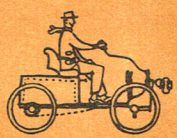
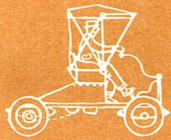

A PICTORIAL HISTORY




OF THE FORD

BY PHILIP VAN DOREN STERN



WHEN HENRY FORD BUILT HIS FIRST CAR

The streets of Detroit were dark and wet with rain on the very early morning of June 4, 1896, when the city's silence was shattered by a sputtering roar. A tiny, four-wheeled automobile (then called a quadricycle because it had four wire-spoked bicycle wheels) emerged from a brick workshop behind a small house on Bagley Avenue and went down the unpaved street slowly and rather uncertainly. It was preceded by a bicycle rider, who went ahead to make sure the road was clear. The gasoline engine-powered quadricycle had much in common with the bicycle, including a bicycle seat and chain drive. The little car had been built by hand and was being driven by thirty-three-year-old Henry Ford, an expert mechanic who had worked all his life in machine shops and electric power stations.

Henry Ford drove his new car while it was still dark because he didn't want to attract a lot of public attention or scare horses with his noisy two-cylinder engine. No licenses were needed for cars or drivers in those days, and when the mayor of Detroit granted special permission to drive on the city streets, Henry Ford became America's first licensed driver.

After this trial run, the car was modified and improved, had a seat for two people put on it, and was then sold to a friend for $200. Fortunately this man took good care of the now historic little vehicle, so it can still be seen at the Henry Ford Museum, in Dearborn, Michigan. In 1899, Ford built another handmade car (also on display at the Museum) and became mechanical superintendent of the newly organized Detroit Automobile Company.

Photographs in this booklet were used by permission of the following: pages 3, 4, 7 (lower), 8, 9, 10, 11 (lower), 12, Ford Motor Company Archives; pages 5, 6 (upper), 7 (upper), Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village; pages 13, 14, 15, 16, Ford Motor Company; page 6 (lower), Culver Service.

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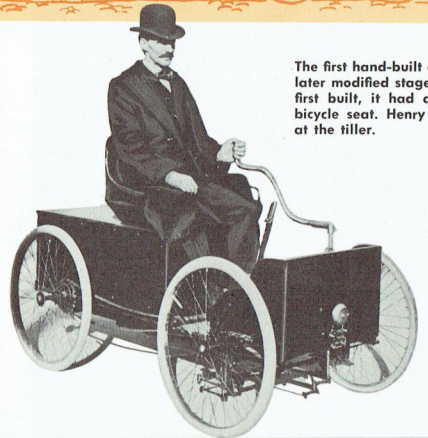
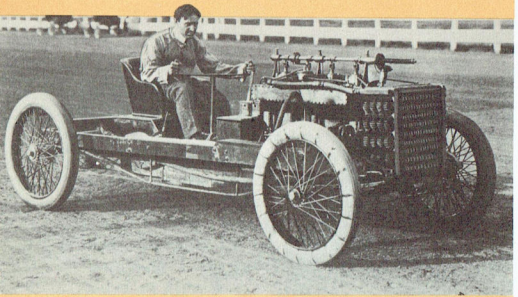
At that time, because the automobile was still an unproved means of fast transportation, speed was regarded as the greatest of all challenges. A great deal of time, money, and effort was spent all over the world during the years before 1900 trying to develop racing cars that would go faster than 40 miles an hour. Henry Ford felt that he could best make a name for himself and his cars by establishing a reputation on the race track. For several years he built faster and faster cars until he created the snorting monster called the "999." While he was developing this new speed record breaker, he resigned from the company to devote all his time to racing cars. The firm was later reorganized as the Cadillac Automobile Company; its first model, which appeared in 1902, was based on designs Henry Ford had made for the original company.



The first hand-built car at a later modified stage. When first built, it had a single bicycle seat. Henry Ford is at the tiller.



