

TRACTION PLOWING

AS TOLD BY THE MEN WHO DO IT

On this and the following page will be found a number of letters from traction plowmen in Canada West, the originals of which are on file in our office. We have inserted the letters just as they came to us, and we will, therefore, not hold ourselves responsible for any of the opinions or criticisms contained therein. Should anyone disagree with the statements made, we would be pleased to offer them the use of our reading columns for the purpose of criticism, etc.—Editor.

Plowing with Engine Cheaper than with Horses.

I have a Rumely 30 h. p. steam engine and a John Deere ten-bottom plow. The engine being an easy steamer handles the plows without any trouble.

When I bought this outfit I never had any intention of breaking the whole earth up the first year, but to do as much breaking with as little expense as possible. I started with a crew of four men and one water tank. I had two men on the engine and one man on the plows and one man with the water tank. After I got nicely started I dispensed with the man on the plow and then our crew consisted of three men and one team, which I found was sufficient where there is neither stones or scrub. But in stony or scrub land it requires one man on the plows all the time.

I had to haul the coal about eighteen miles but I had a car of wheat to haul out. The same teams hauled some coal back with them. I used Pittsburg screened coal and it was the cheapest and best coal to use. I find that the best coal is the cheapest and most satisfactory to use.

I was plowing 25 days and I averaged 24 acres per day. We had most of the time a mile stretch. We made two miles in the hour. We found that was the best gait. We used about 12 barrels of water every two miles.

When we started at first the ground was rather wet. We cut two plows off for a few days until the engine could get sufficient grip, then I put on ten plows and after a few days we had the misfortune to strike a hidden rock which turned one plow right round. I sent it to town to get it straightened, but I could not get it to work right, so I cut it off and worked with nine plows.

As to which is the harder on the engine, plowing or threshing, well this engine handles either so easily it is hard to say. Taking everything into consideration, however, when plowing you have all parts under a constant heavy strain and as plowing causes the most wear on the gearing and the wear on the engine is very slight. In threshing, the biggest wear I find is in the crank shaft boxes, particularly if you have to back so tight in the belt to keep a good grip on the pullies. By using some good belt dressing and running the belt as slack as possible and keeping everything adjusted and lubricated, the wear on an engine in threshing is immaterial. I always found the firebox and tubes

gave the most trouble in threshing when firing with straw, but in plowing if you are using coal and have a good man to fire I don't find it very hard on either the engine or boiler, but very hard on the gearing.

My plows are easy to handle and do nice work. I cannot say which I like better, the gangs or the single furrow, not having seen any of the others at work. I had quite a lot of trouble with the rolling colters in breaking. They were always working loose. So I got pins and had no more trouble. I find the worst job is changing the shares. It takes so long to get the nuts off the landside of the share. The others are all right.

I am well satisfied with my outfit and have gained enough experience to know that traction plowing is cheaper and better

on the engine and one man with tank team and one man to haul coal. We use about one ton and a half of coal per day and four tanks of water.

With the proper care given to an engine we do not consider plowing any harder on same than threshing. We estimate the cost of plowing per acre \$1.50.

As a rule we never plow for less than \$4.00 per acre, and with the proper care given an engine and the outfit worked under good management, this kind of business should make money for a man.

When plowing stubble at home we always use straw for fuel. At this we only employ three men; that is two men on engine and plows and one to haul straw and water. We must have the water and straw right near to the field

pound North-west Engine, also a 30 h. p. Simple American-Abell. These engines are both good pullers.

I used a ten-bottom Cockshutt engine gang and under ordinary conditions I could pull the bunch, but in heavy gumbo I could only pull six at a depth of five inches. I employed five men and two teams of horses on these outfits; engineer, fireman, plowman, tankman and woodman. I have always used wood for fuel, as it came a little cheaper than coal. When working real hard I would consume three cords of wood and from 75 to 90 barrels of wafer in a day of 13 hours.

I find after careful calculation of all expense in connection with steam plowing that it takes about \$2.00 per acre for deep breaking and about \$1.00 per acre for stubble, to cover all expense.

I find that there is no comparison between plowing and threshing. The engine stands the work well if cared for properly, but is simply death to the boiler. Our ground is so rough that it would be hard to build a boiler that would stand the strain. The bigger and heavier they are the harder it is on the boiler.

I would like to say one word to the new beginner. Do not load your engines too heavily just because it is willing to do its best. That is the one great point where we plowmen fall down.

Just a word about gasoline. I have a 40 h. p. Flour City engine and an 8-bottom Big Dutchman engine gang. I use two men on it, engineer and plowman.

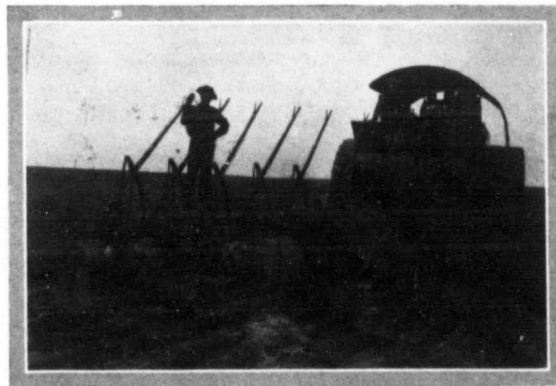
This outfit consumes 60 gallons of gasoline per day of 13 hours and about 1½ gallon cylinder oil, also about two barrels of water per day. It has a slight advantage over the steam tractor in not being so heavy. It does not pack the ground the same.

I have never used my engines for anything but plowing and threshing; therefore, I have had no experience with any only ordinary plow hitch.

I might say in closing that I think every plowman, thresherman and farmer should take The Canadian Thresherman and read it carefully. It is a high-class magazine in its line and what I like about it is that when they get through telling you something you can understand it.

Wishing all a good season for 1911, I am,

Yours truly,
J. J. Grant,
Ingleside, Man.



A Reeves and a Cockshutt doing good work in Saskatchewan.

than horses. I figured the cost of my plowing with steam at \$1.25 per acre. I am sending a photo of the outfit at work.

Yours truly,
Frank Frombach,
Hednesford, Sask.

Never Plows for less than \$4.00 per acre.

We own a 25 h. p. Gaar-Scott double simple steam engine, a seven bottom Cockshutt plow and a 40-60 separator.

When breaking we never pulled any more than seven plows as we believe any more than that would be too much of a strain on the engine, a 25 horse power one, causing a lot of trouble and break-downs.

While out contracting we employ four men, that is two men

so that it can be handled by one man.

We have not done any plowing yet in the fall of the year on account of water being so scarce.

In the spring we have plowed, disced, dragged, packed and drilled from 25 to 30 acres per day and you could not tell whether the work had been done by steam or horses.

Yours truly,
I and S. J. Frehlich,
Scott, Sask.

Uses Wood For Fuel.

I might say that I have plowed for the last three seasons with steam and gasoline and have had fairly good success with both.

I had a 34 h. p. Cross Com-