

Bill Airola's cows have touched off a 20th century range war.

and calves, each wearing a cowbell, graze on Diamond XX's unoccupied lots, fattening up before they are trucked 8,000 feet up into the Sierra to spend the summer.

"It was the cowbells that prompted the gunfire," said Frederic M. Hanelt, a Sacramento lawyer hired by angry homeowners in this community 40 miles east of Stockton.

The cows won't stay on the unoccupied lots. Because of that, Airola is feuding with Fredrick and Jean Dole and Mike Carezza and a sizable portion of the Diamond XX Homeown-

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East Area Rapist Sought 5 Years Later

By Clark Brooks
Bee Staff Writer

For 22 months, he squeezed Sacramento in a grip of terror and held the law in the palm of his hand.

And five years after the sexual attacks suddenly stopped, the detective he eluded is still pursuing Sacramento's East Area Rapist.

"I want him very badly," sheriff's Sgt. Jim Bevins said the other day. "I've got six years invested and I'd hate to think it was all for nothing."

The rapist attacked 31 women in Sacramento County, mostly in the northeast area of metropolitan Sacramento. He also raped 13 women in Stockton, Davis and the Bay area.

In the first 15 rapes, he broke into the homes of women who were alone or with children. Then he sought out married couples, forcing the wives to bind their husbands before he raped the women. Always there were foul-mouthed threats and insults as the intruder taunted his victims for up to three hours.

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shade is sparse and the sun is merciless and the water is nearly non-existent. Diamond XX is home, sweet home to 40 or so families. Twenty-acre lots sell for \$45,000 to \$65,000, unimproved.

The issue is a tug of war over grazing land that began when developers suddenly plopped a subdivision in the middle of decades-old cattle country. Diamond XX is the focus of a collision between people the locals call flatlanders, and a powerful cowman whose roots in the Mother Lode go back to the Gold Rush.

From the first of each year until May, before the grass turns tawny in the scorching sun, Diamond XX is knee-high in verdant rye grass. For four or five months, John William "Bill" Airola's 400 Hereford cows

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Rapist

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The man in many cases took it upon them the women, Bevins said. "Because of the frustration they feel, we had a couple of cases where when they were finally united, the men actually went outside and fired weapons in frustration, long after the rapist was gone."

The search for the East Area Rapist has involved 100 officers and at least 10,000 hours of investigation. The cost has been nearly \$1 million, Bevins said.

The search continues despite the possibility that it is too late to prosecute him on any of the Sacramento rape, sex perversion, assault, robbery and burglary charges. Only if he has spent a substantial amount of time out of the state — which doesn't count toward California's statute of limitations — would the rapist have to answer to some of those charges. The only certain charges he faces are two counts of kidnapping, a crime for which there is no statute of limitations.

Bevins, who headed the investigation from the outset, said the rapist's victims are among the "people who contact him periodically with leads from all parts of the country. He also hears occasionally from police officials who think they might have the East Area Rapist in custody."

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of the next five years, we'll have the computer techniques to deal with the enormous data flow from a system of that size.

In years to come, Drake would like to see the entire concept lifted from Earth to an orbiting radio telescope that would beam its information back to Earth-based computers. The setup would narrow the possibility of false alarms like the kind he experienced in 1955 while a graduate student at Harvard.

Drake recalls picking up "a great big signal in a narrow frequency channel" and believing that he was monitoring a messenger from space. However, the signal that appeared to be coming from the Friedlides star cluster persisted even when the telescope was moved to an observation post 110 miles from a source on Earth.

Two years later, Drake had to rule out another source. "The signal was much stronger than a signal," says

Drake, "and it was a signal which strong extraterrestrial. There are a lot of signals which couldn't be identified."

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The detective said he currently is reviewing cases in Illinois and Michigan. However, asked on what he's read in the reports, he believes rapist there were not committed by the man who once was the most hunted criminal in Sacramento.

