

Faccioli Dead, Made Synthetic Thunderbolts

Former Chief Engineer of
General Electric Called
Successor to Steinmetz

Developed Generators

Crippled, He Made Notable
Experiments in Wheelchair

By The Associated Press

PITTSFIELD, Mass., Jan. 13.—Giuseppe Faccioli, former chief engineer of the Pittsfield works of the General Electric Company, whose experiments in the high voltage transmission of electricity produced the nearest counterpart to lightning yet known, died of pneumonia today at his home here. He was fifty-six years old.

Created Artificial Thunderbolts

Two years ago, Giuseppe Faccioli, creator of artificial thunderbolts, received the most coveted citation of the electrical world when the Lamme Medal was conferred upon him by the American Institute of Electrical Engineers in recognition of his achievements as "successor" to the late Charles Proteus Steinmetz.

For many years Mr. Faccioli had been associated with Steinmetz in the General Electric Company's laboratories. Like Steinmetz, he was a cripple, conducting his experiments from a wheel chair which his chauffeur pushed about the testing room, and also like the other scientist, who died in 1923, his physical affliction seemed to intensify his mental energy. But while Steinmetz, originator of the lightning experiments, generated 1,000,000 volts, Faccioli juggled many times that amount—the most enormous unit of electrical energy ever controlled by man.

Mr. Faccioli came to the United States from Italy when he was twenty-five years old, a graduate of the University of Milan, and passed the first years here designing alternating current machinery. For a time he was with the New York Edison Company and then, to learn something of electric transportation, he joined the Interborough Rapid Transit Company. In 1904 he went to the Crocker-Wheeling Company to study manufacturing and his work was so impressive that he was called to the Stanley Laboratories as chief assistant to William Stanley, inventor.

Developed Generators

When the Stanley plant was absorbed by the General Electric Company in 1907, Mr. Faccioli served with the railway department at Schenectady and later at Pittsfield, where he was appointed works engineer in 1913. Meanwhile, the problem of power transmission had become his chief interest. Working with Frank W. Peek, electrical engineer, who was killed in an automobile accident last July, he developed new and more powerful generators for the storing up of the energy which was to be used in a study of causes and effects of lightning.

A frequent speculation of the scientist was the possibility that one form of matter might be transformed to another form by the application of the energy he had created. He knew that by bombarding the atom with terrific concentrated energy the number of electrons in the atom might be changed, but the problem of rebuilding the broken-down structure into an atom of some other form of matter remained unsolved.

Fearless in Experiments

Mr. Faccioli had so little fear of the high voltage arcs that he would frequently approach in his wheelchair to within ten feet of the thunderbolts so that he could study them more carefully.

He was born in Rome, Italy, on April 7, 1877, a son of the late Colonel Luigi Faccioli, who fought under General Garibaldi. His mother, Mrs. Flora G. Faccioli, died in Pittsfield six days ago.

Appointed associate manager and works manager of the Pittsfield plant of the General Electric Company in 1927, he retired in 1930, being succeeded as chief engineer by Mr. Peek. He was a fellow of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers and a member of the American Physical Society and the British Institute of Electrical Engineers. He was unmarried.

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G. FACCIOLI DIES; NOTED ENGINEER

His Experiments With Artificial
Lightning Won International
Fame—Age Was 56.

ASSOCIATE OF STEINMETZ

Won Gold Medal of American
Electrical Engineers—
Native of Italy.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.
PITTSFIELD, Mass., Jan. 13.—
Giuseppe Faccioli, an electrical en-
gineer internationally known for
his experiments with artificial light-
ning, who had been considered a
friendly rival of the late Charles P.
Steinmetz, died early today of pneu-
monia at his home here. He was
in his fifty-seventh year.

Grief over the death last Sunday
at the age of 91 of his mother,
Mrs. Flora G. Faccioli, was be-
lieved to have hastened his own
death.

Mr. Faccioli's nearest surviving
relative is a cousin, Paride Sabatini
of Rome. The funeral will be
held on Tuesday and the body,
with that of his mother, will be
sent to Italy for burial.

A native of Rome, Mr. Faccioli's
father, Colonel Luigi Faccioli,
fought under Garibaldi. The son
was graduated with high honors
as an electrical and industrial en-
gineer from the Royal Polytechnic
Institute of Milan in 1899. He came
to this country in 1904 first as a
designer of alternating current ma-
chines for the Crocker Wheeler
Company. He came in contact with
the late William Stanley of Great
Barrington, whose experimental
staff he joined.

In 1908 Mr. Faccioli became an
engineer at the Pittsfield works of
the General Electric Company, with
which he remained until his retire-
ment as chief engineer there in
1930. During this period he was
associated in research work with
Mr. Steinmetz. In 1932 Mr. Fac-
cioli received the Lamme Gold
Medal of the American Institute of
Electrical Engineers.

Feat of 1921 Recalled.

The name of Giuseppe Faccioli
first became known to the general
public in September, 1921, when the
General Electric Company an-
nounced that after thirty years of
experimentation an electrical cur-
rent of 1,000,000 volts had been
transmitted in its laboratory at
Pittsfield.

The three engineers mentioned as
chiefly responsible for the achieve-
ment were F. W. Peak Jr., W. S.
Moody and Mr. Faccioli.

Less than two years later Mr.
Faccioli focused upon himself the
attention of the world when he cre-
ated a twenty-four foot bolt of
lightning by means of an electrical
current of 2,000,000 volts. The Jo-
vian feat made a sensational cul-
mination to his many years of re-
search in the field of high-power
transmission.

Ranked With Steinmetz.

His work at Pittsfield led many
electrical experts to rank Faccioli
with Edison and Steinmetz as an
experimenter. A writer in THE NEW
YORK TIMES thus described him in
1923:

"He is one of those men inter-
ested in research itself, in the dis-
covery of that elusive thing, Truth,
in the causes behind all natural
phenomena, toward which, scien-
tists have been groping for cen-
turies.

"When he speaks of them his
eyes shine, his face lights with
the enthusiasm of the zealot, and
he deprecates the knowledge
gained in the hope of that greater
knowledge which is to come.

"He is a man strikingly like
Steinmetz in many ways. He came
to this country when young and de-
veloped his ability here. Also, like
Steinmetz, he is a cripple. He does
his work in a wheeled chair, which
his chauffeur pushes about the big
testing laboratory. And, as with
Steinmetz, his physical infirmity
seems to accentuate rather than
diminish the intensity of his mental
energy. Both men appear to have
taken something vital and tremen-
dous into themselves from the gi-
gantic forces which they control."

*Lamme Gold
medal 1931*