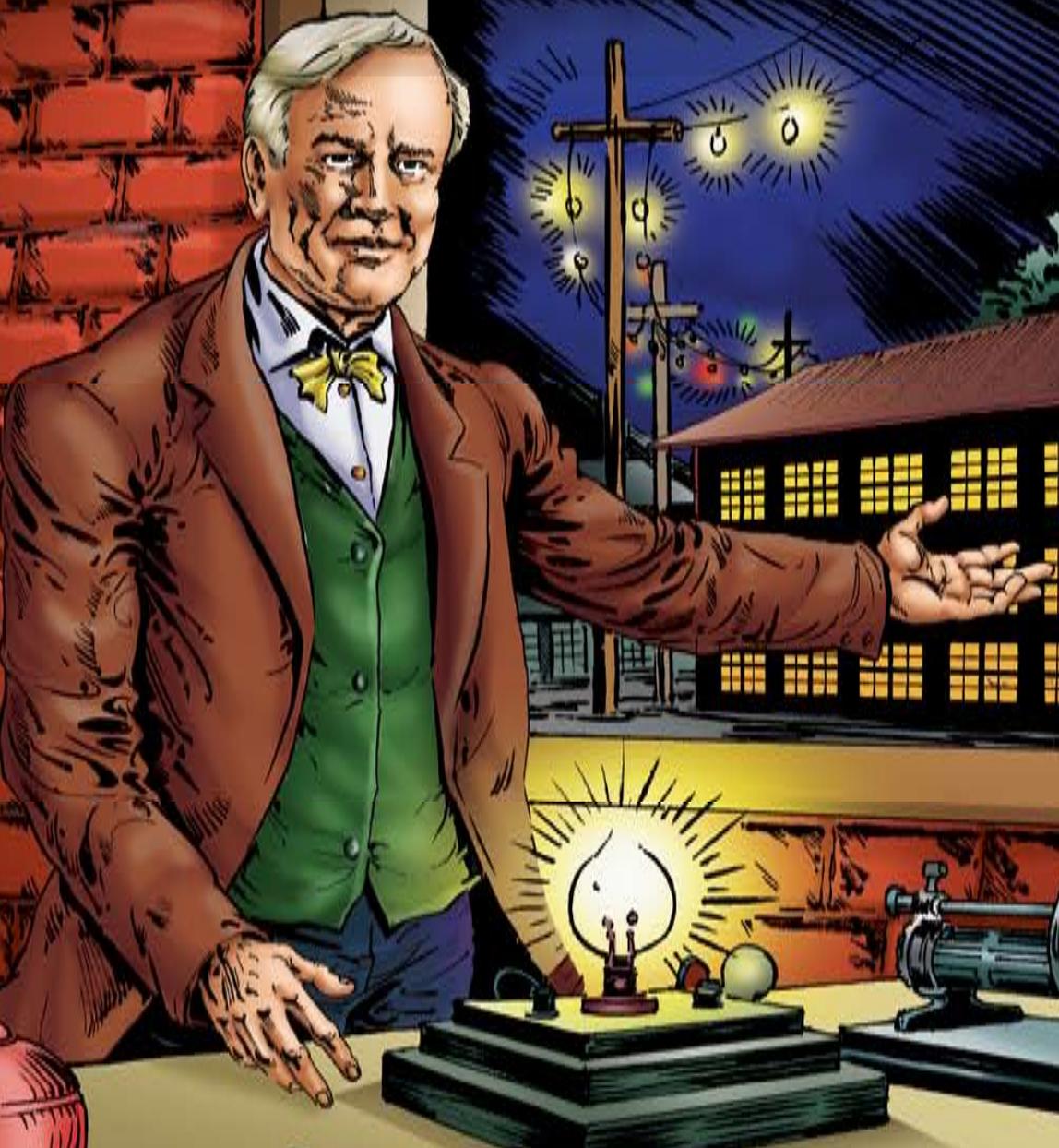


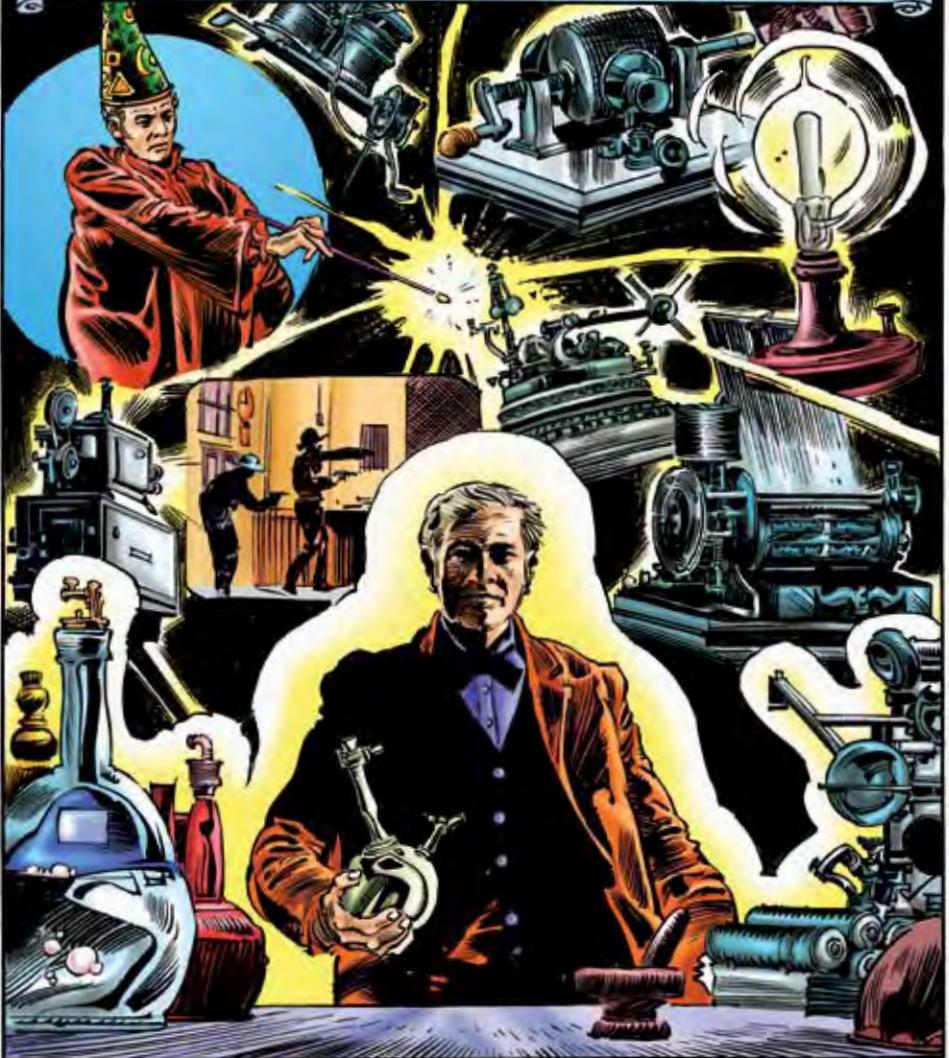
**GRAPHIC  
BIOGRAPHY**

# THOMAS EDISON





They called him the Wizard of Menlo Park. He turned darkness into light; made a machine talk; brought pictures to life—through the magic of electricity and hard work.





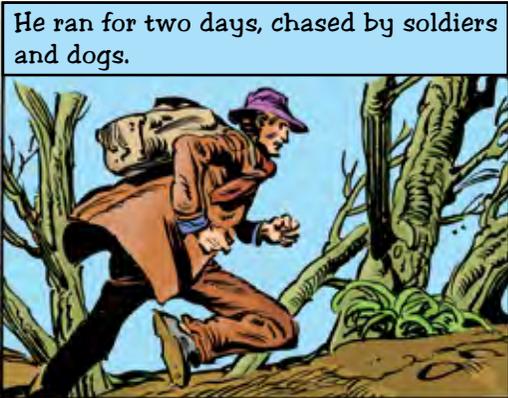
Tom Edison's family didn't do things like everybody else. In 1837 his father revolted against the Canadian government.

