

F. Worth Press 8-18 1936

Data Sought As Fireball Streaks Across Oklahoma

Scientists Believe Heavenly Display May Have Been Meteor; Hundreds Watch Its 75-Mile Course

By United Press.

OKLAHOMA CITY, Aug. 18.—Scientists eagerly sought data today on the ball of "blue fire" that streaked across Central Oklahoma at dusk last night.

Hundreds of persons reported witnessing the phenomenon as it trailed a cloud of white smoke northwestward over a course some 75 miles in length, from Shawnee to Kingfisher.

Astronomers described it as a "fireball," a mammoth boulder whizzing through the atmosphere at such speed that it generated sufficient heat to ignite itself.

A dull explosion from the direction taken by the fireball was audible after it disappeared. At El Reno the blast seemed to come from the direction of Concho, farther to the northwest. But at Concho the phenomenon had not been observed, nor was the explosion noted.

G. E. Meador, professor of astronomy at Oklahoma City University, said the blazing boulder undoubtedly was a fireball. He said one of the same general descrip-

tion was sighted in Central Oklahoma about a year ago.

Harry Wahlgren, federal meteorologist here, missed the chance of a lifetime. He was swamped with calls concerning the fireball, but he failed to see it. But he did hear the explosion.

"I ran to the roof and looked toward the oilfield, thinking it was an explosion there," Wahlgren said. "It might have been a large meteor."

Prof. Meador said the fireball probably struck the ground, burned itself out and when gas formed blew out a hole, causing the blast. The explosion occurred some three minutes after the celestial display was observed.

Signature of observer
after having questioned him
& approved by him. C.A. Howard.

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1936 8-18

Dallas News

Shooting Star Lights Sky, Brings Reports Of Burning Airplane

A shooting star of unusual brilliance or a meteor was seen by a number of Dallasites Monday in the northern sky shortly before dark.

According to various descriptions the light from the heavenly visitor was green at first and turned into orange as it disappeared. The duration of the light was variously estimated from two to ten seconds, the latter by E. C. Malloy, 614 North Clinton.

In addition to the reports on the shooting star or meteor, several telephone calls were received by The News asking if an airplane at Love Field had caught on fire.

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1936 8-19

Fort Worth Astronomer Leaves on Extensive Hunt for Meteorite

Robert Brown Will Search Throughout Area in Oklahoma.

Robert Brown, Fort Worth amateur astronomer, climbed into his automobile yesterday and went hunting for a meteorite.

He was headed for Oklahoma on a four-day trip during which he hopes to locate remnants of the fiery meteor which Monday evening streaked across the sky, and his methods will approach those of a detective as he attempts to locate evidences of the phenomenon.

Brown is a member of the Texas Observers, a group of amateur astronomers with headquarters at 312 West Leuda Street. To assist him in his difficult task, he asked before departing that any persons having knowledge of the meteorite communicate with Oscar Monnig, member of the organization, at this address.

Brown will go first to Chickasha and work from there north toward El Reno. He believes, from reports, that the meteorite may be found somewhere south of Concho, but it will be necessary for him to establish a theoretical circle and then question farmers and others around that circle in an effort to determine the location of the meteorite. Even then, he may find that the fiery mass disseminated before striking the ground, and in that case there will be no trace of it.

Monnig said that it is a rare occurrence to locate a fallen meteor because most people, after seeing the phenomenon shoot across the sky, forget it. He hopes Brown's careful survey will locate this one and if it does he will bring at least part of it back with him. Brown took samples of meteorites to exhibit to those he queries, in case they may have found some parts of the falling astral body in the fields near Concho.

The streaking ball of fire was seen headed northwest Monday at dusk by residents of El Reno, Shawnee, Oklahoma City and Blackwell, Okla. One person who saw it was G. E. Meador, astronomy professor at Oklahoma City University, who was positive the phenomenon was a "fire ball." Oklahoma Cityans claimed they heard explosions, which may indicate the meteor disseminated before reaching the earth, but at Blackwell the "giant skyrocket" appeared and disappeared without the accompaniment of an explosion.

Regardless of the conflicting stories, Brown will spend four days in his astronomical detective work and he hopes to bring home the "rock," or at least part of it.

Guthrie Daily Leader
1936 8-21 front page

SOVIET Terrorist Co-spirator Admits Fascism Movement. Story On Page 12.

VOLUME XLVI.

