Sixth Conference of the Viral and Rickettsial Registry Committee
Pittsburgh, Pa., May 6, 1954


Guests: Drs. R. E. Buchanan and Wm. A. Clark.

1. Report for 1953. Dr. Weiss

A statement covering distribution of specimens and stocks on hand was distributed with announcements of the meeting.

During the year 1953, 283 specimens were sold, including 3 teaching sets, and 5 specimens were sent to contributors. The net income was $2885.13. Thirteen agents were added to the Registry.

2. Continuation of the Registry.

It was taken by consent to continue the Registry for one more year.

3. Old business.

a) Master list of viral and rickettsial strains. In 1952, the Committee directed that a master list of well-documented viral and rickettsial strains in the laboratories of members of the Committee be prepared for use of the membership. Due to the failure of many members to supply the necessary information, it was agreed to abandon the project.

b) Sale of specimens for teaching purposes. In 1952, the Committee agreed to offer for sale for a period of two years sets of from 3 to 6 viruses (influenza (types A and B), herpes, poliomyelitis, mouse pneumonitis and vaccinia) for $3 per specimen for teaching purposes. It was agreed to again publicize the offer and to continue to offer sets on the same basis for two more years.

c) Report of the subcommittee for review of regulations governing distribution of materials. See the attached statement. Recommendations made by the subcommittee were accepted. These provide for continuation of present practices, including the receipt of approval of the Public Health Service or the Bureau of Animal Industry, or both, prior to the shipment of strains in the Registry designated with a double star.

d) Cooperation with European V & R Registry. In 1953, the Committee approved the formation of a subcommittee, to be composed of those members attending the Microbiology Congress in Rome, to discuss with Dr. Paul Hauduroy and others possible cooperation with a European Registry. A statement relating to the ensuing discussions is enclosed. The Committee decided to encourage Dr. Hauduroy to publicize our list of strains in Europe and to request him to provide a list of specimens which he has available for distribution to members of our Committee to serve as a basis for further deliberations. It also was agreed that discussions between members of the Registry and Dr. Payne of WHO concerning the possible role of the latter organization in a European Registry were in order.


a) Report of the subcommittee for selection of materials. The actions taken were:
1) Inclusion of types 1 and 3, intracerebrally, mouse adapted strains of poliomyelitis virus (Dr. Schaeffer). (Dr. Schaeffer may elect to supply temporarily strains infectious for mice by the intraspinous route).

ii) Inclusion of louping ill virus (Dr. Smadel). To be designated with two stars.

iii) Inclusion of Murray Valley encephalitis virus (Dr. Smadel). Two stars.

iv) Removal of starred designation of the California virus (Dr. Hammon). Double.

v) Removal of starred designation of Boutonneuse rickettsia (Dr. Philip).

vi) Agreed to consider the inclusion of one or more bird pox viruses in the Registry. (Possible sources to be supplied by Dr. Van Rooyen).

vii) To hold in abeyance for one year a decision regarding inclusion of sporadic bovine encephalitis and sheep pneumonia viruses in the Registry.

viii) Noted that the previously accepted agents for inclusion in the Registry have not been received: Rous sarcoma; Virus III; vesicular stomatitis (Indiana and New Jersey); sandfly fever; dengue (Sicilian); St. Louis, Japanese B and equine encephalomyelitis (western) strains with high hemagglutinating properties.

b) BAII decision on mousepox. Dr. B. T. Simms, Chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry, has ruled that ectromelia virus cannot be transported from one state to another.

c) New catalog. Insert sheets will be prepared for agents not listed in the present catalog. The Registry has 69 viruses and rickettsiae, 47 of which are listed in the present catalog. A new catalog will be required in 1955, the preparation of which will be discussed at the next meeting.

d) Next meeting. It was agreed to hold the next meeting in New York during the annual meeting of the S.A.B.

5. Appreciation

Members of the Registry present expressed appreciation to Dr. Weiss for his cooperation in the operation of the Registry and for the excellent luncheon.

R. L. Thompson
VIRAL AND RICKETTSIAL REGISTRY
Membership List, March 15, 1954

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REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF REGULATIONS
COVERING THE DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIMENS

American Type Culture Collection

May, 1954

1. At the 1953 meeting of the Registry Committee there was considerable
discussion regarding the regulations currently in force covering distribution
of pathogenic materials to domestic and foreign laboratories. This discussion
arose from reports that certain strains of viruses and rickettsiae had been
sought from contributors to the Registry for possible eventual inclusion in
European culture collections. A Sub-Committee was, therefore, appointed to
review the present regulations concerning distribution of materials with
particular reference to shipments to foreign workers.

2. The Sub-Committee activities have consisted of a series of discussions
with Dr. Weiss of the ATCC, Dr. Calvin E. Spencer, Chief, Division of Foreign
Quarantine and Dr. William Workman, Chief, Laboratory of Biologics Control,
National Institutes of Health. A series of specific questions, summarizing
the main points at issue in the 1953 meeting, were prepared and submitted to
Dr. Weiss for clarification. These questions and the answers abstracted from
Dr. Weiss’ letter of 23 April were as follows:

(a) Who assumes the initiative in carrying out safe procedures?

"Although certain general policies were established by the
public and animal health authorities, and by the V & R Committee, it has been
our practice here to anticipate questions and adjust practices accordingly,
rather than be requested to do so. All the official agencies with which we
have dealt appear to have confidence in this organization."

(b) Is there duplication of surveillance by officials of the
Federal Public Health Service and the Department of Agriculture?

"With reference to two of the double-starred agents in the
virus catalogue we were advised to obtain the approval of both the Public
Health Service and the Department of Agriculture before sending out specimens,
viz. Venezuelan Equine Encephalomyelitis and Newcastle Disease Virus. The
requirement for approval of the USDA for the latter was subsequently dropped.
This question can be answered essentially in the negative.

