

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



# Baker Street Elementary

THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# A033 -- IT'S THE DARBIES FOR YOU -- FEBRUARY, 2022





**WELCOME TO TOPIC # 033... TODAY, WATSON AND I WILL LOOK AT THE USE OF HANDCUFFS IN THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.**



**HANDCUFFS WERE USED TO DETAIN NINE PERSONS  
IN THE CANON:**





**JEFFERSON HOPE IN A STUDY IN SCARLET; JONATHAN SMALL IN THE SIGN OF THE FOUR; JOHN CLAY IN 'THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE'; (REFERRED TO AS 'DERBIES,' BUT PRONOUNCED 'DARBIES')**





ABE SLANEY IN 'THE DANCING MEN'; PATRICK CAIRNS IN  
'BLACK PETER'; JOSIAH BROWN IN 'SIX NAPOLEONS';  
CULVERTON SMITH IN 'DETECTIVE'  
COUNT SYLVIUS AND SAM MERTON IN 'MAZARIN STONE'



**RESTRAINING PRISONERS, CRIMINALS, SLAVES, OR OTHERS TO DETER THEIR ABILITY TO FLEE OR INJURE PEOPLE MOST LIKELY DATES BACK TO PREHISTORIC TIMES.**



**BINDINGS MADE OF HIDES OR OTHER MATERIAL  
WERE PROBABLY THE FIRST SUCH BONDS.**





ONCE METAL WORK DEVELOPED, HAND AND FOOT SHACKLES WERE DESIGNED.



THESE WERE MOST LIKELY CREATED EVEN PRIOR TO COINS, APPEARING IN THE BRONZE AGE AND REQUIRING A RIVET TO SECURE THEM.



**THE GREEKS AND OTHERS USED SHACKLES TO CONTROL PRISONERS OF WAR. CHARIOTS FULL OF THESE DEVICES WOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE BATTLEFIELD IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ENEMIES' CAPTURE.**



THE DESIGN INVOLVED A U-SHAPED PIECE OF METAL AROUND THE WRISTS AND CLOSED BY A BAR THAT COULD EITHER BE STAMPED SHUT AS A MORE PERMANENT DEVICE OR LOCKED TO RESTRAIN SOMEONE TEMPORARILY.



