

**The Best of...**

**Second in a Series**



**Tractors of the**

**Great Depression**

# Legacy of the '30's 'Forged' in Old Iron

THE GREAT DEPRESSION—many farmers remember it as a time of dust and hardship.

Others recall it as a not-so-bad string of years—a decade in which money was scarce, but home-grown food was plentiful and folks were rich in good friends and neighbors.

Nearly everyone, however, remembers the '30's as an era of *classic* farm tractors.

The tractors of that decade helped farmers “pull” the country through the tough times—and many kept on working reliably for years to come.

Today, folks from all over are restoring these great tractors...preserving some of the rich history of that time.

To honor that history, we've put together this second edition of *The Best of Tractor Talk*—

“Tractors of the Great Depression”.

This book contains the best Depression-era tractors from the pages of *Farm & Ranch Living*. Plus, we've added extra photos and stories never before seen in our magazine, as well as some information and facts about each tractor.

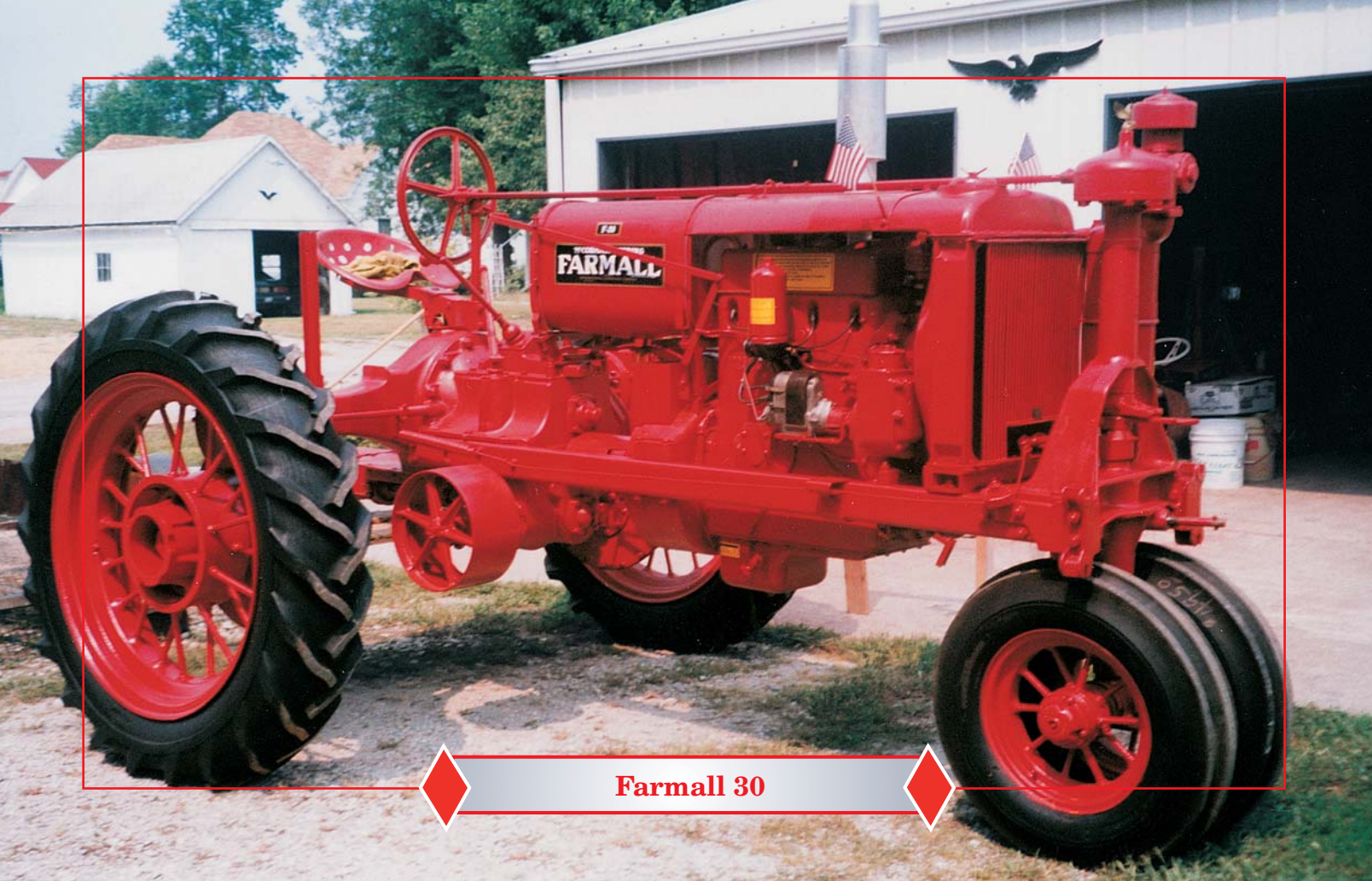
(There's even a “Tractor Puzzler” trivia question at the bottom of each page. Take our “test”, then flip to the inside back cover for the answers!)

We hope you and your family enjoy this tribute to the tractors of the Great Depression...and that you'll look forward to future editions in *The Best of Tractor Talk* book series!

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**Art Director:** Brian Sienko

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**Farmall 30**

## Farmall 30

1931-1939

### *Selected Facts:*

Weight: about 5,300 pounds

Original price: \$1,075 (on steel)

Site of manufacture: Rock Island, Illinois

International Harvester brought out the Farmall 30 during the heyday of the general purpose tractor. Though sticking close to the pattern of the original Farmall “Regular”, the F-30 was quite a bit larger. It could also handle a bigger workload—the company designed the F-30 with the needs of the 200- to 300-acre farm in mind.

The tractor featured an IH-built 1,150 rpm engine—a vertical, four-cylinder unit with a bore and stroke of 4-1/4 x 5. Its ignition system employed the company’s renowned E4A magneto.

IH claimed the F-30 could replace a dozen or more farm animals. This powerful tractor was especially suited for work with larger implements. It could handle three 14-inch plows, a four-row cultivator or a two-row corn picker—not to mention a harvester-thresher.

The company also offered the F-30 in a number of special versions—including the McCormick-Deering W-30 standard tread model. The Farmall 30 eventually sold over 28,000 units.

**Tractor Puzzler #1:** In what year did IH introduce “Farmall Red” (see photograph on other side)—and what paint color did it replace?

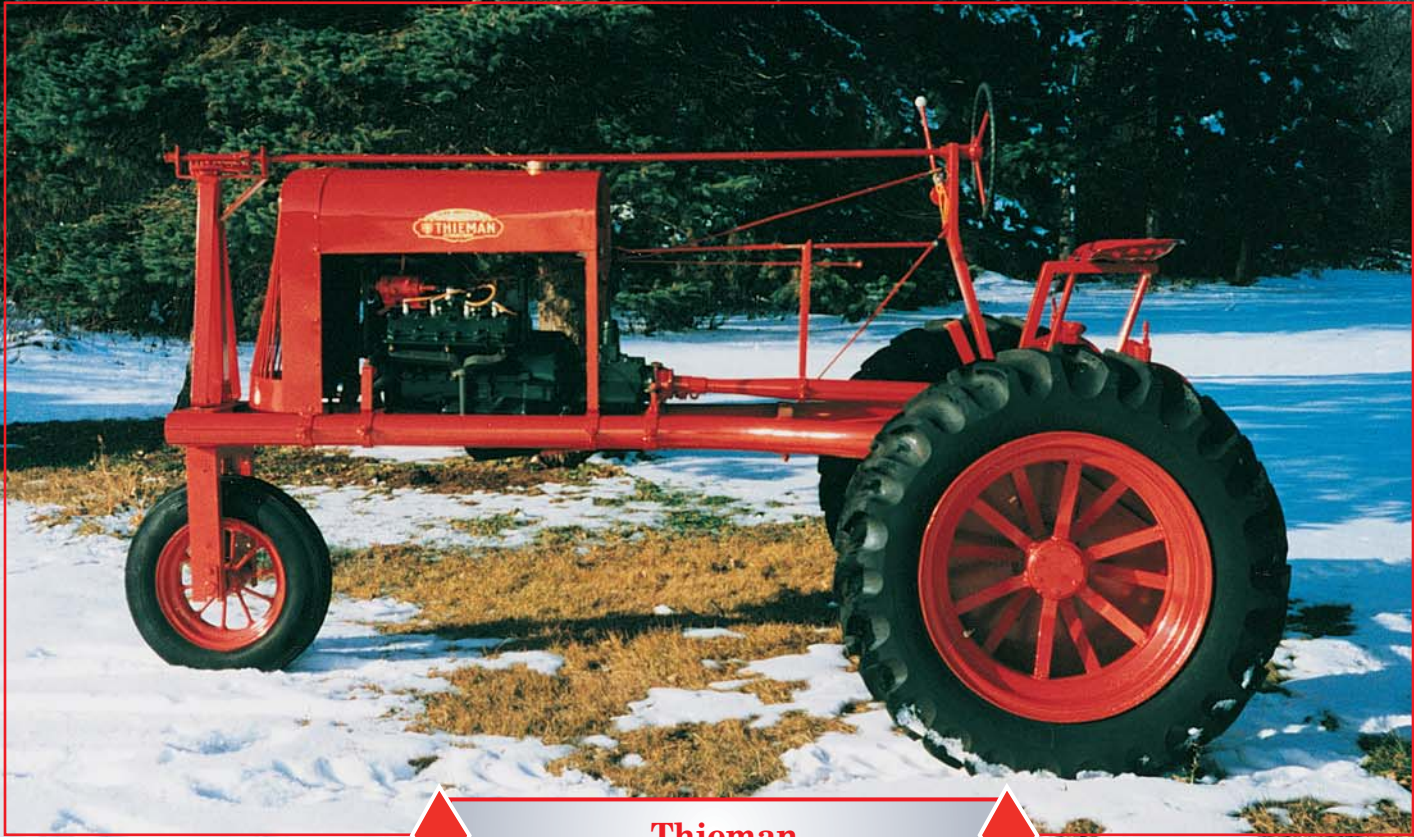
## For Old Time’s Sake

FRESHLY discharged from the Navy, Herman Bennett first laid eyes on his Farmall 30 way back in 1946. He was working for a farmer in Shelby County, Illinois, and driving the F-30 was one of the job’s “fringe benefits”.

