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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

TO
PROFESSOR L. R. ABRAMS

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS
RETIREMENT FROM TEACHING

1940

To

Professor S. P. Abrams
on the occasion of his
retirement from teaching

1940

Williams, Oregon,
April 27, 1940.

Dr. LeRoy Abrams,
Stanford University,
California.

Dear Dr. Abrams:

The time has come when it is necessary for you to retire from the active duties of a professor-- to take your place among that sedate group called the emeritus.

From your studentship to the head of the "department," I have been in a position to know you intimately, to appreciate your earnest, efficient and conscientious efforts in helping to build up, under difficulties, every phase of the University.

What more could I say than that you are a most worthy successor to Professor Dudley--that kindly, efficient, inspiring man.

Now, free from responsibility, I hope you will have time and strength to finish "The Illustrated Flora of the Pacific States," and other things you have in mind; and that they will be published with greater rapidity than heretofore.

Very sincerely yours,

Edward S. Applegate.

Acting Curator
Dudley Herbarium.

2445 Filbert Street
San Francisco, California
May 9, 1940

Dr. L. R. Abrams
Dudley Herbarium
Stanford University
California

Dear Dr. Abrams,

Despite the compulsory retirement ruling, I know that you are going to continue to enjoy many useful and contented years in the herbarium and field bringing to the light of publication the result of enviable years of devoted work on the flora of the Pacific States. May your obstacles be fewer than they have been in the past, and the rest of the time be comparatively clear sailing. Carry on!

Sincerely yours,

Rimo Bacigalupi

Rimo Bacigalupi

Helena W. Carter

Dudley Herbarium
May 9, 1940.

Dear Dr. Abrams:

When I first came to Stanford and had to go over to the Museum every quarter to have you sign my registration book, I had only heard of herbaria and taxonomists, and didn't know exactly what either of them did. Now after three years here I understand better what is all about, and a loyal supporter of both among experimental biologist friends.

It has been very pleasant working for you. No one could have a better or kinder "boss." And helping to bring the "Flora" from the yellow paper stage through to proof has made me feel pretty important. It's fun to be an authority on some phase of a project like that, even if it's only reference abbreviations! I hope you'll let me help with the part yet to come.

We'll probably see you as much as ever at the Herbarium now, since you won't have all those committee meetings to attend. Otherwise, we would certainly miss you.

Sincerely,

Helena W. Barden

University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona
May 7, 1940

Dr. L. R. Abrams, Director
Natural History Museum
Stanford University, California

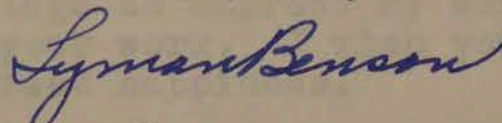
Dear Doctor Abrams:

I wish to congratulate you upon your long period of service to Stanford University and to its student body. I greatly appreciate the help and inspiration you have given me in my undergraduate and graduate work, and the training which has been given to all of us who have studied under you.

I hope that retirement from the routine of official duties will allow you not only leisure for your own enjoyment, but freedom to carry out without interruption the important projects which you have outlined for yourself.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Lyman Benson,
Botany Department.

LB:AW

Los Angeles, California
May 10, 1940

Dr. L. R. Abrams
Stanford University
California

Dear Dr. Abrams:

It has been brought to my attention that you are shortly to retire from active work in the Botany Department at Stanford University. I know you will miss the bustle and regularity of the departmental activity, but I feel sure you will find great opportunity to further your own work and study.

I find great enjoyment in looking over our friendship from its first inception through my brother Gilbert. I recall the collecting trip you made with him and others through Western Oregon. Our collecting trips to the Channel Islands off the Southern California coast are highlights in my memory. May I recall the difficulties of our first trip when we lay windbound in Pelican Bay at Santa Cruz Island. Our second trip, the successful one, was made under much pleasanter circumstances and we touched at nearly all the places we desired to visit and inspect.

I am glad of this privilege to express my admiration and respect for yourself and your work. I wish you a long and active life filled with great happiness.

Yours with greatest respect,

Chester J. Benson

U.S. Dept. Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

5 May 1940

Dear Prof. Abrams:

Just a word of appreciation
of the work you have done on the botany
of California and other western states, of respect
and liking for you as a man, and an expression
of the hope that your retirement from active
teaching will bring leisure for the completion
of your *Flora of the Pacific coast*.

S. T. Blake

Dear Colleague:

Mr. Pitkin wote that "Life begins at 40" but even the emerituri know that he was anticipating by twenty-five years for it really begins at 65. Now that you are so close to this climatic age we are at long last able to offer our congratulations. Undoubtedly the first sixty-five years are the hardest but I am assured by your professional colleagues in Phytotaxonomy that you have acquitted yourself nobly.

It was a sufficiently remarkable feat of your youth to rake and scrape from the arid hills of L.A. brush enough to write a book. This however was a mere nothing to the Herculean feat of your mature years in picturing and describing all the posies of the P.C. which appear in the ponderous tomes of the Flora of the Pacific Coast.

So now that you are nearing the end of your probation, are about to be freed from regimentation, and about to receive the award of merit, we anticipate that you will be able to chew the cud of satisfaction and ruminate your "hay" with great profit and pleasure to yourself, your friends, and your scientific colleagues the world over.

But since no man may hope to be perfect I can not honestly close this eulogium without reminding you of your sins in having diverted so many young men and women from the stern paths of duty to the flowery fields of ease.

With the kindest regards of your friend,

Lance Burlingame

Nixa, Mo.
May 9, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams,

There are undoubtedly many people wishing to greet you who will be just a bit busier than I and fail to get to it at all. About the best I can hope for my own note is that it may be added on as a post script.

I recall with pleasure, the Department as it was twelve years ago - with Dr. Abrams, Dr. Pince and Dr. Smith, the sunny Tables where we worked in the Herbarium, the stacks of smelly pressed specimens, the Friday afternoon tea -

Since I do not correspond with any of my Stanford classmates I was much pleased to receive Mrs. Ferris' note.

Recently Dr. Paul Leonard has been back here discussing modern educational trends with the people of his old home town.

You might know someone who would like to be informed of the death today of Dr. Ralph Voss, head of the State Teachers' College's Biology Department.

My own two babies are of school age - Evan and Elizabeth. We live on the same old farm homesteaded by the Wests and drive twelve miles in to Springfield where I teach.

My Father retires from teaching next year. I shall be content, years from now, if I can have helped others as you two have helped me and others who came to you.

This bears my very best wishes, sincerely,

Belle West Gopsey
(Mrs. E. R. Gopsey)

Dr. LeRoy Abrams, Director
Natural History Museum
Stanford University, California

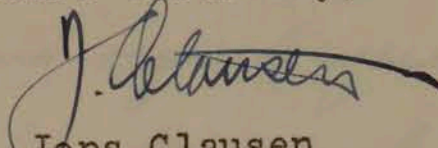
Dear Dr. Abrams:

They tell us you are preparing to retire, but they are wrong. You cannot retire as long as the plants of the Pacific States continue to call: "LeRoy, LeRoy, come over and see us. We have done some reshuffling here in a remote corner, and we are afraid the other botanists will not notice or appreciate us." They are your lifetime friends, who know you by first name and will not recognize your retirement. I know very well that for several reasons you cannot resist such an invitation. For you appreciate the artistic beauty of nature as well as the sense displayed in a well-conceived system of plants.

