

What Was It? Fireball Lights Up FW Sky

A supersonic fireball—labeled everything from a Russian invasion to "oxidized chromium"—set Fort Worth aglow last night and sent police, military and aviation officials on a merry chase. The brilliant light, believed

to have been one or two meteorites lit up this area and jammed police and news switchboards at 10:09 p.m.

The puzzled switchboard operators, none of whom saw the 45-second streak of light, were faced with questions like:

"My God, was it Khrushchev?"

Or the drunk who was told by police that it was a meteor. To this the tipsy sky watcher replied with another question. "The meteor of what?"

Vice officer Jim Stout described the strong shock wave that followed the streak, traveling southwest to northeast, as "just like a tremendous underground explosion."

"It was the most fantastic thing I've ever seen," said W. B. Harris Jr., 2805 Binyon. "It was a tremendous greenish light like oxidized chromium."

Mr. Harris said he had his family with him, riding on the S. Freeway near Berry when night suddenly turned into day.

"There was a terrific boom," said Lee Smith, 1125 College Ave. He said he heard the boom minutes after the flash.

JACK ELLIOTT, 308 Pecan, in Hurst, said he was sitting on his porch when suddenly everything turned light.

"I did not see an object in the sky . . . no moving light," said Mr. Elliott. "It was just like an overhead light . . . greenish white. The trees didn't even reflect any shadows."

DALLAS (UPI) — A flaming object, believed by the U. S. Weather Bureau to be a meteorite, streaked across the skies tonight and was seen over a large area of the southwestern United States.

The Weather Bureau said the object was reported by a pilot who said he saw "two very bright meteorites" moving southwest to northeast. He reported it to the Federal Aviation Agency.

Observers from Houston, to Dallas and as far north as Topeka, Kan., reported they saw one object.

TONY LANKFORD of the Texas Department of Public Safety in Austin, expressed belief the brilliant object was a meteorite, but said it was also theorized that high-flying jet planes taking pictures of hurricane Carla dropped magnesium flares in large clusters at about 50,000 feet, causing the phenomenon.

But a spokesman for the weather bureau at Fort Worth said "It must have been a meteorite to have been seen that far."

The flight control tower at Dallas Love Field reported the object caused a sonic boom as it hit the thick layers of the earth's atmosphere, then hit the earth and exploded.

THERE WAS a report that the object crashed to earth near Paris in north Texas near the Red River.