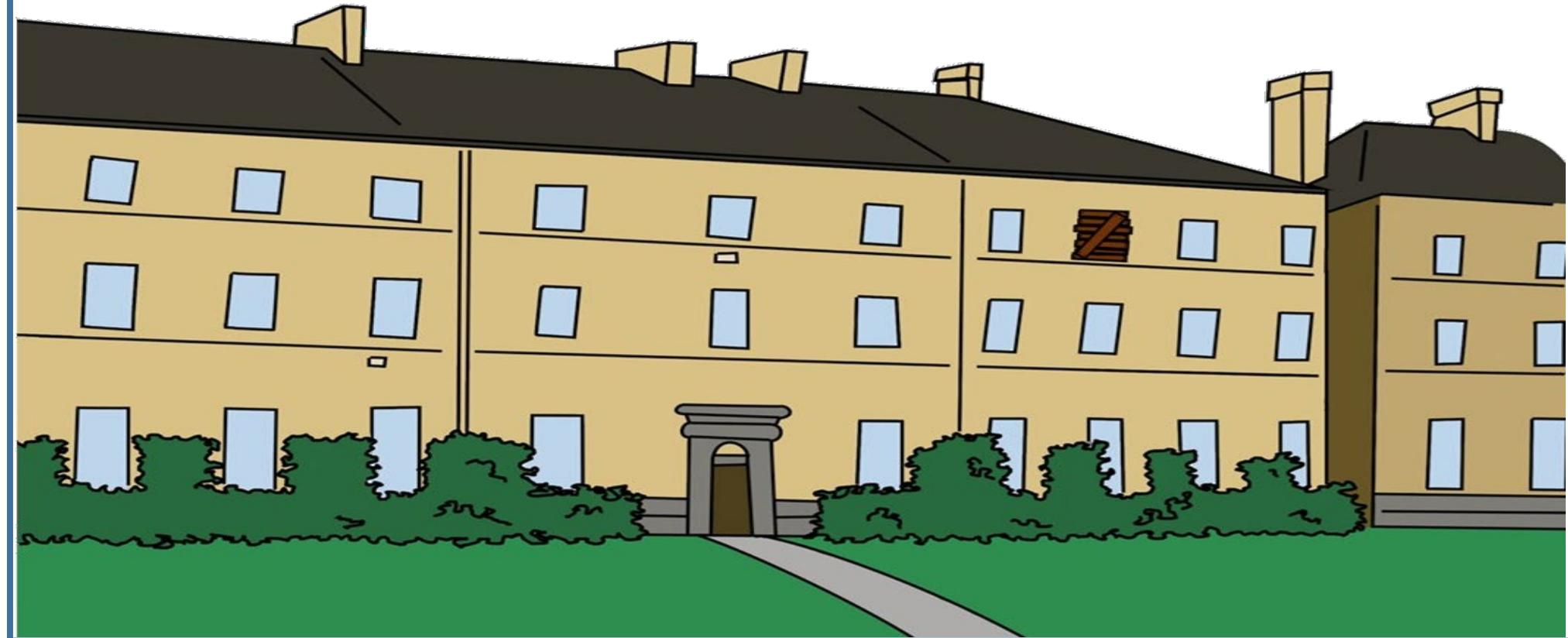


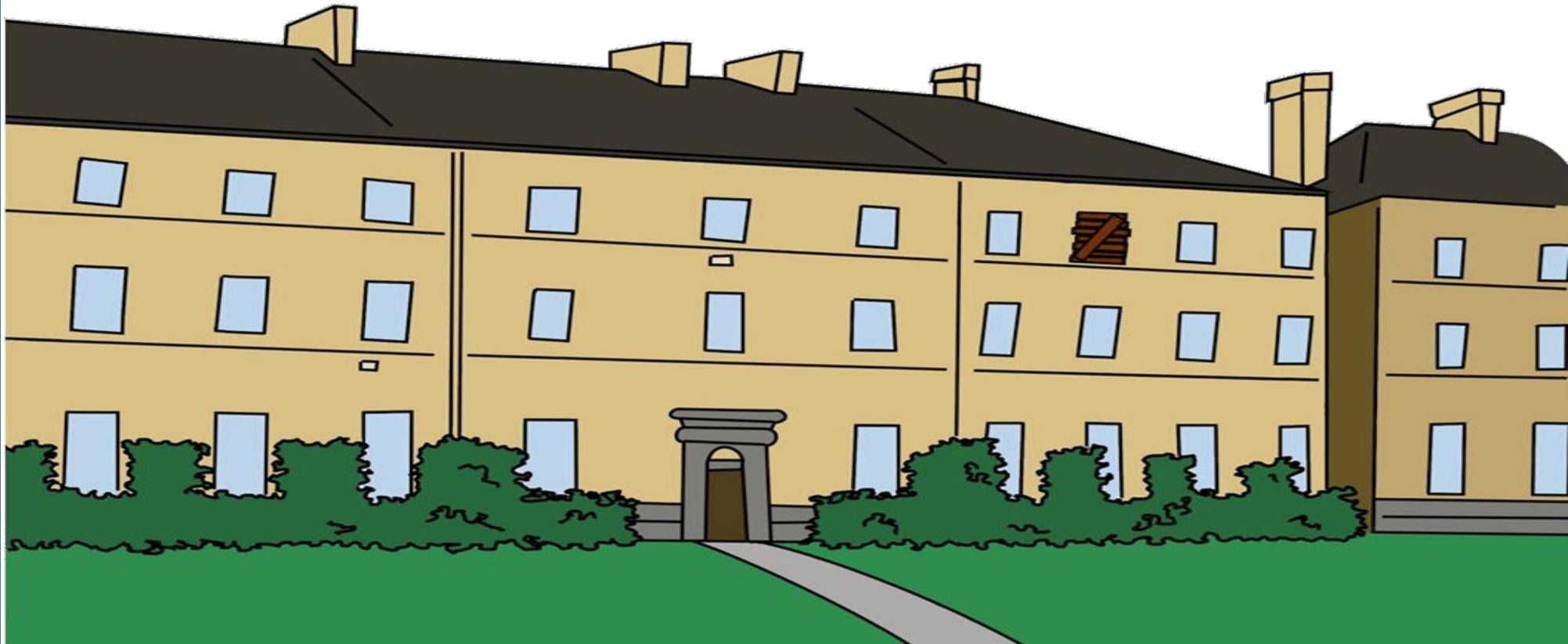
Baker Street Elementary

Presents
"The Life and Times in Victorian London"



Baker Street Elementary

