

Excerpt from *In the Laramie* by Charles H. Sternberg in *A Story of the Past or The Romance of Science*, published by Sherman, French and Company, Boston, 1911 describing discovery, excavation, and transport of AMNH FARB 5060 *Edmontosaurus* sp., Skeleton with large part of skin preserved lacking tail tibia, fibula & pedes. Dinosaur mummy. Late Cretaceous (Maastrichtian), Lance Formation, Converse (or Niobrara?) County WY, 1908

But good luck does not come alone, –
George has found a pelvic bone.
Charlie and I make the long trip
To Lusk, where we our fossil ship.
When five days later we return,
I hear such news my heart strings burn –
A story that George has to tell.
My pride runs high, my bosom swell, –
He's found a splendid *Trachodon*,
And he the prize has surely won.
"He lies now in the quarry there,
Let's quickly to the place repair."
"No," says George, "unload your duds.
For three long days we've lived on spuds,
We've worked at least twelve hours a day,
And quarried out the sandstone grey
Full fifteen feet at least in height,
Twelve feet across from left to right.
The floor is over ten feet deep,
In center lies, as if asleep,
The carcass of our *Trachodon*.
And so, you see, the prize I've won."
"That's not all," cries the eager boy,
"I know your heart will break for joy,
The glory of this specimen –
He lies there as he floated in
With bloated body on the wave.
The gas escapes he found his grave,
And he sinks to his long rest,
Skin clinging fast to bone and breast.
A long and lingering death he'd died,
His flesh had all been atrophied.
He surely has been starved to death,
He skin to all the bones is prest,
And within abdominal walls,
Like a great curtain there it falls.
While carcass rides upon the tide,
The head is pressed to the left side;
And in the sand his body's laid,
Hi arms stretched out imploring aid."

I can scarce wait until with ease
The boys their hunger can appease.
With haste our eager footsteps take
To the bed of old Laramie lake,
To where the mighty carcass lay,
As if he'd died but yesterday.
I raise a high exultant sound,
The crags and canyons echo round.
"Thank God, thank God, I'm paid at last

For days of toil, for dangers past!”
Now Science had a mighty store
Found by collectors long before,
Of this great reptile Trachodon.

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His body was in armor clad.
I must confess it made me glad
To learn from this my trophy grand,
HE LIVED IN WATER, not on land.
His feet were webbed, and his thin skin
Was blotched with scales, both small and thin.
His mighty body shines and pales,
Lined by rosettes and little scales.

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But now to work; I’ll dream no more.
Our work lies in the old lake’s floor.
How will we get our saurian safe,
Is the great problem we must face.
The mighty fossil it will prove
A trying task for us to move.
We first take off the arms and head;
They’re heavy, and they weigh like lead.
The body now we cut in two,
Cover with starch and paper too;
While yards of cloth and paper enfold,
Which, dipped in plaster, forms a mold
That soon becomes as hard as stone.
Two thousand pounds each section weigh,
Like chunks of iron there they lay.
We’re only four, my sons and I.
To move these masses we will try.
But first of all, strong boxes make;
Then each his sharpened shovel take
And cut some grass to pack around
This specimen that we have found.
We build a platform for the skull,
And to it now our wagons pull.
A section then we get around,
With levers lift it from the ground.
We build beneath with rocky blocks,
And get it in the box at last,
Which we roll in the wagon, too; –
Repeat the process till we’re through.
Now you might think our labor done:
Dear friends, it’s only just begun.
We hitch four horses, –“Please don’t talk.”
Half up the hill those horses balk;
They back the wagon in a ditch;
They will not pull. So we unhitch.
The to the nearest ranch I go –
Full twenty miles from camp, I know.
What if a rain should flood the ditch
And in the Cheyenne River pitch
This load to me worth more than gold?
“The ranchman’s busy,” so I’m told.
He would not stop his work one day

For all the bones on earth, they say.
I find a man who owns a team
Who'd gladly go, so it would seem,
To help me in my direst need.
So off they go with all their speed,
For Levi had come on with me,
And went to show the road, you see.
In passing I might simply say
He only charged three dollars a day.
"We're out the woods; now I can talk" –
Alas! he knew his team would balk.
So full three days all squandered they.
The man got his three dollars a day.
At last George finds a man and team
Who'd do their duty, so 'twould seem.
And so we reach the platform floor
Beside the railroad station door.

[The fossil shipped from Lusk is most likely a *Triceratops* skull found just before and destined for the BM(NH) described in the unexcerpted part of the poem]