

CRESCENT

Recovered By The Texas Observers

Fell August 17, 1936

Logan County, Oklahoma

CM2 Carbonaceous chondrite

TKW: 80 grams

Two stones

After a large fireball traveling northwest over central Oklahoma was observed about sunset on August 17, 1936, the Texas Observers sprang into action. They were an informal group of amateur astronomers based out of Fort Worth, Texas whose mission was to search out and recover meteorite falls. The group, founded in 1926 and led by Oscar Monnig, was responsible for the recovery of many meteorite falls and finds in Texas and Oklahoma over Monnig's sixty plus years of involvement including the recovery of the rare Crescent, Bells, and Kirbyville falls. Many of these meteorites are now in the Oscar Monnig Meteorite Collection housed at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth.

Members of the Texas Observers immediately began to take reports of observations of the fireball and plotted its course. Canvassing people along the calculated path of the meteor, they encountered two men and a boy who had been rabbit hunting the evening after the fall. The nine year old boy, Eddie Gene Johnson, and his father and uncle related that they had found a black rock on the red Permian soil, laid bare by drought. The uncle had not believed it to be a meteorite because of its softness; he had trimmed an end off the stone with his pocket knife. Texas Observer member, Robert Brown, visited the site four days after the fall and recovered a fresh 72.7 gram stone and 1.6 grams of the shaved fragments. Seven weeks later a another member of the group, Mr. Sterling Bunch, personally recovered a second specimen of 5.7 grams about a mile east of the first stone.

The Crescent meteorite is a rare CM2 carbonaceous chondrite and the first CM2 to have fallen in the U.S. These meteorites are characterized by a dark gray matrix with about 10% being made up of small (<0.5mm) chondrules. They are somewhat soft and have a low density. They contain 3% to 11% water and weather easily. The small specimen, recovered less than two months after the fall, went through rains and temperature changes and showed evidence of rapid weathering. The crust was no longer black, but was discolored brown by spattered soil and rusting; and cracking of the stone itself had begun.



Small fragment of the Crescent meteorite. Photo from Don Edwards.