

## **The Great In-vent-or – Thom-as Edj-son - Part 1**

Thom-as **A.** Edj-son wa<sup>S</sup> born in Mi-lan, **O-hi-o**,  
Feb-ru-ar-y 11, 1847.

There wa<sup>S</sup> no-th-ing in Mi-lan to **make** a boy wish  
to d<sup>O</sup> **great deed<sup>S</sup>**.

There wa<sup>S</sup> a ca-nal there.

Thom-as had one **great help**—hi<sup>S</sup> m<sup>O</sup>-ther.

She had been a **tea-cher**.

Her **grea-test wish** for her son wa<sup>S</sup> that he sh-ould  
love **knowl-edge**.

Thom-as had a **quick mind**.

**He** in-qui-red in-t<sup>O</sup> e-very-thing.

**He** wa<sup>S</sup> fond of get-ting ev-er-y lit-tle th-ing well  
learn-ed.

**He** ne-ver did th-ing<sup>S</sup> bY halve<sup>S</sup>.

He loved to try **ex**·per·i·ments.

When Thom·as was a ver·y lit·tle boy, **on**·ly six years **old**, and still wear·ing dress·es, he did a ver·y fun·ny th·ing.

He was one **day** found miss·ing.

His frig·htened par·ents searched for him long and anx·ious·ly.

Where do **you** think he was found?

They found him in the barn, sit·ting on a nest of goose eggs, with his dress spread out to **keep** them warm.

He thought he **could** hatch some gos·lings as well as the mo·ther·goose.

He had **plac**ed some food near by **so** that he **might** **stay** as long as neC·e·ssar·y.

He went to a reg·u·lar school **on**·ly two months.

His fa·ther and mo·ther were his **tea**·chers.

His fa·ther, to en·cour·age him to **read**, **paid** him for ev·er·y book which he **read**.

But Thom·as did not **need** to **be paid** to **read**, for **he read** with plea·sure ev·er·y vol·u·me **he could** get **hold** of.

When **he** wa<sup>s</sup> ten year<sup>s</sup> **old**, **he** wa<sup>s</sup> **re·ading** such book<sup>s</sup> a<sup>s</sup> Gib·bon's "His·tor·y of Rome," Hume's "His·tor·y of Eng·land," and Sear's "His·tor·y of the World."

**Be·side<sup>s</sup>** the<sup>se</sup>, **he** had **read** sev·eral book<sup>s</sup> a·bout chem·is·try.

**He** lo<sup>ved</sup> to **read** a·bout **great** men and their **deed<sup>s</sup>**.

When **he** **played**, it wa<sup>s</sup> at **buil·ding** plank **road<sup>s</sup>**, **digg·ing** **cave<sup>s</sup>**, and **ex·plor·ing** the bank<sup>s</sup> of the ca·nal.

When **on·ly** twelve year<sup>s</sup> of **age**, **he** wa<sup>s</sup> o·bliged to **go** out in·t<sup>o</sup> the world and earn hi<sup>s</sup> **own** liv·ing.

**He** ob·tained a **plac<sup>e</sup>** a<sup>s</sup> **train·boy** on the Grand Trunk **Rail·road**, in **Ea·stern** MiCh·i·gan.

**He** **sold** ap·ple<sup>s</sup>, **pea·nut<sup>s</sup>**, song·book<sup>s</sup>, and **pa·per<sup>s</sup>**.

**He** had such a **plea·sant**, sun·ny **fac<sup>e</sup>** that

ever·y·one **l**iked to buY from him.

He **s**uc·**c**eeded so well that soon he had four boy<sup>S</sup> work·ing un·der him.

This wa<sup>S</sup> not **e**·nough to **k**ee**p** him buSy.

He had ne·ver lost hi<sup>S</sup> **l**i·king for chem·is·try.

He man·aged to trade some of hi<sup>S</sup> pa·per<sup>S</sup> for th·ing<sup>S</sup> with which to try ex·per·i·ment<sup>S</sup>.

He found a book which help·ed him.

He fit·ted up an **o**ld bag·gage car a<sup>S</sup> a room for hi<sup>S</sup> ex·per·i·ment<sup>S</sup>.

He wa<sup>S</sup> a·fra**i**d some one would touch hi<sup>S</sup> che·mi·cal<sup>S</sup>; so he **l**a·belled ev·er·y bot·tle, "Poi·son."

Soon this buSy boy had an·o·ther buSi·ness.

He bought three hun·dred pounds of **o**ld type from the "De·troit **Fr**ee Press."

He had **g**ained a lit·tle knowl·edge of print·ing by **k**ee·ping hi<sup>S</sup> eYe<sup>S</sup> **o**·pen when buY·ing pa·per<sup>S</sup>.

Soon a pa·per, called the "Grand Trunk He·rald," waS prin·ted by Mas·ter Tom.

This pa·per waS twelve by six·teen in·cheS in size.

It waS filled with rail·way gos·sip and man·y o·ther th·ingS of in·ter·est to tra·ve·lerS.

Bag·gage·men and brake·men wrote ar·ti·cleS for it.

George Ste·phen·son, wh<sup>o</sup> built a great bridge at Mon·tre·al, liked it so well that he or·dered an extra e·di·tion for hiS own use.

E·very·bo·dy liked it.

The "Lon·don TimeS" spoke of it aS the on·ly pa·per in the world pub·lished on a rail·way train.

But the "Grand Trunk He·rald" had a sad end·ing.

Do you know what phos·phor·us is?

It is a sub·stanCe which will take fire of it·self if not kept un·der wa·ter.

Tom's bot·tle of phos·phor·us waS thrown to the floor by the jolt·ing of the car.

Soon e·very·thing wa<sup>S</sup> on fire.

