



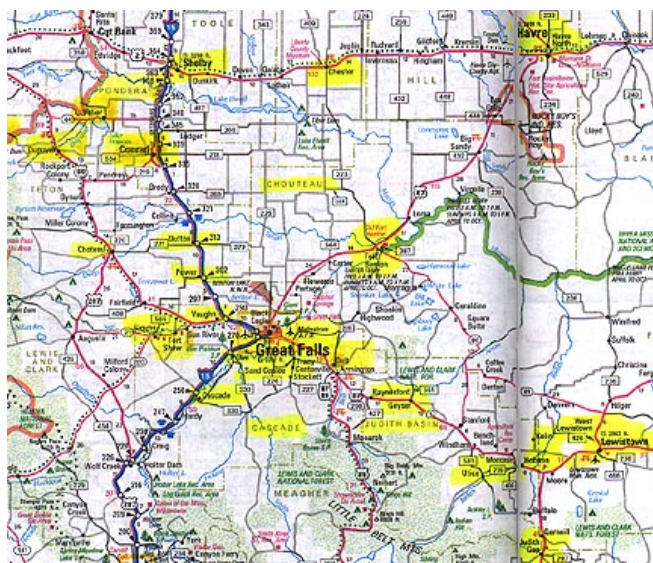
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Mystery Stalks The Prairie

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Chapter 4

Montana Is Not Alone



Yellow indicates the towns, counties and areas affected by animal mutilations, unidentified helicopters and mysterious aerial craft during 1974 to 1976. Twenty-seven years later, in 2001 to 2002, Pondera County and surrounding region experienced more than a dozen animal mutilations associated with unidentified lights and other high strangeness. See [Earthfiles 08/18/01](#).

Were livestock mutilations in other states following the same pattern as those in Montana? Had law officers in these states come up with any substantial evidence that might be helpful in solving the mutilations in Montana?

These were some of the questions Captain Wolverton considered when he started contacting law enforcement agencies in other states where mutilations had taken place. The replies were interesting, but did not solve the riddle. Some reports indicated a similarity in incidents while others introduced entirely new bits of information to add new and baffling parts to the puzzle.

The reports of two mutilations in Meeker County, Minnesota, were particularly interesting. One involved a cow and the other a pig. The cow was mutilated with blood removal similar to those in Montana. The interesting aspect was that law officers arrived on the scene shortly after the cow was mutilated and although there was about a half inch of snow on the ground, the area in a six-foot radius immediately around the cow was melted off. Officers were unable to find any footprints or car tracks.

The pig mutilation also had a strange aspect. The farmer who owned the pig told authorities that his yard light had gone out and he had assumed that it had

burned out. About 20 minutes later, the yard light went back on. He went outside the next morning and found the mutilated pig in the barnyard. It was mutilated in a manner similar to most incidents involving cattle.

The officer who reported to Captain Wolverton said there had been 12 mutilations south of his county toward St. Paul. It was noted that birds and predators did not feed on mutilated animal carcasses. Until the pig mutilation, all information the Cascade County Sheriff's Department accumulated involved cattle. However, shortly thereafter, in mid-August, a report was received that nine sheep had possibly been mutilated near Red Lodge, Montana. The left ear had been cut off seven of the sheep. Two of them died, but the remaining lived.

Interesting information concerning mutilations in Colorado was published by the Colorado press. While investigating a cattle mutilation, a Sheriff in that state found an Army bag containing a scalpel, surgical gloves, and a bovine penis at the scene. It is possible that these specimens were purposely left at the mutilation site.

The Sheriff at Sioux Falls, South Dakota, shared a number of reports on mutilations occurring in late 1974, after the first incidents reported in north-central Montana, but before the major rash of mutilations. An incident in late September 1974, regarding a Black Angus heifer was similar in several ways to the mutilations that later occurred in Montana. The heifer's tongue and reproductive organs were removed and the excision was completed *in an almost perfect circle with no jagged edges. It looked as though a precision instrument of some description was used.*

The right ear was removed in an unusual method. The report stated that the ear was not sliced off at the skull's surface, but the entire ear was excised from the skull. As in most Montana cases, no blood was on the ground by the animal or on the skull and no tracks were found around the animal. A tuft of hair, presumably the animal's, was found about two feet from the rear of the animal. It was in ball shape and approximately tennis ball size.

Lawmen there contacted the Sheriff of another county in Minnesota who reported two mutilations similar in appearance, except that these were mutilations of male animals instead of female.

Another mutilation near Sioux Falls involved a one or two day old calf that had all internal organs removed. All that remained of the calf were the backbone, hide, rib cage, head and legs. The tongue, the left ear, part of the nose, and the bull calf's testicles were removed. There was a hole about one-half inch in diameter wherein the hide of the left shoulder of the calf was removed. Investigating officers found no evidence of the internal organs being dragged along the ground as would be the result if a predator had taken the organs.

