

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, June 23, 1889, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Waverley House, Halifax, N. S. Sunday, June 24rd, 1889. Mabel dear:

Your father's telegram has frightened me. Why should you delay your departure still further from Monday to Thursday unless Dr. Kerr and your father think you not strong enough to go on? There is a great fear my darling rising in my heart, and I am so restless and nervous that I do not know what to do. Quite apart from your health — I am afraid of distance between us — for something tells me that you care less for me — and doubt me — when I am far away.

My letters do not please you — and yours sometimes hurt me too — Do not let us be separated any longer than can be helped — for when we are together suspicions fly away — and we are happy.

The moment I get my father and mother settled in Baddeck — I shall turn right round, and go back for you. The fear of something wrong is so strong in my heart that I will not risk bringing you here until I have taken you to both Dr. Kinnicutt and Dr. Williams for their reports.

I shall probably have started for Washington before you receive this letter.

Oh! Mabel dear — I love you more than you can ever know — and the very thought of anything the matter with you unnerves me and renders me unhappy. My dear little wife — I feel I have neglected you. Deaf-mutes — gravitation or any other hobby has been too apt to take the first place in my thoughts — and yet all the time — my heart was yours alone. I will throw everything on one side now — and this summer shall be devoted to you and

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my children. I have neglected them too — I want to show you that I really can be a good husband and 2 a good father — as well as a solitary selfish thinker. I want to take care of you — and think for you and help you — as you have helped me and thought for me and I won't let deaf-mutes or anything else come between us. I am afraid of distance between us — and a great dread is on me concerning your health. My conscience troubles me — for I have too often forgotten that you were “a delicate hot-house plant” — to be shielded carefully from every rough blast. I trust that Dr. Kinnicutt may be able to dispel my fears — for I am very anxious and very unhappy.

You have grown into my heart my darling and taken root there — and you cannot be plucked out without tearing it to pieces.

Your loving husband, Alec. Mrs. A. Graham Bell, 1336 19th St., Washington, D. C.

P. S.

We had a very pleasant but foggy passage — and a narrow escape from destruction by collision.

A three-masted schooner suddenly appeared out of the fog — bearing right down upon us at right angles. The Captain had heard a whistle or horn — and had stopped the steamer — when the schooner appeared. Seeing that a collision was inevitable and that to remain still courted total destruction — he ordered the engines to be run at full speed — calling to the schooner to go up into the wind. The schooner however never changed her course and bore down full upon us. The Captain managed to turn the steamer sufficiently however — to make a considerable angle with the schooner so and lessen the shock. Fortunately the schooner was not loaded much and was so high out of water — that her bowsprit passed high above our deck catching the mizzen mast. This served as a buffer and the hulls did not touch. The mizzen mast fell — and heavy pieces of iron and wood broke the steamer chain on which passengers was seated only a moment before. Fortunately no one

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was hurt — and the crew repaired damages before we reached Halifax. The migen mast was erected almost as good as new — but at least eight feet shorter than before.

Daisy tried to tell you about this in her letter.

We saw a great many beautiful “Portuguese men-of-war” — one day floating in the water — and some one told Daisy that the shell was a species of “Nautilus.” This is what she meant by “Naughtinesses!”

We are all well — and very thankful to have escaped disaster in the fog. We had an anxious night when we passed the tracks of the New York steamers a thick fog — and twice we had to grope our way — with the knowledge that another steamer was in dangerous proximity. The steam whistle was kept busy — and the other steamer replied. She passed across our bow not far away — as we judged by the sound.

Your loving, Alec.