Sky Blazer Fell Nearby Sleuth Says

Texas Man In Logan County Searching For Meteor That Streaked Monday Eve

HAS HIS FIGURES

Thinks That Particles Or Mass Matter Will Be Located Near Crescent-Lovell

By ROY HICKOX

INTO Guthrie, Friday, rode a meteor detective, a more modern type of investigator than the Philo Vance type of sleuths.

Curly-headed Robert Brown, 26, who hails from Fort Worth, Tex., sped all the way from native plains to Oklahoma to track down the "fireball" which swept across mid-Oklahoma skies Monday evening.

And take it from Brown, he is in hot pursuit.

Parts Fell in County

Brown scanned his clues and drew a conclusion therefrom that particles from the meteor fell to earth between Crescent and Lovell, the locality over which occurred the explosion.

REASONED Brown:

"The meteor began over a point four miles east and eight miles south of Shawnee at a height of about 35 miles and

(Continued on Page Eight.)

Last page
Leaders are delivered to paid subscribers

ADVENTIS

Sky Blazer Fell Nearby Sleuth Says

(Continued from Page 1)

ended over a point about halfway between Crescent and Lovell at a height of 12 miles.

"When I say the meteor ended at the height of 12 miles, I mean the meteor stopped giving off light at that point above the earth. This occurred at the time of the explosion which was so well heard over this section of the country.

"If any fragments did fall, they will be along the path of the meteor and most likely will be very close to the explosion point.

"It will be well for the people living between Crescent and Lovell to be on the lookout for any dark, heavy and unusual rocks which they may find. They may be meteorites."

BY profession Brown is an engineer. But his hobby is astronomy. "But I have to work as an engineer to pay for my hobby," he explained.

The Texan, his face showing a two-day beard accumulated during his search, is itching to get his fingers on those meteorites.

He would appreciate the help of any person who locates one.

"The meteorites have only a scientific value," he declared. "Some institutes pay one dollar a pound for them just to encourage interest and stimulate a search. Finders should not break open a meteorite."

Brown stated that he has been scouring the country between Crescent and Lovell, and that he has talked to so many farmers he is hoarse.

"They all heard the explosion but none of them seems to have seen it. I carry two or three meteorites with me and show the farmers what to look for in their fields.

How did Brown determine the path and height of the meteor? "Well, I started in at the south end and drove completely around the point where meteor was first seen. I got the views of all the persons I could contact who saw it and then plotted the course."

"I did the same thing at this end. I drove through Kingfisher, Enid, Guthrie and all over, and figured the spot just between Crescent and Lovell as the meteor's termination."

Brown offered a new explanation for the explosion.

"The meteor was speeding through the air at probably 20 miles a second. That is much faster than the velocity of a bullet."

"The meteor piled up a column of air in front of it at that terrific speed, and the pressure was so great the air suddenly expanded. The expansion probably caused the meteor to explode."

The meteor detective will be in this vicinity for several days.

CHARRED ROCK MAY BE PART OF METEORITE

CRESCENT, Aug. 22. — (P)—A charred rock which he said was a part of the meteorite which flared across the central Oklahoma sky last Monday night was found near here Saturday by Robert Brown, Fort Worth Texas, meteorologist.

Brown said he found the rock in the possession of Eddie Gene Johnson, 8-year-old farm boy who lives near here. The boy said he picked up the rock Friday because of its peculiarities, when he saw it while rabbit hunting.

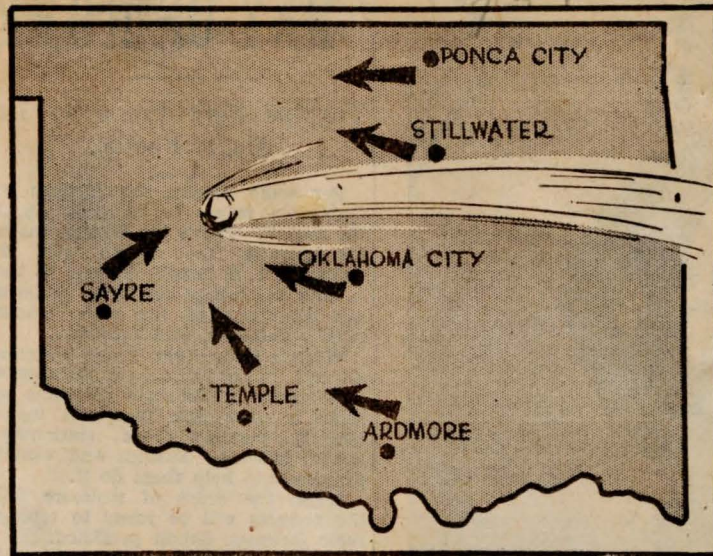
Brown said the fragment measured three inches in length and two inches in width. He found the specimen after a house to house canvass of farmers in northern Logan county.

