

## Cattle Deaths Unsolved

*To anyone concerned with the UFO question, the mysterious mutilation of cattle discussed by Dr. Edwards in his thoughtful article poses a real problem, particularly if editorial comment is called for. Since the connection between this unpleasant practice and other UFO operations is a "suspected" one, as Dr. Edwards accurately describes it, how does an editor or other commentator decide what coverage to give the subject?*

*To be safe, Canadian UFO Report has waited for news that some satanic-minded group finally has been found responsible for the whole grisly business. While it is almost inconceivable that an unidentified sect has the time, money and cunning to carry out a gruesome project on such a scale in complete secrecy, the alternative of placing the blame on space visitors is not editorially attractive. In a way that is particularly unwelcome, it has to make any ufologist aware that he knows virtually nothing of what his chosen subject is all about. other clues to pounce on, we must take a look at it, and we are indebted to Dr. Edwards for helping us to do so with his searching observations. To supplement his article and to bring readers up to date on what is happening, we carry the following news item dated in November, 1975. It will be seen that while "helicopters" are still talked about, there is no evidence they are involved. Instead the mystery remains as deep as ever.*

KIOWA, Colo. (WP) - Over the range they come, moving through the high plains darkness with all the sleuth of the cattle rustlers who have traditionally stalked ranchers' livestock here for the last century.

Only this year's version seems to travel by helicopter instead of on horseback and the *modus operandi* has a distinct kink to it.

Since the beginning of summer, ranchers in the surrounding county have discovered 72 head of cattle and a few horses and pigs, all dead of undetermined causes and all missing an ear, an eye, genitalia or some other

organ.

Nearly all the dead animals had a neat circle cut about a foot wide around the rectum or udder or a narrow strip of flesh removed between the hind quarters.

Albert County Sheriff George Yarnell and his two deputies, who occupy a one-room basement office in the county courthouse here, are baffled. No trace of anyone responsible for the mutilations has been found.

Authorities are trying to figure out whether they are being spooked by a bunch of very discriminating coyotes.

"I'll be damned if I know," says the gravel-voice sheriff, who sits behind his desk with his sweat-stained brown stetson propped back on his head and makes little red Xs on a county grid map to show the location of the latest mutilation.

The mutilation reports in this county of 9,000 persons began trickling in June and swelled to almost one a night in September. "It's the biggest challenge of my career," said Yarnell. "We've exhausted everything we have on this thing and so far we've come up with absolutely nothing."

The peculiar livestock deaths have not been limited to this region. In recent months there have been reports of weird animal slayings from sheriffs up and down the plains states, from Idaho to Texas.

"Just this week," said Yarnell, "I got a call from a sheriff down in Arizona who says they've had about 17 more that turned up down there. And some guy even called me from western Pennsylvania last week and said it happened to one of his dairy cows."

But it is Colorado, where there have been nearly 200 mutilation reports since June, and Albert County - rolling 1,354 square miles of range-land and cottonwood groves about 50 miles southwest of Denver - which seem to be the focus of the mutilators.

To date about \$17,000 worth of stock has been killed and mutilated, according to cattlemen here. The State Cattleman's Association has put up a \$5,000 reward, and other cattlemen's groups and humane associations in Colorado have swelled the funds to \$11,000 for information on the mutilators.

But so far there have been no solid leads, only stories of drivers on lonely roads suddenly pinpointed by searchlights that snap off without a trace.

"It's downright eerie," said Reuben Olson, a rancher who has lost two calves, one of them only a few hundred yards from his little white ranchhouse about 15 miles east of Kiowa.

"Oh, I've heard 'em out behind my corral," said Olson. "I've seen lights come down out of the sky out there but I've never seen one of them."

*As far as we know, there is no case yet that directly links our space visitors with cattle mutilation. However, a few years ago we spoke to a cattle-owner who one night saw a UFO examine his herd literally at close quarters [vol. 1, no. 6]. He was Brian Grattan, operator of a ranch in the B.C. Cariboo. "It was about 40 feet up, moving slowly along with a wobbling motion," he said. "It didn't seem to notice me at all, though I was shining my flashlight. It just kept following the calves across the corral as if it was studying them, and all the time it was making a low rhythmic noise like an IBM computer." The craft then moved off into the night. Drawing by Lesley Footner.*

# NOT ALL ARE UFO'S

by  
KEVIN D. RANDLE

Not all UFO sightings turn out to be unidentified. Many times people are fooled by the mundane such as Venus, Jupiter, balloons, airplanes and even the moon. The investigators has to determine whether there is a good explanation for the sighting or if it is unknown. Just questioning the witnesses is not enough. The investigator must be familiar with the area, with the people and their reactions, and with the UFO phenomena.

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The evening news on Nov. 5, 1975, carried a report of a sighting of an UFO in Grant County, Wis. Greg Schier, his wife and a few neighbors claimed that they had seen two bright lights appear in the southwestern sky shortly after 7 p.m. They watched as it appeared to move closer and drift toward the west. After several minutes, the Schiers lost sight of the UFO's as they passed behind the barn.

It wasn't long before the two lights reappeared over the barn, flew over a tree in the Schier's front yard, almost flew over the house, and disappeared in the east. Both thought that there were two lights on one object, but neither could see a shape. The lights were described as "being like the headlights of a car as it came toward you." Estimates of the altitude ranged from 150 feet to over one thousand. The lights were in sight for almost twenty minutes.

Not long after the object or lights disappeared, Schier called the Grant County Sheriff's office in Lancaster. A patrol car was dispatched to the area near Bagley, and the officer reported that he saw the light and that it passed over the patrol car at a low altitude. He made a call over the CB radio about the UFO and since almost all the farmers in the area have CB sets, the word was out.

About 10:30 p.m., police officers in Fennimore, Wis. received reports of a bright object in the southwestern sky. It appeared to be at a very high altitude and appeared to be hovering. One of the men tried to take several pictures of the UFO. After watching it for several minutes, the officers returned to town and went to see one of the local citizens. The man, who wishes to remain unidentified, was taken to the outskirts of the town and he too was able to see the UFO.

By 6:30 a.m., radio stations in the area were carrying the reports of the sightings, and news reporters from other areas in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois were calling for more information. Several of them made trips to the area for filmed

reports to be aired that evening. It was also quite early when the first "UFO investigator" arrived in Fennimore, in his panel truck with "UFO" painted on its side. He began by randomly stopping people on the street.

## More Reports

Sometime after 7 a.m., a farmer living near Millville, Wisconsin, called the sheriff to report that he too, had seen the strange lights of the night before. In fact, he was sure that the light had touched down behind his house, staying there all night. About dawn, the light vanished and it wasn't until later that he was able to call the sheriff. He has no phone in his farm house.

During the day, Nov. 5, about a dozen rumors were started. On a farm, not far from the Schiers, a man had found a dead and mutilated cow. The "UFO Investigator" seemed to think that this might be related and told newsmen, "It seems that every time we get an UFO sighting, we get a mutilation."

