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Eons ago, the [sic] both rumbled over Florida Eons ago, they both rumbled over Florida

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



EONS AGO, THE BOTH RUMBLED OVER FLORIDA

By HAMPTON DUNN

BARTOW -- If you're cruising along State Road 60 east of Bartow and see an oversize "elephant" poised alongside the highway, don't get shook up.

What you're seeing is a statue of a Pleistocene mammoth, one of the giant animals which roamed the Florida peninsula in prehistoric times. It's a trade mark for the Phosphate Valley Exposition on this site. The North American imperial mammoth attained a shoulder height of 14 feet.

This is the heart of the state's phosphate-producing area, where 80% of the nation's phosphate is mined. Scooped up in this activity often are the fossilized bones of mastodons, saber-toothed tigers and blue triangles with serrated edges, the teeth of big sharks which once swam the warm shallow seas covering the state eons ago.

The museum shows a splendid collection of pleistocene fossils, said to be far more complete than that in the Smithsonian.

Shortly after the phosphate "boom" began in Florida, the Florida Times-Union of Jacksonville, reported that phosphate beds were "the petrified remains of countless millions of animals whose existence dates back into the gray dawn of time .. but in carrying out God's plan, these huge monsters .. buried through all these millions of forgotten ages, again come forth in other forms to give luxuriance and fertility to the plant life which feeds a hungry people (proving that) 'Life is constantly nursing at the bosom of death'."

