

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



# Baker Street *Elementary*

THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# 115 -- VICTORIAN TOYS -- FEBRUARY, 2022



WELCOME TO TOPIC # 115... TODAY, WE WILL BE  
DISCUSSING VICTORIAN TOYS...



**VICTORIAN TOYS ARE HIGHLY COLLECTABLE  
ANTIQUES AND CAN OFTEN BE PICKED UP AT  
AUCTIONS AND VINTAGE FAIRS.**



*NOW WELL OVER 100 YEARS OLD, THEY GIVE A FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO THE LIFE OF PRIVILEGED CHILDREN IN THE MID TO LATE 19TH CENTURY.*



**DURING THE VICTORIAN ERA, WORKING-CLASS CHILDREN HAD LITTLE TIME TO PLAY, BUT THOSE BORN TO MIDDLE AND UPPER-CLASS HOMES ENJOYED A TOTALLY DIFFERENT LIFESTYLE.**



*TOYS WERE GENERALLY HANDMADE FROM METAL OR WOOD AND WERE FAR MORE EXPENSIVE THAN THE MASS-PRODUCED TOYS OF THE 21ST CENTURY.*





*SOME OF THE SIMPLEST VICTORIAN TOYS WERE A ROLLING HOOP WHICH WAS GUIDED WITH A STICK, STRING WHICH HAD TO BE SWUNG UPWARDS AND CAUGHT IN THE ATTACHED CUP.*





*SPINNING TOPS HAVE BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR CENTURIES ALL OVER THE WORLD AND WOULD HAVE BEEN POPULAR IN VICTORIAN TIMES.*



A CORD IS WOUND AROUND THE WOODEN TOP  
AND THEN PULLED TO SET THE TOP SPINNING  
ON ITS POINT.



DOLL'S HOUSES WERE A FIRM FAVORITE IN WELL-TO-DO HOMES AND WOULD HAVE REPLICAS FURNITURE DOWN TO THE LAST DETAIL.



*MADE BY SKILLED CRAFTSMEN, THEY PROVIDED  
HOURS OF MAKE-BELIEVE FUN AS CHILDREN  
PLAYED OUT REAL-LIFE SCENARIOS.*



THE V&A MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD HAS A FINE COLLECTION OF VICTORIAN DOLL'S HOUSES... THEY BECAME VERY POPULAR IN THE 19TH CENTURY AND RECAPTURE IN PERFECT DETAIL THE FURNITURE, DÉCOR AND EQUIPMENT FOUND IN PERIOD VICTORIAN HOMES.





*IN A SIMILAR VEIN, MINIATURE PUPPET THEATRES WERE A POPULAR FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT AND ALLOWED CHILDREN'S IMAGINATION TO RUN WILD IN DAYS BEFORE TV AND FILMS.*



WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF MECHANIZATION,  
TOYS BECAME MORE ANIMATED AND VARIED.



**CLOWNS WOULD PERFORM COMICAL TRICKS WHEN  
TURNED BY A CRANK AND A CARNIVAL ON WHEELS  
WHEN PULLED ALONG WOULD MAKE THE FIGURES  
DANCE AMUSINGLY.**







