

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 6, 1908, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1331 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C. (May 6, 1908.) My darling Alec:

I miss you dreadfully, it doesn't seem right not to have you with me.

Daisy and David want you with them when Alexander is christened, but do not feel that they can ask you to come. when they might have had the ceremony any time this spring. But Dr. Hale leaves on the 13th and this is their only chance. I am so glad to have Dr. Hale perform the ceremony.

Daisy and David are here still and also the precious baby, and it is so damp and chilly that they are quite satisfied to be here.

Bert went to the circus and reported among other things two automobiles turning summersaults in the air, one outside the other. There were girls, pretty girls he said in both, and of course it meant probable death if anything went wrong. Another thing he saw was an acrobat throw himself off a high swing and turned summersaults in the air, not merely over and over again, but reversed, he did this twice and had no support whatever. Bert says he is sure for he had his field-glasses. Now I think either of these feats are much more dangerous than trying to fly the machine.

I have been thinking more about Tom's heat and light affair and the more I think about it the more it seems to me he should have it. I suppose that originally only that was paid which was actually consumed, but in course of time latitude was allowed was allowed and now the custom is to 2 allow officers so much of heat and light whether actually consumed or not. But while custom and convenience has authorized this arrangement, the red tape

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wording of the allowance remains the same as formerly. It is just like our spelling where obsolete forms which once were in common use are retained to make our spelling so unphonetic. The phrase goes "heat and light in accordance with his rank", well the prices for this must differ in different localities. The heat and light required by a Lieut. in Arizona must be differently priced from that needed by the same ranking officer in Alaska, and yet most likely the same allowance is given both. Naturally there must be times when an officer's expenses must be greater than at others, therefore he has to strike a balance and make the fat years help out the lean. So I think Tom should get his allowance whether he actually had to pay for his heat or light or not and I think it works an injustice to stand so stiffly on red tape. It seems to me you went quite as far as necessary in having the matter referred to the War Dept. If they think it O.K. I think you might let it go for you have put yourself on record.

David says to give you his love and tell you that the bundle of reeds which has been lying around in your study has at least found an appreciative audience and the largest carpet manufacturer in New England is going to take them up extensively and is going to send agents to Europe immediately to investigate the looms for weaving the reed into laths and will take it up at wholesale so you will lose your chance of getting the reeds for nothing.

Much love, May 6, 1908. Your Mabel.