

Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



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THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON
074 -- TIME ON YOUR HANDS -- POCKET WATCHES -- FEBRUARY, 2022



WELCOME TO TOPIC # 074... TODAY WE WILL BE
LOOKING AT POCKET WATCHES DURING THE
VICTORIAN PERIOD...



IN A NUMBER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES CASES, A CHARACTER CHECKED THE TIME WITH HIS WATCH, AND OFTEN WILL KEPT IMPORTANT ITEMS — USUALLY A KEY — ON THE ATTACHED CHAIN.





**IN TWO ADVENTURES, MY STUDY OF A WATCH'S
CHARACTERISTICS PROVIDED INFORMATION ABOUT
ITS OWNER.**



AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIGN OF FOUR, YOU SHARED YOUR WATCH FOR ME TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT I CAN DEDUCE ABOUT THE OWNER'S CHARACTERISTICS AND IN 'THE FIVE ORANGE PIPS,' YOU MENTIONED HOW I USED A WATCH TO ESTABLISH A VICTIM'S TIME OF DEATH.



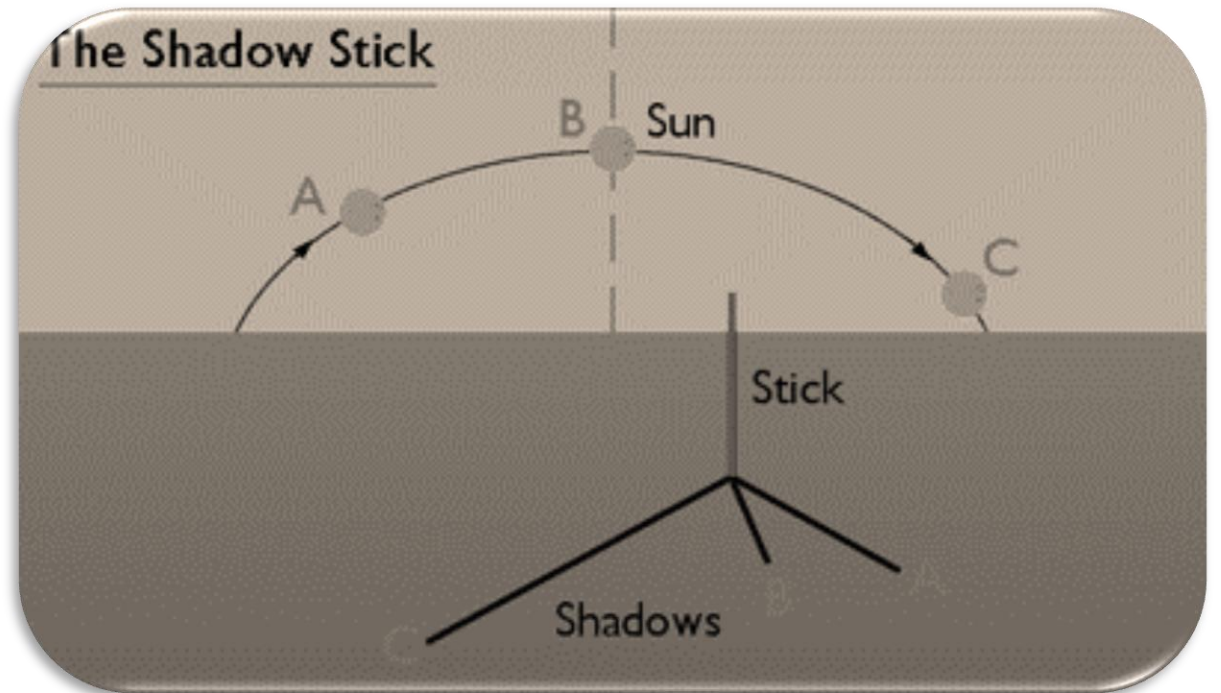
*FOR YOU, WATCHES POSSESSED A GREAT
INDIVIDUALITY.*

