

LOGAN, UTAH JOLTED BY VIOLENT EXPLOSION AND GAPING CRATER FOLLOWING MYSTERIOUS "STREAK OF LIGHT" IN SKY: First guess -- a meteorite, but as the evidence was assembled by foremost authorities, the theory dissipated. Here's the story, thanks to the help of Mrs. John German of Woodscross, Utah who probed the Salt Lake Tribune files for the early facts -- before SILENCE!

On May 7, 1954 the Tribune reported: "A 'conventional meteorite fall' did not produce the crater found west of here Sunday, and probing operations at the scene have been discontinued, geologists said. In a 73-word statement, 3 scientists gave reasons why they ended their investigation, but it contained no opinion on who or what made the hole, or how it was made.

"The statement, signed by J. Stewart Williams, professor of geology, Utah State Agricultural College, Lincoln La Paz, director, Institute of Meteoritics, University of New Mexico and Clyde T. Hardy, USAC geology professor read:

'In the region extending from Clarkston south to Paradise, exhaustive interrogation of numerous persons who saw or heard the explosive phenomenon at midnight on May 1 has been carried out. The testimony thus obtained and material evidence recovered as a result of subsurface investigations at the site of the explosion west of Logan have disclosed that the crater was not produced by a conventional meteorite fall. For these reasons, operations have been discontinued!'

And from the Tribune, May 5: "Dr. Lincoln La Paz spent his first full day here, working with Dr. J. Stewart Williams and Dr. Clyde T. Hardy. On his arrival here Monday night, Dr. La Paz said the hole must have been made by a 'whopper' if it contains a meteorite. They decided to place a frame around the crater and cover it with wire mesh. Workers will stand on movable planks and probe with a pipe. In this way they will know they have probed every place possible under the mesh.

" 'My recommendation is that we excavate until we find what made the hole,' said Dr. La Paz, who is credited with recovering the world's largest aerolite, weighing more than one ton. "

The incident occurred on May 1 bringing "500 phone calls" to the Logan City Police Dept. Residents reported their houses "shaken" and TV viewers said their reception was disturbed. A check made later with Hill Air Force Base and Salt Lake City indicated no planes in the area for several hours. A war veteran described the 16 ft. wide and 6 ft. deep hole as looking like a "bomb crater." Sod was found scattered in all directions for more than 100 yards.

On Aug. 31, '54, I wrote Dr. Clyde T. Hardy, geologist who worked on the project, asking if any substantial evidence as to its (the explosion's) source had been uncovered. Following is Dr. Hardy's reply of Sept. 11, 1954:

"Reference is made to your letter of Aug. 31 re. the explosion and crater west of Logan. Although a fireball was reported by several people previous to the ground explosion, I am personally convinced that they were confused. One especially competent observer describes a ground flash only and he was favorably situated to see all aspects of the occurrence. "

(Signed) Clyde T. Hardy
Assoc. Prof., Dept. Geology