

Billy Durant: The Maverick Who Created General Motors

The Early Years

William Crapo "Billy" Durant was born on September 8, 1861, in Boston, Massachusetts. His father was a wealthy merchant and his mother was a descendant of the prominent Crapo family. Durant was a mischievous and adventurous child, and he often got into trouble. He was expelled from several schools, and he eventually dropped out of high school to work in his father's business.



Billy Durant: Creator of General Motors by Lawrence R. Gustin

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Durant's First Business Ventures

In 1885, Durant started his own business, a carriage company called the Flint Road Cart Company. The company was successful, and Durant soon expanded into other businesses, including a bicycle company and a roller-skating rink. In 1897, Durant met Charles Stewart Mott, a young inventor who had developed a new type of gasoline engine. Durant was impressed

with Mott's engine, and he convinced him to join forces to build a new type of automobile.

The Birth of General Motors

In 1908, Durant founded General Motors (GM). GM was a holding company that owned a number of different automobile companies, including Buick, Oldsmobile, and Cadillac. Durant's goal was to create a single, unified company that could compete with the Ford Motor Company. Under Durant's leadership, GM quickly became one of the largest and most successful automakers in the world.



The General Motors logo

Durant's Controversial Leadership

Durant was a brilliant businessman, but he was also a controversial figure. He was known for his aggressive tactics and his willingness to take risks.

He was also known for his lavish lifestyle and his love of women. Durant's behavior often rubbed people the wrong way, and he was eventually forced out of GM in 1920.



Durant's Later Years

After leaving GM, Durant continued to be involved in the automotive industry. He founded a number of new companies, including Durant Motors and Durant Motors of Canada. He also served as the president of the

American Automobile Association (AAA) from 1921 to 1925. In 1947, Durant died at the age of 85. He was buried in Flint, Michigan, the city where he had founded General Motors.

Durant's Legacy

Billy Durant was one of the most important figures in the history of the automobile industry. He was the founder of General Motors, one of the largest and most successful companies in the world. Durant was a brilliant businessman, but he was also a controversial figure. He was known for his aggressive tactics and his willingness to take risks. However, he was also known for his generosity and his love of life. Billy Durant was a complex and fascinating figure, and his legacy continues to inspire people today.

Sources:

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