

Evidence of Prehistoric Beasts In Valley Uncovered on Creek

By GREG NOKES

Mail Tribune Staff Writer

There was once a time many years ago when huge prehistoric beasts roamed the fertile lands of the then cool and moist Rogue River valley.

They and lesser animals had the valley pretty much to themselves then.

There were no barbed wire fences to bar their way. Nor were there any subdivisions or farms to confiscate their lush pastures. Men with axes had yet to penetrate the deep forests to turn a productive hunting ground into a sea of stumps.

They could wander across the countryside without fear of being struck by a four-wheeled piece of steel. They could munch on a clump of grass or lie down in a thicket without first checking to see if the foliage concealed a rusty beer can.

Couldn't last.

But, like all paradises, it couldn't last forever. An ice age or two, a sudden change in climate and other whims of nature soon made the valley an unbearable place for them. They either died or sought other places of habitation leaving the Rogue valley for the next age to enjoy.

But evidence that they were once here remains. Several months ago Francis (Shorty) Hibbard, a surveyor for the city of Medford, came upon a large tooth in an excavation in Bear creek near the Cottage st. bridge.

Hibbard, who describes himself as a self-made paleontologist of sorts, knew that he had stumbled upon something unusual and promptly forwarded the tooth to the museum of natural history at Oregon State college.

Large Bison

J. A. Shotwell, curator of the museum, wrote Hibbard that the tooth is one of several which once adorned the mouth of a large bison. Shotwell estimated the age of the tooth and bison at 10,000 to 50,000 years old. This would place it in the Pleistocene age.

Several OSC professors seemed quite impressed with the discovery, and indicated to Hibbard that they may come down and further explore the Bear creek area. Hibbard believes that the rest of the bison skeleton is still buried in the creek bed.

Dr. Franklin W. Sturges, assistant professor of science at Southern Oregon college who also examined the tooth, told

the Mail Tribune that although this is the first bison tooth to be found in the valley that he knows of, he does not believe it to be an unusual find.

Evidence Has Existed

Circumstantial evidence has existed for some time that the bison, also known as the Columbian elephant once roamed this area, according to Sturges.

Dr. Sturges said the tooth is from a rather small bison for that period, and said it would have been similar in appearance and size to the nearly extinct bison of today.

More common than the bison in the Rogue valley in those days, however, were mammoths and mastodons, both of which resembled the elephant in appearance except that they were some-

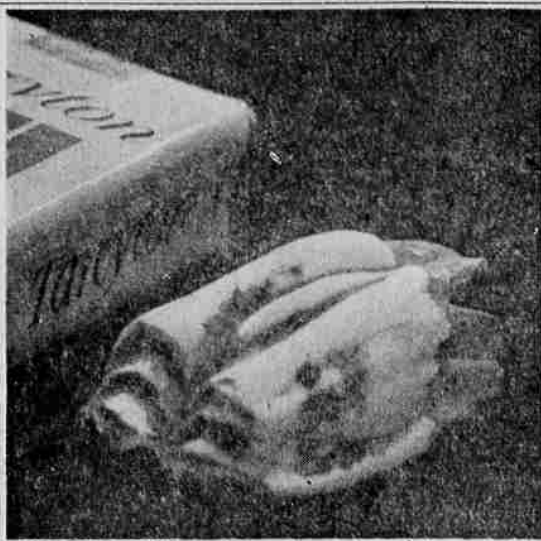
times larger and their bodies were covered with hair.

Sturges said a tusk, tooth and other remains of a mammoth were found two years ago during excavation for the new men's dormitory at Southern Oregon college. The remains were thought to have been about 15,000 years old, he said, and were from a mammoth of fairly large proportions.

Profitable Hunting Places

The most profitable places to hunt for fossils of these animals, according to Dr. Sturges, is in sandstone areas. However, many of the fossils that are found in this county are turned up quite by accident.

Hibbard's bison tooth is now on display at Andy's Jewelry store, 218 East Main st., Medford.



BISON'S TOOTH — Pictured next to a package of cigarettes is a bison's tooth estimated to be from 10,000 to 50,000 years old. Francis (Shorty) Hibbard, a surveyor for the city of Medford, found the tooth recently near an excavation in Bear Creek.