Henry Ford built two big racers, the "Arrow" and the "999." Barney Oldfield is shown at the steering lever of the "999," a roaring monster with four 7" x 7" cylinders that sounded like a tornado. *Opposite page:* The first car built by the newly organized Ford Motor Company—Model A.

BARNEY OLDFIELD AND THE "999"

At that time, Barney Oldfield, who was destined to become one of America's top automobile racers, had never driven a car. He was a professional bicycle racer in Salt Lake City. When he was hired to drive the "999" at a five-mile race at Grosse Pointe, Michigan, in October, 1902, he had to be taught how to handle the heavy, powerful racer, for it was very different from the lightweight bicycles he had pedaled around the track. Probably because of his previous experience with handle bars, the "999" had a two-handled straight lever for steering.

The big racer was towed by horse to the track, where Oldfield learned how to drive it in less than a week. There were only four contestants in the race. One of them was Alexander Winton, who, like Henry Ford, was trying to establish the fame of his cars on the race track. Oldfield came roaring in first to establish an American record by covering the five miles in 5.28 minutes, which was nearly a mile a minute. It was a terrifying rate of speed for an age when tracks were unpaved and roaring engines threw black oil all over their drivers.

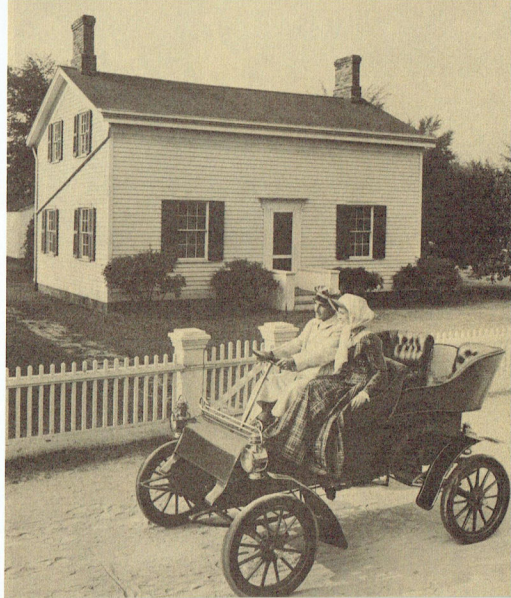
As a result of the fame brought to a Ford-made car by this race, the present Ford Motor Company was established in 1903 with paid-in capital of $28,000.

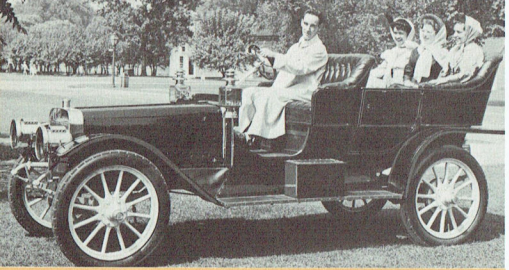
THE FIRST MODEL A FORD

The first car brought out by the newly established Ford Motor Company in 1903 was painted bright red and was named the Model A. It had a two-cylinder opposed horizontal engine slung underneath the body, and was called a "side-winder" because it was started by a crank inserted on the side of the car. The 8-horsepower engine transmitted power to the rear wheels by a single center chain which entered the differential housing through an open cut that continually filled up with mud and dirt from the rough unpaved roads of the time. But the Model A had metal fenders to protect passengers from dust or mud.

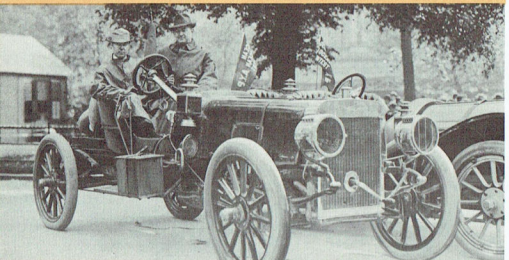
These early cars had no roofs or windshields. Their two small brass lamps were more for emergency use than for seeing the road at night, since no one in his right mind would go out in an automobile after dark.

