

AMUNDSON

July 3, 1969

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Dear Burt:

On a recent visit to Houston I had the pleasure to visit with Dr. James Lee Wilson at Rice University. He gave me your letter of May 19, 1969, addressed to him. I want to thank you for remembering the Gulf Coast Geology course and for remembering my interest in oysters. Very few persons would go to the trouble of collecting some for me. I am sure the specimens would be instructive and would make good study material. There is no substitute for study material. No matter how good photographs or illustrations in books are, the best way to study fossils is to have them in one's hand and to be able to turn them over to look at all sides.

The giant oysters from the Miocene are an enigma. They are world wide in distribution: Portugal, Spain, France, Switzerland, Austria, North Africa, Somalia, Asia Minor, Japan; and I believe they are all one and the same species, because they lived in a confluent sea basin of uniform warm climate unbroken by geographic barriers. What caused oysters sudden to grow so much larger in the Miocene I don't have the slightest notion of the cause or causes.

Did you notice the Miocene species has pronounced layering of the shell at the hinge. I believe there layers are year rings.

Although NSF has failed to support the field course this year, Rice is conducting it again, and I am with it again. I enjoy talking to and arguing with other geologists.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,

H.B. Stenzel
Consultant Professor

HBS:BV