

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY DENTAL SCHOOL

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY BUILDING

DEAN'S OFFICE

CHICAGO ILLINOIS

April 9, 1915.

Dr. Frederick S. McKay,  
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Dear Doctor McKay:-

It has seemed to you undoubtedly that I am very slow about answering your letter, but doctor, I have not been well enough to hardly know what I was doing. True, I have been down to my study many times, but very irregularly, and always when there was something pressing me to be there.

I was very much interested in the paper you sent me, and in your letter. All was very good, but it was not my idea of what you should do at all. First, my idea is that what I have written should go in as I have written it, and be published separately from what you may say. Then you can use from that anything that you like, but it should be printed as I wrote it. That is the first proposition.

The next proposition is this. You have an abundant amount of material for all you will want to present, and it should be presented in such a way as to show what you have done. Now I don't know what you expect to add to what you have sent me, but you have not touched the subject of your investigations at all. You should spend the force of your work on the development of what you have done. I recognized when I was in your city one thing very clearly, and that was this: no matter what I thought, or what any other individual thought, the idea that water was the cause of this difficulty was so fixed in the minds of both professional and non-professional citizens, that that idea necessarily required working out to the bitter end before anything else could be done. I think you have found that bitter end. You must not conclude that because your work has not been a great success, that it is not a great work. It is a great work, and will be so recognized among thinking men. Therefore it seems incumbent upon you that you write it fully and completely. Relate carefully - as briefly as you can of course, but sufficiently - what you have done, giving enough of chemical examinations of water for persons to know what the examinations mean; then giving something of the areas, and the conditions you have found in the areas, other than water; practically including all your observations.

Your idea of keeping secret the names of the individual areas, I will say nothing about. That is your privilege, and I will join you in that, and will not use any names in what I have written. I will make some modification in what I have written and sent you. I thought I would not, but the necessity, as I think about it, grows greater and greater every day. The difference will be simply this - a little discussion of the coloring matter, giving it a name and telling where else it is found in the teeth. I have made a considerable investigation of that subject, and it is a very interesting one. Really it will require but a few paragraphs to develop it, and I will perhaps cut away enough, or more than enough, to prevent any considerable increase - perhaps no increase - in the number of pages. In that I need not stop to explain many things that I have stopped to explain, and it will

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shorten it in that way.

I write what appears above in all sincerity, and for your benefit, because I sincerely believe that this work ought to be done and done completely. The first nine pages of what you have written and sent me is excellent work. From that point, go right on and develop everything you can of the work you have done. I don't think I have any reason to give you any direction about it. That is not my idea at all, but it is simply an expression of my sentiment in regard to it. You have done an immense amount of work there, and unless you write it up, you will have no credit anywhere, and you should not lose the effect of what you have done, upon yourself, your community and the dental profession.

I am not well yet. I don't know, my physical condition is rather bad. I don't mean that it is so bad that I am in danger of dying off, but it doesn't seem to improve. I have been confined to riding down to the school for a long time. To walk a block is more than my physicians think I ought to try to do. From this you will know something of what this means. I can sit and dictate; I cannot read anything because of a difficulty with my eyes, and I am up against it on all sides. But I am at work even when I cannot come down to my study, practically every day more or less, on something. Within a few days I shall have a new book out that will be a surprise. It will be to the profession like a new subject, but it is not. It is on the investing tissues of the teeth. I think I have told you about it. This has been long delayed by my illness.

Hoping to hear from you and to know what you think about my propositions as related, I am,

Very truly yours,

*G.V.B.*

P.S. By the way, I hear that things are not going well with the proposed Dental Congress at San Francisco, and that there is a probability that the date will be changed. Now I have made no investigation of this, and do not know what it amounts to, only this, that the Committee having charge of that matter is finding great difficulty in obtaining writers to fill out the program. Of course at the inception of the matter the great European war was not anticipated, and the result is that all of the work falls upon the Americans practically, which in itself is a great blow to the Dental Congress. What will be done about it I don't know. It seems probable, from what I have heard, that there will be delays at any rate, or it may be given up. The conditions for it are very, very bad.

G.V.B.