



DR. WILLIAM CURTIS FARABEE.

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DR. WILLIAM CURTIS FARABEE

DR. WILLIAM CURTIS FARABEE died at Washington, Pennsylvania, on June 24th and was buried in the cemetery there on the 26th.

Dr. Farabee's illness had been a long one, beginning in June, 1922, when he suffered a severe illness while conducting excavations in the interior of southern Peru, whither he had gone on behalf of the Museum and where his health was exposed to some hazard.

Dr. Farabee was appointed in 1913 Curator of the Section of American Archaeology and Ethnology in the University Museum, a position which he held until the time of his death. Shortly after his appointment he proceeded to South America in charge of the University Museum Amazon Expedition, an undertaking that was to test to the utmost his physical endurance and courage. From that expedition he returned to the Museum in 1916, having explored a large area in southern British Guiana and in northern Brazil as well as some of the little known areas to the south of the Amazon. He also penetrated to the headwaters of that river and ascended the Rio Negro, the Rio Branco and the Rio Uraracuera into Venezuelan territory. Before returning home, he conducted a series of remarkable excavations on the island of Marajo in the mouth of the Amazon River and explored certain ancient caves on the mainland two hundred miles north of the river at its mouth.

The results of this expedition were important in many respects, but undoubtedly the outstanding and the most remarkable of these results were the investigations conducted among the forest tribes in northern Brazil and southern British Guiana. These tribes of Arawak and Carib stock were almost unknown and some of them had not before been visited by white men. In company with Mr. John Ogilvie, Dr. Farabee penetrated to the heart of British Guiana where only Humboldt had preceded him. After being lost in the

wilderness for months and after severe hardships, the party emerged on the coast by way of the Corentyne River, emaciated by fever and almost overcome with fatigue. After six weeks of recuperation on the island of Barbadoes, Dr. Farabee returned to South America and resumed his work in the unexplored wilderness of Brazil south of the Amazon and to complete the work of the expedition by an excursion to the head of the Amazon and finally to undertake the explorations at the mouth of that river already mentioned. The extent of the territory covered will alone serve to indicate the energy and activity displayed by Dr. Farabee on this expedition, but to realize the importance of his results it is necessary to glance at the collections in the University Museum obtained from the many tribes visited and from the excavations made.

As a result of the Amazon Expedition, Dr. Farabee completed two volumes of reports, one *The Central Arawaks* and the other *The Central Caribs*, both of which were published by the University Museum.

In 1922 the Museum sent an expedition to southern Peru and Dr. Farabee again took charge of the South American work. While conducting explorations in the Nasca country in the interior of southern Peru, he was attacked by fever and by inflammatory dysentery. Realizing the danger of his situation, he set out alone to reach the coast and to seek medical aid. He broke down completely on the way and the journey ended in an Indian's hut where he was nursed by the native family until their messengers could reach the coast and bring the necessary aid to save his life. He was then carried to a hacienda where civilized comforts and scientific treatment and his own great physical strength restored him slowly to a semblance of health. To complete his cure, it was decided that he should go to Arequipa where the high mountain air would invigorate his exhausted system. The experiment was not entirely satisfactory in its results and he was taken to the island of Juan Fernandez. In spite of every effort, Dr. Farabee began to realize that he was no longer able to undergo the severe hardships that his projected explorations entailed and after making a journey among the Araucanian Indians of Chile, he returned to Philadelphia by way of the Argentine and Rio Janeiro, arriving here in the spring of 1923. He then underwent medical examination and the doctors pronounced their verdict that he had pernicious anemia. After a course of treatment at the hospital which afforded little encouragement either to himself or to

the medical profession, he went to a farm in West Virginia and lived out of doors. In the winter of the same year, he removed to his old home in Washington, Pennsylvania. Treatment by means of blood transfusions, though it undoubtedly had the effect of prolonging his life, did not enable the patient to regain his strength nor brighten the outlook for a return of health. His death was therefore not unexpected by his family and friends, though for a long time his iron strength of will and courage raised false hopes among the many who found it hard to be reconciled to the true situation.