*The Life and Times in Victorian London
105 - A Tale of Two Watsons - 09/05/2020*





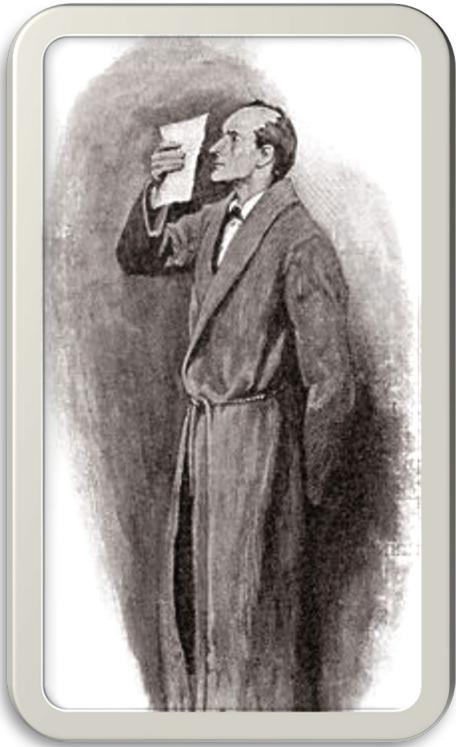
Welcome to topic number 105...
today we will be looking at the
telephone and telegraph.