"I check-out everybody who is called in as a possible suspect," Bevins said. "Normally, I can eliminate a suspect without ever even contacting him by their blood type, shoe size and physical description."

Bevins occasionally goes to other cities in search of the rapist. In April, he went to Colorado Springs, Colo., although it was a trip he didn't want to make.

That investigation began when Don Richard of Sacramento, who spent four years researching the East Area Rapist for a book he is writing, submitted to the Sheriff's Department a 63-page synopsis of his work.

The bulk of Richard's research focused on one man whom he was "85 percent convinced" was the East Area Rapist. Bevins rejected the report out of hand, and Richard took it to the district attorney.

"I was certain his man wasn't the East Area Rapist," Bevins said. "The guy had been checked out several years back and had been eliminated as a suspect. I only got involved."

Nevertheless, Bevins joined Deputy District Attorney Chuck D'Arcy in Colorado Springs to track down elements of Richard's report.

Richard's man had been eliminated from the police investigation in 1977 mainly because the man's blood type was different from the East Area Rapist's, Bevins said.

But Richard discovered the name on the man's blood sample was misspelled and was convinced officers had the wrong specimen. Bevins and Peterson said it was a simple spelling error.

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Richard, who has a master's degree in police science and taught criminal justice at Sacramento City College, presented a convincing case. His report was a summary of 1,500 pages of documents. He presented Assistant Chief Deputy District Attorney Ken Peterson that his theories were worth investigating.

Richard's report criticized police and sheriff's detectives, Bevins took the criticism personally, according to Richard.

Richard now admits he lashed the wrong man. However, he believes the rapes attributed to the East Area Rapist were committed by more than one man. He also maintains the police investigation has been "wrecked" from the beginning.

"I think we've been stigmatized with the East Area Rapist being one monster out there," Richard said. "My point is that, boy, maybe we had several East Area Rapists."

"No chance," says Bevins. He said: (1) The East Area Rapist's cases are easy to identify; (2) his scenario is like reading a script; (3) if he's any one taking the rapist said, but a combination of how he said them and what he said to his victims.

The East Area Rapist, Bevins said, was more a terrorist than a rapist. Once inside a house, the masked intruder usually would

stalk a couple by shining a flashlight into their faces. Armed with a gun or a knife, he supervised as the woman took her husband's leaving him face down in bed.

The rapist then stalked other on the man's back, wanted he would kill the woman if he heard so much as a creak, and tied the woman to a chair in another room. He toyed with his handcuffed victims for one to three hours, threatening to kill and mutilate them as he whistled an endless stream of obscenities.

He always raped his woman victims, Bevins said, but the rapes were usually brief. The rapist also searched the house, at times taking money but most often opting for interpretive souvenirs.

"After a while, he received so much publicity, the victims knew right away who he was," Bevins said. "The men knew what was going to happen, but they couldn't do anything about it. With a flashlight and a gun in their face it would have been suicide for them to try anything. Some victims had guns under their pillow or under their mattress and couldn't use them."

These people weren't sleeping with guns before the East Area Rapist burst on the scene, Bevins said. During the night of his rampage, the rapist gun sales in Sacramento County soared, as did sales of locks, blood

lights, burglar alarms and even guard dogs.

The rapist at one time or another slipped through almost every physical security imaginable and always eluded police. No one ever saw his face, except for one woman who got a vague glimpse of his profile in the dark.

"It was very crafty," Bevins said. "but he was also very lucky. We should've caught him on rape number 15. A neighbor saw him go into a house, but she didn't call anybody." The first rape attributed to him in Sacramento County was on June 11, 1976. The last on April 14, 1978. He then headed down the valley and into the East Bay area where authorities believe he committed his last rape on June 15, 1979, in Walnut Creek.

The result was the same as other leads.

"I conducted an extremely professional and thorough investigation and it revealed he was innocent," said D'Arcy. "We spent hundreds of hours proving somebody innocent, which people think we don't usually do."

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Astronomer Three Mile

Continued From Page A17

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