

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
AND  
ENGINEERING EXPERIMENT STATION  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

~~M. S. KETCHUM~~  
~~DEAN AND DIRECTOR~~

September 26, 1933

Miss Elsie Eaves  
Engineering News-Record  
330 West 42nd Street  
New York, New York

My dear Miss Eaves:

I have written Miss Mary Esther Poorman and asked her to write you with reference to the possibility of a position with the Engineering News-Record. Miss Poorman graduated from Civil Engineering at Purdue University last June and is now attending Mohler's Business College. You may write her in care of Professor A. P. Poorman, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana.

As you doubtless have heard, Martha and Deb plans were changed and Deb is now at the Oriental Institute in Chicago. Martha is living at 5521 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago. They are pleasantly located in a flat and shall be glad to have you call on them whenever you have the opportunity. Tommy has grown to be a very energetic youngster and we miss him very much as he was the principal part of the household.

Very truly yours,

*M. S. Ketchum*

lts



October 14, 1933

Dean H. S. Ketchum,  
1114 California Ave.,  
Urbana, Ill.

Dear Dean Ketchum:

You have no idea how delighted I was to receive your letter of September 26 and I am answering it by enclosing a copy of my letter to Miss Poorman.

Things really look very much brighter here than they have for three or four years, and even if we do not have something in the company that would interest Miss Poorman, our personnel director is in touch with a large number of companies here and has excellent connections so that she may be able to add much better suggestions than I could send.

I am delighted that Martha and Deb will be so near you. I know that Martha especially is very happy at the prospect of staying in America.

I expect to have a busy winter and you may hear from me occasionally when I need advice. I am not yet to that stage on some work I am planning.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Hayes  
Manager, Business News Department

HRH:BS



October 14, 1933

Miss Mary Esther Poorman,  
c/o Prof. A. P. Poorman,  
Purdue University,  
Lafayette, Indiana.

Dear Miss Poorman:

Dean Ketchum has written me that you have completed the Purdue course in civil engineering and are ready to look for a position where you can apply your training.

As Dean Ketchum may have written you, we should have much in common and I hope that I may have the opportunity of knowing you and of keeping in touch with your progress.

Dean Ketchum particularly asked if there are any possibilities of a position with Engineering News-Record. I regret to say that such possibilities at this time are very remote. There is a bare possibility that we may add a statistician to our staff but present thinking along this line is in the early stages. In our present discussions of "ways and means" we think we need an engineer who has had experience with contractors on cost estimating in the building field, but this is by no means final and I am asking our personnel department to send you one of our employment application blanks in order that your experience will be on record here. I should also appreciate it if you would write me and let me know what branches of civil engineering you are particularly interested in and what kind of engineering work you especially wish to follow.

I wish you every success in finding engineering work that will prove as pleasant in every way as the job I have been fortunate enough to get since I completed my work under Dean Ketchum. I am sure that you will always be grateful, as I am, for your engineering college training.

Cordially yours,

Elsie Faves,  
Manager, Business News Department

ENR.ES



November 8, 1933.

Miss Mary Esther Poorman,  
McCormick Y.W.C.A.,  
Dearborn and Oak Streets,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Miss Poorman:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter enclosing your experience record and application for employment. I am forwarding the latter to our personnel department, and asking our personnel manager to keep you in mind in case any opening should develop for which your training would qualify you. She gets many calls from other companies as she has quite a reputation for being able to supply highly qualified people.

I think the friend who advised you to get a business background of shorthand and typing advised you very wisely if it is necessary for you to depend upon your own efforts for a living. If you have an independent income and can finance yourself until you can make a "go" of strictly engineering work, that would be another matter. The combination of business and engineering is good, however, and you will never be sorry that you learned the shorthand and typing. Some bookkeeping and accounting would not hurt, particularly if you are interested in the contracting side of the work.

Structural engineering and architectural work are probably at the lowest ebb of all right now.

