Finding Aid for

WILLIAM C. KLANN PAPERS, 1918-1926
Accession 499

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BENSON FORD ResearchCenter

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OVERVIEW

REPOSITORY:	Benson Ford Research Center The Henry Ford 20900 Oakwood Blvd Dearborn, MI 48124-5029 www.thehenryford.org research.center@thehenryford.org
ACCESSION NUMBER:	499
CREATOR:	Klann, William C., 1884-
TITLE:	William C. Klann papers
INCLUSIVE DATES:	1918-1926
QUANTITY:	0.4 cubic ft.
LANGUAGE:	The materials are in English
ABSTRACT:	William C. Klann worked for Ford Motor Company from 1905 to 1928. His papers include photographs, drawings and personal notes.

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: - William C. Klann oral history, part of the Oral History subgroup, 1951-1961, Accession 65. - Selden v. Ford Patent Lawsuit collection, 1904-1915, Accession 20.
PREFERRED CITATION:	Item, folder, box, accession 499, William C. Klann papers, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
PROCESSING INFORMATION:	Collection processed by Ford Motor Company Archives staff, December 1962.
DESCRIPTION INFORMATION:	Original collection inventory list prepared and published by Ford Motor Company Archives staff in December 1962. 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

Born in Detroit, Michigan, William Klann started working at the Detroit Ship Building Company (Detroit Dry Dock) in 1898. He apprenticed there until 1905 when he became a machinist at the Ford Motor Company. By 1912, he was in charge of the assembly of the Model T motor at the Highland Park Plant and a Ford production expert. In 1917, he managed Ford Motor Company's mass production of the U.S.A. Standardized Aircraft Engine, popularly known as the Liberty engine, for the U.S. War Department. In 1923, the company sent Klann, along with a number of other key personnel, to England to improve the manufacture of the Model T in that country and to initiate the development of a plant in Dagenham. Klann left the Ford Motor Company in 1928. He subsequently worked for the Studebaker Corporation and the Hudson Motor Car Company.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers are primarily comprised of photographs, most significantly a set of images of the Liberty aircraft engine and its production. There are also a few photographs of Model T motor assembly, several photos of a group of men at an "old timers' party," a portrait of Klann with a Model T, and two group portraits that include both Klann and Henry Ford. Descriptions of each photograph were written by Klann for the accession. In addition, there are four original parts drawings (pencil on tracing paper) dated 1924 and 1925; a 1926 assembly line study for axle, body, chassis, frame, ignition, inspection, minor assemblies, motor, painting, top assembly, trimming, and wheels; an undated list of "men in charge of various departments;" and a typewritten biography.

SUBJECT TERMS

Names, Personal and Corporate
Klann, William C., 1884-
Ford, Henry, 1863-1947
Ford Motor Company. Highland Park Plant.

Subjects
Airplanes--Motors
Airplanes--Design and construction
Ford Model T automobile
Engines
Automobile industry and trade
Automobile industry workers
Assembly-line methods
Automobiles--Drawings
Production and logistics
Ford Motor Company--Employees

Genre and Form
Portraits
Group portraits
Photographs
Photographic prints
Design drawings

CONTAINER LIST

Box no.	Description

Box 1

Notes

Photographs

Portraits (consists of 3 photographic prints. Images include William Klann posing with Model T, 1923, and two group portraits that include William Klann and Henry Ford.)

Liberty Aircraft photographs (consists of 28 individually numbered prints)

1-9 (folder 1 of 3)

Print 1 (The Ford Liberty engine was installed in this plane at the Fisher Body Plant on Fort Street, now the Fleetwood Body Plant.)

Print 2 (Camshaft housings having the top bearing caps assembled to the housings to fit them in place.)

Print 3 (Assembling the camshafts to the housing; driving the studs for the caps and re-assembling the caps into place.)

Print 4 (Camshaft housing, with caps assembled, camshaft gears and timing shaft and housing tube assembled ready to be assembled to engine.)

Print 5 (Showing the crankcase with long studs onto which the upper half of the crankcase' is bolted together.)

Print 6 (Showing the bottom view of lower crankcase and driving in the studs for the oil pump; line reaming the lower half of crankcase with the bearing caps; laying the crankshaft in place and the upper half of the crankcase having studs put in place onto which the cylinder case will be bolted.)

Print 7 (Cylinders being prepared for assembly to the upper half of the crankcase.)

Print 8 (Putting on the temporary sleeve in which the piston will lay until the cylinder is assembled to the top half of the case.)

Print 9 (Tightening the nuts on the temporary sleeve in which the piston lies until the cylinder is put in place.)

10-19 (folder 2 of 3)

Print 10 (Showing lower half of crankcases, crankshaft, camshaft housing cylinders, ignition assembly tagged for service parts to go out with each 4 engine assemblies.)

Print 11 (Showing the piston and connecting rods assembled to the crankshaft and pushed thru the temporary piston holder sleeve on top side of bottom crankcase.)

