

STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

DEPARTMENT OF GENETICS

November 8, 1976

Dear Aaron -

I've called a couple of times
and will try again.

Josh.

Dear Friend,

It has fallen on me, together with George Beadle, to take on the task and privilege of preparing a biographical memoir of Edward L. Tatum for the series published by the National Academy of Sciences. I am writing this letter to a number of our mutual friends with the aim of (1) collecting information and impressions that might be useful to us in filling out an accurate picture of Ed and of his life for the memoir, and (2) to assemble a more comprehensive archives that might be kept for the historical record and for more detailed inquiry in the future.

Particularly with respect to the latter, I have been astonished how quickly such materials disappear. For example, it has been impossible to get more than the most fragmentary records of the history of biological sciences at Stanford University during the early 1940's. *and I'm still looking for any detailed records of planning for S.M.A.S. circa 1955-6!!*

We would therefore be most grateful to you either for personal statements or recollections about Edward Tatum in whatever roles you knew him. If there is any material that you are willing to have deposited in the archive but would prefer not be quoted or attributed at the present time, please do not hesitate to indicate that.

Records and correspondence for the period before he joined Rockefeller University in 1957 would be particularly deeply appreciated. I would also welcome suggestions, even if they are possibly redundant, about other people to contact in this pursuit. If you have any information about repositories of documentary material about Ed, other than the collection at the Rockefeller University Library, I would certainly like to hear about it.

Ed told me that he had essentially discarded all of his own papers prior to 1957, so that if any of you have correspondence predating that, I would be glad to have it for the archives even if it covers material that may appear to be self-evident from the published literature.

I hope you will also take the opportunity to record your own personal recollections and impressions of Ed in whatever form and length you see fit.

If you have any questions about this enterprise, I will of course also be glad to hear from you by phone (at 415-497-5801).

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

*I would have your
pages in the J. Mol. Ev. - '60.*