

FARM & HORTICULTURAL EQUIPMENT COLLECTOR

Success

We have been overwhelmed by the response to the first issue of *Farm & Horticultural Equipment Collector* – by the time we went to press with this issue we already had well over 1,000 subscribers (as many as we had expected to get in the whole of the first year!).

Thank you for your support and please remember that your letters and editorial contributions are very welcome and should be sent to the Editor, Patrick Knight, 10 Upper Elms Road, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3ET.

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RANSOMES SIMS & JEFFERIES – More About Crawler Collecting

Having read about the Ransomes Sims & Jefferies Industrial Tractor Wheeled and Industrial Tractor Crawler (ITW and ITC) in issue one of the *Farm & Horticultural Equipment Collector* David Smith of Godalming, Surrey, supplied the following relating to his experiences with an RSJ ITC dumper:-

As mentioned in the article, the ITC dumper is basically a MG40 model with reversed layout ie. the engine to the rear of the operator, allowing clear forward vision. A Ransomes Sims & Jefferies 600cc four-stroke air-cooled engine provides the motive power driving through a gearbox, giving three forward and three reverse speeds. Steering is by the usual hand levers acting on drive clutches. To prevent sinking in soft conditions the ITC dumper is fitted with extra wide rubber pads.

My ITC dumper was supplied to the Metropolitan Water Board for use in maintenance of the water treatment filter beds. Just when it was withdrawn

from service is unknown but it was replaced with a modern four-wheel-drive dumper. The dumper then passed through several owners before being purchased for preservation by my father. The mechanical condition of the dumper was remarkably good; the bodywork had a few minor dents here and there and light surface rust. Restoration really involved only a full service and, after a good cleaning, it was repainted Ransomes blue.



David's ITC dumper was used for many years in the maintenance of the Metropolitan Water Board filter beds.

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After several years of rallying it was found that the engine was not giving of its best, so over the winter of 1989/90 it was stripped and rebuilt, with new piston rings being fitted. This was followed by a full repaint. I have since learnt that the Metropolitan Water Board

repainted their machines a pale green colour but, as another paint job is not envisaged in the near future, it will remain blue for the time being. A worn carburettor jet and needle has brought about temperamental starting. However, a new carburettor purchased via my wanted advert in issue one of *Farm & Horticultural Equipment Collector* should cure this problem.



A close-up of the Ransomes Sims & Jefferies air-cooled engine.

The original duties of the ITC dumpers revolve around the servicing of the water filter beds consisting of large reservoirs filled with sand. Filled to a depth

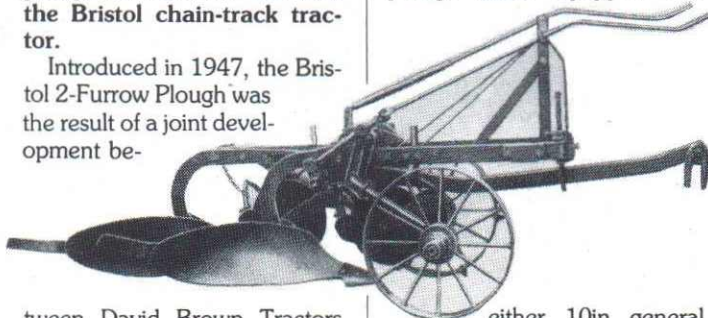
(continued)

THE BRISTOL 2-FURROW PLOUGH

The Bristol 2-Furrow Plough came about following requests from agents and tractor operators for a purpose-built plough suitable for use with the Bristol chain-track tractor.

Introduced in 1947, the Bristol 2-Furrow Plough was the result of a joint development between David Brown Tractors Ltd and Bristol Tractors Ltd. Built on a proven design, the

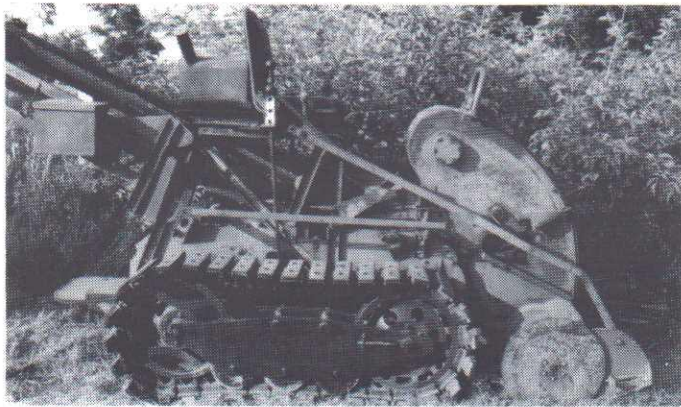
plough was successful and soon became the standard plough for use with the Bristol 20 tractor. A robust piece of equipment, the plough came equipped with



either 10in general purpose breasts or a 12in semi-digger pattern.

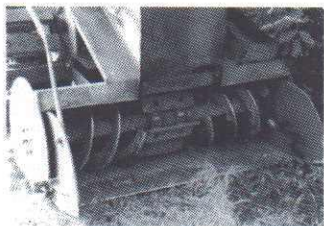
tween David Brown Tractors Ltd and Bristol Tractors Ltd. Built on a proven design, the

RANSOMES SIMS & JEFFERIES CRAWLER (continued)



The Ransomes skimmer as used for the periodical removing the surface dirty sand from the filter beds.

