

cc: New York Safety  
Dr. R. A. Kehoe  
Mr. R. L. Jordan

**ETHYL CORPORATION**

SOUTHERN REGION  
NATIONAL BANK OF TULSA BLDG.  
TULSA 3, OKLAHOMA

Mr. M. A. Taylor

New York

Mr. L. W. Shank

Tulsa

Reports - Tank Cleaning Accident  
Wilmington, N.C.

July 15, 1948

Dear Mat:

I am attaching hereto the following:

1. Report from R. L. Jordan dated July 6, giving the time spent in the tanks and the men involved.
2. Report from R. L. Jordan dated July 10, sent in reply to our request for information in connection with Jim Baldwin's report that men had slept in the tanks at Fisher Island.
3. Report from R. L. Jordan dated July 14, giving further information regarding Fisher Island tanks.
4. My report regarding the location of [REDACTED] and the tank cleaning sequence.

The only comment we have to make is that from the various reports it is obvious that the statement of Curtis Nelson regarding sleeping in the tanks has little or no bearing on the accident. Our reasoning is as follows:

1. [REDACTED] are reported to have slept in the tanks, yet [REDACTED] lead poisoning but Nelson does not.
2. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] worked on the job together at Wilmington. [REDACTED] was not at Fisher Island and could not have slept in a tank at that place. [REDACTED] got a pretty good dose of lead so he obviously got it elsewhere than at Fisher Island. The logical assumption is that he got it at Wilmington.
3. [REDACTED] was not at Fisher Island. In a telephone conversation on another matter, Dr. Katzmillier told me that [REDACTED] had shown up with very high lead, and that [REDACTED] on the border line of being a hospital case. The assumption is that [REDACTED] also got his lead

Mr. M. A. Tayler

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ETHYL CORPORATION

July 15, 1948

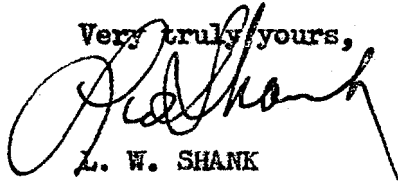
SOUTHERN REGION

NATIONAL BANK OF TULSA BLDG.

In view of the above, I believe that we can consider the Fisher Island angle of the case closed. However, if there is any further information that you want regarding this, please let me know.

I am going East on July 20, and among other places will go to Jacksonville. While there I will undoubtedly see Lou Williams of Tank Cleaners Incorporated. As a matter of fact Dr. Karl Kitzmiller suggested that I make a point of seeing him. Therefore, if there is anything you want me to talk to him about please let me know as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,



L. W. SHANK

LWS-g

Attachments

KE 0006730

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT  
TANK CLEANING ACCIDENT  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

On Thursday, July 8, Mr. J. W. Emery, Safety Engineer, and I called at the Otis Elevator Company in Dallas, Texas, in an attempt to locate Mr. [REDACTED] the tank cleaning foreman on the above job. It had been reported that Mr. [REDACTED] was going back to work for the Otis Elevator Company where he had been previously employed. We were advised that he had not yet been placed on the Otis payroll as his doctor had ordered him to rest for a month or two. We were given Mr. [REDACTED] home address and telephone number.

[REDACTED] resides with his parents at 519 East Sixth Street, Dallas, Texas. His telephone number is Winfield 6736.

We called [REDACTED] and invited him to have lunch with us. We spent about two hours with him and the highlights of our meeting with him are as follows: Mr. [REDACTED] story of the tank cleaning in question was essentially the same as that previously reported. He told me that he had received a very complete physical examination from Dr. Karl Kitzmiller, and that during the examination he had given Dr. Kitzmiller a full and complete account of all the details of the work done at Wilmington from the beginning of the job until the time he left. Therefore, we did not feel it necessary to pursue this angle further and proceeded to develop other information which had been requested.

One of the points that we wished to establish was the exact location of the tanks that had been cleaned at the Carolina terminal. If reference is made to Mr. Baldwin's diagram which accompanied his report of June 28, the tanks can be identified as No. 1, No. 2 and A. The sequence of cleaning was No. 1 first, then No. 2 and then A. This corroborates Mr. Jordan's report of July 6, a copy of which is attached hereto.