TV reception had been disturbed on Tuesday night. People reported that their pictures were fuzzy, some stations faded out while others seemed to have unusually strong signals. Once again there was speculation about a connection with the UFO sightings.

There was a report of another UFO early on the evening of Nov. 5. At 6:34 p.m., a man called the sheriff to report that he had seen a light near Camel Ridge. There was no object seen, only a bright light that vanished quickly and quietly.

## Story Distorted

The newscasts were another story. They reported that Schier had seen lights and that a mutilated cow had been found. For some reason, probably because the UFO investigator had said it several times, the media claimed that the two events were connected. One station also reported the television reception problems and thought that all three were closely related.

On Thursday, Nov. 6, there were several sightings. About 8 p.m., Greg Schier was hunting with two friends, Dave Huser and Greg Huser. They reported that they saw a bright light in the southern sky that would slowly fade out and then reappear. The light was at an extremely high altitude, and would hover for a while and then move to a new location. It never moved too far and they were able to keep it in sight until 11 p.m. It didn't disappear, but the overcast thickened and they went home. As far as they could tell, the object, or

rather the light, was still there.

At 8:08 p.m., another UFO was reported near Camel Ridge. A little more than an hour later, at 9:19 p.m. the UFO was again reported to the sheriff. At 9:36 p.m., a light was reported near the ground three miles north of Stitzer, Wis. In all the sightings, no one saw an object, only a light that some described as bright.

Another string of sightings was reported on Sunday, Nov. 9. The sightings began at 6:10 p.m., when a man called the sheriff to report a bright light in the sky. At 7:14 p.m., there was a second report and at 7:30 p.m., there was a third report. By that time, however, the weather closed in and there were high winds, heavy rains and thunderstorms.

By midnight, the reports had reached various news media and they were calling the sheriff, asking for details. A brief statement was written covering the Schier sighting, and that was released to the media. It contained no speculation about the sighting, only the facts.

## The Plot Thickens

By Wednesday, Nov. 12, the rumors were thicker than the UFO sightings. Calls had been received by the police and sheriff asking about the rumored mutilations of two hunters and if others had been reported missing. One man claimed the UFO's were dropping albino turkeys and that they had knocked-down a TV antenna as they passed over a cabin. Others were talking about a wholesale slaughter of cattle around the county.

The first thing to be done, the first rumor to be destroyed, was the cattle mutilation rumor. Dr. Jeff Davis, the veterinary in Bloomington, Wis. had examined the cow after it died. He was there less than ten hours after the death and was able to pinpoint the cause as respiratory failure. He went on to say that the cow had been sickly from birth and only had one functioning lung. Indications were that it had been chased until the lung collapsed, killing the cow. One ear had been "hacked off with a rather dull knife and part of a lip was missing." Dr. Davis was sure that the UFO's had nothing to do with the mutilation.

Some seized on the phrase, "chased until," and wanted to know who had done the chasing. The sheriff, however, thought that he knew the answer to that question and it involved local teenagers, not aliens.

In fact, it didn't even fit the pattern of the mutilations that have been reported in other parts of the country. The only

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damage done to the cow was the missing ear and lip. The blood had not been drained, the sexual organs had not been touched and there were footprints all over the site.

Other mutilations had been reported near Prairie de Chien about four weeks earlier, but even those are open to question. One veterinarian claimed that there were some "irregularities in the deaths," but others felt that disease accounted for the deaths and that small scavenger animals had eaten the missing organs. There were no UFO sightings in connection with the deaths and no reason to assume such a connection. It was the same with the November mutilation. No connection.

Investigations continued for several days and they revealed that Greg Schier had first seen a UFO on Oct. 30, 1975. He said that it appeared in the south, close to the horizon and slowly moved to the west. Finally it "descended behind some trees and I lost sight of it. It seemed to be huge and was white." Schier didn't see any shape, only the light.

That was the problem with all the Schier sightings. They never reported any objects, only bright lights. The first and second sightings give no clues to a real identity. They could have been nocturnal lights, or, given the weather conditions, scattered ground fog and low hanging clouds, the Schiers could have fooled by Jupiter and Sirius seen through the fog and clouds.

The final Schier sighting on November 6, is probably Jupiter. The descriptions and weather lead directly to that conclusion. Jupiter is very bright and when seen through scattered clouds would seem to dim and disappear. They never saw it move far, indicating that it didn't move but that they were fooled by the atmosphere and their own eyes. There is no reason to believe that the Schiers saw an extraterrestrial spacecraft.

The officer sent to the area after the November 6 Schier sighting was probably fooled by the similar natural phenomena. His sighting was of only one light and is therefore, not related to the Schier sighting. Once again, there is no reason to assume anything extraordinary.

The officers in Fennimore, Wisconsin, reported that they saw a light but unlike many of the others, they identified it. Larry Smith said that he was sure that he was looking at Jupiter. A star chart and a professor at the University of Wisconsin confirmed Smith's opinion. There is no reason to believe that he saw something other than Jupiter.

LaVerne Ackinson used a Kodak Instamatic Camera to take several pictures of the light. However, what appeared in the pictures is not what they were looking at. There are several ways to explain the arc of light in the pictures, none of which are very satisfactory. By the same token, there is no reason to believe that there is anything extraordinary about the pictures and since none of the people present saw the "thing" that was photographed, there is really no place to go with it.

The Millville farmer's sighting wasn't reported until the next morning and several people indicated that he had a reputation

for making up stories. The radio reports of UFO's may have suggested the idea to him and since there was no other witnesses and no physical evidence there is no reason to pursue the case.

The light reported at 6:34 p.m., near Camel Ridge is probably Jupiter. Since the planet accounts for a large number of the sightings, it is reasonable to assume that it applies here.

The November 6, sightings can all be explained by Jupiter or nocturnal lights, or a combination of the two. Again, no one saw any objects and the weather was the same as it had been for the last two nights. There were scattered clouds and patches of ground fog. These factors, plus the renewed interest in UFO's may account for all the sightings.

The November 9, sightings have all been identified. At 6:10 p.m., and again at 7:14, the light causing the sighting was Jupiter. At 7:30, just before the rain and wind storms hit, there was a sighting of the moon. Noonlight through the thin clouds caused a strange glow but sheriff's deputies were sure that the sighting called to them was of the moon.

In addition to all the sightings that are explained by Jupiter and the moon, there are others that can be explained by other facts. For example, one man called the sheriff to report that he had seen a flashing red light hovering near the edge of town. Since the UFO was still in sight, a car was dispatched to the area and the UFO was identified. The man was looking at the flashing red lights put on radio and TV towers so that planes can see them at night. The man had been hearing the UFO reports for several days and when he noticed the lights, for the first time in years, he called the sheriff. It was a case of the man living in the area for several years but not looking at it.

