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The USGS (U.S. Geological Survey) tells us about these [dinosaur tracks](#) near [Hannover, Germany](#): “The tracks of *iguanodontids* and *theropods* are excellently preserved in this quarry in Germany. These trackways were formed 140 million years ago, when dinosaurs walked through mud on the sea or lake shore. We know it was a shoreline because the ripple-like pattern exposed in this picture is just like the patterns formed on modern beaches. Geologists carefully excavated these footprints so that they could learn how big the animals were and how they walked. Image used with permission from: [DinosaurHunter.org](#).”

Pliny Moody was the first person to discover fossilized dinosaur tracks. It was 1802. Those tracks are known today as the Moody Footmark Quarry in South Hadley, Massachusetts.

At the time, people believed the bipedal footprints must have been made by a large bird. [Edward Hitchcock](#), one of the foremost early [authorities](#) on the subject, published a book about those and other tracks. (In the end, they turned out to be dinosaur tracks.)

Around 50 years later, also in America, Ferdinand [Hayden](#) conducted a geological survey along the Judith River (in what was then the Nebraska Territory). He found some large [fossilized teeth](#) belonging to unknown animals. He sent the fossils to Philadelphia where they could be studied by [Joseph Leidy](#), an [eminent physician and naturalist](#).

After he completed his study of those teeth, and other unknown remains, Leidy [published](#) his findings. It was the first description of dinosaur remains printed in the United States.

Not long after Leidy published his paper, the study of dinosaurs became an important academic subject. But as rivalry developed between two of his colleagues (Edward [Cope](#) and Othniel C. Marsh), Leidy grew tired of the bickering.

Working from incomplete skeletons, scientists did not have all the answers about ancient animal remains. It was easy to make errors as one man tried to outdo the other with each new “discovery.”

The Cope-Marsh antagonism grew significantly after Cope made a huge mistake in reconstructing an [Elasmosaurus](#). He placed the creature’s head on the [wrong end](#) of its body and then published his work.

When [Marsh](#) pointed out the flaw, Cope was mortified. He tried to buy back all the illustration plates so he could correct his error. ([Cope](#) wasn’t totally successful in that endeavor, however, as this [link](#) to the Linda Hall Library in Kansas City, Missouri [confirms](#).)

Rivalries between various groups of dinosaur students (professional and amateur) is not just a thing of the past. The battle over “Sue” (the Field Museum’s *T.rex*) and who does (and doesn’t) “own” or “know what” about dinosaur fossils are examples of more modern disagreements.

Occasional feuding between dinosaur hunters is as much a part of the world today as it was during Leidy’s time.

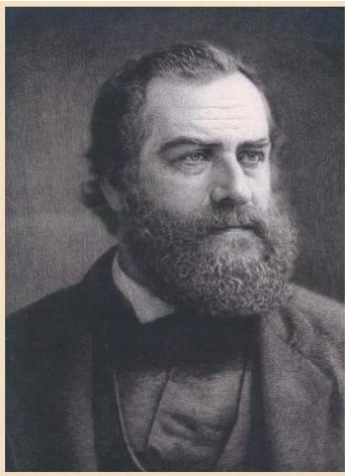
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/DINOSAUR-TRACKS-AND-DISPUTES-Jurassic-Park>

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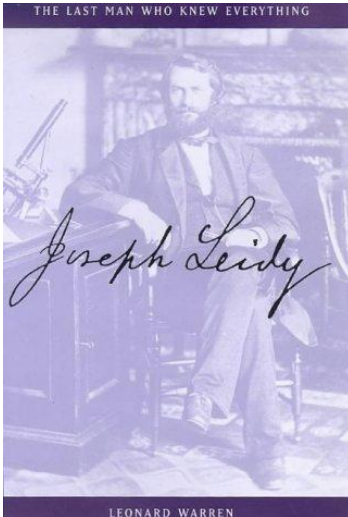


Joseph Leidy - Photo

Image of Leidy online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Joseph Leidy - The Last Man Who Knew Everything

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Edward Cope and the Reconstructed Elasmosaurus

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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