We inquired very carefully as to Mr. [REDACTED] physical condition. He said he felt fine and had a very good appetite for all three meals. He did say, however, that his doctor had him on a somewhat limited diet for a suspected stomach ulcer condition. One thing that he did complain of was sleepless and dreaming. He stated that he usually retired about 10:00 P.M. and read until about 2:00 A.M. at which time he usually dropped off to sleep. He awakens between 6:00 A.M. and 6:30 A.M. He stated that his sleep is somewhat troubled by dreams but that these are not of a particular horrible nature. What mostly bothers him is an after effect condition which involves the thought that he, too, might have died as did [REDACTED] since he was also in these same tanks. This condition, he states, is diminishing. He seems in excellent spirits and says he feels quite well.

Mr. [REDACTED] said that he probably would remain in Dallas where he lives with his parents, but had given some thought of attempting to secure a job in Tulsa. I asked him to get in touch with me if he came to Tulsa and also to advise me if he left Dallas. This he readily agreed to do. Whether he does or not will not matter too much since the above address and telephone number are those of his parents. He can always be located through them.

L. W. SHANK

LWS-g

KE 0006731

N 7662.01

July 6, 1948

### Wilmington N. C. Tank Cleaning Accident

The following information was given to me by L. Williams, Manager of Tank Cleaners, Inc., Jacksonville, Fla., regarding the tanks cleaned at Wilmington by his company up to, and including, the tanks that were involved in the accidnet.

| Tank No. | Date    | Name of Individual<br>and Time in Tank | Tank Size<br>Bbls. | Remarks      |
|----------|---------|----------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 211      | June 16 | 4 hrs.                                 | 40,000             | All          |
|          | June 17 | 6 hrs.                                 |                    | Equipment    |
|          | June 18 | 4 hrs.                                 | 2 hrs.             | Used         |
| 1        | June 18 | 2 hrs.                                 | 12,000             | No Mask      |
|          | June 19 | 4 hrs.                                 | 2 hrs.             | Worn         |
| 2        | June 19 | 4 hrs.                                 | 12,000             | No Mask      |
|          | June 21 | 6 hrs.                                 | 2 hrs.             | Worn         |
| A        | June 21 | 2 hrs.                                 | 12,000             | No Mask Worn |

No work Tuesday, both men sick, returning to Jacksonville Wednesday and on Friday.

The week prior to the accident entered tanks of Belcher Oil Company, Miami. At that time I observed all entries and all precautions were used including the wearing of airline mask.

In the case of he had not been in any tank for over a month prior to the accidnet.

was the foreman on the above job, he was in the tanks without a mask for not over 45 minutes. His present address is 519 East 6th Street, Dallas, Texas.

You will be interested in knowing that Monday, June 28th, was placed in the hospital. The next day he jumped out of a window and ran down the street nude. For several days he was out of his head but he is apparently coming out of it, the last few days they have taken off the straps and he is now acting normal.

If there is anything else you want to know, let me know. In the meantime, I will keep in close touch with Williams.

R. L. JORDAN

COPY

7-20-48

Ker

Admitted to hospital 6-27 am  
Ran into hospital corridor nude  
soon after admission and attempted  
to jump from balcony (3rd floor) prior to

N 7662.02

Daytona Beach, Fla.  
July 10, 1948

Cape Fear Terminals  
Lead Poisoning Case

It is hard to believe the story in your letter but when someone is grasping at straws I guess anything can happen.

Since I felt that the tanks at Fisher Island had been in so many hands I considered them all as having been in leaded service. I will be in Miami Monday with the same crew at the Texas plant which is just across the channel from the Belcher Plant, while there I will check more closely the former content of those tanks.

I called Williams about the men sleeping in the tanks and he said someone had really misunderstood the situation. He claims the men slept on and not in it and would give an affidavit to that effect. I will check further with the crew Monday and advise you of my findings. Looks as if one will have to sleep with the tank cleaners to keep out of trouble.

