

17th. May 1950.

Dear Dr. Wallis,

Thank you for your two letters of May 10th.

I am sure that the choice of Hotelling and Cochran is an excellent one, and hope that they will both have something to say. They are, however, both professed mathematicians, and the book was, of course, written not for mathematicians but for practitioners, who, in so far as they understand their fields of application, are good judges of the kind of statistics which aids them in their work. They constitute, I believe, the real and ultimate judges of such a book as mine, though, of course, the majority of them are rather inarticulate in mathematical circles.

I should suggest, therefore, and have already suggested to the programme committee, that others from one or more fields of application should be invited to show what the book or the ideas which it was intended to express have done for their own subjects. As you invite names, two that occur to me are those of Jack Youden, of the Bureau of Standards at Washington, and that of Kenneth Mather, Professor of Genetics at Birmingham University in this country. Of course, those who have made good use of the book are legion, but these two are also good expositors.

As to your suggestion of my preparing a paper on the history of the book, I am not quite sure what can be done, but I will at once consult my publishers and see whether they are interested in putting together an account from their point of view. In preparing recently notes on Messrs. Wiley's republication of some of my old papers I have been greatly impressed by the extent to which thought has changed and by the consequent difficulty of reconstructing for modern readers the state of statistical science in 1925. So at the moment I am not sure whether I could do anything at all adequate. However, I will think about it.

Yours sincerely,