As Mother Earth faces ever increasing pressures on her ever decreasing natural resources, we fear more and more about the wisdom of long-range planning with the object of achieving more efficient use of remaining resources. This has not always been the case. As an example, for many years prior to 1930, my father leased most of the bottom land along both sides of Grave Creek extending eastward from Leland for more than a mile. The land was then owned by the Leland Land Company of Portland. It was good farmland, and produced a variety of hay and grain crops as well as vegetables. It also included two small but well producing fruit orchards. It also contained an unknown volume of placer gold which had been deposited there over the past thousands of years by Grave Creek. The gold was in the gravel lying on a very wet front, well was the wonderful things we would do with all that money we would be making from full-time jobs created by the dredge. When it was learned that a massive land clearing job would have to be done prior to the actual dredge operation, optimism grew. This would mean employment for many men, everyone agreed, because the dredging operation demanded a surprisingly detailed degree of land-clearing work. All trees, both native and those of the fruit orchards had to be removed, roots included. Land clearing and operation was involved in the big project. The dredge, constructed on a 50- by 100-foot hull, was a floating device. This required the excavation of a 12-foot deep, 150- by 150-foot pond. The pond would be perpetuated by the dredge itself, as a large endless chain of buckets dug up the gravel and soil ahead, ran everything through a gold extraction process, then deposited the gravel, devoid of both topsoil and gold, behind. This, of course, required a rather large volume of water, which was brought to the pond via ditches from Grave Creek and Dog Creek. This demanded the construction of a dam of sorts in Grave Creek near where the dredge began operations. Undoubtedly, at the peak of Leland's placer mining era, more men were employed than were to be hired by all the various phases of the dredge operations. Tom and his predecessors and persisted. The tale could not be confirmed, however, and skepticism remained high. When the Grants Pass Daily Courier finally confirmed the story, all doubt was erased and most of us immediately experienced a drastic and only marginally justified reversal of emotions. Most of us began planning on all the wonderful things we could do with all that money we would be making from full-time jobs created by the dredge. When it was learned that a massive land clearing job would have to be done prior to the actual gold dredging operation, optimism grew. This would mean employment for many men, everyone agreed, because the dredging operation demanded a surprisingly detailed degree of land-clearing work. All trees, both native and those of the fruit orchards had to be removed, roots included.

Pictured is approximately 15,000 yards of the 150,000 yards of dredge area that were crushed this past summer; most was used in repaving I-5 near the Hugo interchange into the Cow Creek Valley. The Leland dredge soon after it began operating. Photos courtesy Larry McLean.
The tale could not be confirmed, however, and skepticism remained high. When the Grays Pass Daily Courier finally confirmed the story, all doubt was erased and most immediately experienced a drastic and only marginally justified reversal of emotions. Most of us decided on living, and it's easy to create a feeling of what one would do with all that time we would be perpetuating by the dredge itself, as a large endless chain of buckets dug up the gravel and soil ahead, ran everything through a gold extraction process, then depositing the gravel, devoid of both topsoil and gold, behind. This, of course, required a rather large volume of water, which was brought to the pond via ditches from Grave Creek and/or Dog Creek. This demanded the construction of a dam of sorts in Grave Creek near where the dredge began operations. Undoubtedly, at the peak of Leland's placer mining era, more men were employed than ever before by all the various phases of the dredge preparation, construction and operation. But they were scattered about the area in smaller groups, and, despite the richness of many of the placer claims, and according to many of the old timers, excitement and news of anything approximating a boom could not be believed by the people, for they could not have believed it, had it been otherwise.

The Skeeter Brothers firm of Phoenix, Oregon, which had been operating for a number of years on Foot Creek in Jackson County, was to be dismantled and moved to Grave Creek (so said the rumor) for the purpose of dredging for gold in an area which included most of the agricultural land formerly leased by my grandfather.

