

August 10, 1927.

Mr. E. W. Webb,  
The Ethyl Gasoline Corp.,  
25 Broadway,  
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Webb:

When I was in Wilmington a few days ago I spoke to Mr. Stecker and to John Schaefer about the possibility of the use of our can filling machine there in filling their different types of cans, having in mind the possibility that we may be called upon to furnish the Anglo American Company with small cans of Fluid for distribution to the Air Ministry and Imperial Airways. You will remember that we discussed this subject, and it was thought that if the small cans could be avoided so much the better. I believe, however, that it might be a good idea to get a sample can from Mr. Tegner, made up in accordance with specifications of the British Air Ministry, and see what it is like. This would be a good idea for two reasons. First of all, I am not satisfied ~~that~~ the cans we are supplying the United States Navy are safe. They strike me as being rather fragile, and I think the caps are none too certain to remain in place. If the Air Ministry have decided upon a can which is a great improvement over our own we ought to know it, and we ought to copy it. Subsequently if we should find it necessary or advisable to supply them with small cans, we will have to do it on the specifications of the British Air Ministry, unless we can modify those specifications by conference with them. It would be advisable to know what they are like and whether they can be filled satisfactorily with our own can filling machine at Deepwater. I trust that you will be able to settle the whole matter without distributing any more cans, and I shall be interested as to the outcome of your correspondence on this subject.

Since my return I have been giving very serious consideration to another matter. My assistants are definitely dissatisfied with the conduct of our mixing plants in the state of Pennsylvania, with the exception of the one plant in Philadelphia. The Pennsylvania plants are unsatisfactory, and in one or two cases there is a very definite laxity in carrying out our rules and regulations. For these reasons I am planning a trip myself into this territory in the very near future. I am going to visit these points without informing them in advance of my coming, and I am going to size up the situation as accurately as possible.

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definite recommendations to you as to what should be done. I am inclined to believe that in installing these plants too great a compromise has been made in the carrying out of our specifications and rules, and I believe that some one of our engineering staff has inadvertently perhaps given the impression that it is not necessary to go through with all the details of our requirements. I hope that my assistants have made a mistake on the side of criticism, but I am going to assure myself of the facts before I make any recommendations.

At the same time I am planning to visit Mr. Jordan in Chicago to discuss with him in as much detail as possible the situation of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana as regards three of their points that now have to our point of view quite unsatisfactory installations of equipment. As things now stand we find it necessary to visit three or four points in the country twice as often as it is necessary to visit other points which we regard as satisfactory. If it were not for these three or four points we could definitely plan to visit our mixing equipments three times annually, and we could be perfectly certain that everything would go well. It does not seem to me to be justifiable from the point of view of traveling expenses, and from the point of view of safety to permit the existence of a few definitely unsatisfactory installations. I have no intention to make any radical recommendations or criticisms for I understand fully the position of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana in a business way, and their spirit of friendliness and cooperation are of such a sort as to make it very embarrassing to be too stringent with them. I am not at all certain, however, that we will not be able to effect some sort of arrangement with them that will serve both their ends and ours. You may rest assured that I will not create any feeling of undue criticism on our part. I merely wish to determine for myself whether we cannot do something to help our this problem. I believe that Mr. Jordan understands perhaps better than anyone else the immediate problems of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana. Perhaps we can together work out some scheme to get around these difficulties. If you have any suggestions as to methods of procedure, or if you have any objection to either of these two trips in the immediate future please let me know at once.

With kindest regards.

Very truly yours,