

U.S. Department
of TransportationNational Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ)

NATIONWIDE 1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 117

Date Received

07-FEB-2000

 Od_or _____
 Rt_dt _____
 Od_rt _____
 Up_ltr _____

Reference No.

856393

 Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☐ YES ☐ NO
 In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name and address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner _____ Date ____/____/____

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN) (located at front of windshield on drivers side)	Vehicle Make	Vehicle Model	Vehicle Year	Current Odometer Reading
4FGL2222YC028118	FEATHERLITE	1630	2000	

Purchase Date	Dealer's Name _____	Engine Size (CID/CC/L) _____	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injection
☒ New ☐ Used	City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____	No Cylinders _____	

Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☐ Automatic	Antilock Brakes ☐ Yes ☒ No	Restraint System ☐ 3-Point Belt ☐ Motorbell ☐ Driverside Airbag ☐ 2-Point Belt ☐ Passengerside Airbag	Cruise Control ☐ Yes ☒ No	Drive Train ☐ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel	Vehicle Type ☐ Car ☐ Sport Ult ☐ Van ☐ Truck ☐ Minivan ☐ Motorcycle ☐ Other _____	Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☒ Other _____
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FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 13450000	Part Name(s) STRUCTURE:DOOR ASSEMBLY:LATCHES AND LOCKS	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement
No of Failures	Date(s) of Failure(s) 01-DEC-1999 Mileage at Failure(s) _____ Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) _____	Failed Part(s) Available? ☐ Yes ☐ No	NHTSA Previously Contacted? ☐ Yes ☐ No

APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and injury(ies) on the back of this form)

Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No	Number of Persons Injured	Number of Fatalities	Estimated Property Damage	Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

WHILE MAKING LEFT TURN AT APPROXIMATELY 6:55PM, WITH STAIRS IN REAR OF VEHICLE. REAR DOORS CAME OPEN. THIS CAUSED THE STAIRS TO FALL OUT & WERE HIT BY 5 VEHICLES. PRIVATE INVESTIGATION FIRM FOUND DOORS DEFECTIVE DUE TO LACK OF PINS IN DOOR LOCKS. THE MANUFACTURER INDICATED PINS DID NOT COME WITH TRAILER DOORS. *AK

CONTINUED ON BACK (SEE)

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. 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.



Allstate Insurance Company
1828 E. SE Loop 323, Suite 200
Tyler, TX 75701

Monice Miller
Sr. Claim Representative
903-535-4042

February 11, 2000



RE: Claim Number 4852643636
Date of Loss: December 1, 1999

Dear [REDACTED]

Enclosed is a copy of our letter submitted to all involved claimants for the above referenced claim. If you receive any information from the manufacturer regarding the claim, please notify me so that I may be of assistance.

Regards,

Monice Miller
Sr. Claim Representative



Allstate Insurance Company
1828 E. SE Loop 323, Suite 200
Tyler, TX 75701

Monice Miller
Sr. Claim Representative
903-535-4042

February 11, 2000

Re: Claim Number 4852643636
Date of Loss: December 1, 1999

Dear Claimant:

We have now completed our investigation of the above referenced accident. The investigation has revealed that the doors on the cattle trailer did not swing open due to any negligence on the part of our insured, [REDACTED]. Our investigation has shown that due to the instability of the latch door assembly from the manufacturer, there was an inadvertent unlatching which resulted in the opening of the trailer doors allowing the cows being transported to exit the trailer.

We are respectfully denying all claims for property damage and bodily injury arising out of the subsequent collisions which occurred following the unexpected release of the cows. If you wish to pursue your claim against the manufacturer of the trailer, you may contact as follows:

Featherlite Trailer Manufacturer
P. O. Box 320
Cresco, Iowa 52136
1-800-800-1230

Regards,

Monice Miller
Sr. Claim Representative

cc: Trish Graham - Allstate Agent
[REDACTED] Named Insured

Page 1 of 8

CRASH PEACE OFFICER'S ACCIDENT REPORT 51-3 (REV. 1/1/99)

MAIL TO: ACCIDENT SERVICES, TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, PO BOX 40827, AUSTIN TX 78775-0827

PLACE WHERE
ACCIDENT OCCURRED

Henderson

CITY OR TOWN

Berryville

IF ACCIDENT WAS OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS,
INDICATE DISTANCE FROM NEAREST TOWN

MILES

NORTH S E W OF

DIRECTION

ROAD ON WHICH
ACCIDENT OCCURRED

SH 155

INTERSECTING STREET
OR RAILROAD NUMBER

NAME NUMBER

STREET OR ROAD NAME

CROSS STREET OR RAILROAD

NOT AT INTERSECTION

0.4

FT. S E W

Milepost 346

346

CONSTR. ☐ YES ☐ NO SPEED
ZONE ☐ NO LIMIT 65
CONSTR. ☐ YES ☐ NO SPEED
ZONE ☐ NO LIMITDO NOT WRITE
IN THIS SPACE

OPS NO.

LIC.

CODE

SEVERITY

FAC. NO.

DR. NO.

DATE OF
ACCIDENT December 1

IN 99

DAY OF

Wednesday

HOUR 6:55

☐ A.M. IF EXACTLY MIDNIGHT
☐ P.M. ON INCIDENT, OR DATEUNIT
NO. 1 - MOTOR VEHICLE

VEH IDENT NO

2FTHF25F95CA71140

IF BODY STYLE - VAN OR BUS,
INDICATE SEATING CAPACITYYEAR
MODEL 1995COLOR
4 MAKE Green FordMODEL
NAME F250BODY
STYLE PickupLICENSE
PLATE 99 Texas RX6-783DRIVER'S
NAMEDRIVER'S
LICENSE

Texas 15513643 C

DOB

03-07-76

RACE

W

SEX

F

OCCUPATION

Vet. Assistant

SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS)
1-BREATH 2-BLOOD 3-OTHER 4-NONE 5-REFUSED 4

ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT

PEACE OFFICER, THIS DRIVER,
FIRE FIGHTER ON EMERGENCY? ☐ YES ☐ NOLESSER ☐
OWNER ☐ Same as aboveLIABILITY
INSURANCE ☐ NO

Allstate Co. Mutual Insurance

336003088 04/03/4/3/2000

VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING

None

UNIT
NO. 2 TOWED ☐ PEDESTRIAN ☐ DRIVER ☐

VEH IDENT NO

4FGL2222YC028118

IF BODY STYLE - VAN OR BUS,
INDICATE SEATING CAPACITYYEAR
MODEL 2000COLOR
5 MAKE FeatherlightMODEL
NAME HEBODY
STYLE TrailerLICENSE
PLATE 2000 Texas 34W-CHXDRIVER'S
NAME

NA

DRIVER'S
LICENSE

NA

DOB

NA

RACE

NA

SEX

NA

OCCUPATION

NA

SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS)
1-BREATH 2-BLOOD 3-OTHER 4-NONE 5-REFUSED

ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT

PEACE OFFICER, THIS DRIVER,
FIRE FIGHTER ON EMERGENCY? ☐ YES ☐ NOLESSER ☐
OWNER ☐ Same as aboveLIABILITY
INSURANCE ☐ NO

Allstate Co. Mutual Insurance

33600308804/03

VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING

None

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OTHER THAN VEHICLES

None

LIGHT
CONDITION 3

WEATHER 1 -

SURFACE
CONDITION 1TYPE ROAD
SURFACE 1

DESCRIBE ROAD CONDITIONS (INVESTIGATOR'S OPINION)

1-DAYLIGHT
2-DARK
3-DARK-NOT LIGHTED
4-DARK-LIGHTED
5-DUSK1-CLEAR/CLOUDY
2-RAINING
3-SHOWING
4-FOG
5-BLOWING DUST
6-SMOKE
7-BLENDING
8-HIGH WINDS
9-OTHER1-DRY
2-WET
3-MUDDY
4-SIMPLY/ICY
5-OTHER1-BLACKTOP
2-CONCRETE
3-GRAVEL
4-SMALL
5-BIT
6-OTHERIN YOUR OPINION, DID THIS ACCIDENT RESULT IN AT LEAST \$500.00 DAMAGE TO ANY ONE PERSON'S PROPERTY? ☒ YES ☐ NO

CHARGES FILED

NAME None

CHARGE

CITATION
NUMBER

NAME

CHARGE

CITATION
NUMBERTIME NOTIFIED
OF ACCIDENT

12-1-99

7:06P

M NOW Henderson County S O

TIME ADVISED
OF ACCIDENT

12-1-99

7:58P

TYPED OR PRINTED NAME OF INVESTIGATOR

Scott N. Smith

DATE REPORT MADE 12-2-99

IS REPORT COMPLETE ☒ YES ☐ NO

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

ID NO.

4372

DEPARTMENT DPS-THP

DIST./AREA 6A08

9

LAST WHERE ACCIDENT OCCURRED
COUNTY Henderson CITY OR TOWN Barryville
IF ACCIDENT WAS OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS, INDICATE DISTANCE FROM NEAREST TOWN
MILES 0.4 NORTH S E W OF Highway 346 CITY Barryville

ROAD ON WHICH ACCIDENT OCCURRED
INTERSECTING STREET OR RAILROAD NUMBER SH 155
NOT AT INTERSECTION 0.4 ☐ FT. ☐ MI. ☐ OF Highway 346

DATE OF ACCIDENT December 1 99 DAY OF WEEK Wednesday HOUR 6:55 ☐ A.M. ☒ P.M. (IF EXACTLY MIDNIGHT, INDICATE AS SUCH)

UNIT NO. 2 **VEHICLE TYPE** MOTOR VEHICLE **VEHICLE NO.** 1CCBS14EXF8240884 **IF BODY STYLE - VAN OR BUS, INDICATE SEATING CAPACITY** -

YEAR 1985 **COLOR & MAKE** White Chevrolet **MODEL NAME** B10 **BODY STYLE** Pickup **LICENSE PLATE** 2000 Texas GR2 832

DRIVER'S NAME Bradford, Margaret Ann, Rt. 2 Box 58-G, Frankston, Texas 75763 **PHONE NUMBER** -

DRIVER'S LICENSE Texas 07135872 **CLASS** C **DOB** 09-16-61 **RACE** W **SEX** F **OCCUPATION** Home Health Care

SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS)
1-BREATH 2-BLOOD 3-OTHER 4-NONE 5-REFUSED 4 **ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT** -

LESSOR ☐ **OWNER** ☒ Same as above **PEACE OFFICER, EMS DRIVER, FIRE FIGHTER ON EMERGENCY?** ☐ YES ☒ NO

LIABILITY ☒ YES Mid Century Insurance **INSURANCE** ☐ NO 35-3979-84-20 **VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING** 12-LFO-3

UNIT NO. 3 **VEHICLE TYPE** ☒ MOTOR VEHICLE ☐ TRAIN ☐ PEDESTALIST ☐ TOWER ☐ PEDESTRIAN ☐ OTHER ☐ **VEHICLE NO.** 2MEFM75W7KK703576 **IF BODY STYLE - VAN OR BUS, INDICATE SEATING CAPACITY** -

YEAR 1999 **COLOR & MAKE** Grey Mercury **MODEL NAME** Grand Marquis **BODY STYLE** 4 Door **LICENSE PLATE** 2000 Texas F55-MDM

DRIVER'S NAME Lipsey, Zillah Wilbanks, 1408 E. Park, Palestine, Texas **PHONE NUMBER** 75801

DRIVER'S LICENSE Texas 02933288 **CLASS** C **DOB** 05-16-33 **RACE** W **SEX** F **OCCUPATION** Rancher/Beautician

SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS)
1-BREATH 2-BLOOD 3-OTHER 4-NONE 5-REFUSED 4 **ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT** -

LESSOR ☐ **OWNER** ☒ Same as above **PEACE OFFICER, EMS DRIVER, FIRE FIGHTER ON EMERGENCY?** ☐ YES ☒ NO

LIABILITY ☒ YES Trinity Insurance **INSURANCE** ☐ NO APS 9880064 **VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING** 12-FD-3

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OTHER THAN VEHICLES
None

LIGHT CONDITION <u>3</u> 1-DAYLIGHT 2-DAWN 3-DARK-NOT LIGHTED 4-DARK-LIGHTED 5-DUSK	WEATHER <u>1</u> 1-CLEAR/CLIMBY 2-RAINING 3-SHOWING 4-FOG 5-STEAMING RUST	SURFACE CONDITION <u>1</u> 1-DRY 2-WET 3-SLIPPERY 4-SNOWY/ICY 5-OTHER	TYPE ROAD SURFACE <u>1</u> 1-BLACKTOP 2-CONCRETE 3-BRAVEL 4-SHELL 5-DIRT 6-OTHER	BECAUSE ROAD CONDITIONS (INVESTIGATOR'S OPINION) <u>-</u>
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IN YOUR OPINION, DID THIS ACCIDENT RESULT IN AT LEAST \$500.00 DAMAGE TO ANY ONE PERSON'S PROPERTY? ☒ YES ☐ NO

CHARGES FILED
NAME None **CHARGE** - **CITATION NUMBER** -

NAME - **CHARGE** - **CITATION NUMBER** -

TIME NOTIFIED OF ACCIDENT 12-1-99 7:06P **HOW** Henderson County S O **TIME ARRIVED AT SCENE OF ACCIDENT** 12-1-99 7:58P

TYPED OR PRINTED NAME OF INVESTIGATOR Scott N. Smith **DATE REPORT MADE** 12-2-99 **IS REPORT COMPLETE** ☒ YES ☐ NO

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR Scott N. Smith **ID NO.** 4372 **DEPARTMENT** DPS-THP **DIST./AREA** 6A08

[illegible]

PLACE WHERE ACCIDENT OCCURRED
 COUNTY: Henderson CITY OR TOWN: Berryville
 IF ACCIDENT WAS OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS, INDICATE DISTANCE FROM NEAREST TOWN: _____ MILES NORTH S E W OF _____
 ROAD ON WHICH ACCIDENT OCCURRED: SH 155 COUNTY: ☐ YES SPEED LIMIT: 65
 INTERSECTION STREET OR ON ST/TH INTERSECTION: _____ COUNTY: ☐ YES SPEED LIMIT: _____
 DISTANCE TO INTERSECTION: 0.4 MILES ☐ FT. ☐ S ☐ E ☐ W 346 346

DATE OF ACCIDENT: December 1 1999 DAY OF WEEK: Wednesday TIME: 6:55 ☐ A.M. ☐ P.M. (ALWAYS USE 24 HOUR)

UNIT NO. OF MOTOR VEHICLE: 2G4WY52M4X152043 IF BODY STYLE = VAN OR BUS, INDICATE SEATING CAPACITY: _____
 YEAR: 1999 COLOR & MAKE: Gray Buick MODEL NAME: Century BODY STYLE: 4 Door LICENSE PLATE: 2000 Texas D13KYF
 DRIVER'S NAME: Cobb, Virginia Collins ADDRESS: 22039 Briarwood Dr., Frankston, Texas PHONE NUMBER: 75763
 DRIVER'S LICENSE: Texas 00339917 C DOB: 02-25-31 RACE: W SEX: F OCCUPATION: Retired
 SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS): ☒ 1-BREATH ☐ 2-BLOOD ☐ 3-OTHER ☐ 4-NONE ☐ 5-REFUSED 4 ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT: _____
 LEASED ☐ OWNER ☒ Same as above
 LIABILITY ☒ YES ☐ NO State Farm Insurance POLICY NUMBER: L200142-E01-43D VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING: 12-LFQ-2

