



A short biography of Henry Ford

Henry was born on a farm near Greenfield, Michigan on July 30th, 1863. Educated in the Greenfield school district, and at the age of 16 Henry became a machinist's apprentice in Detroit. In 1888 he married Clara Jane Bryant. In 1891 he became an engineer at the Edison Illumination Company in Detroit. Henry had one son, Edsel Bryant Ford, born in Detroit Nov. 6th, 1893.

Henry built his first car, the "Quadricycle Runabout" in the summer of 1896. It had a 4 horse power engine and could reach 20 mph. He sold the car for \$200.00 to finance his second car which was completed around early 1898.

He incorporated Ford Motor Company on June 16th, 1903 which was capitalized for \$100,000 with 12 stock holders. Ford produced 1708 cars the first year. In 1908 he brought out the Model T. A car for anybody and everybody. In 1914 he announced a plan for profit-sharing, and then an unheard of \$5.00-a-day minimum wage. When the United States entered the war in 1917 his plants switched to war production. Efficient production line methods enabled him to cut costs of his products while simultaneously increasing wages so that his employee's were the highest paid in the industry. In 1926 with the popularity of the Model T waning and almost 15,000,000 units sold Edsel, now President of Ford, had pushed Henry to design and build a new car. What evolved was the "Model A". First shown in Dec. 1927 to the general public. Ford produced about 4,500,000 Model A's before adding the V8 engine in 1932 and calling it the "Model B". When the United States again entered war (World War II) Henry again converted all his plants to war production.

Edsel, in 1919 succeeded his father as president of Ford Motor Company until his death on May 26th, 1943 at the age of 49. Henry again, at the age of 80, took over the presidency of Ford Motor Company. On September 21st, 1945 his grandson, Henry Ford II, Edsel's eldest son, took over the presidency.

Henry Ford, the undisputed father of the automobile, died in Dearborn Mich., April 7th, 1947. He was 83 years old.