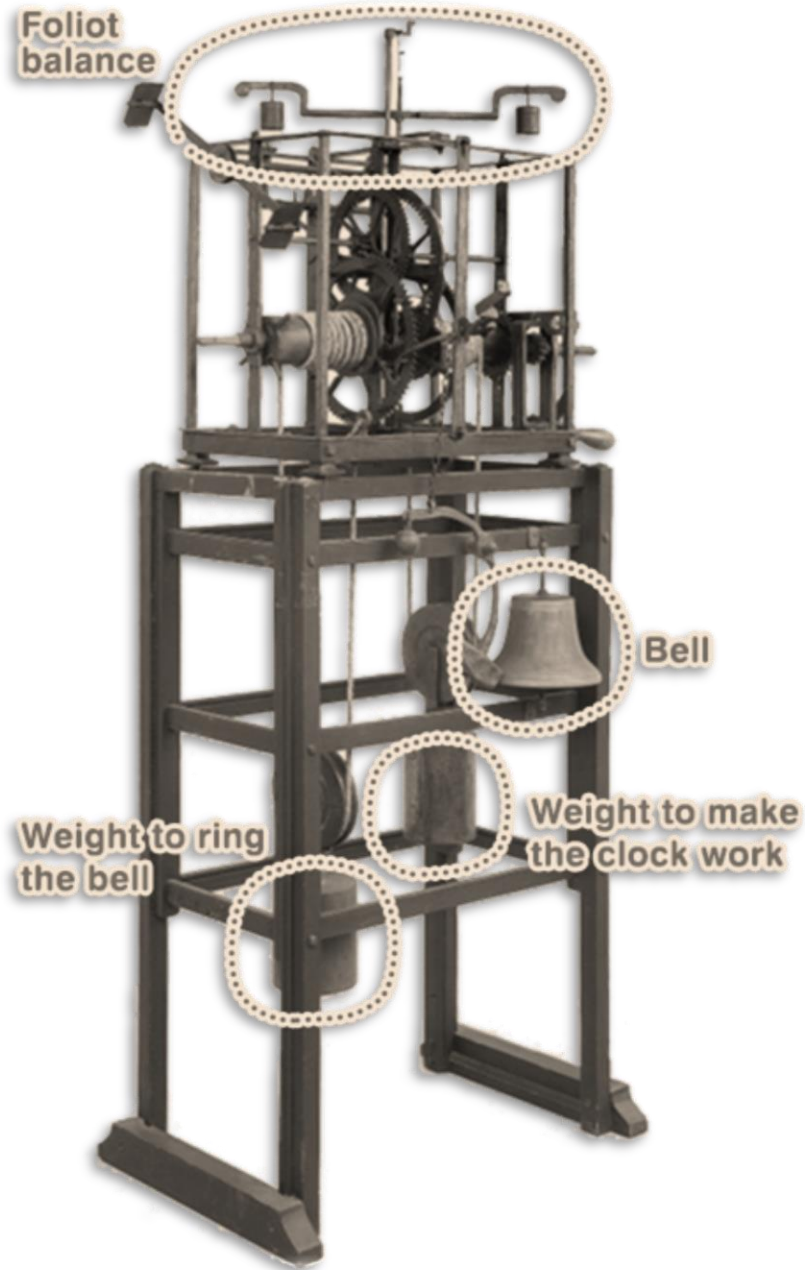


*THE CONCEPT OF TIME REFLECTS MAN'S
OBSERVATION OF CHANGE — FROM DAY TO NIGHT,
FOR EXAMPLE — AND IS MEASURED BY MOTION AS
WELL AS OBSERVED BY MOTION.*



EARLY TIMEPIECES TRACKED THE MOVEMENT OF THE SUN BY A SHADOW CAST BY A STICK IN THE GROUND, (BECAME THE SUNDIAL OVER TIME)... TO KEEP TIME WHEN THE SUN WAS NOT VISIBLE, MECHANICAL DEVICES WERE CREATED, INCLUDING HOURGLASSES AND CANDLES WITH THE HOURS MARKED ALONG ITS LENGTH.





THE 1300s MARKED THE CREATION OF MECHANICAL CLOCKS THAT USED WEIGHTS TO MOVE A CLOCK'S HANDS... IN 1450, A COILED SPRING WAS INTRODUCED, MAKING CLOCKS SMALLER, AND IN 1657 CHRISTIAAN HUYGENS CREATED THE PENDULUM CLOCK THAT GREATLY INCREASED THE TIMEPIECE'S ACCURACY.





