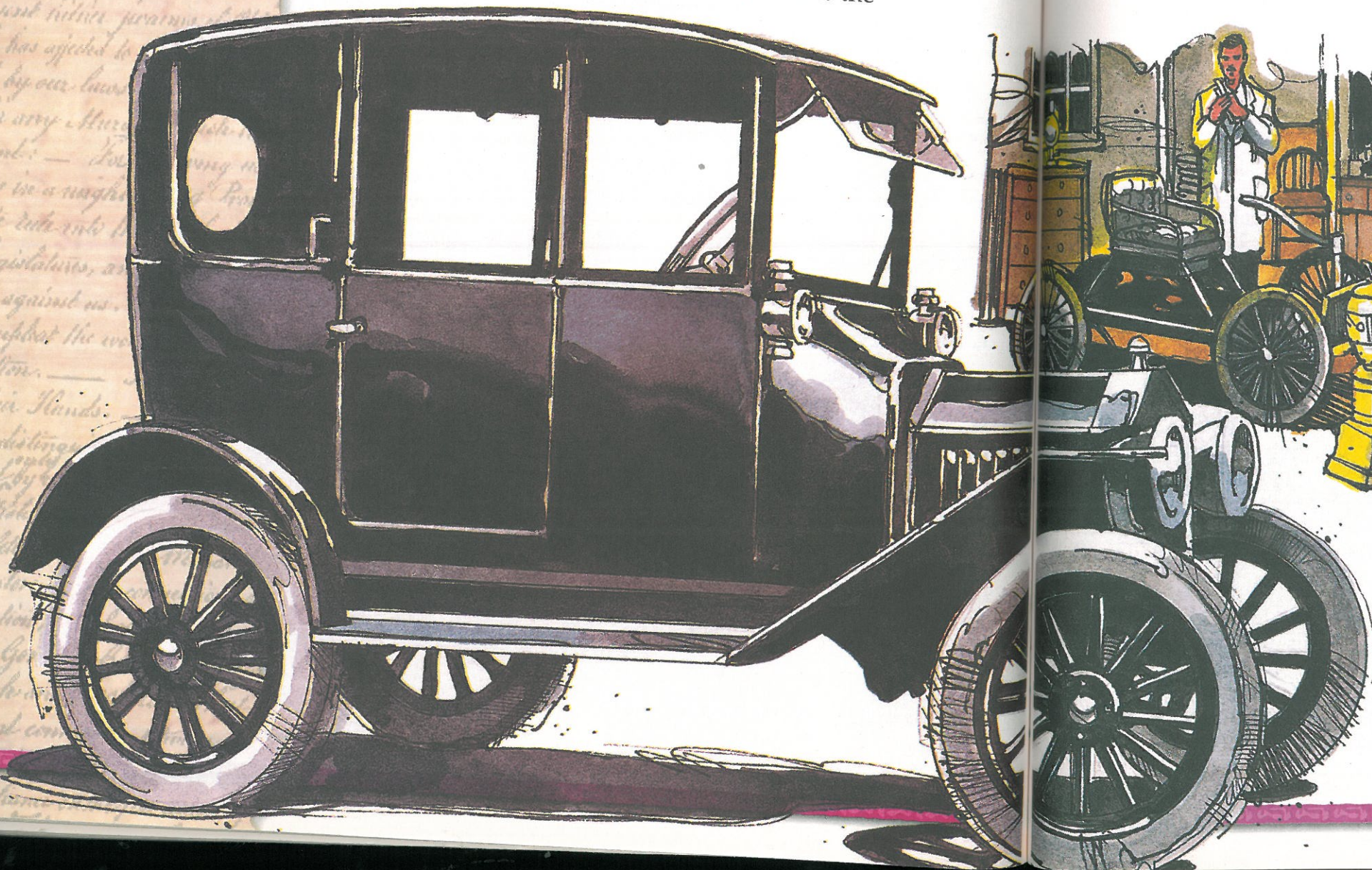


HENRY FORD'S FORDS

Henry Ford did not build the first car. Still, when people think of the earliest automobiles, they often think of Henry Ford. That is because Henry Ford was the first to build an inexpensive, reliable car.

Henry Ford's Model T

Henry Ford started his Ford Motor Company in 1903. At first, the cars he made were like the



cars others were making. That is, his cars were expensive.

