



MONTREAL NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE

*Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery
McGill University*

and

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Professor of Neurosurgery
Senior Consultant*

8 January 1975

Mrs. William V. Cone
Mount-Royal Villa
275 Brittany Avenue
Town of Mount Royal, Quebec

File

Dear Avis,

Faith and I appreciated very much your lovely Christmas note. It seems to have been a busy time, with everyone going to and from Montreal to the country. We had four of the children here over Christmas Day, and Faith put on a magnificent turkey dinner at the country cottage. There was a gentle fall of snow during most of the day and the next day, Boxing Day, gave us brilliant sunshine which showed off the countryside to great advantage. We have grown very fond of the area around Abercorn. We have a fine view of the Sutton mountains and the mountains in upper Vermont, such as Jay Peak which you will remember well since it can be seen easily from the Newport area. We miss the presence of water and the nearest sailing lake is at Brome, about twenty minutes away, but we have a large natural swimming pool which can also serve as a skating rink in winter. I say can because at the moment it is covered with a foot and a half of snow and we never seem to be out there long enough to get it cleared.

I miss the presence of water but there are other compensations. Faith has discovered antique shops, for example. There is a famous country bakery within a few miles that makes so many varieties of bread it is difficult to remember them all. Also, there is a Swiss cheese-maker in Glen Sutton where Joe and Aurelie have been getting cheese for several years. There are some forty doctors hidden in various parts of the hills and many university people, both from McGill and from the University of Montreal. We have a marvellous French-Canadian school-teacher and her sister next door who are great musicians and have encouraged me to take up the violin again after a thirty-year hiatus. Don Baine and his wife (Don used to be our accountant at the Neuro.) have a house across the road but they have taken off to St. Stephen, New Brunswick, for retirement and we

Mrs. W. V. Cone

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see them very little now. We have a pulp-and-paper chemist a little further up the road who plays the tuba on the roof of his one-storey barn on summer nights while his daughter is rather better on the flute. The Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Montreal, a Professor of Chemistry, lives two houses up the road and we have an ophthalmologist next door. I could go on, but you can tell from that what an interesting country community it must be.

Your very generous donation to the Bill Cone Memorial Fund is deeply appreciated, and for many reasons. This was set up, as you know, by friends and patients who had a high regard for Bill and his work and it will always serve as a permanent reminder of what he did for so many people and of the high place that he held in the Neurosurgical profession. Indeed, it is difficult except for those who worked with him to know how great that influence was in Neurosurgery because he did not always record his new techniques and contributions. But his students have spread his methods widely and in that way his work will continue and will serve an ever-widening circle of those in need.

It has been my privilege over the past fifteen years to have directed the use of the proceeds of the Bill Cone Fund, and I can therefore tell you how remarkably valuable it has been in stimulating new research and new research methods. We began in 1959 by getting the improved model of the Saskatoon radio-active brain scanner which at that time was the first automatic instrument of its type in North America. This gave us a base-line from which much more sophisticated work could be developed on the problem of disorders of the circulation in the brain. The important thing was that the Cone Fund allowed us to get off to a quick start, saving probably several years as compared to waiting for the usual channels of outside research grants. But it also made it possible to get a substantial piece of research behind us so that we were qualified to apply for grants from the Medical Research Council and other people. On top of that, the work that we did with the help of the Cone Fund allowed me to get up enough courage to ask for other donations from some of our friends and patients. This has led to two further endowment funds for the Institute amounting to about \$1,000,000 each. One of these was supported by the Webster family and it was Colin Webster who did much of the hard work in organizing the contributors who made up the major part of Bill Cone's memorial fund.

Perhaps the feature which would have interested Bill most was that over the past fifteen years we have found it possible, with the Cone Fund, to give one or two men each year the opportunity of getting into laboratory

Mrs. W. V. Cone

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work in addition to their usual clinical training. I expect they will not all become Bill Cones but they will be much the better for it when they go out to their own departments or hospitals elsewhere. We continue with a small but expert team of scientists, young neurosurgeons and biomedical engineers who keep the work going forward even though I have much less time now than I would like to get into the laboratory. Recently we acquired a new piece of machinery called an x-ray microscope that was developed at Cambridge University. This is one of very few in the world and certainly the most advanced model of its type. We hope to study the very smallest blood vessels in the brain and spinal cord with this to enlarge our research findings.

