

THE TEXAS COMPANY

Dayton, Ohio, October 25, 1951.

Dear Mom & Dad--- You, too, Caroline!

Having nothing else in the world to do, I should sit down like this and write to you more often. Sometimes the weather is bad and I leave early in order to get a ride with somebody, and then on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays I write to Ann --- but this is Thursday night and there's no point in writing one day and going home the next. I know now how lonesome Dad must have been when he worked away from home every week. I was just thinking the other day how he used to get room and board for a dollar a day --- of course he was earning less -- but I was just thinking how nice it would be if I could get by that cheap today, with today's salaries. I have to pay \$5 per week for my room, which is cheaper than a lot of them, then buy my meals besides. Two eggs, with toast and coffee costs 42¢, and a plate lunch here brings from 70¢ on up, plus tax, with no dessert. I'm doing fine if I get by on less than \$15 per week. I don't have to pay any transportation to and from Cincinnati any more. I ride with a salesman who drives a company car. He lives in Covington, just across the river from Cincinnati, and I travel with him every week.

My landlady where I room, is going to the hospital to have an operation and some of her folks from Cincinnati were up to see her last night. I was talking with her aunt, a Mrs. Souders, and the conversation got around to the churches. She is 65 years old, has been a Baptist all her life, and believes firmly in that "once in grace, you're always in grace". Naturally, we had an argument. No ill feeling, of course, but I really argued it out. She was a bigger talker than me, and knew the Bible better, so I guess she won in the eyes of the listeners, Mr & Mrs Snyder. She quoted, or rather got the Bible and read, from Romans, I think the eighth chapter, and tried so hard to convince me that I was wrong. I mentioned Lot's wife, who turned back and was turned to a pillar of salt, and also remembered a verse from somewhere about keeping your hands to the plow, once you're started. I've been reading the New Testament, and have read completely through Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and about 2/3 of the way through The Acts. Isn't there something in the New Testament I can use to bolster my argument? I may see her again some day. I have missed going to church several Sundays --- we all had colds, one or two at a time -- and one Sunday I foolishly forgot to change my shoes when I left here for the week-end, and wound up in an old pair of shoes I wouldn't wear to a dog fight. I just own one good pair of shoes, and they're not so hot. Of course God wouldn't care what kind of shoes I wore, but you know how such things are, especially in a city.

According to the latest information I have been able to gather from my prospective landlord up here, it will be another two or three weeks before we can move to Dayton --- and then I won't be right in Dayton. It's a little house on Xenia Pike, about 10 miles or so out of town, and it will take me about an hour by bus and street car to get to work. But I'll still take that in preference to this - at least I can be with my family every night.

I'm going to take some paint home with me this weekend, ~~xxxx~~ borrow a ladder and put a fresh coat of white paint on the house. The only places to paint are the eaves and window facings, but I doubt if I

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can do the job in one day. If I can get that done right away, and make the house look real nice, I may put it on the market for sale. I don't like the idea of selling. I would much rather hold it until I get my equity built up to an amount large enough to make a down payment on another home up here. But when you rent a house you need to be around to see after things and collect the rent. Besides that, something always needs fixing, and most of those things I can do myself at a very small cost whereas it would run into some money to hire it done. Another reason for selling is that I'm slowly going broke, paying expenses here and trying to maintain a home in Cincinnati. We have to pinch every penny to make ends meet. I made some debts down there which don't pay up until next summer, and it's getting tougher and tougher to meet the payments. I'm still paying on coal that we used last winter and hoping against hope that this winter won't be quite so rough. If I get the painting done and present a good appearance I think I can sell the house for a little more than I paid and come out with enough money ahead to pay most of my debts with some left over. I may just invest the money in a car and forget about owning a home. The Texas Company is a big company and could transfer me again - almost anywhere. If I'm going to be moved around from place to place I'm better off without a home of my own. I still like the idea, though. Maybe when I get to be a big shot, I can say, "OK boys, this is it. I won't move another inch." Wouldn't that be something?

Don't you think I've gabbed enough -- unloading all my troubles on you. I don't have any real troubles at all, when it's boiled down. We're all in good health and looking forward to a future that's even better. Sure wish you and Dad could be around us a little more, or that I had a car and could come down once in a while for weekend visits. I think somebody down there should drive you-all up here in that nice Pontiac before the bad weather sets in. If somebody would drive it to Dayton, I could buy you a case of Havoline motor oil, "the best motor oil your money can buy" --- I can sell it for \$5.46 per 24/1 case - that's 24 quarts of motor oil and it figures just a little under 23¢ per quart. When you buy it at a service station you pay 40 or 45¢ per quart. See the saving? I have thought a few times about shipping a case, but the cost of shipping wouldn't leave much saved. That price of \$5.46 includes a Federal tax of 36¢ --- my list price is \$5.10. Oh well, you probably won't come up anyway. Guess you couldn't get away during the week, while Alice is working. Maybe you could, too, during Thanksgiving holidays. Isn't the school out a week for that? I may be in Dayton by that time, but that's where I want you to come anyway - I want you to see my bulk plant. If you'll come, we'll roast a big turkey - what do you say? I've never bought a Thanksgiving turkey, but we're going to have one this year if I have to buy it on the installment plan - so you may as well be here to enjoy it with us. I remember eating turkey once at Huffman, after we moved to Lansing, with Grandma and Grandpa Scott - a wild turkey that Grandpa had caught sitting on the garden fence. Do you remember that, Dad? You took us boys up, as you did many times, one Sunday, and Grandma had that turkey on the table. Those were the good old days, weren't they?

You-all take good care of yourselves, now. ~~Don't~~ Don't be going things you don't have to do --- take it easy. You've worked hard all your lives raising eight kids and you deserve a rest -- I'd give anything to be close by where I could help once in a while.

Love to all -

Bill