

16 June, 1992

John,

I agree generally with Edelstein that involving GE at this time would make things very complicated. Perhaps nothing more needs to be said for now. It is very reasonable to approach GE later with a relatively completed product in order to attempt to license it or to pursue an implementation test.

The downside of this for St. George's is that, if all the various claimants to ownership of the patent can be convinced to assign their rights to St. George's, then it will be necessary for the school to be prepared to pay the £10,000 to £20,000 cost of filing as well to commit to hiring a solicitor to negotiate with e.g. GE's lawyers for an agreement later. I would not assign my rights until I knew where St. George's stood on this.

Obviously, the school could avoid this expense by simply donating the idea to GE or abandoning efforts to develop the patent. I must disagree with Edelstein's suggestion "that all the legal maneuvering is wasting time and energy when you should be doing experiments!" There are always voices to be heard arguing that we should do away with patents, copyrights, even perhaps the idea of plagiarism and simply share and share alike in the common fruits of the human intellectual endeavor. This makes some sense, but it does seem a bit strained coming from an organization like GE.

Here at U.W. I have been meeting with Jay Tsuruda who has moved up here from Moseley's group and is in charge of many of the MR research efforts in Seattle. Their abstract for the SMRM reports the successful implementation of one of the ideas laid out in the patent application and in the Wellcome grant which is the use of various algorithms to track the vector (or tensor) of the diffusion anisotropy direction and magnitude to trace the motor tracts through the brain. They have a Nicolet 2.0 T magnet with 25 G/cm gradients, low field gradients only on their 4.7T, and low fields on their research Signa 1.5T. Because of their other diffusion work, they are in negotiation with some other small manufacturer to obtain a specially designed magnet with 25G/cm gradients and 2.0T in a human-sized bore. This is a one-of-a-kind machine and may be crucial to getting e.g. brachial plexus images. GE has been promising a 3G/cm gradient set for the Signa for several years, but so far has been unable to provide one.

I have asked both Doug Stoner and Marvin Snyder (the responsible legal person in Schenectady) to try to explain to Dumoulin and Edelstein how this mix up took place. Snyder was instructed to call me to discuss the material but inexplicably decided it would be simplest to just ask the scientists to sign. I do apologize for the embarrassment, but this had to be adressed now or never. I will know more about plans at U.W. by next week and will be back in touch.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be 'Alan', written in black ink.