

Horsing around at New Holland special auction

BY PAT KAUFFMAN
NEW HOLLAND — They came by buggy, by car and by foot. They came to buy, to look, and to spend the day. But they came...to the Friday New Holland horse sale.

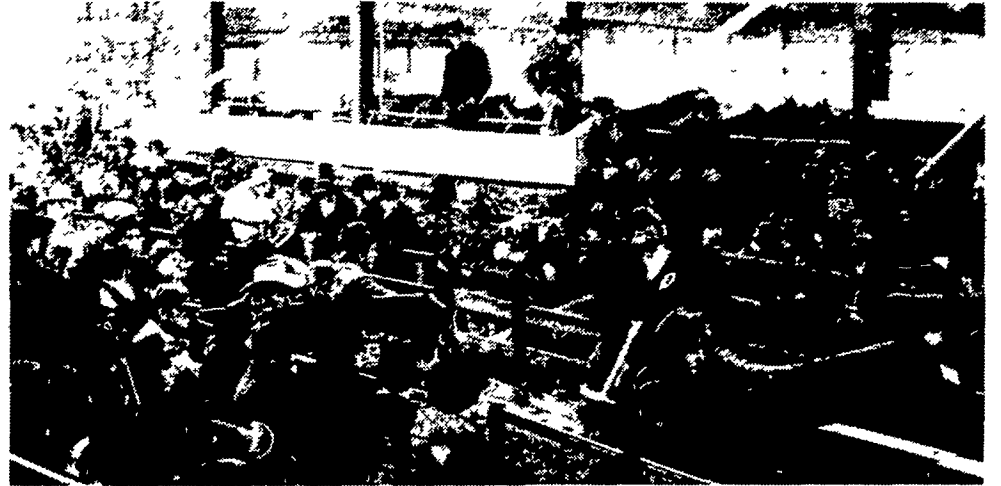
The special Friday horse auctions at the New Holland Stables are very different from the regular Monday horse auctions here.

Broad brims and clouds of cigar smoke were the first indicators of the difference to greet the visitor. And farther inside, the predominance of bays, chestnuts and sorrels, the length of the ears and the breadth of the backs told the story.

The goods offered for sale here were the backbone of the plain man's livelihood.

They were not the quick stocky quarter horse, or the gray sloped shoulder hunter or the occasional thoroughbred. These animals were the sixteen hand Saddlebreds, the matched mules, the giant work horses.

In the stands, spectators and bidders, mostly male, assessed the animals one by one as they entered the ring



Buyers and lookers cram the alleys at the Friday auction. Mules and work horses were in the most plentiful supply with only a scattering of driving horses.

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and the seller hawked his wares. They checked the mouth, they watched the rhythm of the feet for flaws, they kept a wary eye on fellow bidders.

Behind the stands, they pressed through crowded aisles, scanning the goods, checking pedigrees, skimming the legs with their hands, talking Dutch to their friends, waiting for the horses they'd decided on to be brought in.

This was a day for decisions. There were fields to be plowed soon and many miles for their carriages to travel. Here the horsepower burned hay.

While movement in the stables was mostly slow and resolute and the horses stood rump to rump with astounding patience, the signs warned buyers to enter at their own risk and spectators to stay clear. And the familiarity of these people with the beasts here hit home as an otherwise quiet, slow-moving Amish gentleman leaped numbly

with a shout out of the path of a hoof.

What ladies there were, talked animatedly in the stands to friends they could not call on the phone. And business associates settled outstanding hay bills, quoted prices on supplies needed, or detailed stock they had for sale at home. To all of them, the special auction was more than a sale, it was an ingathering, a time to renew acquaintances, a social function.

Sprinkled among the plain sects were "English" people, mostly in their later years. Some came to reminisce with friends on bygone days, some came to buy a horse to till the garden and plow the little field. Some came for something to do.

A few buyers came longer distances to purchase the large horses for pulling specialized parade and ceremony vehicles.

While the candy vendor said horse prices were down, Paul Snyder, auction manager, said that

generally speaking the higher-priced horses were not there, and that prices for the qualities available were steady.

Attendance was not as heavy at this recent special auction. Veteran auction-goers stated that most farmers who use the animals have already purchased their pulling stock.

The top price for the day was a pair of work horses which brought \$3900.

The next special horse auction is scheduled for Friday, April 11.

Prices paid Friday were as follows:

There were reported receipts of 235 head of horses, mules and ponies. Market: steady.

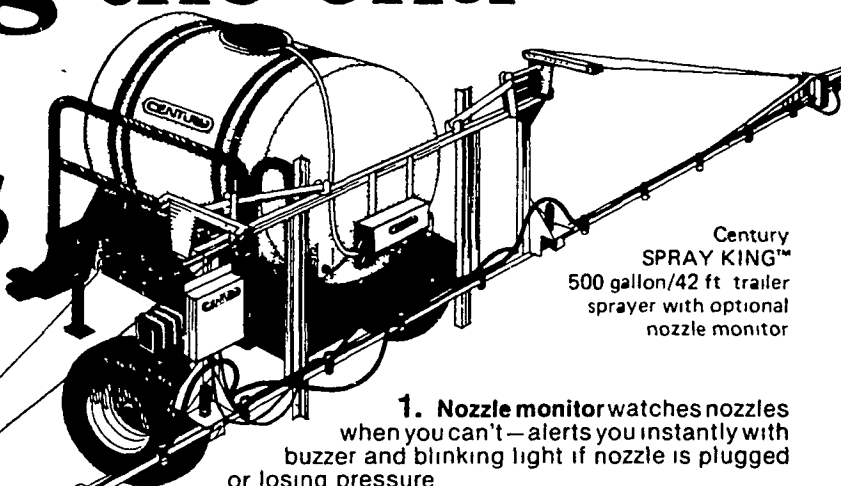
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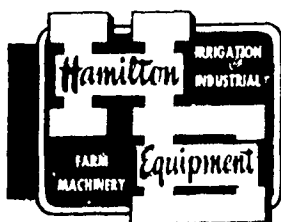
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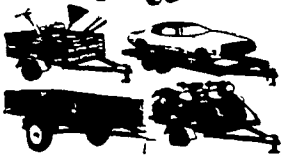


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