

Department conducted an investigation and enacted laws for the protection and compensation of the worker against this hazard. The whole subject in England has been very well summarized by Meremether in a series of articles in Tubercle. (2) At the present time, as nearly as can be estimated, there are about 12,000 individuals employed in the chief asbestos plants in the United States of whom, 10,000 might be exposed to asbestos dust.

In 1927, a fatal case of uncomplicated asbestosis was reported to the Medical Society of South Carolina (3) and since then, including this case, there have been eleven fatal cases reported in the United States, eight uncomplicated and three complicated by tuberculosis. These reports, together with the fact that asbestosis figured in the extraordinary occupational disease litigation that has spread over this country, resulted in both laboratory and field studies of this new hazard. Gardner and Cummings at Saranac Lake commenced animal experimentation with asbestos in 1928 and reported their findings in 1931. (4) These two authorities in the United States and Gloyne in England (5) have produced masterly descriptions of the pathology. While silicosis is predominantly parenchymatous, asbestosis is mainly interstitial, nor is asbestosis characterized by the nodular formation so distinctive of silicosis.

A search of all the death records on file in the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company revealed that asbestosis had been given as a cause or contributing cause of death in only nineteen cases. The first case noted was in 1924, two in 1927, one in 1931, and the rest since 1933. The diagnosis was supported by autopsy in only six. In one of these six, the primary cause of death was carcinoma; in another, glioma of the brain; and in another, pulmonary tuberculosis. In the other three, asbestosis was given as the primary cause with cardiac failure as the contributing cause. Some of these cases were reported in the literature.

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