This rumor refused to meet the fate of most of its predecessors and persisted. The tale could not be confirmed, however, and skepticism remained high. When the Grays Pass Daily Courier finally confirmed the story, all doubt was erased and most immediately experienced a drastic and only marginally justified reversal of emotions. Most of us began planning on all the wonderful things we could do with all that time we would be perpetuating by the dredge itself, as a large endless chain of buckets dug up the gravel and soil ahead, ran everything through a gold extraction process, then depositing the gravel, devoid of both topsoil and gold, behind. This, of course, required a rather large volume of water, which was brought to the pond via ditches from Grave Creek and/or Dog Creek. This demanded the construction of a dam of sorts in Grave Creek near where the dredge began operations. Undoubtedly, at the peak of Leland's placer mining era, more men were employed than ever before by all the various phases of the dredge preparation, construction and operation. But they were scattered about the area in smaller groups, and, despite the richness of many of the placer claims, and according to many of the old timers, excitement and news of anything approximating a boom could not be believed by the people, for they could not have believed it, had it been otherwise.

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The Endian gold dredge, which was assembled during 1928, has been operating recently in the Foots Creek district. The big dredge floats in a small lake and draws from the bank guide its operation from side to side. Water for the lake comes from the creek and its movement is changed as the digging progresses. A good sized crew, under the supervision of D. H. Ferry, keeps the dredge busy day and night and it is estimated that an average of 40 tons is ready to machine in a month, for at least 10 years at the present rate of production.
OREGON WELCOMES rock hunters to the Agate State...

Collectors of every age enjoy the thrill of discovering a flawless gem or a rare fossil, and Oregon is the place to find them.

Come on out and try your luck in one or all of the state's many rich deposits.

However, don't be disappointed if you fail to "strike it rich" on your first outing ... it took the residents of Canyon City, in central Oregon, 10 years to discover they had paved their streets with gold-bearing gravel!

ROCKHOUND RULES

Oregon is a collector's paradise, but even in a paradise it is wise to follow a few simple rules ... certainly they will tend to assure the best possible success...

1. Select several sites within a fairly small area to avoid spreading valuable collecting time too thin ... become informed on the material available and its exact location.

2. Don't hesitate to ask local collectors for information about selected sites ... check with rockhound clubs wherever they are found.

3. Bring along the proper tools and equipment—including boots and sturdy clothing—for field work ... depending on the material sought, you may find use for a rockhammer, shovel, prybar, sledge and chisel, or light pick mattock.

4. Make special preparations for seasonal weather conditions—canteens, caps and sunglasses for the desert, warm jackets for the mountains, etc.

5. Obtain permission of land owners before entering private property ... don't leave campsite debris scattered about and BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE.

6. Take care in entering abandoned mine shafts—you enter at your own risk.

7. Don't throw rocks from cliffs and endanger persons who might be below ... use proper care in handling tools.

8. Take only the material you will use and leave the rest for other collectors.

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OREGON STATE HIGHWAY DEPT.
SALEM, OREGON
OREGON'S MINERALS...

The state's metallic mineral wealth may be measured—at least in terms of collecting—by both the abundance and diversity of available types. Topping the list are gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, mercury and iron. In addition, the only nickel mine in the United States operates in southwestern Oregon. Commercial grade uranium ore was discovered in southwestern Oregon in 1955 and is known to exist in other parts of the state. The list of metals includes tungsten, molybdenum, cobalt, antimony and chromium.

GEMS

Oregon is famous for its semi-precious gems. Agates, petrified wood, jaspers, opals and thunder eggs are found in quantity in many areas of the state. Also to be found in gem quality are hematite, garnet, sunstone, malachite and azurite, rhodonite, chrysocolla, obsidian and rock crystal. Native gold and cinnabar, when found in matrices suitable for polishing, are used as gem stones. Oregon's annual gem production is estimated at $1,000,000.

FOSSILS...

