

Who was the Hermit?

His body found Saturday near Three Forks

March 26 1984

THREE FORKS (AP) — Gallatin County officials are searching for the real identity of a man known locally as “Tony the Hermit.”

The man was found dead Saturday in an old log cabin near the Jefferson River west of here County coroner Dons Fisher said Tony died of natural causes.

The man came to the Three Forks area and moved into a vacant one-room cabin on the Don Scoffield ranch about 20 years ago.

Scoffield said he decided to let Tony stay.

Jack Anderson of Three Forks discovered Tony s body when he went for help after getting his vehicle stuck while fishing.

Scoffield said Tony may have died last fall.

“He always came about the first or middle of October and the first thing he did was burn the grass around the cabin,” Scoffield said. “Then he d fix the fence and the roof if it needed it. clean up around the place and get his wood.”

None of those chores was done last fall, and Scoffield said he thought Tony hadn’t come back.

“I never bothered him. That was his borne and he wanted to be alone,” Scoffield said.

“He was friendly and used to walk over to tell us if a calf was sick or something else was wrong But even though we invited him to eat or set a spell, he would never come into our home,” he said.

Scoffield described Tony as about six feet tall and 180 pounds with black curly hair He said Tony was about 65 years old.

When he first came I asked him if he was Mexican and he told me he was a Spaniard He never told me his last name but I m sure he d been raised in another country because he spoke real broken English.” Scof-field said.

Tony always left Three Forks in the spring but no one knows lor sure where he went Scoffield said he sometimes mentioned Spokane and Arizona.

Officials hope to locate any of his living relatives.

I hope someone will be able to tell us who Tony was.” Scoffield said. “I’d really like him to be buried right and with a name.”

Ms. Fisher said an expert from the state crime lab in Missoula will take Tony’s fingerprints.

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