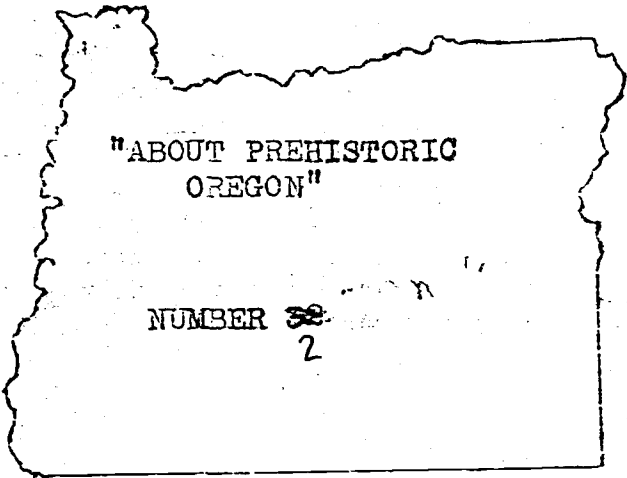


OREGON ODDITIES  
and  
ITEMS OF INTEREST



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The items in this bulletin, selected from the material compiled by the Federal Writers' Project and the Historical Records Survey of the Works Progress Administration, are representative of the significant collections being made by these nation-wide programs.

The Historical Records Survey is inventorying all sources of early Oregon history, including county and state records, church archives, historic cemeteries, old manuscripts and imprints, old printing presses, monuments and relics, private diaries, letters, and memoirs, historic buildings, and Indian records and lore.

The chief undertaking of the Federal Writers' Project has been the American Guide Series of books. In Oregon as in all other states the work includes the state Guide, designed to acquaint Americans with America and to present to the visitor the history, industry, recreational advantages and scenic attractions of the state. The Oregon Guide, now in the final stages of editing will soon be added to the list of those already published which includes Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture; Maine: A Guide "Down East"; Massachusetts: A Guide to its Places and People; New Hampshire: A Guide to the Granite State; Washington: City and Capital; Philadelphia: A Guide to the Birthplace of a Nation.

Over 100 books have been published by the Federal Writers' Project. The spring catalog, now in preparation, may be had upon request.

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## ABOUT PREHISTORIC OREGON

Dr. Thomas Condon, pastor, carried a geologist's pick with him constantly when he roamed the hills of Wasco county, in the days when The Dalles was a wide-open picturesque frontier town. In addition to being one of the most noted of early-day pastors of Oregon, Dr. Condon was a geologist of prominence who did much to turn the eyes of eastern scientists toward Oregon as a rich source of material for the geologist, paleobotanist, and paleontologist.

Having no library to aid him in the preparation of his sermons, he was accustomed to walk about the country adjacent to The Dalles while he composed them. On such excursions he was ever picking away at the rocky formations. His enthusiasm for geology soon enlisted the help of the soldiers and officers of the military garrison, teamsters and ranchers. The amateur collectors brought him fossil specimens from far points.

Dr. Condon was a prominent figure in The Dalles for 10 years, evidencing a life of practical Christianity. His church was made up of communicants of many Protestant denominations. He became professor of natural science at the University of Oregon, where he remained until his death, at the age of 84. He became widely known for his book, *The Two Islands and What Became of Them*.

Pictographs in the Rock Creek gorge which were recently reported may provide another link in the race migration story which is revealed in other Columbia valley pictographs and petroglyphs. Those recently discovered pictographs are located on a cliff near the John Hughes ranch in Morrow county.

A huge granite boulder was uncovered near Corvallis in 1924. It is thought to have been brought by glacial action from the Cascades of Washington and deposited on the margin of Willamette Sound by a molting iceberg.

In 1851 stone seats were found on the top of an uninhabited mountain.

In December 1956, when the Columbia river reached an all time low water mark for the periods when the stream is not frozen over, a part of the river's bed near Crate point, just west of The Dalles, was uncovered. C. A. Klindt, local pioneer and amateur archeologist, visited the spot and unearthed a rare collection of cooking utensils, mortars and pestles. The relics were buried in the mud, just below the water line.

Klindt says that visiting research students had suspected a deposit of relics might be found at this point. Previous investigation had been hampered by the fact that when the low water periods occur the river is usually frozen over.

Those locally informed on Indian relics are of the opinion that the new finds are not of Indian origin but were left by a much earlier people, probably the race credited with having carved the pictographs on the basalt cliffs of the Columbia river.

The tusk of a mastodon was exhumed near Arlington in 1923. It was whole when found, but became broken in several pieces by inexpert handling.

In 1887 it was reported that an artesian well on the W. S. Ladd property near Portland, was sunk nearly 2000 feet and passed through numerous different tropical formations. The drill brought up petrified specimens of tropical timber, among them being almond shells of perfect form, and wood and bark of the Sawke species.

That a three toed horse once lived in Oregon is evidenced by the remains found in the fossil beds of the state, particularly in the John Day country.

In March, 1923, interesting relics, including a straight stone pipe with evidence of having been used, were found in burial mounds in N. E. Benton county on the farm of Clyde Peacock. The remains are classed as pre-Indian--skulls symmetrical--artifacts present.

Prehistoric burial mounds are situated along the Calapooia River in Linn county, between Albany and Brownsville.

Skulls of Calapooia mound builder Stone Age Indian artifacts, utensils and carvings, are on exhibition at the Oregon State Collogo museum. The other above mentioned specimens are also to be found there.

