

<b>DOT Auto Safety Hotline</b> <b>Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire</b> To Report Vehicle Safety Defects 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236) INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline		FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 252	
U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration		Date Received 08-AUG-2004	Repository <input type="checkbox"/> (Reference No.) 10087542
OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)		Daytime Telephone Number	E-mail Address
Name: [Redacted]		Evening Telephone Number	[Redacted]
Address: [Redacted]		City: LAKE STEVENS State: WA Zip Code: [Redacted]	
Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.			
Signature of Owner: [Redacted]		Date: 8/11/04	
VEHICLE INFORMATION			
17 digit Vehicle Identification Number located at bottom of dashboard on driver's side 1J4FJ6854TL [Redacted]		Make: JEEP	Model: CHEROKEE
Date Purchased: 12/1997		Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: [Redacted]	Model Year: 1998
Original Owner: 2nd		Dealer's City: Seattle	Engine: No. Cylinders: 8 Fuel Type: Gas
Transmission Type: AUTOMATIC		Powertrain: 4 WHEEL DRIVE	Vehicle Component Code: 013000 STEERING; GEAR BOX (OTHER THAN RACK AND PINION)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Antilock Brakes		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cruise Control	Multiple Failure: 1
FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION			
Incident Date(s): 08-AUG-2004	Failure Mileage: 214000	Failure Speed: 55	Frame rail cracking & Broken Steering Gear Attaching Bolts
ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE			
Tire Make:	Tire Model (Name or Number):	Tire Size (Example P215/B5R15):	
DOT No. (Example: DOTM5A3J286)	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Repair	Failure Location:	
Tire Component Code:		Tire Failure Type:	
ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE			
Make:	Date Manufactured:	Model No./Name:	
Seat Type:		Installation System:	
Child Seat Component Code:		Failed Part:	
APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION (Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies).)			
Crash: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Fire: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Number of Persons Injured: 0	Number of Deaths: 0
		Reported to Police: N	
Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies). Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).			
WHILE DRIVING STEERING WHEEL VIBRATED ON ITS OWN. CONSUMER WAS ABLE TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE VEHICLE. AND DROVE IT TO THE DEALER FOR INSPECTION. MECHANIC DETERMINED THAT THE STEERING BOX GEAR ON DRIVER'S SIDE CRACKED AND NEEDED TO BE REPLACED. *AK.			
also Cracking TH Drivers side Frame rail because of a fillet weld that joins the inner steering gear attachment was omitted during manufacturing happened 3 times in 1.5 years			
*Attaching Bolts			
-Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.		ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY	
The Privacy Act of 1974, Public Law 93-579. This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.			

██████████  
Lake Stevens, WA ██████████

Home: ██████████

Email: ██████████

(Address changed in the last month)

I have a 1996 Jeep Cherokee Sport 4WD, and from the receipts and documents enclosed, in 2002 I have my steering gear bolts break and lost my steering while turning. My local mechanic fixed the bolts. In early 2003, the same bolts broke again and, and the same mechanic discovered that I have several cracks in my front drivers side frame rail and that was causing my steering problem.

My insurance agent investigated it and discovered that there is a recall on certain jeep Cherokees (recall sheet enclosed) that has this problem because of a weld that was not completed in the frame rail where the steering gear box is bolted.

I took this to Town and Country Jeep dealer in Seattle where I bought the car and per the VIN # on my car, my Jeep is not involved in the recall, even though I have the exact same problem as the Jeeps on the recall list. The local Chrysler rep for Washington said the dealership or Chrysler would not pay for the recall repairs.

I paid for the repairing of my frame rail, which was welded with a brace and paid for rental car fees myself, and wrote to the customer dissatisfaction department of Chrysler with all my receipts after my car was repaired. In about 3 weeks I got a check from Chrysler for all my costs and even a check for my rental car fees for a follow up repair.

In July of 2004, my local mechanic was doing an engine repair, discovered my frame rail was cracked again, about 2" from where Town and Country jeep body shop had repaired the cracking the first time. I went back to the dealership and they would not pay to fix or repair the problem as they said they would have to put in a whole new frame rail

Estimate by them is enclosed).