While the instrument carrying Alexander Graham Bell's cry for help to his assistant ("Watson, come here, I need you,") will make its appearance in Britain a year after the famous call...



... Sherlock will prefer to telegraph his plea for assistance to his Watson, reflecting one British Post Office engineer's assessment that Britain had no need for the device.



This preference for telegrams will be confirmed by finding no references in the Canon to Holmes ever telephoning Watson. Once Watson will call his friend from Little Purlington in "The Adventure of the Retired Colourman."

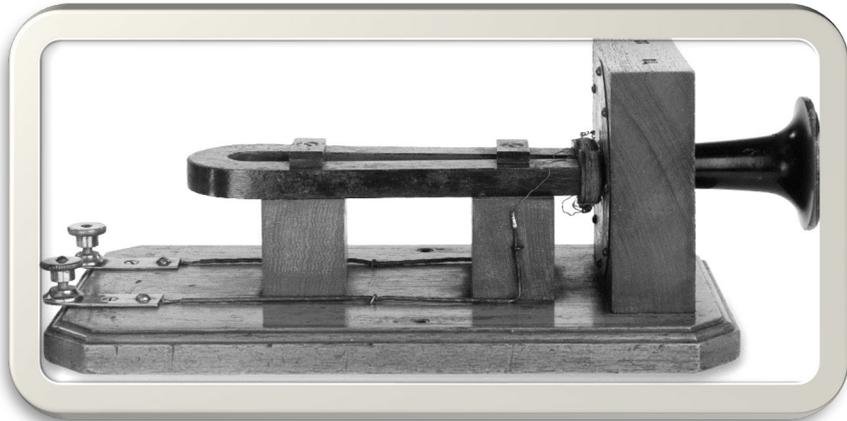


Telephones will be mentioned in five additional stories: "The Sign of the Four," "The Man with the Twisted Lip," "The Illustrious Client," "The Blanched Soldier," and "The Three Garridebs," and telephone directories are consulted in another two: "The Stockbroker's Clerk" and "The Three Gables."



This scarcity of telephone use may represent the instrument's rockier history in England.