Prolific fossil beds are located in many sections of the state. Of special interest are the John Day beds, first explored by Dr. Thomas Condon, the "Father of Oregon Geology." Fossils of plants and animals which existed 30 to 40 million years ago are taken from these beds. Clarno formation fossils, including many varieties of nuts and semi-tropical plants, have become world famous. Marine beds in western Oregon contain an abundance of fossil sea shells and occasional shark teeth and whale bones. Mollusks and rare specimens of marine reptiles occur in Oregon's rocks of the Mesozoic era (100 to 200 million years ago).

OREGON'S GEOLOGIC PAST

OREGON ABOUNDS with geologic wonders, ranging in size from the towering snow-capped peaks of the Cascade Range to the fossilized seeds and plant spores of the Clarno deposit. These features form a visible link between the present day and a history which spans 400 million years.

THE OLDEST ROCKS found on the surface are the schists of southwestern Oregon and the limestone formations of central Oregon. Among the newest are the scattered cinder cones and lava flows of recent volcanic upheaval... one eruption occurred no more than 250 years ago—a "fraction of a second" in geologic time.

OREGON'S CLIMATE has ranged between glacial and semi-tropical, and as a result the fossilized remains of such dissimilar creatures as the wooly mastodon and the crocodile may be found today.

SEMI-PRECIOUS GEMS are found in every section of the state, from the beaches to the eastern border... Oregon gems are "ageless," in that they are found among the rocks of many geologic periods.

CLUBS, SOCIETIES

Oregonians are aware of the scenic beauty of their state, but many are aware also of the beauty which lies beneath the surface.

Oregon has nearly 50 clubs and societies which exist because of this awareness. The members of these clubs are a friendly and enthusiastic lot and welcome inquiries from out-of-state collectors. Contact any or all of the clubs listed below for tips concerning little-known localities and "special" diggings.

- Agate Beach Agate Society, Toledo
- Albany Rock and Gem Club, Albany
- Ashland Mineral and Gem Club, Ashland
- Blue Mountain Gem Club, La Grande
- Camp White Rock Club, Camp White
- Clark County Gem and Mineral Club, Clackamas
- Columbia Gorge Rockhounds, Corbett
- Columbia Rock and Gem Club, St. Helens
- Coos County Mineral and Gem Club, Coos Bay
- Corvallis Rock and Gem Club, Corvallis
- Deschutes Geology Club, Bend
- Eugene Mineral Club, Eugene
- Hat Rock Gem Club, Estacada
- Hi-Desert Gem and Mineral Society, Bend
- Illinois Valley Mineral and Geology Society, Roseburg
- John Day Basin Gem and Geology Society, John Day
- Klamath Mineral Club, Klamath Falls
- Lebanon Geological Society, Albany
- Madras Gem and Mineral Club, Madras
- Morrow County Gem and Mineral Society, Haggard
- Mt. Emily Gem and Mineral Club, Brookings
- Mt. Hood Rock Club, Gresham
- Newberg Gem and Mineral Club, Newberg
- Newport Agate Society, Newport
- Nickel M.T. Rock Club, Myrtle Creek
- Oregon Agate and Mineral Society, Portland
- Oregon Trail Gem and Mineral Society, Pendleton
- Owyhee Gem and Mineral Society, Hamms, Malheur
- Pioneer Prospectors Club, Toledo
- Prineville Mineral Society, Prineville
- Rogue Gem and Geology Society, Grants Pass
- Rose Ate Gem and Mineral Club, Central Point
- Scottsbluffers, Joseph
- Sweet Home Rock and Mineral Society, Sweet Home
- Tetonics Employees Geology Club, Hillsboro
- Tillamook Rock Hounds, Tillamook
- Trails End Gem and Mineral Club, Astoria
- Tuskegee Valley Gem Club, Hillsboro
- Tyee Mineralites, Dalles City (The Dalles)
- Unique Mineral Club, Roseburg
- Yamhill County Rock and Geology Society, Oregon City
- Yamhill County Rock and Gem Club, Vernonia
- Williams Lake Rock Club, Springfield
- Williamsite Agate and Mineral Society, Balmat
- Yamhill County Rock and Mineral Club, McMinnville
MINERALS, FOSSILS . . .
- Agates
  b — banded
  c — carnelian
  i — iris
  m — moss
  p — plume
  s — sagenitic
- Jaspers
- Obsidian
- Garnet, Oregon "jade"
- Metal minerals, ores
  A — antimony
  Al — aluminum
  C — copper
  Cb — cobalt
  Ch — chromium
  G — gold
  I — iron
  L — lead
  M — mercury
  Md — molybdenum
  N — nickel
  S — silver
  T — tungsten
  U — uranium
  Z — zinc
- Opals
- Petrified wood
- Quartz crystals
- Thunder eggs
- Plant fossils
- Animal fossils
- Marine fossils

