



INSTITUT FÜR
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15 December 1993

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Klausstrasse 4, CH 8008 Zürich,
Tel.: -41-1-3838236
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Dr. Henry Blackburn
Fax: 612-624-0315

Dear Henry,

When we got back from Bethesda at the end of November, your letter of November 11 was waiting for me. I wanted to write to you every day since but time closed in on me again and again for a number of reasons. However, to-day, another letter arrived by fax, dated December 14, and I cannot stand it any longer not to write... I tried to call Ms. Fortner, to ask whether you left for Florida already but only the tape answered. Talking about tapes, I'm glad you received my recorded message just before we left Bethesda. As you will have gathered meanwhile, I did not get the message you left for me at the Convention Center in Atlanta because I am in the bad habit never to check for messages. I am very sorry I missed it. Many thanks for leaving it for me!

What you said about the Keys Lecture and also the contributions to the symposium in Japan moved and touched me deeply. I needed this support very much and you have truly been the "blessed physician" to me. Particularly with regard to the Keys Lecture, it meant everything to me to live up to the occasion and I gave to it every bit of the strength that remained after the difficult period since Doris' accident almost 2 years ago. I was grateful and happy that a fair number of our friends and colleagues gave me a pat on the back after the Lecture but none of it did me as much good as what you wrote to me. I thank you with all my heart...

When I think back to the Lecture and the dinner next day, there is a glow which will never go away. It was fortunate that we could stay in the States for a bit longer, especially in Bethesda which has become a home from home. We had a happy Thanksgiving with Tony and his family. Luckily, Andy had a meeting in Washington during our stay so that, for the first time in years, I could be together with him and Tony at the same time. Things were rather hectic when we got back, - catching up with work and the annual pre-holiday priorities, as well as visitors. Moreover, with Doris' impairments in moving around, things take longer. We had already seen Dr. Stauffer, the head of orthopedic surgery at Hopkins while we were in Bethesda, on account of Doris' pain which isn't really a lot better since the operation. Dr. Stauffer thought that the pain was caused by the prothesis being loose (difficult to understand because the location of the pain is the same it was almost 2 years ago) but, a couple of days ago, Doris' orthopedic surgeon here, Professor Schreiber (who also operated on Silvia Mancini) came to the same conclusion. Doris is scheduled for a total hip replacement in a month or so. In a way, we are glad because the present situation becomes more and more discouraging and now, we have new hope.

I am very appreciative that you have taken the initiative the get going on our "history" again. I feel as enthusiastic as ever and I was encouraged by the independent remarks of several people after the Keys Lecture how much they enjoyed some of my digging up the past. Please do let me know what I can do in the way of dividing the labor. Perhaps, I could concentrate more on the beginnings and you on the more recent developments though, for the earlier past in particular, there will be much overlap. Is Rick Shekelle still "on board"?

We had thought of going to the Engadin over the holidays but Doris has so much discomfort again, despite analgesics, that it would not be worth the effort. We are glad that we could be in the mountains during part of the summer. It will be enjoyable, too, to be home, with some of its aspects of paradise, as Stacy and you know. Incidentally, I was tremendously impressed with Stacy's description of your Florida retreat when we talked to each other across the table at the first-evening dinner in Fukuoka,- I imagine that Rousseau, certainly, and even Thoreau would have envied you quite a bit. Have a very happy time there together and a very good New Year,- in every respect. Along with these wishes, Doris and I send you both our fondest thoughts -

As ever,
Fred.

TOTAL PAGES: 3

St. Louis

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January 27, 1994

Dr. Fred Epstein
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CH 8008 Zurich, Switzerland

Dear Fred:

I have made substantial progress in arranging and abstracting the documentation of the historical developments of the Council on Epidemiology and Prevention of the American Heart Association. That arranging is a long way from producing a readable draft of any manageable length! Nevertheless, I am sufficiently encouraged over the progress that I have mentioned that progress to several people with the result that the upcoming March 17-19 meeting of the AHA Council on Epidemiology will highlight the 30th formal anniversary of the Council.

I also have the considerable interest of Grethe Tell in publishing the history in some form or other in the CVD Newsletter, although her deadline for the end of March is not practical.

In light of these rather rapid developments, I can only hope that you will be receptive to receiving some sort of document within the next month, with the idea that we would actively collaborate on the AHA Council history. I can only hope that you will also be receptive to coming to the March 17-19 meeting this year in Tampa, Florida. I am not sure about your expected rotation to Bethesda, or whether that is now going to subside since the production of your magnum opus (plus the marvelous article submitted to Circulation!), or whether it is too soon for you to think of travel this way again.

