

# Sheridan Ford

By Rick Grassley

If you are from Wilmington, Delaware, "Sheridan Ford" is where you would purchase your new Ford automobile. However, if you are from Monroe County, the name will probably mean nothing at all. You might think he was a black sheep or some lost cousin of the automobile manufacturing company family. However, Sheridan D. Ford is another one of Monroe County's famous personalities and few know his story.

Sheridan D. Ford was born in Dundee, Michigan on 28 Jan 1862 to Valorous Ford and Elizabeth Bell Ford of English and Irish decent. His father was employed as a millwright. He was the youngest of five brothers (William, Robert B, Corydon and Clarence). Mr. Sheridan was educated at the common schools in the county. At an early age, he moved to New York City and soon made a name for himself.



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In New York, Sheridan became a newspaper man and this led to a career as an art critic. On Oct 31, 1887, he married Mary Bacon Martin in Manhattan, New York. Soon afterwards the owner of the New York Sun would send him to England where he would meet James McNeil Whistler, Oscar Wilde and others. While in London, Sheridan and Mary would be blessed with a daughter, Marjorie on May 11, 1890. The marriage would not last long and in June 1894, the couple divorced. It was alluded to that Mary Bacon Ford, a well published writer for magazines and Corydon Ford, a novelist and Sheridan's brother, were romantically involved.

While in Europe, Sheridan would be credited with being the first to recognize and publicize the "Glasgow School" of artists. During his lifetime he would author "Art: A Commodity" 1888, "The Larger Life" 1904, and in 1922 "The Art of Folly" (poems). In 1890, "The gentle art of making enemies: edited by Sheridan Ford" would cause him many problems. He was accused and prosecuted of "pirating" the works of James Whistler. The quarrel that followed would include lawsuits in several countries. There were even two books written about James Whistler that contained details about the relationship and strife between the two men.

At the end of 1892, and for 11 years Sheridan Ford spoke little and wrote less. About 1907, he would marry Maude Halsted and live in Detroit until his death. During 1915-1918, he would serve two terms in the Michigan legislature as the Wayne County District 1, representative. Sheridan D Ford died April 6, 1922, of aortic regurgitation and pleuritic, in Detroit and is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, Dundee, Michigan.

**Ford Fined.**  
LONDON, October 20.—Mr. Sheridan Ford was to-day sentenced to a fine of \$100 under the alternative of three months' imprisonment and to pay the sum of \$200 in damages, also with the alternative of three months' imprisonment, upon being convicted of the charge of "pirating" of the books written by Mr. Whistler, the well-known artist and president of the Society of the British Artists.

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