

Q Fever

A Note Clarifying the Identity of American Strains of *Coxiella burnetii*

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THE purpose of this note is to call attention to a confusion in the literature regarding the identity of the Nine-Mile¹ and Dyer² strains of *Coxiella burnetii*. A number of statements are made in the literature which would indicate that these strains are identical.³⁻⁵ Since publication of our paper, "Q Fever. Complement-Fixing Antibodies with *C. burnetii* Antigens in Various Geographic Areas and Occupational Groups in the United States," which appeared in the *American Journal of Public Health* (39:492, (Apr.), 1949), it has been called to our attention⁶ that these two strains differ significantly in their immunologic properties. Subsequently, Dr. Herald R. Cox⁷ has stated that, "On the basis of quantitative complement-fixation studies it has been conclusively demonstrated that the Dyer and Nine-Mile strains are not similar in respect to their serological sensitivity and specificity, and that both Nine-Mile American and Henzerling Italian are much more sensitive than the Dyer American; also, that there is no essential difference between the Nine-Mile and Henzerling strains in this respect." These observations have been confirmed by Smadel and his associates.⁷ We are informed that these data are to appear shortly in the *Journal of Immunology*.⁸

In view of the foregoing, it should be

emphasized that the serologic studies reported by us in the April, 1949, issue of the *American Journal of Public Health* were performed entirely with complement-fixing antigen prepared with the Nine-Mile strain. This is also true of the serologic studies carried out in connection with the Amarillo epidemic.^{9, 10} The implication in our paper that "an even greater number of sera would have fixed complement had the Henzerling strain been employed" is consequently unwarranted.

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