

Letter from Fred H. Wines to Alexander Graham Bell, November 27, 1899

File 7—001. TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE United States. Department of the Interior, M Census Office, Washington, D. C., November 27, 1899. Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, Badek, Nova Scotia. My dear Sir:

I send you a copy of a letter I have just received from Mr. Wm. Wade, of Oakmont, Pa., giving further information in regard to the articles published about Helen Keller's examinations.

Very sincerely yours, Fred H. Wines Assistant Director.

File COPY.M. Oakmont, Pa., Nov. 23, 1899. Dr. Fred H. Wines, Assistant Director of Census, Washington, D. C. Dear Sir:

Yours 21st received. It is quite probable that the paper [in which] I saw the statement as to the number of deaf-blind given by the census may have taken the statement from the 1880 one.

I note that you have overlooked answering my inquiry whether I might send your letter, or extracts from it, to the paper (of a deaf school) which I think originated the statement. The whole of both your letters would be considered valuable by such a paper, for publication. The statements I objected to about Helen Keller's examinations were those that made her unfamiliar with American Braille, the print in which her examination papers were given her, when I know perfectly well that she was thoroughly acquainted with it before she saw any English Braille, and this I have demonstrated in Annals, by the published letters of Miss Sullivan, and of Helen herself. And furthermore, that she did not know the signs of algebra in American braille, when I know she did, and that she taught them to the teacher

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of physics at Mr. Gilman's school, when she was there. As the latter statement appeared in the New York World, with Helen's name attached, I feel certain that she never wrote that letter, as it appears, and that practically it is a forgery, and from what I hear of later letters purporting to come from her, I disbelieve her authorship of anything said to be hers. But I must make one exception, in favor of a letter I received from her yesterday, which is so thoroughly the sweet, beautiful Helen I have so long known, that I have no doubts as to it ; the fact that one letter purporting to be hers contains a falsehood, is evidence that she did not write it, as she cannot be induced to be untruthful, befooled and hoodwinked though she be.

Yours truly, Wm. Wade.