

THOMPSON SETON, NOTED AUTHOR, DIES

Writer of 42 Books on Indian Lore and Wildlife Also Did Many of His Own Sketches

SANTA FE, N. M., Oct. 23 (AP)—Ernest Thompson Seton, world-famed author and authority on Indian lore and wildlife, died this morning at his home in Seton Village, ten miles south of Santa Fe. His age was 86.

Still active despite his years, Mr. Seton only a short time ago completed his forty-second book and had made plans for a 10,000-mile lecture tour. He also helped place a new roof on his 50,000-volume library recently.

His best known book probably was "Wild Animals I Have Known," published in 1898. It contained 200 of his drawings. This book attracted the attention of Theodore Roosevelt and the two became great personal friends. Rudyard Kipling said the volume led him to write his "Jungle Tales."

A Lover of the Outdoors

F. Ernest Thompson Seton followed the call of the wild over prairie trails and backwoods pathways to international fame as a naturalist and author. Trained as an artist at London schools and the ateliers in Paris, he found that the remote stretches of the Canadian north-west afforded him the best chance for expression of his many talents. He wrote and illustrated more than forty books on subjects related to woodcraft, scouting, wild animals and Indians. Many of them became best sellers. He was an authority on Indian lore and his home at Santa Fe contained an extensive Indian collection.

Children of twenty or thirty years ago "grew up on" Seton's books — he was Ernest Seton Thompson then. Such of his books as "The Trail of the Sandhill Crane," "The Biography of a Grizzly," "Wild Animals I Have Known" and "American Woodcraft for Boys" were required reading in thousands of American homes.

Mr. Seton was interested in nature study from his childhood. When he was only 24 years old he was a naturalist to the Manitoba government. When he began to write he made the history of the bald eagle a popular story with millions of people because of the "humanizing" of his subject.

Studied Art in Youth

As a small boy in England he loved an outdoor life and was mainly interested in birds. When he came to Canada as a child he already knew more about wildlife than those who had long lived in the provincial region where his family settled.

Mr. Seton, the son of Joseph L. and Alice Snowden Thompson, was born at Shields, England, Aug. 14, 1860. His family descended from George Seton, Earl of Winton, whose surname he later assumed. He was still a young boy when he was brought to Lindsay, Ont., Canada. A few years later the family moved to Toronto, where young Seton was educated in the public schools. He also studied art and was a gold medalist at the high school there.

Although he was set on being a naturalist his father insisted he study to be an artist. Accordingly he was sent to London, where he studied in two years of study at the Royal Academy under distinguished artists. His health broke from overwork and he was ordered home in 1882—after earning \$60 designing Christmas cards for a Toronto publisher—he bought a ticket to Starbuck, Man., where his brother had a farm. He also bought some land.

Mr. Seton published his first book in 1885. Recognition of this work by leading scientists led to his appointment by the Manitoba Government. The next year he went to New York, where his illustrations of nature studies for The Century magazine brought success.

The bear, the lynx, the partridge and the hare were young Mr. Seton's especial interests, so in 1890 he went to Paris to study animal anatomy under leading French teachers so that his own illustrative work might improve. Many of his paintings were exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français.

Painting Created a Furor

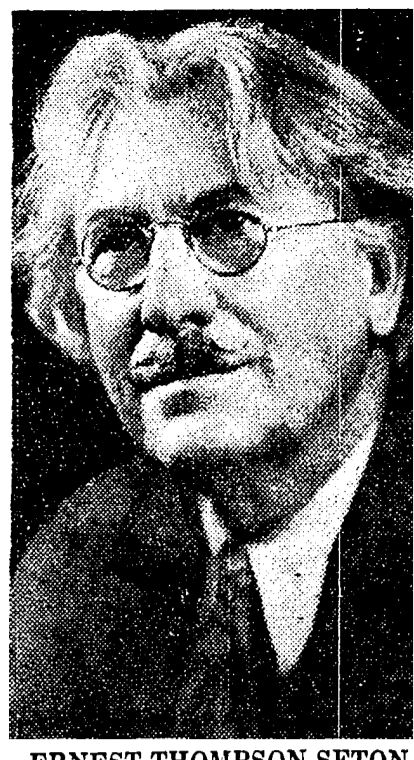
One of his paintings—"Awaited in Vain"—which depicted a dawn in a northern forest, with a wolf gnawing his fangs in the body of a man in the foreground while other wolves skulked in the background looking at a home with a lighted window—created a mild furor when it was shown at the Paris exposition.

Upon his return from Paris Mr. Seton plunged into writing and lecturing. He delivered more than 1,000 lectures in the next twenty years. He also studied taxidermy, and his rooms in New York, when he lived here, contained more than 1,000 stuffed animals and skins.

Among Mr. Seton's best known books were "Molly Cottontail," "The Coyote," "Art Anatomy of Animals," and "Lives of the Game Animals." His "Birch Bark Roll of the Woodcraft Indians" originated the spirit of the Boy Scout movement in the United States. He was chief scout of the Boy Scouts of America, from 1910 to 1915. He edited "Totem Board," organ of the Woodcraft League of America, and was the founder in 1902 of "Woodcraft Indians."

Mr. Seton received the silver medal of Société l'Acclimatation of France in 1918, the John Burroughs medal in 1926, and the Daniel Giraud Elliot medal in 1928.

At 78 he was the father of his joyous daughter, Beulah, who often appeared as an Indian dancer on programs with him and his second wife, the former Julia M. Butree Cross, herself an authority on Indian life. His first wife, from whom he was divorced, was Grace Hallatin, a writer on the Orient and the Near East. Their daughter, Ann, became Mrs. Hamilton Chase.



ERNEST THOMPSON SETON
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