

Cave Man's Life Resurrected

Anthropology

The first authoritative life-size reconstruction ever made of a cave man, his family, and his cave, has just been completed at Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. The cover photograph this week, reproduced by courtesy of the Field Museum, shows a portion of the group.

The reconstruction represents one of the earliest types of prehistoric man, the ape-like Neanderthal or Mousterian man. This race lived in western Europe during the last glacial period, and represents the earliest stage of human existence of which complete skeletons have been found. The race is believed to have lived some 50,000 years ago and more.

The Field Museum group is one of the results of the recent Captain Marshall Field Archaeological Expedition to Europe, under the leadership of Henry Field, a member of the museum's anthropological staff. In the work of the expedition and the preparation of the group the museum has had the cooperation of leading anthropologists of England and France, including Professor Sir Arthur Keith, president of the Royal College of Surgeons, London; Professor G. Elliott-Smith of University College, London; Abbé Henri Breuil of Paris, who is generally considered the greatest living expert on prehistoric man, and Professor Marcellin Boule of Paris.

The designer and sculptor of the group is Frederick Blaschke of Cold Spring, N. Y., who accompanied the expedition to Europe, and has spent more than two years on the work. The scene represented is an actual Neanderthal man's cave at Le Moustier, in the Dordogne region of southwest France. The cave has been reproduced in three dimensions in the museum exhibit. A large painted background of the country near the cave sets off the reconstructed group, this feature being the work of C. A. Corwin, staff artist of the museum.

The individual figures in the group consist of a man about 55 years old, a boy about 12, a woman about 30 with a baby in her arms, and an older woman. These figures have all been carefully reconstructed from measurements, casts and models made of the skulls and skeletons of Neanderthals which have been found in various localities in Europe. The figures are in lifelike attitudes, and are represented as engaged in occu-



OLD MAN NEANDERTHAL now in the Field Museum group

pations typical of their time and stage of development.

The man is shown outside the entrance of the cave, having just returned from hunting. With one hand he grasps the antlers of a reindeer which he has killed with a stone implement which is seen, red with blood, in his other hand. The woman with the baby is on her way out from the inner recesses of the cave. Nearby is seen the boy, gnawing hungrily on a bone. The older woman is squatting beside a fire cleaning fat from a skin. Squatting, rather than sitting, was characteristic of these people, scientists have determined from facets on skeletons. Evidence that the

Neanderthals knew how to make fire has been found in abundance.

The special characteristics of the Neanderthal race are carefully represented. These include very prominent and continuous brow ridges extending from temple to temple; short thick necks with heads thrown forward because of a peculiar construction of the spinal column which made it impossible for these people to stand quite erect; broad flat noses; and bent knees like a gorilla's, which it was impossible for them to straighten. Their bodies were short and of stout build. Their heads were proportionately large, and the size of their brains was not much below that of modern man's, according to Dr. Oliver C. Farrington, curator of geology. While in volume their brain substance apparently equalled that of modern man, the proportions were more like those of apes, according to Dr. Farrington. The hands were extremely large, and lacked the mobility of those of modern man. The arms were relatively shorter than the legs, and the shin bones shorter than the thigh bones, thus indicating that these people were clumsy and slow-moving beings.

Flint implements obtained from one of the actual caves used by this race at Le Moustier are scattered about on the floor of the reproduced cave. The background depicts the cold rocky landscape on the bank of the Vezere River, where this rock shelter stands. As many known details as possible illustrating the anatomy, habits and environment of members of the Neanderthal race have been embodied in the group.

Science News-Letter, June 29, 1929

\$9,000,000 Research Fund

General Science

Nine millions for science is the goal toward which Cornell University has started, with the announcement of a gift from the General Education Board of \$1,500,000. The project is to be completed in three steps of \$3,000,000 each, of which the present gift constitutes the first half of the first unit. In its final development, \$1,500,000 of the total fund is to be spent for a building and the rest is to constitute an endowment for the support of the research staff and the purchase of equipment.

Science News-Letter, June 29, 1929