



Huber Machinery Museum exhibits tractors, steam shovels and other inventions crafted and built by Edward Huber in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Overlooked Inventor Helped Shape Ag Equipment

In the annals of early farm equipment inventors, top-of-mind names are typically Cyrus McCormick, Eli Whitney, John Deere, Charles Hart and Charles Parr, to name a few. Rarely is the name Edward Huber included in this group. History shows he definitely should be.

In 1865, Huber moved to Marion, Ohio, to manufacture a revolving hay rake of his own design, using wood from the area's abundant ash and hickory trees. Over the next 15 years, his company built more than 200,000 of those rakes. Farmers who used them said the rake could do in 3 hr what had previously taken

three men 3 days to accomplish.

Huber was named on and helped patent more than 100 other inventions. These included a steam engine, a traction engine, a grain separator, and a revolving road scraper. He was also instrumental in developing the Marion Steam Shovel Company, founded in 1865. Equipment built by that company has helped construct the Hoover Dam and the Panama Canal and has been used to extract valuable materials from open-pit mines around the world.

Considered Marion's "Father of Industry," Huber first adapted a gasoline engine to a steam tractor chassis in 1898. The design incorporated a traction engine frame, transmission and steering system. A Van Duzen gas engine provided the power. Huber built 30 of those tractors, each specifically designed to power Huber threshing machines.

From 1911 to 1916, his company built 24, 27 and 33-hp models with improved ignition and carburetors. These were called the "Farmer's Tractor," with the driver seated in the front. The tractor used evaporative cooling rather than a radiator.

Newer models included the Light Four 12-25, the Super Four 15-30 with a 4-cyl. Midwest engine, and the Master Four 20-40 with a 4-cyl. Hinckley engine. In 1936, a 2 or

3-plow Huber Model B with a Buda engine was produced in standard-tread orchard versions and in a small grader model.

When production of farm tractors was discontinued, the BG was renamed the Maintainer. Versatile and equipped with many tools, it served as a road grader, a road sweeper and a bulldozer. It also carried a sickle-bar roadside mower, a scarifier and a leveler, and offered a mounted loader option. Huber discontinued production when its parent company closed in 1984.

Some of the 14,000 tractors the company built are still in collectors' hands, and Huber's legacy of invention is preserved at the Huber Machinery Museum in Marion, Ohio. The cornerstone of the original Huber plant is on display at the Huber Museum. Also on display are several Marion Steam Shovels, the "shoe" from a crawler/transporter that moved rockets to the Cape Canaveral launch pad, and several tractors. The museum is open Saturdays from March through November, 1 to 4 p.m.

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Ames Percherons have been among North America's top draft horse teams for more than 30 years.

Percherons Are Ambassadors For Construction Company

The mascots for Ames Construction are award-winning 6 and 8-horse hitchers of 2,000-lb Percheron draft horses, averaging 18 hands (6 ft) tall.

Ames Construction was founded by Dick Ames in 1962 in Minnesota as a

local earth-moving business. The company expanded over time to become a full-service, nationwide civil and industrial contractor, with employees working out of several offices. The company's black Percherons serve as ambassadors for Ames Construction.

Dick Ames inherited his love of Percherons from his father and grandfather. The Ames Percheron farm in Jordan, Minn., is home to 16 Percherons that compete in more than a dozen fairs and draft-horse hitch competitions each year at shows from coast to coast, from Arizona to Canada.

The Ames horses are trained for the hitch by full-time caretakers and trainers Travis and Jacqui Shaw. A horse usually begins training at age four, and most "retire" by age 14 or 15, Jacqui says.

"The most challenging part of training for the hitch," she says, "is getting the horse to 'like the job.' You can't develop a show horse from a horse that isn't willing to perform."

Each Ames Percheron receives daily exercise and training and is fed 6 lbs of a custom-made pelleted feed and 40 lbs of hay.

Ames Construction, an employee-owned, team-driven organization with 4,000 employees, emphasizes teamwork in its employee training. Its five core values are: People, Team, Our Bond, Persistence and Vision. The goal of training world-class 6 and 8-horse hitchers is to instill in the horses the

grace and ability to work together in perfect harmony. The parallels between training a Percheron hitch and training employees to excel at working together are why Dick Ames chose Percheron hitch horses to be the proud ambassadors of Ames Construction.

An Ames Percherons history video on the website shows 6 and 8-horse hitchers pulling wagons in perfect harmony. The video ends with this message: "The Ames Percherons are more than just a hitch. They're proud ambassadors of a legacy built on teamwork, integrity and the relentless pursuit of success. They remind us all — co-workers, clients and partners — that true strength comes not from individual effort but from a team working together toward a common goal. With their grace and power, these magnificent horses represent the foundation upon which Ames Construction proudly stands."

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Lemon balm makes a great ground cover in rock gardens and around patio planters.

Lemon Balm Brings Delight To Gardens

The heart-shaped leaves of lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*) might be enough to melt your heart — at least when you get close enough to smell them. Hardy through Zone 4, lemon balm is grown as a short-lived perennial throughout the U.S. This clump-

forming perennial looks like mint, but never fear; it's far easier to control.

As a native of southern Europe and northern Africa, lemon balm is rich in antioxidants and releases a pleasant lemon scent when crushed. It's a popular ingredient in

anti-aging products, dietary supplements and cocktails. A handful of fresh lemon balm makes a refreshing tea that's excellent whether hot or iced.

Each of lemon balm's deeply veined leaves is covered with stiff hairs. Flowers appear in early summer and are small, white and delicate. They're also a favorite food source for bees and other pollinators, making lemon balm an especially attractive garden addition.

Lemon balm grows best in rich, moist soil and partial shade. Sunlight brings out the flavor in lemon balm, but direct, full sun can scorch the leaves or turn them yellow. Shade-grown plants, in contrast, tend to be larger and more succulent. Because of its spreading habit, lemon balm makes a great ground cover in rock gardens and around patio planters. Lemon balm tolerates drought well. There's little reason to coddle the plant once it's well established.

Start seeds indoors up to 6 weeks before the last frost date. Germination can take 2 weeks or longer. Lemon balm can be harvested 2 to 3 in. above the base of the plant. The plant is most flavorful before it blooms, so remove flower buds to prolong its lifespan. Fresh cuttings are the most potent, but sprigs can be dried in warm, airy locations. Strip off the leaves for long-term storage once they're

crinkly to the touch.

Thanks to its aggressive nature, lemon balm requires little maintenance once it's established. You'll only need to protect the plant from weeds that might suffocate it early on. Mulch can provide all the fertilizer lemon balm needs. Avoid overwatering, as the herb can be sensitive to root rot. In the fall, consider cutting the plant back to just a few inches at the base. Add mulch to protect the roots, and the plant should overwinter effectively.

Lemon balm leaves make a perfect accent in recipes. Use them in place of lemon peel to flavor soups, sauces, vinegars and seafood. The citrus-inspired leaves can also add zest to fruit salads, fresh greens and juice.

Harvest a few leaves at a time whenever the urge strikes. The plants tolerate being cut down to 2 in. tall and bounce back quickly. Pinch off leaves with your fingers, or use pruners to remove entire stems. Harvest in the morning for the best flavor, and prioritize the youngest leaves.

The herb also has mild medicinal properties. Brew a relaxing tea to ease headaches and anxiety, or bruise fresh leaves to relieve insect bites, cuts and grazes. A strong infusion can shorten the healing time for cold sores and reduce the risk of recurrence.