You must excuse me for putting this down at some length. But I thought you would like to know that the Memorial Fund which was established for Bill has, in my mind, been tremendously successful in supporting the type of work which would have fascinated Bill, in giving young scientists and young neurosurgeons an opportunity to get a proper scientific background, in attracting research funds from other foundations and other private individuals and in giving a degree of security to our research program that would not have otherwise been possible. This is all quite aside from the fact that it will always stand out from the others and remain as a memorial to the things that Bill Cone stood for and will keep his name and his good works alive here at the Neuro. and elsewhere long after we have all passed on. It is most heartening that your generous contribution will be added to this support.

As Dr. Penfield told you, we do have a Neurosurgical professorship named after Bill that is, however, not endowed of itself. The Cone Professor has the direction of the Memorial Research Fund. We intend to develop a fund that would in time support a major part of the Cone Professor's income so that this Chair would remain in perpetuity and in these days of government uncertainties in financing research it will still carry on as another means of recognizing Bill Cone. This is not important for myself as the present Cone Professor, but it would be most critical in attracting and supporting a younger man who would bring the proper stature to this Chair. In many ways, it is recognized as one of the most distinguished Chairs of Neurosurgery anywhere and we have an obvious responsibility in seeing that it is always regarded as such. I know that those of us here at the Neuro., Ted Rasmussen, Gilles Bertrand, and myself as well as the younger men, will do our best to keep up the professional side of the Cone professorship but we need the moral and financial support of Bill's friends and admirers to keep the thing going properly.

What a long screed this is! Let me end by sending our warmest wishes

Mrs. W. V. Cone

8/1/75

for 1975 from Faith and myself, and all the family. We have had many warm messages from a large number of former Fellows who want to be remembered to you, and I send these along en masse.

Sincerely,

Bill Feindel

William Feindel, M.D.

WF:emg

A. Cone

November 29, 1974

Mrs. William Cone
Room 372
Villa Mount Royal
275 Brittany
Town of Mount Royal, P.Q.

December 6, 1974

Dear Avis:

Many thanks for your note of November 29th. The only reason for my writing that previous letter of mine to you in regard to your will, was that you should know what the possibilities are, and so be able to make the arrangements that you have in mind. You have done that, and I am completely satisfied.

You are quite right about Bill's not having an ordinary internship. He was the intern on my service, but he was a little superior to an intern, from the beginning. He learned his surgery during this period in the Presbyterian Hospital which began in 1924 and carried on until 1928. He really began as an assistant resident, and then moved on to the responsibility of a senior resident without ever having to live in the hospital.

Maybe you thought he behaved at times as though he were living in the hospital! It is great fun to look back on those days sometimes. I remember the exciting times Bill had with Johnny Hanford, as well as with me.

Helen, Wilder and I loved our visit with you the other day and we'll come again to see you soon.

As ever, yours

Wilder Penfield

WP:khe

November 29, 194.

Dear Wilder,

Thank you for your letter of November 14th. I can sympathize with your insomnia, after my own complaint.

As to my will, I left a donation to the Cune Research Fund, but not my estate as you wrote in your letter. I'm interested in the Research Fund, but the problems of the Professorship of Neurosurgery I feel are McGill's problems.

I do not recall that
Bill ever had an internship,
always working on grants
in the early days.

I was delighted to have
a visit from Helen and
you and Wides Junior,
and so glad Helen's
health is improving.

Love to you both,
Avis

Rm 342, Villa, Mt. Royal
275 Brittany
T. of Mt. Royal

! P.S. One nursing home
is very much like another,
When you've seen one,
you've seen them all,
for they all operate the
same way. I shall be
glad when I can dispense
with them.

A&C

Avis Cone

November 17, 1974

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Mrs. William Cone

Be No Man Alone -- The Story of the Founding of the Montreal Neurological Institute, L'Institut Neurologique de Montreal.
I'm in the home-stretch on Chapter 15 now.

From the time when you and Bill joined Helen and me at the Presbyterian Hospital in 1924 onward, I ceased to be alone in my efforts and ambitions and dreams. We had 35 years of work together. He began as my first resident and soon became my closest associate and companion. I turned to him so often for support and friendship and understanding.

