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Some Comment on the Split-Log Drag

John Jackson, Lincoln Co., Ont.

MUCH has been said and published during recent years about the merits of the split-log drag for keeping clay or earth roads in proper shape. And it is hardly possible to say too much in favor of the split-log drag, which is one of the most useful implements introduced in recent years, especially where the small cost of it is taken into consideration.

Simple as it is in order to get best results, much depends on the construction of the drag. The man that uses it is another important factor. Two men may take the same make of plow; work of a very inferior character. To make a good job of anything it is necessary to start first furrow is straight, it is an easy matter to keep all straight. If the first one is crooked and uneven it is so to the end.

ERRORS IN ROAD MAKING

Let us consider a few of the prevailing errors most common in road making. The turpikes in most cases are laid out too wide. Crooked ditches so commonly found give an uneven width to the road bed, causing it to grade up higher in the narrow places.

The dimensions as I have seen them given for making the split-log drag call for too wide a drag. A turnpike to be in the best condition possible, must have a good even round or crown. A long drag can have no longer bearing on a round surface than a shorter one. When one end is down in the ditch, the other is up in the air and so the extra length only hinders the proper working of the machine. A fairly wide turnpike may be all right where travel is congested that is if work enough can be put on it to round it up properly. But a narrow roadway rounded up is much preferable to a wide, flat one, or one simply with a ridge up the centre with a flat on each side, which latter is not uncommon. On such roads the water has to soak away in the road bed instead of running directly off into the ditch.

THE SECRET OF GOOD ROADS

A deep ditch is not necessarily as essential as it is to have an even grade with open outlets so that surface water cannot stand in the ditches. In fact herein lies the secret of keeping a road in good shape.

In laying out a new turnpike it is better to start it on the narrow side rather than to be too wide. It is easier to widen it out in working, than it is to narrow it. On a model clay road in

the nearby vicinity the turnpike is nineteen feet between outside of ditches; this seems all right for width. At all events, for all ordinary roads, concessions and side lines, 20 feet from outside to outside of ditches should be the limit. Some will claim that to be too narrow on account of danger in meeting autos, etc., but remember that to round up this width requires but a small ditch only, about the depth of a plow furrow. There is no danger in case of emergency to drive across it. As we widen the turnpike, we must deepen the ditch. A 24 foot turnpike must have a ditch twice the size of one 2 feet wide and it will take twice the work to make and keep it in shape.

GRADING WITH THE DRAG

The regular road machine is perhaps the proper thing with which to grade up the road although some with a good deal of experience in road-making, too, will contend that a turnpike can be made as good and as cheaply with a split-log drag as with a regular road grader. Be that as it may, I have seen an excellent turnpike made right out the rough with the split-log drag; but

If the turnpike is laid out too wide and the ditches are crooked it is unwise to waste any more work on it while in that shape. If necessary, narrow the roadway and straighten the ditches by plowing, throwing the furrows outward. Or start anew by setting stakes; set them straight and work to them. The work will pay well. The road will grade up even and keep in better shape. The looks alone are more than worth the extra pains taken to make the ditches straight and it will be an object lesson for others to profit by.

The illustration shows a road in the Township of Clinton near Beamsville turpiked up from the flat. The work was done entirely with the drag shown, by Angus Stewart and Mr. Comfort. This drag is faced with strong iron in front. With two teams and two men riding it it rolls up this heavy clay about equal to any road machine.

GOOD ROADS AT SMALL COST

A properly kept clay road may be very bad for a little time each year. But far about nine months

of the year it is really better than the average fairly well kept macadamised roads. The cost of keeping up all the roads in a Township, side lines and concessions by means of the split-log drag would not exceed the cost of one macadamised road through the township. This applies particularly where the stone has to be hauled some distance. The foregoing would not apply to all parts of the country with the same force, such as where there is plenty of good gravel at convenient points, nor would it apply so aptly in the case of a very light sandy road.



A Road That Was Graded Up in 1909 Entirely With the Split-log Drag
The possibilities of the split-log drag are well illustrated in the photo reproduced above. This road in the township of Clinton, near Beamsville, Ont., was turpiked up from the flat by means of a split-log drag.

—Photo by J. Jackson.

where they do excel is in keeping a road in proper shape. The drag that we use has three blades instead of two. This is an improvement. Compared with the two blade drag, it is like a joint plane to a draw knife. Our drag is made of material 2 by 8 inches; 5 feet 4 inches long, the pieces being placed two feet apart. They are shod with iron plates in front.

It is better not to have the drag too heavy; weight can be added if necessary. If a road is once properly graded it may be kept in good shape for from five to ten years without re-grading with road machine. Drawing the drag on the proper angle will keep up the round of the road to counterbalance the natural tendency to flatten out. The road should be dragged often enough, either when very wet or when mellow, so that it will smooth up nicely. The turnpike must be kept free from grass or the machine will not take a proper hold.

Diseases of Horses' Feet—Founder

Dr. H. G. Reed, V.S., Hutton Co., Ont.

Laminitis or founder is one of the most serious diseases from which the horse is liable to suffer. It is an inflammation of the soft tissues of the hoof which unite the external horny hoof to the internal pedal bone. An acute attack of this disease causes most intense pain and suffering to the patient. In inflammation of any tissue relief is always experienced to a greater or less extent when swelling occurs. It will readily be understood that in the case of a horse's foot swelling is impossible, enclosed as it is in an unyielding hoof and the result is in most cases excruciating pain.

CAUSES OF FOUNDER

The most ordinary causes are over exertion, hard driving, especially on hard roads, over-feeding of heating grain as wheat or peas, chills and some