

A NEW METEORIC STONE FROM BALDWIN, MISSISSIPPI

By GEORGE P. MERRILL

Head Curator of Geology, United States National Museum

At the time of the meeting of the Geological Society of America in Washington, December, 1923, the present writer was shown by Prof. L. C. Glenn, of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn., a beautifully encrusted meteoric stone weighing about 345 grams, which fell on the farm of Allen Cox, of Baldwin, Miss., February 2, 1922. Concerning it Mr. Cox furnished the writer the following information:

This meteoric stone fell * * * on my farm about one and a half miles northwest of Baldwin, Miss. Ed. Bush, a negro tenant on my place, who is an unusually reliable and intelligent darky saw it fall and in fact it did not miss hitting him by more than 10 feet. He came to the house and reported it to me and I went with him and picked up the stone which had buried itself about three or four inches in soft clay. It was still hot, not hot enough to burn, but very decidedly warm and gave off a smell very much like brimstone or a flint when it has been struck with steel and sparks have been made to fly. The darky had been so badly scared that he had been afraid to touch it. He said his attention was first attracted by a humming noise which he took to be an airplane and he turned to look into the sky for the airplane but saw nothing. The noise increased and in a short space of time described by him as about a minute, but which I am sure was only a few seconds, a rush of air came by his head and the stone buried itself near his feet. He did not at any time see the actual stone until it hit the ground. It first was heard in a northwesterly direction from him and in falling described an arch of about 30 to 35 degrees as nearly as I could tell from the location he gave me for the position of the first sound.

As no record of this stone has thus far appeared in print, the present writer, with Professor Glenn's permission, cut from it a thin section from which the following description was prepared:

The stone is chondritic though the structure is quite indistinct. The single thin section examined shows the usual fine granular ground with irregularly outlined areas of larger granules, the evident residue of chondrules partially obliterated through metamor-

phism. The determined silicate minerals are olivine and an orthorhombic pyroxene with small, interstitial areas of a clear, colorless, doubly refracting mineral which in a few instances shows plainly the twinning striae characteristic of a plagioclase feldspar. The cut surface shows numerous black veins, some of which are mere lines, but in one instance 4—5 millimeters in diameter enclosing fragments of the silicates, the whole imparting a somewhat breccia structure to the stone (see pl. 1).

Under the prevailing system it would be classified as a veined white chondrite.

This stone, the doubtfully meteoric iron of Oktibbeha and a small stone that fell near Palahatchie in Rankin County on October 17, 1910, represent the sole contributions of the State of Mississippi to our knowledge of the distribution of these very interesting bodies.





THE BALDWIN, MISSISSIPPI, METEORIC STONE

FOR REFERENCE TO PLATE SEE PAGE 2

