

1957, Jan. 22.

Dr. E. P. Henderson,
U. S. National Museum,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Henderson:

You have probably long been aware of the Hinrichs collection of meteorites in St. Louis. I first learned of it some 20 years ago and have tried steadily to obtain it, tho always unsuccessfully. Most of the collection would probably not interest you, and as time has gone on many of the specimens have become less desirable to me.

One piece, however, I have felt worthy of continued effort and attention in that I feel it has never been fully or properly recorded. In a booklet "The Amana Meteorites", Gustavus Hinrichs refers to "a perfectly unique and big new meteorite, the 'White Crust' of 1892, a single stone weighing 23 kilogrammes (the fragments specified fit into same). It is a dark stone, resembling that of Tadjera, almost completely coated with white Oldhamite (Calcium Sulphide)....." In another place he refers to it as weighing 22.8 kilos, and in a list of his smaller pieces he tabulates a 214 gram piece.

The piece seems to have been more fully described in Comptes Rendus, Tome 118, p 1418; 1894, to which I have never had access.

Originally the son, Carl G. Hinrichs, led me to believe this "white creut" specimen came from Lampasas, Texas, and I made a special trip of investigation there years ago. I became convinced the object had actually come from Kaufman, Texas. Mr. Hinrichs was killed a few years ago and I have recently negotiated with his widow. She has unearthed the correspondence on this meteorite and I got to read it only last Sunday, when I was thru St. Louis. The meteorite definitely came from near Kaufman, and I will give you a copy of my notes when I transcribe them later.

I finally persuaded Mrs. Hinrichs to let me have on loan a piece of the meteorite which fits into the main mass and weighs 427.5 grams according to my scales. I am going to send this to you soon, but I think before you cut or work on it, we should agree exactly what is to be done and get Mrs. Hinrichs' specific consent. She is hard to deal with.

My general plan was that you cut a small slice (she would not want much removed) sufficient to enable you to classify the stone. I feel pretty positive it is a chondrite, probably of no great rarity or unusualness. Then I wondered if you could test the white material, because I never could see how it could be calcium sulphide.

Hinrichs seems to have been convinced this was a fresh fall, recovered within a few weeks, and I presume he thought the calcium sulphide was an original cosmic constituent. The stone looks to me like an old fall, and there is a definite line to the white material all around the mass, which I would ordinarily call a "ground line". My guess is that the white encrusted part was embedded in the soil and had limestone or travertine deposited on it by ground water. The surface geology around Kaufman is upper Cretaceous, the Taylor and Navarro formations. I think these are mostly marl but perhaps there are some limy strata.

I am further guessing rather wildly that when he scraped some of the white crust off for testing he got some sulphides out of the troilite in the meteorite--the calcium out of the travertine and the sulphide from the meteorite would give him calcium sulphide. But you are the chemist in the family, and who am I to do the talking! You might not even be able to test it easily, because the white deposit is thin. Of course I could try HCl on it, but I'm just going to leave it alone so that it will come to you untampered with.

Sincerely,