
Editorial

Genetical Research was first published in 1960. Eric Reeve was its founding Editor, and has continued in that role for a total of 36 years. In the previous (December) issue of the journal he told us something of its origins and history. The qualities of the journal and its editor are totally confounded, but as Eric did such a good job the question of disentangling them never arose. Now Eric has decided to take a well-earned retirement, but in case he had too much free time, he is editing an encyclopaedia of genetics.

For many of the authors who have never met Eric, but in recent years have submitted papers to him and gained the benefits of his constructive and direct criticism, it may surprise them to know he is now 82 years of age. His first degree was in mathematics and his doctorate in Zoology, both at Oxford, and he studied allometry of growth. During the Second World War his work included analysis of bombing surveys. Soon after, he came to Edinburgh where he started the research for which he is probably best known, on theoretical and experimental quantitative genetics, particularly on the inheritance of body size using *Drosophila* as a model species. This produced a series of important papers, many with Forbes Robertson, in the 1950s. Subsequently he turned to bacterial genetics, taking population genetic methods into the study of antibiotic resistance. He retired from the Agricultural Research Council in the Institute of Animal Genetics at the University of Edinburgh 15 years ago.

It is both an honour and a daunting prospect for me to be Eric's successor as Editor of *Genetical Research*. I am pleased, however, that I shall still be able to consult the journal's Founding Editor on 'difficult' cases (papers or persons). I do, of course, intend to maintain the standards he has set for quality, rigour and fairness and thereby continue to enhance the value of the journal. For this I shall rely on my co-editors, Trudy Mackay and David Finnegan, the

members of the Editorial Board, some of long standing and others who have recently joined, John Fincham, whom I have asked to edit the book reviews, the support staff at Edinburgh, and Cambridge University Press.

The editor of any publication should, of course, have a policy. Mine is quite simply to publish research papers in genetics which are of the highest quality, measured by the advances they make to our subject. Topicality and general appeal are not the primary object, but the best papers are interesting and contribute to the mainstream advance of knowledge. An editor can publish only what is submitted, so it is not easy to direct the areas covered and it is not my intention, even if I could, to effect any major shift in the topics which this journal has traditionally covered. I trust that *Genetical Research* will, for example, remain one of the primary journals in basic, population, animal and quantitative genetics. What I particularly want to see are papers which bring new or different methods into established subjects; for example the mapping and genetic analysis of continuous traits, the application of evolutionary genetics to protein engineering of molecules, and the genetic analysis of development.

I hope to see a continued increase in the flow of submissions of your good papers which we aim to handle fairly and efficiently. I want to see more papers published in each issue, which will be facilitated if your papers are brief. Short Notes, of no more than four printed pages, are encouraged and will be handled speedily. I remind you that there are no page charges. We look forward to receiving papers, which can be sent to me, to Trudy or David, or to a member of the Editorial Board. I would also be happy to hear from you with any ideas about the future development of the journal and spreading its readership.

William G. Hill