FORDSON

- YEAR: 1926
- MODEL: Steel Wheeled – Model “F”
- COUNTRY: England
- ENGINE: 20HP – Kero / Petrol Start
- ITEM NUMBER: 145
- DONATED BY: Mr John Wilson

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The Fordson Model F was completed in 1916 and was the first lightweight, mass produced tractor in the world, making it possible for the average farmer to own a tractor for the first time. In 1916 and 1917, the name "Fordson" was not yet used as the tractor's make or model name, nor was "Model F". The Fordson persuaded thousands of small farmers to buy their first tractor, and over half-a-million of them were sold between 1917 – 1928, transforming American farming.

It used a 20 horsepower, four-cylinder vaporising oil engine, a three-speed spur gear transmission (the three forward speeds ranged from approximately 2.25 to 6.25 mph), and a worm gear reduction set in the differential. Brakes were not provided on early Fordson as high-ratio worm sets generally transmitted rotation in one direction only, from the worm element to the gear element, because of the high power loss through friction. To stop the tractor, the driver depressed the clutch. Ford engineer Eugene Farkas successfully made the engine, transmission and rear axle a stressed member of the frame. By eliminating the need for a heavy separate frame, costs were reduced and manufacturing was simplified

Like the Model T car, a Fordson tractor that was relatively new and well maintained would start easily in warm weather. Under such conditions, often a single crank pull would start it. However, in cold weather, starting could be difficult, especially once the machines were 10, 20, or 30 years old and worn out. In cold weather, the oil congealed on the cylinder walls and on the clutch plates. The engine had to be hand cranked repeatedly with great effort. Strong men took turns cranking between intervals when individual ignition coils were adjusted. Sometimes farmers would build a fire under the tractor to warm up the crankcase and gear boxes to make it crank easier. The tractor ran on kerosene, but gasoline was required to start it.

The carburettor air was filtered by bubbling it through a water tank. On dry days, mud would build up in the water tank after a few of hours of operation. The mud would then have to be flushed out and the tank refilled.