

TELEPHONE CENTENARY

Issued 10th March, 1976

100th Anniversary of the First Telephone Transmission

Alexander Graham Bell was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 3rd March, 1847, and studied at the University of Edinburgh and the University of London. He emigrated to Canada in 1879 for health reasons.

Like his father and grandfather, young Bell had been devoting his life to educating the deaf, and he had acquired a considerable knowledge of the physiology of human speech and hearing. In 1872 he went to and settled in Boston in the United States of America and there opened a school for training teachers of the deaf. He also became Professor of Vocal Physiology at the University of Boston, but began to devote more and more time to work on the simultaneous transmission of a number of telegrams over the same circuit. A system of simultaneous two-way telegraphy had been developed and Bell hoped that the method he was working on would lead to a better system of multiplex telegraphy and bring him fame and fortune.

While Bell was working on his circuits during the afternoon of 2nd June, 1875, a reed on one of his instruments adhered to its electromagnet. Bell told his assistant, Thomas A. Watson, to pluck the sticking reed away and, when this was done, it was found that the corresponding reed on the other inter-connected instrument had begun to vibrate and produce a sound of the same pitch. Bell deduced from this simple phenomenon that, if a single sound could be transmitted electrically, so could complicated human speech and even music.

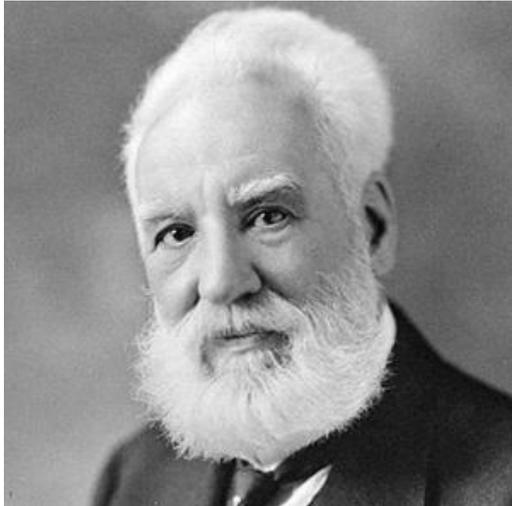
He devised an instrument consisting of a circular piece of gold-beater's skin stretched over a small cylinder into which one could speak, with the skin being connected to a reed associated with an electro-magnet. After tests, the first complete sentence spoken into this instrument and conveyed over the connecting wire to another instrument was: "Mr. Watson, come here, I want you". This first telephone transmission was made on the 10th March, 1876



The original Bell telephone of 1876

Although the early devices were crude and communication was poor, development was rapid in the United States of America. The first step was made in 1877, when an outdoor telephone line was run in Boston between the workshops of a Mr. Charles Williams, in which the first telephones were made by Watson, and Williams' private residence in Sommerville. Also in 1877, the first news despatch sent by telephone was made in a call to the Boston Globe, thus inaugurating the public use of the telephone.

Bell did not spare himself in making his discovery known; he travelled widely and lectured in America, and demonstrated the telephone for the first time in Britain at the annual meeting of the British Association at Plymouth. In 1878 Bell was presented to Queen Victoria, during his honeymoon visit to England, and demonstrated his telephone to her.



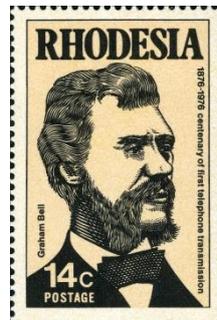
Alexander Graham Bell in later life

The reward for Bell's industriousness came in a rapid increase in the use of telephones in the United States of America, the first phones and switchboard for commercial service being installed at New Haven, Connecticut, in 1878, with 21 subscribers. During the years since its discovery, Bell's telephone system has been refined and made more efficient, and the telephone is now in use in every country in the world, with a total of 340 000 000 being in use. It is impossible to emphasize too strongly how much the discovery and development of the telephone has contributed to man's progress.

Alexander Graham Bell died on the 2nd August, 1922, at his summer home near Baddeck, Nova Scotia, Canada.

(Source: PTC Bulletin No 1 of 1976)³

THE ISSUED STAMPS



Catalogue listings

SG	RSC ²	Value	Description
524	C151	3c	Telephones 1876 & 1976
525	C152	14c	Alexander Graham Bell

Technical details

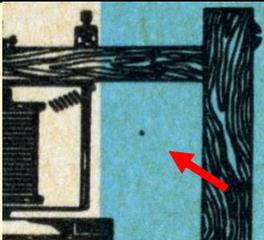
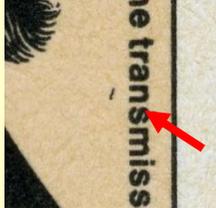
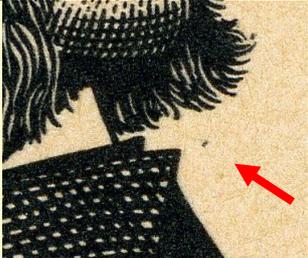
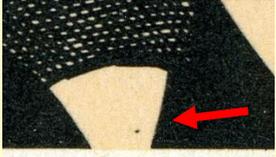
Stamp size:	28 x 42 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (5 rows of 10 stamps), two panes within printed sheet
Artist:	M C Chase (picture of Bell based photograph taken in 1976)
Paper:	Type 10 – Chromo paper, brown gum, non-fluorescent

