

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Harry St. George Tucker, June 7, 1906, with transcript

JAMESTOWN EXPOSITION. Copy of a letter-press copy of a letter from ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL concerning the exhibit of flying machines to be made at Jamestown. June 7, 1906 Hon. Harry St. George Tucker President of the Jamestown Exposition Comapny, Norfolk, Virginia. Dear Mr. Tucker:

I am very anxious to see the subject of Aeronautics well handled at the Jamestown Exposition and regret exceedingly that I have found it impossible, with the numerous duties devolving upon me to accept the position of Honorary Director of Aeronautics offered me by the Board of Governors.

If this branch of the Exposition is to be made a success it will require the expenditure of several thousand dollars on the part of the Exposition for the housing of flying machines, and dirigible balloons, and for the plant required to make gas light enough for the use of the Balloonists. And it would require the whole time of a competent man familiar with the needs of Aeronauts etc., to attend to this work properly.

I do not know what men you have in mind, but have written to Mr. Southgate suggesting the name of Prof. W. J. McGee, Director of the St. Louis Public Museum, and formerly in charge of the Ethnological Exhibits at the St. Louis Exposition. You are probably familiar with his name as a man of science — especially prominent for his researches in Anthropology, but may not know — as I do that he has been for years a close student of all that has done in regard to Aerial Locomotion — a better term by the by than Aerial Navigation. If he could be induced to become the Director of the department relating to this subject in your Exposition, he would no doubt throw himself into the work with his characteristic energy and ability.

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I do not at the present time recall the name of any one more capable of making this department of your Exposition a success. I do not know whether he would accept such a position were it tendered to him, but I am sure he would look sympathetically upon the proposition, and, for my part I should be glad to see him go into some work that would lead him to direct his thoughts still more closely to the subject.

Yours sincerely, Alexander Graham Bell