

March 10, 1960

Hotel Nettuno, Bologna

Dear Ancel:

I am just beginning to feel that the team is whipping into good shape on its own. Our blood pressure and assignment of clinical codes are consistent, the spirograms are as satisfactory as possible with the insensitive spirometer and rather "dense" peasantry, and the Elema rolls merrily away. Mohacek, Todesco, and I are doing independent ECG coding and they are doing well, developing interest in reading while the subject is still captive, including a better index of suspicion on ST depressions to be confirmed by delayed records post exercise, and so forth. The most difficult thing has been to convince them that anything other than perfect records is usually due to impatience and sloppy technique and not the will of God. But the records look very nice these days.

Milano, on our day off yesterday, was a welcome adventure after the routine. Del Vecchio met me with my ticket to La Scala and I ate lightly at the opera restaurant, which comes close to a good French restaurant in atmosphere and service. La Somnambula, the sleep walker, was delightful and was quite heady with elegant and beautiful young people, perfumes and magnificent sounds. After seven curtain calls, "bravos and bravas" long after midnight, there was a lagniappe, a stupendous ballet company of 82-100 in a hypnotizing pattern of color and motion dancing to Ravel's La Valse.

Milano's department store is for the all world like Daytons and I got knickerbockers and socks for skiing at Cervinia this week-end. On the way back I visited Reggio Emilia with a charming old engineer who gave me a two hour Roman history told through old coins, shiny and used, victory issues, legal and illegal issues, smooth and the serrated edges and so forth. I visited with a Bellevue-trained cardiologist there who handed me a fat manuscript on an ECG study he would like rewritten for Circulation!

If weather prevents my Milano-Burssels-Cervinia flight, #646 on the afternoon of the 19th of March, I will arrive Sunday a.m. by train. Let me know if there are any important social invitations for the 19th so that I may anticipate and schedule changes. Flaminio