

Great American Inventors

"LEARN ONE THING EVERY DAY"

No. 3. ELIAS HOWE.

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IT IS a remarkable fact that some of the greatest and most useful inventions have been bitterly opposed by the very persons whom they were designed to help. The bowmen of olden times resented the introduction of guns; the stage-coach lines tried in every way to block the building of railways; and Elias Howe, the inventor of one of the greatest labor-saving devices in the world, the sewing machine, was ridiculed, discouraged, and denounced as an enemy of poor sewing women, the ones whose toll he was seeking to lighten. They imagined that with the introduction of the sewing machine their occupation would be taken away.



Elias Howe was born in Spencer, Massachusetts, on July 9, 1819, one of a family of eight children. His father was a farmer and miller, and Elias' early years were spent in the mill. At the same time he managed to pick up a smattering of education. He went to Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1835, to work in a cotton mill. Two years later he obtained a place in a Cambridge machine shop in which his cousin, Nathaniel P. Banks, afterward Governor of Massachusetts, was also employed. Howe married at the age of twen-

ty-one and moved to Boston. It was there that the first germs of his great idea became implanted in his brain. To increase the family income his wife did sewing at night. As Howe watched her slowly and laboriously stitching a seam, his inventive mind sought and sought for some way to decrease her toil. He had a natural bent for mechanics, and it was not long before he had constructed the first crude sewing machine.

This was in October, 1844. But although he now had his idea, he lacked money to prove its value. However, a man named Fisher in Cambridge liked his invention, and agreed to board Howe and his family and to advance \$500 in return for half interest in the patent. By the middle of the next May Howe had constructed a machine that did sewing which promised to outlast the cloth.

But the invention was opposed everywhere in America. Finally, in 1846, Howe's brother, Amasa, went to England, and managed to sell the English rights in the machine for \$1250 to a William Thomas. This man also gave Elias Howe a place in his factory at \$15 a week. But he treated the inventor shamefully and Howe threw up the situation. He sent his family back to America ahead of him, and then returned himself. He landed in New York with less than a dollar in his pocket and was met with the news that his wife was dying of consumption in Cambridge. He managed to borrow some money and reached her side just before she died.

These were Howe's darkest days. Imitations of his machine were infringing on his patent, and he had to begin several suits to establish his rights. He and another man now commenced to manufacture sewing machines in a small way. It was during this time that the "sewing machine riots" took place, but soon the real value of the invention was seen, and all opposition ceased.

Brighter times began for the inventor. He won his patent suits, and by 1863 his royalties were estimated at \$4,000 a day. At the Paris Exposition of 1867 he was awarded a gold medal and the ribbon of the Legion of Honor. His last years were happy ones. He died on October 3, 1867.

No. 4. SAMUEL FINLEY BREESE MORSE.

ON MAY 24, 1844, an anxious expectant crowd was gathered about a crude little instrument in a building in Baltimore. The minutes passed slowly. The crowd stirred restlessly. But at last came that for which they were waiting. The instrument moved, and then began an irregular clicking.



"What—hath—God—wrought!" This was the message that the instrument spelled out, and this was the message that proved to the waiting crowd that Morse's dream of telegraphy had become a reality.

Samuel Finley Breese Morse was born at Charlestown, Massachusetts, on April 27, 1791. He was the son of the Rev. Jedediah Morse, and the great grandson of Samuel Finley, the second president of the College of New Jersey at Princeton.

Morse entered Yale at the age of fourteen, which was not considered extremely young in those days. It was there that he first began the study of electricity. But his tastes led him more strongly toward art than toward science, and in 1811 the young graduate became the pupil of Washington Allston and went with him to England. Here he remained four years, distinguishing himself with his brush and making many friends.

During the next few years the young artist traveled about New England painting portraits for the sum of \$15 apiece. Later he increased his price to \$60 a portrait, doing an average of four a week. By the money he thus earned he was enabled to marry Miss Lucretia P. Walker on October 6, 1818.

In 1825 Morse was one of the founders of the National Academy of Design, and was its first president, from 1826 until 1845. He made a second visit to Europe in 1829, and traveled about the Continent for three years before returning to New York.

During all this time, however, while he was working at his art, Morse's mind had also been occupied with another interest. That was electro-magnetism, and the possibility of communication between far distant places by means of it.

It was toward the ship "Sully," in which he was returning to America, that the idea of the telegraph was first made visible in his mind. "If the presence of an electric current, I see

no reason why intelligence may not be transmitted by electricity." And in a few days he had finished some rough plans of an apparatus to do this.

But it was a twelve-year struggle against poverty and discouragement before he could get any apparatus that would work. Finally, however, he was successful in this, and after taking out a patent applied to Congress for money to experiment with the telegraph over a circuit of sufficient length to test its possibility and value. After long delay he was at last granted this in 1843. A line was built from Baltimore to Washington, and on May 24, 1844, Miss Ellsworth, daughter of the Commissioner of Patents, sent the first message from the Chamber of the Supreme Court in Washington to Baltimore.

Three years later Morse was compelled to defend his invention in the courts and successfully proved his claim to be called the original inventor of the electro-magnetic recording telegraph. He married for the second time in 1848.

In 1871 a bronze statue of Morse was erected in Central Park, New York City, and the following year, on April 2, the great inventor died, simple, dignified and kindly to the end.

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GREAT GAME AT POLO GROUNDS

Annual Football Contest Between Army and Navy To Be Played November 9.

(By Associated Press to Coos Bay Times.)
WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 4.—Army-Navy football game will be played at the New York polo grounds Nov. 9th. This was arranged today at a conference between Secretary Daniels, Assistant Secretary Breckinridge and athletic directors at West Point and Annapolis. The difficulty between the two teams was obviated through the Navy yielding to a desire of the Army to hold the game at the polo grounds. Managers of the grounds will provide 12,500 seats for both Army and Navy, with the privilege for each of them to purchase in case of need an additional 3,000. This gives 31,000 seats.

TAFT IS ELECTED.

Former President Heads American Bar Association.
(By Associated Press to Coos Bay Times.)
MONTREAL, Sept. 4.—Ex-President Taft was elected president of the American Bar Association at the close of the annual meeting.

WILSON RETURNED YESTERDAY

President Back at Washington From Summer Home.
(By Associated Press to Coos Bay Times.)
WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 4.—President Wilson arrived at the White House from Cornish, N. H., Wednesday.

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Resources.		Liabilities.	
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Banking House	50,000.00	Surplus and Undivided Profits	62,788.31
Cash and Sight Exchange	311,699.76	Deposits	769,993.55
Total	\$882,781.86	Total	\$882,781.86

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