

# Master Sheet 5.2c

## **Eyewitness Account #5:**

**Name:** W. and L. Johnson

**Event witnessed:** directed blast

**Site location:** 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) NE/on ridge top with good view of Mount St. Helens

Shortly after the vertical eruption began, a large horizontal blast occurred. Just before the top of the mountain became obscured, the south side of the summit crumbled into the hole formed by the avalanche. As the cloud grew, what appeared to be a shock wave similar to that associated with a nuclear explosion moved ahead of the cloud. About 1 1/2 minutes after the start of the avalanche and perhaps 45 seconds after the start of the blast, a noise like a clap of thunder accompanied some sort of pressure change. The initial noise was followed by a continuous rumbling, "like a freight train."

## **Eyewitness Account #7:**

**Name:** M. and L. Moore (campers)

**Event witnessed:** directed blast and ash cloud

**Site location:** 22 kilometers (14 miles) N/on north side of Green River

A noise similar to, but which "didn't sound quite right" for, a propeller-driven aircraft occurred for 10-20 seconds before a rapid pressure change, which caused ears to pop numerous times over a period of about 10 seconds. One person also felt as if she was being squeezed gently over her entire body. A short time later, an immense ash cloud approached that seemed to consist of a lower vertical wall and upper overhanging part.

## **Eyewitness Account #6:**

**Name:** C. Rosenquist (amateur photographer)

**Event witnessed:** directed blast

**Site location:** 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) NE/ on ridge top with good view of Mount St. Helens

A rumbling noise began within 7-8 seconds of the start of the avalanche. One member of the group sensed a pressure decrease at about the same time. A "shock wave," which looked like heat waves, formed ahead of the blast cloud.

## **Eyewitness Account #8:**

**Name:** B. Nelson (loggers)

**Event witnessed:** directed blast

**Site location:** 21 kilometers (13 miles) N/on north bank of the Green River

The witness and two companions were cutting timber with chain saws. Mount St. Helens was hidden by a ridge and the three men neither heard nor felt anything unusual until they were alerted to the eruption by a fourth man. About 10 seconds later, "a horrible crashing, crunching, grinding sound" came through the trees from the east. Suddenly, it became totally dark: "I could see absolutely nothing." It immediately got very hot, and almost impossible to breathe. While the men were gasping for air, the inside of their mouths and their throats were burned. The witness was knocked down, although he does not recall being hit by rocks or other projectiles. He arose with his back to searing, painful heat that lasted about 2 minutes. All trees had been knocked down, and everything was covered with about a foot of drab gray ash. None of the men's clothing had been burned, but their bodies had been burned extensively. Three of the men subsequently died. Heavy ash fall resumed after about 20 minutes.