

## A NEW YORK BOY, 14 YEARS OLD, IS 20,000,000th VISITOR

As forecast in the August issue of *FIELD MUSEUM NEWS*, the twenty millionth visitor to the present building of the Museum in the sixteen years since its opening, arrived during the first week of August—on Wednesday, August 4.

The person selected by fate to arrive at the decisive moment is John Ladd, 14 years old, a high school boy from New York City, who came to the Museum while visiting relatives in Chicago. John, momentarily startled as he was stopped at the Museum entrance by Director Clifford C. Gregg, recovered his presence when he realized his "arrest" was purely one of welcome. Mr. Gregg informed him that he was the twenty

millionth visitor and presented him with a certificate of Life Membership in the Museum. The Director then conducted the lad to the office of President Stanley Field, who reiterated the welcome and presented John with a miniature reproduction of one of the Races of Mankind sculptures in Chauncey Keep Memorial Hall—the bronze figure of a Vedda, of Ceylon, by the noted artist, Malvina Hoffman.

Director Gregg next escorted John on a tour of some of the principal exhibits in the various Departments of the Museum, as well as through the special exhibit in Stanley Field Hall arranged for the occasion of the twenty millionth visitor's arrival. The boy evinced great interest in the comparison of old and new Museum methods illustrated in this special exhibit, and in the pictures, charts, and other features which traced the growth of the institution and its activities from its founding in 1893 down to the present time. It

happened that John, despite his youth, had for some years been developing into an avid museum "fan," with a special interest in various phases of natural history. He had been a visitor in a number of important museums in other cities, and upon his visit to Chicago one of the first things he had expressed a desire to do was to visit Field Museum.

After his inspection of the exhibits, John was taken by Director Gregg to the Museum's printing shop where he saw his name printed on the Life Membership certificate that had been given to him.

The special exhibit is being maintained in Stanley Field Hall until Labor Day (September 6).



President and Director Greet Visitor No. 20,000,000

John Ladd (center), 14 years old, of New York City, entered Field Museum on August 4 just as the attendance tally reached twenty million for the present building. He is seen here holding a bronze sculpture of a Vedda by Malvina Hoffman, presented by President Stanley Field (right). Director Clifford C. Gregg (left) holds a Life Membership certificate which was also given to the boy.

## RAYMOND FOUNDATION OFFERS PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

The annual autumn series of free motion picture programs for children, presented by the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures, will begin on October 2, and continue each Saturday morning during October and November. Nine programs, including thirty-two films, will be presented. While a few of the pictures are silent, the majority will be sound films for the presentation of which the James Simpson Theatre of the Museum was equipped earlier this year.

The films to be shown on the October 2 program are: "Su-lin the Panda," "The Haunted House," "Cats and More Cats," and "Top o' the Morning." There will be two showings of the films on each program, one at 10 A.M. and one at 11. A complete

schedule of the dates, and the titles of the films to be presented on each, will appear in the October issue of *FIELD MUSEUM NEWS*. Children from all parts of Chicago and suburbs are invited to attend these entertainments. They may come alone, in groups from schools and other centers, or with parents, teachers or other adults. No tickets are required for admission.

## SPECIAL NOTICE

All Members of Field Museum who have changed their residences or are planning to do so are earnestly urged to notify the Museum at once of their new addresses, so that copies of *FIELD MUSEUM NEWS* and all other communications from the Museum may reach them promptly.

## BASEMENT HERPETOLOGY

By KARL P. SCHMIDT  
Curator of Reptiles and Amphibians

A herpetologist, whose study includes the amphibians and reptiles, is quite likely to be this sort of specialist because these creatures are to him the most charming of animals, although they include many which millions of people regard as the most repulsive of living things. Perhaps it is only poetic justice, therefore, that the basement of a herpetologist's home should repeatedly become the dwelling place of some of these creatures which are his familiars.

Tiger salamanders, commonly but incorrectly known as lizards, spend their summers on land, burrowing in the soil or beneath logs or boards. In September or October, depending upon the lateness of the season, they are seized with the homing instinct which causes them to travel overland to the ponds and marshes in which they spend the winter. Open cellarways make effective pitfalls for these salamanders, and during this season they are frequently reported to the Museum from the suburbs and even from well within the limits of Chicago. If the cellar door be open, or if there be a crack beneath it, the salamander may enter the basement, and if a moist spot in a dark corner is available, may spend the winter there. The common toad also wanders far from water, and an open cellarway is a trap for him too. A half-grown toad was found to have taken up residence in my basement at Homewood, Illinois, where he stayed in a crevice where wall and concrete floor are defectively joined.

The small swamp tree frog whose loud voice in spring is the only sign of its presence to most Chicagoans, is another creature often trapped in cellarways. Two, in different years, have been found in my basement in crevices between wall and floor. These tree frogs are more sociable than the toad, for when I opened the furnace door and rattled the shovel, these froglets would give their rattling cry in reply. This behavior was continued through the winter—a most cheerful reminder that spring must surely follow.

Examples of a number of these creatures which may accidentally become inhabitants of homes in Chicago and suburbs are included among the exhibits of reptiles and amphibians in Albert W. Harris Hall (Hall 18).

## NEW FOSSIL MAMMAL SPECIES DISCOVERED BY EXPEDITION

Discovery of a hitherto unknown species of prehistoric mammal by the Field Museum Paleontological Expedition to Colorado is announced in a report received recently from Assistant Curator Bryan Patterson, leader of the party. The new beast of which fossil remains have been found is one of the earliest of the larger extinct mammals, and is about the size of a hippopotamus. It lived approximately forty-five million years ago, when western Colorado was a low flat region and the Rocky Mountains were in their infancy. It is related to another recently discovered species which has been given the scientific name *Barylambda*. The latter was excavated in the same region three years ago by the same searchers.

Mr. Patterson has been engaged in research among the old formations of the Age of Mammals in Colorado since 1932. He is accompanied by Mr. James H. Quinn, also a member of the Museum staff, as well as a number of local men residing in the region being explored.





Schmidt, Karl Patterson. 1937. "Basement Herpetology." *Field Museum news* 8(9), 3-3.

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