

Dr. Grinnell, 88, Dies; Fought to Save Wild Life

Naturalist and Explorer, He
Led in Drive to Protect
Game and Was a Founder
of the Audubon Society

Dr. George Bird Grinnell, author, naturalist and explorer, long one of the nation's foremost advocates of game and forest conservation, died early yesterday at his home, 238 East Fifteenth Street, at Stuyvesant Square. He had been ill for several years. He was eighty-eight years old. He was the organizer of the first Audubon Society.

Dr. Grinnell, who lived as a boy in Audubon Park, the section of Washington Heights in which John James Audubon, the ornithologist, had his estate, was regarded by many persons as Audubon's successor as the outstanding American defender of wild life. In 1910 Dr. Grinnell brought about the creation of Glacier National Park in northwestern Montana, a reserve of 1,000,000 acres of mountain country. The Grinnell Glacier in the St. Mary's Lakes region in Montana, one of his discoveries, was named in his honor. He wrote extensively in defense of the preservation of such natural beauties and, in 1925, when he received the Roosevelt Memorial Association medal for distinguished service, he received credit from President Coolidge for saving Yellowstone National Park from reckless private exploitation.

Authority on Indians

"Few have done so much as you, none have done more, to preserve vast areas of picturesque wilderness for the eyes of posterity in the simple majesty in which you and your fellow pioneers first beheld them," President Coolidge told Mr. Grinnell.

Mr. Grinnell was an authority on the Plains Indians, writing about the Blackfeet, the Cheyennes and the Pawnees. He wrote authoritative volumes also about game birds of America, particularly ducks, emphasizing the sharp decline in numbers and species. In all he wrote twenty-six books, edited eight more and from 1880 to 1911 served as editor and president of "Forest and Stream," a weekly periodical devoted to outdoor life.

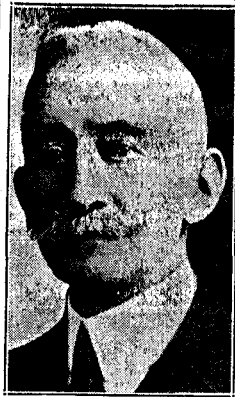
His was far from a sedentary editorial career. In the summer of 1870, after his graduation from Yale at the age of twenty-one, he went West for six months with an expedition of the Peabody Museum, at New Haven, to collect vertebrate fossils in hostile Indian country. His fascination with the Indians began then. He began making semi-annual trips to the West and by 1874 he had built up such a reputation that General George Custer invited him along as naturalist on his expedition to the Black Hills. Two years later General Custer invited him to come along again, but by then Mr. Grinnell was so busy with his work as assistant in osteology at the Peabody Museum that he declined. On that expedition the famous Custer massacre occurred.

Mr. Grinnell first attracted scientific interest in 1875 on his return after a survey trip to Yellowstone Park with Colonel William Ludlow. Zoologists were amazed at his report, which is still considered an authoritative work on the mammals and birds of that region. But laymen were more interested in Mr. Grinnell's conclusions. He protested against the "terrible destruction" of buffalo elk, mule-deer and antelope by unscrupulous hunters for the hides alone and warned the country that "unless the destruction of these animals is checked in some way, the large game still so abundant in some localities, will ere long be exterminated."

Years of agitation followed before his recommendations brought about legislation making the violation of game laws a punishable crime. In 1887 Dr. Grinnell and his friend, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, then a member of the New York Assembly, conceived and founded the Boone and Crockett Club, which soon became one of the most influential groups in the country for the conservation and study of wild life. As a result of the club's efforts, Congress, in 1894, stopped the exploitation of Yellowstone Park.

Through "Forest and Stream" Dr. Grinnell had fought tirelessly for the measure. Its passage became assured in March, 1894, when an expedition he had sent to Yellowstone apprehended a trapper in the As-tington and Pelican Creek districts of the park skinning a buffalo cow, surrounded by six other freshly killed buffalo cows and a yearling calf. Conservationists exploited the incident throughout the country.

