

is considered to be the first grandfather clock made in the United States. Later, he and the Quaker's sons were selected to lay the plans for our nation's capitol, Washington DC. Thus he was the first African American to receive a presidential appointment, but also the first black civil engineer.

Prior to the Civil War, a black man by the name James Forten became one of the few African Americans of that era to become extremely wealthy from his invention. Forten made a device that helped guide ship sails. He used the money to expand his sail factory.

Another great black inventor of this time was Jan Matzeliger. He came to the United States from South America in 1877. Noticing the tedious procedure by which soles were attached to shoes, he invented a shoe lasting machine. By the time he got his patent in 1883, the equipment was so successful that shoe manufacturers throughout the world clamored for his invention.

In 1884, a black man named Granville T. Woods invented an improved steam boiler furnace. In his Cincinnati, Ohio electrical shop, Woods built a "better boiler" to the amazement of the heating industry. Three years later he patented something called a "Synchronous Multi-

plex Railway Telegraph, an induction type telegraph machine. His invention allowed railroad train per-



Henry Flipper was a Military Commander who was the first black to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy in West Point in 1877 and the first black to be assigned to a command position in a black unit following the Civil War.

sonnel to communicate with workers on other trains while in motion. In addition, he invented an overhead trolley electrical system for streetcars and railroad trains. Woods was a prolific inventor and became known as a "Black Edison." He ended up with patents to more

than sixty valuable inventions, including an air brake that was sold to the Westinghouse Corporation and an incubator.

Military

As with other areas of American life, the military was no exception. African Americans have been discriminated in the military since the

earliest days of the armed forces. Besides worrying about Indian warfare, the country's biggest concern was an insurrection by slaves. However, during the Revolutionary War, black soldiers with white Americans against the British in the battles of Lexington and Concord, the first battles of the war. An African American by the name of Salem Poore,

fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill and was credited with firing the shot that killed the commander of the British Force, Major John Pitcairn. He also fought with George Washington at Valley Forge. Conveniently, once the war was over with, African Americans were once again banned from being allowed in the military. Only free able-bodied white

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