

TRIP TO MONTREAL, ASBESTOS, THETFORD MINES, QUEBEC

10/16/-10/21/44

Purpose

To explore the high tuberculosis mortality rate in Thetford Mines;
to advise the asbestos industry regarding a health program in Thetford Mines;
to visit Group policyholders in Montreal.

the reasons for mines in Thetford concerning the establishment of an industrial clinic
with Mr. Perry and Mr. Fehnel
Individuals ~~Mr. Fehnel~~ make industrial hygiene survey of asbestos mills in Asbestos and Thetford. (Mr. Fehnel)
Contacts Made and Groups Visited

October 16, 1944

Radio Corporation of Canada: Mr. Deacon, the new President, Mr. McCallum, Personnel Director; Dr. Kaufman, Medical Director, Mr. Rousseau, Safety Director.
Charles Frosst Co., pharmaceutical manufacturers: President, Eliot S. Frosst; Mr. Sheen, the Plant Manager; and Dr. Lozinsky, Director of Research.

October 17, 1944

Called on Mr. Robert Steele, President of Asbestos Corporation; Dr. Jacques Cartier of the Montreal Antituberculosis Society; 20 physicians doing industrial medicine in Montreal who are members of the Congress of Industrial Physicians, whose president is Dr. Graham Ross, Medical Director of National Breweries. The meeting was held in the projection room of the Aluminum Company of Canada, whose Medical Director is Dr. ~~Berthiaume~~. A guest at the meeting was Dr. Tourangeau, Director of Industrial Hygiene, Provincial Health Department of Quebec.

October 18, 1944

* * Mr. Steele explained also that

Meeting with Mr. Ivan Sabourin, lawyer, through whom Mr. Frank Roe arranged for our visits to Asbestos and Thetford Mines. ~~Mr. Sabourin~~ is the legal representative for the Asbestos Producers Association of Canada. This includes not only the three operators in Thetford, but Johnson ~~Manville~~ in Asbestos. Mr. Sabourin has been ~~handling~~ handling the compensation cases arising out of the asbestos industry. He has also been guiding the producers at Thetford Mines in the setting up of the health clinic ~~which they are charged to do by law~~. Mr. Sabourin is interested in securing all the help and guidance possible, not only as regards the establishment of a health clinic but in a study in the problem of asbestosis and, indirectly tuberculosis. Several cases have come before the Compensation Commission in Thetford Mines since the disease has become compensable. The prevailing medical opinion in the Province is that asbestosis contributes to tuberculosis. Furthermore, there is enough confusion about the subject in the minds of the doctors that claims are being filed for asbestosis when the cause of death may be due to kidney or heart disease when the x-ray picture also reveals some degree of asbestosis. There is also no agreement on the type of x-ray film which should be taken to properly reveal asbestosis.

Meeting with Mr. Sherry, Manager of the Johnson ~~Manville~~ Plant in Asbestos. The meeting was attended by about a dozen of the executives of Asbestos, including Dr. Stevenson, Medical Director, and Dr. Smith, his assistant, and Mr. C. M. McGaw, in charge of Industrial Relations. Visited the asbestos mill and weaving plant in Asbestos, also the hospital there.

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* Mr. Steele explained that asbestos producers in Thetford, of which is corporation is one, are planning to establish a health clinic which the law makes necessary. The government is giving the industry the chance to set it up. * * *

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

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Sabourin, with whom details of the trip to Asbestos and Thetford were arranged, is the legal representative

October 19, 1944

In Thetford, conference with Mr. O. C. Smith, President of Bell Mines; Mr. Andrew Johnson, President of Johnsons Mine; Mr. Alfred Penhale, Manager of Asbestos Corporation Mine in Thetford. Inspected the Bell, Johnsons, and Asbestos Corporation mills. Visited the Thetford Mines Hospital. Conferred with Dr. Sirou, practicing physician in Thetford Mines who specializes in tuberculosis and has charge of the tuberculosis service at the hospital; and Miss Chess, Metropolitan Nurse in Thetford.

October 20, 1944

Conference with Dr. Parrott in Quebec, the statistician for the Provincial Health Department; Dr. Foley, Epidemiologist, Dr. Gregoire, Deputy Minister of Health; and Dr. Gilbert, Director of Health Education.

October 21, 1944.

Conference with Dr. Burnette.

Results

RCA claim rate, as analyzed by Mr. McCallum and Mr. Roussseau, is running currently 40 per 1000. It reached a peak during August of this year. I do not believe that all these claims are legitimate illness. The bulk of the claims and the highest disbursements are in the radio department which employs about 90 percent females. Predominant diagnoses are neurasthenia, weakness, anemia, etc. Dr. Kaufman was very critical of the Company's claim administration, especially the part played by the Medical Examiner. He said they were poorly trained and did not help in controlling malingering. He made a point of the fact that Examiners' examination was no more revealing of the patient's physical condition than the patient's own physician. He complained about the Company's failure to use laboratory procedures such as blood tests, x-rays, etc., to check up on vague diagnoses submitted by attending physicians. He was bitter about one case which the Company permitted to have 13 weeks' disability because our Medical Examiner agreed with the attending physician, although Dr. Kaufman believed the worker was malingering. On the other hand, on a case where he knew the facts and thought that the worker needed a rest the claim was turned down.

