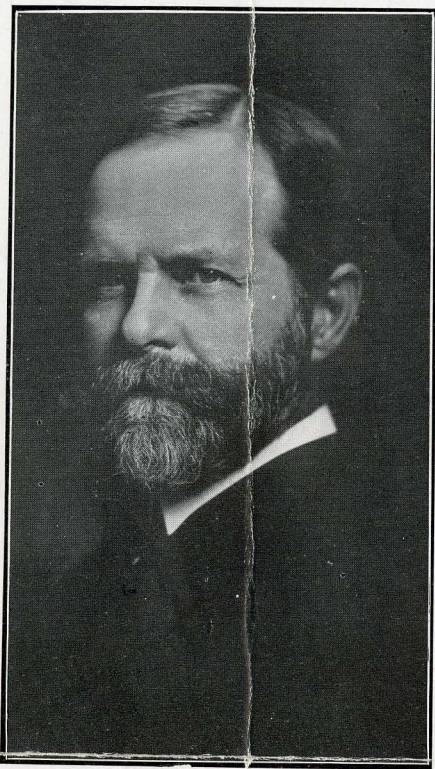


WILLIAM J. HAMMER

CONSULTING ELECTRICAL ENGINEER



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In the growth and development of electrical science, it is beyond dispute that the United States leads the entire world. The names of her chief electrical engineers and inventors are known and honored in every civilized country on the globe; do away with their achievements and the advancement of civilization would be most seriously retarded and the human race deprived of many comforts and luxuries which they now enjoy and consider indispensable. Among these men the name at the head of this brief biography possesses wide and enviable fame.

William Joseph Hammer, son of William Alexander and Martha A. (Beck) Hammer, was born in Cressona, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, on the 26th of February, 1858. His ancestors came from the Rhine region of Germany near the borders of Switzerland. The American branch of the family was founded in 1763. Mr. Hammer's preparatory education was received in the private, public and high schools of Newark, N. J. This was followed by study at home and abroad and in attendance at lectures at the University of Berlin and The Technische Hochschule.

Mr. Hammer's initial professional work dates from the year 1878, when he became an assistant of Mr. Edward Weston, of Newark, N. J., in connection with the Weston Malleable Nickel Company. In December, 1879, he visited the laboratory of Mr. Thomas A. Edison at Menlo Park, N. J., and secured an appointment as an assistant to Mr. Edison, first undertaking telephone work and later giving his attention largely to the work on the Edison incandescent electric lamp, although, in common with other assistants, he assisted in the electric railway, or separating and other work going on at the laboratory. In the fall of 1881 Mr. Hammer was sent to England by Mr. Edison, and as engineer of the English Edison Company he installed in London the Holborn Viaduct Central Station, for incandescent electric lighting of 3,000 light capacity, this being the first central station for incandescent electric lighting established anywhere in the world. While in London he also installed a large isolated plant consisting of twelve Edison dynamos at the Crystal Palace Exhibition, also arranging at the electric exhibition held there in 1882 the entire Edison exhibit which had been shown at the Paris Exposition of 1881. Mr. Hammer also exhibited here the first electric sign ever made of electric lights and which was invented by him and constructed in December, 1881, and which was operated by a huge lever spring switch. In 1883 Mr. Hammer was offered the post of chief engineer of both the French and German Edison Companies and accepted the appointment as chief engineer to the German Edison Company, known to-day as the *Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft*. He installed many plants throughout the German Empire, and commenced the building of Edison dynamos at Charlottenburg, and it was while in Berlin in 1883 that he invented and used the first automatic flashing and spelling electric sign, operated by a flasher and an electric motor which is now in such universal use here and abroad.

Mr. Hammer returned to America in the fall of 1884, and was given charge of Mr. Edison's personal interests and some eight other Edison