Later, he and his wife moved to Shelbina, Missouri and took up farming on their own. When he heard that his former employer was retiring, Herman made the trip back to Illinois and purchased the Farmall.

After he quit farming, the old tractor sat out in the weather for some years while Herman worked other jobs. Then, a few years into his retirement, Herman began restoring the Farmall. Two years of work—and some help from a friend and a couple of family members—put the old Farmall back in sparkling-new condition (see photo on other side).

Herman says what he loved most about restoring the F-30 was seeing how each day’s work brought the tractor “closer to looking like it did when I first drove it in 1946”.



**Thieman**



## Thieman

1936-1942

### *Selected Facts:*

Weight: 2,500 pounds

Dimensions: 140”L x 74”W x 72”H

Original price: around \$500

The Thieman Harvester Company was founded in 1921 by the Thieman brothers—five “sons of the soil” devoted to practical solutions to farming problems. They came out first with an ensilage harvester, then invented several more pieces of farm equipment.

The brothers built the extremely simple Thieman tractor around a factory-reconditioned Ford Model A engine. For lightness and strength, the frame was constructed of electric-welded 4-inch tubular steel. In addition, buyers could choose from a number of optional features and labor-saving attachments.

An all-around tractor, the Thieman could pull two 14-inch plows and was useful for discing, two-row cultivating, corn planting, grain binding—any farm job requiring four or five horses. According to the company, the tractor could run for an hour on 1 to 1-1/2 gallons of gas.

By 1939, over 400 dealers (mostly Ford dealerships) carried the Thieman tractor. However, production was suspended with the outbreak of WWII because of the unavailability of steel. The company went out of business shortly after the end of the war.

**Tractor Puzzler #2:** What non-farm product did the Thieman Harvester Company manufacture?

## Tractor Detective

HALF the fun of restoring a rare tractor is the detective work that goes into the project.

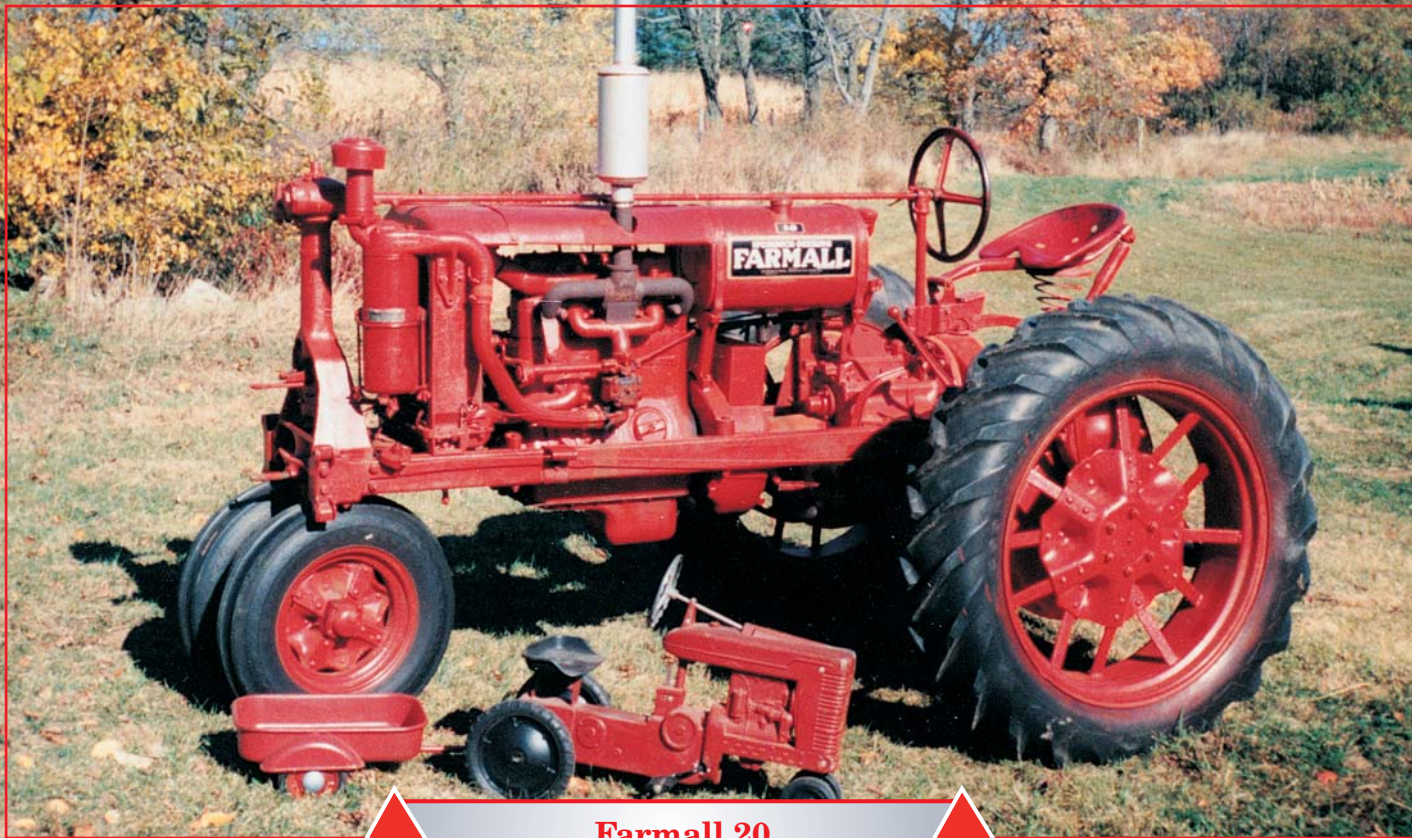
Jim Ringsrud, a retired boiler serviceman from Fargo, North Dakota, has done his share of sleuthing into the Thieman tractor he restored (see photo).

Just determining the year the tractor was manufactured was a challenge. Jim says the main problem is that some Thieman tractors never had a serial number. And on others, the number came off through wear and tear.

But by tracing the clues, Jim was able to pin down his Thieman’s year. Judging by features like the enclosed drive train and the V-8 engine, he figures the tractor was built in 1937.

His investigations have even led him to a nephew of the Thieman family—who was kind enough to supply Jim with a set of original Thieman decals.

The *other* half of the fun of a rare tractor is observing people’s surprise when they first see it. Jim says he’s had a good time showing his Thieman at tractor events and celebrations.



**Farmall 20**

## Farmall 20

1932-1939

### *Selected Facts:*

Dimensions: 140”L x 86”W x 76”H

Plow capability: two 14-inch

Total production: 148,960

International Harvester billed the Farmall 20 as the “direct descendant” of the Farmall Regular—the original row crop tractor that revolutionized the industry in the ’20’s.

The new model was nearly identical to its ancestor. The main exception—the F-20 was a bit larger and boasted about 10% more power. It retained, however, the Regular’s vertical, 4-cylinder, 3-3/4 x 5 engine and had four forward gears (top speed 3-3/4 mph) plus reverse. The F-20 continued the Farmall reputation of ruggedness, simplicity and reliability.

International Harvester pitched the F-20 to the farmer with an average-sized spread, about 160 acres or so. According to the company, the tractor could do the work of 6 to 10 horses. In its November 1936 Nebraska test (there were two others) the F-20 delivered horsepower of 20/27 burning distillate. Also, it pulled a maximum of 2,927 pounds.

Over the years, IH added several options to the hugely popular F-20, but the basic tractor itself changed little.

**Tractor Puzzler #3:** In what year was the Farmall Regular introduced?

## A Tale of Two Tractors

WHEN Bob Wiley was a boy, his father planted a big garden every year. Power for the 10-acre plot was supplied by a draft horse—one with the habit of stepping on the plants.

So in the early ’50’s, Bob’s father replaced the animal with a Farmall 20. Bob (a resident of Ashland, Ohio) says the F-20 was not only his dad’s first tractor, but also his favorite.

