

February 3, 1930

Dr. Graham Edgar,
P. O. Box 390,
Yonkers, N. Y.

My dear Edgar:

I am very sorry to have to reply to your letter of January 27 by saying that I do not believe that a man who has had tuberculosis as recently as the man whom you describe, is in any way to be regarded as a safe risk in connection with hazardous trades. I do not mean to imply by this that the hazards of your work are great for I am sure they are not, but I do not believe that we would be justified in placing a man with this history in any position with appreciable exposure to lead compounds. As far as my experience goes, lead absorption has a particularly pernicious influence upon the course of tuberculosis, and an arrested tuberculosis is after all a potentially active tuberculosis. Consequently, if this man was a patient of mine I would advise him to stay out of such work. Unfortunately with this point of view I can hardly advise you to go ahead and employ him.

I believe the reason that we have been so free of troubles up to the present in spite of a certain amount of lead absorption among men who are mixing ETHYL fluid with gasoline at various points, is that we have carefully excluded persons with recognizable organic diseases, and even with histories which suggest the existence of organic diseases of tuberculosis and syphilis. I can not but believe that our safety for the future resides in the same sort of selection.

I will have seen you in all probability before you receive this letter. I must apologize for not having an opportunity to read it before sending it, but I am dictating it in order that you may have a written statement of my opinion.

Very truly yours,