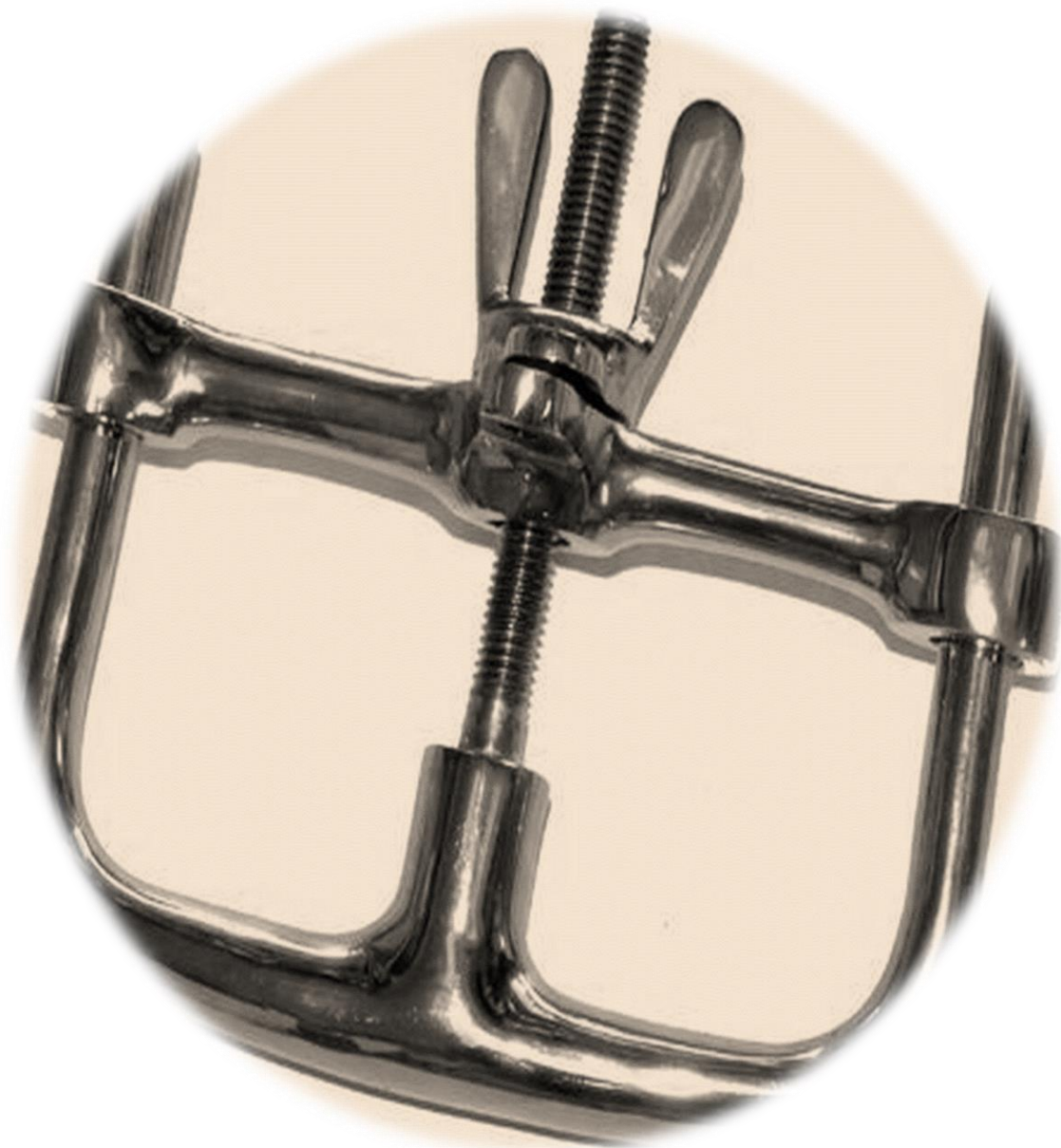
**THIS 'ONE SIZE FITS ALL' DEVICE CREATED A MAJOR DRAWBACK. PRISONERS WITH SMALL ENOUGH HANDS OR WRISTS COULD SLIP THEM OFF AND ESCAPE.**



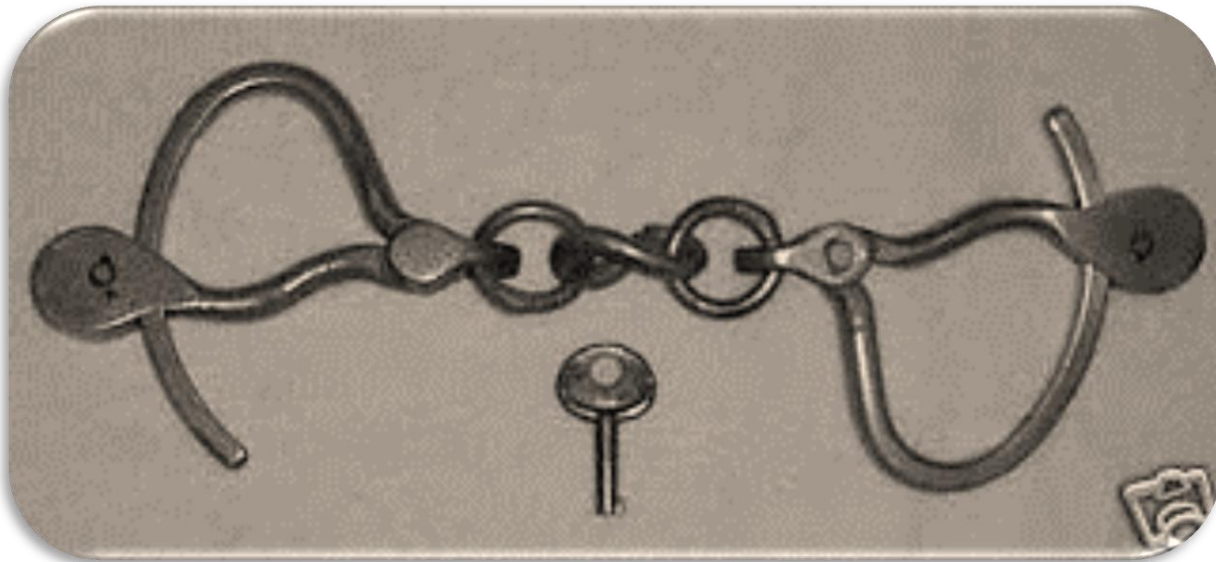
IN THE EARLY 1800s, THE MOST COMMON HANDCUFFS USED IN BRITAIN WERE THE 'BANGO,' WHICH RESEMBLED A DOUBLE OXEN YOKE FOR THE HANDS AND DID NOT PERMIT ANY MOVEMENT, AND THE 'FLEXIBLE' (OR DARBY) WITH A LINK BETWEEN THE CUFFS ON EACH HAND THAT ALLOWED SOME MOVEMENT, SUCH AS FOR EATING.



