

BURNIE FLYING SAUCER IDENTIFIED AS FLOCK OF BIRDS

THE RIDDLE of the N.W. Coast "flying saucer," which held many people fascinated late on Tuesday night as it gyrated and dived at high speeds, has been solved.

THE "saucer" seen by many Stowport and Natone residents has been identified as a gigantic flock of starlings performing "gymnastics" on their way along the coast after a day of searching for food on hinterland farms.

Several further reports of the "saucer" came yesterday from Stowport and Natone.

with vivid descriptions of its gyrations.

Then came this explanation from Mr. P. F. Norton, of Stowport.

"One of my sons and I saw the 'saucer' and watched it for 10 minutes or so

"It was the largest flock of birds I have ever seen and they put on an amaz-

ing performance. There were thousands of them

were thousands of them flying wingtip to wingtip, forming a seemingly solid mass," Mr. Norton said.

"For 10 minutes or more they zoomed about the sky. At times the birds at the top of the flight would fan out, while those below would pack into a tight mass, forming a huge mushroom in the sky.

They would mass together in the form of a giant top and go wheeling almost straight up in the air.

Eerie Sight

"In the fading light and against the grey background of low clouds they made an eerie sight, and it was only when they zoomed only a few hundred feet overhead that we could see they were birds."

Mr. Norton said that from a distance it was im

from a distance it was impossible to identify the mass as birds and he could well imagine anyone thinking they were a "flying saucer."

When Mr. Norton's story was referred to an old resident of Wynyard who makes a study of bird habits, he said that every evening large flocks of startings, which had their roosts in ti-tree scrub on the western side of Table Cape, blackened the sky in the area when they came home for the night.

He considered it more than likely that the "flying saucer" seen by John Howarth, of Sulphur Creek, was also a flock of these birds