

October 3, 1972

Michael T. Dolan, M.D.
9806 Singleton Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20034

Dear Doctor Dolan:

As my secretary indicated in her note of August 30, I have been out of my office for some weeks, during which my correspondence has languished. I shall attempt to bring it up-to-date, but I can hardly bring myself "up-to-date," since by reason of an illness, I have been substantially out of action since August of last year. Moreover, having retired (not entirely, but certainly at a greatly reduced scientific activity) in 1964, I must draw on the past for my information.

With reference to Dr. Gilfillan, I must, in all sincerity, say that, in my view, he has contributed little or nothing to the substantiation of his thesis (and that of earlier interpreters of certain historical events). The analytical work which I and my analytical conferees attempted to carry out and interpret was done in an effort (unsuccessful) to prevent unjustified interpretations of the results. First of all, the analytical work had to be based on sound analytical findings; and second, the results had to be interpreted for what they were worth only, and not for what one wished to know. To be specific, there was no information available to us as to the conditions surrounding the samples which might have resulted in their contamination with soil, water, or other materials which may have contained lead. One must indulge in speculation as to why the results are variable. There is nothing - literally nothing - by which one can interpret these phenomena. There is no certainty that this lead was in these bones at the time of death of the individual concerned. So much is known as to the factors which may have been involved, that one is not entitled to judge these matters.

The hypothesis which is held by Dr. Gilfillan is an interesting one, and one would wish to bring evidence to bear for or against it, but no such evidence has been found. It is as though this work had not been done, so that there I leave it, as pure hypothesis. I regret to have to make this statement, since Dr. Gilfillan is such a charming gentleman, but the facts are as they are and have not been influenced by his interest and enthusiasm.

Cordially yours,

RAK:wb

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.