

The Callen Coprolitic Reference Collection

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From the early 1950's until his untimely death in Ayacucho, Peru, in August of 1970, Dr. Eric O. Callen was recognized as the world's leading authority in the area of prehistoric human coprolite analysis. During his nearly 20 years of coprolitic research Dr. Callen completed and published the analyses of samples recovered from archeological sites in many areas of the world including coprolites from Huaca Prieta de Chicama in Peru (Callen and Cameron, 1955, 1960); from Tamaulipas, Mexico (Callen, 1963, 1965, 1967a); from Tehuacan, Mexico (Callen, 1967b); from Lazaret, France (Callen, 1969); and from the Glen Canyon in Utah (Callen and Martin, 1969). In addition to these studies Dr. Callen examined but had not yet published the analyses of prehistoric human coprolites recovered from archeological sites in Florida, Kentucky, Egypt and Peru.

Dr. Callen was one of the pioneers in the field of coprolitic analysis, and his research set the standards for others to follow. His colleagues therefore felt that it was essential that his many notes, records and reference materials not become lost, scattered, or accidentally discarded. Those of us who had seen and used his collections knew of its important value and of the contributions it could continue to make in the field of human coprolite analysis. Fortunately, his complete collection was saved and is now catalogued and available for use.

The Eric O. Callen Collection is stored and maintained by the Laboratory of Anthropology at Texas A&M University. The collection consists of 15,213 micro-

scope slides of mounted material recovered from coprolites; 1,472 microscope slides of reference materials; 625 coprolite residues; numerous seeds, specimens of small animal bones, mammal hairs, photomicrographs and line drawings that he used for making morphologic comparisons; and a file system of over 20,000 index cards cross-referenced with the microscope slides and coprolite residues. Since its arrival at Texas A&M this collection has already proven valuable as a reference source during the analysis of prehistoric human coprolites from Mammoth Cave, Kentucky; Ayacucho, Peru; and Frightful Cave, Mexico. Later this year the Callen Collection also will be used as a basis for the identification of materials recovered in 400,000 year old human coprolites from the Terra Amata site in Nice, France.

Dr. Callen's widow and MacDonald College (Saint-Anne de Bellevue, Canada) gave the Eric O. Callen Collection to Texas A&M University with the understanding that it would be maintained by the Laboratory of Anthropology and that it would remain always available for use by other researchers wishing to pursue the study of human coprolitic analysis. Interested researchers are therefore invited to inquire by writing to the Laboratory of Anthropology at Texas A&M University.

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Eric O. Callen and MacDonald College for giving the collection to the Laboratory of Anthropology at Texas A&M University.

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tion. He laments the excessive use of silver maple for street plantings. He pleads for a new ethic for trees with an expression of hope that trees, the lives of which may span many human generations, be accorded much greater respect and credit for their contributions to the quality of our lives.

This book is both a source book of information and a source of enjoyment for students of trees. It has been useful to several generations of botanists and horticulturists and should continue to be both timely and timeless.

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Man and His Foods: Studies in the Ethnobotany of Nutrition—Contemporary, Primitive, and Prehistoric Non-European Diets. Edited by C. Earle Smith, Jr. 131 pp. illus. University of Alabama Press, University, Alabama, 1973. \$6.50

This is a collection of five papers that were presented at a symposium of the XI International Botanical Congress, in Seattle in 1969. In the introduction Smith poses two thoughts that set the mood for the five papers to follow. First, our almost complete lack of knowledge of nutritional patterns among most of the world's population, especially those peoples not subsisting on the standard European diet, threatens to undermine our efforts to make any substantial progress in the race between population growth and the production of food. Second, the rate of acculturation among smaller ethnic

groups is proceeding so rapidly that the very data needed to understand nutritional patterns throughout the world are disappearing faster than they can be collected and may well be lost to mankind forever.

The first paper, by Nickerson, Rowe, and Richter, evaluates the role of plants in the diet of primarily meat-eating Alaskan Eskimos. The authors mention several anomalies with respect to the Eskimo diet. One, that the intake of Vitamin C is low but scurvy is virtually absent among these Eskimos. This, the authors conclude, is a result of the periodic intake of such plant products as willow leaves, cloudberry, etc. They also indicate that the knowledge of the use of plants to supplement the meat diet is rapidly disappearing and is primarily a phenomenon of the older segment of the Eskimo population. One question they leave unanswered is why the Eskimo population at Wainwright deviates from this pattern by having a young population with a substantial knowledge of plants as a part of the diet.

Callen's paper on dietary patterns in ancient Mexico affords the reader a view of man's use of plants in his diet from 6500 B.C. to as recently as 500 years ago. Callen also provides data on subtle differences in diet from village site to village site during the same time period. Through the use of data gained from coprolites (human fecal remains), Callen has constructed an extremely accurate view of the diet of particular peoples at specific time intervals in the history of Mexico. His work serves as a model of how we can gain an understanding of ancestral dietary patterns. His untimely death

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