I've been declared a traitor. The King's soldiers are after me!

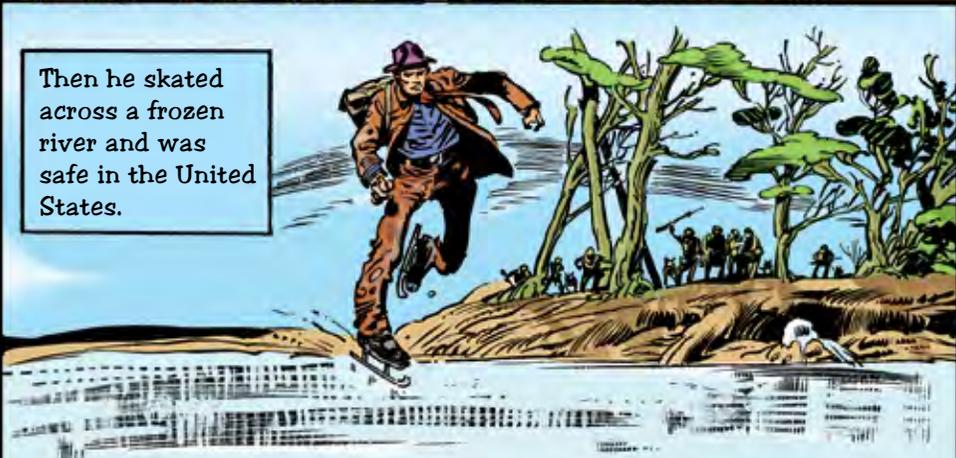
Oh, Sam! What will you do?



Run for the border. I can outrun anybody!



He ran for two days, chased by soldiers and dogs.



Then he skated across a frozen river and was safe in the United States.



He settled in Milan, Ohio, and sent for his family.

What a pretty house!

I've opened a lumberyard and business is good.



Thomas Alva Edison was born there on February 11, 1847.

Your wife's fine, and you have a new son!

Thank God! We lost our three youngest. Nancy has longed for a baby.



He has an awfully big head! Will he grow into it?

Nonsense! He's perfect! Give him to me.

And his mother would always stand up for him.



Later the family moved to Port Huron, Michigan.

You're eight years old, Tom. It's time you started school.

I think I'll like that.

But he didn't. One morning, three months later, he rushed home.

I'm never going back to that school! I heard the teacher say I'm addle-headed and can't learn anything.

Why did he say such a thing?

I think it's because I ask why and want to know instead of just memorizing.

Tom's mother went to see the teacher.

I've been a teacher. I know Tom is a bright boy. If you can't teach him, I don't think much of your methods.

