

Case 10-20

Racine, WI 1917



The late teens were a watershed for the J.I. Case Company, a time of enormous activity as the company moved out of the steam-traction engine market and into the growing gas-engine market. The company was particularly focused on the growing small-tractor market, with new and innovative machinery coming out of the factory on a regular basis.

In 1915, Case's first attempt at a small gas tractor was the Case 10-20. Following the trends at the time, the 10-20 was an unusual-looking three-wheeled, lightweight tractor that featured a four-cylinder vertical cross-mounted engine.

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Like other popular models at that time, the 10-20 had one large driving "bull" wheel on the right, or furrow side, with its front steering wheel aligned with it on the right. The idler wheel on the left, or land side, had no differential, but could temporarily clutch into the live axle for extra traction if needed. An arrow was mounted above the front wheel which pointed in the direction of travel. This was to aid the operator as he was seated behind the large drive wheel and had limited vision of the front of the machine. A true lightweight tractor for its time, the 10-20 weighed in at just over 5,000 pounds.

Although the 10-20 was priced to be within reach of the small farmer at just under \$900 and was the least expensive of the Case tractors, it could not compete with the Bull tractor that sold for about half the price and captured more than 40 percent of the market. Interestingly, the 10-20 was not tremendously popular in the United States, but seems to have had a much better reception in other countries. By 1918, the Fordson came on the market and outsold all competitors.

Production of the 10-20 ceased in 1918. Over its three-year lifespan, 6,579 Case 10-20 tractors were built and it was not until 1924 that all the remaining inventory was sold off.



Old Abe the Case Mascot