

March 1, 1951.

Dr. C. A. Stuart,  
Department of Biology,  
Brown University,  
Providence, R. I.

Dear Professor Stuart:

Thank you for the collection of 40 cultures of Escherichia coli recently sent. They are being tested now for their capacity to recombine genetically with strain K-12. We are quite interested in the behavior of serological differences, and I am pleased to note your offer of assistance in the preliminary phases. It will take another week or two to complete the initial and confirmatory tests, and I will reserve the opportunity to write again in a week or two.

None of the 40 cultures fermented cellobiose, which is probably as good a single index as possible of their character as *E. coli*. I am still looking, unsuccessfully, for a methyl-red-positive, nongummy, coliform which ferments cellobiose strongly. None of 300 cultures from various sources has fulfilled this criterion so far.

I am disappointed to learn (or so I infer) that you did not have an intact collection of the coliforms which were the basis of the papers from your laboratory on the taxonomy of the group. However, I hope I am not unduly pressing the point if I indicate an interest in any of the aberrant forms which you may have retained, even if they lack the detailed analysis given these first 40 cultures.

Concerning the question of remuneration to the ATCC, I sympathize with its deplorable straits, and hope it can achieve the financial stability necessary to preserve its service to bacteriologists. Our project is not specifically budgeted for cultures, but a purchase order could be written for them. However, the funds are under the immediate control of our business office, and they require an invoice for payment. If you would wish to act as payee, I will be glad to use your bill as the basis for such an invoice.

The package in which the cultures were shipped attracted my empirical interest. Can you tell me where and how I might purchase some similar containers?

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg,  
Associate Professor of Genetics