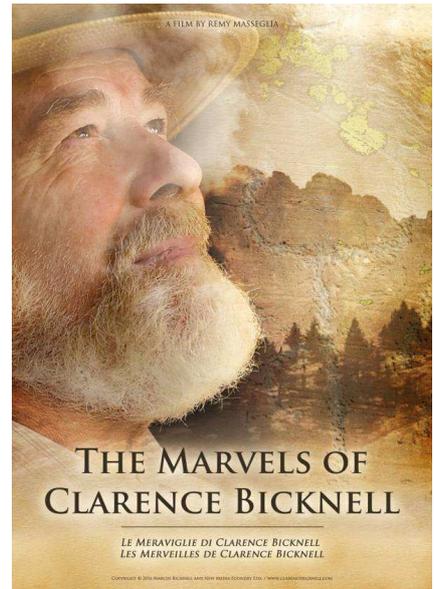


**Monday 17th October at the Art Workers' Guild.
18h30 for 19h projection. Admission free. Drinks and light food.**

The Marvels of Clarence Bicknell

Le Meraviglie di Clarence Bicknell - Les Merveilles de Clarence Bicknell
A film by Rémy Masségia

We heard last year with slides about Clarence Bicknell from Christopher Chippindale (Cambridge University) and past Master Julian Bicknell, Clarence's great grand nephew. Now Julian's brother Marcus has produced a film by an imaginative young French director, Rémy Masségia, which makes its English language premiere at the Art Workers' Guild on October 17th. Italian and French versions were launched at the end of September in Bordighera, Genoa, Tende and Breil-sur-Roya. The imagery of the 18-minute documentary dwells on the beauty of the Alps above Bordighera, the flowers that Clarence painted, and the rock engravings which he reproduced on paper for 12 long summers to a backdrop of Mozart, Chopin and as little narration as possible.



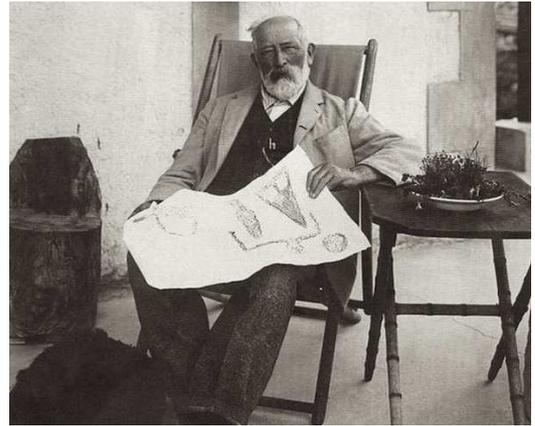
The Marvels of Clarence Bicknell is a short documentary, or biopic, the true story of Clarence Bicknell.

He was born in 1842 in Herne Hill near London and died in 1918 in his summer house in Casterino, in the mountains near Tende. He left the church when he was 35 years old to become an out-of-the-ordinary botanist, artist, archaeologist and idealist in Bordighera on the Italian Riviera.



Clarence Bicknell's path is intertwined with artists like Turner, his cousin Phiz, intellectual sects of the Anglican Church, wanderlust of the Grand Tour, the scientific Renaissance of the end of the 19th century, the British on the Riviera, a network of researchers across Europe, and with charity and with idealism. In a remarkable parallel with the explosion of free-spirited learning in that period, Bicknell threw off the dog collar and devoted himself to nature. He became an expert on flowers of the Riviera, painted accurate water-colours of them and published a highly-respected book on them.

He then turned his skills to archaeology, discovering, copying and classifying thousands of rock engravings on the high rock slabs of the Vallée des Merveilles and the Val Fontanalba. He was one of the first scientists to devote his energies to providing a record from which future researchers could benefit. His self-taught techniques of recording and classifying finds, rather than jumping to conclusions, pre-dated the best modern techniques by 100 years.



The film, shot at Stoke-on-Tern (UK), Bordighera (Italy), Val Fontanalba and Casterino (France) is

being used to promote to established TV broadcasters and production companies the idea of a full-length documentary to coincide with the 2018 centenary of Clarence's death. It will be available for viewing by visitors to local museums and on the internet.

Valerie Browne Lester, descended from Clarence's cousin Phiz whose biography she has written, is writing the first full-length biography of Clarence Bicknell. Valerie is a



descendant of Clarence's cousin Phiz, Dickens' illustrator, and she is therefore a cousin of Julian, Marcus and Renchi. Since completing her biography of the Italian printer and designer Bodoni in 2015 she has been working at home near Boston USA and on the road with Marcus near London, in Cambridge, in Shropshire, in Walworth, in Tende and Casterino and in Bordighera on finding out the aspects of

Bicknell's life which have not previously been documented. Her research also informs the film.

Julian and Marcus's cousin Renchi, a Glastonbury artist who closely resembles Clarence, plays the part of Clarence in the film and will be present on the 17th. All the water-colour paintings, albums, pressed flowers, butterflies, rubbings of rock engravings, letters, books and Esperanto artefacts in the film



are originals created by Clarence Bicknell, either from the Museo Bicknell in Bordighera or from the Bicknell Family Collection. Some of the vellum albums of botanical watercolours will be brought on the night for those that want to have a look.

The trailer is at <https://vimeo.com/182358729> and on the www.clarencebicknell.com home page.

Note from the film's producer, Marcus Bicknell, marcus@bicknell.com www.clarencebicknell.com