The Amazing Biography of a Cow

Souvenir
International Harvester Dairy Equipment Display A Century of Progress Exposition 1934
International Harvester Exhibits - A Century of Progress 1934

Why "Lady" Allen is No?  See picture of McCormick-Dengler trolley and in our photo, rear end of every cattle which means the present and higher prices of the money and better return of his producing equipment.

A model of Holstein Frisian cow standing in the middle of the floor. Compare with "Lady" Allen's "smallest" in the photo in the picture (at left).

The black spot on "Lady" Allen's side is the door to the machinery which makes this mess and contrives the other simulations of life. The Serbian An is a closed pipe with a distant pump, returning to and up a rear flag of the Cow is in the other. This is the "Y" it is continuously washed off day long.
The Amazing Biography of "Lady" Alten Irma Ormsby
(Pure-bred Holstein Con. No. 864903)
The Story of her After-Life
1934
The Amazing Biography of a Cow

As this is to be a life story of International Harvester's famous mechanical cow, one of the most popular and best known exhibits at the Century of Progress, we might start off in the approved biographical manner and tell you that her full name was Alken Ina Ormsby, that she first saw the light of day in 1927 on the dairy farm of Dr. G. F. Warren at Ithaca, New York, that she was later purchased by Forsgate Farms, Jamesburg, New Jersey, and that her mother and her father, Ormsby Perfection, were distinguished members of the blue-blood Holstein-Friesian aristocracy, with all that that implies.

First there was the Milker

But that, fine as it sounds, wouldn't be the real beginning. The story of the Cow must start with the McCormick-Deering milker. If there hadn't been a display of McCormick-Deering dairy equipment at the World's Fair and a
famous milker to be featured in it, there wouldn’t have been a famous cow.

That takes us back to 1932, when Advertising Manager F. W. Heiskell tackled the job of planning and preparing the Company’s various exhibits for A Century of Progress 1933. The dairy equipment display in the main exhibit in the Agriculture building was just one of the myriad problems facing him, but an important one. The milker was to be featured adequately. But how? What to do to make the milker display different, outstanding, World’s Fair caliber.

Then the Big Idea

“We’ll have a real cow,” Manager Heiskell said, “and show the public how the McCormick-Deering milker works. We’ll milk the cow continuously all day and demonstrate the milker’s place in modern dairying. The milker has not only made pleasant work out of a universally disliked farm chore; in careful hands it has also made milk production much more sanitary. Folks who drink milk and use it in other ways should know that. The milker has also helped dairymen keep their costs down where they can make a profit from the sale of their product. We should try to bring these points out in our display.”

Nothing less than a purebred cow would do of course. Preferably a Holstein, true to type in every line and point and without blemish or defect. And, Mr. Heiskell decided, she would have to do more than merely give milk. She would have to be able to moo, switch her tail, turn her head, flick her ear, wink her eye, chew her cud, breathe!

The Search Begins

What a contract! With some searching a suitable cow could undoubtedly be found. The big question was:

Could she be made to do mechanically so many of these things she did naturally in life? There was only one way to find out.

Instructions were issued. The investigation wheels began to turn. Phone calls, telegrams, letters, trips here, trips there, interviews, explanations, offers, rejections, estimates, problems galore. And then one day weeks later—success! The Cow had been found and installed in the New York studio of a mechanical-animal “creator” who had guaranteed that in her re-incarnation she would perform according to the Company’s specifications in every detail. The guarantor was Messmore & Damon, whose reputation was shortly to become nation-wide as World’s Fair visitors “oh’d” and “ah’d” and “wow’d” their way through the firm’s unique exhibit, “The World a Million Years Ago.”

The Search Ends

Ralph A. Hayne, a Harvester man whose knowledge of Holstein fine points was only exceeded by his zeal to obtain just the right animal, examined over 150 cows on various farms before making the final choice. He singled out Alken Ina Ormsby No. 364903 from the herd of more than 200 registered purebred Holsteins on the Forsgate Farms. She most nearly measured up to the numerous specifications that had been laid down.

She was 5 years, 2 months, and 12 days old when this honor came to her. Milk record 18,464.4 pounds in 305 days, Class B record. Butterfat 571.4 pounds. She had an almost perfect head and neck. Legs were square under her and wide apart, giving a good chest. Big girth, big roomy middle that would with equal facility take gobs of feed or a flock of motors, cams, levers, and other gadgets. Her back from shoulder to tail was long and straight as a line. She was wide across the hips and between pin
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bones. Thighs wide apart. Large smooth udder, hanging level. Skin fine-haired, soft and pliable. No warts, no calloused knees, no scratches, no scars, no blemishes of any kind.

