

# European Telephone Story: P. Vande Meerssche: Brussels, Belgium

by Jan Verhelst

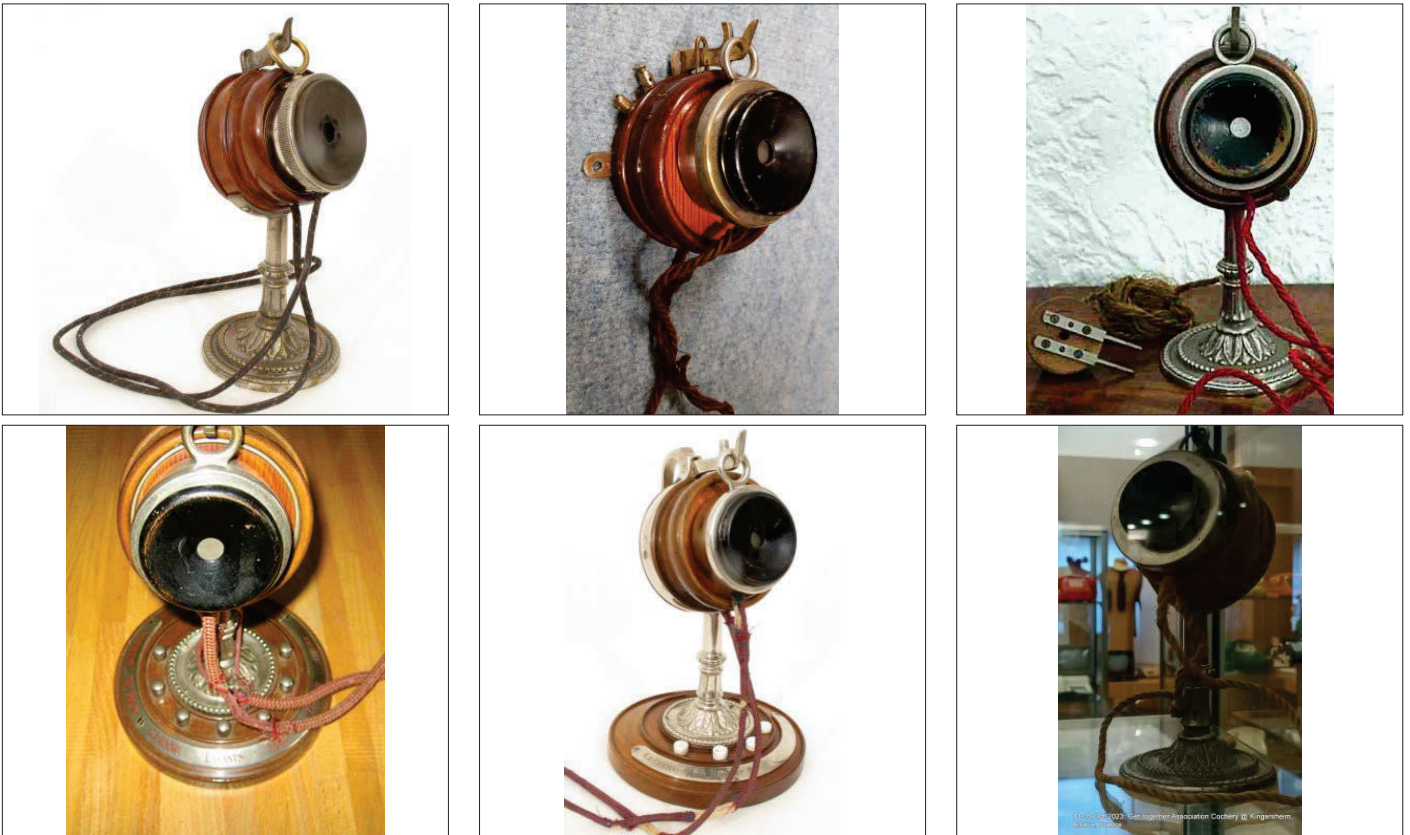


Fig. 1 - Variants of Vande Meerssche phones

Vande Meerssche was a Belgian manufacturer of beautiful ornated telephones in “Art Nouveau” style, operating in Brussels between at least 1888 and 1930. It was basically an electrician who also supplied telephones to upper class customers. Table and wall models were available.

It was a typical “patriarchal” telephone. The “boss” could give orders to his “household staff” from his office. The household staff could call the boss only. The devices have definitely a “Art Nouveau” signature. Not surprisingly, such phone is also on the desk of Art Nouveau architect Victor Horta (see Fig. 2).

The Fig. 2 picture was taken at the desk of his Brussels office.



Fig. 2 - Art Nouveau architect Victor Horta with a Vande Meerssche telephone (1905)

International collectors (France, Switzerland) urgently request information about the Belgian telephone manufacturer Vande Meerssche and to our regret we cannot find any-

thing so far, no catalogue, no flyers. He lived in various locations in Brussels during the period 1888-1930, and as an electrician he also supplied electric bells to his customers.

Fig. 1 sources: Collection of:

- Association Adolphe Cochéry, France
- Urs Wehrle, Switzerland
- Leo De Boeck, Belgium
- Filip Van Steenkiste, Belgium
- <http://www.antibrocdeletour.com/Les-collections/1-images/telephone-ancien-mobile-Vande-Meerssche-1890.jpg>

Fig. 2 source:

- <https://www.artiststudiomuseum.org/studio-museums/hortamuseum/>

