STERNE, MAX (June 1, 1905 Trieste, Italy - February 26, 1997, Hampshire, UK)
Veterinary bacteriologist, Immunologist. Born of Austrian parents who
emigrated to South Africa in 1909. Married Tikvah Alper 1932, two sons.

EDUCATION: University of Pretoria, 1928: BVSc; London School of Hygiene
and Tropical Medicine, 1947: Diploma in Bacteriology.

CAREER: 1929-1930,
manager cattle ranch in Belgian Congo; 1931-1933, state veterinarian at the
Allerton veterinary laboratory, Pietermaritzburg; 1934-1951, researcher in
the Section Bacteriology of the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute,
Pretoria; 1951-retirement, researcher at the Wellcome Research Laboratory,
Kent, UK.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Sterne's main contribution to science was the
discovery of an apathogenic, non-encapsulated anthrax bacillus which
elicited 100% protection against infection with the virulent organism. His
spore-based vaccine replaced the Pasteur vaccine world-wide and is still
being used today to effectively control anthrax, an economically important
disease affecting both animals and man. He also developed new bacterial
culture methods and a new technique for the production of bacterial toxins
which led to the first successful vaccine against botulism (lamsiekte) in
cattle. At Wellcome he continued this research and was responsible for the
development of a number of highly successful Wellcome vaccines, both
veterinary and human.

HOMAGES AND DISTINCTIONS: In 1985, at the age of 80, he was
awarded the Karl F. Meyer Gold Cane award of the American Epidemiology
Society for his contributions to animal medicine.

WRITINGS: Author or co-author of more than 45 scientific publications,
half of which are referenced in the Author and Subject Index to the
A few representative publications are the following: Variation in Bacillus anthracis.
Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Science and Animal Industry (OJVSAI)
(1937), 271-350; The preparation of anthrax spore vaccine for cattle and
sheep in South Africa. OJVSAI (1939), 9-21; The use of anthrax vaccines
prepared from avirulent (uncapsulated) variants of Bacillus anthracis.
OJVSAI (1939), 307-312; Avirulent anthrax vaccines. OJVSAI (1946), 41-43.

REFERENCES/ OBITUARIES: Gilfoyle, D. Anthrax in South Africa:
Economics, Experiment and the mass Vaccination of Animals, c. 1910-1945.
Journal of Veterinary Research (1997) 64, (June). Obituary: Max Sterne. The

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