

Interestingly, this letter did not mention the findings and the many publications of Dr. H.S. Martland, who firmly and without hesitation stated that the problems in the industry were due to radium and mesothorium. Martland's contributions are detailed below under "Early Findings on Health Effects of Radium."

The U.S. Radium Corporation found it necessary to close its dial painting plant in Orange, New Jersey, by 1926, because the unfavorable publicity generated by the newspaper accounts of the tragedies that befell the early dial painters made finding employees difficult. The company moved its offices and facilities to New York City and continued its business, but never again at the level of activity that prevailed at Orange.

Dial painting also took place in the Midwest, primarily in Illinois. The Radium Dial Company was organized as a division of the Standard Chemical Company in 1917, to give the company an entry into the dial painting industry. The Radium Dial Company was operating a dial painting studio in Chicago as early as 1918, located in the Marshall Field Annex building.

The Radium Dial Company moved from Chicago to Peru, Illinois, in 1920, to be closer to its major customer, the Westclox Clock Company (Figure 4). Radium Dial did not remain long in Peru, but found a more appropriate site in the former township high school building in Ottawa, Illinois. This studio was in operation by 1922 and continued operating at that site until it closed in the middle 1930s. Radium Dial also opened a studio in Streator, Illinois, in 1925, but it closed this studio after only about nine months of operation.

In an interview with an officer of the firm in 1925, Kjaer learned that Radium Dial had employed about 1,000 young women since operations in Illinois started in 1917. Each painter handled about a millicurie of radium each month. The quantity issued at any time varied from 0.18 μCi to 0.98 μCi of ^{226}Ra , depending on the size of the dials to be painted. The company stated that it was practically impossible to keep the workers from tipping their brushes in their mouths. In 1925, Radium Dial was turning out about 4,300 dials each day (Figure 5).

The size of the dial industry in the 1920s can be estimated by the number of firms purchasing luminous compounds from the U.S. Radium Corporation and the Radium Chemical Company. The former claimed that about 120 firms bought luminous paint. Radium Chemical placed the total number at about 100 and stated that its major customers were Radium Dial in