Extracts from the will of
James Smithson

... In the case of the death of my
said nephew without leaving children...
I then bequeath the whole of my property...

James Smithson
The Smithsonian's Board of Regents meets this year on Friday, January 13. As has been the custom in recent years, a dinner is held in the Great Hall of the Smithsonian Building on the evening before this annual meeting. At the dinner some of the most interesting acquisitions of the year in the Smithsonian museums are displayed. Usually several members of the research staff are invited to tell about some important part of their research in progress.

Few staff members have had a chance to meet or even see their Regents. Some have asked what the duties of the Board are and how it works. To these, the answer is that the Regents watch over the affairs of the Smithsonian and guide its policies very much as a board of trustees serves a college or a board of directors serves a corporation.

How the Smithsonian came to have a Board of Regents and how they are chosen is an interesting story.

When James Smithson left his fortune to the United States to found the Institution that bears his name, it became necessary to set up an organization to receive and administer it. After eight years of consideration, a bill creating the Smithsonian Institution was passed and signed into law by President Polk on August 10, 1846. In it the United States solemnly agreed, through its elected representatives in Congress, to act as perpetual guardian of the Institution created to use Smithson's bequest.

Those chosen to be the Institution itself, or the Establishment, as it is also called, were the President and the Vice President of the United States, the Chief Justice, and the members of the President's Cabinet. Few institutions, public or private, in this or any other country, can claim such a distinguished membership.

Because the Institution is composed of men busy with affairs of government, the founding act also created a Board of Regents to act for them in directing the activities of the Smithsonian. Two of these Regents are members of the Institution -- the Vice President and the Chief Justice, who presides over the Board as its Chancellor.

Of the others, six are members of Congress -- three from the Senate and three from the House of Representatives -- and six are private citizens -- two from the District of Columbia and four from different States of the Union. The Senate members are nominated by the President of the Senate and those from the House of Representatives by the Speaker of the House. These nominations are confirmed by vote of the respective Houses of Congress. The six citizen members are elected for a term of six years by joint resolution of Congress. The Regents, in turn, select the Secretary, who is executive head of the Smithsonian, and who also serves as secretary of the Board of Regents.
In past years many notable in science and public affairs have served on the Board of Regents, including such men as Louis J. Agassiz, James B. Angell, Chester A. Arthur, William E. Astor, George Bancroft, Alexander Graham Bell, Robert S. Brooking, Jefferson Davis, Millard E. Fillmore, James A. Garfield, Anna Gray, Charles Evans Hughes, Henry Cabot Lodge, Dwight W. Morrow, Theodore Roosevelt, William T. Sherman, Adlai E. Stevenson, and William Howard Taft.

The Board of Regents today is made up of the following: Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the United States Richard N. Nixon, Vice President of the United States Clinton P. Anderson, Member of the Senate Leverett Saltonstall, Member of the Senate H. Alexander Smith, Member of the Senate Clarence Cannon, Member of the House of Representatives Overton Brooks, Member of the House of Representatives John V. Foye, Member of the House of Representatives Arthur H. Compton, citizen of Missouri Robert V. Fleming, citizen of Washington, D.C. Jerome C. Munson, citizen of Massachusetts

Three vacancies exist among the citizen members as a result of the resignation of Dr. Vannaver Bush on January 1, 1956, and the deaths of Owen J. Roberts on May 17, 1955, and Harvey N. Davis on December 3

ENCOURAGING

The following letter was received by THE TORCH from Mr. Ralph Solecki, formerly with the River Basin Survey of the Smithsonian and now with the Department of Anthropology, Columbia University:

"I have been receiving THE TORCH regularly, for which I sincerely thank you very much. I hope you continue to prosper over the coming years. "Perhaps you have not been aware of it, but Professor William Duncan Strong, of the Department of Anthropology (Columbia) is an alumnus of the Smithsonian. I have been turning over my copies of THE TORCH to Dr. Strong, which he reads with much interest."" 

