

STANDARD OIL COMPANY.

INCORPORATED IN KENTUCKY

LOUISVILLE, KY.

PLEASE REFER TO FILE NO.

May 5th, 1943

JJH

-- Re: [REDACTED], Colored laborer -
Birmingham Plant --

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe,
College of Medicine,
University of Cincinnati,
Eden Avenue,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

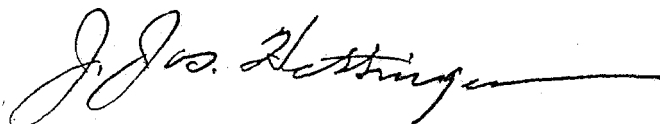
Dear Dr. Kehoe:

On receipt of your letter of May 4th, 1943, regarding the above, I discussed the matter further with our General Counsel, Mr. Chas. G. Middleton, and in view of the opinion expressed by you, it is his idea that we await further developments.

However, if the occasion should arise, and we conclude to have an examination made, we will communicate further with you.

Thanking you for your attention to this, I am

Yours very truly,



J. Jos. Hettinger

JJH:CM

KE 0016311

May 4, 1943

Mr. J. Joseph Hettinger,
Standard Oil Company, Inc.,
Louisville, Kentucky.

Dear Mr. Hettinger:

I have your letter of April 29, concerning Mr. James A. Williams. I have looked over the information which you supplied me with your letter, and there is nothing in it which in my point of view would justify any anxiety concerning the likelihood that this man is suffering from lead poisoning. The certification of Dr. H. P. Hart is so vague as to be without any real significance. The doctor says, "There is some lead line present." Just what he means by this is quite uncertain. No doubt he is referring to some sort of a blue line on the gums, but the fact that he says "some lead line" makes it very dubious that there is any such sign of lead absorption. He should know whether it is a lead line or not, and his vague manner of expression indicates rather strongly that he is not sure that it is a lead line or that there is any line there at all. Moreover, he concludes the sentence by the statement that the blood is negative for stippled cells, a statement which would generally be accepted as a contradiction of the first portion of the sentence. There is no evidence in the information given of any exposure to lead in the course of Williams' occupation over a period of years. In addition to this fact, no previous examiner referred to any occupational illness. For all of these reasons it seems to me there is very little point in our disturbing ourselves over the question of lead poisoning. Despite this fact, we should be quite willing to be of assistance to you in dealing with this case if you consider it necessary. There is no suggestion of any lead exposure on the part of this man to any product related to the business of the Ethyl Corporation, and therefore, I can see no reason for being concerned with it in my capacity as medical director of the Ethyl Corporation. On the other hand, as you doubtless know, we in this Laboratory have been concerned with the general problem of industrial lead exposure and we have engaged in the rather extensive study of cases of lead poisoning. Consequently, if we can be of any service to you, we would not hesitate to make the effort. Two courses of action suggest themselves as possibilities. If Williams is able to come to Cincinnati, I should be glad to

Mr. J. Joseph Hettinger - (2) - May 4, 1943

see that he is examined and to see that you are provided with a report of our findings. This would be the simplest way of handling the matter, and any arrangement you may wish to make to that end will be entirely satisfactory. The other possibility is that we might assist [REDACTED] present physician by writing to him and by offering our services for the examination of his blood and the analysis of samples of blood and urine. I am perfectly willing to do this and will await your advice.

I see no present reason for your coming to Cincinnati to discuss the case, although if you should wish to come for any reason, I should be glad to see you and give you any advice or information that would seem to be pertinent.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kenoe, M. D.

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KE 0016313

STANDARD OIL COMPANY.

INCORPORATED IN KENTUCKY

W.E. SMITH,
PRESIDENT

LOUISVILLE, KY.

PLEASE REFER TO FILE NO.

APRIL 29th, 1943

JJH

-- Re: [REDACTED], Colored Laborer -
Birmingham, Ala. Plant --

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe,
College of Medicine,
University of Cincinnati,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

Dear Sir:

For your information, I attach hereto a copy of my complete file regarding the above.

