

THE WELLCOME TRUST  
(CREATED BY THE WILL OF THE LATE SIR HENRY S. WELLCOME)

TRUSTEES

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SCIENTIFIC SECRETARY: DR. F. H. K. GREEN, C.B.E., F.R.C.P.

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TELEGRAMS: WELTRUST WESDO LONDON.

19th January, 1960.

Dear Wilder,

The Wellcome Trustees, at their Meeting yesterday, gave careful and sympathetic consideration to the scheme which you proposed in your letter to me of last August 13th, and which was further discussed in correspondence between us in August, October, November and December. As I told you in my letter of December 4th, your proposal had to encounter fierce competition with a number of other important applications, of which the total was such that our consideration of them all had to be highly selective. I am sorry to have to tell you that your scheme, as proposed and developed in our correspondence, did not find favour with my Trustee colleagues as a body. Apart from the above-mentioned competitive nature of their decisions, they were disinclined to adopt a mechanism for the award of research fellowships which, if they had accepted it, would have been an innovation in the policy with regard to such appointments which they have hitherto adopted. They have not so far agreed to create a system of fellowships, to be put at the disposal of a particular research institution, reserving to themselves only the right of a formal approval of appointments effectively made by the institution in question. I think that they fear that, if we adopt your scheme, they might be embarrassed by pressure for the adoption of similar schemes, with regard to other research centres. This might, in effect, eventually result in allowing the application of a substantial proportion, of the annual income at their disposal, to pass into other hands than those of the Trustees themselves and their immediately chosen advisers on particular cases. It is a fact that, so far, they have avoided committing themselves to schemes of the kind which you proposed. On the contrary, they have adopted what has been recognised by outside observers as an eclectic and opportunist policy, the results of which have, in fact, been the subject of encouraging appreciation and endorsement. It will correspondingly be difficult, for some time at least, to get them to depart from that general principle in the administration of their funds.

The upshot is this, that I am quite sure that, if and when you and your colleagues at the M.N.I. have a man in view, whom you would like to send to England, or to some other appropriate outside centre, for a period of research, an application from you, with a full account of his credentials

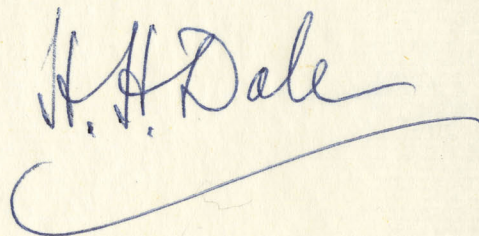
and a nomination of the neurological research centre where you would like to send him, would, at any time, receive special consideration by the Trustees. And similarly, if you ever had in view a man from a centre of neurological research in this country, or elsewhere, to whom you would like to give opportunity for a period in the M.N.I., and who would himself wish to come to you, the Trustees would welcome the opportunity of considering the award to him of a fellowship for that purpose, and would add their own enquiries to yours in making the decision. I believe that, in that way, we could really produce the effect of what you have in mind, but without formally instituting a procedure of attaching Wellcome fellowships and their award to a particular institution, which the Trustees, as at present advised, are unwilling to accept.

You may be sure that they will be really sorry, and I certainly with them, if action on such more opportunist lines should fail to produce the commemorative effect, which you also had in view, in connexion with the Silver Jubilee of the M.N.I. I shall hope to hear from you, however, that what the Trustees feel able to do, and would gladly do, in both directions and in suitable cases, will not appear to you so much less satisfactory than the more formal association of your scheme.

We are eagerly looking forward to seeing you and Helen at the Royal Society's Tercentenary Celebrations in July. Nellie has recently had charming letters from Ruth Mary and from Kate.

All good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "H. H. Dale". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Professor Wilder Penfield, O.M., C.M.G., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.S.(C),  
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