

Field Museum of Natural History

Founded by Marshall Field, 1893

Roosevelt Road and Lake Michigan, Chicago

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FIELD MUSEUM NEWS

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Field Museum is open every day of the year (except Christmas and New Year's Day) during the hours indicated below:

Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar.	9 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
April, September, October	9 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
May, June, July, August	9 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Admission is free to Members on all days. Other adults are admitted free on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays; non-members pay 25 cents on other days. Children are admitted free on all days. Students and faculty members of educational institutions are admitted free any day upon presentation of credentials.

The Museum's natural history Library is open for reference daily except Saturday afternoon and Sunday.

Traveling exhibits are circulated in the schools of Chicago by the N. W. Harris Public School Extension Department of the Museum.

Lectures for schools, and special entertainments and tours for children at the Museum, are provided by the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures.

Announcements of free illustrated lectures for the public, and special lectures for Members of the Museum, will appear in FIELD MUSEUM NEWS.

A cafeteria in the Museum serves visitors. Rooms are provided for those bringing their lunches.

Chicago Motor Coach Company No. 26 buses go direct to the Museum.

Members are requested to inform the Museum promptly of changes of address.

MEMBERSHIP IN FIELD MUSEUM

Field Museum has several classes of Members. Benefactors give or devise \$100,000 or more. Contributors give or devise \$1,000 to \$100,000. Life Members give \$500; Non-Resident Life and Associate Members pay \$100; Non-Resident Associate Members pay \$50. All the above classes are exempt from dues. Sustaining Members contribute \$25 annually. After six years they become Associate Members. Annual Members contribute \$10 annually. Other memberships are Corporate, Honorary, Patron, and Corresponding, additions under these classifications being made by special action of the Board of Trustees.

Each Member, in all classes, is entitled to free admission to the Museum for himself, his family and house guests, and to two reserved seats for Museum lectures provided for Members. Subscription to FIELD MUSEUM NEWS is included with all memberships. The courtesies of every museum of note in the United States and Canada are extended to all Members of Field Museum. A Member may give his personal card to non-residents of Chicago, upon presentation of which they will be admitted to the Museum without charge. Further information about memberships will be sent on request.

BEQUESTS AND ENDOWMENTS

Bequests to Field Museum of Natural History may be made in securities, money, books or collections. They may, if desired, take the form of a memorial to a person or cause, named by the giver.

Contributions made within the taxable year not exceeding 15 per cent of the taxpayer's net income are allowable as deductions in computing net income for federal income tax purposes.

Endowments may be made to the Museum with the provision that an annuity be paid to the patron for life. These annuities are guaranteed against fluctuation in amount, and may reduce federal income taxes.

ORIGIN OF THE NAVAHO

BY PAUL S. MARTIN

Curator, Department of Anthropology

The study of primitive, unwritten languages may, at first thought, seem far removed from the ken of archaeology or ethnology. But such a study is of supreme usefulness in shedding light on remote cultural connections, as has recently been demonstrated by Dr. Edward Sapir, of Yale University, in his study of Navaho language.

The Navaho Indians, who are now pastoral-agricultural people, but who were formerly war-like nomads, are the immediate neighbors of the Hopi Indians, who are a sedentary, agricultural, town-inhabiting people. The cultural gap between the Navaho and the Hopi has been frequently noted by ethnologists and archaeologists. But it was not until linguists tackled the problem that any explanation for the many differences between these two peoples was forthcoming.

Careful analysis of Navaho phraseology, construction, root-words, and other grammatical peculiarities shows that the Navaho language has descended in surprisingly pure form from a large parent stock, known as Athapaskan. The Athapaskan tongue at present is spoken in the greater part of western Canada, and in portions of Alaska, California, Oregon, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and northern Mexico.

It has therefore always been assumed that the Athapaskan-speaking peoples were originally massed in northern North America, because the greatest number of them live there today, and that the Navaho broke away from the main group and migrated southward. Linguistic studies of the Navaho language confirm this inference.

