

Botanists in the Book of Guests in Esperanto

By Graham Avery

Clarence Bicknell's *Book of Guests in Esperanto* gives brief profiles of eleven botanists and three accompanying persons who stayed overnight at Casa Fontanalba, Bicknell's summer home in the Maritime Alps:

1. Fritz Mader (1906)
2. C. Werner (1906) accompanying his friend Fritz Mader
3. Harold Stuart Thompson (1907)
4. Lino Vaccari (1908)
5. Emile Burnat (1909)
6. Jean Burnat (1909) accompanying his father Emile Burnat
7. E. Wilczek (1909)
8. John Briquet (1909)
9. François Cavillier (1909)
10. Emile Albrezol (1909)
11. James W. White (1911)
12. Cedric Bucknall (1911)
13. Abbie Bucknall (1911) accompanying her husband Cedric Bucknall
14. Renato Pampanini (1916)

Bicknell also kept a separate *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book*, signed by all his visitors including those who did not stay overnight. Among these were thirteen other botanists:

15. Reginald Farrer (1910)
16. Clarence Elliott (1910)
17. Louis Lutz and eight others (1910)
18. Henry Correvon (1914)
19. Théodor Katz (1914)

In this note I give further information on all these persons. Bicknell's visitors at Casa Fontanalba in the years from 1906 to 1916 included 24 botanists and 3 accompanying persons. It was an international group - Italian, German, French, Swiss and British - and many of them knew each other. Some had international reputations, and several were pioneers in the movement for plant protection. The friendship between Bicknell and this notable group, and the interwoven contacts between them, illustrate the extent and diversity of scientific exchange in Europe in the years before the Great War.

1. Fritz Mader

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 22, 1906):

'Fritz Mader, son of the pastor of the German church in Nice, doctor of philosophy. For a long time he has been exploring the glaciers, the geological structure, the flora etc. of the Maritime Alps, about which he has written very learned guidebooks. He has done a lot of work for the firm Baedeker'

Fritz Mader (1872-1921) was an alpinist, botanist, glaciologist, speleologist, historian and photographer. He was educated at the Lycée in Nice, the Gymnasium in Heilbronn, and the University of Leipzig. From 1903 to 1914 he worked for Baedeker, the publisher of guidebooks, and although the firm's offices were in Leipzig, Mader lived with his parents in Nice and at their summer home in Tenda (Villa Alpina, now the *Maison Communale* of Tende) from where he explored the surrounding mountains.

Mader's contributions to Baedeker's guides were anonymous, but he published four books in his own name, including his doctoral thesis on the physical geography of the Maritime Alps and a guide-book to the Riviera. He also published more than 50 articles, mainly on the natural history of the Maritime and Ligurian Alps, in journals of the *Club Alpino Italiano*, the *Club Alpin Français*, the *Société des Lettres, Sciences & Arts des Alpes-Maritimes*, *Deutsche Rundschau für Geographie*, and *The Gardeners' Chronicle*. He contributed to the work of the Swiss botanist Emile Burnat, who also visited Casa Fontanalba (see below).

Mader played a key role in launching Bicknell on the path of recording the prehistoric rock engravings in Val Fontanalba and the Vallée des Merveilles (*Meraviglie*), which led to Bicknell's recognition as a pioneer in the study of rock art. Bicknell wrote that in 1897:

‘I heard that a house in Val Casterino was to be let, and I took it for the summer, partly with the intention of botanizing, but partly with that of seeing more of the rock figures. I wrote to the Secretary of the Italian Alpine Club to ask if he could give me any information about the works already published on the *Meraviglie*, and he referred me to Dr. Fritz Mader, an Associate who had a thorough knowledge of the Maritime Alps, and spent his summers in Tenda. It was then, through the full and courteous reply to a letter that I wrote to Dr. Mader that we first heard of there being inscriptions in the valley near us, and we immediately went up to search for ourselves’

On the day after receiving Bicknell's request, Mader sent a long reply, listing authors who had written about the *Meraviglie*, commenting on their ideas, and offering his own thoughts on the origins and purpose of the rock engravings. This remarkable letter, dated 1 August 1897, influenced Bicknell's own thinking. The text of the letter, and my commentary on it, can be found in my article ‘Fritz Mader's correspondence with Clarence Bicknell in 1897’ https://clarencebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/mader_bicknell_correspondence_1897_avery_2020.pdf

Mader stayed with Bicknell in Bordighera in 1900, and again in 1901, and visited him several times in Val Casterino: the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book* records his signature on 16 September 1906, 18-22 September 1909 and 6 July 1911. For 16 August 1909 and 6 July 1911 it records also the signatures of his sister Marie Mader and his niece Erika Maurin.

