

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

FIELD MUSEUM'S BUILDING

BY HENRY F. DITZEL
REGISTRAR

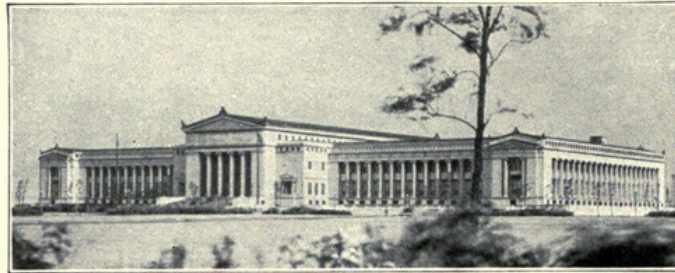
For a number of years prior to the construction of the present Field Museum building, every museum of note in the world was studied with the idea that this institution might profit by their good qualities and avoid their faults, thus fulfilling in the highest degree the needs of a great modern natural history museum. The importance of the collections and their vast educational value and influence, together with the unusual size of the building and its location in the very heart of the boulevard system of one of the greatest metropolitan centers, make it one of the most important buildings of this century, and its standard has set an architectural example for institutions in many other places.

The first consideration of importance in planning any successful museum building is to secure illumination of the objects in the cases so that they may be seen to the best possible advantage, yet, at the same time, be protected from fading by contact with excessive light or direct sunlight. For years this problem has been the object of considerable research, and repeatedly new methods of lighting have been introduced in an effort to reach eventually the highest possible standard.

The handling of the great crowds which on free days and holidays visit the Museum is also an important question. A simple, straightforward plan is absolutely essential to prevent confusion in a building of such great size. It was necessary to make conditions extremely favorable for crowds to find their way about easily. Of all the plans of great buildings, none has better succeeded in this respect than the plan of the great central nave (Stanley Field Hall) or avenue

of circulation which leads through the entire middle of the Museum building and handles the crowds perfectly. The top-lights of this nave have been reduced to the size of ordinary windows, thus giving only the subdued daylight necessary to show the architectural treatment, and the selected exhibits in this hall that introduce to the visitor the scope of the sciences embraced by the institution.

The general plan of the building divides the main and second floors into four groups of exhibition halls. This division does not necessarily correspond to any division of the Museum's work or material. The number



Photograph by Henry Fuermann and Sons, Chicago

of such divisions varies in different museums, and there does not seem to be any recognized classification by which nature, as represented in natural history museums, can be standardized so as to fall into a limited number of departments. Changes in classification as science progresses, and changes in personnel, often result in modifications of the grouping of the divisions.

The active educational work of the Museum, through its lectures, programs for children, study classes, libraries, and study collection facilities, has been provided for without interfering with the normal circulation of the public from one exhibition hall to another.

The ideal location of Field Museum of Natural History can challenge that of probably any other museum in the world. It symbolizes not only the eminence of the Museum in the scientific world, but its beautiful exterior and orderly surroundings may be considered complementary to the scientific arrangement of its contents. A park system perhaps more notable than that of any other city in the country places Chicago in the first rank among the beautiful cities of the world. Field Museum occupies a place of honor in this system, contributing both added beauty and notable public service.

Staff Notes

Mr. C. Martin Wilbur, Curator of Chinese Archaeology and Ethnology, recently lectured before an audience at the Art Institute of Chicago on "Archaeology and the Art of the Han Period." Staff Taxidermist C. J. Albrecht recently lectured before audiences at museums in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., and Staff Taxidermist John W. Moyer spoke before the West Chicago Women's Club. Mr. Loren P. Woods, of the Raymond

Foundation staff, was a recent guest speaker before the Chicago Aquarium Society.

Mrs. Leota Gregory Thomas, of the staff of the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures, is the author of *Seedless Plants*, recently published by the American Education Press, of Columbus, Ohio. It is a "unit study" textbook on fungi for school children from the sixth grade up, and fills a specific place in the science curriculum of many school systems.

Mrs. Thomas was recently appointed chairman of the Chicago Committee for the Museum-School Branch of the Progressive Education Association.

Mr. Emmet R. Blake, Assistant Curator of Birds, left Chicago on March 1 for visits at museums in Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and New York. The

purpose of his trip was research in connection with collections made by the Stanley Field and Sewell Avery Expeditions to British Guiana which Mr. Blake conducted in 1937 and 1938.

Illinois Birds

Birds known to occur in Illinois are given special attention in the systematic collection of North American birds in Hall 21. All such species are designated by red stars on the labels.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT FIELD MUSEUM

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, and	
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 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 at 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.

Free courses of lectures for adults are presented in the James Simpson Theatre on Saturday afternoons (at 2:30 o'clock) in March, April, October, and November.

A Cafeteria serves visitors. Rooms are available also for those bringing their lunches.

Chicago Motor Coach Company No. 26 busses provide direct transportation to the Museum. Service is offered also by Surface Lines, Rapid Transit Lines (the "L"), interurban electric lines, and Illinois Central trains. There is ample free parking space for automobiles at the Museum.



Ditzel, Henry F. 1940. "Field Museum's Building." *Field Museum news* 11(4), 6–6.

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