

# Wilson Bentley

by Guy Belleranti

Wilson Bentley was born in 1865, shortly before the end of the Civil War. He was to someday become known as the "Snowflake Man".



Bentley lived on a farm in Jericho, Vermont. Along with a brother, he was homeschooled by his mother, a former teacher. He began using a microscope for his studies. Soon he was studying the snow crystals

they formed.

At first, he tried to draw the snow crystals. However, none of his drawings could be reproduced. Then, Bentley read about photography. His father thought the work was too difficult, but he convinced him to purchase a camera.

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etches. However, none of his drawings could be reproduced. Then, Bentley read about photography. His father thought the work was too difficult, but he convinced him to purchase a camera.

Learning by trial and error, Bentley attempted to photograph snow crystals with a camera and microscope. It took him several months, but he eventually achieved success, recording the first photomicrograph ever of a snow crystal.

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mont winter days Bentley used glass plates with his bulky camera. On his 23rd birthday, he

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achieved success, recording the first photomicrograph ever of a snow crystal.

Over the next 13 years, Bentley took hundreds of additional photomicrographs. He saw that the shapes and sizes of the crystals varied and that every snowflake was different. He began filling notebooks with detailed weather observations. He also recorded information on his photographic techniques. Finally, in 1898, he had his first of many articles on snow crystals published.

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During this time he was also busy running the family farm. His father had passed away, and his mother was now an invalid. Many thought he was kind of a strange man, a man who loved nature and music. Indeed, he was a talented musician. He played several instruments including piano, organ, clarinet and cornet. And he did love nature. In fact, it is said he often imitated the sounds of birds and other animals on his violin.

But it was his interest in snow crystals and other weather-related subjects that consumed him most. His "hobby" included learning about water in all its forms from raindrops and dew to

and their varying sizes  
flour to falling rain for  
addition, each raindr  
pellet dried he found  
found new informati

Still, it was year  
Bentley's abilities and  
Scientific American, l

In 1920, Bentley  
in 1931, shortly before  
published. In it were

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-Originally purchased by EdGate Total Reader in 2006 for use in a Lexile-based reading assessment program.

# Wilson Bentley

- 1) Which answer contradicts the information given in the passage?
- a) In order to best capture the real beauty of snowflakes, Bentley took to photographing snowflakes.
  - b) It didn't take long for scientists and professional photographers to accept Bentley's paintings and abilities.
  - c) Apart from being a photographer, Bentley played several musical instruments including piano.
  - d) Bentley's father was a professional photographer in the 19th century.

2) Explain how right

Man".

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3) Wilson Bentley was very keen about the beauty and intricacies of what he wanted to capture, and in fact, this was the reason why he stopped sketching them and started capturing them in photographs. Why might artists, and not just painters for that matter, give great importance to such details?

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Name : \_\_\_\_\_

# Wilson Bentley

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4) How did Bentley  
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5) Write a paragraph about your favorite hobby. Explain how often you practice this hobby and what aspects of it specially intrigue you. Is this something you wish to turn into a career?

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# Wilson Bentley

- 1) Which answer contradicts the information given in the passage?
- a) In order to best capture the real beauty of snowflakes, Bentley took to photographing snowflakes.
  - b) It didn't take long for scientists and professional photographers to accept Bentley's paintings and abilities.
  - c) Apart from being a photographer, Bentley played several musical instruments including piano.
  - d) Bentley's fame spread throughout the world in the 19th century.

2) Explain how right

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3) Wilson Bentley was very keen about the beauty and intricacies of what he wanted to capture, and in fact, this was the reason why he stopped sketching them and started capturing them in photographs. Why might artists, and not just painters for that matter, give great importance to such details?

**Art is an undying thirst for perfection. Seldom is an artist pleased with their work unless they find the intricate elements of perfect craftsmanship and a near-ideal translation of what they have been madly chasing, superbly**

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

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expressing itself through the medium they have chosen. Pretty much like

Wilson Bentley, who was not content with the sketches of snowflakes and

instead caught their beauty in photographs, every painter and every artist

craves to achieve success in their works. Only when they find an artistic

work exemplary, will they consider themselves successful.

4) How did Bentley  
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accepted Bentley

in publication

Popular Science

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5) Write a paragraph about your favorite hobby. Explain how often you practice this hobby and what aspects of it specially intrigue you. Is this something you wish to turn into a career?

Answers may vary.