

# EDISON, 70, DINED BY 1,800 EMPLOYEES

**Stands Smiling in Glow of Electric Candles on Cake as He Is Cheered Five Minutes.**

## WILSON SENDS A GREETING

**Inventor Has Toastmaster Read Note Saying He Is Working Hard for His "Uncle Sammy."**

*Special to The New York Times.*

ORANGE, N. J., Feb. 10.—Standing before a great birthday cake aglow with seventy electric candles in the Edison Storage Battery Building in West Orange, Thomas A. Edison tonight smilingly faced 1,800 employes of the various Edison enterprises and waited for nearly five minutes while they cheered and shouted their congratulations because he had reached life's three-score-and-ten milestone. It was a wonderful testimonial to Edison, the manufacturer, by the men who are under him, and elaborate had been the preparations made to turn one entire floor of the factory into a great dining hall in Mr. Edison's honor.

Mr. Edison will be 70 years old tomorrow, but today he received congratulations from every part of the world. He sat under crossed American flags with his son Charles on one side of him and his wife on the other. Henry Ford sat on the other side of Mrs. Edison, and ranged along the guests' table were many of Mr. Edison's business associates. The long room was decked with flags and the lighting so arranged that it was reflected from the ceiling, leaving the hall brilliantly lighted and yet without shadow. In front of Mr. Edison on a smaller table rested the birthday cake, a wonderful creation surmounted by a Liberty Statue holding aloft an electric torch.

There were no set speeches, at Mr. Edison's request, but William Maxwell, the toastmaster, saw to it that some form of entertainment was going on all the time. The guest of honor made no remarks, but in response to a request for a birthday message he wrote upon a slip of paper and handed across the table this greeting: "I feel fine and I am working hard just now for my Uncle Sammy."

### The President's Greeting.

Among the letters read was one of regret from President Wilson. The President sent this greeting:

"I wish with all my heart that I might be present to take part in celebrating Mr. Edison's seventieth birthday. It would be a real pleasure to be able to say in public with what deep and genuine admiration I have followed his remarkable career of achievement. I was an undergraduate at the university when his first inventions captured the imagination of the world, and ever since then I have retained the sense of magic which what he did then created in my mind. He seems always to have been in the special confidence of Nature herself. His career already has made an indelible impression in the history of applied science, and I hope that he has many years yet before him in which to make his record still more remarkable."

There was a reception in the library of the laboratory building before the dinner at which Mr. Edison met and exchanged pleasantries with friends. Here he was joined by Mrs. Edison, and with her walked to the storage battery building. On their arrival at the dining hall, the inventor and his wife took seats near the outer door, and there remained until the guests had entered. There was no confusion in seating the great number of diners. The guests were seated at a long table along the western wall. Multi-colored lights were arranged in the order of the spectrum from end to end of the hall.

As Mr. Edison and his wife entered the Edison employes' band struck up "Hail to the Chief!" and the cheering began. It lasted during all the time the guests of honor were marching to their places, and continued until the toastmaster began the reading of messages.

Mr. Edison finished his soup and, leaning back in his chair, lit one of the long-stemmed pipes that were on the table. He kept his pipe going during most of the evening. The ban was placed on cigars and cigarettes, and each diner found a pipe and plenty of tobacco awaiting him.

### "70" in Blue Electric Lights.

"There will be no speechmaking tonight," announced the toastmaster, and the enthusiastic applause that followed was led by Mr. Edison.

This announcement had just been made when there flashed into light above the guest table "70" in blue electric lights.

"Let us drink a toast to Mr. Edison," shouted Mr. Maxwell, and, as all got to their feet, he continued: "There is no use wishing Mr. Edison happy returns. He will have them anyway. He is an institution, so I will say, Here's health to the biggest man in the United States and the best boss." Thereat there was more cheering, and the band struck up the "Edison Birthday March," especially composed and dedicated to Mr. Edison by Professor Frederick Campione.

"I would like John Opp, the oldest employe, to stand up," was the shouted request of the toastmaster. Mr. Opp got to his feet, and to get a better view so, too, did nearly all of the 1,800 present, and it was hard to identify the oldest employe. A toast was drunk to Mrs. Edison, "the only person whom Mr. Edison recognizes as boss, and whose watchful care is responsible for his youthful appearance." Again came volleys of cheering. The next toast was to Charles Edison.

"What is this for?" Mr. Edison asked his wife.

"Your son Charles," she replied, and Mr. Edison began waving his napkin with enthusiasm.

### 35,000 St. Louisians Send Message.

A photograph album and a book containing the best wishes of 35,000 persons in St. Louis were presented to Mr. Edison. This was sent by the Governor of Missouri, who sent this message: "We hope you will continue the work you are doing for humanity."

The ceremony of cutting the cake was performed by J. W. Lieb, Vice President of the New York Edison Company.

This cake was sent by the employes of the New York Edison Company. It was forty inches in diameter or ten and a half feet in circumference. It was pyramided and had three decorative bands, the band around the base containing twelve plaques symbolic of Mr. Edison's inventions.

A concert and recitations closed the exercises, which lasted until a late hour.

"He may be old, but he still has young ideas," was a song that won great applause.