These points are just a few, a very few, of those considered. But they explain the remark of a dairy cattle breeder who, watching the cow perform during the Fair, said: "Why, that cow alive would be worth $1,000 a year just to win prizes at county and state fairs."

Her Markings of Perfect Ancestry

There was another point—her markings. Of course they were to be a pleasing combination of black and white. But it was also specified that she should have a large black patch on one side. Such a patch would effectively conceal a door to give access to her interior mechanism, if the outline of the patch were also the outline of the door. Alken Ina had such a patch and now has such a door. Through it she receives her daily inspection and ration of oil.

Installed in the studio, she was waited upon like a princess royal—which as a matter of fact she was. Her specially prescribed daily diet of grain, beet pulp, and hay was weighed and measured and taken to her at the proper intervals. And from then until she departed several weeks later for Chicago and the Company's exhibit at the Fair she was at home to interested visitors six days a week.

She Goes Under Observation

She was the wonder of a lifetime to many and many a boy and girl from those nearby streets and alleys—boys and girls who had never seen a cow, and whose ideas of the origin of milk did not extend far beyond the white-
painted wagons that rumbled and clanked through echoing streets in the early morning hours. For these the supreme thrill was to see her ladyship milked by that manipulative genius, the presiding dairyman. Marvelous indeed to see large pails filled to overflowing with the warm foamy liquid that was freely given to needy families in the neighborhood. Shop girls, waiters, stenographers, office clerks, factory hands, foremen, managers, many business men—all paid their tribute of interest and admiration to "Lady" Alken Ina Ormsby.

She Gets In the News

Newspaper men and magazine writers came, made notes, took photographs. Her story and picture were widely published in newspapers and periodicals of various kinds both here and abroad. The list in the Chicago office files is as long as your arm. She was featured in Pathé, Hearst, and Paramount news reels. She was described to radio audiences over both the NBC and CBS chains. Eddie Cantor, Clara, Lu 'n' Em, Uncle Ezra, Floyd Gibbons, Amos and Andy, and others all had a voice in broadcasting her rare appeal to Fair-goers. She was even then becoming a celebrity.

"Robot Cow Moos and Gives Milk" headed a story in Popular Science Monthly, which received still wider circulation when reported by other publications. "A joint product of nature, art, and invention," said the Scientific American in the opening paragraph of its scientific write-up. "Cow—with Gestures," began a humorous account in "The Skylight," a New York art publication, which wound up: "We worry about the whole affair; does it or does it not belong in a serious magazine on sculpturing and modeling?"

Dozens of newspapers and trade publications, describing the "mechanical boissy that breathes," said in sub-
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stance: “Spectators at A Century of Progress will rub their eyes in amazement when they find this Holstein is wholly mechanical.” One newspaper referred to her as “Baron Munchausen’s cow,” following wide publication of a picture of that well-known stage, screen, and radio entertainer taken with the cow in the New York studio.

She Has Her Studio Days

What happened in the studio for several weeks after her ladyship’s arrival was thus outlined in part in the columns of The New Yorker:

“Messmore & Damon, who make mechanical animals—great big ones—are having fun right now copying a cow. It’s a little whimsy of the International Harvester Company who are going to exhibit an automatic milking device at the Chicago World’s Fair and who thought it would be nice to have it milk an automatic cow. They approached Messmore & Damon, who are probably the only people in the world who would receive such an order with equanimity. Messmore & Damon did a little figuring on a piece of paper... and went to work.

“It [the cow] arrived somewhat astonished and was put in an improvised stall in a corner of the firm’s huge workshop on West 27th Street. Mr. Damon set up a wooden frame beside the cow and began making a full-size model in potter’s clay. Mr. Messmore got to work on the complicated mechanical devices that will make the thing work.

The Big Black Spot

“The day we dropped in things were still in this early state, but the great men of the mechanical-animal world outlined their plans. After the clay model a ‘negative’ in plaster must be made and from that a hollow papier

mache cow will be fashioned. Then the live cow will be slaughtered and its hide stretched over the model. The real cow has a big black spot on one side—which was specified, so that a kind of door could be cut around the outside edge of the spot. The door is to permit the operator of the cow to get at its machinery if anything goes wrong...

“They found of course that milking the real cow had to be worked out at once. They hired a man named Bill from the Ben Hur stables. He feeds the cow twice a day and milks her twice a day. Her milk, five or six gallons a day, is given free to destitute families in the neighborhood. “Mothers and fathers appear with buckets and take what they want.”

