

## EXPEDITION TO AITUTAKI

An expedition to Aitutaki, one of the most remote and least known islands of the Pacific Ocean, to make collections of zoological material for Field Museum, sailed from San Francisco on June 11. The expedition is sponsored and led by Philip M. Chancellor of Santa Barbara, Calif. Norton Stuart, a naturalist of the same city, is co-leader.

Messrs. Chancellor and Stuart led the Chancellor-Stuart-Field Museum Expedition to the South Pacific in 1929, obtaining specimens of the rare giant lizards of Komodo, the reticulated python, world's largest snake, and other collections.

The new Chancellor-Stuart-Field Museum Expedition was to disembark from the steamer late last month at Raratonga, Cook Islands, and thence proceed to Aitutaki by trading schooner, arriving early this month. Rarely has a white man set foot upon this island, and it is sparsely populated by natives whose life is entirely unmodified by civilization.

The principal object of the expedition is to collect the beautiful fishes which abound in the waters over the coral reefs which surround the island. In connection with this work, underwater pictures, both motion and still, will be made.

Some ethnological investigations will also be conducted, and motion pictures will be made illustrating various phases of the native life.

## THREE MORE MURALS

Three more of the series of large mural paintings depicting prehistoric life, being presented to Field Museum by Ernest R. Graham, have been received from the artist, Charles R. Knight, and placed on exhibition. With this addition, there are now twenty-one of the paintings on view, out of the total of twenty-eight which will comprise the series when complete. They will cover most of the wall space in Ernest R. Graham Hall of Historical Geology.

One of the new paintings just installed depicts giant long-necked sea-lizards or plesiosaurs, and so-called fish-lizards with bodies, fins and tails like fish but typical lizard heads and jaws. These creatures are estimated to have lived about 120,000,000 years ago. They were common in the old world, and in the inland sea which extended across what is now Texas, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas, connecting with the Arctic Ocean.

Another of the paintings represents a scene at the Rancho la Brea asphaltum pits near Los Angeles. The painting depicts the great sabertooth tiger, driving vultures away from the tar-trapped carcasses of animals on which both want to feed. Extinct species of wolves and of horses are also shown. The animals were of the last geological period, becoming extinct about 50,000 years ago, and were closely related to similar modern animals.

The third of the new paintings restores the four-tusk mastodons and the river rhinoceroses which were common in Nebraska about seven million years ago.

## PREHISTORIC PAINTS

BY HENRY FIELD

Assistant Curator of Physical Anthropology

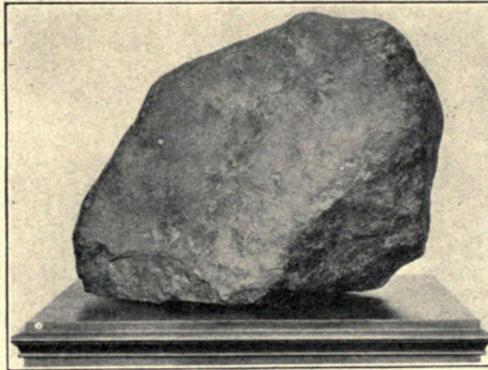
Twenty-five thousand years ago ochre was used as paint to adorn the walls of cave sanctuaries with pictures of animals and religious symbols. It is possible that the half-naked bodies of the Magdalenian artists were also painted with the various natural colors at hand, as many primitive peoples

throughout the world paint themselves today. The color red appears to have had ritualistic properties from as far back as Aurignacian times, and it was probably associated with the conception of blood as representing the symbol of life.

The cave of Altamira in northern Spain contains the finest collection of paintings attributed to the Magdalenian artists. The ceiling is twenty-eight feet long by twenty feet wide, and upon its surface many animals, including bison, deer and wild boar have been painted in red, black, yellow and white. The artistic ability of the Magdalenians is clearly shown by the remarkable and realistic portrayal of the animals which they hunted for their food supply. Specimens of these various paints, both from deposits in the cave of Altamira and in other localities, were obtained by the recent Marshall Field Archaeological Expedition to Europe.

The polished surface of the several fragments of ochre in Field Museum's collections prove that these were actually used by the Magdalenians to decorate their caves more than fifteen centuries before the dawn of writing.

