The 1880s Speak: Recent Developments in Archeophony

Patrick Feaster • ARSC • 19 May 2012
“Tin Phonograph Cylinder [...] Record”
3D Imaging: Confocal Scanning Probe
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
“Tin Phonograph Cylinder [...] Record”
Early Talking Doll Recording Discovered

On May 11, 2011, scientists at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in Berkeley, California recovered sound from an artifact that historians believe is the earliest surviving talking doll record. The artifact is a ring-shaped cylinder phonograph record made of solid metal, preserved by the National Park Service at Thomas Edison National Historical Park. Phonograph inventor Thomas Edison made the record during the fall or winter of 1888 in West Orange, New Jersey. On the recording, an unidentified woman recites one verse of the nursery rhyme "Twinkle, twinkle, little star". The voice captured on the
June 26, 88

Theo. Hoch, Esq.,
223 East 5th Street,
New York City.

Dear Sirs:

I take pleasure in enclosing herewith Mr. Nelson's check for $15, to cover the expenses of yourself and friends in connection with your recent visit to the laboratory.

Mr. Nelson desires me to thank you for the assistance which you rendered and he hopes at some future time to have the pleasure of seeing you at the laboratory to take some tests in connection with the new photograph, which is a great improvement over the one you tried.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Private Secretary.

Theodore Hoch

25 June 1888
TAED D8818ANT; TAEM 122:394
Scientists Play World's Oldest Commercial Record

This scratchy, 12-second audio clip of a woman reciting the first verse of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" doesn't sound like much. But the faint, 123-year-old recording—etched into a warped metal cylinder and brought back to life after decades of silence by a three-dimensional (3D) optical scanning technique—appears to belong to the first record intended for sale to the public. Made for a talking doll briefly sold by phonograph inventor Thomas Edison, the early record is the oldest known American recording of a woman's voice and may be the oldest known record produced at Edison's laboratory in West Orange, New Jersey.

Early recording. Edison's talking doll, briefly produced in 1890, used a hand-cranked wax cylinder to speak.
Alexander Graham Bell recordings played from 1880s

By BRETT ZONGKER | AP – Wed, Dec 14, 2011

Playback: 130-Year-Old Sounds Revealed

Smithsonian, Library of Congress and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory Partnership Unlocks Mysteries of History, Science and Invention: Presenting a First Listen to the Experimental Sound Recordings of Alexander Graham Bell

December 14, 2011
Volta Laboratory

Alexander Graham Bell
Charles Sumner Tainter
Chichester Bell
photophone
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
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| "The photophone is complete.\nPerfect articulation and\nend sound articulation." | "The photophone is perfect.\nEnd sound articulation."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
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| We satiate our minds with the\nbetween the Smithsonian\nObservatory and the\nFranklin School House." | "Hey! Hey! We satiate our minds\nwith the Franklin School House."

2 June 1880

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
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<td>Coupling</td>
<td>Coupling</td>
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</table>
| "I have a very bad cold,\nso do you hear what I say." | "I have a very bad cold.\nSo do you hear what I say?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
<th>Trilled F2</th>
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</table>
| "I think it wholly unnecessary\nto listen to the Smithsonian\nand there will be nothing\nheard in it." | "I think it wholly unnecessary\nto listen to the Smithsonian.\nAnd there will be nothing\nheard in it."
4 June 1881
6 June 1881
The following words and sounds are recorded upon the cylinder of the enclosed Graphophone: "J-2-a - J-2-r - There are more things in heaven and earth Horatio, than are dreamed of in our philosophy. - J-2-r - I am a Graphophone, and my mother was a Phonograph."
Trrr!

One, two, three, four, five, six.

ca. 18 October 1881
To be, or not to be—that is the question:
Whether it is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them.
To die, to sleep—
Exp III  Nov 17th 1884
Style vibrations to word “Barometer”
H G Rogers
This record has been inscribed by Mister Sumner Tainter and H. G. Rogers. It’s the eleventh day of March, eighteen hundred and eighty five.

[Trilled R] How is this for high! Mary had a little lamb, and its fleece was white as snow, and everywhere that Mary went — oh no.

[Trilled R] Mary had a little lamb, and its fleece was white as snow, and wherever Mary went, the little lamb was sure to go. How is this for high! [...]
“Oh f**k!”
"Oh, fxxx!" The first recorded naughty word
Alexander Graham Bell reading an excerpt from the *Boston Journal* on 13 April 1885

NMAH 287909
“Killarney / Hot Shot March”
ca. 1885
NMAH 287665
Adelbert Theodor Edward Wangemann (1855-1906)
EDISON NOW SATISFIED.

