

EL



DEPARTMENT OF PHYSIOLOGICAL BOTANY
UNIVERSITY OF UPPSALA

Uppsala, January 1st, 1991.

Dr Joshua Lederberg
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Dear Josh,

It was indeed a very pleasant surprise, when I received the reprint of your excellent biography of Ed Tatum and I am very grateful to you for sending it to me. It aroused so much of half-forgotten recollections from years gone by. In particular I remembered the halcyonic days at Utrecht 1937, when I spent my first sojourn abroad as a visiting scientist in Kögl's laboratory. It was there I first met Ed, as you quite correctly mentioned in your memoir. Ed and I made friends immediately and learned a lot from each other during daily discussions in that old shabby lab, which we after some time felt rather cosy.

I had never really understood all the difficulties Ed (as well as G.W. Beadle) had to overcome during the following, turbulent years until the Neurospora project got started in 1941. I feel flattered, that you mentioned my very modest contribution, which quite likely could be traced back to our speculations at Utrecht.

When the war was over and Ed had moved to the assured position at Yale university, he invited me to come and spend a few months working in his laboratory. As you may remember I also got to know you during that period. On the whole I did not spend much time in the lab (nor did Ed), but it was very refreshing for me, after the long isolation during the war, to meet Ed again and to get acquainted with so many new workers within the new and fascinating field of biochemical genetics.

(P.T.O!)

As a rule I spent the Sundays with the Tatum family by invitation in the their nice New England style house outside the town.

Later meetings with Ed were short and few, but I remember of course the Nobel Prize days at ^tStockholm and Uppsala. Still with June and the girls he visited us once at our summer house on the Swedish West coast and finally I met him at the Rockefeller University after the international botany congress in 1969.

Well, these very personal reminiscences cannot be of any interest to you, but I could not refrain from writing them down under the catalytic effect of your biographical memoir.

Finally, I was very delighted to get the report of your activities - at least some of them - during the last twenty years and I feel impressed indeed. It was gratifying to learn that you, after the 12 years of Rockefeller presidency, are back again in the lab doing bench research. I must confess that I am still spending all weekdays in my old lab, although now being somewhat aged (at least compared to you, young man!).

Today it happens to be the first of January 1991. Thus it seems opportunely to send my best wishes to you for the new year: May it be happy, prosperous and profitable!

Yours



(Nils Fries)