

25 January 1969

Dear Emmett, (Copy for J-P.)

Your second letter arrived to-day, posted Thursday, and as I have no teaching on Saturdays this term (for a wonder) I had better reply briefly before I get down to the serious official correspondence about Research Students with which I am burdened.

I had noticed and on the whole copied blindly JPO's variation in the use of dots. But when I think about it, I feel sure that dots ought to be duplicated (triplicated, etc.) when we have 10[. My reason is simply that the dot is a fragile thing, and the reader may well think that a single dot like 10[is just a mistake. (I agree of course that the same argument might apply to 12, but this is not quite the same situation for there is something on the tablet which corresponds to the 2 but not to the 0) Even more when we have 100[- it seems very odd. I would ordinarily write 100[= there may or may not be a hundred sign here, generally the left edge of a curve. I would only countenance 100[if it were clear that hundreds followed but not how many there were - this might occur with perhaps 200[or 300[, where 200[would imply doubt as to what order of numeral we had as well as how many. But I would regard single dots as exceptional, and vote for rows of dots in all normal cases. This will probably satisfy neither of you, which means it's a good compromise.

I have no objection to the spelling out of supra mutila [sc. tabella] or any other abbreviation where we have room. Since it occurs so often on nasty little fragments, it is essential to have an abbreviation, and I have wondered whether we dare now risk s.m. (i.m.).

I haven't got down to the first letter yet, beyond discussing with JTK what is the latin for rectangle. We agree that we would like QUAD (unless this is barred under the puns rule), which if you are pedantic you can interpret as ~~qua~~ QUADrangulum, but would be much simpler as QUADratum. Although this means square, I think it is used as loosely as the English word; and *189 is not far off a true square - it's certainly not long and narrow (oblongum). Ask J-P what carré means in French (and what shape is the Maison Carré at Nîmes?)

I reply in more detail later, but perhaps not in time to catch you in Athens. Sorry to hear of J-P's illness - not serious I hope.

22 January 1969

John

Dear Emmett, (Copy for J.C.)

Your second letter arrived to-day, posted Thursday, and as I have no teaching on Saturdays this term (for a wonder) I had better reply briefly before I get down to the serious official correspondence about Research Students which I am burdened,

I had noticed and on the whole copied blindly J20's variation in the use of dots. But when I think about it, I feel sure that dots ought to be duplicated (triplicated, etc.) when we have J01. My reason is simply that the dot is a fragile thing, and the reader may well think that a single dot like J01 is just a mistake. (I agree of course that the same argument might apply to J2, but this is not quite the same situation for there is something on the tablet which corresponds to the 2 but not to the 0) Even more when we have J00 - it seems very odd. I would ordinarily write J00. There may or may not be a hundred signs here, generally the last sign of a curve. I would only countenance J00 if it were clear that hundreds followed but not how many there were - this might occur with perhaps J00 or J00, where J00 would imply doubt as to what order of numeral we had as well as how many. But I would regard single dots as exceptional, and vote for power 01 dots in all normal cases. This will probably satisfy neither of you, which means it is a good compromise.

I have no objection to the spelling out of mutilla [sec. tabella] or any other abbreviation where we have room. Since it occurs so often on nearly little fragments, it is essential to have an abbreviation, and I have wondered whether we have now risk a.m. (a.m.).

I haven't got down to the first letter yet, beyond discussing with JTK what is the Latin for rectangle. We agree that we would like QUAD (unless this is barred under the puns rule), which is your pedantic you can interpret as quadragintum, but would be much simpler as QUADRATUM. Although this means square, I think it is used as loosely as the English word; and 189 is not far off a true square - it's certainly not long and narrow (oblongum). Ask J-P what carad means in French (and what shape is the Maison Carrée at Nîmes?)

I reply in more detail later, but perhaps not in time to catch you in Athens. Sorry to hear of J-P's illness - not serious I hope.