



Kerosene Annie, a Rumley that sold for \$89,000 plus buyer's premium, is the only one of its kind known to exist.

ANTIQUE TRACTOR SALE YIELDS \$5 MILLION

Oscar's Dreamland Ends

By John Harvey

It was an extravaganza the likes of which we'll likely never witness again - a complete close-out auction in June of nearly 2,000 rare, unusual, and one-of-a-kind antiques from the estate of Oscar Cooke, who once operated three Allis-Chalmers dealerships in Missouri. Prior to his death three years ago, Cooke had amassed the largest antique tractor and equipment collection in the world and placed it in his Oscar's Dreamland Museum in Billings, Mont. When the auction gavel struck for the last time, those antiques had brought approximately \$5 million.

For example, the 1906 Best Traction Steam Engine Model 110, an old 3-wheeler, topped the sale at a few cents under \$150,000. It was purchased by the Holt family, descendants



This 1917 Titan 30-60 commanded \$126,000.

of the original manufacturer of Holt steel-tracked "caterpillar" tractor company that became the Caterpillar company and current owners of the San Antonio Spurs professional basketball team. Another purchase of the family was the Holt 75 crawler, for which they paid \$120,000 - plus the premium of five percent.

In addition to the bidding audience of 1,200 people, bids were coming in on the Internet from around the world. Items up for bid appeared on six closed-circuit big-screen televisions during the auction in order to give bidders an unobstructed view of the actual item. Prior to the event, buyers and wannabe buyers were able to survey the hundreds of tractors and other museum pieces on site.

J.R. Simplot, of potato, cattle, fertilizer and land-holding fame in Boise, Idaho, proved to be the newest, oldest tractor collector

around. He and his agents purchased dozens of tractors and implements for a museum that is still to be built. Before the sale, the 89-year-old billionaire surveyed various tractors and machinery from his golf cart. He told a reporter that he plans to build a \$100 million museum in Boise to house his collection.

One of the many tractors he plans to include in his museum is the

1910 Kerosene Annie, which he bought for \$89,000, plus the five percent premium. This tractor was the forerunner of the entire Rumley family.

Not every rare tractor went to a buyer with



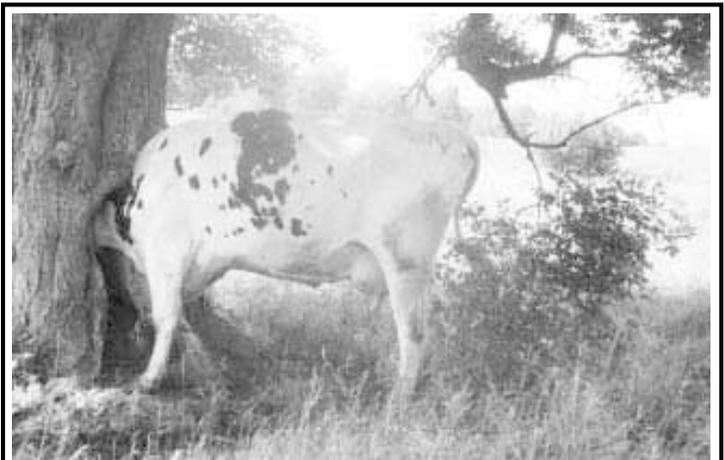
This 1910 Olmstead 25-50, the only one of its kind left, brought \$94,500.

deep pockets and unlimited amounts of cash. Wended Kelch, operator of Kelch's Repair Service in Bethel, Ohio, plunked down \$120,000 (which, with the premium totaled \$126,000) for a 1917 Titan 30-60, a record-smashing price for a gasoline tractor. Kelch said he had the opportunity to buy the tractor a year earlier for \$85,000, but turned it down!

A few items, such as implement seats, sold for as little as \$100, although most brought at least \$350. An Oliver Chilled Plow Works seat in excellent condition fetched \$700.



Tractors of every size, make and description tempted buyers at the closing-out sale of Oscar's Dreamland Museum.



Cow Gets Stuck Looking For Greener Pastures

One of Alvin Madson's cows didn't return with the rest of the herd for milking recently. So the Lonsdale, Minn., farmer went looking for her, only to find her in a sticky predicament: Her head was stuck in a tree.

Madson got his chain saw and a camera and he and his son proceeded to cut her free.

Once freed, she took one last look at the tree and returned home.

"She's always done her own thing," says Madson, who considers her nearly a pet. He calls her "Dumbo".

The name has nothing to do with all the "weird things" the cow does. "She had really big feet when she was little and they sort of flopped around like clown shoes until the vet trimmed them up," explains Madson.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Alvin Madson, 5335 Union Lake Trail, Lonsdale, Minn. 55046 (ph 507 744-2156).

So, Oscar's Dreamland Museum is no more. That's the bad news. The good news is that a large percentage of his rare tractors will wind up in other museums where people can enjoy them for years to come. Oscar Cooke would have liked that.

The 1936 Silver King tractor, at right, was best buy of the day at \$1,500.