TORCH contributors:

appreciate this letter very much and are taking this opportu-

tunity to advise Mr. Solecki and the professor that Dr.

Strong's name has been added to our mailing list.

ROSE

Margaret Brown, assistant curator of the division of civil history, will be married to Frank Klyaphor on Wednesday, January 19, at 6 p.m. in Sacred Heart Church in La Plata, Md. Miss Brown's sister, Mrs. William Moore, will be matron of honor and her nieces, Mary and Betty Moore, will be flower girls.

Mr. Klyaphor was museum aid to the division of civil history prior to his departure to head the D.A.R. museum last year.

REDOUTÉ EXHIBITION

An exhibition of "Water-
colors and Prints by Redouté" will be on view in the foyer of the National History Building from January 15 through February 2.

The exhibit, sponsored by the Luxembourg ambassador, M. Le Gallais, is to be circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibitions Service.

Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759-1840) was official flower painter to Marie Antoinette at Trianon and to Joséphine Bonaparte at Malmaison. He specialized in the rendering of roses and lilies, and painted many other flowers and fruits with equal elegance and accuracy. Ansonh called him the "flower painter par excellence."

Of the 44 works on exhibition, 8 are lent by the Luxembourg State Museum, 27 by members of the Luxembourg Society, and 5 by E. Wayne of New York.

Redouté was born into a family of artists at St. Robert, in a corner of the Ardennes near Belgium. As a young man he decorated churches and at eighteen he was painting portraits of the prominent citizens. His elder brother, Antonio Ferdinand, invited him to Paris and procured commissions for him at the Italian Theatre. At the Jardin des Plantes he sketched flowers and met the botanist, L'Officier de la Science. Through his brother he came to London where he learned to print plates in color as well as watercolor techniques.

Later Redouté came to the notice of Joséphine Bonaparte and it was under her munificent patronage that much of his work was published. Napoleon presented the painter's works in luxurious bindings to the crowned heads of Europe.

As the LONDON TIMES wrote on the occasion of the first Redouté exhibition at the Marlborough Galleries, July 1949, "He was once known as the Raphael of the Roses, but he also grew them, and was indeed a profound student of the genus, introducing many plants to cul-
tivation; there is a class known as Redouté roses, of a rather

pries and early Victorian simplic-

ity. As an artist Redouté

was exactly suited to illustrate

this genre, precise and exquisitely

tidy in his execution, graceful and

wholly unaffected; he would labour,

evidently for hours at a time, to
describe a dewdrop, and use the same
power of minute discrimination to
distinguish the exact character of a particular

species or florist's variety."

Roger Medd, author of a volume on Redouté published in London, 1929, wrote the intro-
duction to the Smithonian catalog of the exhibition. He said about the artist: "In
taking nature by surprise, he

has recognized her elusive

qualities and captured her

beauty for us to gaze upon quite

unhindered. Nature could hide

no flaws or secrets from this

untiring observer and

frank admirer; her

beauty is reflected in his work. Redouté's

flowers truly live, as does his

face."
HEART TO HEART

Although you may be unaware of it, you have a faithful friend with you constantly. His labor could lift you, once each day of your life, to the height of the Empire State Building, or, with one hour's work, he could lift a 1-ton truck one foot above the ground. In one year he functions 36 million times and he becomes his amazing feat, without ceasing, all of your lifetime. If you haven't realized who he is by now, you are taking your heart for granted. Your friend, your heart, can take quite an amount of abuse but he will remain faithful for a long lifetime only if you respect his limitations and pay prompt attention to any danger signals he may give you.

Five facts you should know about heart disease: (1) Some forms of heart disease can be prevented.... a few can be cured; (2) all heart cases can be cared for best if diagnosed early; (3) almost every heart condition can be helped by proper treatment; (4) most heart patients can keep on working -- often at the same job; (5) most patients may not mean heart disease. Don't guess, don't worry. See your doctor and be sure.