**BOTH OF THESE WERE STILL 'ONE SIZE FITS ALL' AND  
REQUIRED SOME EFFORT TO PLACE ON THE PRISONER.**



**THE INTRODUCTION OF RATCHETS, PATENTED BY W.V. ADAMS IN 1862, ON A CUFF WITH A 'SWING GATE' CREATED THE FIRST ADJUSTABLE BINDINGS TO FIT LARGE AND SMALL WRISTS.**

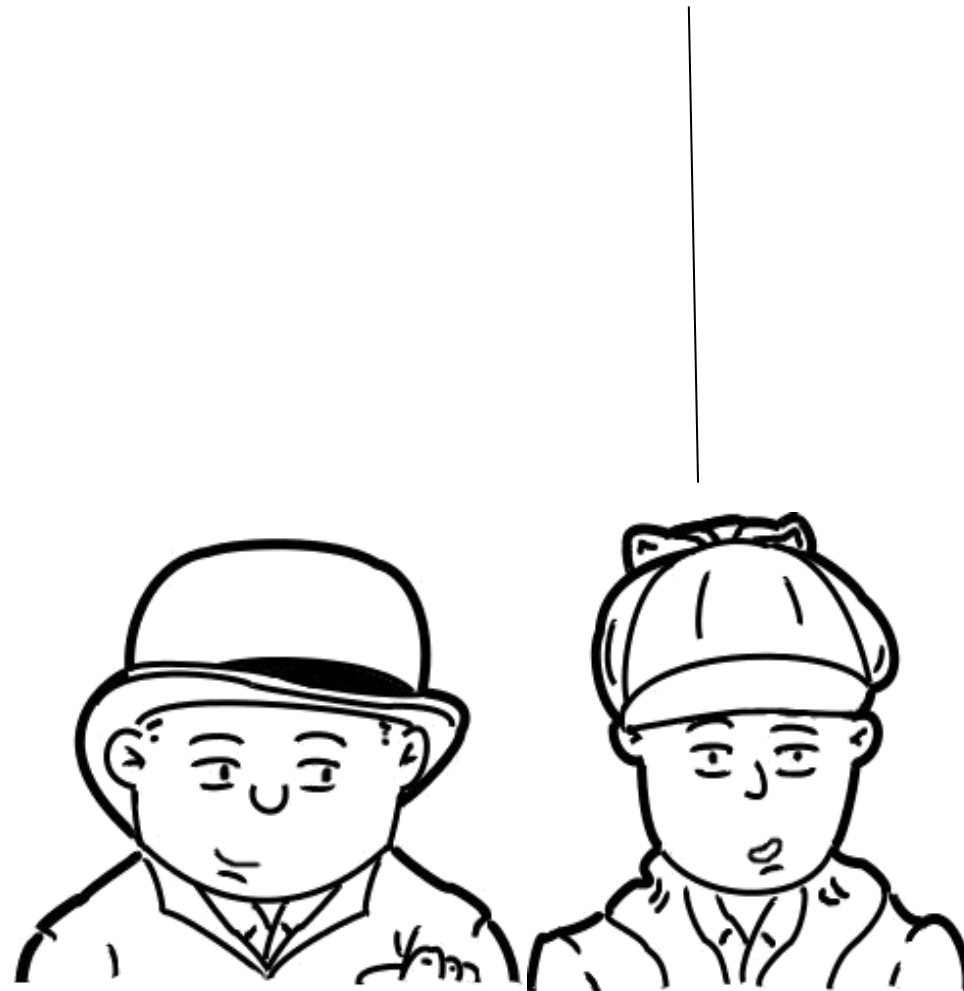




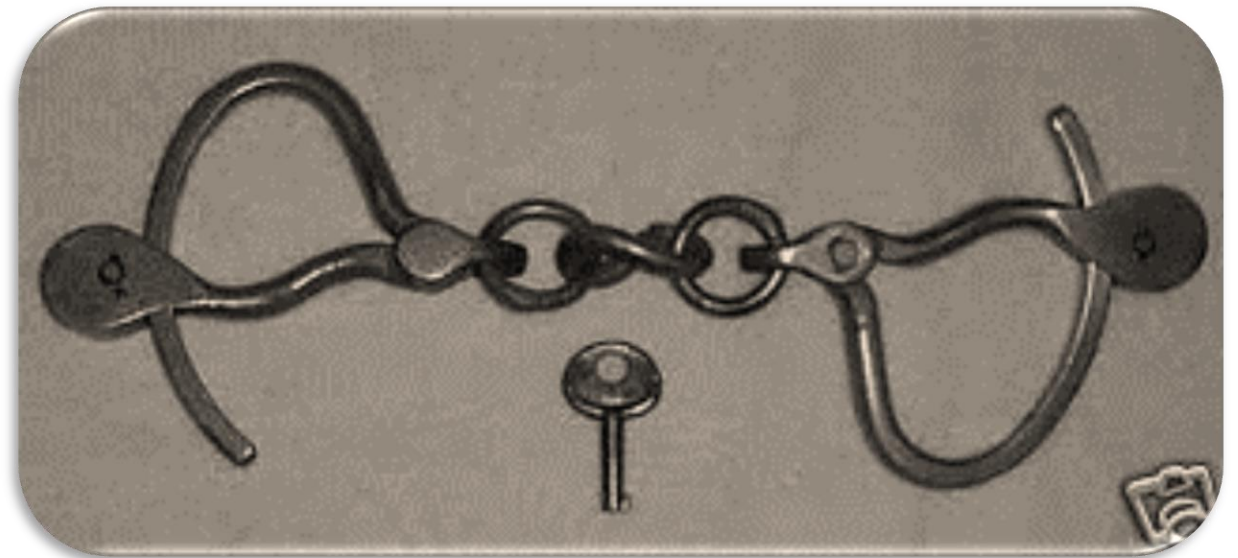
SEVERAL ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS TO THIS DESIGN BY JOHN TOWER INCLUDED THE RATCHET NOTCHES ON THE INSIDE OF THE SWING GATE, THE PLACEMENT OF THE LOCK CASE ON THE SIDE OF THE FRAME, AND A RELEASE BUTTON TO KEEP THE CUFFS FROM LOCKING UNTIL APPLIED TO THE PRISONER'S WRIST.



*SUCH RESTRAINTS, HOWEVER, COULD BE SHIMMIED BY SLIDING A PIECE OF METAL BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES OF THE CUFF.*



