

August 25, 1951.

Dave and Miriam Bonner,
Yale University,
Osborn Botanical Laboratory,
New Haven, Connecticut.

Dear Miriam and Dave:

First, thanks for sending me the cultures I asked for. They all look perfectly all right: I don't think sitting in Miriam's lap could do any harm.

From your postcard, I gather you may be leaving for Oak Ridge fairly soon. Esther and I do hope you can manage to enjoy it down there: it gave me the creeps the once I visited.

We are finally getting down to business on a long-neglected task: preserving our culture collection. Fortunately, almost everything important was still recoverable from agarvials, although some were over two years old. We're using the Hershey-Brown method of drying the cultures, (with CaCl_2 in the vials; no freezing, except some by evaporation), with apparent satisfactory results. There are just a few items I wanted to check with you. Are you leaving OBL soon? Are you taking the lyophil collection with you, or are you leaving it in anyone's custody at OBL. I'm interested, of course, mostly in the colifect.

Do you recall our discussion of W-45 (Lac_2^-)? All of my recent cultures of this strain now show a slow fermentation of lactose, but poor growth on EMB. A W-45/1 mutant was just pulled out, however, which accords better with my recollection of what W-45 had used to behave like. Do you have any W-45 cultures, old and recent, that could be used to check on this, and to help clear up the discrepancy in our findings re the leakiness of this mutant.

The only W- mutants of any significance that seem to have been lost are W-327 and W-328, both Mal⁺ Glu- derivatives from W-108. We could probably get them again, but if you happen to have the lyophil tubes on these, I would appreciate having them. We are also missing W-239 (Glu-), but this one's not at all important.

Our collection of Y- cultures is quite incomplete, but we anticipate no pressing needs in that direction. However, can you give me the history of Y-161 and of Y-256: we have, I think, the cultures but no other data on them.

Please let us know if we can reciprocate these favors in any way.

Best wishes,

Joshua Lederberg