

Victorian Era Spring-Loaded Fish Hook

By William Blausen

These are 2 fine examples of an English spring-loaded fish hook dating from the second half of the 1800's. They are similar in function to, but much simpler in design than, the Isaac Walton Spring Snap-Hook from a century earlier. These 2 examples were found in England, in an unmarked box along with a very few others, and in 2 different sizes. The hooks are japanned and retain their original looped metal leaders, with the larger one having a braided brass wire leader and the smaller one a coiled brass leader referred to as a "gimp Trace"which is defined as... "to wrap or twist with wire around a central thread of silk, wool or cotton".

Each spring hook is made from a single piece of spring steel wire coiled at it's center to form a loop which also forms the line-tie. The 2 barbed hooks are compressed and held together in the set position by a separate steel ring to which is attached the wire leader. When the hooks are pulled against a tight line, the ring slides up the 2 shanks, and the 2 barbed hooks spring outward.....(from the collection of William

Blauser).

This is the larger of the 2 sizes shown in the set position with U.S. dime for scale.



Shown below in the sprung position.



Close-up in set position.



Smaller size shown below in the set position with gimp trace leader.



