

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, April 26, 1891, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1336 Nineteenth Street, Washington, D. C. April 26, 1891. My dear Alec:

No letter for two days, I feel quite homesick without one. Perhaps Daisy's absence emphasizes my homesickness. I drove out to Twin Oaks this morning in the phaeton with the child and they kept her. I did not think I should miss her so much for such a little while. Miss True goes tomorrow. I almost think you have laid too great a burden on her in sending her alone on this long journey. She dreads it very much and has been worrying herself nearly ill over it. She announces that she wishes she were buried "this minute" half a dozen times a day. It is certainly an undertaking for a woman to go trotting around country and grapple with the mysteries of railway schedules alone. Nellie Bly's journey was a trifle to it, she had all her route and all her connections marked out for her, and everything arranged for her by telegraph so that it was reduced to a mere question of physical endurance in obeying orders. I wonder whether, if women drew up time-tables they would be any more intellegible to the uninitiated?

We are fast losing the first glory of spring and settling down to the steady green of summer, but the weather is by no means as summer-like as it was a week. In fact I think it has been cool and bracing enough to meet with even your approval.

Day and I go out to Twin Oaks tomorrow to stay until your return, leaving Mr. McCurdy in charge. He is very much interested in his work in the laboratory, thinks he has made, and is making great improvements in the graphophone which will make it superior to 2 the phonograph in every way. He went to the Phonograph Co's offices the other day, and reports affairs there at a very low ebb even with the phonograph. He is out in Georgetown with Aileen now, and I am in sole possession of the study and the lovely bright fire.

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Papa said today that there was practically no doubt that Grace will go to Baddeck unless something unforeseen happens. He thinks also that his Mamma will find her way there, so I am very anxious that things should be in good trim. Cannot anything be done about our walks and drives through the place this spring? Your father and mother will likely come down too. These four people so very dear to us both are growing old, it may well be their last visit to our dear home which they will bless and endear to us by their presence and afterwards by the memory of their presence. I want them to go over our place. I shall never again care so much for any one's presence there. Please grant me the happiness of escorting them all over the place in a manner possible only with roads. You have the plans all ready now, please lay out the roads so that they will be available this summer for walking at least. There cannot be as many acres of ground in the Soldiers Home enclosure as there are in Beinn Bhreagh, yet there are eight miles of driveway. Do please see about this, even if you have to stay a while longer. I am very much worried about your knee, I am afraid it is not going to get better without surgical aid, and meantime you are losing so much exercise that you need. I fear it will prevent your doing as much walking as is necessary to the laying out of the roads.

Have you thought of my idea of hiring one of those two houses. It seems to me the easiest way out of our difficulty. By 3 the time the weather is too cold to make journeys back and forth across the bay agreeable to Mr. Ellis the new cottage would be finished. I want the house-boat put in order too, for I think my Mother and Father would use it this summer as well as yours, and we could invite some people down at the same time who would help to pass the time for Papa. Professor Langley for instance. I would like Crescent Grove painted this year, a pale yellow with white trimmings. It would be paid for out of the rental, and I would like the dining room papered. It has never been done and I think would make the room so much more cheerful for Grace. I will write to Mr. McInnis so as not to bother you with details and of course you can put a veto on anything.

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Papa's foot is in plaster. There was no keeping him still so the doctor had recourse to stringent measures for keeping his foot quiet at least.

I return the plans of our house here to the architect tomorrow as satisfactory, the only thing, but alas the most important, now remaining undecided is the price. I hope it will prove within our means for the house is a very nice one.

Take care of yourself, I don't like to think of you living so uncomfortably while we are in such luxury. I am going to telegraph you tonight to find out how you are, the absence of letters and telegrams coupled with your living in tents while the bay is full of ice disturbs me.

I love you very much, As ever yours, Mabel. April 26th, 1891.