UNIT NO. OF TOWED ☐ MOTOR VEHICLE ☐ TRAILER ☐ SEMI-TRAILER ☐ IF BODY STYLE = VAN OR BUS, INDICATE SEATING CAPACITY: _____
 YEAR: 1997 COLOR & MAKE: Red Chevrolet MODEL NAME: 1500 Silverado BODY STYLE: Pickup LICENSE PLATE: 2000 Texas TV9950
 DRIVER'S NAME: McChriaty, John Calvin ADDRESS: CR 35 #6, Tyler, Texas PHONE NUMBER: _____
 DRIVER'S LICENSE: Texas 03275733 AM DOB: 09-22-34 RACE: W SEX: M OCCUPATION: Retired
 SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS): ☒ 1-BREATH ☐ 2-BLOOD ☐ 3-OTHER ☐ 4-NONE ☐ 5-REFUSED 4 ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT: _____
 LEASED ☐ OWNER ☒ Same as above
 LIABILITY ☒ YES ☐ NO South Farm Bureau Casualty POLICY NUMBER: 21171411 VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING: 12-LFQ-2

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OTHER THAN VEHICLES: None
 LIGHT CONDITION: 3 WEATHER: 1 SURFACE CONDITION: 1 TYPE ROAD SURFACE: 1
 1-DAYLIGHT 2-DARK 3-DARK-NOT LIT 4-DARK-LIGHT 5-DUSK
 1-CLEAR/CLIMBY 2-RAINING 3-DRIZZLING 4-FOG 5-SLOWING POST
 1-DRY 2-WET 3-SLEET 4-SNOWY/ICY 5-OTHER
 1-BLACKTOP 2-CONCRETE 3-GRAVEL 4-SHELL 5-DIRT 6-OTHER

IN YOUR OPINION, DID THIS ACCIDENT RESULT IN AT LEAST \$500.00 DAMAGE TO ANY ONE PERSON'S PROPERTY? ☒ YES ☐ NO

CHARGES FILED
 NAME: None CHARGE: _____ CITATION NUMBER: _____
 NAME: _____ CHARGE: _____ CITATION NUMBER: _____

TIME NOTIFIED OF ACCIDENT: 12-1-99 7:06P M HOW: Henderson County S O TIME ARRIVED AT SCENE OF ACCIDENT: 12-1-99 7:58P M
 TYPED OR PRINTED NAME OF INVESTIGATOR: Scott N. Smith DATE REPORT MADE: 12-2-99 IS REPORT COMPLETE: ☒ YES ☐ NO
 SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR: Scott N. Smith ID NO. 4746 DEPARTMENT: DPS-THP DIST./AREA: 6A08

SALESMAN (SEE)	DATE FOR TYPE	DATE FOR TYPE	DATE FOR TYPE	DATE FOR TYPE	DATE FOR TYPE	DATE FOR TYPE
1. NAME 2. ADDRESS 3. PHONE 4. BUSINESS 5. HOME 6. OTHER	1. NAME 2. ADDRESS 3. PHONE 4. BUSINESS 5. HOME 6. OTHER	1. NAME 2. ADDRESS 3. PHONE 4. BUSINESS 5. HOME 6. OTHER	1. NAME 2. ADDRESS 3. PHONE 4. BUSINESS 5. HOME 6. OTHER	1. NAME 2. ADDRESS 3. PHONE 4. BUSINESS 5. HOME 6. OTHER	1. NAME 2. ADDRESS 3. PHONE 4. BUSINESS 5. HOME 6. OTHER	1. NAME 2. ADDRESS 3. PHONE 4. BUSINESS 5. HOME 6. OTHER

12-1FO-2

Driver

Driver

NAME (LAST FIRST MIDDLE)	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)	AGE	SEX	HAIR	EYES	SKIN	DOB	DOB	DOB
22039 Briarwood DR., Frankston, Texas	Frankston, Texas	68	F	N	N	N			

12-1FO-2

Driver

Driver

NAME (LAST FIRST MIDDLE)	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)	AGE	SEX	HAIR	EYES	SKIN	DOB	DOB	DOB
10929 CR 35 #6, Tyler, Texas 75706	Tyler, Texas 75706	85	M	N	N	N			
McChristy, Jean	10929 CR 35 #6, Tyler, Texas 75706	61	F	C					

NAME (LAST FIRST MIDDLE)	ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)	AGE	SEX	HAIR	EYES	SKIN	DOB	DOB	DOB
--------------------------	------------------------------------	-----	-----	------	------	------	-----	-----	-----

Did not seek treatment at scene

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	TIME OF BIRTH	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	TIME OF BIRTH	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	TIME OF BIRTH
------	---------------	---------------	------	---------------	---------------	------	---------------	---------------

damage to the underside.

See page two for diagram

FACTORS/CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTING	OTHER FACTORS/CONDITIONS NOT LISTED	FACTORS/CONDITIONS NOT LISTED	FACTORS/CONDITIONS NOT LISTED
1. ROAD - ROAD - ROAD	1. ROAD - ROAD - ROAD	1. ROAD - ROAD - ROAD	1. ROAD - ROAD - ROAD

Page 7 of 8

TEXAS PEACE OFFICER'S ACCIDENT REPORT

ITS (Rev. 1/1/96)

MAIL TO: ACCIDENT RECORDS, TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, PO BOX 4002, AUSTIN TX 78773-0002

PLACE WHERE ACCIDENT OCCURRED		CITY OR TOWN Berryville		LIC. NO.
COUNTY Henderson	MILES 0.4		DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE	
IF ACCIDENT WAS OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS, INDICATE DISTANCE FROM NEAREST TOWN		NORTH S E W OF		SPC NO.
ROAD ON WHICH ACCIDENT OCCURRED SH 155		CONST. ☐ YES ☒ NO		LIC.
INTERSECTING STREET OR RAIL XING NUMBER		SPEED 65		CODE
DISTANCE FROM INTERSECTION 0.4		CONST. ☐ YES ☒ NO		SEVERITY
MILEPOST 346		SPEED 346		FOR REC.
MILEPOST 346		SPEED 346		DR. REC.

DATE OF ACCIDENT **December 1** 1999 DAY OF WEEK **Wednesday** HOUR **6:55** ☐ A.M. ☒ P.M. IF EXACTLY MIDNIGHT, SO STATE

UNIT NO. 6	VEH IDENT NO 733BR4V017562	IF BODY STYLE - VAN OR BUS, INDICATE SEATING CAPACITY
YEAR 1974	MODEL Scout	BODY STYLE Motor Home
COLOR & MAKE White Dodge	MODEL NAME	LICENSE PLATE 2000 Texas YGV18B
DRIVER'S NAME Carnley, Wendell Lewis, Rt. 3 Box 3045, Palestine, Texas	DRIVER'S PHONE NUMBER 75801	DRIVER'S OCCUPATION Disabled
DRIVER'S LICENSE Texas 06072096 A	DRIVER'S RACE W SEX M	DRIVER'S OCCUPATION Disabled
SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS) 4	ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT	PEACE OFFICER, EMS DRIVER, FIRE FIGHTER ON EMERGENCY? ☐ YES ☒ NO
LESSER ☐		
OWNER ☐		
LIABILITY ☒ YES ☐ NO	State Farm Insurance	VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING 12-LFO-2

UNIT NO. 6	VEH IDENT NO	IF BODY STYLE - VAN OR BUS, INDICATE SEATING CAPACITY
YEAR 1974	MODEL Scout	BODY STYLE Motor Home
COLOR & MAKE White Dodge	MODEL NAME	LICENSE PLATE 2000 Texas YGV18B
DRIVER'S NAME Carnley, Wendell Lewis, Rt. 3 Box 3045, Palestine, Texas	DRIVER'S PHONE NUMBER 75801	DRIVER'S OCCUPATION Disabled
DRIVER'S LICENSE Texas 06072096 A	DRIVER'S RACE W SEX M	DRIVER'S OCCUPATION Disabled
SPECIMEN TAKEN (ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS) 4	ALCOHOL/DRUG ANALYSIS RESULT	PEACE OFFICER, EMS DRIVER, FIRE FIGHTER ON EMERGENCY? ☐ YES ☒ NO
LESSER ☐		
OWNER ☐		
LIABILITY ☒ YES ☐ NO	State Farm Insurance	VEHICLE DAMAGE RATING 12-LFO-2

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OTHER THAN VEHICLES			
None			
LIGHT CONDITION 3	WEATHER 1	ROADWAY CONDITION 1	TYPE ROAD SURFACE 1
1-DAYLIGHT	1-CLEAR/CLAUDE	1-DRY	1-BLACKTOP
2-DIM	2-RAINING	2-WET	2-CONCRETE
3-BARE-MET EMBITT	3-SHOWING	3-MUDRY	3-GRANUL
4-BARE-MET	4-FOG	4-SNOWY/ICY	4-SWELL
5-DUSK	5-DRIVING DIST	5-OTHER	5-OTHER

IN YOUR OPINION, DID THIS ACCIDENT RESULT IN AT LEAST \$500.00 DAMAGE TO ANY ONE PERSON'S PROPERTY? ☒ YES ☐ NO

CHARGE FILED	NAME None	CHARGE	CITATION NUMBER
NAME	CHARGE	CITATION NUMBER	

TIME NOTIFIED OF ACCIDENT 12-1-99	TIME OF ACCIDENT 7:06P	LOCATION OF ACCIDENT Henderson County S 0	TIME ARRIVED AT SCENE OF ACCIDENT 12-1-99	TIME OF REPORT 7:58P
TYPED OR PRINTED NAME OF INVESTIGATOR Scott N. Smith		DATE REPORT MADE 12-1-99 IS REPORT COMPLETE ☒ YES ☐ NO		
SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR Scott N. Smith		NO. 4746	DEPARTMENT DPS-THP	DIST./AREA 6A08

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

INVESTIGATOR'S NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF WHAT HAPPENED (ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY)	☐ MURDER ☐ SEX CRIME ☐ FIRE ☐ OTHER
See page two for narrative	☒ INDICATE NUMBER See page two for diagram

FACTORS/CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTING				OTHER FACTORS/CONDITIONS MAY BE SHOWN BUT NAME CONTRIBUTING				OTHER FACTORS/CONDITIONS MAY BE SHOWN BUT NAME CONTRIBUTING			
UNIT #	1	2	3	UNIT #	1	2	3	UNIT #	1	2	3
NAME				NAME				NAME			



ENGINEERING REPORT

**INVESTIGATION OF
POTENTIAL TRAILER
LATCH FAILURE
FRANKSTON, TEXAS**

**PREPARED BY:
H. G. JERNIGAN, P.E.
DECEMBER 28, 1999**

**PREPARED FOR:
ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY
TYLER, TEXAS**

SYSTEM ENGINEERING AND LABORATORIES CORPORATION

12785 State Hwy. 64 East • Tyler, Texas 75707-8705 • (903) 566-1980



SEAL Corporation

1-800-624-0905



SEAL Corporation

Corporate Office
12785 Hwy 64 East
Tyler, TX 75707
(903)566-1980
(903)566-4504 Fax
email seal@tyler.net
www.tyler.net/seal

BRANCH LOCATIONS



P.O. Box 1506
Amarillo, TX 79105



6330 Linden Lane
Dallas, TX 75230



P.O. Box 16125
Houston, TX 77496



11701 Sun Belt Court
Baton Rouge, LA 70809



P.O. Box 750358
Memphis, TN 38175

*System Engineering And
Laboratories Corporation
is an independent testing
laboratory.*

January 11, 2000

Ms. Monice Miller
Allstate Insurance Company
P O Box 132040
Tyler, TX 75713-2040

RE: "Natalie Smith" Matter
Claim No. 485-264-3636
SEAL File No. AAI-336-91

Dear Ms. Miller:

I. INTRODUCTION:

On December 2, 1999, I inspected a 2000 Featherlite Gooseneck Horse Trailer being towed by your insured driver [REDACTED]. Apparently, a rear door opened while Smith was transporting two steers on Highway 155 near Frankston. The steers were struck and killed by motorists following Smith. My assignment was to determine how the rear door inadvertently opened and to analyze the latch system for potential defects. The following is my report concerning SEAL Corporation's investigation, analysis, and findings in this matter. Findings stated herein are based on work and evidence reviewed to date. Should further evidence or information develop indicating a need for continued analysis, I reserve the right to refine or expand my preliminary opinion if indicated by such developments.

II. BASIS OF FINDINGS, ACTIVITIES AND MATERIAL REVIEWED:

In addition to my education, training and experience, the following provides the basis for my findings in this matter:

1. Visual inspection and documentation of Smith's Featherlite Trailer.
2. Discussion with Ms. [REDACTED] and statement taken by Allstate.
3. Statement of witness Derek Gideon.
4. Inspection of exemplar trailers and discussion with owners
5. Discussion with Big Tex Trailer Manufacturing Company Engineer.
6. Inspection of Frankston Riding Club loading and access road.

LR.00.011.HGJ.AAI33691(6)

7. Technical research.
8. Featherlite trailer owner's manual.
9. Examination and analysis based on principles and methods outlined in Section VII.

III. BACKGROUND:

Reportedly, on the evening of December 1, 1999, [REDACTED] and Derek Gideon loaded two young, five hundred to seven hundred pound steers into the rear stall of [REDACTED] model 8541 Featherlite gooseneck horse trailer. [REDACTED] and Gideon had been using the steers at the Frankston Rodeo Club to practice for rodeo events. Both [REDACTED] and Gideon attest that after loading the steers, the right rear door was closed and latched. [REDACTED] left ahead of Gideon and while in route the steers exited through the open right rear door and were struck and killed by following motorists. After this incident [REDACTED] was reportedly told by other trailer owners and the owner of a feed store about similar unlatching occurrences.

IV. FIELD INSPECTIONS:

A. SMITH TRAILER:

On December 2, 1999 and January 5, 2000, I inspected and photographed [REDACTED] trailer at her residence. Photographs of my inspection are attached.

[REDACTED] trailer is a Featherlite Inc. model 8541 7X22 gooseneck horse trailer manufactured August 1999. VIN number is 4FG-L0222-2-Y0028118. This trailer had two rear doors with a hinged center mount butterfly type latch system. (See attachments for typical components of a butterfly latch.) The left and right doors are hinged and latched separately. The left rear door provides access to a tack storage area. The right door provides access to the individual transport stalls. The right rear stall has a "rump" strap sometimes used to position a horse forward of the door. This strap was reportedly not used with the steers because the horns can get caught and tangled up.

When loading the steers, it is necessary to use the latch handle as leverage to completely close the door against the pressure of the steers. Failure to at least partially latch the door even without animals inside results in the door coming open by itself. Once the door is latched in the stationary lower clip and the upper and lower clips are aligned, a pin or padlock can be added to prevent the latch handle from releasing.

OBSERVATIONS:

General:

██████████ trailer was obviously new and in good condition. The trailer utilizes aluminum extensively in its construction. The butterfly type rear latch components are all aluminum except the latch clips which are steel.

Specific:

1. The left door latch handle was not completely seated in the lower clip (see photograph 2).
2. Both left and right latch handles exhibited contact/wear marks and abrasions indicative of clip to handle movement and interaction (see photographs 9 through 16).
3. Although the inside of the rear door panel floor and threshold were soiled, the door closed freely and completely (see photographs 5 through 8).
4. With the latch handle completely seated in the lower clip, the upper movable clip, which overlaps the handle about ¼ inch, can rotate counter clockwise (CCW) and catch on the top outer edge of the handle (see photographs 13 and 14).

B. EXEMPLAR TRAILERS:

Discussions with ██████████ revealed several other trailer owners in the area had experience with rear latches inadvertently opening. Some owners purchased inexpensive linchpins to provide a safety feature. None of the owners had a latch open inadvertently following installation of the linchpins. (Linchpins are sold at feed stores for twenty-five cents.)