While we admire your mastery of the plant world, we love you for your human qualities. Always a gentleman in dealings with other people, and a friend among friends, you keep sustained interest with young people.

Looking forward to continually enjoying your active presence and steadying influence among us, I wish you and Mrs. Abrams many happy trips to your plant friends and many happy years with us.

Yours cordially,


Jens Clausen

Carnegie Institution of Washington
Division of Plant Biology
Stanford University, California
May 11, 1940

May 10, 1940.

Dear Dr. Abrams,

I find it exceedingly difficult to believe that you have reached the point of retirement because, I am afraid we have always treated you as "one of the boys," rather than ^{with} the reverence to which you have been entitled.

We are consoled by the firm conviction that — retirement or no retirement — you will always remain the genial host of the Dudley Herbarium, who invariably makes a trip to Stanford seem like a home-coming.

If I may take upon myself the liberty of speaking for the younger botanists of the Pacific Coast, present and past, who have never had the privilege of working under your direction, I should like to say that we all feel as though we had, and regard yourself and your work with a great admiration and a vast affection.

Very sincerely,

Lucile Constantine

University of Minnesota
May 2, 1940

Dear Doctor Abrams:

Personally, I think it is absurd to retire a man at the early age of sixty-five. We are luckier here in being allowed to work three years longer than that. However, there are compensations. You will have a chance to do what you want to do when you want to do it, and you have a lot to do. Perhaps, after all, it is worth while, for it will give you an opportunity to complete your Flora, for which many of us are waiting impatiently.

I look back upon my few years at Stanford as among the happiest of my life, and I owe much to you for making them so.

Mrs. Cooper joins me in good wishes to you and Mrs. Abrams - and please go at that Flora hard.

Sincerely yours,

William S. Cooper

Berkeley, California
May 17, 1940

Professor LeRoy Abrams
Stanford University
California

Dear Abe:

Nobody who has been retired as much and as often as I have will congratulate you merely on retirement. I am glad, however, to welcome you to the distinguished ranks of the retired and to congratulate you on the years of good service which have brought you to this point.

Being fairly familiar with the history and fate of botany at Stanford, it is not my impression that you have had an easy time. Accordingly, I would congratulate you particularly on having made the most of the series of situations and on leaving your own work in excellent shape.

Very sincerely,

E. B. Copeland

Sacramento Junior College
Sacramento, California, May 10, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams,

Your friends and students
congratulate you upon your work
accomplished; and we are sure that
release from formal duties will mean
more good work well done.

Herbert F. Copeland

George L. Kimber

Frank C. Joy

Mary R. Crasey

Hubert O. Jenkins

Chester C. Wright

Joseph Dowdell

Berkeley, California

May 8, 1940

Dr. L. R. Abrams
Stanford University, California.

My dear Dr. Abrams:

At this time of your retirement from active service at the University, I should like to express my indebtedness to you. You opened my eyes and taught me to see the wonderful beauty of the plant world. I have forgotten many of the scientific facts and names which I knew at one time, but my appreciation of nature will never leave me.

Last week-end I went camping in Yosemite Valley. Do you remember the field trip our Forest Botany class had there? I remember it clearly because of the wonderful time we had and also because of the things I learned about the native trees. That one short field trip to Yosemite did more to make my following trips enjoyable than I can express in words.

It is not only enjoyment of the out-of-doors for which I thank you, but it is the glimpse into the history and location of the plant which you gave me. My trips to Point Lobos

Arkansas A. & M. College
Monticello, Arkansas
May 2, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams,

I want to congratulate you on the work that you have done and on the contributions that you have made to botany. I only hope that I can be able to do field work as you are. I wish I could have been on some mountain field trips with you while at Stanford. It hardly seems possible that I entered Stanford eleven years ago. Wiggins was a kid then. He has grown up and must carry your load. Once in 1930 I remember meeting you in a bank in Palo Alto and at once arranged for a trip with Dr. Wiggin to Old Mexico. That was one of my best field trips and I am awaiting another. The botany meetings on Monday nights will always be one of my greatest remembrances at Stanford. One topic I use many times a year in my teaching was brought up about the unusual coldness at Palo Alto. Some said it was due to the snow on Mt. Hamilton. I well remember the following question which you asked. "Is it cold in Palo Alto because there is snow on Mt. Hamilton or is there snow on Mt. Hamilton because it is cold in Palo Alto?" Last week our school presented ten papers at the Arkansas Academy of Science. We returned by the way of Magazine Mountain, 2860 feet elevation and probably the highest point in the state. Trees were not in good bud and only a very few early spring plants were out which is not unusual for Arkansas. In our delta land it is much warmer. Besides several short trips we

have made three 550-700 mile trips. On one trip we attended the Louisiana Academy of Science Meeting at Shreveport, Louisiana.

Since being here four years I have moved our quarters four times. The last time I moved into a new \$200,000 science building.

Well, Dr. Abrams, if you are passing to the East stop and see a new field of plants. Our hills are all wooded and we have no sand dunes. I hope some day to have a state check list which will be about 2500. My big trouble is with the old lists. Wrong identifications, records not backed by herbarium specimen, new revisions and the fact that Arkansas Territory took in part of Oklahoma. When just Arkansas is given many times they meant Arkansas Territory.

I hope that since you can put aside the routine of duties that you have had to carry for so many years you can carry on your research and finish the Pacific Coast Flora.

I send you and Mrs. Abrams my sincerest wishes.

Yours truly,

Delzie Demaree
Chairman of Division of
Natural Science and Mathematics

Dear Dr. Abrams:

I should like to add my few words of appreciation to the many which I know you are receiving on this occasion from the friends you have made throughout your years of teaching. Since my first acquaintance with you I have considered myself fortunate to have been one of your students and to have had the opportunity of experiencing your personal friendship. Your teaching in the classroom and the example you have set in your research have been an inspiration to all of us who have known you. And I am sure that your retirement from active service at Stanford is in no way going to change your relationship with those who have had your guidance in the past.

I wish to extend to you my best wishes in the continuance of your work, and assure you of my lasting appreciation of your past kindnesses and interest.

Sincerely your friend,

Le Roy E. Detling.

Eugene, Oregon
May 6, 1940

1014 Forest Ave.,
Palo Alto, California.
May 10, 1940.

Dear Dr. Abrams:

It pleases me very much that I am given this opportunity to write a few lines for your volume of letters. Like many others, I have not continued my scientific studies of late years, and the census record reads, "Occupation, housewife". I may have forgotten how to use the Index Kewensis, but I can never forget certain fundamentals learned in the study of botany, nor can I forget the kindness and wisdom of the teachers who guided me in the old days.

Those of us who were privileged to be your students remember you not so much as an instructor, as a kind adviser, always willing to help with our problems. You always had "time to talk". And although you treated us with patience and understanding, yet you held us to high standards of scholarship. We learned to search for the truth, and to be satisfied with nothing less than the truth. I feel that I am still striving for the truth, just as much as when I examined the parts of a flower under the binocular. If my training in botany has given me a better understanding of life, it is due to the patience and inspiration of teachers like yourself.

With sincere best wishes,

Lois Dale Dreier

Prof. L. R. Abrams
Stanford University, California

Dear Roy:

Even though I visit the campus many times a year, I am fast becoming a total stranger to the University. Above all others, you have been the tie which has made me feel that I am not yet quite a stranger.

Now you are giving up your teaching, and no doubt will devote much of your time to completing your Flora of the Pacific States. This is as it should be. Too many scientific books are published by those having but an immature conception of their subject.

