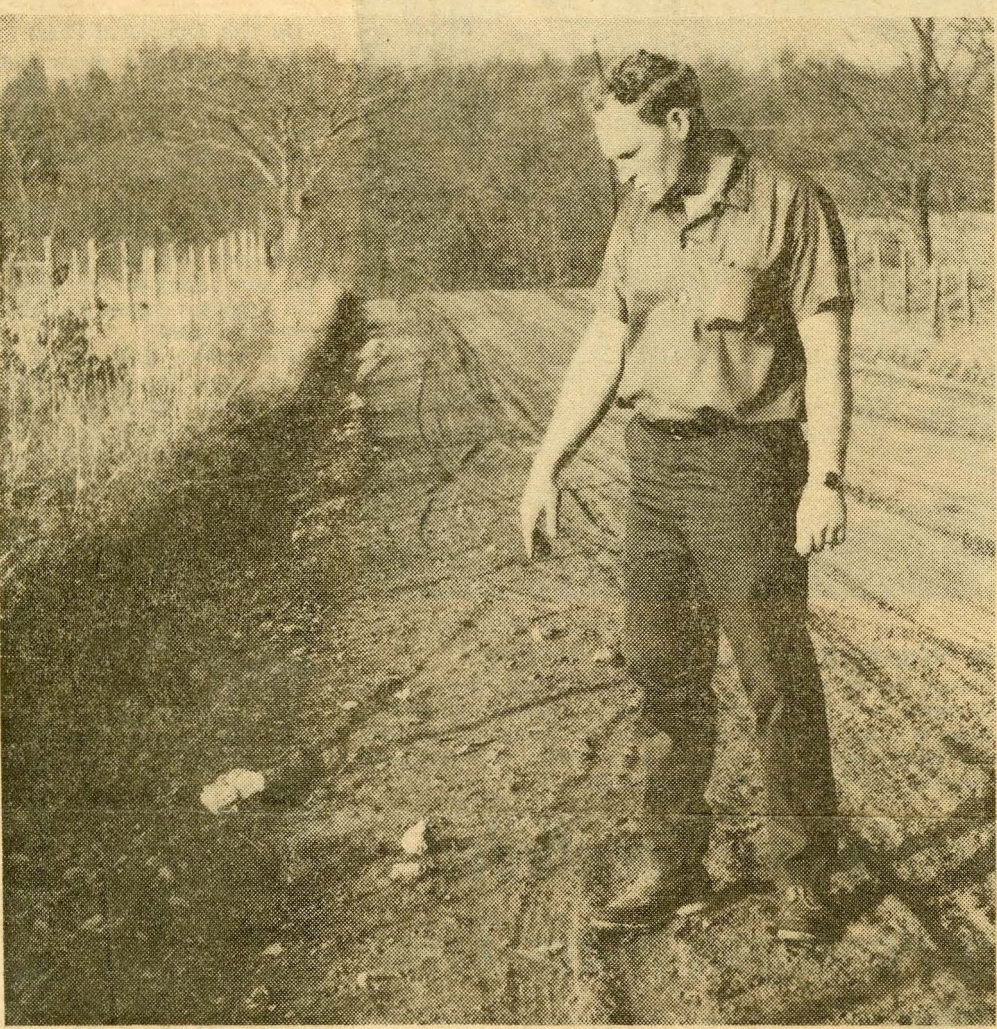


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—World Staff Photo

Burr points to where the meteor was found lying on the snow.

Lost City Sector Is Combed For More Pieces of Meteorite

By PAT CROW
Of the World Staff

LOST CITY—Smithsonian Institution scientists are combing the countryside for more for more pieces of a meteor which fell near here Jan. 3.

They admit their search is somewhat analogous to looking for a needle in a haystack, since the additional pieces could be anywhere inside a square mile area, and possibly outside of it.

The meteor lit the sky and caused a sonic boom over a Northeastern Oklahoma area

when it fell to earth the night of Jan. 3.

The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Prairie Network of tracking stations determined the meteor had fallen near Lost City through photographic tracking.

GUNTHER SCHWARTZ, field manager of the Prairie Network, came to the Lost City area six days later to look for the meteorite.

While driving about 2 miles northeast of Lost City on a country road covered with 4

inches of snow, Schwartz noticed a strange black rock. Investigating, he found it was a meteorite.

J. T. Williams, a Smithsonian technician from Urbana, Ill., was one of the men looking for more meteorites Friday. He said to determine the chances against Schwartz's lucky find, "Just think of outrageous odds and then quadruple them."

"WE HAVE VER Y GOOD reasons to think there is another large piece of the meteorite and possibly a number of small pieces," said R. E. McCrosky of Cambridge, Mass., the head of the field team.

The third man of the SAO search team is Ivan Burr, of Lincoln, Neb. Burr has been looking for five days, Williams four and McCrosky three.

Two more men are expected to join the hunt Saturday, McCrosky said, adding the search will continue for up to 10 more days.

The men have covered about 100 acres so far, walking about 15 miles a day, 8 hours a day, through fields and pastures.

The 22.6-pound, liver-shaped meteorite was the first ever found as a direct result of photographic tracking, and also the freshest ever examined.

IT PROBABL YWAS FROM 1-10 million years old and had been in an orbit reaching out as far as the other side of Mars, scientists have determined.

The meteorite, weighing about a ton, came into the earth's atmosphere traveling almost due east at about 8.5 miles per second, McCrosky said.

The high speed caused intense heat upon entry to the atmosphere, blacking the meteorite, burning most of it up, and causing the remainder of it to split up due to "thermal shock."

THE PIECES WERE SLOWED to a stop in the earth's atmosphere, and then just dropped to the ground.

McCrosky said two things about the meteorite fall to

Meteorite

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from two to four—very close together.

The first boom was the loudest, residents said, although there were two very distinct booms. The fact that there were several booms indicates there were several large pieces, or groups of small pieces, McCrosky said.

8 THERE WAS ALSO A streak of light "as bright as a full moon," area farmers told the scientists. It was "as bright, or brighter than mercury vapor security lights," they said.

The chance of other pieces of the meteor landing in the immediate vicinity of the one found are "pretty slim," Burr said, adding that because they were smaller they would slow down faster, landing west of the piece found.

"The finding of a second piece is not nearly as important as finding the first, McCrosky said, but added: "It would be helpful to find another piece "which came from another part of the meteor, to help determine the original size.

"Also, finding something else would give us a clue as to where to look for a third piece," he said.

"It has no commercial value. There's not a thing in it anyone would want, except a scientist who investigates meteorites."

"The peculiar value of this meteorite is its orbit in space," he said. "It is unique in that respect."

MCCROSK YSAID THE MEN have searched three times in the past five years for meteorites, "mostly to keep ourselves in practice. We don't really expect to find anything."

Metal detectors are "very awkward" and of no use, he said. Their only possible value is that if you happen to bump into a large meteorite with a metal detector, "it would give you a slight jar," McCrosky said.

He said the meteors are "very distinctive" black rocks. "You don't have to be very close to it to recognize it."

"The only trouble is, it looks very much like cow manure," he said with experience.

majority for approval.

THE MOVE WILL PREVENT bonds approved at the election from falling under a legal cloud caused by U.S. Supreme Court decisions which have attacked validity of elections restricted to ad valorem taxpayers.

The commission also hiked the limit on maximum interest payable on the bonds from six to eight per cent.

Most municipalities have been unable to market bonds which