On December 8, 1999, I inspected and documented three Sundowner trailers. None of these trailers, vintage 1990 through 1995, were provided with safety pins by the manufacturer. All three use a similar latch handle/clip retainer design in the latch system. Both owners purchased and added linchpins as a safety device.

OBSERVATIONS:

Champion's 1995 Sundowner gooseneck horse trailer (see photograph 1 through 8).

1. Aluminum construction with two rear doors.
2. Latch system is universal cam type construction. Latch handles are steel, clips are also steel. Linchpins are added for safety.
3. Wear/contact patterns more uniform. Relative movement indicated.

Champion's 1990 Sundowner bumper pull horse trailer (see photographs 9 through 13).

1. Steel construction with two rear doors.
2. Latch system center butterfly type.
3. Wear/contact patterns more uniform both upper and lower handle to clip contact. Relative movement indicated.

Gideon's 1995 Sundowner gooseneck horse trailer (see photographs 1 through 8).

1. Aluminum construction with two rear doors.
2. Latch system is center butterfly type linchpins added for safety. Right side removed in photographs.
3. Wear/patterns not uniform. Extensive relative contact movement indicated.

Jemigan's 1998 Big Tex dump trailer (see photographs 1 through 4).

1. All steel construction with two rear doors.
2. Latch is universal cam type system.
3. Linchpin provided by manufacturer.

C. FRANKSTON RIDING CLUB:

On January 5, 2000, I inspected the Frankston Riding Club area and documented the access road back to Highway 155. I found the road to be partially surfaced with asphalt, rough, and bumpy. A significant downgrade proceeds the intersection with the highway. Obviously, a trailer towed over this road would experience jolts and twists (see photographs 17 through 20). I also stopped by to reinspect the Smith trailer and found linchpins in the door latches (see photographs 21 through 24).

V. RESEARCH:

On December 13, 1999, I contacted an engineer (Dan) at the Big Tex Trailer manufacturing plant in Midland, Texas with respect to recommendations or guidelines for trailer latches published by the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers (NATM). Dan was aware of "inadvertent unlatching," but found no reference in the NATM guidelines for latch retention. Big Tex trailers are sold with linchpins installed in the clips.

Featherlite Owners Manual - Owners are not instructed, cautioned, or warned about the rear door latches "inadvertently unlatching."

VI. TECHNICAL DISCUSSION:

Examination of the Incident trailer and several exemplars indicates the latch handle and clips move extensively relative to each other and rub as the trailer experiences the dynamic loading of shifting cargo and roadway inputs (jolts, bumps, twists, etc.). Wear patterns, metal to metal contacts, and abrasions on the Smith trailer latch indicate the upper clip has been out of position (CCW) and contacting the top surface of the latch handle. With outward pressure momentarily removed from the rear door, due to dynamic load shifting from bumps and grade changes, the latch handle can disengage from the lower clip and progressively move upward. With the upper clip out of position, the latch handle is no longer retained and the door can inadvertently open. Both Smith and witness, Gideon assert the trailer door was properly and completely latched prior to Smith leaving the Frankston Riding Club. Unless the latch handle is at least retained by the lower clip, the door will spring open immediately allowing the animals to exit. Use of a pin as a clip retainer assures both clips are in place and prevents the handle from disengaging. A padlock would also serve this function, but was rejected unanimously by everyone to whom I talked. Locking an exit door with animals inside while on the road was unacceptable to the owners.

VII. PRINCIPLES AND METHODS:

Principles and methods normally utilized by forensic engineers including the following were employed:

- I. Systematic field investigation techniques per SEAL Standard Operating Procedures 97-215-ST.
- II. Visual observations and application of education, training, and experience.

Ms. Monice Miller
Allstate Insurance Company
January 11, 2000
Page 6

- III. Newton's Principia, specifically 2nd and 3rd laws.
- IV. Principles of mechanical failure analysis.
- V. Properties of structural materials.

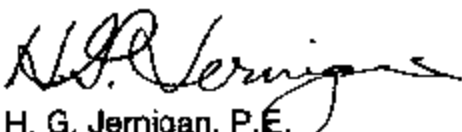
VIII. CONCLUSIONS:

Based on all the above and to a reasonable degree of engineering probability, I have reached the following conclusions:

- 1. "Inadvertent unlatching" of rear trailer doors with latch handle and clip, butterfly type, and similar latches is well known by experienced owners and manufacturers of livestock trailers. This defect is a potential safety hazard, but is not addressed as such in the Featherlite owner's manual.
- 2. More likely than not, Smith properly and completely latched the right rear door of her 2000 Featherlite trailer on December 1, 1999.
- 3. The right rear door "inadvertently unlatched" after Smith exited the Frankston Riding Club and traveled several miles on Highway 155 allowing her steers to be struck and killed by motorists on the highway.
- 4. Addition of a simple inexpensive linchpin as a safety backup, as is done by experienced trailer owners and some trailer manufacturers, would have prevented this "inadvertent unlatching." Use of a linchpin would also insure latch clips are properly aligned.

Should you have any questions or desire to discuss this matter further, please call SEAL's Tyler, Texas office.

Yours truly,



H. G. Jernigan, P.E.
Vice President, Mechanical Engineering
S.E.A.L. Corporation

HGJ:dm

Resume'

H. G. "GARY" JERNIGAN, P.E.

Vice President, Mechanical Engineering
System Engineering And Laboratories Corporation, Tyler

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering, Texas A&M University, 1965

CERTIFICATIONS

Registered Professional Engineer, Texas, #37215, 1974
Certified Safety Instructor, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1989
Certified Master Mechanic - Automotive, 1973
Safety Professional, TWCC No. 0659

HONORS

National Honor Society
Outstanding Company Cadet, R.O.T.C. Summer Camp
Merit Scholarship, Texas A&M
Distinguished Military Graduate
Pi Tau Sigma, Mechanical Engineering Honor Society
Outstanding Lt., U.S. Army Engineer Center Brigade
Ross Volunteer Company, Governors Honor Guard
President's Commendation, Pentagon Civil Disturbance

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

NSPE, National Society of Professional Engineers
TSPE, Texas Society of Professional Engineers
NAFE, National Academy of Forensic Engineers,
Certified Diplomate Forensic Engineer
SAE, Society of Automotive Engineers

MILITARY SERVICE

1960-1966 Army ROTC, Texas A&M Corps of Cadets,
Battalion Exec. Officer
1966-1968 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Battalion Commander,
First Lieutenant; Security Clearance - Secret



ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

Engineer officer training, computer programming, home-entertainment electronics, electrical appliance repair with air conditioning and refrigeration, master-mechanic/automotive, vibration analysis, corrosion control, bearing failure analysis, controller response tuning, first aid, loss-control management.

Accident Reconstruction & Crashworthiness Seminars:

- Texas A&M, 1986
- SAE International Congress, Detroit, Michigan, 1987
- National Academy of Forensic Engineers, Los Angeles, California, 1988
- Traffic Accident Analysis & Reconstruction, George Washington U School of Engineering & Applied Science, U.T. Tyler, 1990
- Microcomputer Application Programs for Traffic Accident Reconstruction, The Traffic Institute, Northwestern University, 1987
- Engineering Dynamics Corporation, San Antonio, Texas 1991
- SAE Rollover TOPTEC, Scottsdale, AZ, September, 1992
- SAE 37th Stapp Car Crash Conference, San Antonio, Texas, November, 1993
- SAE Sensor Design for Auto Air Bag Systems, Costa Mesa, California, August 1995
- SAE Airbag Design and Performance TOPTEC, Costa Mesa, California, August 1997
- SAE Vehicle Safety Restraint Systems TOPTEC, Costa Mesa, California, August 1999

Mechanics of Heavy-Duty Trucks: University of Michigan, 1987

OSHA Compliance: University of Texas at Tyler, Texas, 1989; Recertification 1991

Potential FMEA For Product Design & Development (Design FMEA), SAE, Chicago, Illinois, April 1987

Biomechanics For Collision Reconstruction, Texas A&M University, San Antonio, TX, July 1998

CONSULTING SPECIALTIES

- Accident Reconstruction - Vehicular and Construction Equipment
- Mechanical Failure Analysis - Defect Related Loss of Control - Design Performance Evaluation of Mechanical Systems and Components
- Crashworthiness Analysis - Safety Standard Compliance Evaluation
- Petrochemical Accident Reconstruction and Failure Analysis - Manufacturing Facility Equipment and Construction Related Personal Injury Accidents

EXPERIENCE

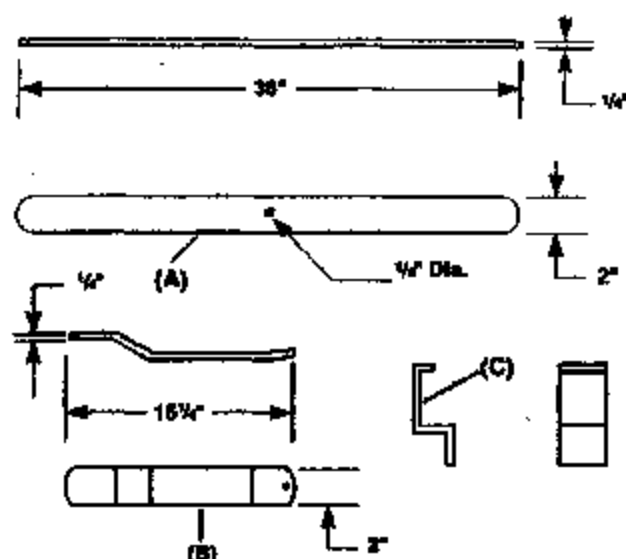
1990 - Present Vice President, Mechanical Engineering, SEAL Corporation
1986 - 1990 Consulting and Forensic engineer for SEAL Corporation
1978 - 1985 Manager of Construction for Baker Tank Company and Altech
1968 - 1977 Senior Engineer for Shell Chemical Company - Maintenance, Startup and Construction
1967 - 1968 Battalion Commander for U.S. Army Center Brigade
1966 - 1967 Maintenance Platoon leader for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1965 - 1966 Maintenance Engineer for Shell Chemical Company

Attachments

TYPICAL EXEMPLAR LATCH COMPONENTS



BUTTERFLY LATCH ASSEMBLY



PART NO. DESCRIPTION

08-100	Complete Butterfly Latch Assy. (Includes 2 of Item A, B, & C)
08-101	Handle for Butterfly Latches (B)
08-102	Clip for Butterfly Latches (C)
08-101-1	Butterfly Latch Bar (A)

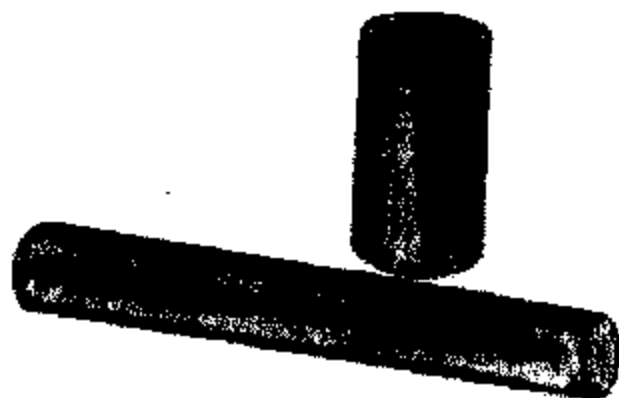
VINYL GRIPS



PART NO.

08-107	A. 3/4" x 4" Round Black Vinyl Grip
08-108	B. 1/2" x 4" Round Black Vinyl Grip
08-104	C. 1 1/2" x 3" Flat Black Vinyl Grip
08-103	D. 2" x 3" Flat Black Vinyl Grip
08-109	B. 3/4" x 4" Round Black Vinyl Grip

HINGE PIN & BUSHING



PART NO.

08-350	Hinge Pin - 1/2" x 4.25"
08-355	Hinge Bushing - 1/2" ID x 2.25"

DOOR ROLLER ASSEMBLY

(for sliding rear gate)



