

Fred R. Black and C.W. Olmstead Papers

Accession 554

Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village
Finding Aid

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Open For Research

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Introduction

Fred C. Black began his career with the Ford Motor Company in January 1919 as the editor of the *Dearborn Independent* and remained with the paper until its demise in 1927. He then became the head of the Ford Motor Company Advertising Department where he reported to and worked closely with Ford's president Edsel Ford. In the depression year of 1933 most Ford advertising ceased and Edsel asked Black to organize the Ford exhibit at the 1934-35 Chicago World's Fair, called "A Century of Progress."

Ford Motor Company, like most other large American companies, took part in annual regional expositions throughout the United States to promote the industrial age, and the benefits Americans received from the manufacturing giants. True to the era, Ford Motor Company spent millions of dollars, as did all corporations, on promoting their business and its contributions to society, while America was in the throws of the Great Depression. Ford's exposition buildings informed the public about the materials and products from all regions of the United States that Ford used in the manufacture of its cars. While this was encouraging to the people to know that the automobile did not usurp their agriculture and mining products, many directly benefited from these events by the employment opportunities they provided.¹

Black employed 800 people to staff the Ford exhibit, most being students from the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois and Armour Institute who acted as guides and exhibit operators. Edsel Ford hired the Detroit Symphony Orchestra to play at the fair and retained them for the Ford Sunday Evening Hour radio program. At the fair's end, Black worked with architect Albert Kahn to move the Rotunda, Ford's exhibit building, to Dearborn where it served as a visitor center and point of departure for the popular tours of the Rouge Plant.

In 1939 Black was given responsibility for both the New York Worlds Fair and the San Francisco Golden Gate Exposition. Black took charge of the New York extravaganza and hire Clarence Olmstead as his assistant to handle the San Francisco exposition.

In addition to the world's fairs, Black and later Olmstead, helped to coordinate Ford's involvement in other events such as the expositions in San Diego, Cleveland and Dallas as well

¹ Robert W. Rydell, *World of Fairs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993) 115-116. See also, Ford R. Ryan, *Henry's Lieutenants* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1993) 37-41.

as smaller events like regional fairs, trade shows and local Detroit events like the dedication of the Wright brothers home in Greenfield Village in 1939 and opening of the Rotunda.

Scope and Content Note

The Fred R. Black and C.W. Olmstead Collection consists of the files of the Ford Motor Company's public relations department spanning from 1934 through 1948. These files contain a variety of materials including: contractual agreements, display design, manufacturing technical specifications, labor requirements, attendance reports, cost analysis, tour plans, lectures, brochures, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, and photographs.

This collection provides detailed information on all aspects Ford Motor Company used to promote their company and its ideals.

Arrangement

The arrangement of this collection is based on the type of events that Ford Motor Company was participating in, or sponsoring. The original provenance of the Public Relations department was always taken into account. Very few items had to be changed from their original order. Those consisted of items that were miss filed. Because this collection originated in a well-established and important division of the company it had been well maintained in a logical and orderly fashion. Therefore the collection itself dictated the arrangement.

In regard to the photographs in the collection some work was needed. When the photographs were filed with correspondence they were left in place, as the letters they accompanied explained their importance. In other instances the photographs were organized in albums relating to an event. In those cases they were left in the original album.

Each series in this collection relates to a particular type of event. The sub-series is those events that fall under that category of event. The correspondence and speeches series were items related to other activities that Black, Olmstead and Cameron were involved in.

The 5 series are:

Introductory Series contains compiled material on all exhibits Ford Motor Company participated in, primarily New York.

World Fair Series contains records pertaining to the planning; implementation and final analysis of the 1933-1934 Chicago Century of Progress World's Fair, and the 1939-1940 New York World's Fair. This series includes the special events that Ford held in conjunction with the fairs, as well as photographs that document those events. Also, the buildings and displays are documented in photographs.

Exposition Series consists of the records of all the regional events Ford Motor Company participated in: 1936 Detroit Michigan Exposition, 1936 San Diego Pacific International, 1936 Great Lakes Centennial, Cleveland, 1936 Texas Centennial Dallas, 1939-40 San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition, 1948 Canadian Northern Exposition, Toronto. This series includes photographs and blueprints from the larger of these events.

