

July 18, 1962

Dr. Merel H. Harmel
Department of Biochemistry
University of Oxford
South Parks Road
Oxford, England

Dear Merel:

Just a pleasant little note to let you know how things are going at Kings County Hospital. At this moment we have inability to run more than five operating rooms in the B building at any given time, and Maggie tells me that Binder has gone on vacation. There are not enough nurse anesthetists on the horizon to fill in the breaches and even if we ever get this blasted air-conditioning program finished, we seem unlikely to have enough personnel to run the rooms that we have. In the meantime, A-42 has 19 patients waiting for operation and the average number of patients on the general surgical wards waiting for operation is 11, or about two weeks work. Where I was raised, we endeavored to get patients into the hospital after workup the day before surgery, have them operated upon and get them out of the hospital quickly so that more could be brought in. I realize that we have many new anesthesia residents and that it is difficult to cover when they are insufficiently experienced to handle cases without immediate supervision. I would be happier, I must confess, if that supervision were available until the new men acquired that facility. All this is a frustrating experience for the surgical residents, who represent, I believe, the best group I have ever had here. Maggie complains loquaciously and loudly about everything that they do which she considers out of line, and although I get awfully tired of it I guess that is par for the course. She has gotten some of your people to join with some of us and our cardiac resuscitation program, and I think this aspect of things will help a good deal in terms of morale.

When you get back, I would like to explore with you as carefully as possible some means of giving imaginative support to research programs in Anesthesia carried out perhaps jointly with people in the Department of Surgery, as I am confident that such collaboration might do a great deal for the spirit of the place.

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Am not taking a formal vacation this summer as there is simply too much to do. Am hoping to get away during the hunting season this fall for a couple of weeks, after the new group gets reasonably broken in.

Kids and family are fine. Hope yours are the same.

Very sincerely yours,

Clarence Dennis, M.D.

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