

INVENTORS

Alexander Graham Bell

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Bell was born at a time when the world was full of entrepreneurs and creative geniuses. In the first 50 years of his life, many of the things we know today as modern conveniences were invented.
2. Almost every year from 1850 to 1900 there was some dramatic discovery that further shifted us from the agricultural society we once knew to the industrial society we know today.
3. Bell had the background for an inventor. His distinguished family tree was filled with scholars, artists, and relatives dedicated to education and service.
4. After his two brothers died of tuberculosis, the family moved to Canada, believing that the Scottish climate had contributed to their deaths.
5. While teaching in Boston, Bell met Gardner Hubbard, a patron who helped finance his inventing of the telephone. He married Gardner's daughter, Mabel.
6. Bell died of complications from diabetes on August 2, 1922, at age 75.
5. When he was 43, Bell established and financed what is now known as the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf.

UNIQUE INFLUENCE

1. Bell's invention of the telephone has no doubt been the single most compelling reason why we live in a global, rather than a regional, world today.
2. Now there are well over 200 million telephones in the United States and 92 percent of American homes have at least one.
3. Although much improved, telephones today use the same basic fundamentals that Bell developed in his first phones.
4. Faxes, e-mail, even the Internet wouldn't be possible without Bell's genius.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Although Bell's major invention was the telephone, it was not the main focus of his life.
2. Bell dedicated the second half of his life to the service of the deaf.
3. He established the Volta Laboratory for the research, invention, and work for the deaf. It was there he developed the method of making phonograph records on wax discs.
4. Proceeds from his inventions went to fund the Volta Bureau, which today is an international information center for education of the deaf.

THE PERSON

1. He was born March 3, 1847, in Edinburgh, Scotland.
2. His father was an expert and author in the field of speech and deafness. His mother was deaf and was a superb painter and pianist.
3. Bell was shy and reserved. At 13, he lived with his grandfather for a year and received lessons in elocution and delivery as well as acoustics and sound.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"He was tall and dark, with jet black hair and eyes, but dressed badly and carelessly in an old-fashioned suit of black broadcloth, making his body look shiny, and altogether, to one accustomed to the dainty neatness of Harvard students, he seemed hardly a gentleman." Mabel Bell's first impression of her future husband.

"Alexander is a good fellow and, I have no doubt, will make an excellent husband. He is hotheaded but warmhearted, sentimental, dreamy and self-absorbed, but sincere and unselfish. He is ambitious, to a fault, and is apt to let his enthusiasm run away with his judgment." From a letter

Alexander's father wrote to Mabel before she and Alexander were married.

"I at once felt the tenderness and sympathy which endeared Dr. Bell to so many hearts He understood my signs. I knew it and loved him at once." A passage written by Helen Keller in her autobiography, which she dedicated to Bell.

"Citizen of the United States and Teacher of the Deaf." The simple engraving on Bell's tomb, which he wrote himself.