



October 31, 1986

Mr. R. Carson Dalzell, Chairman
ASME History and Heritage Committee
2548 North Vermont Street
Arlington, Virginia 22207

Subject: Your letter dated September 25, 1986
Re: Buckeye Steam Traction Ditcher

Dear Mr. Dalzell:

Your letter resulted in a research trip on October 24, 1986, to the Hancock County Museum, Findlay, Ohio. There it was found that the museum has in its possession a refurbished Buckeye Steam Traction Ditcher. However, for lack of space, the unit is currently in storage.

The questions in your letter are answered as follows:

1. Re: "Exact date of manufacture"

Research by Mr. Ed Heminger of the "Republican Courier", the Findlay newspaper, and Mr. Don E. Smith determined that the above ditcher was the 88th unit manufactured by the company. Additional searching will be required to determine the exact date of manufacture.

2. Re: "Oldest known in existence"

Casual conversation at the Fulton County Steam Threshers Show indicated that a ditcher in Michigan and another in Canada are in the initial stages of being refurbished. These reports have not been followed. Also no attempt has been made to compare the manufacture date of the trailered Buckeye Steam Traction Ditcher (that was displayed at the Fulton County Steam Thresher Show) with the manufacture date of the refurbished unit at the Hancock County Museum.

3. Re: "Does it have original parts"

Some of the parts, subject to wear, as gears, sprockets, chains, belts or the boiler, may not be the original parts. However, it is believed that 95% of the components are of the original design.



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4. Re: "To qualify as a National or International award"

It is believed that the "Buckeye Steam Traction Ditcher" was developed for laying drainage tile in the Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan "Black Swamp" area. Subsequent design changes and development allowed this type of machine to be used throughout the United States of America and other countries of the world.

5. Re: "Accessibility by Historians and general public"

The Hancock County Museum is currently being enlarged. Mr. Chris Haley, Curator, has indicated that display space will be provided for the Buckeye Steam Traction Ditcher and that the museum would gladly accept the responsibility of the Landmark Award. The museum is open to all from 9 to 5 P.M.

Additional information is available through Mr. Paul Yon, Director, Center for Archival Collections, Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C. V. Anderson', is written over the typed name.

C. V. Anderson, Chairman
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CVA/pha

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