

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, May 10, 1878

Letter written by Alexander Graham Bell to his Mother. 57 West Cromwell Road, S. W., Friday — May 10th, 1878. My dear Mama:

Our little baby has at last come into the world — unlike its Papa and Mama — punctual — and on time to the minute. On Wednesday morning before daylight she began to rebel against the restraints of an irksome confinement and at a quarter before seven in the evening she popped into this world with as lusty a shout as ever demonstrated the possession of a healthy pair of lungs. Such a funny black little thing it is! Perfectly formed — with a full crop of dark hair — bluish eyes — and a complexion so swarthy that Mabel declares she has given birth to a red Indian!

I can't say much about good looks — I never could see beauty in a baby — but she is our own baby and that is enough for us.

We are quite contented to take her just as she has been given to us — and we welcome her to our home as heartily as we were ourselves welcomed into this world. Poor Mabel had a fearful time — and even begged to be killed — but it is all over now — and the pain and the anguish have been quite forgotten in the happiness of the mother in the possession of her child.

With a good doctor — and a careful nurse — and loving friends all round — Mabel seems in a fair way to make a speedy recovery. The next great event will be the naming of our child. We have not the faintest idea of the name it will bear — but the English law will compel us to decide very speedily. I don't suppose we shall settle upon a name for some time to come so give us the benefit of your suggestions. Mabel and I had agreed that I should name baby if a boy and she if a girl — so the decision will rest with her.

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We are all very much troubled and distressed on Gertrude's account. She has been very ill since her arrival here and the doctors give us very little encouragement for her recovery. She is now breathing through one lung alone, the other being congested. At present there is no active disease — but the danger is that with her delicate constitution and evident tendency towards pulmonary trouble — the lung may fail to recover its power and become the seat of active disease. We hope for the best — but you can understand how much care and anxiety we have with our two invalids. Poor Mrs. Hubbard is so anxious and careworn but she keeps up wonderfully well. Dear Mama, I wish I could only be with you now — or that you could be here. How far away you seem. Three thousand miles of land and sea between us. I do hope you are all well. With ever so much love to Papa and to my cousins and to all in town — in which Mabel would join if she were awake.

Your loving son, Alec. Mrs. A. Melville Bell, Brantford, Ontario.