

14th August, 1956.

My dear Irving,

It is exceedingly pleasant to me to see your paper with Geoff Watson on "Statistical Methods in Rock Magnetism". Indeed you have advanced this branch of the subject, if I may draw the parallel, from the stage of statistical methods in the mathematical sense to that of experimental design as a necessity of the Natural Sciences. In my opinion this is exactly what needed doing, and your paper will lead others to put results on record, by which the kinds of variation to be expected will be explored, and the precision of estimates systematically tuned up.

Your seven samples of the Deccan Traps, with inclination 56° , puts that part of the Deccan in a South latitude about equivalent to Victoria, or somewhat on the Melbourne side of Canberra. For comparison, I wonder if you know to what latitude Blakett's later samples would assign it? So far as I know he used two sites, and from what people tell me he set the latitude almost in the Antarctic, but of course there is very much more room in the temperate zone than in the small polar area. Anyway the possibility should be borne in mind that your earlier results,

(for which you were not awarded a Ph.D.,) may have been better than Blackett's later determinations.

I do not think at all that you should hesitate to speak on statistical matters in public, for statistics, as much or more than other branches of applied mathematics, need scientists with an intelligent grasp of what they are talking about to keep mathematicians, who have their own uses, on the rails, and nothing is more obvious than that the judgement of the relative importance of different lines of work is very ill-developed in many mathematical departments.

You are quite right, your science will require a fairly long campaign to establish its position, and the kind of opposition which the Carnegie Institution first voiced will surely not be the last example of very prejudiced opposition.

Sincerely yours,