THE PHONOGRAPH IS PERFECTED.

His Machine Will Reproduce All Sounds—Soon to be Turning Out Talking Machines at the Rate of 200 a Day—Doing Away With Stereography—Names Faithfully Recorded.

New Haven Register, 12 May 1888

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A PERFECTED PHONOGRAPH.

Edison’s Wonderful Speaking Machine No Longer a Toy.

Philadelphia Inquirer, 12 May 1888

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EDISON’S TALKING MACHINE.

The Wizard of Llewellyn Park Completes His Phonograph.

A MARVELLOUS EXHIBITION.

Speech and Music Engraved by Sound, Preserved and Articulated Again.

New York Herald, 12 May 1888

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THE PHONOGRAPH’S MUSIC.

Some Difficulties to be Overcome—Recent Changes and Improvements.

New York Post, 12 May 1888

TAED SC88019A; TAEM 146:247
Paris Universal Exposition
1889
Mr. Wagnerman left for Paris
June 15th, 1889.
Tacianu Sisters, Paris, 29 August 1889
Violin played on the Eiffel Tower, Nov. 6, 1889
E1 – *Cornet* [Killarney] Franklin

G2 – Talking [...] W. O. Band

G3 – Banjo –


F5 – *Violin* cello Piano

G6 – *Flute & Piano* Franklin

    Miss Effie Stewart at Orange 89

F7 – Talk & whistling Ned & family

G8 – *Clarionet & Piano*

    Frenchmen Talking Paris

G9 – Talking (Ned)

G10 – *Bugle etc* Violin

G11 – Band Piano & Flute Paris

F12 – *Clarionet* Bugle & W. J. H.

G13 – Piano & Cornet Paris

G14 – Cornet (Hoch) Orange & Paris

G15 – Flute – Eiffel Tower

G16 – *Cornet* Clarionet

    Clarinet, Piano Bugle

G17 – Clarinet, *Piano* Bugle

G18 – Bugle & Singing WJH
Paul Taffanel

Flute – Eiffel Tower

Frenchmen Talking
Paris
NATURALIZED.

No. 365.          Original.

ISSUED.         September 18, 1867.

E. J. E. [Name]

I, E. J. E. [Name], a naturalized and legal citizen of the United States, do hereby apply to the Legation of the United States at [Address], for a passport for myself and wife and my minor children as follows: born at [Place and Date], on the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... and

In support of the above application, I do solemnly swear that I was born at [Place], on or about the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... that I emigrated to the United States, sailing on board the [Ship], from [Place], on the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]..., and arriving at [Port], on the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... that I resided five years uninterruptedly in the United States, from [Date], to [Date], that I was naturalized as a citizen of the United States before the [Court], on the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... which is shown by the accompanying certificate of naturalization; and that I am the bearer of Passport No. [Number], issued on the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... which is returned herewith; that I am the identical person referred to in said certificate and passport; that I am domiciled in the United States, my permanent residence therein being at [City], in the State of [State], where I follow the occupation of [Occupation]; that I last left the United States on the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... on board the [Ship], arriving in [Port], on the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... that I have resided in [Country] since the [Day], of [Month], 18[Year]... that I am now temporarily residing at [Address]... and that I intend to return to the United States and reside there with a purpose of residing and performing the duties of citizenship there.

I desire the passport for the purpose of residing.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any reservation or purpose of evasion: So help me God.

Legation of the United States at [Address].

Sworn to before me, this [Day], of [Month], 18[Year].

[Signature]

Description of Applicant.

Age: [Age] years.

Stature: [Height] feet [Inches].

Complexion: [Complexion].

Hair: [Color].

Eyes: [Color].

Nose: [Description].

Identification.

I hereby certify that I know the above named [Name] personally, and know him to be the identical person referred to in the within-described Certificate of Naturalization, and that the facts stated in his affidavit are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

[Address of witness]

Note: This form is to be filed out to be legible, unless being attested at the time of the Legation and the other forwarded with the quarterly report to the Department of State. It may be so filled out by the applicant, in which case its transmission is chargeable.
Johannes Brahms, Hungarian Dance #1, recorded in Vienna on 2 December 1889
Alfred Grünfeld (1852-1924), self-composed Hungarian Rhapsody, recorded in Vienna on 18 November 1889
Otto Neitzel (1852-1920), *Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, 3rd movement* (adaptation) by Frédéric Chopin, recorded in Cologne, 23 January 1890
First Chopin recording released by US museum

2nd February 2012

The first-ever recording of Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor can now be heard

The Thomas Edison National Historical Park museum in the US has released what is thought to be the first-ever recording of Polish-born composer Fryderyk Chopin’s music.

