



Finding Aid for

**COLLECTION ON FRANK JOHNSON, 1904-1957**  
**Accession 570**

Finding Aid Published: January 2011



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## **SUMMARY INFORMATION**

**COLLECTOR:** Johnson, Russell F.

**TITLE:** Collection on Frank Johnson

**INCLUSIVE DATES:** 1904-1957

**BULK DATES:** 1904-1942

**QUANTITY:** 0.8 cubic ft.

**ABSTRACT:** Collected diaries and oral interview transcripts relating to Frank Johnson's automotive career with Leland and Faulconer, Cadillac Motor Company, Lincoln Motor Company, and Ford Motor Company.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**ACCESS RESTRICTIONS:** The papers are open for research

**ACQUISITION:** Donation, 1956

**PREFERRED CITATION:** Item, folder, box, Accession 570, Collection on Frank Johnson, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford

**PROCESSING INFORMATION:** Finding aid prepared by Pete Kalinski, April, 2005

## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Russell F. Johnson's father, Frank Johnson, was born in Paris, Michigan in 1871 and attended local public schools and Michigan State College (now Michigan State University). After earning a degree in mechanical engineering in 1895, Frank Johnson worked as a tool designer and engineer with the Leland and Faulconer Company. Leland and Faulconer Company was a noted machine and tool shop started by Henry M. Leland in 1890 that supplied engines, transmission, and steering gear to the Henry Ford Company and later the Cadillac Motor Company. Leland and his son Wilfred C. Leland assumed control of Cadillac in 1902 and merged the companies. Johnson was instrumental in the key phases of early engine design at Cadillac. He left Cadillac in 1917 when the Lelands started the Lincoln Motor Company, returned to Cadillac in 1921, and finally returned to Lincoln in 1925 after Henry Ford purchased the assets of the company at a receivership auction. As chief engineer at Lincoln, Johnson was instrumental in developing the 1927 Lincoln V-8 engine, the first V-12 production engine for the Lincoln, and the redesigned V-12 engine for the landmark 1937 Lincoln-Zephyr.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Collection on Frank Johnson consists of three oral history transcripts of interviews conducted by Russell F. Johnson with engineers and designers who worked with his father, Frank Johnson, throughout his career at Leland and Faulconer Company, Cadillac Motor Company, Lincoln Motor Car Company, and Ford Motor Company. The collection also includes pocket diaries and notebooks kept by Frank Johnson between 1904 and 1942 which document his professional career as an automotive engineer and his personal and family life. For more detailed information, see Frank Johnson's oral reminiscence available at the Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford.

**BOX AND FOLDER LISTING**

**Box no.                      Description**

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**ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPTS**

**Box 1**

Anibal, Benjamin H., 1957  
Ellis, Forrest, circa 1957  
Jack, Robert K., 1957

**DIARIES AND NOTEBOOKS**

**Box 2**

Diaries, 1904-1942 (13 volumes)  
Notebooks, circa 1905-1928 (4 volumes)