

Thousands of Midwesterners watch as UFOs skip across the night sky

WEEKLY NEWS
W0135

26/2/80

An electrifying series of unexplained UFO sightings within four hours stunned and mystified thousands living in the country's grain belt.

The first sighting — a dazzling explosion — was seen by airline pilots and residents in Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma.

A glowing ball of white light

was spotted moving through the clear night skies at about 8:35 on January 16. Many thought the object was a meteor, or a shooting star but it did not have the meteor's usual flaming tail.

Suddenly, the ball of light exploded. The blinding flash literally bathed the center of America with daylight.

Some witnesses reported a rumbling sound "like thunder" just before the flash. One law-

man near Salina, Kans., said night was turned into day. "You could read your newspaper by it," he said, noting that the blinding light lasted about three or four seconds.

Calls poured into the air traffic tower at the Salina airport.

"We got calls, but no one knows for sure what it was," a Federal Aviation Administration official said.

Then, about three hours later,

at 11:45 p.m., Don Wall of Texico, a tiny town in central Illinois, was awakened by a strange greenish light pouring through his bedroom window.

The 28-year-old welder had rushed to the window in time to see a huge object at least 100 feet long racing along at treetop level above his backyard.

The object had two large floodlights and two smaller lights. He said it was only about

200 feet away. "It was pretty scary," Wall told The NEWS. "I'm still scared."

The next day, Wall's car would not start. A resistor had burned out in the car's ignition system.

"I don't know what could have caused it," he says. "My car is almost new and I have not had any trouble with it before."

Only 10 minutes later and 40 miles away, coal miner Don Taylor was driving to his night shift job when he spotted a bright yellow light moving across the sky.

"It looked like some kind of aircraft," he says. "I could see it moving and then all of a sudden it exploded into a giant blue ball of fire. It was a huge explosion at least 200 feet long and 50 feet high."

"Then there were flaming yellow embers and it disintegrated."

Residents in nearby Benton, Ill., also reported the sighting.