

Fraud

1493

File No. _____

OFFICE
OF THE
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
FOR THE
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

SUBJECT: *Helen Wilhams*

Seabreeze Florida

ACTION: Papers referred for investigation on following

— date: _____

— Returned to files of Office of Assistant Attorney General

— on following date: _____

— Returned to writer: _____

(Copy.)

Post Office Department,

ORDER No. 1149

Washington, D. C.,

October 5, 1901.

It having been made to appear to the Postmaster General, upon evidence satisfactory to him, that Mrs. Helen Wilmans and Helen Wilmans,

at Seabreeze, Florida, is
engaged in conducting a scheme or device for obtaining money through the mails by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, in violation of the Act of Congress entitled "An act to amend certain sections of the Revised Statutes relating to lotteries, and for other purposes," approved September 19, 1890—

Now, therefore, by authority vested in him by said act, and by the Act of Congress entitled "An act for the suppression of lottery traffic through international and interstate commerce and the postal service, subject to the jurisdiction and laws of the United States," approved March 2, 1895, the Postmaster General hereby *forbids you to pay any Postal Money Order* drawn

to the order of said Mrs. Helen Wilmans and Helen Wilmans,
and you are hereby directed to inform the remitter of any such postal money order that payment thereof has been forbidden, and that the amount thereof will be returned upon the presentation of a duplicate money order applied for and obtained under the regulations of the Department.

And you are hereby instructed to *return all letters*, whether registered or not, and *other mail matter* which shall arrive at your office directed to the said Mrs. Helen Wilmans
and Helen Wilmans

to the postmasters at the offices at which they were originally mailed, to be delivered to the senders thereof, with the word "*Fraudulent*" plainly written or stamped upon the outside of such letters or matter. Provided, however, that where there is nothing to indicate who are the senders of letters not registered or other matter, you are directed in that case to send such letters and matter to the *Dead-Letter Office* with the word "*Fraudulent*" plainly written or stamped thereon, to be disposed of as other dead matter under the laws and regulations applicable thereto.

(Signed.) CH. EMORY SMITH

Postmaster General.

To the Postmaster,

Seabreeze, Florida.

Oct. 14th 1901.

The Honorable,
The Postmaster General,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir,

I have recently learned that your Department proposes to stop Freedom (published at Sea Breeze, Fla.) from being sent through the U. S. mails. As I am a subscriber to the periodical, I would deem it a very great hardship if you undertake any such action. I have for some time regarded it as an intellectual necessity - and no doubt there are thousands of others (not by any means cranks) placed in a similar position to myself.

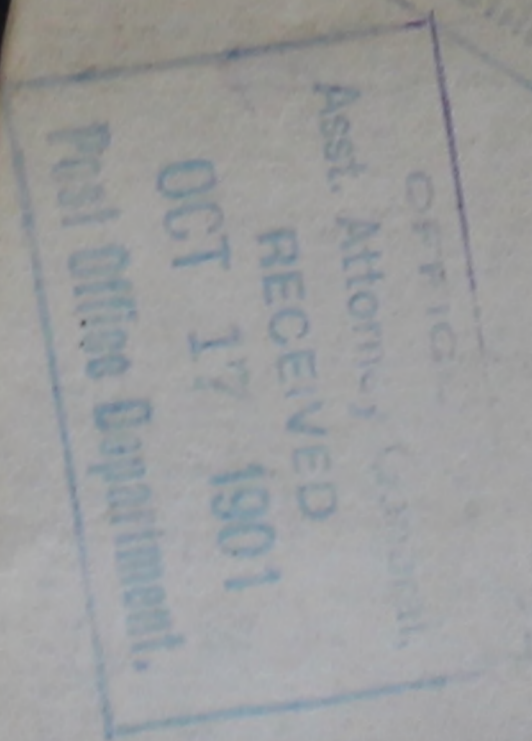
I have been told by various Washington Correspondents and Members of Congress that you are far minded, and would wrong no one knowingly - and you or the higher officials of the Post Office Department but understood the subject of Mental Science, you would I am sure see what a mighty force it is for good.

At first I approached Mental Science rather ^{as} a scoffer than otherwise, but after two years of a most ~~thorough~~ thorough investigation, I decide it is all its teachers claim for it - and more too.

I am proof in my own person that absent treatment means just what is claimed for it. I suffered for

5323
twenty-seven years from a very bad case of nervous
dyspepsia, tried drugs + doctors for years without
any appreciable benefit, was treated by Mrs Helen
Wilmanus Post and, after a few months, was positively
cured - without resorting to dieting or any other change
in my mode of living. All this can be proved by
the testimony of a hundred literary men + journalists
of New York City - friends + acquaintances, many
of whom I have known for the last twenty years.

Very Respectfully Yours,
Gerald Carlton.



OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
FOR THE
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

October 5, 1901.

MEMORANDUM.

In re:

Mrs. Helen Wilmans and Helen Wilmans of Seabreeze, Fla., for operating through the mails a scheme devised for obtaining money under false or fraudulent pretenses, etc.