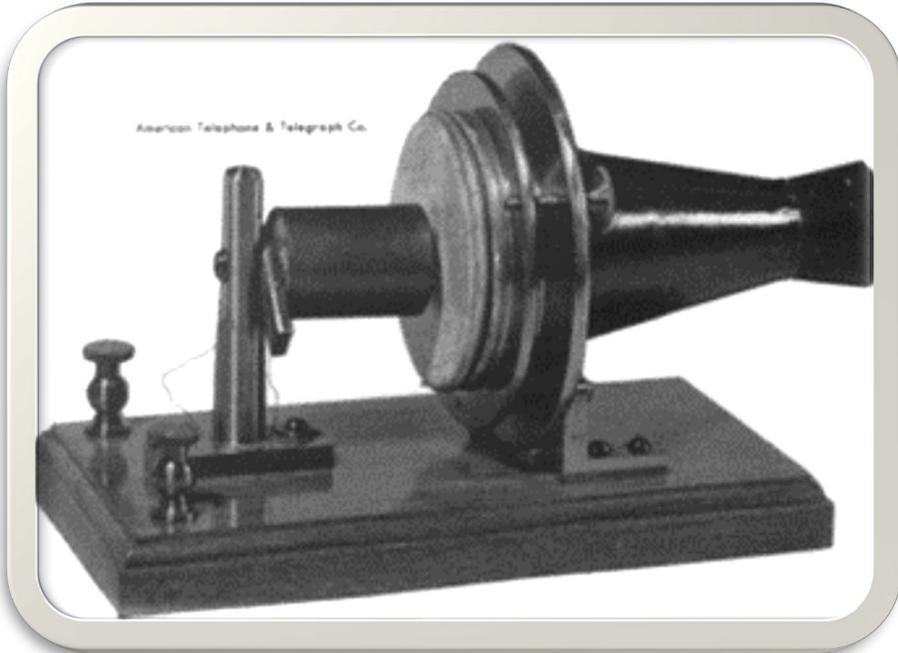




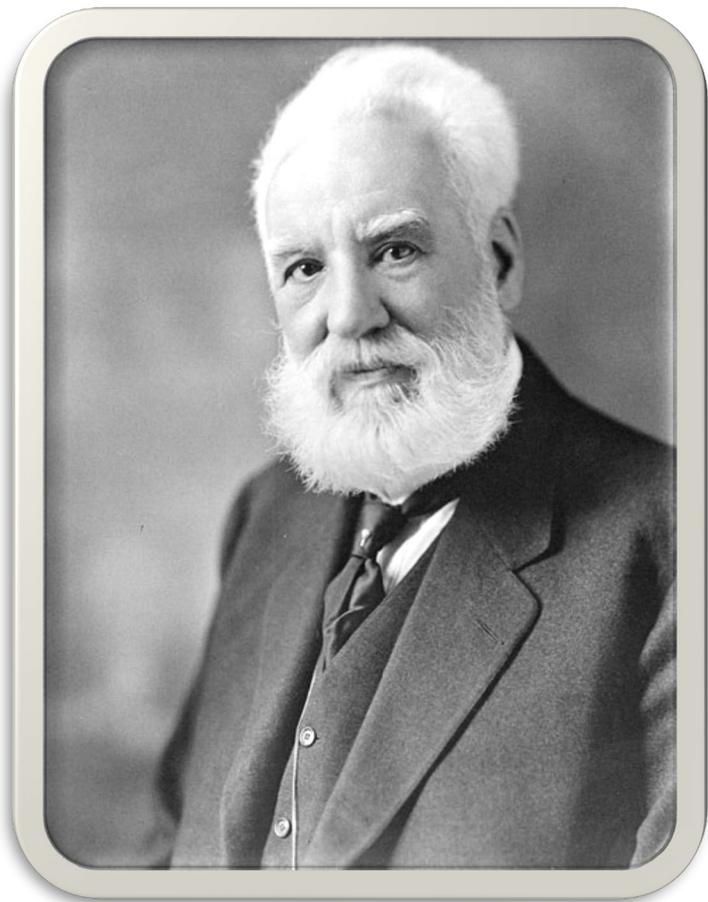
From its inception, the various telephone designs (of which Alexander Graham Bell's represents only one) will involve a power source, a switch hook, a dialer, a ringer, a transmitter, and a receiver.



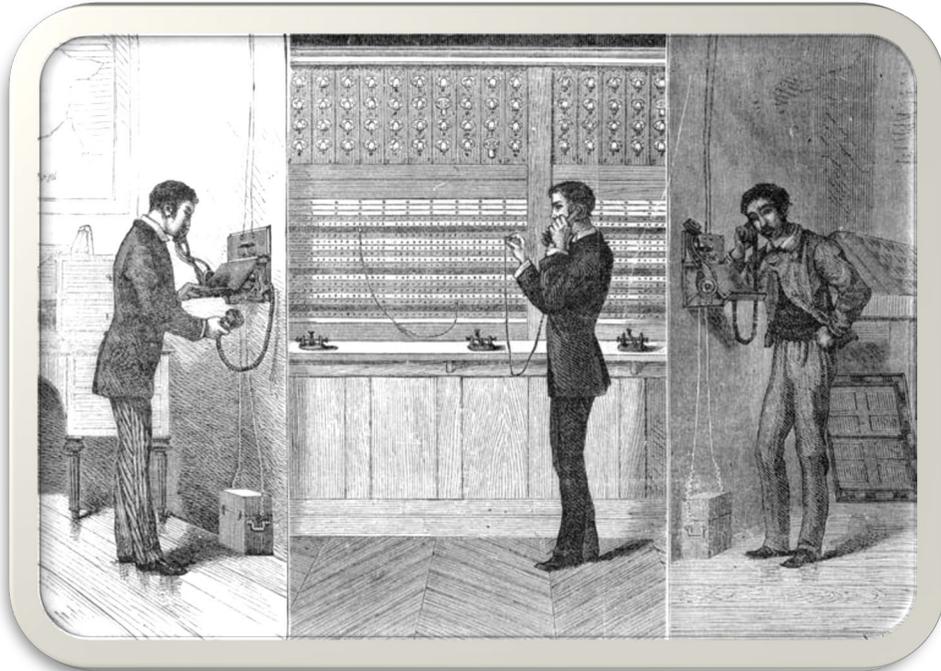
The transmitter and receiver will each house a membrane which sound waves cause to vibrate. Vibrations from the transmitter flow along wires to be recreated in the receiving membrane.



