



Finding Aid for

**SELDEN PATENT LAWSUIT COLLECTION,
1898-1955 (BULK 1900-1925)
Accession 1704**

Finding Aid Published: December 2011



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OVERVIEW

REPOSITORY: Benson Ford Research Center
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ACCESSION NUMBER: 1704

CREATOR: Benson Ford Research Center

TITLE: Selden patent lawsuit collection

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1891-1955

BULK DATES 1900-1925

QUANTITY: 1.6 cubic ft. and 1 oversize box

LANGUAGE: The materials are in English

ABSTRACT: The Selden patent lawsuit collection contains documents, correspondence, and financial reports relating to George B. Selden's patent for road vehicles and the Electric Vehicle Company v. Ford lawsuit.

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:** Donated by Henry Austin Clark, Jr. in 1986
- RELATED MATERIAL:** Related material held by The Henry Ford: Selden v. Ford patent lawsuit collection, 1904-1915, Accession 20
- PREFERRED CITATION:** Item, folder, box, accession 1704, Selden patent lawsuit collection, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
- PROCESSING INFORMATION:** Collection processed by Benson Ford Research Center staff, August 1988 and updated in October 2005.
- DESCRIPTION INFORMATION:** Original collection inventory list prepared and published by Benson Ford Research Center staff in August 1988 and updated in October 2005.
- Finding aid prepared by Elyssa Bisoski, December 2011, and published in December 2011.
- Finding aid prepared using Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS) and local guidelines.

HISTORICAL NOTE

George Baldwin Selden was born on September 14, 1848 in Clarkston, New York, the son of a well-to-do local lawyer. He attended local public schools, the University of Rochester, and graduated from Yale University after a brief enlistment in the Union Army during the Civil War. He was admitted to the New York bar in 1871 and joined his father's law firm. Selden turned his attention to mechanical design and in 1879 he filed a patent application for a self-propelled "road engine." In 1895 he was granted a final patent. The most unique feature of his patent was its effort to cover all self-propelled wheeled vehicles built in the United States in 1879. Selden was never able to manufacture automobiles himself and in 1899, the Columbia and Electric Vehicle Company, later called the Electric Vehicle Company, in New Haven, Connecticut, purchased the patent rights from Selden for cash and future royalty payments.

By 1903, several automobile manufacturers, including some of the successful early companies such as the Winton Motor Carriage Company, Olds Motor Works, and Packard Motor Car Company, recognized the validity of Selden's patent and agreed to pay the Electric Vehicle Company a royalty of 1.25% for each vehicle manufactured with proceeds distributed to Selden, the Electric Vehicle Company, and eventually a national association of automobile manufacturers. Also in 1903, the royalty paying companies established the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers (ALAM) in conjunction with the Electric Vehicle Company in an effort to control automotive competition and issued licenses to new companies.

In 1903, Henry Ford applied to the ALAM for a license but was turned down by the selection committee primarily because it was believed that Ford Motor Company was an assembly company rather than a manufacturing company. Henry Ford decided to fight the patent and continued to produce vehicles. Ford was then sued by the ALAM, George B. Selden, and the Electric Vehicle Company for patent infringement. Ford appealed a 1909 decision upholding Selden's patent and in 1911 a federal appellate court decided in favor of Henry Ford and effectively ended Selden's legal claim to a patent covering all motor vehicles. After Selden's death in 1922, the ALAM reorganized as a national advocacy group for automobile manufacturers and endured through several name changes including the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, and the Automobile Manufacturer's Association.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Selden Patent Lawsuit collection consists of two series. The **Subject Files series**, 1891-1955 (1.6 cubic ft.), includes correspondence, clippings, British, French, and American patent copies and financial reports. Researchers should note that material in this collection was gathered from various sources and includes a wide variety of general information about the early automobile industry. Of special interest are the annual reports, audits, national automobile show planning and cost reports, royalty summaries, and other financial records of automobile manufacturer's organizations such as the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers and a wholly-owned holding company, the Association Patents Company, the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, the Automobile Board of Trade, and the Automobile Manufacturer's Association. The **Lantern Slides series**, circa 1904-1909 (1 oversize box), consists of 56 glass lantern slides.

