

about May 30th

Dear Grete:

I have your letters of March 15th and April 20th before me which means they haven't been answered. It hardly seems possible that time passes so quickly, but we have had a hell of a time.

In March we had a fire which burned out the shed where we did our painting, and destroyed nearly all the brackets. This was a real set-back even though we were covered by insurance and have since collected. All the headaches, extra work, effort and strain involved, plus trying to stay in production and keep our customers happy has been tough. We have been back to normal for a couple of weeks, but we had to buy a new building, new equipment, new wiring, new stock etc. I guess we were lucky because most of our production is in the main building which was untouched. The cause: a faulty stove plus a high wind which caused a back draft and ignited some thinner.

The business picture is not as cheerful as I might like to relate, but frankly, it has been bad for too long. In general, it comes down to this: We need to make some improvements in the product which should improve its marketability. Since we now have competition, it is important that these improvements be made as rapidly as possible. After making these changes, we should have better acceptance and be able to merchandise it better. If this does not prove to be true, then we have no alternative but to dump the whole thing. Naturally, I'm going ahead with these improvements just as fast as I can, but they cost money, and more importantly, I can't spend all my time working on them even though I should.

Vertical blinds are a terrific idea, but if they can't be sold at a price on which a profit can be realized, then it is not a business no matter how terrific the idea. We have learned a lot in the past five years, and I hope we can turn it to our benefit, but we have to do so within the next 12 months or know the reason why. If our competition was doing a wonderful job and we weren't, then I would have even more cause to change, but competition is doing no better than we are. All this is kind of a bitter pill to swallow after all our sweat, but we might as well be realistic about it.

The house move is still in abeyance because the lot was too expensive. We now understand it has been sold, and if so we have to look for another site. This presents problems because there are not many lots left in Wheaton, and those available near the path this house could be moved are scarce indeed. We still are working on it, and when the guy who bought the lot learns the problems of putting in the sewer, he may renege----we'll see.

The lack of any real living from the business is all tied up with our living quarters, and raising four kids this close to town is not ideal. Also, we would like to fix up the place, but are leathe to spend the money----the same old story. The answer to everything is simple: Just let us do five times our present volume for the rest of the year, and everything would fall into place.

The family is fine with everyone in good health, and the little guys (Todd and Larry) getting into at least one scrape a day and doing things that Andy and Jeff would have never thought of much less considered doing. Andy is getting to be quite the young lady, and Jeff is playing little league baseball, and Jean is busy in a variety of activities. Me, I work all the time, and when I'm not working I think about how we can redesign the

blinds.

Enclosed are a couple of items which should be taken care of, and I have received quite a quantity of mail which is stashed away as being of no current interest. I hope you get the coils all right, and if there is anything else, just let me know. We are glad your experiments are going well, and that you find the people and their ideas stimulating. Keep us informed of what gives and what your plans are.

We all send our love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Schuyler". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed text.