But a beginning had been made. Factory-produced American cars were being built to be offered for sale. Though the first Ford Model A was crude and primitive and still made largely by hand, it had left the experimental stage. Improved versions called Models C and F were produced later. Then came the Model B, a four-cylinder car which was much larger than the Model A and sold for $2,000.





The Model K Touring Car had six cylinders. Its counterpart, the 640 Roadster, below, was one of the first sports cars.



THE MODEL K and the 640 ROADSTER

Since automobiles were still being built by slow and laborious hand methods, they brought high prices and could be sold only to wealthy people. Henry Ford wanted to develop a simplified automobile which could be produced in large quantities and therefore be offered at a low price. But some of his partners still felt that the high-priced market should not be ignored. Only a few of the $2,000 Model B had been sold, but in 1906 the company produced a large six-cylinder automobile called the Model K, and its sporty-looking counterpart, the 640 Roadster. The Model K was priced at $2,800, and the company lost money on every one sold.

Like all early Ford cars, the Model K had planetary transmission and right-hand drive. It was big and powerful and impressive for its day, but it did little to promote the success of the Ford Motor Company except to convince Henry Ford that the true future of the automobile business lay in producing a car that could be made for the millions.

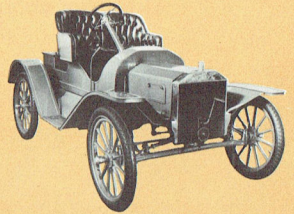
Out of his thinking along this line came a series of small cars which weighed even less than the first Model A; but they had four-cylinder engines up front, and they marked a big advance over the primitive Model A.

THE ANCESTORS OF THE MODEL T

The famous Model T did not suddenly spring into being. It evolved slowly over a period of several years and grew out of prototypes which were a groping toward the final expression. When Model N first appeared in 1906, it had a four-cylinder engine and supposedly could do about 45 mph. It sold for the very low price of $600 and immediately became very popular.

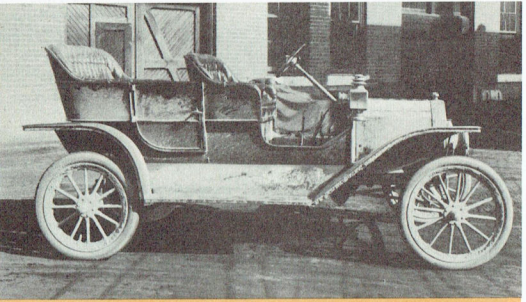
Improved models (really de luxe versions with more equipment) known as Models R and S were then brought out. When they appeared on the market, the stage was all set for the historic Model T, the sturdy, dependable, low-priced car that was to change the face of America and convert its economy from steam and animal power to the modern automobile nation it is today.

When the Model T was born, the United States had only about 150,000 miles of paved roads, the best of which would be regarded as pretty poor today. To ride on rough roads, the early Fords had big wheels with high clearances. The famous three-point suspension system was adopted to enable the wheels and the engine to move freely up and down when passing over a bump. Tough vanadium steel was also used.



The Model N and its variations, Models R and S, were light cars with four-cylinder engines mounted up front. They were the forerunners of the famous Model T.

ENTER THE MODEL T



This photograph was taken on October 2, 1908; it shows the very first factory-produced Model T Ford after its return from a 1,350-mile test run on which Henry Ford went along.

The famous Model T Ford's official birthday was October 1, 1908, although it did not reach the market in any quantity until 1909. Long before it was publicly announced, hand-built Model T test cars were being put through their paces on the rough and rutted roads of Michigan. On September 24 Henry Ford and two of his best drivers took the very first factory-built Model T on a 1,350-mile trip to Wisconsin and back. This grueling trip showed that the new car had amazing stamina and that it could get through practically any kind of road. The mud-stained car shown here was photographed on its return on October 2. It had two hand levers, one of which was used for reverse. This type of control was soon eliminated in favor of the three-pedal, one-lever controls which were used on millions of Model T's.