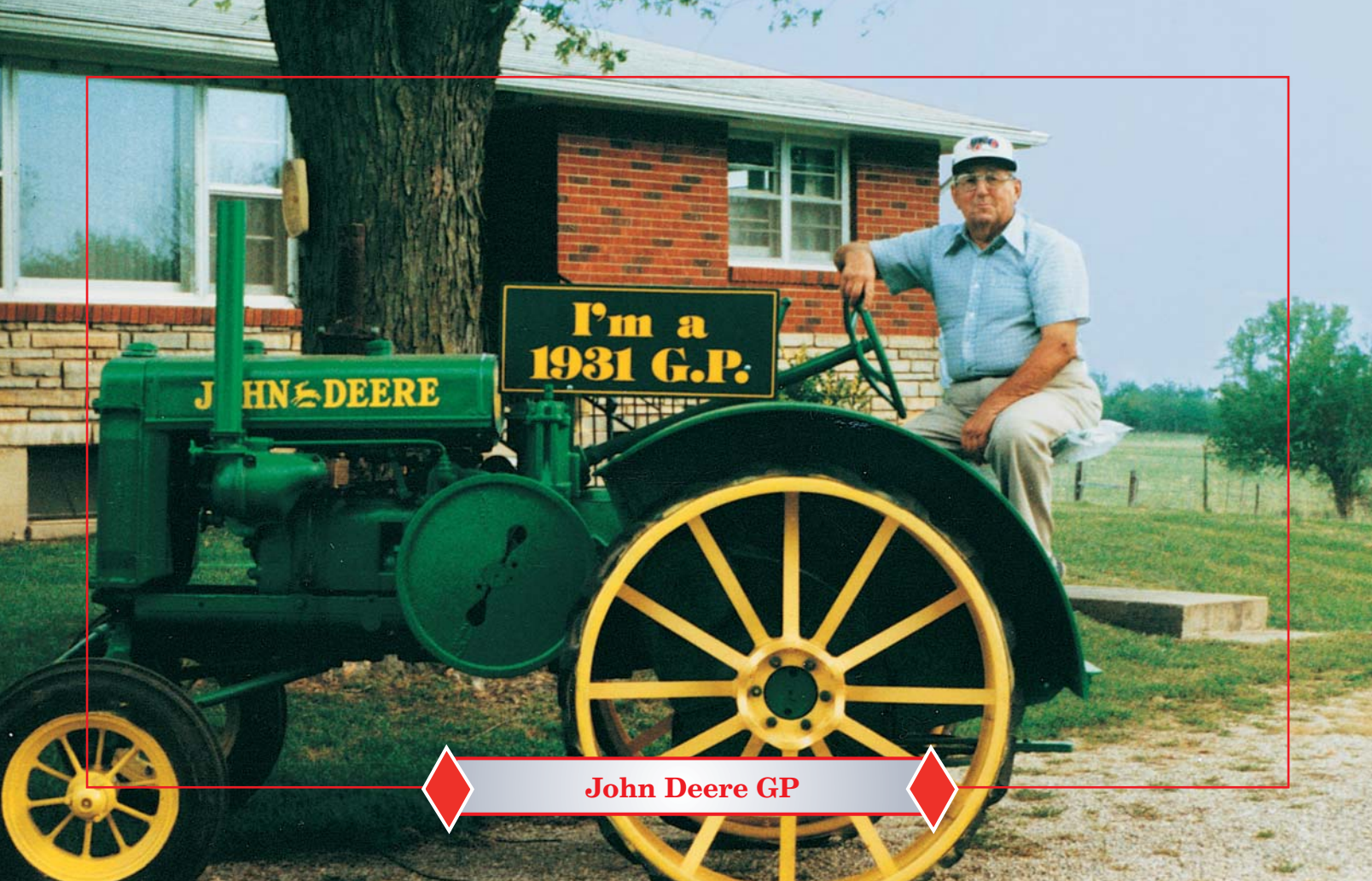
Bob also got *his* first tractor around this time—a Farmall M pedal tractor (see photo) with a trailer. Bob recalls, “I hauled anything and everything I could in that trailer.”

After his dad passed away, Bob set about restoring the Farmalls. Since his father had always kept the F-20 in nice shape, all the tractor needed was a good cleaning and a fresh coat of paint.

The “M”, however, was a different story. Besides a paint job, the tractor needed a new seat, steering column, chain sprocket, front wheels and foot pedals.

Now fully restored, both tractors serve as a living memory to be passed down to Bob’s own son and daughter.





JOHN DEERE

I'm a  
1931 G.P.

**John Deere GP**

## John Deere GP

1928-1935

### *Selected Facts:*

Engine: Horizontal, two-cylinder, L-head

PTO speed: 520 rpm

Gears: three forward (4-1/3 mph max.), one reverse

The John Deere GP began its life as the Model C. However, after building only about 100 units, the company changed the tractor's name to emphasize the fact that it was a "general purpose" farm machine.

When introduced, this light (3,600-pound) tractor was powered by a 5-3/4 x 6 engine. In 1930, the bore was increased to 6 inches. This helped boost horsepower from the original 10/20 to an energetic 16/24. Historically, the GP will always be known as the first tractor to feature a power equipment lift.

Another GP innovation was its arched front axle, which allowed the tractor to straddle one row and cultivate three. The GP could handle two 14-inch plows, and at its 1931 Nebraska test (with its new, beefed-up engine) the powerful machine pulled 2,853 pounds.

The GP was not universally popular. Many folks disliked the three-row idea. Also, the lines of the tractor caused visibility problems. Likely the main sticking point, however, was the price—\$800 when introduced, a couple hundred dollars more than the Farmall (by 1931 the price was even higher, \$1,200). Nonetheless, during the GP's lifetime, John Deere built over 30,000 units and produced several special versions.

**Tractor Puzzler #4:** What was Deere & Company's first tractor?

### A Mixed Batch

SOME Old Iron fans stop after fixing up one or two vintage tractors. Not Elwood Hachler of Eldon, Missouri—he's restored 15 of them!

Elwood says he's not particular about make or model—he'll restore any tractor he can find for sale at a reasonable price. So far, his collection includes an Oliver 80, a Hart-Parr 18-27, a Graham-Bradley, a Sears Economy, a couple International Harvesters, several Massey-Harrises and about half a dozen John Deeres.

One of Elwood's most challenging jobs was his 1931 John Deere GP (see photo on front). He says it was a real "basket case" when he started work on it. But despite the sad shape the GP was in, Elwood got it up and running—and looking brand-new—in one year.

To show the GP—and the other tractors in his big collection—Elwood goes to as many Old Iron events as he can. And when he does, he takes along one to three *trailer loads* of tractors!



**English Fordson Model N**

## English Fordson Model N

**1933-1938**

### *Selected Facts:*

Bore and stroke: 4-1/8 x 5

Air cleaner: water (oil bath in 1938)

Weight: 3,310 pounds

American production of the Fordson Model F lasted from 1918 to 1928. After making nearly three-quarters of a million Fs, Ford shifted production to Cork, Ireland. The Irish Fordson—redubbed the Model N—remained in production until 1933, when its manufacture was moved to Dagenham, England. The tractor built for 5 years in Dagenham became known in America as the “English Fordson”.

The Model N was a better tractor than its U.S. predecessor. For one, it featured a bigger (27-horsepower) engine. Also, for superior starting, a high-tension magneto replaced the F’s vibrating spark coils. Plus, to counter the old Fordson’s overheating problem, the Irish and English versions added a water pump cooling system.

The authentic color of the English Fordson is a source of dispute. Many folks stand by *rusty orange* (see photo) as the tractor’s genuine hue. Others say that the N was painted *blue* when it moved to England. Some even contend that at the end of its production life, the N came out in *dark green*—to avoid being a target for enemy aircraft!

**Tractor Puzzler #5:** What tractor company was the first to call its product a “tractor”?

### What Friends Are For

OLD IRON BUFF Richard Vogt of Enid, Oklahoma has his friend George Oller to thank for “jump starting” his interest in antique power.

