

# The YANKEE'S ATTIC



## John Deere Family Album

**T**HIS TIME I AM FEATURING FOUR GREAT PHOTOS of John Deere tractors at work. I must explain that it took some outside intervention for this to happen. As my readers know, I am especially interested in the more obscure and unusual tractors in our past, and many of the photographs that I feature in “The Yankee’s Attic” focus on those types of tractors. I guess I haven’t paid too much attention, but various readers and many of my local friends have told me that I have completely neglected their favorite Green-and-Yellow brand for several years.

For many reasons I have never been a great fan of the Green tractors and must admit a bit of prejudice toward them. The main reason is there are just too many of them out there to get my interest level up. It is hard to explain, but I prefer rare pieces of agricultural history, so seeing a bunch of John Deere Ls, Bs, or GPs in a row isn’t the same as seeing just one Case L Trackson crawler conversion.

With all that said, I still appreciate all the hard work that collectors put into their favorite brands. Without them our important agricultural history would have been lost to the junkman years ago. Since the late 1970s, when this great hobby we are involved in got into high gear, thousands of tractors of all brands from all over the world have been preserved. Today, it is much easier to restore an old tractor because of all the companies that have sprung up to serve the hobby. Every

time I look in the advertising pages of *Antique Power* I see another company that has started to supply parts or information to help us restore our piles of rust—no matter what color they end up being.

As an apology to all my Green fans, I am featuring their favorite tractors this issue. There is no doubt that John Deere collectors are some of the most dedicated in the hobby. They have very fierce brand loyalty—with good reason. Let’s face it, theirs is the only old-line farm equipment company still selling tractors. They have been painted the same color, have the same name, and are still headquartered in the United States—for nearly 100 years.

The photos featured here were all taken during the golden years of North American agriculture. From the 1920s to the 1930s, mechanization of farming was becoming a long-dreamed-of reality. Each of these pictures shows a John Deere tractor doing a job that—just a few years earlier—had been done with animal power or big steam and gas power.

I hope everyone enjoys these old John Deere photos. I will try to be more evenhanded in the future about the brand balance in the “Attic.”

Till then, happy hunting!—whatever your favorite tractor color may be.

—Ed Bezanson, “*The Yankee*”



This photo, taken in 1937, shows a farmer on a John Deere B pulling a one-row corn cutter. My apologies if the tractor is not a B, but all the Green unstyled tractors look alike to me. The farmer must have been on his last trip around the field because the big leafy plants behind him look like sunflowers. Oh, can anyone spot the face of someone peaking through the sunflower leaves framed by the L-shaped lever on the corn cutter? That question is posed on the back of this photo. The photographer didn’t notice the face till he saw the developed shot and didn’t know who it was.