Grant County sheriff's deputies kept any rumors from spreading. As reports poured into the office, they would try to identify the UFO. Many times, by keeping the witness on the phone and stepping outside, the deputies could see the UFO. They always seemed to turn out to be Jupiter. Some of the witnesses would then come to the sheriff's office and point to the UFO. They would point out a bright, blue light moving erratically and the deputy would point to Jupiter. They were looking at the same thing.

The deputies weren't interested in just explaining the sightings. When they had an answer, they would provide it and in these cases they had it. However, some of them had seen UFO's on other occasions and one or two told investigators of those sightings. They involved more than just a bright light in the sky. One deputy said that he had seen a large, cigar-shaped craft with lighted windows. It has passed over the car slowly and had made no sound. If anything, it proved that the deputies were being completely candid in their comments.

It is almost ridiculous to explain the other rumors that accompanied the UFO's. However, to prevent anyone from suspecting that a total investigation wasn't carried out, I will

deal with the rumors. The important point here is to remember that as far as had been demonstrated by the facts and the investigations, there were no sightings of UFO's, meaning extraterrestrial spacecraft.

First, and probably the most important of the related phenomena was the TV reception problem. There was no reason to assume that it was connected with the UFO's. The reported problems were not consistent with the EM effects as demonstrated in the past. In UFO related cases, the reception is usually stopped and the power is knocked out. When the UFO leaves the area, the reception and power return. The EM effects are usually restricted to a limited area. If the UFO happened to be nearing a transmitting station or powerplant, the effects can be spread over a large area but those are indirect. The UFO affects the station and that affects the outlying areas.

However, the TV reception problems of November 4 did not fit the pattern. TV reception was also impaired in regions of Iowa and NBC reported that they were having transmission troubles on that date. The problem was in New York and not in Wisconsin. Others, living in Fennimore, Wisconsin, reported that such troubles were quite common and happened at least once a month. The reception difficulties fit the pattern of the problems in other months and not in UFO sightings. There is no reason to assume a connection.

That didn't prevent an editorial in the FENNIMORE TIMES. The writer remembered the UFO and the reception and wondered if it wasn't a rather strange coincidence. A strange coincidence, yes, but not related to the UFO. Using the logic that there is a connection because it happened on the same day is shakey. There was a report of a bomb on the Fennimore campus of the Southwest Wisconsin Vocational-Technical Institute and since it happened on the same day that the "UFO appeared," the two events "must" be connected. Of course that is not true, but it does show how faulty the logic is.

The chance of physical evidence connected to any UFO sighting is a big factor for most investigators and they will go out of their way to find it. And, since the downed antenna was found the day after the first UFO sighting, several assumed a connection. An examination of the area showed that the only damage was done to the antenna and if an UFO had been involved, there should have been indications in the trees surrounding the site. None was found. There were high winds, and it is more likely that the wind is responsible for the damage. Since no one saw a UFO near the antenna at any time, there is no reason to assume that one was there. Some aren't content with that, however. They want to believe that a UFO hit the antenna and will not accept any other answer.

One by one, the rumors as well as the UFO sightings were explained until only the albino turkey rumor was left. That was started by one man who claimed to be a UFO investigator. He believed that UFO's had been dropping albino animals for experimentation and he was looking for

confirmation of this. Since there was no UFO's, meaning spacecraft, there was no reason to suspect that any albino turkeys would be found.

The investigator didn't even chase his own rumor very hard. There had been a short story in the FENNIMORE TIMES about an albino raccoon being killed. It happened weeks before the UFO sightings, but at least it was albino. Albinism is common to all species on earth, and again, no reason to assume an extraterrestrial origin.

The final conclusions, after several days of investigation, is that there were no sightings of an extraterrestrial phenomena. All the sightings can be explained, easily, by alternative factors. The key word is easily. Why invent a spaceship when one isn't needed? There are many other cases where alternatives don't exist, but there in Wisconsin there are dozens of alternatives. All the talk of UFO's probably lead some people to look for strange things in the sky and when they start looking, they are bound to see it. Unless new information is added, there is no reason not to believe that all the sightings are explainable by natural phenomena.

The Series of Wisconsin sightings show the investigator's need to probe beyond the witnesses. Don't just ask what they saw or thought they saw but explore all the information. What baffles one can be explained by another. By only inspecting the surface, we could have been left with a physical evidence case, EM effects, one mutilated cow, pictures, and multiple witnesses. Looking further, we found solid explanations for all the facts. We didn't have to reach to make them fit or didn't have to bend them into shape. They were there, hidden by the surface clutter, some of it thrown up by a so-called UFO investigator.

The job of the real investigator is to find explanations for sightings. He is not there to interview one or two people but to talk with everyone that has a stake in the case. Only by eliminating the worthless sightings will we be able to move the UFO into a respectable location. Leaving haphazard investigations for debunkers to destroy only ruins the credibility of other sightings and in this business, credibility is everything.

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# Santa Monica UFO Sighting

by William F. Hassel

At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of 28 January 1976 Lacuion Johnson was looking out through a glass door of her second floor office. The door faces southwest and opens onto a porch. The sun was low in a clear sky in the west-southwest direction. Miss Johnson was standing about a foot from the glass when she noticed an object moving from the left toward the direction of the sun. The object was elliptical in shape in its upper portion and flat on the bottom. It's elevation angle was no more than 10 degrees, so the underneath side could not be seen. The upper portion was a smooth, shiny surface having the appearance of bright aluminum. The rays of the sun reflected off one portion of its surface. It moved noiselessly with no trail, and its outline was well defined. The observer at first thought it might be the Goodyear blimp, but then realized it could not be because of its flat bottom. After watching it for about 5 seconds during which time it moved in a straight line through a line-of-sight angle of about 45 degrees, and moved slightly past the southwest direction, she turned to call to another in the office. A second or so later, when she turned back to the door, the object was gone.

Based upon Miss Johnson's description that the object appeared to pass close to a church steeple a block away, it is estimated that its distance was 500 feet and its altitude was 75-100 feet. Its estimated diameter was 26 feet and its speed 100 feet/second.

Miss Johnson reported that she had one previous UFO sighting. This was a nighttime light sighting in Detroit in 1968 in which the light alternately hovered and darted.

Miss Johnson uses glasses for driving, but was not wearing them at the time of the sighting. She has interest in UFOs but has not followed the literature. The UFO was seen in Santa Monica, but since the Goodyear blimp did not pass over Santa Monica on January 28, it can be eliminated from consideration. Also the UFO appeared too close and at too low an altitude to be a plane. The characteristics of the sighting would indicate that it could not be a conventional object.

## 1976 MUFON SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

(84 pages)

"Swamp Gas Plus Ten - And Counting" by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Director of the Center for UFO Studies.

"Canadian UFO Residium" by Henry H. McKay, MUFON Canadian Regional Director.