interests at the Franklin Institute Electric Exhibition held that year in Philadelphia, Pa. Later he became confidential assistant to the president of the parent Edison Company, and one of the incorporators and trustees of the Sprague Electric Railway and Motor Company. Shortly thereafter he was appointed chief inspector of central stations of the parent Edison Company, making electrical, mechanical and financial reports upon the stations throughout the United States for over two years, when he was made general manager and engineer of the Boston Edison Company, which had been a losing investment and which he in a single year put upon a dividend basis of twelve per cent. on its capitalization, also installing an elaborate underground system, equipping the new station and putting in some ninety-two electric motors, making this the first plant for electric transmission of power worthy of the name which had been established anywhere in the world. Late in 1887 he removed to New York to take up special expert work for the parent Edison Company, and was sent to St. Augustine to take charge of the 8,000 light plant in the Ponce de Leon Hotel, the largest isolated plant in the world at the time. He secured the acceptance of the plant without a single proviso, and while in Florida erected, together with Mr. William Kennish, the first electric lighting plant ever operated by artesian well power driving the turbine and dynamo. In 1888 he was appointed consulting electrical engineer to the Cincinnati Centennial Exposition, and as a contractor designed and installed electrical effects as an attraction to the Exposition, amounting to upwards of sixty thousand dollars.

From Cincinnati Mr. Hammer went to France as the personal representative of Mr. Edison at the Paris Exposition of 1889. This exhibit, the largest in the Exposition, represented an outlay of \$100,000, necessitating the employment of no less than forty-five assistants. During the Exposition, Mr. Hammer accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Edison to the German Science Congress at Heidelberg, and at the close of the Exposition he hired an enormous balloon, and accompanied by Drs. Wells and Rotch made a trip of over a hundred miles, making meteorological, magnetic, electrical and other observations and testing original methods of signalling from war balloons, etc.

Since 1890 Mr. Hammer has been independently established in New York City as a consulting electrical engineer. He has had a number of patents issued to him here and abroad for his inventions. In recent years he has frequently visited Europe on behalf of his clients and as a delegate to electrical congresses and meetings. He has lectured before many universities and scientific societies upon radium and radio-activity, having been the first to take up investigations upon radium in this country, and has presented many papers upon electrical engineering subjects before the leading engineering organizations. Mr. Hammer is a life member of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers and represented that body at the recent ceremonies at the Hall of Fame. He has been vice-president of both the American Institute of Electrical Engineers and the New York Electrical Society, and was for ten years president of the National Conference of Standard Electrical Rules, which body prepared and promulgated the national electrical code now in use throughout this country. He is at present vice-president of the Aeronautic Club and was for two years president of the Franklin Experimental Club. In addition to the above, he is, or has been, a member of the following organizations: The Franklin Institute, the Agassiz Natural History Society, a chapter of which was named in his honor; the Society of Arts, the American Physical Society, the International Society of Electricians, the American Electrochemical Society, the Association of Edison Illuminating Companies, the Mineralogical Society, the National Electric Light Association, the Society of Illuminating Engineers, the Aero Club of America and the Engineers' Club, and in 1904 he was made a "Fellow" of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The John Scott Legacy Medal and Premium was awarded him for his telephone relay and his long distance sound experiments, and the Elliott Cresson Gold Medal for his collection of incandescent electric lamps, which is practically a complete history of the Art from its initial stage. Upon this collection he has worked for more than thirty years, and it is claimed that this represents the only Art in which such a record has been made. He was also awarded a silver medal at the Crystal Palace Electrical Exposition of 1882 and a similar one at the Exposition of 1892, and the "Grand Prize" and a special silver medal at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. He was appointed by President Francis of the St. Louis Exposition a member of the committee to organize the International Electrical Congress at St. Louis in 1904, and at the latter Exposition he was a member of the Departmental Jury and Chairman of the Jury on Telegraphy, Telephony and Wireless. At the Jamestown Exposition International Aeronautical Congress of 1907 he was chairman of the General Committee, and more recently held the post of expert and secretary of the Aeronautics Committee of the Hudson-Fulton Celebration Commission of 1909.

His professional literary works include "Radium and Other Radio-active Substances," the first book in the world published upon the subject, and which has gone through several editions here and abroad, and important papers before engineering and scientific societies, articles in the encyclopedias and technical periodicals. He has been offered, on several occasions, the editorship of electro-technical publications. In 1907 he was one of the editors of the official book of the Aero Club of America, "Navigating the Air," and at one time was a member of the Franklin Institute's committee to report upon the work of Professor and Mme. Curie, the discoverers of radium.

On the 31st of January, 1894, he was married at Cleveland, Ohio, to Miss Alice Maude White, daughter of Thomas H. White, Esq., of that city, and has one child. Their New York residence is at 153 West Forty-sixth Street.

Mr. Hammer has long been regarded as one of America's foremost electrical experts, and his over seven years' experience in European countries, coupled with an experience in this country of nearly a quarter of a century, has given him an international reputation as a consulting electrical engineer and scientist.