3940 Côte des Neiges Rd.

I know the book I'm writing ^{apt. C-33} ~~apt. C-33~~ ^{Montreal, P.Q.} ~~Montreal, P.Q.~~ ^{H3H 1W2} ~~H3H 1W2~~ ^{November 17, 1974} ~~November 17, 1974~~ ^{of Rockefeller} ~~of Rockefeller~~ ^{Foundation} ~~Foundation~~ ^{endowment.} ~~endowment.~~ The obit ^{wrote} ~~wrote~~ ^{after his death,} ~~after his death,~~ too, is quite inadequate as a ^{achievement.} ~~achievement.~~

Mrs. William Cone ^{and his friends set the Montreal Neuro-} ~~and his friends set the Montreal Neuro-~~
Villa Mount Royal ^{log.} ~~log.~~ Colin Russel, Bill Cone and I, with
275 Brittany ^{were} ~~were~~ the founders of the M.N.I. It was here
Town of Mount Royal ^{his work and it is appropriate that} ~~his work and it is appropriate that~~
Montreal, Quebec ^{his name will never be forgotten, due to the} ~~his name will never be forgotten, due to the~~
^{establishment of the Cone Memorial Fund.} ~~establishment of the Cone Memorial Fund.~~

Dear Avis:

^{and he had decided to return to the United States} ~~and he had decided to return to the United States~~
^{when Columbia University tried to get him and later} ~~when Columbia University tried to get him and later~~
After we visited you this afternoon (Helen and Wilder and I), and you told me what you had been doing during your recent trip to Muscatine -- settling your affairs, giving your 40-acre forest preserve to the University of Iowa and rewriting your will and even considering the return of some of your stored furniture that is of museum quality -- my mind has gone back over the years. And now, not being able to sleep anyway, I have dressed and come back to my desk at 1 A.M.

As ever, yours

Since you have decided you want no public statement now in regard to your plan of leaving your estate to the Cone Memorial Fund which will provide for the Cone Professorship of Neurosurgery, at McGill and the M.N.I., there will be no announcement until the will is settled. Neither you nor I will be around then to tell the story. So I shall give a copy of this letter to the Director, William Feindel:

Bill Cone left us on May 4th, 1959. He would never have had patience enough to tell his own story nor to review his own contribution to medicine and to the birth and growth of the Montreal Neurological Institute.

I've been trying to tell that story in the book I've been writing for more than three years. The title of the book is to

.../2

November 17, 1974

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Mrs. William Cone

be No Man Alone -- The Story of the Founding of the Montreal Neurological Institute, L'Institut Neurologique de Montréal.
I'm in the home-stretch on Chapter 16 now.

From the time when you and Bill joined Helen and me at the Presbyterian Hospital in 1924 onward, I ceased to be alone in my efforts and ambitions and dreams. We had 35 years of work together. He began as my first resident and soon became my closest associate and companion. I turned to him so often for support and friendship and understanding.

I know the book I'm writing does not do him justice. It takes the reader only as far as the promise of Rockefeller Foundation endowment. The obituary I wrote after his death, too, is quite inadequate as a description of his achievement.

Edward Archibald and his friends set the Montreal Neurological project moving. Colin Russel, Bill Cone and I, with many friends, became the founders of the M.N.I. It was here that William Cone did his work and it is appropriate that here in Montreal his name will never be forgotten, due to the establishment of the Cone Memorial Fund.

If you and he had decided to return to the United States when Columbia University tried so hard to get him and later when the University of Iowa offered him two professorships, my own achievement would have been a poorer one and Helen and I would have lost much happiness that came to us through your friendship.

When she reads this in the morning, she will join me in the love we send you.

As ever, yours

Wilder Penfield and Helen.

Wilder Penfield

WP:khe

cc: Dr. William Feindel

Cone
Avis

October 4, 1974

Mrs. William Cone
Lutheran Home
Muscatine
Iowa 52761
U.S.A.

October 10, 1974

Dear Avis:

Helen and I got your letter of October 4th, 1974 a night or two before you left for Muscatine. Francis and Bill Feindel and Preston told me about the impressive leavetaking at the front door at the M.N.I.

We hope you are going to be happy there. You mustn't expect it to be perfect, but it is not perfect anywhere in these late years, as we have to change things. I think I told you that I am having a very rapid progression of weakness in my legs, and as you know, Helen has her own difficulties to face, but we have got to make the best of things.

We will always want to hear from you, and will always want to help you if it is possible for us to do so. If, in the end, you prefer to return here and find a home in Montreal, you may find Helen and me in it!

Good luck, Avis. As ever yours, and Helen joins me in this dictated letter,

Wilder Penfield

WP:khe

October 4, 1944

Dear Wilder,

Thank you and Helen
for your letter, and for
your suggestions as to my
will. I decidedly do not
want my name on a Chair
of Neurosurgery. I am
interested in contributing
to the research fund which
Bill originally set-up, and
will consult with my
lawyer when I get to
Muscatine.

It is with great trepidation
That I leave for Muscatine,
but I have no other alternative.
I'll miss my friends here,
and especially you and
Helen, who have been
friends for so many years,
Ruth May has been a
wonderful friend too, and
so thoughtful. I'll always
enjoy having news of
Helen and you and your
family.