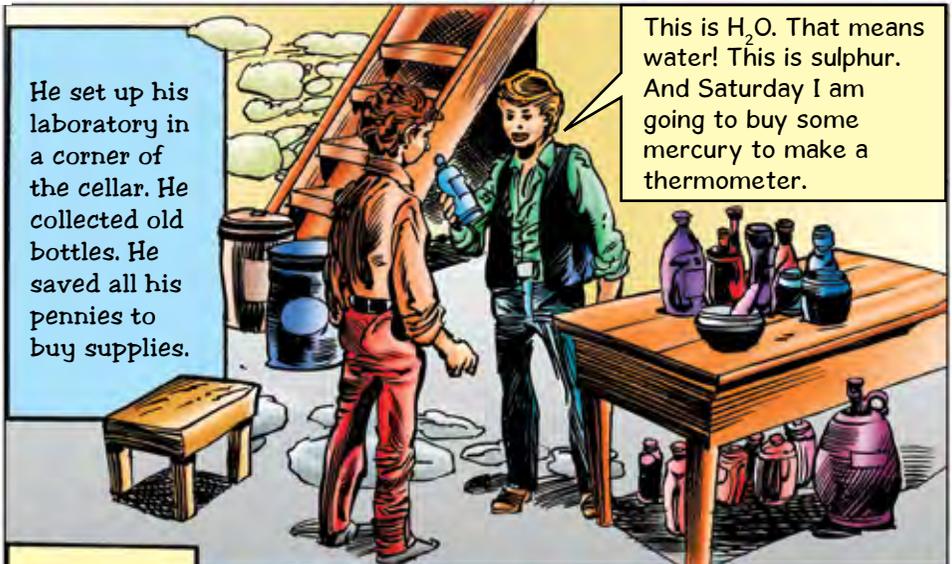
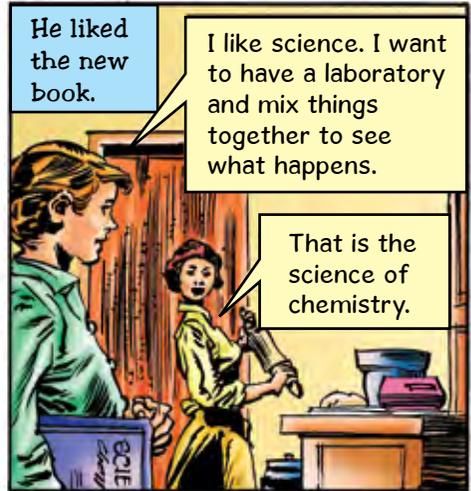
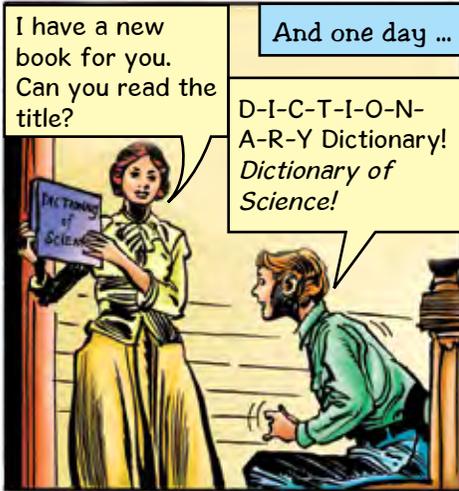
But Mrs. Edison ...

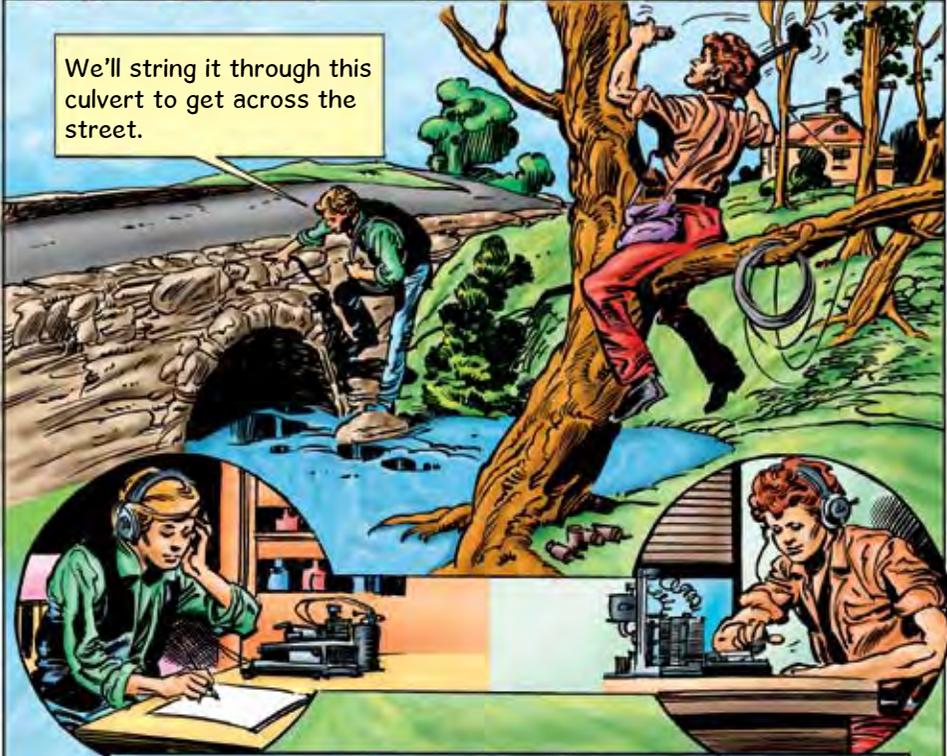
Tom never went back to school. His mother taught him every day.

