

## The Sylacauga Meteorite

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Ann Hodges was enjoying a well-deserved nap in her farmhouse on the afternoon of November 30, 1954, in Oak Grove, Alabama, near the town of Sylacauga. It was a cool fall day, typical in Alabama for that time of year. The typical fall afternoon, however, would quickly become anything but typical. At 12:46 P.M., a large object came crashing through the roof of the farmhouse. It crushed a wooden radio before hitting Mrs. Hodges. The object that fell was about the size of a grapefruit. It left a nasty bruise on the left thigh of Mrs. Hodges, but otherwise, left her uninjured.

### What was it?

Before the object came crashing through the roof of the farmhouse, people across eastern Alabama reported a fireball streaking through the sky. Others heard loud booming noises. Many believed it was a plane crash or even a UFO. A government geologist was called in to investigate. He quickly concluded that the object that fell was a meteorite. Thus, Ann Hodges made history that day. She was the first documented person in history hit by an object from space. While meteorites entering the Earth's atmosphere are relatively common events, large, intact meteorites are exceedingly rare. Most fall into the ocean or break up into tiny parts. Soon, people from across Alabama descended upon the Hodges house to see the meteorite for themselves. Ann Hodges was so overwhelmed by the attention that she was transferred to a local hospital.

### The next question

The final question that soon arose concerning the meteorite involved ownership. Who owned the meteorite? While the United States Air Force initially collected the meteorite, both the Hodges' and their landlord claimed ownership. Eventually, the two parties compromised and the Hodges paid \$500 to their landlord for the meteorite. The Hodges had hoped to sell the meteorite, but by the time their ownership was established interest had waned, and they were unsuccessful in finding an owner. They decided to donate the meteorite to the Alabama Museum of Natural History.

- 1. Which of the following best describes November 30<sup>th</sup> in Oak Grove before 12:46?**
  - A. It was very noteworthy
  - B. It was a typical day for that time of the year
  - C. It was chaotic
  - D. It was very atypical for a fall day in Oak Grove
- 2. Which of the following IS NOT true?**
  - A. The meteorite almost hit Ann Hodges
  - B. The meteorite crushed a radio
  - C. The meteorite fell in the afternoon of November 30
  - D. Some believed the meteorite was a UFO

**3. The type of meteorite that landed in Oak Grove...**

- A. was fairly common.
- B. was fairly uncommon.
- C. was very common.
- D. was very rare.

**4. How did Ann Hodges feel about the aftermath of the meteorite strike?**

- A. She felt very proud to have been the first documented person to have been struck by a meteorite
- B. She was badly injured and likely in significant pain
- C. She did not like all of the attention that came with the meteorite strike
- D. She felt it was an opportunity to become rich and famous

**5. What is suggested in the following sentence?**

She was the first documented person in history hit by an object from space.

- A. No one other than Ann Hodges had ever been hit with a meteorite or part of a meteorite
- B. People are sometimes hit by objects from space
- C. There would soon be new documented instances of people struck by meteorites
- D. There may have been others struck by meteorites, but only Ann Hodges was definitively struck by a meteorite.

**6. Which word used in the final paragraph means to “come to an agreement?”**

- A. compromised
- B. descended
- C. established
- D. claimed

**7. What ultimately became of the meteorite?**

- A. The Hodges sold it
- B. It was donated to a museum
- C. It was given to the landlord
- D. The passage doesn't say