

IOWA STATE COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE AND MECHANIC ARTS
AMES, IOWA

July 13, 1937

1937
If undelivered please return to
GALTON LABORATORY,
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
GOWER STREET,
LONDON, W.C.1.

Dr. R. A. Fisher
Galton Laboratory, University College
Gower Street, London, W.C.1
England

Dear Professor Fisher:

I have been very slow in answering your letter of April 14th. It was quite a blow to me that the powers here did not realize that they were not meeting your conditions. I told them very frankly that they were not, but of course you realize that my word was hardly sufficient to make them see the light. We had rather hoped that you would see your way clear to take the position, and even before your letter came I had talked over the matter with Professor Smith and others as to the disposition of my time if you ^{should} come. It had been generally agreed that I would be one of your assistants if you so wished. That sort of position is what is known as a "Senior" position, and is accompanied by a salary of \$4600 to \$5600, which would be very attractive to me.

For some time the Soil Conservation Service has been dealing with me concerning a Senior position with them. Their actions, however, make me feel certain that our civil servants do not differ greatly from yours; that is, they are "on the whole, honest, distrustful, intellectual, and obstructive". In a personal conference during the Christmas Holidays, one of the directors led me to believe that they were going to fill the position almost immediately. They requested information concerning my training and experience, and asked for the earliest date I could report. I sent the desired information and waited several months before hearing another thing about the position. The next thing I heard was not direct but through Dean Buchanan of our school. A little later I received an airmail letter Special Delivery asking for more information and requesting that it be sent by return airmail. That storm died just as quickly as it rose, and I have heard nothing direct since, though several of the men from Washington have dropped in and were surprised to see me still here.

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Sarle and King, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, whom you may remember from last summer, were in last week. They were very sorry indeed to hear that you are not coming this fall. They are doing considerable work, as you may remember, with regard to crop prediction and sample census. They see Deming very frequently and apparently consult with him at times on statistical matters. It appears that when he heard of your possible coming to this country, he became somewhat agitated and told these men that if they would come to his office someday he would prove to them that your methods were all wrong. Then Sarle and King told me this, I expressed a desire to be in on this demonstration. They have promised that the first time we are all three in Washington together, we will call on Deming.

You may be interested to know that we are now getting some of the people working on crop prediction around to the view which you stated in your letter. That is, that the growing crop may prove to be after all the best meteorological integrator. In fact, it is possible that we may start some work along that line in four or five states this year. One of the States almost certainly will be Iowa.

Your doubt concerning the attitude of the officials in Washington is one which many of us entertain. That was one reason for thinking that someone like myself who was more accustomed to such things might be the proper sort of assistant for you so as to absorb a good many of those shocks and leave your time and energy free for worthwhile work.

It would be impossible really for our institution to enter into an agreement concerning your position that might involve another State Institution. That is, it would be impossible for us to offer to arrange for you to work at another institution situated in a region enjoying a better climate than ours. There is no reason, however, why some other institution so situated would not cooperate with the government in the way which we had planned. Officially we are not interested in any such plan, but I should like to have your permission to canvass the field a bit in an effort to find another school which would like to have you on its staff. You are fully aware, perhaps, that most of the agitation for offering you the position arose with the Secretary of Agriculture. Under the circumstances, I am certain he would be very decidedly in favor of having some other school make you an offer. It is very unfortunate, however, that none of the other institutions in the United States have gone in for statistics in the same manner that we have.

I was greatly pleased with the offer which you have made to Norton. Though we know that the final arrangements have not been made, he and I are going ahead as though we will be in England next year. This is a little difficult, for no one can be appointed to his assistantship

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until he resigns, and of course we will not ask him to resign until he is absolutely certain of the position with you. I have worked very closely with Norton this year, and I am certain your judgment of his abilities is correct.

I greatly enjoyed your reply to my bit of humor involved in the calculations of income taxes. I was quite certain that you would take the joke in the right way and appreciate it.

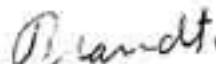
I received a letter from Forster this week, and knowing that Norton is likely to go to England, I am beginning to feel a very strong urge for another trip. However, such a trip will have to wait better fortunes.

Forster said that Mather is coming to California Tech for a year. I had hoped that when he came it could be for a two-year period. I am sure Forster will agree with me when I say that he would receive more than double the benefit from a two-year stay that he will from a one-year stay. Though he is going to California by way of the Panama Canal, I shall write to him and insist that he come back across country, especially if the trip can be made at a time when I can arrange some speaking dates for him. Such dates would provide a break in his travel and then the honoraria would help to pay traveling expenses.

Professor Snedecor has recently secured, through a firm of book importers in New York, a copy of the new edition of Design of Experiments. The gay design on the paper cover is getting a good bit of favorable comment.

Our children frequently speak of yours and wish they might be here to enjoy the ponies. Give our kindest regards to your wife and family.

Sincerely,



A. E. Brandt
Statistical Laboratory

AEB:MX