The con·duc·tor rushed in and threw all the type and che·mi·cals out of the car.

He al·so gave the young chem·ist a thrash·ing.

Poor Thom·as gath·ered up what wa<sup>S</sup> left.

He put hi<sup>S</sup> th·ing<sup>S</sup> in the base·ment of hi<sup>S</sup> fa·ther's house.

Thom·as's fa·ther now lived at Port Hur·on.

Thom·as al·way<sup>S</sup> slept at home.

He now prin·ted an·o·ther and a lar·ger jour·nal.

This wa<sup>S</sup> called the "Paul PrY."

In this he pub·lished an ar·ti·cle which one of hi<sup>S</sup> sub·scri·bers did not like.

The ang·ry man, mee·ting Thom·as on the banks of the St. Clair Riv·er, picked him up and threw him in.

Thom·as wa<sup>S</sup> a good swimm·er and reached the shore in safe·ty.

But **he** did not **care** for **the** **print·ing** **bu·si·ness** any more.

**Dur·ing** **the** four year<sup>s</sup> in **whi·ch** Thom·as Edj·son wa<sup>s</sup> a **train·boy**, **he** had **earned** **tw<sup>o</sup>** **th·ou·sand** **dol·lar<sup>s</sup>** and **giv·en** it **all** to hi<sup>s</sup> par·ents.

When in De·troit, **he** **read** a<sup>s</sup> **much** a<sup>s</sup> pos·si·ble from **the** pu·blic **li·bra·ry**.

On·ce **he** **thought** **he** **would** **be·gin** with **num·ber** one and **read** **each** of **the** **th·ou·sand** **vol·u·me<sup>s</sup>**.

**He** **read** un·til **he** had **fin·ish·ed** a long **row** of hard book<sup>s</sup> on a **sh·elf** **fif·teen** **feet** long.

**Then** **he** **made** up hi<sup>s</sup> **mind** **that** an·y·one **would** have to live a<sup>s</sup> long a<sup>s</sup> Me·thu·se·lah to **read** a **li·bra·ry** **throu·gh**, and **gave** up **the** plan.

Thom·as **be·came** in·ter·es·ted in tel·e·graph·y dur·ing **the** Ci·vil War.

**He** **u<sup>s</sup>ed** to tel·e·graph **the** he·ad·ing<sup>s</sup> in hi<sup>s</sup> **pa·per** a·head one **sta·tion**.

**He** **thought** **this** a **good** **way** to ad·ver·ti<sup>se</sup>.

**He** **fi·nal·ly** **bought** a **good** **book** a·bout

e·le·c·tri·Ci·ty.

Soon the **base·ment** of the house at Port Hur·on was filled with man·y th·ing<sup>s</sup> **be·side** print·ing press·e<sup>s</sup>.

He **u**<sup>s</sup>ed stove·pipe **wi·re**, and soon had a tel·e·graph **wi·re** **be·twee**n the **base·ment** and the **home** of a boy fri·end.

Per·haps it was a good th·ing that **all** the chil·dren in the Edj·son fa·mij·ly were not **like** Thom·as.

Had they been, the **poor** **old** house would s·car·ce·ly have held them.

But the mo·ther was proud of **all** that Thom·as did.

She did not wor·ry **o·ver** the bot·tles, **wi·re**<sup>s</sup>, string<sup>s</sup>, and print·ing press·e<sup>s</sup>.

A·bout this time Thom·as did a **brave** th·ing.

The sta·tion **a·gent** at Mt. Cle·men<sup>s</sup> had a **ba·by** boy tw<sup>o</sup> year<sup>s</sup> **old**.

This **ba·by** crept on to the track in front of a **train** just com·ing in.



Quick as thought, young Edj·son rushed to the track and saved the child at the risk of his **own** life.

The ba·by's fa·ther was ver·y grate·ful and of·fered to **teach** Thom·as tel·e·graph·y.

Of course, Thom·as was ver·y hap·**py**, and ac·cep·ted the of·fer.

He **came** to Mt. cle·mens ev·er·y eve·ning, af·ter work·ing hard all **day**.

He did **so** well that, in five months, he was giv·en a po·si·tion at Port Hur·on.

He earned six and one·quar·ter dol·lars a **week**.

He worked al·most night and day, **so** that he might learn all he could a·bout it.

His mo·ther said that the world would hear from her boy some **day**.

Af·ter·wards he worked in sev·eral pla·**ce**s.

In In·**di**·an·apo·lis, though not yet sev·en·**teen**, he in·ven·ted his first tel·e·graph in·stru·ment.

This wa<sup>S</sup> thought to **be** a **great** th·ing for **so** young a boy to d<sup>O</sup>.

**He** lost sev·eral pla·ce<sup>S</sup> **be**·cau<sup>Se</sup> **he** tried new way<sup>S</sup>.

At last, **he** wa<sup>S</sup> o·bli<sup>g</sup>ed to wa<sup>l</sup>k near·ly all the way to Lou·i<sup>s</sup>·ville **be**·cau<sup>Se</sup> **he** had **no** mo·ney.

Here **he** wa<sup>S</sup> giv·en a good po·si·tion.

**He** stay<sup>e</sup>d sev·eral year<sup>S</sup>.

Un·der the tel·e·graph room<sup>S</sup> wa<sup>S</sup> an el·e·gant bank.

One **day**, while ex·per·i·ment·ing, **he** spill<sup>e</sup>d a **great** bot·tle of a·cid.

This a·cid went through the floor in·t<sup>O</sup> the bank **below**.

Of course it spoile<sup>d</sup> the **cei**·ling, hand·some car·pet<sup>S</sup>, and fur·ni·ture.

**So** the un·for·tu·nate in·vent·or had to **leave** Lou·i<sup>s</sup>·ville.

