

Information and images from the internet regarding telephones manufactured by the American Speaking Telephone Company

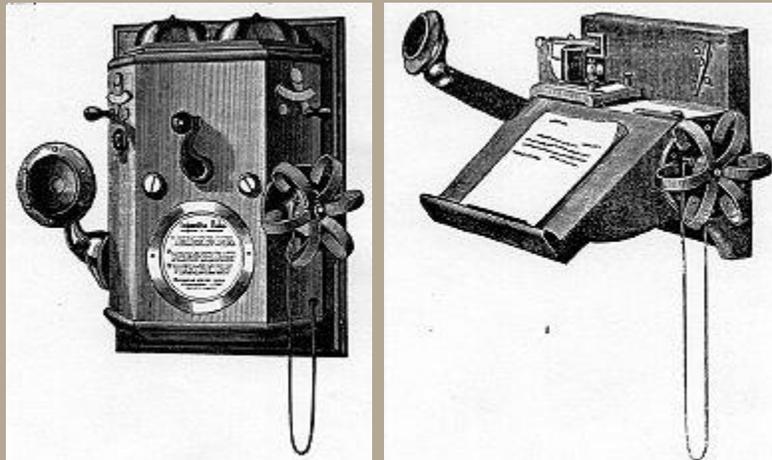
From John Casale's website *Telegraph-History*: <http://www.telegraph-history.org/george-m-phelps/page4.htm>

In 1877, Western Union decided to compete with Bell and began the commercial production of telephones. George Phelps patented inventions in both telephone receiver and transmitter designs. Western Union conducted extensive tests with the telephone designs of Phelps, Edison, and Elisha Gray. (Gray was an electrician, inventor, and co-founder of the Western Electric Mfg.Co. in Chicago.) The telephones that were built by Bell, Gray, and Phelps utilized a magneto design. A magneto telephone could be used as either a receiver or a transmitter. A user would speak into the magneto telephone, then quickly move the phone to his ear to listen. On short lines the magneto worked satisfactory, but as a transmitter on long lines, its output was too weak. Early telephones were connected using existing telegraph lines and were often subject to interference from adjacent lines. Thomas Edison invented a carbon transmitter to solve the problems of the magneto. Western Union evaluated Edison's Carbon Telephone Transmitter in a test between New York and Philadelphia, early in 1878. Present for the evaluation in Philadelphia was Charles Batchelor, Edison's chief assistant. In New York, William Orton, (W.U. president) Thomas Edison, and George Phelps were present. It was determined that Edison's Carbon Telephone was superior to the magneto as a transmitter and thus became the standard transmitter used by Western Union. The receiver that was commonly used was the Phelps Single Crown Telephone, shown on the right.



Western Union marketed their telephones through their subsidiaries : The American Speaking Telephone Company and The Gold and Stock Telegraph Company. **They sold telephones utilizing Edison's Carbon Telephone as the transmitter paired with Phelps' Single Crown Telephone as the receiver.** Gray's telephone was also paired with the Edison transmitter. Western Union's New York factory, run by Phelps, would build both telegraph and telephone apparatus 1877 through 1879. Two examples of phones built by Phelps in his factory are shown below illustrating the Edison/Phelps combinations. The carbon buttons used in the manufacture of Edison's transmitters, were supplied to Phelps directly by Edison from Menlo Park. In late 1879 Western Union and Bell settled on a patent infringement suit filed by Bell. In the settlement, Western Union sold to Bell, its telephone exchanges in 55 cities and 56,000 subscriber telephones.

The two telephones below incorporated the inventions of Edison and Phelps. The phone on the right also shows an "ordinary" Phelps telegraph sounder being used as the bell.



The first telephone exchange in a major U. S. city was opened in San Francisco by The Gold and Stock Telegraph Company in February of 1878. The instruments selected for use were the Edison Carbon Telephone and the Phelps Crown Telephone.

TELEPHONES.

THE GOLD AND STOCK TELEGRAPH COMPANY,
as the General Agent of the American Speaking Telephone Company, is the Sole Proprietor and Manufacturer of the

EDISON CARBON TELEPHONE,
the **PHELPS' DUPLEX, CROWN AND DOUBLE-CROWN TELEPHONES** and the **GRAY BI-POLAR TELEPHONES,** also of the

PHELPS' MAGNETO CALL-BOXES
for use on Telephone Lines.

The **EDISON CARBON TELEPHONE** is the only Telephone which can be successfully used on very long lines or City Lines troubled by induction. It is the most reliable instrument for constant and uniform service.

THE **PHELPS CROWN AND DOUBLE-CROWN TELEPHONES**

are superior to any other telephones in use except the carbon for their power and clearness, and the

PHELPS DUPLEX AND GRAY BI-POLAR HAND TELEPHONES,

are distinguished for their

CLEAR AND DISTINCT ARTICULATION.

For Price Lists and Descriptive Circulars, and for all information relating to Telephones, apply to any Western Union superintendent or manager, or to the undersigned

GEORGE WALKER,
Vice-President.

A copy of a 1878 ad by The Gold and Stock Telegraph Co.. All the telephone instruments in this ad, with the exception of Elisha Gray's Bi-Polar, were built in the Phelps/Western Union Manufactory.

From the Collections of the MIT Museum:

<http://webmuseum.mit.edu/detail.php?t=exhibitions&type=exh&f=&s=1&record=79>

Catalog number: IN-0889

Wall Telephone

American Speaking Telephone Co., The

1879-1880

12 1/2 in x 10 in x 9 in

Description: Phelps Duplex Telephone No. A with Edison Carbon Transmitter - Phelps Long Line Magneto Box (1879), Used Edison transmitter & Phelp's receiver.

American Speaking Telephone Co. is subsidiary of Western Union



From ebay.com auction sale 10/27/2013 by seller "swizzlestick!" (winning bid was \$18,699.69):