I called Chrysler and they said they would not pay to have the car fixed again.

The Body shop manager at Town and country dealership told me he gets 3 to 4 of these frame rail cracking in Jeep Cherokees a month to repair.

This is a serious problem that could cause a loss of steering and a fatal accident. I think that all jeep Cherokees should be included in the recall and Chrysler should pay for these repairs.

Thank you,



[REDACTED]  
Seattle, Washington [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

**New Address:**

[REDACTED]  
Lake Stevens, WA [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Vehicle owned: 1996 Jeep Cherokee Sport 4 dr - 4.0liter eng.

Vehicle VIN# 1J4FJ68SXTL [REDACTED]

Customer Dissatisfaction Department

C/o operations manager

P.O. Box 1040

St. Charles, MO

63302-1040

[REDACTED]  
Dear Sirs,

Since this problem in March 2003, I have found new cracks in the frame 2" from the repair job that town and country jeep dealer did last year. The bid cost to repair the car is enclosed and the cost of renting a car for when the dealership why they inspected it and waited for the local Chrysler rep to take a look at it is also enclosed. I called you on the phone and you told me you would not pay for the costs of repairing this car or my other expenses.

If I do not get this problem that was not my fault, paid for, I will be contacting the state and US attorney general, the NSTB, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administrators offices to start a recall on all the jeep Cherokees involved with this problem. I also will be posting my feedback on this car and its problems on the internet.

This car fault and repair is not any of my doing and if you do not take the necessary steps to correct it, I will take the right ones to get my car fixed or corrected.

This will be the last Chrysler product I ever buy if this is not resolved.

ESTIMATE BY TOWN AND COUNTRY TO REPAIR FRAME RAIL	\$2333.87
CAR RENTAL EXPENSES	\$352.64

[REDACTED]

I bought my 1996 Jeep Cherokee Sport in December of 1997 from Town and Country Jeep dealer in Seattle, Washington. Last September of 2002, my Steering gear box bolts broke and I had to have the car towed and repaired by Salmon's service center in Seattle for the broken steering. On March 6<sup>th</sup> of this year the same exact steering gear box bolts broke and had it towed to the same repair shop in Seattle and they found that not only the same bolts broke on the steering gear box, but there were several cracks in the drivers side frame rail and I had it towed to Town and Country Jeep dealer body shop where they found that there was a recall on this problem on this year of Jeep Cherokee sports, and my problems on my car were exactly as the recall form(which is included) states.

Town and Country said that my VIN# car was not included in the recall and that they would not pay for the repairs and expenses of my car, of which I have included the receipts and the expenses are highlighted:

First steering repair from Salmons service center 9/2002 -	\$ 310.62
Rental car expense for that day 9/2002:	\$ 46.82
Town and country body shop repairs 3/2003	\$1493.50
Car rental expenses for 3/2002	\$1045.01
<b>Total expenses:</b>	<b>\$2895.95</b>

This does not include towing expenses, which should be covered by my insurance company.

You can contact my insurance agent on this case, Ryan Aslakson at 425-806-4191 or email at [Ryan.Aslakson@NorthPacificInsurance.com](mailto:Ryan.Aslakson@NorthPacificInsurance.com)

Or my insurance investigator, Dave Rice-Reynolds at 253-826-5066 or email at [david.rice-reynolds@northpacificinsurance.com](mailto:david.rice-reynolds@northpacificinsurance.com). They worked on my case in this investigation and can answer questions on the problem.

I am submitting for a claim for my expenses for the costs involved in this problem with my car, which is exactly like the recall for the other jeeps in my year. This problem has been very serious for me as both times my steering broke I was going very slow to turn and I was not injured. If my steering had broken at a higher speed, it could have been a much more serious situation to anyone involved or even a fatality.

If you have any other questions or concerns, call or email me at the addresses above.

Your company's reaction on this will influence my car purchasing decisions in the future and my recommendations of your companies products to other people.

