

October 31, 1944.

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Mr. Ivan Sabourin,
507 Place d'Armes,
Montreal, Que.,
Canada.

Dear Mr. Sabourin:

This is a somewhat delayed letter, and I offer my apologies for not being able to get off a note to you sooner. However, I have been very busy catching up with what has been happening while I was in Canada.

The plane trip was uneventful and we arrived in LaGuardia in an hour and a half, which is considered excellent time. Again let me thank you for the hospitality which you extended to Mr. Fehnel and me. I hope that I can return this, in some small measure at least, when you come to New York.

The delay in writing to you has had some advantages, because I have had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Woodard, Colonel Lanza and Dr. Gardner. The latter two dropped into the office on Friday and I was able to give them a verbal report of our activities. I told them that there was some possibility that a clinical discussion of asbestosis by recognized experts was contemplated and they were both heartily in favor. Colonel Lanza did not think he could participate while he is still in the Army because of the difficulty of getting time off for such a meeting. Dr. Gardner said that he would be available, and he would suggest inviting Dr. Vestal, Chairman of the North Carolina Medical Board of the State Industrial Commission. Both Colonel Lanza and Dr. Gardner thought that it would be a constructive move to have a committee to establish standards for X-ray examination and diagnosis of asbestosis. They are planning to be at the meeting of the Industrial Hygiene Foundation in Pittsburgh, Pa. on November 15 and 16. I doubt if I can make it because of other commitments, but Mr. Fehnel will be there and arrange to have you meet Colonel Lanza.

Mr. Woodard was, of course, very much interested in what we had done during the week and he told me that he had received a letter from you reporting our visit and which covered the points that I mentioned.

Incidentally, I enclose a carbon copy summarizing my observations of the trip. I am exceedingly interested in the plan to establish a health clinic in Thetford Mines and shall be glad to give you all the advice possible in helping the group there get started. I hope you have been successful in getting Dr. Certier. Dr. Gardner spoke very favorably about him on Friday.

I am sending you shortly an outline of the purpose and scope of an industrial medical service which I believe the group at Thetford Mines will find helpful perhaps in visualizing the kind of program that they are looking forward to.

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Mr. Sabourin.

There was one point that I was not clear about in connection with the health clinic physician's function. I understood that he would be expected to do preemployment medical examinations. Is he also to treat occupational illness and injury? Mr. Smith mentioned that at the present time in Thetford the employees have their own physician in case of occupational injury and illness. From his explanation I got the impression that the law specifies that the employee should be treated by his own physician and not by the company physician. Is this interpretation correct? I received the impression at Asbestos that all occupational illness and injuries are treated by the company physicians. In many places in the State it has been found that the cost of treating occupational illness and injury is much less when done by the company physician and the quality of care is usually better.

Dr. Gardner is looking forward to seeing the mortality data on tuberculosis which the Provincial Health Department has promised. He reiterated again his belief that it would be desirable to have tuberculosis X-ray surveys made, preferably starting in communities outside the asbestos industry. The group with experience in doing this is the Montreal Anti-Tuberculosis Society and perhaps they will aid Dr. Cartier in studying tuberculosis in Thetford. He could also utilise the facilities of the Montreal Anti-Tuberculosis Society in making surveys in some of the other communities that we have picked for the mortality study.

Both Colonel Lense and Dr. Gardner thought that the 35 mm. and the 4 by 5" X-ray film which is usually used for tuberculosis surveys would not be satisfactory for X-raying workers in the asbestos industry. They thought that 4 by 5" films could be used for the general population in Thetford Mines and Asbestos, but that regular sized films ought to be used for workers. I think that Dr. Cartier had the same opinion when I discussed some of the practical procedures in carrying out such a survey as we had in mind.

I shall be glad to be kept posted on the progress of the health clinic and will be glad to advise you on any questions that may arise. I presume that I would clear any suggestions through you rather than writing directly to Mr. O. C. Smith, unless you suggest otherwise.

I am enclosing two reprints on asbestosis which you may find interesting.

With kindest regards and thanks again for your assistance in making our trip so pleasant, I am

Very sincerely yours,

George H. Whistley, M.D.
Assistant Medical Director

Copy to Dr. Burnette