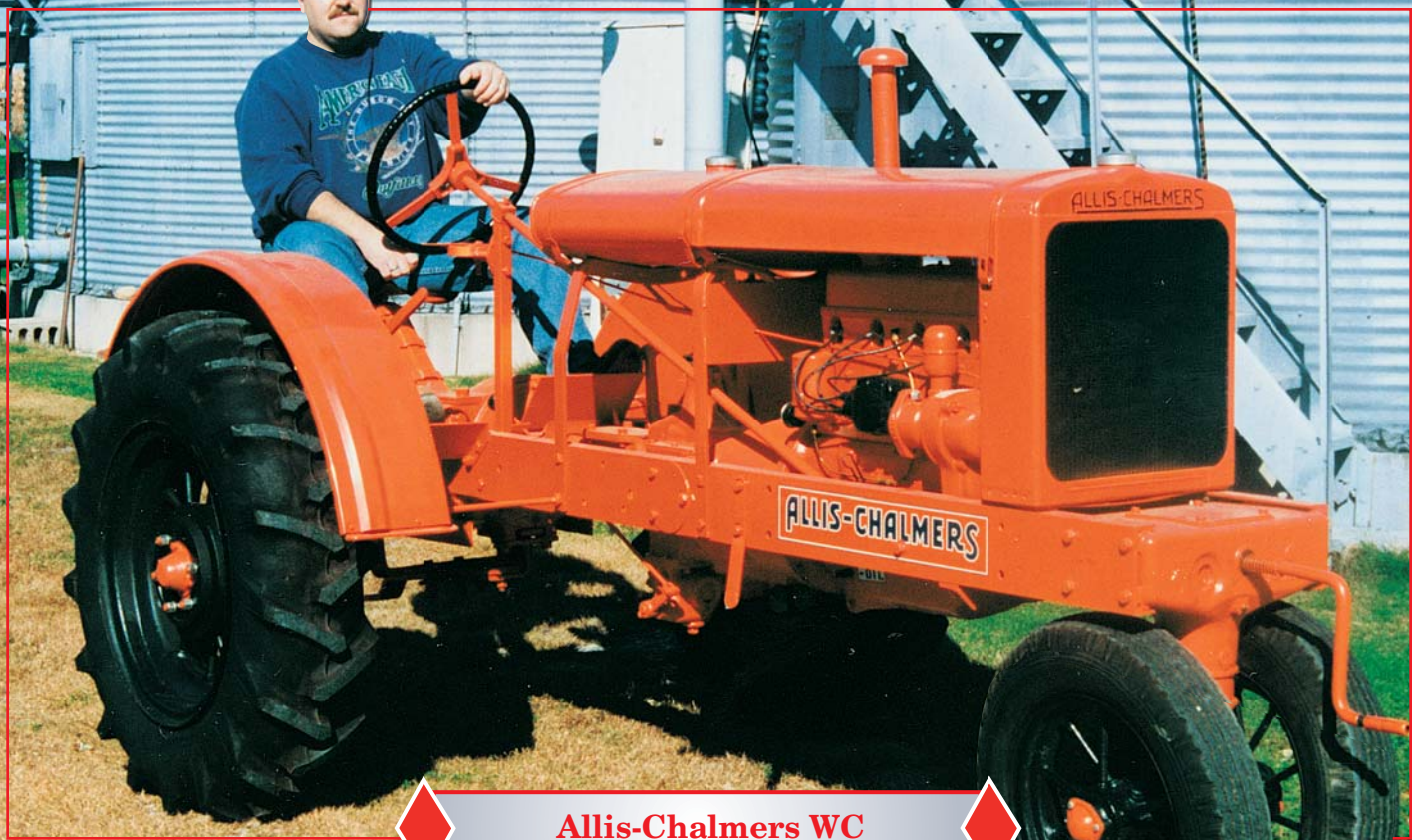
A few years ago, George got Richard hooked on old engines. Later, Richard became fascinated by vintage tractors.

The hobby was a natural for Richard, who grew up on a rented farm northeast of Enid and started driving a tractor when he was 12 years old.

One tractor Richard had always been drawn to was the English Fordson. His father had bought one brand-new back in 1937 and farmed with it through World War II. So a few years ago when Richard heard about a 1938 model for sale, he and his friend George went to check it out.

Richard bought the tractor and, with his friend’s help, hauled it home. He then dove into the restoration project, completing the job in under 2 years.

Including the Fordson (see photo on the front), Richard now owns six vintage tractors and two show engines.



**Allis-Chalmers WC**



## Allis-Chalmers WC

1933-1948

### *Selected Facts:*

Weight: 3,300 pounds (on rubber)

Plow capability: two 14-inch

Total production: 178,202

The WC row crop tractor has the distinction of being the first farm tractor offered with rubber tires as standard equipment from the factory. (Allis-Chalmers' Model U came on rubber as an *option* in 1932.)

The WC was also the first tractor with a “square” motor: a 4-inch bore and a 4-inch stroke. The vertical, 4-cylinder engine—introduced in 1934 with the main production run—boasted a capacity of 201 cubic inches.

A unique design feature of the WC was its light, sturdy steel-channel frame. Also, throughout its production, the tractor featured individual rear wheel hand brakes. It was restyled in 1938-39.

The WC was a godsend for legions of Depression-era farmers. It was a strong, reliable, “nothing fancy” tractor priced in 1934 at a low \$825 (\$675 on steel). Teamed with A-C's famous All-Crop combine, the WC offered independence to family farmers all across the country.

Largely because of the popularity of the WC, Allis-Chalmers' share of the tractor market quadrupled in the first part of the '30's. After a run of a decade and a half, the WC was replaced with the Model WD.

**Tractor Puzzler #6:** In 1934, what did it cost a company to have a tractor tested at the Nebraska Tractor Test Laboratory?

## A Pioneer

RUBBER tractor tires caused quite a stir when they appeared in Putnam County.

Just ask Glenn Crosby (now of Fort Myers, Florida). In 1935 his father brought home the Indiana county's first rubber-tired tractor—a new Allis-Chalmers WC (see photo of great-grandson Christopher on the restored tractor).

For publicity, the dealer who sold the tractor had Glenn's dad spend a whole day driving it around the courthouse square. Since steel-lugged tractors weren't allowed on streets, the sight of the WC cruising the pavement whipped up a real commotion!

After the WC got down to work in the field, folks came from miles for a look. Says Glenn, many thought rubber tires wouldn't have the traction to pull a plow.

But the WC proved them wrong with its easy handling of two 14-inch bottoms. And when the tractor towed a double 7-foot disc with a drag in loose plowed soil, they were truly amazed.

Glenn recalls that the WC's performance “sold several other farmers on the idea of buying a rubber-tired tractor.”



McCormick-Deering W-40

## McCormick-Deering W-40

**1934-1940**

*Selected Facts:*

Horsepower: 35/50  
Belt speed: 645 rpm  
PTO speed: 552 rpm

The McCormick-Deering W-40—International Harvester's very first six-cylinder tractor—made its name in the late '30's as a high-horsepower farm tractor.

Its vertical, cast-en-bloc engine had a bore and stroke of 3-3/4 x 4-1/2 and could generate 1,750 rpm. While the W-40 ran on gasoline, it could also burn kerosene and distillate.

Since pneumatic tractor tires came out just a few years before the introduction of the W-40, the model was available from the start on either rubber or steel.

The W-40 was neither very maneuverable (outside turning radius was 17 feet) nor sprightly (top speed was 3-5/8 mph), but it made up for these shortcomings with superior power. With this strong machine, a farmer could plow up to 20 acres a day.

W-40 production eventually exceeded 6,000 units. IH also built an industrial version of the model starting in 1936.

**Tractor Puzzler #7:** What model did IH build as a companion to the W-40? (Hint: It was the first U.S. wheel-type tractor with a diesel engine.)

### International Man

OLD IRON fan Roger Willing is mighty particular about his tractors. His collection contains nothing but vintage International Harvesters—23 of them!

Roger, a farmer from Pecatonica, Illinois, says he's been driving tractors since he was 6 years old.

He traces his interest in IH models back to the '50's and '60's when he worked as a mechanic at an IH dealer. It wasn't until about a dozen years ago, however, that he started collecting.

Roger purchased his McCormick-Deering W-40 (see photo) from a man in neighboring Wisconsin whose father had bought it new back in 1935.

Roger says the W-40 still had its original cylinders when he bought it. The restoration took less than a year, with only the fenders giving him much trouble.

Since being completed, the W-40 has proven its strength. Roger has entered it in a tractor pull every year for the last 3 years—and the W-40's won first place three times!





**John Deere D**

## John Deere D

1923-1953

### *Selected Facts:*

Fuel: kerosene or distillate

Weight: 4,250 pounds (original version)

Plow capability: three or four 14-inch

The Model D—the first tractor to bear the John Deere name—rolled off the assembly line for *three decades*. Production eventually exceeded 150,000 units. Almost everything good you could say about a tractor applied to the D. It was powerful, economical, reliable and easy to use.

It was also ingeniously *simple*, featuring John Deere's trademark two-cylinder, horizontal engine—a configuration that eliminated extra parts and allowed the tractor to burn low-cost fuels efficiently.

John Deere tweaked and revised the Model D extensively during its 30-year production life. Originally 6-1/2 inches, engine bore was increased in 1927 to 6-3/4 (stroke remained 7 inches), boosting displacement from 465 to 501 cubic inches. Later, in 1930, the company stepped up engine speed from 800 to 900 rpm.

Even the dimensions of the Model D increased—the last version was 5 inches taller and 21 inches longer than the first, representing a weight gain of over 1,000 pounds. Of course, horsepower increased significantly—going from 22/30 in 1924 to its final output of 38/42.

**Tractor Puzzle #8:** In 1939, the Model D became the *third* John Deere tractor to be “styled”. What were the first two?

## A Real Card

FARMER Delbert Marquardt of Julesburg, Colorado has been around John Deere tractors since way back. He was born on a farm...has lived on farms all his life...and his family has always used Deeres.

That's why in 1990, when given the chance to acquire a 1931 John Deere D, he was willing to trade away his Ford Model A truck in an even swap.

The D was in good shape. What work it did need was handled by hired man Felix Campbell. Felix put the D back in mint condition (see photo).

