

## Who Was Thomas Alva Edison?

This newest volume in the acclaimed Papers of Thomas A. Edison covers one year in the life of America's greatest inventor—1878.

That year Edison, whom a New York newspaper in the spring first called "the Wizard of Menlo Park," developed the phonograph, one of his most famous inventions; made a breakthrough in the development of telephone transmitters, which made the instrument commercially viable; and announced the advent of

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domestic electric lighting, with only a few weeks' worth of tinkering necessary to complete its design (the announcement sent gas-company stocks plummeting; the research and development went on for four years). These inventions brought Edison financial support for his work and attention from the public. In January investors in the Edison Speaking Phonograph Company agreed to fund development work on the phonograph. The invention made Edison internationally famous and in May he traveled to

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Washington, D.C., to show the phonograph at the National Academy of Sciences, to Congress, and to President Rutherford B. Hayes at the White House. That same month Western Union agreed to pay Edison an annual salary of \$6,000 for his telephone inventions, although other support from the company declined following the death of its president, William Orton. The stress of unceasing public attention, including a trans-Atlantic dispute over the question of who invented the microphone, led an exhausted Edison to

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travel west during the summer to witness a solar eclipse but also to seek rest. His six-week trip took him to San Francisco and the Yosemite region of California. Edison began working on electric lighting after his return and in October the Edison Electric Light Company was formed to support his research.

Most readers will recognize the name, but their information might be limited to Thomas Alva Edison's most famous inventions, including the light bulb, phonograph, and motion picture camera.

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This brief introductory biography introduces young readers to Edison's extraordinary life and brilliant mind. Beginning with his younger years, this book guides readers through his school and work experiences, highlighting his inspirations and other talents, such as salesmanship. An overview of his many later inventions make clear why he was called the "Wizard of Menlo Park" and has such a prominent place in history. A biography, focusing on the early years, of the man whose many inventions have

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changed the lives of millions of people.

Who Was Thomas Alva Edison?Penguin

The Wizard of Menlo Park

American Inventor and Businessman

Competing Interests, January 1888–December  
1889

Who Was Thomas Alva Edison?

***Presents a biography of the tireless Thomas Edison, illustrated with many photos of his life and inventions.***

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***know it. This work was reproduced from the original artifact, and remains as true to the original work as possible. Therefore, you will see the original copyright references, library stamps (as most of these works have been housed in our most important libraries around the world), and other notations in the work. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of***

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***biography. Delving deeply into the personal and professional life of "The Wizard of Menlo Park," author Frank Lewis Dyer offers a fascinating glimpse into Edison's extraordinary mind and remarkable ambition.***

***One day in 1882, Thomas Edison flipped a switch that lit up lower Manhattan with incandescent light and changed the way people live ever after. The electric light bulb was only one of thousands of Edison's inventions, which include the phonograph and the kinetoscope, an early precursor to***

***the movie camera. As a boy, observing a robin catch a worm and then take flight, he fed a playmate a mixture of worms and water to see if she could fly! Here's an accessible, appealing biography with 100 black-and-white illustrations.***

***A Photobiography of Thomas Alva Edison  
Great American Inventor***

***Biography of Thomas Alva Edison***

***The Life and Inventions of Thomas Alva Edison***

Learn about the life of this American genius.

Thomas Edison passed on many decades ago, but his

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inventions still echo loudly through time. If you watch TV, listen to your favorite songs, or simply click on the lamp next to your bed, it was Thomas Edison who brought all of these innovations into the world. Inside you will read about...

Edison's Early Life    The Electric Light    The War of the Currents    Other Inventions and Projects    Final Years and Death    Edison's Legacy And much more! Edison is sometimes regarded as someone who loved arguing with other inventors who were going in different directions from him, yet his tenacity and dedication to his own work were what made so many of his inventions workable. No matter which way you look at Edison, from failed businessman, renowned inventor, distant father to his children, or to an argumentative scientist, there is one thing everyone can

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agree on; Thomas Edison was pure genius. After all, in his world, nothing less would do.

An introduction to the genius with a curious mind who loved to experiment and who invented the phonograph, light bulb, movie camera, and numerous other items.

One day in 1882, Thomas Edison flipped a switch that lit up lower Manhattan with incandescent light and changed the way people live ever after. The electric light bulb was only one of thousands of Edison's inventions, which include the phonograph and the kinetoscope, an early precursor to the movie camera. As a boy, observing a robin catch a worm and then take flight, he fed a playmate a mixture of worms and water to see if she could fly! Here's an accessible, appealing biography with 100 black-and-white illustrations.

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The boys' life of Edison

The Telegraph-boy who Became a Great Inventor

Thomas Edison

Edison

*Examines the electric bulb, an invention at first ridiculed, distrusted, and feared, which ultimately led to new uses of electricity and transformed society.*

*Details the life and work of Thomas Edison, who developed the electric light bulb and over 1000 patents for other inventions and innovations.*

*Reproduction of the original: The boys' life of Edison by William Meadowcroft*

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*Contains primary source material.*

*A Streak of Luck*

*Edison: A Biography*

*Thomas Alva Edison, Young Inventor*

*The Story of Thomas Alva Edison*

**Delves into the life of the inventor Edison, recounting the joys, tragedies, and successes of his life, and explains the scientific principles behind his revolutionary work.**

**Traces the life and contributions of the American genius who changed the world forever through his inventions including the electric lightbulb and the phonograph.**

**First he was known as Tommy, then Woodrow, and eventually, Mr. President. Born on December 28, 1856, in Staunton, Virginia, Thomas Woodrow Wilson was a born leader. He was**

**the president of Princeton University, served as governor of New Jersey after that, and was then elected president of the United States. But not everything was so easy for Wilson. He was ahead of his time in wanting a League of Nations after World War I to help prevent another war like it, but his hopes were dashed when the United States refused to join. Margaret Frith offers a fascinating look at how this magnificent and tragic figure handled debilitating illness, heartbreak, and "the war to end all wars."**

**Essays and notes based on meticulous research in a wide range of sources, many only recently available, provide a rich context for the documents.**

**Inventing the Future**

**His Life and Inventions**

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**Thomas Alva Edison, Great Inventor**

**Thomas Alva Edison**

**Although polio left him wheelchair bound, Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office during the Great Depression and served as president during World War II. Elected four times, he spent thirteen years in the White House. How he led the country through tremendously difficult problems, much like the ones facing America today, makes for a timely and engrossing biography.**

**A biography of the influential inventor**



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who changed the way people live with his invention of the incandescent light bulb. Thomas Alva Edison is a name to reckon with in the scientific and technological circles of the world. A prolific inventor and a leading businessman, he was the mastermind behind numerous discoveries and innovations that helped build America's economy. Born to Samuel Ogden Edison, Jr and Nancy Matthews Elliott, Thomas Edison was the youngest of the seven children of the couple. While his father was an exiled political activist, his mother was

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employed as a teacher.

Thomas Alva Edison; who transformed his childhood problem of deafness into an exemplary quality of concentration; did not get tired till his last. Despite being deprived of formal education; this great scientist studied literature and science with immense interest; acquired new patents on an average in every 15 days of his active life. Through him; the world entered into the modern era and it led to an onset of consumerism.

