Henry Ford 5 Essay, Research Paper

Henry Ford

I have come here today to inform your of Henry Ford’s early years, breakthrough with the Model T , and of his stubbornness attitude. Henry Ford made the automobile industry what it is today. His childhood hobby of mechanical tinkering proved him to be one of America’s greatest inventors of all time.

Henry Ford was born on July 30, 1863 in the area of Detroit, Michigan. The was the eldest of six children born to William and Mary Litogot O’Hern Ford. Henry attended rural schools only to the age of fifteen. He had and intelligent, inquisitive nature and was energized by the huge growth of industry occurring in the Detroit area. He was also and avid experimenter. Once in order to prove the power of steam, he plugged up the spout of a tea kettle full of boiling water and it blew apart. Henry always enjoyed taking watches apart because of all of the tiny mechanical parts inside them. His mother called him a “born mechanic” and provided him with darning needles and corset stays to make into tools for his watch repair work.

Probably the most dramatic event in Henry’s life happened in 1876, when he was thirteen years old. While working with his father in a field, they saw a steam engine traveling along the road under its own power. This greatly fascinated young Henry and from that point on he yearned to build a machine that could travel along on its own power.

At the age of seventeen and with his father’s blessings, Henry moved to Detroit and got a job at a machine shop. He was fired shortly thereafter because he angered elder employees by making repairs in a + an hour instead of the usual five hours. Whenever he had spare time he read about gas engines and experimented in his own shop. In 1893 he began working at the Detroit Illuminating Company and was later promoted to chief engineer. He left that job in 1899 to become a member of the Detroit Automobile Company, a firm that built custom cars, in which he later left to build race cars. His race cars proved to be record setting which inturn provided him with enough publicity to attract partners who joined him in the launching of the Ford Motor Company. Henry had in mind of producing an automobile that would be cheap enough for common people to own rather than being just a luxury for rich people. And he did just that with the mass produced, very popular Model T. Henry put to use in his factory an idea he had called the assembly line. The assembly line proved to be a brilliant idea, seeing in how it cut production time of a Model T from 12 + hours to a mere 1 + hours. With greatly reducing production time, production went up and prices when down. In fact in 1908 the Model T cost $850, and thanks to the assembly line, final cost was a mere $290 in 1924. The Model T proved to be such a success, that in its nineteen years of production, Ford produced more than fifteen-million of them.

Though Henry Ford earlier showed great vision and “put America on wheels” with the Model T, he later proved to be resistant to making changes and stubbornly insisted that the design be left unchanged, this allowed other manufactures to make great competitive gains. With innovations such as hydraulic brakes, colorful paint jobs, and larger engine sizes. Then finally in 1927 Ford was convinced to put the Model T to rest and introduced the V-8 powered Model A. In his personal life Henry enjoyed folk-dancing, collecting early Americana and was a practical joker. He ran for the Senant but lost and also thought of running for the presidency. He died on April 20, 1947. Henry Ford achieved very much in his life and was a great influence to this countries automobile industry.