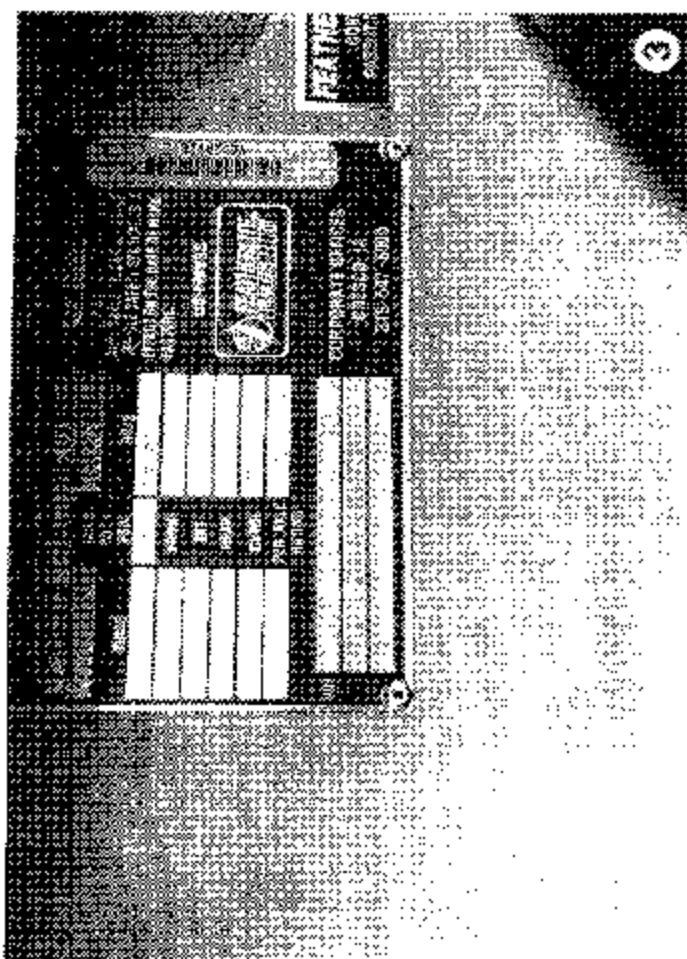
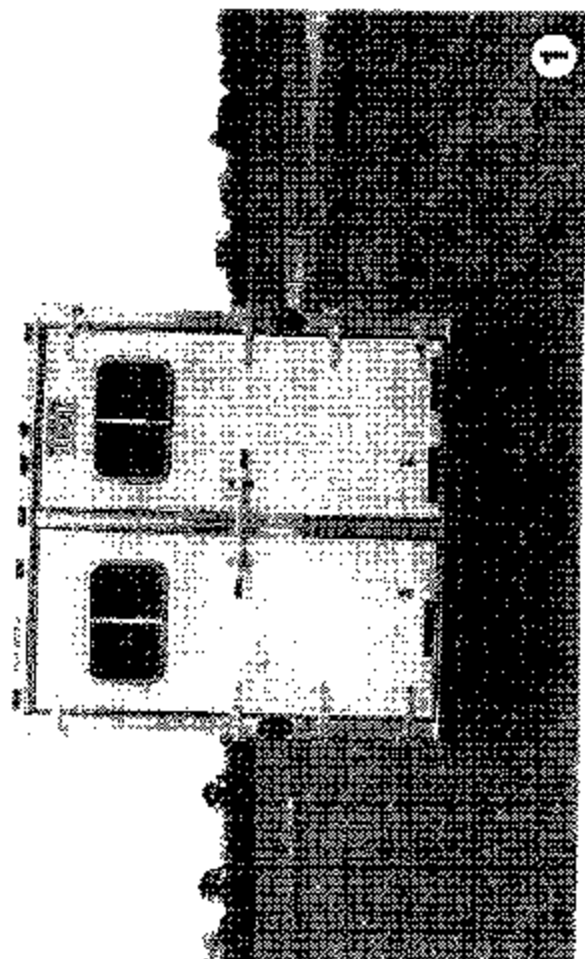
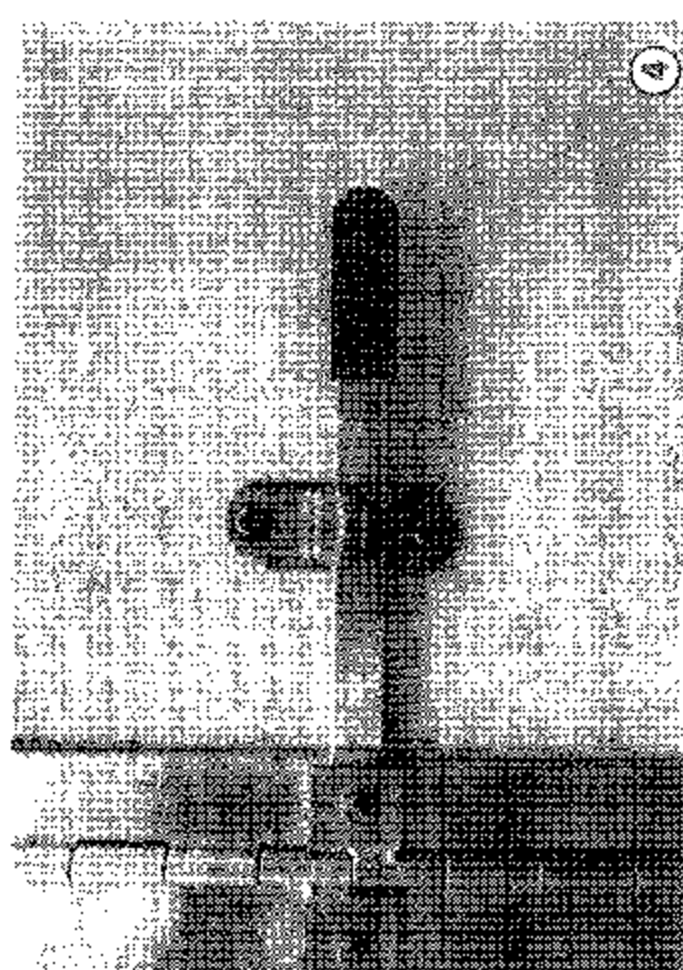
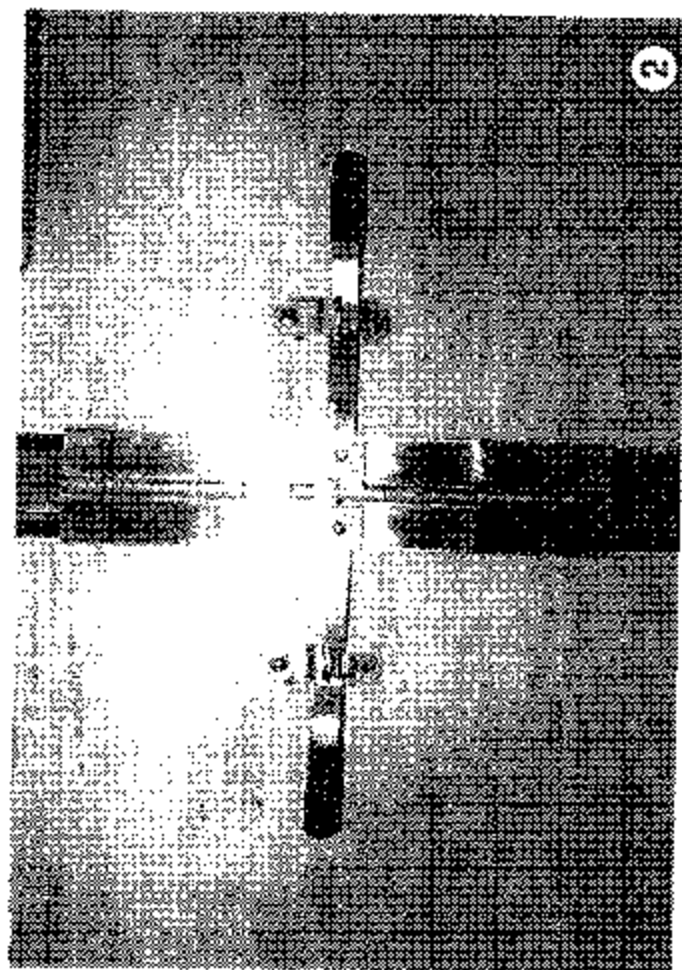
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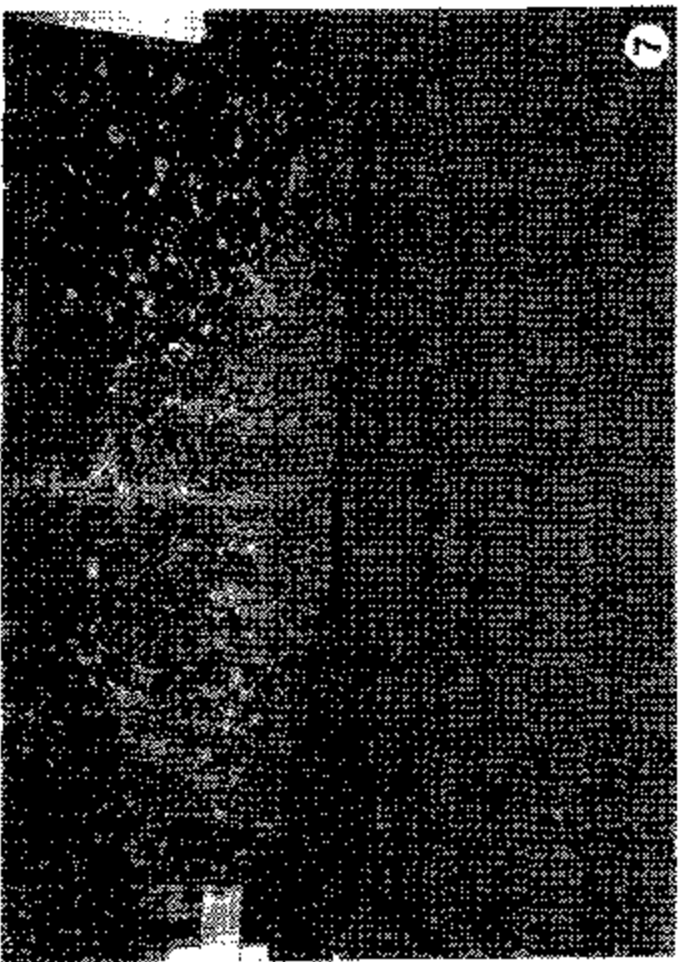
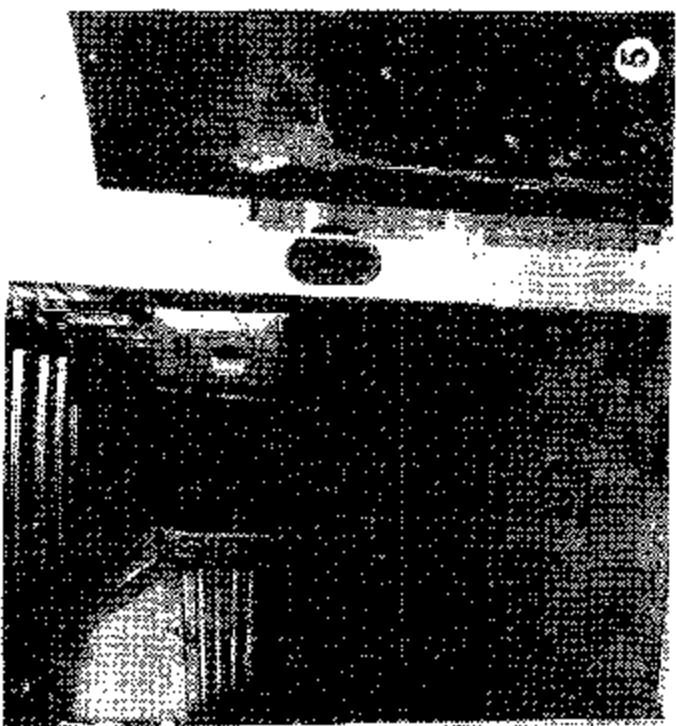
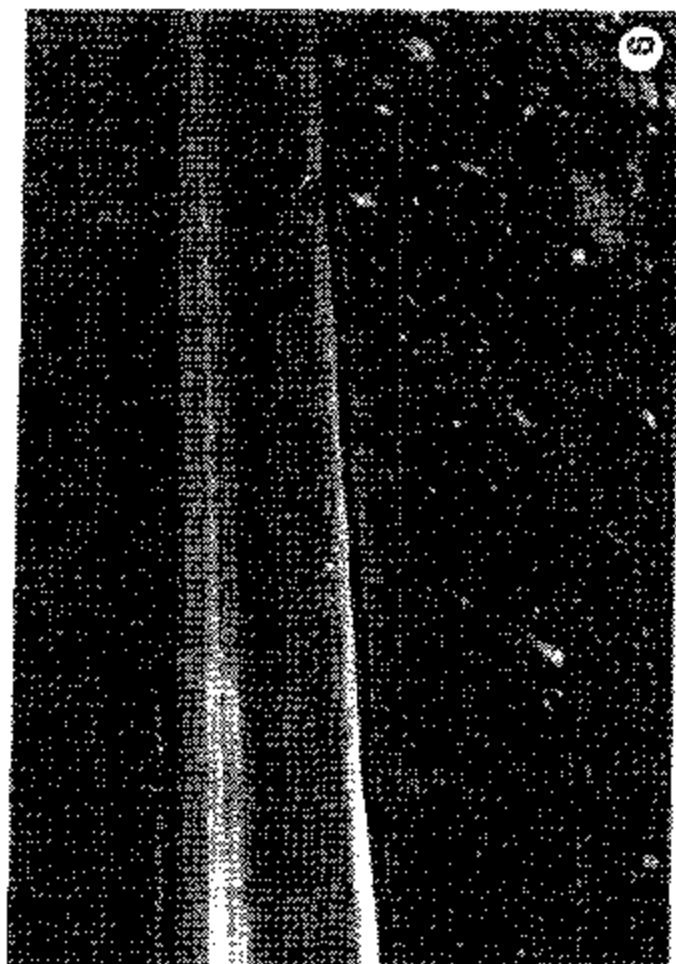
08-082	Dia. of roller 1 1/2" Length of pin 1 3/4"
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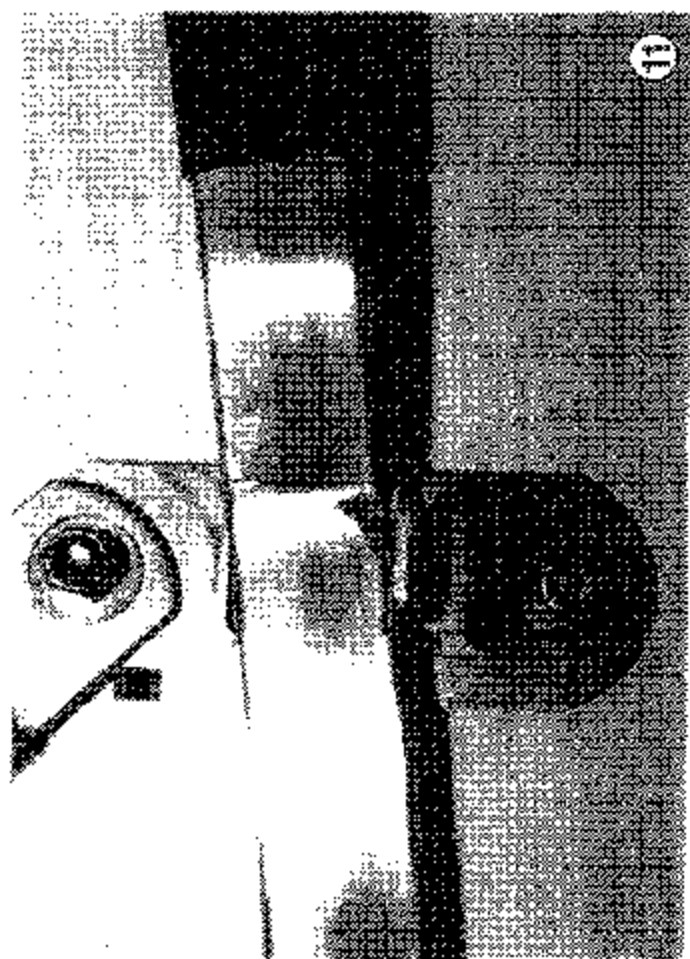
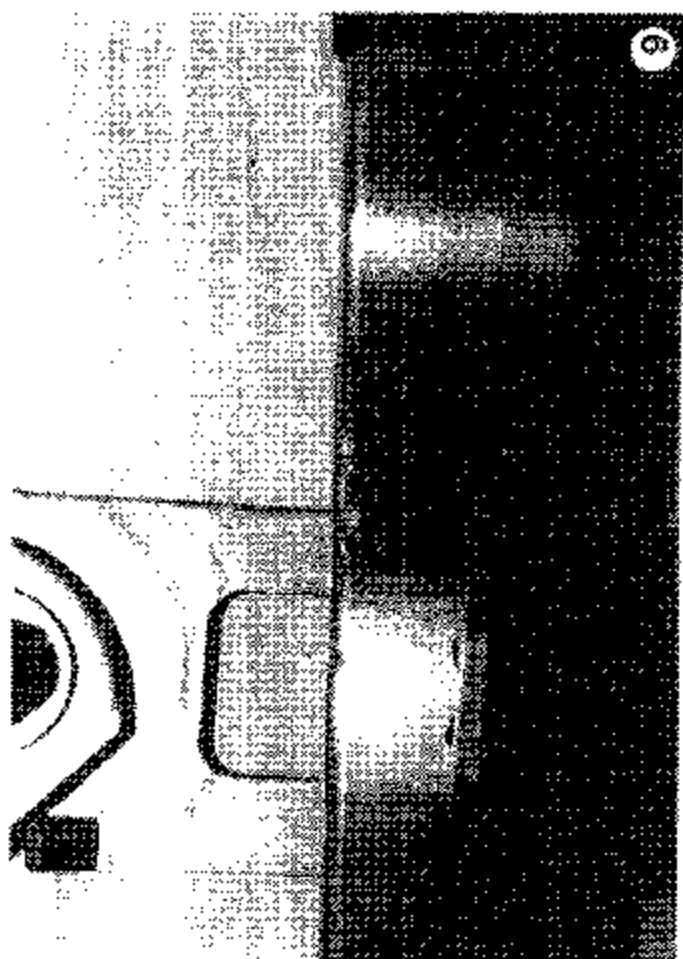
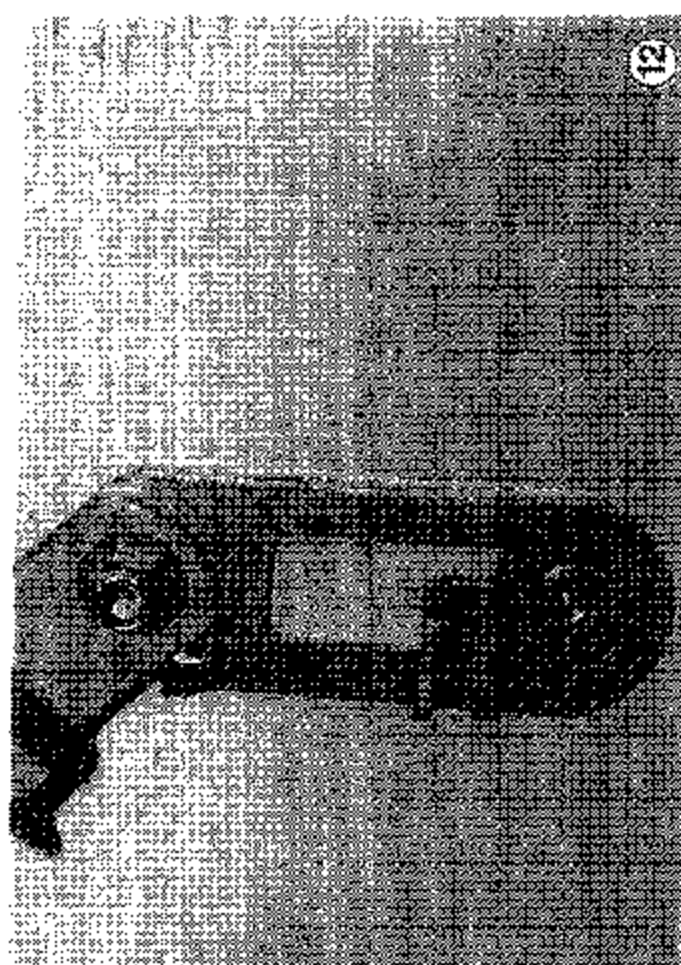
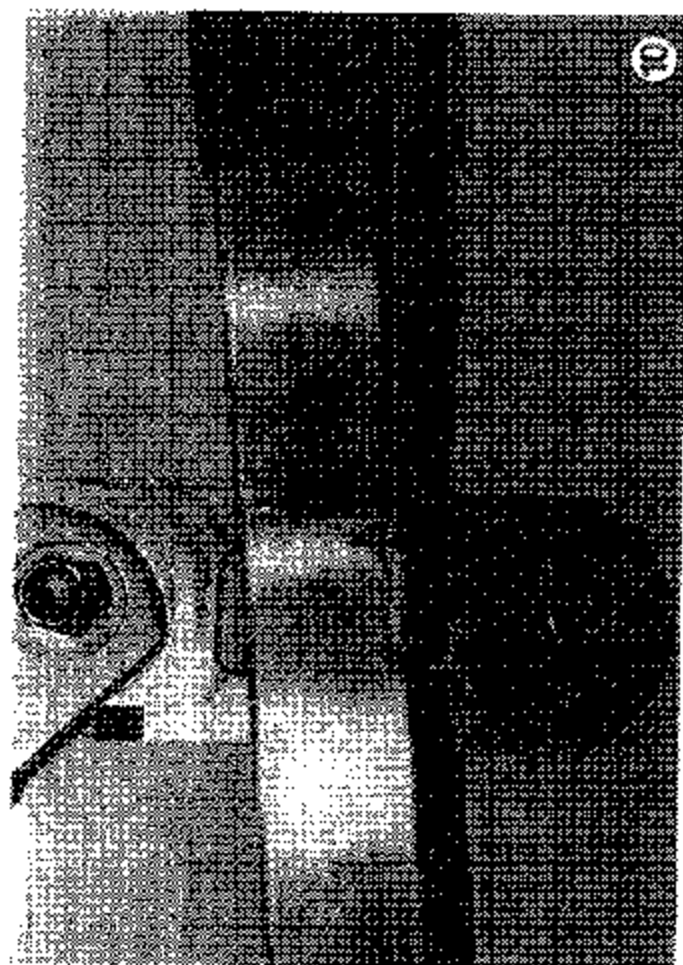
Photographs

