

# Leader In Many Movements To Aid Industry, Public

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public. He organized the "Ship by Truck" movement in 1918 to encourage use of trucks for the transportation of food, machinery, and other goods; and led the "Good Roads" movement. He initiated the now popular one-stop service store program in 1926; and he inaugurated the first commercially sponsored network musical radio program, the "Voice of Firestone," in 1928.

In 1922 Mr. Firestone began his campaign, "Americans Should Produce Their Own Rubber," in protest against the Stevenson Rubber Restriction Act which caused a rise in the price of natural rubber. Carrying out his program, Firestone began its own plantations operations in Liberia in 1924. Today the Liberian plantations cover 87,000 acres, and Firestone also operates plantations in Brazil, the Philippines and Guatemala.

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**DURING HIS CAREER**, Mr. Firestone successfully fought monopolies on demountable rims and tire building machinery, and the monopoly on machinery for building tires by the flat-band process, a method of applying cord fabric to a drum in endless bands. These victories aided the progress of the entire rubber industry and saved many millions of dollars for American motorists.

One of Mr. Firestone's proudest achievements was his start of the campaign to "Put the Farm on Rubber" with the development of the first practical low-pressure farm tractor tire.

The successful development of the farm tire came in 1932 at the depth of the depression which started with the stock market crash of 1929. The early Thirties were disastrous years for American business. But Firestone had used the profitable boom years of the Twenties as a time for expansion, greater efficiency and organizational strengthening. When the crash came, the company was solid, substantial and able to weather the storm.

In 1937, when national economic recovery suffered another setback, the company had its greatest sales year up to that time, a total of \$156,800,000.

The Thirties, despite their economic stresses and strains on business generally, were years of substantial growth for Firestone. Products were improved and diversified. Old plants were expanded and new plants were opened. Sales and profits increased.

In the early Thirties, Harvey S. Firestone developed the retail store program for two reasons: To increase the number of Firestone outlets for its products and, of equal importance, to use the stores to test the salability of specific products and methods of merchandising them. These stores have become a vast merchandising laboratory. Practices that are successful in the stores are passed on to Firestone's independent dealers.

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**BY 1936** the five sons of the founder of the company had been graduated from college and had joined their father in the management of the business. Harvey S. Firestone, Jr., now chairman, joined the company in 1920. The late Russell A. Firestone followed his brother in 1922 and became head of the Mechanical Rubber Goods Division. In 1931 Leonard K. Firestone became associated with the firm; he is now president of the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company of California. Raymond C. Firestone joined his brothers in 1933 and is now chairman of the executive committee and chief executive officer of the parent company. The last to become part of Firestone management was Roger S. Firestone in 1936. He is president of the Firestone Plastics Company and the Firestone Synthetic Fibers Company, divisions of The Firestone Tire & Rubber Company.

In 1933 the company began research and experimental work on synthetic rubber, which proved of great value during World War II when Japan cut the United States off from the natural rubber of the Far East. By 1939 Firestone was producing the butadiene-styrene type for use in tires. Because of this background and experience the Government-owned, Firestone-operated synthetic rubber plant in Akron was the first in the country to produce synthetic latex, in April, 1942.

The synthetic rubber produced by the company, together with the natural rubber from the company's plantations in Liberia, Brazil and the Philippines makes Firestone one of the largest producers of rubber in the world.

Shortly after the outbreak of World War II in Europe, Harvey S. Firestone,

Jr., then president, did as his father had done in the first World War; placed every Firestone facility at the command of the Government for the manufacture of defense products.

On the day after Pearl Harbor, over the nationwide radio broadcast of the "Voice of Firestone," he told the American people, "The Firestone organization pledges anew to the President of the United States and to the American people its whole-hearted support and dedicates to our nation its resources, its manufacturing facilities, its engineering ingenuity and its scientific skill that more and more defense materials may flow forth in ever-increasing stream to assure final victory."

Before hostilities ended in 1945, the company was producing hundreds of products needed by the armed forces. These ranged from anti-aircraft guns to barrage balloons, from gas masks to tank tracks. In addition to millions of tires and tubes for military vehicles and aircraft, the company produced bombs, aircraft oxygen cylinders, airplane wings, machine gun clips, life belts and life boats, and many other rubber, steel and plastic products.

The enormous problems involved in the transition to normal peacetime manufacturing, after several years of all-out production for war, were actually solved before they arose. Because postwar planning had been started during the war, the changeover was accomplished quickly and successfully.

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**SIMULTANEOUSLY** with the work of reconversion, research and development programs were enlarged and intensified; and the plan for enlarging existing factories and building new ones was put into effect. The research programs were turning up new products of rubber, plastic and steel to meet changing civilian needs.