AND WHERE TO FIND THEM . . .
SOUTHERN OREGON BEACHES—Gem quality agate, jasper, petrified wood, serpentine, Oregon “jade” (formerly “lakesite”), in the “wonderstone” of Utah—in thunder eggs—similar to the “wonderstone” of Utah. Digging is necessary in most areas. A county road crosses Antelope Creek a short distance east of Eagle Point and provides easy access to the creek bed. The Methodist Chamber of Commerce has a listing of other locations.

GREEN SPRINGS and MOUNTAIN—Banded blue grey agate, crystal-lined geodes. Best locations are on Highway 62 about two miles east of Ashland. Nodules are found in a placer stream. Digging is necessary in most areas.

CLACKAMAS RIVER—Cinnabar, petrified wood, jasper, the river bed above Exocanada produces gem quality chalcedony; a variety of petrified woods and dark green bloodstone, often associated with common opal—and to good fair roads parallel the river for many miles.

SUNFLOWER PLATE—Banded agate, crystal-lined geodes, jasper. Area is located on the Wapinitia cut-off southeast of Bear Springs Voter Camp between the Maupin road and the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. Hillsides and creek bed produce fine material. Digging is necessary in most areas.

CLARNO—Fossil nails, leaves and prehistoric mammals, blue agate nodules, petrified wood, jasper, swillets, barch crystals, the world-famous Clarno fossil beds are located a few miles east of the John Day River, off the Road to Antelope and Fossil. Amateurs may collect specimens in the vicinity of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry’s Camp Hancock, but the mammal beds are reserved for scientific exploration. An outcrop behind the high school at Fossil contains excellent imprints of cones, leaves and Metasequoia needles.

ANTOLEPO—Mass agate, jasp-igate, massive banded agate, Oregon “jade”, and agatized wood. Best location is on the Antelope River south of Corvallis. Amateurs may find even in the metropolitan Portland area.

WHITE BEAVER—Cinnabar, petrified wood, banded agate, carnelian agate, jasper, crystal-lined geodes, the area around Sweet Home and the Willamette forest, and an abundance of silicified fossil wood—some beautifully colored with clearly marked grain and ring structure. Digging is necessary in the Eagle Creek and the Calapooya River south of town. Crabtree Creek and the hills north of town, the fields, woods and streams of the area hold banded agates, crystal-lined geodes and fire-engine red jasper. Chandler Mountain is the location of large carnelian beds, petrified wood and opals. The Eagle Rock and the Calapooya River south of town. East of the ghost town of Greenhorn—several miles north of U.S. Highway 20 from mile post 145.5 to the east material comes from river bars and gravel company.

PRINEVILLE—Thunder eggs, agate, jasper, petrified wood, the area south of Adrian along Sucker Creek to Rockville is an extremely productive rock hunting location. Thunder eggs may contain Pastelite or agate with inclusions of black dendrites, green moss or golden moss agate, opals and nodules and agatized wood sections. The Wildcat Mountain area northeast of town produces Morrisonite—a hard jasper-like material similar to the “wonderstone” of Utah. Thunder eggs, agate, jasper, nodules, agatized wood, Ballad Canyon and parallel Deadman Canyon, on the east outskirts of town, produce blue and purple agate, opalized wood, jasp-igate and orbicular jasper, highly prized blue agate is found near U.S. Highway 97, from two to five miles south of Lakeview, the Crater Lake area south of town contains agate-filled thunder eggs... Kelly Creek produces agate, jasper, thunder eggs... agates are found in quantity in the vast Dry Creek area west of town... directions at Davis’ Rock Shop in Lakeview.

