

## That Man Edison

With more than 1,000 patents to his name, Thomas alva Edison is surely America's greatest inventor, and thus america's greatest maker of firsts. His most famous firsts—the phono graph, a practical electric light bulb, an electric generating system, the moving picture camera and a and a sound-recording machine—helped create enormous industries and improved peoples lives all over the world.

Edison was not always the first to try to make these machines, but he was the 1<sup>st</sup> to make them practical. For example he was not the 1<sup>st</sup> person to experiment with electric light. But he built the first power plants that could deliver the electricity to power electric lights into peoples homes at an affordable rate. In this way, he was a true visionary.

Edison received his first patent in 1869 for a vote counter, but found no buyers for it. edison vowed never again to invent some thing unless he was sure to make money. his motto to "inventions to order" led him to manufacture improved telegraph machines over the next several years. He opened a laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey, in 1876. The laboratory edison created was a remarkable invention in it self. It was like an like and invention factory. At MENLO PARK, Edison employed brilliant scientists and engineers to create bold new ideas. Electricians, ironworkers, and carpenters helped turn the ideas into reality. Then other employees worked to submit the invention for a patent.

Nearly deaf in both ears, Edison could focus and concentrate on work with an amazing intensity. Even failure did not deter his enthusiasm. When a fellow scientist expressed frustration after efforts to create a superior battery had results in 8,000 failures, EDISON refused to give up, saying, "Well at least we know 8,000 things that don't work!"

That was edison's genius, the knowledge that even a lack of progress is a form of progress. After all, it was edison who 1<sup>st</sup> said, "Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration." In other words you have to work very hard to change a great idea in to some thing useful. Edison did that better and more often and more often than anyone else.