

EUGENE PINTARD BICKNELL

The name Bicknell is familiar to birders because of the Bicknell's Thrush, a race of the Gray-cheeked Thrush having a limited breeding range in northeastern United States and the maritime provinces of eastern Canada. This thrush was named in honor of the subject of this sketch who discovered it in the high Catskills in the early eighteenthies.

Eugene Pintard Bicknell was born at Riverdale-on-Hudson in September 1859, the son of Joseph and Maria (Pierrepoint) Bicknell. His interest in ornithology was evidenced early, since he contributed notes on birds to "Forest and Stream" at the age of fifteen. In the years immediately following he reported on the results of his field work in the lower Hudson Valley in the Nuttall Ornithological Club Bulletin. In 1882 Bicknell published a paper entitled "A Review of the Summer Birds of a part of the Catskill Mountains." This was described by E. H. Eaton (*Birds of New York*, 1914) as "our first definite and reliable knowledge concerning the Canadian fauna which inhabits the summits of the Catskills.

Bicknell had an unusually keen ear for bird songs and calls, and it was this faculty which enabled him to note a difference in the song of the thrush which was later identified with him. In this connection it should be mentioned that he published an extensive paper entitled "A Study of the Singing of our Birds" which appeared serially in Volumes I and II of the *Auk*.

Bicknell was one of the founders of the Linnaean Society of New York and was its president from 1879 to 1887. He was also a founder of the American Ornithologists' Union, being twenty-four years old at the time and the youngest on the list. During much of his life he was actively interested in botany, and for years birds were forced to take a second place. He was the author of numerous botanical papers, the most important of which was "The Ferns and Flowering Plants of Nantucket."

He was married on October 9, 1901 to Edith Babcock of Riverdale, and the couple moved that year to Hewlett, Long Island. A banker by profession, he was connected with the firm of John Monroe and Company, New York City. He is described as being modest and retiring, caring little for social diversion. Not long before his death Bicknell wrote a paper entitled, "The Status of the Black Gyr Falcon as a Long Island Bird" which appeared in the January 1924 issue of the *Auk*.

Eugene Pintard Bicknell died at Hewlett, Long Island on February 9, 1925. A more extended account of his life can be found in the *Auk*, Volume XLIII, page 143. Appended to this is a list of his published zoological papers.

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