



ALEXANDER BELL



Lived 1847 - 1922

Bell was a Scottish-born American scientist and inventor, most famous for his pioneering work on the development of the telephone.

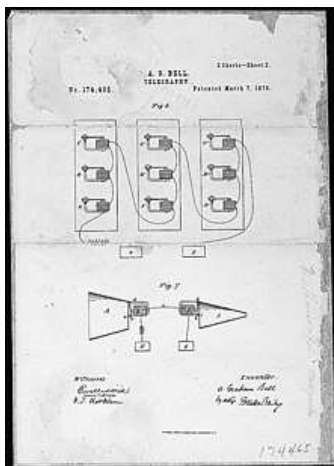
EARLY LIFE

Born on March 3rd 1847 in Edinburgh. Alexander became interested in how sound works due to his mother becoming profoundly deaf by the time he was 10 years old. He would play the piano for her and he noticed the strings inside the piano vibrating when they were hit by the little hammer. He realised that the vibration was making the sound.

ADULT LIFE

In 1870, Bell emigrated with his family to Canada, and the following year he moved to the United States to teach. There he pioneered a system called visible speech, developed by his father, to teach deaf-mute children. This involved helping them learn how to move their throat, tongue and lips to produce the vibrations to make the sounds that go into speech. In 1872 Bell founded a school in Boston to train teachers of the deaf. The school subsequently became part of Boston University, where Bell was appointed professor of vocal physiology in 1873. He became a naturalised U.S. citizen in 1882.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENT



Bell had long been fascinated by the idea of transmitting speech and when he was asked to improve the telegraph machine he was determined to find a way to transmit sound. By 1875, with the help of his assistant Thomas Watson, he had come up with a simple receiver that could turn electricity into sound. Bell was granted a patent for the telephone on 7 March 1876 and it developed quickly. Within a year the first telephone exchange was built in Connecticut and the Bell Telephone Company was created in 1877, with Bell the owner of a third of the shares, quickly making him a wealthy man.

LATE LIFE

In 1880, Bell was awarded the French Volta Prize for his invention and with the money, founded the Volta Laboratory in Washington, where he continued experiments in communication, in medical research, and in techniques for teaching speech to the deaf, working with Helen Keller among others. In 1885 he acquired land in Nova Scotia and established a summer home there where he continued his experiments, particularly in the field of aviation.

In 1888, Bell was one of the founding members of the National Geographic Society, and served as its president from 1896 to 1904, also helping to establish its journal.

Bell died on August 22nd 1922 at his home in Nova Scotia



FIND OUT MORE

https://youtu.be/9n_5jG_9fAE

<https://youtu.be/qTpWD28Vcq0> The first 4 minutes are Bell reciting numbers, if you want to skip to skip to minute 4 you will hear him speaking fully, all the way from 1855!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/true-stories-alexander-graham-bell/zf7gd6f>

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Which country was Bell born in?
2. What did Bell invent?
3. Why was Bell intrigued by how sound works?
4. Which French prize was Bell awarded?
5. Which year was the first telephone exchange created in the USA?