

1971 August 14

Dr. E. P. Henderson,
Smithsonian Institution
U. S. National Museum,
Washington, D. C. 20560

Dear Dr. Henderson:

I appreciated your recent letter and want to hear something about that Alaska trip sometime. I've never been, mainly because I really don't care to make trips unless I have a purpose, and I don't know where to ask for meteorites in Alaska!

Right now I am in the throes of preparing to leave for Tübingen; we have never been to Europe and are making a tour out of it, as I shall take my wife and her sister and we will go to Switzerland a few days afterwards. I used to say I never wanted to go because my grandfather left REEs (near Bonn) in 1849 rather than serve in the German army; my mother came from what was then Posen, in Germany (now in Poland); and I just really haven't lost anything over there. But the attraction for me was to get to the Ries Kessel and the Steinheim Basin.

I have had a suspected meteorite reported to me from De Witt County, Texas, near Yorktown, but a man who has identified three meteorites for me in the past. I am enclosing small samples, which need not be returned; it looks like an igneous rock to me. Give me your verdict; I am sure no extensive laboratory test will be needed. It is attracted slightly by an Alnico magnet but I presume this is due to included magnetite. It is difficult to say how an igneous rock could get to that region, with the nearest outcrop I know of being along the Balcones Fault; I have in mind Pilot Knob near Austin, where there is a hill of what you boys in the trade call limburgite. This would be about 80 miles away, and this rock is reported to weight around 50 pounds.

Yes, all is well about Tishomingo, except, of course, that a big hunk of it ought to the National Museum for EPH to study and be happy about! More on this later.

Orin D. Young