FOUNDER OF AUDUBON SOCIETY



Dr. George Bird Grinnell

Crime Was Boon to Cause

"This crime was undoubtedly the best thing that ever happened for the park," Dr. Grinnell remarked later.

Dr. Grinnell later succeeded Colonel Roosevelt as president of the Boone and Crockett Club, a position he held many years until he retired as honorary president for life. Dr. Grinnell and Colonel Roosevelt for a decade were co-editors of the books published by the club, including "American Big Game Hunting," 1893; "Hunting in Many Lands," 1895, and "Trail and Campfire," 1897.

"Hunting in Many Lands" included a proud preface by Colonel Roosevelt and Dr. Grinnell, in which they pointed to the passage of national legislation in behalf of Yellowstone Park and told how one bear had already developed the habit of frequenting one of the hotels for rations of pie. This, they concluded, indicated that wild animals came quickly to look upon human beings as friends, once the latter made the overtures.

When Colonel Roosevelt became President Dr. Grinnell became the club's sole editor. The latest volume of the series was "Trails on Three Continents," which he edited in 1933.

Goes on Canoe Trip

In 1895 the Boone and Crockett Club organized the New York Zoological Society. Dr. Grinnell helped select the site for the park and was a trustee from the beginning. During these years his explorations and travels continued. In 1881 he accompanied the late Dr. E. S. Dana, of Yale, on a long canoe trip along the coast of British Columbia. In 1895 President Grover Cleveland chose him commissioner to deal with the Blackfoot Indians. Later, Theodore Roosevelt, as President, deputed him to settle troubles among the Indians at the "Sitting Rock" in 1899. In 1899 he went with

the late E. H. Harriman to Alaska, obtaining much new information about the natives and the salmon industry. His impressions on the trip made him a crusader for game laws in Alaska.

His fight for protection of the game in such a distant territory, like his earlier campaign to "stop the selling of wild game," was laughed at when he began it. But the public came around to his point of view and the reforms were made.

Among the associations with which Dr. Grinnell was affiliated were the Audubon Society, organized in 1886; the American Game Association, of which he was co-founder in 1911; the Council on National Parks, Forests and Wild Life, of which he was chairman, and the National Parks Association. In 1925 he succeeded Herbert Hoover as president of the National Parks Association.

Born in Brooklyn

Dr. Grinnell was born in Brooklyn, September 20, 1849, the son of George Blake and Helen Lansing Grinnell. Among his ancestors were five Colonial governors, and Betty Alden, the first white woman born in New England. He received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Yale in 1880.

Among his books were "Pawnee Hero Stories," "Blackfoot Lodge Tales," "The Story of the Indian," "Jack, the Young Ranchman," "Jack Among the Indians," "The Indians of Today," "Punishment of the Stingy," "American Duck Shooting," "Jack in the Rockies," "Jack, the Young Canoeerman," "Jack, the Young Trapper," "Jack, the Young Explorer," "American Game Bird Shooting," "Trails of the Pathfinders," "The Indians of Today (to 1910)," "Jack, the Young Cowboy," "Beyond the Old Frontiers," "Blackfoot Indian Stories," "The Wolf Hunters," "The Fighting Cheyennes," "When Buffalo Ran," "The Cheyenne Indians," "Bent's Old Fort and Its Builders," "By Cheyenne Campfires" and "Two Great Scouts."

He was the oldest living member of the Union Club. Other memberships included the University, Century Association, Rockaway Hunting, Mayflower Descendants, Society of Colonial Wars, Colony, Authors, Century, Explorers and Narrows Islands Clubs and the Cosmos Club, of Washington. He was a trustee of the Hispanic Society of America and the National Association of Audubon Societies. He was a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Ethnological Society, the American Geographical Society, the American Museum of Natural History, the American Ornithologists' Union, the American Society of Mammalogists, the New York Academy of Sciences and a member of the Archaeological Institute of America, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society and Psi Upsilon fraternity.

Surviving are his wife, the former Elisabeth Kirby Curtis, whom he married in 1902, and a sister, Mrs. Newell Martin, of Huntington, L. I.

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