On 17 September 1906 Mader made an excursion of which he published an account in the *Rivista Mensile* of the *Club Alpino Italiano*: ‘In the morning Mr. K. Werner and I left Val Casterino, where we had been splendidly received by Mr. Clarence Bicknell of Bordighera in the charming villa that he has built there. After three hours we reached Baissa di Peirafica, and went from there to the eastern summit of Rocca dell'Abisso, from which we admired an extensive panorama, ranging from the sea, sparkling like gold, to Cuneo, the smoke above Turin, the hills of Ivrea, and the chain of the Alps, including Mont Blanc peeping out behind Monviso’.

In 1907 he gave the name ‘Cima Bicknell’ to a modest summit (2,600m.) above Val Fontanalba, commenting ‘one could do no better than to think of Mr. Clarence Bicknell, founder of the Museum in Bordighera, who for many summers has been exploring the prehistoric rock engravings in this region’. He also named ‘Cima Viglino’ (2,915m.) in honour of his friend Alberto Viglino, alpinist, geologist and glaciologist.

In 1910 Mader published an account of another excursion made from Casa Fontanalba: ‘On 21 September I left the villa of Mr. Bicknell in Val Casterino and climbed Cima Viglino in about six hours. Despite the cloud, I enjoyed a good view of Monte Clapier, the upper valley of Valmasca, the main peaks of the Maritime Alps, and the great ring of the Alps’.

In 1914 he published an article proposing the creation of a National Park in the Argentera region. It took many years for this idea to be realised: the *Parco Naturale dell'Argentera* was created in 1980, and became the *Parco Naturale delle Alpi Marittime* in 1995. Its website describes Mader as ‘one of the great explorers of the Ligurian and Maritime Alps, and the first to express the wish for the creation of a park in this area’

Mader continued to explore his beloved mountains until Italy’s declaration of war in 1915 obliged him to return to Germany, where he died in Stuttgart in 1921. His sister Frida wrote ‘it was a great sadness for him that he never again saw his Alpine Flora and other books dear to him, which were stolen from our parents’ house in Tenda during the war. Until his very last days he was working on a book on the Maritime Alps’ of which the manuscript has not survived.

2. C. Werner

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 23, 1906):

‘C. Werner, friend of Dr Mader, who came with him to visit us’

I have not been able to identify this person, who signed the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors’ Book* on 16 September 1906 as ‘C. Werner’. He is described as ‘K. Werner’ in Mader’s account of their excursion on 17 September.

3. Harold Stuart Thompson

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 28, 1907):

‘Harold Stuart Thompson, English botanist, who was staying in the Hotel S. Dalmazzo and came up here to get to know our mountain flora’

Harold Stuart Thompson (1870-1940) studied at Bristol University and at Christ's College, Cambridge, and initially practised as a land surveyor, but his main interest was botany. A Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, he published many papers in botanical journals, and three popular illustrated books: *Alpine Plants of Europe* (1911), *Sub-alpine Plants of the Swiss Woods and Meadows* (1912) and *Flowering Plants of the Riviera* (1914). He toured extensively in Europe in search of plants, particularly in Switzerland, and was an alpinist as well as a botanist.

In August 1906 Thompson wrote to Bicknell asking whether certain plants grew in his district; Bicknell in his reply commented ‘I hope someday you will come to see me’. The invitation was taken up in 1907 when Thompson’s signature appears in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors’ Book* for 15-18 June 1907. After leaving Casa Fontanalba, Thompson travelled to Mont Cenis, where he botanised until mid-August. In the spring of 1908 Thompson wrote another letter to Bicknell about his mountain excursions, to which Bicknell’s replied ‘Take care of your throat – talk Esperanto instead of French – that is the cure’ and ‘Let me hear from you from time to time’.

