

Who Was Nebraska Man?

In 1922, geologist Harold Cook found a tooth in Nebraska. He sent the tooth to Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn, who was the leading paleontologist and head of the American Museum of Natural History. Professor Osborn said that the tooth belonged to an early type of ape man, and named the “missing link” *Hesperopithecus harold cooki* in honor of the man who discovered it. Some evolutionists happily declared that another missing link between ape and man had been found! Here are some facts about *Hesperopithecus*:

- Due to the location of the discovery, *Hesperopithecus* was nicknamed Nebraska Man.
- Although the actual fossil evidence consisted of only a single tooth, the London Illustrated News hired an artist to draw “Mr. and Mrs. Nebraska Man”—two creatures resembling something between men and apes. The drawing was featured in the June 24, 1922 issue of the News and created the distinct impression that scientists had discovered yet another missing link.
- Four years later Harold Cook returned to the site to search for additional fossils and found an identical tooth nearby. This tooth was still attached to a jaw—the jaw of a wild pig!



London Illustrated News,
June 24, 1922

During the time which this mistake occurred, the scientific community was experiencing a bit of ape man frenzy. Discoveries of other so-called missing links had been made in Europe and the American scientists were anxious to get into the game. Consequently, claims like Nebraska Man were often based upon flimsy evidence, so it is understandable how the mistake was made. What is truly disturbing, however, is the manner in which this mistake was disclosed. To minimize embarrassment for the evolutionists involved, *Hesperopithecus* was quietly removed from encyclopedias and textbooks. For a period of time, many people in the world continued to believe that Nebraska Man was a missing link.

As Christians, we should be leery of claims that contradict the clear teachings of the Bible. Despite all of the hype, Nebraska Man turned out to be nothing more than a pig. The missing link between man and apes was still missing—and still is today.

Recommended Resources:

- Unruh, Timothy J, “A Tooth From the Pig That Made a Monkey Out of a Man.” 1998. Print
- [A Pocket Guide to Apemen: Separating Fact from Fiction](#), Answers in Genesis-USA, 2010