HART MOUNTAINS—Quality agate nodules. Fire opal, crystals of various kinds, sunstone, jasp-igate similar to Morrisite... sunstone locations are on the desert flats west of the mountains... nodules and jasp-igate are found in mountain canyons... fire opal is found on the high peaks of the west rim. Inquire at Plush or at Davis’ Rock Shop in Lakeview.

OPAL BUTTE—Opal-filled nodules... area is located about 35 miles south of Hagerman. Vein State Highway 207 and forest roads.

GREENHORN—Fossils, variety of gem material... sections and fragments of fossil Cretaceous fern “frunks” (Tempskyia) may be uncovered about a mile north east of the ghost town of Grewhorn—several miles north of U.S. Highway 26 from Austin... best location is east of the abandoned IX mine, toward Olive Creek, and on the right of the road... obtain permission to collect on private land.

FRIDAY RANCH (COMMERCIAL) - Thunder eggs containing blue agate, plume agate, green and red moss agate, opals, petrified wood. This famed location is reached by driving approximately 15 miles northeast of Madras on U.S. Highway 97, then turning right on the old Highway 97 and driving for two miles to junction of road to Ashwood, and following this road for almost nine miles... farther south one may dig for diggings and a per-pound fee is charged for gem material.

PRINEVILLE—Thunder eggs, plume, carnelian and moss agate. Digging is necessary in the Eagle Rock and the Calapooya River south of town. The Eagle Rock and the Calapooya River south of town. Digging is necessary in the Eagle Rock and the Calapooya River south of town.

MEDFORD—Mass and dendritic agate, jaspers, muscovite feldspar. The Creek area south of town produces red and green moss agate, nodules and agatized wood sections. The Wildcat Mountain area northeast of town produces Morrisonite—a hard jasper-like material similar to the “wonderstone” of Utah. Thunder eggs, agate, jasper, nodules... directions may be obtained at the Prineville Chamber of Commerce.

GLASS BUTTES—Obsidian... this site is found on Highway 20 between Bend and Burns... black, variegated and silver sheen volcanic glass is found just short of mile post 79, south of the highway... red and gold sheen material in great abundance may be located by continuing east to mile post 81, turning south toward cinnabar mine and driving two to three miles on the right-hand fork of the road... prized rainbow and double flow obsidians also are found.

LAKEVIEW—Thunder eggs, agate, jasper, nodules, agatized wood... Bullard Canyon and parallel Deadman Canyon, on the east outskirts of town, produce blue and purple agate, opalized wood, jasp-igate and orbicular jasper... highly prized blue agate is found near U.S. Highway 97, from two to five miles south of Lakeview... the Crater Lake area south of town contains agate-filled thunder eggs... Kelly Creek produces agate, jasper, thunder eggs... agates are found in quantity in the vast Dry Creek area west of town... directions at Davis’ Rock Shop in Lakeview.

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ID NORTHERN OREGON BEACHES—Variety of jaspers and agates, petrified wood, Oregon “jade”... beaches near Ocean City contain fine material, including colorful jaspers and agates... large specimens are found on Tillamook County beaches... cliffs bordering Tillamook Bay contain Morrisonite-a hard feldspar.
An Ounce of Gold
For a Ton of Ore

And Using His Ancient Mill, 82-year-old Miner
Tiaman Hatcher is Determined to Get His Ounce

ROGUE RIVER — Tiaman Hatcher says he never takes a job unless he knows he is a big enough man to finish it. The 135-pound man has never turned one down. He has, in fact, taken on bigger jobs than most men would dare attempt.