Exhibits, Trade Shows, Fairs, Corporate Meeting Presentations Series contains files relating to Ford's participation in lesser events including: the Rotunda operation in Dearborn, and Greenfield Village publicity; the Automobile Golden Jubilee which was a citywide celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the car held in 1946; trade shows held around the country from 1939 through 1948; smaller state and local fairs that Ford Motor Company participated in during the 1940's; and corporate meetings where the company presented exhibits and demonstrations.

Correspondence and Talks

This Series contains the correspondence of Fred R. Black, C.W. Olmstead, Edsel Ford and speeches by William Cameron, much of which deals with Worlds Fairs and other exhibitions involving Ford.

Series I
Introductory Material

This series contains compiled material on all exhibits in which Ford Motor Company participated . Included here is survey information on the fairs, a history of Worlds Fairs and reports on the buildings constructed for the fairs.

Box 1 Cost of all Exhibits
 Compiled Costs of all Exhibits

Series II
World Fair Series

This series contains records pertaining to the planning; implementation and final analysis of the 1933-1934 Chicago Century of Progress World's Fair, and the 1939-1940 New York World's Fair. This series includes the special events that Ford held in conjunction with the fairs, as well as photographs, negatives and blueprints documenting the events, the buildings and the displays.

Chicago Century of Progress, 1933-34

Display Measurements
Engineering Display Information
Stroboscope Steel display
Electricity at Work
Lectures
Photo Collection of Displays and Fair Activities (2 folders)
Photo of Henry Ford and Edsel Ford
Press Releases
Hall of Science
Soybean Exhibit

Box 2 Roads of the World
 Background Material
 United States East
 United States West (2 folders)
 Central and South America
 Central and South America Photographs
 Europe (2 folders)
 Asia and Pacific

Box 3 New York World's Fair, 1939-40
 New York World's Fair Accounting and Attendance
 Accounting memos, budgets, and equipment lists
 General Accounting Procedures and Instructions 1939-40
 Weekly Labor Reports
 Personnel Required for Show
 Attendance 1939 (2 folders)
 Attendance 1940 (2 folders)

Box 3
con't)**World Fair Series --New York Worlds Fair** (con't)**Accounting and Attendance** (con't)

New York World's Fair/ San Francisco Comparison
 New York World's Fair Attendance, 4-30-39/10-31-39
 New York World's Fair Attendance, 5-11-40/10-27/40

Contracts and Leases

New York World's Fair 1939 Contract
 New York World's Fair 1940 Contract
 Contract Rules and Agenda 1940

Box 4

Building Leases and Information 1939
 Building Leases and Information 1940
 Contract Preliminary Negotiations 1939
 Decisions for 1940 Fair Season
 Rules and Regulations, 11-20-1937/3-15-39
 New York World's Fair miscellaneous information

Building Exhibits and Specifications

Building Acoustics
 Turntable Specifications

Box 5

Billings Mural
Pencil Point September 1937
 Organization of Ford Exhibit
 Used Checkbook
 Fair Procedures
 New York City Diagram
 First Gas Engine Display

Box 6

New York World's Fair Lectures, Speeches and Events
 Ford Cycle of Production
 Topical File of Lectures, 1939
 New York Lectures, 1939-40
 Clippings - News Boys at Roads of Tomorrow Exhibit
 Public Comments on Roads of Tomorrow
 Good Driver's Club, 1940
 Astor Show
 Motion Picture Script, 1939
 Style Show
 "A Thousand Times Neigh", 1940 Ballet
 Transportation Pageant Proposal
 Executive Lounge Activities, 1939
 Photo Contest
 Activities and Reports
 World Fair Exhibits