In 1914 Thompson published *Flowering Plants of the Riviera*, whose 24 coloured plates were reproductions of water-colours by Bicknell. Bicknell wrote: ‘I congratulate you on its being finished & thank you for the copy, though now you will be wanting & worrying to start another’. Bicknell complained that an incorrect name had been attributed to a plant in one of the plates, and that the colours had been badly printed, but added ‘However, one can see that the plants were well drawn, if not well coloured, which satisfies me’.

Thompson lived in Bristol, where he knew the botanists James W. White and Cedric Bucknell who also stayed at Casa Fontanalba (see below). Thompson’s correspondence with Bicknell is in the H.S. Thompson Collection in the Archives of Bristol University, and his herbarium of European plants is in the National Museum of Wales.

4. Lino Vaccari

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 42, 1908)

‘Lino Vaccari, botanist, professor in Tivoli, and director of the Chanousia alpine garden at the Petit Saint-Bernard’

Lino Vaccari (1873-1951), studied natural sciences in Padua and published his thesis on the Italian gentians in 1902. He was a science teacher (*professore*) in schools in Aosta, Tivoli, Florence and Rome, and later a lecturer in botany at the Universities of Rome and Florence. He bequeathed his herbarium to the Italian Central Herbarium (*Erbario Centrale Italiano*) in Florence. During his time in Aosta he worked with Abbot Pierre Chanoux, Rector of the hospice on the Petit Saint-Bernard Pass where he founded the Chanousia alpine garden. On the death of Chanoux in 1909 the monks of the hospice appointed Vaccari as Director of the garden, and he continued his work there until the garden was damaged in 1943. It has now been reconstructed, and is open daily in the summer.

Vaccari was an associate of the Swiss botanists Henry Correvon and Ernst Wilczek, and also of Renato Pampanini, all of whom visited Casa Fontanalba (see below). He was influenced by the ideas of Correvon, a pioneer in the Swiss plant protection movement, whom he had met at Chanousia. Vaccari was one of the founders in 1913 of the *Lega nazionale per la protezione dei monumenti naturali*, and has been described as ‘the most prolific and effective campaigner in the Italian movement for the protection of nature’.

Vaccari’s signature appears in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors’ Book* for 18-21 July 1908, and again for 15-16 September 1915, when he commented ‘for the second time I was fascinated by the beauty of the place, by the fine engravings on the cliffs, the richness of the alpine flora, and by the kindness and generosity of Mr. Bicknell, the dear artist and incomparable philanthropist’.

5. Emile Burnat

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 50, 1909):

‘Emile Burnat, Swiss, famous botanist who for more than forty-five years has travelled every year in the Maritime Alps, both French and Italian, and has already published four volumes on the flora of that region. He owns a herbarium, probably the richest in Europe, of European plants’

Emile Burnat (1828-1920) was born in Vevey and collected flowers in his youth. After graduating in Paris as an engineer he went to Mulhouse to work in a textile firm, and in 1868 returned to Switzerland and devoted himself to botany, travelling every summer in the Maritime Alps and other areas. His monumental *Flore des Alpes Maritimes* was published in seven volumes from 1892 to 1931.

Burnat was a friend of Bicknell, and encouraged him to pursue botany in a more scientific way. The catalogue of Burnat’s herbarium in Geneva records that Bicknell sent him more than 1200 botanical specimens, and the *Flore des Alpes Maritimes* includes 1250 citations of Bicknell, as well as Burnat’s personal thanks to Bicknell. We know from Burnat’s autobiography that he was at Bordighera in 1891 and 1893; that he camped in Val Casterino in 1886 & 1888, visited it again in 1901 & 1909, and that Bicknell visited Burnat in Switzerland nine times in the period from 1888 to 1906. Bicknell’s letters to Burnat (nearly 700 documents) are in the archives of the Botanical Garden of Geneva (*Conservatoire et Jardin Botaniques de la Ville de Genève*) and are summarised in my article ‘Clarence Bicknell’s correspondence with Emile Burnat’ at https://clarencebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/burnat_letters_from_bicknell.pdf

