

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

January 29, 1987

Ref. 1987-17

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
President
The Rockefeller University
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Dear Josh:

You may recall that in April or May 1986 you had discussed with me your desire to procure certain information regarding the course that Ed Tatum gave under the auspices of the Department of Chemistry. I remember that I promised to make the necessary search of the departmental records in July or August. Actually, procrastination being so sweet, I didn't undertake the search until a few weeks ago.

The result has been futile, disappointing and surprising. At the moment the administrative records of the Department of Chemistry are on file in the department only as far back as 1962. One person who should certainly know about the earlier records assured me that they were in the department and covered the period back to 1915 or so. She even mentioned where they were filed away. Actually, they were not to be found where they presumably rested until a year or two ago. Another member of the faculty who had served as an assistant executive head for several years assured me that they were indeed filed away within the department and were seemingly complete back to at least 1915 or so. Another member of the department who had served recently as the executive head questioned all of this and said that he had never seen the early records.

The suggestion emerged that they might have been sent over for deposit in the University archives. I have asked the University archivist about this and have been told in reply that there is nothing in the archives which can be identified as the administrative records of the department. Apparently they do have on file in the archives some of the correspondence, almost one foot deep, of Robert Eckles Swain covering the period 1916 to 1938. I do not know the year in which Tatum gave the course of lectures, but if per chance the date was not later than 1938 it is possible that the information you seek may be in the Swain collection.

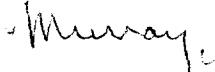
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I am sorry that I can't be more helpful, only because the hiding place of the administrative records prior to 1962 has not been determined. It is unthinkable to me that the records may have been thrown overboard by someone convinced that the storage space might be put to a better use.

With greetings, good wishes and personal regards,

Yours etc.



J. Murray Luck
Professor Emeritus

JML: jm