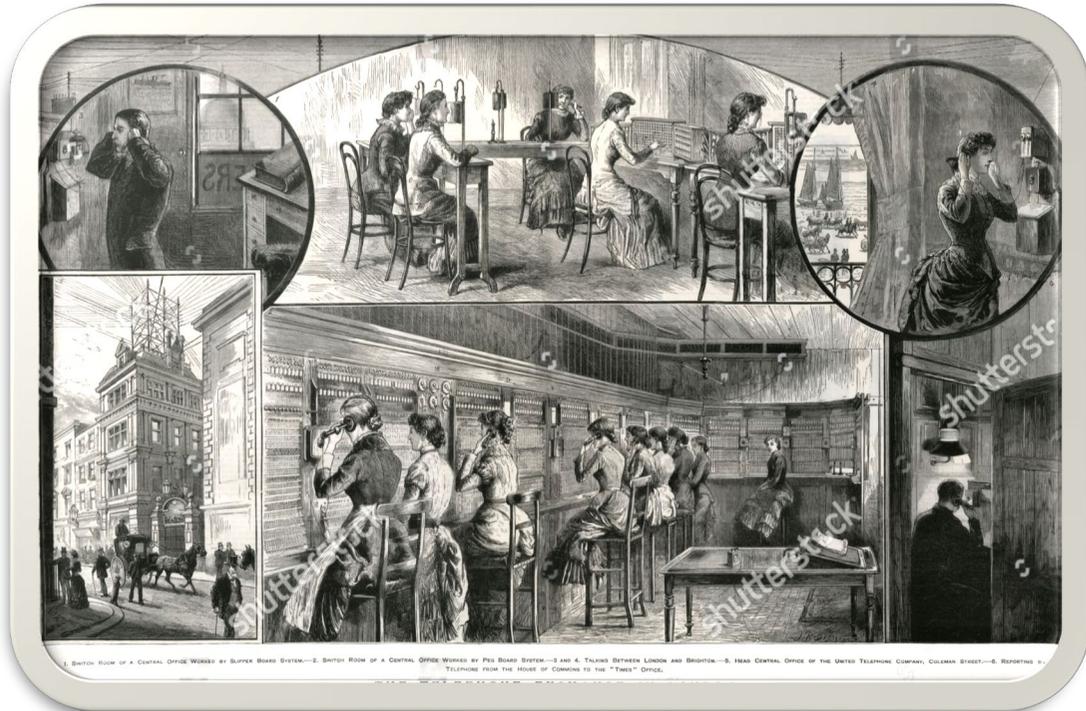
*When Bell patents this device in 1876,
he will include not only the instrument,
but the system to link them.*