Five agents were designated in the catalogue as requiring
Public Health approval. To these have been added the two strains of Rabies
virus, which were not originally double-starred, also the Flury strain of
Rabies virus and Boutonneuse fever which were accepted at the Chicago meeting.
in 1953. Likewise, two strains of canine distemper virus, added in 1953, were double-starred for approval by the Department of Agriculture.

The mechanics of obtaining approval of the Public Health Service is simple. The attached form, with name of agent and requesting party inserted, is sent in duplicate to Dr. Workman. If he approves, he signs one form and returns it to the ATCC, retaining the other for his file. The whole procedure could hardly be called burdensome."

(c) Should any changes be made in the present designation of agents for double-starred classification?

"The status of California encephalitis virus has never been fully settled in this respect, and Dr. Philip thinks it unnecessary to two-star Boutonneuse fever. Perhaps all the agents should be reviewed but if changes are to be made this can be done most conveniently when the catalogue is revised in toto, which is projected for 1955."

(d) Who assumes the responsibility for compliance with public health and quarantine regulations of foreign countries when pathogenic agents are sent abroad?

"Very few of the requests we receive for viral agents from abroad are transmitted through diplomatic channels, and even when they are thus transmitted it has not been our experience that the personnel of the foreign embassies appear to have any particular understanding of the requirements of their respective countries in these respects (an exception should be made of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau).

With reference to orders for unstarred agents, we inform the requesting party that appropriate arrangements should be made locally to clear the shipment without delay through customs and quarantine offices. For starred items, we submit a request for clearance by U. S. Public Health or the Department of Agriculture in the usual way, but these agencies then communicate with the appropriate health or quarantine officials in the country of origin to insure their approval of importing the agent in question before we in turn are authorized to send it. Instances of this complicated procedure are few."

3. In view of the above, it is the opinion of this Sub-Committee that the regulations currently in force by the U. S. Public Health Service under Section 71.156, and regulations of the Bureau of Animal Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, adequately cover the distribution of specimens by the ATCC. These regulations are clearly set forth in the introductions to the V & R Registry (1950). It is furthermore the opinion of the Sub-Committee that it is unnecessary for the ATCC to institute any official action at this time which might be likely to stir up either confusion or uncertainty
on the part of either the regulating agencies or requesting laboratories. It is further advised that inasmuch as the Registry is about to revise the present catalogue in 1955, the review of hazard levels can be automatically performed by various members of the Registry prior to the appearance of this catalogue.

JOSEPH E. SHADEL, M.D.
Chairman

KAHL HABEL, M.D.

ROBERT YAGER, Lt. Col., VC

FREEMAN A. WEISS, Ph. D.

JOEL WARREN, Ph. D.
REPORT ON PROPOSED COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN V & R REGISTRY

R. L. Thompson

It was reported at the V&R Registry Conference in Chicago in 1953 that some members of the Registry had received letters from Dr. Paul Hauduroy relative to the possible establishment of a virus registry in Switzerland. The members of the Registry who planned to attend the International Microbiology Congress in Rome were authorized to act as a committee to meet with Dr. Hauduroy and others who might be interested in such a project in order to determine how cooperation between the two groups could be promoted. Dr. Sabin has made the following report concerning discussions in Europe and subsequent developments:

"Doctors Koprowski, Sigel, Francis Gordon and I, and possibly one or two other Americans who were at Rome had a discussion with Dr. Hauduroy of Switzerland and Dr. Dekking of Holland. The most important point established at this discussion was that there was no viral and rickettsial registry comparable to that maintained in the U.S.A. either in Europe or elsewhere in the world. The center under Dr. Hauduroy's direction was founded and is controlled by the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences and has no connection with UNESCO except that it has on occasion received some small monetary support from UNESCO. Dr. Hauduroy has not been collecting viruses but rather has been making a list of centers in which certain viruses are being maintained. The desirability of having one or more regional viral and rickettsial registries outside of the western hemisphere, operated and controlled by a plan similar to that obtaining for the American registry, was considered highly desirable. Accordingly, the discussion was brought to the open meeting of one of the virus sessions at the International Congress in Rome. The recent disastrous experience of France in which a seemingly reputable bacteriologist turned loose on the country the virus of myxomatosis and nearly wiped out the important rabbit population of France, figured very strongly in these discussions. Accordingly, it was suggested that various microbiological societies of Europe and other parts of the world discuss among themselves the question of establishing in Europe, and possibly elsewhere in the world, viral and rickettsial registries which would work together with the American registry. Dr. Payne of the World Health Organization was present at the meeting and pointed out that this sort of international activity was within the scope of UNESCO. He furthermore offered, during the course of his travels, to stimulate various microbiological societies to draw up some plan and agenda which could be discussed and acted upon at the forthcoming International Congress of Microbiology in 1956."

As the result of further correspondence on the subject with Dr. Hauduroy, Dr. Sabin made the following statement in a letter to him, dated December 1, 1953: "If I understand your offer correctly you propose to send to the American Viral and Rickettsial Registry the list of viruses maintained in European collections, which you have gathered with the idea that it might be added to the catalogue that is being published by the American registry. In return you would like to add the information contained in the American catalogue to be published together with your list. The decision on this matter will have to be made by the entire group responsible for the American registry and, I dare say, will depend in part on the nature of the list and the standing of the laboratories in which the collections are maintained. I do not think, offhand, that the American Type Culture Collection would have any objections to having its catalogue of strains reprinted alongside any list that you may wish to publish yourself."

The proposal presented in this report forms one item on the agenda for the next meeting of the registry.