As a co-plaintiff in the infringement lawsuit filed against Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company, Selden's attorneys used the lantern slides to illustrate early automobile development and the part George B. Selden played in that process. The slides also illustrate engine and motor vehicle development in Europe and the United States at the turn of the century.

SUBJECT TERMS

Names, Personal or Corporate

Ford, Henry, 1863-1947

Selden, George Baldwin, 1848-1922

Ford Motor Company

Electric Vehicle Company (Hartford, Conn.)

Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers (U.S.)

National Association of Automobile Manufacturers

Automobile Board of Trade

National Automobile Chamber of Commerce

Automobile Manufacturers Association

Subjects

Automobiles--Design and construction

Automobiles--Exhibitions

Automobiles--History

Automobiles--Motors

Automobile industry and trade

Financial statements

Ford Motor Company--Trials, litigation, etc

Auditors' reports

Automobiles--Patents

Patents suits

Patent infringement

Genre and Form

Lantern slides

CONTAINER LIST

Box no. **Description**

Box 1

SUBJECT FILES

A. Fleury and Sons correspondence, 1891
Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers
 Reports and accounts
 Correspondence, 1905
 January-June, 1909
 July-December, 1909
 January 1909-February 1910
 January-June 1910
 July-December 1919
 January 1911-April 1913
 Royalty reports, 1903-1905
 Royalty reports and financial statements
 January 1, 1903-September 30, 1904
 November 7, 1904
 November 30, 1905
 October 1904-December 31, 1906
 June 30, 1906
 December 31, 1907
 August 15, 1908
 December 31, 1908
 April 1909
 Suit costs, 1906
Association Patent Company
 Minutes, 1905
 Reports and accounts, 1905-July 1912
 Reports and accounts January-July 1912
 Audit, June 3, 1913
Automobile Board of Trade
 Audit, June 26, 1913
 Audit, July 31, 1914
American Manufacturing Association Audits
 June 30, 1935
 June 30, 1936
 June 30, 1937
 June 30, 1938
 June 30, 1939

Box 2

Boyriven, Ltd., correspondence
British Patent Office
 Edmund Allyne and Le Dree Pomeroy, 1900

Hubert Baker, 1897
Alfred Boulton, 1901
William Cox, 1901
Middleton Crawford, 1903
Frederick de Veulle, 1902
George Dorris, 1900
George Ellis, 1903
Auguste Grivel, 1898
Elie Lacoste and Emile Battman, 1902
Henry H. Lake, 1901
Paul Lemaire, 1898
Paul Montaubon and Ernest Marchandier, 1901
Henry Pearson, 1901
John Ridley, 1901
Charles Sangster, 1902
G. W. D. Scott, 1903
Henry Spurrier, 1902
William Starley, 1902 (2 folders)
Frederick Strickland, 1902
Rear axle listing, 1899-1910
Budd Manufacturing Company, field men's report, 1928
A Chronicle of the Automobile Industry, 1946
Clippings
 Automobile advertising, undated
 Automobile manufacturing, 1942-1950
 Automobile pioneers, 1940-1955
 Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company, 1940-1953
 Rochester, New York, 1922-1948
 George Selden, 1910-1948
 U.S. War Effort, 1940-1945
Cowles suit
 Marks and Clerk (London) correspondence
 October 1928
 November 1928
 Undated
 Schiff and Bueren (Berlin) correspondence
 October 1938
 November 1928
Drawings of motors and early automobiles

Box 3

Electric Vehicle Company, witnesses, 1929
Fay, Jesse B., Patent Attorney, report of rear axle patents, 1912
Ford, Henry, museum collections, clippings, 1928
Ford, Henry, Packard Motor Car Suit, 1928
French Patent Office

M. Brasier, 1903
M. Chabouche, 1899-1900 (3 folders)
F. Charron, Girardot, Voigt, 1902
Compagnie Francaise de Voitures Electromobile, 1902
Albert de Dion, 1893
A. De Dion, G. Bouton, 1899
Pope Manufacturing Company, 1899
Societe des Etablissements and Malicet et Blin, 1903
Societe E. Henriod, 1902
General Motors, yellow cab design, 1928
German Patent Office, John Otto Donner, 1893
"La France Automobile," articles, 1901-1902
"La Locomotion," article, February 22, 1902
Rotarian magazine, August, September, November 1945
Time magazine, September 24, 1945
National Automobile Chamber of Commerce
Audits
 July 31, 1914
 June 30, 1915
 June 30, 1916
 June 30, 1917
 June 30, 1918
 June 30, 1920
 September 2, 1921
 September 7, 1922
 September 11, 1923
 June 30, 1924
 June 30, 1925
 June 30, 1926
 June 30, 1927