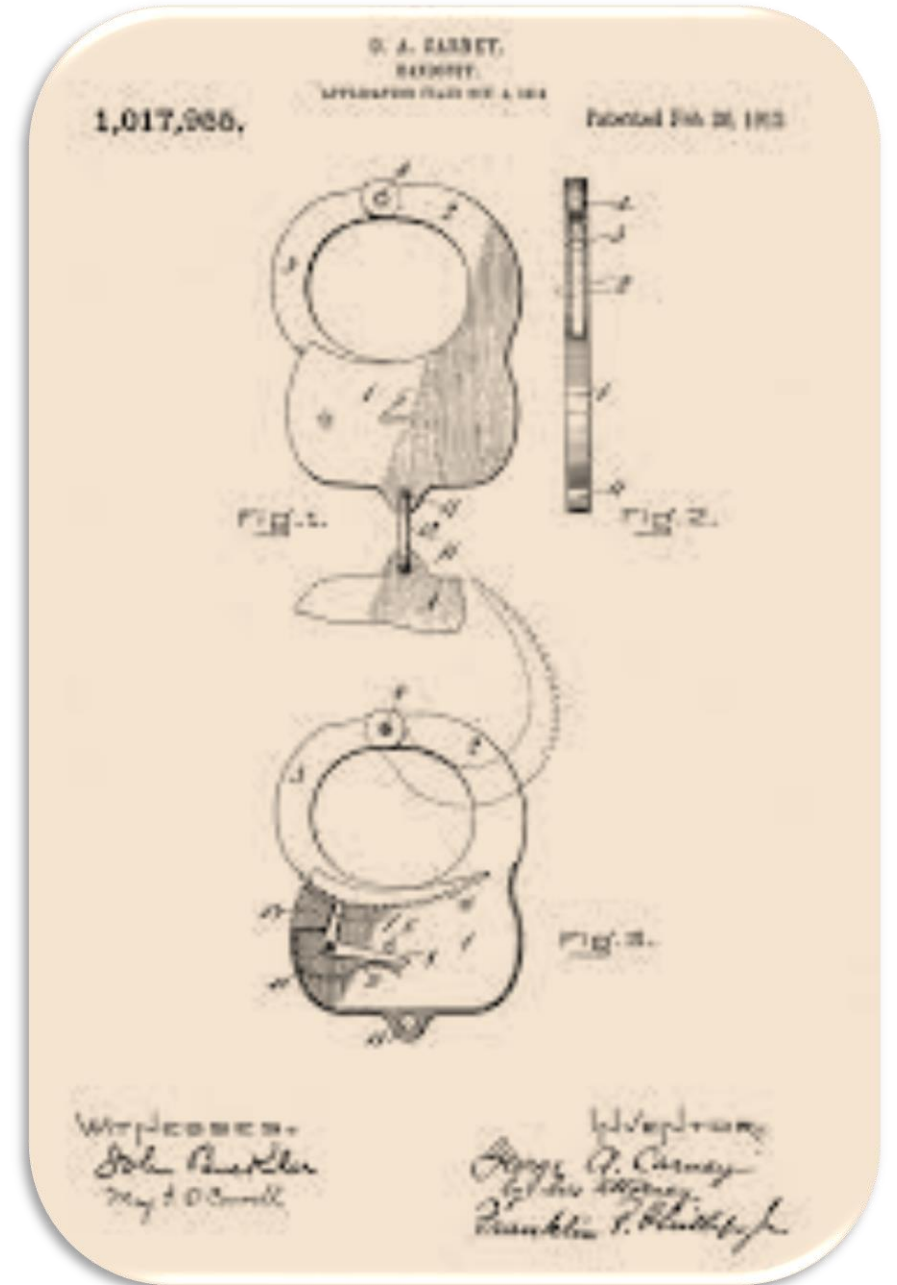
THEY WERE ALSO DIFFICULT TO LOCK BECAUSE THE  
KEY HAD TO BE TURNED SEVERAL TIMES.



