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THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

New York, N. Y. 10021

VICE PRESIDENT
AND PHYSICIAN-IN-CHIEF

October 11, 1972

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Josh:

With regard to the relationship of Harriett Taylor to our group here at Rockefeller, I believe that she first approached Avery about doing postdoctoral work in his laboratory at about the time she was completing her degree requirements in the spring of 1945. She then joined the lab that summer. I do not know who contacted Avery about this and it may have been Harriett herself. Certainly she was motivated by an intense interest in working in the transformation field. Just where she got that interest is another question, and I can only contribute a small point on the issue. Dobzhansky was aware of the Griffith phenomenon and the fact that it was still under investigation in Avery's lab, and in the 1941 edition of his "Genetics and the Origin of Species" he discussed transformation and added "If this transformation is described as a genetic mutation— and it is difficult to avoid so describing it— "..... Thus, at least one of Harriett's professors saw the genetic implications of transformation.

Sincerely yours,



Maclyn McCarty, M. D.