SMITH TRAILER EXAM 12/03/99

1. Smith's Featherlite horse trailer at insured's residence.
2. Rear doors showing latch positions as found. Note left side (facing rear) tack room door latch handle is not completely seated in lower fixed retainer clip. No safety pin to secure upper movable retainer clip.
3. VIN plate.
4. Right side access/stall door "butterfly" latch.

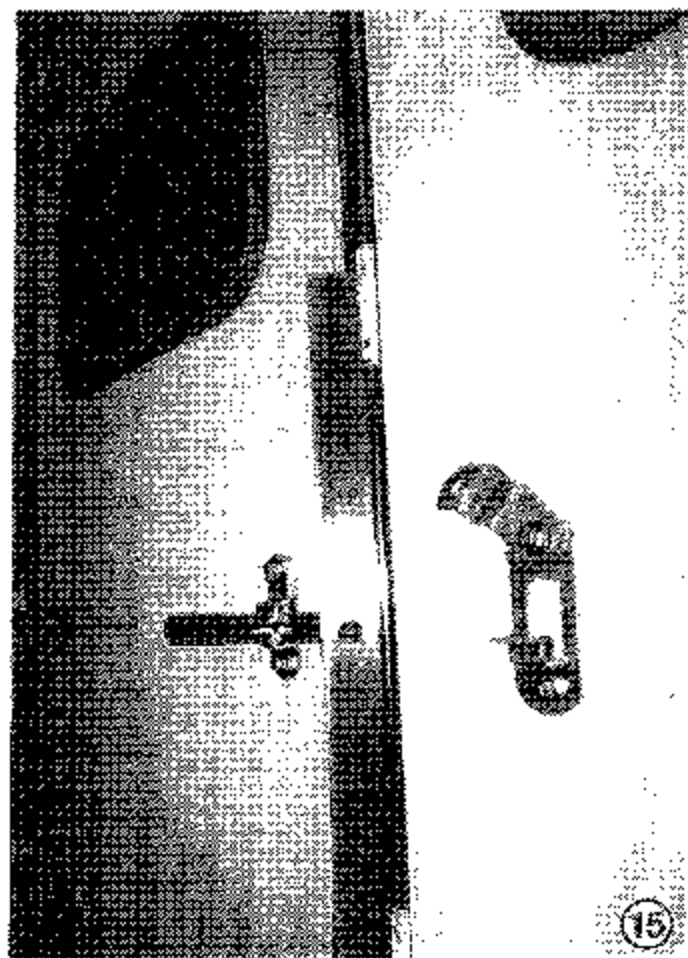
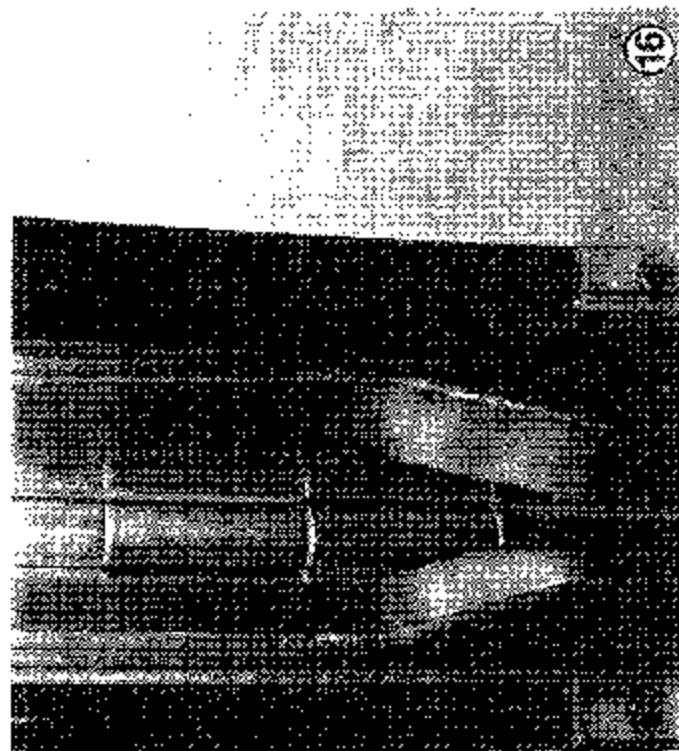
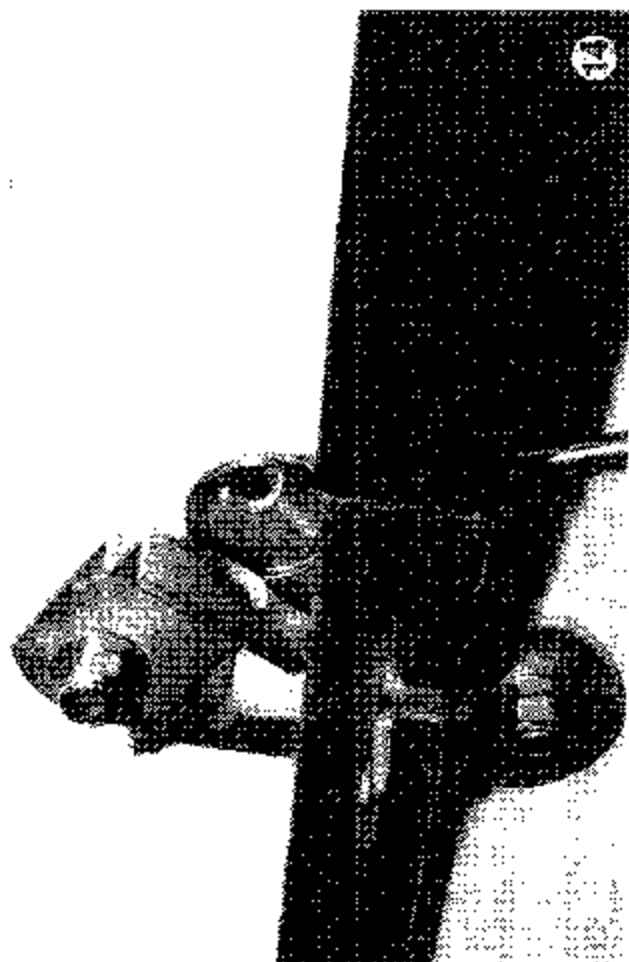






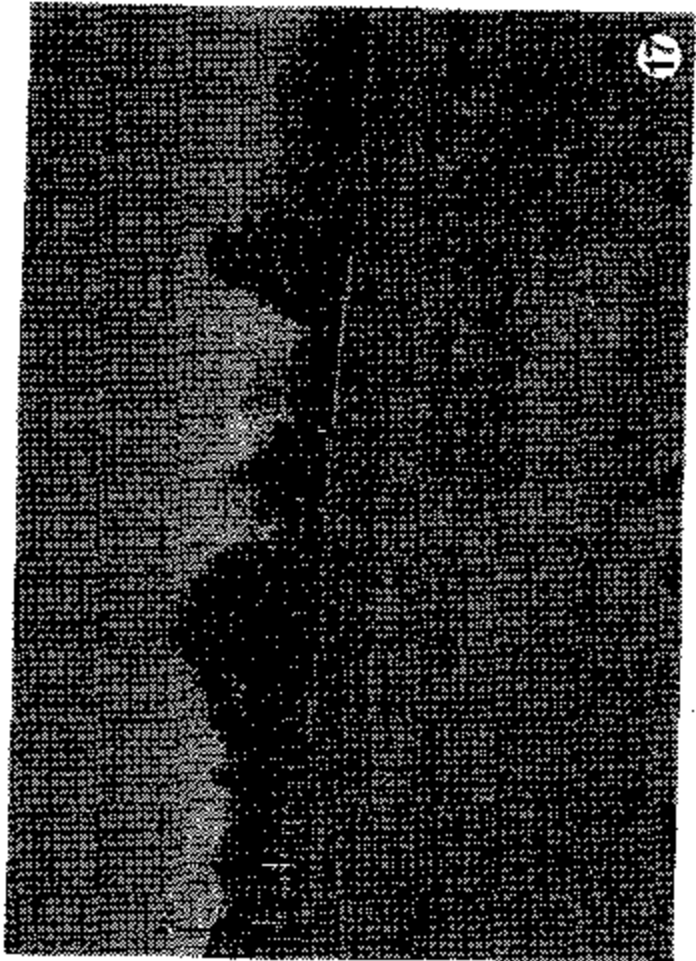
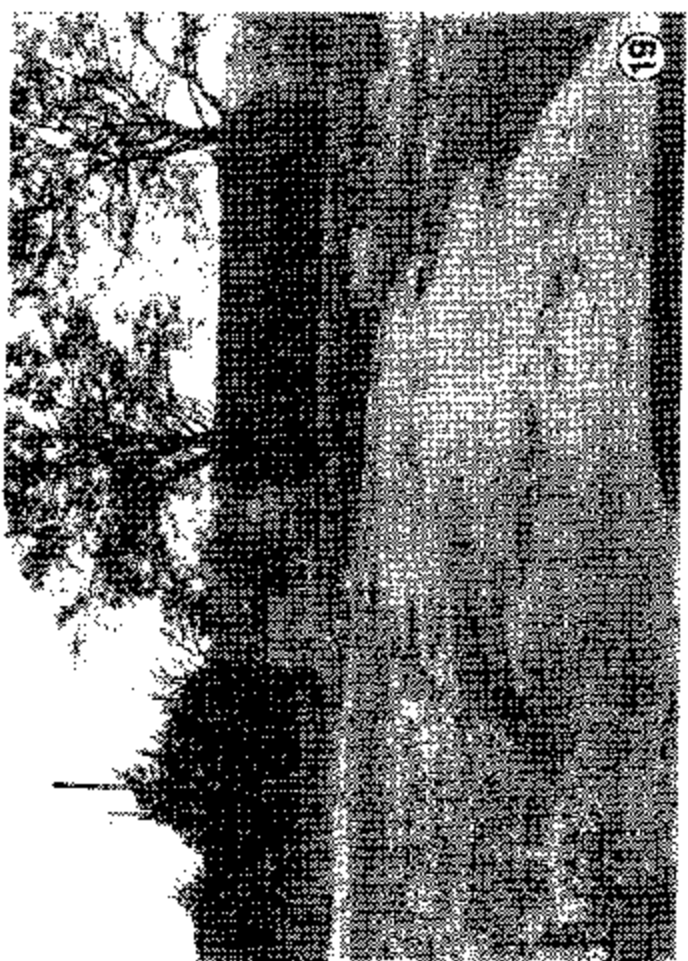
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JOURNAL OF
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ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

- 13, 14. Close-up views of inboard surface of upper movable retainer clip of latch via mirror reflection.
15. View of inboard surface of hinged "butterfly" latch bar. Note contact/movement transfer markings where the bar bears on door edge wearing strips (white).
16. View of left and right latch handles showing contact/gouge abrasion markings.