**KALEIDOSCOPIES WERE POPULAR TOYS AND WHEN  
TURNED THEY CREATED EVER-CHANGING  
SYMMETRICAL PATTERNS USING MIRRORS.**



*MUSICAL TOYS WERE HIGHLY PRIZED BY  
VICTORIAN CHILDREN.*



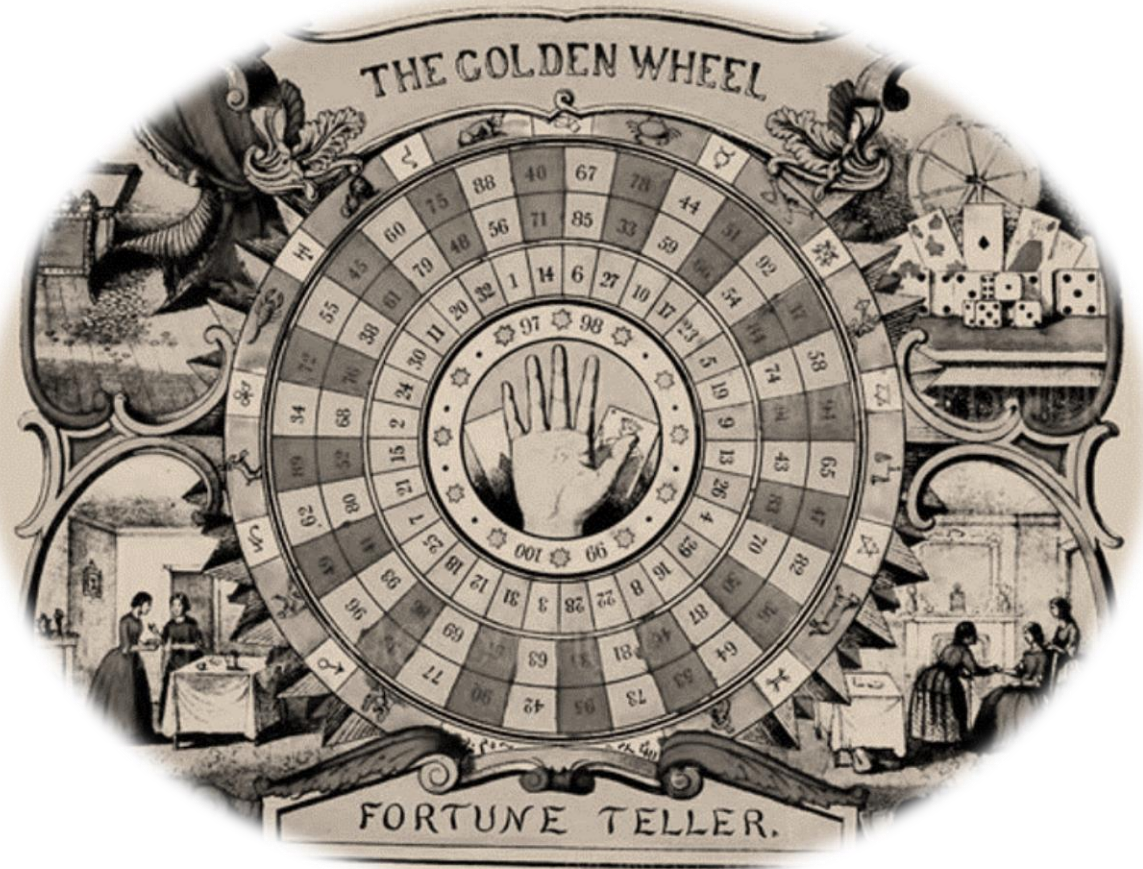
*ROSEWOOD BOXES WOULD CONTAIN AN  
AMPHITHEATER OF FIGURES.*



TURNING A CRANK OR WINDING THE CLOCKWORK  
ON THE SIDE OF THE BOX CREATED SWEET MUSIC  
AND MADE THE FIGURES DANCE FRENZIEDLY.



GYPSY ORACLES AND FORTUNE-TELLERS WERE POPULAR AND GAMES OF PARLOR LOTTO (BINGO) WERE DEVISED.



**BUILDING BLOCKS WERE USED TO BUILD CASTLES  
AND REPLICA COLISEUMS.**



*ALPHABET BLOCKS WERE DECORATED WITH  
ILLUMINATED LETTERS AND ENGRAVINGS,  
SCENES  
OF FOX-HUNTS OR SHIPWRECKS.*



*MUCH AS TODAY, GIRLS WOULD ENJOY PLAYING WITH VICTORIAN DOLLS ALTHOUGH PLASTIC WAS NOT AN OPTION.*







*FACES WERE FORMED FROM WAX OR CHINA  
BISQUE, EYES WERE MADE OF REAL BLUE GLASS  
AND GOLDEN CURLS WERE MADE OF HUMAN HAIR.*



THEIR BEAUTIFUL HANDMADE CLOTHING HAD ALL THE DETAIL, FROM HANDMADE LACE TRIM AND CRINOLINE SKIRTS TO GILT BUTTONS AND FELT HATS OR BONNETS.



BY THE LATE 19TH-CENTURY TIN SOLDIERS WERE BEING MASS-PRODUCED TO RECREATE BATTLE SCENES.



THEY WERE POPULAR FOR BOYS OF ALL AGES... THE  
EARLY TIN SOLDIERS WERE FLAT AND ALMOST  
TWO DIMENSIONAL, ONLY BECOMING FULLY  
ROUNDED LATER.



**MOST VICTORIAN TOYS WERE MADE OUT OF METAL  
OR WOOD BY SKILLED CRAFTSMEN.**





*THEY WERE STURDILY MADE AND CONSEQUENTLY  
MANY HAVE SURVIVED AND CAN NOW BE SEEN  
IN CHILDHOOD MUSEUMS.*



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 115 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 116, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT FASHIONS DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.



# AboutBritain.com

## ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THIS TOPIC:

- [HTTP://WWW.ABOUTBRITAIN.COM/ARTICLES/VICTORIAN-TOYS.ASP](http://www.aboutbritain.com/articles/victorian-toys.asp)





# Baker Street Elementary

"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

JOE FAY  
LIESE SHERWOOD-FABRE  
RUSTY MASON  
&  
STEVE MASON