"Heavenly Chariots And Flying Saucers" by Dr. Ted Peters, MUFON State Section Director for Central South Carolina.

"UFOlogy and the Digital Computer - A Lesson In The Evaluation Of UFO Secondary Evidence" by William H. Spaulding, Director of Ground Saucer Watch, Inc.

"The Operation ARGUS Concept - A New Look At UFO Event Sharing And UFO Data Sharing" by Ray Stanford, Director of Project Starlight International.

"Analysis Of Humanoid Reports" by David F. Webb, MUFON Eastern Regional Director and Co-Chairman of the MUFON Humanoid Study Group.

"Must We Stand Idly By? Social Reaction To UFO Reports" by Dr. Ron Westrum, MUFON Consultant in Sociology.

The 1976 Proceedings is available from MUFON, 103 Oldtowne Rd., Seguin, Texas 78155 for \$4.00 post-paid.

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ordinary" adventures of Monsieur Cyrus were not to end there. For he, along with two other persons, was to witness a further curious phenomenon which — this time — was to puzzle him vastly.

This next episode took place in the summer of 1975, and prior to the happenings of August 29 described at the beginning of the article.

The first manifestation of the phenomena was at 11.00 p.m. on the square in Muret. Monsieur Cyrus had just sat down in his car in order to put it away in the garage for the night when, to his astonishment — since his car radio was not switched on — he hears sounds coming from it. He could not believe his ears; surely, he thinks, this beats everything! The sounds from the radio lasted about half a minute. He checked three or four times and made quite sure that the radio was definitely not switched on, and also established positively that the voices were coming from its amplifier. (As an indication of the wave-length, he told us that he always kept his radio tuned to *Radio-Andorra*.)

#### The sounds from his radio

These seemed guttural, and do not appear to be identifiable with any known language. The pitch was flat and monocordant. Several "voices" seemed to be present, and taking part in a "discussion."

Despite the fact that it bore no resemblance to any language, Monsieur Cyrus insists on using the words "speech" and "phrase" in describing it. And he does however make one comparison: he has been in Africa (where he served in the Gendarmerie) and he tells us that it could conceivably be likened "to the language of apes." It had the same sort of abrupt, jarring sounds. This comparison returns several times later, and most cogently, to his mind. (It should be noted incidentally that he knows one foreign language, German, and so is able to cut out categorically any possibility that it can have been that.)

Once his initial astonishment had passed, he went on with his job of garaging the car, and meanwhile the incoherent conversation began again from his radio, leaving him in a state of the most utter bafflement.

Moreover, there was to be a second manifestation of this voice phenomenon. The next time, it occurred on the road to Saint-Gaudens, when he was driving to that place from Muret. His wife was with him, and they were just passing the little place known as Marqufavres. This time, it started with a noise comparable to that of a continuous, drawn-out sounding of a klaxon (like the way country bakers sound their horn in France, for example). Thinking that they were being hooted by another vehicle behind them, they looked back, but there was no sign that any other driver was doing it. Then it began again, and this time with the same voices mingling with the noise of the klaxon. They checked to see where it was coming from, and once again there was no question about it: it was definitely coming from the loud-speaker of the car radio, and with the radio well and truly switched off. The phenomenon continued for about ten minutes, until they got to the village of Cazères. And that is the end of Monsieur Cyrus' remarkable adventures!

#### Corroborative evidence

It seems that at the moment when all this was going on, there was a burst of intensive UFO activity over the whole region around Muret and Cazères. The case of Monsieur and Madame Cyrus with the voices was no isolated phenomenon. At least two other investigations conducted in the area mention similar phenomena happening to other persons, all quite unknown to each other.

At present we feel that a thorough investigation in the whole area is likely to show that we are by no means done with our surprises from that quarter.

So far the following cases have come to light: — Cazères, 1974: an object was seen, plus humanoids. Aspet, 1975: two women report that over a period of ten days an object was seen in the midst of a herd of cows.

Auterive: There was a sighting in 1972.

Further reports are still arriving, and this encourages us to push on with our project for an intensive study of the whole Département — indeed even of this whole south-western region of France. We have just formed our group, the Toulouse Régional UFO Investigation Group (Groupement Régional de Recherches sur les OVNI's) in Toulouse. So it seems that as the reports flow in we shall secure a clearer picture.

Points to be borne in mind in any investigation of this area include the following: —

- a. There is a radio transmitter at Muret.
  - b. There is a Herzian Wave station at Venerque.
  - c. There is a military installation at Venerque.
- All these are within a radius of thirty kilometres.

We must express our thanks to Monsieur Cyrus for his good-natured collaboration and assistance to our members in their task of investigating — not always an easy one.

#### Comment by Gordon Creighton

Once more we see an interesting report with many of the "classic" features with which we are now becoming so familiar — the physical paralysis of the witness and his temporary loss of speech and shock; the overwhelming luminous phenomenon of the close approach; the EM effect and electrical disturbances (can they be so sure that the car's engine did not stall?). Highly interesting too is the resultant "sleepiness" and visual disturbance of the witness, so reminiscent of the cases of Antônio Villas Boas, Aveyrou, and others. And, last but not least, we have the zany business of sounds and voices coming from the loudspeaker of a car radio that is not even switched on (see my article *Gobbledygook*, in FSR Vol. 18, No.6, November-December 1972).

YOUR CLIPPINGS of newspaper items are very welcome. We apologise here for being generally unable to acknowledge these items as the pressure of work on our tiny staff and on our postage resources is too great. However, please do not be deterred by this seeming lack of courtesy. We really do appreciate anything you care to send.

FSR, Vol. 22, N° 2, Jc 1976

vieron claramente, pero pudieron observar que era peludo y negro. Cierta vez, mientras la Sra. Rogers lavaba la vajilla, la criatura subía y bajaba al otro lado de la ventana, sobre el sumidero.

"Coincidimos en pensar que podía ser un gorila" dijo ella. "Podía pararse como un hombre, pero corría sobre sus cuatro extremidades. Hasta en cuatro patas era tan alto como mi esposo, que mide 5 pies 9 pulgadas (N. del T.: 1,82 m.). Realmente era corpulento.

"Jamás estuve verdaderamente asustada de él. Si hubiera querido lastimarme, podría haberlo hecho en la primera noche. Nunca lo vía durante el día, no sentía ningún temor. Hasta dejaba las puertas abiertas. Algunas veces puse la basura afuera, y más tarde desaparecía. Mi esposo pensaba que estaba loca, molesto de que hiciera amigos como ése. Mi pequeño jamás iba solo a jugar fuera. Pero yo estaba muy preocupada por lo que sucedía.

"Lo misterioso era que jamás pudimos hallar rastros, ni siquiera cuando corría sobre el barro. Corría y saltaba, pero de algún modo era como si no hubiera tocado nada. Cuando corría a través de la maleza, Ud. no escuchaba sonido alguno. Y algunas veces cuando lo miraba, podía ver "a través de él".

