

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

25 BROADWAY

INTER-OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE

NEW YORK March 30, 1928.

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe,

Dear Dr. Kehoe;

Herewith enclosed are copies of two recent cables from Mr. Maxwell which I am sure will be of interest to you. #49 has reference to Flight Lieutenant Kinkead who, in an effort to break the world's speed record quite recently, fell in the English Channel while going at a terrific speed. At the preliminary coroner's inquest there was some intimation by a fellow Flight Lieutenant, one Wood, to the effect that Lieutenant Kinkead had complained to him about feeling sick after returning from several short flights, the purport of which being that it was perhaps due to the exhaust fumes. From this statement there was considerable talk about the possibility of Lieutenant Kinkead being overcome with lead fumes. Of course, we are pleased to know that there was nothing in the coroner's inquest which would indicate that the use of ETHYL in the plane had anything to do with his accident.

I have just put in a telephone call for you, and not being sure that I will be able to get you will mention the purpose of the call.

It is primarily to apologize to you for the delay in replying to your letter of the 26th inst. in which you asked for my views by return mail. I left the office early Monday afternoon to go out of town and did not return until Wednesday afternoon. Meanwhile your letter had arrived and through oversight was not brought to my attention until yesterday. I intended to immediately get in touch with you but the pressure of some other things didn't enable me to get to it.

I think, in view of the announcement in Parliament of the full committee and that it will immediately sit, that it would not be advisable to entirely finish the group of positive control cases of about one hundred which you obtained in Cincinnati and to which you refer in the forepart of the second paragraph of your letter of the 26th. It would seem advisable to me, in view of present conditions, to proceed as you indicated, namely, complete enough of these cases for comparisons with your other groups. I take it from your parenthetical statement that you have proceeded under the assumption that it is better to complete the report at the earliest possible date. Perhaps after you have finished your report you will consider it advisable and might have the opportunity to take the necessary time "to entirely finish this group of almost one hundred cases". If so, that might be made a supplement to your main report.

KE 0001288

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe - #2

March 30, 1928.

I do not believe that the week longer than that which you predicted as being necessary to have your report in shape for submission to the Surgeon General, is going to prove embarrassing in the slightest degree. There is no question about the soundness of the conclusion you reached in that respect, i.e. "It is much better that it should be done properly and that none of our conclusions be arrived at hastily".

It is quite obvious that the British are going into this subject more extensively than was originally anticipated. This, I take it, has been brought about by the very antagonistic attitude of certain members of Parliament and the "Daily Mail". The combination of the two has created a great deal more publicity in Great Britain than was ever aroused here by any of our opponents. You will note that the personnel of the committee has a number of chemists and pathologists.

I am very much pleased with the progress which you have made, and assure you that the few days longer which you have so industriously employed and which you did not expect would continue until now at our last interview, are not to us a matter of inconvenience, and because of the thoroughness of the work should not only not prove inconvenient but extremely helpful to the British in their study of the subject.

Naturally, any expedition of the matter by the Surgeon General's office after the completion of your work and collaboration with them, should be sought for and would undoubtedly prove helpful. On the other hand, so far as I am personally concerned, it is much preferable to take adequate time to do the work with entire satisfaction rather than in the effort to hasten it do so with the feeling that some part of it has not been handled exactly as it should have been.

I assume that some members at least of the British committee will approach any work that has been done by or through any source with a very critical eye. I am sure they will regard it the same as you do, as a matter of such importance as not to excuse haste in the search for the facts. We do not intend to go to them with an apology because of the time element, but expect the report to be submitted as is, without any alibis. I know that is the way you feel about it and we wouldn't want you to do anything in connection with it which would cause you to feel dissatisfied on account of haste.

We all appreciate the immense amount of work you have had to personally give this matter.

With kind personal regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

E. W. Webb

EWV:CH

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