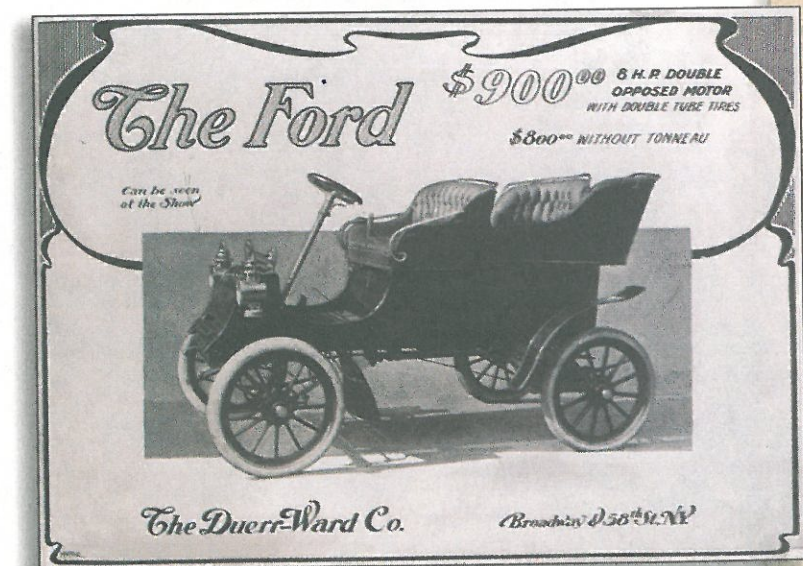
Henry knew people were very interested in automobiles. He also knew that most people couldn't afford them. So, Henry decided to build a car that almost everyone could buy. He planned to make the car "so low in price that no man making a good salary will be unable to own one."

In 1908, the Ford Motor Company introduced a new car. It

was called the Model T, and it was a homely, boxy, rattly thing. It also was inexpensive—it sold for just \$825. Americans fell in love with it.

The Model T had other advantages besides price. For example, it was such a simple machine that it was an easy car to fix. It was a sturdy car, too. It could handle the bumpy, rocky roads better than many expensive cars. Plus, attachments for the Model T made it able to pump water and plow fields!

Henry Ford was not satisfied with the \$825 price tag for his Model T. He kept thinking up new ways to save money in the making of the car. When he did, he passed those savings on to his customers. By 1916, the price of a Model T had dropped to \$345. By 1924, a brand-new Model T Ford cost only \$290!



This picture shows an early advertisement for the Model T Ford.

Some couldn't understand why Henry Ford kept dropping the price of his Model T. But, Henry had a reason behind his decision. Here's what Henry believed: "Every time I lower the price a dollar, we gain a thousand new buyers."