Anyway, I am hoping against hope that you will be able to give some time to this at the end of February and the early part of March in regard to our collaborative undertaking, and that you will consider it possible to appear at the banquet dinner presumably on the evening of March 17th, Thursday. You will undoubtedly soon hear from Luepker and Fortmann and Co. in this regard.

Finally, in regard to our larger ambition, to develop a history of CVD epidemiology, it seems to me that you have made such a marvelous start on that that it should be your initiative, to which I would be happy to respond as co-author. In other words, I

am taking initiative on the AHA Council history and hoping that you will co-author it with me, while you take a new initiative on the history of the field, a much more ambitious issue with a much wider potential audience, with me and perhaps Rick Shekelle or another as collaborator (though Rick seems to have dropped his interest in the matter, or given up on our progress!).

On the occasion of the banquet celebration of the 30th anniversary of the formal organization of the Council, it is the intent of the Council to invite, as well as yourself, Oglesby Paul and Len Cook. Unfortunately, we are a few months too late to have Felix with us. All the evidence is that Oley and Felix and Len were critical early movers within the AHA organization.

I am still fumbling for a way in which to put the immense documentation together. I have abstracted all AHA Council Executive Committee Minutes, and minutes of the predecessor Committee on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiological Studies, going from 1958 up to the present. I have also abstracted the content and leadership of the conferences from 1967 to the present and we are looking for some evidence of programs for the 1960 to 1966 Chicago Epi Conferences (would you know of any?). I have assembled some correspondence, though very limited, and have abstracted the National Conference on Cardiovascular Diseases in Washington, 1950, the Brookline Conference in 1957, and, when I get home, I plan to abstract the Princeton Conference Report. I have nothing on the Arden House meeting and hope that you might have.

So this is more or less in the nature of a progress report to you, as well as an earnest hope and request that you will be able to respond in the next period to my efforts, still not quite focused, on putting it all together, and that you will put a place in your calendar for at least the potential of attending the AHA Council Annual Scientific Meeting in Tampa, March 17-19, this year.

Finally, if this all comes to pass this rapidly, I hope you can have some time to interview Oley Paul and Roy Dawber in regard to the Council history and the broader history of CVD Epi at the time of the Tampa meeting.

I would like your advice soon about whether we should think of the CVD Newsletter as a place to publish this material in considerable detail (possibly with an appendix or two on the officers over the years, maybe excerpts or the whole talk of Ancel Keys and Oglesby Paul in their sort of summary talks of 1974-76, banquet talks at our conference, and so on). I would also envisage a much shorter version of six to ten printed pages that I would hope we might be successful in having published in Circulation. I think Bruce Fye's example last year on the Council on Clinical Cardiology is an excellent one and I would be happy if we could produce one as fine as that one.

I am in a quandary about organization of this voluminous material. I had thought of dividing it into 1) ideas; 2) people; 3) events; and 4) organization. They are

awfully intertwined and don't separate very well into these categories. Without even facing the issue, I know that it will be a major one when we start talking about people in that we will be accused of leaving important people out. The only way I thought to deal with this is to simply use names in their factual context as they have participated in the organization, with only a strong focused mention of people who were heavily involved at the outset in the predecessors of the Council and in its organization.

The Council minutes and even the conference programs certainly don't provide the drama of the ideas that I had hoped they might. The ideas were obviously in the heads of the investigators but the excitement doesn't come through in perusing through these documents. As you know so well, because you were so responsible for it, a preoccupation with Criteria and Methods and the agenda of that working committee, including the Pooling Project, were really the thing that brought us together in the early conferences and the glue that held us together in the early years. Criteria and Methods are continuing to be important, but certainly NIH and public policy and AHA politics have dominated our organization in recent decades.

Clearly, what I am trying to do is to avoid the banality of a chronology, as important as it is. I have not yet found the way to get the drama and the personalities and the ideas and the events brought together effectively. Because you have done this and done this so well, I hope you will think about these issues in the next days before you get any of this material from me.

At any rate, this is a warning that after your remarkable creative efforts of the latter part of '93, culminating in so many classic presentations and publications, that you are being called on for another and different creative effort and on a schedule that is being thrust upon us by events (because I opened my mouth in regard to this being the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Council). Let me know about your availability, openness and enthusiasm to work on this project in the next period. Certainly there is no deadline in terms of any publication, but you and I will be called upon for a night of nostalgia in March in Tampa.