Proving that Oregon redwood trees flourished at one time in central Oregon, the petrified sequoia forest of this district is of special value. Once the clumsy, small-brained dinosaurs roamed among the trees, but during a later geologic age the redwoods were toppled over by some ancient upheaval.

The Gazette-Times of Corvallis, September 4, 1924, reported a farmer had uncovered with his plow a large circle of symbolic stones, shaped and placed by prehistoric man in a field on a hilltop near Salem.

There are still some fine specimens of redwood trees to be found in Oregon. Forest Grove, in Washington county, is one of the cities where some beautiful trees of this species grow.

The Opal Springs in Jefferson county, nature has combined art and science to produce, not genuine opals, but polished chalcedony, a kind of agate. Although opal deposits have been discovered and worked commercially on upper Trout creek in Jefferson County, the name Opal Springs is somewhat figurative.

Recent research there revealed an interesting bit of history in connection with the redwoods of Washington county.

The chalcedony which issues from the springs, however, does become polished and gleaming from the constant motion of the water. These agates are prized by tourists as souvenirs.

When gold was discovered in California in 1849, every able-bodied man struck out for the mining regions of the south, among them John R. Porter, a lover of trees. Though he fared none too well in California and brought back little of the yellow metal, he did bring back to his home community a more enduring treasure in the form of two bushel sacks of cones from the California redwoods, whose symmetrical beauty had intrigued him.

To reach this interesting spot the visitor should drive down the Crooked river ten miles below the state highway bridge through what is known locally as The Gorge.

He planted the seed in a nursery and grew some hundred seedlings, some of which he divided among his neighbors, though he planted many of them on his farm near Verboort.

According to McArthur's Oregon Geographic Names, the springs in themselves are remarkable since they discharge over eighty million gallons of water per day.

At the present time there are 91 of these stately redwood trees in Washington county, most of them about 100 feet tall, cone-shaped and symmetrical as a steeple. Three of the trees are on the college campus in Forest Grove, others are on the courthouse grounds in Hillsboro, while still others are located in various parts of Forest Grove.

In 1895 a basement for the new postoffice building at Albany was excavated, and bones of a huge animal were found. In the opinion of Prof. Condon they were bones of a small elephant which lived in Oregon during the Champlain period.

Found under the earth in a cave a few miles out of Bend was a large and oddly shaped moccasin or slipper. It was made of woven bark and tule grass.

Fossil remains of Oregon mastodons including jawbones, leg bones, vertebrae etc., have been found in various parts of the state, as well as tusks and teeth of prehistoric elephants and mammoths.

The Oregon Agricultural College Barometer for December 22, 1922, reported that a piece of elephant's tusk was found in a load of sawed wood delivered from Kiger Island.

Taken from the John Day fossil beds between 1930 and 1936, were some agatized paleontological specimens: phiohippus head and loose teeth; co-hippus head and loose teeth; rhinoceros teeth, horn and jawbones; camel teeth and jawbones; peccarico teeth and jawbones; saber tooth tiger, tusk and jawbones; squirrel teeth and skulls--all said to be about 200 million years old. These Miocene deposits in the John Day fossil beds are located near US Highway 28.

The following appeared in the Weekly Astorian May 19, 1877: "A few days ago Harry T. Spedden picked up a curiosity on the beach below Point Adams. It is the skull of a mammoth bird. The bones measure six inches across the forehead and twelve inches from the crown of the head to the point of the nose."

A vertebra weighing 4 3/4 pounds and several mineralized ribs were discovered in Fossil Lake in 1931. They were regarded as elephant remains, and are considered additional proof of the existence of a large prehistoric lake covering much of Lake county.

The following appeared in the Democrat-Herald of Baker, May 14, 1873: "J. W. Virtue has in his bank the remains of a mammoth. The jawbone measures about 3' in length and 18" wide at the back portion. The whole is in good condition. These remains were found by Charles Green in his mining claim in Rye Valley in this county at a depth of 60' under ground. It is one of the most perfect fossil remains that we have ever seen."

The Jan. 18, 1890, edition of the Coast Mail, newspaper published at that time in Coos county, contains a story

of a fallen meteor: "A meteor fell near Schetter's logging camp on South Slough, about a quarter of a mile above the old Winchester dam last Saturday night. The blaze lit up the whole country for miles and the explosion was distinctly heard at Marshfield. It buried itself out of sight in the hill and parties are trying to discover the nature of the thing."

Workmen excavating on the bank site in Lakeview found some very old and queerly shaped guns and clubs made of huge limbs of trees shaped to fit the hand. The clubs have round blunt heads and supposedly were used by a very primitive tribe for killing game.

In Dec. 1881 the East Oregonian reported that the thigh bone of an antedeluvian monster, washed out by water, was dug up by John L. Cox on his ranch in Alkali Canyon, 15 miles southwest of Pendleton. The bone was the femur with knee-joint over eight inches in diameter, solid and well preserved. Some Indians called it "big elk", but others styled it "big injun".

Unusual rocks, including huge agates, geodes, "thunder eggs" and obsidian, as well as stony fragments of primeval trees, are used in the porch, foundation and fireplace in the home of Mrs. John Matson of Bend.

Geologists who have visited the home have been amazed at the wide variety of stones, some of them semi-precious. Some of the pieces of petrified wood are representative of semi-tropical forests.

A cave located about 40 years ago on Snake river is decorated with Indian paintings. The paintings, done in colors, are almost hidden by a coating of dust and smoke. On the ceiling is one mural about 40 feet by 18 feet, and on the north wall, one about 12 feet long and 3 feet wide.