Delbert was able to find out a lot about his Model D—even its “birthday”, February 24. On that very same day, the brand-new tractor shipped out to Nebraska. Delbert says the D's owner used it near the town of Ogallala until finally retiring it from farming.

Once the Model D was restored, Delbert discovered a novel way to put the old beauty to work. He uses a photo of it on greeting cards!



**Oliver Hart-Parr Row-Crop 70**

## Oliver Hart-Parr Row-Crop 70

1935-1937

### *Selected Facts:*

Weight: 3,500 pounds (in Nebraska test)

Engine speed: 1,500 rpm

Gears: four forward (5.88 mph max.), plus reverse

When introduced, the Oliver Hart-Parr 70 set the industry standard for sleek design. A pioneer in many ways, it also boasted the first high-compression tractor engine.

The 70's vertical, automobile-type engine featured *six* smooth-running cylinders. With a bore and stroke of 3-1/8 x 4-3/8, the valve-in-head motor delivered quiet power and efficiency. This model also featured Oliver's unique "Power on Tiptoe" skeleton wheels.

At its 1936 Nebraska test, the 70 performed the muscular feat of pulling nearly its own weight. In the field, the tractor could handle two 14-inch plows and turn 10 acres in a day's work. A nice feature of the 70 was its adjustable rear tread (60 to 72 inches). It also boasted steering brakes for tight turning.

From the beginning, sales of the 70 outstripped the expectations of the company, which also offered the tractor in standard, orchard and industrial versions. After only a few years of production, the "Hart-Parr" name was dropped from the logo and the tractor became simply the Oliver 70. It was replaced in 1948 by the Oliver Fleetline 77.

**Tractor Puzzler #9:** What was the first mass-produced tractor?

### Many Hours Together

"I HAD a lot of seat time on this tractor," says Al Bloesser of his Oliver Hart-Parr.

The tractor, a rare 1935 Row-Crop 70 (see photo), had been on the old family farm at Fort Scott, Kansas for as long as Al could remember. They used it for all kinds of chores—plowing, discing, cultivating, combining. Finally, after decades of hard work, the Oliver was "put out to pasture".

After the tractor sat in the same spot for 20 years, Al decided to restore it. Just moving it from its resting place was a project—he had to cut down three trees simply to budge the old tractor. He then hauled it to his home in Sidney, Montana.

An auto mechanic by trade, Al was well cut out for the job of bringing this old machine back to life.

Apparently, all the "seat time" he spent on this tractor never dampened his enthusiasm for the old machine. He refers to the 70 as "my pride and joy".



1939  
CASE RC  
Jim Waymire

Case RC

## Case RC

1935-1940

### *Selected Facts:*

Original price: \$847 (1940, on rubber)

Plow capability: one 16-inch

Rear tread width: 44" to 80" (adjustable)

The RC was Case's attempt to create a tractor competitive with the general purpose, row crop units popular at the time.

The model went through many changes during its short 5-year production life. The original RC used an over-the-top steering configuration. In 1937, a "side arm" set up was substituted. In addition, late in its production, a fourth gear was added, more than doubling its top speed. And, with the introduction of the "Flambeau Red" series, the RC's light grey color was replaced with a striking red paint job (plus, the original grille design gave way to a stylish "sunburst").

Case offered the Model RC on either steel or rubber tires. On the front end, buyers had the option of a single wheel or a dual narrow-tread wheel configuration.

According to the company, the RC could handle the workload of four or five draft animals. At its Nebraska test in 1936, the model pulled 2,103 pounds.

A popular tractor, the RC eventually sold several thousand units. Total production for the entire R series exceeded 15,000.

**Tractor Puzzler #10:** For its first 2 years, the RC was built in Racine, Wisconsin. Where did production move in 1937?

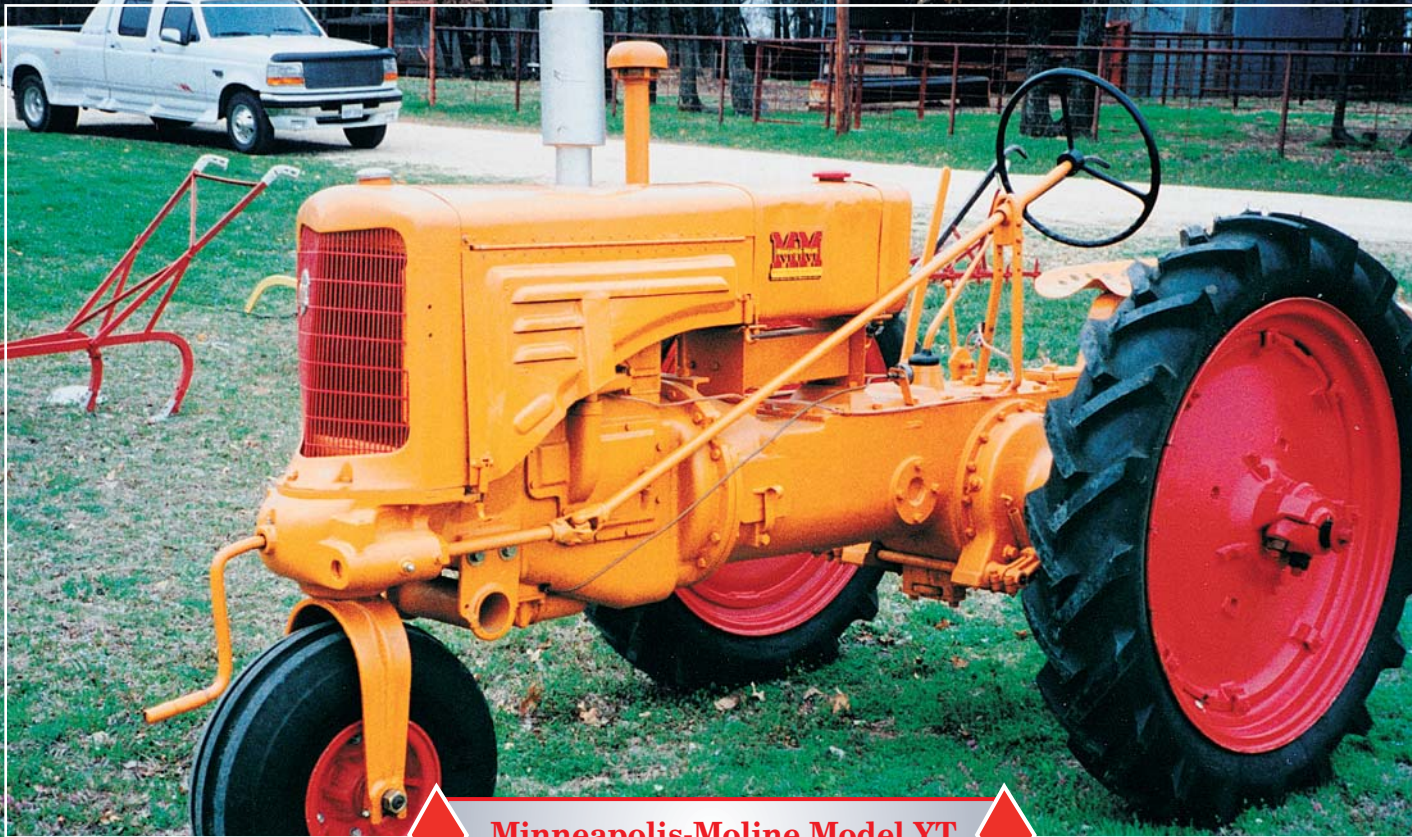
## A Labor of Love

MANY folks dream of restoring a tractor owned by their father or grandfather. Jim Waymire of Greeley, Colorado can proudly say he's done just that.

His Case RC (see photo) was originally owned by his grandfather, who bought it brand-new in 1939 for a grand total of \$570. The RC was one of the very first pieces of equipment used on his grandfather's farm...and it remained there working reliably for over 40 years.

According to Jim, restoring the old beauty was easy. That's because his grandpa had taken such good care of it for all those decades. When it came into his hands, the mint-condition Case still ran like new. All the project required was new tires and a fresh paint job.

About the job, Jim confides, "I did this as a labor of love...in memory of my grandpa." He believes his grandfather would have been proud to see the tractor as it is today...and proud to watch it in parades and tractor pulls.



Minneapolis-Moline Model YT

## Minneapolis-Moline Model YT

**1937-1938**

*Selected Facts:*

Length: 119”

Width: 80”

Height: 80” (including stack)

The extremely rare YT was an experimental model built by Minneapolis-Moline in the late '30's. Only a few were made—25 to be exact. This number includes three prototypes and 22 “production run” tractors.

The Model YT's vertical gas engine was the only two-cylinder engine ever built by M-M. It resembles a regular four-cylinder engine split in half.

Apparently, different individual tractors came with different parts. For example, some YTs were installed with a Fairbanks Morse magneto, while at least one had a Type BN from Edison-Splitdorf.

One mystery surrounding the YT has to do with its serial numbers—each tractor is stamped with a number from the U.S. Army Air Force. The model's connection to the military, however, is unclear.

The exact fate of all 25 YTs is unknown. However, at least eight have survived and have been restored.