The Model T's chief virtues were its stark simplicity, its low cost, and its usefulness in rural communities with unpaved roads. It introduced left-hand drive, essential in a country where vehicles keep to the right. And it had a low-tension magneto built into the flywheel to supply ignition current. This did away with short-lived dry batteries and undependable high-tension magnetos.

The early models came without tops, windshields, or headlights. But they cost only $850.

The Model T created such an immediate sensation throughout the world that the Ford Motor Company was faced with only one problem—how to make more and more cars. This problem was to keep it busy for years. A new and much larger factory was built on the outskirts of Detroit to manufacture the new model. No provision was made for storing cars. Each day's output was shipped before the day was over. Parts were also shipped to branch assembly plants to be made into cars.

The tremendous and lasting demand for the faithful little Model T gave rise to our modern mass-production assembly-line system. Henry Ford adapted the overhead-rail method used in meat-packing establishments for dressing animals in progressive stages, and by 1913 had a rudimentary assembly-line system at work for the first time in the manufacture of automobiles. The early cars were pulled along on a track by ropes. Then the system was steadily improved, and more and more Model T's were built each year until an all-time record was reached in 1923, when 1,866,307 passenger cars were made.

As production increased, the price of Model T's was reduced year after year until 1923, when a standard version of the car could be bought for the even then astonishingly low price of only $295!

Conditions on the roads of America in the early days of automobiling are unbelievable to the younger generation who have grown up with paved highways. No modern car, with its low clearances, could have traveled on such roads.

MORE ABOUT THE MODEL T

People did all kinds of strange tricks and stunts to the little Model T just to show how much punishment it could take.

The Model T became a legend. It was affectionately called the Tin Lizzie, and jokes, songs, and stories were written about it. It had a greater emotional appeal to millions of people throughout the entire world than any mechanical product before or since. Its distribution was truly world-wide. Model T's penetrated the deserts and jungles of Africa, the innermost parts of South America and Asia. In many European countries, it outsold locally manufactured cars.

As Model T's increased in number, roads were improved, and under the pressure of more and more cars being produced by many companies, our modern highway system began to evolve. Thus the Model T became a civilizing influence of enormous importance. Its homely, starkly functional form was an instrument of destiny. Like the covered wagon and the first pioneer railroads, it drove back the frontier and made an enduring place for itself in history.

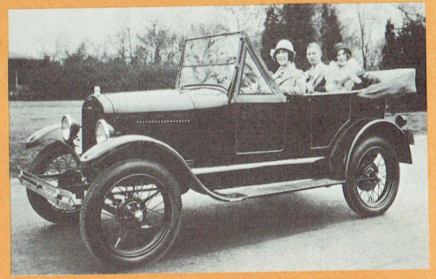
During the 1920's the Model T Fords were improved with such then novel devices as electric starters, demountable rims, wire wheels, and balloon tires. The very late Model T's were sporty-looking cars which seemed far different from their spindly, high-bodied, brass- and wood-trimmed ancestors that had first ventured out on the road

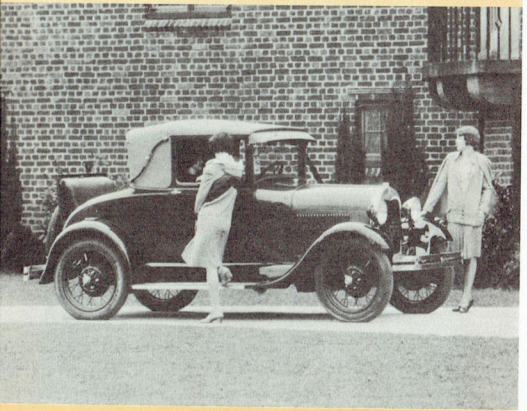
in the autumn of 1908. Yet they were basically the same in engine, transmission, brakes, and body design. They had a top speed of 40 or 45 mph.

