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REES-STEALY CLINIC
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SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

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May 13, 1932

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

At the request of Mr. S. M. Wagner of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation, I have investigated the circumstances surrounding the death of Lieut. [REDACTED] U.S. Navy (retired). Mr. Wagner requested that I send you a report of my findings. The newspaper reported it a death from lead poisoning.

Lieut. [REDACTED] was retired from service several years ago on account of arteriosclerosis with hypertension.

In an attempt to siphon the gasoline he aspirated a mouthful, bringing on violent paroxysms of coughing. His family physician, among other things, administered emetics and finally washed out his stomach. Finally (I do not know the exact time interval) he sent him to the Naval Hospital with the diagnosis of lead poisoning. Upon admission he had a marked pulmonary edema and a greatly lowered blood pressure. He died the following morning.

The autopsy showed a rupture of the ascending aorta in one of the atheromatous plaques which did not penetrate the adventitia. The blood passed between the media and adventitia down beyond the bifurcation of the aorta and upward along the vessels of the neck. The right ventricle of the heart contained a large thrombus and both lungs showed multiple infarcts.

The case was presented at a meeting of our society of pathologists of which I am a member. Dr. Hall stated that he found a trace of lead in the urine, but, of course, did not consider lead as a factor in the death.

It happens that my nephew, Leon Saler is a freshman medical student at your school. I think he is a good boy and if there is ever a time when you can give him a lift along the rocky path of the medical student it will be appreciated by me.

Sincerely yours,

H. S. Sumerlin
H. S. Sumerlin, M.D.