

Glowing Meteor Cuts Wide Swath of Alarm Here

A meteor flashed a path of fire through the sky—and a wide swath of alarm below—from the St. Louis to Memphis areas yesterday before exploding with awesome force which jarred parts of three states.

St. Louis viewers saw it as a "ball of fire" in the southeast. As the meteor raced south, glowing ever brighter as the atmosphere's friction burned it up, it finally "lit up the whole sky," according to Tennesseans. Then there was a jar that was felt all the way from Memphis to the Paducah, Ky., Cairo, Ill., area.

'PLENTY SCARED'

A lot of the viewers south of St. Louis admitted they were "plenty scared" when, by an optical illusion, the meteor appeared headed right at them.

Paul Winneman, an Illinois Central railroader, was driving near Cairo, and gave this version: "The thing came out of the north, little northwest, like a bright white light, then it looked yellow with red things flying off of it. * * * I thought it was going to land smack on the car. I stopped, jumped out—and that's what a lot of truck drivers were doing, too."

RELATIVELY SMALL

A meteor is a relatively small mass of matter—there are billions of them hurtling through celestial space—which hits the earth's atmosphere and becomes luminous. They generally travel from 12 to 35 miles per second.

Reports indicate that yesterday's visitor was one of the largest to hit the Midwest skies for several years and come as low as it did before disintegrating.

There were unconfirmed reports that "the meteor or part of it"

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