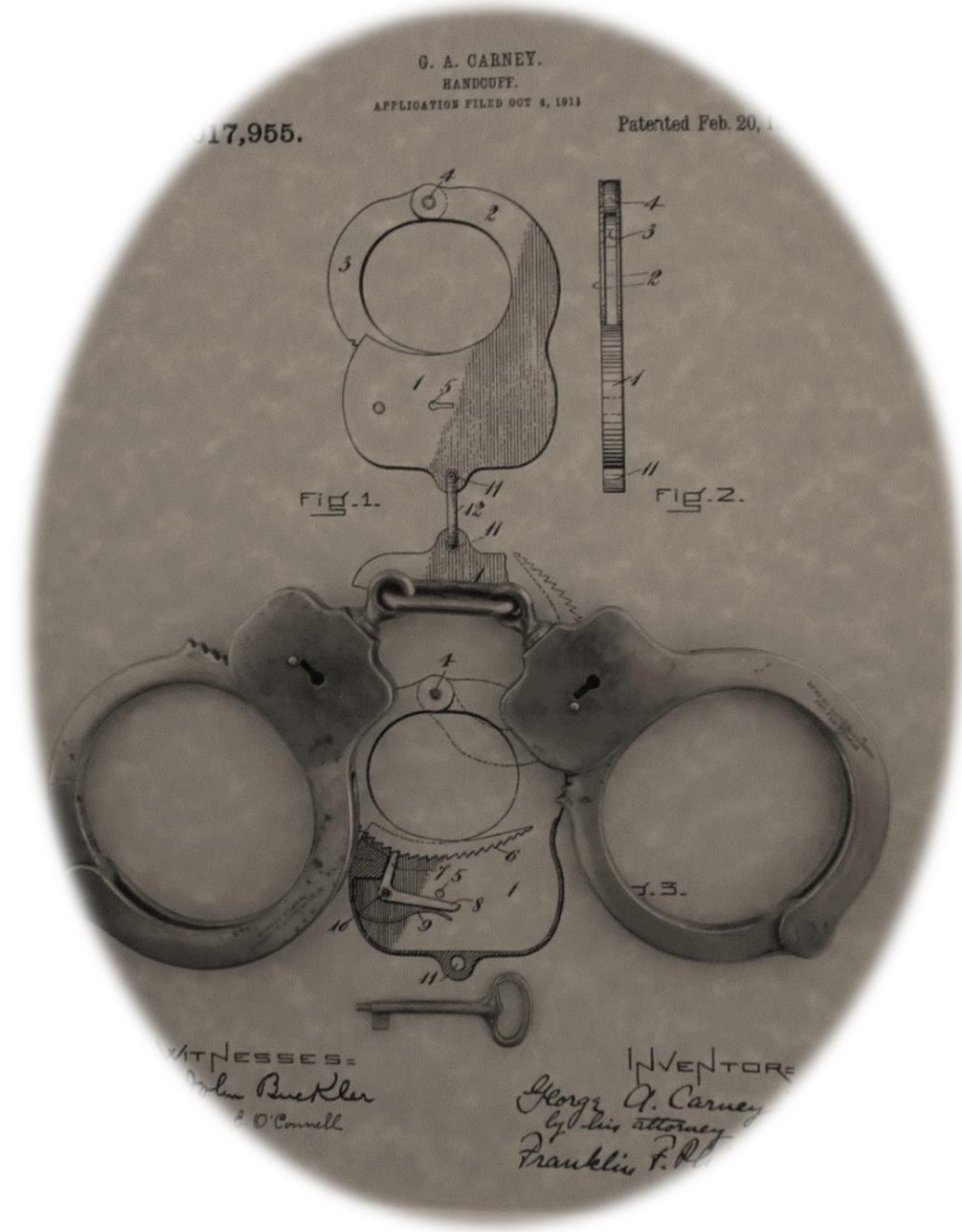
THESE DRAWBACKS, HOWEVER, WERE ADDRESSED  
IN 1912 BY GEORGE CARNEY.



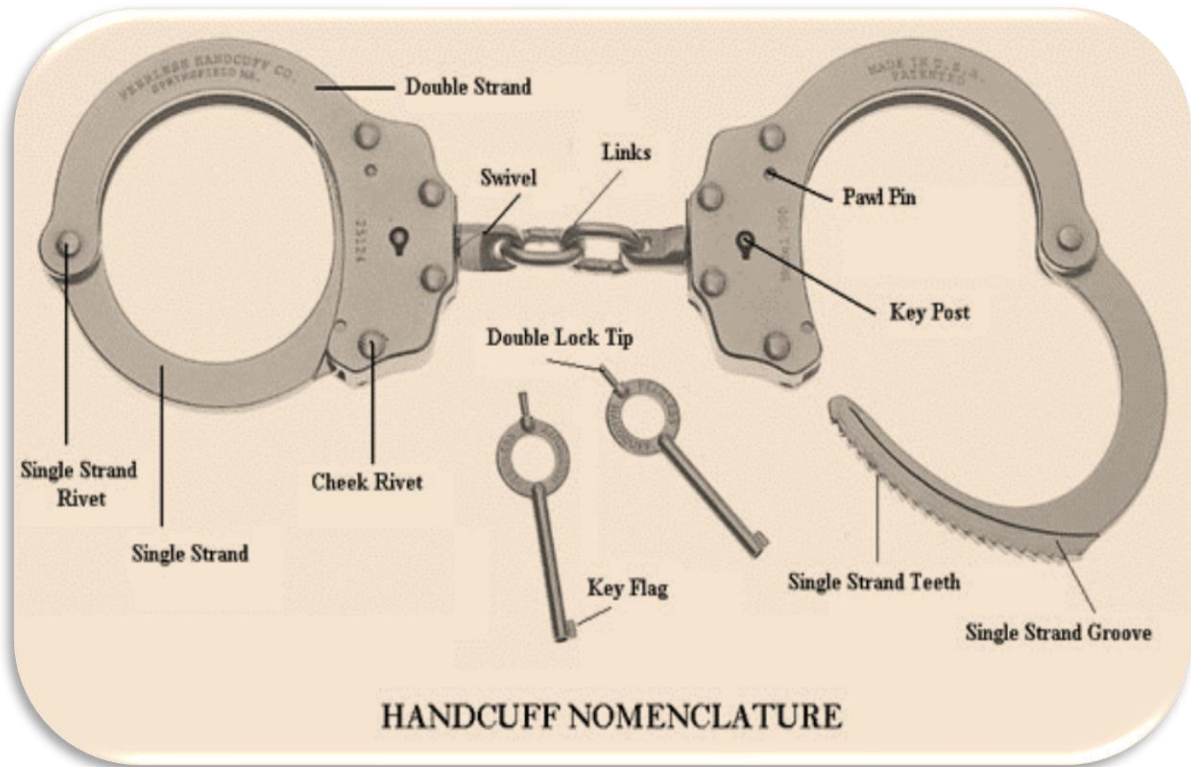
THE DEVICE HE PATENTED RESEMBLE THOSE USED TODAY: A LIGHTWEIGHT, SWING-THRU GATE DESIGN THAT COULD BE SECURED WITHOUT A KEY.



