

August 22nd, 1912.

J. J. Hankenson, Esq.
Glencoe, Minn.

Dear Sir:-

Replying to your favor of yesterday re Ditch No. 49, I would state that not being the engineer, I won't quarrel about

the depth etc of the ditch. I figure, however, speaking personally only, that a good deal of the filling in was caused by the fact that the ditch was dug with floating dredges, with the water held by dams to a high stage. While this could not be helped, using those dredges, it was not the fault of the ditch, and is up to the contractor, after the water runs off, and the slush settles, to clear it out to grade, so as to have a complete job when it is claimed to be finished.

In other words, the contractor takes the risk of the method of digging, and the character of the soil, rather than the ditch or the County, whether or not you went over the work and brought it within the rule, I am not prepared to say, of my own knowledge.

Leaving that water for the engineers, I would say that for a long time I agreed entirely with you, that the only way to get rid of the water at the upper end of the ditch, above the rise in the level of the country that you speak of, was to cut through to the southwest, to Twin Lakes, which is only some 50 rods or so, and I went with others and looked it all over carefully.

When this repair petition came in, it asked for that to be done.

The engineer ran the levels carefully and repeatedly, as we all thought he was wrong to start with.

He finds that with the present stage of water in the lake, which is at least two feet below where it often is, there is only four feet fall from the level of the meadow at the head of the ditch, to the water in the lake.

Figuring the necessary depth of the ditch, not less than two and one half feet, and the usual rise of the lake, at least two feet, and at times three, he reports that such a ditch would be useless, as the water in the ditch and the water in the lake would be on a level, and no drainage possible at ordinary times.

This was a great surprise to those of us who had looked the ground over, and to those who live there, but I am afraid he is right.

So that leaves the Blanche County there with the water on it, and the only way to get it off is to put the ditch to the grade originally laid, or deeper.

I would have said there was at least eleven feet from the meadow to the water in the lake, which would have given at least four feet fall at high water, into the lake, and would have worked out fine. But the report is substantially as above.

So it is demanded by the land owners that the contractor put the ditch to the grade originally required, and if more is necessary that will have to be handled as a repair job.

As to the Johnson branch, I feel that you are largely correct as to its laying out, and I believe it runs the wrong way, but that would not relieve you from putting it to grade, if you did not do so, which I do not know, one way or the other, from my own knowledge.

This states the situation that we are all up against, as plainly as I came put it.

Yours very respectfully,

William M. Ross

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Sketch #49