What Happened to Her Hide

The clay model completed, the plaster mold or “negative” was made. Then the 6-ply paper mache frame. The latter had to be strong enough to carry the weight of the internal mechanism and provide a substantial framework on which to mount the hide. The hide meantime had been prepared, treated, and handled with the utmost care. When mounted it fitted perfectly. Not a stitch showed.

The base, with its cement finish, the stanchion equipment, salt cup, water cup, and manger were all assembled at New York. When finally and officially approved, everything was expressed in much-upholstered boxes and crates to Chicago to be connected up with the milker in the permanent installation at the Fair.

The Milker?
Oh, Yes

The milker! We haven’t said much about the milker, because this story belongs to “Lady” Alken Ina Ormsby.
However, you should know something of the mechanical problems involved in making that milker function “naturally” under unnatural conditions and of the ingenuity of the Company’s Milwaukee factory men who worked those problems out.

Of course the “milk” (an oil solution) circulates continuously from cow to pail and back again, although in appearance it is drawn from the cow solely by the suction action of the milker.

There Was a Secret

The secret is this: A pipe in the bottom of the milk pail allows the milk to flow by gravity to the motor-driven Viking pump in the rear of the exhibit, the pump being about a foot lower than the pail. The pump continuously forces the milk back to the cow’s udder through a pipe in the cow’s rear right leg, distributing it still under pressure to each of the four teat cups. At each stroke of the milker pulsator a quantity of milk is released into the teat cups and sucked up into the pail, completing the cycle.

How about the vacuum on the milker, you say. The motor and vacuum pump are in a back room 80 feet away. The vacuum gauge on the pipe line above the stanchion registers constant proof of their activity.

Glass Windows Reveal

You can see the action of the rubber teat-cup liners because the regular metal of the teat cups has been replaced with glass. You can also follow the progress of the milk through the rubber hose to the pail by watching the transparent glass-tube section of the hose. Finally you can see the milk cascading into the pail, which has thick celluloid sides and an interior light.

And that, more or less briefly, is the life story of Harvester’s cow. She was the product of much fertile thought and ingenious effort on the part of her creators in New York and the milker engineers of the Company’s Milwaukee Works. A problem every step of the way, but finally an outstanding display achievement with a definite mission.

What Was “Lady” Alken Ina’s Mission?

That mission, referred to in Mr. Heiskell’s remarks near the beginning of the story, was educational. It was to show the public, urban and rural, that the farmer milking cows need no longer be a slave to ancient hand methods. It was to demonstrate that with a McCormick-Deering milker the farmer of today can put his dairying operations on the same basis of efficiency, convenience, and comfort as he enjoys in other operations long since advanced from the muscle-power era of 1831. It was to prove, if possible, that hand milking, one of the most burdensome and unwelcome of all farm chores, need no longer be tolerated—that with a modern milker installation the farmer gains at one stroke numerous advantages—sanitary, economic, cultural—which advantages he forfeits as long as he uses out-of-date hand methods.
International Harvester—past and present

The history of the Harvester Company's business traces back through that of the McCormick Company to 1831, the year in which Cyrus Hall McCormick, a Virginia farmer's son, invented and demonstrated the world's first successful grain reaper. His invention signaled the ending of an agricultural era which extended back to the time of the Pharaohs and beyond—the man-power, scythe-and-sickle era of scarcity. The reaper inaugurated the animal-power, mechanized farming era of plenty. And the reaper founded the agricultural implement industry of today.

The Twine Binder Stimulus

In the decades that followed McCormick's epoch-making contribution to farming and the more efficient, surer, cheaper production of the world's food supply, scores of other inventors and manufacturers entered the field. The industry ramified and grew in all countries, but most aggressively and successfully in America. Plows, seeding machines, tillage implements appeared in ever greater variety and number. With Appleby's invention of the twine knoter, Deering and McCormick and other grain harvesters became self-binders in the early 80's—a long step forward. Corn pickers, huskers and shellers, ensilage cutters, harvester-threshers, cotton planters and cultivators, gasoline engines, and many other labor- and crop-saving implements and machines successively became available to the farmer. With the turn of the century and the formation of the Company, Harvester engineers and others were building experimental tractors and high-wheel motor trucks, thereby helping to lay the foundation for the latest and most promising era in farming—the mechanical-power era.

Our Hard-Won Leadership Tradition

In all of these manifold activities of an advancing key industry the predecessor companies in their day and the International Harvester Company since 1902 have maintained a hard-won tradition of leadership in service to agriculture and the nation. That leadership is the outcome of one long-established cardinal policy: unceasing study of the problems of equipment users and a correlated development and distribution of implements and machines, improved or new, to solve those problems and meet those needs. Over a period of many years' intensive experimentation and research the Company has developed sixty-four lines of McCormick-Deering implements and machines covering every major farm operation, a notable line of industrial tractors and power units, and a motor truck line which includes types and capacities to meet virtually every demand of highway and industrial transport users.

