

HOTEL DE HOLLANDE
18 ET 20, RUE DE LA PAIX
P A R I S

HOTEL MÉTROPOLE

ROYAT-LES-BAINS

Sept. 17. 1908

My dear Ellie:-

We have just received your kind invitation to Ellen's wedding but of course it is out of the question for us to accept it - as we are still on this side of the ocean, winding up a very pleasant season at this little French bath resort. Each day some of the few guests disappears & next week we expect to motor to Paris by way of Bourges, to see the fine Cathedral there, & probably stopping the next night at Tours or Orleans taking three days for the trip. It can easily be done in one day by the direct route but we thought we would make a detour to extend the time - we spent a month in

Germany, partly in Berlin which has grown
enormously in the eight-years since we were
last here, & then in the country at Eisenach
in constant view of the Wartburg of Tann-
häuser fame, & right in the heart of the
Thuringian Forest. The drives & walks were
most charming & when we were not out we
spent our time on our balcony breathing the
lovely piney air. Then by way of Frankfurt &
Basil we went to Geneva for the International
Geographical Congress which was held there - we
had a most interesting time, educationally &
socially as there were many papers, in French,
German & English & plenty of garden parties &
other festivities. At the close of the Congress &
party of fifty subscribers, under the care of two
Geneva gentlemen, took a trip of a week to the
high mountains & a cement of its semi-scientific
character we were shown & great many at-
tentions from the governing bodies of the places
that we visited. The "Conseils d'Etat" re-
solved us at the towns & there were speeches &
Champagne & free rides up, for example, with
trays & all sorts of nice things - Then we came

back to Geneva to rest for a week after our
travels & again dispensed & received hospitality,
as we did not like to accept so much kind-
ness without making some return, we gave
lunches at our hotel for some of our hostesses
& invited also two or three American friends
who spoke French. From Geneva we went to
Aix les Bains, a gay place where big hats &
startling costumes were some of the artificial
exhibits. The place itself is beautiful, how-
ever independent of its meretricious side,
& we enjoyed the natural scenery & the fine
baths. Then we took a trip through the south
of France, Edward having retained of his own
voluntarily joined us at Geneva, & we visited
Arignon, Orange, Avies & Nîmes, where so many
wonderful Roman remains are to be found
at Avies we saw a mock bull fight in the
ancient arena with eight thousand people
as spectators. The horns of the farm yard
bulls are covered & the young men of the
town are all at liberty to handle the bulls -
no body is hurt & the scene is a merry one -
Coming north we stopped at Le Puy, a pre-
historic little town with a bronze figure of
a wile type perched on top of a curious

Volcanic Peak. It is a dirty little place
but one that I had always wanted to see
having once heard it called "the most pic-
turesque spot in the world". It is hardly that
but it was well worth a visit. Since we have
been here we have walked, driven, & motored
out to Vichy which is much more pretentious
than Royat, now as I have said we leave next
week for Paris & sail for home on Sept. 30 -
I have found our our wanderings in detail
hoping that you may be interested. It is pleasant
to recall the renewal of our old friendships
last winter, I hope it may not be very long before
we can again welcome you to our house. The
wedding I hope will pass off delightfully
& I trust in the near future we may meet
our new cousin - upon our return we expect
to send Ellen a wedding gift; as any thing
sent from Europe only makes a difficulty with
the Customs house. I suppose Mary will be
at the wedding. Cousin Jane of course also
was so nice to see her last winter & her after-
noon at the Hippodrome filled me with admira-
tion at her pluck & endurance - Our de-
fenses bill has just - run 11. 30 G. M. to
this - must love to all the Cousins & always affectionately
Ernie Bell

9-13-08

Mrs. William H. Belden

Chester

Ohio

U. S. America



For Belden, Bell



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ROYAT-LES-BAINS

