

# Field Museum News

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## PACIFIC WALRUS GROUP, FROM THORNE-GRAVES EXPEDITION, IS INSTALLED

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As the principal result of the Thorne-Graves Arctic Expedition of Field Museum (1929), a large imposing group of Pacific walrus has been added to the Hall of Marine Mammals (Hall N). The animals for this group were personally collected and presented by Bruce Thorne of Chicago and George Coe Graves II of New York, whose

have it completed and opened to the public in record time.

The Pacific walrus is much larger than the Atlantic species and is especially distinguished by having very long tusks. Like the polar bear, it spends its life among Arctic ice floes and, although it has been much hunted for its ivory, it is still to be found in considerable numbers by hardy voyagers who cruise to the northernmost limits of navigation.

enjoying a resting place on the hard, rough, Arctic ice. A bleak icy sea stretches behind them over which gleams the cold glare of a midnight sun cleverly devised to connect with the painted background of ice and snow. The whole effect is one of striking interest and the group stands as one of exceptional individuality.

The taxidermy of the animals in the group was done by Jonas Brothers of Yonkers, New York, one of whom, John Jonas,



Group of Pacific Walrus (Hall N)—Thorne-Graves-Field Museum Arctic Expedition

expedition was especially organized for this purpose. Field Museum is also indebted to them and to Henry Graves, Jr., for a substantial contribution toward the cost of preparing the group which made it possible to

Seven animals are included in the group, one large bull, two younger males, two adult females, and two partly grown young. The ponderous beasts are shown huddled together in characteristic manner, lazily

accompanied the expedition and prepared the skins. Installation was carried out by Staff Taxidermist C. J. Albrecht, and the background and light effects are by Charles A. Corwin.

## EXPEDITION WILL EXPLORE LANDS OF THE MAYAS

The Third Marshall Field Archaeological Expedition to British Honduras and Guatemala to conduct excavations on ancient Maya sites and ethnological research among the modern Mayas, will sail from New Orleans on February 20. J. Eric Thompson, Assistant Curator of Central and South American Archaeology, is leader. He led the two previous expeditions in 1928-29 and 1929-30.

The present expedition has a wider scope of operations than the previous two, and will remain in the field probably for a period of six or seven months.

After landing at Belize the expedition will proceed by boat up the coast to the mouth of the New River, and thence inland on the river to the head of navigation. Thence by mule pack train and on foot the journey will continue to the site of the ancient city of Kax Uinic (Maya name meaning "Man of the Woods"), which is situated on the frontier between British Honduras and Guatemala. There, with a party of Maya diggers, certain ruins will be excavated which promise to yield a rich collection of Maya antiquities for the Museum.

When this work has been completed, the expedition will transfer its activities to the southeast Peten district of Guatemala, where reconnaissance work will be carried on through an uninhabited and almost impenetrable forest region in search of the sites of ancient Maya cities known to exist but hitherto never definitely located. Work here will be entirely on foot, as the trails are too poor to take mules. The assistance of natives living on the edge of the forest, who are believed to have knowledge of the ruins, will be solicited. It is hoped that a number of old monuments bearing dates in Maya hieroglyphics will be found on the surface in the locality of the buried ruins.

Finally the expedition will pitch camp in the highlands of Guatemala to conduct ethnological work among modern Maya tribes.

## New Exhibit of Birds

Exhibits of North American birds at Field Museum have been augmented by a new case containing 145 specimens of a great variety of species. They were collected chiefly by Taxidermist Ashley Hine, some during a recent expedition to Arizona, and some in Illinois.

## RARE GEMS ARE PRESENTED BY R. T. CRANE, JR.

Two magnificent and highly valuable gem specimens, one of them pronounced by experts the largest and finest of its kind in the world, have been presented to the Museum by R. T. Crane, Jr.

The stone which has no equal of its kind is of the rare variety of topaz known variously as "rose topaz," "royal topaz," and "Brazilian ruby." It is of deep table cut, one and one-quarter inches long and seven-eighths of an inch wide, and weighs 97.55 carats.

The other is a superb specimen of black opal in the form of a plaque about two and one-half inches long and two inches wide, and weighs 148.43 carats.

These gems have been added to the exhibits in H. N. Higinbotham Hall.

The topaz is a rich red in color, and is perfectly transparent. Topaz of this color is found chiefly in Brazil, and its occurrence in any large and transparent form is extremely rare.

The large black opal plaque has a surface stippled all over with minute brilliant colors which change uniformly to other tints as the stone is seen from different angles.





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