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LARGEST LAND MAMMALS OF EOCENE PERIOD RESTORED IN KNIGHT PAINTING

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Among the last of the twenty-eight mural paintings of the prehistoric world by Charles R. Knight, recently installed in Ernest R. Graham Hall, is one entitled *Uintatherium and Orohippus*. These are the scientific names of two animals of interest which lived in North America at the middle of the Eocene Period, some 45,000,000 years ago.

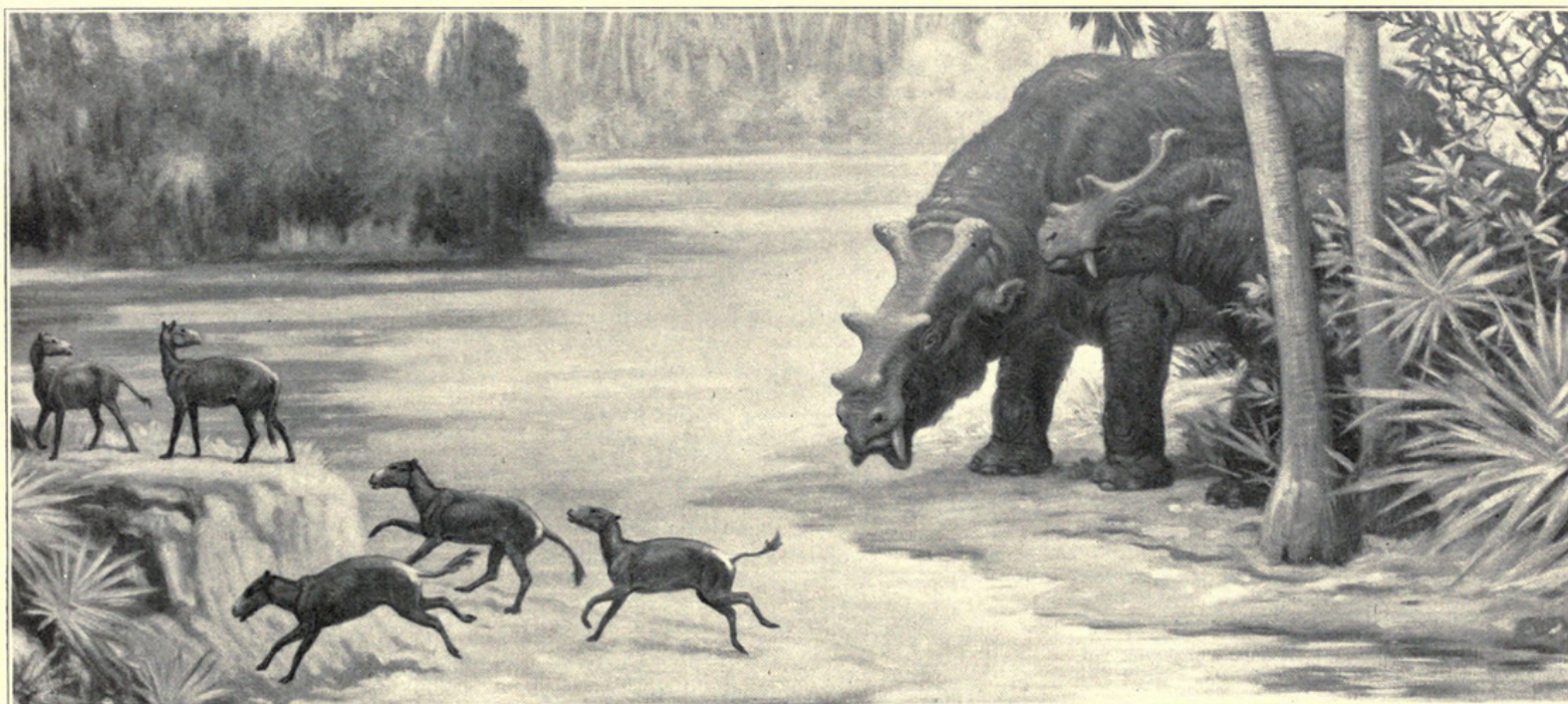
Uintatherium was a member of a long line of animals known to have lived in fertile basins of the Rocky Mountain region. Its

The animal's legs were long, and its feet were broad and padded like those of an elephant. It fed upon leaves of trees and fleshy plants of the lowland, forested regions.

The uintatheres are known from fossil remains found in the "bad lands" of the Bridger Basin, southwestern Wyoming, and from the Uintah Basin of northeastern Utah. Remains of this animal are the rarest of all the large extinct mammals known to have lived in North America. One mounted skeleton and a half dozen skulls constitute all the specimens known of the genus

on each hind foot. It is known from entire skeletons and from many skulls, legs and feet.

Orohippus would have been rated as small game if there had been human hunters in its time. It was among the small and timid animals which lived about the meadows and fed upon leaves of low bushes and upon the fleshy plants at the water's edge. It was doubtless preyed upon by the more common wolf-like and otter-like flesh-eaters of its time. Being quick and alert it ran away at the first sign of danger, though often a lagging member of the troop was seized by



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Uintatherium and Orohippus

Mural in Hall 38 showing rhinoceros-like animals and small four-toed horses which lived in Rocky Mountain region about 45,000,000 years ago. One of the series of twenty-eight paintings presented by Ernest R. Graham. Charles R. Knight is the artist.

family included the largest land animals—the natural overlords of its time. None but their own kind approached them in size and strength to dispute for supremacy.

One member of the family (*Eobasileus*) grew larger and stronger than the modern rhinoceros and was armed with three pairs of horns on the head. A first short pair arose from the nose, a second pair from above the eyes, and a third massive pair from the back of the head. A stout pair of tusks protruded from the upper jaws.

BLAKE OF MANDEL EXPEDITION MAKES NOTABLE COLLECTION

The work of the Mandel-Field Museum Zoological Expedition to Venezuela ended last month with the return of Emmet R. Blake, a zoologist of the University of Pittsburgh, who was the last member of the party remaining in the field. Mr. Blake spent several days in Chicago at the Museum following his arrival in this country. Part of his collections had preceded him, and the

balance was expected to arrive shortly after his return.

In a period of only about six weeks, Mr. Blake made a collection of nearly 900 birds, a notable achievement for a collector working alone in such a short period, and under the difficult conditions imposed by the trailless slopes of Mount Turumiquiri, a 9,000-foot peak, which was the principal locality in which he worked. This is the isolated easternmost projection of the Andes, and is a region with a fauna distinctive in some

an enemy which waited in ambush for it.

This little horse is of importance as an ancestor of the modern horse. It represents what is believed to be the second stage of development of the horse. Its sight and smell were probably keenly developed for use as senses of protection. Its teeth were simple and not suited for eating grass. Its narrow, tapering hoofs, spreading out into a broad foot with a pad under the first and second joints of the toes, were well adapted for running over marshy lands.

respects from that of the lower Andes. Very little previous collecting had been done there. Mr. Blake's collection of birds is one of the largest ever made in so short a time. Included among the specimens are numerous examples of rare species, and it is believed that further study will reveal a number of previously unknown species.

Mr. Blake collected also about seventy-five reptiles and amphibians, and a number of small mammals, which are welcome additions to the Department of Zoology.



Riggs, Elmer S. 1932. "Largest Land Mammals of Eocene Period Restored in Knight Painting." *Field Museum news* 3(6), 1-1.

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