Thank you,





<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>  
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>

## Office of Defects Investigation

### Recalls - Search Results

Recall Date : April 21, 1997

TYPE : VEHICLE

BUILD DATES : July 1, 1992 - October 15, 1996

MAKE : JEEP

MODEL : CHEROKEE

Make : JEEP

Model : CHEROKEE

Year : 1996

NHTSA CAMPAIGN ID Number : 97V069000

Recall Date : APR 21, 1997

Component : STEERING:GEAR BOX (OTHER THAN RACK AND PINION)

Potential Number Of Units Affected : 2500

**Summary:**

DURING ASSEMBLY OF THE FRAME, A FILLET WELD THAT JOINS THE INNER STEERING GEAR ATTACHMENT REINFORCEMENT TO THE FRAME RAIL, WAS OMITTED.

**Consequence:**

DUE TO HIGH STEERING LOAD EVENTS, VEHICLES CAN EXHIBIT BROKEN STEERING GEAR ATTACHING BOLTS OR FRAME RAIL CRACKING AT THE STEERING GEAR ATTACHING POINT INCREASING THE RISK OF A VEHICLE CRASH.

**Remedy:**

DEALERS WILL INSPECT THE VEHICLES FOR CRACKS IN THE FRAME RAIL. VEHICLES THAT SHOW CRACKS WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH REINFORCEMENT PLATES. VEHICLES THAT ARE FOUND TO BE FREE OF CRACKS WILL HAVE A SLOT CUT IN THE CROSS MEMBER AND THE FILLET WELD WILL BE ADDED.

**Notes:**

OWNER NOTIFICATION: OWNER NOTIFICATION IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN DURING MAY 1997.

NOTE: OWNERS WHO TAKE THEIR VEHICLES TO AN AUTHORIZED DEALER ON AN AGREED UPON SERVICE DATE AND DO NOT RECEIVE THE FREE REMEDY WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME SHOULD CONTACT CHRYSLER AT 1-800-853-1403. ALSO CONTACT THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE AT 1-800-424-9393.



800-992-1997

#5

12536433

# DAIMLERCHRYSLER

DaimlerChrysler  
Motors Company LLC

April 17, 2003

[REDACTED]  
Seattle, WA [REDACTED]

Reference No.: 11054263

V.I.N.: 1J4FJ68SXTL [REDACTED]

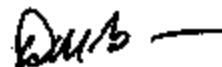
Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

This will acknowledge your inquiry regarding the expenses that you incurred involving your 1996 Jeep Cherokee Sport.

Enclosed you will find DaimlerChrysler check number 6332055, in the amount of \$2,895.95.

The amount of this check will represent a *goodwill* reimbursement for the expenses that you incurred.

Sincerely,



D. M. Bennis  
Special Investigations  
(248) 944-7036

DMB/ljs  
Enclosure

[REDACTED]

# DAIMLERCHRYSLER


DaimlerChrysler  
Motors Company LLC

May 7, 2003

  
Seattle, WA 

Reference No.: 11227033

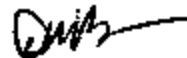
V.I.N.: 1J4FJ68SXTI 

Dear Mr. 

Enclosed you will find DaimlerChrysler check number 6349303, in the amount of \$104.23.

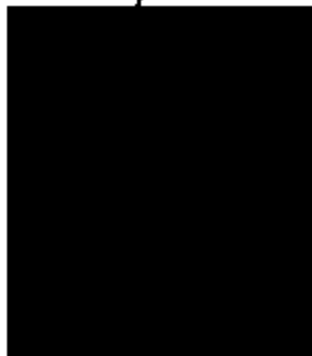
The amount of this check will represent a *goodwill* reimbursement for the rental expenses that you incurred.

Sincerely,



D. M. Bennis  
Special Investigations  
(248) 944-7036

DMB/ls  
Enclosure



800 -  
~~992~~ -1997  
992

[REDACTED]  
Seattle, Washington [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Vehicle owned: 1996 Jeep Cherokee Sport 4 dr - 4.0liter eng.

