January 25, 1965

Dr. P. R. Edwards
Enteric Bacteriology
Box 185
Chamblee, Ga.

Dear Phil:

I wonder if you would be interested to take a look at the culture enclosed, W-2745.

As you will see from its superficial appearance, it looks like a Serratia marcescens. Someone here says he did a spectrum on the pigment and this does agree with prodigiosin.

The interesting point about the culture is its origin. One of my colleagues here, Prof. W. H. Stone, had a baby girl last month; when she came home, the Stones noticed the red staining of the diapers, and it eventually was found that this red-pigment organism dominates the fecal flora. From fresh anal swabs, the red colonies were present in practically pure culture; no colonies that look like E. coli on EMB lactose agar have been found at all so far. The situation has continued several weeks, but the child seems perfectly healthy. The pediatrician has been somewhat startled and made some half-hearted attempts to control the flora with sulfasuxidine, with no definite success. This is not my responsibility, but I know of no particular reason for this concern, and with the evolution of the child's diet, the organism will probably be displaced "spontaneously".

The physician has no direct interest in the bacteriology, and Dr. Stone and I have been examining the specimens ourselves. He was not able to recover the ~~xxgnxxx~~ organism from the ~~xhxxx~~ pharynx, ears, skin etc, of the child; in fact nowhere but from the stool.

Have you ever heard of such an incident?

I am sending you the culture in the thought that it should be classified biochemically and serologically, for the record. In view of its habitat, it might possible conform at least serologically to some of the other Enterobacteriaceae. Don't do any more with it than you would think fruitful yourself.

This is the time of year when we begin to envy you your climate again. I hope everything continues well with you. Best regards and

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg