

TWO York men believe a UFO attack may have been responsible for the blaze at York Minster.

One, a York taxi driver, claims he saw a fast-moving Zeppelin-like object sending down a flame-coloured charge while it was over the Minster.

The other man, a van driver, made a separate sighting of the UFO earlier that night, and produced a drawing of what he saw, which has been exclusively obtained by the Express.

Van driver, 55-year-old Eddie Acaster, of 88 North Moor Road, Huntington, and taxi driver, Bill Whitehead, aged 44, of Lock Cottage, Haxby Road, said they kept their UFO sightings secret until now for fear of being ridiculed.

But they came forward with their bizarre story in the hope that other people may have seen something similar, and that the UFO theory may shed some light on the mystery of the Minster fire.

Sightings

Eddie made his sighting at 10.30pm on Sunday night last week from outside his house.

He said he saw a Zeppelin-like object moving fast in a North Easterly direction from York.

He said it was glowing molten-orange in the clear skies, and had a white vapour trail following behind.

He stood watching it for about a minute before it vanished into a single cloud in the sky.

Soon after, there was a short but severe electrical disturbance, said Eddie.

"I have never seen lightning like it. It was too straight for lightning — lightning is jagged.

"It was like a rocket directed towards a ship.

"The 'lightning' was definitely aimed," said Eddie, who was an Army crack-shot during his service with the Green Howards.

Possibilities

Eddie said the object he saw was like a Zeppelin without an undercarriage or propellers.

The description is similar to that given by taxi driver Bill Whitehead.

He was on the St Sampson's Square taxi rank at around 2am, Monday morning, when he claims he saw the UFO over the Minster.

"I thought it was a UFO. It was flame coloured.

"It looked as if there was a

Mystery 'Zeppelin' seen by York pair on night of blaze

By Nick Ingelbrecht

charge coming out of the bottom of it. To me it seemed like a flame — unless it was lightning," said Bill.

He added: "It was strange. There was no noise coming from it. I thought it was a barrage balloon at first, but they don't travel at that speed."

One of the men investigating the Minster blaze is Divisional Commander Alan Stow of York fire brigade. He told the Express: "We have not eliminated anything from our inquiries at this stage. All possibilities are being investigated."

Puzzle

Local airports said they had nothing in the air at the time of the reported sightings.

Inquiries were made at RAF Linton-on-Ouse in respect of that base and those at Topcliffe, Church Fenton, Dishforth, Elvington, and RAF Leeming; Teesside airport, Leeds Bradford and Newcastle had no aircraft coming or going at that time.

Bill Whitehead said around six other people were in St Sampson's Square at the time he made his sighting.

They may be able to confirm the story.

Report your sighting to the Express by dialling York 39929.



Eddie Acaster's drawing of the UFO, seen disappearing into a bank of clouds.



EDDIE ACASTER: Bizarre theory of how Minster fire was started. Picture by Darren Hartas.