Hatcher, 82, a gold miner, but he is not panning creekside, using giant streams of water to wash away hillsides or dredging with a gasoline-powered motor. He and two workers are taking ore out of mine shafts with picks and shovels, hauling it on their backs over rugged hillsides, and milling it in Hatcher's 50-year-old mill.

They are sure that any day, they are going to strike it rich. Maybe they already have. The old shaft they are working contains ore that puts a glint in a gold miner's eye. "Should work out to around an ounce a ton," Hatcher said optimistically. That does not sound like much but to a hard rock miner, the ratio is not bad. The old mill can handle about three tons of ore a day, and three ounces of gold are worth over $1,500. The rub is getting the ore from the mine to the mill.

HATCHER HAS MINED a 20-acre claim near Rogue River for 20 years. He is never really made much off of it. When he started gold was only bringing $35 an ounce and the original shaft near his house was full of low grade ore. "Not worth grinding up," Hatcher says. Still he has worked most of his life, he and he picked, shoveled, hauled and milled tons of it.

Often he would trek off through the woods with his cast iron mortar and pestal in his backpack to test the rocks around his claim. Trekking on Hatcher's claim is no easy matter. It is heavily wooded and straight up and down. Hatcher's almost daily examination of it over the past 20 years may explain his vitality.

He walks up steep grades, leaving less stalwart reporters in his dust. On one of his hikes Hatcher discovered a shaft that an earlier miner had covered over with tons of debris. Less than a year ago he got around to uncovering it. "I'd have taken a lot of gold out of this claim if I could get some good help," Hatcher complained. "The men I get up here to help me usually go out in the woods and drink and don't do no good."

His CURRENT HELPERS are exceptions, he said. "They're good. They're working hard," he said. "That's an understatement.

The two men and Hatcher removed the debris from in front of the abandoned mine. It took them 11 days. Then they cut 20 small trees to bolster the entrance to the mine. Now they chip ore from the back of the 20-foot shaft, cart it out in wheelbarrows, load it into five-gallon pails mounted on wooden backboards and pack it up and down over three-quarters of a mile of hills to the mill. It takes a while to pile up three tons.

Three tons is the amount Hatcher likes to have before the mill is fired up.

Recently the men cut a rough road so the ore can be hauled uphill. The conviction that the ore is rich keeps them going, Hatcher said.

Hatcher himself needs a little less to keep going. In his lifetime he has been a carpenter, a roadbuilder, a painter, an oxen driver, a farmer, a mechanic and a miner. "There ain't any other thing I can't do," Hatcher proclaimed with a little slap on his leg.

WHEN HE AND his now-deceased wife moved onto the claim, the small cabin was occupied by goats and deer, and the small orchard they planted was overrun with vines. "I'd have taken a lot of gold out of this claim if I could get some good help," Hatcher complained. "The men I get up here to help me usually go out in the woods and drink and don't do no good."

Hatcher mined for more than 20 years, but when his wife died four years ago he only had $1.35 after paying hospital bills. He gets $180 a month in social security. "That pale is eaten up in medical and hospital bills."

"When my big diesel (the one that provides power to run the mill) broke down and the gears was stripped, it took the darn thing apart and put it back together and it hasn't needed a repair for 20 years," he said. Hatcher's disdain for mechanics other than himself is just about as rigorous as his distaste for doctors.

"I wouldn't take any of those medicines," he said. His back was broken in three places after a car roll on him in 1952.

Those darn doctors said I'd never walk again, but I didn't believe them. They just didn't put much stock in the problems they tried to tell me," Hatcher related.

In the early 1960s Hatcher heard that a mill he had set up near Rogue River was being sold for back taxes. He bought it for $1,450. Hatcher had done some mining near Crescent City, Calif., and had worked a poor claim on the Umpqua River but had no gone all out on hard rock mining before.

When he and his now-deceased wife moved onto the claim, the small cabin was occupied by goats and deer, and the mill had not been worked in some time. The rickey but functional mill is built on a hillside and uses gravity to aid the mining process. Ore is fed into the top, the gold is shaken to the bottom and the lighter sand washed away.