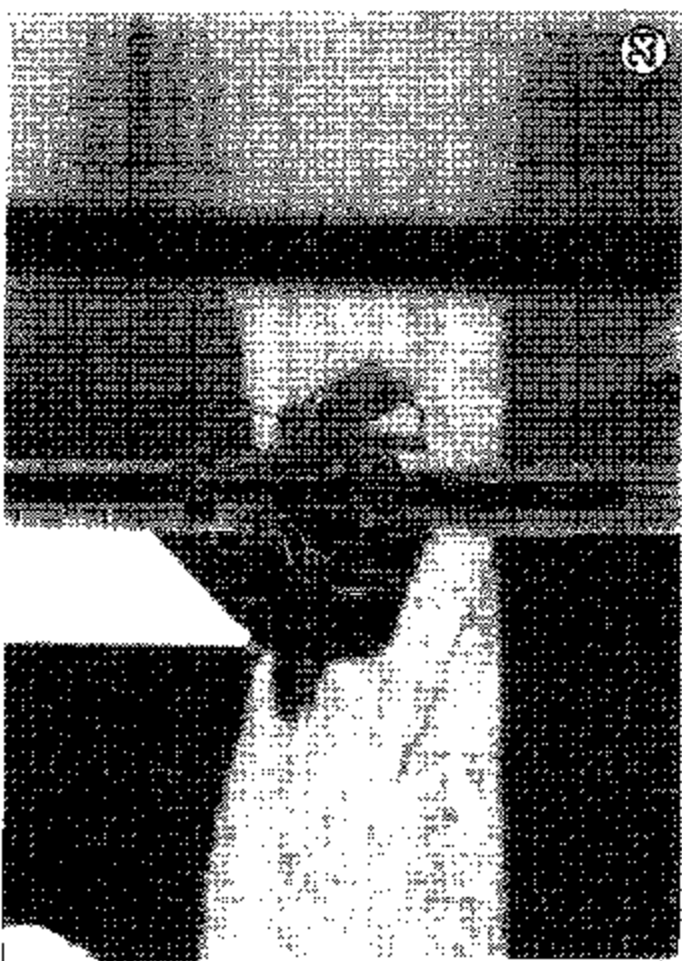
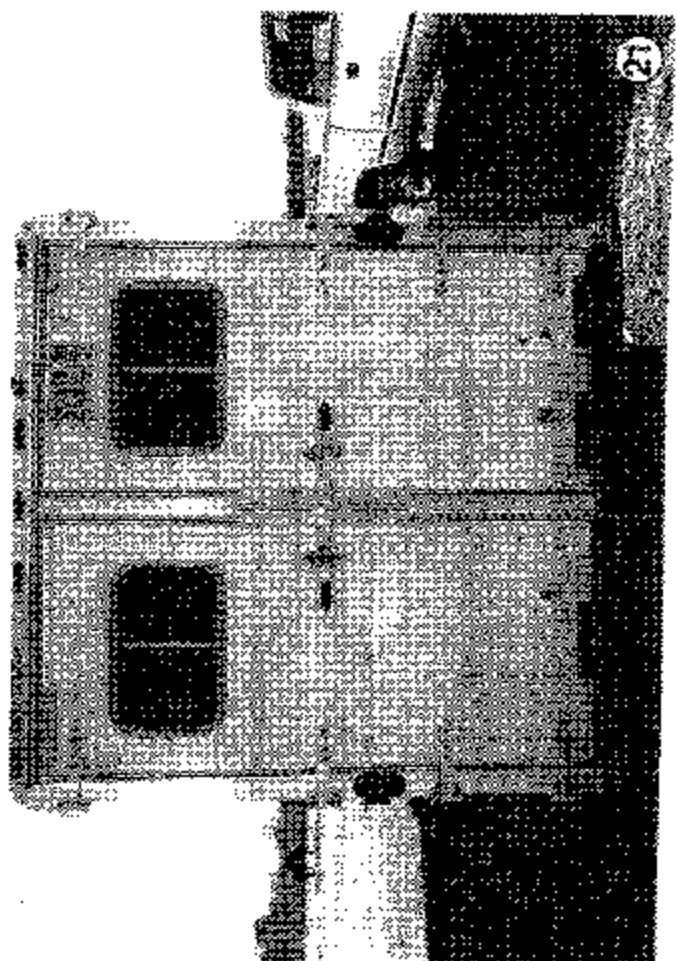
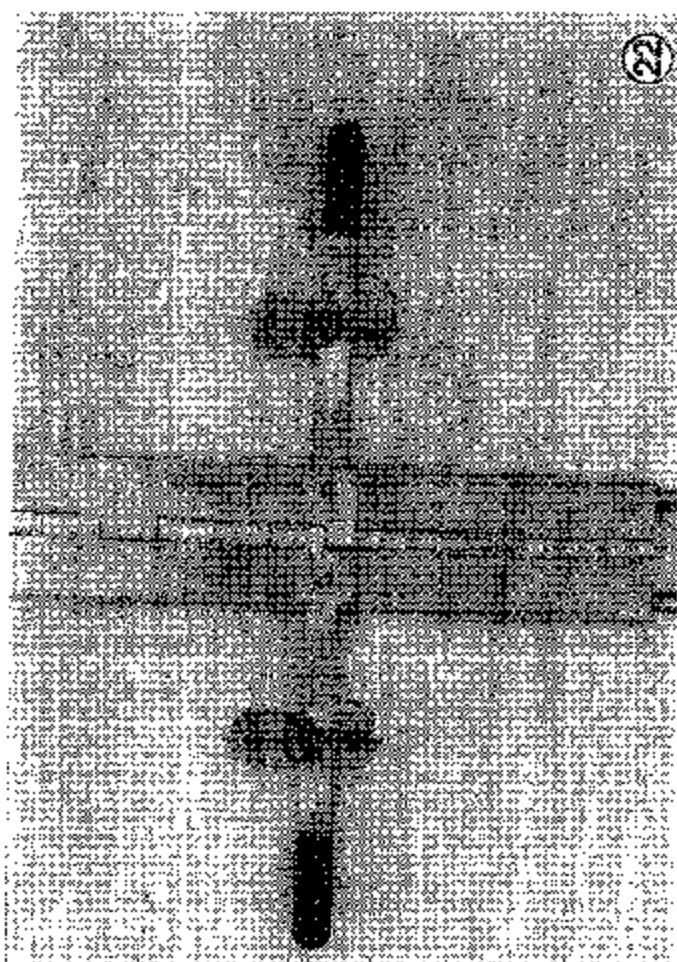


FRANKSTON RIDING CLUB AND FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF
THE SMITH TRAILER ON 01/05/00

17-20 Views of Frankston Riding Club loading area and access road. Road is rough and bumpy with significant grade changes.



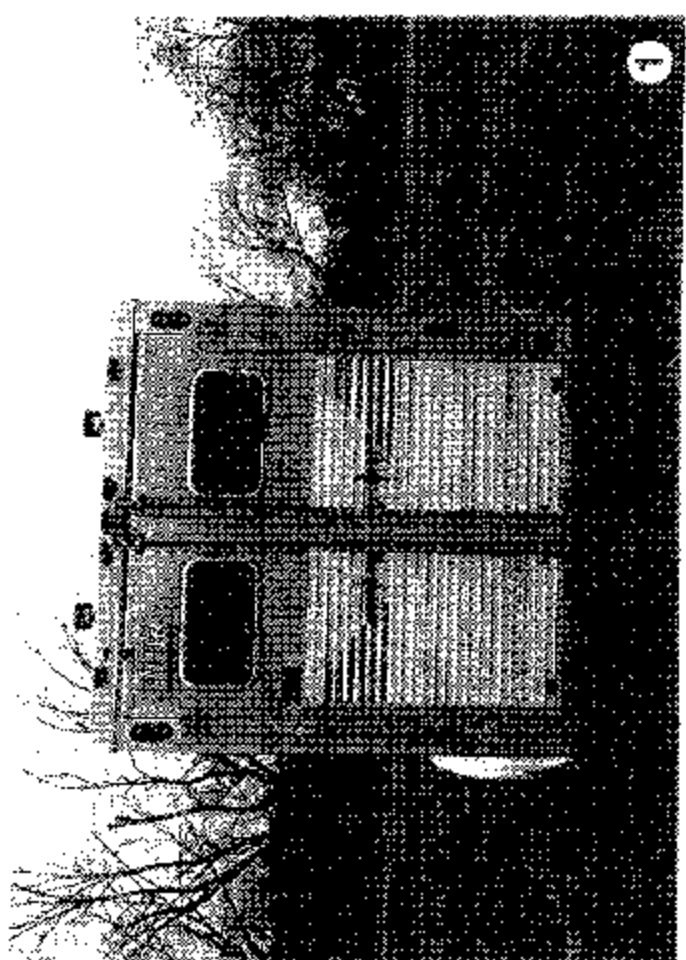
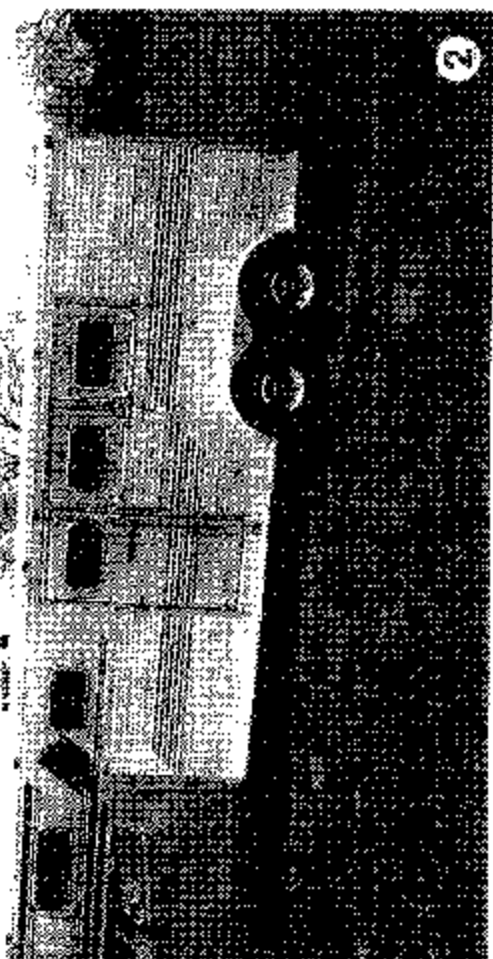
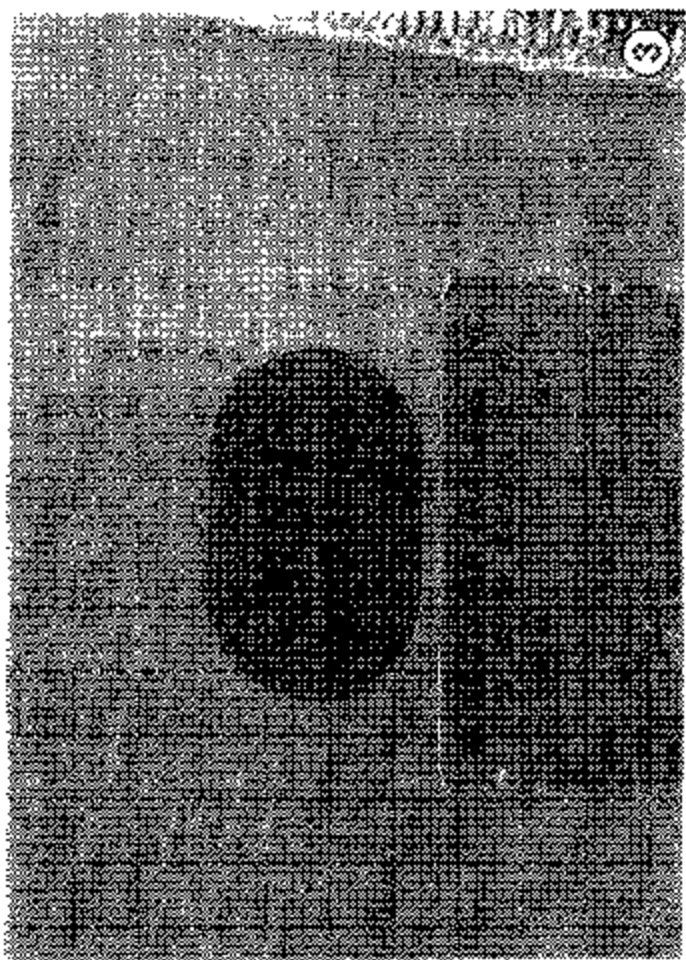
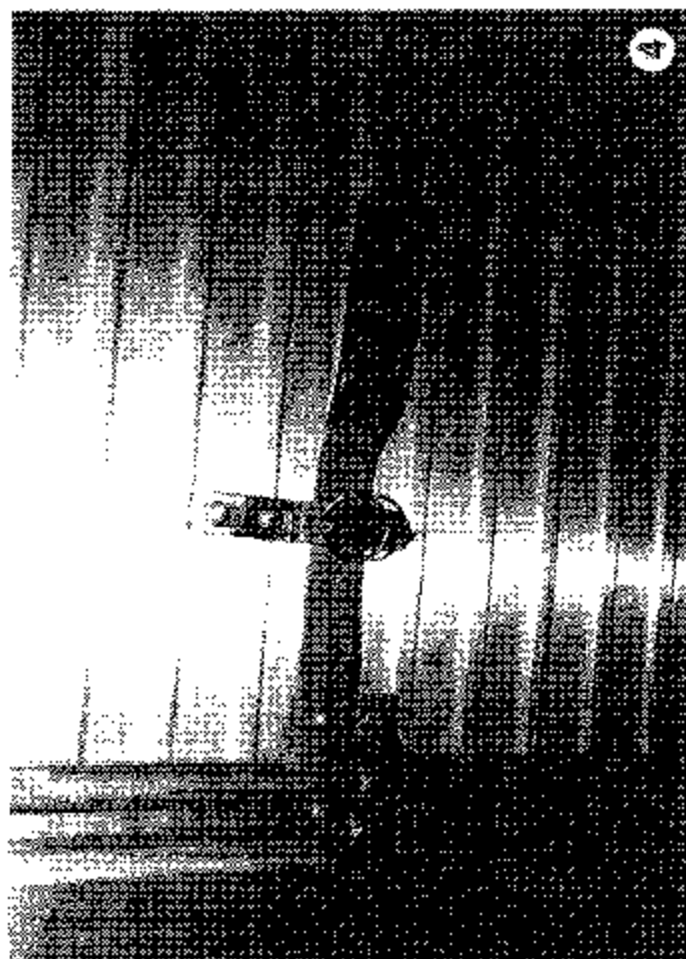
- 21-23. Follow-up inspection of the Smith trailer. Linchpins installed in clips as safety.
24. Smith steer similar to those killed on day of accident.