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*front p Daily Oklahoman
1936 8-23*

1936 8-23
Meteor Reports Pour In

*Daily Oklahoman
p. 3*



Wahlgren Finds Public Is Helpful in Defining Course of Fireball.

HARRY WAHLGREN just can't get that meteor off his mind.

And no wonder, for ever since it whizzed through the Oklahoma twilight Monday, he has been besieged with letters, cards and telephone calls from obliging unofficial observers.

It has been likened to a sky rocket, a football, and even a grapefruit. Its glow has been described variously as "transparent blue," "peach red" and "brilliant yellow."

Although everyone agrees its pfutt-tt-tt lasted only a second or two, the time of its appearance has been set "accurately," by people who "looked at their watches to be sure," from 7:02 to 7:16.

Reports of seeing the—well, whatever it was—have come from Ponca City and Fort Worth, Texas, and from Wewoka, Seminole county, to Sayre and Erick, Beckham county, and scores of points in between.

* * *

OUT of the chaos of reports, however, there emerges a fairly accurate idea of the "football's" course. Judging from the directions in which it was seen from various points, the "grapefruit" must have flashed somewhere either over or beyond the northwestern part of the state.

But there is a peculiar thing. The "explosion" which was supposed to have followed the flash was heard in only a few counties in the central part of the state.

Wahlgren, who has become a confirmed meteor student this week, has a likely answer. According to one of his books, there may not have been an explosion, only a shock wave, caused by the rapid motion of the "skyrocket" through the air.

Since air-resistance quickly reduces the meteor's speed, it may have had

"shock wave" force only during the first split-second after it entered the atmosphere.

The meteor, the books explain further, may have been shattered in midair by the terrific pressure of the air, with a sound like an explosion.

front p 1936 8-24
Unusual Rock Found; May Be Part of Meteor
*Guthrie Daily Leader
Raymond Fields, Publisher*
The Oklahoma meteor of a week ago may be gone but it certainly isn't forgotten.

In the wake of the "fireball" come reports of the sky flier.

Writing that he read in The Guthrie Daily Leader where the meteor and its fragments are believed to have fallen near Crescent and Lovell by an amateur astronomer, M. A. Knecht, living midway between Crescent and Lovell, Monday reported the finding of an unusual rock in his front yard.

"I know it has not been there long," he said. "It is the size of a large strawberry and is shaped similar to one."

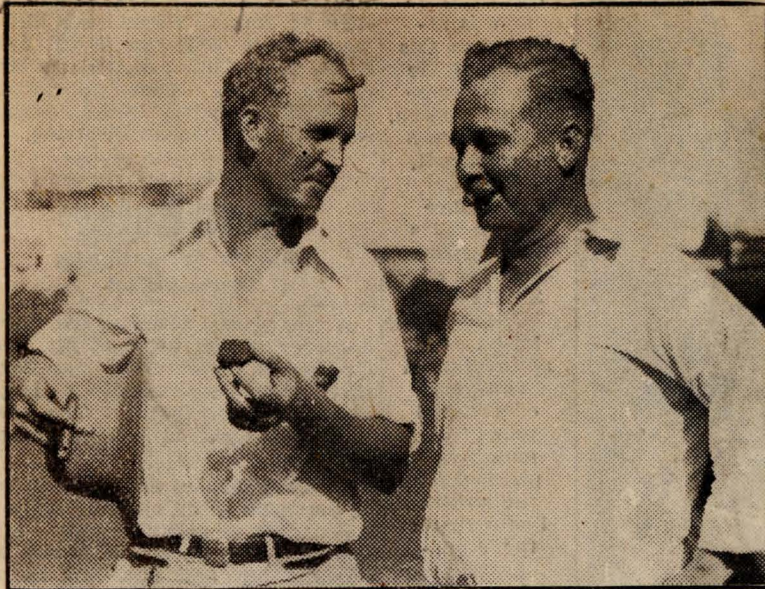
"It is dark red at the point and a shade lighter at the top."