**Tractor Puzzler #11:** Why is the Minneapolis-Moline YT so rare?

### **“You've Got a What?”**

“NO PARTS are made for it.” That's what Jerry Brammer and his cousin were told about the worn-out Minnie-Mo they used to play on in the early '40's.

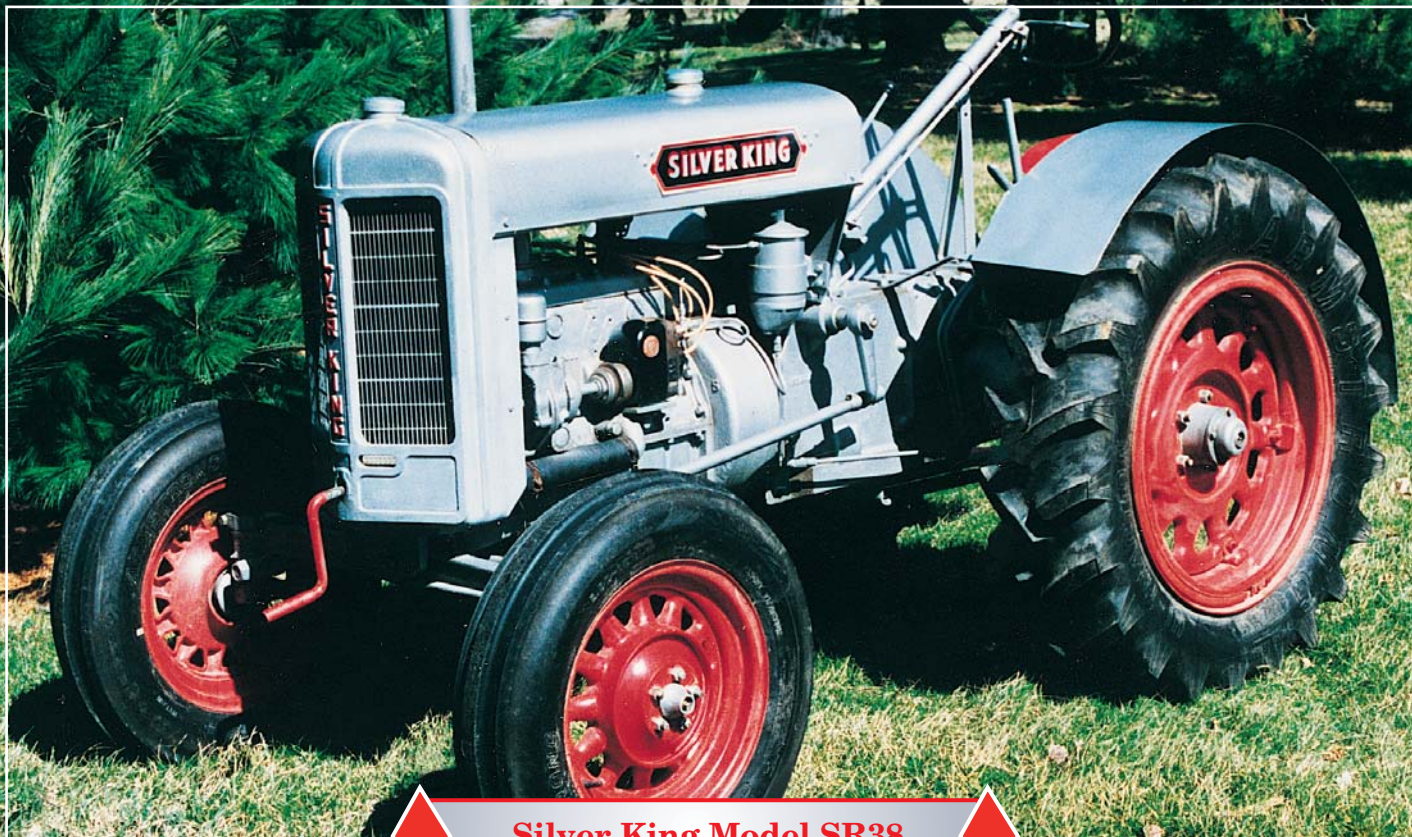
But it wasn't until Jerry (a resident of Rhome, Texas) bought the Model YT from his cousin a few years back that he found out how rare it really was.

According to wife Barbara, when she asked dealers about YT parts, many laughed at her. Others told her to go check the serial number again. Everyone she talked to was of the same opinion—there's no such tractor as a Minneapolis-Moline YT!

That's when the Brammers began searching in earnest for clues about the mysterious tractor. Trips to libraries and book stores uncovered some information...and led them to a fellow YT owner who supplied even more of the story.

It took the couple just 7 months to restore the YT (see photo). They now display it at shows and drive it in parades—not bad for a tractor many folks said didn't exist!





**Silver King Model SR38**

## Silver King Model SR38

1937-1939

### *Selected Facts:*

Weight: 2,170 pounds

Dimensions: 97”L x 48”W x 49”H

Engine: Hercules IXB

The first tractor manufactured by the Fate-Root-Heath Company was the 1933 Plymouth 10-20, named for the Ohio town where the company was located. In 1935, the company rechristened its tractor line the “Silver King”—and repainted them accordingly.

The Model SR38 is named for the width of its rear tread: a non-adjustable 38 inches. (A wider-tread Model 44 was also offered.) The SR38 featured a vertical, 4-cylinder engine with a bore and stroke of 3-1/4 x 4.

The Silver King line was known for its compact size, light weight, maneuverability (9-foot outside turning radius) and relatively smooth ride. The Model SR38 could pull one 14-inch plow and turn a 5-acre field in a day. The most noteworthy thing about Silver King tractors was their transport speed—they could breeze along at up to 25 mph.

The Silver King line was sold in 1956 to the Mountain State Fabricating Company of Clarksburg, West Virginia. Production of the tractor line ended before the close of the decade.

**Tractor Puzzler #12:** Before it got into the tractor business, what did the Fate-Root-Heath Company manufacture?

### “Young Iron”

TEENAGER Aaron Schmitkons of Lorain, Ohio is the fifth generation to live on his family’s fruit farm. The 16-year-old came by his love of antique farm machinery from all the fascinating old equipment he grew up with.

But his interest in Old Iron really revved up a few years ago when his father purchased a McCormick-Deering 10-20. Inspired, Aaron (11 years old at the time) asked his dad for one of the family’s old Silver Kings to restore.

The tractor Aaron set to work on was a Model SR38 his grandpa had bought for parts back in the ’60’s (see photo).

To learn all he could about his tractor, Aaron did research and spent a lot of time talking with other Silver King owners. Altogether, the restoration took a little under a year.

Aaron’s tractor has seen a lot of action since being completed in 1993. He has taken it to several shows, and he’s also entered it in a couple of antique tractor pulls.



**Graham-Bradley**

## Graham-Bradley

1937-1941

### *Selected Facts:*

Engine displacement: 217 cubic inches

Horsepower: 20/28

Maximum pull: 3,013 pounds

The sleek Graham-Bradley tractor was produced in the late '30's by the Graham-Paige Motors Corporation—the Detroit automobile manufacturer known for its racing cars. During the years 1938 and 1939, Graham-Paige offered its farm tractor through Sears Roebuck (either store or catalog). The tractor sold for \$1,030 in 1938.

The Graham-Bradley featured the company's own six-cylinder, 3-1/4 x 4-3/8 engine. This vertical, L-head, high-compression motor ran at 1,500 rpm. The tractor was designed to pull two 14-inch plows.

The Graham-Bradley was available in both standard and row crop versions and came from the factory with lots of advanced features: rubber tires, PTO, power lift, and electric starter and lighting. Most remarkable about the tractor was its zippiness. It had four forward gears (plus reverse) and maxed out near 20 mph. Interestingly, the transmission also ran through the pulley, so the belt had four speeds as well.

Manufacture of the Graham-Bradley was discontinued with the start of World War II.

**Tractor Puzzler #13:** The Graham-Bradley was built with a number of truck parts from another automaker. Which one was it?

