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Cattlemen Band Together To Combat Rustling

Fort Worth, Tex. — (UPI) — Mechanization has made cattle rustling a hit-and-run crime on a faster scale, but it hasn't changed the main way a rancher marks his cattle as his own.

Ernest Duke of Fort Worth, director of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, said the cattle rustler's pony has given way to trucks. And the herd-em-to-safety method of the past has yielded to a method harder to trace — rush'em-to-market.

"Transportation has been a real boon to thieves," Duke said. "They can steal cattle after dark and be far away by daylight. They can load the cattle into fast transports and have them sold at market before long."

Texas law enforcement officers still have a lot of trouble with cattle thieves, Duke said. The end of the open range didn't bring an end to rustling.

Remains Same

But cattle branding has remained basically the same over the years.

"Nothing has replaced the hot iron yet," Duke said. "It remains the same thing as in the old days. There are some acids and other chemical brands, but they don't work as well."

To match the rustlers' increasing mobility, enforcement officers and cattlemen have a few new tricks of their own.

One of their major weapons is the cattlemen's association, which was founded to fight rustling and has remained, with additional functions, to aid ranchers.

The association was founded in 1877, when 40 cattlemen gathered under a giant oak tree near Graham, Tex. Before long, the membership had spread throughout the world.

The present name of the organization is a misnomer, Duke pointed out. The members range through 30 states, Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Australia.

Association brand inspectors check cattle auctions for sales, and keep records of the vehicles, bringing the cattle to market. In this way, they can often spot rustled cattle before they are sold.

Duke estimated that \$30 million worth of strayed and stolen cattle have been restored to rightful owners by the association during the past 20 years.

235,000 Brands

Texas has 235,000 cattle brands registered with the association, he said. They are recorded on a county-by-county basis, so that no two men in the same county can have the same brand. Some duplications do occur across county lines.

Despite the speedup in rustling methods, one aspect of speed has hurt the cattle thieves, Duke said.

"There's not so much trouble nowadays with a running brand — that is, changing one brand to another design," he said. "When you run a brand you have to hide the cattle somewhere for a few days to let the brand heal, or it can be detected."

"In the old days, a rustler could run the cattle off somewhere and wait for the new brand to set. But now, he doesn't have time for that," Duke said.

Meat Tenderizers

Come from Papaya

New York — (UPI) — A solution of the enzyme papain, obtained from the papaya plant, is the most commonly used commercially to tenderize meats.

This enzyme — a chemical sparkplug — softens the connective tissue as well as the muscle protein. Because cooking inactivates the enzyme, no harmful effects have been reported from its use in this manner, the journal of the American Medical Association reported.

Stork Busiest During Last Half of Year

New York — (UPI) — The stork's busiest during July, August, September and December.

The Health Insurance Institute reported that birth rates hit a peak during those months. The December birth rate jump is highest among middle income families, lower among high income families and lowest among low income families.

ELECTRONIC BRAIN

New York — (UPI) — Giant electronic "brains" are having trouble akin to marital difficulties. They can't figure out how to talk to each other.

For example, one brand of thinking machine can't understand the language used by another brand of machine. Improved and standardized translating devices may provide the answer, according to Dr. Joseph Barker, consultant to the Office Equipment Manufacturers Institute.