Apparently the absence of tracks puzzled the South Dakota officers, too, who reported that in one investigation the mutilated heifer was found in the middle of a soybean field which had been harvested. The ground was very soft, but no tracks were found.

A man in Texas who has apparently been assembling data to help law officers in their investigations of cattle mutilations sent Captain Wolverton photostat copies of reports and news articles collected from a number of states. The man said he worked with the knowledge and approval of his local sheriff and asked that Captain Wolverton send him information about mutilations in Montana.

Among the information the Texas man submitted was a copy of the poster advertising a \$2,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those doing the mutilations. The reward was offered by the Wisconsin Livestock Protective Association, organized in 1970, and which has over 250 members. He also submitted copies of news stories telling of the mutilation of a cow in Kansas, the organization of a farmer-vigilante group in Nebraska and a \$500 reward offered by the American Human Association in Denver, Colorado.

A news broadcast over a Salt Lake City television station in the fall of 1975 stated that there had been 1,600 mutilations in 28 states. Whether this figure is accurate or not is not known, but newspaper stories have reported cattle mutilations in a number of states including Texas, Oklahoma, Washington, Oregon, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Kansas, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming and Idaho, as well as Montana.

In addition to checking with law enforcement personnel in other states, Captain Wolverton contacted a man in Nebraska who is a doctor of pharmacology and a biochemist to get further information on the effects of certain drugs on livestock. The man verified that Ketaset is an anesthetic or tranquilizer. He said Ketaset was the name used when the drug was still in the experimental stage.

The man voiced the opinion that the two holes found in the jugular vein on many mutilated animals could have possibly been used to inject a salt solution through the one hole while pumping out the blood through the other. He added that the salt solution could not be detected after the animal was dead any length of time.

Meanwhile, reports of mutilations continued to come in to the Cascade County Sheriff's Office. One report stated a calf was found dead in a remote area of the Highwood Mountains. The calf was missing both ears, its male organs, tail, rectum and tongue. Captain Wolverton cut its throat and found no blood in it or on the ground around it.



There was no blood in this mutilated calf when the investigating officer, Keith Wolverton, slit its throat. Nor was there any blood on the ground around it. However, it was missing both ears, its male organs, tail, rectal, area and tongue.
Photograph © 1975 Cascade County Sheriff's Office.

On the ground directly in front of the calf was a white substance forming an X measuring 10 by 17 inches and topped with a bar. Officers wondered if it could be some sort of a symbol, so they sent some of the substance to a Missoula laboratory for analysis. Disappointingly, the substance turned out to be bird droppings.



Directly in front of the mutilated calf, officers found a large (faint) X formed by some white substance. Thinking it could be a symbol, they sent a sample of the white substance to a laboratory for analysis, but it turned out to be bird droppings.

Photograph © 1975 Cascade County Sheriff's Office.

Judith Basin County Undersheriff Jerry Skelton investigated the mutilation of a

bull calf in which a hole had been drilled in the back of its head and the brains removed. In some cases, the cause of death was definitely not attributed to mutilation. For example, a cow and calf found near Simms. A veterinarian did autopsies on both animals and said the cow died of emphysema and the calf expired due to intestinal blockage.

The mutilation of a cow south of Stockett followed what seemed to be the usual pattern - rectal area, tail and one ear removed - but there was one difference. A white, filmy substance, similar to that discovered earlier on a mutilated calf near Utica, was found on the hair of the cow's neck. It was sent to a laboratory for analysis, along with samples of the soil around the animal at two feet, nine feet and twenty feet. Although extensive tests have been made at the lab, the white substance has not been identified. Scientists did confirm that it is not petroleum distillate, as in the other case.

A mutilation with a different twist was investigated by officers February 20, 1976. The cow, found northwest of Cascade, was dead an estimated one to two weeks. Two circular patches of hide from the belly, one teat and one ear were missing. Apparently the carcass had not appealed to birds of prey, as there were no droppings or other evidence that birds had eaten on it.

In examining the carcass, Captain Wolverton cut open the throat, revealing no blood, but he found an extremely foul-smelling, milky fluid which ran from the opening. Some of it was sent to a laboratory for testing, but the tests did not determine what the fluid was. However, a veterinarian later said it was possibly putrefaction of tissue. As in most cases, there were no tracks around the dead cow.

One of the greatest dangers in any investigation of strange or frightening circumstances is the panic it can cause when people hear about it. Such was almost the case at a rural high school in Cascade County one day in October 1975. A rumor was going around the school that humans were to be mutilated next and that on that particular night some residents of the area were to be mutilated.

The Cascade County Sheriff's Office was notified. A special assembly was called at the school and Captain Wolverton and Deputy Arne Sand drove to the school to speak to the students. They explained that there was no validity to the rumor. The deputies found out in questioning the students later that the rumor was started by some students as a joke. The officers did not consider it funny, as they knew what fear and panic can do to normally stable citizens.

To be continued in **Chapter 5 - The Montana Site**

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