

THE TEXAS METEOR OF OCTOBER 1, 1917

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On Oct. 1, at about 10.30 p.m., an unusually bright meteor appeared over the central part of Texas. The undersigned promptly made arrangements to secure information on its appearance thruout the state, while the phenomenon was yet fresh in the memories of those who saw it. Notes from some three-score observers have been secured. From these it appears that the place where the aerolite fell must be somewhere in or near Kimble County. The observed directions all converge toward this county. Evidently the path this meteor followed was at a considerable angle to the horizon and had a course from northeast to southwest. Nearly all observers agree that at first the light of this meteor was small. Increasing rapidly in brilliance, it terminated abruptly with an explosion at some considerable distance above the ground. To the most distant observers it appeared to reach the horizon. Over an area some 150 miles in diameter, north of Bandera County, sounds like that of thunder were heard from three to five minutes after the meteor disappeared. At Brady and at one or two other places these sounds were reported to be strong enough to shake buildings and to cause dishes and windows to rattle. The light in the same region is likened to strong lightning and it is said to have been blinding to some observers. The usual thin cloud of dust high in the sky was noted by several parties, who say it could be distinctly seen for 40 minutes after the fall.

The meteor was observed over the entire state, from the Gulf to the Panhandle and from the northeast counties to the far mountains west of the Pecos, a distance of nearly 600 miles. Several parties who saw the bright body at a distance of about 200 miles or less, report hearing a swishing or buzzing sound, which seems to have been simultaneous with the appearance of the light. This communication is prompted chiefly by a desire to learn if such sounds have been previously reported as being connected with meteoric falls. Several circumstances in the present case indicate that this sound was real and not psychological. May it have been the indirect result of some form of electric energy? One observer seems to refer this sound to objects attached to the ground.

--J. A. Udden

Austin, Texas, Oct. 22, 1917.

(A map of Texas accompanies the article, marking all points of observation, and classifying them as follows: weak moonlight; bright moonlight; daylight; bright daylight; thunder sounds. By far the greatest number of observations are in the central region of Texas; one is in the southern end of the Panhandle; two in the Pecos River region; two or three along the Gulf; and about half a dozen in the two or three tiers of north Texas counties including Tarrant.)

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