## A Lasting Impression

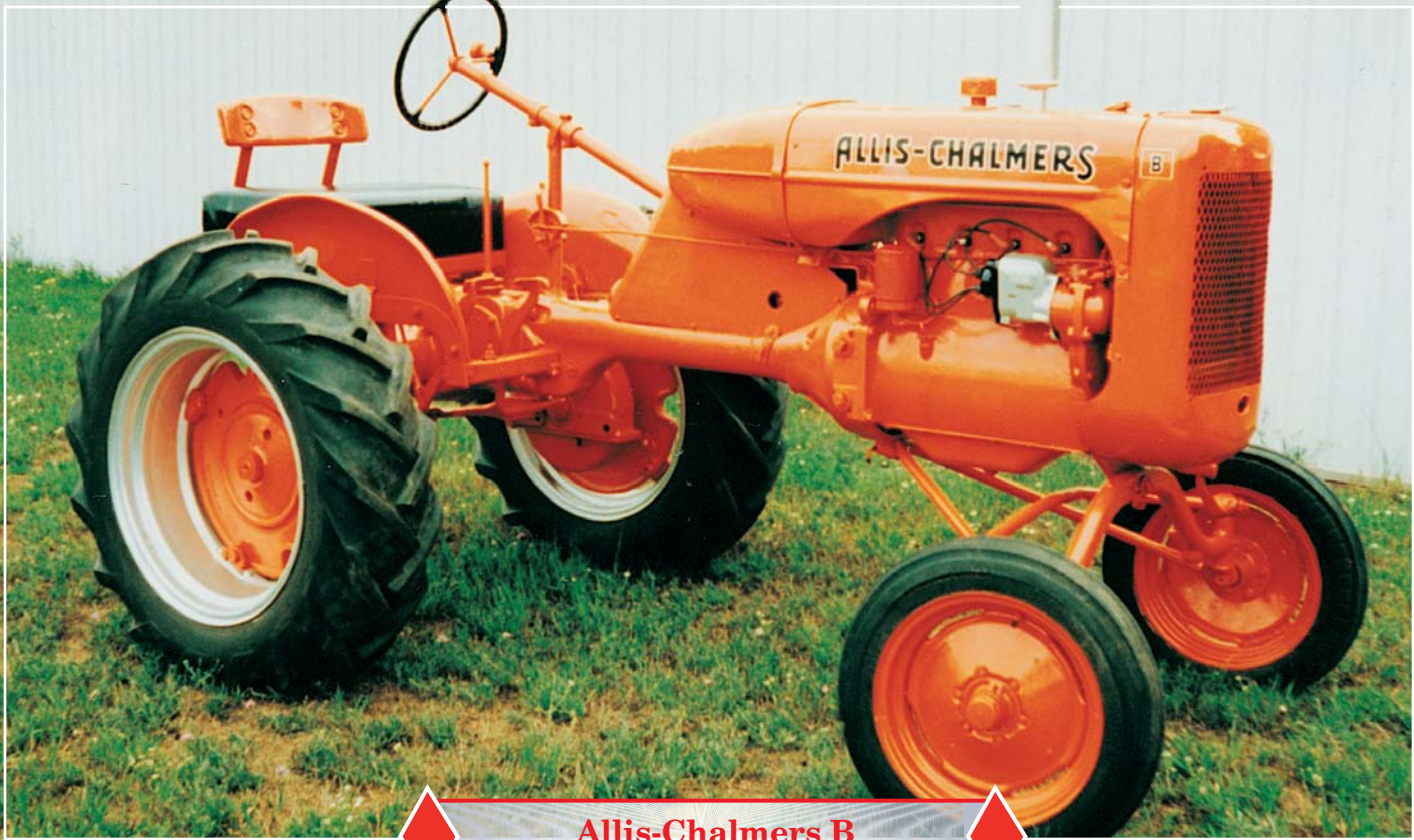
THERE weren't any tractors on Earl Morin's family farm when he was a boy—his grandfather didn't believe in them. So at age 13 when he went to work for a farmer who had, as Earl puts it, “advanced to the machine age”, the first tractor he worked with made a lasting impression.

It was a 1938 Graham-Bradley with a radio mounted on the fender. As he breezed along listening to Chicago radio station WLS, he felt like he was flying.

The impression was so strong that nearly 50 years later Earl found and bought one of these rare tractors. It took 5 years to restore, but all the while the Kankakee, Illinois resident kept his eye on the goal of returning the tractor to strictly authentic condition (see photo).

And he succeeded—except in one detail. Despite careful handling, when it came time to put everything back together, the *engine fan* was nowhere to be found...and no amount of searching could make it turn up!

As Earl dryly puts it, “In every project there is a bit of humor.”



**Allis-Chalmers B**

## Allis-Chalmers B

1937-1957

### *Selected Facts:*

Plow capability: one 16-inch  
Total production: over 125,000  
Weight: under 2,000 pounds

When introduced on a large scale in 1938, the Allis-Chalmers B cost a mere \$495—and that was with rubber tires included (on steel, the B was even cheaper). At this low price, tens of thousands of small farmers were able to afford mechanized farm power for the first time. In fact, the Model B had much to do with the demise of the farm horse.

A-C advertised its small Model B as the perfect tractor “for all jobs on small farms—for small jobs on big farms”. The 1938 version of the tractor delivered horsepower of 13/16 burning distillate. In 1943 the B’s engine displacement grew from 116 to 125 cubic inches. When tested again in 1950, horsepower had increased to 20/22 (fueled by gasoline).

Besides being affordable, the B was designed for superior visibility. Its innovative torque-tube chassis design gave farmers a better view of the ground, without sacrificing stability. The bowed front axle also improved lines of vision. Plus, the extra-wide seat allowed the driver to shift from side to side to watch what was happening below.

The B was an instant hit with farmers—and was widely copied by other manufacturers.

**Tractor Puzzle #14:** What tractor replaced the A-C Model B?

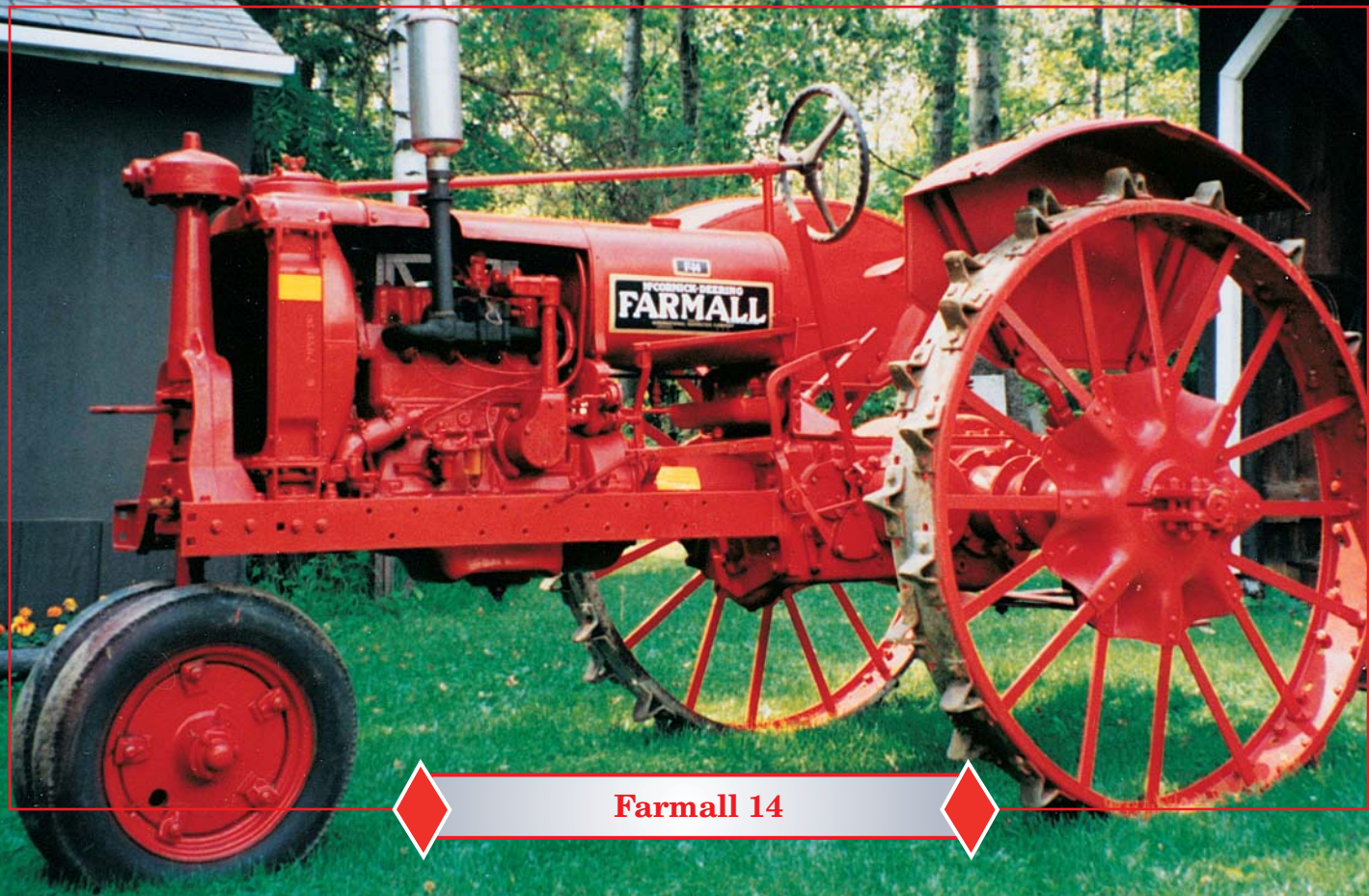
### Quick Work

THE Allis-Chalmers B restored by Jimmy and Beverly Shillington of Grawn, Michigan has been in the family for quite a while. It was bought new by Jimmy’s grandfather back in 1939, and his dad also worked with it.

After its farming days were over, the B sat out in a field for 25 years. By the end of that time, its tires were rotten and the rims and the gas tank were full of holes. Plus, it had no seat, no gauges and no caps...and it was serving as a nice home to several mice.

Finally one recent summer, Jim and Bev hauled the B into their workshop and began to restore it. First, they paid visits to three “tractor graveyards” to find all the needed parts. The couple then put in 10 hours a day for 2 weeks straight getting their tractor back in running order (see photo).

