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# Bill Keeler, Portrait of a San Francisco Office Client

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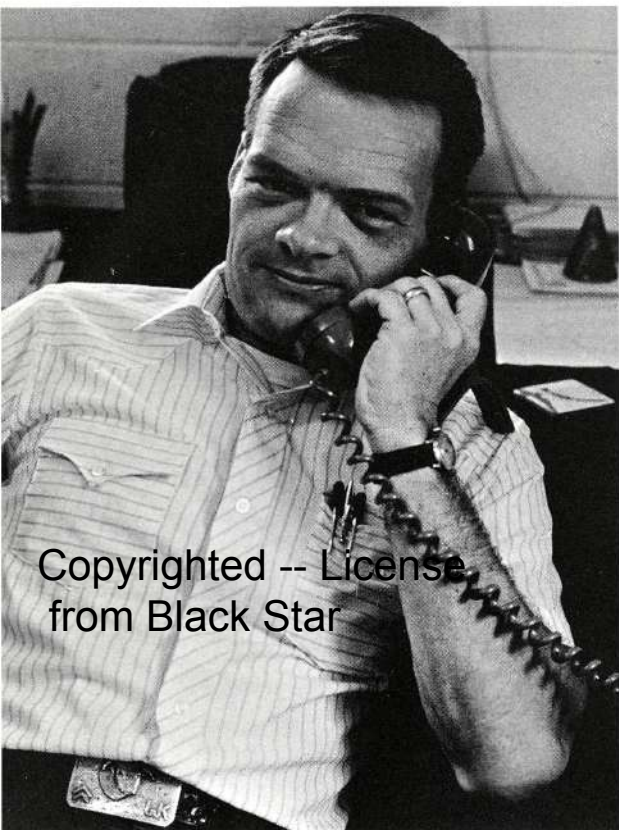
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# BILL KEELER

who uses science and modern business methods "to do the old things the right way" at his Dye Creek Cattle Company



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William Keeler, new-style scientific rancher and multi-purpose land developer, was trained in chemistry at Amherst College and in geology at Stanford University. In 1963 he switched careers, bought more than 60,000 acres near Red Bluff in northern California and organized Dye Creek Cattle Company. WK brand, one of several that mark Bill's 4,000-head breeding herd and a like number of feeder cattle, adorns his belt buckle.

No one illustrates more clearly than William Keeler, President of Dye Creek Cattle Company, the dynamism of the country and people served by the San Francisco Office of Haskins & Sells. Bill, just touching 40, is a hard man to keep up with, and impossible to categorize quickly.

Owner of the 37,000-acre Dye Creek Ranch near Red Bluff, California, and of the Tuscan Ranch nearby (another 25,000 acres), Bill has turned his land to multiple use as a recreational hunting preserve and as winter range for his 4,000 head of cattle. As a cattle raiser he keeps up with the latest in modern veterinary medicine, reads technical journals with the thoroughness of a university professor, and employs advanced techniques of cross-breeding and testing so as to promote maximum productivity of his herd. He markets more than 3,500 calves a year, plus about 800 mature animals. For summer range the cattle are transported to more productive grazing land, of which Bill's company owns 3,000 acres and rents another 150,000 acres. He has developed a highly efficient, vertically integrated cattle operation from breeding herd through feed lots and slaughterhouse to retail stores.

As a recreational area developer, Bill recognizes the appeal that his large, undeveloped acreage holds for outdoor sportsmen, with its rolling hills, canyons, streams, ponds and woodlands sloping upward from the Sacramento River Valley to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. His property abounded with wildfowl, deer and wild pigs when he bought it in 1963, and since then he has managed and developed the wildlife by preserving natural cover and breeding places, stocking streams and building ponds for ducks and geese. A novelty at Dye Creek is Bill's program of cross-breeding local pigs with European wild boar. As a result, Bill's paying guest-hunters sometimes

return home with tales of a fierce charge and a narrow escape from a slashing by a 250-pound wild boar. And they show a pair of tusks to prove the story.

City-dwelling sportsmen can fly into Red Bluff airport, where they are met by Wayne Long, Bill Keeler's recreational manager, and airlifted in one of Bill's helicopters to a hunting and fishing lodge a dozen or more miles back in the hill country. Flying in is more economical of time, labor and money than keeping a road open, and the volcanic stones scattered about make much of the Dye Creek land treacherous for jeeps. So Bill's upland property is dotted with landing strips for light planes and helicopter pads. As an outdoorsman he believes there's no better way to get back to nature. And as a businessman, he is making formerly unproductive land pay.

Like many professional and business men in the West who must get around without wasting time, Bill is his own airplane pilot. He has turned his interest in flying into a business enterprise, organized under the name Keeairco, Inc., with a dozen planes and helicopters based at Red Bluff. In addition to servicing sportsmen who visit the hunting preserve, Bill uses the aircraft to spray orchards, to check on herds out on the range, to rescue strayed calves and to spot marauders. Paul Anderson of the H&S San Francisco Office, who has worked on the Dye Creek Cattle Company engagement for several years, has gone up in a helicopter to take inventory of cattle on the hoof. Keeairco rents out planes, offers flight services, and uses its helicopters to provide neighboring ranches with spraying and other agricultural aerial applications.

Rancher, outdoorsman, entrepreneur, business manager, applied scientist—Bill Keeler is all of these. Although he is constantly on the go and works





very hard, he is also a friendly, personable man who takes time to chat. He is informal and invites first-name relationships. In Red Bluff he has found a way of life that combines the freedom of the outdoors with the hard practicalities of running a competitive business. While maintaining contact with everything that is new in equipment, scientific methods, business organization, and whatever else will make for efficiency, this client of our San Francisco Office has escaped the tensions of urban living. Of his cattle operation Bill Keeler says:

"We are doing the old things the right way"—by which he means that Dye Creek Cattle employs every technique of modern science and management available to meet man's ever-expanding need for food. □

At the Antelope Fruit Company, a Keeler agricultural enterprise, Bill checks the ripening peach crop with Paul Anderson (l.), H&S senior accountant, and Lee Nicklas, secretary-treasurer and controller of all Keeler activities. Helicopter, one of a dozen aircraft in the Bill Keeler fleet, hovers low over the orchard to dust the trees with insecticide.

Fastest way for Bill to get anywhere from Red Bluff is to fly his own plane. The winging H&S client takes his wife Barbara along on a business trip in his twin-engine Beechcraft Travelaire.