



FIRST CHOICE — This little girl waited more than an hour for the parish auction at Prairie du Chien to come to

her. She wanted the desk she is sitting at.

Some Rare Finds

150-Year-Old Parish Yields Auction Prizes

By DON EASTMAN

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN — Well, it was quite a Saturday afternoon at St. Gabriel's Catholic Parish here as more than 200 avid auction fans gathered to bid on the variety of objects that had been tucked away through the years at the 150-year-old parish.

Cold, brisk winds and threatening rain only made the crowd huddle closer together and the lunch stand set up on the grounds did a whopping business in coffee sales.

Auction fans are an addicted group. Some come looking for bargains, others seek the unusual, while still more come "just to look" and never go away empty-handed.

Auctioneer F. W. Marshall's booming voice of "Who'll open the bid" and "Six and a quarter, who'll give me six and a half" are more than most persons can resist for a comfortable old rocking chair or a vase like Grandma used to have.

One couple who drove 100 miles to attend the sale, went home happy with a car-full of student desks and an old pew.

The old pews from the church found new owners that had useful places for them far removed from their original purpose. Many will be used in entrance halls and back porches, and one group of pews is reported to be going to a barber shop. The old communion rail has a variety of possibilities, stated its new owner, and with a little imagination can be

wooden candlesticks varying in size from a few inches to a four-foot tall candle holder. Some he bought for friends, and some will be displayed in his 140-year-old home.

The old desks from the schoolhouse, stored away years ago, were eagerly bought up by parents of school children. The tiny desks of first graders and the long-forgotten desks with seats that tipped up fastened in pairs to runners were snatched up by parents and grandparents who remembered sitting in these very seats.

The 150-year-old pieces of timber that had been replaced in the church went to Paul Nolan, who reportedly has several construction projects planned on his farm near here.

The eight-foot tall painting of the Annunciation scene which formerly hung over the altar in the old church was bought by Mary Barrette. She wasn't sure where she could display it in her parents' house, but she



Jim Bittner Helps Load a Statue

a little imagination can be turned into numerous items.

The old sedelia, the seat that the priest and altar boys sat on in the sanctuary, was sold to a lady who plans to turn the Gothic-styled back into a headboard for a bed, and the seat will remain a bench.

The statues that had been removed from the church were favorite items to many of the parishoners. A recent bride, Mrs. Diane Beesecker, Prairie du Chien, was thrilled when she was the high bidder on the 5-foot tall statue of St. Theresa, the Little Flower.

What can people do with five foot statues? That's no problem. Some will be used in outdoor shrines, while others will be placed inside the homes in an honored place.

Everyone wanted candlesticks and there was a great variety. Some were bidding for a relic from the old church, while others call them antiques. Don McTaggart, Elkader, Ia., was the successful bidder of over a dozen of the brass, gold, and

Ag Unit Cancels Milk Pay Hearing

The Assembly Agriculture Committee has canceled a hearing that had been scheduled at 10 a.m. today on a bill requiring prompt payment to milk producers.

The hearing conflicted with a federal hearing in Chicago on the same issue. The Assembly

inner parents house, but she wanted it anyway.

The manager of a local lumber yard, Abe Lacke, donated 75 various size cans of paint to the auction, and a handful of other parishioners brought an assortment of household items.

The sale wasn't all unusual items — there was the standard things found at an auction, too. Old bathtubs and sinks, chairs, doors, dressers and cabinets, carpets, lawn mowers, and light fixtures were but a few of the hundreds of items that were no longer used at the parish.

After three and a half hours of competitive bidding, the auction was over, and people started looking at the items they had purchased. Many had come in trucks and station wagons, prepared to haul away their new possessions.

But there's always the "lookers," the one's who didn't plan to bid on anything, or maybe one little thing. These people suddenly realized that they had this big pile of things, and no way to get it home. But auction fans are friends and neighbors who willingly help out in such an emergency.

And soon the lot was empty, except for one old kitchen stove and some old tin that nobody wanted.

The end of another auction.

St. Gabriel's will have to wait another 150 years to gather together such an assortment of prize possessions for another generation of waiting new owners.



Auctioneer F. W. Marshall Spiels

Highland Legion Picks