

American Veterinary Medical History Society

"Devoted to the Diffusion of Veterinary History"

Vintage Veterinary Instrument #5

Bovine Pelvis Splitter



This instrument is a Bovine Pelvis Splitter for use in a heifer, or young cow, having difficulty delivering a first large but alive calf. Prior to the 1960s, it was employed infrequently but when it was not possible, or the veterinarian was unwilling to do a C-section, to surgically remove the calf. After splitting the mother cow's pelvis at the pubic symphysis, this allowed her pelvis bones to open wider allowing the calf to be delivered alive. The heifer was then hobbled for two weeks, turning the animal every four hours to prevent "bed sores," also called pressure sores or decubitus ulcers. The cartilage of the pelvis would heal quickly. Then, the heifer could walk normally, but slowly for another two weeks. This instrument is 48 inches long and weighs 18 lbs.

Instrument and description provided by Fred J. Born, DVM (Fond du Lac, Wisconsin), April 28, 2019.