

1957, May 11.

Dr. E. P. Henderson,
U. S. National Museum,
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Dr. Henderson:

As to the Kaufman, Texas, stone, thanks for your letter of May 8 informing me that Mrs. Hinrichs' slice has been returned to her. We will just let all matters pertaining to this stone percolate for the time being, and I'll see if I can get anything tangible out of my further efforts in the region of find.

I write now to report to you that the La Villa, Texas, stone will be donated by the finder to the Pan American College at Edinburg, Texas. I made a bid for \$100 but the owners are reasonably well-to-do and well educated, and tho I promised to leave the piece on exhibit somewhat indefinitely at the college, they decided to short-cut me and just give it directly to the college. Such are the woes of a private collector!

I wanted you to have these facts for your files, and will add that the exact point of find is 2.3 miles SE of the intersection of Highways 107 and 491; the town of La Villa is at this intersection, lying mainly just N of it. The latitude and longitude, which I will convey to Dr. Leonard for his joy, are $26^{\circ} 16.3' N.$, $97^{\circ} 54.1' W.$

I was originally told that the meteorite weighs $42\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, but Mrs. J. R. Wade, Sr., who controls the meteorite, told me verbally $43\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. I was not able to check the weight personally. The property belongs to the J. R. Wade Farms, Inc., and her sons and daughters are stockholders. The meteorite was actually found in the course of farm work by a Mexican, Alfonso Robles, working under a foreman, Carlos Gonzales, probably in early April, 1956. It was carried to the end of the row and thrown out, but later recognized, apparently partly thru its weight, by Mr. Elmo Wade, the farm manager, who lives in Mercedes, Texas. He thought enough of it to bring it to the house, and his mother seems finally to have sensed pretty strongly that it was a meteorite.

I helped identify the meteorite finally and positively in March, 1957 and made a trip to see it and get first hand facts April 13-15. I have a very small chip which shows clearly the stone is a chondrite. It has not been substantially damaged or broken; only a few tiny chips were knocked off.

There was the usual hopeful attempt to connect this with a morning (daytime) fireball said to have been seen in the region during the last week of March or first week of April, 1956, but this cannot be as the stone is obviously quite old and weathered. One side has a definite tho not thick deposit of limestone, scratched in some 15 or more streaks by plow disks which have hit it. While the stone has the usual set of surfaces on which it may be rested in different positions, it is largely more or less rounded and ellipsoidal in shape, with no outstanding features or pittings. Original crust is hardly evident, only oxidation. There is one fairly plane surface, indicating positively to my mind that the meteorite broke along this side and that a somewhat smaller piece should be in the region, I would say another 10 to 15 pound piece, if it stayed intact.

The Mexican found it when he was cultivating cotton. The plow wheel ran over it and the "sweeps" in back struck it. Mrs. Wade was considerably amazed that this stone had not been found before or struck by plows; she could not understand how it had been found if it was originally deep, and did not see how such a big stone could be at a shallow depth. However, it turned out the land had been chiseled (plowed to a depth of perhaps 18 inches) the year before, perhaps even twice, and I think doubtless this process served to help bring it out and up. As stated above, it had clearly been criss-crossed by plows a number of times.

The surface geology of the region is undifferentiated Quaternary on the old Texas geologic map. The land for some miles around the find is rock-free, apparently mostly alluvial or very recent geologic deposits. It ought to furnish a good area for further finds if we can arouse interest, and I have already furnished the college with some additional stones to make up a little display and endeavor to arouse public interest. They have a pretty lively astronomical club at the college and an observatory, and maybe with this to work more meteorites can be turned up. The find at least gives us a basis for a try. Mrs. Wade is something of a local newspaperwoman and anxious for a blast of publicity, which I think she can get and which should help us all.

And so, for the present, FINIS on La Villa. But if nothing else is found, we may yet some day work out a deal with the college to have you slice it and maybe each of us can get a slice.

Sincerely,