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On September 12th, 1901, Helen Wilmans was called upon to show cause on or before September 30, 1901 why a fraud order should not be issued against her for operating through the mails a scheme devised for obtaining money under false and fraudulent pretenses, etc. On the date set for the hearing she appeared at this office in the person of her husband C. C. Post and her attorney, O. T. Green to answer the charges against her. Frederick C. Bryan, Esq., of Washington, D. C. was also present at the hearing as attorney for interests connected with accused. The hearing was held before G. A. C. Christiancy, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Post Office Department. F. C. Huebner, from the Office of the Assistant Attorney General, etc. was also present.

The facts brought out at the hearing were that Mrs. Helen Wilmans claims power to heal any disease or affliction including poverty by a method of concentrating her thought on the patient taking treatment, and for such service solicits remittances of \$3 per week or \$10 per month (or in special cases other prices are given). Evidence was further submitted showing that a large number of persons have applied to her and have paid her money for the extension of her thought power to their specific cases. To these persons she has sent instructions to the effect that they shall set apart fifteen minutes per day in which to forget about other matters and permit the healing thought which she sends to her patients to enter their bodies and renew them.

The impression is carried through the printed literature that during this fifteen minutes Mrs. Wilmans is sending healing thoughts to them, and when patients have expressed this belief in communications to Mrs. Wilmans, she makes no effort to explain matters so they have a proper understanding of just what Mrs. Wilmans does in fact do. The evidence before the Department has shown that during a long period while certain persons by the name of Dayton were acting as Mrs. Wilmans' Chief Clerks, Mrs. Wilmans opened the mail coming to her address and simply took out the money, and without carefully reading any of such mail, and without examining a part of it in any way further than to extract the money, the same was handed to these Chief Clerks to answer, with certain stereotype letters to fit the different inquiries, which letters were mailed to the patients without being reviewed or seen by Mrs. Wilmans, and that on some occasions when Mrs. Wilmans was absent from home the letters were opened and answered in the same manner as when Mrs. Wilmans was present. Evidence was offered by the defence that the methods in vogue at the time the Daytons were in their employ had been changed and that Mrs. Wilmans not only opened the mail at the present time but also reviewed the letters which went to patients. Even granting this as true, it appears that every letter sent out in connection with this scheme is designed to have the patient put constant faith in the power of Helen Wilmans, which calls for more money, and even should she answer all letters coming to her personally it is held that that would not show a compliance with her promise to send healing thoughts to certain patients at certain hours of the day. Further evidence was offered and not disputed that Helen Wilmans does considerable other work, such as writing books, articles for papers, etc. While it is conceded that Mrs. Wilmans is energetic and capable of much work, from the amount she has done shows that it would be absolutely impossible to even make a pretense

of sending specific and individual thoughts to all her patients on account of the limited number of hours in a day. To this evidence the defense replied that Mrs. Wilmans could think of 1000 at a time as easily as of one - which seems beyond human possibility, and what makes it still more improbable is the fact that the character of diseases she treats includes not only those usually treated surgically and medically, but also treatment to restore confidence, to relieve from poverty, and any other affliction to which humanity is heir.

Therefore, without in any manner inquiring into the merits of so-called Mental Science except so far as deception was in fact imposed upon the sick and unfortunate who were induced to take this treatment, or alleged treatment, without a knowledge of just what would be given, or done for the money sent to Mrs. Helen Wilmans or Helen Wilmans, it is my opinion that a fraud order should be issued against them.

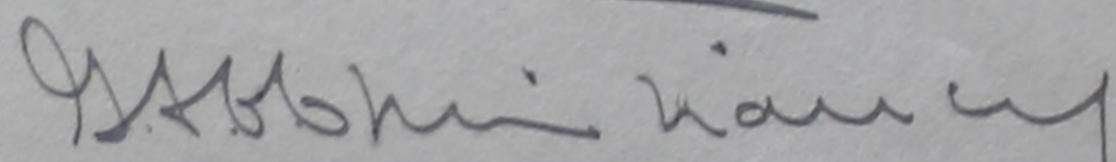

 Acting Assistant Attorney General
 for the Post Office Department.

Postscript:

A fraud order would have been recommended in this case without such a protracted hearing had some of the evidence which has since been brought to my attention been presented at the opening of the hearing as it would have shown that the scheme was certainly one to defraud. For example: In a book in the possession of the Post Office Inspector in which the patient's names were entered and the diagnosis of their complaints, which book was secured through a subpoena duces tecum from one of the clerks of Helen Wilmans, appears in effect the following:

Mrs. A. B. of -----, Terms \$-----, per month, (a statement of two or

three, possibly four payments). Then follows a diagnosis of the case "Wants a new set of teeth, money, and everything nice". Another was: Mrs. A. B. of some place in Colorado, diagnosis: "Wants some one to love her 'soul mate'". From these and other entries under other diagnosis it appears that she accepted money and represented her ability not only to cure physical and mental trouble but to give the patient anything that he or she might express a desire for. In other words, they stamp the scheme as that of a charlatan's and a fraud-order would have been issued upon this evidence alone without considering the other points involved.


Acting Assistant Attorney General
for the Post Office Department.

To the Postmaster General.