

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Alexander Melville Bell, September 11, 1898, with transcript

Copy of letter written by Alexander Graham Bell to his father. Boston, Mass. September 11, 1898. Dear Papa:

We leave here for San Francisco tomorrow afternoon. Will sail on S. S. Coptic for Honolulu and Japan.

Address all communications care of The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, at Yokohama, Japan.

I enclose a few Kite photos. The Man-hole Kite is my latest. Flise nicely. It is intended as a model for Kite to carry a man. Mr. Ellis is now building a Monster upon same plan and when I returned from Japan — well — I will see about going up in it!

The Man-hole Kite just as it is, could be used in actual warfare (without any man in it) to drop high explosives on the enemy's position. The dynamite would be released by action of electromagnet. Two wires employed to hold Kite will furnish the circuit and the breaking of the circuit would bring down the dynamite.

For observation purposes the Kite would undoubtedly prove superior to a balloon — Could be moved right over the enemy's position if desired. Altitude and a small metallic shield at lower part of man-hole would protect man against bullets. Altitude would reduce impact and shield cause shots togglance. The rest of the Kite might be peppered full of holes without materially injuring its flying properties.

I have sent Mrs. Bell a set of photos of our Sable Island trip — Hope they will reach her safely.

Library of Congress

We take Charles with us. Did you see his little pamphlet about Adventures of a Valet in Italy? I suppose next you will be seeing about a Valet's adventures in Sable Island and Japan.

2

Party will consist of Mable, Elsie, Daisy and self, with Charles in attendance.

It is difficult to get off. So many things to do at last moment.

With much love to both, not forgetting Mary, Louise, Uncle David, Aunt Ellen and Aileen.

Your loving son, Alexander Graham Bell.