- Box 7** **World Fair Series --New York Worlds Fair** (con't)
 Activities and Reports (con't)
 Executive Lounge Report, 1940
 Edison Institute Exhibit
 Pearl Street Station
Entertainment
 Clippings
 Score -- Symphony in F (copy) (3 folders)
- Box 8** New York World's Fair Photo Collection
 Negative Log
 Wood Distillation Photo
 Wood Distillation and Circumnavigator's Dinner negatives
 Panama Hat Letter Photo
 Three Photo Albums of Publicity Pictures
- Box 9** Photos of Exhibits Turntables
 Photos 1-5B
 Photos 6-11A
 Photos 11B-18A
 Photos 18B-24A
- Box 10** Photo of Exhibits Turntables 24B-27
 Expo Building
 Grand Central and Astor Hotel -- Floor Plans and Photos
 Old Cars
 Documentation from Photo Album
 Photographs of Fair
New York World's Fair Press Releases
 Press Department Report
 Press Releases (9 folders)
- Box 11** New York World's Fair Publicity and News Clipping
 Literature on Ford Products
 Fair Bulletins
 Publicity Brochures
 Fred Black's file on Publicity
 Ford Cycle of Production
 Foreign Publicity and News Clippings
 Publicity and News Clippings
 Ford Days Broadcast for the Ford Summer Hour
 News Clippings
 Giant 160 Ton Press
 Radio Publicity
 Photograph Contest
 New World Ensemble
 New England Tour 1,000,000 Visitors

Series III
Expositions

The Exposition Series consists of the records of all the regional events Ford Motor Company participated in: 1936 Detroit Michigan Exposition, 1936 San Diego Pacific International, 1936 Great Lakes Centennial, Cleveland, 1936 Texas Centennial Dallas, 1939-40 San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition, 1948 Canadian Northern Exposition, Toronto. This series includes photographs and blueprints from the larger of these events. Of special note is the fact that the Dioramas used at the San Diego Exposition were the same ones used at the Dallas Centennial in 1936.

Box 12 **San Francisco Golden Gate International, 1939-40**
Accounting, Attendance, Buildings and Personnel
White Print of Grounds
White Print of Grounds with Photos
Accounting Instructions
Accounting and Operation Procedures
Exposition Comparison Charts, 1939
Attendance for 5-18-39/10-29-39
Roth Federal Research Reports on Attendance
Attendance Records and other Statistics, 1939
Attendance, 1940
Attendance, 5-25-40/10-40
Personnel
Building Specifications

Box 13 Budgets, Contracts, Displays and Events
Budget Estimates
Contracts, 1940
Farm Products Used in Ford Industry
Ford Days, 1939
William H. Jackson, Photos, Radio Program, Ford Tractor
Publicity Photos (2 folders)
27,000,000 Ford Correspondence
27,000,000 Ford Photos (3 folders)
Correspondence, 1939-40
Programs for Events, 1940
Special Event Photos

Box 14 Lectures, Photos, and News Clippings
Lectures
Lectures and Photos
Photos of Turntable Exhibits
Negatives of Models on Turntables
Turntable Negatives

Box 14
(con't)

Expositions – San Francisco (con't)

Lectures, Photos, and News Clippings (con't)

Negatives of Exhibits, Parties Animated Islands, and Animated
Models on Turntables
News Clippings, 1939 (3 folders)

Box 15

San Diego Pacific International, 1936

Agreements, Attendance, Events, and Exhibits
Agreement Letters
Complete Photostats of Ballets and Spectacles
Technical Material
Attendance Reports (2 folders)
Correspondence Concerning Attendance
Exhibit on Cotton
Ford News
Moving Exhibits and Lectures
Lectures, 1935
Glass Exhibit

Box 16

Lectures
Lecture Topics
Lectures Used in San Diego
Lectures Used in San Diego – Duplicate Sets (2 folders)
Dioramas
Correspondence and Drawings (2 folders)
Shot List of Photographs
Photographs – Fred Black's Presentation Book
Photographs of Entertainers

Box 17

Dallas, Texas Centennial, 1936

Contracts, Budget, Labor, Attendance, and Rules
Rules and Regulations Booklet
Budget Material
Contracts
Cameron's Dallas Speech
List of Cars used at Dallas
Johannson Gage Blocks
Labor Reports
Attendance
Photo with Letter
Display Instructions
Displays - Description and Photos
Guest Book
Exhibits

Box 18

Expositions (con't)

Dallas, Texas Centennial, 1936 (con't)

Lectures (4 folders)

Cleveland, Great Lakes Exposition, 1936

Cleveland, Attendance, Rules, Exhibits and Lectures

Administrative

Show Manager's File

Rules and Regulations

Exhibit Materials

Lectures (2 folders)

