

Knoxville, Oct. 16. 12.30 pm.

Dear Oscar:

Your airmail letter just arrived. I am sorry I did not give you the little more I found out from the Harriman end in my airmail the other day. I called Dr. Cross before going to Chattanooga. He was as close-mouthed as usual, but I hung on the phone until he did tell me this much: They hadn't located the meteorite up to that time. Mr. Hembree, the actual finder of the iron, owes Dr. Cross money. He turned the meteorite over to Dr. Cross telling him he could have anything he could get out of it to go on this debt. Hembree has been sick and a suit has not yet been started, but Dr. Cross and Mr. Hembree are going to sue A.R. Davis, the man who let the Chattanooga fellows get away with it, and Mr. Dodd, the third-- or perhaps I should say fourth or nth partner. This leaves the Harriman end, and for that matter the legal status of the whole thing, still more complicated. Now, it was my understanding that Hembree owned the property on which it was found. If this is so that clears up that part. If not, Dr. Cross has no claim at all on it and we must find out definitely on whose land it actually was found. I get so provoked with the whole crowd, the good Dr. Cross no less than the others, for being so evasive about the history of the thing. I could eat nails sometimes. If you check back through my letters about this matter, I know you will find contradictory statements, especially about the history of the thing, but the reason is that everytime I hear from Harriman, they have a different tune and no two of them tell the same thing, nor does their later statements half the time gee with the outline I first got when I was over there.

The truth of the matter is, with Dr. Cross and Hembree planning suit as I said, I am half inclined to believe they will fight it out half-heartedly there at Harriman and we'd never hear anything more about it. That is, if you could buy it quietly from Kenyon and get it down there at once. However, Dr. Cross knows that I was making another trip down there to try to locate it and if they did get judgement against Davis he might get after Kenyon and then to us. On the other hand wouldn't we have a legal comeback at Kenyon if the Harriman fellows sued us for recovery. Our attitude could truthfully be that it was purchased in good faith as far as it was possible for us to know; in other words, we don't actually know who the owners are.

I hope you don't think that I was trying to pass the job on to somebody else just to get it off my hands. As a matter of fact, if Jones don't get results in a few days, be sure to let me know and I'll stay right in behind it, for I won't be satisfied now until we get it, or you have a fair shot at buying it, anyway. It was Jones own offer that he look after the matter for you if there was any further negotiations to be carried on and I have the utmost confidence in his doing the right thing by you. I don't believe that he has any reason or desire to cross you.

Jones is now on the Government payroll with the National Forest Service. He was formerly Chattanooga's leading architect, so I was told, but he's even taking in boarders now to get by. His wife's illness and death hit his pocketbook hard as well as his heart, but he still thinks he's hardup if he can't make \$10,000 a year. He runs you a close second in putting out coin on equipment, books, etc., and his house looks like a hotel. Must cost him a pretty penny to keep it going, as middle-class living expenses go. His kids are practically grown, but he has three boys still in high school and the University.

I had supper with him Friday night and got a chance to see Saturn and the moon through his rather locally famous 12" reflector.

I would place it second only to your Godfrey glass in definition. He has it housed under a sliding roof almost identical with Las Estrellas. And here's something. He and some other Chattanooga astronomers have got a WPA appropriation, together with some local money, and are going to build a complete observatory with a 20.5" mirror, dome, laboratory, library, darkroom, grinding room and lecture room all housed in one building. He has the plans completely drawn up and the money, so he said, was not only approved at Washington but has even passed McCarl's office and they expect to get to work on it right away. It is to be built at McCallie school atop goodsized hill, which is part of Missionary Ridge. If they carry their plans through its going to be one of ~~the finest~~ finest municipal observatories anywhere in the country.

We had to postpone our radio-meteor program until later, partly because I have been too busy to push it, but chiefly because Brown and DeWitt haven't completely worked out details and contacted by radio yet.

LJW and I are working on an idea for getting in on the 4-A publication. We believe we can raise enough money to pay up a minimum number of subscriptions in this locality for one year and thus get a local section in the national publication.

Peggy Ann is growing so fast one would hardly know her for the original article. Health fine.

Be sure to let me know your progress on the meteorite negotiations and whenever you want me to step in again I am eager to do so. I am writing the fellow who is supposed to have the meteorite at Harrison, Tenn., and will let you know the results of that.

Best wishes,

Bunch.