

Faculty of Forestry,  
University of Toronto,  
TORONTO 5, Ontario.  
April 9, 1951.

Professor R. A. Fisher,  
Whittingehame Lodge,  
44 Storey's Way,  
Cambridge, England.

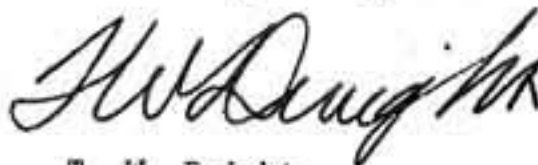
Dear Professor Fisher:

As I rather anticipated, I have not been successful in getting any definite information in regard to mast years in the north country where the records of fur-bearing animals trapped come from. I had a talk with Professor Butler and he says that he has a considerable volume of records of the taking of squirrel. These would presumably be affected by variations in tree seed supply more than almost any other animal, since the tree seeds are an important part of their food supply. The number of squirrel pelts brought to the fur traders varies considerably from year to year but in a very erratic manner, not suggesting any periodicity of any kind. I believe that where the squirrels are common either lodgepole or jack pine forms an important part of the forest and both these trees have cones which adhere to the trees for several years; consequently there is no appreciable variation in the available seed supply. I understood from Professor Butler that the lemmings live mainly on lichens and are found mainly beyond the range of heavy tree growth.

I am sorry to fall down so badly on the matter of giving you any information but there does not seem to be much available. We still have an enquiry out regarding seed years north of Lake Superior in the region where the Viking sword was found and if anything definite comes along, I will pass it on to you.

I notice you mention the matter of ascribing the Hudson Bay fur records to sun spots. I did not gather from what Professor Butler said that he supported that view.

Yours very truly,



T. W. Dwight  
Professor of Forestry

TWD:RM