

19th September 1933.

Dr. Max Broedel,
Johns Hopkins Hospital,
Baltimore, Md.

Dear Dr. Broedel,

We are building a new Neurological Institute for McGill University. It is to be attached to the Royal Victoria Hospital but owned by McGill. I saw a book-plate which you had designed for Dr. Barker and others at an exhibition in Toronto, and I am now wondering if we could get you to make a shield for the Montreal Neurological Institute. I should expect this to be on a professional basis, of course, and if you are willing to undertake it perhaps you will be good enough to let me know approximately what the fee would come to. If we can secure a suitable shield we will use it as a book plate for the Fellows' Library and possibly use it on the Institute stationery.

But I have another and more immediate purpose in securing a shield and that is to use it in the exterior decoration of the Institute. The style is ^{cott}Spanish baronial which allows the insertion of a good many odd bits of carving of one sort and another. The entrance and window above the entrance have been held up and I do not think the architect's scheme for it, as shown on the enclosed blue print, is particularly attractive. Over the door you will find that they have put in the base of a brain which is taken from a drawing by Christopher Wren. The shield above contains an old trephine but it is too mechanical; something which signifies Canada or something of that sort for that, will be substituted, I think.

Letter to Dr. Broedel continued.

Elsewhere in the exterior detail some very old cranial instruments have been worked into the design very effectively. I am enclosing photographs of some of the instruments which I gave to the architects for possible use.

On one corner of the building is a stone slab with the words "Dedicated to [the] relief of sickness and pain and to the study of neurology." On either side of this legend is a human brain and spinal cord and between the two brains at the top a rising sun is worked into the form of a shield. I enclose a rough sketch of the idea which I turned over to the architects and they feel they can use it. [W.F.]

The shield of McGill will appear on one side of a bridge which connects the Institute with the Hospital and the shield of the Royal Victoria Hospital on the other side. I give you this information about the symbolism which we have tried to use thinking that it may guide you in devising a shield.

If it is suitable I would suggest to the architects that we do not put the words "Montreal Neurological Institute" in large letters over the door as planned, but that we put a shield over the door around which the words "Montreal Neurological Institute" should run somewhat as in the sketch which I am sending you. Such a thing would have to be chiselled in stone and could not, I suppose, be very complicated. I enclose a copy of the McGill shield and you will see on the stationery which I am using also their shield. It may be that if you work simply from the point of view of devising a shield or book-plate we could modify it sufficiently to use it in the external architecture.

Letter to Dr. Broedel continued:

The shield should indicate that the Neurological Institute is part of McGill. I rather like the idea of showing the brain and the rising sun, but possibly you will not consider this artistic. At all events the shield should express the fact that in this Institute neurology and neurosurgery are one branch of medicine; psychiatry is not included in the activities of the Institute.

Rather than use the McGill Latin inscription "Grandescunt aucta Labore" we could either leave out all legends or, if one is to be included, I should prefer to devise another brief legend that might refer to the brain or something of that sort.

On entering the front door of the Institute one will come into a waiting room about which there will be a frieze containing the heads of prominent neurologists, and at the end of the room a copy of the statue which is now in the Ecole de Medicine in Paris by Barrias which you may know. It bears the legend below it "La nature se devoillant devant la science."

I give you this fragmentary information in the hope of enlisting your interest in devising a shield for us. The architect tells me that if we are to use it in the external decoration we will have to have it without very much delay. Most of the stonework is already finished on the building although the area shown in the blue print has been held back.

With best regards,
Sincerely yours,

WGP/HL
encls.