Una vez, sin embargo, ella y su hermano menor hallaron un par de huellas realizadas por algo que se sostenía sobre dos pies -o mejor dicho, un pie y un tacón- pero sólo medían tres pulgadas de diámetro (N. del T.: 7,5 cm.), mucho más pequeñas, aseguraba ella, que las que tendría que haber dejado la criatura observada. No tenía idea de que las había producido.

"Tampoco supo cómo apareció cierto día en la casa un "plato volador" plástico de juguete. No pertenecía a su hijo, quien no demostró interés por él, y lo arrojó a la basura. Al día siguiente, había desaparecido.

Durante las tres semanas siguientes, otros residentes del área de Roachdale reportaron haber visto a la criatura. Ellos

no aceptaron su presencia con tanta calma como los Rogers. Aproximadamente unas tres docenas de personas denunciaron encuentros con la bestia, descrita con la apariencia de un enorme gorila de ojos brillantes. El oficial de Conservación William Woodall de Crawfordsville entrevistó a varios testigos mientras cundía el pánico. Admitió no tener respuesta.

El informe más espectacular proviene de la granja de Carter Burdine, quien perdió todas excepto 30 de sus 200 gallinas, por causa del misterioso intruso. El primer ataque ocurrió en la noche del 22 de Agosto, cuando Carter y su tío Bill ("Junior") Burdine, se dirigieron hacia el interior del corral, desubriendo los restos de más de 60 gallinas, diseminados a lo largo de un camino de 200 pies (N. del T.: 64 metros), desde el gallinero hasta el patio delantero de la casa. No hubo evidencia de que el asesino hubiera comido las gallinas; simplemente las había destrozado separadamente.

Unos minutos más tarde, llegó al lugar para investigar el Marshall del pueblo, Leroy Clonos. Mientras los tres se hallaban conversando, escucha-

ron un ruido entre el gallinero y el camino. Clonos subió al auto y maniobró lentamente camino arriba, en tanto Junior Burdine caminaba a su lado. De improviso algo salió de la zanja y cruzó el camino a 6 pies (N. del T.: 1,92 m.) por delante de Burdine, moviéndose tan rápidamente que no pudo verlo bien, ni tuvo oportunidad de dispararle.

Junior y Carter hallaron por donde la criatura había cruzado la cerca. "Aque-lla cerca estaba aplastada contra el suelo", me contó Junior. "Esa cosa era fuerte"; contrariamente a la forma de manifestarse a los Rogers, en este caso dejó un rastro de hierbas y pastos pisoteados. Carter, quién lo escuchó, manifestó que corría sobre dos extramidades.

Los Burdine descubrieron que el merodeador había sustraído unos tomates y pepinos que habían sido dejados en un balde para comida de los cerdos. Revisaron también a los perros de la familia para ver si tenían algo de sangre y plumas sobre ellos, pero no hallaron nada. En realidad, los dos hombres informaron que el perro más bravo estaba actuando con una timidez no característica echándose en el porche-. "El otro perro estaba tan asustado que no salía de su perrera", recordó Carter.

Herman dijo: "En ese momento Carter y yo salimos del granero y dimos la vuelta en la esquina; mi hermano hizo fuego a algo a través del campo. No veía cosa alguna, pero me detuve y comencé a hacer fuego en la misma dirección".

"Disparé cuatro veces con la escopeta de gas", dijo Junior. "La cosa estaba a sólo unos cien pies (N. del T.: 32 m.) de distancia cuando comencé a disparar. Debí haberle acertado. He matado muchos conejos desde esa distancia".

Sin embargo los disparos de Junior no detuvieron ni retrasaron la huida de la criatura. El se molestó al darse cuenta de que la cosa no dio indicios de haber sido tocado. Su pelo no se movió y no derramó sangre. No emitía sonido al-

guno mientras corría y no dejó rastros.

De vuelta en el gallinero los Burdine encontraron 110 aves muertas, todas abiértadas y vaciadas de sangre. Posteriormente, cuando investigaba, el Oficial Woodall examinó cuidadosamente los restos esparcidos en busca de trazas de pelos o cualquier otra evidencia física a fin de identificar al asesino. No halló nada.

"Hamás pude hallar alguna evidencia física concreta", me informó Woodall tiempo después. "Todo lo que tenía era un montón de historias acerca de lo que la gente había visto. Pienso que no pude hallar huella alguna porque el suelo era duro y la vegetación muy alta".

#### Perros y un cerdo asesinados

Hacia el fin de semana la alarma había seguido su curso y la criatura se había desvanecido. A mediados de Septiembre, sin embargo, algunas personas de una región poblada, y densamente boscosa, a lo largo del condado Parke-Fountain, en la línea norte de Roachdale, reportaron la observación de "un monstruo de 10 pies (N. del T.: 3,2 m.) de altura... cubierto de pelaje... (con) pies de 21 pulgadas (N. del T.: 53,34 cm.) de longitud". El había matado supuestamente a dos perros y a un cerdo, abriéndoles por el vientre.

"Aparentemente", concluyó el "Crawfordsville Journal an Review", "este monstruo, al igual que la criatura de Roachdale, será enlistado como otro de los OVNI's (objetos velludos no identificados) de Indiana centro este".

Durante el verano de 1.972 se registraron observaciones de "monstruos" peludos en Louisiana, Missouri; Roachdale, Indiana; Springdale, Arkansas; Peoria, Pekin y Cairo, Illinois; y Cleveland, Ohio. Hay suficiente razón para creer, tal como hemos expuesto en éste, y en otros artículos de la "Flying Saucer Review" (1), que esos "para-

There were just too many of them and no purely human agency, even if it had the time and the wherewithal, could continue to commit such acts without ever being detected. And I was not all taken with Ed Sanders' elaborate theories about covert government intelligence operations.

Since the early days when I was actively involved, there have been new developments. Responsible researchers such as Wolverton, Wolf, Mayne and Davidson himself have documented cases of paranormal effects in association with some mutilations. So I gladly accept their

evidence — evidence which I was unable to find in my own investigations, despite my best efforts.

Of course one immediately begins to form certain paranoid ideas, most prominently these: Is the Phenomenon reflective in nature and now producing the "evidence" we were searching for all along? Were the original mutes human-caused — but now a reflective Phenomenon is creating paranormal pseudomutes? And so on and on into never-neverland.



## MUTILATIONS: UP FROM OBSCURITY

→ By Jacob A. Davidson

Perhaps one of the more fascinating areas of inquiry open to Fortean is the subject of cattle mutilations and mysterious animal killings in general. During the years 1973-1976, this rather rancid phenomenon had the audacity to impose itself with an openness and intensity unparalleled in the history of Fortean. There has since been a "calming" of this weirdness but it refuses to bid us adieu. Cases of nocturnal depredations continue to creep into the papers, eventually finding their way into the wet and clammy hands of us dozen or so connoisseurs of mysterious mute lore.

