

Menlo Park in Edison, New Jersey

the birthplace of recorded sound

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edison black wax

Edison Black Wax

In 1902 both Edison and Columbia issued molded cylinders.

These cylinders were formed in a mold and were so pressed to give a much higher fidelity to the recording compared to the rather dull sounds of the brown wax. Being molded also made the cylinders louder and let them last longer than their brown wax predecessors.

Although they are referred to as black wax, the cylinders were not really made of wax, but more of a soap compound. They were jet black in color.

The cylinders had 100 grooves per inch and played at 160 R.P.M. and usually played for about 2 minutes. The first molds were made from a gold sputtering of the wax master, and were called "Gold Molded" by the Thomas Edison Company.

In 1908 Edison issued 4-minute black wax cylinders at 200 grooves per inch and produced these side by side with the 2-minute variety until the arrival of the Blue Amberol Cylinders of 1912.

[Read more about cylinders](#) in our history of recorded sound.

Click on the title of the song below to hear the recording.

[Help with listening to recordings.](#)

What you will hear on this site are cylinders and records played on original equipment-- no filters, no mixing and no digital alteration. Nothing except for the original recording played on original "turn of the century" equipment.

The content of these recordings reflect a period of our history. They do not reflect the views of Edison Township, www.edisonnj.org, menlopark.edisonnj.org, The Thomas Alva Edison Memorial Tower and Menlo Park Museum or any of the preceding employees. Please enjoy this look back in history.

[Bouncer At The Blazing Rag](#)

2:05 - 1902

Len Spencer and Gilbert Gerard

This bizarre music hall scene gives a slight flavor of what it was like on the music hall circuit circa 1902.

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[You'll Have To Get Off And Walk](#)

2:04 - 1905

Will E. Denny

Will E. Denny was one of the pioneers of recording, he started recording in the early 1890's and continued till his death in 1908.

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Mayor Ed Koch

hear the phonograph

select and click
 "hear the phonograph"



EDISON REMEMBERS
 9.11. 2001

45 Minutes From Broadway**2:07 - 1906****Billy Murray**

This popular song from one of George M. Cohan's many patriotic musicals talks about the difference between New York City and New Rochelle, New York.

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I Am The Edison Phonograph (Advertising Record)**2:05 - 1906****Len Spencer**

This would have been heard at most Edison phonograph dealers in the early part of the 20th century.

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I'm Afraid To Come Home In The Dark**2:12 - 1907****Billy Murray**

This fun song was a great hit for Billy Murray his recorded it for all the major record companies

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Stradella Overture**2:12 - 1907****The Edison Concert Band**

A touch of Edison on the classical side.

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Mr Marriccia Take A Steamboat Medley**2:02 - 1908****Edison Military Band**

This was a popular song in the early 20th century and it is a great example of good recording.

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Other Vintage Recordings:

- [Edison Brown Wax](#)
- [Edison Black Wax](#)
- [Edison Blue Amberol](#)
- [Edison Diamond Disc Records \(or Re-Creations\)](#)
- [Berliner Gramophone Company](#)
- [Columbia Graphophone Company](#)
- [Little Wonder Records](#)
- [Nations Forum Recording Project](#)
- [Victor Talking Machine Company](#)
- [The Elections of 1908 and 1912](#)

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