Harvester Makes What You Want

Today the farm equipment lines provide the farmer with a full range of implements and machines in the following general classifications: seeding machines, including grain, alfalfa and grass drills; grain harvesters, including threshing machines, including binders and harvester-threshers; haymaking machines, including mowers, rakes, and baling presses; tillage implements, including plows, cultivators, harrows, and rotary hoes; corn machines, including planters, cultivators, ensilage cutters, and pickers; cotton machines, including gillers, cultivators, and pullers; tractors, including three sizes of Farmalls and the "12" series of small-farm tractors; dairy machines, including cream separators and milkers; feed processing machines, including plate-type feed grinders, hammer mills, and roughage mills; potato machines, including two-row planters and power-driven 2-row diggers; soil conservation machines, including manure spreaders, lime spreaders, and fertilizer distributors; farm wagons, including sleighs and roller-bearing, all-steel trucks; sugar cane mills; knife grinders; and sisal and manila binder twine. The industrial tractor line provides the industrial power user with four sizes of wheel-type and two sizes of track-type tractors, the latter type, with modifications, also meeting an extensive
agricultural tractor demand in certain sections where hilly land or unfavorable soil conditions make wheel-type tractors impractical. Power units (the tractor engines mounted on bases for stationary installations) are available in three sizes.

The motor truck line provides highway and industrial transport users with a variety of models comprising both light- and heavy-duty units and ranging in capacity from one-half to ten tons.

In Motor Trucks New Records

The rise of International Harvester to its present commanding position among truck manufacturers is an outstanding achievement in transportation history. The steady expansion of International truck sales during the past fourteen years—years both fat and lean—is in striking contrast to that of the industry at large. International’s rate of increase was several times that of the industry in the “prosperity decade,” 1920-1929; still higher in the full fourteen-year period, 1920-1933; and highest during the depression years, 1930-1933. International truck popularity is essentially one of continuity and of growth.

For Every Need A Model

Up to 1933 it was not possible for the truck user whose requirements varied from light trucks to powerful heavy-duty units to standardize on any one make of vehicle, because no one manufacturer built such a complete line of trucks. Since then, however, the International line has included models and types to meet every possible need from the quick delivery of extremely light loads to the heaviest highway hauling. And International truck service through a network of Company-owned branches and dealers’ service stations remains, as before, unsurpassed.

There are twelve International truck models ranging from ½ to 10 tons rated capacity. Four- and six-cylinder engines, numerous wheelbases, a variety of rear axle ratios, and multiple-speed transmissions, especially in the heavy-duty models, permit the accurate selection, from every standpoint, of the right truck for any specific demand.

The entry of International Harvester into the wheel-type industrial tractor field about ten years ago was followed by like recognition and expanding sales among a new class of customers—
International Harvester--past and present

iron ore mines in the Mesabi Range, Minnesota; coal mines in Kentucky; a sisal plantation in Cuba; timber limits in Mississippi, Missouri, and British Columbia; and furnaces, steel mills, and a by-product coke plant in South Chicago, Illinois.

The Company's products are merchandised in all countries through local dealers or distributors who draw on nearby branches and transfer warehouses for their requirements or import direct, as the case may be. There are branches, transfer warehouses, and motor truck sales and service stations at 197 points in the United States, at 20 points in Canada, and correspondingly in other countries. The branch house organizations keep in touch with the dealers and assist them in supplying the types of equipment best adapted to local conditions, in maintaining adequate supplies of repair parts, and in providing skilled mechanical service for machines in use. Millions of users throughout the world attest the efficient after-sale service with which the continued satisfactory performance of Harvester quality-built products is maintained for long periods. Many instances are on record of International Harvester farm machines having been used continuously for thirty and forty years before being replaced. In truth, the industry could not long survive were it to neglect this vital requisite of customer good will and continued success.

We Are Proud To Have So Many Friends

Visitors—farm-bred and city-bred alike—to the Company's exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair of 1933 and '34 exclaim over the diversity and perfection of the representative machines on display and the world scope of Harvester service as portrayed by the illuminated map on the north wall. Their exclamations, comments, and frequent inquiries indicate accomplishment of the Company's purpose in preparing the exhibit. That purpose was to bring home to millions of the Fair-going public the essential nature of International Harvester's contribution to the progress of the past hundred years and its fundamental service-relationship in the continued advancement of civilization and human welfare.
Forsgate Farms, Jamesburg, New Jersey, until the call of science and advertising took her on to fame, was the palatial home of "Lady" Alken Ina.