Bicknell encouraged several of his botanical friends to contact Burnat. In 1898 he passed on to him a number of questions from Mader, who soon corresponded directly with Burnat, with the result that Burnat thanked Mader in Vol 4 of *Flore des Alpes Maritimes* (1906) for ‘sending much useful information, often accompanied by plants’. In 1907 Bicknell wrote to Thompson ‘I hope you will go & see M. Burnat and his charming home & well-ordered collections... He is the most charming and genial of men’.

Burnat travelled in the mountains with a well-organised suite of assistants, a cook, botanical equipment, tents and mules, as mentioned in the entry on Emile Albrezol (below). Amusing anecdotes about the adventures of Burnat and his ‘caravan’ are to be found in his autobiography.

The group who signed the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors’ Book* on 27 July 1909 consisted of Emile Burnat, his son Jean and his assistants Wilczek, Briquet, Cavillier and Albrezol. They had travelled from Nice (where Burnat had a villa) to St Martin Vésubie, Madonna delle Finestre, Col delle Finestre, Entraque, Valdieri, Roaschia, and Val Sabbione. After Val Casterino they returned to Vevey via St. Dalmas de Tende, Turin and Simplon.

6. Jean Burnat

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 51, 1909):

‘Jean Burnat, son of Mr E. Burnat. He studied viticulture in Montpellier, and now occupies himself with his vineyards in Geneva. He is a collector of butterflies’

We know little about Burnat’s son Jean (1872-1939). He had stayed with Bicknell in Bordighera for health reasons.

7. Ernst Wilczek

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 52, 1909):

‘E. Wilczek, professor of botany in Lausanne, who accompanied Mr Burnat. Later he kindly sent fruit trees, Siberian species, for our garden, which we planted in November, when the ground was covered in snow; but almost all of them died’

Ernst Wilczek (1867-1948) studied at the University of Zurich and was professor of botany at the University of Lausanne from 1892 to 1934. He was Director of the alpine garden at Pont de Nant, created by him in 1891. In addition to accompanying Burnat on botanical expeditions, he made a crossing of the Andes and visited Morocco. He campaigned for plant protection both in Switzerland and in Italy, where he was a member of the *Societa Botanica Italiana*. He was an associate of the Swiss botanist Henry Correvon (see below) and the Italian botanist Lino Vaccari (see above).

8. John Briquet

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 53, 1909):

‘John Briquet, doctor, famous botanist in Geneva. He has written extensively on the flora of our mountains, often travelling with Mr. Burnat’

John Briquet (1870-193) studied natural sciences in Geneva and Berlin, and was director of the *Conservatoire Botanique* of Geneva from 1906 to 1931. He accompanied Burnat on a number of botanical expeditions, was president of the Swiss Botanical Society from 1912 to 1921, and played a leading role in developing the International Code of Nomenclature for plants. In 1898 gave the name *Pimpinella Bicknellii* to a plant discovered by Bicknell on the island of Majorca, and in 1908 he gave the name *Galium asperum* var. *Thompsonii* to a plant discovered by Thompson at Mont Cenis.

9. François Cavillier

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 54, 1909):

‘François Cavillier, botanical assistant to Mr Burnat for many years, and now the curator of his herbarium’

François Cavillier (1868-1953) had worked for Burnat since 1894, and stayed with Bicknell in Bordighera in 1905. After Burnat’s death in 1920, Briquet and Cavillier edited his autobiography, and the last three volumes of *Flore des Alpes Maritimes*.

10. Emile Samuel Albrezol

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 55, 1909):

‘Emile S. Albrezol, botanical assistant to Mr Burnat, and during his travels the dryer of the flowers and the paper. He along with the five aforementioned botanists: also with mules, muleteers, cooks, tents, suitcases etc. arrived late in the evening. They had been driven from the Col Sabbione pass, because of the tempestuous weather and the daily shooting of the soldiers. They dined and slept at our place’

Emile Albrezol (1877-1940) had worked for Burnat since 1898. The soldiers at Col Sabbione (2328 m.) were guarding the frontier between France and Italy.

