

April 17, 1953

Mr. C. F. Taliaferro  
Chief Claims Agent  
Atlantic Coast Line R. R. Co.  
Wilmington, N. C.

Dear Mr. Taliaferro:

The problem presented in your letter of April 6 is not an easy one, at this time, for the simple reason that it would seem, from your letter, that there has been a long time interval since your employee, who has presented a claim of lead poisoning, discontinued his work. At least I gather that he has been ill for some time, and that he has not been working under conditions that have given rise to lead exposure for quite some time. If this is the case, it will be quite difficult at this time to establish a diagnosis with any degree of certainty, unless the man's illness is due to some rather obvious other cause. If it were possible to examine him, or to obtain blood and urine from him for analysis, in close relationship to his exposure, it would then be possible to say whether his exposure to lead had been sufficient or insufficient to cause lead poisoning. Under the present circumstances no such quantitative information is available.

I am not sure how I could be of any service to you in connection with this case, but if you should desire that all the facts in the case be put in my hands and that I express an opinion on them, I should be quite willing to do so. It so happens that I shall be out of the Laboratory during all of this coming week, but I shall be here at my desk on Monday, April 27, and thereafter with the exception of two days when I shall be in Washington.

In general it is fair to state that cases of lead poisoning among ordinary painters are not very numerous. The usual methods of applying paint are such as not to give rise to much serious exposure to lead, and it is usually only when the painter is engaged in burning paint or in creating a dust in the atmosphere by scraping or sanding, that he has enough exposure to lead to give rise to lead poisoning. Nevertheless, cases do occur under suitable circumstances, and I should not be in position to express any opinion of any kind on this case without knowing all of the facts.

KE 0007487

N 7918

Mr. C. F. Taliaferro - (2) - April 17, 1953

I think I should tell you also, that I am not in position engage in legal controversies of this type as an expert witness. There simply is not time enough to permit of my engaging in this type of medico-legal work. I do have to support the facts as obtained by the Laboratory in investigations from time to time, but even these I attempt to do far as possible by deposition. If you were to ask me to review the record in this case and to provide you with a report, I could do this, since it could be done in my office. I could also subsequently, if it were desirable, give a deposition expressing my opinion for the court record by arrangement here in Cincinnati. It would be quite impossible for me, however, to go to Georgia to testify in a case of this sort.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

RAK ef

KE 0007488