Our employment records indicate that James A. Williams is 49 years old - the date of his birth being February 29th, 1894.

In view of the fact that Dr. Hart stated in his report of April 15th, 1943 that [REDACTED] has some evidence of lead poisoning, we thought it advisable to refer the matter to you, thinking that possibly you would care to have a thorough examination of Williams made, and at the same time, we should like to be prepared in the event Williams should die in the near future and claim made against our Company on the grounds [REDACTED] suffered lead poisoning and that condition caused his death.

As you will observe from the letter of our District Manager, Mr. L. S. Williams, under date April 8th, [REDACTED] at that time was living at 105 Tremount Street, S.W. Massillon, Ohio, and we assume he is still located there.

It was the writer's intention to personally call and discuss the matter with you with a view of either having Williams come to Cincinnati or possibly you could arrange to have one of your assistants examine him at Massillon, or possibly arrange to have some other member of your medical staff, near Massillon, make such examination.

At any rate, we should like to have a copy of the doctor's report covering his examination so that we will have definite information as to the cause of Williams' trouble and be prepared in the event claim is made in the future on the grounds that lead poisoning either caused his condition, or, if death ensues, that lead poisoning was the cause thereof.

KE 0016314

#2 - Dr. Robert A. Kehoe, etc.

April 29, 1943.

If you desire that the writer call on you, I shall be glad to do so and we can then make such arrangements as you deem proper toward having [REDACTED] thoroughly examined. To that end, I would appreciate it if you would be kind enough to advise if you desire to have me call on you or if you deem that unnecessary, if you will arrange to have [REDACTED] thoroughly examined and furnish me with a copy of the doctor's report.

I can arrange to come to see you at any time it is convenient for you.

Very truly yours,



J. Jos. Hettinger

JJH:CM
Encs.

KE 0016315

KE 0016316

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E. Smith, Pres.,

Home Office

April 22nd, 1943

JJH

JJH

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

LSW

-- [REDACTED], colored laborer,
Birmingham Plant --

Referring to recent correspondence which you have had with Mr. Cocks regarding the above.

While I note that [REDACTED] was most recently employed as a laborer, I wish you would advise me in detail the extent of his exposure to leaded gasoline; also whether he at any time, particularly a short time before his recent ailment, was engaged in cleaning the inside of any storage tanks which contained gasoline and if so, whether he at all times was provided with the required gas mask and other facilities to be used when so engaged.

I wish you would let me have this information as promptly as possible because it is my purpose to contact Dr. Kehoe, the Ethyl Gasoline physician at Cincinnati, Ohio, and possibly Williams himself at Massillon, Ohio, with a view of having him thoroughly examined by Dr. Kehoe.

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KE 0016317

STANDARD OIL COMPANY

INCORPORATED IN KENTUCKY

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DICTATED BY

L. S. Williams, D. M., Birmingham, Ala. April 19, 1943LSWLSWD. F. Cocks, Secretary and Treasurer, Louisville, Ky.

LOCATION

DATE

FILE NO.

DEPT.

LOCATION

FILE NO.

SUBJECT

[REDACTED], Colored Laborer,
Birmingham Plant

In further reference to the above your file C-62, Williams' recent disability started on Monday, January 25, and his ninety day waiting period for annuity will expire April 25, and we will make no more deductions for annuity from his disability checks after that date.

I am attaching copy of a letter received from Dr. H. P. Hart who I mentioned previously was attending [REDACTED] in Massillon, Ohio. Please note the reference to the presence of lead lime in the blood test. Unquestionably this has come about by the doctor interrogating Williams as to the nature of his duties, and the doctor's attempts to get some history which might justify his findings. It does not seem reasonable to us that neither our Birmingham doctor nor the Veterans' Hospital at Tuskegee would fail to discover this condition, if it existed, and had any significance.