11. James Walter White

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 75, 1911):

‘James W. White, Fellow of the Linnaean Society, a learned botanist who has written extensively on the vegetation of Britain. He is a pharmacist in Clifton, England’

James Walter White (1846-1932) was a member of the Bristol Naturalists' Society, of which Thompson (see above) and Bucknall (see below) were also members. He was also a friend of G. Claridge Druce, an important figure in British botany. In 1910 White became Lecturer in Botany at Bristol University, to which he bequeathed his herbarium. His most important publication was *The Flora of Bristol* (1912). He made regular botanical expeditions with his friend Bucknall to places in Europe including Majorca (where they found *Pimpinella bicknellii* in the place where Bicknell had discovered it) and to the Austrian Tyrol, Carinthia, the Apennines, Naples, Sicily, and Southern Spain.

Bicknell had already been in contact with White and Bucknall in 1902, when he wrote to Burnat ‘I have found two English gentlemen who would be glad to send us plants from England’. The result was that White sent many plants to Burnat, and his name appears in the list of contributors to Burnat’s Herbarium. Bicknell was in contact with them again in 1903 about their planned visit to Majorca, for which he sent instructions on how to find *Pimpinella bicknellii*. It was not until later that the two men met in person, when White signed the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors’ Book* on 19 July 1911.

For more information on White, Thompson and Bucknall see my article ‘Bristol Botanists at Casa Fontanalba’ at https://clarencibicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/bristol_botanists_at_casa_fontanalba.pdf

12. Cedric Bucknall

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 77, 1911):

‘Cedric Bucknall, professor of music and a brilliant organist in Clifton, England. He is also a learned botanist and has travelled widely in European countries to collect flowers’

Cedric Bucknall (1849-1921) obtained a degree in Music at Keble College, Oxford, and was organist at King's College, London, St. Thomas' Church, Clapton, and Southwell Minster, before being appointed in 1876 as organist and choir-master at All Saints' Church, Clifton, Bristol, where he remained until his death. He was Bristol University's first lecturer in Harmony and Counterpoint, and his work as a composer received national recognition: four of his tunes were included in the Anglican hymn book *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

Among Bucknall's recreations were astronomy, microscopy, and the study of fungi. The Bristol Naturalists' Society, of which he was a member, published his *Fungi of the Bristol District*. In his obituary of Bucknall, White wrote:

'When the supply of fungi failed him, Bucknall gave attention to flowering plants with the same assiduity and methodical care that characterised all his work... During the latter half of his life he made many Continental trips, collecting plants and acquiring a good knowledge of the flora of Central and Southern Europe. He learned to read at least six languages and could converse in four'.

White related some amusing anecdotes of their Continental tours:

One night in the Austrian Tyrol something moved Bucknall after dinner to sit down to a grand piano in the dining-room. Within five minutes all the hotel guests and most of the servants were jostling in the doorways, attracted by unaccustomed melody. Noticing this, he plunged straightway into the country's national airs, to the general delight... In a Palermo drawing-room he accompanied the weird songs of a Roumanian vocalist to her entire satisfaction... If there were a large organ within reach, Bucknall would get at it somehow. In Carcassonne the cathedral organ was under repair, but Bucknall tipped the workmen to blow it for him to play'.

Bucknall's gravestone is inscribed 'Musician and Botanist'.

I have already mentioned that Bicknell was in contact with White and Bucknall in 1902 and 1903. In December 1903 Bicknell wrote to Bucknall: 'You and your (and my) friend Mr White are about the best letter writers I know, and as for handwriting – you are both an example to the world'. He continued 'You seem to have had a delightful tour in Majorca' and added wistfully 'I long to revisit those delightful places'.

