

Letter to Dr John Ross, Chairman and members of the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust.

21st September 1908, Skibo Castle, Dornoch, Sutherland.

Gentlemen. The success of the Hero Fund upon the North American Continent has been so great that I have decided to extend its benefits to my native land. We live in an heroic age. Nor seldom are we thrilled by deeds of heroism where men or women are injured or lose their lives in attempting to preserve or rescue their fellows; such are the heroes of civilisation. The false heroes of barbarism maimed or killed theirs. I have long felt that such true heroes and those dependent upon them should be freed from pecuniary cares resulting from their heroism, and as a Fund for this purpose, One and a quarter Millions of Dollars in five per cent. Bonds, yielding Twelve thousand five hundred Pounds Stg. per annum, will be sent you. Judging from our experience, this sum is ample to administer the Trust; meeting the cost of maintaining injured heroes and their families during disability of the heroes; the widows and children of heroes who may lose their lives in the United Kingdom, and still have a surplus for emergencies and contributions under Article Four hereof.

The interest of the Fund is to be used as follows:

First: To place those following peaceful vocations, who have been injured in heroic efforts to save human life, in somewhat better positions pecuniarily than before, until again able to work. In case of death, the widow and children to be provided for until the widow re-marries, and the children until they reach self-supporting age. If there be any other immediate dependants the Trustees in their discretion may provide for them also. For exceptional children exceptional grants may be made for advanced education. Grants in money or in other forms may also be made to heroes and heroines as the Trustees deem advisable—each case to be judged upon its merits. As a rule, grants should be paid monthly.

Second: No grant is to be continued unless it is being soberly and properly used, and the recipients remain respectable well-behaved members of the community. No exception will be made to this rule; but heroes and heroines are to be given at first a fair trial, no matter what their antecedents. They deserve pardon and a fresh start.

Third: Many cities provide pensions for policemen, firemen and others, and some may give rewards for acts of heroism. All these and other facts the Trustees will take into account and act accordingly in making grants. Nothing could be further from my intention than to deaden or interfere with these most creditable provisions, doubly precious as showing public and municipal appreciation of faithful and heroic service. I ask for the Trustees most careful guard against this danger. Whether something cannot judiciously be done in cases of heroism by policemen and firemen or others at the request or with the approval of the city authorities, the Trustees shall determine. I hope there can be.

Fourth: For many years claims upon the income will not exhaust it. In course of time however the number of pensioners will increase. Should the Trustees find, after allowing liberally for this that a surplus will still remain, they have power to make grants from such surplus to those injured in case of accidents, preferably where a hero has appeared. They should not act, however, until employers and communities

have done their parts, for their contributions benefit both givers and recipients. Widows with children are to be given first care.

Fifth: The field embraced by the funds is the British Islands and the waters thereof. The sea is the scene of many heroic acts.

Sixth: No action is more heroic than that of doctors and nurses volunteering their services in the case of epidemics. Railroad employees are remarkable for their heroism. All these and similar cases are embraced. Whenever heroism is displayed by a man or woman in saving human life in peaceful pursuits the Fund applies.

Seventh: When the King presents medals for heroism in peaceful pursuits in the United Kingdom, you will make immediate and careful enquiries into the circumstances of the recipients, and wherever needed make provision for their wants, or those of their families in accordance with the requirements in paragraphs in 1st 2nd and 3rd. If His Majesty ever chooses to express a wish in these cases, it is to be your law. I am glad to inform you that the purpose and general plan of this Fund have been honoured by His Majesty's gracious approval.

Eighth: You will give instructions for the preparation of a formal Trust Deed to be signed by me giving legal effect to the arrangements in this letter and containing the powers of the Trustees and granting them the same immunities as are expressed in the Trust Deed creating the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust and providing also that the Trustees are the sole judges of the proper action to be taken in each case.

Ninth: An Annual Report including a detailed statement of sums granted, and to whom, and the reason thereof, shall be made and widely published each year. A finely executed roll of the heroes and heroines shall be kept and displayed in the office in Dunfermline. At our recent conference there I stated that it was your admirable administration of the Dunfermline Fund “for bringing into the lives of the toilers more of sweetness and light” that induced me to appeal to you to take this Fund also into your wise keeping. Your prompt and unanimous response was only what I expected from such a body of men. That I privileged to know you well, and also the Trustees of my Scottish Universities' Fund and your worthy compeers of similar Funds across the Atlantic, who labour as you do, is one of the chief pleasures of my life. While I only give money, many of you are giving yourselves fully to service for your fellows without compensation other than that all-sufficient reward of knowing you are thus performing a holy duty, since the highest worship of God is service to man. With deep and abiding gratitude,

Always yours.

Andrew Carnegie.