The government work is heading up locally through the State Public Works Administration Committee whose executive officers are state engineers of P.W.A. The state engineer for Illinois is Joshua D'Esposito, U.S. Court House, Chicago, Ill. If you really are interested in government work, I suggest that you begin your investigation of it there.

There has been no further development of our plans for handling our statistical work, and so many emergency matters are keeping various members of our staff out in the field that I doubt if any plans will come to a head soon.

I shall be glad to get in touch with you should I hear of anything that would interest you.

Cordially yours,

Elsie Eaves  
EIR-EDS

Manager, Business News Department.

American Society of Women Engineers and Architects Records, Box 1, Folder 5, Folder Part 4, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University



MARY ESTHER POORMAN  
329 Russell Street  
West Lafayette, Indiana

March 12, 1934

Miss Elsie Eaves  
Manager, Business News Department  
Engineering News-Record  
McGraw-Hill Building  
330 West 42nd Street  
New York, New York

Dear Miss Eaves:

Last fall I had some correspondence with you regarding a position. As you remember, I was graduated from Purdue last June in Civil Engineering and, at the suggestion of Dean Ketchum and other engineering friends, I attended Moser Business College in Chicago.

Since the first of February, I have been at home and have registered in Purdue for some graduate work. I keep up my typing and shorthand with practice at home and what outside work I am able to secure.

I wondered if you had any suggestions concerning my obtaining a position. Would I be making a mistake if I accepted a purely stenographic position? Purdue University has a rule to the effect that only one member of a family can be employed at one time, so there is no chance for me here. Do you know anyone in the middle west to whom I could write? Do you think there is any possibility of an opening in Chicago with the Engineering News Record? Would you advise the accepting of a temporary position, say for the summer?

You have been very kind to me in the past, and having had very few contacts with the business world, I know not where to turn, so have come again to you.

Very sincerely yours,

*Mary Esther Poorman*



March 28, 1934.

Miss Mary Esther Poorman,  
329 Russell St.,  
West Lafayette, Ind.

Dear Miss Poorman:

Your letter of March 12 arrived when I was completely swamped with rush work at the office and I am only now getting my head above water.

To answer your specific questions: I do not believe that you would make a mistake to accept a purely stenographic position. Practical experience is a great asset and on stenographic work the type of experience does not count as much as the actual use of stenographic training and polishing up and speeding up of your ability. It, of course, would be more desirable to find a job, even a stenographic job, in an engineer's office, where you could branch out and use your engineering training as the occasion demands.

The accepting of a temporary position merits the same answer that experience is good and it is easier to get a job if you can point to a previous job.

I am not closely in touch with the Middle West sufficiently to know what the opportunities are there for work. Did you ever stop at the Engineering News-Record offices when you were in Chicago and get acquainted with Mr. DeBerard? Mr. DeBerard took a great deal of interest in me and was very helpful in advising me when I came East.

Mr. DeBerard also is probably in better touch with the engineering profession in the Middle West than any other individual, and I am inclosing a letter to him for you, in the belief that that is the most practical assistance that I can give you.

I believe that things are opening up and that conditions will be better this spring and summer.

Did you notice in Engineering News-Record a week or so ago an advertisement for a job as engineer and secretary? Apparently a young masculine engineer has some secretarial training that he felt he could make use of. It looks like a good advertisement and I should not be surprised if he found an opening.

I wish you success.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Eaves/arc

Manager, Business News Department.

American Society of Women Engineers and Architects Records, Box 1, Folder 5, Folder Part 4, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University



March 28, 1934.

Mr. W. W. DeBerard,  
Western Editor,  
Engineering News-Record,  
520 North Michigan Blvd.,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. DeBerard:

This will introduce to you Miss Mary Esther Poorman who has written to me at the suggestion of Dean Ketchum. Miss Poorman is a civil engineering graduate of Purdue and has added training in typing and short-hand.

She is now looking for a position in the Middle West where she can make use of this training.

