

kinds, by little weasels, and by larger and smaller sabertooth cats of several species. Harboring and burrowing animals are found in the rabbit, the squirrel, and a small species of insectivore.

These and their contemporaries formed a varied and a well-balanced community of mammals in middle Oligocene time. They had acquired most of the habits of living and of feeding found among land mammals of the present day.

Some of the descendants of these animals migrated to the Old World and introduced the stocks of horses, camels, and rhinoceroses to the wide plains and valleys of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Others crossed over the narrow connections with South America and brought to that continent the stocks of horses and lamas, of tapirs and rodents, of fox-like wolves, and the larger cats which gave to that continent in later times a more cosmopolitan phase of mammalian life than it had previously enjoyed.

All of this bears unmistakable evidence that North America was a fertile breeding ground for many sturdy races of mammals which have developed and maintained their existence in this favored part of the earth through millions of years.

VENEZUELA JUNGLE REPORT FROM MUSEUM EXPLORER

(Editor's Note:—Somewhere in the deepest and most remote parts of the Venezuelan jungle, Mr. Llewelyn Williams, of Field Museum's botanical staff, is trudging on foot and traveling swift-running, rock-strewn streams in dug-out canoes, in the interests of science. For the first time since he plunged last autumn into the region known as the Venezuelan Guiana, he has reached an outpost of civilization from which to send a report to Lieutenant-Colonel Clifford C. Gregg, Director of the Museum. After sending his report, from which excerpts follow, Mr. Williams immediately departed into the jungle again, this time in a different direction, along the upper reaches of the Orinoco River.)

By LLEWELYN WILLIAMS
CURATOR OF ECONOMIC BOTANY

After a long and arduous trip I am able to report that we managed to bring to this point a large collection of plant and wood specimens, as well as other forest products. This was accomplished without mishap despite the many rapids that were negotiated, the frequent heavy showers experienced, and inadequate transportation.

We left Puerto Ayacucho on January 17, traveling overland to Sanariapo, above the dangerous rapids of Atures, thence along the Orinoco River to San Fernando de Atabapo, and then followed this stream (Atabapo) to its headwaters. From Yavita, on the Temi, after making collections, we traveled overland to the River Pimichin, and down this stream until we reached the Guainía, which forms the source of the Rio Negro. Collections were made along the Guainía from the Colombian border to the Brazilian frontier. In addition, excursions

were made along the lower Casiquiare, the stream San Miguel flowing diagonally in the direction of the upper Casiquiare, and the forest flanking the Yavita-Pimichin trail.

The material assembled at the various centers was embarked in large dugouts, *falcas*, with roofs made of palm leaves to protect the specimens from the heat and rains. The entire cargo, forming 40 loads, was then transported overland by Indians from Pimichin to Yavita, at which point several canoes were obtained and other Indians hired for the journey downstream to San Fernando. Here we transferred the cargo into larger boats, able to withstand the strong currents and rapids of the Orinoco, to Sanariapo, thence overland to this place. With the exception of three brief spells of fever I managed to keep good health throughout, despite the fact that we had to take with us all the food necessary for myself and the peons.

RUBBER TREES ABUNDANT

The region studied is one of the most interesting, floristically, of the entire territory. It is estimated that seven-eighths of its entire area is covered by rain forests of tall trees and a wide variety of palms. One of the most notable features of these forests is the abundance of latex-yielding trees, chief of which is rubber (*Hevea*), represented by several species, followed by chicle, masarandy, balata, uququirana, marima, etc.

Plants furnishing fibers are also especially well represented, the principal one being the *chiquichiqui* palm, known in Brazil as *piassaba*; its fiber is durable in contact with water and almost incorruptible when placed in the ground, being especially suitable for brooms and tow ropes. Another fiber furnished by a palm is *cumuaré*, from the young leaves of which the Indians remove a fine, tough, yellowish fiber, greatly esteemed for making hammocks. The fiber is sometimes dyed black or dark brown with the crushed leaves of a plant of the trumpet-creeper family. The color, being indelible, holds indefinitely and is not affected by the action of climatic elements. Another useful fiber is *curagua*, obtained from the leaves of a plant of the pineapple family, and employed principally in the making of fishing lines and nets.

Many woods are encountered in these forests. They range from the heavy *parature*, a leguminous species with a rich reddish brown heartwood, to the light-colored *palo de boyá*, almost as light as balsa-wood, and used by the Indians for rafts and for fishing floats.

INDIANS AND THEIR CUSTOMS

The region is inhabited almost entirely by Indians, of which there are many tribes, the principal ones being the Baniba, the Piapoco, the Puinave, the Guahibo, the Kuripako, the Karros, the Uarekena, and the Baré. The Baniba are excellent woodsmen and expert tree climbers. Most of the Indians are nomadic in habits, and during

the dry months they travel far in search of game and fish.

