Dr. Whaley left the home to his sister.

Kitty was an avid collector and duck hunter. Her seafood business and love of the outdoors made Rumbley a perfect location to live. Kitty's collecting interests led to her friendship with Elizabeth Hall of nearby Crisfield. Ms. Hall worked for the State of Maryland in the social services department advocating for children. Born in 1917, she received a bachelor's degree from Washington College in Chestertown and returned to Somerset County to begin her career. Educated as a teacher, Hall loved antiques and dealing, and she traveled up and down the shore – as well as many northeast cities – buying and selling new finds.

In 1955, 17-year-old Oliver Lawson had been carving decoys for nearly half his young life when opportunity knocked. Lawson had learned his craft and trade directly from his neighbors the Ward brothers, who were already famous decoy makers. Hall had an eye for quality and saw promise in young Oliver's carvings and proposed a business deal.

"I had been married for about a year and just had my first daughter when Elizabeth asked me how much money I made at the grocery store," Lawson said. "I told her $35 a week and she offered me the same to make decoys for her." He agreed with one condition, that she would give him a one-year guarantee, which she accepted.

With a year's contract "Tuts" Lawson, as he was known since boyhood, started carv-

Rare, possibly one-of-a-kind standing pintail by Oliver Lawson, 1957. Although Cummins sold many of Lawson's carvings, she was also an avid collector.

Miniature swan by Oliver Lawson with a detailed feather pattern.

Kitty Cummins, the proprietor of The Duck House in Rumbley, Maryland was an avid hunter as well as an early trader in decoys and decorative waterfowl carvings. The Canada goose and black duck (facing page) by Oliver Lawson were from her personal hunting rig.

Full-sized pair of shovelers by Oliver Lawson. Although the majority of the carvings sold at The Duck House were miniature, this pair bears the familiar jelly label.