For information, contact the Washington Heart Association. For consultation, see your physician.

HAVE YOU HEARD

One of the hardest secrets for a man to keep, is his opinion of himself.

MORE ABOUT DINOSAUR

In answer to last month's poem, by H.L.T. on the dual-functional system of the dinosaur, a Smithsonian poet contributes the following:

THE DINOSAUR: REPORT

Behold, indeed, the Dinosaur,
That bi-cerebral heart of yore
Who had a second brain behind
to supplement the brain before.

So what! Like us who have
but one,
He ate and drank and had his fun.
And perished when his day was done.

For all his derriere-punaise
He did not live an extra day.

--John Alexander Pope

STANLEY POTTEN NEW HOME

Just before Christmas, Mr. Potter of the National Air Museum staff, who was badly injured August 13 while unloading airplane parts at the NAS-Seattle facility, was given a partial release from the Naval Medical Center at Bethesda. He spent Christmas Day with his family but will be required to make regular visits to the hospital to take physical therapy treatments.

It will probably be several months yet before he can think of returning to the Museum. In the meanwhile he says it is wonderful to be home again and he appreciates the many cards, phone calls, and visits from his friends.

MORE QUESTIONS

A panel of experts listed as necessary for supervisory advancement: high frustration tolerance; self-analysis; ability to express hostility tactfully; a realistic approach to objectives; ability to accept victory with controlled emotion; lack of any tendency to be destroyed by defeat.

GREETING CARD

Christmas greetings to the director and staff of the National Museum were received from the Council of Agriculture, Brisbane, Australia; the Norak Polar Institute, Oslo, Norway; Dr. Abelardo Morena, Havana, Cuba; and Dr. Esir Menza Gafferty, Tehran, Iran. Dr. Gafferty added, "With all my thanks and sincere gratitude for the kindness of you and your staff during my stay at the Museum."

Dr. Kallogg received season's greetings from a correspondent in D. C., who said, "I'd like to congratulate you people on the fine exhibits about the North American Indians. What a welcome improvement over your older exhibits about North American Indians. I have visited museums abroad, and it seems to me a shame that Uncle Sam has lagged so far behind some lesser countries in having good historical museums. We are proud of our heritage and history. Let us show it in our museums."

If anyone knows of the whereabouts of Mr. and Mrs. David Baker or Mr. Jesu de Rubens, please notify Correspondence and Records. Christmas cards have been received addressed to them in care of the Smithsonian.
Philately Tops Million

The division of philately has just completed the most active 12-month accessioning period in its history. Well over 500,000 specimens were added from major accessions alone.

Possibly the most important accession was received from former Postmaster General James A. Farley. It consisted of almost 30,000 specimens from his personal collection. There are original sketches for stamp designs by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and signed or initialed by him; full sheets --first off the presses--autographed by the late President and his Postmaster General; first-day covers; and a complete collection of National Air Mail Week Covers.

A worldwide collection of approximately 70,000 varieties was received from Mrs. Theodore Shewyn Palmie, widow of the late Dr. T. S. Palmer, noted Washington ornithologist.

The General Services Administration transferred close to 146,000 specimens from an "abandoned" collection held since World War II by the Judge Advocate General, U. S. Army.

Major donations included a 3-volume collection of Spain No. 1, Russian Locals, a 3-volume collection of Indian Feudatory States, a Swiss collection, Italian States pre-stamp covers, and scarce varieties such as inverts and imperforates.

Major donors during this period included Ernest Lowenstein, Dr. Milford Riddler, John P. V. Heimoller, Floyd Z. Starr, Philip R. Ward, Jr., S. M. Weithal, B. N. Koman, Jr., Julius Skolow, Dr. William Winour and Seymour Winour, and Irvin Hermannof.

The division of philately has now passed the million-specimen mark, having doubled its holdings in the past five years.

