

GORDON

THE GROOTFONTEIN, SOUTHWEST AFRICA, METEORIC IRON

BY SAMUEL G. GORDON.

The Grootfontein meteoric iron lies on Farm Hoba, about 20 kilometers west of Grootfontein, in Southwest Africa. When first discovered (in 1920?), only a bit of the upper surface was exposed. Extensive excavations (see Text-figs. 2, 3) have revealed it to be the largest meteorite at present known. Brief descriptions by Schneiderhöhn,<sup>1</sup> Luyten,<sup>2</sup> and Spencer<sup>3</sup> have recently appeared, calling attention to this extraordinary mass.

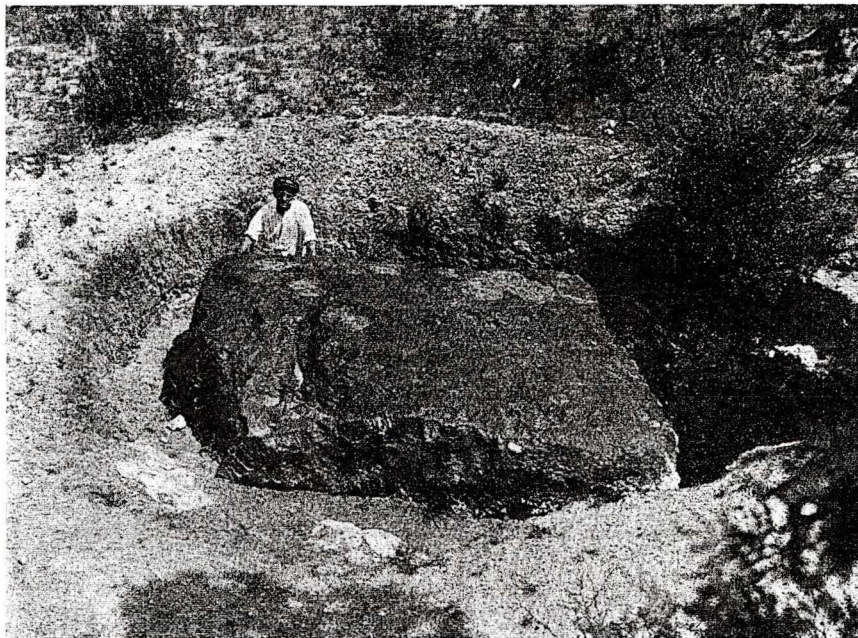


FIG. 1.—The Grootfontein meteoric iron, showing concavities due to weathering. The meteorite occurred embedded in the ground, and the pit is due to excavations made after its discovery. The fluting on the edges was made in the past by a collector with an oxyacetylene blowpipe. Photograph by the author.

<sup>1</sup> H. Schneiderhöhn, "Das Otavi-Bergland und seine Erzlagerstätten." Zeit. f. prak. Geol. 37 (6) 95-96, 1929. Map on page 88 shows location of meteorite.

<sup>2</sup> W. J. Luyten, New York Times of April 14 and 21, 1929. "The Grootfontein Meteorite." South African Journal of Science, XXVI, 19-20, 1929.

<sup>3</sup> L. J. Spencer, A New Meteoric Iron from Piedade do Bagre, Minas Geraes, Brazil. Min. Mag. XXII (129), footnote on page 272, 1930. Meteoric irons from Southwest Africa. Natural History Magazine, II, (15) 244-246, 1930.