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Molds for Huge Dinosaur Model Arrive From Carnegie Museum

By G. E. Untermann

Through the generosity of the Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the Vernal Lions Club and Grant Southam, Public-spirited trucker of Vernal, the Utah Field House of Natural History has been made a gift of molds from which will be cast the skeleton of a 76 foot long dinosaur, Diplodocus.

The original skeleton of Diplodocus was excavated at Dinosaur Quarry by Professor Earl Douglass and was assembled and set up at Carnegie where it is on display today. This rather perfect skeleton of one of the largest dinosaurs ever to be unearthed was an object of admiration by the museums of many countries. Obviously, it would not be possible for every museum to have such a fine specimen, since there were not enough to go around. In addition, the cost of an original skeleton, were it available, was prohibitive for all but the very largest museums. However, the interest in this particular specimen was so great that Andrew Carnegie, steel magnate and philanthropist, ordered that a complete set of molds of the original Diplodocus from Dinosaur Quarry, be made. From these molds were cast ten complete skeletons of Diplodocus which were then presented as a gift by Mr. Carnegie to as many museums of Europe, Mexico and South America. These fine replicas are now on exhibit in these museums and serve to show visitors what Diplodocus was like.

Dr. J. LeRoy Kay, Head of the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology, Carnegie Museum, informed the Utah Field House of Natural History that these dinosaur molds were no longer needed at Carnegie, and that if the Field House could arrange to have them hauled to Vernal the museum would be made a gift of them.

Local Trucker makes trip

Since the molds alone weighed several tons, their transportation involved a rather expensive transaction over such a great distance. At this point the Vernal Lions Club volunteered to pay the freight if the molds could be hauled to Vernal at a reasonable cost. The man who made possible the hauling of

MOLDS FOR DINOSAUR MODEL ARRIVES FROM CARNEGIE MUSEUM

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this bulky and heavy load, from Pittsburgh to Vernal, is Grant Southam, who not only used his own equipment to make the trip but contributed cash to the cost of transporting the dinosaur mold to the Field House. Mr. Southam was accompanied to Pittsburgh by Marvin Haws and Deloy Gardiner who assisted with the loading. This is probably the first time a "dinosaur" ever had to ride in an automobile and Mr. Southam reports that his load created a near sensation along the highway.

When work is completed in casting all the numerous parts of the skeleton, the replica of Diplodocus will be erected on the lawn at the southeast corner of the Field House. Casting will be done in concrete and the display will be permanent, showing what the internal skeletal structure of this huge dinosaur was like. A special marker will inform the public that the original specimen came from Dinosaur Quarry and is now on display at the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh. The public will also be invited to view skeletal dinosaur remains at Dinosaur National Monument where excavation and relieving on the Quarry wall will begin next summer.

Owing to the tremendous job of casting the countless parts which compose the skeleton of Diplodocus, and due to the limited staff which will have to do the work of casting and erecting the replica, it is not likely that the dinosaur will be "browsing" on the museum lawn for at least two years. The Field House staff can work on this project only during the quieter winter months as its time is entirely taken up during the summer with field work and in caring for the more than fifty thousand visitors who pass through the museum annually.

However, when completed, the replica of Diplodocus will be the only completely assembled dinosaur skeleton in the "Land of the Dinosaurs" and will fill a long felt need for such an exhibit. Visitors daily remark that they are here in the "Land of the Dinosaur" in the Vernal area, and no where can they see an assembled skeleton or replica of one without going to Salt Lake City, Denver or some of the larger eastern museums. At last Vernal will have an authentic, scientifically constructed dinosaur of its own.

This skeletal replica of Diplodocus when completed, will be a fine supplement for the outstanding life-size dinosaur group which it is hoped can be created by Utah's master sculptor, Dr. Avard Fairbanks, at some future time. This spectacular group will be erected on the museum lawn at the southeast corner of the building. Thus will be exhibited the dinosaurs as they appeared in life and also an excellent replica of their internal skeletal structure. No finer study of the dinosaurs will be exhibited anywhere.