

is now Portland's Marine Drive probably heard a distant murmur. Maybe they looked up, wondering what was up 60 miles down stream. Within minutes, the murmur became a roar, which became a howl. Then the shockwave, a shaft of compressed air driven by a piston of water perhaps 500 feet high, exploded into Portland with the force of 22,000 Hiroshima bombs. Constricted at Kalama, the deluge retreated up the Willamette River past Oregon City, where it spilled west into the Tualatin Basin, filling the Willamette Valley like a 3,000-square-mile bathtub. And all was quiet. Until it happened again. And again. Every half-century for 2,000 years. During one of these floods, an iceberg as tall as the Multnomah County Central Library floated into town, carrying 160 tons of metamorphic argillite on its back. Before it reached present-day Sheridan, the giant ice cube melted and tipped, and the boulder sank like, well, 160 tons of metamorphic argillite. Today, the Bellevue erratic (the biggest of more than 300 glacial "erratics" that rafted from Montana during the Bretz Floods), sits at the