

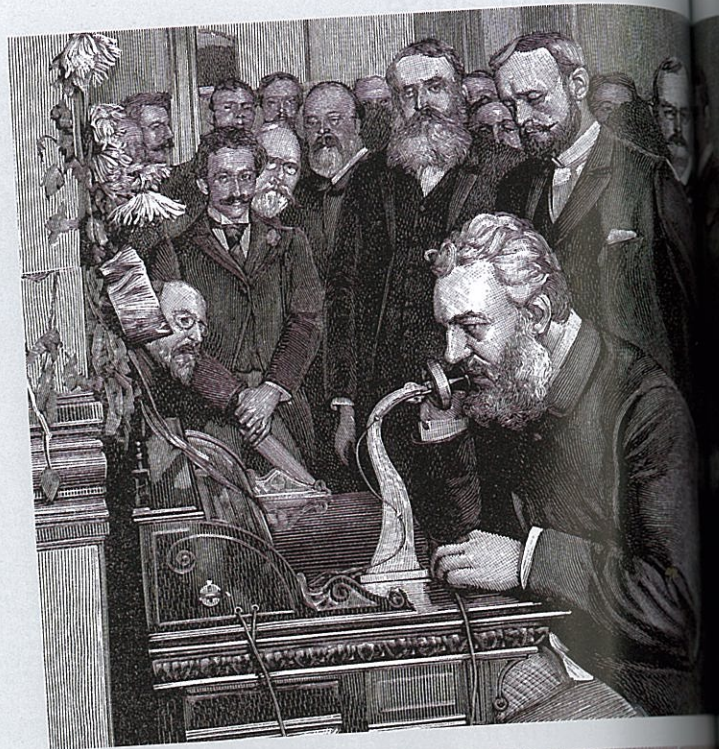
Contestability

The concept of contestability relates to explanations or interpretations of past events that are open to debate. Historians around the world often have access to very different sources. Artefacts, such as jewellery and weapons, may have been damaged, or artworks may be incomplete. Written records may contain errors, or might have been changed after they were written. Some records may even have been completely destroyed. This can lead historians to draw different conclusions about what they are seeing. Even historians studying the same sources can sometimes come to very different conclusions about what the evidence is telling them. This is one of the exciting things about history – it is open to debate. There is often no right answer, and historians are always seeking a more complete understanding of the past.

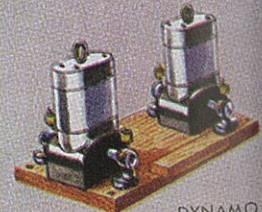
The Industrial Revolution was a time of great change. In a short amount of time, new inventions and innovations brought about huge changes to the way people worked, lived, communicated and travelled. For example, the invention of the telephone revolutionised the way in which people communicated all around the world. Scottish-born inventor Alexander Graham Bell has long been credited with inventing the telephone. Certainly, he was the first to patent it in the USA, in 1886, after conceptualising and developing a version of the telephone (see Source 9). However, many historians contest this belief.

Other inventors were also working on similar inventions at the same time as Alexander Graham Bell. Among them were Antonio Meucci, Innocenzo Manzetti and Thomas Edison (see Source 10). Many historians credit these inventors with the development of the first voice communication apparatuses. Unfortunately, it is difficult to prove who was first because many of the electronic components that would eventually become part the telephone were being developed separately around the world by many different people at the same time.

For this reason, the inventor of the telephone will always be contested by historians. One thing that cannot be contested is the fact that no single person was solely responsible for the invention.



MOTION
PICTURE
PROJECTOR



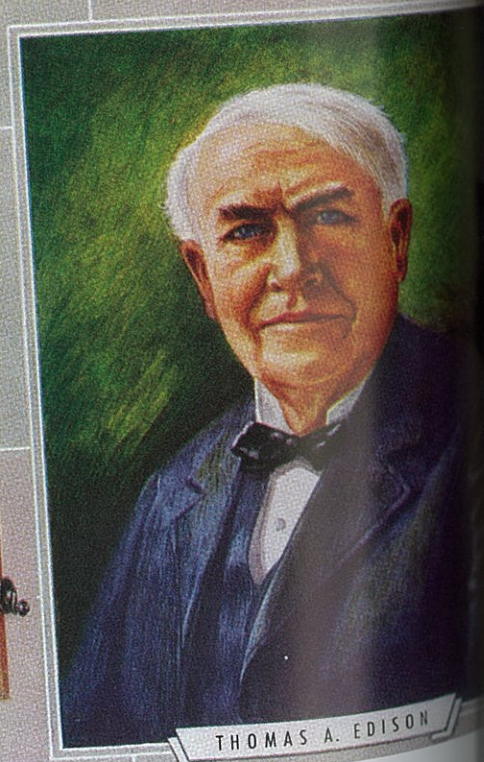
DYNAMO



WET CELL
STORAGE
BATTERY



TELEPHONE



THOMAS A. EDISON