

April 2, 1927.

Craighead, Cowden and Smith,
714 Dayton Savings and Trust Bldg.,
Dayton, Ohio.

Gentlemen:

I have records covering my examinations of the four men whom you mention in your letter of March 29th, and I shall be very glad to give you the information which I possess.

Mr. [REDACTED] began work in the blending room at the General Motors Plant, April 17, 1924 and continued thus for seven weeks. He became ill, was laid off for four weeks, after which time he was very much improved and was then transferred into the shipping department. He was working in this department at the time of my arrival at Dayton. The above statement as to his employment and illness was obtained from him, and is part of my record. He describes his illness as being a matter of sleeplessness, frequent disturbing dreams, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting. He was examined by me on September 19, 1924 at which time he made the above statement.

On the occasion of his examination, September 19th, he was complaining of some degree of sleeplessness, poor appetite and headache. He also said that he had been losing weight. Physical examination at this time disclosed no apparent illness as a result of handling tetraethyl lead. Since he had been working for some time previously in the shipping department, where the exposure to lead compounds was very slight, I was of the opinion that his symptoms were not the result of his present occupation. At this time his weight was 149, his temperature 97.8°, his blood pressure 126/80, and there were no physical signs of illness.

Reexamination on December 10, 1924 showed that the symptoms of which he was complaining at this time, (principally headache on the right side of the head) were due to a sinus infection following an acute cold. At neither of these times was there any evidence of changes in the red blood cells which are characteristic of lead poisoning.

Mr. [REDACTED] was seen from time to time by me, and was questioned as to his condition. During my entire observation of him there was no evidence that he was

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suffering as a result of his original acute poisoning, nor was I ever able to find evidence that he was continuing to absorb lead as a result of his work in the shipping department. My knowledge of conditions in the shipping department lead me to believe that the exposure here was very slight indeed, and not of a dangerous type. In fact, the exposure here was so slight that the employees of the shipping department were not examined with the same frequency as men employed elsewhere.

At a considerable later date, of which unfortunately I have no record, I reexamined Mr. [REDACTED] the purpose of this examination being to determine whether or not his physical condition was such as made it inadvisable to release him from the employ of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation. (There was a standing rule at this time that no one was to be discharged without having had a physical examination and an O.K. by myself.) It is my remembrance that the question of discharging Mr. [REDACTED] had arisen from some thing which was no concern of mine. I, therefore, passed upon his physical fitness and found no evidence whatever of any injury or illness which might be a deterrent to his discharge.

Comment:- I think it is quite likely that Mr. [REDACTED] story of his first illness is correct in my opinion. From the several examinations which I made of him there was no residual effect from this injury, and he left the employ of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation in a condition of physical fitness.

[REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED] was examined by me several times. He stated that he worked one day in the blending room prior to my being in charge of the Blending Plant, medically, that he had not been ill as a result of this work, and that he had been immediately transferred to the shipping department. During my entire stay in Dayton he was employed in the shipping department almost exclusively as a carpenter, crating new equipment which was being shipped.

On my first examination of him in September 1924, he was suffering from an acute case of herpes on the chest (shingles). This followed an acute attack of tonsillitis and necessitated his being under the care of his family physician for some weeks. Some time after his return to work (December 1924) I reexamined him and found that he was still suffering from some circulatory disturbance, apparently as a result of

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his former acute infection. I saw him from time to time later and observed that the work which he was doing was too much for him. He complained from time to time of headaches, and was not able to sleep well. At the end of the days work his feet were swollen and his hands and feet were bluish from poor circulation. He had a valvular lesion of the heart, and his heart muscle was becoming weaker, and for this reason I did not feel justified in allowing him to continue the work which he was doing. I was afraid that he would develop an acute heart failure from the nature of the work which he was doing, and advised him, therefore, to seek work elsewhere, suggesting that he find light out of door work. He was given a considerable period of time in which to find work elsewhere. Finally I set a date some weeks ahead as a time upon which we would not employ him. I should not have felt justified in doing this except for the fact that all of the work in the Blending Plant was regarded as hazardous to some extent, and I did not feel justified in permitting a man in his bad physical condition as was Mr. [REDACTED] to continue in his work. As a matter of fact I had no fear of his being poisoned. I had great fear, however, of his developing acute heart disease and of this inevitable result being finally blamed upon his occupation in the Plant.

I have not the slightest doubt that at this time Mr. [REDACTED] is a sick man. He has a heart condition which in all probability has progressed, and which is almost certainly giving him discomfort and weakness. I have not seen at any time any evidence of injury to him as a result of his employment. He is unfortunately a man with a circulatory system so damaged that it will not permit him to do heavy, manual labor, and he should not, therefore, be permitted to engage in such labor.

[REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED] was employed in the Blending Plant at the time of my arrival in Dayton. He was employed at this job for five weeks, after which time he complained of certain symptoms which in my opinion were definitely due to the absorption of lead. The symptoms were sleeplessness, gastric cramps, loss of appetite and loss of weight. The blood also showed stippling which is characteristic of lead absorption. His temperature, pulse, and blood pressure were subnormal. He was removed from employment, therefore, some time in July and was off work, being seen by me from time to time, until about December 30th. Oct 1924 At this time he returned feeling very much improved, having gained back the weight which he had lost. He was able to sleep well, had good color, and according to his own statement was feeling perfectly well.

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The stippling had also disappeared from his blood. My notes at this time on his condition come to an abrupt end. As I remember, however, for this was my general policy, I advised him not to return to work in the Blending Plant, but to keep away from all exposure to lead compounds, this was partly because of his age, since he was only twenty, but was largely because I felt that men who had been exposed to tetraethyl lead for a period of time such as his under the early conditions of blending, had absorbed a sufficient amount of lead, so that it was the very best thing to be free of all lead exposure for some considerable period of time. Mr. [REDACTED] therefore, was given some period of time, on pay, to look about for another position. As I remember it he found another position shortly and took it. At the time he was last seen by me he was feeling perfectly well, and was very well disposed toward the company who had employed him, and felt that he had been treated fairly and properly in having been advised not to work longer in the Blending Plant. If anything has happened to him since to produce illness, I do not know about it, for I have not seen him since he left the employ of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation. I have in my notes, however, this observation. He has a goitre involving the right side of the neck, and I suspect that some portion of his symptoms is due to the existence of this goitre. In fact, he had some bulging of the eyes and a rapid pulse. He also had a high blood pressure at times with a nervous system condition which was very like hyperthyroidism. My impression of [REDACTED] whom I remember very well, was that he was a very likable, honest and intelligent man, and I inclined to suspect that if he is claiming illness, it because he is suffering from some condition which is capable of producing illness. Whether it bears any relationship to his previous absorption of lead, I am, of course, unable to say.

Mr. [REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED] was employed after I was in charge of the Dayton Plant, medically. I passed him for work after a careful examination, in which the only physical finding which tended to exclude him from employment were a very bad set of teeth. He was employed for short time jobs, however, the with the advice that if he would have his mouth cleaned up he would be employed for a longer period. He had the necessary dental work done and was then passed for continued work. Nautre of his work was such that he was likely to inhale dust of lead compounds. He was cautioned continually as to the care and necessary in doing this work, in spite of which he developed some signs and symptoms of lead absorption. He was, therefore, released from work on pay in spite of his protest that he was not ill. He was kept off the job for a period of time which my record does not show. His condition was, at no time serious, but consisted of the following things.

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but consisted of the following things. He had lost weight, the blood pressure had dropped slightly and the blood smears showed the presence of stippling. His appetite was not good and he was not sleeping as well as he normally did. There was at no time, however, any reason for any anxiety for his condition. He was merely kept out of all exposure to lead compounds until such a time as these symptoms disappeared, and he maintained that he felt perfectly well. He returned to work after a period of some weeks, or perhaps months, and after this time was not allowed to do work which involved any serious further exposure to lead compounds. He was not inclined to be careful, however, and insisted that he was not likely to be injured by anything that he did.

I have a record of a number of examinations of him, and my physical examination shows no evidence of any injury present, with the single expedient that it was still possible to find an occasional stippled cell in his blood. On my advice that he should not be allowed any further exposure to lead compounds, he was kept strictly out of such exposure, and at the time of the discontinuance of the distribution of Ethyl Gasoline in May 1925, he was still an employee of the company, working on odd jobs of trucking, etc. Shortly after this the company found another position for him, and I have not seen him since.

Comment:- I know Mr. [REDACTED] to have absorbed sufficient quantities of lead to produce symptoms. He has at no time, however, had a serious case of lead poisoning, and I am sure that if his case were considered in connection with the usual types of industrial lead poisoning, it would be given no credence whatsoever. It is my opinion, without having seen him recently, that he has no adequate claim for damages.

In connection with this entire group of cases I am not in position to say definitely that no latent results can accrue as a result of the absorption of lead, which at one time took place in the case of three of these men. It may be that results which did not show over a period of time have again occurred, and that they may now be suffering, to some extent, as a result of former injury. This occurs some times in lead poisoning to my certain knowledge.

The entire groups who were employed at Dayton, however, were kept under close observation. Some of them I have seen since and I have not been able to find a single bona fide case of a recurrence of symptoms of any import in the men who apparently recovered. I should be very much interested in seeing and examining any of these men, in order to determine whether or not they are suffering as a result of their exposures. This is a matter of medical and scientific interest, as well as one of human interest.

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Frankly I have been very anxious to see that all of these men receive fair treatment and I extended myself in every possible way to see that they were dealt with at the time of their illness and of their employment in such a way that they would have no valid complaint of any account kind. I should be very glad on their account and in the interests of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation, as well as to cooperate with you in any way possible to determine what may be or should be done in their cases.