There is one thing I would like to point out. Work on the Belcher tanks did not start until Friday, June 11, and there was only one tank thoroughly cleaned by Saturday night. If they did sleep in the tank, which I don't believe, [REDACTED] could have slept in it only Saturday night, since he left on Sunday morning for Wilmington.

The thing I can not understand is, if Mercer told Williams, as he claims, to wear masks because he thought the tanks dangerous, why did he leave the tanks over the weekend and not return til Tuesday

Frankly, I am getting a little sore about all this buck passing.

Yours truly,

R. L. JORDAN

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O  
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KE 0006733

N 7662.03

COPY

July 14, 1948

Cape Fear Terminals  
Alleged Lead Poisoning Case

While in Miami I checked again with Orange State Oil Co as to what had been in the tanks on Fisher Island.

|      |                                    |
|------|------------------------------------|
| #103 | Kerosene                           |
| #102 | Ethyl You have this #122 on report |
| #105 | Ethyl                              |
| #107 | Ethyl                              |
| #101 | Housebrand                         |

Unfortunately Curtis Nelson was not with the crew this time having gone on another tank cleaning up North so I was unable to quiz him about sleeping in the tanks. Ed Williams was there and he said he slept on the tank to get up in the air to get some breeze since it was like a jungle on the ground. I personally don't know what to believe but that is the story.

While at Miami, J. F. Sova, the foreman who was with me on the above and who took over the cleaning of the tanks at Wilmington after the accident, told me an interesting thing that occurred there. After the accident the pit in which the sludge was to be buried was not covered over until he arrived which was about a week later. I understand that Baldwin took a lead air sample above this sludge after Sova arrived there and this sample showed 10 micrograms. It seems to me with such high lead in the tank, all you had to do was to smell the tank to know that it was dangerous.

s/ R. L. Jordan

COPY

KE 0006734

N 7662.04

June 26, 1948

Medical Report - [REDACTED], employee of Tank Cleaners, Incorporated, P.O. Box 3261, Jacksonville, Florida, age 32, occupation - assistant tank cleaner. Married, Negro - children - 1 girl 13, 1 boy 6.

Industrial and Personal History: Born in Athens, Georgia. Completed 6th grade, elementary school. Worked at a variety of odd jobs during childhood and later. Employed as laborer in tire shop for several years. Worked as spray painter, using "olive drab" Army paint 1941-1945. Employed by Tank Cleaners, Incorporated for past 3 years (1945-1948). Principal job was to act as assistant to chief tank cleaner. Seldom worked inside tank and then only in case of help shortage or to mop up water after the tank had been cleaned. Principal job was to stand outside manhole and to receive buckets of sludge and carry them to the sludge pit for disposal. Assisted in digging sludge pit and burying sludge. Carried on general maintenance work, cleaning, washing, and painting trucks. Wears coveralls, rubber boots, and gloves while engaged in tank-cleaning activities. Has worn airline mask when engaged in cleaning operations in tanks which was seldom, but not when working in tank after cleaning.

Past Medical History: Felt good. Usual childhood illnesses, although does not remember specific nature. Has never been seriously sick. Mild attacks of asthma since 13 years of age. Sustained rupture some years ago. Wears truss.

Present Medical History: Became worried after learning of the illness of [REDACTED]. Did not feel well on Wednesday, June 23,

KE 0006735

and after completing the day's work at the Carolina Terminal, Wilmington, North Carolina, boarded a bus that evening and arrived in Jacksonville Thursday evening, where he consulted Dr. John Mitchell. States that he feels all right at present, though he had been quite disturbed Saturday morning on learning of the death of William Davis. Appetite good. Diet adequate. No alcohol. Smokes one package of cigarettes daily. Sleeps well with occasional dreams, though sleep has been disturbed recently.

U.W. 138 pounds B.W. 160 pounds (1941) L.W. 138 pounds  
(1947-1948)

Family History: Parents living and well. Four sisters, two brothers living and well.

Physical Examination: The subject is a fairly well nourished and well developed Negro apparently of stated age and weight.

