

August 26, 1942.

Mr. J. R. Fitzgerald,
Lumber Mutual Casualty Insurance Company of New York,
44 East 42nd Street,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Fitzgerald:

From the information on the illness of Mr. [REDACTED] given in your letter of August 21, I should hazard the opinion that the diagnosis of lead poisoning was probably incorrect. It is possible, of course, that there may have been some unrecognized exposure to lead, but it is utterly absurd to think or even to suspect that lead poisoning could have occurred as the consequence of the use of leaded gasoline in the manner described. Moreover, if one accepts the analytical data which you have given me at its face value, the exposure in this case was quite severe. Lead concentrations in the blood and urine of the order of magnitude described, are seen only in association with very severe lead exposure. I suspect that the analytical results were grossly in error. Unless the utmost precautions are taken in the collection of samples, and unless the analysis is carried out by highly experienced and competent chemist who knows this field of work, the results can be expected to be excessively high. Accordingly, I question them and I should think it would be highly desirable to check. If you wish this done, you could arrange with a physician to take the necessary samples of blood and urine, after which I would send to him directly the necessary containers and instructions for the collection of the samples. If the results were as high as reported in May, they will certainly be somewhat elevated at this time, and, therefore, it will be useful for your purpose to have them checked.

Despite all that I have said, it is difficult to offset the type of evidence that has been obtained in this man's case, and I think you are up against a difficult task in doing so. At present it would be very difficult for me to come to Syracuse, and it would be even more difficult for me to appear and testify in any medico-legal proceedings. This is not a question of a fee, but rather one of lack of time, since I am literally swamped with work. I would suggest that you obtain the services of the most competent internist that is available to you in Syracuse. You could give him carte blanche to make any investigation of the case which he thinks necessary

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in order to arrive at a diagnosis. This, I think, is the best procedure, since if you are up against a hopeless case, you may just as well recognize it at once, rather than to go through a period of expensive investigation and litigation. If I can be of any further assistance to you along the lines indicated, do not hesitate to let me know.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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