

P.O. Box 197
New Hope, Pa.
U.S.A.
March 12, 1955

Dear Reber,

Thank you very much for correcting my chapter and also for your "bonus" letter on further history. You are right that I am interested in the history of radio astronomy, but not for the history itself. ~~which~~ As a general subject history does not particularly interest me, but in this case if it indicates that people don't always get the freedom to do research and that the country loses thereby-- I am interested.

Your tips are being followed up. In this mail I am writing both Langer and Stagner, and I certainly appreciate the trouble you took writing me. As a dubious reward for your troubles, I am sending the chapter that precedes the one you saw. It is the chapter about Jansky and I thought it would interest you. Please read it at your leisure because you have already taken enough of your time making comments. But I thought it would interest and perhaps amuse you as a spare-time reading project--if you have any spare time.

Incidentally, if you want to, you might tell me where your funds are coming from. People as me over here and I tell them that I assume it's still the Research Corporation but for all I know you may be working for the Aussies, too.

I believe I have made all the changes you suggest in your chapter. I like "lone wolf" better than "rugged individualist", but not enough to argue over. The power and range of radio telescopes, based on the implications of the Cygnus source, will be pointed out both before and after your chapter.

I am reluctant to omit my comments about why astronomers may have missed the boat for so long. Whether or not it is the sort of snobbery I mention, I think it important to discuss the point--not for its own sake, but because I do not think it is possible to exaggerate the seriousness of the delay and discouragement in the early days (what are we delaying and discouraging now!) But I certainly agree that there should be no inference that those thoughts are your thoughts and I shall try to remove all such inferences.

Harlow Shapley's name shall not be mentioned.

As you may know, I live only sixteen miles from Princeton University and early next month the American Astronomical Society meets there. Of course, I shall attend because I understand that quite a batch of radio astronomy papers will be reported and read---at least a dozen. I have a feeling that it will represent another feather in radio astronomy's cap. Incidentally, I have corresponded with, but never met Walter Baade; I shall be spending some time with him at the meetings, however, and we have already set up an appointment. Also there's an IRE meeting the end of this month and I'm seeing the Colline Radio people about their so-called radio sextant and their experiments in radio navigation (they're the only commercial company actively doing research in radio astronomy). I'll be seeing Doc Ewen there, too. We have an appointment starting at midnight and ending around 6 am!

Thank you again for all your time and help, and I hope the Jansky chapter will interest you.. In any case, return it when you're finished.

Yours,

John Pfeiffer

PS. I'll probably
use your story of the Jansky
brush-off at BTL (not attributing
it to you, of course).
JRP