NICE PLACE PERIOD

The following quotation is from "The Talk of the Town" article in the December 10 issue of THE NEW YORKER:

"If kindhearted folk..."

"...keep on giving the President things for his Gettysburg farm, it is eventually going to get as cluttered as the Smithsonian Institution. (The Smithsonian is a nice place to visit, but we wouldn't want to live there.)"

"We guess the writer was just saying it because it's true, or perhaps because he has an inferiority complex from living in New York."

Anyway, it brings up a point. In the old days, people did live in the Smithsonian. The first Secretary, Joseph Henry, and his family occupied a two-floor apartment in the east wing of the Smithsonian from 1855 until his death in 1876. His successor, Spencer Baird, lived in the same apartment until 1883, when he moved to allow for remodeling and fireproofing of the east wing.

---

### BALANCE SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1954</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>Liabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans</td>
<td>$120,779.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash in bank</td>
<td>5,304.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petty cash</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change fund</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts</td>
<td>$353,313.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fed. Savings &amp; Loan Assms.</td>
<td>15,604.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. bonds</td>
<td>3,385.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furn. &amp; Filt.</td>
<td>24.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid Rsp.</td>
<td>120.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1954</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sty. &amp; supplies</td>
<td>$63.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.C. League dues</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrower's assns.</td>
<td>577.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life savings ins.</td>
<td>1,947.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditor's fee</td>
<td>305.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory fee</td>
<td>205.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond premium</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank serv. charge</td>
<td>16.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer's salary</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other salaries</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. expenses</td>
<td>63.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,096.30</td>
<td>$2,096.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### STATISTICAL REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>1954</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loans made in 1955</td>
<td>$195,000.00</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>$192,000.00</td>
<td>1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans made in 1956</td>
<td>$192,000.00</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>$192,000.00</td>
<td>1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans outstanding December 31, 1955</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans outstanding December 31, 1956</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad loans written off since organization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total paid on shares since organization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of members December 31, 1955</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of members December 31, 1956</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividends paid since organization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. S. Savings Bonds sold since organization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Thomas F. Clark, Treasurer
ART WORKS EXHIBITED

Several members of the Smithsonian staff are represented by paintings and sculpture in the 10th Annual Area Exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The exhibition opened December 4 and is scheduled to close February 5.

Jacob Kahn, associate curator of the division of graphic arts, received high praise in the press reviews, and his painting entitled “Warrior Bird” was reproduced in the front of the catalog. The judges selected this painting as one of the 22 outstanding works of art.

Benedict Lawless, of the exhibit staff, was represented in the watercolor division. His “Working Boots” was selected to illustrate the watercolor grouping.

Other Smithsonian exhibitors included Rowland Iyoun of the National Collection of Fine Arts, Fuller Griffiths, division of vertebrate paleontology, and Morris Pearson, Jr., of the exhibit staff.

GONE TO PANAMA

Our former Secretary, Dr. Wetmore, left December 1 for the Canal Zone and Republic of Panama to continue his ornithological research for the Institution on the distribution and variation among birds of the isthmus. Mrs. Wetmore accompanied him in the capacity of field assistant and, probably more important, camp cook.

NATIONAL HEALTH FAIR

George Grifﬁenhagen, acting curator of the division of medicine and public health, has been appointed to the technical committee for the 1956 National Health Fair. This exposition is designed as a community health education project to present information about the progress of medicine and promote better personal and family health by providing sound health information and experiences.

The zones, including the sponsored by the Medical Society for the District of Columbia, the Washington Board of Trade, the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the Health Section, United Community Services, in cooperation with official and voluntary health organizations, government and private institutions and research centers.

PAGE LIFTED

The 1953 1-cylinder Cadillac has come home after being sent to Atlantic City for exhibition by the Cadillac Division of General Motors. It now sports a new black and red paint job and is ﬁtted with tufted black genuine leather upholstery. Also, it is equipped with the new tires that were presented by Harvey Firestone, Jr., in 1954.

