

FOUR MUSEUM EMPLOYEES RETIRE ON PENSIONS

December 31, 1939, marked the retirement of several employees of Field Museum under the new pension program instituted last year. All retirements at this time either were granted at the request of the employee or were necessitated by impaired physical condition. Those whose active work at Field Museum terminated with the end of the year just past include Miss Margaret M. Cornell,



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Cornell, Miss Rose J. Watson, Mr. Thomas Mason, and Mr. Valerie Legault.

Miss Margaret M. Cornell, Chief of the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures, joined the staff of Field Museum in July, 1926, as a guide-lecturer, and became Chief of the Division in March, 1929. She is an alumna of Kent Teachers College, the University of Chicago, and Northwestern University. Prior to her association with Field Museum she had had teaching experience in Ohio, Kentucky, and Illinois. Under her leadership the Raymond Foundation was expanded both in number of personnel and in the scope of its activities. During the year 1938, the last year for which complete figures were available at the time of going to press, the activities of the Raymond Foundation reached 265,229 individuals.

Miss Rose J. Watson, Departmental Librarian and secretary to the Chief Curator of Anthropology, came to Field Museum in September, 1907, and for more than thirty-two years has been an integral part of the administration of that Department. She served under three Chief Curators, Dr. George A. Dorsey, Dr. Berthold Laufer, and Dr. Paul S. Martin.

Mr. Thomas Mason joined the staff of Field Museum in December, 1896, as Chief Engineer, and was one of the oldest men in continuous service at the institution. During the entire period when Field Museum was located in Jackson Park, Mr. Mason continued as Chief Engineer, giving up that title and responsibility when the care of a new and larger plant and a new building confronted him at an age when many men retire from active service. Mr. Mason chose to remain in the Division of Engineering and has done so until the present time. He has passed his eightieth year, and the Museum is unwilling to make further demands upon his naturally diminishing strength.

Mr. Valerie Legault came to Field Museum as a carpenter in July, 1906. When

the N. W. Harris Public School Extension was founded, Mr. Legault was detailed to that Department and was of great value in helping to plan the original traveling Museum case. In 1924 he was transferred to the Department of Geology, where he has taken care of the mechanical side of its exhibition program ever since. Mr. Legault is a native of Montreal, Quebec, but transferred his citizenship and his loyalty to his adopted country many years ago.

It is but natural that the employees of Field Museum look upon the passing of their several co-workers from active service with deep regret, recalling the many years of pleasant association together. On the other hand, it is most gratifying to realize that provision has been made for their future needs as a just reward for faithful service at Field Museum.

—C.C.G.

CHICAGO WINTER BIRDS

(Continued from page 1)

the local ornithologists of this region.

In winter the activity of birds is motivated primarily by a search for food. If this need is adequately filled, most birds are able to survive temperatures which otherwise would force them southward or cause high mortality among those which remained. So vital to wintering birds is this single factor that the maintenance of sheltered feeding stations becomes a highly commendable and satisfying hobby. Not infrequently species which normally migrate southward can be encouraged to remain about feeding stations until spring. Many obscure problems of local distribution can best be solved by familiarity with the kinds and sources of food preferred by the various species.

A majority of the several score species which normally winter in the Chicago region can be regarded as permanent residents. The bob-white, Hungarian partridge, ring-necked pheasant, English sparrow and other strictly sedentary species probably remain within a few miles of their first homes throughout their lives. In general, however, the birds one sees in winter are not the individuals which nested in the area. With the approach of frigid weather a modified migration takes place in which locally breeding individuals are gradually displaced by new arrivals from the north.

As can be expected, Lake Michigan and other large bodies of water nearby strongly influence the occurrence and distribution of birds in the Chicago region. Each autumn countless northern-bred shore birds and ducks pause at these havens of food and shelter. Flocks of mergansers, golden-eyes, old-squaws, and Canada geese regularly resist all but the most inclement weather, and occasionally such rarities as eiders, scoters, Barrow's golden-eye and Harlequin ducks appear from the north. Ring-billed

and herring gulls may be seen on the lake at all seasons, though neither nests in our area.

The study of wintering birds is particularly recommended for the novice who might well be confused and discouraged by the much greater activity and abundance of birds in spring and summer. Many species can be lured by strategically-placed feeding stations, and observation of the others in leafless trees usually is relatively easy. Fewer than 100 species are known to winter near Chicago. As one becomes familiar with these under ideal conditions others can be added to the list of acquaintances during the spring migration.

MIRIAM WOOD IS NEW CHIEF OF RAYMOND FOUNDATION

Miss Miriam Wood, a member of the staff of the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures since 1929, will become Chief of that lecture foundation on January 1, 1940, on the retirement of Miss Margaret M. Cornell. Miss Wood took both her undergraduate and graduate work at Northwestern University. During her years at Field Museum she has devoted her principal energies toward the extension lectures carried on in the schools of Chicago and is thoroughly conversant with the public school curriculum and methods. Her appointment promises to uphold the high standards set for the Raymond Foundation.



Miss Miriam Wood

Missouri Flora Nearing Publication

A spring flora of the State of Missouri is now in process of publication jointly by the Missouri Botanical Garden and Field Museum. It was prepared by Dr. Julian A. Steyermark, Assistant Curator of the Herbarium, and provides keys in non-technical language for all plants of the state known to flower before June 1. The more than one thousand illustrations, picturing all the plants listed, were prepared at the Museum with the assistance of artists supplied by the Works Progress Administration.

Mortars of "Spirits"

Old stone mortars from New Guinea, regarded by natives as belonging to spirits, are on exhibition in Joseph N. Field Hall (Hall A). Found on old village sites and in the forest, their origin and use are unknown to the present inhabitants, who therefore have assumed that they are supernatural.



1940. "Four Museum Employees Retire on Pensions." *Field Museum news* 11(1), 7-7.

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