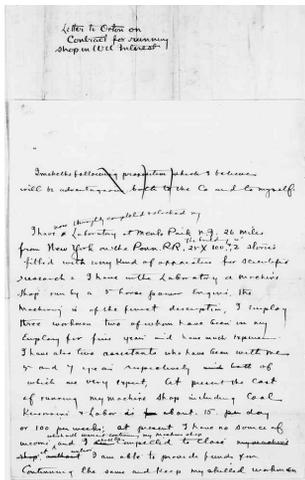


Draft to William Orton



[Menlo Park, c. January 29, 1877]<sup>1</sup>

I make the following proposition which I believe will be advantageous both to the Co and to myself.

I have a now thoroughly completed & stocked my<sup>a</sup> laboratory at Menlo Park N.J. 26 miles from New York on the Penn. R.R. The building is<sup>b</sup> 25 × 100 .&. 2 stories fitted with every kind of apparatus for scientific research= I have in the Laboratory a machine shop run by a 5 horse power engine. The machinery is of the finest description. I employ three workmen two of whom have been in my Employ for five years and have much experience.<sup>2</sup> I have also two assistants who have been with me 5 and 7 years, respectively with both of which are very expert.<sup>3</sup> At present the cost of running my machine shop including coal kerosene & labor ais for about, 15 per day or 100 per week; at present I have no source of income which will warrant continuing my machine shop<sup>c</sup> and I am shall be<sup>d</sup> compelled to close my machine shop it,<sup>e</sup> without unless<sup>e</sup> I am able to provide funds for continuing the same and keep my skilled workmen the loss of which would seriously cripple me in me<sup>e</sup> I therefore make the following<sup>f</sup> proposition to the Co to wit:—that if it will enter into a contract<sup>e</sup> pay the running expenses of my shop ie<sup>h</sup> \$100 per week, I will enter into a con-

tract for a period of time to be agreed upon giving them every invention that I can make during that time which is applicable to ~~the Land Telegraphy~~ commercial telegraphy in the US<sup>i</sup> and adaptable applicable<sup>e</sup> on [---]<sup>j</sup> to & the Cos needs system,<sup>c</sup> they ~~company~~ paying me a small royalty on every such inventions as they may<sup>e</sup> adopt and find of value to them This royalty will be the<sup>e</sup> my source of income, and will pay me for my time of myself and 2 assistants, for time and talents which of course will be entirely dependant upon the value of the inventions to the Co. adopted & found useful to the Co. will be large or small according to the value of the invention to the Co. ~~The Co Value~~ I have invested in my laboratory hwith machinery & apparatus have cost<sup>k</sup> about \$40,000, and I and if the Co desire to enter into such a contract<sup>l</sup> I suggest that Mr. Prescott be sent to look at it and learn its completeness investigate my unusual the unusual facilities which I have<sup>m</sup> for perfecting any kind of Telegraphic<sup>e</sup> invention. Yours

T. A. Edison

ADfS, NjWOE, DF (*TAEM* 14:226). “now . . . my” interlined above. <sup>b</sup>“The . . . is” interlined above. <sup>c</sup>“which . . . shop” interlined above. <sup>d</sup>“shall be” interlined above. <sup>e</sup>Interlined above. <sup>f</sup>“therefore . . . following” interlined above. <sup>g</sup>“enter . . . contrae” interlined above. <sup>h</sup>Circled. <sup>i</sup>“commercial . . . US” interlined above. <sup>j</sup>Canceled; “on [---]” interlined above “applicable”. <sup>k</sup>“hwith . . . cost” interlined. <sup>l</sup>“and . . . contract” interlined above. <sup>m</sup>“investigate . . . have” interlined above.

1. This draft is the foundation for Edison’s 22 March contract with Western Union (Doc. 876). On 29 January, Charles Batchelor wrote in his diary that “Edison saw Orton and broached the subject of getting \$100— per week to pay Expenses at Laboratory” (Cat. 1233:29, Batchelor [*TAEM* 90:67]). Edison had apparently been considering the terms of his relationship with Western Union for some time, as indicated by letters from Robert Russell and Uriah Painter and his earlier letter to Orton (Docs. 823, 827, and 833).

2. Account records show entries for Charles Wurth and John Kruesi, both of whom had been with Edison for several years; the other workman may have been Tony Bronk. *TAEB* 2:519 n. 2; 633 n. 6; Cat. 1213:7–12, Accts. (*TAEM* 20:8–11).

3. James Adams and Charles Batchelor.

R[eiff] would take & let me know— I am satisfied that nothing can be got out of A&P. for Auto<sup>b</sup> except you go & set it up on its legs & make it work— Now the thing to do, is to take advantage of the situation & get an option on all the rest of interests<sup>c</sup> at its present value: (which is awfully low-down, about where Little sold—) then put in the past with your genius to bring it up, & ~~then~~ we can get something that will do somebody some good! Let Reiff settle with his creditors on the basis of what there is to-day, & what is made to-morrow beyond what you & I need we can settle it on the Phila girl:—<sup>3</sup> So he will have a home to go to, which he has not now—& is not likely to have if allowed to have his own way— The advice you gave him one night two years ago when we were in Newark was, to “go & bust,” & “make fresh start”:—was sound then, & is sound now—

You do not put a price on your new perforating repeater! Is it in condition where you can do so? Yours Truly

U H. Painter

Come over here & stay a day or two it will pay you! UH.P

ALS, NjWoe, DF (*TAEM* 14:641). <sup>a</sup>Place and date from *Philadelphia Inquirer* hand stamp. <sup>b</sup>“for Auto” interlined above. <sup>c</sup>“of interests” interlined above.

1. From Felicia Dorothea Hemans’s poem “Casabianca.”
2. Not found.
3. Unidentified.

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[Menlo Park,] Feb 1st, 1877

*Notebook Entry:*  
*Autographic Printing*<sup>1</sup>

Edisons Autographic Power press.

Our next endeavour was to turn a cylinder and cut a piece from the surface so that the stencil could be fastened to it (as in Fig 33) and have a roller running on top which acts in place of a press bed and the ink roller placed inside which when not running on the stencil is distributing on the inside surface of the cylinder.

Fig 33