A Picture Book of Thomas Alva Edison

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### **A Brief History of Thomas Alva Edison Who Was Woodrow Wilson? Research to Development at Menlo Park, January 1879-March 1881**

Thomas Edison's greatest invention? His own fame. At the height of his fame Thomas Alva Edison was hailed as "the Napoleon of invention" and blazed in the public imagination as a virtual demigod. Starting with the first public demonstrations of the phonograph in 1878 and extending through the development of incandescent light and the

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first motion picture cameras, Edison's name became emblematic of all the wonder and promise of the emerging age of technological marvels. But as Randall Stross makes clear in this critical biography of the man who is arguably the most globally famous of all Americans, Thomas Edison's greatest invention may have been his own celebrity. Edison was certainly a technical genius, but Stross excavates the man from layers of myth-making and separates his true achievements from his almost equally colossal failures. How

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much credit should Edison receive for the various inventions that have popularly been attributed to him—and how many of them resulted from both the inspiration and the perspiration of his rivals and even his own assistants? This bold reassessment of Edison's life and career answers this and many other important questions while telling the story of how he came upon his most famous inventions as a young man and spent the remainder of his long life trying to conjure similar success. We also meet his partners

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and competitors, presidents and entertainers, his close friend Henry Ford, the wives who competed with his work for his attention, and the children who tried to thrive in his shadow—all providing a fuller view of Edison's life and times than has ever been offered before. The Wizard of Menlo Park reveals not only how Edison worked, but how he managed his own fame, becoming the first great celebrity of the modern age.

A great folk hero in American history, Edison is viewed by the public as a facile inventor,

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the electrical wizard and the perfect symbol of the self-made and practical creator. But he was also a paradoxical figure: deaf, impoverished and with no formal education as a youngster, Edison nevertheless became a fertile and versatile inventor, accumulated fortunes for himself and others but remained indifferent to wealth except as a means towards more inventions. Edison's key contributions include the carbon microphone, the electric light bulb, electricity distribution systems, the phonograph and the motion-

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picture camera. Edison's methods were also remarkable: halfway between the craftsman-tinkerer of the early 19th century and the scientist of today, he established and ran pioneering research laboratories with large staffs, yet lacked training in mathematics or the basic sciences. Matthew Josephson's *Edison: A Biography* won the Society of American Historians' Francis Parkman Prize in 1960. "This is an outstanding biography... [Josephson] establishes the developing relationship between finance and invention



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which constitutes the basis for Edison's success... [He] has mastered the substance of Edison's inventive activity and has written of it quite authoritatively and vividly." — Thomas P. Hughes, *Technology and Culture* "... It is clear that there is reason to welcome yet another book about a man of whom so much has been written. It must have been precisely because so much in the Edison record is myth, fostered by adulators and by Edison himself that Mr. Josephson turned his skillful, corrective hand to a saga that may have

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seemed more familiar than it actually is. From his well-presented, well-written findings emerges a giant without whom much of life as we live it would simply not exist. It is a first-rate job that needed doing.” — John K. Hutchens, New York Herald Tribune “A well-researched account of the life of one of America’s authentic folk heroes--Thomas Alva Edison--an original creator with a genius for strategic invention... Thoroughly absorbing, this significant volume is a competent contribution to the history of American

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science, and gives not only a sharply drawn picture of this self-educated giant of invention, but also of the beginnings of the telegraph, electrical, record, motion picture and automobile industries, as well as the sociological changes that were wrought by Edison's practical discoveries." — Kirkus Review "A biography that is dignified, detailed, and objective, sprinkled with moments of humor, pathos, and drama... One of the chief virtues of this book is the care taken by the author to build up a realistic

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picture of Edison the man." — F. Garvin Davenport, *The American Historical Review*

Ellen M. Dolan explores the life and career of America's best inventor. Focusing on Edison's development from his early years as a telegraph operator to a powerful and influential businessman, it shows how Edison's inquisitive nature helped him become an inventor with over a thousand registered patents and become popularly known as the "Wizard of Menlo Park."

His inventions included the phonograph, light

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bulb, and movie camera.