Today we are going to read *The Merchant of Venice*, a play by William Shakespeare.

What's a merchant, Mother? And where is Venice?

That's right, son. Always ask "why" when you don't understand. That's the best way to learn.





We'll string it through this culvert to get across the street.

The boys learned Morse code, and tapped out messages from one house to the other.

Soon there was great news.

The Grand Trunk Railway has been finished. You can ride from Port Huron all the way to Detroit.

Maybe I can get a job!

The railway wanted a boy to sell newspapers, candy, and sandwiches on the train. Tom got the job.

Every morning at 7 a.m. he got on the train.

Hello, Tom.

Hi-ya, Mr. Stevenson.

He went through the cars with his wares.

Newspapers, sandwiches, candy. Here you are, sir.

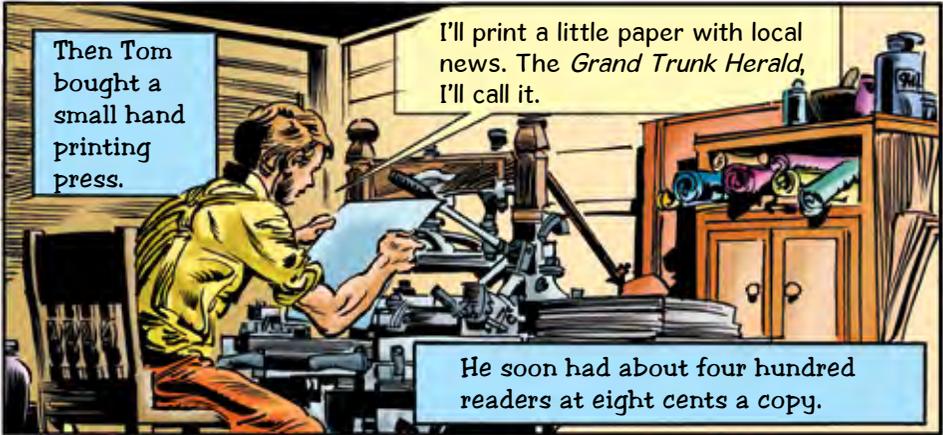
Later ...

There's a lot of room here. Could I use it for some of my things?

I don't see why not.

So Tom moved his laboratory on board.

I'll have lots of time to do experiments here!



Then Tom bought a small hand printing press.

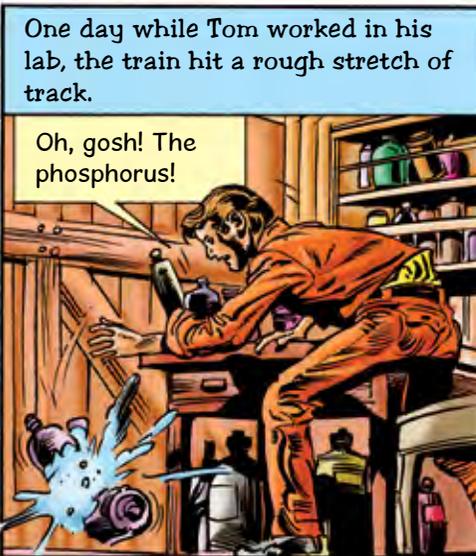
I'll print a little paper with local news. The *Grand Trunk Herald*, I'll call it.

