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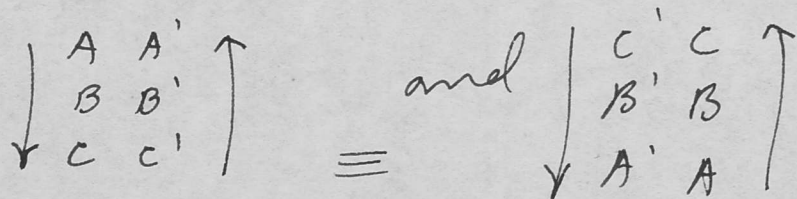
December 10, 1958.

Dear Francis:

I met Igor Tamm at a reception last night and he proved a remarkably lively & brilliantly accomplished fellow, quite extraordinary among the Russians I've ever met. He is also remarkably interested & well informed about genetics, far more than any Russian biologist I've encountered.

He was quizzing me on triplet codes and raised the question of redundancy in the complement, which I thought I had long since raised with and had generated by you, but I couldn't reproduce the argument.

Briefly, in a complementary double helix, does a triplet carry 5 bits or 6? His argument was that the sets:



i.e., ABC \equiv C'B'A' and insisted there was no exception on the grounds of steric asymmetry — i.e., the double helix has the same sense when viewed.

I could hardly think you had overlooked this point; Tamm brought it up in connection with the utility of the 20 meaningful triplets in a comma-less code. The steric argument is the one I can't intuitively beguile sense of without the models so the quickest answer seemed to be to ask you directly.

Fred Sanyer will give you all the intimate &
generous details of the whole here. One
minor calamity awaited where Ed Tatum finally
showed last last evening having been fog-bound
in Paris.

albertus

John

Have a fine time at Cambridge &
we look forward to seeing you in July.