

Letter from Annie C. Pratt to Alexander Graham Bell, July 30, 1894

63 Washington Ave. Chelsea, Mass. July 30, 1894. Dear Mr. Bell,

Miss Annie Sullivan is with us, come up from the Cape to consider and decide upon a school for Helen. Well, the subject has been turned and twisted about, inside out and upside down. This one wants Helen at that school, and that one wants Helen at this school, and as far as Boston goes, it all means fashionable entertainments, receptions &c. and no study of value. The Burnham Classical School, Annie has considered and feels that she should accept that, because you advise her to do so, but at the same time she is not in sympathy with the proposition, shrinks from going to Northampton, she does not have full faith in the manner in which speech is taught to the deaf, either at the Clarke Inst. or at the Horace Mann School, as you know.

She feels that Washington would afford advantages for Helen, such perhaps as perhaps no other place could surpass, yet there the social element would interfere, Mrs. Cleaveland is deeply interested in Helen, they have recently met again at Buzzards Bay, and Annie feels that it would be difficult to avoid being drawn into gaieties and amusements detrimental to the object she has in placing Helen under instruction at this time. Two Boston schools (private) are urged by fashionable lady friends here, and there is a small school which Mr Spaulding has under his patronage which he thinks would be very desirable. All these, and yet Annie finds in none of them anything that pleases her in regard to Helen's speech as the method advocated by Wright & Numasen. Mr. Spaulding was interviewed by Annie & self this morning after having been given last week a copy of your letter to Capt. Keller, Wright & Humason's letter to Miss Sullivan, Mrs. Agassiz's letter to Miss Derby, (advocating the School on Marlboro, St. Boston) &c., he finally advised Miss Sullivan to take Helen to New York for this next term of school, and directed her

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to write at once to Wright and Humason to that effect, and to say to them that he would become responsible for the \$800.00, (their offer for board and tuition). Mr. Spaulding told Annie that he would pay that bill himself. We three formed a little private Club, "The Helen Keller Club", and on our own responsibility elected Mrs. S.C. Hopkins Secy. & Treas. with full authority to receive, receipt for, and disburse funds for the use and benefit of "the twins". Wright & Humason are directed to send their bills to Mrs. Hopkins.

Annie hopes all this will meet with your approval, says you was are greatly in sympathy with the N.Y. school. We all send love to Mrs. Bell, the " little bells " and their Papa , and Mr. McCurdy and Dr. A. M. Bell & beside if they are now with you.

Very sincerely, Annie C. Pratt