

Benham, Ky., July 27, 1918.

Mr. C. F. Biggert, Vice President,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Sir:

I have your letter of July 25th advising that you have an engineer in mind who has good references. Providing you have located the right man we are most certainly very fortunate as men of this character are in great demand all through the Pittsburgh district and I suppose every place else, and I know it is true in the iron industry where I am personally familiar with all of the operations. Our engineering force right now is inadequate, but we hope to have a couple of new men within a week or so. There will be a draftsman on the job Monday when we will start getting up plans for houses.

We have exposed the face of the coal on the Looney side in four different places, this being done so that when we are ready to proceed with the work we may establish a line of levels for the outside tram road. The engineers we now have are working on the topography at the base of Looney Ridge and we expect to have this data platted tomorrow. We will then be in position to establish permanent locations and work out preliminary estimates on railroad trackage, bridges, etc. This work also correlates with the definite location of the permanent mine openings.

I will be glad to have Mr. Holmes come down any time now as the future preliminary work is entirely of an engineering nature, that is as far as we can now go until we have definite advice relative to the final decision on the by-product construction. I had hoped that we could have our data by so that we would be ready to go over this with you early next week, but it will probably be the latter part of the week before we will get things so shaped that we can get at everything definitely. I hope that in the meantime we will have advice one way or the other on this proposition as to whether we are going ahead.

I am very much interested in this question of double houses as there is not only economy in the original construction but in maintenance as well both on the houses and facilities connected therewith. I realize that such construction is contrary to the policy previously established here, however providing we continue to build these single houses with large lots it is going to be necessary to go west of the Gilliam property in order to get building locations. Furthermore, there are in any community as large as this will be people who are not interested in gardening and such things who can be placed in these double houses. Benham as it is now established is in every way satisfactory and will always be the center of the town. I feel that the time has come when it is necessary to consider the economizing of available building space as well as the proposition of maintenance which includes water, lights, streets, and side walks, and we can get in the same number of families in about half the area with the double houses as we can in the single. I am bringing this matter to your attention now so that you may have it in mind when the question of houses comes up as I hope to have