

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel B. McCurdy, April 22, 1910

Aviation History 1331 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, WASHINGTON, D. C. April 22, 1910.
Miss Mabel B. McCurdy, Baddeck, Nova Scotia, Canada. Dear Miss McCurdy:—

If, as I expect, the Canadian Government should form an Aviation Department in connection with its Militia system, the future development of aviation, especially in Great Britain, will be profoundly affected by what is done in Canada.

It has occurred to me that it would be well to prepare a historical statement that would show how the Canadian Aviation Department came into existence, while the matter is still fresh in my mind.

Whether it would be wise to place this at once in the Recorder is a matter for consideration. It would be well in any event to prepare the paper, and file it away. I have not the material here, but you have it in Beinn Bhreagh, and I would like you, if possible, to hunt up the letters I want and send me a complete copy, so that I may prepare the article before I leave.

The whole matter originated with my Ottawa Address. I have just received from the Canadian Club of Ottawa a printed volume entitled "Addresses delivered before the Canadian Club of Ottawa, 1903–1909", edited by Gerald H. Brown, first Vice-President. 2 Ottawa: the Mortimer Press, 1910.

My Address, as printed by the Club, is given on pp 181–187, and should go into the Recorder.

Following this Address, I received a letter from the Deputy Minister of Militia which reached Beinn Bhreagh after my departure and was acknowledged by Baldwin and McCurdy. I

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want a copy of this and Baldwin and McCurdy's acknowledgement. The document reached me while traveling in Wales, and I acknowledged receipt from there, and stated that I would reply more fully after my return to America, and after I had conferred with Messrs. Baldwin and McCurdy.

After my return to America, and after conference with Baldwin and McCurdy I replied to the letter. Want copies of these letters.

The next document to quote in the historical statement is a letter written to me by Earl Grey after his visit to Beinn Bhreagh (you can probably get the date of it from the Recorder) although it is doubtful whether it is given in full there.

To this letter I replied from Washington in a personal letter of considerable length. Want copies of these.

Earl Grey then wrote to me asking me certain questions to which I replied, December 27, 1909 (I think that is the date). This letter is of importance as it contains my ideas of what the Canadian Government should do.

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Next in order should come a telegram from Baldwin and McCurdy to the Militia Council inviting them to send a representative to Baddeck to witness the flights over the ice; and a telegram from Baldwin and McCurdy to Major Maunsell inviting him to come. I think also there was a telegram to Earl Grey about the same time which should be included.

Then come the telegraphic replies from Ottawa informing Baldwin and McCurdy that Major Maunsell would come.

(We should also have in the proper place copies of telegrams or letters that passed between Baldwin and McCurdy and the Ottawa authorities that led to the Petewawa visit.)

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Next should come the letters of Major Maunsell to Baldwin and McCurdy informing them privately that the Militia Council had made some proposition which was now under consideration by the Privy Council, and the reply of Baldwin and McCurdy.

That is as far as we can go at present in the preparation of a historical statement. Should be much obliged if you can hunt up and send me a copy of all these letters and telegrams, arranged in proper order.

The Recorder contains information of what happened at Petewawa and also a description of the flights over the ice at Beinn Bhreagh when Major Maunsell was present, so it will be unnecessary to send any material concerning these matters. Not necessary to give anything that is in the Recorder.

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Please rush this matter as it takes so long for letters to pass between Beinn Bhreagh and Washington, and I want to have my historical statement prepared before I leave for my trip round the world. It will then be safe for preservation should I never return. Please rush this matter.

I enclose the forward under separate cover the book of Addresses before the Canadian Club of Ottawa so that you can take my address from that for the Recorder.

Yours sincerely, Alexander Graham Bell Per C.R.C.