



# University of Cincinnati

Cincinnati, Ohio 45221

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS

April 9, 1975

Dr. Regis Miller  
Forest Products Laboratory  
P.O. Box 5130  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Madison, Wisconsin 53705

Dear Dr. Miller:

I wrote to your Service on March 10, asking for help in identifying charred substances found in our archaeological excavations on the Aegean island of Kea in Greece. At the advice of colleagues, my letter was addressed to Dr. Koeppen. A reply (4700-2) came from Judy Kent, Secretary, saying that the Service would examine our specimens, and asking me to send them for your attention. We shall be very grateful for your assistance and advice.

Please see my letter of March 10 for a description of the circumstances. Obviously this project is quite different from those which you normally handle.

I am now sending you a small package holding four specimens, each in a small pill-bottle:

1. Very small fragments. From object with our inventory number K.1799 (found in House A, Room I; 15th century B.C.)
2. Larger fragment of woody (?) substance. From our storage tray with eight similar objects (Inv. Nos. K.361, 1035, 1339, 1753, 2638, 2989, 3379, 3806). This fragment had almost certainly fallen out of one of the eight.
3. Relatively large mass, apparently a coagulation of small pieces. From object K.29 (found in Area C, Room I).
4. Small fragments. From object K.1339 (found in House A, Room XIII; 15th century B.C.).

Please give me your opinion, and the results of any analyses that can be made. We recognize that it may not be possible to determine the substances exactly or more generally; or that they may require thin-sectioning and microscopic examination with an expense of time that your laboratory cannot afford to devote. If that should be the case, could you direct me to any other center in America or in Europe where this sort of work is done?



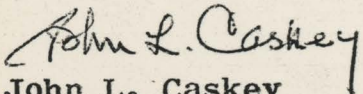
As you will understand from my earlier letter, our first question is whether any of these substances may come from the burning of aromatic woods or small plants which might give off a smell of incense. But we are interested in any kind of information and identification.

May I ask that you return to us any parts of these specimens which are not destroyed in the examination and analysis?

Communications should be addressed to me here at my office. I expect to leave for Greece in June; if your report comes after I have left, it will be forwarded to me.

Again, with thanks for your collaboration,

Yours sincerely,

  
John L. Caskey  
Professor of Classical  
Archaeology

JLC:bs