Vehicle VIN# 1J4FJ68SXTL [REDACTED]

Customer Dissatisfaction Department

C/o operations manager

P.O. Box 1040

St. Charles, MO

63302-1040

File # 110542263

Dear Dave,

In a follow up problem since my first letter, on April 1, 2003, my car had more problems in the frame rail and I took it back to Town and Country Jeep dealership body shop and they found more cracking in the frame rail that had started since the last repair they did. It was not safe to drive and they had to make more repairs in the next few days and I had to rent one of their cars from 4/1 to 4/3 at an expense of \$104.23. Town and Country did not charge me for the repairs on the second visit.

Car rental for 2<sup>nd</sup> repair to frame rail

\$ 104.23

Thank you,

[REDACTED]



19909 120th Avenue NE, Suite 201  
Bothell, WA 98011-6233

Tel: 425 806 9100  
Toll Free: 800 284 6742

March 12, 2003

[REDACTED]  
Seattle, WA [REDACTED]

Our Insured : [REDACTED]  
Claim No. : [REDACTED]  
Date of Loss : 01/04/02

Dear [REDACTED]

This letter is in follow up to the above loss and the additional damage that you have recently discovered to your vehicles left frame rail.

Based on our investigation, it is found that the damaged sustained to your 1996 Jeep Cherokee was not related to this loss. Enclosed you will find a copy of the NHTSA report supporting that this damage is related to a defect in the manufacturing of your vehicle and not a result of this accident. As such, we are unable to provide any additional coverage for your damages.

Please contact the undersigned if you need any additional information from us.

Sincerely,  
North Pacific Insurance Company

  
Ryan Aslakson  
Case Manager  
(800) 284-6742 x4191

**Claim Notes for [REDACTED]**  
Printed 3/13/03 by Ryan Aslakson

Entered 3/12/03 12:37:38 PM by David Rice-Reynolds

Update -

3/10 - reinspected additional damage being claimed by insured on this 96 Jeep Cherokee at PAR shop Haury's. Reviewed files & estimates from the 2002 repair (this claim) and another prior repair (major one) from 2001. Neither claim seemed to support damage observed to Lt. frame rail (severe cracking at steering box mounting point). Evidently, Safeco adjuster has already inspected this as well (as they are adverse carrier in this loss)

- reviewed NHTSA website & found recall info describing this exact type of damage, which is the result of a flaw in manufacture of this year/make/model vehicle - per notice, the problem is as follows:

"During assembly of the frame, a fillet weld that joins the inner steering gear attachment reinforcement to the frame rail, was omitted."

- per the notice, the consequence is:

"Due to high steering load events, vehicles can exhibit broken steering gear attaching bolts or frame rail cracking at the steering gear attaching point increasing the risk of a vehicle crash."

\*\* this almost exactly describes the problems the insured has been having over the last year (steering gear mounting bolts shearing off) and the subsequent cracking now visible on the Lt. frame rail.

- I emailed pics of the damage & the recall notice to both Ryan & the shop to handle accordingly

cc: Ryan



19909 120th Avenue NE, Suite 201  
Bothell, WA 98011-8235

Tel: 425 806 9100  
Toll Free: 800 284 6742

March 12, 2003

[REDACTED]  
Seattle, WA [REDACTED]

Our Insured : [REDACTED]  
Claim No. : [REDACTED]  
Date of Loss : 01/04/02

Dear [REDACTED]

This letter is in follow up to the above loss and the additional damage that you have recently discovered to your vehicles left frame rail.

Based on our investigation, it is found that the damaged sustained to your 1996 Jeep Cherokee was not related to this loss. Inclosed you will find a copy of the NHTSA report supporting that this damage is related to a defect in the manufacturing of your vehicle and not a result of this accident. As such, we are unable to provide any additional coverage for your damages.

Please contact the undersigned if you need any additional information from us.

