

October 17th, 1952

Dr. Robert S. Morison,
Division of Medicine and Public Health,
The Rockefeller Foundation,
49 West 49th Street,
New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Morison:

I am writing to you to discover whether the Foundation would entertain an application for assisted research on a three to five year basis as will be described below. If this letter should have been written to Dr. Andrew Warren, please pass it on to him with my apologies.

The project that I would propose is a study of the temporal lobe. We have been reviewing, this past year, several hundred cases of temporal lobectomy in the treatment of temporal lobe epilepsy, and at the same time have reviewed a somewhat larger group of temporal lobe epileptics who were treated medically.

The project which I would like to propose has to do, not with epilepsy, but with the Function of the Temporal Cortex in the Field of the Intellect. Exciting information is at hand on memory, dreams, interpretation of perception, deviations of normal behaviour and psychoses.

Curiously enough, there seems to be a possibility of localization of memory recording, and we find that epileptic discharge or local electrical stimulation in a small area near the amygdaloid nucleus produces temporary amnesia.

A large number of patients have presented themselves in whom there were behaviour abnormalities among these temporal lobe cases. Many of the psychological hallucinations which they experience have resembled those seen among psychiatric patients, and as a result of a series of local epileptic discharges they have not infrequently become psychotic, a condition which clears up when the attacks are controlled. In some cases removal of one whole temporal lobe has reduced the capacity for memory; in other cases there has been no interference whatever.

These facts open a field for a psychological-psychiatric-neurological study which can only be undertaken adequately by a group working together. We have the material, we have the cases, we have a group of relatively young people ready now to tackle the job.

We would need a full-time salary for a neurologist, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a secretary. The total would come to something between \$15,000 and \$20,000 a year, and it would have to be laid on for three to five years.

I believe that this might open up an important approach to psychiatric problems as well as neurological and psychological knowledge.

My question, then, is this. Would the Rockefeller Foundation consider it if we drew up our problem in detail or is this outside the field of the Foundation's interests at the present time?

We are very grateful to the Foundation for the help they have given us in the past twenty years. Each major assistance following the initiation of the work of the M.N.I. has resulted in the establishment of a new department of research. Jasper's work on Electrophysiology and Electroencephalography was the first and Elliott's work on Neurochemistry was the second.* This is the third major request for help to launch work in a new field.

With best regards and much hope,

Yours sincerely,

WGP/AD

* You know, I think, that the grant that was made for the Epilepsy and Neurochemistry study resulted in our bringing K.A.C. Elliott here, and that he has a Markle Fellow, Tower, working with him now on some rather exciting work on acetylcholine in epileptogenic foci. The Laboratory of Experimental Chemistry has now been endowed in perpetuity by Mr. William H. Donner to the extent of \$20,400.00 annually.