Henry Ford 4 Essay, Research Paper

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Henry Ford

I found Henry Ford to be a very interesting person to learn about. Throughout Ragtime, Henry Ford played a small, but important role. He enlightened people about his great inventions. The car was a symbol in this book for wealth and luxury. The car caused commotion with some people, when they saw people thought to be inferior to them driving. Henry Ford was born in 1863 in Dearborn, Michigan. Ford lived and served a good, peaceful life. His inventions will always be used, and that made him an even more brilliant man than he already was. Billions of people use his inventions every day. Once the invention of his car came out, it was a major success. People did not just want the car for luxury; but it was for a means of transportation. Ford brought a whole new meaning to life in America. He is the reason for present and future technological development, because of his inventions. His inventions gave other inventors ideas, which then flourished across the world. To many he is a great inventor, but to me, he is the greatest of all time. The author, E. L. Doctorow, portrayed Ford like a person from royalty. He made it seem like Henry Ford was the smartest man, and it was a privilege to be in his presence. After reading about him, I agree completely with the author. It seemed Ford was into nature, and was a quiet and peaceful man.

The first time Ford was introduced in Ragtime, it caught my attention quickly. The author wrote that when the people saw him in their presence they had tears in their eyes. It says, Henry Ford had once been an ordinary automobile manufacturer. He had caused a machine to replicate itself endlessly. His executives and managers and assistants crowded around him to shake his hand. Tears were in their eyes (Page 113). I think people really thought he was one of the smartest people they knew, because it seems he figured out how to make everything easier. Henry Ford produced cars in the book, and he taught his workers how to do it quickly and efficiently. He started producing three thousand cars a month, because it was important to get as many cars out as possible since they were in demand. Henry Ford didn t have a huge part in the book, but his presence was felt. The main thing Ford brought to the book was the automobile.

Henry Ford was born the first of William and Mary Ford’s six children. He grew up on a farm in Dearborn, Michigan. Henry spent days in a one- room school and doing farm chores. At an early age, he showed an interest in mechanical things and a hate for farm work.

In 1891, Ford became an engineer with the Edison Illuminating Company in Detroit. Ford now dedicated his life to industrial pursuits. His promotion to Chief Engineer in 1893 gave him enough time and money to pay attention to his personal experiments on internal combustion engines.

With his father s blessing, he moved to Detroit and started working at the Michigan Car Company for $1.10 a day. Ford was so brilliant, that he was fired shortly after because he angered the older employees by making repairs in a half hour instead of the usual five hours (Edison).

Later, Henry Ford tried to open his own company. After two unsuccessful attempts to establish a company to manufacture automobiles, the Ford Motor Company was incorporated in 1903 with Henry Ford as vice-president and chief engineer. The company produced only a few cars a day at the Ford factory in Detroit. Groups of two or three men worked on each car from components made to order by other companies.

Ford s only child Edsel had been named president of the Ford factory in 1919. Later, Edsel died in 1943, and Ford resumed presidency. Two years later after he experienced two strokes, he handed over the presidency to his grandson, Henry Ford II (Biographies).

Henry Ford realized his dream of producing an automobile that was reasonably priced, reliable, and efficient with the introduction of the Model T in 1908. The Model T began a new era in personal transportation. It was easy to operate, maintain, and handle on rough roads, which made it immediately a huge success. By 1918, half of all cars in America were Model T s. To meet the growing demand for the Model T, the company opened a large factory at Michigan in 1910. Ford combined manufacturing, standardized and interchangeable parts, a division of labor, and a moving assembly line. Workers remained in place, adding one component to each automobile as it moved past them on the line. Delivery of parts by conveyor belt to the workers was carefully timed to keep the assembly line moving smoothly and efficiently. The introduction of the moving assembly line revolutionized automobile production by significantly reducing assembly time per vehicle, thus lowering costs. Ford’s production of Model T s made his company the largest automobile manufacturer in the world (Ford).

Another invention that helped Ford out big time was the interchangeable parts. That allowed for quicker and cheaper ways to make his cars. He saved a lot of money using those kinds of parts. They were also much easier for the workers to use.

In Ragtime, the car showed wealth and luxury for those who drove it. Coalhouse drove a car in the book, which showed he was well- to- do. There was a little commotion though, because not everyone thought that Coalhouse should be driving a car. People got offended when they saw a minority person driving. When Coalhouse left his car with the firemen, he had no clue that such a thing would happen to his car. When he returned the firemen had ruined his car. They were jealous that a black man was successful and able to drive.

The car had many advantages though. It now transported people faster and more efficient than before. It made it much easier to get to places, and had a reasonable price. Mothers Younger Brother was able to travel across North America with the Model T. He made it very far until finally it broke down and he had to sell it, because he traveled too far. The car also helped movement to flourish. People now were able to move to new places easier. This was important if people needed to move from the east coast to the west coast. It cut time greatly, and people visited more places than in the past.

Ford has proved to be a great inventor and a hard working man. I learned that if I really wan to achieve something that I want, then I should try my hardest. That is what Ford did and his father backed him up all the way. Ford became very successful and well known throughout the world. Even today Ford Motor Company is still around after almost 100 years. After researching everything on Ford, it was interesting to know how smart he was that he was actually fired from a job for being to quick. Also, by allowing people to perform only one operation and let an assembly line bring them the parts was brilliant. All his ideas were carefully planned out, and he seemed to always be on task. Without Ford s inventions, who knows how we would be getting around to at such a quick and cost efficient way. In the future, I hope to learn even more about Ford and how he actually built the automobile by himself the first time.

I didn t expect Ford to have been interested in cars at such a young age. When I researched on him, it fascinated me that he never gave up on his goals. I learned when he made his first car and who helped him. It seemed even though there wasn t a lot on Ford in the book; that his personality differed in that he was stubborn in real life. In the book, it occurred to me he was just a smart man with a quiet personality. Overall, I learned enough information on Ford to know what kind of guy he really was.