

Knoxville, Tenn.,
Aug. 22, 1935.

Dear Prof:

As I told you on the card yesterday, Dr. Cross sent word, through his son, that they had located the meteorite in Chattanooga and had turned the matter of recovering possession over to an attorney. You wrote me once that you did not know of any decision in this country in court on this matter. I am just wondering if, in the absence of any statutes and prior decisions, a judge would be guided by the English law on this point. If so, the meteorite would certainly come back to Harriman to the man on whose place it was found. I very much fear, ~~XXXXX~~ however, that in this case the replevin warrant, or whatever the court order is called, would be sought through some half-baked JP's court, of which there are literally hundreds in the large cities of this state, and it would simply reduce to a question of how well strings could be pulled on both sides. No fine legal points considered in such courts. Dr. Cross seemed insistent that I sit tight just a little longer and confident they would have possession of the meteorite in a few days. I have waited on them and fooled with them so long and they can't seem to do anything, that I don't know whether anything will come of this or not. I suggest that we give them a little longer to see what they can do with their legal efforts and then let me return the money to you so you will have it available for the other meteorite prospects you have in mind. I thought I would give them a few days, possibly until the first of next week, then phone Dr. Cross and tell them if they can't produce the meteorite by a certain date, say by Saturday week, Aug. 31, that I am using my available funds to purchase another meteorite. Then if they can do nothing by that time I'll return the money. We can still keep a baited line out to them, so that if they do happen to get it, you will still have a chance at it, if you want it. I feel sure that they will have no other chance to sell it and will turn to me if they do recover it later.

As I told you, I delayed writing Jones about the matter until I got your letter and then after hearing from Dr. Cross and your suggestion not to write I never got in touch with him. Which was probably the best thing.

We still don't know where we stand with Washington-- what is going to be done around this station. Something is hanging fire somewhere, but we don't know what it is. We have all instruments ordered, have made arrangements for quarters on the Island and now all we can do is wait. The plane which will be used for this work is standing idle in the hangar at Island Airport and has been there for about a week. Since it will take three weeks to a month to train whoever goes out there, it looks like now that it will be Oct. 1st, anyway, before our observations will start here.

I had a long letter from LJW today regarding this and that. He inclosed two photographs of the Nova Herculis region, one made Dec. 23, and the other Aug. 18. Whenever I see other amateur stellar photography I am impressed with the high quality of the Las Estrellas products. LJW's photographs would compare rather poorly with our first efforts with the aberration camera. He has 's.a.' and declination error both badly. He writes that they got 12 photographs of the eclipse with DeWitt's 12" and that they were good. This telescope was apparently the best of the Nashville equipment I saw, but enough money had been spent on it to have purchased a factory made instrument.

Incidentally, LJW and I got two or three coincident meteors on the Perseids. I have reduced for one of them-- the end point was only 31.0 miles high-- rather low for the average Perseid and this was almost

certainly a Perseid.

I am shipping today the small refractor by PP insured. The book is inclosed with the telescope. I am sorry to have been so long in sending this book back and in not getting the telescope down there sooner, when Bob and you were so kind as to offer to mount it. When it is mounted you has best keep it there for awhile until I get settled down again.

As I said some time ago, if I am not sent to the airport and nothing else shows up around here, I may yet trade stations with the El Paso observer. This town and country gets my goat worse and 'wprser' as time goes on and I AM NOT going to stay here much longer, unless I get a promotion or other inducement to stay.

Mildred is in good health and feeling fine. My mother continues in excellent health for a woman of her age. She has a small apartment not far from us and gets to see us most every day, which makes her quite happy.

I must sign off and get ready for the pm ob. Let me know what your latest reactions are on the Harriman meteorite proposition and if you want it handled as I have outlined.

Best regards to Bob, Morse, your family and yourself.

Bunch.