

1966

Mastodon Tusk [UNI Museum Inventory Description]

Iowa State Teachers College

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MASTODON TUSK

Sept. 23, 1933 Unearthed from a gravel pit on the farm of W. S. Heuermann, section 21, Reeve Township, Franklin County, about 4 miles south of Hampton, Iowa. Tusk 11 feet, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, record!

Tusk was varnished and glazed sometime between 1933 and 1960, according to Godfrey Miller, S.C.I. painter. (Reported 2/24/66.)

1960 First Godfrey Miller patched tusk wherever it was scaling off with a prepared patching plaster (in a can, like spackling compound). He touched it up with enamel undercoating, then glazing liquid (brown material), and then two coats of varnish (satin finish varnish with some gloss added to match previous sheen). The pulpy area is brown from heavy coat of glazing compound. (Notes taken by P. Sauer from Godfrey Miller 2/24/66.)

Museum move, Dec., 1964

Glass top and sides removed. Tusk moved downstairs bolted in position on base of display area. Handled very carefully by men. Stood move very well apparently. Glass top and sides replaced downstairs.

Museum move, February - March, 1966

- February After glass top had been removed and off several days, we noticed small hairline cracks near tip of tusk. Consulted Al Potter, head of science dept. at Price Lab School. Al had worked six years for the American Museum of Natural History in New York as a vertebrate paleontologist and had experience in collecting, packing and moving bones. He said they always took about a week to dig out a bone, shellacking it several times during that time. Shellac soaks in and hardens the bones. Since ours has already been varnished, we can't shellac it.
- Feb. 23rd Carpenter Harold Owen added a wood brace near tip of tusk as advised by Al Potter. Brace was put in a little too high. Tusk cracked much more from pressure up near tip.
- Feb. 25th Plumbing shop sent man to put another steel band around tusk near tip since it cracked behind Owen's brace. Steel band not painted. To be finished in fall after we move out of storage.
- March 4th Moved to East Stadium for storage. Wads of newspaper placed under tusk for extra support. Men very, very careful. Truck took about 5 minutes to drive from the northwest door of Seerley Hall over the curb to the east end of Sabin Hall! Drove 6 miles per hour to East Stadium. (Sauer drove her car behind to watch the procedure and recorded speed.) Glass cover taken on second trip and covered over tusk. Tusk travelled well and arrived apparently in excellent condition. Tusk was moved bolted securely to bottom of its display area in case.