



The Complete Angler: A Connecticut Yankee Follows in the Footsteps of Walton

By James Prosek

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"Izaak Walton was my excuse to go to England. I had been thinking through ideas to get money from Yale in the form of a traveling fellowship for two years, and several attempts had failed. My last--and best--idea was to suggest to the fellowship committee that I go to England and fish in the footsteps of a legitimate seventeenth-century author, Izaak Walton, who wrote *The Compleat Angler*, the third most frequently reprinted book in the English language, one that has been in print for over three hundred years. I told them during my interview that Walton's words spoke to me, that fishing was my passion, and that his book represented and defended every facet of the art more lucidly than I ever could."

-- James Prosek

James Prosek has been called "the Audubon of the fishing world" by the *New York Times*. A passionate fisherman and talented artist from a young age, he published two illustrated books on fish and fishing while still an undergraduate at Yale. After winning a traveling fellowship to follow in the footsteps of Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler* became his obsession. He was fascinated by Walton, a humble man who won the friendship of kings, and he was intrigued by the book's philosophies concerning the timelessness and immortality that could be achieved by fishing. Although Walton was sixty when *The Compleat Angler* was published and Prosek only twenty when he set off to visit England, they each had traits in common: a love of fishing and an extraordinary ability to make friends.

This is the story of a young man's pilgrimage through England, fishing the waters that are now privately held. Along with wonderful stories about good times, great fishing, and fine eating, this trip becomes an exploration of Waltonian ideals: how to live with humor, wisdom, contentment, and simplicity.

The original watercolors complementing the text are wonderful. Like Walton's book, *The Complete Angler* is *not* about fishing but about life. Or rather, it *is*

about fishing--but fishing is life.

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