



Machinery Makes Easy Work of Farming In Few Generations

Farm machinery manufacturers, although roundly cursed on occasion, have had a big part in easing the labors of wheat growing. What the farmers wanted in the way of labor-saving equipment they got and in comparatively few years.

The modern farmer goes into the field with a self-propelled combine and keeps one or more truck drivers busy hauling away his output. At day's end the grain is safely under shelter in the elevator; there are no horses to cuff

and curry and most of the dirt has been eliminated. It costs more, sure. It is worth more. Court records of early days were full of suits against farmers by implement dealers whereas they are now uncommon occurrences.

Early day farmers were limited to a few field tools, a plow, a harrow, a disk or right-lap, a drill and a header. Nowadays he can get an attachment to a tractor that will do almost any job. Bulk outfits took the back-breaking work out of handling wheat. A farmer's life, while not an existence of continuous ease, requires much less physical labor than it did one generation ago and in two gener-

ations the change has been as remarkable as in any industry. Farmers work their summer-fallow to pack it down as much as to kill weeds; that job is taken care of by a flitting plane or a self-operated ground rig. Chemicals make it possible to utilize all the soil elements by increasing the deficient element.

The farmer is a scientist and a manager, not a mere laborer. And he likes it.

Oregon In History

April 26, 1895—Work at the Cascade Locks is being rapidly pushed and the prospect is that within a year they will be ready for use. That will add to all values

and give a fresh impetus to all kinds of business in the middle and upper Columbia River region. In the near future there is sure to be some better means of communication over or around the falls above The Dalles.

April 19, 1846—Sunday 19, about 30 natives at meeting (at The Dalles). Brother Whiller preaches. I talk a little by way of two interpreters, one putting it into jargon, the second into Chinook. It says to them, we are all children of the great Father. He sees all we do, though we cannot see him any more than we can see the wind . . . when we die we shall appear before Him . . . George Gary's Diary

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run-aways were recorded before the Shenandoah hitch was invented to give the driver control over the 21 to 39 head of horses hooked to the machine. Early ones were ground power, that is, power for threshing came from the bull wheel. Gas engines were not sure enough at that time.

A combine crew consisted of a driver who also took care of the leaders and the lead string of six, usually making nine horses for him to feed and curry. There was a sacksewer and a jog and a header tender. The separator man did not care for any horses, being busy with the machinery. When there were many horses there were often two sack sewers.

Combines were a dirty place to work especially when the wind blew from the back to the front although nothing could compare to the doghouse (sacksewer's quarters) on a threshing machine.

Machinery makers in a matter of twenty years improved and lightened combines until by 1916 McCormick and Deering started sale of the little "stubble-bugs" (of which few pictures exist) which could be pulled by eight horses and operated by two men. They put the commercial thrasher man out of business in a few years.

For almost twenty years Sherman county wheat farmers hauled their grain to the Columbia river for storage in warehouses. The railroad came through the county in the last years of the 18th century and shortened the haul so that most farmers could make two trips a day instead of two trips a week which had been about par until that time.

Whenever a good crop was harvested sacked grain was piled first in warehouses and then outside on the ground. The good year of 1900 saw 25,000 sacks piled at Hay Canyon according to the caption on the picture taken by Bill Raymond.

Sacks weighed 135 to 145 pounds depending on who jigged and sewed them and husky men handled them all day with more pride than pain.

Modern harvesting is entirely different; no horses, no heavy machinery, almost no men, no sacks.

Oregon In History

April 18, 1882—The drowning of Harry Frederickson who jumped overboard from the Storm King has caused much excitement among the Scandinavian fishermen of Astoria with the result that today an attempt was made to lynch Nick Davish, the sailor boardinghouse keeper who is said to have shanghaied him.

Oregon In History

April 26, 1869—Despite the vigorous opposition of a number of prominent citizens, and the Ore-

gonian, Oregon's first public high school, with J. W. Johnson as principal and Miss M. N. Tower as assistant, opened at Portland with classes conducted on the second floor of North School.

