

February 8, 1983

Mr Roland L. Mapelli
PO Box G
Greeley, CO 80632

Dear Mr Mapelli:

Enclosed is a photograph of the Triceratops skull taken the day it was found. The rubble under the hammer is part of the skull exposed on the surface which led to the discovery. The rubble is the fate of all fossils when they are exposed to the weathering action of climate, It is estimated that the entire skull would have been reduced to unrecognizable fragments in less than ten years if it had not been found.

The skull lay on its right side and was crushed flat, The depression above the hammer head and below the horn is the eye orbit. The nasals would have been just below the front horn, above the beak, in the depression seen to the left of the hammer, A portion of the skeleton was also recovered and includes a partial shoulder blade, parts of the back and tail, many ribs, and lots of fragments of other bones. Dr Martin Lockley, Department of Geology, University of Colorado, Denver, has been working on the skeleton with the assistance of several students. They are removing the rock encasing the bones, a tedious process they may not finish for another year. Unfortunately, Dr. Lockley has been appointed Chairman for the UCD Geology Department and is no longer able to devote as much time as he had previously.

The University of Colorado Museum hopes to have the skull cleaned of rock, the damaged area (where the hammer is in the photograph) restored and then to place the skull on exhibit for all to see, The skeleton is too fragmentary to be placed on exhibit, but will remain in the museum's vertebrate fossil collection for scientists to study. Skeletons are rarely found associated with Triceratops skulls making this specimen very important.

It is difficult to assign a dollar value to this specimen because it is the only one of its kind from Colorado, and it is too large (5ft.skull) and heavy (over $\frac{1}{4}$ ton) for a private collector to show off in his house. Furthermore, the work necessary to prepare the skull for exhibit is far beyond the capacity of a weekend fossil hunter. Besides, if it were in some private collection, then it would be inaccessible for others to see and marvel at. It truly is a magnificent fossil Colorado should be proud of.

As you may recall, Colorado is where the first Triceratops was found, but unfortunately, only consisted of a pair of horns. Thus, the discovery of the skull on your land has a great deal of historical importance.

Please note that at no time have I divulge the location where the skull was found in order to prevent unwelcomed visitors. I understand the frustration ranchers have of cattle wandering off because gates were left open, or trash left lying about, or having strangers on the land. I have had several people ask me where it was found, but my reply was to say near Greeley.

I hope that this answers any questions you may have concerning the skull. If not please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Carpenter