I have had the very great privilege of watching your work at Stanford since your instructorship days. And to me, the outstanding virtue, if I may use that word, has been your patience and understanding of the student's viewpoint, his hopes and aspirations.

While others were striving for honors gained through experiments and investigations, and were too busy to spend their time on younger students, you, in your quiet and charming manner, gave these young students a thorough grounding in Botany I, and along with this introduction to a natural science, imparted a desire to learn more. This is a far greater service than the more simple art of teaching.

And yet, at the same time the number of advanced students who came from other institutions to study under you, showed those of us who were interested of the high respect and esteem in which you were held by the botanists of the United States.

Another subject close to my heart has been your work in connection with the Dudley Herbarium. We all know that this was a work of love for your former teacher, my uncle. No one could have carried it on to its present state of completeness and efficiency as well as you, in fact if at all.

And may I express to you the appreciation of my brother, H. C. Dudley, of Duluth, who I know joins me in congratulating you on your retirement from active teaching, and in wishing you many years of activity in other botanical fields.

Ernest G. Dudley

Exeter, California

California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco
May 9, 1940

Congratulations to you, dear Dr. Abrams.
You are to be relieved of all official duties
and will be able to devote your time and
energy to the completion of your flora and
take up other research problems in Taxonomy.
You look so young and vigorous too and
will be able to carry on for years. It
was a great surprise to me that you
have reached the age of retirement at
Stanford University.

The harmonious atmosphere that
prevails in the Department of Botany
at Stanford University is due to your
genial, happy disposition. It is also the
cause of the love which all your friends
have for you among whom I have
always been one.

The work that you have already
done is of the greatest service to all of
us and I feel very grateful for the
help it has been to me.

With love and congratulations
Alice Eastwood.

The word retirement is a grievous blunder when it is applied to botanists and other scientific workers, and something should be done about it. For what scientific worker ever retires? Rather I think we should call it the new opportunity. For whether it be in teaching others or in teaching oneself, these later years, freed from the inexorable hands of the clock, are but the threshold to a new experience. It is then that the accumulated knowledge of one's lifetime may be turned as a single beam into the mistiness ahead.

I doubt very much if Professor Abrams will retire and I feel it a privilege to congratulate him upon this new birth of freedom. I am sure that the stimulus which he has provided for western botany for many years will not thus suddenly lapse, but will be augmented and strengthened thereby.

Carl E. S. 

May 8, 1940

Dear Professor Abrams:

Now that you ain't going to be my boss any-
more I can tell you what I think about that grade of C that you
gave me twentyfive years or so ago in Systematic Botany. Don't
think I don't remember it. The elephant never forgets! The joke is
that you made a mistake. I really did do the work myself and I
didn't get my identifications from Roxy. I should have had a B.

But time heals all things, so there is nothing left of that terri-
ble wound but a bit of scar tissue.

But aside from that one ghastly error you have been a good teacher,
colleague and boss. In the last capacity you have been extremely for-
tunate, however. You didn't have me to manage in my younger and most
obstreperous period so you have been able to enjoy that administrat-
ive peace and quiet which every executive must regard as obtainable
only by retirement. I can congratulate myself that I haven't person-
ally been responsible for any desire which you may have to give up
and retire to some secluded island, nor, I believe, am I in any way
responsible for that shock of gray hair which you have developed in
the last few years. That must have come from the Flora.

With best regards,

G. F. Ferris
G. F. Ferris

Dear Dr. Abrams
May 10, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams:

When the occasion comes,
along at which I know I am better
qualified to express myself than most
people —, haven't I worked under your
direction for twenty-five years or so —
I become as usual completely in-
articulate. Let me at least say,
by way of expressing my emotion,
that I was of half a mind to retire
myself. But I hope and I am
sure that we will see you here in
the herbarium working at the things
you like, not on call for committee
meetings and other disturbing elements.

My very best wishes to you & Mrs. Abrams.

Affectionately

Thomas S. Ferris

Missouri Botanical Garden
Dear Abrams:

It is pleasant to look back to our first association in the old Bird and Reptile class of 1897; to our common regard for Professor Sudley; and to the long harmonious friendships since those good old days.

Let me congratulate you on having preserved the spirit of Sudley which we value so greatly; and also on having well earned that respite from pulling "academic weeds" which will give you more opportunity for your chosen work. The "academic flowers" will still remain for you to enjoy!

W. K. Fisher

Hopkins Marine Station

April 30, 1940.

MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN
ST. LOUIS

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
2115 TOWER GROVE AVENUE

CABLE ADDRESS
"MOBOTGARD"

ARBORETUM, GRAY SUMMIT, MO.
REPRESENTATIVE IN TROPICS,
BALBOA, C. Z.
REPRESENTATIVE IN EUROPE,
HOVE, SUSSEX, ENGLAND

May
fourteenth
1940

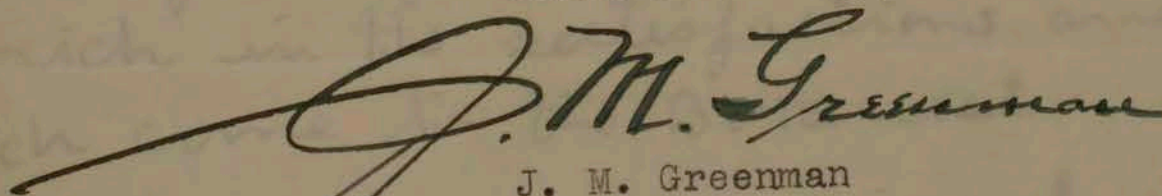
Dear Professor LeRoy Abrams
Department of Botany
Stanford University
Stanford University, California

Dear Professor Abrams:

It gives me pleasure to join your colleagues and many friends in extending to you felicitations and good wishes in your retirement from active service in Stanford University. Although your active service may cease formerly, yet we all know that the results of your long term of fruitful teaching, your example of unselfishness and tolerance will continue for many years to come.

May you enjoy in the years of your retirement a long life in which to carry forward the work of your chosen field.

Yours sincerely,


J. M. Greenman

JMG/VP

16 Carr St.
Watsonville, Calif.

May 12, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams:-

As an "old grad" who came back to get her Master's Degree after many years, I wish to express my appreciation for the help and inspiration you gave me when I was laboring on a thesis called, "The Marsh and Aquatic Plants of the Pajaro Valley"

May the years of your retirement still be rich in the satisfactions and happiness which come to the Botanist.

Very sincerely yours,
Eda B. Hayward

California Academy of Sciences
259 Francisco, California
May 1, 1940

I first met LeRoy Abrams in 1900. He was then a young instructor, notable not only for his knowledge of the plants of southern California but also for his gracious and pleasing manner. During the ensuing decades our friendship has been a pleasure that constantly increased as the years went by.

The outstanding characteristics of Dr. Abrams have always seemed to me to be his sound scholarship, his modesty, and his simple, friendly personality that always put even the most diffident at ease.

Only last Saturday morning I met a lady who was a fellow botany student with me nearly forty years ago. She spoke of Dr. Abrams, and of his outstanding courtesy to students. If a stupid blunder was made by a student Dr. Abrams never indulged in witticisms or said or did anything to cause unpleasant feeling or to cheapen or humiliate the student. Such unflinching kindness and consideration for others has made a lasting memorial to LeRoy Abrams in the affections of his students during his entire career at Stanford.

