

September 29, 1939

Dear Provost,

I am sorry to read the contents of your letter of September 27th. I must, however, remind you of several facts which you appear either to forget or to deny. <sup>Our</sup>~~the~~ discussion on the morning of September 19th was concerned entirely with the possibility of finding alternative accommodation for my Department, or what is left of it. That this is so is obvious from the fact that you agreed that the College would be willing to pay a moderate rent for alternative accommodation, a payment which would be entirely unnecessary if the Department as a unit was not in view. We also gave some time to the discussion of accommodation for animals, which again could not be continued without the assistance of the geneticists.

We agreed that it might be possible to find accommodation within two rooms, provided that the rooms were large enough, and actually the accommodation offered to us at Rothamsted is included in two largish rooms. The essential question, however, does not concern the amount of space into which we can be squeezed, but on whether you intend to forbid my assistants to continue their work in the new quarters. If this is your

intention, as I said before, the question of a move may be dropped. This would, however, be a most definite reversal of the policy which you verbally approved on the 19th. In your note to me on our conversation you say nothing of my staff being forbidden to attend, but, on the contrary, say "where you might maintain the nucleus of your department". In the following paragraph you stipulate, what would be unnecessary if you had not at that time in view the continuance of the Department at Rothamsted: "It is understood that this should not in any way diminish the responsibility upon the members of your staff to seek paid national or other service elsewhere".

In the second paragraph of your letter of the 27th you stress the importance of the College staff, in their own interests and in the interests of their colleagues, to seek alternative paid employment. In respect of Stevens and Norton (who, I must again remind you, is an American citizen) the favourable prospect of obtaining work of a type in which they are expert will be destroyed if the Department is dispersed. So long as the machines and personnel are kept together, as they could be in the accommodation offered at Rothamsted, and as they are here, they can immediately take on work of national importance when the occasion for such work arises.

I may add that in my last letter from Sir John he says that there is no question of rent, but simply of defraying the share of expenses incurred, cleaning, lighting, heating and various other incidental expenses. This refers to the two rooms into

which I was prepared to fit those members of the Department who are still free to continue their work.

In your last paragraph you say: "The College has offered to do what it can towards meeting your problem". That offer has never been made. On the contrary, the proposals I have made for meeting the College's wishes that the Department should leave its present premises, have been wantonly thrown over after a basis for agreement had been established.

Yours sincerely,