

# Silent flash has officials baffled

LINCOLN JOURNAL

NEBRASKA CITY (AP) — Lawmen, farmers and many other sky watchers in south-east Nebraska Monday were still shaking their heads and wondering what it was they saw hovering, flashing and darting across the night skies during the weekend.

Acting Otoe County Sheriff Rich Tilson says he and law officers in three other south-east Nebraska counties saw the spectacular-but-silent flash, but didn't see the dull red glowing objects that called him out to investigate after 11 p.m. Saturday.

Tilson got a 11:10 p.m. call from a farmer who said he had been drawn into the outdoor chill by his spooked horse.

Tilson and Deputy Tom Frudiker arrived to find the farmer and a group of neighbors still intently staring at the clear sky.

The group told the men they had seen two dull red lights in the sky, one of which appeared to land in a field and the other that moved off to the northwest.

Those interviewed by the officers said the red color was not bright as is normally associated with aircraft.

Then, as Tilson and Frudiker watched with the farmer and the others, a bright flash lit up the sky. Tilson said law enforcement officers in Johnson, Nemaha and Cass counties also reported the flash that he said appeared to emanate out in all directions from a single point.

Tilson said the flash lit up the entire area but did not make a sound. He said he's seen meteors, falling stars and what he saw Saturday night was like nothing he'd ever seen before.

Tilson says his office investigated an incident several years ago when a helicopter was used to rustle cattle in the Nebraska City area. Several people in the area at that time had reported the helicopter as a UFO, he said.

"This may turn out to be the same kind of thing," he said. Air control tower officials in Omaha and at Offutt Air Force Base in nearby Bellevue said there were no aircraft in the areas when Saturday night's sightings were reported.

J.S.

# Lincoln residents report seeing fireball

Several Lincoln residents reported seeing a bright fireball crossing the south-eastern sky toward the south at about 9:50 Saturday night.

An employee in the control tower at the Lincoln Airport said he saw the fireball and that it was a meteor.

Other observers weren't so sure, because of the size and

color of the light. One said the light appeared as big as a softball held at arm's length. Another, who said he saw the object while driving, said it appeared to change in color from yellow to green.

Spokesmen for law enforcement agencies said they had no information on the fireball.

LINCOLN JOURNAL APR. 5, 1981

# Scientist: Lightning dug holes

HUMPHREY (UPI) — Two large holes in a farmer's field southeast of Humphrey apparently were caused by bolts of lightning last week, an investigator said Thursday.

The holes, one measuring 5 inches in diameter and 20 feet deep and the second 3 inches in diameter and 7 feet deep, were within an oval-shaped impression with a white powdery substance surrounding the lips of each hole. Radiation equipment indicated there was metal at the bottom of one hole.

John Say, a chemistry professor at Norfolk, said he talked over the telephone Wednesday night with a geologist, who told him the holes probably were caused by lightning bolts.

"As far as I'm concerned, it sounds plausible to me," Say said.

Say said the laboratory tests on the white substance were incomplete, but the geologist told Say the substance may be the result of sand particles subjected to extreme heat.

Say said a white substance found around a similar set of holes discovered a few years ago also proved to be fused silica, or sand particles. Metal also was detected at the bottom of one of the holes, but no metal was ever found.

LINCOLN JOURNAL

# Fireball seen near Omaha but not found

OMAHA (UPI) — Authorities said a search on Saturday failed to turn up any trace of what observers described as a flaming flying object seen Friday night in rural Douglas County.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies combed an area north of Omaha near the Douglas-Washington County line looking for what some thought might have been a meteorite. The search concentrated on an area near a ravine east of U.S. 73.

James Shearron, 57, of rural Omaha said he and three other people were northbound on the highway about 11:30 p.m. Friday when they saw a flaming object coming toward them.

He said the object was about 5 feet wide with a flaming tail 25 feet long.

"It looked like it hit the ground right in front of us," Shearron said.

LINCOLN JOURNAL  
JAN. 25, 1981