

field briefs



Hollow ceramic figurine of man with painting on face and body. Ht. 11½". Circa 600 B.C. On view in an exhibition of ancient Ecuadorian pottery and artifacts, opening April 18 in Hall 9.

Former Curator Knighted

J. Eric Thompson, a research associate in the Department of Anthropology and formerly assistant curator of middle and South American archaeology, has recently been made a knight of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II. Sir Eric is one of the greatest living Maya scholars and is the author of many research monographs and books published by Field Museum, the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and the University of Oklahoma Press. His most widely read works are *Maya Hieroglyphic Writing, an Introduction*, *The Rise and Fall of Maya Civilization*, *Maya History and Religion*, and *The Civilization of the Mayas*; the latter work was first published by Field Museum in 1927.

Sir Eric lives and continues to write in Essex, England, not far from Cambridge. He was last at Field Museum in 1967, when the Women's Board honored him with a luncheon in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the first printing of *The Civilization of the Mayas*.

Grove Named Texas Museum Director

Sam Grove, a member of the Department of Exhibition staff since 1947, resigned February 1 to accept a position as director of the Museum of the Southwest, in Midland, Texas. Grove's most recent post at Field Museum was as senior scientific illustrator.

Gentry Named Associate Curator

Johnnie L. Gentry, Jr., who joined Field Museum's Department of Botany in 1969, has been named associate curator, vascular plants. Gentry's main areas of research currently include the Solanaceae (tomatoes and allies) and Boraginaceae (borage and allies), particularly of Central America. Dr. Gentry is also community professor of environmental science at Governors State University, Park Forest South.

Ancient Ecuador Pottery Exhibition Opens April 18

"Ancient Ecuador: Culture, Clay, and Creativity"—an exhibition of pottery and artifacts dating from 3000-300 B.C., opens April 18 in Hall 9. The collection contains material revealing various aspects of the lives of these people and includes the oldest known developed ceramics in the Western Hemisphere, never previously exhibited. Most beautiful are the pottery sculptures depicting humans and animals. Label copy for the display is in Spanish and English. Following its closing at Field Museum on August 5, 1975, the exhibition will travel to other United States museums and to Quito and Guayaquil, Ecuador.

African Arts and Crafts Presentation

Through the end of June, Phillip Cotton, crafts instructor for the Department of Education, will be giving presentations of African arts and crafts. Using Harris Extension learning materials, he will show slides and demonstrate musical instruments and weaving techniques. Children will have the opportunity to sit down and try weaving for themselves. Presentations are on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 a.m. until noon, in Hall 27.

Federal Grants in 1974

Federal grants to Field Museum's scientific staff in 1974 totalled \$253,818. The funds, earmarked for specific research, were provided by the National Science Foundation, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the U.S. Department of Interior, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Among the projects funded are floristic field work in Central America; the floras of Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Veracruz; and the study of endangered land snail species of the Pacific islands.

LETTERS

Sirs:

The article by David Young in the January *Bulletin* repeats the usual belief that *Brachiosaurus* was the largest dinosaur. In 1969 I pointed out (*Copeia*, pp. 624-626) that the sauropod *Antarctosaurus giganteus*, known from the late Cretaceous of Argentina, may have been as large. Its femur, 2.31 meters long, is the longest known limb bone of a vertebrate. Other bones are both longer and shorter than the corresponding ones of *Brachiosaurus*.

A better comparison would use the sum of the minimum cross-sectional areas of the limb bones, for these carried the weight. A visitor to the Museo de La Plata (La Plata, Argentina) could perhaps make the appropriate measurements for *Antarctosaurus*. The largest known specimen of *Brachiosaurus*, if it still survives, came from Madagascar and it is the Geologisch-Palaontologisches Institut of Humboldt University, East Berlin. It too is inadequately described.

However, there are few specimens known of each genus, and which genus has the largest known specimen may be as much a result of the chances of sampling as of the size each reached in life.

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