

Enclosures: Introduction

Summary

2 research funds

December 10, 1949

Dr. Alan Gregg,
Director, Division of Medical Sciences,
Rockefeller Foundation,
49 W. 49th St.,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Alan,

Here we are again. For several years we have been struggling to set the Montreal Neurological Institute on its feet permanently as an international centre for research and teaching. My efforts with the Federal Government seem to have succeeded and are as permanent as political currents will allow them to be. For 3 years it has contributed \$40,000 to the scientific budget in the form of a "consolidated grant". It served to prevent retrenchment.

Now we must tear down the temporary military annex. There was a real blaze in it recently, only just put out in time. Thus we must go back to the former 47 beds or else build a wing and go up to 130 from the present capacity of 95. A wing will bring the private and semi-private proportion up to 50%, thus helping to balance public patient deficits, which have added up to a quarter of a million in the last five years.

We have never had so active and enthusiastic a group of research workers and clinicians as this year - Cone, Jasper, Elliott, McNaughton, Swank, McEachern, Kershman, Babkin, Olszewski, and a brilliant succession of fellows. There are 30 research fellows and 10 members of house staff here at the moment.

I believe now the work is sure to go on growing regardless of retirements because the nervous system is such an inexhaustible gold mine of hidden truths. Eight years remain to me here, good years, for the work becomes more exciting all the time, particularly with the evolution of Jasper's department of neurophysiology and McNaughton's department of neuroanatomy and the brain chemistry.

I'm afraid I have featured and over-emphasized the clinical need for the wing in the appeal summary I am sending you.* This emphasis was made for local effect on prospective donors. But the crowding in research laboratories is terrific.

*Not quite ready, but it will be forwarded.

Neuroanatomy, neurochemistry, neurophotography and some fellows' laboratories should go over into the wing if we can add a laboratory floor to it.

If you think the work has been good, if it is worth perpetuation, read over the summary of needs which is enclosed and the appeal that will come along in a few days under separate cover. The appeal is being bound. Consider whether it is worth while for the Foundation to help make this a permanent research and training centre.

I hope the Foundation will contribute \$200,000 for construction so we can add a laboratory floor to the clinical wing. In addition I dare to hope it will add \$1,000,000 so as to double the present endowment. We already have the promise of enough money to build the hospital portion of the wing now as we start on the campaign, i.e., \$1,000,000 from one private citizen here in Montreal. I will come to New York before Christmas or afterward. When can I see you? You must give me your advice, even if it is felt that the Foundation cannot help.

In any case, I am sure that the story that runs through the appeal will interest you. It is your story as much as mine or Bill Cone's. You gambled on this venture at the beginning for building and scientific endowment, and Mr. J.W. McConnell and Sir Herbert Holt matched the building fund, while Province and City undertook the responsibility for financing clinical deficits.

You have gambled on it twice since then. The first time was when we brought Herbert Jasper here to open the department of electroencephalography. You and Mr. McConnell made it possible to bring him here. I believe it is not too much to say that Jasper has subsequently opened a new chapter in neurology.

The third time you gambled \$50,000 over a five year period on brain chemistry, and Mr. McConnell matched that sum to bring the chemist K.A.C. Elliott here. Electroencephalography now pays its own way with fees. But I can not establish the brain chemistry on a permanent basis without considerably more foundation. It might well prove the most important department of all.

In the present attempt to reorganize and stabilize the institution Mr. McConnell leads off, for it is he who has pledged the million for the new wing. I think we can raise the \$400,000 for equipment, etc., from other friends.

Today I have a telegram from the Premier of Quebec, Mr. Duplessis, promising \$90,000 as an "annual payment" for the purpose of clinical deficits. The Province originally pledged \$20,000.

Dr. Alan Gregg

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The City of Montreal started off 15 years ago with \$15,000 annually. A request to raise it to \$50,000 is before the City Council now and I hope for an answer shortly. This would really cover our hospitalization costs.

The present proposal no longer calls for gambling. The scientific and clinical team is strong and local support for clinical needs seems sure. But we should enter a much more important field than simple neurology. The Montreal Neurological Institute came into existence because of your vision and the great generosity of the Rockefeller Foundation. You were interested primarily in brain research.

The Institute can be permanently established for the type of service to humanity that you, and I and the members of the Foundation Board would like to give. I refer to eventual solution of certain major problems in the field of psychiatry.

Sincerely yours,