PHILO FARNSWORTH

INVENTOR OF THE ELECTRONIC TV

Every TV today contains over 100 items patented by a single farmer's son from Utah. Philo Farnsworth had the idea for television at age 14 while plowing his family's potato field, seeing how the rows could represent lines of light.

At 21, he created the first working electronic television system in San Francisco. RCA tried to steal his patents, but Farnsworth won the legal battle.

By his death in 1971, he held 300+ patents, including the first electronic microscope and early air traffic control systems. The U.S. honored him with a postage stamp in 1983

While roaming his father's field on a harvester, PHILO FARNSWORTH came up with an idea that would revolutionize the audiovisual industry in the 20th century: at just 14, this boy who had been raised without electricity invented electronic television. His future looked more than auspicious; however, he could never financially take advantage of his creation.

The story of this genius of electronics is that of a great injustice, that of a humble boy who had to face almighty giants and who, despite getting up one and a thousand times, finally fell defeated to the obvious inequality of forces and to the evil itself luck.

After overcoming countless setbacks, on September 7, 1927, before the astonishing eyes of his wife "Pem", Farnsworth demonstrated that his prototype of electronic television worked: the system transmitted its first signal, which was a simple, straight line in motion.

A year later he made his invention public, but nothing would be easy for him. The almighty president of the RCA, David Sarnoff, who handled radio licenses in the United States, found out and took on a fierce competition to get ahead in the market: he spent a fortune developing a similar device, for which he hired Russian Vladimir Zworykin, and when he had it, he patented it.

Farnsworth had to fight in court to be recognized as the first to create television and, when it seemed all was lost, he pulled an ace up his sleeve: he called as a witness an old professor of his who showed a role he had given him in 1921 with the accurate drawing of his invention Justice failed in their favor.

Now yes, that poor boy who had been raised in a cottage without electricity, was recognized as the inventor of the device that would revolutionize the world and had the "chicken of the golden eggs" in his power. He was at his best. Touching Heaven with hands, buttt Sarnoff, the media tycoon who had lost in the courts, was not going to give up.

Through legal gadgets and contacts with politicians, he delayed Farnsworth's invention market as long as possible. He intended to save time until his patents expired and he would have the free way to go out and sell his TV.

This unequal brawl damaged Philo's mental health, who, to the top of it, turned to alcohol. Still, the genius rose once again and worked out the final details to bring his creation to the market; but, when he's about to make it happen, Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, the United States enters World War II and television becomes the last the concern of Americans.

When the conflict ended, Farnsworth’s patents were no longer valid and anyone could use their technology, just in the time of the big TV explosion: in three years the number of these devices in American homes rose from 40,000 to over 9 million, something that was well used by Sarnoff.

Defeated by circumstances, exhausted forces and no economic balance, Philo could only watch others get rich with his invention. The man who had created television as just a teenager never wanted to investigate it again, forbidden his children and family from watching it.

Ended his days (March 11, 1971) almost forgetful, disappointed, depressed and alcoholic.

September 28, 1927 - The first successful television transmission was made by Philo Farnsworth. He is best known for his invention of the first fully functional all-electronic image pickup device (video camera tube), the

image dissector, as well as the first fully functional and complete all-electronic television system. He developed a television system complete with receiver and camera—which he produced commercially through the Farnsworth Television and Radio Corporation from 1938 to 1951, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. In later life, Farnsworth invented a small nuclear fusion device, the Farnsworth Fusor, employing inertial electrostatic confinement (IEC). Like many fusion devices, it was not a practical device for generating nuclear power, although it provides a viable source of neutrons.

See Also

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television