

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
DEPARTMENT OF GENETICS AND DEVELOPMENT

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Dear Viktor,

I will write today about questions and comments in your last letter just so I don't procrastinate (which is my wont!).

- 1) I am certain there was no overleaf with the larger photograph you sent of those attending the 1939 symposium. (There was one for the smaller picture of the Woods Hole embryology , which I know was in the package I sent back.) Just in case you don't have the names of those in the symposium picture, I am enclosing a xerox copy of that picture and the legend giving the names.
- 2) I did not know that Lillie's youngest daughter lives in St. Louis. My correspondence with the Lillie family has been exclusively with Mary Prentice Lillie Barrows. In case you also know her, which seems likely, her present address is P. O. Box 67, Kentfield, California, 94904. I have a note from her dated March 9, 1981 stating that "I will be sending the spare copies (of the reprints I sent to her) to my sisters, my daughter, and a cousin of mine, daughter of H. H. Newman, who will all be very much interested." (She also added, interestingly, "As you may recall from my little memoirs, our mother was so busy keeping us properly humble that we never knew the full extent of Father's accomplishments!") NOTE THAT SHE CAPITALIZED FATHER. How's that for family respect? Even though I assume Mrs. Barrows sent a reprint of each Lillie article to Mrs. Cramer, I will use the address you provided and send reprints to the latter directly.
- 3) Here are some comments about the upcoming Morgan symposium. a) I do not know the address of Morgan's daughter, nor her name. b) The information I believe I sent to you about this symposium was given at the paper session in Dallas sponsored by the Committee on the History of ASZ, which at that meeting was approved for divisional status in ASZ. No mention was made of the name of your colleague, Garland (sp?) Allen at that time. Only talks by Jane Oppenheimer (on Morgan as embryologist), by John Moore (on Morgan as geneticist), and comments by, or at least the presence of, Morgan's daughter at the symposium, plus a statement, as I recall, that contributed papers would be solicited for topics in some way related to Morgan, were mentioned there. Even now other plans for the symposium are apparently vague since, when I mentioned something about it to Jane in a letter, her response was that my information was the first she had heard anything more about it since the original contact asking her to be a speaker!

If Dr. Allen is interested in participating I suggest he contact the person who presided at the Dallas session: Ms. E. M. Zipf, BioSciences Information Service, 2100 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103 (Tel. 215-568-4016). She may not be the actual organizer of the Morgan symposium, but will know who is. Otherwise the person to contact is the prime organizer and pusher for establishment of this history division in ASZ: Brother C. Edward FSC, Christian Brothers Center, 4415 Post Road, Bronx, N. Y. 10471 (tel. 212-796-5999. Quinn).

- 4) A word about Howard's authoring two books. In addition to the full-size revision of Lillie's book, Howard put out a smaller "Brief Edition", also in 1952, which contained only chapters 1-7 of the larger book, through p. 291, and did contain your stage series. This was a verbatim reproduction of these chapters in the main book, so it was an easy way to become author of two books! I don't believe he ever wrote any book on genealogy, although he may well do so now that he retires completely at the end of this spring semester.

5) Our search committee for a new departmental head for our Department of Genetics and Development is meeting for the first time with our departmental faculty tomorrow morning for a progress report and to work out a plan of action, hopefully with the full cooperation of the review committee of our School of Life Sciences, to try to get more university support for appointing the best man available. Your news that Ron Oppenheim is one of those under consideration for the post was therefore real news and news of special interest to me! Thanks. I have to miss this important meeting tomorrow because I am having a 3-hour exination at that time in our Speech and Hearing Clinic to see if anything can possibly be done about my continued speech problems (I have not had a stroke) and to see whether my hearing is deteriorating, as I suspect it is, since I had partial hearing loss of certain ranges of sound as a child when I had diphtheria. Because I can't attend this meeting, I talked briefly with Dave Nanney about it this morning. The Department has had no leadership since its establishment and the head all that time, Ed Brown, has been, I think, the only departmental head on campus who is still an associate professor, which the administration abhorred. The department has wanted support from the university to get in a strong departmental head from the outside (we were not permitted to go outside before) and has been increasingly concerned about our departmental administration.