Bucknall and his wife Abbie signed the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book* on 2 August 1911, and stayed for a week. After his return to Bristol, he published an article *Rock Figures of the Maritime Alps* in the Proceedings of the Bristol Naturalists' Society. It began:

'Mr. Clarence Bicknell for the last fourteen years has spent a part of each summer in drawing and taking rubbings of the figures. It is through his kindness that my wife and I were enabled, in August, 1911, to spend a week in Val Casterino, to collect a large number of the rare plants with which this most interesting region abounds, and above all to visit and examine for ourselves examples of the various types of figures on the rocks of Val Fontanalba'

Bucknall's reason for going to the Maritime Alps was to explore the botany, but his most interesting discovery was the prehistoric rock art, to which (except for the reference to 'a large number of rare plants') his paper was almost entirely devoted.

13. Abbie Cecilia Bucknall

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 77, 1911):

‘Abbie C. Bucknall, wife of Mr Bucknall’

We know little of Bucknall’s wife Abbie: they married in 1873 when he was organist at Southwell, and both are buried in Canford Cemetery, Bristol (where White is also buried).

14. Renato Pampanini

Entry in the *Book of Guests in Esperanto* (page 23, 1916):

‘Doctor Renato Pampanini, Professor of botanical science in Florence. He accompanied the Italian expeditionary force to Tripoli in 1913. He is now devoting himself to the flora of the republic of San Marino’

Renato Pampanini (1875-1949) studied in Switzerland at the universities of Geneva, Lausanne and Freiburg, and then worked in Florence where he was successively assistant, assistant professor, and professor. He was curator of the *Erbario Centrale Italiano*, and secretary of the *Società Botanica Italiana* from 1906 to 1929.

Pampanini’s visit to Libya in 1913 was not with a military expedition (Libya had been invaded and colonised in 1911) but with a mission organised by the Italian Society for the Study of Libya, as a result of which he published *Plants of Tripolitania gathered by the author in 1913* (334 pages). On the plants of San Marino, he published a note (5 pages) in 1914, and a *Flora della Repubblica di San Marino* (228 pages) in 1930.

Pampanini published many botanical articles, and was a campaigner for plant protection. In 1911 he presented an important paper *Per la protezione della flora italiana* at a meeting in Rome. It surveyed the situation in other countries, particularly Switzerland, recalled the unsuccessful efforts of the *Club Alpino Italiano* and the *Società Botanica Italiana* to obtain action by the Italian government, analysed the causes of the problem and listed the plants threatened in Italy, and it concluded with an appeal to the Society to support initiatives for plant protection. Together with Vaccari, he was one of the founders in 1913 of the *Lega nazionale per la protezione dei monumenti naturali*.

Bicknell had been a member of the *Società Botanica Italiana* since 1903, and contributed articles to its Bulletin in 1904 and 1907. He also contributed herbarium specimens to *Flora italica exsiccata*, the botanical exchange programme managed by Pampanini. He probably met Pampanini during one of his visits to Florence, and they certainly met in 1912 during the Society’s visit to Hanbury Gardens, where Pampanini and Bicknell were speakers. Pampanini signed the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors’ Book* on 23 July 1916, and a year later he asked Bicknell (unsuccessfully) to contribute to the Bulletin a list of the plants growing in the region of Val Casterino.

15. Reginald Farrer

Signature in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book*: 10 July 1910

Reginald Farrer (1840-1920) studied at Balliol College, Oxford, and hoped to make his name as an author of plays and novels, but had little success. He tried his hand at politics, but failed to be elected to Parliament. His abiding passion was botany, and he founded a plant nursery at his parents' home in Clapham, Yorkshire. He made regular excursions in the Alps in the period from 1899 to 1913, and was a friend of the Swiss botanist Henry Correvon (see below). Farrer made botanical expeditions in 1914-16 to China and in 1919-20 to Burma, where he died in the mountains.

Farrer's books and articles on alpine plants were popular, he introduced many new plants from Asia, and he has been described as 'virtually the patron saint of rock gardening for much of the twentieth century'. He combined multiple talents with an unconventional personality: he was a misogynist, became a Buddhist, and enjoyed playing mischievous jokes. He objected to regulations for plant protection, arguing that 'there is no such thing as a rare plant' and 'you cannot exterminate an alpine species'.

