



Mines, Miners, and Minerals of Western North Carolina: Western North Carolina's Hidden Mineralogical Treasures

Lowell Presnell

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Mining in Western North Carolina played an important economic role in the lives of its people and the state's history, but little has been recorded about the industry, especially the day-to-day trials and triumphs of the individual miner. Presented here are the tales of old-timers as they talk about discovering huge books of mica, outrunning muck cars, and finding out in the nick of time that a mine has bad air. Marvel at Conrad Reed who found an interesting-looking rock (a seventeen-pound gold nugget) or Dr. George Kunz, vice president of Tiffany's, who searched for hiddenite but had to settle for gem-quality emeralds instead. Learn about the famous commercial and private mines that supplied this country with the raw materials needed for defense and technology. Minerals mined in Western North Carolina include alum, asbestos, lay, corundum, copper, chromium, feldspar, granite, gold, graphite, gravel, iron, kyanite, lead, limestone, mica, marble, manganese, molybdenum, nickel, quartz, sand, silver, tin, tungsten, talc, uranium, vermiculite, zinc, and many varieties of gemstones such as diamonds, garnets, emeralds, rubies, and beryl.

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