

**INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE  
OCCURENCE AND  
CLASSIFICATION OF THE  
HAEMOGLOBINOPHILIC  
BACTERIA**

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Investigations into the occurrence and classification of the haemoglobinophilic bacteria by  
Martin Kristensen

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**MARTIN KRISTENSEN**

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f. T. Dekanus.

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Immediately after the „Spanish illness“ had arrived in Denmark in the beginning of July 1918, an investigation was set on foot at the State Serum Institute into the bacteriology of the disease.

As a collaborator in this work I succeeded in demonstrating PFEIFFER'S „Influenza Bacillus“, few days after the beginning of the investigation in 5 of the patients from whom samples were taken. This finding directed the bacteriological investigations, which were undertaken under the direction of the Chief of the Department at that time, Dr. OLUF THOMSEN, to a large extent towards demonstrating Pfeiffer's bacillus in influenza and other diseases, as well as in healthy people.

I continued these investigations in the following years, for the first few months in collaboration with Dr. THOMSEN and afterwards independently. The original object was only to obtain as comprehensive an idea as possible of the occurrence of the bacillus here in Denmark in the various phases of the pandemic and after it had ceased. But another question soon claimed my attention to a greater extent. It appeared that while the colonies of Pfeiffer's bacillus from influenza patients were always of very characteristic appearance in cultures and easy to distinguish from colonies of other species of bacteria and the microscopic picture did not usually display great differences, the conditions were more complex in the case of samples from healthy persons as colonies of haemoglobinophilic bacteria could vary considerably more, both in macroscopic and in microscopic appearance, making it difficult to judge where the boundary between Pfeiffer's bacillus and other bacteria ought to be placed.