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Introduction: The Orgueil meteorite is allegedly one of the most important extraterrestrial samples present in our collections. The goal of this paper is to summarize the 150 years of history of this intriguing meteorite, with special emphasis given to the description of the fall and early scientific work.

The fall: The fall of the Orgueil meteorite occurred Saturday 14th May 1864. The meteor which had the size of the full Moon was spotted in all the western France. The first newspaper article reporting the Orgueil meteor and meteorites' fall appeared in the Tuesday May 17th issue of *Le Courier de Tarn et Garonne*. It reported the meteor direction (from North West to South East) and gave a fair description of its explosion, followed by a detonation, similar to a platoon fire or a cannonade. "From the time elapsed since the last light and the detonation, it was calculated that the explosion occurred at 18 km of altitude".

Early work: Within a few weeks of the fall, a series of analysis were performed under the authority of G.A. Daubrée, Geology professor at the Paris Natural History Museum [1-3]. The skilled scientists reported the presence in Orgueil of iron sulfides, hydrated silicates and carbonates. They also characterized ammoniacal salts which are now gone, and observed sulfates being remobilized at the surface of the stone. They identified its high water and carbon content and its similarities with the Alais meteorite which fell in 1806 [4]. Daubrée and his colleagues noted the similarity of the Orgueil organic matter with some terrestrial humus. The famous Pasteur carefully examined the rock but could not find any trace of living organisms.

Modern analysis: One century later, Nagy and Claus were less prudent and announced the discovery of "organized" elements in some samples of Orgueil [5]. Their observations were quickly discarded by Ed Anders and others who also discovered that pollen grains were intentionally placed into the rock, maybe to let future scientists believe that living organisms had once been present in the Orgueil parent-body [6]. Orgueil is now one of the most studied meteorites. It contains a diversity of carbon-rich compounds which help address the question of organo-synthesis in the early solar system. Its chemical composition is close to that of the Sun's photosphere and serves as a cosmic reference [7]. The secondary minerals which make 99% of the Orgueil volume were probably formed during hydrothermal alteration on its the parent-body within the first million years of the solar system; their study help understand fluid-rock interaction in asteroids and comets. Finally, the Orgueil meteorite probably originated from a cometary body, as indicated by its orbit [8]. Because it bears strong similarities with other carbonaceous chondrites coming from dark asteroids, this cometary connection establishes the existence of a continuum between dark asteroids and comets [9].

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