



The Mitten

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FORD'S Model T

I will build a motor car for the great multitude,"

Henry Ford announced. "It will be so low in price," he added, "that no man making a good salary will be unable to own one." With these words Henry Ford introduced the world to the Model T.

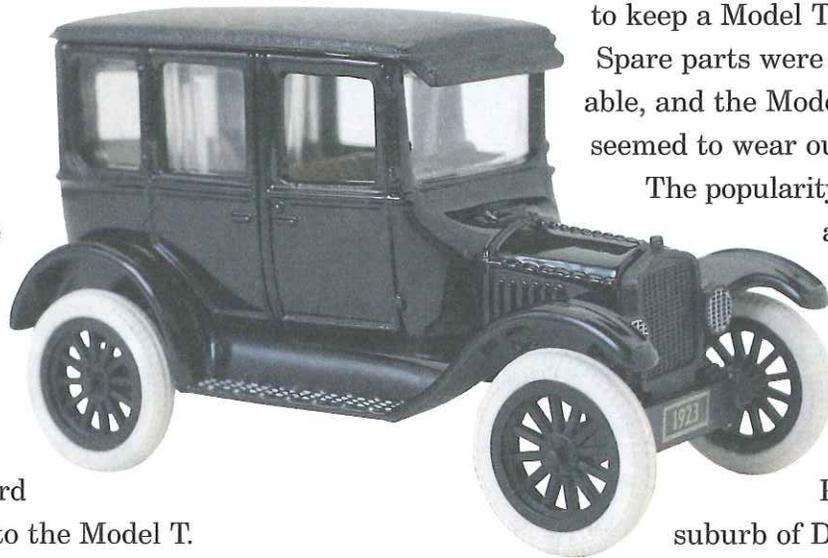
In October 1908, the Ford Motor Company produced its first Model T. It became one of the world's most popular cars.

The Model T (there were models A through S) carried a 4-cylinder motor, and traveled up to 45 miles per hour. It came in one color, black.

The Model T introduced drivers to new mechanical improvements. In a Model T, the driver controlled the car with three floor pedals: a brake and a pedal for forward and one for reverse. This left the driver's hands free to steer the car. Unlike most cars of the day, the steering wheel was on the left side of the car.

The Model T became popular because it was cheap. The first Model T cost \$850. But eventually it went as low as \$290.

The Model T also was easy to fix. All a driver needed were pliers and a screwdriver



to keep a Model T running. Spare parts were easily available, and the Model T never seemed to wear out.

The popularity of the Model T allowed the Ford Motor Company to open a new factory in Highland Park, a small suburb of Detroit. At Highland Park, Ford

introduced the moving assembly line. (See next page.)

Americans loved the Model T. A woman from Georgia wrote Henry Ford, "Your car . . . brought joy into our lives."

The Model T even developed international fame. As one newspaper noted, "The Ford Motor Company has beaten out both the [U.S.] flag and the Constitution in carrying civilization into the wild places of the world."

In 1927 the Ford Motor Company produced its last Model T. In 19 years, the company had made 15,007,033 of the cars. In the 1970s, Germany's Volkswagen "Beetle," finally passed the Model T in numbers made.

As the Ford Motor Company likes to say to this day, the Model T "put America on wheels."

Workin' On the Line

FORD'S HIGHLAND PARK ASSEMBLY LINE

The Highland Park manufacturing plant was the home of Ford's Model T and the first automobile moving assembly line.

