

1964, March 29

Dr. John W. Harrington,
P. O. Box 1208,
Spartanburg, S. C. 29301

Dear Sir:

I have been like hundreds of others in wondering about the Solitario and am glad you mentioned Gene Herin's thesis. I have the old Selbards' et al map of it published about 1932 and I think I once looked thru a treatment of the igneous rocks of the region by Lonsdale. I recently unearthed the reference to his article and a friend of mine and I had been planning to go out to see the Solitario. Several of us were out there some 20 years ago checking into the matter of the old Alpine or Chisos Mountains meteorites, an ataxite which U. S. National has a small piece of but which was reported as being about 2 tons! At that time two of my friends with me went by to see the Solitario briefly, but my wife was along and would not go, so I missed it.

I will go to Dalaaas to see Hertin and talk to him about the Colorado City formation. I had felt from the literature that if you once eroded away all breccia the crater walls would be gone, too, and you would actually be down an anticlinal central area instead of synclinal as in this case. The wall dip is generally also outwards in the case of a meteorite crater, tho I believe there is a small Henbury crater where there was apparently only a sort of pushing and slumping action; you would have to follow that idea at Colorado City to defend it as a meteorite crater.

No matter what the structure, I find the geologists generally lean away from, and the astronomers towards, an impact hypothesis in any case. I just returned from a South Texas trip and talked to Virgil Barnes at the U of T; he clearly is inclined to talk "diapir" action, and with all the salt there is in the Permian I don't know that you can gainsay him very easily, as to the Colorado City structure. He had never seen it.

I also went to Corpus Christi to talk to Humble geologists about a structure near Hico, Texas, where Glen Rose lime has been upthrust some 100 feet in a close high; I have been to this spot twice and am trying to run down their cuttings or cores to see if there is any trace of shatter-coning.

talking to them I get the clear impression they do not favor an impact origin. This Hico site is one of the two I mentioned to you in my last letter. I don't see where they'd get enough salt or gypsum underneath it to push rock up that way. This feature shows on aerial photo's, tho not too well topographically.

The other one I mentioned is in Wilbarger County and was reported in the literature in 1932 when Urban Hughes doubtfully ascribed it to the movement of gypsiferous shales. Again we are here in the Permian (Lueders limestone has been upthrust several hundred feet) and there might be plenty of gyp or even salt available, but it just does not appeal to me.

In both these cases there is not what I could call brecciation, but the lime strata have been twisted, turned and faulted pretty vigorously, and the structures are apparently unique in their region or in that particular formation. As an interested but rather helpless amateur onlooker there is not much more that I can do. I have learned that the well material from the Hico structure is at Wichita Falls and am going up there some free week-end to pester the Humble geologists about it.

Thanks for reminding me that Dr. Arthur Richards is the man at S. M. U. with whom I left the meteorites. You had nothing to do with them, and I shouldn't have mentioned it. I will see him when I go over there.

I can lend you a pair of stereographic photo's of the Colorado City structure if you want to see them. I also have an interesting picture of the Hico "push up". It was found by a Humble geologist and they drilled a 2500 foot well near the supposed center just to get information on the strata. Another company had earlier drilled a well on the flank of the area.

I find I am more long-winded than you !

Sincerely,