If you want to see a brand new 1953 Cadillac, be sure to visit the Automobile Hall in the Arts and Industries Building.

WRIGHT BROTHERS’ ANNIVERSARY

December 17 marked the 50th anniversary of the ﬁrst powered and controlled flight by man in a heavier-than-air craft. On this historic date on the aviation calendar, the ﬂying fraternity gathered at the Sheraton-Park Hotel to honor the Wright Brothers and review another year of impressive progress. Principal speakers were the Vice President of the United States and the Ambassador of Great Britain. Decorations, including bronze sculptures of the Wright Brothers and a scale model of the “Kitty Hawk” ﬂyer, were furnished by the National Air Museum. Secretary Carmichael and Mr. Garber represented the Smithsonian at this occasion.

FREER REFRESH

The staff at Freer Gallery had good-bye on November 30 to Edward Van Leer. For the past ﬁve years Mr. Van Leer served at the sales desk of the Gallery. At a small farewell party, his fellow workers presented him with a wallet containing cash to wish him well upon his retirement. Mr. Van Leer is leaving Washington to enter the Masonic Home in Philadelphia, where he spent much of his youth.
A PRAYER

"Give me the serenity to accept what cannot be changed; give me the courage to change what can be changed; and the wisdom to know one from the other."

Reinhold Niebuhr

TIGER FLIGHTS TO EUROPE

Now often have you dreamed of taking a trip to Europe and then with a shrug and a sigh said to yourself, "Oh what's the use, I'll never be able to afford it?"

Well, fasten your safety belt, we have news for you!

The Flying Tiger Line, Inc., operating under express authority of the Civil Aeronautics Board, offers year-round service for employee groups to fly to Europe on spacious 4-engine DC-4s and DC-6s for a cost generally less than $300 round trip per passenger.

The more passengers, the lower the cost.

Here's how it works. A DC-4 accommodates 68 passengers with no pounds of baggage per passenger. If enough employees are interested in making the flight, a plane is chartered from the Flying Tiger Lines at a cost of $40,000 per trip during the period June to September. Thus, if 68 passengers sign up for a summer trip the cost would be $305 round trip to London, Amsterdam, Brussels, or Paris; or $235 if trip is made from October to May to the same points.

The planes have comfortable interiors; the seats recline; hot meals are served aloft; and two stewardesses accompany each flight. The passenger list need not be employees exclusively, but may include husbands, wives, and children.

Upon arrival abroad you may take advantage of the 21-day tour of Europe which includes hotels, meals, travel, entrance fees, tours, excursions, etc., for a total cost of $250.

Because of the popularity of these flights arrangements and reservations must be made several months in advance.

If you seriously contemplate taking advantage of these bargain rates to Europe, please call Mrs. Fields, ext. 277 before January 25. If enough people express interest, a meeting will be arranged to present all the facts and make the necessary arrangements.

Let's go! All aboard.

SCHOOL DAYS COMING

You may be interested in taking courses at local colleges or universities or at the YMCA to further your education or for social or recreational reasons. Catalogs and related announcements for the coming semester in February are available in the rack alongside the door of the Personnel Office. Help yourself.

AIR MAIL TALK

Back in 1918-1920 the present curator of the National Air Museum was in the Postal Aviation Service. That was when the first continuously scheduled public service airplane mail route was established between Washington, Philadelphia, and New York.

At the request of the Hagerstown, Md., chapter of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences, Mr. Garber recalled those adventurous days in a talk given at the Hotel Alexander in that city on December 13. About 100 members of the Institute were there, principally the engineering personnel of the nearby Fairchild Aircraft Company.

