

April 18, 1953

Dr. Carey P. McCord
Institute of Industrial Health
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dear Carey:

I am a little slow in replying to your letter of March 24, because I have been barnstorming and doing various other things which kept me away from my desk so much that my correspondence has been neglected. I hasten at the earliest possible time to give you a reply. I am afraid that my collection of historical information does not include anything of any consequence on lead production and lead poisoning in early America. The only thing that I know that might be of considerable interest to you is information I got by word of mouth from Dr. Ralph T. Richards of the Salt Lake Clinic, 115 East on South Temple Street, Salt Lake City 1, Utah. In a very interesting evening in Salt Lake City some time last year, Dr. Richards discussed in some detail the information concerning cases of lead poisoning in the early days of mining in that part of the country, which he had dug up from hospital records. ^{not} This is only one item of information and it would probably meet your broad needs in any way at all. However, ^{as} it is a matter of considerable interest in that the information supplied, provided the background for enabling one to see why it is that lead poisoning occurs in connection with mining activities some times, and sometimes does not. Dr. Richards' observations demonstrated rather completely that the top layers in these mining activities for lead give rise to exposure to lead carbonate, whereas when one burrows down deeper he begins to hit the layers of galena, at which point significant absorption stops and lead poisoning generally disappears, either largely or in toto.

The only thing that I know otherwise of historical importance, are the observations of Benjamin Franklin. I have no doubt you are familiar with these. They are not very extensive, but they are of considerable interest. I suppose that if I were to dig around a bit, I could find some more material, since our bibliography is probably the most extensive available in the country. On the other hand, my recollection does not give me any very sanguine feeling about the likelihood of your finding very much in the way of good literature on this subject. My guess would be that the observations of early times were rather fragmentary and scattered, and that we had no very

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extensive literature of any very great quality. If in the course of your studies the opportunity presents itself and you would like to make use of our library facilities, they are yours for the asking.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH
ANN ARBOR

March 24, 1953

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Kettering Laboratory
University of Cincinnati
Medical College - Eden and Bethesda Avenues
Cincinnati 19, Ohio

Dear Doctor Kehoe

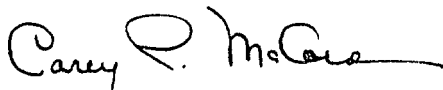
Do you know of the existence anywhere of any substantial history of lead production and lead poisoning in early America? The periods in mind are the Colonial generations and after the formation of the United States up to the period of about 1880. Of course, it is to be admitted that 1880 and thereabouts is truly not early America, but that term is convenient to our purposes.

In looking around somewhat casually, there appears to be mighty little recorded historical information as to the lead industries and lead poisoning in any of the hundreds of relatively recent publications devoted to lead. In fact, there seems to be far more information about lead poisoning among the Greeks and Romans than for the American colonies and the early United States.

The fear is that someone may have done a grand job of assembling extensive information publishing same, but all this escaping our knowledge. If you have any leads as to sources of this sort of information, for all time we shall be grateful. A small library study is being planned and will be pursued unless it comes to light that all this has been done before and in a fashion better than our opportunities afford.

May we hope to be favored with many suggestions from your vast store of information about lead poisoning?

Appreciatively



Carey P. McCord, M.D.
Consultant

CPM/s

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