

Collection #
P 0312

**MARMON PORTRAITS AND INDUSTRIAL PHOTOGRAPHS
CA. 1910S–1933**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 folders of black-and-white photographs

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1910s–1933

PROVENANCE: Multiple

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Marmon Motor Car Co. Records (M 0592)

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 2001.1064, 2010.0104

NOTES: For photographs of Marmon automobiles, see also: P 0411, Box 10, Folder 4

BIOGRAPHICAL / HISTORICAL SKETCH

The sons of Daniel W. Marmon and Elizabeth Carpenter, Howard and Walter Marmon built their first automobile in 1902. They built it using the facilities of Nordyke and Marmon, the nation's leading manufacturer of flour mill machinery. The company was founded in 1851 by Ellis Nordyke. Daniel W. Marmon joined the firm in 1865. Walter and Howard were born in Richmond, Indiana, where Nordyke & Marmon was located before the company moved to Indianapolis in the 1870s.

Walter Carpenter Marmon was born 25 August 1872. He attended Earlham College from 1889 to 1892 and graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1895. He returned to Indianapolis to work at Nordyke & Marmon in 1897.

Howard Carpenter Marmon was born 24 May 1876. Howard graduated from Shortridge High School in Indianapolis in 1891, attended Earlham College in Richmond from 1891 to 1893, and graduated from the University of California in Berkeley in 1898 with a degree in mechanical engineering. He began working at Nordyke & Marmon in 1899.

Both Marmon brothers had an interest in the automobile, and so helped establish a subsidiary of Nordyke & Marmon that produced a motor car in 1901–1902 at the company's facilities on West Morris Street at Kentucky Avenue. The company gained national prominence when its Marmon Wasp racecar, driven by company designer Ray Harroun, became the winner of the first Indianapolis 500-mile race in 1911.

Howard was the chief designer and engineer of this new endeavor, while Walter managed finance and manufacturing. Howard served as president of the American Society of Automotive Engineers from 1913 to 1914. In the late 1910s, the Marmon Model 34 was recognized for its use of aluminum, making it much lighter than other automobiles.

The War Industries Board was established on 28 July 1917 to coordinate the role of American industry during World War I. It managed resources and set priorities in commodity production and distribution. The automobile industry produced planes and tanks for the war effort.

In 1918, Howard Marmon was selected to lead a group of engineers as part of a government commission that was sent to France and England to study the latest in aircraft motor building. As an officer in the Army Air Service / Aviation Section, Signal Corps, he was assigned to head the airplane engine experimental station at McCook Field in Dayton, Ohio. He and other engineers designed the Liberty aircraft engine.

As early as 1920, Marmon employed 5,000 workers. Nordyke & Marmon ceased production of its milling equipment in 1926 and became the Marmon Motor Car Company. The company introduced a compact known as the Little Marmon in 1927 and in 1929 the Roosevelt, which was the first eight-cylinder car in the world to sell for less than \$1000. The design of the 16-cylinder model Marmon Sixteen, which was manufactured from 1931 to 1933, earned Howard Marmon a medal from the American Society of Automotive Engineers.

From 1902 to 1933, Marmon produced more than 250,000 automobiles. The company pioneered modern pressure lubrication, designed air-cooled V-4 engines, side entrances, all-aluminum cars, factory-installed radios, and built "systems engineered" cars. Marmon cars had a reputation for reliability and comfort. They were considered to be elegant and well-engineered high-powered automobiles. Despite its reputation and the introduction of more affordable cars, Marmon failed to survive the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression that followed.

In 1931, Walter Marmon and Arthur W. Herrington founded the Marmon-Herrington Company, which manufactured heavy-duty all-wheel-drive trucks. The company procured contracts to produce military vehicles. Today the company is part of Berkshire-Hathaway, Inc. It manufactures products for trucks and specialty vehicles, as well as products for other industries.

Walter died 29 August 1940 in Indianapolis and was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery. Howard died in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on 4 April 1943, and his remains were returned to Indianapolis for burial in Crown Hill Cemetery also.

Sources:

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SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of black-and-white photographs pertaining to Walter and Howard Marmon, the Marmon Motor Car Company, and the production of components for automobiles, particularly for the Marmon Sixteen. There are also two 1918 group portraits of the War Industries Board in Washington, DC.

Series 1, Portraits: This series includes individual portraits of Walter and Howard Marmon that are mounted one on each side of the same board, and two group portraits of members of the War Industries Board that are also mounted on both sides of a board. Individuals in the group portraits are not identified.

Series 2, Industrial Photographs: This series contains photographs of machinery used in the manufacture of automobile components, primarily for the Marmon Sixteen, as well as exterior and interior images of industrial building(s). Some of the photographs show unidentified workers using the machinery. Stamped on the back of most of these photographs is: Indianapolis Engraving Co. Plain and Color Industrial Photography.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Portraits

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Walter C. Marmon, ca. 1910s.

Howard C. Marmon, ca. 1910s.

Group portrait of section chiefs of the War Industries Board in Washington, DC, ca. 1918.

Members of the War Industries Board, seated around a large dining table, Washington, DC, 1918.

CONTAINER

Photographs, Folder 1 of 2

Photographs, Folder 1 of 2

Photographs, Folder 1 of 2

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Series 2: Industrial Photographs

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Back seat of a car. (Photo #24654)

"A view of the right side of the Marmon Sixteen 200-horsepower engine showing the massive, yet compact construction of the various units." [1931–1933] (Photo #24655)

"How companion connecting rods are mounted on a single large bearing on the crankshaft of the Marmon Sixteen engine." [1931–1933] (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #24762)

"The aluminum alloy cylinder block of the Marmon Sixteen engine weighs only 40 per cent of its equivalent in cast iron." (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #24764)

"How the case-hardened steel cylinders of the Marmon Sixteen engine are assembled into the aluminum alloy cylinder block." [1931–1933] (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #24775)

CONTAINER

Photographs, Folder 2 of 2

Photographs, Folder 2 of 2

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<p>"Combustion chambers in the Marmon Sixteen aluminum alloy cylinder head. At the left and in the center are completely machined combustion spaces and at the right is the finished firing head with non-corrosive heat resisting aluminum bronze valve seats and spark plug in place." [1931–1933] (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #24787) (2 copies)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>"The front end of the Marmon Sixteen 200-horsepower engine showing the neat and well-protected distributor and ignition wiring system." [1931–1933] (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #24805)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Unidentified circular machinery. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #25308)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Engine. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #25309)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Machinery with cylinders. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #25316)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Workers testing motor dynamometers. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #25938D)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Worker finishing combustion chamber for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243).</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Worker milling side of connecting rod for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243A)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Worker machining cylinder head for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243C)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Worker machining valve tappet guide for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243D)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>
<p>Machinery drilling and reaming connecting rod bolt locks (?) for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243E)</p>	<p>Photographs, Folder 2 of 2</p>

Machinery boring connecting rods for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243F)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Machinery milling forked connecting rod for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243G)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Worker with machinery milling crankcase for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243H)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Worker machining crankcase for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243I)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Machinery broaching bearing lock for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243J)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Worker at machinery. Written on back: "Finish boring for cylinders" for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243K)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Worker at machinery boring for cylinders for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243M)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Worker milling main bearing for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243N)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Worker machining for transmission housing for the Marmon Sixteen [1931–1933]. (Photo by Indianapolis Engraving Co., #26243O)	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Industrial building probably on the Marmon campus at Kentucky Avenue and Morris Street in Indianapolis, n.d.	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2
Interior of building showing machinery and workers, n.d.	Photographs, Folder 2 of 2