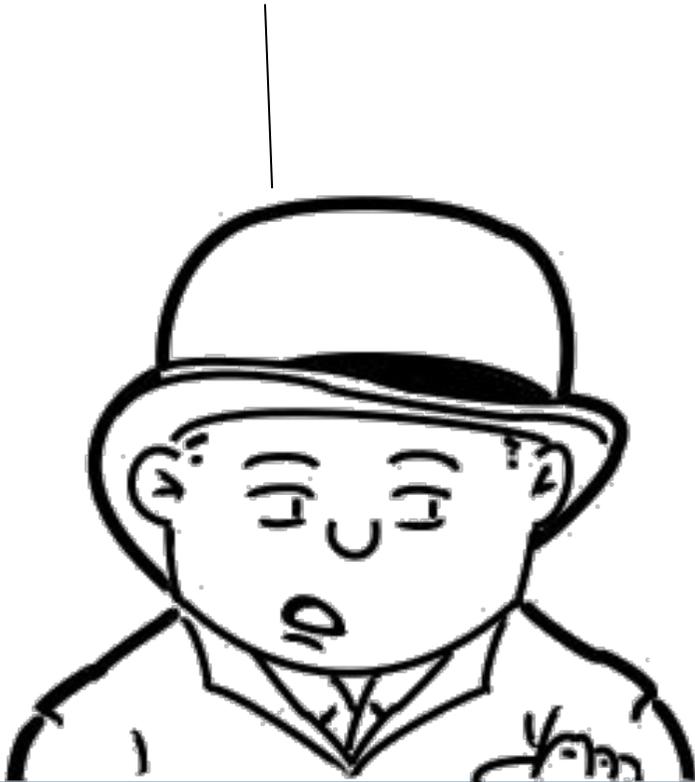
At the beginning, the structure will involve non-insulated wires similar to telegraph wires connecting the device to a central point, or exchange, where a switchboard operator would connect the caller to the receiver's wire using a short cable.



The increase in the number users and the poor transmission quality of the wires will make it difficult for the signal to carry as long a distance as a telegraph line until the invention of hand-drawn copper wire.



Within a year of the patent, the telephone will be presented around the world as a curiosity. It first appears in Britain in 1877 when Sir William Preece, chief engineer for the British Post Office, will demonstrate the instrument.



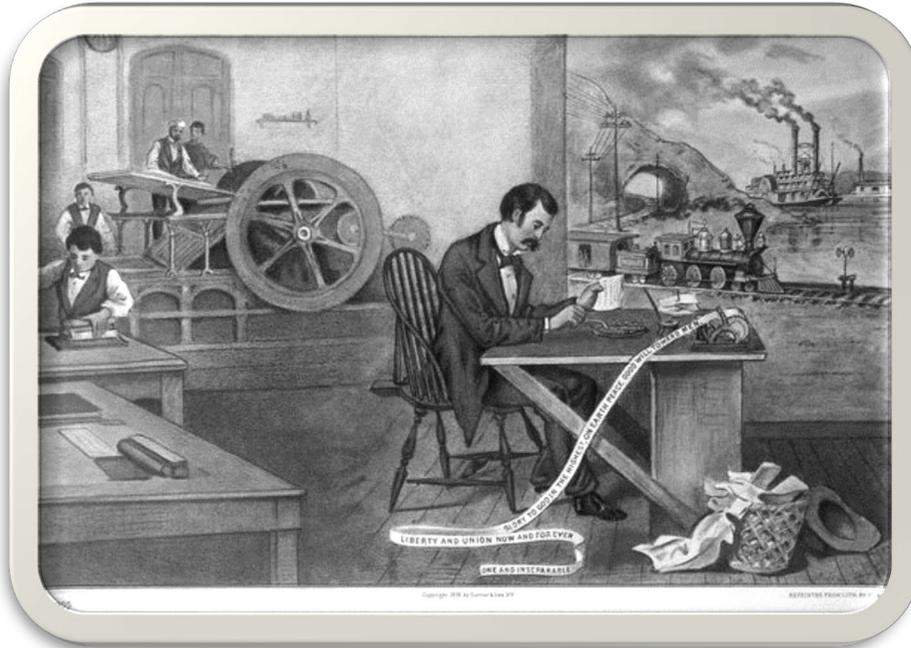
He will famously note to the House of Commons two years later the telephone is not necessary in Britain because they have plenty of messenger boys.



