

Carriage goes for \$12 grand

INTERCOURSE — If you noticed a few more cars with out-of-state license plates winding down the Lancaster County roads near Intercourse last Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, these folks probably weren't just the usual Dutch country tourists.

Over 600 buyers registered at the 9th annual Carriage, Sleigh, and Antique Auction held by Martin Auctioneers, Inc. They came from about 40 states and Canada.

The tents at the sales pavilion were crowded with people and horse drawn vehicles.

Strolling around the grounds, some of the carriage specimens took a bit of imagination to visualize them actually rolling down the road, either in the past or future. But to an expert's eye, these weather beaten, seen-there-better-days carriages offered a challenge in restoration.

Others were shined and polished to a piano-top finish so that a passer-by could see his own reflection. And even

the novice carriage enthusiast could appreciate the time and effort put into reshaping the antique mode of transport.

Around 250 vehicles were sold on Saturday, bringing to a grand finale the two previous days' sales of antiques and horse related items.

According to Martins, the Friday evening sale of horse equipment went on into Saturday's early morning hours.

"The people stuck with us, so we sold until 1:45 in the morning. If we hadn't sold so late on Friday, the Saturday sale would have lasted until midnight instead of finishing up at 8 p.m."

The top price paid for a carriage this year was \$12,700. Douglas Cater, of Gallupville, New York, became the proud new owner of a 6-passenger mud wagon made by Abbott & Downing.

The extra light vehicle that looks like a stage coach to the untrained eye did not top the sale record for price paid for a single carriage.

Martins said that several years ago, a stage coach sold for \$25,000.

One of the top-priced vehicles will be rolling out to the windy state of Kansas. An immaculate carriage, known as a panel boot victoria, sold for \$7700 to a Kansas carriage enthusiast.

Thomas Gerrity, from Moscow, Lackawanna County, bought a hearse manufactured by Cunningham Carriage Co., Cleveland, Ohio about 1887. The hearse came complete with a plain wood coffin, and sold for \$3000.

The carriage lamps that were on the hearse were sold separately, bringing \$800 for the pair.

Following the hearse in the sale, a carriage called a rockaway because of its unique suspension for a smoother ride sold for \$4100.

What was special about this rockaway? It was made by the Cunningham Carriage Co., Cleveland, Ohio, and was in original condition, with a front seat that was reversible.

Another unique vehicle

that rolled across the auction block was a vis-a-vis wagonette. This four wheeled carriage was imported from England and was totally restored.

It was equipped with three

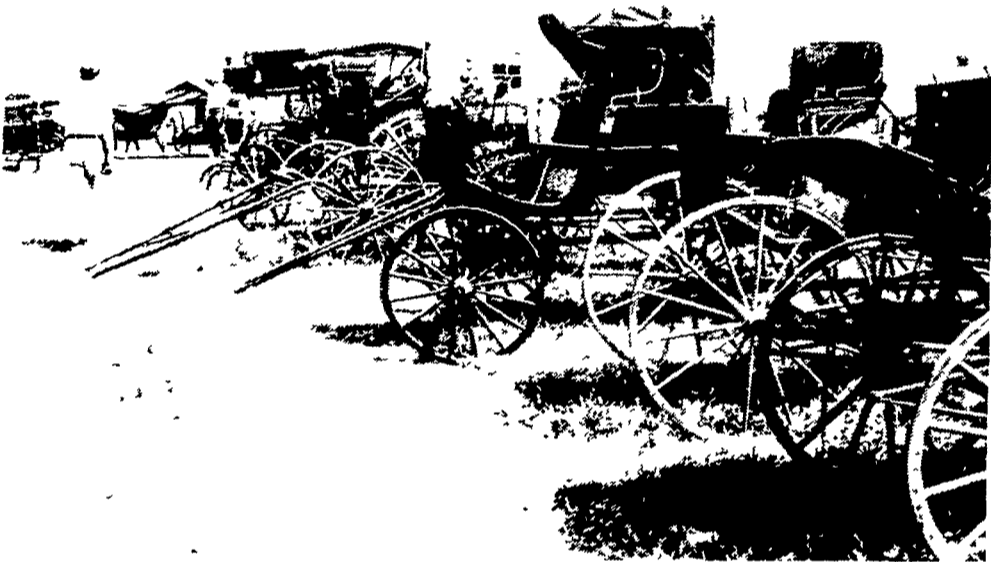
seats, two facing front and with the one behind the driver's seat facing to the rear. That's why it's called a vis-a-vis, because that's French for face-to-face.

The Martins' carriage auction, famous throughout the world, is over for this May. For anyone interested in seeing probably the

largest collection of horse drawn vehicles gathered under tents in one sales pavilion (at least in Lancaster County, if not the world), they should plan to wander on down to Intercourse in August when the next carriage auction will bring back memories of yesteryear.

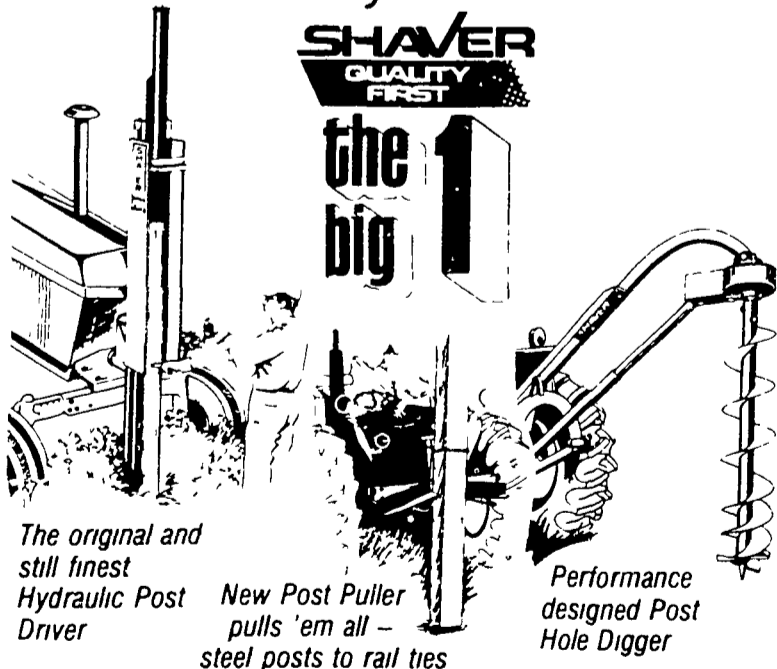


With the carriage lamps of a top-selling hearse in the foreground, sleighs and carts in all sizes and states of repair filled the tents and grounds around the sales pavilion.



Rows and rows of carriages rolled across the auction block at Martin's Ninth Annual Carriage, Sleigh, and Antique sale.

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