Attention to this phenomenon has given rise to much speculation as to its origins. The most notable attempt, based upon the testimony of prison inmates Albert Kenneth Bankston and Dan Duggin, resulted in the issuance of the Flickinger Report<sup>1</sup> which placed the blame for the "removal of cow vulvas and bull donges" (our thanks to Ed Sanders for this description) on some obscure occult group hell-bent on malevolence. Needless to say, this report, along with some pretty spooky stories of occult-ritual misbehavior, caused much paranoia throughout law enforcement circles in the midwest.

The Flickinger Report appeared to placate many UFO researchers who were unable (or unwilling) to handle the intrusion of more "weirdness" into an already overtaxed ufological arena; especially since there appeared to be a growing sense of "legitimization" occurring in the public mind concerning the UFO phenomena, possibly due to that granddaddy of UFO flaps in 1973. Even Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who had some responsibility for the Flickinger inquiry, appeared to embrace the findings of the report with open arms. Recently, though, perhaps due to mute-creature-ufo reports investigated by ex-CIA agent, Brad Ayers, investigator for the Center for UFO Studies<sup>2</sup>, and undoubtedly the persistent reports of aerial anomalies in the vicinity of mute occurrences, Dr. Hynek has tempered his initial reluctance to engage the mute problem. While visiting Seattle during February of this year (1978) Robert Gribble, Director of Phenomena Research and I had occasion to meet with Dr. Hynek at which time he acknowledged an interest in the mutilation phenomenon. "There certainly is no ordinary, common-sense, scientific explanation for it. We've got to go afield."<sup>3</sup>

Among the many others who accepted the occult angle as presented in the Flickinger findings were such notables as Jerome Clark and Loren Coleman. Both researchers had had an excellent running knowledge of the cow-killer

phenomenon, a good historical perspective, well aware of the contemporary mute scene, a history of interaction with informant Albert Kenneth Bankston<sup>4</sup> and a good appreciation for the psycho-social "peculiarities" that appear to be inherent within a phenomenon such as this. With all of this background, both Clark and Coleman went ahead and accepted Flickinger's report as "the final word." I have often puzzled over this "position" of theirs and hope that sometime in the near future they may be able to shed some light on this matter.

Another suspect for surgery on the range is the Government. The major exponent of this theory is Ed Sanders, recipient of (in his own words) "My Very Own Lingue Bovina Excisa" (ah, cut cow's tongue) sent via Sacramento, California, gratis.<sup>5</sup> Sanders feels that a "rogue-element" within the government is responsible for these occurrences — meandering about the countryside in large vans that serve to house those mysterious denizens of the sky, THE UNMARKED BLACK HELICOPTER. And yes, they do carry with them various strains of Clostridia virus for testing on our friends, the four-leggeds. I think Sanders makes a pretty good case for this — but only up to a point. He has been unable to explain the presence of "peripheral elements" such as non-reaction by animals near the recipient of cow-cutting, predator avoidance of mutilated carcasses, the presence of soundless unidentified helicopters (as well as nocturnal lights), hairy creature activity near some areas of mutilations, the overwhelming geographical distribution of mutes, vs. the needed ground support, and perhaps most staggering of all, the total lack of eye-witness accounts of a mutilation in progress.

No harm is meant to those whom I have playfully criticized. They have all done great work in the field, but it intrigues me to see Fortean strive for an imposed sense of order in an arena full of Chaos.

The Mutilation Phenomenon appears to be multi-faceted. It seems to contain within itself all potential explanations: the occult, the government, the predator, the UFO, the paranormal possibilities: they're all there, waiting to reflect a particular perspective.

Still, it is always important to do research, to investigate, to theorize. With this in mind I would like to add to the strain by engaging a little history.

I have often wondered how extensive are reports of mysterious animal killings and mutilations in recent history. It seems that if there is historical precedence to this anomaly at least one of the "suspects" — government involvement — could be given a lesser position in the hierarchy of possible explanations. I was aware of Fort's attention to this matter via his collected works, but wanted cases

from other sources that have generally remained obscure. Thanks to my friend Rod Dyke, I was able to obtain xeroxed copies of Tiffany Thayer's magazine, *Doubt*, The Fortean Society Magazine, a rather miserable publication which made its first appearance in September of 1937 and ended with issue number 61 (Spring 1959). Thayer's lack of attention to detail and his tendency toward presumption was painful to wade through but the issues of *Doubt* did manage to yield some interesting animal mutilation and bizarre animal killing reports that have not seen the light of day for quite some time.

The following extracts are delivered in chronological order according to their presentation in *Doubt*. They are given here verbatim. I have not attempted to "pair" an original report with a "follow-up" story that may have appeared in successive issues of the magazine. The reader can do this for him/herself.

1. "Something about the size of a Great Dane" killed (1-29-37) eighteen sheep by breaking their necks. For details write Clarence Noon, Philadelphia, New York.<sup>6</sup>

2. "Animal" accused of killing poultry around Verona, California, was shot (2-13-36). "Of a flame-red color, 5 feet long, shaped roughly like a pig, with forefeet like a bear and hind feet like a duck. Its incisor teeth were over two inches long." *L. A. Herald-Examiner*.<sup>7</sup>

3. "Vigilantes" searched (11-1-37) around Morrison, Ill., for a "huge wild animal" which eluded them but left large tracks.<sup>8</sup>

4. "Terror spread" in Mobile, Alabama, when "ordinarily reputable" negroes (the Alabama equivalent of "usually well-informed sources") reported (1-29-38) that a "thing" dubbed the "Frankenstein of Fisher's Alley" — had been appearing and disappearing for 48 hours. No description is given but it frightened negro ladies leaving church. It was said that "bullets bounced off the monster's shell-like exterior."

The police "clung" to their original theory "that it might be a swamp bear, a wild dog or wildcat."<sup>9</sup>

5. In Columbus, Ohio, a "thing" gnawed (4-29-38) a bone in a backyard. Described as: "the size of a dozen cats, head and feet large, fur gray with yellow stripes." It left footprints no one there could identify. It "ate" bark from trees.<sup>10</sup>

6. A "slasher" cut (or did not cut) 13 people in the West Riding area the first week in December 1938. British police put a stop to that nonsense by prosecuting the people who reported being attacked! — Convicting them, too, what's more. The papers finally decided there never had been a ripper, and all the stories were false. *Brit. Corr.*<sup>11</sup>

7. "... For weeks" something had been "chewing up hound dogs" and making frightful sounds at night in woods near Glastonberry, Conn. A posse was formed which — with the help of the Freeprez — turned the thing into a low comedy reminiscent of a Shriner's convention. They were hunting a "Glowakus" — and had so much fun doing it they kept it up nearly two weeks.