The Model T dominated the American automobile market from 1909 to 1927. By that time the historic old Model T had been made obsolete by rapidly advancing automotive technical progress. On May 26, 1927, the fifteen millionth—and last—Model T came off the assembly line to be replaced later by a wholly new car: like the very first Ford Motor Company automobile, it was named the Model A.

But the Model T was still far from dead. There were literally millions of them running around, and for many years they continued to play an important part in transportation throughout the world. Many of them were kept in use on farms and in remote places until well after the Second World War. In 1948 nearly fifty thousand of them were still registered and in daily use. Since then they have become scarcer and scarcer, until they have now acquired antique value. Some of them, lovingly restored by proud owners, take part in old-car meets and appear in parades and celebrations. Such well-restored cars, when offered for sale, often bring prices many times higher than their original price.

The very last Model T's were pretty sporty-looking cars.





The Model A was especially popular with young people, who liked its snappy performance.

1927 — MODEL A AGAIN

In preparation for the new Model A that was to replace the nineteen-year-old Model T, the tremendous River Rouge plant was built at Dearborn, where ships from the Great Lakes could bring in the raw materials needed.

Months were spent getting the Model A ready. When it was released to the public on December 2, 1927, it had already created more advance interest than any other car in history. People waited in line by the thousands at dealers' showrooms in all the major American cities to see what the new Ford was really like. Its three-speed standard shift was regarded as a great improvement over the old three-pedal, one-hand-lever system. And its peppy four-cylinder engine, with twice the horsepower of the Model T (40 hp against 20), meant much more acceleration and speed.

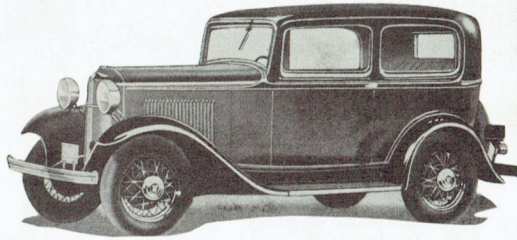
The Model A became a very popular car, and thousands of them are still in use, especially around college campuses. They are also in great demand for hunting and fishing camps and for use as beach buggies, for the unusually high road clearance of 9½ inches can be found in no modern car.

1932 — A LOW-PRICED V-8

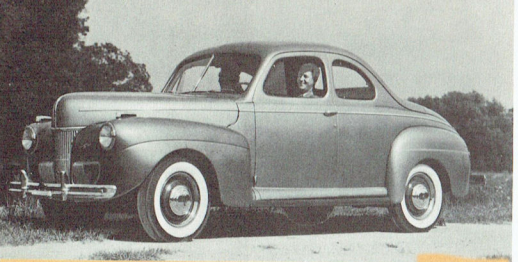
Despite its many virtues, the Model A was made only for four years. In 1932 it was replaced by an inexpensive V-8 Ford which sold for only $590. A four-cylinder car known as the Model B continued to be available for several years, but Ford so perfected the V-8 engine that V-8's are practically standard in almost every American car made today. Since the 1932 V-8 engine was used to power a light car, its performance was very lively. And many people who want to build or modify a car for racing have found that a souped-up Ford V-8 engine is ideal for such use.

After the death of its founder, the company and its cars underwent many changes. His grandsons brought advanced automotive ideas to the popular-priced market, and the once humble Ford began to blossom into a luxury automobile with all the automatic features that could previously be found only in very high-priced cars.

Since 1932, Ford has manufactured 23,000,000 V-8 engines and has had more experience designing and building that highly efficient type of power plant than any other automobile company in the world.



The first Ford V-8 (1932) was still a small car, but it had a very powerful engine.



The Ford V-8 was a familiar sight during the war years. The 1949 Ford, below, featured "picture-window" visibility.