Sincerely,  
North Pacific Insurance Company

  
Ryan Aalaxson  
Case Manager  
(800) 284-6742 x4191



**SALMON'S SERVICE CENTERS, INC.**

Greenwood  
355 N.W. 85th  
789-1881

U-District  
2424 N.E. 85th  
528-9400

Northgate  
1424 N.E. 125th  
368-0585

**THE AUTOMOTIVE EXPERTS**

REPAIR ORDER

034801

3	7/16x14x4 1/2	GAROS BOLTS	17	75
1	7/16x14	WHL COLL	17	75
8/10/02				
LAF				
P.I.F				
CREDIT/VISA				
TOTAL PARTS			35	50

NAME: [REDACTED]  
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]  
CITY: Seattle

YEAR 06	MAKE JEEP	DATE 9/10/02
MODEL SABROKER	POWER STEERING 3.3M	
LICENSE	MOTOR NUMBER 450C	
PURCHASE ORDER	ODOMETER 155,986	

Steering Broken  
1) REPAIR UNMOUNTED STEERING  
BOX - INCLUDES BALL &  
EXTRACT BROKEN MOUNTING  
BOLTS (3) - REPAIR THREADS,  
MOUNT STEERING BOX &  
TEST DRIVE - GOOD (210) 22500

I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE REPAIR WORK TO BE DONE ALONG WITH NECESSARY MATERIALS. YOU AND YOUR EMPLOYEES MAY OPERATE ABOVE VEHICLE FOR PURPOSES OF TESTING, INSPECTION OR DELIVERY AT MY RISK. AN EXPRESS MECHANIC'S LIEN IS ACKNOWLEDGED ON ABOVE VEHICLE TO SECURE THE AMOUNT OF REPAIRS THEREON. YOU WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO VEHICLE OR ARTICLES LEFT IN VEHICLE IN CASE OF FIRE, THEFT, ACCIDENT OR ANY OTHER CAUSE BEYOND YOUR CONTROL.

*[Signature]*  
STORAGE CHARGE  
Will be applied 2 days  
after completion of repairs.

QTS OIL			
LSG GREASE			
LSG GEAR LUBE			
TRANS FLUID			
BRAKE FLUID			
TOTAL			

TOTAL

Date: 7/29/2004 03:12 PM  
 Estimate ID: 11402  
 Estimate Version: 0  
 Preliminary  
 Profile ID: Standard

# TOWN & COUNTRY COLLISION CENTER

MAILING ADDRESS / PO BOX 77430 Seattle, WA 98177  
 (206) 365-3530  
 Fax: (206) 368-9521  
 Tax ID: 91-1197824

Damage Assessed By: GARY AUSTIN

Deductible: UNKNOWN

Owner: [REDACTED]  
 Address: [REDACTED]  
 Telephone: Work Phone: [REDACTED] Home Phone: [REDACTED]

Mitchell Service: 919425

Description: 1996 Jeep Cherokee Sport  
 Body Style: 4D Ut 101" WB Drive Train: 4.0L Inj 6 Cyl 4WD  
 VIN: 1J4FJ88SXTL [REDACTED]  
 OEMALT: A Search Code: B331873  
 Options: ALUM/ALLOY WHEELS, AIR CONDITIONING, POWER WINDOWS, POWER DOOR LOCKS  
 CRUISE CONTROL, AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION, AM-FM STEREO/CDPLAYER(SINGLE)

Line Item	Entry Number	Labor Type	Operation	Line Item Description	Part Type/ Part Number	Dollar Amount	Labor Units
1	888059	MCH	REMOVE/INSTALL	ENGINE ASSY -#			8.3
2	817310	BDY	REMOVE/INSTALL	LWR FRONT BODY TIE BAR -S	Existing		2.5* #
3	817392	BDY	REMOVE/REPLACE	L FRONT BODY SIDE RAIL -S	4798085AB	875.00	8.8 #
4	AUTO	REF	REFINISH	L SIDE RAIL			1.0
5	833003	REF	ADD'L OPR	TINT COLOR			0.5*
6	833004	BDY	ADD'L OPR	UNDERCOATING		8.00*	0.6*
7	833005	BDY	ADD'L OPR	RESTORE CORROSION PROTECTION		5.00*	0.3*
8	833016	REF	ADD'L OPR	MASK FOR OVERSPRAY		5.00*	0.3*
9	AUTO		ADD'L COST	PART/MATERIALS		34.50*	
10	AUTO		ADD'L COST	SHOP MATERIALS		25.30*	
11	AUTO		ADD'L COST	HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL		8.00*	

