



Mystery Stalks The Prairie

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Chapter 11

Hairy Creatures, Eight Feet Tall

Law officers have been unable so far to find an explanation for the sequence in which the strange events have occurred. First, there was the rash of cattle mutilations, then the many sightings of unidentified helicopters, followed by numerous UFO sightings and more recently, the reports of people who saw one or more strange hairy creatures that walked upright like a man. There were overlapping events. One type of activity seemed to decline as another started. Was it a piece of the puzzle or coincidence? Speculation seemed futile.

The first report officers received of the hairy creatures came December 26, 1975, from two very badly frightened junior high age girls. One girl, who lives in Great Falls, was spending the Christmas holidays with another girl in the Vaughn area and it was here the incident occurred. The girls told the deputies that in the late afternoon, they noticed the horses were acting very strangely, pawing the ground and rearing on their hind legs. They went outside to see what was the matter and it was then that they saw a strange creature about 200 yards from their mobile home and 25 yards or so away from a thicket.



Vaughn, where the girls saw the "Bigfoot" creature through rifle scope, west of Great Falls. All the yellow-colored towns and regions were affected by whatever was stalking animals so intensely in 1975 to 1976 in Montana.

The Great Falls girl found a .22 rifle belonging to her friend's father and looked through the scope at the creature. She described its face as *dark and awful looking and not like a human's*. The girls said the creature was 7 to 7.5 feet tall and twice as wide as a man.

To see if she could frighten the creature, the girl with the rifle fired it into the air. When nothing happened, she waited a short time and fired into the air again. The second time, the creature dropped to the ground and pulled itself along with its arms for a short distance before standing erect once more. The girls

decided they had seen enough!

They took off running, intent on finding someone who would take them to Great Falls where they could wait for the Vaughn girl's mother to get off work. One of the girls looked back over her shoulder and saw several other creatures - she thought three or four - helping the first one back into the thicket.

The girls swore their story was true and their obvious fright reinforced what they had said. Later, they both willingly took a polygraph test which further indicated they were telling the truth.

The night following the incident, Undersheriff Glenn Osborne, Captain Keith Wolverton and Deputy Dick Gasvoda went to the area to search for the creatures or any evidence. While Undersheriff Osborne and Deputy Gasvoda went into the brush to try to "flush them out," Captain Wolverton waited in the clearing with a starlight scope which permitted him to see in the dark.

No creatures were found, but the men did notice a number of trees broken off in the area which is a similar observation noted at other sites where the creatures were seen.

When officers questioned the Vaughn girls' father later, he told of a hair-raising experience he had had shortly after midnight Christmas morning. He said he had awakened to a sound that he could only describe as like a human dying an agonizing death. He said he took his flashlight and rifle and went outside to check, but his dog refused to go with him. The awesome sounds have been reported in connection with seeing strange hairy creatures in several places in the United States. The Cascade County Sheriff's Office has tapes of the sounds from California, Pennsylvania and Washington. It's an eerie sound, to say the least, officers have noted.

Reports from some areas where the biped creatures have been seen say that they emit an unpleasant odor compared to rotten eggs. Not satisfied with their night search of the area, Captain Wolverton returned the next day and walked the area where the creatures were seen, but he found no footprints. The following day, he flew over the area and took pictures of it.

In a telephone conversation with a writer in another state who was writing a book on the strange creatures, Captain Wolverton was told that reports of sightings have come from all over the United States. The writer said he had been told that the creatures do not leave tracks, that they have been shot at, but it apparently does not hurt them, plus at times the creatures appear transparent. He added the bipeds have been observed in connection with UFOs.

The theory that bullets don't stop them was evidently shared by a Great Falls man who gave officers a belated report of seeing a large, hairy creature while hunting coyotes on Bootlegger Trail in December, 1974. He described the creature as seven or eight feet tall and said it looked like a grizzly bear. He said he fired at it three times with his 30.30 and when it kept coming toward him, he left hurriedly in his car.

It was about one month after the girls' terrifying experience that a man living two or three miles west of Vaughn, reported hearing the same disturbing sound the Vaughn girls' father heard on Christmas Eve. He, too, likened it to the scream of a man dying an agonizing death. he said it lasted about five minutes. He looked out the bathroom window, but was unable to see anything. His dogs, which are ordinarily very aggressive and bark loudly when anyone approaches, were standing next to the house making faint barking sounds.

Early in February 1976, a woman in Babb phoned to tell officers that she and her husband had heard the same kind of weird sound twice during the preceding summer. She likened the sound to a werewolf. Again, the dogs appeared to be terrified. She said other residents of Babb had heard the sound, too, and she understood a man from Browning had seen "Bigfoot" on Logan Pass in Glacier

Park the preceding summer. Authorities did not have the man's name so they could not check the story.

Captain Wolverton received a report from an airman on February 11, 1976, who said he had seen footprints in the snow that appeared to be those of an animal walking upright. The tracks, found in the vicinity of Beaver Creek in the Rocky Mountains west of Augusta, had three toes. The airman also reported that some of the green pine trees in the area were broken down. Deep snow prevented Captain Wolverton from reaching the area, but he did fly over it. However, he was unable to see anything unusual.

A few days later, a Great Falls woman reported she had heard the strange sounds twice - once between Christmas and New Year's and once in January.