Print 12 (Showing the piston on top face of the lower half of the crankcase with the generator bolted in place.)

Print 13 (Shown as missing in December 1962 inventory)

Print 14 (Showing the intake pipe assemblies bolted together and ready to go into the boxes which were sent to the next assembly to put the carburetor in place. The man at the left is W. C. Klann's clerk, Mr. Fred Gammel, 4238 Los Palos Avenue, Palo Alto, California. He also had charge of these 4 men.)

Print 15 (Showing cylinders in sets of 12 ready to go onto the line to be placed on the top half of the crankcase.)
Print 16 (Showing engines ready to go on running-in stands to get all bearings loosened up.)
Print 17 (Showing front end of engines with the wiring being attached to the end of the camshaft housing and gear.)
Print 18 (Showing the back end of the engine with the high pressure oil valves in place.)
Print 19 (Showing front end of engine with wiring put thru retaining tubes, water connecting hoses in place and the valve springs and rocker arms and the two timing gear shaft tube in upright positions.)

20-28 (folder 3 of 3)

Print 20 (Showing engines on running-in stands with the oil hose going to the engines. The oil was circulated under pressure from the filter barrel at the right side of picture.)
Print 21 (Shown as missing in December 1962 inventory.)
Print 22 (Showing the first Liberty engine assembled. Men in the picture, left to right: Charles Hartner, Goss Jones, man with fedora and mustache is John Etzold, bare-headed with badge on suspenders and glasses is Ray Franks, white shirt, black vest and cap is Harold Fuller, whom we can thank for these pictures as he brought them to me, next black shirt and no cap is Ray Franks, and the Government inspector on the right, don't remember his name.)
Print 23 (First engine on test block to see just what we had to have to get all of our water fittings and gasoline pipes in place before we built the other 80 test stands.)
Print 24 (Man in charge of Liberty engine assembly. Top left: William C. Klann, top right: 1st assistant Victor Perini - one good Italian tool maker. Bottom row, left to right: Fred Lowe, in charge of all testing and running-in stands, Mr. Iverson, in charge of all inspection, John Etzold - note mustache shaved off - second in charge of all assembly under George Blair, next George Blair, assistant to Harry Fuller. Right end: Harry Fuller, assistant to Perini. These men can be given credit for the Liberty Engine assemblies and we built the most, 75 per day, as our production records will show and we got the 8' x 12' American Flag for our bonus.)
Print 25 (The Government inspector spraying the engine with a mixture of oil and light wax before being put in a crate for shipping.)
Print 26 (The first engine put into the plane at Fisher Body ready to take off at Morrow Field on Wyoming Avenue at West Warren Avenue. W. C. Klann, left end of the wing, with Captain Morrow, the pilot who was killed on November 11, 1918 when his plane wing was sheared off by the flag pole in Grand Circus Park.)
Print 27 (Fake Armistice Day, November 14, 1918, when everyone wanted to go home, saying the war was over. We locked the gates and had all of the officials of the Ford Motor Company out talking the men into going back to work.)

Print 28 (All of the foremen, sub-foremen, inspectors.)

Motor Assembly (consists of 6 individual numbered prints)
- Print 1 (Showing crankshaft just laid in place on front end right: next, bearing caps being put in place over crankshaft bearing: stock boxes behind the conveyor line: empty conveyor showing how cylinder blocks were conveyed: files for filing burrs off bearing caps.)
- Print 2 (Showing camshaft in rack with large timing gears fitted to same and then the camshaft assemble was fitted into the cylinder block: the clamp in front shows how the cylinder was held down so it could not fall off the bench while being turned over to match the two timing gears to proper location.)
- Print 3 (Showing the piston and connecting rod assembly to the crankshaft.)
- Print 4 (Showing hook used to turn cylinder block over: cylinder long on the carrier for the bottom oil pan to be assembled.)
- Print 5 (Showing hook used to lift engines off assembly line. This looks good but it is only an oversize ice block hook.)
- Print 6 (Engines on running in stand after engine was on its own power. It was Pat Maher's idea to use the electric motor as a generator to put power back in to lines.)

First Old Timers' Party (consists of 3 photographic prints)
- Print 1 (Image shows, left to right: William Mager, standing, Ernest Grimshaw, seated, William. C. Klann, standing, Tom Laughlin, seated, leaning on table, Berri Thomas Mager and Klann only two from Mack and Bellevue Avenue Plant. C. Sorenson was not there from 1905 to 1906)
- Print 2 (Image shows same five men as print number 1 of 3.)
- Print 3 (Image shows Berri Thomas at piano, William Mager behind him, Ernest Grimshaw, William Klann leaning on piano and Tom Laughlin. Tom was a cylinder block tester at Highland Park. He could lift the 112 pound cylinder block with one hand.)

Time Study, 1926 (consists of time studies done on various vehicle assembly operations)

Drawings, 1924-1925 (4 drawings. Includes drawings for experimental steel piston, tube, and 2 splined shafts.)