During the period when Dr. Farabee was Curator of the Section of American Archaeology and Ethnology in the University Museum, he received many honours and distinctions. Among them were the gold medal of the Philadelphia Geographical Society and the gold medal of the Explorers Club of New York. He was selected as a member of the delegation of experts that accompanied President Wilson to the Peace Conference in Paris and he was chosen by the American Government to represent the United States at the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of Peruvian independence in Lima.

Before entering the service of the University Museum in 1913, Dr. Farabee had already conducted a three year exploration in South America as leader of the Harvard-DeMilhau Expedition. At an earlier period he had made a journey across the central desert of Iceland during a summer vacation when he was an instructor in anthropology at Harvard University.

Dr. Farabee combined the qualities of ripe scholarship with a magnetic personality, a kindly disposition and the buoyancy of youth. He won friends readily and held them firmly wherever he went. It is not easy to recall any man of science who was personally so well liked, who had so few enemies and so many friends.

The collections obtained by Dr. Farabee represent the following living Arawak and Carib tribes: Apal'ai, Waiwai, Parukutu, Macusi, Wapisiana, Ataroi. These are tribes in northern Brazil and southern British Guiana; on the Tapajos River south of the Amazon, the Mundurucu; at the headwaters of the Amazon, in Peru and in Ecuador, Huitoto, Conebo, Shipibo, Cashipobo and Yahua.

The collections of ancient decorated pottery obtained from the excavations on the island of Marajo are unequalled in extent and in variety of interest, and those obtained from the anciently inhabited caves north of the river are otherwise unknown.

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The later expedition to southern Peru resulted in the acquisition of a collection representing the ancient arts of the Nasca Indians, including their beautiful weavings and also their painted pottery. There were also obtained a number of Inca and Pre Inca collections. The South American collections in the Museum consequently have been greatly enriched by Dr. Farabee's labours and the additional knowledge obtained by him has been of the very first importance.

The following books and articles by Dr. Farabee have been published by the University Museum.

- THE CENTRAL ARAWAKS, 1918
THE CENTRAL CARIBS, 1924
ANCIENT GOLD TREASURE FROM SOUTH AMERICA,
CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO, 1920
THE AMAZON EXPEDITION, MUSEUM JOURNAL VI, 1
CONEBO POTTERY, MUSEUM JOURNAL VI, 2
THE AMAZON EXPEDITION OF THE UNIVERSITY
MUSEUM, MUSEUM JOURNAL VII, 4; VIII, 1; VIII, 2
DECORATIVE ARTS OF THE AMAZON, MUSEUM JOURNAL IX, 1
MARRIAGE OF THE ELECTRIC EEL, MUSEUM JOURNAL IX, 1
INDIAN CHILDREN'S BURIAL PLACE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA, MUSEUM JOURNAL X, 3
THE APALAI, MUSEUM JOURNAL X, 3
MUMMIFIED JIVARO HEADS, MUSEUM JOURNAL X, 4
ANCIENT AMERICAN GOLD, MUSEUM JOURNAL XI, 1
A NEWLY ACQUIRED WAMPUM BELT, MUSEUM JOURNAL XI, 1
INDIAN CRADLES, MUSEUM JOURNAL XI, 4
THE USE OF METALS IN PREHISTORIC AMERICA, MUSEUM JOURNAL XII, 1
A GOLDEN HOARD FROM ECUADOR, MUSEUM JOURNAL XII, 1
EXPLORATIONS AT THE MOUTH OF THE AMAZON, MUSEUM JOURNAL XII, 3
DRESS AMONG PLAINS INDIAN WOMEN, MUSEUM JOURNAL XII, 4
RECENT DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT WAMPUM BELTS, MUSEUM JOURNAL XIII, 1