

Museum Notes

In March, 1964, a 16mm sound film, "Home of Iowa's History" was made by station KDPS-TV in Des Moines. This 20 minute film on the State Department of History and Archives introduces the Historical Library, Census, Archives, Newspaper and Annals divisions of the department and briefly explains their functions.

Since the Museum Division most graphically portrays the history of our state, museum displays were chosen to tell the story of Iowa's past.

A piece of Sioux quartzite was used to illustrate the earliest period in our pre-history. This rock is typical of those formed millions of years before life first appeared on earth. Fossils of sponges and corals, and the less familiar trilobites and crinoids were used to show the myriads of forms of sea life that gradually evolved, developed and disappeared only to be replaced by newer forms of life.

Best known of the prehistoric reptiles were dynasaurs—the largest animals ever to exist on land. Finally, mammals appear and after many more millions of years man evolved and in his wandering arrived on the continent of North America. The prehistoric Indians were represented in the film by the artifacts and skeletons taken last summer from the burial site in West Des Moines, and historic Indians by early photographs and drawings and the many artifacts that the museum has in its collection. Then the wild animals, seen in the habitat groups of the animal room, show what Iowa was like when White man first arrived.

The museum collection of early fine china and glassware was used to show the changes that took place in the lives of the people during the 1800's. World Wars I and II are reflected in the headlines of newspapers of the times. Finally the atomic age with a display on the Ames Laboratory of the Atomic Energy Commission, and a space instrument package built by the Iowa City Scientist under the direction of Dr. James Van Allen.

Copies of the film may be borrowed for group showings by contacting KDPS-TV, Des Moines.

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