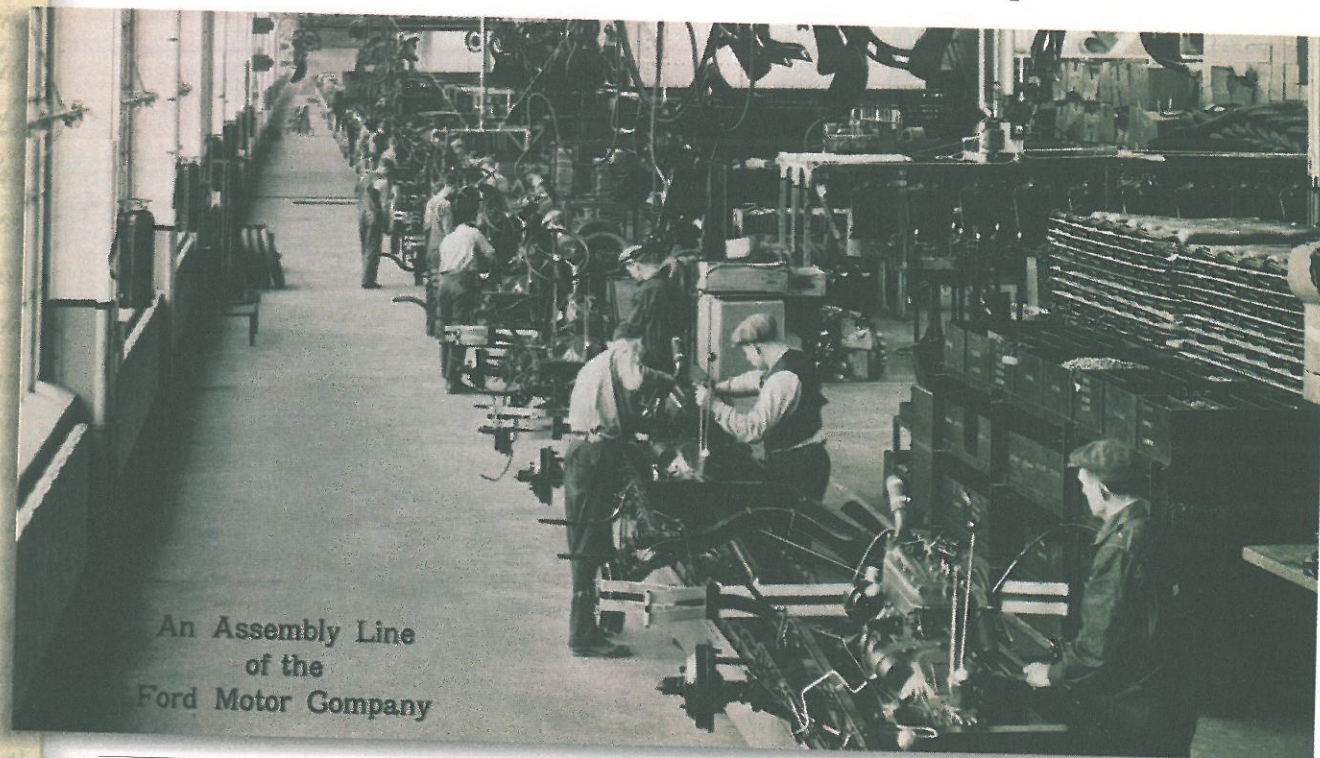
Henry's Assembly Lines

Early cars were all crafted by hand. That meant that each car was slightly different from the next. It also meant that each car took a long time to make.

Henry had a different idea. Here is how he planned to make his cars: "The way to make automobiles is to make one automobile like another

automobile . . . to make them come through the factory just alike." No longer would Henry's cars be handmade. Instead, they would be put together—each in exactly the same way—with the help of an assembly line.

In an assembly line, workers stay in one place. All day long, a moving belt, called a conveyor belt, brings their work to them. Each worker has one assignment. It might be to screw two pieces together, or it might be to tighten a connection. Then, the work goes on to the next worker, and the next, and the next. Each worker does his or her small, exact part of the job, until all the workers together have created a finished product.



An Assembly Line
of the
Ford Motor Company

Henry Ford's plan for lines of assembly changed manufacturing all over the world.

Using an assembly line, Henry could turn out cars much faster than he could when each car was made individually. In just a few years, his factory was churning out a car every 1 1/2 hours. By 1911, his company was making more than \$10 million every year.