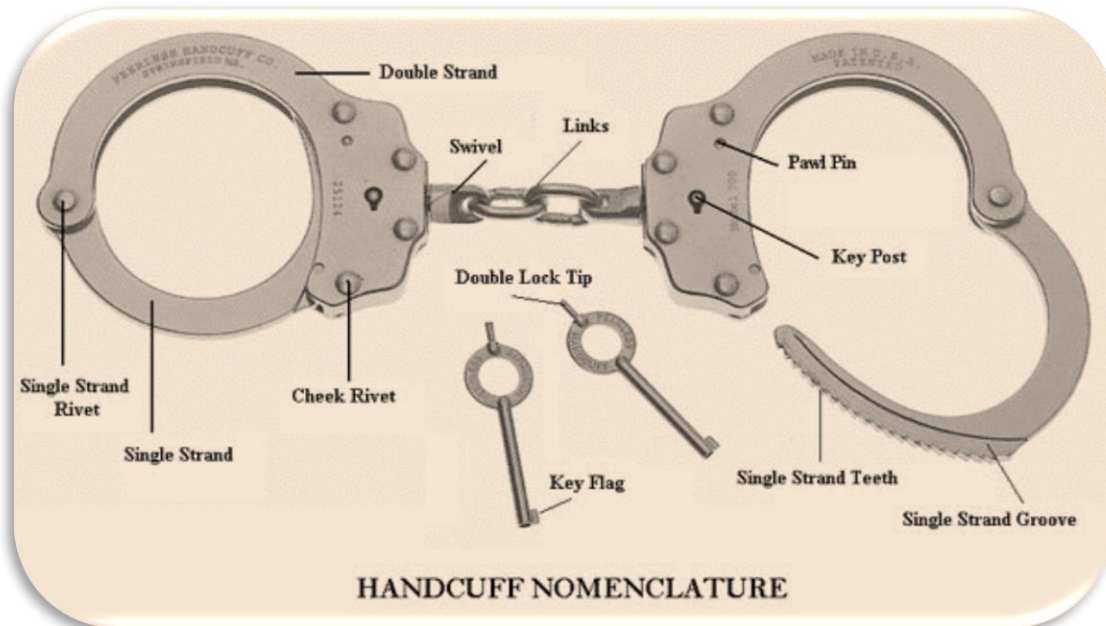
EASILY SLAPPED ONTO A PERSON'S WRIST, A  
POLICEMAN ONLY NEEDED ONE HAND TO QUICKLY  
RESTRAIN A CRIMINAL.



