

MEMBER LIBRARY

GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL (1849-1938)



Theodore J. Holsten
EMERITUS MEMBER
Boone and Crockett Club

When George Armstrong Custer rode out on his ill-fated Little Bighorn Expedition in 1876, his staff was missing an invited guest. George Bird Grinnell had previously accompanied Custer as

invited zoologist and paleontologist on his expedition to the Black Hills in 1874. Grinnell was a graduate student at Yale's Peabody Museum, and his boss, Professor O.C. Marsh, turned down his request to go with Custer in 1876. That decision saved the American conservation movement from losing what was to become one of its greatest heroes.

George Bird Grinnell spent his adolescent years at Audubon Park, the former home of John James Audubon, on Manhattan's upper West Side. It was there he developed an interest in ornithology and zoology that was to last throughout his life. He went on to become the founder of the Audubon Society, and in 1887, along with his friend Theodore Roosevelt, he co-founded the Boone and Crockett Club.

During his early trips to the West, Grinnell developed a lifelong interest in the American Indian. He strongly supported Indian causes and became a leading authority on Indian culture. Several of the tribes named him honorary chief, but of them all, it was the Cheyenne that he liked most. They called him "Wikis" meaning "bird" because he came and went with the seasons like a migrating bird.

Grinnell's involvement in the conservation movement was vast. He pressed for the establishment of Glacier National Park in 1910. Several of its outstanding natural features, including Grinnell Glacier, have been named after him. He supported the sustainable use of America's forests and advocated protection for Yellowstone National Park. He fought to eliminate market hunting that was destroying American wildlife while enduring criticism by those who questioned how he could be a big-game hunter and a conservationist at the same time.

Grinnell was editor of Forest and Stream Publishing Company when he teamed up with Theodore Roosevelt in 1887 to form the Boone and Crockett Club. He edited and contributed to all seven of the "Acorn" series books published by the Club during his lifetime.

Although he was very modest about his achievements, Grinnell has been considered the "Father of American Conservation." Those wishing to learn why should read John F. Reiger's book *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation* (1975) and James B. Trefethen's *Crusade for Wildlife*, published by Boone and Crockett in 1961.

George Bird Grinnell died in 1938 after a long illness. In his obituary, the *New York Herald Tribune* wrote that Grinnell's achievements had marked him as "the noblest Roman of them all." ■

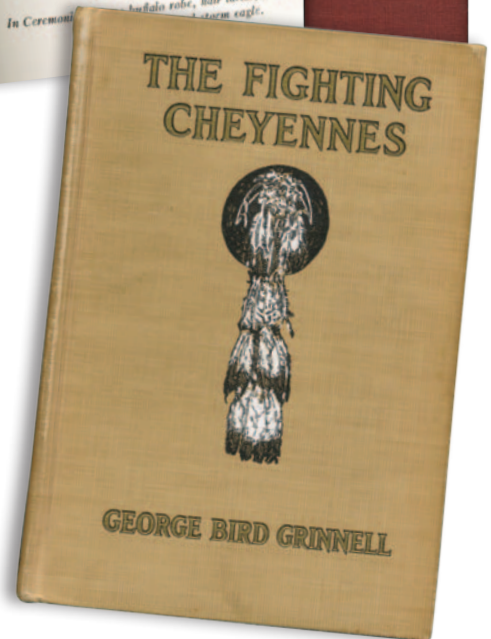
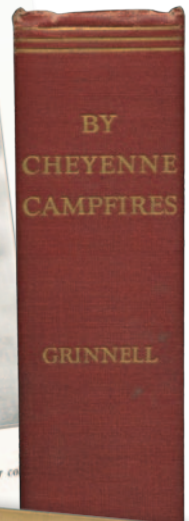
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A PARTIAL LIST OF BOOKS BY GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL

- Pawnee Hero Stories* (1889)
- Blackfoot Lodge Tales* (1892)
- The Story of the Indian* (1895)
- The Indians of Today* (1911)
- The Fighting Cheyennes* (1915)
- When Buffalo Ran* (1920)
- The Cheyenne Indians* (1923)
- By Cheyenne Campfires* (1926)



PAWNEE WARRIOR LEADER.
In Ceremony. Buffalo robe, hair lariet, otter cap.



CLOCKWISE: A photo of a Pawnee warrior leader, taken from *By Cheyenne Campfires*. ■ Influenced by the Cheyenne he also wrote *The Fighting Cheyennes*. ■ A rare portrait of Grinnell. ■ Grinnell and his wife Elizabeth hiked through Glacier National Park in September 1923.

