

Thimbleby & Shorland

SALE REPORT

THE LES OAKES REDUCTION SALE – CHEADLE, STAFFORDSHIRE WEDNESDAY 29th JULY 2009

The weather could not have been more unkind to the large and enthusiastic crowd which came to Hales View Farm near Cheadle in Staffordshire for the reduction sale of the late Les Oakes Collection. But carriage buyers are a hardy crowd and were not going to be perturbed by the heavy, persistent rain which fell relentlessly all day. They were more interested in getting a glimpse of the vast and varied collection of carriages and artefacts gathered together by the late Les Oakes, one of the most popular and well known characters in the auction world, who passed away ten years ago. And the prices achieved on the day belied any worries about the economic climate, as so often happens with one-off private sales.

Top price of the day was paid for one of the last lots forward – the wonderful and rare Bow Top Gypsy Wagon by the sought after builder Bill Wright of Rothwell Haigh, Leeds (571). Although in need of extensive renovation, this well known wagon appears in the bible of gypsy wagons, the Harvey and Ward-Jackson book 'The English Gypsy Caravan', and as its first appearance on the open market, the anticipation was great, with the hammer coming down at £48,000.

The second star lot was the wonderful Steam Pump Fire Engine by Merryweather of London which again was in need of refurbishment (543). This far exceeded expectations and sold for a record price for such a vehicle of £27,500, purchased by the National Trust to return to its original home of Penrhyn Castle in North Wales. Another much anticipated lot was the Barouche which attracted a number of telephone bidders, before being sold to Spanish buyers for £20,000 (561).

One of the better presented vehicles at the sale was the Knackers Cart which sold for £6,100 (528), two Bakers Vans for restoration made £2,600 (531) and £2,300 (532) and a highly decorative Bradford Cart sold for £4,000 (533). At the end of the sale, having sold the 70 carriages forward, a Ready Gypsy Wagon sold for £10,000 (572), another wagon thought to be by Dunton of Reading made £4,500 (573) and a Showman's Wagon, again for renovation, made £2,200 (574).

It was an eclectic sale, reflecting the man who put the collection together. Other lots included three diesel train shunters, garden statutory, a pianola, vintage cars as well as harness, sundries and pictures. A set of four warner wheels made £1,300 (89), a pair of oval fronted lamps for repair, thought to be by Lawton, made £420 (103), a pair of large coach type lamps made £380 (104), a pair of square fronted lamps by John Marston made £430 (117), a pair of Road Coach lamps by Davis Hart, Grosvenor Square sold for £580 (121) and 12 large coaching umbrellas made £660 (143). A rare brass collar measurer sold for £460 (192), a collar with hames made £250 (204), a heavy horse collar made £220 (209) and a set of four heavy horse lattern bells sold for £230 (250). A set of pony pair harness with collars sold for £600 (282) and a set of heavy horse pair harness made £360 (284).

Red telephone boxes sold for £580 each (321, 435 & 436), a pair of stone greyhounds sold for £240 (332), a late 18th-century stone trough from a country estate sold for £950 (337), another made £720 (338) and two partially covered stone troughs sold for £1,400 (339) and £1,500 (340). A cast iron salt box marked 'City of Westminster' made £500 (349), a pair of cast iron swan urns on plinths made £2,200 (356), a pair of huge wild boars sold for £4,300 (358), a pair of large repro iron urns made £3,400 (364) and a pair of large white urns sold for £1,900 (400).

A 1950 Thorneycroft fire engine sold for £600 (431), a Daimler Straight 8 (with the body of a gypsy wagon on the back!) made £900 (432), an old Ford Van sold for £920 (434) and an old Morris Minor sold for £1,150 (437).

The next carriage sale is the Reading Carriage Sale on Wednesday 2nd September 2009 and catalogues are now available. Entries for the final sale of the year on 4th November are now being accepted - please contact the auctioneers for an entry form, or download one from the web site.

For further information on the above sale or any future sales, please call 0118 950 8611 or email carriages@thimbleby-shorland.co.uk