

HUNTER COLLEGE

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

695 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK 21, N. Y.

Department of Classics

March 1, 1957.

Professor Emmett L. Bennett,
Yale University,
New Haven, Conn.

Dear Professor Bennett:

I thank you very much for your letter of February 26, which reached me yesterday; It must have crossed my note to you; I'm sorry I bothered you with that.

I'm even sorrier that I must, I'm afraid, ask you to do something that you would rather not do; but I think the College will be heart-broken if you don't talk on "how they were deciphered". While waiting for the exact title of your lecture, I've been announcing you all over the place, and every one is in a state of eager expectation for just that information. For instance, our very brilliant Dean of Faculty Mina Rees, a well-known mathematician, is planning not only to come herself but to bring her husband, a distinguished physician, because he too is so much interested in the methods of deciphering unknown scripts and languages. Remember that the original solving of the riddle made the front page of the New York Times and had every one agog. To me as a classicist, it would be tremendously interesting to get authoritative proof that the Mycenaeans were Greeks (as I have long believed) and not Minoans, or to hear a comparison of the documentary gods with those of Homer; but our audience will consist mainly not of classicists, but of barbarians that we're trying to educate and heathens that we're trying to convert, and they won't know much about even Homeric gods, and will probably never have heard that the ethnic origin of the Mycenaeans has been disputed. So please do tell them "how they were deciphered"!

I admit that 90 minutes would be too long, even with so thrilling a subject and so stimulating a speaker; but if you went a bit over 60, it wouldn't be too terrible. And if you have to leave anything out, we can plant a stooge (Harry Levy would do a fine job) to ask a question during the discussion period that would elicit as an answer any particularly important material that you might have to leave out of the speech proper.

Unless I hear from you right away to the contrary (absit omen!), I'll announce your speech as "How the Cretan Inscriptions

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in Minoan Script Were Deciphered". I think I'd better use both Cretan and Minoan, to make sure every one knows what I'm talking about. (Please don't think that Hunter is composed completely of what I heard one would-be literate term ignorami, but I have to think of the students as well as the faculty.)

I'm so happy you'll stay for dinner. Everything will be over in ample time for you to catch a train before the last. As for meat vs. fish, I'll let you know the possibilities as soon as the manager of our commons has planned the menu.

Looking forward to March 22, I remain

Yours cordially,

E. Adelaide Hahn

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EAH/fjb