

January 19, 1942

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Patient of Dr. George Berger (Covington, Kentucky), referred for diagnosis of possible plumbism.

Started work Crane and Breed Casket Company, September, 1941, dry-sending lead-coated copper and steel caskets. Mainly hand sanding but fellow workmen used mechanical sander continuously. Initially dirty metal was rinsed with "lacquer thinner" blown dry, then sanded and blown clean - very dusty. Fumes of thinner were extremely heavy especially when rinsing inside of casket. Was giddy and drunk most of time. Several men on verge of collapse from time to time and all had to go to open window for relief. Lost 12-15 pounds from September to December, 1941. Four pounds lost in past 2 weeks. Fatigue was marked in December 1941, anorexia was complete, a.m. vomiting q.d., night sweats regularly, pain under left scapula, palpitation, a.m. metallic taste. Vasospasm legs q.d. with cold sensation, feet and hands would swell at night. Went into Booth Hospital December 18, 1941 - in house until today - to return after examination. No hemoptysis, no colic. Other workers had some symptoms. One has ulceration of lip presumably from copper. Patient had severe anemia in December - 2 blood transfusions given in December, 1941.

Has improved in past month. Still has G.E. tract disturbances, pain and cramps in legs, diarrhea past week.

Summary

- (1) Severe exposure to organic solvent (probably non-chlorinated as had 80° flash point).
- (2) Indeterminate exposure to metallic lead and lead oxide dusts. (Faint line at left upper cuspid.)

Impression

Illness can be accounted for entirely by exposure to volatile organic solvent, in fact, type of onset, initial C.N.S. symptoms, anemia, vomiting, etc. are entirely consistent with that type of intoxication.

Willard Machle, M.D.

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