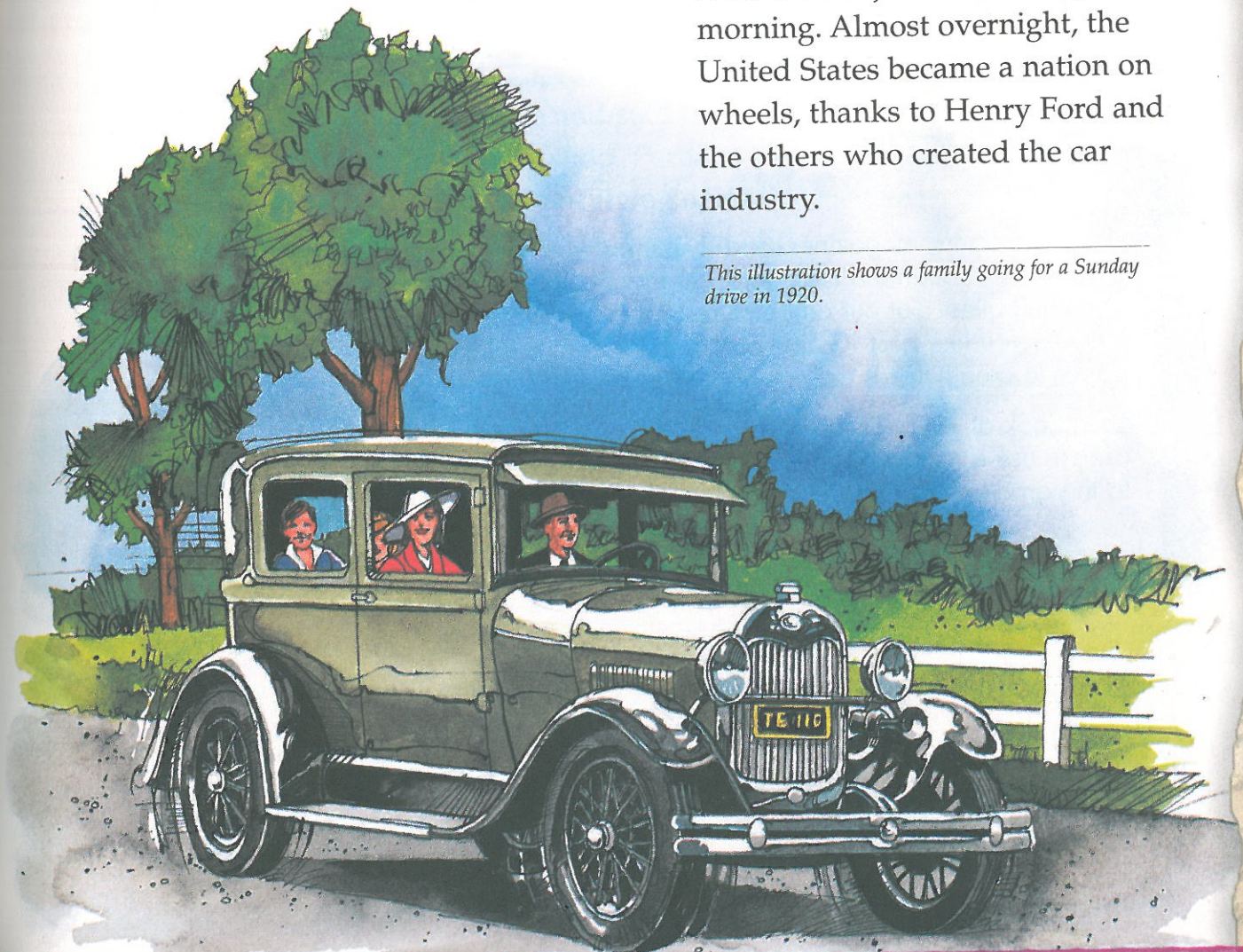
What Cars Meant to Americans

It is hard to think of any one thing that has changed life in the United States as much as the car. What had been faraway in the days before the automobile was

faraway no more. In pre-car days, most people depended on horses, boats, trolleys, and their own feet to get them where they needed to go. That meant they'd better live near where they worked. And, they'd better shop near where they lived.

Now, with inexpensive cars like Henry's Model T, people could drive a longer distance to work. Cars also let people shop far from home. They could take a weekend vacation miles away and still be back at their jobs on Monday morning. Almost overnight, the United States became a nation on wheels, thanks to Henry Ford and the others who created the car industry.

This illustration shows a family going for a Sunday drive in 1920.



Jokes Help Sell Fords

Henry Ford's cars became the subject of jokes for many years. Comedians could be counted on to make fun of Fords. There were even little books of Ford jokes that you could buy on trains—"two hundred good jokes for only fifteen cents"!

Henry didn't mind. In fact, he once said, "The jokes about my car sure helped to popularize it. I hope they never end."

Here are some of the jokes people told about Henry's Fords.

I hear they're going to magnetize the rear bumper of the Ford.

Why would they do that?

So it can pick up the parts that fall off.

Ford is the perfect car for people with children. It even has a rattle for the baby!

I don't need a speedometer. When my Ford is going five miles per hour, the hood rattles. When it goes 10 miles an hour, my teeth rattle. And when it goes 15 miles per hour, the engine falls out.

Show What You Know

Use newspapers, magazines, and flyers that you may cut apart. Then, look through the materials you have collected to find pictures of automobiles. Cut out any pictures you see. Choose five or six pictures you like best. Glue them together onto a white sheet of paper to create a car collage.

Then, look at your car collage, and make a list of reasons why people use cars today. Your list might include reasons such as going to the grocery store or taking children to school.

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS FLY

Orville and Wilbur Wright were brothers. They grew up in Dayton, Ohio. Wilbur was the older brother. He was born in 1867. Orville was born in 1871.

Orville and Wilbur Yearn to Fly

Orville and Wilbur Wright both loved to think about and talk about flying. They read everything they could find about the subject. They also built all kinds of gliders, which they tested in a wind tunnel they made themselves.

Orville and Wilbur made and sold bicycles in their own Dayton bicycle shop. Perhaps you thought that people who loved flying so much would become pilots. The Wright brothers did not become pilots, because, at that time, there was no such job.

The Flyer

The Flyer was 21 feet, 1 inch long. The frame was made mainly of wood. Cotton cloth was stretched over its wings—one above the other, and each was 40 feet, 4 inches wide. A Wright-made, 12-horsepower engine ran two wooden propellers that sat in front of the wings. There was no real seat for the pilot. Instead, he had to lie in the middle of the bottom wing. You can still see the Flyer today. It is on display at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

