

5487-6323

Snippy mutilation event, September 1967, Alamosa County, Colorado, USA.

**Tasking:**

Move to the optimum position/location and describe the event as it happens. Describe the event as it unfolds and the perpetrators of the mutilation.



## Additional feedback:

The first allegedly strange death of livestock--or at least the first widely-publicized case--comes from near Alamosa, Colorado, in 1967. On September 7 of that year, Agnes King and her son Harry noted that Snippy, a three-year-old horse had not returned to the ranch at the usual time for her water. This was unusual, given the heat and the arid conditions.

Harry found Snippy on September 9. Her head and neck had been skinned and defleshed, the bones were white and clean. To King, the cuts on Snippy seemed to have been very precise. There was no blood at the scene, according to Harry, and there was a strong medicinal odor in the air.

The next day, Harry and Agnes returned to the scene with Mr. and Mrs. Berle Lewis, who were Agnes' brother and sister-in-law. They found a lump of skin and horse flesh; when Mrs. Lewis touched it, the flesh oozed a greenish fluid which burned her hand. They also reported the discovery of fifteen "tapering, circular exhaust marks punched into the ground" over some 5000 square yards. (Saunders and Harkins, 156) The medicinal odor had weakened somewhat, but was still present.

Mrs. Lewis contacted the United States Forest Service, and Ranger Duane Martin was sent to investigate. Among other tasks, Martin "checked the area with a [civil defense](#) Geiger counter. He reported finding a considerable increase in radioactivity about two city blocks from the body." (Saunders and Harkins, 157)

Later, Martin would state, "The death of this saddle pony is one of the most mysterious sights I've ever witnessed ... I've seen stock killed by lightning, but it was never like this." (ibid., 159)

After trying to interest other authorities with little success, Mrs. Lewis turned to her professional connections: She wrote occasionally for the *Pueblo Chieftain*. Her account of Snippy's strange death was published in that newspaper, and was picked up by the Associated Press on October 5, 1967. Soon, much of the United States knew the tale of Snippy's death, and reports of UFO's were made from others in Colorado. That same day, an account by Superior Court Judge Charles E. Bennett of Denver, Colorado, saw publication. Bennett and his wife claimed to have witnessed "three reddish-orange rings in the sky. They maintained a triangular formation, moved at a high speed, and made a humming sound." (Saunders and Harkins, 157) The civilian UFO research group NICAP became involved in the case as well, and some people were speculating that UFOs were somehow involved with Snippy's death.

Shortly thereafter, an anonymous Denver pathologist's account of his autopsy saw publication. Snippy's brain and abdominal organs were missing, he said, and there was no material in the spinal column. The pathologist insisted on anonymity, he said, due to fear of damaging his reputation with involvement in such a high-profile case.

The Condon Committee, then at the University of Colorado, sent its coordinator, Robert Low, to investigate. Low brought in Dr Robert O. Adams, head of Colorado State University's Veterinary and Biomedical Science School.

Adams examined Snippy and the evidence. He concluded there were "No unearthly causes, at least not to my mind." (Saunders and Harkins, 164) Adams noted a severe infection in Snippy's hindquarters, and speculated that someone had come across the dying horse and slit its throat in order to end its misery. Then, Adams said, scavengers had inflicted the rest of the damage to the horse.

To some, this settled the question, but Mrs. Lewis argued that Adams' conclusions were flawed in not accounting for the lack of blood at the scene and the medicinal odor.

Low reported that he'd located the "anonymous pathologist"; Low said that the man was "widely misquoted" and was furthermore not a pathologist. The man's opinions of Snippy's death generally matched Adams', said Low. Jerome Clark later identifies the anonymous man as hematologist John H. Altshuler. (Clark, 17)