

# Andrew Jackson Beard

## Railroad Safety

In the 19th century, 6,500 people invented a device that would solve the problem of workers who were often killed or maimed during the process of attaching trains on the railroad track, and they applied for and received patents. Beard's design was by far the most advanced, and although there seems to be controversy over his being credited with the invention called the Jenny coupler, a manufacturing company paid Beard \$50,000 for his patented idea.

**Lesson:** Many would-be inventors can get the same idea at the same time and create products, but each will differ and the product with the best design and marketing strategy will stand out above the crowd.

## References

*African American Inventors*. Patricia and Frederick McKissick Millbrook Press, 1994.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew\\_Jackson\\_Beard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Jackson_Beard)

[http://inventors.about.com/od/blackinventors/ss/Beard\\_patents.htm](http://inventors.about.com/od/blackinventors/ss/Beard_patents.htm)

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