I am proud to have Dr. Abrams as friend and fellow scientific worker, and trust that his great knowledge of Pacific Coast plants may continue to serve the scientific world and general public alike for many more years.

Albert W. Ferrer

April 25, 1940.

Very kindly yours
John Thomas Howell

California Academy of Sciences
San Francisco, California
May 7, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams:

Here's the opportunity I've been wanting--to tell you how highly I regard you botanically and how much I like you personally without being embarrassed by the effusion! So here goes!

There are two ways in which we may be influenced by our friends, by direct guidance and contact of personality or by those more indefinite and indirect impressions that result from occasional visits with that friend or from his work. And it not infrequently happens that this latter more subtle sort of influence is in the end more prevailing because of the admiration one has for the work of this friend. This little preamble leads me to acknowledge that you have exerted over me a more profound influence in an indirect way than maybe you have suspected.

Ever since my first visit to the Dudley Herbarium when as a beginner I was working over the genus *Leslingia*, I have been impressed by your cordial and congenial personality, by your sympathetic interest in our bits of research, and by your deep but unostentatious appreciation of the problems in Californian botany. I have always regarded a visit to the Dudley Herbarium as a real occasion and I feel that much of the pleasure is due to the happy influence you impart to the institution. In taxonomic matters I have a deep regard for your outlook for I believe that you have steered the middle course between the "splitters" and "lumpers" better than any Californian botanist. I have not had the privilege of being a student in your class-room but I have been your pupil indirectly in that I have studied your treatments of complex groups time and again and have always felt benefited even by the indirect contact. Frequently when I am perplexed as to what status should be assigned to some entity or other, I do not say to myself "What would Dr. Jepson do with this?" because I know what he would do; neither do I say "What would Miss Eastwood do with it?" because I know; but rather I say "What would Dr. Abrams do in this case?" because I know that if I answer that question properly I am just about where I want to be.

In a round-about way, from the hallowed halls of my alma mater, have come reports to my ears that "Howell is slipping"! One does not have to search far for the cause of the "slip" but I am counting on your non-skid effect on me to keep me on the road and pretty near the middle, so that I shall not ditch myself either right or left. Perhaps I infer for your benefit a responsibility that you would rather not assume; but I don't know what we are going to do about it because I think you're just about proper and I shall continue to respect and admire you!

For the past, my deep gratitude!

For the future, my best wishes!

Very sincerely yours,
John Thomas Howell

Dear Dr. Abrams.

Formality is definitely not my "forte" and when I'm asked for "remarks suitable" to an occasion I'm left at a decided loss.

I don't like the idea of your "retiring", anyway. You're too young to retire, and I can only hope that you'll have years and years yet of activity and interest and usefulness.

I do know one thing - that you're about the grandest person to work for or with that I ever knew or heard of. If everyone had your patience and good nature and pleasant disposition, this world would be a definitely happier place. And that's no "blarney" - that's a fact!

The very best of luck to you, and sincerest wishes for all good things for you!

With sincere affection,
Jeanne Janick

University of California
Berkeley, California.
May 13, 1940.

Dr. LeRoy Abrams
Professor of Botany
Stanford University, California

Dear Professor Abrams:

For many years I have contemplated your labors in systematic botany at Stanford University with admiration and satisfaction. You appeared upon the scene at a time when the herbarium of the Department of Botany was being made under severe difficulties as to space, equipment and financial aid, and you have as a result of great activity developed the collection into what we know as the Dudley Herbarium, one of the most important in western America. Meanwhile, and doubtless as a first duty, you made a distinguished record as a teacher and trained many able young botanists to follow after you. The general welfare of the University likewise absorbed much of your energy and your devotion to the institution's great profit.

This day of retirement from official duties is not for you one of actual retirement but only a fresh opportunity for such continued activities as are in the interests of your research and of Pacific Coast botany. I extend my hearty congratulations upon your achievements and upon the opportunities which the years ahead hold for you. May they be happy and contentful ones, and long and fruitful.

Faithfully yours,

Willis Linn Jepson

Willis Linn Jepson

Bureau of Plant Industry,
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D. C.
April 26, 1940

Professor Leroy Abrams,
Stanford University, Calif.

Dear Professor Abrams:

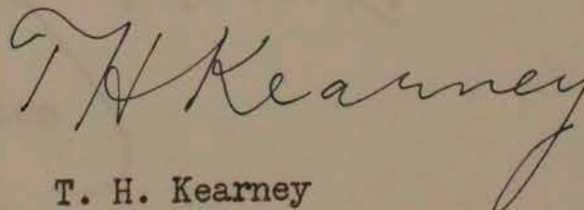
It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, on the eve of your retirement, upon your varied and important achievements in your chosen field. Since you came to Stanford University, you have impressed your name indelibly on the botany of California. No less valuable have been your services in developing the Department of Botany at the University, and in building up the Dudley Herbarium so that it now ranks among the leading collections of plants in the United States.

I take this occasion to thank you heartily for the cordial welcome I have always received at the Dudley Herbarium.

Hoping that your retirement will not prevent the continuation of your botanical studies, and that you may have many useful years ahead of you,

I am

Most sincerely yours,



T. H. Kearney
Principal Physiologist

Dr. LeRoy Abrams

Dear Dr. Abrams:

I want to felicitate you on this memorable occasion and wish you the happy leisure years that you have so rightfully earned. It is everyone's pleasure to muse upon the occupations that will fill his time in the years after retirement when he is relieved from the routine duties that have taken up so many hours heretofore, and in your own case you have doubtless had one persistent answer to your thoughts in this direction. I hope you will find it possible to complete the Illustrated Flora of the Pacific States which is so needed by all of us, and I am glad that now you are to have more time to devote to it. I have always felt that you were the man best fitted for the big task of preparing such a flora.

Your students will always recall with gratitude their contact with you, for you brought to them all the best qualities of a teacher. I myself have sampled of your teaching enough to know. Also, I find this a proper time to express my appreciation for your ideals and accomplishments in regard to the fine herbarium under your care. It is one of the important tools for my own work and I'm forever grateful for its competent management.

All of us look forward to an uninterrupted continuation of the cordial relations that have drawn us to you whenever friendly counsel, professional advice or encouragement were needed.

Please transmit my greetings to Mrs. Abrams also, who has so fully earned your honors with you and who deserves to benefit from the new schedule too.

Best of good luck to you both!

Sincerely your friend,

David S. Keck

Carnegie Institution of Washington
Stanford University, California
May 9, 1940

Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D. C.
May 6, 1940.

Dear Abrams:

More than ever I wish California were not so far away, for at the present time, when you are retiring from official responsibilities at Stanford, I should like very much to see you. Others, far better qualified than I, will heap well-deserved encomiums upon your modest self. My thought would be to wish you simply and earnestly a long period of good health and, now that you are to be free of routine official demands upon your time, corresponding accomplishment in the systematic field you know so well.

And I should like also to bring up a few reminiscences of your stay of nearly a year with us in Washington. Can you realize that 35 years have gone by since you joined our small bachelor group at the Columbia? I can not. We had good times, which I often recall. Our friendship has meant a great deal to me, and I have always regretted keenly the distance between Stanford and Washington.

All best wishes to you, young man!

