



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian Institution Archives

Proceedings of the Board of Regents Meetings, 1920-1931

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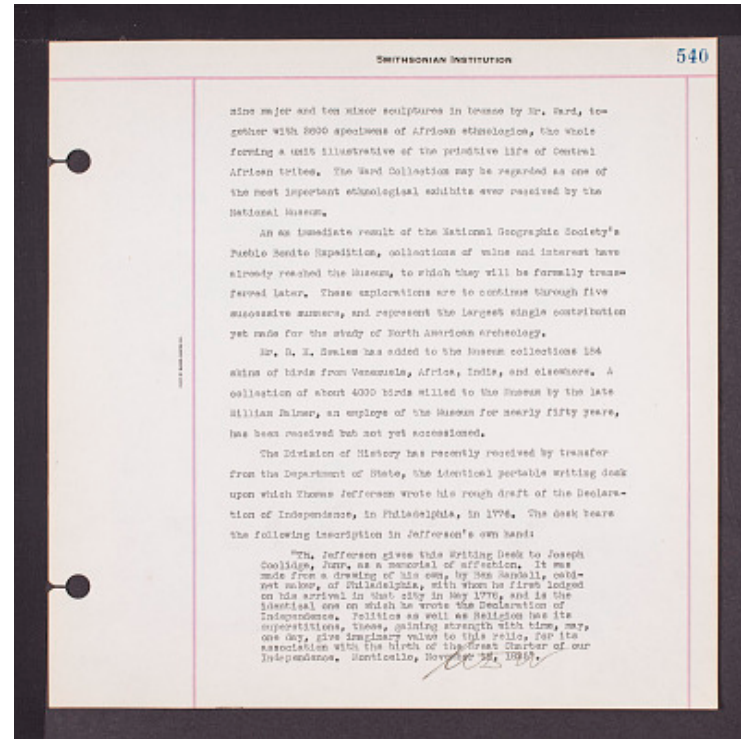
nine major and ten minor sculptures in bronze by Mr. Ward, together with 2600 specimens of African ethnologica, the whole forming a unit illustrative of the primitive life of Central African tribes. The Ward Collection may be regarded as one of the most important ethnological exhibits ever received by the National Museum.

An [[sic. "As"]] an immediate result of the National Geographic Society's Pueblo Bonito Expedition, collections of value and interest have already reached the Museum, to which they will be formally transferred later. These explorations are to continue through five successive summers, and represent the largest single contribution yet made for the study of North American archeology.

Mr. B. H. Swales has added to the Museum collections 184 skins of birds from Venezuela, Africa, India, and elsewhere. A collection of about 4000 birds willed to the Museum by the late William Palmer, an employee of the Museum for nearly fifty years, has been received but not yet accessioned.

The Division of History has recently received by transfer from the Department of State, the identical portable writing desk upon which Thomas Jefferson wrote his rough draft of the Declaration of Independence, in Philadelphia, in 1776. The desk bears the following inscription in Jefferson's own hand:

"Th. Jefferson gives this Writing Desk to Joseph Coolidge, Junr. as a memorial of affection. It was made from a drawing of his own, by Ben Randall, cabinet maker, of Philadelphia, with whom he first lodged on his arrival in that city in May 1776, and is the identical one on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence. Politics as well as Religion has its superstitions, these, gaining strength with time, may, one day, give imaginary value to this relic, for its association with the birth of the Great Charter of our Independence. Monticello, November 18, 1825".
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