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Sir Lawrence Bragg

Homage

Dear Bragg

On the festive occasion of your eightieth birthday I would like to join the crowd of your friends and pupils in expressing to you my warmest congratulations and sincere good wishes.

Looking back, you were lucky throughout your life, and you worked hard to deserve and maintain this status. Born under some fortunate star of the southern skies into a wonderful family home you grew up a prince of physics. Hardly had you gained manhood when your first fundamental papers brought a novel approach to the brand-new discovery of X-ray diffraction by crystals and demonstrated how to find the first crystal structures – the key to all later ones. If, according to recent research into the mythology of crystallography* this was the first dragon slain by the youthful hero, you later rid mankind of others that blocked the narrow ridges of progress. Your labours

and prowess developed the methods of crystal structure analysis, created order in the maze of silicate chemistry, helped in the understanding of the nature of metals, and, finally, started the ambitious climb to the cloud piercing Himalayan peaks of structure determination, the proteins.

It is wonderful for humans to live to see the fulfilment of their early dreams and aspirations, and it is most gratifying that this happened to you, who have contributed more than anyone else to their realization.

May you continue to be active under the benign star, to your own and our delight.

P. P. EWALD

* FORMAN, P. (1969). *The Discovery of the Diffraction of X-rays by Crystals: a Critique of the Myths*. *Archive for History of Exact Sciences*, 6, 38–71.

EWALD, P. P. (1969). *The Myth of Myths. Comments on P. Forman's paper on 'The Discovery of the Diffraction of X-rays in Crystals'*. *Archive for History of Exact Sciences*, 6, 72–81.

Homage through a Book

The authors of this note have two things in common: firstly they all three started to apply X-ray diffraction to problems of crystal structure determination in one way or other at some time in the 1920's. Two of them had moreover the privilege to work in their formative years for some time in the laboratories directed either by Sir William or Sir Lawrence Bragg. Secondly, they cooperated in the edition of *Early Papers on Diffraction of X-rays by Crystals*, published for the International Union of Crystallography.

On this occasion, so memorable for all X-ray crystallographers, they would feel unhappy not to be represented in an issue of *Acta Crystallographica* dedicated to Sir Lawrence Bragg on his 80th birthday.

It may seem unusual to direct attention to a book edited by oneself, but in this special case we venture to do so. For us, as editors, who during the last two years have again been immersed in, and impressed by, the brilliant original ideas by which the science of X-ray crystallography grew and took shape, it has been a revelation to experience again what a formidable part Sir Lawrence Bragg has played herein. May this be our contribution to this jubilee issue.

J. M. BIJVOET
W. G. BURGERS
G. HÄGG