

My third one is a book of reference (in English) about the lives, the inventions, the apparatus, the companies,...of 15 famous telegraph inventors in the 19th century.

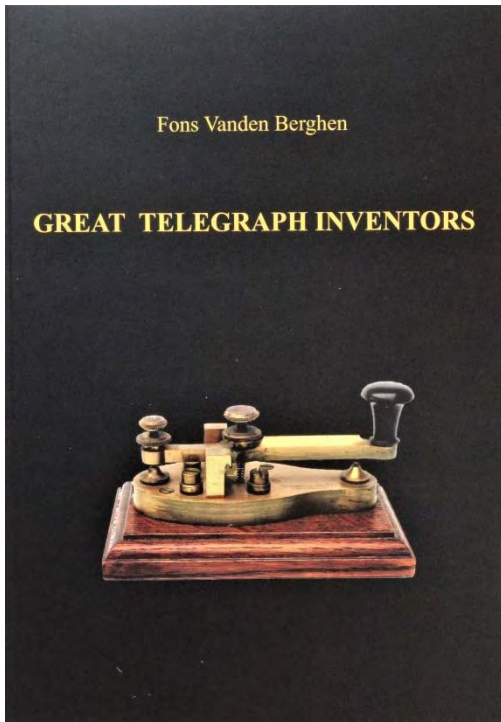


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PART OF MY INTRODUCTION

This book, intended as a reference work, is primarily written for 'keen collectors' of telegraph instruments. Here collectors will find plenty of background information about a number of important inventors of their desirable items. As a bonus I have also included a very large number of photos of devices that once were in my collection. as well as other illustrations that have a link to these inventors (over 800 in total!).

As I am focusing on the inventors, you will not learn a lot about the telegraphs and other telegraph apparatus as such. I have covered all of this in my second book 'Het Internet van de 19-de Eeuw' ('The Internet of the 19th Century'), spread over 434 pages and illustrated with about 650 photos. It is free to download (see the homepage of my website www.telegraphy.eu . That book is in Dutch, but the many images are in an 'international language'.

(Note that my 'Flemish English' in the book has been corrected by native speakers.)

A REVIEW

Here is a review from an independent reader (who doesn't know me): Paul Wills, Coatesville, PA - USA

Great Inventors of Telegraphs - About the lives, the inventions, the apparatus, the companies, ... of 15 famous telegraph inventors in the 19th century by Fons Vanden Berghen takes a slightly different approach in presenting the history of telegraphic technology. Rather than writing merely a biography or technical book, he chose to include both subjects in his overview of inventors.

I say “overview” because it covers many of the important people who contributed to the science of distant communication. The term overview, however, is not sufficient as the author provides much more information than would be expected from a simple overview. For example, in each chapter, the reader will find a brief biography of the inventor followed by a description of the challenges that he encountered while turning his idea into a marketable system.

The author then goes into some technical detail that includes schematics, patent drawings, and detailed photographs to describe how that system worked. He finishes with a collection of historic illustrations and beautiful photographs of restored equipment; about all of which were from his collection.

What results, then, is an “overview” of inventors that still looks deeper into the personal and technological details about the inventor and his invention(s). This makes it perfect for the person who doesn’t want to read a complete biography of an inventor but still wants more than a cursory paragraph or two. For those who want to go deeper, the author provides a bibliography at the end of each chapter.

The book starts with the semaphore system developed by Claude Chappe (as well as several other “visual” communications systems) and ends up with Marconi’s wireless telegraph while covering everything in between including printing telegraph systems. Supplements are included at the end that provide a summary of other inventors that deserve mention as well as a brief look at the manufacturing of the early telegraph equipment.

To summarize; lots of interesting reading and plenty of illustrations. What more could the telecommunications enthusiast want?

Interested in it? Contact me > fons.vandenberghen@telenet.be (copy/paste)