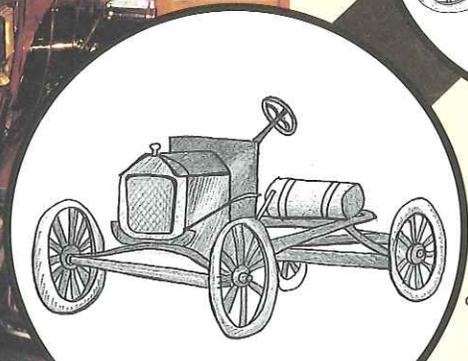
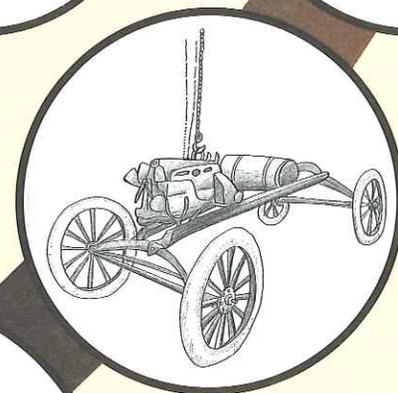
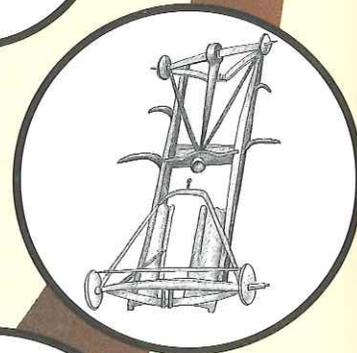
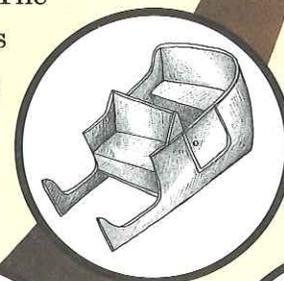
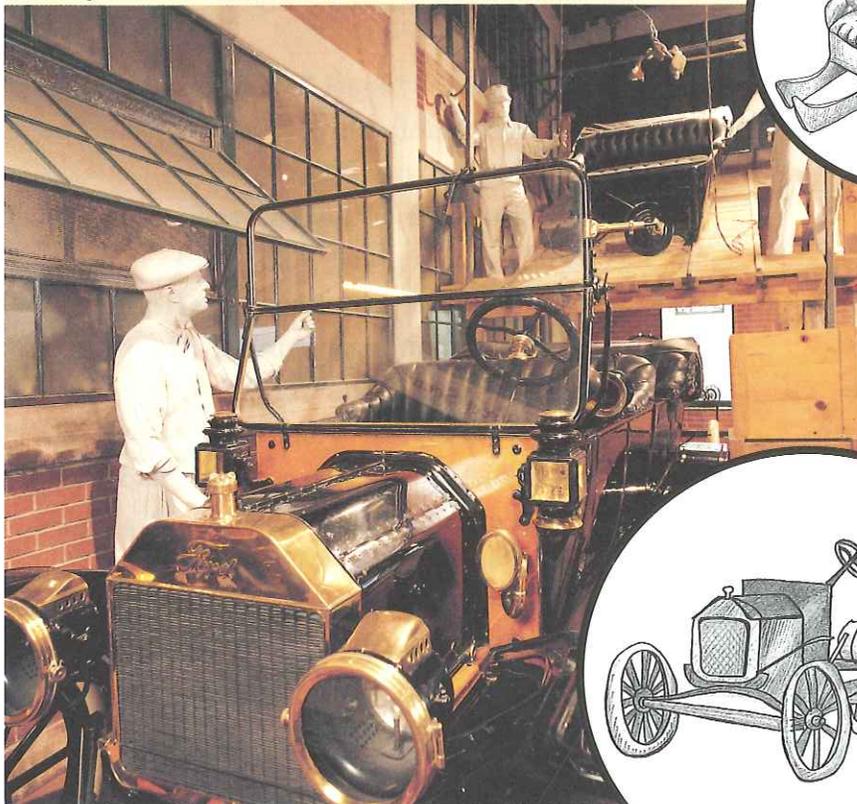
At Highland Park the job of making a car was broken down into basic tasks. Each task was assigned to a worker, who did the job over and over again. The assembly line made it cheaper to build a car. Before using the assembly line, it took 13 hours to build a Model T. With the line, it only took 90 minutes to make a Model T. It even got quicker.

The two main parts of the Model T were the frame, or "chassis," and the body. The chassis moved along the line at six feet a minute. It took 41 separate

jobs to complete the chassis. Bodies were built on the upper floor of the plant. Wood parts were buffed and varnished and paint was poured over the metal. Seat covers were stuffed with horsehair.

The last step was to combine the chassis and body. A body chute, called a "drop," lowered the body onto the chassis. The completed car was then brought to a shipping platform and was taken to a dealer to be sold.

Michigan Historical Museum/Tom Sherry



Carolyn Damstra

The Michigan Historical Museum's recreated body drop, or chute, shows the Model T car body and chassis coming together.

Where to Take Your Family

The Henry Ford Museum
20900 Oakwood Blvd.

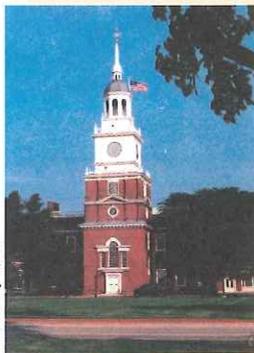
Dearborn, MI 48124

(313) 982-6100

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Website: [www.hfmgv.org/
museum](http://www.hfmgv.org/museum)

Email: info@thehenryford.org



The Henry Ford

The Henry Ford Museum documents and celebrates American ideas and innovations.

This 12-acre indoor history museum houses an astounding collection of artifacts, one theater, two restaurants, and three retail stores.

