

The Russian Tzar`s train will be auctioned

On the 2nd and 3rd of March 2018 a big winter auction for old toys will take place again in the Auktionshaus Hohenstaufen. at Goppingen Germany

As in previous years, quite a few exceptional pieces will be auctioned off. But an exhibit is a very special gem because it has an unusual history.

It is the train "Train Géant", the Tzar`s train, believed to have been lost for a long time, by BRIANNE Paris in 1905.

This train surrounds from the beginning a fascinating story.

Model for the model train was the 2C version of the famous coup-vent, which was used in Morocco. The identical machine, but shortened by a drive axle, was used in France on the PLM route (Paris - Lyon-Mediterranee) as a tractor for express trains.

As violent Mistral winds affected the speed of the trains on this route, the locomotive was given a streamlined shape, which earned it the name "windcutter" (coup-vent). The BRIANNE model was made around the year 1900 in Paris. For a toy train he was with a gauge of 140mm (5 1/2 ") actually much too big, which is why he was titled in the catalog as Train Géant. The train has a length of 1,40m (55") and it weighs 22kg

Unfortunately, because of its high price (1250 Francs), it did not sell for years. Thus, for political reasons, the French state made the procession a gift to the Russian tsar. How he came back to France can only be guessed. It is possible that the engine was defective and should be repaired in France. This happened in 1917, shortly before the Russian Revolution, when the tsar's family was murdered. A return to Russia was no longer possible. The Train Géant was lost and was considered lost for decades. Only the BRIANNE catalog from the year 1909/10 proved that it had ever existed and was donated personally to the Tsarevich by the French President. The catalog shows the present in a huge hinged cabinet

In the 1970s the locomotive and two wagons in a junkyard became neglected near Muhlhausen in France found. The finder repaired the train with plaster and paint.

For the tin toy collector and railway king Alois Bommer from Switzerland, there was only one "Train Géant" in his life, from BRIANNE and he had been working on it for a long time. This train was considered a sacred grail of toy collecting for him. When at a Paris auction in 1996 a locomotive appeared in an auction catalog and was described there only marginally, Bommer became hellhorig. Her flew to Paris, looked at the locomotive and two cars and knew: that was the train of the Tsar. Bommer bought the locomotive and the car for only 16,000 CHF, which was a lucky one. The auctioneer was not pleased about it, the Train Géant is considered a French national sanctuary.

Dr. Bommer had the locomotive restored but its condition is still in need of restauration. The electrical engine went off, the powertrain with the gear still works. The Tzar`s train was exhibited and admired in the Technorama Museum for 25 years in Winterthur, Switzerland.

Bommer died in 2009 and now the Tzar`s train with the original catalog in the Auktionshaus Hohenstaufen in Goppingen is up for auction.

One may be extremely curious about the result ...