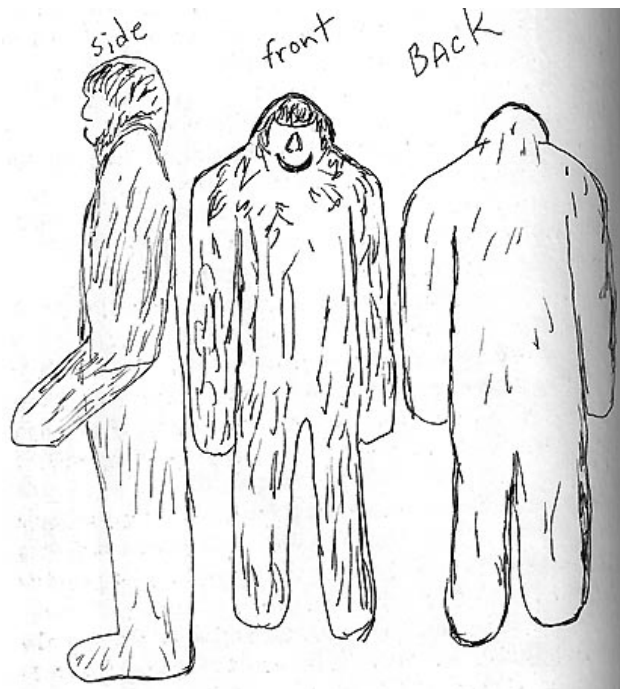
Helena Bigfoot Encounter on April 4, 1976



By far the most startling report so far and the one that produced the most evidence was one from a 16-year-old Helena boy. When Captain Wolverton learned of the incident, he and Deputy Ken Anderson went to Helena to interview the boy and his family. The youth told the officers that he had awakened about 4:30 a.m. the morning of April 4, 1976, and stood looking out his bedroom window for a time. The second story window provides a grand view of the pasture to the east of the house.

At about 5 a.m., the boy told the officers he saw a tall, hairy creature walking in the pasture, coming from the south, or to his right. He said the creature was taking long strides and his arms moved back and forth as a person's would.

The creature did not appear to have a neck, but it was capable of turning its head and it appeared to be looking around. Except for its face, it was covered entirely with brown or black hair about an inch to an inch and a half long.



Sixteen-year-old Helena, Montana teenager watched two large, hairy creatures in the early morning of April 4, 1976 walking across a pasture near his home. He drew the above sketches to show what the two hairy creatures he saw from his bedroom window looked like.

He told law officers that one of the creatures came as close as 100 feet to his house. Drawings on file at Cascade County Sheriff's Office.

The youth was unable to describe the face, but said the forehead protruded out and then upward to a rounded head. The nose looked pushed in. He did not notice any ears. In some respects, the description matched that given of strange creatures seen in Pennsylvania earlier. When the creature moved, the boy said it walked very smoothly without stooping and did not appear to bend its knees much.

When the creature's arms were at its side, the arms were as thick through from front to back as its body. The creature's back seemed to go straight down to below the buttocks, without any curve at the small of the back. The youth estimated the creature's height at eight feet. He claimed he was misquoted in a newspaper account as saying the creature was ten feet tall. He was upset over being misquoted.

As the boy watched, the creature kept walking until it was directly east of the house, at which time it was joined by a second hairy creature. The second one was about a head shorter than the first, but just as wide and the color was the same. At this point, the boy related, the larger creature reached down and picked up something dark colored, *about the size of a bale of hay*. 'Something was flapping from the ends of the object which looked similar to a piece of dark plastic. the larger creature handed the object to the smaller creature who carried it.

The larger hairy creature then started walking straight toward the house. When it was within about 100 feet of the house, it looked directly toward the window where the boy was watching. The boy vaulted downstairs to wake his father and the two returned to the window in not more than two minutes. But when they looked out, the strange creatures were gone. Even the use of 10 power binoculars failed to reveal anything.

The boy appeared badly shaken by the ordeal. Later in the day, the boy's sister found a track in the pasture. She and the boy covered it with wood until the next day when they made a plaster cast of it. Captain Wolverton and Deputy Anderson made their own cast from the one the youth had. The track measures 17.5 inches long and 7 inches wide and appears to have three toes. The boy drew

three sketches of the creature for officers. The drawings (above in this chapter) are on file in the Cascade County Sheriff's Office.



This is a photograph of a plaster cast made by a Helena, Montana, youth of a track found near his home. The track is believed to have been made by one of two large, hairy creatures seen by the young man in the pasture outside his bedroom window. Note the ruler that shows the length of the footprint as 18 inches. Photograph © 1976 Cascade County Sheriff's Office.

In talking with the boy's father, the deputies learned of another incident that happened twelve days before the boy saw the creatures. The father said he was taking a bath when he heard something outside his bathroom window. He got dressed and went outside where he found a large print in the five inches of snow below the window. He said he couldn't make any shape out of it, but on either side of the track and a little forward were two different scratch marks in the snow. Each mark had five scratches indicated in the snow.

The boy's mother also confirmed his story and added that during the two months previous, a number of strange things had been happening. She told of hearing sounds like something heavy running outside and their dog being scared. She added that they had heard weird sounds like an elk bugling or dogs howling, both before and after her son saw the strange creatures. The officers were also told that a 13-year-old boy who lives in the same area had also reported seeing one of the hairy creatures.

As officers searched the pasture area where the two creatures were seen, they noticed both cattle tracks and horse prints. When they asked the boy's father when the horses were taken out of the pasture, he replied, *There's never been horses in that pasture.*"

The boy said he had taken a lot of kidding about seeing the creatures, but he wasn't kidded by the officers. They did not doubt him and Captain Wolverton added to his official report, "After talking to (the boy) and his family, I believe that (the boy) did see what he reported."

To be continued in **Chapter 12 - False Story Fools Public**

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