

1956, Nov. 14.

Dr. E. P. Henderson,
U. S. National Museum,
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Dr. Henderson:

I am the person you should write for more details of the Chickasha, Oklahoma, meteorite!

Mr. Van Long of Route 3 Chickasha, Okla., found the piece on land he owns when he was plowing in the fall of 1955, probably about Oct. 1, he wrote. He told me when I visited him that he had actually originally found it some years ago, but threw it back down at that time. In later reading, he decided mentally this was a meteorite, and resolved to watch for it. He therefore takes some pardonable pride in having finally discovered it again. He claims he first found it about 1930-31, when he was farming with teams, and tried on that occasion to put it in his hip pocket; it was too big to fit comfortably so he left it in the field. Technically, he was harrowing this field in preparation for sowing wheat when he re-found it in 1955; he then chipped it with a wrench.

He took it in to the nearby University of Oklahoma at Norman to a man whose name I do not have exactly; it is something like Branscom, possibly Burnson or Branscom--first name Carl. I think he is in the geology department. This man hazarded a guess that Indians had brought it in, and undertook to have it cut for the finder. Van Long thought he had a deal that they were to cut off one slice for themselves and was extremely angered on going back and finding they had cut three slices; he declared all deals off, took everything home with him, and was carrying the piece around in his care with him when I was there. He has followed the University's recommendation to spray it with a protective coating and keeps it wrapped in papers.

The University told him it was a black chondrite of 4,532 grams weight. I would say the classification is right. Some relatively large and peculiar metallic inclusions in one end of some of the outs would probably intrigue you; there is one slice you and I would fight over. The find was near the center of the southwest quarter of Section 31, Township 8 North Range 6 West, almost exactly three miles south of the little town and railroad stop of Amber, Grady County, Oklahoma.

Van Long has a picture of the original mass from a negative the U of O has; I took a few poor photo's of the slices while there, but can't get him to lend me a slice for proper photography here. (I wanted to show you the odd metallic inclusions.) I have occasionally written Long trying to make a deal, but he turns down everything I suggest. He claimed in one letter he had been offered \$15 a pound, which I doubt. Personally, he told me it would take some huge price; that unless he could get an "oil man" who didn't care about thousands, he would just keep it. I think I can eventually get it from him but it will take time and perseverance.

I could have sworn he told me he wrote the Smithsonian or U. S. National, and there should be something in your files up there somewhere. That's why I assumed you knew all about it.

He wrote me because of some publicity I got last spring in Oklahoma because of an unexplained shock wave heard over a considerable area, which I hypothesized was a meteorite-- but I was never able to get any evidence. Incidentally, I have official correspondence from the army that they are getting to pay a claim for damages to a house in Guthrie in this instance tho they aver they can find no record of supersonic planes being in the air, and it has been definitely shown there was no quake recorded.

Sorry to bore you with all this, but I find the details of meteorite finding and retrieving most illuminating when you get the full story.

Sincerely,

Many Thanks for the opinion on the diorite-like piece found less than a mile from the Van Long Chickasha stone. I suppose I was mistaking the whitish feldspar in this fragment for quartz.