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Mystery sparked after many night sightings

'1,000FT-LONG UFO' LIGHTS UP DEVON

SIGHTINGS of a massive cigar-shaped UFO covered in light sparked a Devon mystery today.

Reports of the object have come from various parts of the county with claims that it was 1,000ft-long and moved back and forth in a straight line for about an hour before shooting off into the night sky.

Amateur astronomer Mr Ian Platt, of Beacon Heath, Exeter, watched the strange object through his telescope and said today he had never seen anything like it before.

"It was massive and brilliantly lit. I couldn't believe it at first so I got some of my neighbours to come and look as well," he said.

"It must have been about 5,000 ft up and moving at about 100 mph. I first saw it in the west and then it moved north east, stopped, came back along the same lines and then went back to the north east again before it shot off."

A similar brilliantly lit object was also seen by Mr Peter Doyle and his wife in the St David's area of the city. The whole underside was covered in lights and it was cigar-shaped, he said.

A report of the object also

came from a man in Dartington who phoned Devon and Cornwall police HQ in Exeter to say he had seen a series of lights moving west to north, shortly after midnight.

RAF Chivenor in North Devon and Exeter Airport both said they had had no reports of the object and did not know what it might be.

One of Devon's best known astronomers, Mr James Hedley Robinson of Teignmouth was convinced today that whatever it was in the sky was not of extraterrestrial origin.

"I am satisfied that whatever it was it was a man-made gadget. Probably something to do with the military.

"If it had been a meteor travelling east to west it would have been travelling incredibly fast and even if it had been going west to east it would still be going too fast to be an object like that sighted last night."