

[redacted] - Pvt, 3rd Bn., [redacted] Infantry

L.B.

Injured: 7 September 1943 by dive into shallow water near Ain-el-turek, Algeria.

Admission: 7 September 1943, direct admission from site of accident.

Died: 12 September 1943, Fulminant bronchopneumonia.

This 19 year old soldier dove into shallow water and suffered immediate paralysis of all extremities. X-rays revealed small fragment chipped from anterior margin of 4th cervical vertebra, severe compressive destruction of 5th cervical vertebra which was displaced posteriorly into the canal 4mm., and slight compression of 6th cervical vertebra. There was complete motor and sensory loss below level of C-5. Crutchfield tongs with 25 pounds traction were applied, and indwelling catheter inserted. Signs of pulmonary mischief appeared in 12 hours and progressed until death 12 September 1943.

The salient features of the postmortem were:

The scalp is recently shaven, and the marks of skull tongs are evident. There are two small bruised areas on the vertex, but the scalp is not broken.

There are a few hundred cc of purulent fluid in each pleural cavity. The left lung weighs an estimated 800grams and is involved by a confluent bronchopneumonia in all lobes. The bronchi contains much pus. The right lung weighs 1000 grams and shows the same change. There are no areas of massive necrosis visible on gross examination.

Dissection of the cervical spine revealed a compression fracture of the fifth cervical vertebrae, together with some displacement into the spinal canal. The cord at this point was the site of a marked herniation through its coverings at the anterolateral site. There was diffused hemorrhage into the cord segment.

Examination of the brain revealed no significant changes.

(Microscopic)

Lung - (2 blks; 2 sec): There is a bronchopneumonia.

Clinical Diagnoses:

- (1) Compression fracture of 5th cervical vertebra, with posterior displacement into spinal canal.

Pathologic Diagnoses:

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM: None

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM: Massive bronchopneumonia, all lung lobes.

SPLEEN & HEMATOPOIETIC TISSUES: Acute splenitis.

PANCREAS: None.

LIVER: Acute passive congestion.

GENITOURINARY SYSTEM: Acute passive congestion of both kidneys.

GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM: None.

ENDOCRINE SYSTEM: None.

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM: Herniation of spinal cord at C5 with extensive hemorrhage into cord substance.

BONES & JOINTS: Compression fracture of the fifth cervical vertebra, with posterior displacement of body in spinal canal.

MISCELLANEOUS: Bruises of scalp; skull tong marks in outer table of skull; cyanosis of the face.