Yours very truly



Prof. LeRoy Abrams
Director, Dudley Herbarium
Stanford University
Stanford University, California

Whittier, California,
April 28, 1940

Doctor Le Roy Abrams,
Stanford University, California,

Dear Doctor Abrams:

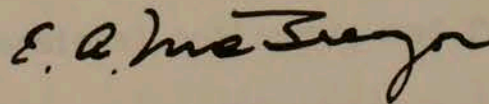
I feel sure that the pleasantest six years of my life, when all activities are taken into consideration, were those spent at Stanford from 1904 to 1910. And of all the subjects I pursued at college, the one that gave me the greatest pleasure was the field and herbarium explorations delving into the fascinations of our flora. It was with much disappointment that I found these activities crowded into the background by my other work.

Probably the most glorious adventure I ever enjoyed was that field collecting trip that I took under your leadership in the summer of 1909. Buying our six burrows at Santa Paula; sleeping with the rattle snake at Neenach; bathing in the snow of Mt. Pinos; being greeted with: "Look who's here" as we sauntered into the Harvey dining room at Mojave; and living on rice and tea when we ran out of grub. On that trip with you, Dr. Abrams, I contracted a severe case of "botanyitis" from which I have never recovered - and I hope I never shall.

If I have learned to ken the flowers
That grow in California bowers,
'Tis you who led me on my way
To know their faces, sweet and gay.

As a teacher and pal, I salute you.

Sincerely,



E. A. McGregor

Mills College
Oakland, California

May 8, 1940

Professor LeRoy Abrams,
Department of Botany,
Stanford University,
California.

Dear Professor Abrams:

It is a pleasure to write a note of felicitation upon the occasion of the completion of the many years of active service which you have given as a member of the staff of the Natural History Museum at Stanford University. During your formal association with the staff you have not only published the results of your researches, which have been source materials for other botanists, but have shared by your friendly cooperation the unpublished results of your studies.

Now that you have entered into an informal relationship with the University I hope you will find more time for the completion of your manuscript on the Pacific Coast Flora. It is a real pleasure and privilege to know you as a student, professional colleague, and friend. I sincerely trust that this pleasant relationship will continue.

Cordially yours,

H. E. McMinn

H. E. McMinn

Dear Abe:

From the woods of Mendocino County I came to Stanford University 39 years ago to find out what a university might be like. Your kindly interest and encouragement had a large part in making life here so interesting that I am here still and having a jolly good time. While my presence here has made but little difference to the University, to me it has made a world of difference and I should like to express my appreciation to you and all those who made this possible.

Wishing you many happy years as an Emeritus, I am

Sincerely yours.

James M^c Murphy.

Lamont, Washington
April, 29, 1940

Dear Dr. Leroy Abrams:

Just twenty-one years ago this last January, I started work on my Master's Thesis at Stanford University, under "Father" Abrams, as we so affectionately called you behind your back.

A teacher has so few ways of knowing the influence he may have on his pupils. Yet, as I look back over those years of work and pleasure, that took me to Colorado as a Museum Assistant and teacher; to Wyoming and back to California as a teacher of Biology; to Alaska, East Cape, Siberia, the Arctic Circle, and the South Seas as a traveler; I find a thread running through it all that leads back to that year at Stanford University.

Even now as a wheat rancher's wife, each spring means a keener appreciation of the plant life because I once had your kindly help and suggestions on a plant thesis.

And now that you are to be relieved of class room duties, perhaps you can enjoy a richer, fuller life of your own, as a slight compensation for the far reaches of your service to the rest of us.

With my very best wishes,

Most sincerely,

Rena Duthie Melville

(Mrs. Arno M. Melville)

Pomona College,
Claremont, California.
May 9, 1940.

Dr. L. R. Abrams,
Stanford University,
California.

Dear Dr. Abrams:

It is a great pleasure to me to be able to join your many friends and colleagues who unite at this time to express to you our appreciation of you as a teacher, as a botanist, and as a man. You have the reputation of being the most approachable botanist on the Pacific Coast and one who is always willing to give of your botanical knowledge, of your experience, and of yourself to the many who come to you. This reputation has not come as a result of a few such requests nor in a short time.

As you now come to the end of a long and brilliant teaching career, it is my earnest hope that you will for many years have the health and the desire to "carry on" in your research and in your writing. All working botanists of this country and especially of this Coast wish that you may continue until completion, your Illustrated Flora of the Pacific States.

Somehow you do not seem to me to be a man who is retiring from active duty; you are only middle-aged, in point of view and in appearance. I trust that you and Mrs. Abrams may have much pleasure in the years of greater leisure that await you and that your life will be full of all good things. With all good wishes to you both and with sincere gratitude to you for the many kindnesses that you have always shown me,

I am, most sincerely yours,

Philip A. Munz

Philip A. Munz

Colaba
Humboldt Co.
May 8, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams,

To Dr. LeRoy Abrams, on the occasion of his retirement

There is no way to tell you
What we really want to say,
For every mode of saying it
Is either sad or gay.
We are not gay you're leaving us--
It's t'other way around,
And if we're sad, that won't express
The joy in you we've found.

As student and as faculty
You ever were to me,
A steadfast guide who always
Made the right road plain to see;
Unruffled, calm and friendly,
You have helped in every way,
And all at the Museum
Only wish that you could stay.

But we're not losing you, you know--
We want to keep you near;
As an Emeritus, you will
Be always welcome here;
And now we must salute you
As a friend we know is true--
We wish you every happiness
In everything you do.

George S. Meyers
Stanford University
May 12, 1940.

Loleta,

Humboldt Co.,

May 8, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams,

I can't put in words how important to me has been my association and friendship with you and Mrs. Abrams. You are so closely linked with everything of importance that has ever happened to me, pleasure, work, sorrow and adventure. I really think that no day goes by that doesn't recall some touch of my Stanford life and my Stanford life means you. If there hadn't been a Doctor and Mrs. Abrams, Stanford wouldn't have been nearly so fine.

Did I ever tell you that ever since he was very small our Bruce's chief pleasure is "playing" he is Doctor Abrams. At the age of nearly nine, he still does. I hope he always will.

Doris.

Salem, Oregon,
May 2, 1940.

Dear Doctor Abrams,

I am glad of this opportunity of telling you how much I appreciate not only the value of your contributions to science, but the privilege of knowing you personally and of being one of the many workers in your own field to share the benefits of your great accumulation of scientific lore.

I can hardly realize that we have met personally only three or four times; I think that is because your kindness and sincerity make friends quickly and hold them long.

May you see the full accomplishment of the great work you are engaged in, and may friendships and all other satisfactions multiply!

Most sincerely,
Morton E. Peck.

May 12, 1940

Dear colleague and friend..

Who could have foreseen, when we met, that we should be so long associated? In this increasingly close connection I am very grateful, and I only hope that it will continue, for us both, in health, comfort, and satisfaction. We both are happy in knowing that our congenial successors will continue to cultivate the subjects of our choice, benefitting humanity by increasing knowledge and by putting that knowledge to definite use when that is needed.

May your clear vision, your courage, and your wit, accompany you and us all for the years to come!

