

FIFTY YEARS AGO AT THE MUSEUM

In recognition of the keen interest of many persons in the early history of the Museum, the BULLETIN herewith inaugurates a column, "Fifty Years Ago at the Museum." The research into past records for significant events as well as the reporting of them is being done by Miss Margaret J. Bauer, of the Department of Zoology.

"The Library at present contains 9,003 books and 9,630 pamphlets . . ."
[On last count, in 1948, our rapidly growing library has reached 130,000 volumes.]

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"In Geology, the gift of Mr. L. W. Reese, of Chicago, of the Schmidt-Dickert relief model of the moon is a notable acquisition. This great model, 19 feet in diameter, . . . was prepared with great care from the charts of Beer and Madler and of Dr. Schmidt of the Athens Observatory, undoubtedly the greatest authority upon the topography of the moon. . . ."

[The exhibit may now be found in Clarence Buckingham Hall—Hall 35.]

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"Mr. George A. Dorsey, Curator of the Department of Anthropology, accompanied by Mr. F. B. Melville, visited the province of Tysayan, Arizona, in December and January. The object of the expedition was to make casts of a number of Hopi Indians."

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"Notwithstanding his three months' absence on expeditions in the Northwest, Mr. Carl E. Akeley, the Chief Taxidermist, has created two more striking groups from the material obtained on the African expedition—Waller's Gazelles and the oryx group. The same appreciation of the high purpose of his work, the same skillful blending of nature and of art, the same conspicuous care in detail, distinguish these groups as marked the other creations of which he has been the author."

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"Mr. Daniel Giraud Elliot, the Curator of the Department of Zoology, and his assistant, Mr. C. E. Akeley, were commissioned upon an expedition to the Northwest in July. . . . Mr. Elliot writes: 'The expedition to the Olympian Mountains . . .

has thus far secured 500 skins of deer, carnivora, and rodents. . . . This collection is exceedingly valuable, coming as it does from hitherto unknown localities where no naturalist has ever penetrated. There are probably species new to science. . . ."

MT. KENYA BIRDS

The Museum has just received a small but important collection of birds from Mt. Kenya in Africa. It is the gift of Mr. Walther Buchen of Chicago.

Mt. Kenya stands nearly on the equator but rises to more than 17,000 feet, so high that snow falls on its summit and there is glacial ice there. Its interest lies in its being an isolated mountain and also one where, compressed into an altitude of 17,000 feet, a climatic transition from tropics to eternal snow can be studied.

To the ornithologist, Mt. Kenya is interesting from both points of view. Mr. Buchen's collection contains samples of some of the brilliant, metallic sunbirds that in East Africa are found only high up on the various mountains. Also included are specimens of the hadada ibis, a rare sparrow hawk, a francolin restricted to Mt. Kenya, a snipe, the strange plantain eaters (relatives of our cuckoos), tiny barbets, paradise flycatchers, mountain thrushes, an ox-pecker that climbs over cattle as a woodpecker over a tree, and weaver birds noted for their long flowing tails or their seasonal plumage change from a brilliant breeding to a dull off-season plumage. One of the most interesting species is a dull, streaked seed-eater, a kind of sparrow; as one goes up the mountain the birds encountered are progressively different in color, presumably a response to the change in environment. As further work is done on the collection, probably other interesting discoveries will be made.

—A.L.R.

DECEMBER LECTURE TOURS, DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS

Tours of exhibits, under the guidance of staff lecturers, are conducted every afternoon at 2 o'clock, except Sundays and certain holidays. On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, general tours are given covering all departments. Special subjects are offered on Wednesdays and Fridays (the Friday tours open with an introductory lecture and slides or films in the Meeting Room on the second floor of the Museum); a schedule of these follows:

Wed., Dec. 1—How Animals Spend the Winter (*Jane Sharpe*).

Fri., Dec. 3—Fibers, Feathers, and Furs—Materials Used in Clothing. Illustrated introduction in Meeting Room (*Marie Seoboda*).

Wed., Dec. 8—The Largest and Smallest Animals (*Lorain Farmer*).

Fri., Dec. 10—Trees in Winter. Illustrated introduction in Meeting Room (*Miriam Wood*).

Wed., Dec. 15—Gift Customs—When and Why People Give Presents (*Harriet Smith*).

Fri., Dec. 17—Sacred Animals. Illustrated introduction in Meeting Room (*Jane Sharpe*).

Wed., Dec. 22—Christmas Greens—Mistletoe, Holly, and Evergreens (*Marie Seoboda*).

Fri., Dec. 24—Adventures of a Fossil Hunter. Illustrated introduction in Meeting Room (*Lorain Farmer*).

Wed., Dec. 29—Indian Art in the Americas (*Jane Buchwald*).

Fri., Dec. 31—New Year's Celebrations. Illustrated introduction in Meeting Room (*Harriet Smith*).

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING NEED BE NO BURDEN—

Christmas shopping and preparing of many packages can be eased by using services Chicago Natural History Museum offers:

(1) Christmas Gift Memberships

Send to the Director the name and address of the person to whom you wish to give a Museum membership, together with your remittance to cover membership fee or dues.

An attractive Christmas card notifying the recipient that through your generosity he has been elected a Member of the Museum will be sent, together with membership card or certificate and information on membership privileges.

(2) Museum Book Shop Gifts

The BOOK SHOP has books endorsed for scientific authenticity by members of the Museum staff, for both adults and children.

Where desired, the BOOK SHOP will handle mail and telephone (Wabash 2-9410) orders and will undertake all details of wrapping and dispatching gift purchases to the designated recipients, together with such personal greetings as the purchaser may specify.



Rand, Austin Loomer. 1948. "Mt. Kenya Birds." *Bulletin* 19(12), 8-8.

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