In 1957, 17 wax cylinders containing recordings of speeches by former German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, and significant historical recordings of famous German and Hungarian musicians, were discovered in an unlabeled box in Thomas Edison’s laboratory in
Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898)
[Wangemann:] Friedrichsruh am siebten Oktober achtzehnhundertneunundachtzig.

[Bismarck:] In good old colony times, When we lived under the King, Three roguish chaps fell into mishaps Because they could not sing.

Als Kaiser Rotbart lobesam Zum heil'gen Land gezogen kam, Da mußt er mit dem frommen Heer Durch ein Gebirge wüst und leer.

Friedrichsruh on the seventh of October 1889.

When good Emperor Redbeard Was journeying to the Holy Land, He had to go with his pious army Through mountains desolate and empty.
Let us rejoice, therefore, While we are young. 
After a pleasant youth After a troubling old age 
The earth will have us.

Arise, children of the Fatherland, 
The day of glory has arrived! 
Against us of tyranny The bloody banner is raised.

Do everything in moderation and morality, namely work, but then also eating, and apart from that especially drinking. 
Advice of a father to his son.
Bismarcks Stimme aus dem Grab

Eine 123 Jahre alte Aufnahme beweist: Der Eiserne Kanzler hatte keine Fistelstimme

Kreisau (Krzyżowa)

Helmuth von Moltke
"Herr Wangemann is here with Mister Edison’s telephone and is currently...."
Edison's Files Reveal the Only Known Voice Recording of Someone Born in the 18th Century

Many of the most significant moments of the 20th century are written in our brains not as naked text but as audio files. Who can think of Neil Armstrong, zooming across the landing of Kennedy’s expedition to a...
Helmuth von Moltke, der große Schweiger
(1800-1891)
[Adelbert Theodor Emil Wangemann:]  
Altenkirchen, den Vierzehnten, ah,  
Januar 1889 [sic. 1890]. Lieber Adalbert,  
ah, hier ist, ah ah, die Odo und, ah, Julius  
und die Kinder und wir wollen Dir alle  
etwas sagen. Theo.

[Ottilie "Odo" (Wangemann) Klaube:]  
Lieber Adalbert, wir freuen uns sehr dass  
 wir durch den Phonograph selber etwas  
sagen können. Wir haben ein sehr  
gemütliches Weihnachtsfest zusammen  
gefeiert und haben uns sehr gefreut dass  
Theo und Anne bei uns waren und  
hoffen dass Ihr auch bald mal zu uns  
kommt. Wär ich sehr über [...]. Lasst  
recht gut gehen und denkt zuweilen an  
Eure Odo.

[Julius Klaube:] Sehen wir Euch bald  
wieder bei uns. Julius.

Altenkirchen, the fourteenth of, ah,  
January 1889. Dear Adalbert, uh, here  
is, uh, uh, Odo and, uh, Julius and the  
children and we all want to say  
something to you. Theo.

Dear Adalbert, we're happy that we can  
say something to you through the  
phonograph ourselves. We have  
celebrated a very cozy Christmas  
together and were very happy that  
Theo and Anne were with us and hope  
that you will soon come to us too. I'd be  
very [...] about [...]. Hope things are  
going well, and think from time to time  
of your Odo.

Hope we'll see you with us again soon.  
Julius.
14 July 1889

Mr. Thomas A. Edison,

Dear Sir,

On my arrival here I found as expected the phonograph running steadily, some readers fair & there was nothing with either to keep or to keep my act. I have worked daily from six to 11 o'clock in the Exhibition helping partly Mr. Hammer & instruct the boys on all points of making records & showing the Phonograph to important & prominent people visiting the Gallerie des Machines. Mr. Hammer having been ill with fever, I had to take right hold in the Exposition. The Phonograph now is in good what I consider to your satisfaction. Few days after my arrival the fair of the Phonograph class came & I arrived just in time to show off the phonograph.
something like this:

Just pointing

Sex was

said of a bow

view

of "Under the

old apple tree"
Ah, aahaahaah, oohoooh ! Bonjour Monsieur le Graphophone, racontez-nous quelque chose s'il vous plaît.

Ah, aahaahaahah, oohoooh ! Good day, Mister Graphophone, tell us something if you please.
Nous allons chanter à la ronde,
Si vous voulez,
Que je l'adore
et qu'elle est blonde
Comme les blés.

We’ll sing in rounds,
If you want,
For I adore her
and she is blonde
As the corn.
“The phonograph makes it possible for a man who has already rested long in the grave once again to raise his voice and greet the present.”
—Helmuth von Moltke