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

P. H. Rave

Dear Doctor Abrams,
Cambridge, Massachusetts
April 21, 1940

Dear Doctor Abrams:

Once, on a collecting trip into Nevada, Snyder made the profound biological discovery that there were two kinds of tourists - those who were enjoying themselves in a beautiful land and those whose chief desire was to get out of that "damned desert". A little prying and he discovered further that the first group had an interest in something about the desert while the others didn't. It seems that there are two similar groups among the Emeriti and I suspect that they are similarly characterized. Statistically speaking I'm sure that, applied to the Emeriti, the chi-squared test of association between happiness and interest would be highly positive - P approaching one. (Additional explanation on request.) The category into which you will fall is not in any doubt and, so,

Felicitations,

Willis H. Rich

May 12, 1940

Sincerely yours
Willis H. Rich
and S. Collins

Gray Herbarium, Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts
April 26, 1940

Professor L. R. Abrams
Natural History Museum
Stanford University, California

My dear Professor Abrams:

On the occasion of your 65th. birthday and retirement from official duty in Stanford University, I am privileged to have the opportunity of joining with your many friends in proffering my sincere friendship and deepest respect. Ever since I first became acquainted with your works upon the vegetation of southern California and the Pacific Coast generally, the permanency and excellent quality of your contributions to American Botany have been evident to me. You have had a large hand in laying the foundations upon which those who now study the botany of the Pacific Coast must build, and the job has been well-done indeed.

It is a truism that each generation steps upon the shoulders of previous generations. We, who are being hurtled forward by the labors of our older colleagues, are indeed fortunate.

I hope your work will continue to be fruitful, Professor Abrams, and that we shall long enjoy your stimulating fellowship. I congratulate you upon your long and excellent service to the Science of Botany and to Stanford University.

Sincerely yours

Reed C. Rollins

Reed C. Rollins

536 Bowdoin St.
Palo Alto
California
April 30, 1940

Dear Prof. Abrams:

Ruth and I express sincere gratitude for your kindness and guidance. We know many others have the same feelings, for we have often heard your past students speak fondly of you and appreciatively of the interest and knowledge they have gained with you in botanical study.

We can well appreciate what you have done to perpetuate in Stanford a wholesomely broadminded, tolerant attitude toward learning and living and toward other people. May these same interests continue to have influence for many years to come, and may you enjoy your botanical work for as long.

Our happiness during these several years in California certainly owes a bit to the friendliness of you and Mrs. Abrams.

Sincerely yours,

George B. Rossbach

Ruth P. Rossbach

Palo Alto, California.
May 8, 1940.

Dr. L. R. Abrams .
Stanford University .

Dear Dr. Abrams ,

Since I have the honor to be included in the group selected to write a letter, I shall try to write one worthy of a former student and one who at present considers himself a friend.

It is difficult for me to find words that fit such an occasion. I am sure your work at Stanford University has left an indelible mark on the Botany Department of which we, who had the honor to work with and under your guidance, are justly proud.

The fine books you have written leave a tangible record of your good work, but the impression your personality has made on those who have known you has been deeper though it may not be as obvious.

In closing I regret that more Stanford students can not have the honor and pleasure of studying with you; a gentleman and a scholar.

Sincerely yours,

H. C. Scherer " 27 "

Tucson, Arizona
May 6, 1940

Dr. LeRoy Abrams,
Stanford University, Calif.

Dear Dr. Abrams:

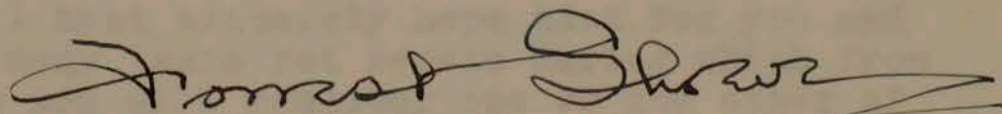
It gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity to join in the shower of greetings that is soon to fall upon your head. You have my heartiest felicitations on the long and useful period in which you have furthered the interests of botanical science in Stanford and have done so much to help both amateurs and professionals outside the University. I feel very safe in regarding the occasion for these greetings as a mere milestone in your career. I applaud the practise of Stanford in relieving its men of administrative and teaching duties while they are still young enough to be able to carry out the plans and ambitions that every active and useful man has.

I often recall with great pleasure the trip that you made with me in Sonora in 1932. From our conversations on that trip sprang the plan for investigation of the Sonoran Desert, and from it, in turn, the Chihuahuan Desert project in which we are still engaged. Your enthusiasm for such work and your many helpful suggestions will always make me feel grateful in connection with these projects, which I believe are going to bear good fruit.

I expect to be on the coast in June and will hope to see you at that time.

With my warmest regards and all good wishes, I am

sincerely yours,



Forrest Shreve

May 1st, 1940.

Professor L. R. Abrams,
Natural History Museum,
Stanford University.

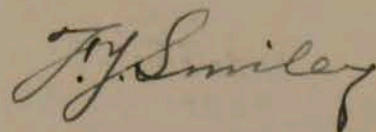
My dear Dr. Abrams :

During the thirty years that have slipped by since I first had the privilege to enroll as a student in your class in Systematic Botany I have often recalled the new experiences which came to me from that association.

Your unfailing good humor and readiness to give aid and encouragement admirably complemented your professional competence and from this combination one of your old students can sincerely say he derived a lasting benefit. Many of us teachers, when we first begin our work, are too often apt to follow the easy way, speaking in verbis magistris but forgetting that however earnestly we may wish to teach as well as we were taught, we can hardly hope to carry over the spirit which illumined the pattern.

In a way it seems to me somewhat absurd to think of you as retiring : rather it is setting you free to carry on the great Flora of which for too long we have had but the first volume to refer to as sure guide in the herbarium and in the field. I most sincerely hope that for you and Mrs. Abrams many years yet remain during which from time to time you will remember one or the other of your old-time students, some of whom themselves are not so far from the goal you are just about to reach.

Very truly yours,



Occidental College,
Los Angeles.

Pacific Grove
May 8, 1940

Dear Professor Abrams:

It seems very fitting to me that your colleagues and former students should at this time express their formal appreciation of your many services to Botany. As one associated with you for the past fifteen years I realize how richly you deserve the thanks of all for what you have done for Botany at Stanford.

You are to be congratulated on the fact that your work is still unfinished and that so much is to be done before the "Flora" is completed. Stanford may change your title, but I defy them to stop you from carrying on. Here is wishing you every success in further work on the monumental task you have set for yourself.

Sincerely yours,

Siobahn M. Smith

To
Professor LeRoy Abrams
Dudley Herbarium
Stanford University

Le Roy Abrams

Gentleman

Scholar

One of the Princes of Botany, with Professors
Dudley, Robinson, Peirce

A friend in deed and in need

A friend when friends are few

Ever faithful, patient, encouraging, considerate,
helpful and ready with sound advice

.....

May your years to come be happy and crowned with
many satisfactions and accomplishments

Especially be it our wish that the publication of
your Illustrated Flora be brought to an early com-
pletion, printed, bound, and distributed, to your
utmost satisfaction and joy; a joy that will be
shared by all of your friends

Very sincerely

Charles Piper Smith

Charles Piper Smith

263 Evergreen Avenue
Daly City, California
May 8, 1940

Dr. LeRoy Abrams
Dudley Herbarium
Natural History Museum
Stanford University, California

Dear Dr. Abrams:

I am very glad of the privilege of being permitted to express to you how much I enjoyed working under you when I was at Stanford University, and how much I appreciate the help you have given me, both then and since I left the university.

It doesn't seem possible that it is time for you to retire. However it must be a grand feeling for you to know that you have done a good piece of work, and have really helped others, and you certainly deserve to have that feeling.

I hope that now you will have time to enjoy yourself thoroughly and do lots of the things that you have always wanted to do.

Very sincerely,

Martha E. Springer

Chicago, May 7, 1940

Professor L. R. Abrams,
Dudley Herbarium,
Stanford University,
California.