The Radio Department was inspected and new ventilating hoods to take off soldering fumes were observed. These followed Mr. Fehnel's previous study of the plant. He will make a recheck of these working conditions on this trip.

Charles Frosst Company is planning a health service for its 200 employees. Mr. Fehnel and I inspected the plant, made suggestions regarding the health service, and we will send Dr. Lozinsky information on the medical setup for a small plant. Several working locations in the plant raised the question of possible hazard from mixing drugs. Mr. Fehnel will make a survey of these working locations on this trip.

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On October 17th at 3:30 at the Aluminum Company of Canada, Mr. Fehnel and I spoke on industrial hygiene. Dr. Ross presided. I described the organization and purpose of the Industrial Hygiene Bureau of the Company, and then discussed briefly the reason for our visit, with some discussion about tuberculosis and asbestosis. Also discussed the role of industrial medical service in the problem of rehabilitation of veterans returning to industry and recent developments in the control of respiratory infections. Also saw a very interesting color film on nutrition produced by Squibb & Co. It is a 16-mm. film, runs about 40 minutes, and is called "Modern Nutrition". A copy can be obtained from W. R. McHargue, Chief of the Nutrition Department of Squibb in New York. Mr. Stoddart was their Canadian representative. This film is intended for a medical audience. Dr. Ross would like copies of our industrial hygiene material to distribute to physicians in his group—about 25 copies of any material would be appropriate. Dr. Tourangeau was very much interested in our proposed visit to Asbestos and Thetford Mines. He said that he was hopeful of making some dust studies there himself. We promised to try to secure the approval of the Asbestos operators in Thetford for Dr. Tourangeau's laboratory man to work in Thetford with Mr. Fehnel the following week.

On October 18th, conference with Mr. Sabourin, Mr. Smith, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Penhale, and Mr. Fehnel, and myself. The health clinic was discussed. ~~Mrx Smith~~ The three operators have agreed to the establishment of the clinic and are prepared to spend ~~xxx~~ between \$50,000 and \$60,000 to establish it. They want the best x-ray equipment possible are ready to employ a full-time physician. Dr. Cartier was the physician that they have considered. ~~ix~~ Not knowing this, but knowing he was interested in the problem of tuberculosis, I had called on him the previous day at Dr. Burnette's suggestion. Dr. Cartier has had very good training in the field of medicine and especially tuberculosis. He is seriously considering the offer to go to Thetford Mines. I urged him to accept it if it were offered. At the meeting of the mine operators, I recommended him and it was agreed to offer him a position. I also suggested that the doctor be put on the Management Committee for the health clinic which is composed of the three mine operators. The health clinic will be established for preplacement medical examinations and subsequent follow-up examinations and health supervision of the workers in the three companies. It is intended to employ one or more nurses, as necessary, and a technician for x-ray and other laboratory purposes. It was thought that the plan could be initiated at once if Dr. Cartier could accept. They would permit him to determine his own leads and give him sufficient time to study the local situation and visit other places in order to become fairly well oriented with his problem. A specified yearly sum will be available to him for travel and post-graduate study.

The Provincial Health Department will send me mortality data on tuberculosis in the Province. The tuberculosis mortality rate at Thetford Mines is high, but it is also high in a number of other Provinces in the community. No breakdown has been made which will show whether there is an excess male mortality from tuberculosis in Thetford. If asbestosis contributes to tuberculosis, one would expect a higher mortality among males in Thetford Mines since practically no women are employed in the industry in Thetford. Dr. Parrott promised to send in two or three weeks age-specific mortality rates for males and females in the Dominion, in the Province of Quebec, and in Thetford Mines, Asbestos, Valleyfield, Rimouski, St. Hyacinthe, St. Jean, Cap de Madeleine, and Chicoutimi. He will

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He will likewise send infant mortality for these communities. We were interested in securing a description of the economic and living conditions of these same communities for comparison with Thetford Mines. Dr. Parrott said that the Dominion census had secured this information but ~~that~~ it had not been analyzed. Therefore, it is not available. When I met Dr. Burnette on Saturday, I discussed this with him and he thought it would be possible for our Nurses to secure this information.

In discussing with Mr. Sabourin what further steps might be taken to clarify this problem of asbestosis and tuberculosis, we agreed that there was need to educate the physicians in the Province regarding asbestosis. There was also urgent need for agreement among physicians and roentgenologists and others who were being called upon to act as experts in this disease on standards of x-ray examination and diagnosis. To this end, Mr. Sabourin thought it would be possible to do two things: (1) to invite a medical commission to review and agree upon standards of diagnosis; (2) to arrange a clinical symposium on asbestosis. He thought that the Asbestos Association might pay half of the expenses to bring doctors in the Province to this clinical symposium;

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