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Circa 1991  
HB

Dr. Ancel Keys  
410 Groveland, Apt 802  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Dear Ancel:

Many thanks to your reading (and thanks to Margaret for her reading) of my Seven Countries field adventures. You put your finger on a real problem in that I haven't identified my readership very clearly. I guess I see it as medical and cardiological colleagues who are not entirely familiar with the Seven Countries details, but have an interest in the study. I would also hope that it would be readable to a few intelligent lay readers.

At any rate, my daughter, Katia, is now editing them at my expense. Her boss gave her a week off to do it. From what I have heard back, she also agrees with you on cutting out the technical sections, etc. Stacy is not available to look at mine or anybody else's writings I am afraid, being up until 2:00 nightly these days in preparing the scripts for a series of 21 Minneapolis school programs to take place in the later winter and spring.

Thanks for your special notes about Martti and other details. You referred to expecting to hear more about me personally. Yes, I have made a good deal of progress on my personal memoirs, divided into sections on childhood and youth, then a whole separate section on medical career and interests and then another separate section on musical career and interests. That, I did get Stacy to glance at some months ago and she indicated it would require tons of work not to be an amateurish production. So I'll save that for my later "sabbatical".

I will share with you any information on printers and publishing as I receive it. I have three estimates now on the 300 page edition of my Seven Countries Field Adventures, and they are all very close to \$7,000 to get a nicely printed and bound volume. That seems to be beyond the realm

of possibility right now for me and I can't imagine finding a publisher that would sponsor this. As I find out more, including, I hope, less expensive desktop publishing, I will keep you informed.

I very much appreciate you sharing your reminiscences. They are fascinating and important and I am delighted you are getting them down. They must get printed in one form or another. I heard back from Dean Edith Leyasmeyer, more or less as I expected. No money in the Dean's Office! But I'll keep exploring and one way or another we will get this done.

I particularly enjoyed seeing stories of your early life, some of which I had heard in snatches over the course of the last 30 years. I think it's marvelous that you have written them. I am delighted particularly to hear about California and Copenhagen experiences and your early visit to Eastern Finland that I was not aware of, and how much you owe to Professor Krogh. Keep it coming.

Regards,

Henry

COPY

Keys - Kennel

410 Groveland Av. No. 802  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
28 October 1994

William B. Kannell M.D.  
Boston University School of Medicine  
80 East Concord Street  
Boston ME 02118

Dear Bill,

I appreciate your interest in the relation between body mass index and mortality. There are two major questions. One concerns the common assumptions of the distribution of the variables: normal linear or quadratic. In almost all of the analyses and published reports there is no interest and certainly no proof that these assumptions are warranted.

To avoid any such assumptions I have examined the data on 25-year mortality of the men in decile classes of the body mass index. I enclose a brief summary of the findings. Because there was no suggestion of a trend in the middle classes of the BMI, I have omitted them to shorten the table. You will see there is no indication of excess risk of shortened life in the men with the higher body mass index. In contrast, there is a distinct tendency for a shortened life of the men with low BMI.

The second point of concern is the question of confounding by smoking habit. This was examined by confining the analyses to the 2,751 men in the Seven Countries Study who had never smoked or had stopped at least ten years before entering the Study. The 25-year mortality of those men was not related to BMI.

The Cox equation for 25-year survival was solved with age, systolic blood pressure, smoking habit and BMI as co-variates. The BMI was not significant for survival in any cohort while the other co-variates were significant. Serum cholesterol was borderline.

You mention "ill health" causing weight loss. Our men were more rigorously screened for present and past health than any other prospective study I know about. Our data noted above cover over 8000 deaths in 25 years. We are beginning to examine 30-year data. Extremely bad eyesight retards my work doing all BMDP calculations.