Regardless, following a demonstration to the Queen in 1878, Bell will create the Telephone Company Ltd. to sell his instrument in Britain, and soon will have a number of subscribers.



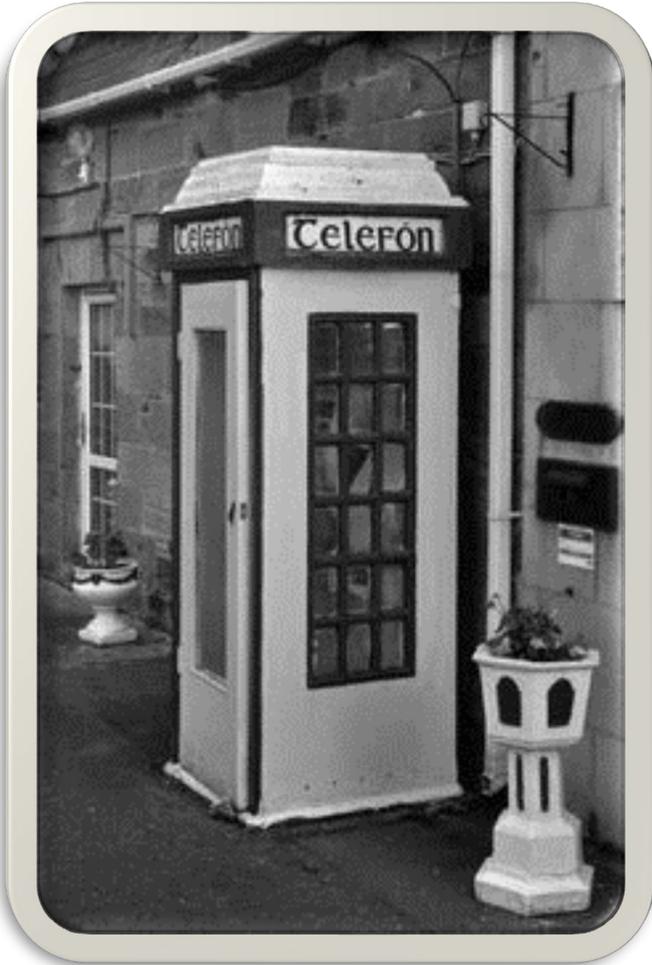
To serve the public, the Telephone Company will convert some telegraph exchanges into telephone exchanges—as well as offering public call offices in railway stations and general stores.



The original call offices will be small wooden huts where anyone could make a call for a "tuppence." These early call offices will have no standard design until 1921.



