Hart Parr 30-60s - Absolute Faith in the Tractor

The following letters from two Manitoba farmers appeared in the August 1913 edition of the Canadian Thresherman and Farmer. The two farmers both operated Hart Parr 30-60 tractors and got along quite well with the units.

Absolute faith in the Tractor

Dear Sirs,

In reply to your request as to the success of the past season's operations by the use of the traction power which I have used, I am pleased to state that in spite of the unfavorable season which we experienced in the Red River Valley that my opinion has not been altered as to the feasibility and advisability of the use of traction power on a farm where acreage consists of a section or more.

Owing to the lateness of the season and the previous fall's unfavorable conditions we found that we required to do a large amount of spring plowing, and without the traction power we would have been unable to do it. Our engine is a Hart Parr 30-60 and we estimate that the amount of fuel oil used will be about 3 gallons per acre. The oil laid down at the station costs us about 15c per gallon and the oil has to be drawn a distance of from one to four miles, according to the place where the engine is working. I estimate the cost of plowing to be from 55 to 60 cents per acre including fuel oil and lubricating oil. We do not perform any seeding or discing with our engine, as, owing to the heaviness of the soil, and in my opinion it is not conducive on the best conditions to run heavy engines over plowed ground for seeding purposes unless the ground is much drier than we usually find it at seeding time.

I have found the Traction Power very satisfactory for plowing and threshing purposes. This is the only power work I have performed.

Yours Truly,

H.B. Robinson
Carman, Manitoba

Ideal for Fall Plowing

Dear Sirs,

I purchased a Hart Parr Gas Tractor 30-60 and a 32 by 52 Red River Special separator about the last of November, 1911 and owing to the facts that I had no experience , the lateness of the season and the cold and rough weather, we got along extremely well. In the spring of 1912 we did a little plowing using a light furrow 14 inch Cockshutt gang and broke 185 acres for ourselves at the cost of about $1.60 per acre and summer fallowed 100 acres in about 4 1/2 days using harrows behind at the cost of about 75 cents per acre. We use on an average of 60 gallons of gasoline and kerosene per day, and about 35 gallons of water. We have not used it for any seeding operations so far, and do not think it would be a profitable speculation to equip ourselves with the necessary machinery , as some years we would be unable to make use of it on account of wet seasons, for instance, 1912. I do not consider it would be detrimental to land that might be in a condition to use an engine on.

In conclusion, I might just say that I consider the gas tractor an ideal outfit for fall plowing, summer fallowing and threshing, in consideration of the fact that we do not have to employ so many men.

Yours Truly,

W.H. Steward
Miniota, Man.

Just what it meant by the line in Mr Steward's letter "I do not consider it would be detrimental to land that might be in a condition to use an engine on." is not known. Perhaps the printer missed inserting the word "it" at the end of this sentence?

The Manitoba Agricultual Museum's collection contains two Hart Parr 30-60s, both in operating condition. One tractor was donated by the Sims Brothers of Snowflake, Manitoba and the other 30-60 was donated by F.T. Venables and J.E. Kirk of Hamiota. Hart Parr began building 30-60s in 1907 and the design remained in production until 1918. While Hart Parr also built a 22-45 and 20-40 model during this time, the 30-60 was by far the most popular. Both 30-60s in the collection were built in 1912. The 30-60 tractors featured a two-cylinder engine cooled by oil circulated by a centrifugal pump. The radiator was cooled by an induced draft from the engine exhaust, a very common feature on tractors until the late 1910s. The engine had a "hit and miss" governor. The engine was started on gasoline and then switched over to kerosene when the engine was hot. Oil as a coolant was common in the early years of tractors, as oil did not freeze, and oil cooling resulted in the engine running hotter which was an advantage when running the tractor on kerosene. Water was injected into the carburator in order to prevent the kerosene from pre-igniting in the hot cylinders or knocking which explains Mr Stewards comment about burning 35 gallons of water a day when the tractor was working.

Mr Steward also made a comment about plowing with a light furrow 14 inch Cockshutt gang, which was a Cockshutt engine gang plow equipped with 14 inch moldboards. Just what he meant by light furrow is not known at this time. As well he does not say how many bottoms this plow possessed. The Cockshutt engine gang plow came in 3 basic sizes offering from 6 to 12 bottoms.

The Expo at the 2015 Threshermen's Reunion features the Cockshutt family of companies. If you have equipment built by Cockshutt or Frost and Wood you should consider bringing it to the Cockshutt Expo. You can contact the Museum office at 204-637-2354 to make arrangements.

The Museum is open year round and operates a website at http://ag-museum.mb.ca/ which can provide visitors with information on Museum events and location.

One of the two 30-60s in the Museum's collection. The tractor was donated by F.T. Venables and J.E. Kirk of Hamiota.