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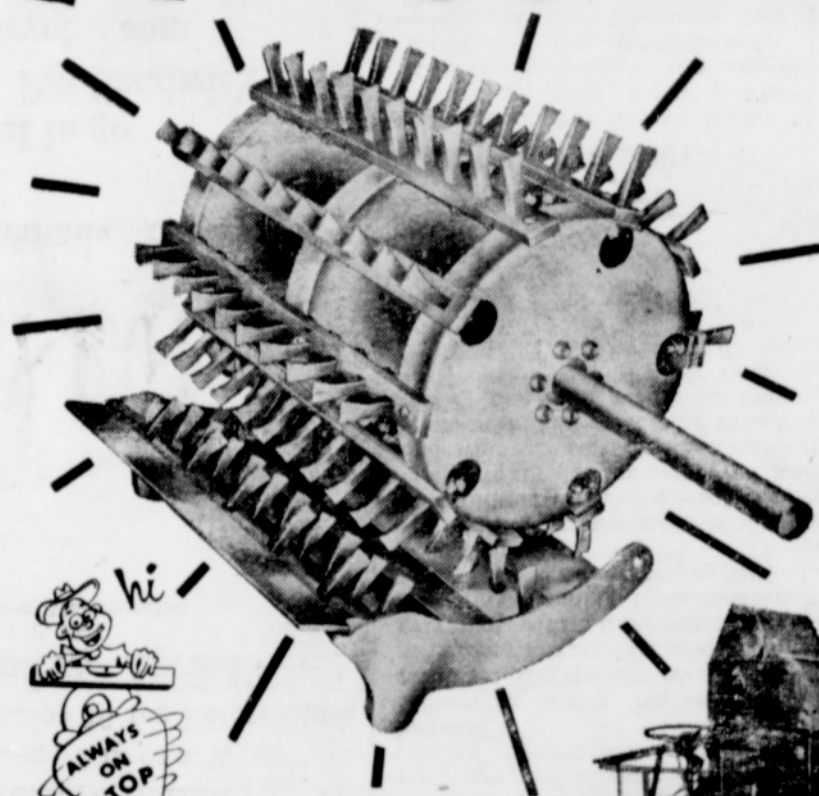
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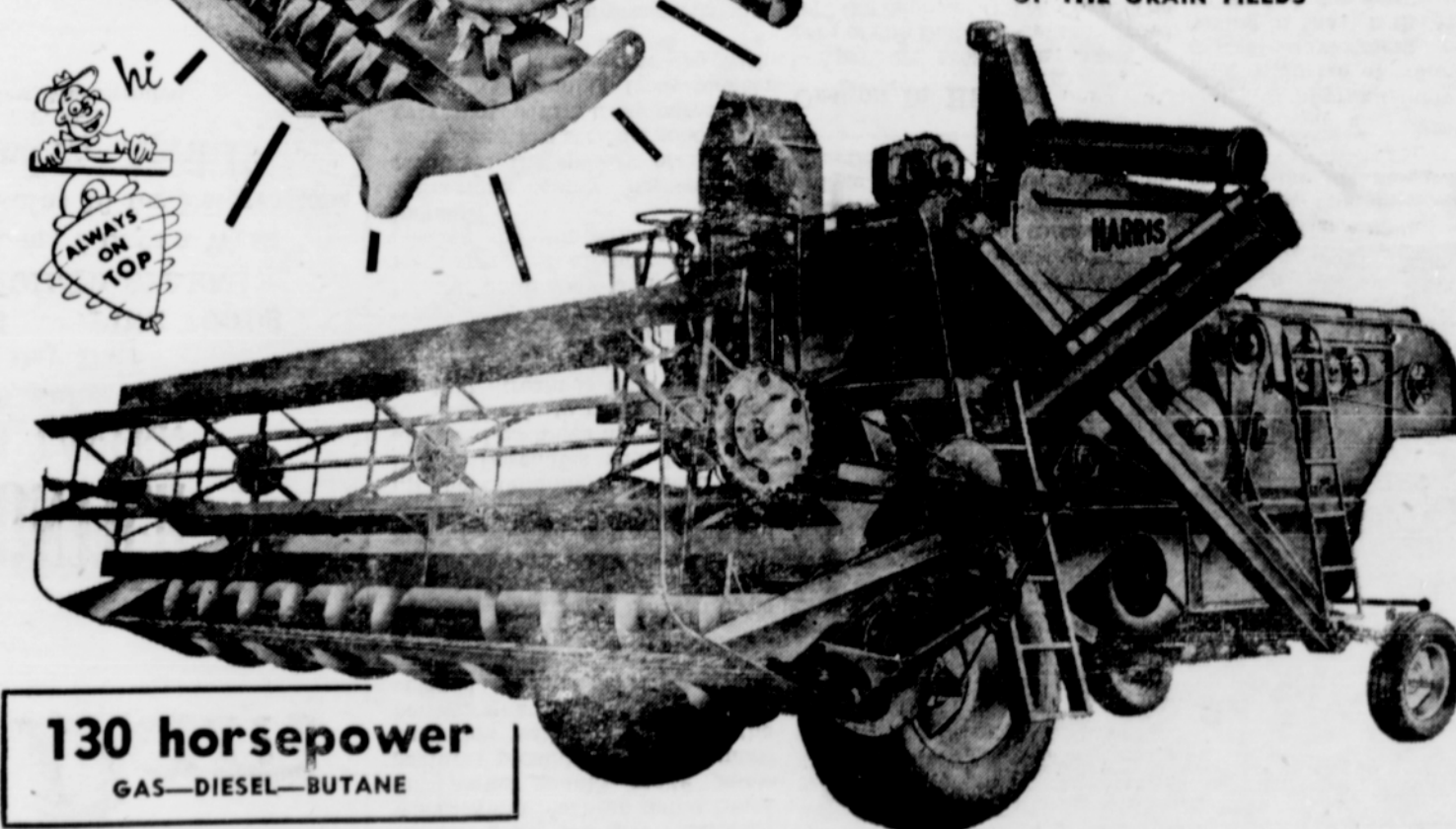


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