

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, November 18, 1912

Beinn Bhreagh, Baddeck. N.S. Nov 18, 1912. Mrs. A. Graham Bell, 1331 Connecticut Avenue, Washington.. D. C. Dear Mabel,

I send a few items for you.

1912 Nov 15, Friday:— Casey, Kathleen and Mrs. Laurie dined with me at the Point. Maggie “did herself proud”.

1912 Nov 16, Saturday:— Miss Porter, Principal of the Baddeck Academy spent the afternoon at BB Hall looking over reference books suitable for the use of the teachers and pupils of the Baddeck Academy. I propose to loan these books to the Academy for the winter, while we are away.

### Walking Extraordinary

Walked down to the Houseboat Saturday afternoon. Walked back to the Hall Sunday morning at daybreak. Walked back to the Houseboat Sunday afternoon; walked back to the Hall Monday morning at daybreak. This just suited me and gave me the exercise I need. Walking down to Houseboat in the afternoon, I turned in at once for a nap and woke about half-past ten. Stayed up all night and left for the Hall at daybreak and turned into bed there before anyone was up. Same thing Sunday night and Monday morning.

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Mr. Smallwood and I have just completed Table XII of the Hyde Statistics, which deals with the average duration of life in connection with the Mother's Age at Death. This only

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confirms previous results and indicates clearly that long lived mothers, on the average, have longer lived offspring than short lived mothers.

There are 1806 cases in which the age at death and the mother's age at death are both stated, the average of age at death is 39 years

### OFFSPRING

| Mother's age at Death | Number of Cases | Number of Years | Average age at Death |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| under 25              | 8               | 159             | 20 yrs               |
| 25 & under 50         | 390             | 13265           | 34 yrs               |
| 50 & under 75         | 693             | 25326           | 36 yrs               |
| 75 & over             | 715             | 31980           | 45 yrs               |
| Total                 | 1806            | 70730           | 39 yrs               |

A great deal of labor has been involved in ascertaining the "number of years" lived by the offspring. It has been necessary to note the number of years lived by each of the 1806 persons and then add them together, yielding a total of 70730 years in all, dividing these up equably among the 1806 persons we reach the average age at death as 39.16 years

Two newspaper cuttings enclosed.

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The following points conclusively proved:—

Long lived fathers have, on the average longer lived offspring than short lived fathers.

Long lived mothers, on the average have longer lived offspring than short lived mothers

From this point of view you and I (especially you) have a good chance of living long. I say 'especially you' because your constitution has been tried by an almost fatal illness and it has not been found wanting; whereas the soundness of my constitution has never been put to the actual test.

Our children too, have a good chance for long life, especially Daisy, for she, like yourself has passed safely through ordeals that would have killed weaker persons.

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Daisy is not going to give way under any of the ordinary ills of life. Barring accidents, she will probably live to be an old woman, if she doesn't worry herself into something or other. You also, are all right barring imaginary worries and a tendency to trust to the tender mercies of a multitude of doctors rather than to the good constitution with which Nature has endowed you.

I look upon you, and Daisy, and Barbara as those who are most likely to live to old age with reasonable care and freedom from worry..

Elsie undoubtedly inherits a good constitution but her nervous system is affected. This disadvantage however, is offset by a phlegmatic disposition that leads her to take life easily and not worry. You and Daisy, on the other hand have a tendency to torment yourselves unnecessarily over all the little ills of life, and I do not know anything more calculated to break a person down than the constant worrying over things. You and Daisy should certainly cultivate the phlegmatic disposition which you do not possess — Don't worry . I suppose you have been worrying about me, if everything is going well in Washington. I can merely say that I never was better in my life. I feel well and have actually enjoyed those walks to the Houseboat.

By-the-bye, Louis seems to be pretty miserable. He has been suffering from toothache and we have been having quite wintry weather here. We have had several inches of snow and although the weather has now cleared up it is pretty cold and damp. This is evidently not a place for colored people. Louis seems to feel the cold, suffers constantly from toothache, and appears to be pretty lonely. Why don't you have him go right on to Washington? There is no earthly need of him here. I have sent him to see a dentist and if he doesn't brighten up I shall just pack him off to Washington unless I hear from you by telegraph that you want him to stay.

I am anxious for another telegram about Daisy and Nancy. Can't think of another thing to say.

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Your loving husband Alec. Two articles by you, and one by Elsie, read before Ladies Club, appear in the Recorder Vol 12. Copy sent to Volta Bureau. AGB