

ANCIENT ASTRONAUTS, MODERN MYSTERIES

By John A. Keel

Vampires From Outer Space?

In recent years thousands of cows, sheep, dogs, and horses have died under very mysterious circumstances. Someone or something has expertly drained the blood from the carcasses and surgically removed their sex organs, tongues, and ears. Regular SAGA readers know that this is not a new phenomenon. We have been following it in these pages for almost a decade, and periodic waves of animal mutilations have occurred worldwide for at least two hundred years. In the early 1970s, the mutilations saw marked increase in the east. Angry farmers in Pennsylvania held meetings, believing they were dealing with cattle rustlers. And by 1975, several states in the mid-west and west were in a similar uproar. The senseless slaughter reached a peak that summer and local authorities concluded they were dealing with a secret band of devil worshippers. Others blamed marauders from outer space — because strange flying objects and phantom "helicopters" were often sighted in the vicinity of the mutilations.

Our old friends, the Big Hairy Monsters (BHM), also got into the act. Alarmed witnesses were reporting the presence of the giant bipeds outside Pittsburgh, Pa., simultaneously with the disappearance or butchering of domestic animals. The creatures allegedly raided chicken coops, invaded pig pens, tore out the throats of hapless sheep, and, in general, conducted a terror campaign against our rural communities. By January 1976, many Texas residents were speculating that their epidemic of animal mutilations was related to the appearances of the "Big Bird" which was terrifying residents of the Chicano community around Brownsville. The Bird — some reliable witnesses described it as resembling an ancient pterodactyl — had been seen sporadically since 1945. It

may also be linked to the legendary Thunderbird which frequently appears in the legends of the American Indians.

The Land Down Under hasn't produced any Big Bird reports lately, but giant ape-like monsters have been raising a ruckus in Australia's Outback country for the past year. Most of the activity has been concentrated around an obscure little town called Goolma. The BHM sightings also have been accompanied by UFOs and animal mutilations. Something that left footprints 15 inches long and six inches wide apparently broke the necks of a number of cattle. Several dogs were also killed or disappeared. The hairy monsters were seen several times by reliable witnesses in May 1975 as the animal mutilations reached epidemic proportions. Flying saucer sightings peaked around the same time in Goolma, Wellington, Gerie, and Gulgong in New South Wales.

On the other side of the globe, in the province of Sodermanland in Sweden, farmers were up in arms over a sudden outbreak of mutilations in the spring of 1976. As in the American cases, the mutilators ignored the edible cuts of meat and removed useless organs like the heart and sex organs. In nearly every instance, the carcasses had been drained of blood. There have been many hairy monster sightings in Sweden, too, and, of course, flying saucers are a familiar sight in the thinly populated provinces north of the Arctic Circle.

While investigating animal mutilations in the mid-1960s, I was perplexed by the constant absence of blood. A freshly killed animal bleeds profusely and there should always be traces on the ground, grass, and surrounding area. The phantom mutilators accomplish the impossible: They manage to kill and cut up their victims without spilling a drop of blood! Even more

bizarre, they somehow drain all the blood from the carcasses without leaving a single telltale puncture mark. Experienced veterinarians and pathologists have painstakingly examined the bodies of mutilated animals in the U.S. without finding as much as a puncture or surgical incision on the bloodless carcass.

One common theory in law enforcement circles is that the animals are first downed by a tranquilizer gun. Such weapons are rare, require some training to use, and employ a tranquilizing agent with a nicotine base. Traces of nicotine should be present in various organs, even if the blood has been removed. Failing to find such traces, authorities are baffled.

Are these animals first paralyzed by some mysterious force in the same way that humans have often been paralyzed in the presence of UFOs? Instead of using drugs, the mutilators may be using some form of electrical energy which immobilizes the entire nervous system.

²⁰In innumerable Men In Black cases, the witnesses have claimed they felt a numbness or paralysis when confronted by the strange MIBs. In Middle Europe these black-garbed mystery men were once thought to be evil vampires. Legend has it that they first paralyzed their victims with a hypnotic stare and then drank their blood. Could these legends be based on *fact*? Fortunately, there have been no verifiable cases of this in modern times, but there are a great many disappearances of people every year, and we might speculate that the modern vampires are now clever enough to hide or bury the incriminating evidence. Or perhaps they have turned their bloodthirsty practices to animals because killing human beings has become too difficult and too involved.

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All of this revives one of zoologist Ivan Sanderson's more chilling theories: That the Earth is a farm and we are the crop. The UFOs raid us frequently to satisfy their thirst for blood, operating behind a smoke screen of deception and confusion.

