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This month on July 29, 1909, General Motors (GM) bought Cadillac - the top-selling product of American luxury automobiles for \$ 4.5 million in GM stock. Cadillac's history began with the failure of Henry Ford's second attempt to start a car company. When former Ford investors turned to Henry Leland, an engineer, and mechanic in Detroit, to evaluate their facilities and equipment, he persuaded these people to continue their plans to start an auto company. His idea was to use his own engine design and the investor plans, for what was supposed to be Henry Ford's first car to build Cadillac's first automobile.

Leland called the auto-venture which he founded in Detroit, Michigan in 1701 Cadillac, in honor of French Explorer Antoine Laumet de La Mothe, Sieur de Cadillac. On October 17, 1902, the first Cadillac's - two-seat Runabout and Tonneau horseless carriages left the factory. These automobiles combined the Ford-designed body and chassis with the Leland-designed 10-horsepower single-cylinder engine.



1903 Cadillac



These cars are almost identical to the 1903 Ford Model A. Leland introduced the first Cadillac car models at the 1903 New York Auto Show in January of the following year and immediately received more than 2,000 orders.

Leland ensured that Cadillacs were known for the precision manufacturing and outstanding reliability, something the company has shown to date. His leadership skills enabled him to gain full control of the company in 1904 after they were able to build 2,500 impressive cars in the first year of production.

In 1908, William C. Durant bought Buick and Oldsmobile and founded General Motors as a holding company. In July 1909, he persuaded Leland to sell Cadillac and promised to keep Leland and Leland's son in top leadership positions. The transaction was completed and Cadillac was thriving. Just three years later, Cadillac launched the world's first successful electric car starter for automobiles. In 1915, they were the first company to put V8 engines in every production car for a model year.

During World War I, Leland left GM after a dispute with Durant over producing war materials. Leland later founded Lincoln Motor Company to produce aircraft engines for Allied planes. After the war, he reorganized the company to manufacture luxury cars. In 1922, Lincoln was put up for sale the only offer came from Henry Ford, who bought a company with a market value of nearly \$ 16 million for \$ 5 million. It's almost certain the low price is out of malice because Ford knows how Leland created Cadillac. The judge was unwilling to accept the low bid and Ford raised the offer to \$ 8 million, which was later accepted. In June 1922, Henry Leland and his son Wilfred had to leave the company they founded.

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