In Maroa I had occasion to witness a typical Indian festival, an event to offer thanksgiving for the catch secured during the dry period. The festival is held in the middle of March, shortly before the rainy season begins. The principals, the *lluiz* (chief), *mardomo*, *mardoma*, etc., are selected the year before and when the festival is inaugurated these persons set up two posts, known as *mastres*, laden with fruit. On the last, or ninth day, the retiring officers offer a feast to the newly-appointed officials, the meal composed mostly of manioc and cassava, prepared from yuca roots, which constitute their staple food. Fish and game meat are also eaten. At sunset on the same day the fruit-bearing posts are felled, each woman holding office giving a blow with an ax, followed by the men, and the job is finished by the chief.

In the upper Guainía the Kuripako Indians hold a feast, known as *dabukuri*. This ceremony takes two forms: an offering of certain articles, such as fruit, fish, or canoe paddles, or dances in which the young men are subjected to lashing with a long whip made of vine, to the accompaniment of music played on the *yapururo*, a long instrument made from the hollow stem of the *mari* palm.

I intend next to leave on the second stage of the explorations, to collect around Tamatama, at the bifurcation of the Orinoco and the upper Casiquiare, where *Hevea* rubber trees are said to abound. Thence I will proceed farther up the Orinoco, and also along the River Padamo, before returning downstream to reach the Ventuari region and the mountain ranges in the area traversed by the Sipapo River.

NESTING BIRDS

and the Vegetation Substrate

This is an informing little book dealing with the common birds of the Chicago area and their relation to the plant communities in which they nest.

Written by Mr. William J. Beecher, Assistant in the Department of Zoology, it is an account of eight years' study of the nesting birds of the Fox Lake region near Chicago.

"This book is highly recommended to local bird students," says Mr. Emmet R. Blake, Assistant Curator of Birds, "but the basic principles illustrated by the data make it equally valuable elsewhere." Illustrated with an aerial photograph, and text figures. \$1.

THE BOOK SHOP of FIELD MUSEUM is sole distributor.

Field Museum of Natural History

FOUNDED BY MARSHALL FIELD, 1893
Roosevelt Road and Field Drive, Chicago
TELEPHONE: WABASH 9410

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

LESTER ARMOUR	STANLEY FIELD
SEWELL L. AVERY	SAMUEL INSULL, JR.
W. MCCORMICK BLAIR	CHARLES A. MCCULLOCH
LEOPOLD E. BLOCK	WILLIAM H. MITCHELL
BOARDMAN CONOVER	GEORGE A. RICHARDSON
WALTER J. CUMMINGS	THEODORE ROOSEVELT
ALBERT B. DICK, JR.	SOLOMON A. SMITH
HOWARD W. FENTON	ALBERT A. SPRAGUE
JOSEPH N. FIELD	SILAS H. STRAWN
MARSHALL FIELD	ALBERT H. WETTEN

JOHN P. WILSON

OFFICERS

STANLEY FIELD	.....President
ALBERT A. SPRAGUE	.....First Vice-President
SILAS H. STRAWN	.....Second Vice-President
ALBERT B. DICK, JR.	.....Third Vice-President
CLIFFORD C. GREGG	.....Director and Secretary
SOLOMON A. SMITH	.....Treasurer and Assistant Secretary

FIELD MUSEUM NEWS

EDITOR

CLIFFORD C. GREGG.....Director of the Museum

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

WILFRED H. OSGOOD.....Curator Emeritus, Zoology

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

PAUL S. MARTIN	.....Chief Curator of Anthropology
B. E. DAHLGREN	.....Chief Curator of Botany
HENRY W. NICHOLS	.....Chief Curator of Geology
KARL P. SCHMIDT	.....Chief Curator of Zoology

MANAGING EDITOR

H. B. HARTE.....Public Relations Counsel

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

BON VOYAGE, COLONEL GREGG—

The Director of Field Museum, Lieutenant Colonel Clifford C. Gregg, who has been on active duty with the United States Army since September 1, 1940, in the Adjutant-General's Department at Sixth Corps Area headquarters in Chicago, was transferred to another post far from Chicago late last month.

Prior to his departure, a farewell reception was given in his honor in the Museum Library, with the entire personnel of the institution attending. An especially prepared memento book, bound in calf-skin, containing a testimonial of the respect and friendship of every man and woman employed by the Museum, and personally signed with the autograph of each, was presented to Colonel Gregg upon this occasion. Dr. Wilfred H. Osgood, Curator Emeritus of Zoology, and Mr. Stanley Field, President of the Museum, made addresses in connection with the presentation of the volume, and Colonel Gregg responded with a farewell speech.

