A short tractor timeline

From a light petrol motor to a fuel-cell machine.

Each line has a date and a source. The Doe Triple-D, launched in 1959, is omitted here because the firm's history gives the year but not a month, and October 1959 already belongs to the fuel-cell tractor.

Year	What happened	Source
1902	Dan Albone's Ivel agricultural tractor, designed at Biggleswade: the first British internal-combustion light agricultural tractor, in the Science Museum Group's wording.	Science Museum Group, object 1920-130
1920	Dr Fritz Huber's Lanz Bulldog design, after a post-war fuel shortage; a machine that would run on several fuels, with hot-bulb ignition.	Science Museum Group, Lanz Bulldog
1921	Harry Ferguson's United States patent 1,379,399, 24 May, for an early tractor hitch. An early drawing, not the later hydraulic TE20 linkage.	US patent 1,379,399
1933	The Ferguson Black, built in Northern Ireland, the first tractor to fully incorporate the Ferguson System.	National Museums NI
1936	Ferguson has his tractor made by David Brown, according to MERL's TE20 label.	MERL, object 80/68
1938	Handshake agreement between Harry Ferguson and Henry Ford, in the autumn; the Coventry Society places it at Fair Lane, Dearborn.	National Museums NI; Coventry Society
1946	Production switched to England, under the Ferguson name: the classic grey Fergie, the TE20. TE stood for Tractor England.	MERL label and gallery guide
1948	Nebraska Tractor Test 392, "Ferguson Model TE-20," dated January 1948. Official abstract only is quoted on the website.	Nebraska Tractor Test Lab
1950	In the Commons on 23 March, a UK ministerial estimate of about 300,000 agricultural tractors (after a 1948 census of about 245,000).	Historic Hansard
1952	United Press reports, 10 April, that Ferguson's $42,000,000 suit against Ford was settled for $9,250,000.	United Press, 10 April 1952
1958	On 4 January, at 12.30 p.m., Hillary's party arrives at the South Pole in converted Ferguson tractors. The code word the evening before was "Rhubarb."	NZ History
1959	In October, Allis-Chalmers demonstrates a fuel-cell tractor near West Allis: 1,008 cells, a 20-horsepower DC motor, now in the Smithsonian.	Smithsonian NMAH, AG.76A8

ReallyByte — Fun. Educational. Useless. typographic sheet, no photographs. Play the on-site timeline game, and read the longer history, at tractors.farmyard.im. Checked 17 November 2026.