Cordially,

Henry (HB)

Henry Blackburn, MD
Mayo Professor of Public Health



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31 January 1994

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Dr. Henry Blackburn
FAX: 612-624-0315

Dear Henry,

Your letter - by fax - of January 27 made me both happy and sad. First of all, I have endless admiration for your having made such splendid progress on the "history" and I do appreciate ever so much that you want me to be present at the forthcoming Council meeting in Tampa. Under normal circumstances, I would travel to the end of the world for this purpose and return via Tampa. However, as I wrote to you on December 15 -by fax-, Doris is scheduled to have another operation on her hip and this has now been set for February 10. On February 28, if all goes according to plan, we shall drive to Bad Ragaz where Doris will have intensive physiotherapy. We expect to return to Zürich on March 17,- just when the conference in Tampa starts. We were in Ragaz 2 years ago, after the first operation. One stays at a hotel which is connected with the treatment facilities by a passage. Needless to say, Doris will need my help all the time,- getting out of bed, getting dressed or in and out of the bathtub and so on, quite apart from returning home and, once there, requiring again the same help, apart from the daily chores around the house. The timing of the Tampa meeting could not be worse, as far as I am concerned, and there is no point in belaboring the issue because you will understand the situation only too well. It is an awful pity and I can only say that I will be intensely there in the spirit. Thank you again, dear Henry,- once again, you are a wonderful friend...

As far as the opus is concerned, I will write to you and respond to your long letter in detail within the next week. I am very much under pressure right now but I am, of course, most anxious to tell you a little bit about my own thoughts on our venture and, I like to think, adventure together (Blackburn and Epstein, in that order!).

I imagine that you wrote your letter from Florida. I made myself a vivid picture of your place -probably quite inaccurate- from what Stacy told me across the dinner table that first evening in Fukuoka. It sounds a good life in every way...

With all most cordial thoughts from house to cabin, as ever,

Fred.

Prof.Dr.F.H.Epstein



Prof. Dr. F. H. Epstein
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Dr. Henry Blackburn
University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Minneapolis
FAX: 001-612-624-0315

Dear Henry,

Your letter, by Federal Express, of February 28 was sent on to Bad Ragaz where Doris and I have been for a week. Doris is well on her way with her physiotherapy, has little or no discomfort and is making good progress. The hotel (Hotel Quellenhof) is out of this world and we have the same, very nice room we had 2 years ago, after the first operation. There are even gourmet low-calory meals for people like us. Also, we are fond of the peaceful, both gentle and austere landscape. In this connection, you wrote on your most attractive and tempting invitation for the campfire picnic - ever so many thanks, wish we could come... - "we'll think of you in the Engadin". Bad Ragaz is not in the Engadin but about an hour from Zürich, on the way to and close to Chur (the gate to the Engadin). It is also close to Liechtenstein where we went for a short ride the other day. Thank you, dear Stacy and Henry, too, for the postcard, dated January 31, with the romantic picture of The Bobcat. It would be a nice dream if we could haunt you there one day for a day...

However, to come back to earth! Nothing was lost, I am afraid, by your having sent the slightly shorter, second draft because I had not yet tackled the first version which arrived shortly before the rush of departure to Bad Ragaz. My problem is that I am very tired after these difficult two years and I just have to ease off a bit. I forced myself to the limit for the Keys Lecture and the talk in Fukuoka, apart from some lesser priorities but I simply must "give in" sometime till the tiredness has worn off. After all, I need the strength for Doris, too. I took a mountain of things along, being a hopeless optimist, but the Council manuscript has priority, as well as the letter to Oley Paul. You did mention your disagreements concerning MRFIT to me some years ago and I do understand the problem. I had taken note before how meticulously fair you were to him in your manuscript, regardless of this issue. Oley's address was not attached but I have it.

Your questions in the P.S.: (1) I could not read Schyler Kol...name but I don't know anyone with this first name anyway; Robert Reed is the son of Lowell Reed and a biostatistician, - I think he was at Hopkins but may be wrong. (2) To the best of my knowledge, Lester Breslow never played a role on the Council but we must check with Oley. (3) I have no idea who Wm. Brumfield was. (4) I have the Princeton Conference report in Zürich but would have to check about Makarska (Jerry will know...).

I do look forward to go over your draft. I have skimmed over it enough to know that you have done a magnificent job! My red

pencil which you mention won't get much shorter in the process! I am very happy that you decided - perhaps in part intuitively - to write a history of the Council rather than, as we had originally envisaged, a history of CVD epidemiology. The former is within immediate reach, the latter a much bigger and more difficult task which we will, I hope, attempt subsequently. When I told Dick Remington at the time that I was dreaming to write a history of CVD epidemiology and he suggested that this should be sponsored by the Council, he may well have thought primarily of what you have now done.

Highlighting people, mentioned in the first of your two covering letters, will be a problem. However, the problem is smaller if one writes a history of the Council and not a history of CVD epidemiology because one can confine oneself to those immediately involved in its founding and conduct, without anyone taking much offense. It will be a different matter if one is faced with highlighting the people who have contributed to making CVD epidemiology great.

For selfish reasons, I am glad that the 30-year celebration will be postponed till next year. Beyond this, it will be possible to do better with the detailed planning and it will be an advantage to have the Council history under cover. It is a pity that birthdays have no confidence limits, implying that they can be celebrated within these limits. Or have they...?