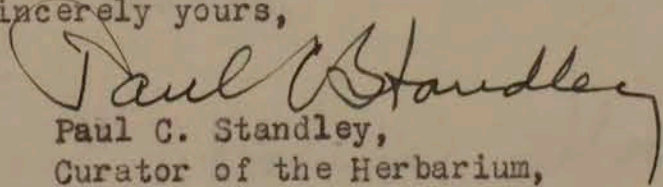
Dear Professor Abrams:

Although our acquaintance has developed principally through correspondence, with personal meetings infrequent and all too brief, I feel that it is somewhat closer than ⁱⁿ case of some other botanists with whom I have had greater personal contact. At any rate, I can not pass the opportunity I am given of expressing my best wishes upon your retirement from strict necessities of teaching routine may afford an opportunity to expand the taxonomic research in which you have been so distinguished when you had leisure for its execution. What a blessed relief it would be to me if I might be so freed to devote my time to things I really want to do!

Naturally, it isn't easy to decide whether one accomplishes more and better work by research and its publication, or by stimulation of others in investigations of the same sort. In the latter you have surely been exceptionally successful, as is proved by the success of the botanists whom you have trained. I remember very definitely that those whom I have met from time to time have spoken with the greatest affection of you, and with the deepest appreciation of your interest in their advancement.

I sincerely hope that we may now see appear some of the results of your long and intimate studies of the flora of the Pacific coast, a particularly fortunate and happy field for study, and that you may carry forward such work--provided always that it is what you most wish to do--for many years under the happiest of circumstances.

With best regards, sincerely yours,


Paul C. Standley,
Curator of the Herbarium,
Field Museum of Natural History.

Berkeley, California

May 11, 1940

Dear Professor Abrams:

May I join the ranks of those who take this occasion to send their regards and best wishes to you?

It is a pleasure to recall my association with you and other faculty members who have helped to build and maintain the Stanford traditions. In most instances, and mine is no exception, the student does not fully appreciate this privilege at the time. Experience and later associations are needed to complete the picture. Petty disappointments and minor hardships are soon forgotten, and even the factual information so painstakingly instilled by the instructors becomes dim, but strangely enough certain of the men whose duty it was to guide the growth and training of the students stand out more sharply against this background, and their influence grows. You are one of these men who symbolize Stanford to me.

I am sure that you look forward with pleasure to doing the many things you have always wanted to do but for which there was never time enough. I am equally sure that those of the botanical fraternity look forward to the continuation of your publications and observations. Your former students and friends anticipate with most pleasure, however, the thing you have always given most freely — your friendship.

Sincerely

Palmer Stockwell

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Washington

May 8, 1940.

Professor L. R. Abrams,
Natural History Museum,
Stanford University,
California.

Greetings! I have learned that you are now beginning your full-time career in botany because you are being relieved from your University duties. I know of no group of scientific men who are in position to take fuller advantage of such complete liberty of action than taxonomic botanists, since the work they do requires judgment rendered accurate by years of practice.

I want to take this occasion to say that I think the work you have done in the University in training capable young botanists, has been of the very greatest importance to California and to the rest of this country. Your own publications on the flora of Los Angeles, of the Pacific Coast and on the trees and shrubs of Southern California, have been models that we all hope will be followed more and more in the future.

I have come to the conclusion that a newer and better type of taxonomic botany and a wider appreciation of its value is absolutely necessary to make botany as a whole scientific.

In my own special field of botany of subtropical and tropical economic plants, I have become convinced of the great importance of the thorough study of the wild relatives of our principal cultivated crop plants and, what is even more important, an accurate placement of the wild relatives in such a way as to indicate approximately their degree of affinity to the cultivated species. For some 30 years I have been at work on the taxonomy of the orange subfamily and what I find is a remarkable group of plants, many of them closely enough related to Citrus to hybridize easily with it and many more able to serve as rootstocks for it.

When you recall that something like 98% of our cultivated crop plants of the United States are of foreign origin, i. e. not native to our own territory, we realize how vitally important it is to have better herbaria and better botanists to use them, so we can employ to the best advantage the newest discoveries in genetics and plant breeding which give us the only hopes we have of combating efficiently the insect pests, fungous parasites and virus diseases that are swarming in from all parts of the world to attack our crop plants. By crossing these crop plants with their wild relatives we can often take advantage of active natural selection that in many cases has been in progress for tens of millions of years and by using them, breed new varieties resistant to diseases and to unfavorable climatic and soil conditions.

You have done your part in setting a good example in the taxonomic study of plants and training young men to do it - may others follow it.

Yours very sincerely,


Walter T. Swingle,
Principal Physiologist

WTS/B.

University of Illinois
April 30, 1940

Dr. LeRoy Abrams
Natural History Museum
Stanford University

Dear Dr. Abrams:

I wish I could be present for the celebration that your friends at Stanford will be offering you, and hope to see you sometime during the coming summer. I can't imagine that your activities will be very different next year. You have always been helpful to students and others who visit the herbarium, and it will be natural for you to continue being so. Somewhat greater freedom in following out your inclinations will be yours, and I am glad that you can enjoy it.

I feel a considerable indebtedness to you for friendly help and encouragement during the years while I was at Stanford, and have much enjoyed our meetings since that time. Mrs. Vestal joins me in expressing our respect and good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur G. Vestal

1391 Woodland Ave.
Palo Alto, Calif.
May 12, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams:

Though the records are reported to say that you are reaching the age when Stanford professors assume emeritus status we do not believe that you feel sixty five and you certainly do not seem that to those of us who have known you since we first became part of the Botany family at Stanford. We say "family" because the relationship in the Department at the time we were student members always seemed closer than simply a Departmental one, a relationship which extended also to the Zoology group.

Naturally that feeling of closeness and of personal regard and esteem has carried on through the intervening years.

Mrs. Wagener joins me in extending to you and to Mrs. Abrams our greetings on the occasion of the completion of your official duties and we look forward to many more happy meetings, with nothing changed except the official status on the University books.

With our every good wish

affectionately,

Willis W. Wagener

Dudley Herbarium
May 10, 1940.

Dear Dr. Abrams:

It is my sincere hope, and I trust not entirely a selfish one, that the door of your office will be open to students and colleagues for years to come. Sometimes we will wish to come for your kindly counsel--at others just to chat about one of Red Camp's facetious comments or the general quality of the current crop of students! But regardless of just why we call on you, call on you we will, for you have contributed so much to the fabrication of the Natural History Museum and the Dudley Herbarium that I can scarcely think of the establishment except in association with you and the understanding thought you have given it and its personnel.

And you are retiring? I think, rather, that you will simply be redirecting your attention and energies from some of the necessary though uninspiring routine to which you have given your attention so faithfully for many years to some of those things which have commanded your interest but have had to be brushed aside for the more pressing immediate problems. It is easy for me to imagine numerous interesting side roads you will now be able to explore--little canyons that lead back from the main highway that have long aroused your curiosity, but which had to be passed up for a more imperative demand upon your time elsewhere--intriguing taxonomic puzzles that may now be hauled into the full light and leisurely mulled over--absorbing bits of unknown but guessed at secrets of distribution to be dug from their places of hiding--these and many other fascinating problems of field and herbarium that may be tackled now whenever you wish, with as much or as little energy as you wish to expend, with or without the consent of exacting commitments elsewhere. May these enticing vistas cause the years to deal kindly with you and afford you no end of pleasure and contentment!