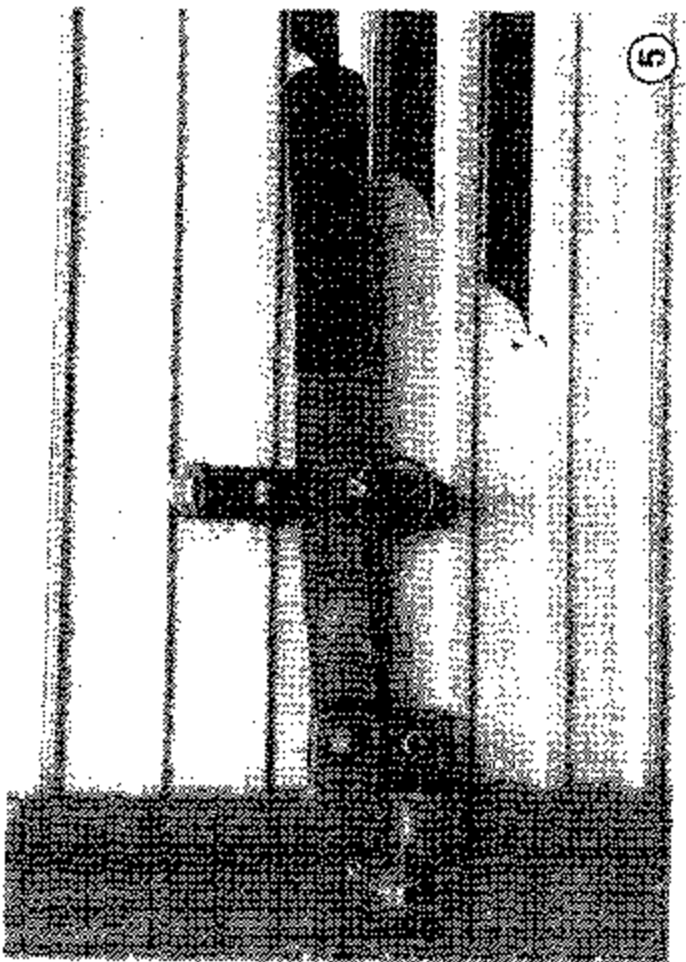
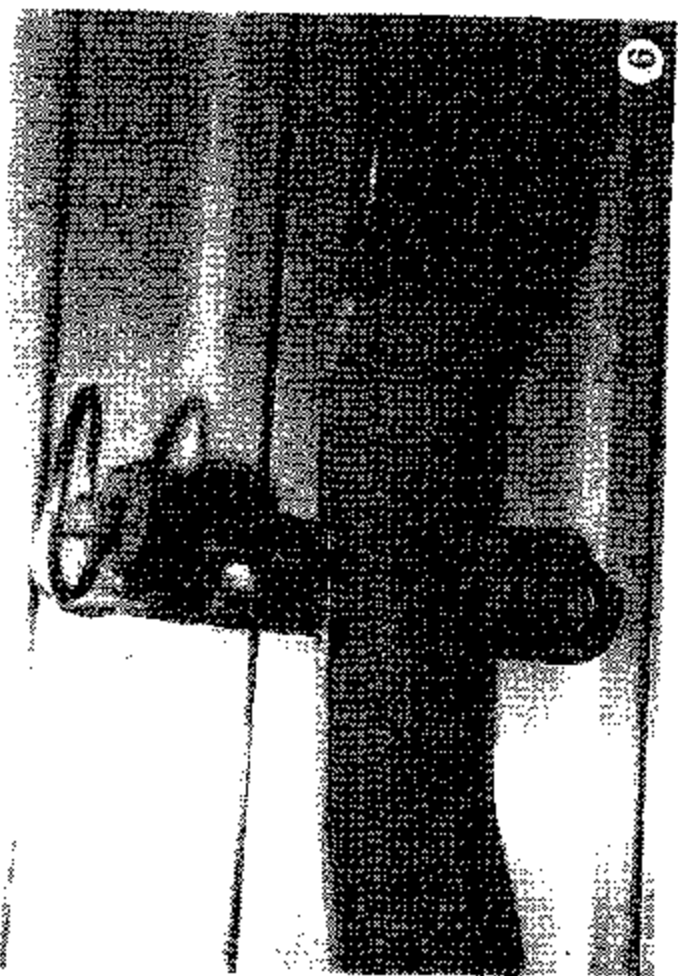
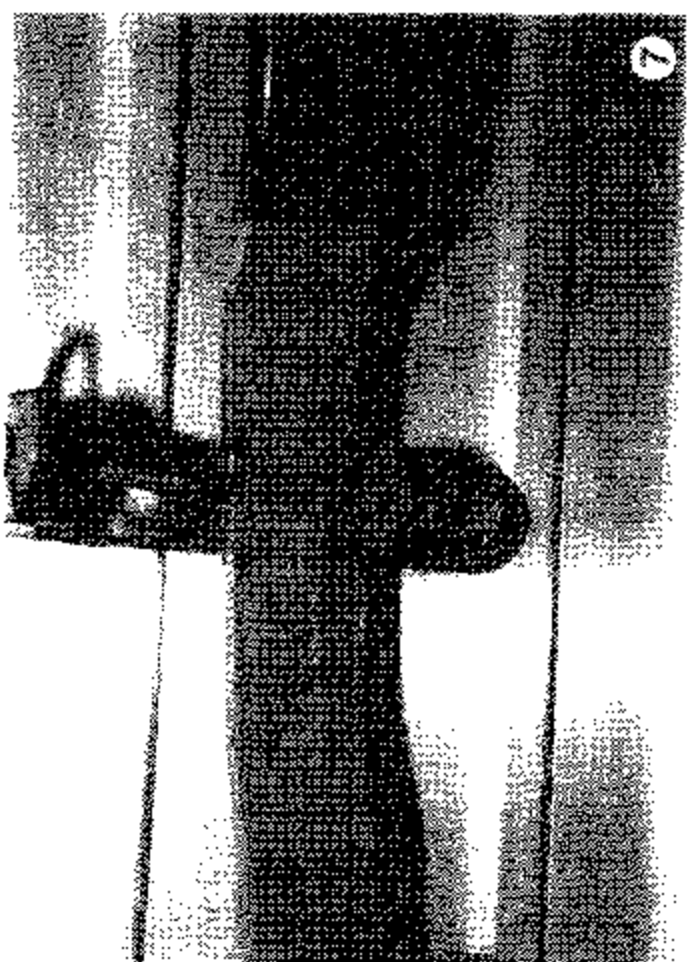
EXEMPLAR TRAILERS 12/08/99

CHAMPION TRAILER GOOSENECK

- 1-3. General views and VIN plate of 1995 Sundowner trailer. This trailer has two hinged rear doors with universal cam type door latches.
4. Note linchpin inserted by owner to secure the upper and lower clips and retain the latch handle.

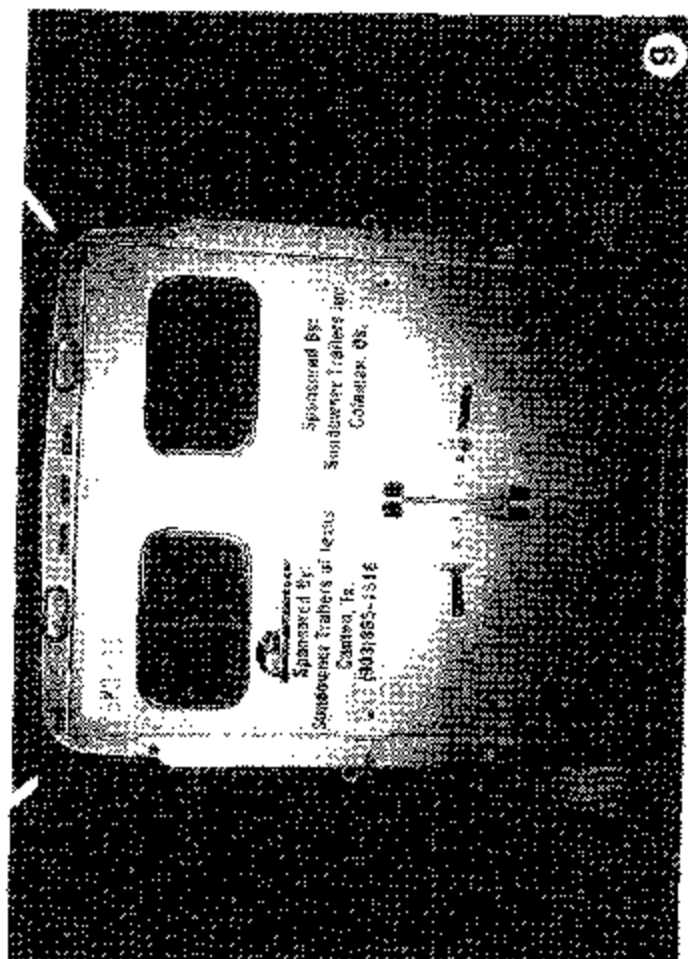


- 5-7. Views of right side access/stall door. Both handle and clips are steel. Note wear pattern and contact markings on handle.
8. Left side tack door latch systems.

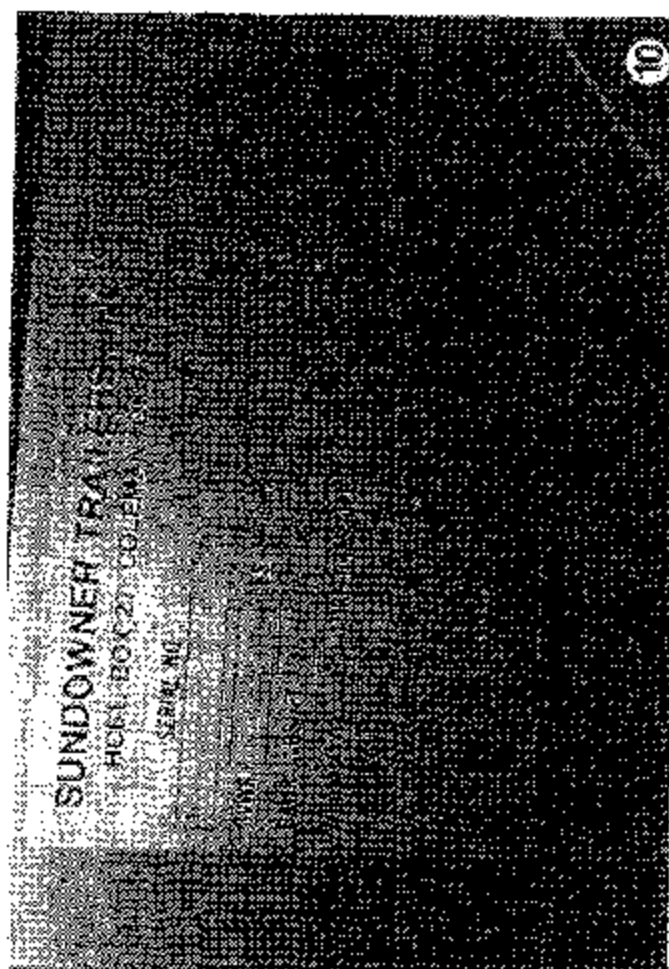


CHAMPION TRAILER BUMPER PULL

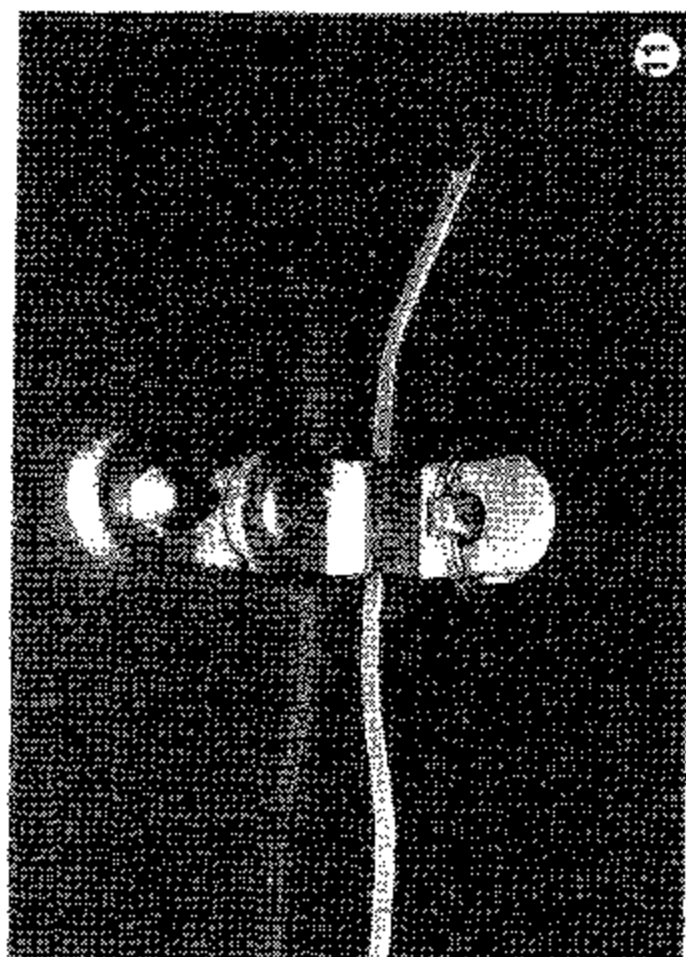
- 9,10. General rear view and VIN plate of older Sundowner bumper pull trailer with center hinged "butterfly" latches. Note owner installed linchpins to secure upper and lower latch clips and retain the latch handle.
- 11,12. Closer views of latch handle clips and linchpin. Note wear pattern in latch handle. Clips and handle are steel.



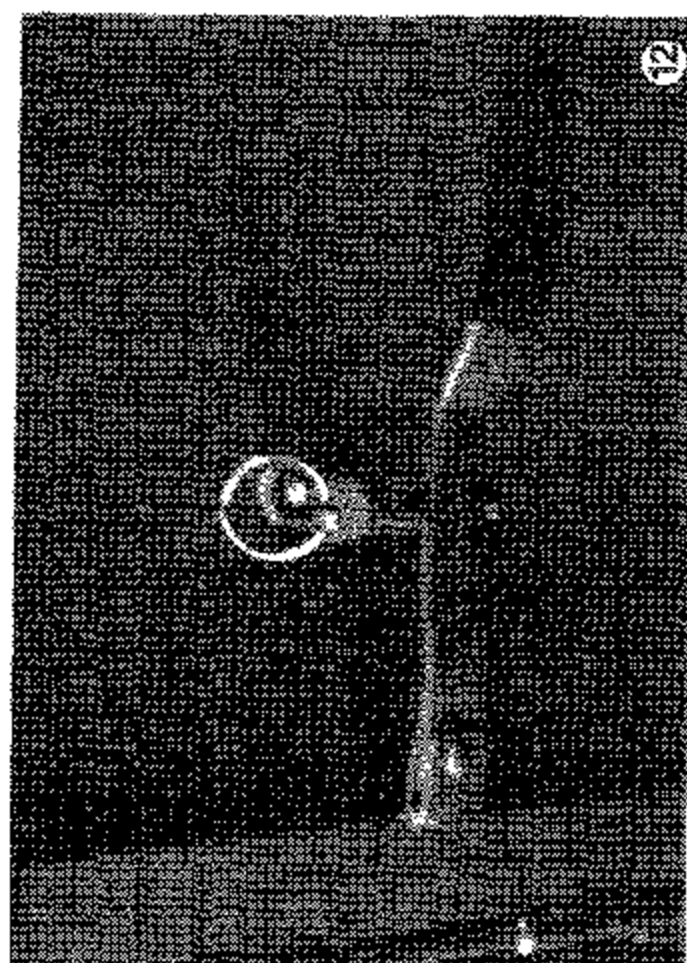
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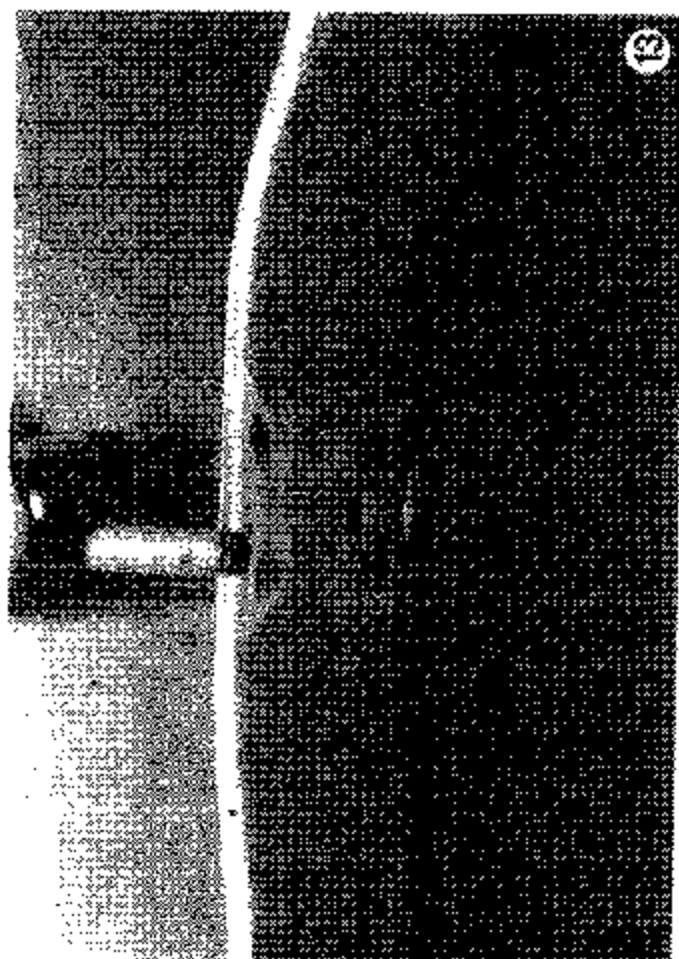


