

# UFO

# Was it

# Venus?

By NEAL KEELING

BRITAIN'S top UFO expert has shed light on the Edgworth "white glow" mystery.

The "extra-terrestrial" that held a family under virtual siege for three hours could have been the planet Venus or a bright star.

As reported in the Evening News on New Year's Eve, the owner of a remote farm ran terrified into his home and his daughter became hysterical when the

object loomed near the farm.

The shapeless white glow appeared low in the sky about five miles from the farm but at times it seemed to be within a few hundred yards.

The man phoned Air Traffic Control at Manchester who told him nothing had been picked up in the area on radar.

But Jenny Randles, director of investigations for the National British UFO Association, believes the mystery can be explained.

She said today: "Any bright

light low in the sky or on the horizon will give a distortion effect which can produce a very strange optical illusion.

"If it is against a completely black sky it can be interpreted by the mind in a strange way. The moon can give the same effect when it is low.

"The chances of any sighting being a UFO are remote. But the odds are even larger — about 9,000-1 — if the object remains in the area for three hours.

"Without speaking to the

people involved I do not want to be too specific about this particular case. But it is almost certain that there is an astronomical explanation. It could have been a bright star or Venus."

Jenny added that her association received reports of carbon-copy sightings several times a year.

"We had a case in September in Blackpool when a woman had reported being followed in her car by a white light for three hours. But that turned out to be Venus."

Jenny, who is the only full-time UFO expert in the country, and a professional writer on the subject, also revealed a possible explanation for the dramatic movement of the object.

"The object appears to be moving but in fact it is the person's eyes which are moving — a phenomena which scientists call auto-kinesis," she said.

The family who saw the object do not wish to be named. But they are now being quizzed by UFO experts.