

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Alexander Melville Bell, Eliza Symonds Bell, Carrie Bell, April 14, 1873, with transcript

3rd copy Copy of a letter written by Alexander Graham Bell to his parents and Carrie. 35 Nest Newton Street, Boston, April 14th, 1873. Dear Papa, Mama and Carrie:

Just after writing my letter to you at Buffalo and while we were at dinner preparatory to going to the Railway station — a couple came to the house wanting to be married. The young man had been to see Dr. Hurd the evening before so it was not wholly unexpected.

Dr. Hurd said we had ten minutes or so to spare so that he might as well perform the ceremony before we sent to the train. As the young people came alone I was called in as a witness. The affair was managed very simply — without any ring and within the specified ten minutes !!

The girl was very pretty and only 18. The young man did not seem more than of age.

I do not know what their names were nor did they know mine — but I shook hands with them nevertheless and wished them all happiness. I remember Dr. Hurd told me the girl's maiden name was Metz. I think from the appearance of affairs, that they are a run away couple.

I was just in time for the train, and sped away towards Rochester. At Rochester I got a sleeping car which went as far as Albany — and then was put on to a side track to wait for the Monday morning train for Boston. This delay at Albany of four and a half hours prevented me from reaching Boston till 4 p. m. to-day.

## Library of Congress

The whole country in New York State seems to be flooded. 2 Even the train passed through water for miles and miles. In the neighbourhood of the Seneca River the water had flooded the country for miles around. I could see no railway track, and nothing to indicate it except the avenue of telegraph posts. One might indeed have supposed that the train was rushing into the middle of one of the lakes. I got quite frightened at the rashness of taking a train along a submerged line, especially as it was evident that the water on each side of the track must have been very deep for not a shrub, nor tree of any kind could be seen except upon the distant hills.

I took off my boots, and put on my slippers — so that if any accident happened I could swim for it.

On going out on the platform to be prepared for anything, I found the water was on a level with the lowest step of the car so that the railroad track, at this part, must have been submerged about three feet !! Could you imagine anything rasher than rushing on blindly in this way? Of course speed had been slackened — but still we went so fast that every wheel was sending up a perfect spout of water. I looked at my watch and it was twenty-five minutes before the track emerged from the water. On two or three other occasions we passed through the midst of a flood. I am sure that, adding all together, we cannot have passed over less than fifteen miles of submerged lines! On entering Massachusetts there was a marked change in the climate. Spring had not commenced . The ground was still frozen, and in many places there was sufficient snow to afford sleighing. I saw one or two sleighs out.

3

All through the Eastern part of Massachusetts the snow is still lying. Boston is quite cold after Brantford.

With much love, Aleck. Prof. A. Melville Bell, Brantford, Ontario, Canada.