It is enjoyable to talk to you but, in the circumstances, I had better spend my time looking at the manuscript. By the way, we will probably be here till around the 18th. We are at the Hotel Quellenhof, CH 7310 Bad Ragaz, Fax +41-81-303-2022, in case you want to get a message to me. I'll be in Tampa in my thoughts.

I am happy that we can work together, - thank you! All good wishes and thoughts,

Cordially,

F. H. Epstein, MD

P.S.: I was almost sure I sent you a fax from Zürich to thank you for the first edition of the draft but I have no record of it here. In the heat of departure, I must have done it only in my thoughts.

TOTAL PAGES: 2

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March 14, 1994

TO: Fred Epstein

FROM: Henry Blackburn

Thanks for your wonderful letter of the 9th March from Bad Ragaz. I don't know where I got the idea but I always envisage you and Doris hand in hand walking the byways of St. Moritz. At any rate, the remarkable result from the surgery and the apparently painless, though long rehabilitation, is most wonderful news.

I can understand your profound fatigue and am embarrassed that I have picked this bad time in many regards to become productive myself in this long-delayed project. Incidentally, I have a copy of the letter from Richard Remington to Oley Paul written in 1978 (!) explaining that you and I were commissioned to do this job! I'll send you a copy along the way.

Unfortunately, I was unable to derail the plans of Luepker and Fortmann to have some acknowledgement of the 30th Anniversary of the Council at the Tampa meeting. Thus, there will be brief informal commentary at the banquet by me, Oley Paul, Bill Zukel and Len Cook.

On the other hand, there is no problem with an orderly process for the manuscripts, so they may be thoroughly dealt with, having your contributions and those that will arise in your correspondence with Oley Paul and others. I have shown it only to two people; Russell Luepker and Len Cook. Len Cook is pleased with it and had no substantive suggestions. Russell Luepker had a couple that will be easy to accommodate.

As you go over it, please keep two publications in mind; presumably a more complete one to be published in the Newsletter or separately with American Heart support (and might contain an appendix of interesting documentation), and another of 8-10 published pages in Circulation.

After I have received your commentary and rewrites, I will attempt the abbreviated Circulation version and get it back to you.

Though the Makarska Conference is not directly relevant to our history, I will contact Jerry Stamler as to whether he might have a copy of any proceedings. I don't know what has happened to my copy of the dark green, privately published account

of the World Congress of Cardiology session in 1954. Perhaps I will run into these as I continue to go through 40 years of papers. At any rate, those are relevant only to the larger history and not to the task in front of us which I am pleased to see you think is realizable.

As I see it we have no heavy deadline for this undertaking so I want you to approach it with enthusiasm and only when you are ready to do so.

I suspect you have experienced, as have I, cyclic periods of forward motion and rest (and occasional backsliding) and have come to accept these as normal parts of your endeavor. I am no longer bothered when I have periods of unproductivity, knowing that somehow ideas and energy will return and sensing that the pause is, in fact, refreshing.

We stay a little too busy here, Stacy working on several important projects having to do with violence prevention and the production of a radio show for youth. The peace and productivity of the next period are interrupted for us by the week we will spend in Florida followed by a week in Mexico City for the 50th Anniversary of Ignacio Chavez Institute, followed by a week in May, an anniversary celebration for the Paisley- Renfrew Study with some honorific occasion of the Royal College in Glasgow for Victor Hawthorne. Incidentally, if you have any anecdotes about Victor, I would appreciate a word. I have a nice letter from Stan Garn on that subject.

The summer ahead looks delightful. We will stay here to be close to the grandchildren. I will take my usual week summer musical camp in the Bohemian Grove, but have resigned from the Lake Tahoe faculty. If Darwin celebrates the 20th anniversary of that undertaking, I may drop out for a week-end.

We have renounced all trips to Europe including the Berlin World Congress for the fall but plan a week in October in New Orleans where I am remarkably, at this late stage, being honored by my alma mater, Tulane. Back at home I am dealing with a rare small cell carcinoma of the larynx in a long-term colleague, Gail Dolliff, our technician on the railroad laboratory and who has been with the Division for 37 years. Most of her neck nodes were positive so we are looking forward to an intensely personal and involved period with her and her grown children in the next months.

Again, many thanks for your communications. Feel that the pressure is off here, and I never intended that it be applied in regard to this effort. We will indeed miss you in Tampa and I will ask for a reprise of this nostalgia, perhaps at the Ancel Keys banquet in Fall, or at the San Antonio meeting of the Council next year, at which time we will surely have a publication in hand. Please let me know the chances of your attending one or the other of these meetings. Regards to you, and congratulations for Doris!