In this connection you might be interested to know that from today through March 26th we have on campus a team of distinguished scientists who are conducting an exhaustive review of programs and activities of our School of Life Sciences with emphasis on the departments and research areas that should receive most of the budgetary support in view of the times and the needs to move ahead in specific areas of importance for the future. Those on the evaluation team are Drs. Michael V. L. Bennett, Donald Farmer, Harlyn O. Halvorson, William D. McElroy, Peter Raven and Alexander Rich. I know that the developmental biologists in our department and in our new anatomy department will be making strong pitches to try to improve the faculty in these departments in specific research areas, as well as in administration.

6) I am embarrassed to admit that I did not know of the publication of the "Festschrift" in your honor. I had seen no advertising about it and no reviews of it. I just checked to see if any libraries on campus had it available. Only the biology library has it, it is checked out to a person whose name they won't reveal, and there are 4 on the waiting list, so all I can do now is to add my name to the list. So the book is of great interest here and I will have to wait my turn to read it. Of course I will read Rita's contribution first! Was the Festschrift publication kept a complete surprise for you? Or did they tell you so you could have the joy of anticipation? In either case, my sincerest congratulations for this great honor that has also come your way recently--an honor that you know I know is very richly deserved! And thank you very much for telling me about it.

7) I am in the process of putting together all the separate sections of the Willier memoir now and will try to get it edited down through revisions to a manuscript I can send to Jim Ebert as soon as possible for a critical reading and editorial slaughter. Jim volunteered for the job and I am delighted that he will take the time to do it. I just cannot believe all the material I have collected from so many different sources! It has been a most interesting experience, although extremely time-consuming and sometimes frustrating.

Do you recall that I earlier asked you and several others who might know if Willier had ever mentioned why he went to the U. of Chicago for his graduate work, why he selected embryology as his research area, and why Lillie therefore became his mentor? No one knew anything about these questions. Howard later told me that Willier made these decisions because of Lillie's established reputation as an outstanding biologist and embryologist, which seemed logical. (I also thought his preparation of the Mateer embryo for microscopic study (human embryo) might have been a factor, that perhaps his teacher, Dr. Mateer, had specialized in embryology, that Lillie's textbook was probably the one used by Willier as an undergraduate student, and that

other factors of a similar nature might have been involved in his decisions.

You can therefore imagine my complete surprise when I finally received family information from Kathryn on Monday that "He had started his thesis on insects, but someone else published a paper on the same area of study while he was in service and Dad had to start over, this time in the embryology field." It seems to me very likely that Kathryn is not right in this statement. There just was no one at the U. of Chicago when Willier was a graduate student there. William Morton Wheeler was not there after 1899 and no one else interested in insects came there on the faculty until Alfred Emerson in 1929. Moreover, Kathryn's statement makes no sense for another reason. Willier stated in a footnote to his 1924 paper on effects of CAM grafts of adult thyroid gland tissue on chick embryos that "The technique as above described was independently worked out during the autumn of 1917." This was before his time spent in the service (1918-1919). So I'm an amateur detective yet.

I had taken a break for lunch with two student friends, one a graduate student and one her boyfriend on spring break as a first year medical student from the U. of Chicago, and I haven't been able to type accurately since. I guess I should have completed this surprisingly long letter before eating lunch. But at least, on the way back, I stopped at the biology library and looked up the books authored or coauthored by your colleague, Dr. Allen, and have the title and call number of his 1978 book on Morgan which I will at least scan one of these days soon. I think by all means he should be on the Morgan symposium next December in Louisville, and if he prefers, I will be happy to contact the new divisional officers about his participation.

Best regards, as always,