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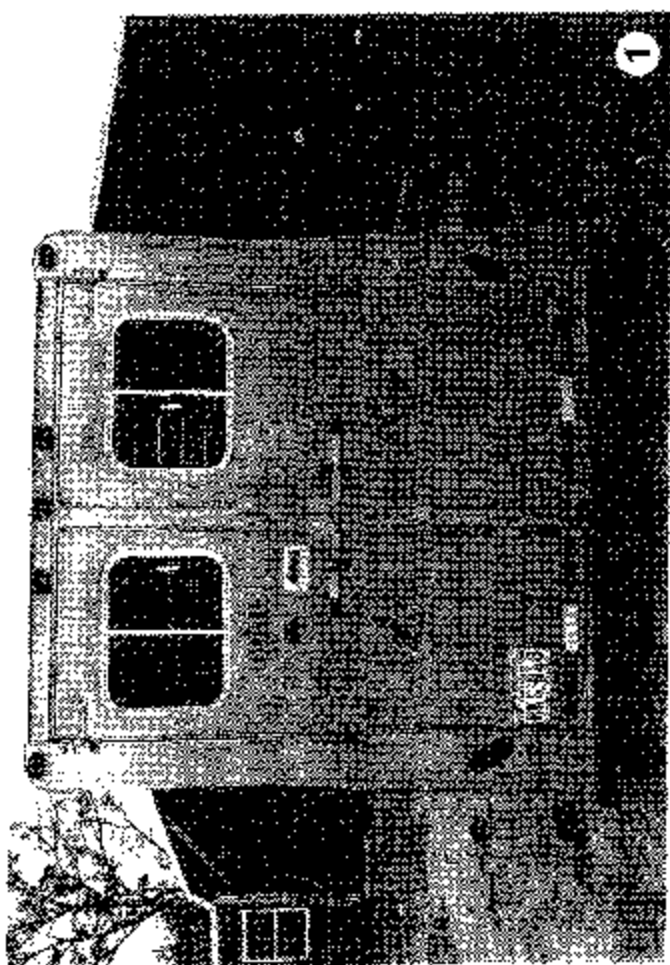
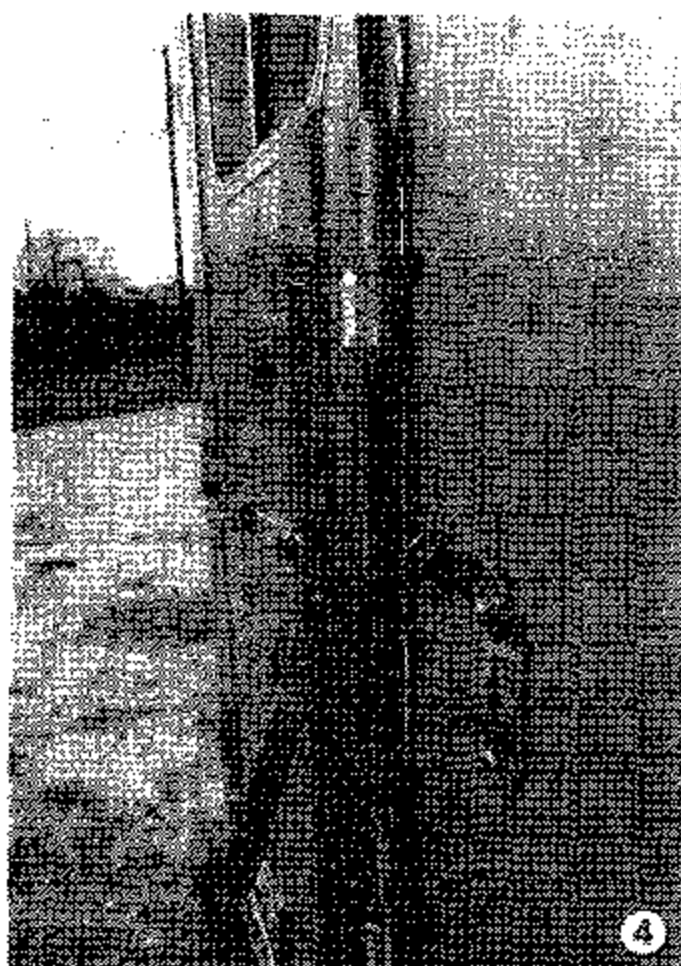
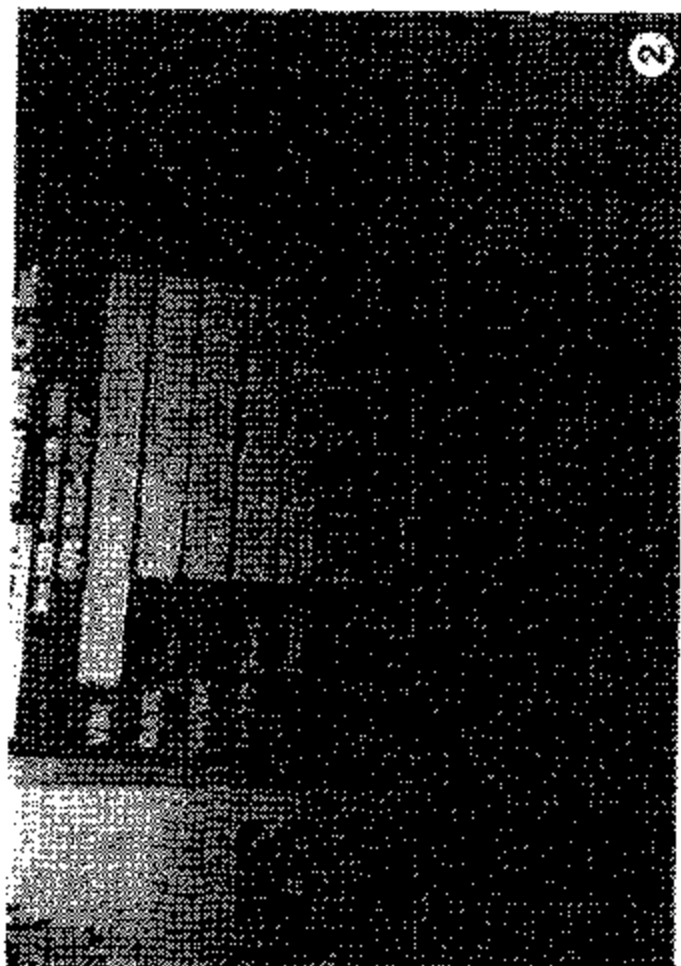
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13.  Closer view of latch handle clips and finchpin. Note wear pattern in latch handle. Clips and handle are steel.

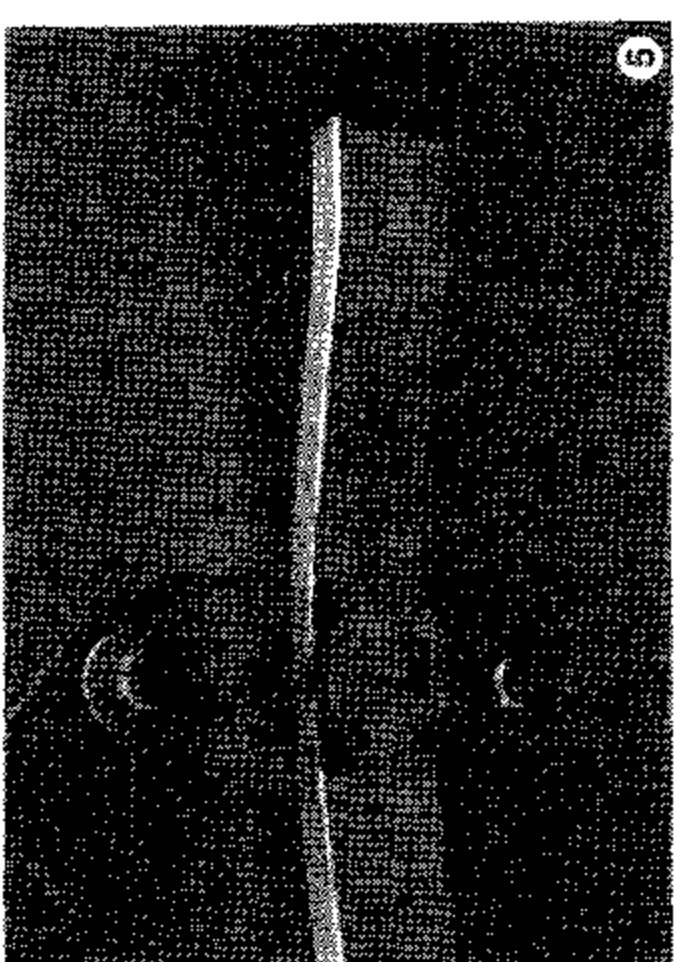
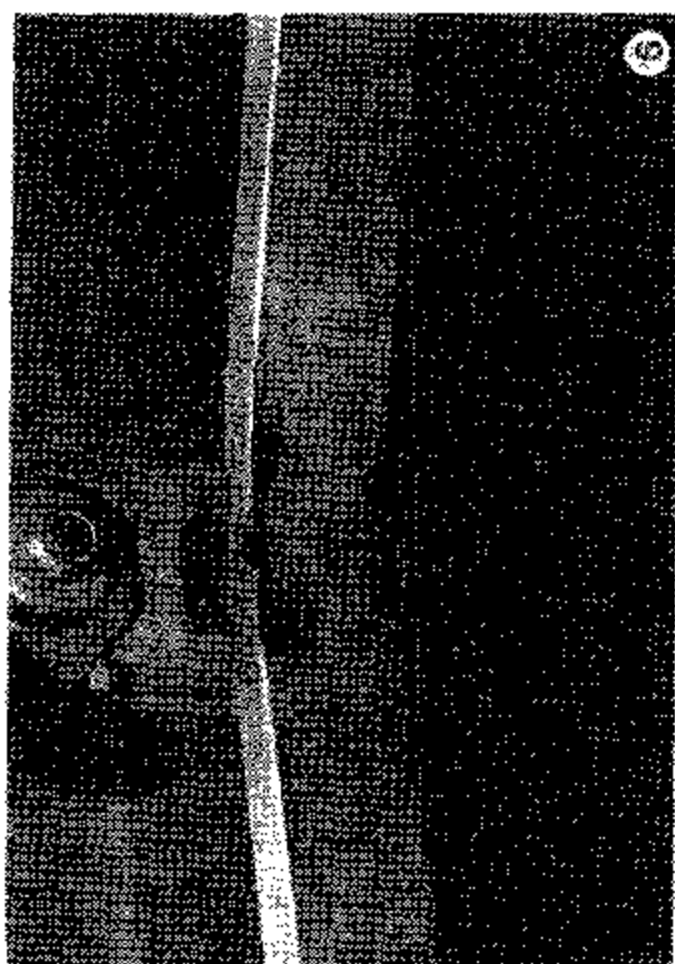
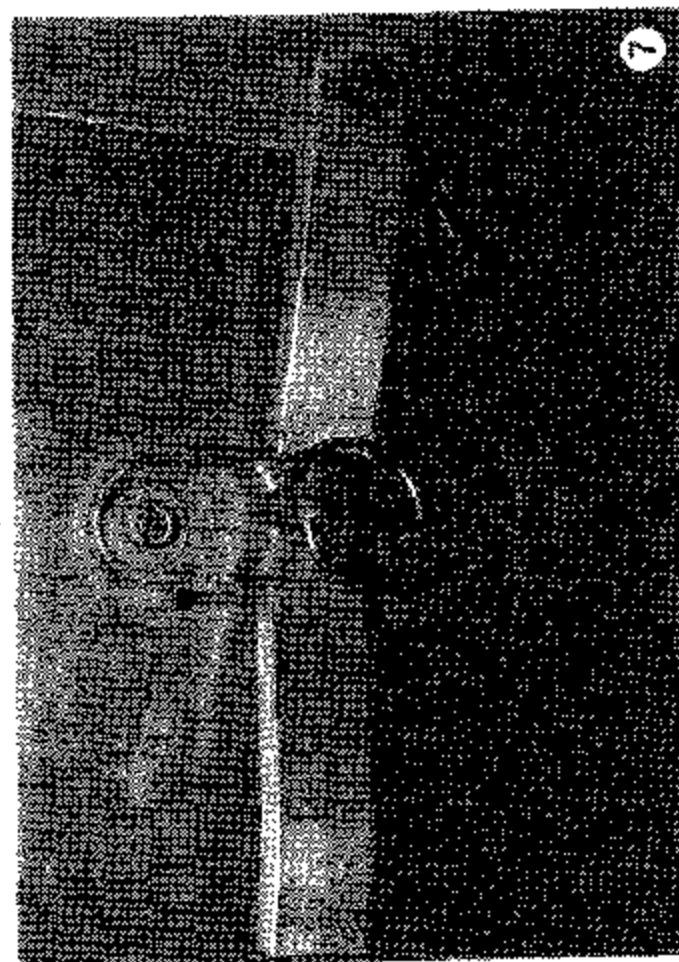
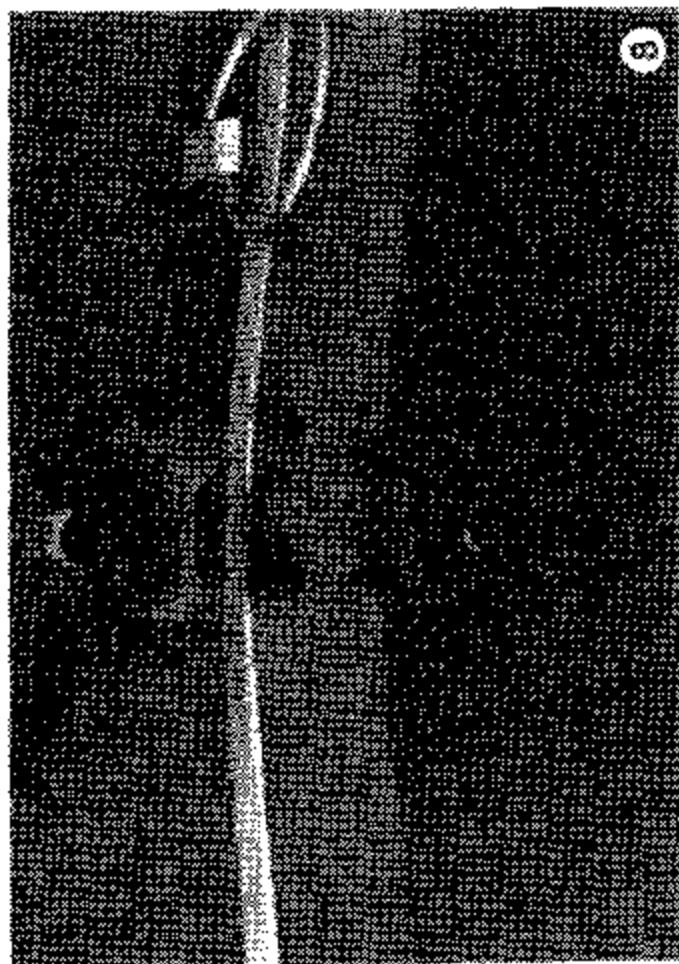


GIDEON GOOSENECK TRAILER

- 1-3. General views and VIN plate of 1995 Sundowner Gooseneck horse trailer. Note linchpin on left side, not installed on right. Latch system is center hinged "butterfly" latch. Latch has steel clips, aluminum latch bar and handle.
4. Note wear pattern on bearing surface of latch bar.



5-8. Closer views of handle to clip contact/wear marks.



BIG TEX JUMBO JR. BUMPER PULL DUMP TRAILER

1. General side view of 1998 Big Tex Jumbo Jr. hydraulic dump trailer bumper pull.
- 2-4. Latch system is single universal cam. Latch handle is aluminum. Clips are steel. Linchpin was installed by manufacturer when sold.

