

A LATE PLEISTOCENE MUSK-OX FROM EAST-CENTRAL ILLINOIS

EDWIN C. GALBREATH

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Recently, Mr. R. E. McClusky of the Ambraw Gravel Company, Lawrenceville, Illinois, presented the axis of a musk-ox, *Symbos cavifrons*, and fragments of a proboscidean limb bone to the Zoology Department of Southern Illinois University for inclusion in the Vertebrate Paleontology Collection.

These fossils were collected in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 27, T 11 N, R 4 W, Lawrence County, Illinois, which would be on the west edge of George Field, an abandoned Army airfield located approximately four miles northeast of Lawrenceville. My inspection of the beds at this locality and the nature of the preservation of the bones suggest that the fossils came from a thin layer of brownish gravels, sands, or silts that overlay the thick, widespread beds of gravel and sand in the area. Dr. George E. Ekblaw, of the Illinois Geological Survey, informs me that the gravel in this area that composes the "second bottom" terrace at Lawrenceville was derived from glaciers terminating to the north in Indiana and were much later in time than the Shelbyville glacier.

In my opinion, this dating is in keeping with age determinations for other late Pleistocene fossils, including musk-ox, found in the Embarrass

drainage system almost 60 miles to the north (Galbreath, 1938).

The axis (No. P200, Vert. Paleont. Coll., Zool. Dept., S.I.U.) and the proboscidean fragments are heavy, massive, and completely mineralized fossils, well-charged with iron oxide that gives them a reddish orange color. The axis is damaged. Only the centrum and neural arch are preserved, but this is enough to enable one to recognize that the bone belonged to a musk-ox. Comparison of the specimen with the axis of a musk-ox reported by Hibbard and Hinds (1960) and identified by them as *Symbos cavifrons* leaves no doubt that the two bones belong to the same species. Fortunately, comparable bones or other parts from related musk-oxen are known (Kitts, 1953) that enables one to eliminate these species from possible consideration in determining the identity of this bone. The measurements of this Lawrenceville specimen are so close to those reported by Hibbard for his specimen that I see no reason to do more than report that the two specimens are similar in size.

This discovery of a musk-ox adds one more record to the list of known kinds of musk-oxen found in Illinois, and is the southernmost reliable record for the distribution of *Symbos cavifrons* in Illinois.

CITED REFERENCES

GALBREATH, E. C. 1938. Post-glacial fossil vertebrates from east-central Illinois. Geol. Ser. Field Mus. Nat. Hist., 6 (20): 303-313, 2 figs.

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KITTS, D. B. 1953. A Pleistocene musk-ox from New York and the distribution of the musk-oxen. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. Novitates, No. 1607: 1-8, 2 figs.