



Finding Aid for

HOWARD WOODWORTH SIMPSON PAPERS, 1919-1956
Accession 500

Finding Aid Published: November 2011



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OVERVIEW

REPOSITORY: Benson Ford Research Center
The Henry Ford
20900 Oakwood Blvd
Dearborn, MI 48124-5029
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ACCESSION NUMBER: 500

CREATOR: Simpson, Howard Woodworth, 1892-1963

TITLE: Howard Woodworth Simpson papers

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1919-1956

QUANTITY: 0.8 cubic ft.

LANGUAGE: The materials are in English

ABSTRACT: Howard Simpson worked for Henry Ford & Son at the Fordson tractor plant in Dearborn. He worked in tractor and transmission design. The papers include drawings, patents, notes and other data related to Fordson tractors and automobile transmission.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

- ACCESS RESTRICTIONS:** The collection is open for research
- COPYRIGHT:** Copyright has been transferred to The Henry Ford by the donor. Copyright for some items in the collection may still be held by their respective creator(s).
- ACQUISITION:** Ford Motor Company donation, 1964.
- RELATED MATERIAL:** Related material held by The Henry Ford:
- Mr. and Mrs. Howard Woodworth Simpson oral history, part of the Oral History subgroup, 1951-1961, Accession 65.
- PREFERRED CITATION:** Item, folder, box, accession 500, Howard Woodworth Simpson papers, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
- PROCESSING INFORMATION:** Collection processed by Ford Motor Company Archives staff, May 1964.
- DESCRIPTION INFORMATION:** Original collection inventory list prepared and published by Ford Motor Company Archives staff in May 1964.
- Finding aid prepared by Elyssa Bisoski, November 2011, and published in November 2011.
- Finding aid prepared using Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACs) and local guidelines.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Howard Simpson was born on May 8, 1892 in Kalamazoo, Michigan, the son of a prominent carriage maker. The family moved to Detroit where Howard finished high school and an apprentice program at Cadillac Motor Company before earning a degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Michigan.

After graduation, Simpson worked for Henry Ford & Son at the tractor plant in Dearborn. When Ford Motor Company acquired Henry Ford and Son, Simpson worked directly under Henry Ford on tractor and transmission design. He worked as head designer on the 9N Fordson tractor as well as the Hy-Ben-Jo-Bill miniature farm equipment used by the Ford children.

Simpson accepted a position in 1939 at Detroit Harvester. In 1943 he retired to work on his own inventions. Howard Simpson is credited with 42 patents for components for tractors, trucks, buses and military vehicles. The Simpson Gear Train is still the dominant automatic transmission gear set design used by Ford Motor Company, General Motors and Chrysler. In 1963 he was named "Outstanding Michigan Inventor" by the Michigan Patent Law Association. He died six months later, on November 4th.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes transmission design drawings, parts drawings, patents, photographs, and other data related to engineering of the Fordson tractor, automobile transmissions, farm implements and special design programs for Henry Ford. Of special interest is a piston ring drawing with notated approval by Henry Ford and a diary of projects from 1921-1938.

SUBJECT TERMS

Names, Personal and Corporate
Simpson, Howard Woodworth, 1892-1963

Subjects
Agricultural implements
Automobiles--Transmission devices
Engineering drawings
Fordson tractors
Inventors
Mechanical engineers
Motor vehicles--Design and construction
Tractor industry--Michigan
Tractors
Tractors--Patents

Genre and Form
Blueprints
Diaries

CONTAINER LIST

Box no.	Description
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Box 1

Diary of projects, 1931-1938

Transmission papers, 1934-1936

Personal Papers

 Piston ring blueprint, 1926

 Ford Old Timers Club poem, January 18, 1956

Fordson Tractor (contains blueprints, instruction book for Ferguson Plow, engineering information, patent data, clippings)

V-8 Tractors, 1951 (plaintiff's exhibit U.S. District Court Southern District of New York)

Passenger Car Transmission (blueprints, engineering information, patent data, clippings)

Box 2

Speed helical transmission (blueprints and notes)

Blueprints (marked for plaintiff's exhibits in Ferguson case)