Finally, may I be permitted to express the wish, as did Elijah to his mentor, that with the passing of the years, a portion of your cloak of wisdom and understanding fall upon my shoulders?

Sincerely yours,

Ira L. Higgins

Palo Alto, California
May 9, 1940.

My dear Abrams:

Forty one years ago a little group of botanists viewed the world in prospect from one of the arches of the arcade. I don't remember just how it appeared in detail but I suspect that picture has not been fully realized. The dreams of youth never are; yet I am equally sure it has not been disappointing. Four of the six members of that group after wandering far afield for some years have returned to live again under the shadow of the University.

It would be fine to start all over again only I should like to begin with the advantage of the accumulated experiences of these forty one years united with the strength and enthusiasm of youth. Still from the standpoint of the systematic botanist we have lived in a very wonderful period. It has been close enough to the time of Bentham, the two Hookers, the De Candolles, Asa Gray and other distinguished men that we might meet some of them and yet profit fully from their work. I think it will be a long time before there will be another company so distinguished in this field. But if we can't start all over again we can nevertheless take heart, for Dr. Wilbur is now having people live to such a ripe old age that we should still be able to count on at least thirty years more of active work.

Rejoicing in the past and with best wishes for the future,
I remain

Very sincerely,

W F Wight

Stanford University
California.
April 25, 1940.

Dear Friend:

Every time I realize that we are going to lose your active services here at Stanford I am reminded of Professor Dudley and of the admirable way in which you have advanced the great work which he began. We are deeply appreciative and grateful for all that you have done.

I think that you are to be envied; for there is hardly any pleasanter occupation than being a Professor of Botany, who can legitimately spend his time collecting beautiful flowers, squeeze the juice out of them and put them away for future study and observation. There was a time when I thought of being a Professor of Botany. I collected flowers for a woman who made paintings of them. I gathered some crocuses on the prairie of North Dakota. In order to reward me she finally painted a crocus on a little wooden plate, but to make it interesting to a boy she put on a bumblebee, too. Unfortunately she put eight legs on the bumblebee. This lack of accuracy gave me a certain hesitancy in taking up either painting or botany. At any rate I still have a little envy whenever I see a real Professor of Botany in action in this enticing field, whether it be on the desert, up in the mountains, or just at the road side.

You have had a wonderful and useful career at Stanford. We are all proud of you and want you and Mrs. Abrams to know how fond we are of you and how glad we are that you have spent these years with us on the Stanford campus.

Mrs. Wilbur joins me in affectionate greetings and in every good wish for the years ahead.

Faithfully yours,

Rogyn Wilbur

R.L.Wilbur/ELF

Professor LeRoy Abrams,
Stanford University.

May 6, 1940.

On an occasion nearing the completion of work required for the Masters degree at Stanford, Dr. Abrams stopped at my desk and asked me what I planned to do later on. It was during the height of the depression and therefore it was a difficult thing for anyone to start something new. My reply was, sanguine enough, that I was "going out to set the world on fire!"

Deeply I was impressed with the genuine interest Dr. Abrams showed in the welfare of a lone student, a quality in Dr. Abrams I had observed ~~in~~ years before. Stanford today, sad to say, needs more men on its faculty like Dr. Abrams, who's view of things and conditions is not first modified with the big "I".

Dr. Abrams has earned, long ago my respect as a teacher and counsellor, and no words that I may put down at this writing can express my appreciation of his friendship through the years it has been my good fortune to know him.

With every good wish, always.

Albert Wilson

Happy Hours, Menlo Park
Calif.

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
May 8, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams,

Ten years have slipped by in rapid succession since I regularly climbed the stairs to the Dudley Herbarium, yet it seems as but yesterday. In those days, and I believe still, you were known to us affectionately, not as Professor Abrams, but as "Father", a name which was not lightly applied. I think that you must have loved each one of us as though we were really your own sons and daughters, for you were so patient and understanding with us. You were never so busy with your own important work that you could not take time to help us with ours, which at the time seemed so vital to us.

I value highly the wealth of botanical information which you taught me, yet, the example which you set in your own quiet and pleasant way has proven to have been my greatest inspiration and has far overshadowed the formal training which you gave so well.

You were eminently successful in initiating us into the worthwhile fields of botany. Somehow you were able to impress us all that the botanical horizons were large and that no matter what our interests, that there was ample room for us all to work without duplication of effort. As a result, I think that each one of us is extremely grateful. You took us as we were, with our individual differences and interests, and guided us along the botanical pathway, but did not drive us down a narrow lane fenced by just your own interests. Thus we emerged from our all too brief a stay with you without having been molded into a uniform pattern.

Now as you give up your routine tasks of administration and teaching your opportunities for doing botanical work are greatly increased. I know that you must have many plans ahead for delightful tasks which have long been postponed. Perhaps some of these will include field studies which have long been impossible and which will cause you to journey to old familiar grounds or to new fields entirely. Regardless of where you go I am certain that your pathway will be a pleasant one, bordered by many plants which will all seem as old friends to you. But whatever you do now I am sure that a large part of your time will be given over to some sort of plant study, for I know that you deeply love plants -- else it would have been impossible for you to have taught so many of us to love them too.

In closing I wish you every good thing of life for the many years to come -- health, happiness and peace, not only for yourself, but for Mrs. Abrams who has also meant so much to me through the years.

Sincerely,

Carl B. Wolf.

Mrs. J. S. Marshall
Loretta Hunter
H. Clark Dalton
Frank Marshall
Alice [unclear]
Jean Shepherd
George B. Rosebush

Stanford University
May 10, 1940

Dear Dr. Abrams:

It is indeed difficult to express our feelings on this, the eve of your retirement. We, who have been so often the recipients of the advice, help and encouragement that you have so cheerfully given during the past years, wish to express our gratitude and appreciation once more. Although we will be under your guidance no longer, each of us will carry with him memories of the hours he spent with you.

And, while you will cease having a hand in the direction of the herbarium and of the Natural History Museum, they in themselves will bear testimony to the years they were under your leadership.

Much as we are sorry to have you leave us, we are glad that now you will have the leisure to complete your own work and to live in the way that you wish.

With our best wishes for your continued success,

The Natural History Club.

John Ponderste
Betty Hammerly
Reid Moran
Dorothy Scott
Edward J. Campau
Loren Yaussey
Ruth Rawlings

Marion J. Theobald
Harrett Hardin
H. Clark Dalton
Earl W. Gerald
Alex Calhoun
Jean Shepherd.
George B. Rossbach
Bonnie Mac Quivay
Alice Kundle
Jean Bryant
Marion Mac Quivay
Rufus N. Thompson
Mabel R. Buss
Deborah Anderson.
Malcolm A. Nobs
Bill Gostine
William Kaiser
Margaret Strey
Barbara Mock

J. H. Ferris.

Leites P. Abrams

Ira L. Higgins.

Anna L. Burlingame

Robert B. Barden

Hildegard Mc Murphy

W. F. Wright

Helena L. Dudley -

Willis H. Rich

Helena W. Barden

Rosamond Pierce

R. L. Burlingame

Margaret Storey

George F. Pierce

Roxanne S. Ferris

James M. Murphy

Deleu P. Smith

A. S. Myers

Mrs. A. W. Herre.

Ruth F. Myers

Ernest G. Dudley

Gertrude H. Wright

Dorothy Hawks Rich

Gilbert M. Smith

Worthing Bruce Wiggins

L.R. Abrams