

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 10 E. 14th St. Tuesday. (1876) My dear Alec:

Did you get my last evening's letter soon after the first one? I can't bear to think of your having the first one and having to wait so long for the other to tell you I had found out my mistake and was very sorry. Appearances were against you and I did not know you well enough in that way to be sure how you would act. I have little to tell you today. The eternal sewing goes on without our seeming to accomplish very much. Mamma and Auntie and the children have each a new dress apiece, now it is Sister's and my turn. I sat all this morning without a dress on because the seamstress had both my two gowns!

I had a very kind note from your mother this morning enclosing one for you which I return, having taken off the envelope in order to enclose the letter better. Pray don't suspect me of peeping into its contents. How could I when I hear so much just now of the sin of opening private letters. It occurs to me it was hardly civil in me to tell you in my last "I longed for your return that I might show you my presents". Please don't think that is the only reason I have for wishing to see you again, just then I was thinking how very nice my things were and how I could not quite enjoy them until you had seen them. I feel so rich and ready to set up housekeeping with my red table-cloth and napkins, my pretty little Japanese plates and teacups and saucers, tiny little coffee cups 2 hardly bigger than eggs. I shall have such an assemblage of animals at my table I shall be afraid to invite Cousin Sam to lunch. There are ducks, geese, hares, dogs, foxes and I know not what else on the table-cloth, bright parrots on the plates, tiny birds on the cups and saucers and a silver owl contains pepper.

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I am so glad Christmas is over, it is such a relief. The Christmas greetings and the Christmas cards with their "Merry Christmas" seemed such a mockery when we were just the contrary. Mamma looked so quiet and pale and drooping, now she has brightened up wonderfully.

Tell your mother Grandpa took possession of her letter and has put it away with other letters of condolence. He has had a certain kind of pleasure in reading them though one made him cry for the first and only time since Grandma died that Monday morning. It is no wonder your mother thought Grandmama so old when she knew she had seen her golden wedding and did not know she was barely sixteen when she married and went at once from the cares of dolls and baby houses to live babies and real housekeeping. She was barely seventeen years older than my mother and used to carry her around almost as if she was a dolly, Grandmama often told me. But she never regretted the early marriage for her widowed mother lived with her and helped her until she died and Grandma was old enough to do without. Grandma has always seemed so much younger than her years, her face hardly more wrinkled, or her beautiful curly hair greyer than Mamma's.

With much love.

Ever lovingly, Your Mabel.