During the twenty-one months since Director Gregg was called to active service with the Army, he has maintained his



LT. COL. C. C. GREGG

connection with and interest in the Museum. Day after day, following a full stretch of hard work on his Army duties, Colonel Gregg came to the Museum in the evening and put in further hours of toil in the interest of this institution, as well as many extra-long sessions at week-ends.

Ever since the first World War, during which he was a lieutenant, Colonel Gregg had retained his commission in the Army Reserve Corps, continuing his military studies, and frequently serving in the summer training camps for reserve officers, thus qualifying himself for promotions. At the time of his call to active duty he had attained the rank of major, and in March of this year he was again promoted to his present rank of lieutenant-colonel.

Until Colonel Gregg's return from the war, Mr. Orr Goodson, who has been his assistant for some time past, will serve as Acting Director. Dr. Osgood will temporarily take Colonel Gregg's place as Editor of FIELD MUSEUM NEWS.

Following is the testimonial voicing the sentiments of the Museum Staff at the departure of their Director for the duration of the war:

"To Lieutenant Colonel Clifford C. Gregg

"The entire personnel of Field Museum of Natural History extends its warmest good wishes to you as you leave for active field service to the Nation. You carry with you our pride, our loyalty, and our confidence in your success. We know that the fine qualities you have shown as Director of this institution will continue wherever you go. May you return to us safely and speedily."

—AU REVOIR

Staff Notes

Mr. Karl P. Schmidt, Chief Curator of Zoology, gave the annual lecture before the Illinois Academy of Sciences meeting at the University of Illinois, May 8. His subject was "A Naturalist in the South Seas."

Mr. John W. Moyer, Staff Taxidermist, returned May 1 from a leave of absence for an extended lecture tour.

African Proverbs

African Negroes have many equivalents of American and European proverbs. The Ibo of Nigeria, instead of saying that "Charity begins at home" state that "A man repairs his own house first." Instead of saying "Familiarity breeds contempt" the Ibo say "If you play with a puppy he tears your clothes."

Among proverbs of the Ovimbundu of Angola are the following (the American equivalents are cited in parentheses in each case):

"You can't tie an antelope's head in a cloth, the horns will stick out" ("murder will out").

"A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, someone has to put it there" (an incompetent man has to be promoted through influence).

"Hot water does not burn a house" (said of a braggart who keeps threatening things he cannot do).

"If you are full of food don't climb on a leopard's back" (means do not be proud and foolish through good fortune).

"I caught some fish but lost my bracelet" (said of a deal which brings small gain and a bigger loss).

Death Takes Mrs. Hackbarth, Museum Telephone Operator

Mrs. Adelaide F. Hackbarth, who had served Field Museum as telephone switchboard operator since 1920, died on April 25 after a long illness. She will be long remembered for her uniform cheerfulness even under the stress of an extremely busy board.

FIELD MUSEUM HONOR ROLL

Now in the Service of their Country:

Theodore Roosevelt, Trustee—Brigadier-General, U.S. Army.

Lester Armour, Trustee—Lieutenant-Commander, U.S. Navy.

Joseph Nash Field, Trustee—Lieutenant (J. G.), U.S. Navy.

Clifford C. Gregg, Director—Lieutenant-Colonel, A.G.D., U.S. Army.

Melvin A. Traylor, Jr., Associate, Birds—Private, U.S. Marine Corps.

Dr. John Rinaldo, Associate, Southwestern Archaeology—Private, U.S. Army.

Dr. Alexander Spoehr, Assistant Curator, North American Ethnology and Archaeology—Private, U.S. Army.

Bert E. Grove, Guide-Lecturer—American Field Service, in North Africa.

Patrick T. McEnery, Guard—Master-at-arms, U.S. Navy.

John Syckowski, Guard—Chief Commissary Steward, U.S. Navy.

George Jahrand, Guard—Chief Water Tender, U.S. Navy.

M. C. Darnall, Jr., Guard—Candidates' Class, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve (Officers' Training Course).

James C. McIntyre, Guard—Private, U.S. Army, Coast Artillery.

Clyde James Nash, Guard—Chief Gunner's Mate, U.S. Navy.

Nicholas Repar, Printer—First Class Seaman, U.S. Navy.

IN A CIVILIAN STATUS

Rudyard Boulton, Curator, Birds—Staff of Co-ordinator of Information, Washington, D.C.

Bryant Mather, Assistant Curator, Mineralogy—Civil Service Worker for Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army.



Riggs, Elmer S. 1942. "Exhibit Shows Varied Animals that Inhabited the Bad Lands 25,000,000 Years Ago." *Field Museum news* 13(6), 4-5.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/25719>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/365045>

Holding Institution

Field Museum of Natural History Library

Sponsored by

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the Chicago Field Museum.
For information contact dcc@library.uiuc.edu.

Rights Holder: Field Museum of Natural History

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.