

# In solitary silence that almost speaks...

**BY DICK ANGLESTEIN**  
**INTERCOURSE** — The best time to wander around an antique

auction, particularly of old carriages, wagons and sleighs, is long before the bidding gets

started and the crowds arrive.

Unlike a livestock sale or show where the hum and buzz of the crowd are essential parts of the atmosphere, the bustle of people jostling back and forth seems to detract from the antiquated items themselves.

People quickly put a sale in the present.

But antiques, such as yesterday's horse-drawn vehicles, belong and should remain securely linked to their roots in the past.

Thus, it was earlier this week, as consignors began bringing their buggies, carts, wagons, carriages and sleighs to Martin's Auction, near Intercourse — the largest such event of its type in the country.

When the three-day marathon of bidding winds up today, some 9,000 items — ranging from horse-drawn hearses to harness and whips to wicker furniture — will have passed under the auctioneer's gavel.

But as the skies began to clear of their dark clouds and drizzle a couple days before the auction was to open, the early-arriving consignments still out-numbered curious on-lookers and seriously interested buyers.

In their solitary silence, it was almost as if the antique vehicles could speak.

But in reality, they couldn't and their voice belongs to Paul Z. Martin Jr. who, along with brother Larry, is observing a 10th anniversary of being a spearhead in the nationwide renewed interest in horse-drawn vehicles and accessories.

"The interest has grown so much, along with the demand for vehicles, you don't get the calls



Patrick Morgan shines up the side glass on a gleaming black hearse — one of several scheduled for sale at Martin's Auction. His reflection shows he's doing a good job.



This field is sprouting all kinds of shafts. They come in all colors, configurations and conditions. Each will become a part of a restoration project that will put another horse-drawn vehicle back on the road.

any more of the old cars uncovered under a pile in the barn," Martin said.

"Ten years ago, there of the farm-to-farm sale now there are so many collectors involved, there's much of the leg-work."

But Martin recalls a few years ago he can stagecoach in the basement home in Massachusetts had been cut off to get the same was done to remove

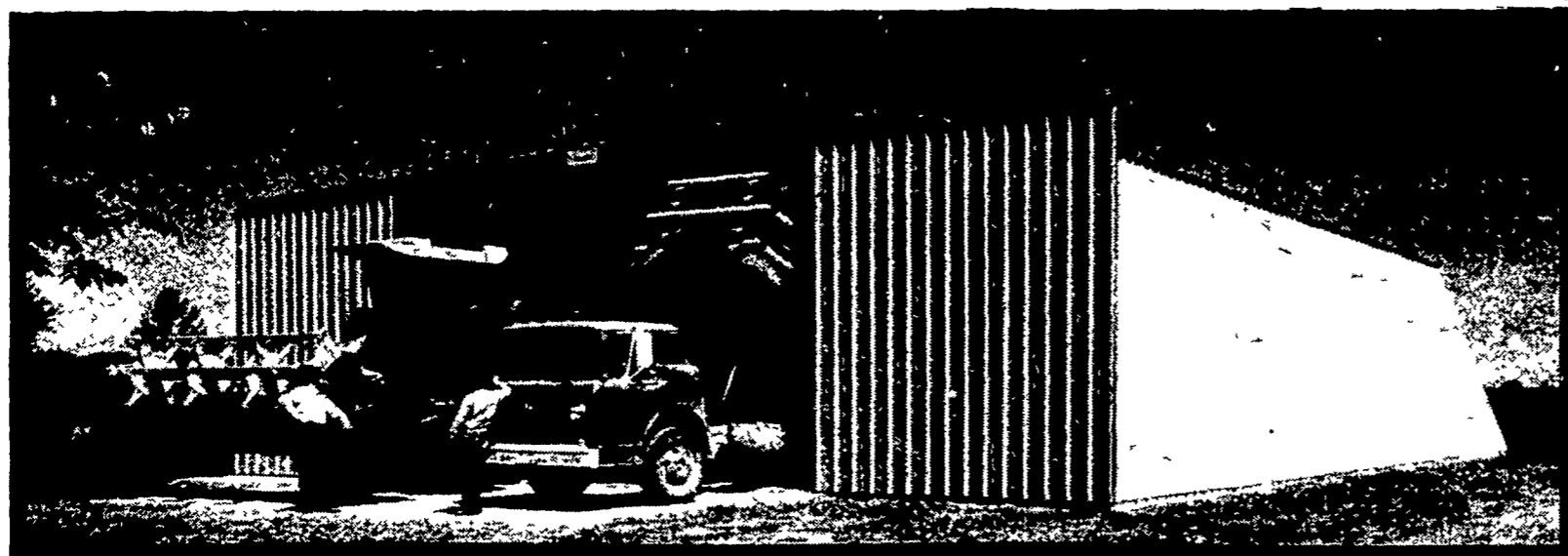
And the prices of drawn vehicles are rivaled by their antique counterparts which feature the horse hood.



Paul Z. Martin Sr. of retirement a few auctions. Here, the c

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