## PARAGOULD METEORITE



Latest addition to the Museum's meteorite collection. On exhibition in Hall 34. It is the largest stone meteorite ever seen to fall. Presented by President Stanley Field.

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## W. H. Beardsley Dies

W. H. Beardsley, for more than twenty years a member of the staff of Field Museum, and since the creation of the N. W. Harris Public School Extension of the Museum a skillful botanical preparator in that Department, died suddenly on June 17. Mr. Beardsley joined the Museum staff in 1908. He did much excellent work in the preparation of native wild flower exhibits and his loss will be keenly felt.

## Expedition Reports Success

The Vernay-Lang Kalahari Expedition for Field Museum is meeting with great success in its collecting of zoological specimens in Africa, according to the latest cabled reports received by the Museum from Arthur S. Vernay, its leader. The last cablegram indicated that the expedition was at the Chobe River, preparing to proceed into the northern part of the Kalahari Desert, thence to Pretoria, and finally into Angola. Large and important collections of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects have been collected thus far in Bechuanaland.

A large collection of beautiful and characteristic marine animals, such as sponges, precious corals, and sea urchins, and the shells of various other marine fauna, is a feature of the Museum's zoological exhibits.

## RAYMOND FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

The summer series of free entertainments for children at Field Museum, provided by the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation for Public School and Children's Lectures, will begin on Thursday, July 10. There will be six programs in all, on consecutive Thursday mornings, the final one being given on August 14. Programs will consist of Museum tours conducted by Raymond Foundation lecturers, motion pictures, and story hours, the latter two features being presented in the James Simpson Theatre of the Museum.

Following is the schedule:

- July 10—10 A.M., tour: Animals of Plains and Deserts; 11 A.M., motion picture: "Chang."
- July 17—10 A.M., story hour: "A Day in Japan" (illustrated with colored pictures); 11 A.M., tour: The Japanese Hall.
- July 24—10 A.M., tour: Insects; 11 A.M., motion pictures: "Our Six-legged Friends," "Cabbage Enemies," "Singing and Stinging," "Honey Makers," "Baby Song Birds at Mealtime."
- July 31—10 A.M., tour: Peoples of the South Seas; 11 A.M., motion picture: "Bali, the Unknown."
- August 7—10 A.M., story hour: "A Trip to Eskimo Land" (illustrated with colored pictures); 11 A.M., tour: The Eskimo Hall.
- August 14—10 A.M., tour: Plants and Animals Used by the Pioneers; 11 A.M., motion pictures: "The Frontier Woman," "The Story of Vincennes" (films given to Field Museum by the late Chauncey Keep).

Children from all parts of the city are invited to these entertainments. In addition to those coming individually, large groups organized in various community centers are expected.

## MOUNDS TO BE EXCAVATED

Permission has been granted by the United States Department of the Interior, on the approval of the Smithsonian Institution, for the Field Museum Archaeological Expedition to Colorado, which left last month, to excavate the Lowry Ruin. This ruin is a site which to date has been untouched by archaeologists. It is in southwestern Colorado near Mesa Verde National Park, and is one of the largest ruins of its kind in the region. It consists of three great mounds, each about thirty feet high, surrounded by numerous lesser ruins of ceremonial chambers.

The expedition, led by Dr. Paul S. Martin, Assistant Curator of North American Archaeology, left Chicago on June 13. It is being financed from income derived from the Julius and Augusta Rosenwald Fund.

It is hoped that when excavations have begun on the mounds there will be revealed rooms of the first and second stories of buildings erected by Indians as far back as 1,500 years ago. The people, traces of whose culture are to be sought here, are believed to have been nearly contemporaneous with the so-called "cliff dwellers" and to have been the ancestors of the present day Indian inhabitants of the region.

It is considered likely that wooden roof beams will be found preserved intact and unrotted, because in the mound they have been sealed safely away from moisture. Evidences of two or three periods of occupancy may be found. Collections of articles in daily use by these people will be sought, such as pottery, various stone and wooden objects, and possibly turquoise beads. If the expedition obtains the right kind of timber from the buildings it may be possible to compute more closely the approximate date of construction by means of tree rings.

Work is to be carried on also in the burial grounds adjacent to the mounds, where it is hoped a collection of pottery and other mortuary offerings may be found.



Field, Henry. 1930. "Prehistoric Paints." *Field Museum news* 1(7), 3–3.

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