In his book *Among the Hills: A Book of Joy in High Places* Farrer described a tour of eight weeks made in 1910 in France Italy, and Austria, including a (puzzling) account of his visit to Casa Fontanalba. He had consulted Thompson (see above) in planning the tour, and was accompanied for some of it by Elliott (see next entry). Farrer later wrote:

'The valley of La Maddalena, above San Dalmazzo de Tenda, is occupied by a famous English botanist, one Mr Bicknell, who has there a house and spends long summers, in the course of which he asks nothing better than to show the treasures of his hills to all such fellow-collectors as desire to see them'

For more information on Farrer and Elliott, see my article 'Clarence Bicknell and Reginald Farrer, 19 July 1910' at

https://www.clarencebicknell.com/images/downloads_news/avery_bicknell_and_farrer.pdf

16. Clarence Elliot

Signature in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book*: 10 July 1910

Clarence Elliott (1881-1969) was a plant collector whose nursery at Six Hills, Stevenage, specialised in alpine plants. He had tried his hand at fruit growing in South Africa, and later made expeditions to the Andes and Chile, from where he returned with an 'arkload' of animals for the London Zoo. In 1907 he published a new edition of the classic work 'Flowers of the Field', first published in 1853 by the Reverend C.A. Johns. Elliott wrote in his obituary of Farrer 'I collected with him for one tremendous month, and the amount we got through was amazing. Farrer in the Alps was always good company, always stimulating'.

17. Louis Lutz and others

Signatures in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book*: 4 August 1910

Louis-Charles Lutz (1871-1952) was Professor of Microbiology and Cryptogamy at the University of Paris, and Secretary General of the *Société botanique de France*.

In 1910 the Society met in the Maritime Alps at Saint Martin Vésubie, where its meetings and excursions were attended by Pampanini, who represented the *Società Botanica Italiana*. Some members went on to Tende, where they were welcomed by Mader, and made excursions to various places including Val Casterino, where they were received by Bicknell.

The signature of Lutz appears in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book* for 4 August 1910, together with the signatures of eight other members of the Society: Joseph Arbost (Nice), Georges Hibon (Paris), Herman Knoche (Montpellier), Léon Lhomme (Paris), Michel des Ligneris (Saint Emilion), Victor Madiot (Jussey), Nisius Roux (Lyon), René Souèges (Paris). In his report of the visit Lutz wrote that 'the venerable philanthropist and botanist of Bordighera, Mr. Clarence Bicknell, received us in his chalet with his usual affability. He had taken the trouble, in advance of our arrival, to have picked for us some rare species which we could not have found in the short time at our disposal'.

For more information see my article 'French Botanists at Casa Fontanalba' at https://clarencebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/french_botanists_casa_fontanalba_1910_graham_avery.pdf

18. Henry Correvon

Signature in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book*: 16 July 1914

Henry Correvon (1854 -1939) was a horticulturalist, botanist, and author of many botanical works, of which the best known is *La flore alpine* (1908). He was a key figure in the movement for plant protection, and helped to create the first alpine gardens in Switzerland.

He recalled his visit in an article published in 1921, in which he wrote that Casa Fontanalba was 'the dwelling that my friend, ever affable and hospitable, had built for himself. I hadn't told him of my visit, and was a bit afraid of finding the door closed. But he saw me coming from afar and, letting go of his drying plants, and leaving his papers spread out in the sun, he came to meet me with open arms. I was happy to sit down at his table for a meal *à l'anglaise*, and to talk about plants'. He described Bicknell as a 'botanist, artist, archaeologist and clergyman' who 'devoted to the study of prehistory such time as his love of botany left free'.

For more information, see my article 'Henry Correvon at Casa Fontanalba' at https://clarencebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/correvon_at_casa_fontanalba_1914_graham_avery.pdf

19. Théodor Katz

Signature in the *Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book*: 16 July 1914

Théodor Katz, who accompanied Henry Correvon to Casa Fontanalba, was his head gardener in Geneva. They went on to the Hanbury Gardens at La Mortola, where their visit was noted in the memoirs of Elise Berger, wife of the Curator Alwin Berger. In 1927 Correvon was asked to create the alpine garden Flore-Alpe at Champex, Switzerland, and Katz was responsible for the garden's maintenance.