Robert Brown, meteorite hunter from Fort Worth, Tex., Saturday reported that a meteor fragment had been found on the farm of Eddie Johnson, five miles northeast of Crescent.

front page 1936 8-25

Talking Over Their Discovery

Guthrie Daily Leader



HOW'RE WE DOIN'?—As one astronomer jubilantly would say to another, it's a pretty fortunate find. Robert Brown, Fort Worth, Tex., meteor chaser, (left), is showing what is claimed to be a "fireball" fragment to his colleague, Bailey Mathis, also of Fort Worth. The meteorite was recovered five miles northeast of Crescent.

This Guy, Wahlgren Is On The 'Spot', We Hope!

same page as above

If The Weatherman Doesn't Bring Rain—An Inch Of It—The Leader Has To Take It On The Chin

Harry Wahlgren, smiling Oklahoma weatherman, lost his grin Tuesday and decided to sink into a spell of glum pessimism from which even sights of high cumulus clouds floating in the sky failed to arouse him.

He quit predicting rain 30 days ago and gave it up as a hopeless task. Even various and sundry scattered showers from different points in the state failed to dispel that dried look from his countenance. He hasn't seen rain for so long that he doesn't know what to look for on his weather instruments, it is reported.

Meanwhile, threats of dire consequences unless he called a rain for Logan county were resounding from Guthrie. Not only has that musty taste in the city water elicited nasty remarks from disgruntled water consumers but the patience of the Logan farmers is about exhausted.

And on top of that, unless it rains one inch by Wednesday, August 26, Guthrie merchants get one loud guffaw, a couple of snickers and several horse laughs thrown in, on the Leader who contracted to bet the advertisers a page of advertising



Harry F. Wahlgren

two weeks ago that it would rain an inch before the above date. Mark it up on the "red," bookkeeper.

So, unless you come across, Brother Wahlgren, you may have to face a law suit filed by The Leader. Damages? The expense of the ad, at least.

Part of Meteorite Found in Okla. by Fort Worth Man

CRESCENT, Okla., Aug. 22 (AP).—A charred rock, which he said was a part of the meteorite that flared across Central Oklahoma's sky last Monday, was found near here today by Robert Brown, Fort Worth, Texas, meteor expert.

Brown said he found the rock in the possession of Eddie Gene Johnson, 8, farm boy who lives four miles north and one mile east of here.

Eddie said he picked it up because of its peculiarities while rabbit hunting.

Brown said the fragment measured three inches by two and appeared to be igneous rock.

He said he found the specimen after a house to house canvass of farmers in northern Logan County. He said he determined from witnesses of the meteorite's flight the approximate point where it exploded and from that calculated the flight began four miles east and eight miles south of Shawnee and ended a short distance north of here.

"The specimen has not been rained on and is similar to meteorites found in other parts of the United States," Brown said.

Brown left here late today for Fort Worth, but said he will return in a week to continue his search.

New Hunt Due For Meteor Fragments

Like a conqueror searching for more fields is Robert Brown, 26-year-old Fort Worth, Texas, engineer and amateur astronomer.

Successful last week in finding what he believes to be a part of the meteor which flashed across the Oklahoma sky August 17, he was in Oklahoma City Friday on his way back to Crescent, in an effort to find another piece of the "fire ball."

Sat, Aug. 29 Daily Oklahoman
Please

FW Star Tel - 1st p 2nd sec morning

He Proved That 'Star' Fell on Oklahoma



—Star-Telegram Photo.

Robert Brown, amateur astronomer and member of the Texas Observers, proudly contemplates the fragment of meteorite which he discovered in Central Oklahoma. He will leave today again to search for specimens of the phenomenon which lighted the Oklahoma sky the night of Aug. 17.

RETURNS TO HUNT FOR OTHER METEOR SCRAPS

Having brought to Fort Worth what he believes to be a fragment of a meteor seen in Central Oklahoma Aug. 17, Robert Brown, local amateur astronomer, left Friday morning for another trip to the section, in search of additional pieces.

*FW Star Telegram
1936 8/29*

next page for story

New Hunt Due For Meteor Fragments

12 Daily Oklahoman
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1936 8-29
Helping, Please

KC Star 1936 8-19 none

Daily Oklahoman 8-19 ✓

8-20 ✓

Story from picture on preceding page

Meteorite Hunter Again Will Seek Bit of Star Dust

Robert Brown, Fort Worth's meteorite detective and amateur astronomer, will leave this morning again to search for fragments of the meteor which flared across Central Oklahoma's sky Aug. 17.