As the uncertain peace of the postwar era gave way to cold war, Firestone was again called upon to produce for defense. By the time of the Korean War in 1950, the company was a major source of material for the armed forces, producing rockets, tank tracks, recoilless rifles, aircraft fuel cells, anti-aircraft guns, 90-mm. tank guns, ammunition and many other defense products. During the conflict the company became the largest, privately owned gun arsenal in the world.

At the same time, Firestone developed and manufactured the "BAT" armor-piercing projectile and the "Corporal" guided missile.

The year 1953 was notable: For the first time annual sales of Firestone products and services topped one billion dollars.

An intensive research program for the development of a tubeless tire was put into effect in the late 1940's. Firestone development engineers worked on the project for several years. In January, 1951, the company announced that a premium priced tubeless tire—blowout-safe and puncture proof—had been added to the company's line.

In the tubeless tire field, Firestone again fulfilled its historic rubber industry role of defending against patents which are invalid but which have been used to restrict the industry. In 1957, a four-year court case ended when a major competitor withdrew its suit against Firestone for alleged infringement of tubeless tire patents, thus saving the public many millions of dollars in royalties which would have had to be added to the price of tires.

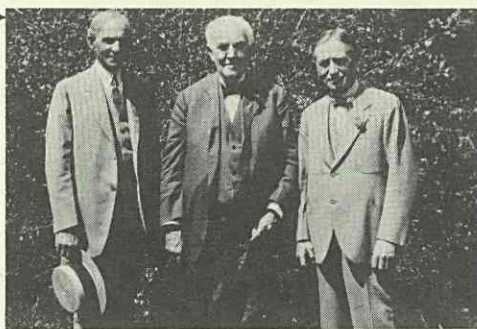
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**WHILE TIRES** are Firestone's principal product, the company is also the world's largest rubber producer and the world's largest manufacturer of rims for trucks, buses and tractors.

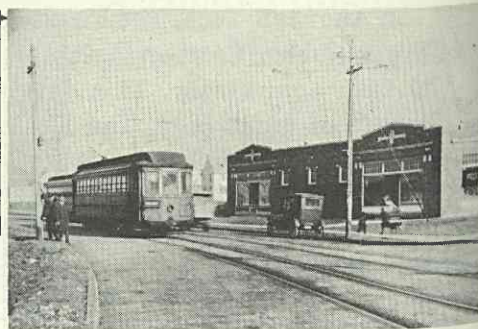
In its metal products division, besides rims and wheels, Firestone manufactures such widely diversified metal products as farm wagons; stainless steel milk cans and beer barrels; stainless steel containers for soft drink dispensers; aluminum and steel grilles and decorative trim for automobiles and trucks; artillery shells and many other products.

The company is a major producer of reclaimed rubber which is used in a great variety of rubber products and in adhesives. Firestone makes a rubber additive to increase the durability of asphalt used in the paving of highways, a rubber material that adds resilience to asphalt playground surfaces, and special coating materials of various kinds. It makes a number of specialty rubbers which are widely used in paints, coatings and in fabric and paper treatment.

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**ENCOURAGING** Harvey S. Firestone, right, in his campaign for Americans to produce their own rubber were two close friends, Henry Ford, left, and Thomas Edison.



**THE OLD TROLLEY** line and the building which was the entire Firestone Park business district about 1920. A thousand acres were developed and a home ownership plan opened to employees in 1916.



**THE FOUR SONS** of Harvey S. Firestone still active in the company survey more than 60 years of progress as they examine a large globe pinpointing world-wide installations of the company. Harvey S. Firestone, Jr., chairman, points out the Coral-Diene plant in Orange, Texas. Behind him, from left, Leonard K. Firestone, president of the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company of California; Raymond C. Firestone, chairman of the executive committee and chief executive officer; and Roger S. Firestone, president of the Firestone Plastics Company and Firestone Synthetic Fibers Company. Russell A. Firestone, the fifth brother, passed away in 1951.



**SYMBOLIC** of constantly increasing production, expanded warehouse facilities and better service to the customer is this scene in the Central Warehouse for tires in Akron. Service to the customer is of utmost importance in these days of stiff competition and need for speed in delivering the order to the customer when he wants it and where he wants it.



**DISTRIBUTION** OF COMPANY products is ably carried on by more than 870 company stores in the United States and 75,000 independent dealers and distributors in the United States and other countries. Modern sales outlets in the U. S. such as the one pictured operate under 48 sales districts and are served by tire warehouses in districts and by 10 home and auto supply warehouses at major distribution points throughout the country.