- THE MAJOR PARTS OF A HANDCUFF INCLUDE:**
- 1. THE SINGLE STRAND, THE MOVING PART THAT LOOSENS OR TIGHTENS THE CUFF**
  - 2. THE TEETH OR RATCHET AT THE END OF THE SINGLE STRAND TO HOLD IT IN PLACE AFTER PASSING INTO**
  - 3. THE DOUBLE STRAND OR GAP THAT HOLDS THE SINGLE STRAND IN PLACE BY**



4. THE PAWL, WHICH IS SPRING-LOADED AND MUST BE MOVED UP TO ALLOW THE SINGLE STRAND TO PASS INTO THE DOUBLE STRAND. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BY INSERTING A KEY INTO A KEY POST
5. THE KEYWAY
6. A RIVET CONNECTS THE SINGLE STRAND TO THE DOUBLE STRAND AND IS WHAT ALLOWS THE CUFF TO ADJUST AROUND THE WRIST
7. A LINK ATTACHES THE TWO CUFFS AND ALLOWS LIMITED MOVEMENT





*IN THREE CASES IN THE CANON, HANDCUFFS WERE REFERRED TO AS 'BRACELETS,' AND INTERESTINGLY...*



**...WOMEN ACTUALLY WORE GOLD BRACELETS THAT RESEMBLED HANDCUFFS IN THE LATE VICTORIAN ERA.**



THESE WERE OFTEN PRESENTED BY A GENTLEMAN  
TO A YOUNG WOMAN IN PLACE OF AN  
ENGAGEMENT RING TO INDICATE THE WOMAN  
WAS NOW 'BOUND' TO HER FUTURE HUSBAND.





*WHETHER CRIMINAL OR FUTURE BRIDE, EITHER MIGHT  
BE TOLD THEY 'HAD A FINE PAIR OF BRACELETS.'*



*SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 033 IN OUR SERIES...*

*IN TOPIC # 034, WE WILL LOOK AT THE USE OF CANS DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.*



## REFERENCES FOR THIS TOPIC:

- [HTTPS://UNITEDLOCKSMITH.NET/BLOG/THE-HISTORY-OF-HANDCUFFS](https://UNITEDLOCKSMITH.NET/BLOG/THE-HISTORY-OF-HANDCUFFS)
- [HTTP://TORTUREMUSEUM.NET/EN/THE-STAND-OF-SHACKLES/](http://TORTUREMUSEUM.NET/EN/THE-STAND-OF-SHACKLES/)
- [HTTPS://UNITEDLOCKSMITH.NET/BLOG/THE-HISTORY-OF-HANDCUFFS](https://UNITEDLOCKSMITH.NET/BLOG/THE-HISTORY-OF-HANDCUFFS)
- [HTTPS://WWW.BLUELINE.CA/A\\_HISTORY\\_OF\\_HANDCUFFS-2396/](https://WWW.BLUELINE.CA/A_HISTORY_OF_HANDCUFFS-2396/)
- [HTTP://LAWENFORCEMENTSERVICES.BIZ/LAW\\_ENFORCEMENT\\_SERVICES,\\_LLC/ANTIQUE\\_HANDCUFFS\\_FILES/A%20BRIEF%20HISTORY%20OF%20US%20HANDCUFFS.PDF](http://LAWENFORCEMENTSERVICES.BIZ/LAW_ENFORCEMENT_SERVICES,_LLC/ANTIQUE_HANDCUFFS_FILES/A%20BRIEF%20HISTORY%20OF%20US%20HANDCUFFS.PDF)
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- [HTTP://LAWENFORCEMENTSERVICES.BIZ/LAW\\_ENFORCEMENT\\_SERVICES,\\_LLC/ANTIQUE\\_HANDCUFFS\\_FILES/A%20BRIEF%20HISTORY%20OF%20US%20HANDCUFFS.PDF](http://LAWENFORCEMENTSERVICES.BIZ/LAW_ENFORCEMENT_SERVICES,_LLC/ANTIQUE_HANDCUFFS_FILES/A%20BRIEF%20HISTORY%20OF%20US%20HANDCUFFS.PDF)
- [HTTPS://WWW.MIMIMATTHEWS.COM/2017/10/02/VICTORIAN-HANDCUFF-BRACELETS-FOR-ENGAGEMENT-AND-MARRIAGE/](https://WWW.MIMIMATTHEWS.COM/2017/10/02/VICTORIAN-HANDCUFF-BRACELETS-FOR-ENGAGEMENT-AND-MARRIAGE/)



# Baker Street *Elementary*

"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

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