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Company Information

Little Known Facts About John Deere

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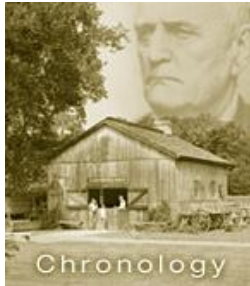
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■ [John Deere: A Biography](#)

A Chronology - 1804-1886

1804 - Born February 7 in Rutland, Vermont

1821 - At the age of seventeen, Deere leaves home to begin a 4-year apprenticeship in the blacksmith shop of Captain Benjamin Lawrence in Middlebury, Vermont

1827 - Marries Demarius Lamb and moves to nearby Vergennes where Deere takes work with blacksmith John McVene

1836 - Leaving his pregnant wife and four children in Vermont, moves to Grand Detour, Illinois, in search of new opportunities

1837 - Develops first commercially successful self-scouring steel plow

1838 - In Grand Detour, Deere is joined by his wife and five children, including new baby Charles. He continues in his general blacksmithing business, producing only a few plows before moving into the plow business full-time.

1841 - Deere makes 75 plows

1848 - Moves company to Moline, Illinois, becoming partners with Robert Tate and John Gould. The Deere family arrives from Grand Detour and moves into a small home with Robert Tate, his wife and daughter. Eleven-year-old Charles Deere later remembered sleeping in a trunk in the hallway.

1849 - Deere's workforce of about 16 builds 2,136 plows. The Deere family moved into a large home several blocks away from the Plow Works on Main Street in Moline.

1852 - Deere, Tate & Gould is dissolved

1853 - Deere wins two dollars at the First Annual Rock Island Fair for the "Best Center Draft Plow"

1854 - Serves as chairman of the Rock Island County Whig Party convention

1854 - Helps organize the Moline Property Protection Society to "protect ourselves from the depredation of thieves"

1855 - Puts out a fire on the Rock Island Bridge with a Mr. Thompson from Quincy, Illinois. Later that year leads efforts to bring a fire engine to Moline.

1858 - Together with other abolitionists, breaks up a Democratic Party meeting in Rock Island

1861 - Pledges \$10 to defray the costs of raising a 100-day company of Moline volunteers for service during the Civil War. His son, Charles, also pledges.

1863 - Helps organize the First National Bank of Moline with other local businessmen, including former partners Charles Atkinson and John Gould. Becomes president in 1866.

1864 - In January, John Deere secures his first patent (and the company's first), a "new and useful Improvement in Molds for Casting Steel Plows and other Articles." He amends the patent in April and receives two more patents in the next three years.

1864 - Buys a farm on a bluff in east Moline, calling it Alderney Hill Farm, after a popular breed of cattle. It's one of many farms he owns in Moline, along with several others throughout the country.

1865 - Demarius Deere, John's wife of 38 years, dies

1866 - Marries Lucenia Lamb, younger sister of his former wife Demarius

1868 - Purchases home in Santa Barbara, California, where he and Lucenia spend most of their winters

1868 - Deere & Company is incorporated. John is named president, with his son Charles, nephew George Vinton and son-in-law Stephen Velle the remaining shareholders.

1873 - Elected the second mayor of Moline, Illinois, winning with 601 of 626 total votes cast. He serves one, 2-year term. That year he is also appointed Life Director of the American Home Missionary Society, based in Chicago.

1874 - Under Deere's direction, Melvin A. Gould designs the first leaping deer trademark

1879 - Named a trustee at his son's alma mater, Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois

1882 - Surprised by the entire Deere & Company office, who walked from their downtown headquarters to his home to surprise him on February 7, his 78th birthday

1885 - At age 81, attends the Minnesota State Fair with his grandson, C.C. Webber

1886 - Deeds land in downtown Moline for a market square

1886 - Dies on May 17, at the age of 82, in his Moline home, Red Cliff