Elihu Thomson Encyclopedia Article

Elihu Thomson

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Elihu Thomson

1853-1937

American engineering scientist and inventor in electrical technology. Thomson devised and marketed a successful electric arc lighting system, developed an alternating-current motor, and held almost 700 patents relating to electrical devices or processes. He helped establish an industrial research laboratory at General Electric, a company formed by consolidation of his Thomson-Houston Electric and the Edison Electric companies. With his many technical talents, Thomson helped make electrical technology a consumer product.