

Mammoth *in situ*

No natural history museum worthy of the name lacks its display case of mammoth or mastodon teeth or its diorama of the "Great Ice Age" mammals. But to see the bones of such creatures exposed in the beds where they occur naturally, let alone to share the excitement of the "dig," one must be or travel with a paleontologist or amateur collector. To my knowledge there is no permanent public display of mammoth bones with artifacts of Early Man in a natural outcrop anywhere in the United States.

Domebo, named for its owner in southwestern Oklahoma, would not have been an easy fossil site to stabilize for such a purpose. The excavation team had its hands full mapping, jacketing, and removing mammoth bones before the spring thaws slumped over the site. Domebo, a Paleo-Indian Mammoth *KM* in the Prairie-Plains (Contribution No. 1 of the Museum

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of the Great Plains, Great Plains Historical Association, Lawton, Oklahoma, 1966. 63 pp., illus. Paper, \$2.50), edited by F. C. Leonhardy, treats the geology, (Retallick and Albritton), paleontology (Slaughter and Mehl), archeology (Leonhardy and Anderson), malacology (Cheatum and Allen), and palynology (Wilson) of beds containing bones of a single subadult, probably female, Imperial Mammoth (*Manimuthus imperator*). Found with the bones were three projectile points, one of Clovis fluted type and one approaching the Plainview type. Carbon-14 dates on the organic fraction of the mammoth bone give its age as 11,200 years. Twelve species of small vertebrates and 30 species of molluscs were removed from associated beds. Part of the fauna cannot be regarded as contemporaneous, as it came from beds 1000 years younger than the mammoth itself. But the pollen diagram by Wilson indicates no major vegetation changes throughout this interval, and the environment 11,000 to 10,000 years ago may have been quite similar to the present one.

Although the information they contain bears directly on a leading controversy in paleoecology—the cause (or causes) of late Pleistocene megafaunal extinction—few single large mammal sites have received the careful attention devoted to the Domebo mammoth. Paleocologists need many more case histories of this sort. And the public and the scientist both may hope that among future discoveries one showing bones, artifacts, stratigraphy, and ancillary evidence will prove suitable for a permanent exhibit *in situ*.

PAUL S. MARTIN

Geochronology Laboratories,
University of Arizona, Tucson