

Alfred Bader Fonds

Correspondence

Oxford Museum,  
Ashmolean Museum

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	
LOCATOR	5095.5
BOX	3
FILE	5

Dr. Alfred Bader  
Chairman



August 30, 1989

Dr. Jon J. L. Whiteley  
The Ashmolean Museum  
Oxford University  
Oxford OX1 3QY, England

Dear Dr. Whiteley:

Isabel and I still remember with great pleasure your kind reception in July.

As promised, please find enclosed a rather beat-up photograph of my Tobias; unfortunately, this is the only one I have at the moment. I have always thought that this is close to Dughet, but recently an art historina in Bologna has suggested that it is by a French artist, Francois Perrier, an artist I really don't know.

As you will see from the copy of my letter to Dr. George Fleet in the Chemistry Department at Oxford, I have been invited to give there a talk entitled "The Adventures of a Chemist-Collector." This is 95% art and 5% chemistry and might be of interest to you and your associates, also.

It has also occurred to me that you might like a more art-historical talk which I would be happy to present, "The Bible through Dutch Eyes," disucssing how Dutch artists in the 17th century looked at the Bible.

In any case, I already look forward to visiting with you again at the very end of November.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,

Alfred Bader  
AB:mmh  
Enclosure

**SIGMA-ALDRICH**



UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

# Museum of the History of Science

OLD ASHMOLEAN BUILDING · BROAD STREET · OXFORD OX1 3AZ

TELEPHONE  
Oxford (0865) 243997

Our reference WDH/sms

Your reference

Date 11 July, 1983

Dr. Alfred Bader,  
Aldrich Chemical Co. Inc.,  
P.O. Box 355,  
Milwaukee,  
Wisconsin 53201,  
U. S. A.

RECEIVED  
JUL 15 1983  
Aldrich Chemical Co., Inc

Dear Dr. Bader,

By the time I phoned Aldrich Chemical you had left for Europe. I am sorry to have missed you, not least because I would have liked to examine your Bega painting. A discussion concerning alchemical paintings in general would also have been very fruitful. Perhaps the opportunity will arise for such a meeting in the not too distant future. I am certainly keen to show you my collection of slides. I hope that my research may ultimately lead to a short book on the subject, but I haven't yet found a publisher willing to take it on; nor am I quite ready to write it yet!

While at the Bakken in Minneapolis, I managed to find out a little more about the Fisher Collection. The news appears to be less dreadful than we feared. I spoke on the telephone to Harry Schwalb, who is at the Corporate Headquarters. He told me that the Company is keen to retain the collection, and that they tried to buy back (unsuccessfully, as it turned out) the Bega painting which Mr. Fisher, Sr. had sold to the New York dealer.

I should be most grateful for a slide or colour reproduction of your Bega painting, and also for information on any other paintings or engravings you possess on the subject of alchemy, chemistry, medicine, or other scientific topic.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

W. D. Hackmann.

Curator	F. R. Maddison, M.A.
Senior Assistant Curator	G. L'E. Turner, M.A., D.SC.
Assistant Curator	W. D. Hackmann, M.A., D.PHIL.
Librarian	A. V. Simcock, M.A.
Technician	J. G. Simons, B.SC.
Secretary	S. M. Stewart (Mrs)

Mission of the History of Science



History of Science Society, University of Toronto

1974

1975

1976

1977

1978

1979

1980

1981

1982

1983

1984

1985

1986

1987



Chemists Helping Chemists in Research and Industry

## aldrich chemical company, inc.

Dr. Alfred Bader  
Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer

February 8, 1983

Dr. W. D. Hackmann  
Assistant Curator  
Museum of the History of Science  
Old Ashmolean Building  
Broad Street  
Oxford OX1 3AZ, England

*OXFORD U.*

Dear Dr. Hackmann:

Thank you so much for your kind and informative letter of January 26.

If you ever would come across the literary source for my painting by Wyck, please do let me know.

I do have two different color reproductions of my Bega, but I am sorry to say that neither is very good in color. To avoid crumpling, I will either give you both when you visit us or hand deliver them to your museum when I visit Oxford in June.

Fisher Scientific was recently sold by the Fisher family to the Allied Corporation, who are unlikely to be very interested in the Fisher collection. However, they turned down my offer to purchase the collection. I made that offer when I learned that Fisher had sold its very best alchemical painting, the Bega, to a dealer in New York. Right now, The Fogg Museum is considering buying it.

I believe that Mr. Benjamin R. Fisher, the son of the man who put the collection together, is still somewhat active in Pittsburgh, and I think that if you will write to him c/o Fisher Scientific Company, 711 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, he will have the courtesy to respond.

Please do give my best regards to Dr. Mullis and do plan to visit us in Milwaukee. Perhaps Aldrich could market your book on "Science through the Painters' Eyes", and I look forward to discussing this with you personally.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Alfred Bader  
AB:mmh





Chemists Helping Chemists in Research and Industry

## aldrich chemical company, inc.

Dr. Alfred Bader  
Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer

January 13, 1983

Dr. W. D. Hackmann  
University of Oxford  
Museum of the History of Science  
Old Ashmolean Building  
Broad Street  
Oxford OX1 3AZ, England

OXFORD - U

Dear Dr. Hackmann:

In response to your most interesting letter of January 6, I am sorry that I have to tell you that I do not have a color slide of my Alchemist by Wyck, but I do have a good color reproduction, enclosed, and I hope that your museum photographer will be able to make a slide from that.

The painting does not belong to Aldrich, but to me personally. I purchased it many years ago at an auction at the Dorotheum in Vienna. The painting bears an old label showing that it had belonged to an L. L. D. Phillips, presumably an English collector. The painting is oil on panel, 21-1/2 x 19-1/2", signed on the lower right.

Also enclosed, please find description of the painting written when we used the painting on our catalog cover in 1974, as well as an article referring to the painting, published in the Aldrichimica Acta, Volume 1, No. 1. Incidentally, I am no longer at all certain that it depicts a transmutation of metal, but may be an act of necromancy. Please do let me know if you happen to know of a literary source for this painting.

I own one other alchemical painting, a work by Bega, and I enclose an article that I wrote for the Aldrichimica Acta, Volume 4, No. 2.

There are quite a few alchemical paintings, but few of them are painted really well. I am bidding on a Venetian 18th century alchemical work that will be sold at Christie's in New York next Tuesday, but I doubt that my modest bid will get it.

I visit Oxford once or twice a year and lectured to the Chemistry Department last October. As you will see from the enclosed, the Alembic Club at Oxford may invite me to speak on "Chemistry in Art" which is a talk concerned mainly with restoration of paintings. The title is a bit misleading as it is 95% art and 5% chemistry. If the Alembic Club would



Dr. W. D. Hackmann  
University of Oxford  
January 13, 1983  
Page Two

like to hear me, I think it would be more fitting for presentation at the Ashmolean Museum.

My main interest in art is not alchemy, but Dutch 17th century paintings of the School of Rembrandt and you may know my work "The Bible through Dutch Eyes".

I presume that while you are at the University of Minnesota you will also want to visit the Art Institute of Chicago, and Milwaukee is on a direct line from Minneapolis to Chicago. It would give me great pleasure to be able to show you not only the two alehcemical paintings, but many dozens of works by Rembrandt students.

Best personal regards,

Alfred Bader

AB:mmh  
Enclosures