

## FIELD MUSEUM BOTANIST RETURNS FROM EUROPE

After more than ten years in Europe during which he has been conducting an important botanical project for Field Museum, Mr. J. Francis Macbride, Associate Curator of the Herbarium, returned to Chicago December 18. Mr. Macbride obtained photographic negatives of more than 40,000 type specimens of plants, chiefly South American species, preserved in the principal herbaria of various European countries. He also obtained from the herbaria in Copenhagen, Geneva, Paris, Madrid, and Vienna, a large number of herbarium specimens, many of them notable for their historical associations.

The type specimen negatives secured by Mr. Macbride represent an important development in systematic botany, not only to Field Museum, but to botanists throughout the United States, and foreign countries as well. Through Field Museum, prints of these are made available to scientists and institutions at cost, obviating the necessity for much travel and delay which would otherwise confront them in many of their research problems. The destructive possibilities of the present war make these negatives potentially even more valuable and important than when the project of collecting them was conceived, as under certain circumstances they might be the only remaining records of many of these type specimens of plants. Said Mr. Macbride on his return to the Museum:

"After life in Paris in recent months—with its blackouts at nightfall, the occasional sirens shrieking the 'alert' signal, the drone of war planes overhead, the boom of anti-aircraft guns reverberating from the surrounding hills, people scurrying in the streets for *abris* (shelters), their heels tapping, the only illumination from their flashlights, police whistling shrilly at the appearance of any other light in the Stygian darkness—after such a world, the bright peaceful streets of America, thronged with happy free citizens spending the comparatively abundant American dollar, is a contrast that makes a returning Chicagoan's heart leap with joy! It makes him feel like hugging himself in gratitude that he is out of the sad mess to which civilization has come across the water.

"From this seemingly dying civilization, from the best of which our own culture took its roots, I have been privileged for these ten years to work toward saving for science a portion of the botanical record that might be otherwise destroyed in just such a conflagration as hovers over Europe at this moment. The records thus preserved are of American origin, and are precious because of their inestimable value in the study of our native plants in the present and future. The threat to these, as to other collections of scientific and of

artistic significance, is a real one, as every government and every people in Europe knows. The result is that a fear, a sadness, pervades the everyday life in the neutral countries no less than those at war."

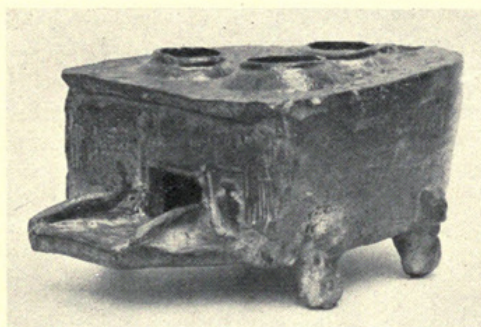
The greater part of Mr. Macbride's negatives were sent, intermittently, during his years in Europe, to the Museum, where they are already in use. Part of his collections, obtained in the later months of 1939, have been left in storage in Geneva and Paris, because of the difficulties and risks involved in shipping them under present circumstances.

Mr. Macbride returned to America on a ship of United States registry, sailing from Genoa. The voyage was without incident except for rigorous inspection of the ship and its passengers by British naval authorities at Gibraltar.

### THINGS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

#### Chinese Stoves for the Dead to Cook Their Meals

The ancient Chinese, like the Egyptians, were much concerned about extending the necessities, comforts and conveniences of life to their deceased relatives and friends. Consequently they buried with the dead



Mortuary Stove

Pottery model such as the Chinese buried with the dead on the assumption that cooking would have to be continued in the other world. Exhibited in Hall 24.

various implements, and representations—in pottery or other material—of food, domestic animals, and even human servitors.

Among the things buried with the dead were pottery models of stoves so that the cooking of food might be continued in the other world. A number of these, dating to about the beginning of the Christian era, are on exhibition in the Hall of Chinese Archaeology (George T. and Frances Gaylord Smith Hall—Hall 24).

Also exhibited is a real cast-iron stove, made during the later Han Dynasty (A.D. 25-220). This, although likewise found buried in a grave, is of the type upon which the people of the period actually did their cooking, according to Mr. C. Martin Wilbur, Curator of Chinese Archaeology and Ethnology. The process of casting iron was the basis of an important industry in old China. Iron founders amassed large fortunes, and in 119 B.C., during the reign

of Emperor Wu, the industry became a state monopoly.

The iron stove is provided with a chimney at one end, and has five cooking holes on top. There is a platform in front of the fire chamber. The four feet are in the shape of a conventionalized art form representing elephants. An inscription on the front has been deciphered as "Great felicity! May this stove be serviceable to the lords."

The mortuary stove models in pottery are similar in design. On some of them are molded, in relief, utensils and articles of food, such as pokers, trays, mats, ladles, fish, and fowl. Also on exhibition is a rubbing from a stone carved during the second century A.D., which shows men preparing a feast and using just such a stove full size.

#### Groups of "4-H" Boys and Girls Make Annual Museum Visit

Field Museum was host, on December 5 and 7, to groups aggregating 1,018 boys and girls from American farms. These youths were in Chicago as delegates to the National Congress of 4-H Clubs held each autumn in conjunction with the International Live Stock Exposition. Members of the staff of the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures conducted the groups on tours of the Museum halls devoted to prehistoric animal life, early man, the Races of Mankind sculptures by Malvina Hoffman, and the exhibits of animals. The live stock show also was responsible for bringing many other out-of-town visitors to the Museum.

At the Live Stock Exposition itself, Field Museum, following its custom of a number of years past, participated by exhibiting several of the portable cases circulated among Chicago schools by the Department of the N. W. Harris Public School Extension, together with photographs of some of the outstanding exhibits in the Museum halls. A wall space of more than thirty feet was devoted to this exhibit, and indications are that it stimulated many of the out-of-town people at the exposition to visit the Museum.

#### FIELD MUSEUM TO PRESENT RADIO PROGRAM SERIES

Beginning early in January, a series of radio broadcasts on various phases of the work of Field Museum will be presented in co-operation with the University Broadcasting Council. There will be one program each week. At the time this issue of FIELD MUSEUM NEWS is going to press, details as to the station, day, hour, and titles are not available, but to those who may be interested it is suggested that they watch the radio programs printed in the daily newspapers. Speakers on these programs will be members of the staff of the Museum.





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