

November 16, 1939

Mr. Hugh Fossett
The Associated Ethyl Company Ltd.
The Adelphi
London, W. C. 2
England

Dear Mr. Fossett:-

I have several letters from you to which I have made no reply, one of them going back as far as July 14th, I believe. What with my vacation in August and my occupation with a great many matters since which have taken me out of town, my correspondence has suffered. In addition I have felt a certain futility in connection with our efforts to control industrial hazards which are our responsibility during the period of the European war. I promise you, however, that I shall not neglect you any more than is necessary, nor will I fail to give careful consideration to such questions as you bring to my attention.

I am assuming that the questions raised in your letter of August 4th as the outgrowth of the technical meeting with D.A.P.G. are no longer of more than purely academic interest. In reading over these questions in the light of subsequent developments, I rather suspect that some of them are definitely related to anticipated war conditions. I am assuming that you have no relationship at present with any of the German companies which would enable you to advise them or in any way regulate them. Therefore I shall not worry about these questions unless there is some point in them about which you would like to have further consideration for your own information.

Thanks very much for your interest in our behalf in the equipment of the Cambridge Instrument Company for the determination of lead. As a matter of fact, we are very much interested in the Polarograph and we are making plans definitely toward the introduction of this equipment into our laboratory. I am not sure where we will obtain the equipment but we are giving every consideration to the various types available. We feel that this equipment will be useful for many purposes other than lead analyses. I have turned over the booklet which you sent me for Mr. Cholak's consideration.

With respect to new regulations

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assume that despite the difficulties of the war, you are going ahead, as well as possible, with translations of booklets and placards into various foreign languages. Moreover the letter of Wasserman's from the Manufacturing Plant, a copy of which came to my desk a few days ago, will point out to you as well as I can the advisability of having supplies of placards on hand in this country, as well as in your office, so that these may be shipped out as required. It may be that you will prefer that these placards should not be shipped from the Manufacturing plant with equipment which goes into your territory. If this is the case, I think you should so instruct Mr. Wasserman, letting him know that you will supply the placards directly from London. I should appreciate a copy of any correspondence that you have with him on this subject, so I may know the status of the matter.

I have heard very little from Roberts so that I know practically nothing of his progress in the handling of the translations. I believe he has all the information that is required, however, and I presume we shall have the finished product in due time.

With respect to the question in your letter of August 9th as to the precautions required in cleaning tank cars, as raised by the Standard American Petroleum Company at Antwerp, I am calling your attention herewith to the results of our analyses on the sample of deposit which they supplied. We analyzed 10 grams of this material, separating it into organic and inorganic fractions. The sample contained 0.001 per cent of organic lead and 0.28 per cent of inorganic lead, most of the material being rust and scale. These results are comparable to those which we obtained in a number of samples from this country. There verify, I believe, my conclusion that these deposits have no hygienic consequence in so far as lead exposure is concerned. I should be glad if you would pass this information on to the Standard American Petroleum Company since if their sample was representative, this will quite clearly indicate to them the insignificance of the lead exposure associated with the handling of this material.

In your letters of July 14th and August 2nd respectively (the latter from Mr. Tegner), you have called my attention to various new medical consultants. I have taken the necessary steps to inform Dr. Starkus in Kaunas, Lithuania and Dr. Bostrum in Stockholm concerning our work which is to be in their hands. You may accept this as my official approval of their appointments in connection with this work.

Some time ago the question was raised by Thenault as to the usefulness of Javel water in the decomposition of tetraethyl lead. Calingaert has investigated this subject and has sent me a report on it, a copy of which I enclose for your information. The report, I believe, is self-explanatory and requires no further action from me. It is apparent that chlorinated lime in any form is a rather poor reagent for the decomposition of tetraethyl lead.

Please convey my very kindest greetings to your associates. I shall be very glad to hear from you from time to time if only a brief note to let me know that you are getting on as well as circumstances will permit.

Cordially yours,

RAK:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.