All good wishes,

Ancel Keys

# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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December 6, 1994

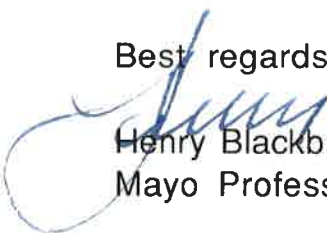
Dr. Ancel Keys  
410 Groveland, Apt 802  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Dear Ancel:

This is an opus that I largely put together, incorporating helpful suggestions of Fred Epstein and Jeremiah and Rose Stamler and Oglesby Paul. This is another "labor of love" completed and is now accepted to be published as a separate monograph by AHA and also, without the appendices, by *Circulation*.

You will notice that your '72 lecture in Tampa at the annual meeting banquet is Appendix F in this compilation.

Best regards,



Henry Blackburn, MD  
Mayo Professor of Public Health

Enclosure

Minneapolis, 84060 Pioppi (SA)  
Italy  
1 June 1995

Prof. Henry Blackburn  
Division of Epidemiology  
School of Public Health  
University of Minnesota  
1300 S. 2nd Street, Suite 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55454

FAX 001 612 624 0315

Dear Henry,

Here is the text of the ms. "Longevity and Body Fatness in Middle Age - American and Italian Railroad Men", together with 13 tables and 2 pages of References. I am giving the same material to Alessandro Menotti. I ask you and Alessandro to provide an Abstract and, if you think it necessary, a note of thanks.

If you are satisfied with this material, it should be sent to a journal. Of course I am amenable to proposed alterations, I insist we do not send it to the American Journal of Epidemiology; I despise the Editor and refuse to pay for publication. I think this is an important report and should be sent to an important journal.

This has been a hard job for me, making and checking all calculations before writing the text. It would have been impossible without the extra big monitor I bought. Margaret has been a great help spotting the many writing errors I make with my terrible vision.

All the best, as ever,



Ancel Keys

COPY

410 Groveland Ave. No. 802  
Minneapolis MN 55403  
9 June 1995

Dr. Henry Blackburn, Mayo Professor  
Division of Epidemiology,  
School of Public Health  
University of Minnesota  
1300 South Second Street  
Suite 300  
Minneapolis MN 55454-1015.

Dear Henry,

Tom Strasser has sent you what I think is a copy of Kannel's Ancel Keys 1994 lecture. I think this should be discussed in the ms. on the railroad men. With my terrible vision I cannot read the ms. in full but I think we should comment that the Framingham data includes men younger than age 40 so the analysis is not comparable to the analyses restricted to men aged 40-59 as in our studies, It may be that body mass index is a risk factor for relatively young men but we deal with middle-aged men at entry.

I thought perhaps our exclusion of prevalence men would make a difference but I enclose a copy of the US railroad finding when prevalence is not excluded. BMI does not distinguish 25-year dead and alive.

I have also made the analysis on the U.S. railroad men restricted to men under age 50 at entry. Entry BMI does not distinguish the survivors from the men dead in 25 years.

In the Framingham data I have not seen the age distribution and I'd like to see the relation of 25-year deaths to body mass index in men aged 40 to 59 to compare with our analyses. Also I wonder about pointing out that Framingham subjects are not a sample of a defined population; a third of the subjects are volunteers. Can you write a few lines on the age, and perhaps on the samples for the ms?

Yours,

Ancel Keys

# COPY

410 Groveland Ave. No. 802  
Minneapolis MN 55403  
24 June 1995

Dr. Henry Blackburn, Mayo Professor  
Division of Epidemiology,  
School of Public Health  
University of Minnesota  
1300 South Second Street  
Suite 300  
Minneapolis MN 55454-1015.

Dear Henry,

Many thanks for the copy of your story in "new clothes". It is a great improvement, especially in the illustrations, but it is also good to have it printed on much better paper.

Margeret has read t  
o me much of your fine story and she will be happy to finish with the more elegant printing. There is some hope I can read it after the cataract is removed

Yours,

Ancel Keys