

10-11-1937
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Shaw, Norton

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

TORONTO DIVISION
302 BAY STREET
TORONTO 2, CANADA

167 Thornton Avenue,
London, Ontario.
November 8th, 1937.

INTER-OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. J. N. FitzGerald.

Dear Fitz:

Re: Lead Poisoning.

As requested in Mr. Olver's letter of October 21st, I am making a further report on Mr. [REDACTED], Thayer's employee, Blenheim, who has operated a tank wagon from this centre for some years.

Before calling on Mr. [REDACTED] I dropped in to Thayer's at Chatham, and Mr. MacPherson, the salesman there, brought up the subject of Mr. Shaw before I had an opportunity to mention it. Mr. [REDACTED] was forced to stop work on September 22nd and spent about four weeks in bed, when he showed considerable improvement, and he has been able to be on his feet again the last couple of weeks. Apparently Thayer's feel that they would like to have him return to work and offered him a job as night watchman at Chatham, but on the Doctor's advice he turned this down. He is not entitled to any compensation as Thayer's do not come under the compensation regulation as they do not manufacture. Mr. MacPherson said that someone told [REDACTED] that in the United States, General Motors, or the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation took care of any lead cases, and Mr. MacPherson wanted to know if we would do anything for Mr. [REDACTED].

I called on Mr. [REDACTED] at Blenheim and found that he still does not look too well, although apparently he is much better than he has been for months. He tells me that infection started in his right leg, at the shin bone in April of this year, Shortly afterwards he consulted the doctor who took a blood test, but which showed no signs of infection, however he gave him some salve to apply, but it had very little effect. By the middle of the summer he began to feel much worse and the rash spread to his other leg and to his arms, and he consulted a second doctor who diagnosed it as lead poisoning. By the end of August the rash became much worse, and was in the form of small blisters which oozed water soaking the bedding etc. The rash finally spread to his face and his hair and he began to lose the strength in his hands and arms. His feet also lost their feeling and he felt as if they were continually asleep. He also had his teeth examined and was told that there was a deposit around them and that they would all have to come out, although they had not troubled him in any way.

When I called on him on November 2nd he had just had three teeth out, and had only three left to be removed. The rash is practically dried up, although there are still signs of it on his legs, arms and hips.

Mr. [REDACTED] lost considerable weight, from 156 lbs. to 132 lbs., and even yet does not look like a well man. He does not feel that he should go back to work for Thayer's if it will mean a return of the same trouble. He also feels that something should be done for him by someone, and he should be compensated in some way for his loss of health, and that some one should pay his medical and dental bills.

I also called on Dr. Story, Blenheim, who has been treating Mr. [REDACTED] for lead poisoning. Dr. Story feels that there is no doubt about Mr. [REDACTED] having lead poisoning, although he admitted that the information regarding lead poisoning was very vague. Dr. Story said that when he decided it was lead poisoning he gave Mr. [REDACTED] potassium iodide to mobilize the lead. He also said that his gums had a purple line and a deposit around the teeth, and that the muscles of his hands lost their power. However a test made on a sample of his urine at the end of October showed no excessive amount of lead. He said that he was sorry that he hadn't had a sample tested earlier, but that when he started his treatment that he was not sure it was lead poisoning. He also said that he felt that Mr. [REDACTED] would be foolish to go back to work on the same job when he would be again exposed to the same trouble. In his opinion most of the trouble originated from the practice of delivering gasoline to the farmers where it had to be canned from the tank wagon to drums stored in small unventilated shacks where there was no way of avoiding the odors. And as most of Thayer's trade in this district is of this type, he felt that this was largely responsible for Mr. [REDACTED]'s condition.

Dr. Story also took Mr. [REDACTED] to see Dr. Reed of Chatham who agreed that it was a distinct case of lead poisoning.

I trust this information covers the history of the case satisfactorily.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) P. B. MacEwen.

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