Michigan Historical Museum

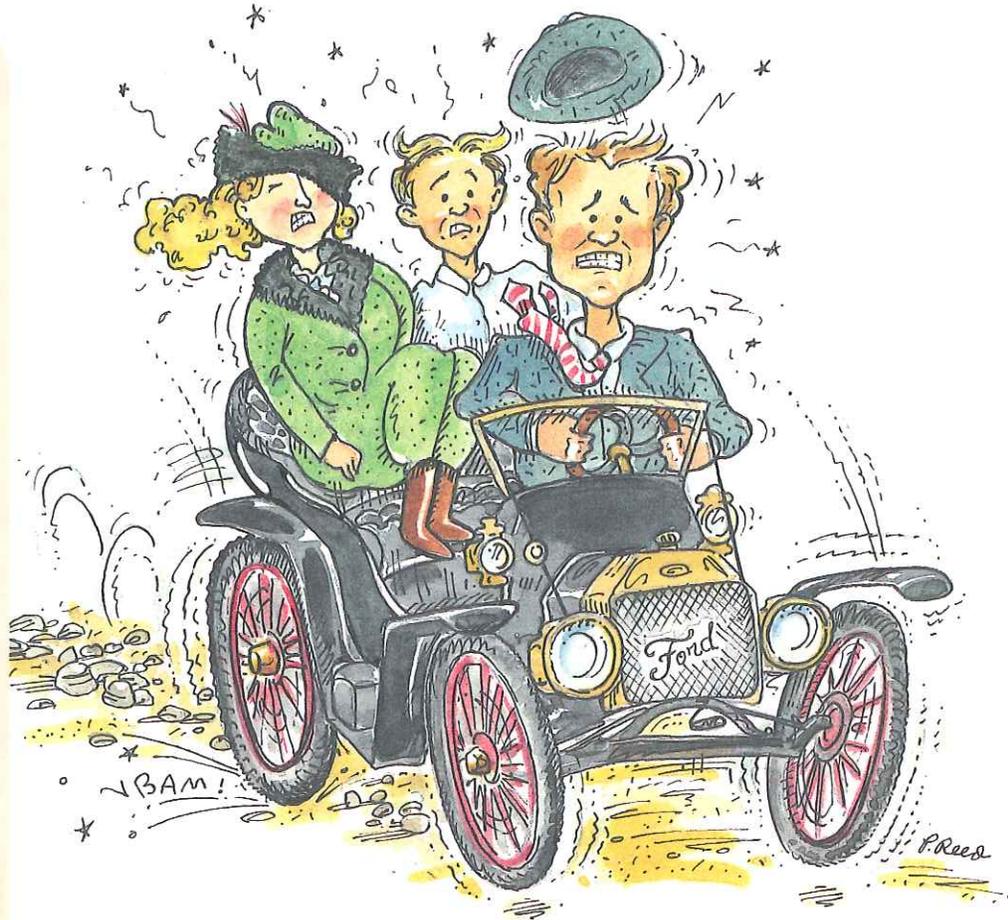
702 W. Kalamazoo Street

Lansing, MI 48909

(517) 373-3559

Website: [www.michigan
history.org](http://www.michiganhistory.org)

The Michigan Historical Museum tells the story of Michigan's past, from its early settlers to the 20th century.



Rattling on Down the Road

The Model T became a national **institution**. Americans joked and shared stories about a car they nicknamed the “Tin Lizzie” because it rattled so much.

One joke asked the question, “What shock absorbers do you use on your Ford?” The answer, “The passengers.”

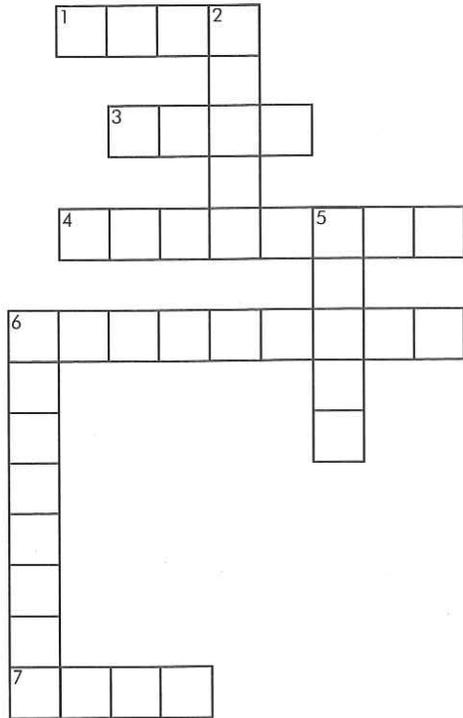
A story was told about a farmer who sent a tin roof that had blown off his barn to the Ford factory as a joke. However, he later received a letter saying that although his Model T was “badly damaged,” it could be repaired.

Another story told about a woman who saved all of her empty cans and sent them to the Ford factory. A few weeks later, she got the following letter: “Dear Madam: We received the cans that you sent and are shipping you back one Ford. We are also returning eight cans that were left over.”

What Did You Learn?

ACROSS

- On the Model T, the steering wheel was on the _____ side of the car.
- _____ Motor Company produced the first Model T.
- Before using the first _____ line, it took 13 hours to build a Model T.
- Seat covers on the Model T were stuffed with _____.



Word List

(in random order)

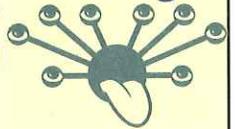
BLACK
HIGHLAND
THREE
LEFT
FORD
ASSEMBLY
HORSEHAIR
DROP

- A body chute, called a _____, lowered the body onto the chassis.

DOWN

- How many floor pedals did the Model T have?
- What color were all Model Ts?
- Model Ts were made at _____ Park.

Vocabulary WORDS



Multitude: A large number

Salary: Money paid to a person regularly in exchange for work

Institution: An established organization