SECRET CULTS

Another theory which got popular support in 1975 is that the animal mutilations are the work of a secret devil cult. Such cults *do* exist, and *have always* existed, but most of the rites of black magic involve the sacrifice of small children, not whole herds of sheep. Any cult that can run rampant in a dozen states at the same time, slaughter thousands of animals, and not leave a single clue must be very large, very well financed, and very organized, but if they could afford to operate on a national, even an international, scale they could also certainly afford to maintain their own ranches and slaughterhouses. They wouldn't need to sneak into some Oklahoma pasture to drain the blood of a few random cows.

However, there have been many

false clues pointing to the existence of an animal-slaughtering cult. Expert investigators like Jerome Clark and Ed Sanders (famous for his study of the Charles Manson cult) have actually interviewed people who claimed to know something about this cult. But, like the police, they have ultimately come up empty-handed.

Occasionally, however, there is a startling report involving mysterious hooded men seen in the mutilation areas. Back in the 1960s a woman in Ohio claimed that tall men in white garments were killing her cows. She had gone after them with a shotgun, she told me, and was amazed when they were able to leap high fences with apparent ease.

In September 1975, Don Mitchell, a Forest Service employee, reported seeing hooded men at a place called Cabin Creek in Idaho.

"The cows in the corral had been making a lot of noise but suddenly got real quiet," Mitchell said. "My horse was also quiet and watching the hillside. I thought there might have been elk, and moved along to see. When I got around a group of willows I saw them: two guys with black hooded robes, one about 5 feet 10 inches tall and the other about 5 feet 8. The taller guy had a canvas sack over his shoulder which seemed to be empty. They were moving at a good clip and headed straight down Cove Creek."

Mitchell was about 50 yards from the

men and even though he was on horseback, couldn't catch up with them. Later, officers of the Blaine County Sheriff's Department searched the area with negative results.

Why would anyone moving around in such a remote wooded area bother to wear long black robes? It's like wearing a tuxedo to go hunting.

In previous issues of SAGA I have discussed the many odd reports of hooded, robed men who have been seen in many parts of the world . . . leaping across roads in England, ambling down isolated highways in Minnesota and West Virginia, running from old farmhouses in New England. Who are they? If you think about it, a hood and long robe might be necessary. *These "people" may not look like us at all.* In order to move in our midst they must cover their possibly alien bodies from head-to-toe. Underneath those robes they might be completely covered with *hair!*

THE VANISHING FOOTPRINTS

Still another puzzling feature of the animal mutilations is the total absence of footprints or tire tracks around the bodies — even when the carcasses are in the middle of mud or snow. Proponents of the cultist theory have

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suggested that the culprits throw down pieces of cardboard to walk on. Not a farfetched theory since Arab bandits in the Middle East have known for centuries how to erase their tracks in soft sand. One western farmer claimed that he discovered a cow dead in a sea of mud. He walked around it and examined it, leaving deep footprints. A day or so later he returned to the site with local police officers and — to the party's astonishment!—*his own footprints were gone.*

Aerial objects, usually thought to be helicopters, have been seen frequently in the vicinity of the mutilations, leading to speculation that the mutilators are doing their dirty work from the air. Carl Whiteside, an agent for the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, doubts this theory.

"If they do use a helicopter, think of how much money is involved,"

Whiteside said. "A helicopter costs from a quarter of a million to half a million dollars and costs for fuel would be about \$9 an hour."

The Colorado Cattlemen's Association has offered a reward of \$5,000 for a solution to the mystery. And with good reason because, in 1975, in four months, a total of 175 mutilations were reported in 21 Colorado counties.

"In order to solve a crime, you have to establish a motive," agent Whiteside recently complained, "but this is a senseless crime. The purpose of taking these animal parts is something we're not aware of since these parts have no retail value. There's no profit motive. All we have now is dead cattle that have been mutilated."

Reports have been coming in from Australia, Sweden, Africa, and other foreign nations as well indicating that we are dealing with one of two things:

1) A worldwide organization staffed with highly trained personnel, who are both heavily financed, and strangely motivated; 2) The Unknown; a force that employs UFOs, bigfoot-type creatures, and other bizarre phenomena to accomplish a mysterious mission here on Earth.

The mutilators, over the years have caused losses in the many millions of dollars. The situation seems to call for a massive international investigation by all law enforcement agencies. We spend more time and money tracking down stolen cars than we do investigating this mysterious and costly phenomenon. If a human organization is behind this, we should be trying to put them out of business and behind bars.

But, as the lawmen say, we've got to find the motive. If the culprit is non-human, perhaps we're better off not knowing. ★