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KEASBEY & MATTISON COMPANY
MANUFACTURERS OF ASBESTOS AND MAGNESIA PRODUCTS SINCE 1873
AMBLER, PENNSYLVANIA

EXECUTIVE OFFICES

May 13, 1946

K&M No. 3755

W. W. F. Shepherd, Esq.
Turner & Newall Ltd.
Spotland, Rochdale

Dear Mr. Shepherd:

Subject: Dr. Gardner's Asbestos Dust Experiments

I hand you herewith copy of Mr. Vandiver Brown's letter of May 9th, together with copies of enclosures referred to by him.

I am today writing Mr. Brown suggesting that in my opinion it is high time we received something definite from Dr. Gardner and that we start bringing pressure to bear so that he submits his final report to us in the reasonably near future.

Yours sincerely,

Ernest Muehleck

Keasbey & Mattison Company

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Atts.

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JOHNS-MANVILLE CORPORATION
NEW YORK

May 9, 1946

Mr. Ernest Muehleck
Keasbey & Mattison Co.
Ambler, Pa.

Dear Mr. Muehleck:

As indicated therein, I believe you will be interested in copy of my letter to Mr. Getke and Dr. Gardner's to Mr. Woodard.

Sincerely,

/s/ VANDIVER BROWN
SECRETARY

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copy

May 9, 1946

Mr. Thomas L. Gatke, Pres.
Asbestos Textile Co., Inc.
165 West Wacker Drive
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. Gatke:

As my secretary informed you, I was away when your letter of April 18 arrived and since my return I have delayed answering until I could locate a letter of Dr. Gardner's which discussed the matter of cancer in relation to asbestos dust. I have now located and am attaching a copy of his letter of April 8 to Mr. J. P. Woodard, our Director of Industrial Relations. In view of your comments concerning this aspect of the problem, I am sure you will find his letter of interest. I am sorry I have no copy of Dr. Heuper's paper.

Dr. Gardner's approach to this question is typical very cautious, very scientific and demonstrating an unwillingness to accept any theory as a fact until the evidence is overwhelming. Dr. Bowditch correctly reported me as being somewhat annoyed and disappointed that Dr. Gardner would not lend us support in connection with a proposed New Jersey Industrial Hygiene Code to the effect that the small particles, which do the damage in the case of silica, are innocuous in the case of asbestos. His unwillingness in this connection is again characteristic and, while it is a little annoying, I think that on balance it is a favorable characteristic. At any rate we know -- and his fellow experts know -- that when Dr. Gardner states a finding it is quite likely to be correct.

Mr. Muehleck of Kessbey & Mattison Co., as well as I, has been following Dr. Gardner from time to time and urging him to prepare a definite report but we have always received during the war years substantially the same answer that he gave you. However, his excuse is now wearing a little thin, and since he is now increasing his staff, I think we should persist in our efforts to have him complete the job he started for us.

I am sending Mr. Muehleck a copy of this letter and the enclosure as I am sure he will also be interested.

With kind personal regards, I am

Sincerely,
/s/ Vandiver Brown
Secretary

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THE SARANAC LABORATORY
FOR THE STUDY OF TUBERCULOSIS
OF THE EDWARD L. TRUDEAU FOUNDATION

May 8, 1946

Mr. J. P. Woodard
Johns-Manville Corp.
New York, N. Y.

Dear Page:

I was pleased to see the copy of Dr. Heuper's paper on Cancer in its relation to occupation and environment and, as requested, I am returning it herewith.

It is well known that asbestosis has been mentioned as one of the causes of pulmonary cancer because of the fact that there are now on record some twenty-three cases of coincidence of the two conditions. I am not at all sure that selection has not played a large part in these publications. Everybody is looking for a cause of cancer, and whenever even a suspicious occupational history is obtained, the doctor is likely to publish his case with suggestions that some dust or fume has been the cause. However, the number in the case of asbestosis is sufficiently great to be impressive. I, myself, have felt that this notion is erroneous, since examination of films of persons employed in the asbestos industry has, to my knowledge, not shown any excess of carcinoma of the lung. Dr. Vestal concurs in this idea; nevertheless, the notion prevails in medical circles.

It is to collect and publish more reliable information on this and other little appreciated phases of the asbestos problem that I hope we may have the opportunity to review all films of Johns-Manville employees. Somebody should do this for the asbestos industry in the United States. I believe that 'somebody' should be outside of the industry, as obviously it would then carry more weight. I hope, before I die, the opportunity may be afforded us.

There is one other phase of the subject, however, that I believe deserves consideration. In one of my reports to your group, I noted that there was an unusually high incidence of cancer of the lung in white mice which had been exposed to asbestos dust. This species of animal does not develop asbestosis, largely, I think, because of the air passages too small to permit inhaling of fibrous asbestos. Nevertheless, we did find over 80% of mice exposed to asbestos showing tumors of the lung, and only some 15% or 20% of those exposed to other dusts showed tumors of this nature. These findings represented a summary of all our experience with mice in asbestos dust. Experiments were not done with the purpose of demonstrating cancer. No attempt was made to control the observation. No care was taken to select a strain of mice that was or was not susceptible to tumor. Cancer has not developed in any other species of animal used in the experiment.

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In view of the publicity given cancer of the lung, I thought that the subject deserved further experimental investigation. I have made a proposal to the National Cancer Institute for a grant of $15,000 to carry on a three-year experiment. I talked the matter over with Dr. Rhoads of the Memorial Hospital and he was highly enthusiastic. As a member of the appropriation committee of the National Cancer Institute, he made favorable recommendation. However, other members of the committee turned it down and the subject was dropped. I still believe that it might be a suitable matter for further investigation.

More important, however, would be the analysis of films of persons employed in the asbestos industry. If a large enough number of such films were reviewed by one central agency, I am quite sure that we would have evidence to controvert the implications of the case reports now in the medical literature.

I enclose a reprint by two of my associates dealing with the general subject of pulmonary cancer and inhaled dust. In the bibliography I have checked several articles reporting cases in asbestos workers.

Sincerely,

s/ Roy
Leroy U. Gardner
Director

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