Box 4

 June 30, 1928
 June 30, 1929
 June 30, 1930
 June 30, 1931
 June 30, 1932
 June 30, 1932
 June 30, 1933
 June 30, 1934
Automobile show, 1928
Kardo Company report, 1915
National automobile shows report, New York and Chicago
 September 16, 1932-March 1, 1933
 1935
 1936 (2 folders)

1937
1938
1940
Patent infringements
1903-1905
1914
Selden, George B., photographs
Selden, Henry, correspondence, 1937-1947
Selden patent information
U.S. Patent Office
Walter C. Baker, 1898 and 1905 (2 folders)
Alanson P. Brush, 1905
John Demmler, 1911
Louis E. Hoffman, 1906 and 1910 (2 folders)
Frank B. Hopewell, 1900
Thomas J. Lindsay, 1898 and 1905 (2 folders)
Charles T. McCue, 1911
Frederick C. Miller, 1905
Louis P. Mooers, 1906 and 1909 (2 folders)
Jules and Albert Niclausse, 1908
C.T. Brock Sangster, 1902 (2 folders)
Charles Schmidt, 1906, 1910 and 1912 (3 folders)
George B. Selden, 1901
Vacuum Oil Company, correspondence, 1929

Box 5

LANTERN SLIDES

Selden automobile
George Selden seated, Henry Selden standing, circa 1905
Road picture, circa 1905
George Selden seated, circa 1905
Hero's apparatus, undated
La Premier Tourette de Lavis Renault, undated
Rosenwald #116871, drawing of non-compression engine, circa 1877
Otto and Langen free piston engine, undated
Daimler motor and bicycle, circa 1885
Otto and Langen four stroke single cylinder, undated
Reithmann engine, circa 1872-1873
Vertical gas engine, undated
Brayton petroleum engine, undated
Scott and Van Altena, undated
Otto and Langen vertical gas motor, undated
Diagram of cylinder action, undated
Reithmann viertaktmotor, circa 1872-1873 (1 of 2 slides)
Gas engine diagram, undated
Saver's pumping engine, 1698

Box 5 continued:

Brotherhood's three-cylinder engine, undated
Vertical two-cylinder engine, undated
Diagram of two-cylinder vertical engine, undated
Muller's Benz motor, undated
Barnett gas engine, undated
Selden and son in automobile
Otto and Langen horizontal cylinder with left hand fly wheel, undated
Barsanti and Matteucci engine, undated (1 of 3 slides)
Lenoir's gas engine, undated
Early vehicle gas engine, undated
Duryea wagon motor, undated
Barsanti and Matteucci engine (2 of 3 slides)
Otto and Langen four cycle compression engine, undated
Brown's gas-vacuum engine, circa 1826
Otto and Langen erster betriebstahiger viertaktmotor, circa 1877-1878
Barsanti and Matteucci engine (3 of 3 slides)
Daimler zwillings motor, undated
Otto and Langen erster versuchs-viertaktmotor, undated
Daimler erster motor, 1884
Reithmann viertaktmotor, circa 1872-1873 (2 of 2 slides)
Otto and Langen erster betriebsreifer flugkolbenmotor, undated
Newcomen's atmospheric engine, 1705
Papin, 1705
Engine suggested by Lenoir, undated
Columbus Perambulator Company, Chicago, undated
Benz three-wheeler, undated
Early vehicle, undated
George B. Selden road engine, 1895
Truck, undated
George B. Selden with vehicle, circa 1905
Selden factory, undated
Gas engine, undated
Benz motor tricycle, 1885
Lenoir carriage, 1860
Benz gas vehicle, circa 1900
Selden automobile,
 Front view, circa 1905
 Side view, circa 1905
 Engine close-up, circa 1905