The Papers of Thomas A. Edison

The Story of Thomas Alva Edison, Inventor  
Inventor

*Edison's unusual life and valuable contributions to technology are surveyed in this rags-to-riches story of the great inventor*

*A biography of the great inventor whose creations have contributed to the comfort, convenience, and entertainment of people all over the world.*

*The fifth volume of The Papers of Thomas A. Edison covers Edison's invention and development of the first commercial incandescent electric light and power*

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*system. In the process he turned his famed Menlo Park laboratory into the first true research and development facility. This also enabled him to develop a new telephone for the British market in the midst of his herculean efforts on electric lighting. In the face of daunting technical challenges and skepticism from leading scientists and engineers, Edison and his team of experimenters and machinists found the solution to the decades-old problem of creating a practical incandescent lamp. By focusing on the characteristics of the entire system Edison reconceptualized the requirements of a successful lamp design. While rivals worked primarily on lamps, Edison developed other parts of a complete system as*

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*well. This approach was most notable in his revolutionary work on generator technology, one of the highlights of this volume. Successful exhibitions of the system in December 1879 drew crowds to Menlo Park to witness the softly glowing lamps. These spectacles gratified his financial backers but Edison realized the importance of following experimental demonstrations with the hard work of commercial development. He needed to make each component work effectively in daily use and to improve the designs so that they were easy to use and inexpensive to manufacture. To create a daytime market for electricity he also developed electric motors for a variety of uses, including electric*

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*railways, for which he built a small demonstration line at Menlo Park. To accomplish all this Edison greatly enlarged his staff to as many as sixty experimenters, machinists, carpenters, and office workers. He began manufacturing lamps at a factory in Menlo Park. At the end of 1880, Edison was ready to move his system into commercial production and made plans to produce other components in New York. He also invited New York officials to a demonstration in order to win their approval for running underground lines in lower Manhattan where he planned to put his first commercial central station. In March 1881, he moved to the Edison Electric Light Company's headquarters on Fifth Avenue and began the hard work of*



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*introducing the new electric light and power technology.*

*NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • From Pulitzer Prize-winning author Edmund Morris comes a revelatory new biography of Thomas Alva Edison, the most prolific genius in American history. NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY Time • Publishers Weekly • Kirkus Reviews Although Thomas Alva Edison was the most famous American of his time, and remains an international name today, he is mostly remembered only for the gift of universal electric light. His invention of the first practical incandescent lamp 140 years ago so dazzled the world—already reeling from his invention of the*

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*phonograph and dozens of other revolutionary devices—that it cast a shadow over his later achievements. In all, this near-deaf genius (“I haven’t heard a bird sing since I was twelve years old”) patented 1,093 inventions, not including others, such as the X-ray fluoroscope, that he left unlicensed for the benefit of medicine. One of the achievements of this staggering new biography, the first major life of Edison in more than twenty years, is that it portrays the unknown Edison—the philosopher, the futurist, the chemist, the botanist, the wartime defense adviser, the founder of nearly 250 companies—as fully as it deconstructs the Edison of mythological memory. Edmund Morris, winner of the Pulitzer Prize*

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*and the National Book Award, brings to the task all the interpretive acuity and literary elegance that distinguished his previous biographies of Theodore Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan, and Ludwig van Beethoven. A trained musician, Morris is especially well equipped to recount Edison's fifty-year obsession with recording technology and his pioneering advances in the synchronization of movies and sound. Morris sweeps aside conspiratorial theories positing an enmity between Edison and Nikola Tesla and presents proof of their mutually admiring, if wary, relationship. Enlightened by seven years of research among the five million pages of original documents preserved in Edison's huge laboratory at West*

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*Orange, New Jersey, and privileged access to family papers still held in trust, Morris is also able to bring his subject to life on the page—the adored yet autocratic and often neglectful husband of two wives and father of six children. If the great man who emerges from it is less a sentimental hero than an overwhelming force of nature, driven onward by compulsive creativity, then Edison is at last getting his biographical due.*

*The Wizard of Menlo Park, 1878*

*Inventing the Electric Age*

*Inventor and Entrepreneur*

*The Light Bulb*