

# JOHN INNES HORTICULTURAL INSTITUTION

MOSTYN ROAD, MERTON PARK, LONDON, S.W.19

Telephone LIBerty 3645

12/8/48

Dear Prof. Fisher,

I am enclosing a double list of the instruments, glassware and main fittings for the bacteriological laboratory. One list is the official one, including items that might be cut off if a reduction were asked for by the Faculty Board. The second list is for your private use, and shows the working minimum necessities. The instruments ~~to~~ which I could give up, in order of increasing sorrow, are: frigidaire (I might ask you for some room in your frigidaire, for exceptionally important material; most culture media can be stored even at room temperature); high vacuum pump; analytical balance; thermostatic bath. The arrangement of the room can be about half as economic, as shown in the official list. As you see, I left a rather wide margin between of safety between the two lists.

As to the deliveries, frigidaires have practically infinite delivery times. The most critical time of delivery, in the minimum working list, is that of ~~the~~ autoclaves, for which no less than twelve months are required! Therefore, when I shall be certain that none of the existing firms offers more reasonable deliveries, we could try (a) to get a second hand one, (b) to borrow one, (c) to <sup>ask for</sup> have an import license, as for instance in Italy they are not short of them. Next, come the Petri dishes, for which 4-6 months are requested. ~~We~~ could probably manage to have some dozens at once. The other deliveries are not as unreasonable, and we might hope to look at our <sup>first</sup> bacteria before Christmas time. We should, however, wait at least six months for the centrifuge, unless we could find more readily available ones; but, for the first few months we might perhaps avoid its use.

I have not included in the lists some smaller items, like a trolley, which especially if it could have one or two drawers, could be very useful. Another item is an ultraviolet lamp, but the germicidal type, <sup>which is</sup> the only one really useful, is sold in America at about 4 dollars, and does not exist here.

As to the adjustment of the room, I could suggest three possibilities :

1) the simplest is to leave everything as it stands, putting the autoclave in one of the kitchens, and providing for storage room of about 3 cubic meters. No special dimensions are needed. A further small sink would be necessary, possibly in the mid of the bench under the window.

2) if the autoclave is to be placed in the main laboratory, a hood with piping or a fume cupboard (the price difference being only of about 6 pounds) should be fitted to one of the walls . Remainder as in 1). Both these possibilities preclude, however, that certain other kinds of work, all those making dust or needing air streams, be made in the same laboratory . I think histology would not be out of place, however, and I understand that this is the main work being done there at the moment (besides mice breeding which , I have been told, should not last long there).

3) a further possibility would be the partition of the main laboratory into two rooms , as assumed in the official list. In this case, I suggest that, if the partition is to be unequal, I could have the bigger room, as plating <sup>plates</sup> sometimes requiring large surfaces. If the subroom to be adhibited to bacteriological work is not the one contiguous to the dark room, a further ~~sink~~ sink is necessary, and I am afraid it is not included in the list. Its dimensions could be similar to those of the already existing one. I have further assumed that, in this case, the big table already existing can be partitioned proportionally to the laboratory. I enclose a small map showing the eventual arrangement of the laboratory in one of the two rooms. It looks as if it could work.

All of this could be discussed with you at my next coming there, as further possibilities may be preferable.

I am glad to inform you that the Undersecretary of State, Alien's Dept., kindly answered to my letter, and I am enclosing here a copy of the communication I received. It seems as if it were not as difficult as I thought of it . However, I should again ask your help to let me know what I should best answer, as to the

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question of the probable period of my proposed appointment to the Department of Genetics. I still must know, if the same facilities will apply to my family as well.

I should very much like to know in which periods you will be in Cambridge, as I hope to collect sufficient data in few days as to the apparatuses, in order that I may pay you my second visit.

Yours sincerely

*Luigi Cavalli*