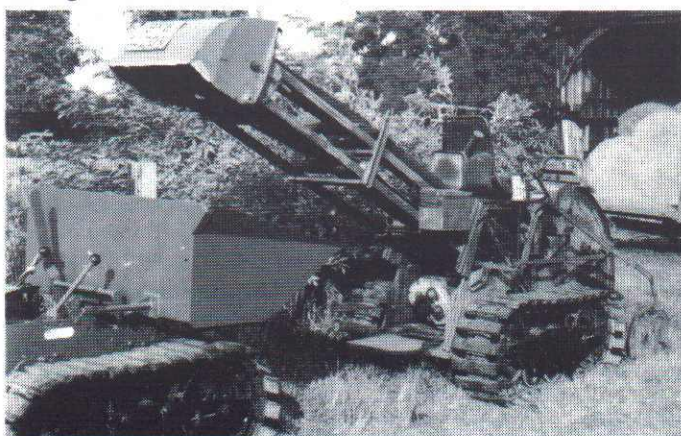
of around 3ft, dirty water passed through the sand, filtering out impurities as it did so. Periodically the surface became clogged with muck and other impurities and required removal using a skimmer, purpose-built by Ransomes Sims & Jefferies. One of these skimmers was purchased recently and, upon completion of its restoration, it is hoped to exhibit both machines as a working unit.



A close-up of the rotary blades which remove and feed the dirty sand on to the conveyor belt. A depth of up to 3in can be removed on each pass of the skimmer.

In operation, as the skimmer progressed forwards across the filter bed a set of rotary blades driven via a PTO shaft removed the dirty sand up to a depth of

The dirty sand passed up the conveyor belt and into the following dumper. Note that the engine is missing on the skimmer.



3in. This sand then passed up the conveyor belt and into an awaiting ITC dumper to be removed and later disposed.

Based on the MG60, the skimmer has three track rollers instead of the usual two. Basically the skimmer differs only in that pedals are used to control the steering, leaving the operator's hands free for control over the depth of skim.

The original purchasers of this particular skimmer were the Bristol Water Board and, thanks to their forward thinking, it remained in service long after most RSJ skimmers were classed obsolete. When the Metropolitan Water Board discontinued the use of RSJ machinery the Bristol Water Board purchased all their machines and spare parts etc. so extending the working life of their own plant for several years.

At some stage the original RSJ engine was replaced with a Briggs & Stratton twin-cylinder engine complete with electric start. When the skimmer was withdrawn from service this engine was removed and placed into storage for possible further use. At present the skimmer is still minus an engine, so if anyone has a spare RSJ engine I would be interested to hear from them. (See his advert in the classified section).



With drivers in position the scale of the machines becomes apparent. David is aboard the dumper.

THE MECHANICAL HEDGE TRIMMER

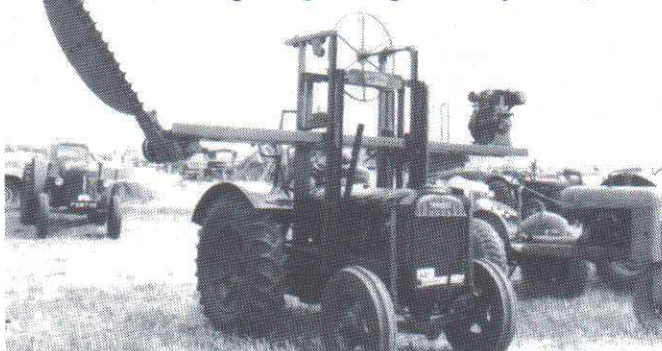
Manufactured from mid-1948 by F.W. McConnell Ltd, this McConnell & Gilmour mechanical hedge trimmer was considered the latest thing in hedge cutting. It comprised a strong frame mounted upon a tractor,

a Fordson Standard in this instance, to which, set at right ang-

le, was an arm with cutter blade. This blade, of the mowing machine type some 4ft 6in in length, was driven by a separate

Petter 2hp air-cooled engine. It was designed for one-man operation, the driver having full control over the arm and cutting blade through a 190 degree movement, allowing virtually any shaped hedge to be cut.

While by today's standards this type of hedge trimmer may seem ungainly and possibly dangerous in operation, several



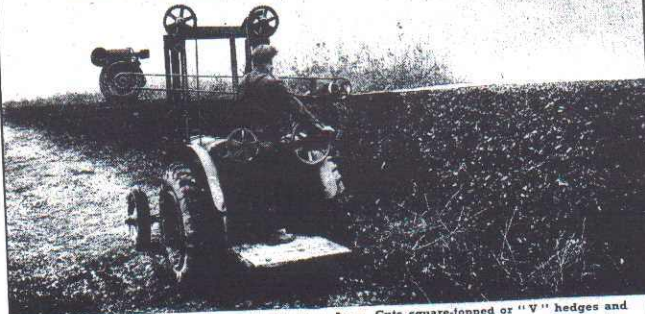
The McConnell & Gilmour mechanical hedge trimmer is a rare sight on today's rally field; this example was seen at the Great Dorset Steam Fair 1990.

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of the country's major implement manufacturers offered their own versions of the mechanical hedge trimmer.

The McConnell & Gilmour hedge trimmer was a one-man operated machine as this 1950 advertisement shows.

McCONNEL-GILMOUR HEDGE CUTTER



With the "Any Position" Cutter-bar

Cuts square-topped or "V" hedges and woodsides up to 13ft; also side growths, banks and ditch sides. Can span a 3-ft. ditch or hedge to cut far side if obstructed. Any tractor driver can complete 2 miles hedges per day safely and cleanly.

PRICE £125

F. W. McConnell Limited, 67 Chiltern Street, London, W1 Works: Ludlow, Shropshire.