

## Field Museum of Natural History

Founded by Marshall Field, 1893

Roosevelt Road and Field Drive, 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:

|                                       |                  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| November, December, January, February | 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. |
| March, April, September, October      | 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. |
| May, June, July, August               | 9 A.M. to 6 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.

## CURIOUS AFRICAN ORNAMENTS

By WILFRID D. HAMBLY

Curator of African Ethnology

Negroes, both men and women, are noted for the strange mutilations performed on their bodies, and the heavy ornaments they wear for supposed beautification. Scars are made on the skin, ears are distended, plugs are inserted in the lips, and in several large tribes heavy wire ornaments are wound around the arms and legs. Coiled spirals of thick wire are worn by the Akikuyu women of Kenya in northeast Africa. The same type of ornament, worn by Munshi women of Nigeria, west Africa, is represented by an example on exhibition in Hall E (Case 28-A).

The wire may be made of iron or of brass. The former is made by Negro blacksmiths who melt scrap iron in charcoal fires. The brass wire is imported from Europe, and may be purchased at most traders' stores. The ornament is adjusted in the form of a well coiled spiral, and a woman who has acquired the decoration wears it through life, as removal would entirely spoil the symmetry of the coil. Frequently such heavy ornaments cause distressing sores by friction, but even so, pride prevents the removal of the decoration. In Hall D (Case 12) are samples of brass collars worn by women living near the mouth of the Congo River. The examples shown are small, but similar collars weighing as much as twenty-eight pounds are worn.

### THINGS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

#### Shrunken Human Heads

Four human heads, slashed from the bodies of victims by head hunters among the aborigines of Peru and Ecuador, and shrunk to the size of oranges for preservation as trophies, are on exhibition in Case No. 5 in the Hall of South American Archaeology and Ethnology (Hall 9).

A field for speculation is opened by the possibility that one of these heads is that of a white or partly white woman—at least, the features are marked by a European cast. Who she was, and how she got into the



Reduced to Size of Oranges

Examples of a gruesome art practised by South American Indians. The head on left is that of a typical Indian, but the one on right may be that of a European woman. These and two other specimens are exhibited in Hall 9.

hands of the savages to meet this tragic fate will, no doubt, always remain a mystery. Another of the heads appears to be that of a man who also may have had European blood in his veins; the remaining two are typically Indian.

Shrunken heads of this type are products of a gruesome art known for hundreds of years to several Indian tribes, prominent among whom are the Jivaro, who dwell in

little-explored regions of the upper Amazon, at the base of the Andes. The heads are usually those of enemies killed in battle. By a laborious process the Indians reduce them to about one-fourth of their original size, at the same time preserving them perfectly. The shape and proportions of the features are in no way affected.

Although head hunting is quite common among primitive peoples in various parts of the world, this method of squeezing the heads is unique to the Indians of South America. Specimens today are exceedingly rare, due to governmental bans on the practice.

Many explorers have entered the Jivaro territory seeking to discover how these heads are prepared, but only in a very few cases have they met with any success. However, a few details of the process have been learned. Long slits are cut in the decapitated head, and all of the skull and facial bones are carefully removed, but in such a way as not to disturb the features. The head is then boiled in water containing some astringent herb. After this, hot stones, of gradually decreasing size, are placed successively inside the head, causing the flesh slowly to contract to smaller and smaller sizes. Finally the last stone is removed and the slits are carefully sewn together. In most cases the lips are also sewn up, a precaution arising from the native belief in magic, and intended to prevent the victim from causing any harm to his slayer.

### J. R. Millar Confirmed as Curator of Harris School Extension

Effective February 1, Mr. John R. Millar will become Curator of the Department of the N. W. Harris Public School Extension of Field Museum. Mr. Millar was placed in temporary charge of this Department last November 8. At their January 17 meeting, the Trustees, on recommendation of Director Clifford C. Gregg who reported upon the success with which Mr. Millar has taken over the work, appointed him Curator.

Curator Millar has been a member of the Museum Staff since February 1, 1918, beginning his service as a preparator in the Department of Botany. Thus his promotion to his present position falls upon the twentieth anniversary of his connection with the Museum.

### ROBERT B. HARSHE

Field Museum extends to its sister institution, the Art Institute of Chicago, sincerest sympathy in the latter's great loss by the death, on January 11, of its director, Dr. Robert B. Harshe—a loss that will be felt throughout cultural circles of the city and the nation.

Dr. Harshe's brilliant administration of the Art Institute, which had been under his direction since 1921, was a large factor in the steady and rapid rise of that institution to its present important position in the world of art. His influence manifested itself not only in the growth of the museum's collections of paintings and sculpture, but also in the expansion of the great School of the Art Institute which has been so prominent in developing the talents of native artists of this country. Notable also was Dr. Harshe's assistance to the art of the drama, which he fostered through the Goodman Theatre established in the Art Institute. Through his fine spirit of cooperation, various relationships existing between the Art Institute and Field Museum were maintained on the most cordial and satisfactory plane.





1938. "J.R. Millar Confirmed as Curator of Harris School Extension." *Field Museum news* 9(2), 2-2.

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Field Museum of Natural History Library

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