

June 18, 1982 response to H. H Nininger (edited):

The Sept. 17, 1945 Atoka, OK, fall came to my attention quickly from newspaper reports. As I recall, we had no observations from here but I drove up there immediately with Blakeney Sanders of our local group.

The fall was detonating and one man saw a piece hit in a wet drainage spot about 10 or 15 feet from him. He feared to dig it out, thinking it might be a bomb. The town was full of witnesses and they, including the local peace officers, had the general good sense to reassure him that it was not a bomb.

Nevertheless, they got a life term prisoner from the nearby penitentiary (Stringtown) to come down the next morning and gave him a long handled shovel with which to dig out the object. He did, and the stone was taken to town and broken in two on the railroad track. After that it passed into the possession of a local school teacher from whom I got it in approximate halves.

The main thing I want to mention here is that the witness who saw it hit did not report any rain of missiles or fragments or small objects around him.

I was told, however, of another piece which had been picked up in a bean patch not far from the first find. There I obtained a beautifully complete and entirely fresh small stone which had made a craterlet in the sand, which I photographed with my hat beside it. At this place, I inquired about the circumstances of the fall and here is the intriguing part. The man and his wife were at their house, a short distance from the garden with the dried up bean patch. I think he was outside running a Maytag washing machine at the time of the fall. I believe he heard the detonations over the noise of the washer. The wife was inside the house and apparently did not hear the detonations but called out to him asking if it was raining. He thought she was referring to the detonations, having mistaken them for thunder. She said no but that she thought she had heard rain drops on the roof.

Sanders and I doffed our shoes and climbed up on the roof to examine carefully in hopes of finding small stones. It was a shingle roof so we looked especially in the open slots between the shingles but a thorough search revealed nothing. There were no gutters on the house. We descended and

searched all around the drip line below the edges of the eaves. We found nothing and then tried an Alnico magnet all around the house in the suspected area. We picked up an amazing amount of rusty wire fragments and nails, etc. but no sign of any meteorites. We then looked carefully in some open containers sitting on an outdoor table but again found nothing. After coaching the man and his wife about what we were after and urging them to write us about anything else they found, we started back home.

About twenty miles out of town, I turned to Sanders and told him where the little meteorites were - in the gizzards of the chickens we had routed out from under the house and running all over the yard. You know how chickens will run after small grain thrown out for them in the yard. I bet they had run out and picked up the meteorites but it was too wild an hypothesis to justify returning and disembowling a chicken or two.

So there you have my best experience (about falls accompanied by small particles) even though it is quite negative.