

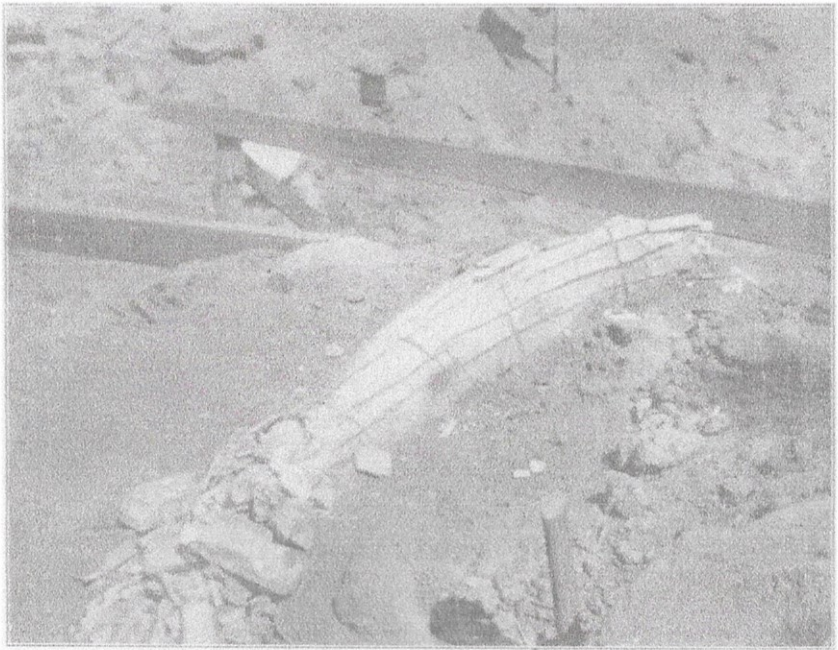
## A FOSSIL TUSK FOUND IN THE EQUUS BEDS IN McPHERSON COUNTY.

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LAST May, while digging in a sand-pit near the head of the east branch of Sharp's creek, the workmen found what they at first thought was a large petrified cottonwood root. Upon closer examination it appeared to be petrified and partially decayed ivory. As soon as we heard of it Prof. J. E. Welin and myself drove out to the place and examined the find, which proved to be the right tusk of a mastodon (*M. Americanus?*). When we arrived the fossil had already begun to crumble, being exposed to the sun and wind. Besides, the sand-bank in which it lay had caved in, so that the distal half and part of the base were broken into small pieces, so characteristic of decaying ivory. We at once set at work to gather up all the fragments and place the part yet intact into



View of tusk and bed in which it was found.



View of tusk as seen from above.

a plaster cast. According to measurements taken by the workmen shortly before the sand caved in, the tusk was nine feet eight inches in length and eleven inches in diameter at the base, tapering to a blunt point about one-half inch in diameter; and the concentric layers that compose it vary in thickness from one thirty-second of an inch along the axis to one-half inch in the outer layer.

It rested on the right or outer side, in a bed of sand, which was covered by eight feet of loam. The base of the tusk projected about five inches above the sand into the overlying loam, while the small or distal end was covered by thirty inches of sand. As found, it rested in the sand about thirty feet above the creek bank and about half way up the gently sloping hill on the east side, a distance of about 100 yards from the creek channel.

The sand in the pit where the tusk was found shows considerable cross-bedding and contains many layers of carbonaceous material and coarser sand and fine gravel. It was twenty feet deep on the east or upper border, and has been made by hauling away the sand, which is of an excellent qual-

ity for building purposes, being composed of thick alternating layers of both fine and coarser sand. Some of this is hauled for a distance of fifteen miles.

The low hills along the east side of the creek show for miles this same structure of sand and gravel, which is covered by layers of "hardpan" and surface soil of varying thicknesses, from three to fifty feet. In these are found two strata of CaCo<sub>3</sub> nodules, so common in this region. At the places I examined they were from eight to twelve inches apart, from one-fourth to one and one-half inches in thickness, and from six to twelve feet below the surface. Much of this material was found in the sand and soil about the tusk.

Last year, in another pit about forty rods north of the tusk, were found most of the bones of a human skeleton, covered by about eight feet of sand and loam. Some other bones were also found, but these had been destroyed, so I have not seen them. According to descriptions given they were bones from the skeleton of an animal of considerable size.

The tusk was found on the north end of the west quarter of section 6, in Jackson township, seven miles west and nine and one-half miles south of Lindsborg, and one and one-half miles west and four and one-half miles north of Conway, which is near the western limit of the McPherson *Equus* beds.

We have now in our museum collection one very valuable fossil from this immediate vicinity. It consists of the greater part of the skull of a *Megalonyx leideyi* Lindh. It was discovered a number of years ago by Prof. J. Udden and described by Dr. J. Lindahl, now of Cincinnati, Ohio. The skull is considered to be of great value, since it is one of the few, and, besides, the most complete of any, ever found.

The tusk has as yet not been reconstructed, but as we have all the pieces it is hoped that we will soon have them replaced and the entire fossil added to the museum collection as a valuable find from the *Equus* beds.



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