Starting with the use of carrier pigeons and trained geese by the ancients and including a reference to the flying gods of mythological lore, Mr. Garber spoke of the carrying of mail on early balloons and dirigibles in the latter 18th century, and then the outstanding instances of balloon air carriage during the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871, when 94 balloons were released carrying over 12 tons of mail from besieged Paris to the other provinces of France. Following the invention of the airplane by the Wright Brothers, heavier-than-air craft were first used for mail carrying in 1910.

Mr. Garber reviewed the early temporary air mail services and followed this with personal recollections of the days when he helped to fly the mail. He told how extension of air mail routes from coast to coast and the gradual transfer of the governmental air mail lines to private operations formed the basis for the present vast commercial air line system.

FIRST S.I. CHRISTMAS PARTY

Christmas has not always been celebrated at the Smithsonian. Indeed, until 1946, the Smithsonian had no visible Christmas spirit. This disturbed a number of us, but it was a relatively new employee, Bob Jenkins, said in archeyology, who did something about it.

With the help of several coworkers—Eugene Greer and Charles Terry especially—he arranged for a program to be held at noon on Christmas Eve in the auditorium of the Natural History Building. Originally intended for the employees in that building, the program they planned was so good that all Smithsonian were invited to attend.

Charles Terry, aid in archeyology (now retired) read the Christmas story as recorded in Luke's Gospel. A chorus of employees, directed by Mr. Jenkins, led the staff in Christmas carols. Robert Cregan, guard (now retired), played "White Christmas" as an accordion solo, and Dr. Charles G. Abbot, (retired Secretary) played a cello solo,
accompanied on the piano by Loyal B. Aldrich (retired director of the Astrophysical Observatory). Mr. Jenkins sang a solo from the Messiah and Dr. Wetmore (then Secretary) gave a few words of greeting. The program closed with the singing of "Silent Night." Those present recall this as one of the nicest events that ever took place in the Natural History Building.

The program was so well received that it was repeated in 1949, with a few changes. Paul Garber sang a solo, and the stage was decorated with Christmas baskets of food contributed by employees. In 1950, appreciating a good idea, the administration made the Christmas party "official" moving it to the Great Hall of the Smithson Building, where it has become an annual event.

Thank you Bob, for setting a most pleasant precedent:

---

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Junior Clerk: Eugene C. McClain
Clerk-Typist: Billie E. Hahnley
Frances Antkonos
Clerk: Elaine J. Smith
Laboratory Aid: Mary S. Ritter
Files Clerk: Donald L. Wheeling
Laborers: George E. McCann

HALF PINT

A petite young lady in one of our scientific departments recently went with a group to the blood bank to give a pint of her blood. She was much chagrined to learn that donors must weigh 110 pounds to give a pint. She weighed almost 110, but the doctor said he could accept only a half pint. But she shouldn't feel badly about it. Her half pint might save the life of a child.

---

ORIENTAL ART LECTURES

The Freer Gallery of Art announces a series of illustrated lectures on oriental art to be held in the gallery auditorium during the winter and spring of 1956.

The programs are as follows:

"Imagery Art, the Art of an Empire," by Dr. Oleg Grabar of the University of Michigan on Tuesday, January 17, at 8:30 p.m.

"The Art and Architecture of the Age of Solomon," by Prof. William F. Albright of The Johns Hopkins University on Thursday, February 24, at 8:30 p.m.

"Western Scenery through Chinese Eyes," by Chiug Yee, artist and author, on Tuesday, March 13, at 8:30 p.m.

"Early Chinese Figure Painting," by Laurence Sloman of the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art on Thursday, April 17, at 8:30 p.m.

---

SPEAKS BEFORE HISTORIANS

Dr. Clifford Evans, associate curator of the division of archeology, participated, by invitation, in the Latin American Historiography session during the annual meeting of the American Historical Association.

The session was held December 28 at the Mayflower Hotel.

Dr. Evans spoke on "Recent Trends in Archeological Research on the Indigenous Cultures of Latin America."

