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Bagnall, James Eustace (1830 – 1918)

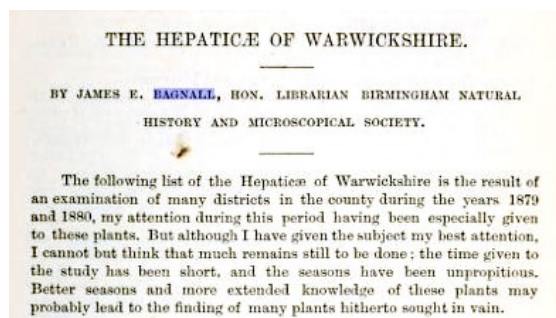
Posted on [February 9, 2011](#) by [Chris](#)

James Bagnall was educated at Singer's Hill School (*Hill Top*). The Headmaster was Mr. Hill; whose son, Rowland, is associated with the '*Penny Black*' stamp. Bagnall began his working life in his father's warehouse but in 1853 he moved to a responsible position in Hinks Wells pen factory. The factory was in Buckingham Street, near Old Snow Hill. He remained with this firm until his retirement in 1897.

His 'biological career' began in 1864 when he was lent a small compound microscope (to examine leaves) by a friend. He joined the Birmingham Naturalists Union and then formed what was to be a long term association with the ***Birmingham Natural History Society*** (BNHS). The BNHS divided up into sections and the botany section decided to study the *flora within a ten mile radius of Birmingham*.

This included Sutton Park, which was a wild area of wood, heath and moorland. A list of the plants of this area was published in the BNHS Transactions in 1869 / 70. Shortly after this, a railway track was built through the area, Bagnall and others monitored the changes and reported in '***Notes on Sutton Park and its flora***' in 1877.

His first contribution to the Journal of Botany was in 1874 – ***The Moss flora of Warwickshire***. Mosses were an abiding interest and in 1886, he published a '***Handbook of Mosses***'. He was variously librarian and vice-president of the Natural History and Microscopical Society, and was elected an ***Associate of the Linnean Society***.



see <http://www.archive.org/stream/reporttransaction1880birmuoft#page/n167/mode/2up>

Between 1876 – 1888, he devoted his leisure time (essentially weekends) to exploring and recording each part of Warwickshire. This was no easy task as some areas of the county were not easily accessible but he would walk 12 to 20 miles to reach many locations (rather than rely on the reports of other, earlier botanists). His ***Flora of Warwickshire*** was published in 1891 (only 500 copies were printed) though it appeared in serial form in *The Midland Naturalist*. He also made a study of *roses and brambles*, which was published in the *Journal of Botany* (in 1882).

His interest in Mosses lead to '***The Mosses and Hepatics of Staffordshire***', and this was followed by his ***Flora of Staffordshire***. As he was no longer capable of his heroic walks this was perhaps less rigorous / detailed than his previous flora.

From the turn of the century, he lived quietly on his annuity. He was remembered as a man always ready to help

others, showing kindness to beginners. He did not marry and was not seen much in natural history circles in his later years. He died in Aston in September 1918 – in his 88th year.

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