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11 States Baffled by Mutilation of Cattle Shipping/Mails

By GRACE LICHTENSTEIN
Special to The New York Times

DENVER, Oct. 27—Who has been killing cattle in Colorado and at least 10 other states the last few months?

Stockmen and lawmen alike have been baffled by the mysterious mutilations. Since April in Colorado alone, 196 cows, as well as one buffalo, one horse and one goat, have been found dead with parts of their carcasses removed.

Similar mutilations, in which udders, eyes, ears, sex organs and tongues seem to have been removed by the use of a sharp instrument, have been reported in Pennsylvania, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, Oklahoma, Montana, Illinois, Wisconsin and California.

But as yet, all investigators, including some Federal officials in Minneapolis, have been unable to turn up any clues indicating human involvement in the killings.

Some theorists here have speculated that the killings are being done by satanic cultists who use the animal organs in black-magic rites. Because there have been no tracks near the scenes of the killings, one local lawman believes the perpetrators used a helicopter to swoop down at night on an unsuspecting herd, do their dirty work then make their getaway by air.

In Lake Villa, Ill., where two calves were found mutilated earlier this month, the police suggested that the mutilations might be linked to the Oregon

group said to be enlisting followers for a trip to outer space.

On the other hand, laboratory studies conducted by Colorado State University scientists and by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation conclude that many of the cattle have died of natural causes. Predators such as coyotes and foxes, rather than humans, then moved in to remove the organs, they believe.

"There's a vast area of ambiguity," said United States Attorney Robert G. Renner of Minneapolis recently. His office ordered an investigation of cult groups months ago by the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Division of the Treasury Department, when it received information that such groups were threatening the lives of public figures. There are also allegations that the same groups were responsible for the cattle mutilations.

However, Mr. Renner said the Federal Government had closed its inquiry after failing to find any evidence linking "nuts and occult groups" to either crime.

But Sheriff George A. Yarnell of Elbert County, a rural area south of Denver, where 73 mutilations have been reported, said the other day, "There's no question in my mind" that two-legged creatures are responsible for the mutilations.

"I've been around cattle all my life and I can sure tell whether it's been done by a coyote or a sharp instrument," he declared.

Sheriff Yarnell acknowledged that during the hot summer months, many of the carcasses could not undergo proper autopsies because they had deteriorated badly before they were found.

Nevertheless, pathologists at Colorado State University reported last month that some of the mutilations were obviously performed with a sharp instrument. The pathologists also said there was no indication the animals had been poisoned or "captured in any way."

Ranchers in Elbert County have reported numerous sightings of helicopters at night. According to Sheriff Yarnell, some government and private helicopters in the area have postponed flights because they are afraid of being shot at from the ground by the angry stockmen.

Recently, The Denver Post announced rewards totaling \$13,000 put up by livestock groups, the newspaper, a bank and a humane association for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the killers.

But Carl Whiteside, the agent in charge of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation inquiry, said that no agency has yet found any leads, any suspects, any helicopters or any cult group evidence. The bureau, he said, was trying to get help from the Interior Department's animal research division.

"We recognize that some

Incoming

TOMORROW, OCT. 31
VENDAM, Holl. Amer. Left St. Thomas, Oct. 27; due 8 A.M. at W 55th St.

Outgoing

SAILING TODAY

Trans-Atlantic
AMERICAN ACCORD (U.S. Lines), Havre Nov. 10; sails from Howland Hook, Staten Island.
EXPORT DIPLOMAT (American Export), Casablanca Nov. 8, Tunis 15 and Beirut 26; sails from 42d St., Brooklyn.
FERNVIEW (Barber), Singapore Dec. 21 and Port Kelang 24; sails from Fane St., Brooklyn.
FINN SAILOR (Finn), Helsinki Nov. 11; sails from Port Newark, N.J.

South America, West Indies, Etc.
CIUDAD DE BUCARAMANGA (Grancolombiana), Barranquilla Nov. 6, Guayaquil 14 and Buenaventura 20; sails from Furman St., Brooklyn.
HOUSTON (Sea-Land), Haina Nov. 5, Kingston 7, Port-au-Prince 8, Port of Spain 10 and Willemstadt 11; sails from Elizabeth, N.J.

SAILING TOMORROW

Trans-Atlantic
HELLEN MILLER (Concordia), Las Palmas Nov. 9, Limassol 17, and Beirut 19; sails from Port Newark, N.J.
SCHELDE-LLOYD (Ned-Lloyd), Daman Nov. 21, Dubai 26, Manama 29 and Kuwait Dec. 1; sails from Fulton St., Brooklyn.
ZIM GENOVA (Zim), Barcelona Nov. 10, Piraeus 13 and Haifa 15; sails from Elizabeth, N.J. Letter mails, printed matter and parcel post for Balearic Islands, Spain, Spanish North Africa, Greece and Israel. Also parcel post for Tangier in Morocco.

South America, West Indies Etc.
MORMACARGO (Moore-McCormack), Rio de Janeiro Nov. 12 and Santos 14; sails from 23rd St., Brooklyn.
VEENDAM (Holl. Amer.), West Indies Cruise; sails 5 P.M. from W. 55th St.

mutilations are occurring. By the same token we feel the total is probably exaggerated," Mr. Whiteside said.

Asked about possible mutilators from outer space, he replied, "I'm not ready for the U.F.O. theory. Maybe I'm narrow-minded."