Dec. 29, 1959.

Dr. Virgil E. Barnes,
Bureau of Economic Geology,
University of Texas,
Austin, Texas.

Dear Virgil:

Congratulations on the $16,000 grant you have received for tektite studies--and commiserations, for I know it will mean a lot of hard traveling and work. I don't envy you the job, but I shall await with pleasure and great interest your progress and reports. My best wishes in the undertaking.

A rock-hound friend of mine, to whom I am sending a copy of this letter, told me of a suspected meteorite crater near Colorado City, Texas, which I finally got out to see for myself a week ago. It is not a meteorite crater in the ordinarily accepted sense, but there is some resemblance to the so-called "cryptovolcanic" or "crypto-explosion craters" in that there is a central hill or dome.

The abnormal feature is the fact that this hill is higher than the surrounding crater walls. It is pretty surely Triassic, covered with and containing typical gravels of that formation, as well as many black apparently ferruginous nodules and concretions of a sort of quartzite, which I was told by a local geology teacher were from the Dockum beds. These materials weather out and tend to gather in a sort of swale or valley between the central hill and the surrounding walls.

The wall is what I take to be a red sandstone, pretty uniformly 10-15 feet above the surrounding plain except for some breaks due to erosion drainage. There is a sort of second similar outcrop of this "wall" in two parts just a few hundred feet southeast of the formation, and the owner has put a dam between these to make a tank. The walls do not show any extensive sign of tilting or folding, tho the rocks "slant" somewhat on the northwest side.

We didn't get to prowl around the coutryside

to see if there were other outcrops of this sort in the region, but I saw none. The locality of this one is a mile north of the Beal's Creek crossing on the highway from Colorado City to Sterling City; the formation lies just SE of the highway.

On your geological map it is just between a High Plains outcrop to the northwest and some Pennsylvanian to the southeast (which I couldn't see or identify). The whole thing is perhaps 3/10 of a mile in diameter, and I believe it is roughly circular, but I'm going to get some aerial maps to see. Here is a picture taken from the central top hill to the northwest. Some markings on the back show the extent of the central hill and walls.

I ask you to do two things for me, please:

1. Is this feature well known and explained, and if so, give me a brief explanation or reference.

2. If the U. of T. has any publications on the geology of Mitchell County or anything else that might treat of this, give me the title so I can consult the writings or get a copy.

If this is anything unusual, for God's sake don't tell the University about it, or they'll go bulldoze it down to get a geologic explanation. I went on to the Odessa Meteorite Crater on this same trip for just a brief look, and what has been done there would make you weep. It has literally been reduced to a shambles.

Yours sincerely,

For give this continuation sheet, as I ran out of blank paper here at home. Merry Christmas!

cc Will T. Scott,
4820 Beaumont Drive,
La Mesa, California.