Successful in locating a fragment of the shattered meteorite near Crescent, Okla., during a four-day, 1,000-mile trip last week, Brown will again comb the countryside and query farmers in that vicinity who promised him to watch for additional specimens.

"There are certain to be more fragments there," Brown said, "but the meteor exploded in the air and the specimens are naturally scattered over a wide area."

The specimen found on the last trip is a black rock about two by three inches. It was found by Eddie Gene Johnson, 8, who came upon the peculiar looking rock while hunting rabbits on his father's farm, five miles from Crescent.

Brown, enthusiastic about his hobby, was elated at his find, as it was the first specimen he has discovered during many long and tedious searches.

The amateur astronomer was positive his find was part of the phenomenon which lighted the sky in Oklahoma the night of Aug. 17, and was even noticed as far south as Waco. His specimen was found in the area where the light of the meteor disappeared, he said, and also, the lack of disintegration proves its recent origin.

After locating the specimen, Brown scoured a 40-acre pasture in which it was found, but without additional success. During the trip, in locating the probable falling point of the meteor, he canvassed farmers over about 30 sections of Central Oklahoma.

"From the answers I received from those who saw the phenomenon," Brown said, "I estimate that the illumination ended about 13 miles up, and the explosion, which was heard over a wide area, followed immediately afterward."

Brown is a member of Texas Observers, a group whose hobby is astronomy.

front page
Star Dust
1936 8-27 Logan County
Meteorite Starts Gold Rush in County
Crescent

Farmers in north Logan county are staging a gold rush all of their own following a shower of rocks from the sky recently.

A meteor which soared from southeast of Shawnee August 17, supposedly exploded about five miles northeast of Crescent. And close behind the run away star came Robert Brown, Fort Worth, Tex., meteorologist.

Following a house-to-house canvass Brown obtained a charred rock from Eddie Gene Johnson, son of Ed Johnson, five miles north of Crescent, which he asserted was definitely part of the meteor.

The star sleuth claims that parts of the exploded meteorite are scattered through out northern Logan county which one central fragment probably weighing several tons, waiting to be discovered.

And astronomers pay one dollar for every pound of meteor specimens found, he added. *Forrest Scribner, Ed*

Wahlgren Is Stuck Again With Meteor

APPARENTLY Tuesday night's meteor was not just a flash in Oklahoma City's pan, as Harry Wahlgren, fatigued collector of meteor information, ardently hoped.

With a report from V. V. Patterson, Shattuck, in Ellis county, on the hijinks the meteor performed before his gaze, it looked Wednesday like Wahlgren was bent on another meteor hunt.

It has taken him more than a week to compile all the reports on the August 17 "fireball." Just because he happened to see Tuesday's fireworks himself, Wahlgren concluded it was only local and hoped his own description of it would be sufficient.

Patterson said the meteor, flashing with a deep purple light and emitting

UST 27, 1936.—THIRTEEN

a tail of sparks, moved from northwest to southeast. Since it appeared in Oklahoma City to be moving southeastward through the northwest sky, Wahlgren concluded it must have passed between the two points.

Nary a Sprinkle Up Yonder, But Meteors Are Plentiful

OKLAHOMA may not have any clouds in her sky—but she sure has meteors!

Another one of the tailed wonders, which observers likened to everything from a baseball to a watermelon and described as blue, green and white, flashed through the northwestern sky about 8:30 p. m. Tuesday.

Primed by a similar phenomenon August 17, scores of witnesses promptly called the weather bureau and The Daily Oklahoman.

And guess who was among them! Harry Wahlgren, federal weatherman and official meteor-information-collector. He happened to be attending an Epworth league rally with his

children at Goldbug field when the celestial fireworks appeared.

"I'm sure glad I saw this one myself," he sighed. "I just finished a week's work collecting and acknowledging reports on the last one. You might just say that I'm going to send in my own personal description this time."

The meteor appeared about 15 degrees above the horizon just slightly east of north, Wahlgren said, and after a two-second dash southwestward, disappeared almost due west.

"It had more of a greenish light than the one last week," he said. "I doubt if it could really be classified as a 'fireball.' It seemed to be pretty low; probably wasn't seen very far. There was no sound with it."

Wed., Aug 26, Daily Oklahoman

Dallas News

1936
10-6

The State Press

OKLAHOMA FIRE BALL.