We also have another letter from [REDACTED] in which he only says he is unable to work. I am dropping him a short note telling him that we will continue his pay in accordance with the disability plan and also will continue his free and contributory insurance in effect and that his annuity will be held in suspense until he returns to work.

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KE 0016318

Dr. H. P. Hart
501 Ohio Merchants Bldg.
Massilon, Ohio.

April 15, 1943

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] is under my care. He is suffering from
gastritis and has some evidence of lead poisoning.
There is some lead line present but the blood is
negative for stippled cells. He is unable to perform
the duties of his occupation.

H.P. Hart, M. D.

copy

RE 0016319

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Mr. D.F. Cocks, Secy. & Treas. Home Office April 9, 1943 C-62 IL

Mr. L.S. Williams, D. M., Birmingham, Ala. LSW

[REDACTED] colored laborer -
Birmingham Plant

I have your letter of April 8th with additional information concerning the condition of this employee.

There appears to be no question that Williams is seriously ill, and under the circumstances is entitled to the application of the Disability & Relief Plan and his case should be handled strictly in accordance therewith. His length of service with the company entitled him to receive twelve months payment at full salary, should he be away from work that long.

Please keep us advised of any general information you may obtain regarding him, and furnish us with doctor's reports from time to time whenever they can be obtained.

You may inform this employee that his free group insurance will be kept in full force and effect, and you should deduct as usual for his contributory group insurance premium. If he is absent from work as long as ninety days, his annuity will be placed in suspense at the end of that period.

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KE 0016320

STANDARD OIL COMPANY

INCORPORATED IN KENTUCKY

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DICTATED BY

Williams, D. M. Birmingham, Alabama, April 8, 1943

LSW

LSW

F. Cocks, Secretary & Treasurer, Louisville, Ky.

LOCATION

DATE

FILE NO.

DEPT.

LOCATION

FILE NO.

SUBJECT

[REDACTED] Colored Laborer,
[REDACTED] m Plant

Since the receipt of your letter of March 29th, file DFC, regarding the above, I have received two letters from this employee under address 105 Tremount Street, S.W. Massillon, Ohio, in the first one of which [REDACTED] stated that he has had a very bad nervous attack and is under the care of Dr. H.P. Hart. The doctor supplies a statement to the effect that he is attending [REDACTED] and that he is unable to perform the duties of his occupation. This morning I received a second letter from Williams to the effect that he is not doing so well and is continuing under the doctor's care but will let us know how he gets along.

A few minutes after receiving that communication, Dr. Charles Watterson, whom I mentioned in letter of March 26th, telephoned me to say that he has a report from the Veterans' Hospital, Tuskegee about [REDACTED] and that although he is not supposed to communicate its contents to any but the patient, he read the report to me on the 'phone, volunteered the statement that Williams is not right either mentally or physically, and that he will not be a fit applicant for any work in future. The report as I copied it down gives the following as Williams' affliction:

- #1 - Hypertensive coronary arteriosclerotic heart disease with valvular damage
- #2 - Arthritis hypertrophic multiple
- #3 - Osteoarthritis lumber spine

From the above it would appear that we have rather a serious case on hand. How Williams got to Massillon, Ohio, I do not know. When talking with Williams, he expressed a desire to go to the Veterans' Hospital in Detroit which several of our negroes have visited in times past but contended that he had no money to get there and the next we hear is his letter from Massillon, Ohio. I see nothing to do at the moment except to await developments. This will be done and you will be advised of anything of interest.

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RE 0016321

STANDARD OIL COMPANY

INCORPORATED IN KENTUCKY

Dictated by

<u>D.F. Cocks, Secty-Treas.</u>	<u>Home Office</u>	<u>March 29, 1943</u>	<u>DFC</u>	<u>DFC:v</u>
TO	LOCATION	DATE	FILE NO.	DEPT.
<u>L.S. Williams, D.M.</u>	<u>Birmingham, Alabama</u>	<u>LSW</u>		<u>SUBJECT</u>
	LOCATION	FILE NO.		

