

THE COMANCHE TEXAS METEORITE

Maj. John Hawley called Nov. 9, 1940 to say that Dr. Nat. H. Godbold in their office was reporting a meteorite from Comanche. The latter, on being interviewed, said he had been visiting relatives there the night before and a boy from Dudley Bros. filling station had told him of the find, reputedly a cubic foot or more and over 100 or 200 pounds, found by a farmer digging a tank. Due to rains he had not been able to take time to go see it.

I called Bob Glover at the filling station and made an appointment with Gilmore Durham for Sunday afternoon (Nov. 10); he was said to have a piece of the meteorite.

At Comanche we found the meteorite in the possession of C. F. Denny, public weigher, and between him and Gilmore got the story. The original weight was 44 or more likely $43\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., and a $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. piece taken off left the present mass weighing 42 lbs. The actual finder was Tom Bagley, who was digging a tank for Charles Carter on the latter's farm about 8 miles NW of Comanche on the Beattie road. (Our speedometer readings indicated it was 7.65 miles from town square to Carter's house) The find was made Thursday, Nov. 7; the object was reported to have been $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft. under the ground (but see our measurements below).

At Charlie Carter's we found the exact locality of the discovery was on the south edge of his farm, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mi. S of his south, just across the road from the house of W. D. Richards. Bagley had hit the piece with his Fresno, at the lowest part of the excavation being made, and near its central portion. Reaching down to pick it out and move it, he was surprised at the great weight, and a little later fooled one of Richards' boys who had come across to watch him, by asking him to throw the piece out. The boy, in the same way, went home to get his father and fooled him. Finally, the piece seems to have been left under a nearby tree, but Richards, thinking it might have value, took it to his house for the night and delivered it to Carter next day.

Apparently it was at once washed off and taken to town. Probably before this, a neck jutting off one side was broken off by the use of a sledge hammer when it was found that the object would not break or cut by ordinary means, and this is the smaller piece that was turned over to Durham for reporting to the Explorers' League. Durham had tried to get some one to cut a piece off for 25¢, but hack saw blades were ruined so quickly that a cutting torch was applied. The torch was applied both to the piece cut off and to the main mass, and only a tiny fragment torch-burned was sent in for identification.

The tank is in a natural draw or drainage area running off to the N or somewhat E of N, and from humus colored soil where the meteorite was found, Brown suspected previous excavation which was

confirmed: Carter's bought the place in 1920 and a tank was scooped out here in a more temporary way about 5 or 6 years after that, or roughly 15 years ago. Thus the presence of this blackish soil brought out the possibility that the meteorite was found at the first digging or thrown into the earlier tank. The tank is being made larger this time, and a dam thrown up across the draw the hold water better. Altho the point of find was perhaps as much as 4 or 5 ft. below the ground level at the upper end of the tank, we judged it was only some $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. below the ground level at the sides. Brown took two photographs with some of the men standing at the point of find while I stood at the ground level to the east of the point, in order to illustrate these questions of depth, as well as the general area.

The piece was finally obtained Dec. 11 for \$75. E. W. (Earl) Gressett, a companion of Carter's and neighbor on the east, had a 10% commission in the deal, and came with him to make the sale. I carried it in the car for 3 days of damp weather in order to show it, and lawrencist began to exude plentifully from the cut or broken areas and places where the limonitic crust was missing and the interior nearly or actually exposed.

1940, Dec. 15

Wrote Carter 1942 4-21 offering \$7⁵⁰ for fragment.