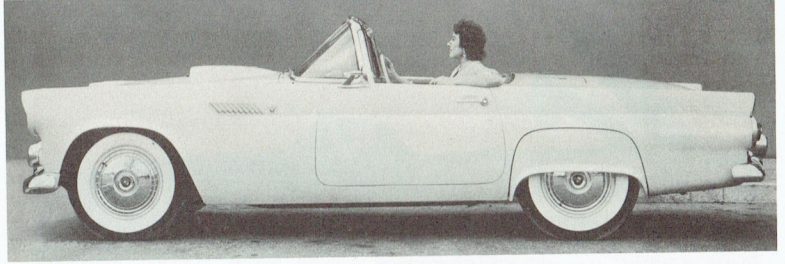
THE 1941 FORD AND THE 1949 FORD

The year 1941 marks the end of an era in American automobile design, for passenger car production ceased when the United States entered the war and the huge Ford factories began turning out war material. Yet extensive changes had been made in the Ford V-8 of that year. The wheel base was lengthened to give a smoother ride. Body changes included a new front with headlights set in the fenders for the first time. The car had a streamlined look. Owners of 1941 Fords had good reason to cherish these cars that carried them through the long war years.

When the war was over, automobile manufacturers began a race to increase production and redesign their cars.

Henry Ford's son, Edsel, had died in 1943, and Henry Ford died in 1947. Management of the company was taken over by Henry Ford's grandsons, Henry Ford II, Benson Ford, and William Clay Ford.

The all-new 1949 Ford had better-riding coil springs and optional overdrive. The body was larger; seats were wider. A six-cylinder engine was introduced, and the V-8 engine was improved. Body and fenders made one smooth line. The whole car was lower, with a redesigned front and more glass for better visibility.



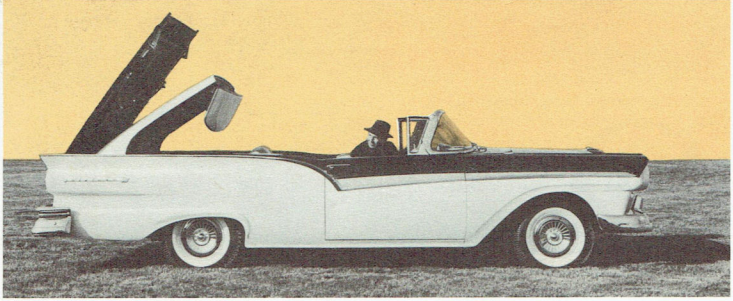
THE FORD THUNDERBIRD

In 1954 the Ford Motor Company brought out a new car that was just about as far a cry from the old Model T as can be imagined. Very low to the ground, slick and streamlined, built for a fast getaway and road-hugging speedy transportation, the Thunderbird quickly became the most envied car in America. Not only young people but men in their fifties and sixties look at it longingly and dream about owning one.

The Thunderbird has been described as a "personal car" for two passengers rather than a sports car. It can be had with all the luxuries of modern American automobile construction, including automatic transmission, full power equipment, and electric roll-up glass windows. Either a detachable plastic hardtop or a folding canvas top is available.

But on a warm sunny day when the top is down and the road stretches ahead free and clear, the Thunderbird is at its superb best. Then driving becomes sheer pleasure. The miles drop away behind its eager wheels, and its big, powerful engine with a four-barrel carburetor purrs like a pleased cat.

Especially popular in solid black or white, the Thunderbird is often seen in fire-engine red, deep blue, cool gray, or practically any color the owner wants to have.



The new Ford Skyliner has a sturdy metal roof that vanishes into the rear deck.

And so, after more than 60 years of steady progress, Ford cars have evolved from a primitive two-cylinder bicycle-wheeled vehicle to the powerful, sleek-looking automobiles of today that can more than hold their own against any cars in their price class.

LITHO IN U. S. A.