Print colours:	3c - black & light blue 14c - black and light buff
Perforations:	Comb perf: SG 14, RSC 14¼ Right margin: Perforated through Top, left and bottom margins: Imperforate
Printer's Imprint:	Type 6a, bottom margin, below columns 4 to 7 – black printing
Cylinder numbers:	Cyls. 1A & 1B bottom margin under R5/1, colours reading across from left – 3c - black, light blue 14c - black, light buff
Colour register:	Type TL 4 – round boxed - left margin opposite R5/1, colours reading down – 3c - black, light blue 14c - black, light buff
Sheet Value:	Bottom margin, below R5/10, black printing
Sheet Number:	Type SN 4 with 'PTC' prefix, right margin opposite R5/10, reading upwards
Print numbers:	3c - 4,000,000 stamps (20,000 1A & 1B sheets each) 14c - 400,000 stamps (2,000 1A & 1B sheets each)
Issue date:	10 th March, 1976
Withdrawal from sale:	9 th December 1976
Demonetarisaton:	9 th December, 1979

Listed varieties

Below are varieties documented or seen for each of the values, starting with the listed varieties within the Mashonaland Guide¹, and those listed in the RSC², shown in yellow shaded tables. The varieties listed in bold are considered by the authors of the Guide to be more important.

Cyl	Row	Col	
3 cents			
1A	1	10	Small dot below 'O' of Rhodesia
	3	1	Blue dot in lower right of white column

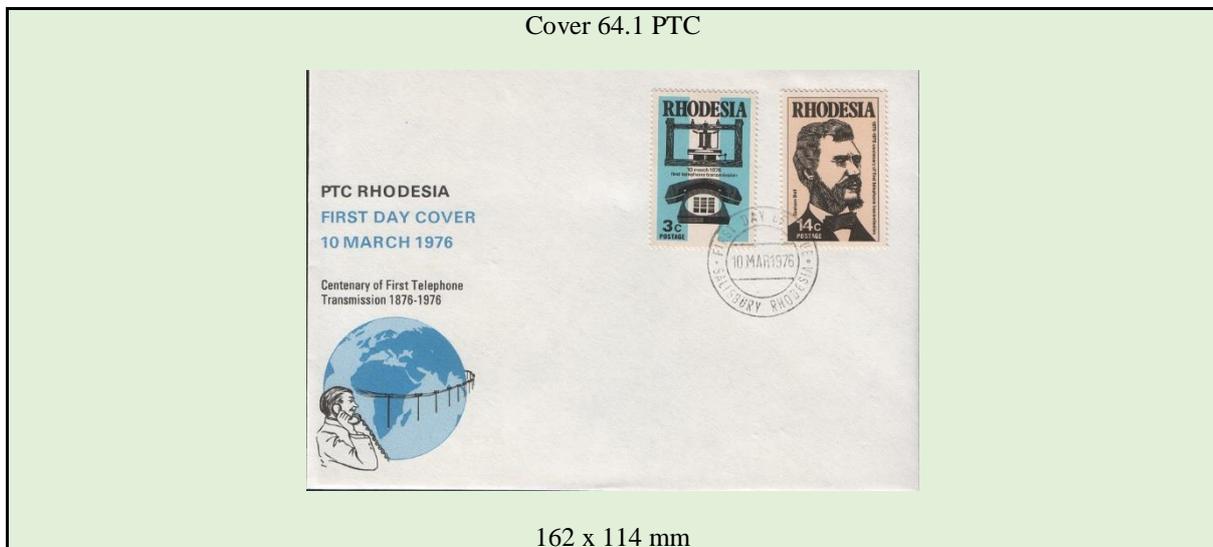
Cyl	Row	Col	
	5	6	Large black dot to right of base of upper instrument 
1B	1	1	Small dot under 'SI' of Rhodesia
	2	1	Small dot under 'E' of Rhodesia
	2	4	Small dot under 'O' of Rhodesia
	4	7	Black dot in blue space at right of upper instrument 
14 cents			
1A	1	2	Vertical dash to left of 'ans' of "transmission". 
	1	9	Dot under beard to right of bow-tie 
1B	1	4	Small dot very close to right of bow-tie
	1	10	Black dot near left margin to left of ear
	3	1	Black dot above shoulder over '1' of value
	4	2	Black dot in shirt front 
	4	7	Black dot between neck and 'M' of Graham 
	5	9	Black dot to right of bow-tie (further right than R1/4 above)

Unlisted variety



First Day Cover

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear



Bibliography

1. "A Guide to the Postage Stamps of Rhodesia", supplement No 5, issued 1978, published by the Mashonaland Philatelic Study Group
2. "The Rhodesia Stamp Catalogue", 1983/84, published by Salisbury Stamp Company
3. Post & Telecommunications Corporation Bulletin No 1 of 1976, published by the Philatelic Bureau