

4 APR 1995

# The day a UFO didn't land here

2374

I GOT A letter last week from the Director of Investigations at the UFO Research Association. Sensational!!! Astounding!!!

"Dear UFO Disbeliever," wrote Philip Mantle, owner of the above impressive handle, "For years now you have heaped scorn and ridicule on our belief that there are such things as Unidentified Flying Objects. The time is fast approaching for me to say 'I told you so', and for you to eat your words."

Yep. At last. Final, incontrovertible proof that, let's hear a blast of unearthly music, that ALIENS HAVE LANDED.

And all will be revealed in August both on television and at the 8th International UFO Congress in Sheffield. Sheffield? Hardly the place, I would have thought, for such momentous revelations. I'd go along with a mountain top in Tibet, with an assortment of the Great White Brotherhood as master of ceremonies. But, Sheffield? Like presenting the Oscars in Trecco Bay.

But first, a confession. Mr Mantle didn't single me out for special treatment. His letter was printed in a national newspaper thus suggesting that I am not the only UFO

## Personally Speaking



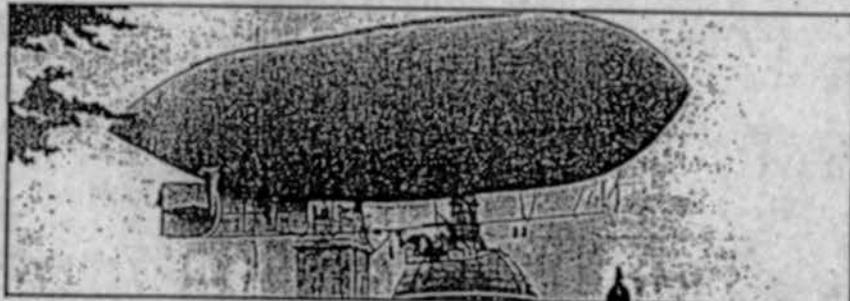
By  
Dan  
O'Neill

Mr Mantle that No, I will not be eating my words in August. I've heard this same tired old song so many times before.

But let us listen to this "Director of Investigations."

"A film has arrived from America which is the Holy Shroud of the UFO movement. It is the closest we have come to proving not only that UFOs are plying our skies but also that aliens have landed on earth."

So what is his proof? Nothing less than a film taken in 1947 at a place in New Mexico called Roswell which is to UFOlogists what Mecca is to Islam, or what the Arms Park used to be to rugby fans. Here, says Mr Mantle, are being hundreds of previ-



EDWARDIAN UFO: Willows' airship caused a sensation when it flew past the City Hall in 1910 - a year after the mystery sighting of a UFO on Caerphilly Mountain.

ous "experts" - a UFO crashed. And a military cameraman flown specially to the area, filmed . . . another dramatic pause . . . filmed THE INHABITANT OF THAT CRASHED SPACECRAFT. The film is "grainy black and white" but Mr Mantle has no difficulty in deciding that the THING being examined by the mandatory men in white coats in the desert (why not a laboratory?) is "humanoid, of slight build, and of average height. It has no hair, nose or ears but has large dark eyes."

The Roswell case, says our Director, is legendary. "We have more than 300 witnesses to the incident." What, all in the desert at the same time? THERE IS NO PROOF

AND NEVER HAS BEEN ANY PROOF that Aliens have landed.

When the great UFO boom was born hundreds of books appeared proving that every episode mentioned in every one of the world's holy books from the Bible to the Tibetan Book of the Dead was down to aliens who included, among their ranks, Jesus and the entire pantheon of Greek gods. Some still insist that Jesus lives on Venus and one believer even claims to have ridden in his flying saucer.

The more "respectable" UFOlogists try to distance themselves from such dottiness and this week the millionth book on the subject appears putting the balanced,

reasoned case. The Complete Book of UFOs by Peter Hough and Jenny Randles (Piatkus Books, £10.99) presents evidence "that is extraordinary, and convincing." Sorry, but it ain't. It's just a rehash of all the same tired rumours including that one about an airship over Caerphilly Mountain in 1909.

In the South Wales Daily News a Mr C Lethbridge, of Newtown, Cardiff, told of his meeting with two "tall men, military-looking," standing besides a cigar-shaped object on Caerphilly Mountain. The UFOlogists prefer to look for an explanation from outer space rather than in the workshops of the Cardiff born airship builder and aviator Ernest Thompson Willows, whose machines were flying at that time.

Since the dawn of history man has invented supernatural (or extra terrestrial) explanations for happenings beyond his comprehension. One day our descendants will look back at these UFOlogists and regard them with the same sort of amused indulgence we show to those benighted Ancient Greeks who believed that Zeus and his mob lived on Mount Olympus, buzzing in and out of humans' lives. . . just like UFOs.