

A sepia-toned portrait of Henry Ford, an elderly man with white hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. The portrait is the background of the entire page.

# LARGER THAN LIFE

A CELEBRATION OF GREATNESS

## Henry Ford

Innovative, Astute

(1863 - 1947)

“Before everything else, getting ready is the secret of success”.

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## INTRODUCTION

Henry Ford was the **founder of the Ford Motor Company and father of modern assembly lines used in mass production.**

His introduction of the Model T automobile revolutionized transportation and American industry. He was **a prolific inventor and was awarded 161 U.S. patents.** As sole owner of the Ford Company he became one of the richest and best-known people in the world.

## BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

Henry Ford, the first of six children was **born on 30th July in 1863** in Greenfield Township, Michigan, and was brought up and raised on the family farm.

He worked on the farm throughout his youth although he showed very little interest in tilling the soil. Henry's real interest was that of working with mechanical things.

## MILESTONES

**1879:** He **left family farm** for Detroit to work in machine shops.

**1888:** He married Clara Bryant. He supported himself and his wife by running a sawmill.

**1891:** He secured position **as engineer with the Edison Illuminating Company** and returned to Detroit.

**1896:** He completed his **first automobile, the Quadricycle,** and drove it through the streets of Detroit.

**1899:** He **ended employment with the Edison** to devote full attention to the manufacture of automobiles.

**1899:** He was made **chief engineer and partner** in the newly formed **Detroit Automobile Company.**

**1901:** **Henry Ford Company was organized with Ford as engineer.** Ford resigned over dispute with bankers.

**1902:** Henry Ford Company became the Cadillac Motor Car Co.

**1903:** **Ford Motor Company was officially incorporated.** Model A appeared on the market in Detroit.

**1908:** Ford began manufacturing the **famous Model T.**

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**1914:** Ford had **another notion**, rather original in its time: **the workers were also potential consumers!** In 1914, Ford workers' wages were raised to \$5 a day - an excellent wage and they soon proved him right by buying their own Model T's. **The increased volume of Model T's made Ford the largest automobile manufacturer in the world at that time.** Ford held strong in the early years to his idea of mass-producing the Model T. By holding on to his dream and by never giving in despite early failures, The Ford Motor Company has become an American institution employing over 338,000 people throughout the world with annual sales of over \$137 billion.

**1910:** Ford began operations at factory in Highland Park, Michigan.

**1913:** Ford introduced first moving automobile assembly line at Highland Park manufacturing facility.

**1917:** Ford Motor Company began construction of industrial facility on the Rouge River in Dearborn, Michigan.

**1921:** **Ford Motor Company dominated auto production** with 55 percent of industry's total output.

1927: Production of **the Model T ended, and the Model A was introduced.**

## LATER YEARS

**Ford's manufacturing principles were adopted by countless other industries.** The process was so revolutionary that the term "to Fordize" meant to standardize a product and manufacture it by mass means at a price so low that the common man could afford to buy it. Henry Ford went beyond his goal of making cars affordable for all; he **changed the habits of a nation, and shaped its very character.**

**He died in 1947** in Fair Lane, his Dearborn estate, and he is buried in the Ford Cemetery in Detroit.

## QUICK FACTS ABOUT HENRY FORD

- Adolf Hitler admired Henry Ford and his ideas and policies to the point that he had a picture of Ford on his wall. Henry Ford built Village Industries, small factories in rural Michigan, where people could work and farm during different seasons, thereby bridging the urban and rural experience. In December 1999 Ford was among 18 included in Gallup's List of 'Widely Admired People of the 20th Century'.
- Henry Ford was especially fond of Thomas Edison and on Edison's deathbed, he demanded Edison's son catch his final breath in a test tube. The test tube can still be found today in Henry Ford Museum.

## Quotes

“Failure is the opportunity to begin again, more intelligently.”

...

“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty.  
Anyone who keeps learning stays young.”

...

“Whether you think you can or think you can't you are right.”

...

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress;  
working together is success.”

## Quiz

- 1) In 1914, Ford workers' wages were raised to \$ \_\_\_\_\_ a day.
- 2) In which year was Henry Ford born?
- 3) Ford was the winner of the award of 'Car Entrepreneur of the Century' in the year \_\_\_\_\_.

## Last Quiz Winners

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