

P.S.: Please to pardon the appearance of this ltr., which I will not delay by copying (being my own typist!). - F.L.
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF ASTRONOMY
LOS ANGELES 24, CALIFORNIA

60-3-29

Dear Oscar:

I am beginning to suspect that you are trying to get even with me for not having answered more promptly your ltr. of 1959 Aug. 1 concerning the Amber aerolite!!* (In case you do not recognize it as such, this is intended to be a JOKE---I do not think that you are ^{really} vindictive!) Seriously speaking, ^{though,} I hope that the 5-lb., 7-oz. fragment of that aerolite is still available for purchase for our Meteoritical Museum here, and I shall appreciate hearing from you by return mail, if possible, whether it is and for how much. The funds will have to be spent soon, as I wrote you, if they are to be spent at all for this purpose. I am inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope for ^{your} reply.

I have heard from H. H. Nininger that the remainder of his collection of meteorites is for sale. A couple of years ago, according to ^{latest} this report, he sold 21% ^{of this collection} to the British Museum (Natural History) for \$140,000. At the same rate, the remaining 79% would be priced, I suppose, at about \$560,000. Do you know of anyone who could and would buy it for that amount? I do hope that the remainder of the collection will remain in the United States---and preferably in the Southwest: I should not like to see it leave the country, as apparently about one-fifth of it has already. (Earlier reports said one-third, but apparently Nininger has revised this fraction to one-fifth!) Have you any suggestions concerning keeping what remains of this magnificent collection in the US? I wonder whether any government agency (such as the NSF) would be willing to purchase it: of one thing I am satisfied, that many of these agencies spend millions of dollars on things that are far less valuable, ^{both} monetarily and scientifically, than a first-class collection of meteorites: and I am sure that you will agree ^{with me in this opinion.}

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain, with best wishes,

Cordially yours,

Frederick C. Leonard.
Frederick C. Leonard.

1 incl.

* If so, I could hardly blame you!