I have suggested to her that she get in touch with you since you probably are in better touch with engineers and contractors in the Middle West than any other individual, so that if practical suggestions can be made, you can make them.

I should greatly appreciate any assistance that you can give Miss Poorman.

Sincerely yours,

Manager,  
Business News Department.

Elsie Eaves,  
ENR-ARC



MARY ESTHER POORMAN  
329 Russell Street  
West Lafayette, Indiana

April 4, 1934

Miss Elsie Eaves  
Manager, Business News Department  
Engineering News Record  
330 West 42nd Street  
New York, New York

Dear Miss Eaves:

It was very nice of you to help me. I have written Mr. DeBerard, sending him my qualification sheet and telling him what kind of position that I particularly desired.

These days I am very busy getting some practical experience working at the Personnel Office of Purdue University when I am not going to school.

You may be interested in my qualification sheet so I am enclosing a copy.

Thank you again for your kind advice.

Yours sincerely,

*Mary Esther Poorman*



March 16, 1937

Miss Meredith Thoms,  
3100 R Street,  
Lincoln, Nebr.

Dear Miss Thoms:

I appreciate your writing me and letting me know the results of your expedition to the East. I am sure that even though the results are not immediate, that the trip is far from wasted in so far as the professional contacts you have made will undoubtedly stand you in good stead should an opening develop. You will be in a much stronger position to apply for it by mail than if you had not been here.

What is the status with the Reclamation Service? It seems to me that it should offer a good field for your talents and that through your Nebraska connections you should be able to get a foothold there.

I enjoyed very much seeing you and your mother and I hope that things will work out for you very satisfactorily.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Eaves  
Manager, Business News Department

ENR.VV



March 25, 1937

Miss Meredith Thoms,  
3100 R Street,  
Lincoln, Nebraska.

Dear Miss Thoms:

When I wrote you March 16, I forgot to enclose the three letters  
Colonel Chevalier wrote.

His letters came in about two hours after you left the office  
here and Miss Payne had them out that same afternoon. I phoned  
your hotel and left a message, but we missed you and I did not  
know how to get them to you then.

They may or may not be useful to you now, but I am sending them  
along and letting you be the judge.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Haves  
Manager, Business News Department

ENR.VV  
Enc.



April 4, 1935

Miss Meredith E. Thoms,  
3100 R St.,  
Lincoln, Nebraska.

Dear Miss Thoms:

I have your letter of March 19, and am wondering if you are familiar with the work that has been done by the National Resources Board.

The report which has recently been released in three parts, Parts 1, 2 and 3, is the most comprehensive "market survey" for engineering services in the water conservation and hydraulic field that has ever been made.

It is difficult at this time to know how much work will go ahead following up the report of the Water Resources Committee, but I suggest that you get in touch with Prof. Thorndike Saville, Civil Engineering Department, New York University, New York City, who is chairman of the Committee on Water Resources, and acquaint him with your qualifications so that he can have you in mind should openings develop either on a continuation of the work on which he has been engaged or on new work resulting from the study that has just been completed.

I also suggest that you write to Mr. C. A. Betts, 1111 Interior Building, Washington, D.C., who is a personal friend of mine and you can write at my suggestion and ask him for suggestions he may have for getting into the kind of work in which you are interested. He is an engineer who has been working on the Mississippi River Commission report and also on the National Resources Board.

In your own state you need a State Sanitary Engineer, and I understand some movement has been started with the idea of establishing this office. Our representative in Lincoln,



Miss Meredith E. Thoms-- 2

April 4, 1935

Mr. A. A. Dobson, Jr., First National Bank Building, is better acquainted with this situation than I am.

Finally, are you at all interested in statistics or work in engineering statistics? There is an increasing demand for this type of work.

With best wishes,

Yours very truly,

Elsie Eaves  
Director of Market Surveys

ENR.VV

THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE WORK DONE BY THE BUREAU OF MARKET SURVEYS DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH, 1935.

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