

A NEW METEORITE FROM CLEBURNE, TEXAS

In about 1907, perhaps a year earlier or later, Mr. Rufus Anderson was working a farm of about 64½ A. located approximately 5 miles northwest of Cleburne, Johnson County, Texas. The farm is about ½ mile east of Noland's River, and was occupied by Mr. Anderson until 1916, when he sold it to a Mr. _____ Smith, who now resides in Dallas, Tex. The purchaser's name and address will be known by Mr. Sterling Capps of Cleburne, who handled the sale.

In 1907, Anderson and his son Chester set out one fall day to clear some rocks out of a field. Anderson had been farming the place about a year, and was anxious to take up these interfering rocks. They used a heavy crowbar [about 9 or 10' long,] and after the "cluster of set rocks" had been removed, the boy was knocking around the hole when his attention was attracted by a "black rock". Only the top of it was exposed, and as he called his father's attention to it, he picked up the crowbar, which was rather heavy for him, and went around to pick out this black rock. The father was sitting on the opposite side of the hole, with the sun to his back, and as Chester struck at the "black rock" and hit it with the crowbar, he must have exposed the fresh iron interior of the meteorite, for Rufus Anderson saw the flash of steel in the sunlight. When the boy got the "rock" out, he had some difficulty in picking it up and was surprised at its great weight. It weighed 15 pounds at that time, and Chester Anderson claimed the find as his. He was a boy of 14 at the time, and died the following spring.

When the meteorite was found, it was barely protruding from the general ground surface, with perhaps two-thirds of its upper faces

showing. The meteorite is a low cone, and the base (the side supposedly to the rear in flight) was downwards--i.e., the meteorite was lying upon it. The sides of the cone are irregular, and one specially noticeable large flat side was laying right next to and in contact with the solid rocks and gravel which had been removed. The meteorite was just to the south of these rocks it lay in contact with.

It at one time occurred to Anderson that this heavy rock was perhaps a marker for treasure. Noland, a Florida adventurer who had gone thru this region on his way to California and was slain near here on the return journey, was thought by some to have had riches with him--Noland's River is named for him. Accordingly, Anderson took a pick and crowbar and dug quite a hole around the spot where the meteorite was found, two to three feet deep, but nothing else was found. Ultimately, in the course of the years during which he worked the place, he believes he hauled 40 or 50 loads of rock away, and during all this time he watched carefully for other meteorites, but none was ever found.

Shortly after it was found, the meteorite was exhibited at a Cleburne fair, but won only second prize, a nominal trinket, as the judges deemed an old family Bible of more general interest. Anderson has had it all these years; at one time he wrote the Smithsonian Institute about it and they even sent postage for it, but he balked at the idea of sending it away without getting something for it first, so that nothing came of this move. In a similar way, Dr. Udden of the University of Texas missed getting the object because he insisted upon a preliminary inspection. A few ounces of material have at various times been removed from

the meteorite, at one time with the help of a blacksmith and a cold chisel, but nothing ever came of attempts to have the material tested or assayed. Some years ago the object was displayed in a grocery store window in Cleburne for several weeks, as a curiosity. Anderson has kept it all this time because of sentimental attachment for one reason--because the object was found by his boy, who died so shortly afterwards.