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Johns-Manville

Internal Correspondence

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Date: January 31, 1983

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Subject: RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL JOURNAL

1. Published monthly by the Committee on Publication, Rhode Island Medical Society.

2. C.U. Medical Library had Volumes 1 to 52 (1917 to 1969) and Volumes 21 on were reviewed (1938 to 1969). Each volume was indexed by subject and author.

3. In addition to original articles and local medical society news, the journal includes editorials and book reviews. From 1943 to 1946 there is a separate column on "Industrial Health," and from 1948 to 1958 there are summary reports of the Annual Congress on Industrial Health sponsored by the American Medical Association. Quite a number of the book reviews in the 1940's and 1950's feature books on occupational health and industrial hygiene (e.g. Johnstone's Occupational Diseases and Medicolegal Phases of Occupational Diseases by C.O. Sappington). There is very little, surprisingly, on occupational medicine after 1960.

4. Specific items of interest:

a. Vol. 26, No. 10 (October 1943), p. 224. A book review of 1021 Answers to Industrial Health and Safety Problems, published by Occupational Hazards Magazine, Cleveland, notes the extensive section on "Dust Hazards."

b. Vol. 31, No. 2 (February 1948), pp. 134, 136, 138, report on "Eighth Annual Congress on Industrial Health at Cleveland, Ohio, January 5-6, 1948." Dr. Arthur Vorwald spoke on "Essential Correlations Between Medicine and Industrial Research," but "his paper was largely didactic and the practical suggestions were very few." No specifics of presentation given.

c. Vol. 31, No. 8 (August 1948), pp. 483-488, 497, "The Seventh Annual Charles V. Chapin Oration: Industrial Health," by Philip Drinker (at Harvard School of Public Health at time). A review of some of the industrial health problems "which have arisen over the last 50 years." Section on dust diseases does not mention asbestos, only silicosis, Shaver's disease, metal fume fever, beryllium poisoning and lead poisoning. Under

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a section on Labor Relations and Health, Drinker mentions that in a shipbuilding area on the West Coast in 1944 "the Maritime Commission, Navy and Public Health Service, acting as a team, were prevented by the dominating union from giving check up examinations and chest x-rays to a group of welders. I was in charge of the shipyard health work and that experience rankled sorely, for we had been promised cooperation by union headquarters in Washington."

d. Vol. 32, No. 2 (February 1949), pp. 75-79, "Spontaneous Pneumothorax," J. N. Corsello. Mostly concerns idiopathic or benign pneumothorax. States: "Active treatment is often considered indicated in recurrent and in chronic pneumothorax. A variety of procedures have been employed ranging from intrapleural injection of sclerosing agents to total pneumonectomy. . . The results have not been uniformly satisfactory and at times the pleural reaction is more severe than desired. There are those who consider this procedure to be actually dangerous."

e. Vol. 32, No. 4 (April 1949), pp. 195-198, 203, "Radiological Safety in Atomic Warfare," Capt. C. F. Behrens, U.S.N. (Medical Officer in Command, Naval Medical Research Institute, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda). There were several articles in various issues by Naval personnel and this article is typical. All dealt with atomic warfare, chemical warfare and the like. Nothing on occupational health problems.

f. Vol. 34, No. 10 (October 1951), pp. 552-556, "Committee on Industrial Health of the Rhode Island Medical Society--Report to the House of Delegates, September 26, 1951." "Another improvement has been coverage under the law of all occupational diseases, including silicosis and asbestosis, which were previously excluded. Under the new amendment the disablement of any employee resulting from an occupational disease or condition is treated as the happening of a personal injury." So far among the state medical journals I have reviewed, Rhode Island's is the best concerning coverage of Workmen's Compensation Laws. Most of the others never mention compensation issues at all.

g. Vol. 36, No. 1 (January 1953), pp. 24-30, 34-36, 52, "Air Pollution and Cancer of the Lung," W.C. Hueper (Chief, Cancerigenic Research Studies Section, Cancer Control Branch, NIH). Article examines studies relating smoking and lung cancer in detail: "Rather far reaching, if not extravagant, claims recently have been advanced as to the important, if not predominant role which the personalized type of air pollution related to cigarette smoking is alleged to have played in the production of lung cancer and its progressive rise in frequency during the past 50 years. . . . If excessive smoking actually plays a role in the production of lung cancer, it seems to be a minor one, if judged from the evidence on hand." The article includes two

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tables of interest. The one, titled "Occupational Groups with an Excessive Lung Cancer Incidence" lists welders, machinists, plumbers, mechanics, but not asbestos workers nor insulators. The second, titled "Occupational Respiratory Carcinogens," lists under agents "Asbestosis" (an error; probably should be asbestos), with "Lung" as the site of cancer, and the approximate number of recorded cancers as "60" total and "10" U.S.A. The table then gives an "incidence rate of effectively exposed" as "150/1000." There is no discussion in the text of the specifics of these tables.

h. Vol 36, No. 3 (March 1953), "13th Annual Congress on Industrial Health--Held at Chicago, Illinois, January 20-22, 1953." Reports that final day's program highlighted by a panel on occupational cancer. At end of article is a list compiled by the American Medical Association Council on Industrial Health of "Recognized and Suspected Occupational Cancer Producing Agents, with Sites Characteristically Affected." Included on the list is "Asbestos - - - Respiratory System - - - Class D" (D = "Reported cases--etiology still doubtful").

i. Vol. 38, No. 4 (April 1955), "15th Annual Congress on Industrial Health, Washington D.C., January 25-26, 1955." "The armed services are reported to be endeavoring to employ civilian physicians in naval units along the entire Atlantic coast, but such physicians must accept a civil service status. The low rate of compensation was seen as a factor in the failure to attract many physicians to this work." I include this because this is not the first time I have found such a reference to difficulty in getting physicians for naval facilities in the 1950's.

j. Vol. 42, No. 8 (August 1959), pp. 507-512, "Bronchogenic Carcinoma--Predisposing Causes," Alton Ochsner. The 76th Annual Caleb Fiske Prize Essay, presented at the 148th Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Medical Society. Solely on relationship of cigarette smoking to cancer. No mention of occupational factors.

k. Vol. 43, No. 4 (April 1960), pp. 262, 264, "occupational Illnesses Increase with New Diseases." News item summarizing a recent issue of Patterns of Disease, a Parke, Davis Co. publication. News item notes that the commonest industrial health problem is occupational dermatitis and "still the No. 1 occupational disease in the United States in terms of disability and compensation costs, despite advances in dust control measures, is silicosis."

5. Follow up:

a. I could not locate a copy of 1021 Answers etc.; however, Occupational Hazards magazine is still being published and I will write to find out if the book is still in their archives of publications.

b. Since there are many references to the Annual Congresses held by the A.M.A. Council on Industrial Health, I have been discussing with Dr. Kotin how we may review any records of the Council on its activities, particularly during the war years. These records may now be with the American Occupational Medicine Association following its formation by the A.M.A., in which case Dr. Kotin has a number of colleagues at A.O.M.A.

c. The Corsello article on spontaneous pneumothorax is the first I've seen that refers to the use of scarring agents for treatment. The bibliography lists several other papers on chemical irritants and talcs in treatment. Although I doubt these will lead to information on naval experiments with talc in submariners, I will check out all the references. Interestingly, one of the references is in the Journal of Mt. Sinai Hospital.

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