H. 64.5" P. 84 R. 20 B.P. 90/50

Well oriented and rational throughout interview. Slightly apprehensive, quiet, and seemingly depressed. Cooperates readily.

Posture: Erect.

Lymph Nodes: Superficial groups not enlarged.

Skin: No eruption.

Ears - Drums appear normal.

Eyes: Pupils equal, regular, react to light and on accommodation.

External ocular movements normal.

Nose: Mucous membranes normal color, breathing space adequate.

Mouth and Throat: Teeth and gums in fairly good condition. Blotchy purplish pigmentation of gums and oral mucous membranes. Tonsils not seen.

Pharynx: Not remarkable. Occasional slight fibrillary twitching of orbicularis oris. Tongue protrudes in midline without tremor. Dorsum coated. Papillae normal.

Chest: Lungs clear on percussssion and auscultation.

Heart - R.S.D. 4.5 R.C.D. 3 x 9 Sounds clear, regular, no murmurs. Exercise response normal.

Abdomen: No masses, no tenderness, no organs palpable. Large easily reducible indirect inguinal hernia, right. No external hemorrhoids.

Extremities: Normal form and function. No incoördination. Muscle power good. No muscle tremors aside from those previously noted.

Reflexes: Equal, active, no abnormal reflexes. Romberg negative. No past pointing. No sensory disturbance. Hb - 15 g. Samples of blood and urine collected for quantitative lead analyses. See attached report.

Summary: Probably has had significant exposure in connection with recent work in tank cleaning. History may not be reliable in view of critical nature of recently past events in connection with tank cleaning activities at Wilmington, North Carolina. Significant findings at this time consist in slightly altered mental status with period of excitable hysterical-like state upon learning of the

death of [REDACTED] followed by a period of depression associated with hypotension, and inconstant fibrillary twitching of orbicularis oris. Advised to continue under the observation of Dr. Mitchell for a few days.

Subsequent Report

[REDACTED] became restless, apprehensive, and unable to sleep during Saturday night, June 26, 1948. He became disoriented and highly agitated Sunday morning and upon the advice of Dr. Mitchell he was admitted to Brewster Hospital Sunday, June 27, 1948, at 11:00 a.m. Complained of pain in right inguinal region on admission. Gave reasonably coherent story of events concerned with recent tank-cleaning activities. Vomited 2-3 times Sunday morning. No diarrhea. Appetite good. Restless, nervous, and depressed. Unable to sleep Saturday night. Physical examination at 1:30 p.m. Sunday by Dr. Allen, extern, disclosed no significant findings with exception of hypotension.

T. 98.6°    P. 80    B.P. 92/58    R. 24, regular  
No abnormal reflexes. No exaggeration of reflexes.

June 28, 1948

Seen at 11:30 a.m. at Brewster Hospital, Jacksonville, Florida. B.P. 90/60    P. 78    R. 20

Patient in bed, restrained with ankle straps and chest bands.

Apprehensive, fearful, agitated, talking irrationally more or less continuously, refuses all medication, fearful of being poisoned or being killed. Suspicious of all doctors and nurses. Finally submits to feeding after much coaxing by attendant and eats heartily (bread, meat, vegetables, ginger ale, water). After an hour or so permits venipuncture. Samples of blood and urine taken for quantitative lead analyses.

1:15 p.m. - I.V. administration of 4 g. magnesium sulfate in 200 c.c. distilled water, preceded by 3 grains of nembutal by mouth. Patient sleeping soundly and quietly before the completion of the I.V.

2:00 p.m. - I.V. continued with 600 c.c. of 10% glucose in normal saline.

3:02 p.m. - 3 c.c. B.A.L. given by injection into the gluteal muscle. B.P. 90/60.

3:05 p.m. - B.P. 100/70.

3:09 p.m. - Samples of blood taken for quantitative lead analyses.

3:15 p.m. - 3 grains of nembutal given orally. B.P. 100/70.

3:25 p.m. - Patient catheterized. 40 c.c. of urine obtained for quantitative lead analyses.

4:02 p.m. - B.P. 110/70.

4:07 p.m. - Blood samples taken for quantitative lead analyses.  
P. 80 B.P. 110/70.