---

Anthropologist Evans hopes that the historians gained something from this exposure to another discipline, but he says that some of the discussion following the session convinced him that many historians still have various concepts of "culture."

----

VERY FRIENDLY

Specimens of some of the world's most venomous serpents have just been added to the collections of the Smithsonian Institution. They are sea snakes of the South Pacific; collected on the shore of Koror Island in the Palau group by Frederick Layard of the division of marine invertebrates who recently returned from a field trip there.

The creatures are at least as deadly as any cobra. A bite almost certainly would be fatal to a human being. Yet native children play with these snakes with complete impunity. They pick them up and toss them from one to another, just as American children play "catch." There is no record that any child ever has been bitten. Neither has anybody else in the Palauas, and natives look upon the reptiles with complete indifference. According to another story, natives sometimes fish with sea snakes, holding them by the tail. The snake pokes about in crevices; and when it catches a fish, the fisherman pulls it out.
He had hoped to bring his specimens to Washington alive for exhibit at the Zoo. Unfortunately they died in transit.

LIBRARY RETURNS

Smithsonian Friends recently bade Godspeed to two members of the library staff who were retiring to private life.

By optional retirement on November 30, Mrs. Ruth Wengler Davison left the Government service after more than 36 years of which 32 had been spent in the Smithsonian Institution.

Miss Minna Gill, whose resignation became effective December 31 after 13 years of service, has the unique distinction of being doubly a Smithsonian second-generation "child." Both her father, DeLancy Gill, and her mother, Mary Wright Gill, were artists who illustrated many of the publications of the Bureau of American Ethnology. DeLancy Gill had been on the staff of the Bureau for more than 40 years when he retired in 1926.

Some are quite beautiful. Those obtained by Bayer were banded with black and white. The largest was about 7 feet long. Their capture entailed little difficulty, Bayer says. It is simply a matter of pinning down the head with a stick and picking up the snake by the neck.

Personally, Bayer says, he never witnessed the snake-tossing game but it was described to him by highly reliable witnesses. The fish story is just a Palauan "fish story."

The term "sea snake," Bayer says, may be somewhat of a misnomer. Actually the creatures spend most of their days asleep among rocks on the beaches. They are excellent tree climbers and like to sun themselves in tree crotches. At dusk, however, they move out to the reefs, where, presumably, the animals spend most of the night pursuing small fishes, their principal food. They naturally are excellent swimmers, and their bodies have been somewhat modified to adapt them for sea life. They have flattened, paddle-like tails.

Fortunately, on land at least, they are sluggish and non-aggressive. They cannot be induced to bite and will suffer almost any indignity without striking back. About the only way a person would be likely to be bitten would be by stepping directly on the head of one of these snakes with bare feet. This is an unlikely event, for the sea snakes do not spend any time under shallow water where they would be a peril for bathers.

"Three Miocene Foraminifera from the Calvert Cliffs, Maryland," by Remington Kellogg (54 pages, 1 figure, 8 plates).

"Contributions to the Nomenclature, Systematics, and Morphology of the Octocorallia," by Frederick M. Bayer (48 pages, 8 plates).

"Contributors to this Issue"

Alvin Goin
Frank Bruce
John Pope
Daisy Fields
Jack Lee
Lois Keyne
Burton Gilbard
Helena Weiss
George McCoy
Frank Roberts
Tom Clark

"FIRST VISIT HOME"

Early in December Lawrence L. Tomsky, administrative assistant at the River Basin Surveys headquarters in Lincoln, Nebr., and Lee G. Madison, laboratory and field assistant for the Surveys, spent several days visiting the Smithsonian buildings here in Washington. They transported a load of fragile archeological specimens, collected by Missouri Basin Project field parties last summer, from the Lincoln laboratory to the National Museum and took advantage of the opportunity to become better acquainted with "home base."

After helpful discussions with the personnel, purchasing, and finance divisions, Tomsky returned to Lincoln with a better understanding of what makes the Smithsonian wheels go around.