“We could take the time needed to restore the B because we’re both retired,” explains Beverly, “except now Jimmy drives a school bus so we can earn a little extra ‘tractor money’.”



**Farmall 14**

## Farmall 14

1938-1939

### *Selected Facts:*

Plow capability: two 14-inch

Fuel: gas or distillate

Original price: \$895 (on rubber)

Produced for only two years, the F-14 was the *fourth* tractor in the Farmall series from International Harvester.

The F-14 was powered by a four-cylinder IH engine with a bore and stroke of 3 x 4. Thanks to this 1,650 rpm motor, in its 1938 Nebraska test the F-14 achieved drawbar horsepower of about 15 and pulled a maximum of 2,369 pounds. In the same test, the tractor delivered maximum belt horsepower of 17.

IH offered rear wheels of steel or rubber for the F-14. (For rubber wheels, the company provided a set of weights to improve the tractor's footing.) The operator could adjust the rear tread to straddle anywhere from 44 to 78 inches. Like all the tractors in the Farmall line, the F-14 was compatible with a wide range of implements.

The F-14 superseded the popular Farmall F-12. Over 25,000 models were sold.

**Tractor Puzzler #15:** What was the name of the Farmall implement mounting system?

## A Short History

EVERY old tractor has a history that separates it from all others. That history is the line of individual farmers who have worked with the tractor and grown to love it.

Vern and Carrie Hallman's Farmall 14 (see photo) has a history that—so far—embraces three families.

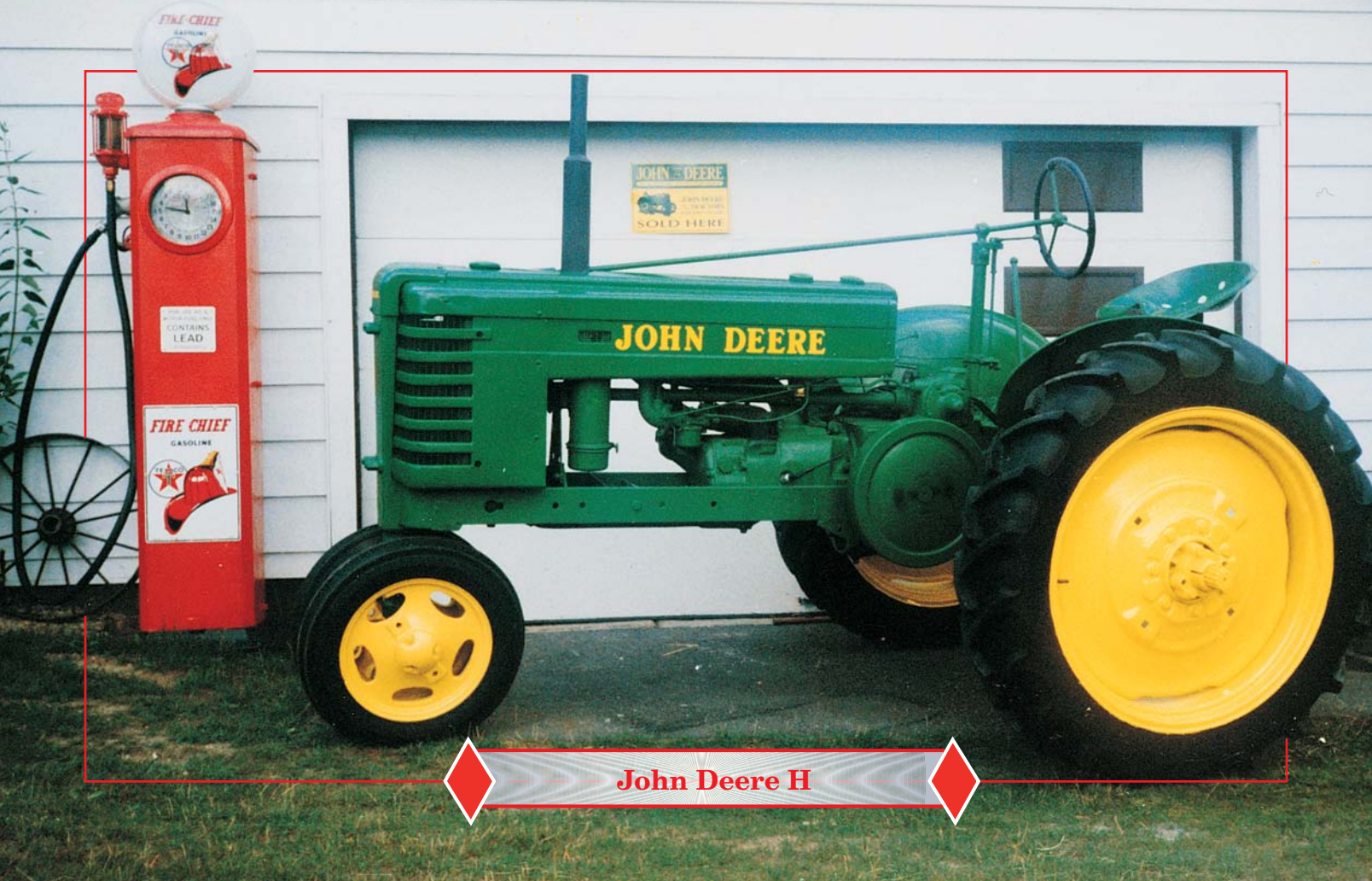
The F-14 was purchased new in 1935 by Willis DeVault of Twining, Michigan, who worked it hard for decades. Upon Mr. DeVault's death, the tractor passed to Paul Hoder, who also farmed with it for a number of years.

Just before he died in the early '70's, Mr. Hoder gave the F-14 to the Hallmans. He wanted the tractor to be well taken care of.

After using it on their property for a few years, the Omer, Michigan couple decided to retire the F-14. They tuned it up, lubed it, gave it a fresh coat of paint and put on new decals.

The little tractor—rich in history—now looks mint and runs like new.





John Deere H

## John Deere H

1939-1947

### *Selected Facts:*

Engine speed: 1,400 rpm

Belt speed: 700 rpm

Maximum pull: 1,839 pounds

John Deere's last new model of the '30's was the H, a small row crop tractor. Deere designed the H to fill the niche between the Model LA utility tractor and the Model B. It looked much like the Models A and B and was "styled" from the beginning of its production.

Its horizontal two-cylinder engine had a bore and stroke of 3-9/16 x 5. The tractor went 5-3/4 mph in third gear, but the rider could actually get up to a transport speed of 7-1/2 mph by using the foot throttle to override the governor. Unique about the H was the fact that its belt pulley ran off the camshaft (instead of the crankshaft). One result of this configuration was that the pulley spun backwards—counter-clockwise.

In general, the 3,000-pound Model H was excellent for lighter farm chores. It produced horsepower of 12/15 and at plowing time could handle a single 16-inch bottom. A main attraction of the H was its low cost—\$650 shortly after its introduction.

Total production of the H topped 60,000 during its lifetime.

**Tractor Puzzler #16:** What model replaced the H (as well as the L and LA) in the John Deere line?

## A Greener Tractor

LIKE all farm boys, Normie Dogs of West Bend, Wisconsin began driving a tractor at a tender age (in his case, 7). He started off side-racking hay—using either his father's Allis-Chalmers B or a neighbor's John Deere H.

Normie recalls, "That little Johnny was my preference, probably because I had less opportunity to drive the John Deere." In this instance, he observes, it wasn't the grass on other side of the fence that was greener...it was the neighbor's tractor!

As an adult, Normie often thought about the old H and the hours he spent driving it around the field. He always dreamed of getting one to restore.

Then in 1994, he and his wife found a Model H in northern Wisconsin and hauled it home. They spent that winter fixing it up.

The following summer, the couple took a picture of the H and an old gas pump they had also recently restored (see other side). Both pump and tractor work like new!

# Now, Let's See *Your* Tractor!

If you haven't yet written to *Farm & Ranch Living* about *your* Old Iron project, we'd sure like to hear from you! We're looking for stories about all kinds of tractors—rare tractors, prize-winning tractors, or simply the tractor near and dear to your heart...you name it.

Whatever your story, please remember to send along a clear photo or two. We can't print everything we receive, but we're always looking for more material.

One day you may find *your* tractor in the latest issue of *Farm & Ranch Living*. And who knows...your Old Iron beauty just might make it all the way to the next edition of *The Best of Tractor Talk*!

Mail stories and photos to:

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***Farm & Ranch Living*  
5925 Country Lane  
Greendale WI 53129**

If you'd like your material back, just enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Thanks!

## **Tractor Puzzler Answers**

1. 1936; grey
2. Steel burial vaults
3. 1924
4. The Waterloo Boy (first built in 1912, acquired by Deere in 1918)
5. Hart-Parr
6. \$500
7. McCormick-Deering WD-40
8. Models A and B
9. The Fordson
10. Rock Island, Illinois
11. Because there aren't "Minnie-Mo" of them!
12. Railroad locomotives
13. Dodge
14. Allis-Chalmers D-10
15. "Quick Attach"
16. John Deere M

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