4:25 p.m. - Patient sleeping, though very restless prior to and after injection of B.A.L., complaining, talking loudly and

profanely, struggling against restraint. Fell into deep sleep after I.V. was discontinued and arm released from restraining board. No specific symptoms noted from B.A.L. injections. Urinalysis - specimen yellow, acid to litmus paper. Sp. Gr. 1.026. Albumin - Trace Sugar - Negative Microscopic - Few granular casts - no blood.

7:00 p.m. - Has been sleeping quietly since last note at 4:25 p.m. B.P. 100/70 P. 78 R. 16, regular. Chest clear, heart sounds regular, good quality. No abdominal tenderness.

11:55 p.m. - B.A.L. 3 c.c. I.M. Patient became restless, incoherent and violent about 5:30 p.m. Attempted to attack nurse who was administering medication. Emesis occurred 5 minutes after the administration of B.A.L. The vomitus consisted of 12-16 ounces of greenish, turbid fluid. Nembutal suppository 3 grains administered at 9:55 p.m.

June 29, 1948

3 c.c. B.A.L. administered 3:45 a.m., 7:00 a.m., and 11:30 a.m. Controlled by the administration of 3 grains of nembutal at 4-6 hour intervals. Sleeping soundly at 11:20 a.m. and 12 noon, from nembutal administered at 10:30 a.m. Talks irrationally when aroused. Tends to become suspicious, fearful, and violent with little provocation. P. 72 R. 20 B.P. 100/70. Administration of B.A.L. at 11:30 a.m. followed shortly thereafter by emesis of 16 ounces of turbid, greenish

fluid. B.P. 110/72 (11:55 a.m.). Following the administration of B.A.L. at 11:55 a.m. blood specimens were taken 7 minutes and 1 hour later. Impossible to collect urine specimen without catheterization. Involuntary during night at time of violent struggling against restraint. I.V. administration of Amigen (Mead-Johnson), a pancreatic hydrolysate of casein, containing amino acids, and polypeptides with 5% dextrose in normal saline (protein 50 grams, glucose 50 grams, NaCl 8 grams).

June 30, 1948

Condition improved, although continues to be disoriented and paranoid. B.A.L. continued - 3 c.c. Q<sub>4</sub>H without untoward effects. Takes food and liquid fairly well though spits out mouthfuls of water frequently. Unable to obtain voided specimen of urine. Advised to force fluids by mouth and to continue restraint as indicated with constant services of male attendant.

2:00 p.m. - Patient taking nourishment and liquid well by mouth. Condition considerably improved.

3:00 p.m. - With the continued improvement in the patient's clinical condition, the prognosis seems good for eventual recovery and further attendance is considered to be unnecessary at this time. Left accordingly for Cincinnati, departing by plane from Jacksonville at 4:05 p.m.

(June 30, 1948).

July 3, 1948

Long-distance telephone conversation with Dr. John Mitchell disclosed the following information. The patient, [REDACTED] had continued to improve since last seen. However, there was some difficulty about compensation adjustment for the male attendants and as a result of this one attendant failed to report for duty Thursday evening. While left alone, [REDACTED] managed to undo the restraining straps on his ankle Thursday night, got out of bed and attempted to jump out of an open window in his room. Fortunately, a nurse happened to be passing through the hall at this time, saw Rouser climbing onto the window sill, ran into the room, seized him by the leg and screamed for help. She succeeded in holding him until assistance arrived. He was then returned to bed and placed in a straight jacket. Straight-jacket restraint was continued throughout Friday and on Saturday morning. However, satisfactory arrangements have been made so that male attendants will again be continuously available for the present. Condition in general seems to be improving.

July 12, 1948

During the course of a long-distance conversation with Dr. Mitchell at 10:30 a.m. he reported that the condition of [REDACTED] was excellent and that pronounced improvement had occurred during the last few days. He has been permitted to be up and about his room under the

 - (9)

supervision of an attendant and is rational and cooperative.  
He has been receiving injections of B.A.L. (3 c.c.) morning  
and evening daily.

K. V. Kitzmiller, M.D.

KE 0006743