By that time the hi-jinks had calmed the countryside and whatever had been making the trouble had fled — probably repulsed by the spectacle of his hunters.<sup>12</sup>

8. Dead sheep and lambs in such numbers as to raise the wrath of farmers in "many parts" of England against "killer dogs" were reported by Tom Elsonder, M.F.S.,

4-10-43, and an almost identical datum comes 10-17-43 from Curtis Cramer, M.F.S., in which the slaughter covers Grand Island, in the Niagara River between Buffalo and Niagara Falls. The American story describes the guilty as "one or two packs of wild dogs." Neither yarn is sufficiently circumstantial to reveal whether "dogs" are assumed from the fact of dead farm animals being found, or if dogs were actually seen.<sup>13</sup>

9. Dr. M. Gann thinks there's a 12-foot ape in Brazil although "zoologists . . . deny the existence of any kind of ape in South America." In the Goyas district, cattle are "slain," "terrific roars" are heard, a native was torn to pieces, and 21-inch ape-shaped footprints are found.<sup>14</sup>

10. This time it's "Montie the Monster." In the Sheep's Hill section of Pennsylvania, five miles north of Pottstown, something which "(a) screams like a panther, (b) barks like a dog, (c) wails like a banshee and (d) laughs like a hyena," had been — 11-14-45 — raiding hen houses and "snarling at children coming home from school" for the previous ten days.

The journalistic insistence upon taking it all lightly assumes this form in lieu of description: "Those who claimed (sic) to have seen Montie (sic) described him in odd shapes, various colors and a hodge-podge of features . . . It was agreed, however, that he possesses a most magnificent tail."<sup>15</sup>

11. An unidentified beast was roaming Wildcat Hollow, near Latrobe, Pa., 9-8-45, "About four feet tall, weighing 100 pounds, it broke up a corn-roast by leaping into the crowd" and "grabbing two ears of corn."<sup>16</sup>

12. MFS Elsonder is chiefly exercised by what is called a "stag", killing sheep near South Brent, Devon. Called a "rogue" and an "outlaw," "about the size of a Dartmoor pony," identification was far from certain (3-28-46), and guns appear to have as little effect upon him as the hard names. The *Western Morning News* states that "the presence of a stag in the district has not been heard of before and it is a mystery where this animal could have come from."<sup>17</sup>

13. . . . *Reynolds News*, 4-28-46, (a full month after Elsonder's notice): "The hunt goes on for the giant Alsatian dog — silver grey with a black streak on its back — which is believed to be responsible for the deaths of over 60 sheep on the Yorkshire moors between Keighley and Colne."<sup>18</sup>

14. About July 25, 1946, one J. L. Applegate of Flat Rock was visiting Indianapolis, presumably at the home of his brother-in-law, Willard Tollinger, and from Mr. Applegate the papers learned that Ray Rush and George Gearhart (perhaps seven persons in all) had seen — on July 19 — a snake about 20 feet long "coiled up in shallow water about a mile and a half from Swinging Bridge" (over the Flat Rock River?). Gearhart had seen "tracks" (of a jug perhaps) "a few weeks ago," in a corn field near Norristown, four miles from Flat Rock (both in Shelby County). Dale Pherigo, postmaster of Flat Rock, has heard the tale before and never fully believed it. Notwithstanding, pigs and other small animals were missing.

On August 4, from Petersburg (100 miles away) came word that Glennie Craig's cat had disappeared — with snake tracks! — two miles south of Otwell, and about six miles northeast of Cato (in the direction of Flat Rock).

This was too much for the Indiana papers, so that when

an unidentified creature which "cried like a baby" — and killed livestock — was reported near Lebanon (about 65 miles from Flat Rock — with Indianapolis between), newsmen were sent to get a pronouncement from— guess who? The State Entomologist, Frank Wallace, no kidding. And Wallace came up with the answer it wanted: "No such animal." (August 13-14 papers).

August 25: The "terrorizing" of Lebanon vicinity had continued two weeks. Mrs. Lulu Brownlee had heard the "weird sound like a baby crying," and Harry McClain, a hunter, age 64, had been engaged to kill or capture the beast, called "feline." Twelve hens had disappeared. Leonard Hawkins joined the hunt.<sup>19</sup>

15. When something began "crying and screaming like a baby" near Pottstown, Pa., it was identified as "a panther, a puma, a wild Chow dog, a bear and a black fox." Nov. 14, 1945.<sup>20</sup>

16. February 14, 1946, INS reported from Coatesville, Pa., a "monster described as a cross between a giraffe, a dog and a deer, that wails like a woman."<sup>21</sup>

17. July 31, 1946, the "angry peasants" of Valais, in the Swiss Alps were chasing one, variously described, "possibly even a wild man," "which in the last few weeks has slaughtered 70 sheep, goats, and cows"; all at night, in the Valley of Loesche, above the town of Sierre. The throat of the victim is slashed but the corpse is never eaten.<sup>22</sup>

18. The "stag" which MFS Elsonder continues to stalk by correspondence, simply ceased his depredations and went home, wherever that may be — perhaps to Sweden by rocket. But another terror of the fold set out on a murderous career about May 31, in the Masham, Colsterdale, Nidderdale, Coverdale, and Warfedale area. By June 10, at least 60 sheep were killed, and hundreds of men were hunting the guilty "dog" — called a "ghost" dog. Farmer Russell, no relation, of Ilton, was first to see it, and he said it was bigger than an Alsatian.

The slaughter increased (in the *Daily Mail*) to 120 sheep and lambs by June 11, and 200 men were hunting. By a whimsy of coincidence, on June 12, a "Mr. Frank Buck, of Harmby" joined the hunt.

By the 14th, the hunters were getting sore, but sticking to their guns. The *York Post* modestly counted 82 dead sheep in 14 days. June 15 — a dog was seen and shot at—but he got away. By the 17th, the army of hunters had reached 1000 and the British Army was aiding with radio equipment, principally to keep the Nimrods from killing the Frank Bucks and vice versa. Two people claimed to have hit the beast on the 17th, but he remained at large . . .

The dead sheep count now at 110.

On June 18th, Police-Constable C. Jackson, of North Riding, stationed at Askrigg, met a gigantic Alsatian on a railroad track and shot it dead. It measured 5 feet 8 inches, weighed 5½ stone, and the photo published in exultation shows a beast which must have been formidable before it was shot. The lost sheep now total 134.

