

Riddle of the night fireball

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IT WAS a fine night as the two ambulancemen stood looking skyward for shooting stars.

Suddenly they were startled by a ball of fire hurtling across the darkness overhead. Three seconds later it had vanished. But what caused it remains a mystery.

The ambulance men, Roger Dicks and Graham Brunnsden, saw the blazing object at about 11 pm while on duty at

Hungerford, Berkshire, ambulance station.

Mr Dicks said: "We thought at first it was an aircraft on fire. It was about 1,000 feet up at a distance of between three and four miles.

"We expected our telephones would soon be ringing. But nothing happened. And the local police said they had had no reports of a crash in the area."

The ambulancemen say that the blazing object was travelling horizontally across

the sky and trailing smoke.

It made no sound, but before it disappeared, it seemed to separate into two halves, with the second half travelling at a lower altitude.

Mr Dicks, who has a science degree, said: "It is a complete mystery. But I can't help feeling the object was man-made—about the size of a garden shed.

"So far, however, I have not found anything to account for it. And nobody else has reported seeing it."