

The extra-terrestrial tale that became a bestseller

Whitley Strieber, a clean-cut, 42-year-old Texan lawyer looked shattered when his feet hit the ground in Birmingham this week.

This was hardly surprising. He has been halfway around the world in the last few months. There is no doubt about that. It is on record.

But Whitley Strieber, if one is to believe him, has also been in touch with UFOs and talked to intelligent non-human beings.

By FRED NORRIS

There is, obviously, tremendous doubt about that. Not even a smart Texan lawyer can produce evidence enough to place it on record.

He has, however, done the next best thing: he has written a book about his extraordinary extra-terrestrial personal encounters of a far from blurred kind.

"They were real," he insists. "Incredibly, frighteningly real. At first I thought was I going crazy, completely out of my mind."

His book, *Communion* (Beech Tree Books), has already caused a sensation in the United States. It was snapped up by the American publisher, Morrow, for one million dollars and has since been selling at a staggering 100,000 copies a week in hardback.

And it has set off an avalanche of stories from other people who, after reading of his out-of-this-world experiences, have been coming forward and relating their own, often very similar experiences.

It also, inevitably, brought a giant tidal wave of scepticism crashing against him. He accepts this as an understandable and quite normal reaction.

"If I thought myself mad, then how could I blame others for thinking the same about me?"

He almost sagged into the chair as he gazed across Birmingham's all-too-real concrete and glass skyline.

Fact or fiction? A novelist's close encounter



I would have laughed in the face of anybody who claimed contact. But now