Hatcher mined for more than 20 years, but when his wife died four years ago he only had $1,35 after paying hospital bills. He gets $180 a month in social security and together with his mining receipts it is enough to eat and keep his 1965 Chrysler running. It buys gas for his mining equipment and feeds his chickens and cat.

But in the best tradition of gold miners, Hatcher is sure that riches are just around the corner. One day a load of ore is going to come over the hill that is going to make his gold miner's heart palpitate. He is not slowing down until it happens.

A MAGNIFYING GLASS is helpful in determining the amount of gold in a sample of ore. Here Tiaman Hatcher examines bits of the ore and gold he extracts so laboriously from his 20-acre claim near Rogue River.
A FLASHLIGHT in one hand, Hatcher prepares to enter his mine shaft (above). The 82-year-old Rogue River miner and his helpers labor daily in the shaft. When they have a load of ore, they haul it to the ramshackle but functional mill (right) which sits on Hatcher's property. When the load of ore gets big enough to make it worthwhile, the mill is fired up, separating the gold from the rocks and sand.

GOLDEN NUGGETS, here displayed in the palm of Hatcher's hand, are what keep the old miner and his helpers working hard day after day.

HATCHER STEPS carefully as he walks down the stairs of his ramshackle but functional mill.

Story and photos
by Mary Korblic,
Courier correspondent
Geo. W. Lance Sr. brought Chinese called Chinese Lock, from Weaverville with him. Chinese Lock was his overseer, managing Chinese laborers who worked for him. They mined between Rock Point bridge, and Foots Creek, along Rogue River. Also mined near forks of Foots Creek, and up Gold Gulch, about 12 mile from point where Foots Creek runs into Rogue River.

Chinese Lock was an exceptional Chinese in that he did not steal gold from diggings as other Chinese did. Mr. Lance trusted him. Chinese Lock made Chinese workers "Chick gang" take off shoes, boots, clothes, and searched them for nuggets each day before they left placers, or when they left placers.

Mention: Mr. and Mrs. Mattis buried at sight of the Siwash Sheberiesen grave. Sheberiesen was a man who lived with them.

New York Engineering Co. built the dredge managed by D. H. Ferry for a stock company. Mr. Lance (Floyd) helped set the dredge upon Foots Creek in 1928.

(Mr. Lance uncle in Grants Pass named Henry Miller.)
Lance Home where Bill & Dorothy Garrett
house now stands. We tore this house down
& used lumber to repair cookhouse and
bunk house.
A HISTORICAL REVIEW
OF GOLD DREDGING
ON FOOTS CREEK

BY LILLIAN KNOTEK NOSIK

The bulge of rusty metal, partially covered with moss, belled out of the ground. The convex clump of iron, about twenty-four inches in circumference, rose to a rounded peak, about six inches above the surface. It was surrounded by brush and woods, not more than fifteen feet from the creek. Over a period of years, the small hill of iron appeared to emerge temporarily, then retreat again into the earth, like a ghost in a graveyard. It was during one such period of its showing, the iron was excavated.

Three buckets, which were part of a dredge, were removed. The buckets represented a time in the history of Foots Creek. In an attempt to walk in the time of the first dredges, a few surviving settlers were visited. The large monster-like machine, with its long steel cables reaching out like arms to steady itself, could not have gone its way slowly up Foots Creek without being noticed.

Did it make any changes in the life of the settler?

Leslie A. Cook, 92, now living in Central Point, was born on Foots Creek. His grandfather settled on Foots Creek in 1865. The happy faced, bright-eyed Leslie, knew precisely the year the dredge was first built and operated on the creek. Mr. Cook's response recalling the year 1903 as the birth of the dredge, made it apparent the early settler was aware of the boat, but with minimal curiosity to its function. He had very little information to add, indicating the early residents were too preoccupied with their own search for gold.

Records show the first successful dredge in Oregon was built and operated on Foots Creek in 1903.