**THESE CLOCKS DEPENDED ON THE PENDULUM
INVENTED BY GALILEO AND LOST ONLY 15
SECONDS A DAY (VS. HALF AN HOUR OR MORE EACH
DAY FOR OTHER MECHANICAL CLOCKS).**





PERSONAL TIMEPIECES WERE FIRST DEVELOPED BY PETER HENLEIN, WHEN HE CREATED THE 'NUREMBERG EGG', A PORTABLE CLOCK USING A SPRING MECHANISM IN AN OVAL ENCLOSURE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 16TH CENTURY.



DUE TO THEIR COSTS, THEY WERE USED PRIMARILY BY THE NOBILITY... ADDITIONAL INNOVATIONS WERE DEVELOPED, SUCH AS INCREASING RESISTANCE WHEN WINDING THE WATCH TO INDICATE A WELL-WOUND SPRING AND MAKING THE GEARS FROM COPPER.



**SUCH IMPROVEMENTS OFTEN REQUIRED FINE
NEEDLEWORK AND ADDED TO THE WATCH'S COST
BUT MADE THEM ACCURATE ENOUGH BY 1762 TO BE
USED FOR NAVIGATION.**



THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WAISTCOAT,
POPULARIZED BY CHARLES II, CREATED A DEMAND
FOR 'POCKET WATCHES' THAT WOULD FIT INSIDE
THE 'WATCH POCKET.'





GIVEN THE AMOUNT OF PRECIOUS METAL IN THE WATCH AS WELL AS THEIR COSTS, SUCH WATCHES WERE CONSIDERED 'LIKE A BANK ACCOUNT' THAT COULD BE SOLD OR PAWNED IN TIMES OF NEED (SUCH AS YOUR BROTHER DID).





WRISTWATCHES ALSO GAINED IN POPULARITY IN THE LATE 1800s (ALTHOUGH THERE ARE ACCOUNTS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I HAVING ONE).





*PRIMARILY MARKETED TO WOMEN AS JEWELRY,
THEY BECAME MUCH MORE IMPORTANT AND
POPULAR AMONG THE MILITARY...*



**...AT THE END OF THE 1800s, AND
MANUFACTURERS BEGAN MARKETING SUCH
TIMEPIECES TO MEN.**



MECHANICAL WATCHES INVOLVE A SPRING THAT AS IT UNWINDS, POWERS A BALANCE WHEEL (WEIGHTED TO MOVE BACK AND FORTH AT A CONSTANT RATE) THAT, IN TURN, ALLOWS OTHER GEARS TO MOVE THE HANDS FORWARD INCREMENTALLY.



AT THE CENTER OF THE BALANCE WHEEL AND OTHER FRICTION POINTS ARE THE WATCH'S 'JEWELS,' ORIGINALLY RUBIES OR SAPPHIRES (REPLACED BY SYNTHETIC ONES TODAY)... CURRENT WATCHES HAVE ABOUT 17 JEWELS, BUT HIGHER AMOUNTS EXIST, INDICATING A MORE COMPLICATED MECHANISM.



WHEN FULLY WOUND, MECHANICAL WATCHES WILL USUALLY RUN BETWEEN 24 AND 36 HOURS, AND SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE WOUND DAILY AT THE SAME TIME TO MAINTAIN ACCURACY.





WHILE I DID NOT PROVIDE MANY DETAILS OF THE
'CAMBERWELL POISONING CASE' IN 'THE FIVE
ORANGE PIPS'...





...STILLMAN DRAKEL, A CANADIAN HISTORIAN OF SCIENCE, USED WHAT WAS PROVIDED TO DISTILL THE ESSENCE OF THE CASE, INCLUDING THE UN-NAMED DEAD MAN.





*HIS DEDUCTIONS BEGAN WITH THE FACT THAT I
WOUND UP A WATCH.*



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 074 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 075, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT THE ROLE OF THE CORONER DURING
THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.



ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL FOR FOR THIS TOPIC:

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"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

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