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Fragment of the skull of an extinct "superbison" (above) and the skull of a large modern bison (below). Note great difference in size.

Giant Bison Found

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One of the most outstanding fossil discoveries ever made in Saskatchewan is a portion of the skull of a giant bison known as "superbison." Mr. B. DeVries in co-operation with the Bliss brothers, excavators, recovered this specimen from a gravel pit near Fort Qu'Appelle during gravel removal in August, 1956. The genus "Superbison" is the largest known bison, being much larger than its modern relatives. (See photo.) Although a few others have been found in the Yukon, Alaska and the southern U.S.A. this is believed to be the most southerly and easterly record in Canada.

A complete study of this specimen remains to be made but preliminary judgment indicates that it is probably of interglacial age and at least one hundred thousand years old. This belief is supported by studies

of the geological formation and the other fossil animals with which it was associated. It is worthy of note that this type of bison probably became extinct before man came to North America; no artifacts have ever been found in association with its bones.

The span of the tips of the horns if complete would be approximately five feet; with the horn sheath present the span of the horns of this great bison would have been at least six feet. Imagination can scarcely conceive a bison with horns of such a dimension. The presence of this animal together with a musk ox-like bovid, numerous large native horses and many elephants (mammoths), as indicated by the fossil evidence, presents a picture of a strange fauna, indeed, for the southern region of Saskatchewan.