

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
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JOSEPH D. GRANT PROFESSOR  
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February 7, 1978

Dr. Roger M. Herriott  
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Dear Roger:

Thank you for your very kind and warm letter of January 26. Obviously in my own way I must share your feelings about Rockefeller University to find it the very interesting challenge that it is. You mentioned "to make it better than it is:" if you have any more concrete thoughts about what is required, in your own estimation, I hope you will be forward with them.

I was particularly interested in your recollections of July 1946. In fact I have been trying to recreate some authentic historical record about the discovery of the K12 system and its presentation to the scientific community. I have some trouble trying to recall the details of that great debate so I wondered if I could call upon you to open up with an uninhibited stream of consciousness about your own recollections of that circumstance. Please just trust me that any use I may make of your impressions will be entirely discrete and that I am really appealing to you to be absolutely uninhibited in your characterizations. I won't say any more just now but will be glad to try to check my own recall against yours after hearing what you have to say about it.

I have not even found it possible to pin down the precise date of that presentation since it does not appear in the published volume and most of the records pertaining to that era seem to have disappeared. They are avowedly not in the collection of Demerec's papers at the American Philosophical Society. I hope that there is a more self conscious historical sense these days although there is no good reason to believe it.

Herriott, R. M.

Dr. Roger M. Herriott

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If by chance you do happen to have preserved correspondence dating back to the forties that may bear on this question or on the ones addressed in the enclosure, I would be most grateful to you to hear about it.

Again my thanks for having expressed your confidence.

Your sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor Of Genetics

JL:ek-f