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OCCUPAT HEAL IN AM

by Henry B.

in collaboration with Alfred H.

THIS BOOK WAS PREPARED UNDER THE
THE HISTORY COMMITTEE OF THE IND

ALFRED H. WHITTAKER,

*OTTO P. GEIER, M.D. | JAMES I. ROBERT

*LOYAL A. SHOUDY, M.D. |

**ARTHUR J. VORWALD | **

**GEORGE R

*Deceased **Appointed to repl

1962

Wayne State University

TRIAL BY DEPRESSION

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parable period in history, despite the scantiness of individual health records and supporting x-rays in most industries. Such investigators as Carey McCord and the father-and-son team of Lewis and William Gregory Cole made many new contributions, after the Gauley Bridge episode, to the already immense literature of the dust diseases.

The middle thirties produced study and discussion of the entire silicosis problem. In June of 1934, '35, and '36 the important Saranac symposiums instituted by LeRoy U. Gardner, director of the Saranac Laboratory, were held in the Trudeau School of Tuberculosis at Saranac Lake. These brought together a notable group including Henry K. Pancoast (University of Pennsylvania), whom Lewis Cole called the foremost roentgenological authority in the country, E. P. Pendergrass, another eminent radiologist (University of Pennsylvania), Anthony J. Lanza (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, Royd R. Sayers (USPHS), later president of the AAIP&S, Henry K. Kessler (New Jersey Rehabilitation Commission), Roy R. Jones (USPHS), Homer L. Sampson (Trudeau Sanatorium), Philip Drinker (Harvard University), W. S. McCann (University of Rochester), and D. M. Brumfiel (Saranac Laboratory).

In June, 1935, there was also a silicosis symposium in Wausau, Wisconsin, organized and widely publicized by the Employers Mutuals of Wausau. Medical interest in silicosis seemed to know no bounds. Government concern was indicated by the appointment, in 1936, of four committees to head a cooperative campaign "to lessen the ravages" of the disease, to which a half-million workers were said to be exposed.⁴

Playing a prominent part in the studies and reports that followed was the Committee on Medical Control, with R. R. Sayers as chairman. Sayers headed a group of physicians that included Lanza, McCann, Gardner, and Pendergrass, Cassius H. Watson, president of the National Safety Council, J. Norman White, of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and Beverly L. Vosburgh, medical director of General Electric Company.

Silicosis literature poured from the presses during those eventful years. C. O. Sappington called the disease "a top problem," so important that "no less a person than the chief officer or president of any corporation should take the responsibility for the proper handling of it."⁵ E. R. Hayhurst commented on the ease of diagnosis.⁶ Michael H. Barsky produced a valuable study in which he analyzed the results of a thousand pre-employment examinations, observing the amount of physical impairment from varying degrees of exposure to silica dust.⁷ Thomas L. Dwyer, of Chicago, in a detailed review of the literature of silicosis, cited a bibliography of at least fifty contemporary references.⁸

The dust diseases represented only one category of subjects that clamored for attention. The mounting interest in toxic hazards from metals and chemicals of every type heralded the fantastic new era of technical progress soon to come. Discussion of these and other immediate problems was seriously handicapped by a depression economy that restricted publication enterprises and curtailed business and professional conventions.

It is certain that a great deal of useful, even vital, industrial-medical news and

not believe it is wise to establish a committee of past presidents to advise with the Board of Directors. The committee is merely a perpetuation of officers in another form, and if I were a director I believe I would feel such advice as might be available to the past presidents could be given to the Board without having a super organization to pass on it."

Present at the meeting, it chanced, was the oldest past president then living—Otto Geier. Asked his opinion of the proposed committee he stated his belief that it could be very useful and could recreate renewed interest in some of the oldsters who have something to contribute. He did not, however, think any brakes on the younger men were needed; and as an ex-president he expressed some embarrassment "in the matter of our pinning roses on ourselves and making ourselves so particularly useful to the association."

There was little more discussion. Shoudy's report and motion were put to a vote and approved. This action fitted nicely into the schedule of the important Committee on Constitution and By-Laws Revision, whose labors were drawing to a close. If the new laws were to become effective in 1945, a long list of basic changes and refinements had to be agreed upon early in the year.

The committee in charge of this project was representative of the type of new blood that was being infused into the directorate in the forties. Its chairman, Rudolph F. Kurz, was thoroughly experienced in both industrial and aviation medicine. He had served his industrial apprenticeship with the Cincinnati Milling Machine Company (managed by the Geier family), had been a flight surgeon in the Army, and was, in 1945, a medical referee for the Travelers Insurance Company, St. Louis. Robert A. Kehoe, widely known educator, medical director, and consultant in pathology and physiology, had served since 1930 as director of the Kettering Laboratory of Applied Physiology, Cincinnati. B. L. Vosburgh (medical director, General Electric) was distinguished for his special work on toxicology and silicosis.

At a night meeting February 11, 1945, the committee presented its final report to the Board. Revisions were examined and discussed in detail and approved for submission to the association membership. With its acceptance, June 22, 1945, the new document became effective, and, except for minor amendments, has remained intact. Along with other important changes, the Shoudy committee's proposal relating to past presidents became part of the bylaws. Provision was also made that the most recent past president should be a member of the Board, but as an addition to the twelve elected directors and to serve for only one year.

So, and by such a devious route, the Past Presidents Committee of the association came into existence. Shoudy, in the end, had his way, but so did the dissenting Lynch. Retired presidents were given a considerable amount of responsibility and useful work to do, while room was made at the same time for a younger man on the Board each year. By and large, the old guard of the association has shown an understandable reluctance to bow out of administrative duties, and have shown, over the

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