Texas Observers' Bulletin, a monthly mimeographed periodical designed for amateur sky students, comes to this column from Fort Worth. Its feature article in the current number describes the journey of a stone from some sidereal home through Oklahoma. It was seen in that State Aug. 17, we gather, and presumably landed on Sooner land, although it hasn't been found. The description is graphic and it is to be regretted that the celestial rock hasn't been found. In its visible flight, all a-flame, it was called a "fire ball" by those Oklahomans who know their fires but not their meteors. However, many meteoritic stones have been found in various places. Science knows they are meteoritic because not like other rocks. They are so largely impregnated with iron as to be iron-stones indeed. There is something uncanny about such specimens. We are familiar with things terrestrial, rocks, chunks, brickbats and old bones. We know what they are, and how come. But an object, tangible and ponderable, that visits us from another sphere moves us to a wonder mixed with awe. It makes us aware that there is verily another world. Certainly we are academically aware that there are lots of other worlds. The astronomers have told us about them ad lib, and at school we went ad astra per aspera, but we did not put much more interest in the astronomers than in our school-book. We understood that the star gazers could tell us about the stars and what they were made of, but they couldn't show us. The meteor, burned to the core through attrition in its flight, is obvious evidence from on high. It is factful proof of another planet, perhaps a planet peopled with beings like ourselves. Even with a remnant meteor in our hands, however, we have to use an astronomical imagination to believe there are men on Mars, saints on Saturn, flirts on Venus. Our earth-bound intelligence balks at belief. Nevertheless, astronomy is interesting.

* * *

Meteor Fragment Discovered



The above is a photograph of a meteor fragment that fell east of Kingfisher the night of August 17, when residents of central Oklahoma observed a meteor or fireball flash across the sky from a southerly direction and apparently burst between Kingfisher and Crescent.

The fragment, found by Fred Bamberg, young farmer residing eight miles east of Kingfisher, weighs about one and three-quarter pounds, has a spongy appearance like burned carbon, and is about six inches long and perhaps ten inches in circumference.

Bamberg said he picked up the fragment in his pasture and there was a depression in the ground where it had fallen. Further evidence that it had just fallen was the lack of weather stains.

Several years ago Bamberg said he found a meteor fragment on the banks of the Cimarron river, and he has kept it as a souvenir as he intends to add this one to the collection.

Numerous residents of Oklahoma saw the fireball flash across the sky just about dark August 17, and they recall they heard a rumbling explosion immediately afterward.

Big Meteor No Fireball, Experts Say

Tuesday Night's Caller Just
One of the August Shower.

THERE was either a big tough stranger, or one of the Solar family boys swooping around over Oklahoma Tuesday night.

"It" skyrocketed across the western sky about 8:30 p. m., drawing a chorus of "ah-h-s" from an Epworth League meeting at Goldbug field.

But whether "it" was a real fireball, a big stranger from outside the earth's own galaxy, or just a meteor falling as meteors do during August, G. E. Meador, professor of mathematics and astronomy at Oklahoma City University, is unprepared to say.

"I did not see either the one that went across the country a week ago, or the one Tuesday night," said Professor Meador. "But I heard the first one, and I believe it was a real fireball. I'm inclined to believe, however, that the one Tuesday night was a meteor."

Meador is interested in the piece of meteor picked up at Crescent, several miles off the course of the meteor charted by Harry Wahlgren, federal weather observer.

"It might have been from the fireball which fell a week ago Monday night," said Meador. "If it exploded high in the air, and the piece was rather flat, air currents might have thrown it several miles off the course."

Wahlgren saw the shooting star Tuesday night. He and his children were in the Epworth League audience. He agreed with Meador that it was no fireball.

"It was white, and had a tail like a sky rocket," Wahlgren said. "I don't think it was a regular fire ball this time, but just a meteor. It made no noise."

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—Star-Telegram Photo.

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1936 8-26

Dear Mr Manning,

Am inclosing
some news paper
clipping to you and
Bob. You will get
this tomorrow and
Bob would be Saturday
evening. I am amused
at Mr Wahlgren saying
the Meteor Bob found
was a fire ball.

my neighbors saw
the one last nite.
that was in the N.W.
am anxious to see
your report on the

one Bob found last
week.

you can call
Bob and tell him.
Any information
we can give you
about this one that
fell last mile, we
will do so gladly

sincerely

^{Rudie}
Mrs Lye

Aug 26th 1936 1404 S 16th
7 p.m. Cheekasha
Okla