He soon had about four hundred readers at eight cents a copy.



Each day the train stayed in Detroit from 10:30 a.m. till 4:30 p.m. Tom went to the Detroit library.

There's fifteen feet of books between A and Z. I'll read a foot of books a week.



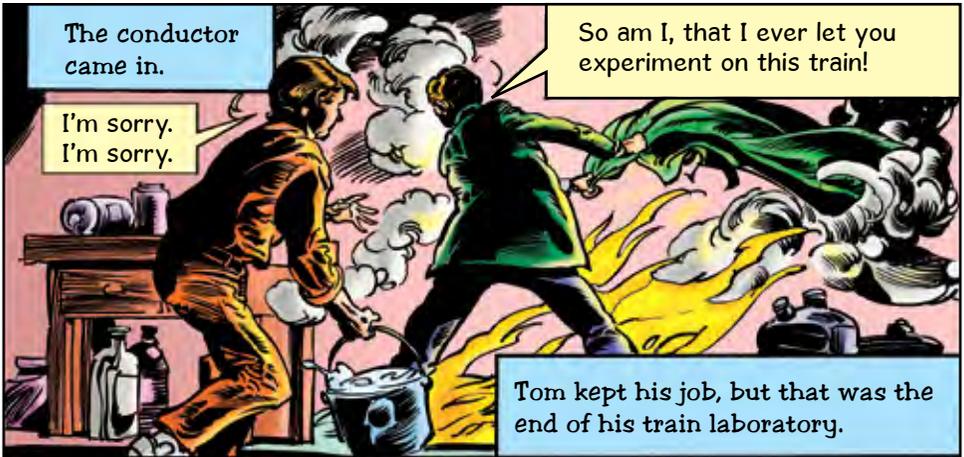
One day while Tom worked in his lab, the train hit a rough stretch of track.

Oh, gosh! The phosphorus!



It burst into flames!

What'll I do? Water!

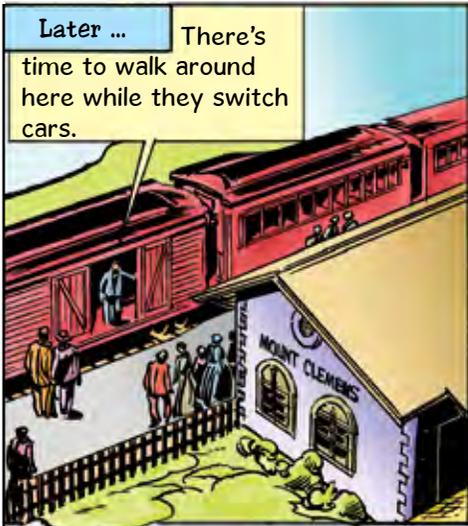


The conductor came in.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

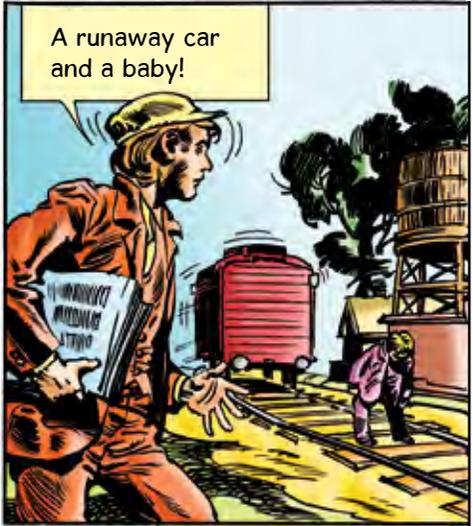
So am I, that I ever let you experiment on this train!

Tom kept his job, but that was the end of his train laboratory.



Later ...

There's time to walk around here while they switch cars.



A runaway car and a baby!



It's all right. I've got you!