Lack of space makes it impossible to illustrate fully the evidences yielded by this detailed study; but, by way of illustration, the buried and primary meaning of two Navaho words will be given.

The Navaho word for "gourd" (a plant which does not grow in northwest Canada) and for "gourd dipper" or "ladle" also means "an animal's horn." This same word in the northern Athapaskan dialects means "horn" or "horn spoon," the only implement of this type in the Canadian northwest. Therefore, it would seem that the gourd is not part of the original culture of the Navaho and that horn spoons, not now present in their culture, were probably known to the remoter ancestors of the Navaho. This habit of reinterpreting the meaning of words is similar to our custom of referring to our musical instrument as a "horn" which now has no relation to an animal's horn, although formerly the term was applied to a ram's horn which was used for making sounds.

Another example of the evidence supplied by internal linguistic structure is found in the Navaho word for "seed lies" or "the seed lies in a row." The original meaning of this word is non-agricultural and means "snow lying on the ground in finely divided particles." This phrase has taken on a transferred meaning and has been secondarily applied to an agricultural environment.

To summarize: The Navaho Indians are probably of northern origin because (1) their language is a dialect of Athapaskan, the geographical center of distribution of which lies in northwestern Canada; (2) their vocabulary yields striking evidence on this point; to wit, the word for "horn spoon," an original element of their culture, was later applied to the gourd ladle, and the term for planting seed, foreign to their

original northland culture, was described in terms of a similar process.

The date of the Navaho's arrival in the Southwest is placed at about A.D. 1400-1500.

FOLKLORE OF AGATE

Of all the folklores surrounding various gems, jewels, and semi-precious stones, that connected with agate is one of the most interesting.

In ancient Persia the Magi believed that agates could stop a storm or hurricane. For this purpose the stones were thrown into a boiling cauldron, and if they turned the water cold they were regarded as possessing the necessary magical power. According to the ideas of the Magi, the stones, to be really efficacious, had to be fastened with lion's hair; they rejected hyena's hair as being provocative of family discord. An agate containing only one color was believed by the Magi to render an athlete invincible.

In ancient Crete certain varieties of agate were held sacred, and regarded as capable of healing wounds inflicted by spiders and scorpions. This theory was credited even by the ancient scholar Pliny, who took as proof the fact that in Sicily, where many agates are found, scorpions actually do lose their venom. In India, among the Mohammedans, there was a widespread belief that agate had the power of stopping the flow of blood, presumably because of its blood-red color.

So far as is known, the Sumerians, earliest inhabitants of Mesopotamia, were the first nation in history to recognize the ornamental value of semi-precious stones, and to understand and practise the art of stone-cutting for the purpose of making cylinder seals, signet rings, beads, and other jewelry. Great quantities of beads of agate, carnelian and lapis lazuli were excavated several years ago from the ruins of the ancient Sumerian city of Kish by the Field Museum-Oxford University Joint Expedition to Mesopotamia.

Interesting examples of agate are on view in H. N. Higinbotham Hall (Hall 31, Case 15), and among the mineral collections of the Department of Geology.

Change in Visiting Hours

Field Museum visiting hours, which have been 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. daily during the summer months, will change to the autumn schedule—9 A.M. to 5 P.M.—on Tuesday, September 8, the day after Labor Day. These hours will continue until October 31. On November 1 the winter hours, 9 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., will go into effect, continuing until March 31. During this period, however, the Museum will be open until 5 P.M. on Sundays.

Sir Henry Wellcome

In the death of Sir Henry Wellcome, which occurred July 25 in London, not only anthropology, but medical and biological sciences in general, lost a devoted benefactor. Sir Henry was 83 years old. He was born in Wisconsin, and spent his youth in this country. Twenty-five years ago he was engaged in important archaeological work in the Sudan, near Khartoum. He also established and maintained medical research laboratories in that city, and was highly honored for humanitarian work carried on among the natives of Africa. In London Sir Henry founded the magnificent Wellcome Research Institution for the advancement of medical science.



1936. "Folklore of Agate." *Field Museum news* 7(9), 2-2.

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