

1961, July 19

Mr. Justin T. Monnig,
Route 2, Box 102,
Inglis, Minn.

Dear Justin:

It was good to get your letter, and I appreciate your brother Glenn's interest in forwarding the clippings from Washington.

I am certainly sorry to hear you lost your wife several years back. If you make your contemplated trip this way, be sure to let me know and see us. I have not yet taken a vacation this year, and don't know when I'll go; it will either be right away or in September, but I hope you won't miss me.

We are pretty well known in Oklahoma and I imagine that is as much on account of the wholesale as the retail. We have always had a salesman traveling Oklahoma, especially the southern half.

Yes, I was after the Harleton, Texas meteorite that fell May 30th at 10.25 p.m. like "a duck after a June bug". A man who saw the fireball from here called me within a minute after, and I planned to begin an investigation and search the next day, but that next morning the meteorite was already reported found!

Consequently, I went to see the finder immediately, and within 20 hours of the fall was bargaining with him for the piece. In the old days, I would have eventually acquired it by negotiation, but the man didn't want to sell right then and kept going up on the price—indeed, he wouldn't even make a price.

The last few years scientists all over the U. S. have been badly wanting a freshly fallen meteorite quickly for tests for short-lived radioactive isotopes presumably created in space by cosmic rays, and I knew they would pay handsomely for this particular specimen. I decided I couldn't beat the competition and so I joined them, and arranged by phone to represent the U. S. National Museum et al.

Eventually I had to let them send a man down and I still don't know what they paid for it, but they didn't get it for 2 weeks, and all I did was lay the groundwork for them.

Yours sincerely,