With love to all

A.E.L.

CONE

Mrs. William Cone

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September 24, 1974

The Montreal Institute, which we opened in 1934, belongs to McGill, but it has cost McGill next to nothing. After the Rockefeller endowment for research, all the subsequent endowments of the academic and research work (an increase of at least twelve times) has come from Canadian contributions. The hospital activity is quite separate.

The University Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery has now three chairs in the Faculty of Medicine:

- 1. Neurology; September 24, 1974
- 2. Neurosurgery;

Neurology and Neurosurgery.

Mrs. William Cone
Room 327
3 East
Montreal Neurological Hospital

connection with the building of the new wing, Feindel occupies these chairs after Russell, Cone and Penfield.

Dear Avis: I intend to approach the Nelson Foundation in the hope that they will endow the Russell chair as a memorial to Colin and Avis (Nelson) Russell. The annual income would go to the basic

It isn't often I write you a letter. After you are well established in Muscateen, if you will write us a monthly bulletin, Helen and I will answer back with great pleasure and so keep in touch with a much-loved friend.

There is no endowment for Bill's chair or my own. If you should decide to leave your estate to McGill for the Montreal Neurological Institute, the occupant could be called the William and Avis Cone Professor of Neurosurgery. This would be a just recognition of your contribution. The part occupant of this chair is

After I talked with you about your will, I talked to Bill Feindel to see what he was hoping to do in the M.N.I. and what had happened. The William Cone Memorial Fund which was established after Bill's death came from money that his grateful patients wanted to give. I was Director then and, with the help of Colin Webster from the McGill Board of Governors, I circularized his old patients. Many gave small or large amounts. That "Cone Memorial Fund" has now reached, Bill says, half a million dollars! The income is devoted by McGill to the support of research in the Cone Laboratory in the Institute.

Avis, you will do what you want to do with the estate of William and Avis Cone. This is not to beg but to let you see clearly. If Bill had accepted the Chair of Neuropathology at the New York Neurological Institute and Columbia or the Chair of Neurosurgery at the University of Iowa when these chairs were offered to him in 1932, your problem now would be different. In any case, his contribution to neurosurgery and neuropathology and to the fate of these who must suffer, was a memorable one.

cc: Dr. William Feindel
Miss Clarice Fraser

.../2

The Montreal Institute, which we opened in 1934, belongs to McGill, but it has cost McGill next to nothing. After the Rockefeller endowment for research, all the subsequent endowments of the academic and research work (an increase of at least twelve times) has come from Canadian contributions. The hospital activity is quite separate.

The University Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery has now three chairs in the Faculty of Medicine:

1. Neurology;
2. Neurosurgery;
3. Neurology and Neurosurgery.

In connection with the building of the new wing, Feindel proposes to name the succeeding occupants of these chairs after Russel, Cone and Penfield.

He intends to approach the Molson Foundation in the hope that they will endow the Russel chair as a memorial to Colin and Evelyn (Molson) Russel. The annual income would go to the basic full-time portion of the salary of the Professor of Neurology, (McEachern, McNaughton, Robb and their successors ad infinitum).

There is no endowment for Bill's chair or my own. If you should decide to leave your estate to McGill for the Montreal Neurological Institute, it would be used for the Cone chair. If you like, the occupant could be called the William and Avis Cone Professor of Neurosurgery. This would be a just recognition of your own contribution. The next occupant of this chair is, I understand, to be Gilles Bertrand. Your lawyer could correspond directly with William Feindel.

It is 50 years since you and Bill joined us in New York and 46 years since you joined us in Breslau and sailed to Montreal ahead of us! In all that time Bill made of me twice the man I would have been without him. And in the reverse, I hope he could say the same.

Bless you, Avis. Write to us.

Wilder and Helen Penfield

WP:khe

cc: Dr. William Feindel
Miss Clarice Fraser

Cone

*Happy Birthday
To a wonderful
friend*

Jan. 31, 1973

Dear Avis,

Thank you very much for the blue hyacinth.
It is very fragrant, and in magnificent bloom.

It was good to see you the other day, and
Helen and I agreed that you seemed to be
growing stronger and more able to meet life's
problems than you have been in the last few
years.

We wish you could find a home where some
one could care for you when well and not so
well here in Montreal, and where Miss Frazier
could visit easily.

Bless you,

WP:rl

Copied

Happy Birthday

Blue
Hyacinth

To a wonderful
friend

A. E. C.

