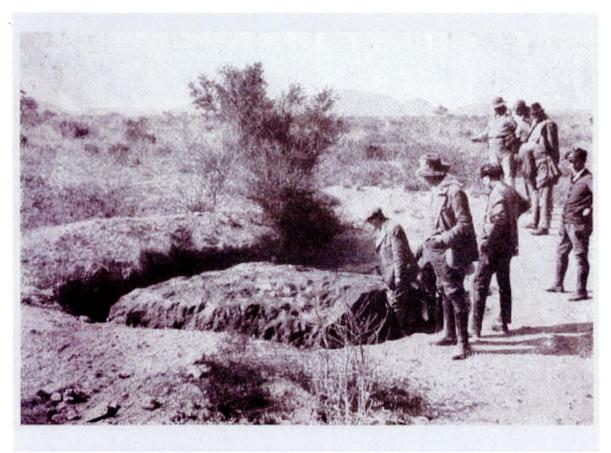
<sup>7 Most N</sup> 1. Hoba, Namibia. Estimated weight: 60 tonnes



## Photo: coda

The runaway winner at approaching twice the weight of its nearest rival, Namibia's Hoba must have taken some stopping. Measuring over 6.5 metres sq, this 60-tonne slab of metal is believed to have been slowed by the Earth's atmosphere to the point where it fell to the surface at a speed that left it intact and barely buried. It's even been suggested that the meteorite's unusually flat shape caused it to skip along much as a skipping stone bounces across water. Nice moves.

## What have we here: One of the earliest known photos of the Hoba, around 1930



Photographer unknown via Giant Crystals

Thought to have landed less than 80,000 years ago, Hoba is composed of about 84% iron and 16% nickel, and remains the most massive known naturally-occurring hunk of iron at the Earth's surface. Due to its large mass, it's not been moved from where it fell since being discovered in 1920 by a <u>farmer</u> ploughing his field – who heard a loud scraping before his oxen came to a rather abrupt halt. Having suffered much vandalism, this beast is now visited by thousands of tourists a year.

## One mighty meteorite: Early traveller visiting the exposed Hoba, around1955



Photographer unknown via Giant Crystals