

Extract from
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'Flying saucers' over France

MYSTERIOUS balls of fire sped through the skies of France early today bringing a rash of reports of "flying saucer" sightings.

Off Dieppe the crew of the French cross-Channel ferry *Valencay* spotted several U.F.O.s (unidentified flying objects), including one group of five resembling orange lights.

Other reports came in from airline pilots reaching Orly Airport, and from early morning strollers from Strasbourg in the east to Nantes on the west coast.

'VIVID LIGHT'

A homegoing worker in the Paris suburb of Villemomble said he had just left the railway station when a U.F.O. appeared.

"It was radiating a vivid light tinted orange. It followed a general direction south-east to north-west then, silently disappeared over the horizon," he said.

Weather office officials said they could only suggest the objects were meteorites.

The Department of Civil Aviation also said they might be meteorites, adding: "Unidentified flying objects are not really our business."

Reports of "Flying Saucers" being sighted also flooded in from Switzerland and Italy.

Similar reports came from the Zurich area and the tiny principality of Leichenstein, between Switzerland and Austria.

'SATELLITE' THEORY

Shipping in the English Channel was alerted early today after reports of a fire-ball moving across the sky from the Kent coast towards France.

A spokesman for the Royal Greenwich Observatory said: "I think the most likely explanation is that it was a satellite re-entering the atmosphere."

It was also being suggested that the fire-ball was the effect of a thunderstorm.

A spokesman for Deal coastguards said that the object appeared to be a ball of fire, with pieces breaking off.

"It was travelling too fast for an aircraft, and too slow for a meteorite."

Later it was learned that there had been no aircraft in the area.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "We have had no reports on this at all."