Photographs and Correspondence

Attendance

Mid-America Exposition, 1946-47

Correspondence

Panama-Pacific International Exposition

Specifications for Exhibition Building

Series IV

Exhibits, Trade Shows, Fairs, Corporate Meeting Presentations

This series contains the records of a more local nature where Ford was requested to provide a presence either by the company, local dealers or community groups. Included here are files relating to the Rotunda operation in Dearborn, Greenfield Village publicity and files regarding the building of The Edison Institute in Dearborn; the Automobile Golden Jubilee, containing the records of the citywide celebration of the 50th anniversary of the car held in 1946; records of the trade shows Ford Motor Company participated in, included government shows pertaining to the war effort as well as auto shows and trade expositions from 1939 through 1948; Minor Fairs contains the files on smaller state and local fairs that Ford Motor Company participated in during the 1940's; Small Events and Exhibits contain the files of minor events involving the Ford Motor Company during the 1940's; and Corporate Meetings records of Regional and Branch Managers meetings held during the middle 1940's.

Box 19

Dearborn Exhibits

Rotunda

Rotunda Exhibits

Staff Training

Building Descriptions

Opening of the Rotunda

Rotunda Guide Lectures

Bouncing Ball Test

Edison Institute and Greenfield Village

Wright Home Dedication, 4/16/1938

McGuffey Memorial Meeting, 6/4-5/1941

Box 20

Exhibits, Trade Shows (con't)

Edison Institute and Greenfield Village (con't)

Research Labs in the Recreation Building -- Correspondence and
Speeches of C.W. Olmstead, 1937 (includes blueprints) (2
folders)

Automobile Golden Jubilee, 1946

Correspondence (2 folders)

Plans

Cranbrook Display for Golden Jubilee

Box 21

Trade Shows

Rainbow Bridge – Monument Valley Expedition, 1936—1938

Correspondence

Canadian National, Toronto, October 1948

Detroit International Aircraft Show, October, 6-14, 1945

ASME Semi-Annual Convention June 17, 1946

U.S.-Canada Conservation Display, Washington D.C., 1943

Detroit Automobile Show, 1939

Chicago Car Show, 1940

MFG. Process Division, Washington D.C., July 1942

Olmstead Correspondence

U.S. Conservation Display

Metallechrome Finish, Masonic Temple, May 8, 1946 (photographs)

The National Institute of Government, Chicago, 1946

Box 22

SAE-ESD Meeting and Exhibit, April 30, 1942

Olmstead's Correspondence (2 folders)

Committee Meetings

Photographs

Speeches

Auto Show Blueprints, 1948

Baltimore Civilian Mobilization Committee, 1944

Fairs

St. Louis County Fair, St. Louis, MO, 8-23/9-11, 1947

Michigan State Fair, Detroit, MI, 8-29/ 9-7, 1947

Mid-South Fair, Memphis, Tenn. 9-22/27, 1947

Paris Exposition, Photographs

Small Events and Exhibits

Model Airplane Meet, Dearborn, May 25-26, 1946

Ford "Facto-Mobile" Ford Motor of Canada

Chemist's Association Meeting Speech

Plant Dedication, Ypsilanti, MI October 1, 1948 Photos

Fred Jones Dealership Exhibit, 1948

Box 23 **Exhibits, Trade Shows** (con't)
Corporate Meetings

Engineering Talks to Branch Managers, June 25, 1945
Regional Managers Meeting, April 3, 1946
Regional Managers meeting, October 21, 1946
Shell Oil Meeting, April 23-25, 1946
Ohio Motor Sales Display, April 3, 1946
Buffalo Branch Display, September 5, 1945
Branch Managers Meeting, June 25, 1945
Dealers Conference, October 17, 1945

Series V
Correspondence and Talks

This Series contains the correspondence of Fred R. Black, C.W. Olmstead, Edsel Ford and speeches by William Cameron, much of which deals with Worlds Fairs and other exhibitions involving Ford.

Box 23 Cameron's Talks
(con't) C. W. Olmstead's Correspondence
 C. W. Olmstead – Photos on Powdered Metal Display, 3/1946
 Fred Black Correspondence
 General (2 folders)
 With Edsel Ford
 About the New York Worlds Fair
 About the Wright Brothers Airplane
 Black's Correspondence with Edsel Ford
 Edsel Ford, on Fairs