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STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Genetics

October 6, 1972

Dr. Rollin Hotchkiss
Laboratory of Genetics
Rockefeller University
66th Street and York Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Rollin,

Further to my previous note about early history. I have some material from Arnold Ravin that he used as documentation for his memorial paper on Harriett, that supports the idea that she first learned of Avery's work from the 1944 paper and then took the initiative herself of writing to him about being a student there. I wish I had a better recollection, or more detailed data, about how she and Francis Ryan related in their perception about the importance of this work for genetics.

I am sending you a copy of a letter that Harriett sent me which is quite intriguing for referring to a draft history about transformation, I think we have discussed before. What is enclosed here is all I have of it and I just wonder if you do not have the rest. I made a parallel inquiry to Boris, although he has already told me he does not recall having seen anything like this among her effects.

You might also be just the person to ask for the reference to her published work on plasmalogen which I know she worked on between Zoology and Rockefeller, and which I just have not been able to lay my hands on. I have had a little trouble figuring out why she worked on this particular subject unless it was simply an expedient way to learn some biochemistry while waiting to connect with Avery. I would also be curious to know exactly when you first connected with transformation yourself. In fact, if I recall were you not also working in part on tissue aldehyde at about the same time that Harriett was, and was there some nexus there that relates to the congruency of your future interests?

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

*with
Walsch

JL/rr
Enclosure