

C O P Y

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

305 South Kanosha Avenue

TULSA ,OKLAHOMA

December 13, 1934.

Mr. T. E. Ronan

Subject: Advertisement in Okmulgee Tribune

Dear Tom:

Mr. Gordon Granger, superintendent of the Barnsdall refinery, Okmulgee, Oklahoma called my attention to the advertisement attached to this letter. The substance of the advertisement, as you can see from the copy, is that C. W. (Bill) Bennett swore before a notary public that he had contracted tetraethyl lead poisoning and that recently an employee of a well known automobile service station at Okmulgee had died of tetraethyl lead poisoning. The purpose of this advertisement appeared as a testimonial for the Model Drug Store at 215 East Main Street, Okmulgee, who are pushing the sales of Flood's Ointment, as a skin salve.

I went to Okmulgee and called on Mr. Flood, a very elderly gentleman who told me that he knew nothing about tetraethyl lead poisoning and all that he was attempting to do was to promote the sale of his ointment. None of the literature at the Model Drug Store makes any reference whatever to tetraethyl lead. I then looked up Mr. C. W. (Bill) Bennett, the district agent for the Deep Rock Oil Corporation at Okmulgee and author of this testimonial, and asked him what the purpose of the ad was. Bill told me he had nothing in mind at all except to do a favor for Mr. Flood. He said that C. I. O'Neal a notary came to him with the idea of collecting testimonials on Flood's Ointment, saying that if he could get one he could sell some space in the Okmulgee Tribune and evidently make a commission on the deal, and all that Bill was trying to do was be obliging to his friend.

Bill Bennett has a very good reputation in Okmulgee, having been a former Continental agent, a Dixie jobber, a sponsor of the Boy Scout movement and a prominent Legionnaire in this community, and as such told me that he was very sorry the thing happened and was merely stating what somebody had told him. In other words, in a moment of irresponsibility he had just dictated the testimonial without reading it over or really being given an opportunity to read it over or check the copy that appeared in the newspaper.

With reference to the statement made in the article that "An employee of a well known automobile service station of Okmulgee had recently died of tetraethyl lead poisoning", inquiries developed the fact that an individual by the name of Jimmie Chouse had contracted a fatal infection some four or five years ago and had been treated in turn by Dr. E. D. Rodda, who has offices in the Commerce Building at Okmulgee. The doctor is a graduate of several medical colleges and gives the appearance of being a very competent physician. He confirmed the fact that Jimmie Chouse was a patient of his but told me that a pimple on his face had developed into a streptococci infection, which in turn had proved fatal. Cultures were made of the germ

which will prove beyond all doubt the cause of Mr. Chouse's demise.

Dr. Rodda also told me that he was treating Bill Bennett for an infected hand. Bill evidently had an abrasion of the skin which in turn became contaminated, but Dr. Rodda told me that on no condition could it be confused with lead poisoning. Dr. Rodda also told me that he knew the symptoms of lead poisoning to be similar to those of painter's colic and he is not responsible for any of the statements made by Bill Bennett.

As can be seen from the newspaper clipping, the Deep Rock Oil Corporation is also mentioned by name and Mr. Bennett is very apprehensive of the reaction to all of this by the Deep Rock's main office in Oklahoma City. He told me that Flood would immediately stop using this clipping to further the sale of his ointment, that he would lay the matter before his district superintendent and whatever the oil company deemed advisable to correct the misimpression would be carried out. Bennett realizes that in a moment of irresponsibility he has placed himself in an embarrassing situation and anything he can do to alleviate the situation will be satisfactory to him.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) Harry Kuhe

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HK/RA