\* - Judgement Item  
 # - Labor Note Applies

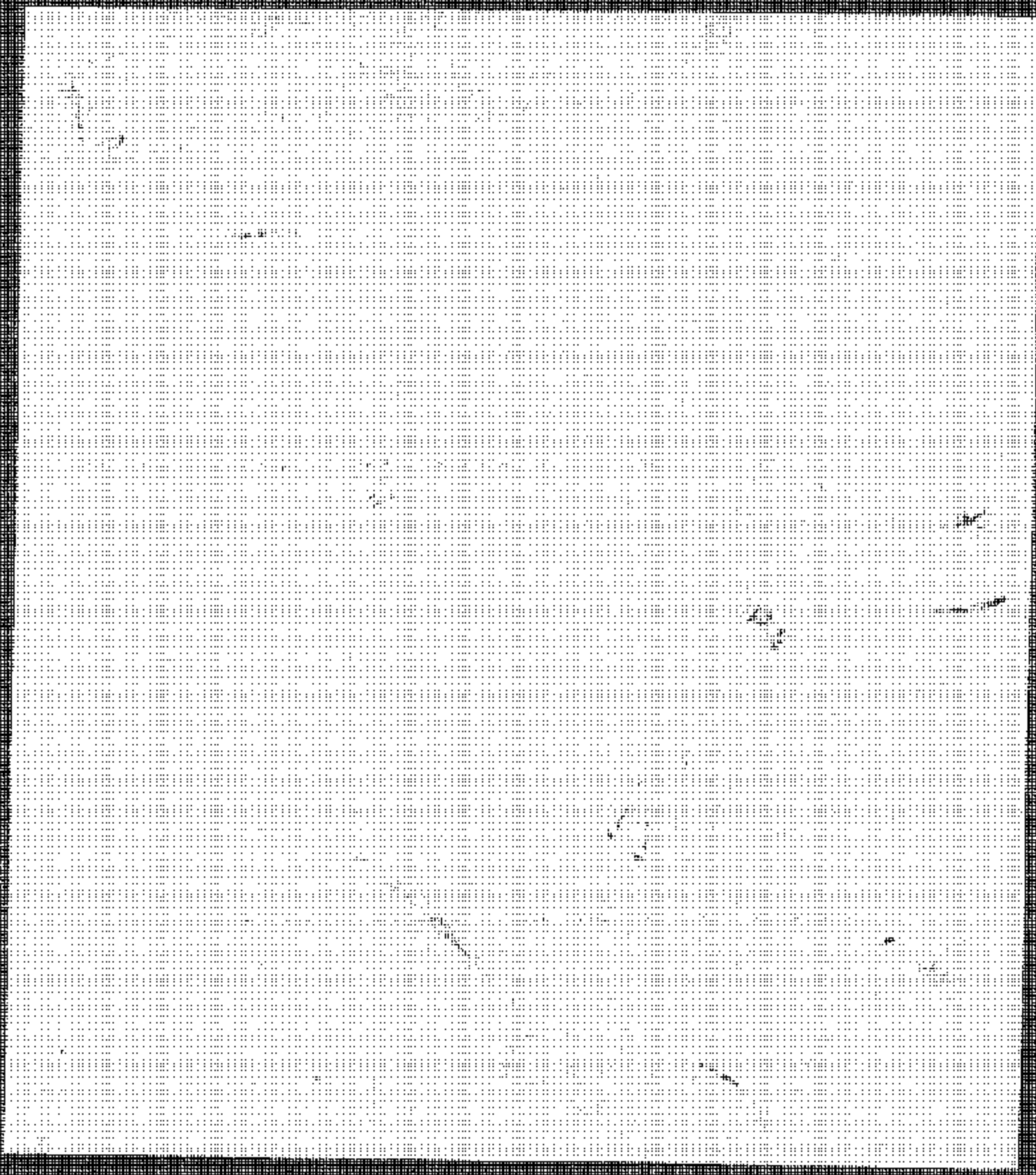
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Mitchell Data Version: JUL\_04\_A  
 UltraMate Version: 5.0.024