After purchasing property on lower Foots Creek, the Champlain Electric Gold Dredging Company built a steam powered bucket-line dredge. In 1905 electric power from the Ray plant near Gold Hill, was obtained. The operating cost was reduced to one half. The electric-operated dredge was equipped with 36, 8 foot buckets. The capacity of this dredge was 2000 yards daily.

The old timers recall with pride, the electric power brought to their area. They accepted with indifference, the significance of its increase in power for dredging.

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SOUTHERN OREGON SUNRISE

July, 1976
In 1911, due to a problem, recorded only as an accident, a dredge was lost. Another immediately took its place. Parts of the disabled dredge were salvaged, but much of it was abandoned. Stories of a lost dredge had been passed down from one generation to another. Often a newcomer to the creek would accept the story of a lost dredge as more myth than fact.

When the three buckets, which were part of the dredge, were exhumed by Robert
Joe Nosik recently, the tale of a lost dredge became very real.

Elizabeth (Dolly) Harrison, in an interview was asked what her memory revealed, involving the lost dredge. The gracious and lovely Mrs. Harrison was born on Foots Creek in 1896. She had, she said, worked for various Champlin employees as a domestic aid at a very early age, but her recollection of the incident was not clear.

Her son Buster, born in 1912 on Foots Creek, was more reminiscent. Laughingly Buster Harrison recalled the many hours he and a friend spent on the inoperable boat. The imaginary sea voyages to distant lands provided satisfying entertainment in his childhood.

In the years that followed the remains of the dredge slowly vanished into the earth, but other dredges continued their invasion of the creek for a time.

The Rogue River Gold Mining Company, sometime referred to as the Ferry Dredge, dredged about two miles on both forks of Foots Creek for seven years. In 1935, the 1000-ton boat halted operation.

The last dredge to operate on Foots Creek was brought, unassembled, by railroad in 1939. In less than three months the elegant boat was assembled and on its way up the middle fork. This dredge was owned by the Murphy Murray Dredging Company. The 67 buckets, which dug 20 feet below the water line, boasted 4000 yards daily. Twelve men operated and maintained the boat. It had a steel hull 81 by 37 by 6 feet, gantries and superstructure. The barge had a screening and washing plant, conveyor belts for stacking tailings.

In March 1941, the dredge was dismantled and moved to another location.

The mounds and walls of rock paralleling the creek are the cold visible signs of another era, a yesteryear on Foots Creek.

"IT REALLY WORKS"
BY JAMES E. BUSSELL JR.
'Tis when you shoo your dreams away
Of being someone new,
You'll find when you're at work or play-
The joy of being you.
Wards Creek Hydraulic Mining
before 1900. Jeff Wimer 3rd & Jeff
Wimer at quilt, Georgia Wimer, Earlie
Wimer, Sable Booker & Florence Taylor.
before 1900

Jef Wimer Sr.
Jef Jr.

Berenzie Wimer
Carlie
Sade Booker
Florence Taylor
Zeland Oregon Hydraulic mining 1899
Harry Taylor in shirt sleeves.
Iceland Oregon
Hoy Taylor - in shirt sleeves
about 1899
Hydraulic Mining  late 1800's
Hydraulic mining on Sykes Creek by Josh Brownsworth and Joe Mansfield.
Hydraulic Mining - Roots Creek, Or.
Right Fork
Lewis mine on Graves Creek.
Harry Taylor on left. 1898
Rollin Taylor Collection
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Lewis Mine, Grave Creek
About 1878

Harry Taylor on left
Hydraulic Mining 1899 Pleasant Creek

W. S. Moore piping; Dick Oden, Mrs. Swings, Mrs. Gerusha Moore, Hazel Moore, Rose Moore and Skip the dog.
W.D. Moore - piping
Dick Eden
Mrs. Allings
Mrs. Jennifer Moore
Hazel Moore
Rose Moore
Shep the dog
Hydraulic Mining late 1800?