

President had his mistress in the White House

President Harding. His Life and Times, 1865-1923, by Francis Russell; Eyre and Spottiswoode, London.

The White House, when Warren Gamaliel Harding and his pathetic, querulous wife were briefly its tenants, ran on broad comedy lines.

It is sometimes hard to realise that such hilarious situations prevailed, less than half a century ago, amid all the solemnities of world power and responsibility.

Warren Harding wasn't going to give up his young mistress, Nan Britton, just because he had become President.

His most trusted secret service man met her at the station on

her at the station on

her calls and brought her into the White House through side doors.

Mrs Harding — who had every reason to be suspicious — once almost surprised the President and Nan Britton in their makeshift rendezvous beside his office.

Fortunately a secret service man had been posted outside the ante-room, and, with great resolution, he barred the door to the furious Mrs Harding — “the Duchess,” she was ironically called.

With further brilliant secret service work, Nan Britton was spirited out of the White House and the President returned plausibly to his desk before his wife was admitted.

If Mrs Harding could

If Mrs Harding could not know the whole truth, she had had ample experience in guessing at it — she had once, back in Marion, Ohio, thrown a piano stool at an earlier mistress.

And besides, Mr Russell suggests, it was probably Mrs Harding's own secret service man who had tipped her off to the presence in the White House of the young mistress!

There is much more of this kind of thing — low life in high places with a Keystone Cops

slant — in Mr Russell's book.

Perhaps there would have been more if Harding's nephew had not succeeded in getting a court injunction to prevent his publication of Harding's letters to Carrie Phillips, "the love of his life," who once threatened to expose him

ened to expose him
but did not.

These letters are re-
presented by dots.

Yet it would be un-
just both to Harding's
memory and to his
biographer to imply
that sexual adventures,
laughable and shabby
as some of them were,
monopolise the book.

Mr Russell, an ex-
perienced, diligent and
some times acidulous
historian, does not
pretend that the in-
adequate Harding was
either great or good,
or that America was
lucky to have chosen
him.

FLYING SAUCER FANS GAIN

NEW SUPPORT

*UFO's over the Southern Hemisphere, by
Michael Hervey Horwitz.*

Space trips and space probes have
given a new credibility to the much-scorn-
ed "flying saucer" theorists.

Once considered
publicity-seekers and

publicity-seekers and crackpots, they are now finding new support.

Author Michael Hervev points out that the first recorded UFO sighting was more than 18 million years ago.

Since then, he says, such reports have never ceased, and Aus-

tralia has had its share of them.

In his book, Mr Hervev lists several hundred accounts of UFO sightings in all Australian States, New Guinea, the Northern Territory and in New Zealand.

He lists the locations, dates, times and names of people who witnessed each sighting.

Some of them make good reading.

Like the Cooktown police sergeant who

police sergeant who saw a number of "bubbles" floating above a lonely road as he was driving his police car in January, 1966.

He tells of how he drove over them and they disappeared under his vehicle.

Another UFO followed a Mr Strong, of Elphinstone, home from work early one morning. The bright

saucer-like object followed his car for several miles and disappeared as he drove into his garage.

The entire staff of Gabo Island lighthouse watched a huge disc hover over them for five minutes in December, 1965.

Mr Hervey has gone into much detail and, one suspects, hundreds of newspaper files to obtain the material for this fascinating book.

book.

