

# Field Museum News

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## GRAVE OF AN ILLINOIS MOUND-BUILDER REPRODUCED IN MUSEUM EXHIBIT

A full-size reproduction of the grave of a prehistoric mound-builder of Illinois, with an actual skeleton and various artifacts brought from the original mound near Lewistown in Fulton County, was installed last month in Mary D. Sturges Hall (Hall 3), devoted to North American archaeology. It shows a mound of the type found in southern central Illinois, representing the "Dickson culture," so named for Dr. Don F. Dickson, who discovered the type mound, excavated it, and preserved its contents. The skeleton and the various burial objects in the exhibit were presented to Field Museum by Dr. Dickson.

In the exhibit the mound is shown with the earth partly cut away so as to expose fully a complete skeleton of a man about 35 years old, while a skull and other parts of two more burials are seen projecting from the walls of the excavation. A water bottle lies on the right side of the head of the complete skeleton, and a small jar on the left. Another jar containing a finely shaped spoon of mussel shell, lies between the knees. Around the neck is a string of shell beads with a pendant made from a small conch shell. Near the right hand lies a flint knife. Other objects included in the burial are a stone celt, various unfinished flint implements with an antler flaking tool used in

shaping them, and also a piece of sandstone used for sharpening the flaking tool.

The group was planned by Curator Berthold Laufer and Assistant Curator Paul S. Martin. The reproduction of the mound

The mounds of the Mississippi Valley were built by ancestors of the present American Indians, and not, as is sometimes believed, by an extinct race of "mound-builders." The skeletons found in the mounds are readily

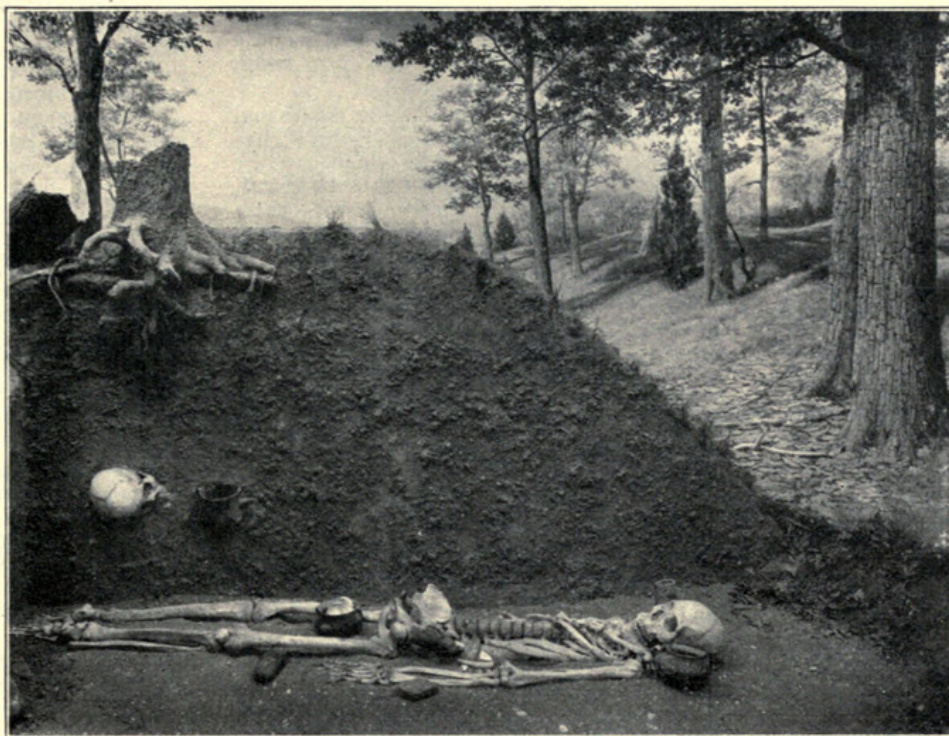
identified as those of Indians. While the Dickson culture shown in the Museum exhibit certainly dates back before the white man's arrival, it is probably not more than 500 to 1,000 years old. This is indicated by the excellent condition of the skeletons and artifacts.

There are a number of historical records of the building of mounds by various Indian tribes. Most of the Illinois mounds were constructed in prehistoric times, but it is unlikely that any of them are more than 2,000 years old. While the majority of them are burial mounds, a few may have served as raised foundations for houses.

Mounds of the Dickson culture usually contain a large number of burials laid at various levels, indicating that they were built up gradually. In sharp contrast with the culture represented by the well-known Hopewell mounds in Ohio, the Dickson culture contains

almost no copper, no platform pipes, few perforated teeth, and no cut jaws.

Also in Mary D. Sturges Hall are objects from the Hopewell mounds, a miniature model of one of them, and two mound altars.



Illinois Mound-builder's Grave

Reproduction of burial illustrating "Dickson culture," on exhibition in Mary D. Sturges Hall (Hall 3).

is the work of John G. Prasuhn. The exhibit is completed by a background in colors representing the country where the mound is located, which was painted by Charles A. Corwin, staff artist of the Museum.

## MUSEUM IS IDEAL PLACE FOR HAY FEVER VICTIMS

Field Museum has been pronounced an unusually attractive place for hay fever sufferers by Dr. Siegfried Maurer, Chicago physician who has been conducting research and experiments to assist in the work of eliminating this common summer and autumn affliction.

Of several public buildings in which Dr. Maurer made a count of ragweed pollen in the air over a period of time, Field Museum showed the lowest count, according to a letter received from the physician by Director Stephen C. Simms. The pollen counts were taken on specially prepared slides during the hay fever seasons of 1929 and 1930, and are believed to indicate approximately the conditions which prevail again this year.

The Museum's system of ventilation probably has much to do with the small quantity of pollen present in the air, Dr. Maurer states, declaring that on the days when observations were made the count seldom exceeded the remarkably low figure of ten

granules of pollen per cubic yard of air, whereas on these days in certain other Chicago buildings the count was from ten to twenty times as many. Dr. Maurer added that the Museum's count was only about one-half of that found at several northern resorts to which hay fever sufferers go.

"I would recommend the Museum as a safe place for hay fever sufferers to spend the day in order that they may be in an atmosphere relatively free of pollen, and one in which most hay fever victims should become completely free of symptoms," Dr. Maurer writes.

Dr. Maurer reports a total pollen count of 156 granules per cubic yard in 20 days in Field Museum. This compares with a count of 2,961 in 29 days in another large Chicago public building, and 8,445 in 37 days at an outdoors observation station.

On exhibition in the Museum's Hall of Plant Life (Hall 29) are models of the two most common ragweeds of the Chicago region, whose pollen is believed to be responsible largely for the prevalence of hay fever.

## Museum Receives Persian Mammals

Two excellent specimens of Persian wild ass, and four of Persian wild goat have been received at Field Museum as a result of the recent expedition conducted by James E. Baum, Jr. One of the goats is an extraordinarily fine male with horns about forty inches long, which is near the record size. These animals inhabit an extremely arid region, and are very shy. Because of the open desert which provides no cover for hunters they are extremely difficult to obtain. One or more of the animals will be mounted for exhibition in the near future.

## Japanese Peer Visits Museum

Count Hirotaro Hayashi, member of the House of Peers of Japan, and professor of pedagogy in the Imperial University of Tokyo, visited Field Museum on August 12. He was especially interested in the Neanderthal family restoration and the other exhibits in Ernest R. Graham Hall, and also in the Egyptian and Chinese archaeological collections.





1931. "Museum Receivces Persian Mammams." *Field Museum news* 2(9), 1-1.

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