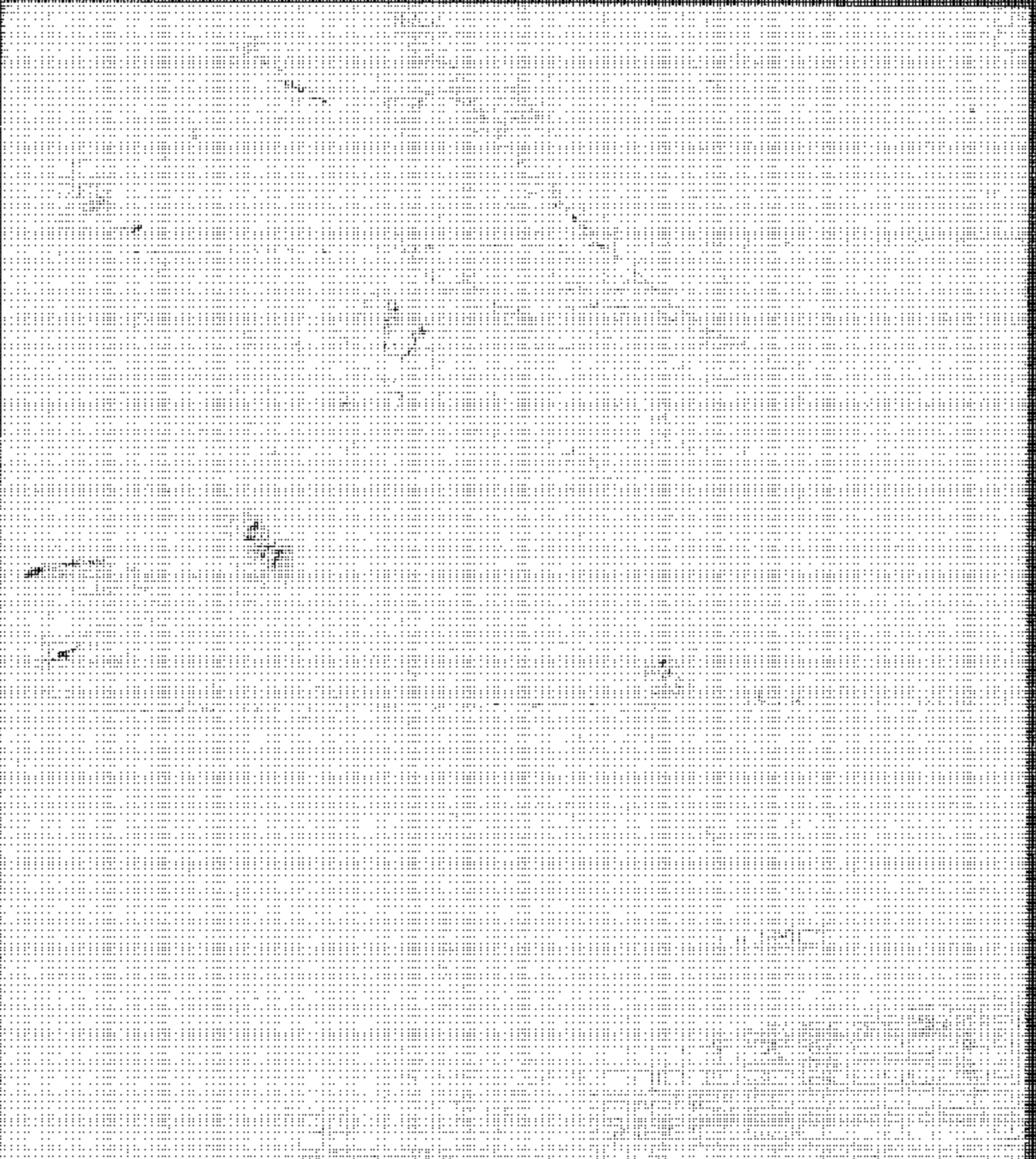
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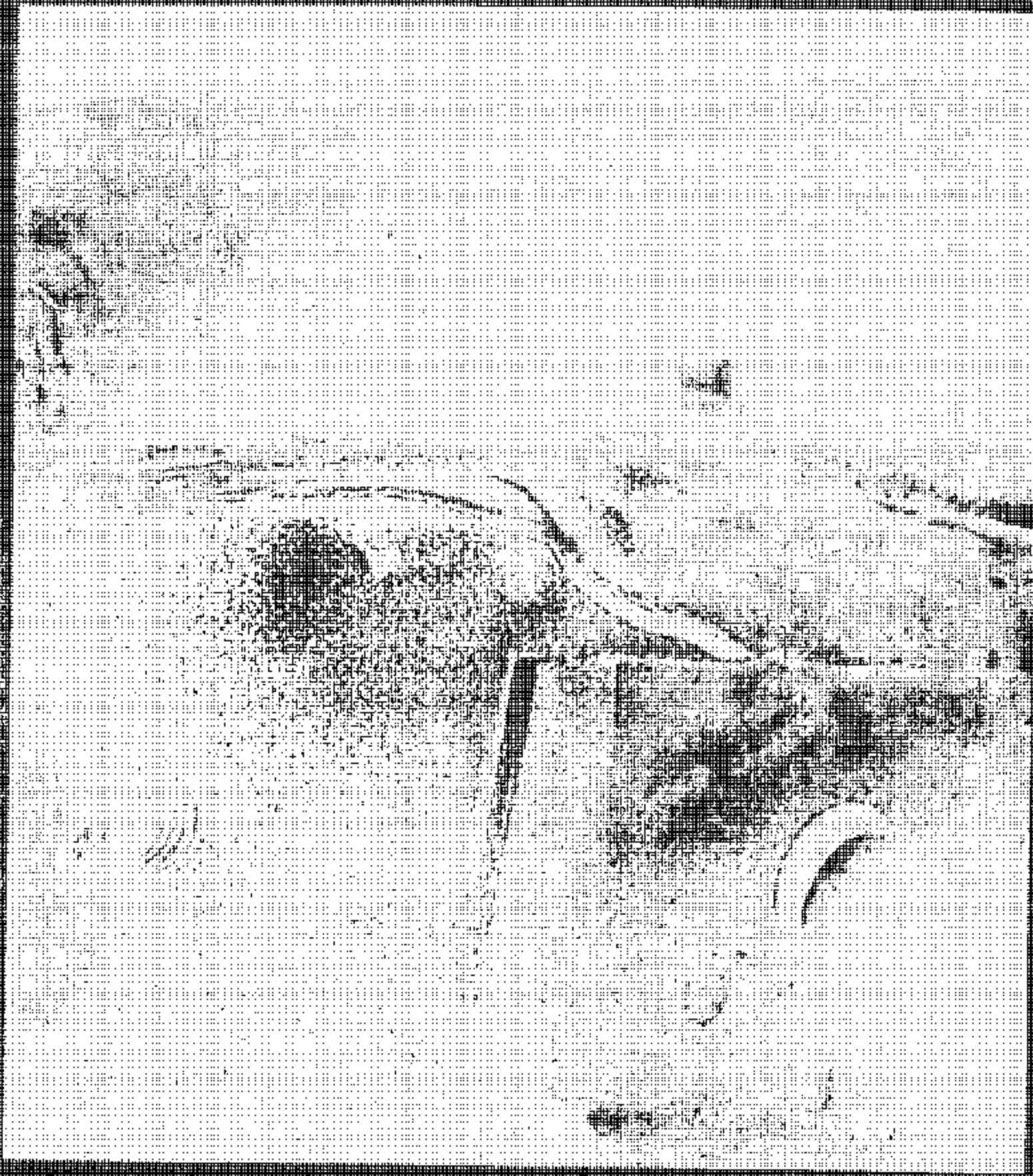












**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS  
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED  
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED  
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY  
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF  
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**