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FISH DIVISION

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Report 260

REPORT ON FOUR TROUT FOUND DEAD UPON THE BEACH OF CLEAR LAKE, MONTMORENCY
COUNTY

On November 9, 1934, four adult male brook trout were received from Mr. W. W. Decent, 1670th V.C.C.C., Camp Presque Isle, Onaway, Michigan. These fish were packed in a wooden box containing ice and shipped by express. Upon arrival there still remained at least 1/4 of the ice, and the fish were still in excellent condition.

A copy of the letter also sent by Mr. Decent is as follows:

Gentlemen

Am shipping you by Express a box of trout, these trout were found on the bank of Clear Lake Montmorency County.

These trout I think are some which were planted lately in Clear Lake and may of been hurt in transit.

Please examine and let me know if there is anything that can be done to stop these fish from dying off.

An examination and autopsy of the four brook trout disclosed the following facts:

The total lengths of the four fish were 13, 13 1/4, 13 1/2 and 15 inches. These fish had obviously been dead some time before they were picked up, though because of cold weather, were still in a fair state of preservation. Both eyes of one and one eye of the other were missing. These had probably been removed and eaten by gulls, crows or some other bird.

All four fish were adult males with the characteristic hooked lower jaw. The testes contained milt and they could be termed "ripe". The color of the fish was very pale, and lacked entirely the red belly of the usual breeding brook trout. Whether this was due to fading after death or lack of color before death could not be determined.

The alimentary canals of all four fish contained no food or fecal matter large enough to be seen with the naked eye.

The gills were in fair shape. They contained but few injuries, none of which were mechanical.

The characteristic frayed, caudal fin or tail with the lower edge of the lower lobe worn considerably, indicated that these fish had recently come from a hatchery.

Three of these fish showed most definitely the pus lesions or "bloody blotches" of furunculosis. The disease had become well established in these fish. If this was not the direct cause of death, it surely would have been had these fish lived a few days longer.

The fourth fish showed no obvious symptoms of furunculosis, though it may have been slightly affected also. It did however, have a fungus growth upon the dorsal surface, from behind the nape to the adipose fin, which apparently had made considerable headway before the fish's death. This fungus growth was most likely the cause of death and was probably aided or begun by the transportation of the fish.

A letter has been sent to Mr. Decent requesting information on how many more brook trout he or others had found along the beach of Clear Lake.

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