

Hunt Goes On For Man Once Called Insane

1-5-83

By Allyn Stone
and Bill Workman

Santa Cruz

The bearded gunman who casually shot and wounded two law officers Monday and then disappeared into the Santa Cruz Mountains was identified by police yesterday as Leslie Grover Wyman, a 44-year-old outdoorsman with a long history of serious mental illness.

Wyman, whose last known residence was in Redwood City, was described by Santa Cruz Sheriff Al Noren as a "loner" and an experienced "survivalist" who has been known to live off the land in remote areas of Northern California for as long as two years at a time — once for six months using a tree stump as his home.

He had been living near Felton for the past year.

Noren said he was identified by sheriff's investigators through items found Monday in an abandoned backpack after Santa Cruz Deputy Sheriff Michael Gray, 38, and Highway Patrolman Jeff Lee, 24, were gunned down.

Witnesses to the shooting said Gray had stopped to interview a man who was hitchhiking outside George's Log Cabin, a bar in Felton on Highway 9, six miles northwest of Santa Cruz. It is not known why Gray stopped him.

The hitchhiker opened fire before the deputy could get out of his

Back Page Col. 1

A SUSPECT IN SANTA CRUZ SHOOTINGS

From Page 1

car, but not before Gray emptied his pistol and was able to radio for help.

Highway Patrol officer Lee, who was patrolling the area, rushed to the scene and exchanged gunfire before he was felled by the gunman's hollow-nosed 9mm bullets.

The witnesses said the man then walked nonchalantly into the woods with a glazed look in his eyes.

Past psychiatric reports have labeled Wyman "a chronic paranoid schizophrenic" with "delusions and disorganized thoughts."

That was the pre-trial psychological evaluation made of Wyman in 1972 after he was arrested for assaulting three San Francisco Water District employees who happened upon him while he was apparently living, and thus trespassing, on land near Crystal Springs Reservoir in Redwood City.

The psychological report stated that Wyman should be "considered potentially dangerous if he was experiencing thoughts and feelings which caused him to believe that he was in danger of losing his physical or psychic freedom."

That report concluded that Wyman was insane, and the charges that he beat the water district workers with a walking stick were ultimately dropped after Wyman served five weeks in San Mateo County Jail awaiting trial.

Earlier, in June 1970, Wyman was arrested for shoplifting groceries from a Portola Valley market after he walked into the store, announced, "I'm hungry and want something to eat," piled food into a cardboard box and walked out of the store.

At the time, according to probation reports, he had been camping out for two years in a wooded area among the horse ranches and corrals of Whiskey Hill and Sand Hill roads in Portola Valley.

The probation report said Wyman had become a "free spirit" and "dropped out" in 1960, about four years after he was discharged from the U.S. Navy.

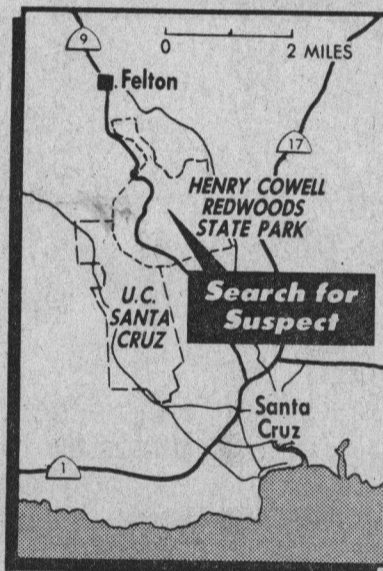
At the time of the 1970 probation report, Wyman admitted he had a drug problem that began during his military service.

Wyman was sentenced to 30 days in the county jail, but instead



AP Wirephoto

Weary Santa Cruz County sheriff's deputies rested after an all-day search in the rugged terrain around Henry Cowell park



was transferred to Agnew State Hospital, where he was admitted for about seven months in 1970.

More recently, on January 7, 1982, Wyman was arrested by San

Mateo police after he was seen standing on a street corner, carrying his backpack, with a loaded revolver sticking out of his waistband.

When he was approached by police officers, there was a struggle and it took three officers to subdue and arrest him.

San Mateo police said Wyman was carrying the loaded 9mm pistol, a .38-caliber pistol and a dagger at the time.

Wyman pleaded no contest to a charge of resisting arrest and was placed on two years probation for that incident. He was still on probation Monday when the shooting occurred.

About 25 officers from a half dozen jurisdictions yesterday pressed their manhunt in the rugged, heavily forested Henry Cowell Redwood State Park, where the gunman disappeared Monday about 1:30 p.m., after wounding the two officers.

The searchers used dogs, helicopters and an infrared detection unit in their search.

The tranquility of this mountain hamlet was broken by the buzzing of the helicopters and the bustle of the heavily armed lawmen on their search mission in the 10-square-mile area consisting of forest, canyons and hills.

"Our men went in there ready for a firefight," said Sheriff's spokesman Sergeant Carl Keubler. "He (Wyman) is a self-styled survivalist who likes the woods, doesn't like to be around people and likes guns."

Keubler added: "I'm an old hunter myself, and I could elude these guys pretty easily in an area like this."

Meanwhile, Gray remained hospitalized in critical condition "with massive internal injuries," with two bullet wounds in his abdomen.

Lee was listed in good condition with wounds to the thigh and wrist. He is expected to be released from the hospital by tomorrow.