[REDACTED], Colored Laborer
Birmingham Plant

I have read with interest your letter of March 26. If this employe returns to work and is able to work, and then decides to resign and get a job, I see nothing that you can do but let him go.

I would suggest that you have your Plant Superintendent tell him that if he isn't satisfied to take off a day or two and see if he can find a better job. I don't believe that you are going to run into any trouble if because of conditions you have to, and did, employ a white man to supervise the work and assign him to a night shift. On the other hand, it may be that if you re-assign him to a day shift he may be satisfied, but frankly, I see no reason why we should run into any trouble if he decides to quit and leave us.

We had a good many very aggravating cases under the old Insurance Disability Clause which was discontinued some years ago, but that situation shouldn't occur now.

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STANDARD OIL COMPANY

INCORPORATED IN KENTUCKY

FROM

L. S. Williams, D. M., Birmingham, Ala. March 26, 1943

DICTATED BY

LSW

D. F. Cocks, Secretary, Louisville, Ky.

LOCATION

DATE

FILE NO.

DEPT.

LOCATION

FILE NO.

SUBJECT

[REDACTED], Colored Laborer,
Birmingham, Ala. Plant

The above was employed January 17th, 1919 and has been on the payroll continuously since that time, which gives him 24 full years of service. A few weeks ago Williams was taken ill and being a veteran of the last war, he went to the hospital at Tuskegee for examination. They kept him there some 12 days, made various tests, took X-ray pictures, gave him no medicine or treatment, and would not tell him what was the matter, so he got disgusted and returned to Birmingham. He is under the care of Dr. Charles Watterson, a white physician. Dr. Watterson is the one who sent [REDACTED] to Tuskegee but even he is unable to get any report from the Tuskegee authorities regarding [REDACTED] case. However, Dr. Watterson tells us that he is not a well man. He seems to be nervous, cannot sleep and has hallucinations but on certain days, feels very well and normal.

Sometime ago in the interest of better operation, we put a white man in charge of unloading tank cars. You probably will recall for years this duty has been delegated to negroes exclusively at this plant, and when our tank cars began slipping away and the receipt of stock was by truck at all hours of the day and night and we began to handle more specialized commodities, we made an addition to our unloading organization by adding this white man. Of course, somebody had to take the night shifts. [REDACTED] got one of those and he has the impression, (erroneously I am sure) that some one in our organization is gunning for him. Having done nothing in the last five weeks, undoubtedly he has brooded over his own condition and also what he thinks is injustice at the plant, so he now wants to resign, saying that he feels his work has not been satisfactory but he can get a job in a war plant and make more than the \$105 we are paying him and which he needs because of a large family. All of this doesn't make sense but I am writing it to you for the reason I was informed that some years ago an employee here resigned and subsequently proved he was in ill health when he did so, and the reaction was unfavorable and costly. I got it that the insurance company was obliged to pay a claim, possibly when we still had the total disability clause in our group contract.

I have talked to [REDACTED] myself this morning and endeavored to show him that he is not being treated unjustly, that the conditions of which he complains are the result of the war, that he would make a mistake to resign and give up all the service he has had with the company to chase a war job and further, that as Dr. Watterson says, he is not a well man, he [REDACTED] could hardly be expected to render better service in a war plant for somebody else than he could render for us. I have told him we do not care to accept his resignation until he can get a statement from the Veterans' Hospital or his doctor or both, stating he is in good physical condition and here is where the matter rests. Dr. Watterson is writing Veterans' Hospital

again today and has promised to tell us what he learns. As yet we have not pushed him for his detailed opinion of [REDACTED] condition, thinking it would be better to approach that subject after he receives the hospital report, if indeed he is able to secure it.

I think we are treading on dangerous ground by forthwith releasing [REDACTED] even on his written request, and am undertaking to get the facts and conditions in some safe shape before any actual decision is made. If you have any comment regarding this report or suggestion for our guidance, it will be appreciated.

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