

Name _____ Date: _____

Alexander Graham Bell



Alexander Graham Bell was born in Edinburgh, Scotland on March 3, 1847. He had two brothers: Melville James Bell and Edward Charles Bell who both died of tuberculosis. His father was Alexander Melville Bell and his mother was Eliza Grace.

Alexander was a bright boy. He was taught at home by his father and then attended the Royal High School, Edinburgh, which he left at the age of 15. He loved to study the sciences, especially biology.

Alexander's mother started to lose her hearing when he was 12. This made Alex fascinated by sound. He began his career as a teacher of deaf children and taught at the Boston School for Deaf Mutes. It was here he met his future wife Mabel Hubbard. They eventually married and had three children.

Bell wanted to perfect the telegraph. He used vibrating steel strips called reeds. He found that when a reed at one end of the line vibrated, a reed at the other end gave out a sound. He then became interested in the idea of transmitting a human voice over wires. Bell hired Thomas Watson as his assistant. Watson was a skilled electrician.

On March 10, 1876, Bell and Watson were experimenting in their laboratory. Watson heard Bell's voice through a wire. He had received the first telephone call. Bell showed his new invention to the public. People were fascinated. By the early 1900s more than 150,000 people owned telephones.

Bell had to fight many lawsuits as other inventors were claiming that they had invented the telephone first, but he always won.

Alexander Graham Bell died on August 2, 1922, at his private estate, at age 75.