Memorial Cancer Lectures Slated

The second annual John Tomlin Memorial Cancer lectures have been scheduled for May 10 and 11 at the Rogue Valley Country club, according to Dr. Oscar T. Heyerman, Medford, chairman.

Established by a bequest to the Oregon division of the American Cancer Society by the late John R. Tomlin, Medford businessman, the lectures bring to the attention of the medical profession of the area the latest information about diagnosis and treatment in the cancer field.

The subject for this year's two-day meeting is the drug and x-ray treatment of cancer of the blood-forming organs—leukemia and lymphoma—as well as certain oth-

er cancers sometimes treated in this manner.

Guest speakers include Drs. Laurens P. White, from the cancer research foundation of the Children's Medical center, Boston, Mass.; Sidney F. Thomas, of the department of cancer therapy and radiology of the Palo Alto clinic, Palo Alto, Calif.; and Nicholas L. Petrakis, from the cancer research institute of the University of California at San Francisco.

Invitations have been sent to the medical doctors in southern Oregon and northern California. Dr. Heyerman quoted that the Memorial Cancer lectures are the only major meetings of their kind held in this area.

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Total deposits of \$22,516,307.93 have been recorded at the Medford branch of the U.S. National bank since the comparable call date in March, 1960, according to Manager Allan F. Perry.

Loans and discounts for the local branch totaled \$9,676,208.84.

The U.S. National Bank of Portland noted "substantial gains" in both loans and deposits during the past year, based on figures released to the comptroller of currency as of April 12.

Deposits were up more than \$21 million and now total \$814,951,807, compared to 1960's \$793,840,231. Loans increased in excess of \$11 million and now total \$411,055,818.

Total resources for the U.S. National system, with 79 branches in Oregon, were \$907,825,472, compared to \$890,472,839 on March 15, 1960.

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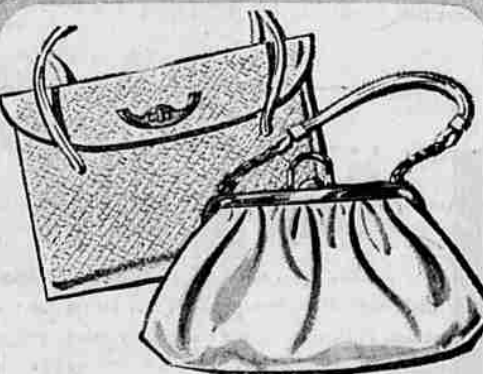
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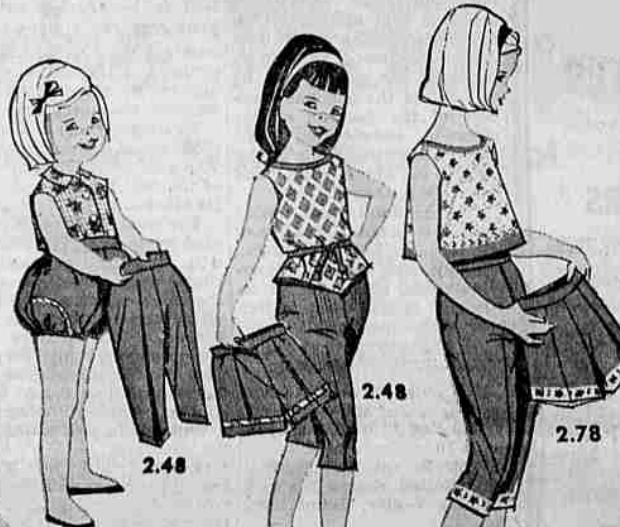
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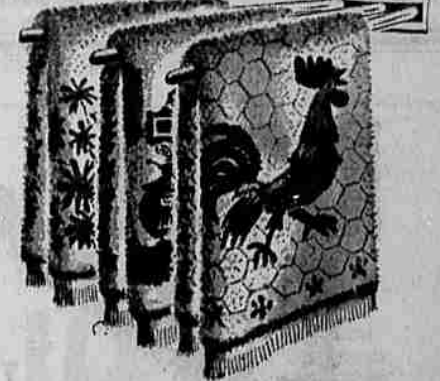
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