June 19, headline in the *Yorkshire Post*: HUNT FOR SECOND DOG ON MOORS . . . "It was after the Alsatian had been killed that this second animal was seen coming off the moors . . . the Alsatian already dead had no wounds."<sup>23</sup>

19. On 9-24-46 at Momence, Ill., clear across the state from Oquawa, and much closer to Lebanon, Ind., some critter had appeared three times, clawing one dog to death . . .<sup>24</sup>

20. Near Carthage, Tenn., just before 11-12-46, "a strange-looking animal with a roar like a lion" preying on livestock. Farmers were content, according to the AP, when they had killed "a big red dog."<sup>25</sup>

21. Near Wapello, Iowa, on Christmas day last, a "lion" thought to have been released by a carnival "tired of footing big meat bills," attacked a dog and his farmer. Also seen by the local Presbyterian pastor but it was a "panther" if you'll take his word for it.<sup>26</sup>

22. On January 3, the gunners of Columbus Junction, Iowa, near Wapello, set out to follow "lion" tracks in the snow.<sup>27</sup>

23. About 11 o'clock Sunday night, 1-15-17 FS, at Eden, N. Y. near Buffalo, a "panther" screamed and left tracks. The screams have been heard before but nobody has seen the cat.<sup>28</sup>

24. Thirty-five lambs on the golf course of Hawera, New Zealand, were killed in one night "by the neat severance of the sinews at the back of the neck and a deep incision in a spot just behind the shoulders." Little blood in evidence. *Buffalo Courier-Express*, 3-13-47.<sup>29</sup>

25. Something called a "bear-man" wearing clothes and carrying a knife, was cutting up farm animals near Thessalon, Ont. July 12.<sup>30</sup>

26. Something hairy with a flesh-colored face was frightening folks around Charlotte, Mich. July 14.<sup>31</sup>

27. Kelly Chamandy, "naturalist," offered a reward of \$100 for the capture of a giant bird, jet black, with yellow eyes, "the size of silver dollars," huge talons and a hooked beak "large enough to carry off a small cow." Kelly saw it, he said, and farmers say it has been preying on live-stock. Ramore, Ont. April 17.<sup>32</sup>

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9 *ibid*

10 *ibid*

11 *ibid*

12 *ibid*

13 *Doubt*, No. 9, p. 4, col. 2

14 *Doubt*, No. 12, p. 178m col. 1

15 *Doubt*, No. 14, p. 203, col. 3

16 *ibid*, p. 204, col. 1

17 *Doubt*, No. 15, p. 219, col. 3

18 *ibid*, p. 220, col. 1

19 *Doubt*, No. 16, p. 236, col. 2-3

20 *ibid*

21 *ibid*

22 *ibid*

23 *ibid*, p. 237, col. 1-2

24 *Doubt*, No. 17, p. 260, col. 325 *Doubt*, No. 18, p. 273, col. 326 *ibid*27 *ibid*, p. 274, col. 128 *ibid*29 *ibid*30 *Doubt*, No. 30, p. 43, col. 231 *ibid*32 *Doubt*, No. 34, p. 108, col. 2

## A REJOINDER to Jacob Davidson

By Jerome Clark

When he asks why I at one time took Donald Flickinger's report to be "the final word" on the cattle mutilations mystery, Jacob Davidson (a researcher for whom, by the way, I have the highest respect) may unwittingly have answered his own question. As he says, I "had had an excellent running knowledge of the cow-killer phenomena [sic], a good historical perspective, well aware of the contemporary mute scene, a history of interaction with informant Albert Kenneth Bankston and a good appreciation for the psycho-social 'peculiarities' that appear to be inherent within a phenomena [sic] such as this."

### THE PRECISION PROBLEM

It was precisely because of my "good historical perspective," et. al., that I recognized mutilations as a new and unprecedented phenomenon. I am surprised that Davidson has missed the obvious point that not a single one of the reports he cites has any similarity — beyond, of course, the fact that both involve the killing of animals — to modern mutilations. (The incidents are more properly tied to the depredations of mystery animals, for which there is a great deal of precedent.) Today's mutilations, by way of contrast, appear to be precise operations, with parts of bodies surgically removed, the blood drained neatly and cleanly, and so on. So far as I know, nothing like this has ever been reported in the Fortean literature before (with the possible exception of some late-1960s West Virginia incidents cited by John Keel in *The Mothman Prophecies*).

That did not stop me, naturally, from immediately suspecting a Fortean cause when I first heard of mutilations through an incident which occurred near my home town of Canby, Minnesota, in November 1973. Reading the story in the town weekly, I thought that if I investigated it I would quickly find certain clues (mysterious lights, power outages or whatever) that would link it with UFOs or other Fortean manifestations. Though my research took me through three area counties and I interviewed numerous people (finding out along the way that other mutilations had taken place several months earlier), I uncovered nothing of the sort.

Then I heard about the cattle-cuttings in Kansas a month or two later and spent some considerable time on the phone running down cops, farmers, politicians, veterinarians, and others who were involved with the matter in one way or another. Again, no hints of paranormal forces at work, though I did hear a few scattered reports of mystery helicopters which may or may not be Fortean-related. There were two or three cases, however, in which human footprints were discovered in the general vicinity of a slain animal. And then, too, I first heard of the notorious Ken Bankston from a Concordia, Kansas, state senator. Now

that's a long story which I may tell in all its lurid detail some day.

Suffice it to say, when Don Flickinger, Brad Ayers and I interviewed Bankston we all found him impressive. Later on, we found out also, at least according to people who had known him a long time, that the man is something of a pathological liar. Yet enough of his story stood up — and was substantiated by other people I met later who had never heard of Bankston — to persuade me that there is every reason to believe a murderous Satanist underground exists in this country and that it occasionally engages in animal and human sacrifices. Bankston apparently based his story (freely embellishing it with his own fertile imaginings) on prison yard talk about such an organization, many of whose members are hardened criminal types.

Late in December 1974 a certain individual from Minneapolis brought UFOs into the mutilations picture — something I had tried to do some months earlier but without success. He said specifically that a mutilation near Kimball, Minnesota, was caused by extraterrestrial interlopers who'd nailed the animal with a laser-beam. It turned out that the "investigator" had never bothered to talk with the farmer on whose land the incident had occurred. If he had troubled to do so, he would have discovered that the allegedly mysterious ground markings on which he'd based his theory had a very clear and thoroughly mundane cause.

Not long afterwards I found out that the individual in question had distinguished himself earlier by claiming to have discovered an ET laser device while hunting for Bigfeet in the Pacific Northwest. He also claimed to be on close personal terms with a number of Bellingham, Washington, Bigfeet, who had entertained him in their homes while explaining their relationship to the lost people of Atlantis.

But the Kimball yarn seemed to get everybody going and pretty soon the UFO pulps and tabloids were loaded with speculation, based on the flimsiest conceivable "evidence," that ufonauts were busily collecting cow vulvas and bull donges. These theorists did not seem to feel they had to establish any kind of one-on-one cause; it was sufficient for them that a UFO (or, at any rate, some sort of aerial object) had appeared within 50 miles of the killing anywhere from a week before to a week after the carcass had been found. I remember that several enthusiasts got quite angry with me because I refused to accept any of this as proof — proof, at any rate, of anything beyond rampant wishful thinking and rank credulity.

But at last I had to agree that something awfully damned peculiar and seemingly paranormal was taking place. After a certain point it was no longer reasonable to speculate about massive conspiracies to perpetuate such killings.