

October 16, 1944

Dr. Leo G. Hertlein  
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Golden Gate Park  
San Francisco, California

Dear Dr. Hertlein :

Recently I have read your paper on "A new gryphaeoid oyster from the Eocene of California." It seems that I am now in the same position you were in when you wrote this paper. There are before me several species of Tertiary oysters which need to be described. They obviously belong to different generic branches and one would hesitate to describe them all under the name "Ostrea." However, nomenclatorial tangles are so bad in the Ostreidae and knowledge of the range of the various genera is so small that one would hesitate to use any generic name other than the well-worn Ostrea.

I have tried to run down the original descriptions and generic type species of the various genera. Among these Gryphaea has caused me a lot of trouble. (Here is where your paper comes in.) It is generally assumed that Lamarck (Anim. s. Vert.) is the author of that name. However, G. P. Deshayes (1824, Descriptions des coquilles fossiles des environs de Paris, vol. 1, p. 326, 332) states that Bruguiere used the name before Lamarck on one of the plates of the Encyclopedie methodique. We do not have the Encyclopedie here, and I have not been able to borrow this book. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether Bruguiere used Gryphaea as a valid name and what the original species were. Do you by any chance know about this? If you could shed some light on this question I would appreciate it.

Very sincerely yours,

H. B. Stenzel, Geologist

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