

Collection #
SC 3436

**ERNEST BICKNELL AND FAMILY
BIOGRAPHY AND JOURNALS, 2007**

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Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 3 manuscript folders

COLLECTION
DATES: 2007

PROVENANCE: Veronica H. Frost, Enon, Ohio

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ACCESSION
NUMBER: 2013.0092

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ernest Percy Bicknell was born on 23 February 1862 to Eli Pardon Bicknell and Charlotte (Lottie) Ford Bicknell in Vincennes, Indiana. Bicknell spent his youth in Freelandville, where his mother was a teacher and his father was post-master. Eli Bicknell previously fought in the Civil War, and upon returning home, built a farm. Due to contracting tuberculosis during the war, he was not strong enough to run the farm, so he took a job as post-master and later as a Justice of the Peace.

When Eli died in 1877, Ernest was only sixteen years old. It was decided that Ernest would move to Vincennes to learn the machinist's trade by working with Clark and Buck. This work did not suit Ernest, so he moved back home two years later to further pursue his studies. In 1883, Ernest moved to Bloomington with his mother and siblings to attend Indiana University. While there, he worked as a staff member on the school newspaper, *The Student*. During his junior year, he was engaged to Cora Scott, and they married in 1886. At the end of his senior year in 1887, Ernest took a job writing for the *Indianapolis News*. In December of 1887, Ernest and Cora had their first child, Clarence Scott, but five days after the birth, Cora passed away.

In 1891, Ernest married his second wife, Grace Vawter, a school teacher. The couple had four children: Ernestine (1893-1894), Charlotte (1895-1904), Grace Constance (b. 1897), and Alberte (b. 1899). It was during this time that Ernest bought the *Jonesboro News*. Six months after buying the newspaper, the position of Secretary of the Indiana Board of Charities became open, and Ernest was encouraged by friends to take it. Ernest heeded their advice and made the transition from news reporter to social worker. His next position was as General Superintendent of the Chicago Bureau of Charities.

In 1908, while Ernest and his family were living in Chicago, Illinois, a position was created for him as the National Director of the American Red Cross. In 1917 during World War I, he traveled with the Red Cross to France where he was named Red Cross Deputy Commissioner to France and later to Europe.

Ernest spent the rest of his life working in various humanitarian roles. He was given several awards and honors for his work, including a LL.D. from Indiana University.

Ernest passed away on 29 September 1935.

Sources:

Ancestry.com

Materials in Collection

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOT

This collection contains a compilation of the Bicknell daughters' journals, "Journals of Alberte & Constance Bicknell: Europe-World War I, 1915-1918". There is also a second compilation titled "Biography of Ernest Bicknell" which includes Ernest Bicknell's autobiography along with period relevant resources. Both compilations were created and edited by Sue McDonald in 2007. Also included is a CD with PDF versions of each compilation.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

"Biography of Ernest Percy Bicknell" by Sue McDonald, 2007

CONTAINER

Folder 1

"Journals of Alberte & Constance Bicknell: Europe-WWI, 1915-1918" by Sue McDonald, 2007

Folder 2

CD: "Biography of Ernest Percy Bicknell" and "Journals of Alberte & Constance Bicknell: Europe-WWI, 1915-1918" PDFs, 2007

Folder 3