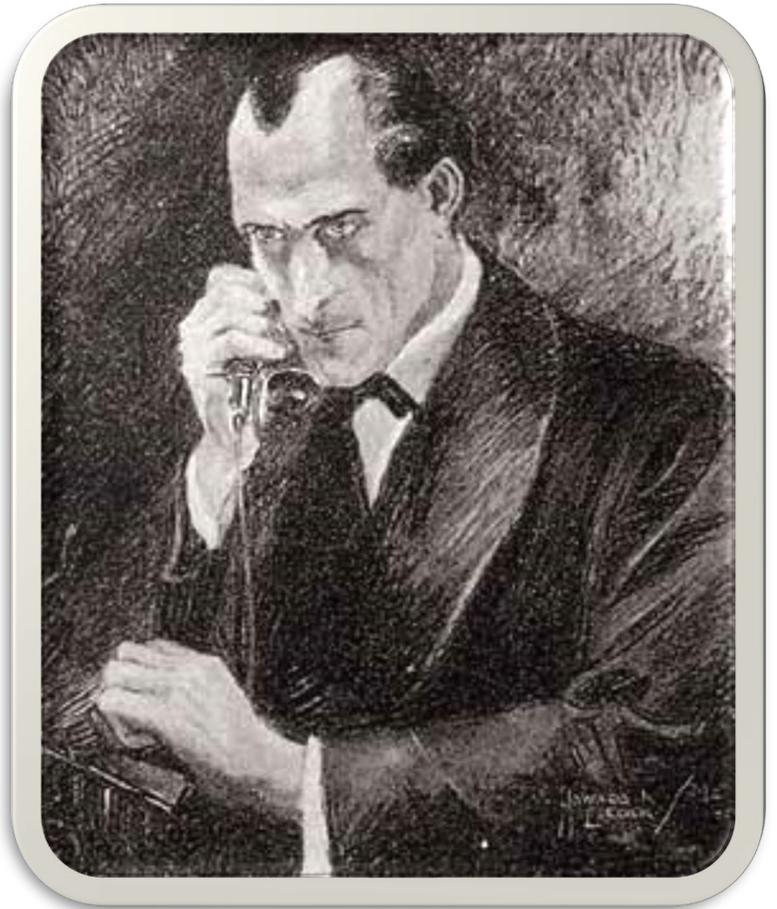
That year, the Post Office will introduce a kiosk specifically designed for the telephone. Made of reinforced concrete, they could be painted to match their surroundings.



Not until 1926 will the iconic red telephone kiosk be designed. Other designs will be introduced over the next forty years, the last in 1968.

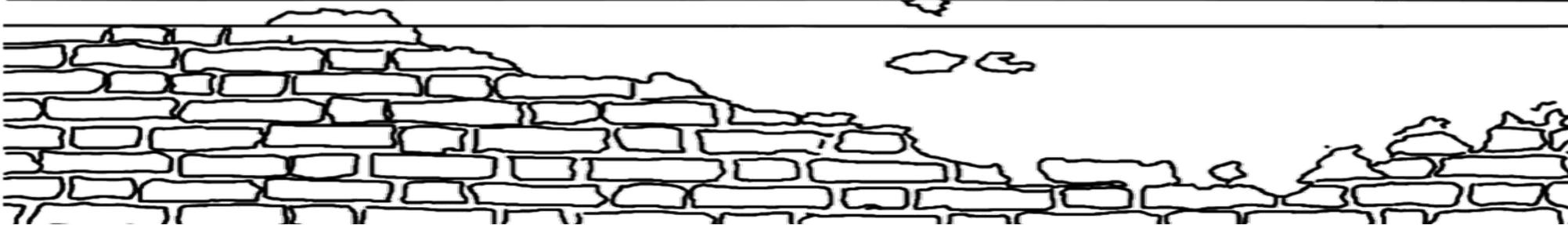


Despite their colleagues' preferences for one form of communication over another (telephone vs. telegram), when the plea arrives, both Watsons will quickly respond to the call.



*So we have completed
topic 105 in our
series...*

*Yes, but we'll be
back with another
topic soon...*



References for this topic:

- 1) <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/03/07/archives/mr-watson-come-here.html>
- 2) <https://www.britannica.com/technology/telephone>
- 3) <http://the-eye.eu/public/WorldTracker.org/Computers/Computer%20Science/Huurdemann%20-%20The%20Worldwide%20History%20of%20Telecommunications.pdf>
- 4) <https://owlcation.com/humanities/history-of-the-telephone-system-uk>
- 5) <https://www.btplc.com/Thegroup/BTshistory/Eventsintelecommunicationshistory/index.htm>
- 6) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telegram_messenger
- 7) <https://owlcation.com/humanities/history-of-the-telephone-system-uk>
- 8) <http://home.bt.com/tech-gadgets/history-of-the-red-telephone-box-kiosk-11364141615834>



Baker Street Elementary

"The Life and Times in Victorian London"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

JOE FAY

LIESE SHERWOOD-FABRE

RUSTY MASON

&

STEVE MASON

