

[REDACTED]
Berea, Ohio, 44017
April 12, 1999

Mr. Brian Lamb, President
C-SPAN
400 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Suite 1650
Washington, D.C., 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

I saw your presentation before the Cleveland City Club on TV/PBS. I enjoyed it as much as I enjoy all your work on C-SPAN.

Yes, Ohio has more interesting HISTORY than some Ohioans appreciate. One place and one person overlooked by too many Ohioans and too many Americans is Thomas Alva Edison from Milan, Ohio. Milan is about three miles south of Gate 7 on the Ohio Turnpike. This is about 20 miles east of Fremont on the way back to the Cleveland Airport, which you probably used. If you are coming back to Fremont for the Rutherford B. Hayes Program, you and your staff would surely find it worthwhile to budget a day to visit Milan.

Fortunately, the EXPERT on Thomas A. Edison is alive and well and living in Milan. Mr. Donald Gfell was a former Science teacher and then Superintendent of the Berlin-Milan school district. Now, in retirement, he has even more time to devote to the restoration and maintenance of the birthplace of Edison, the museum in Edison's honor and to his own antique store. He owns more Edison inventions than anyone I know. He sells and repairs "morning glory" horns on Edison record players for clients around the world. He thrives on accurate stories about Edison and his accomplishments. You may know that Edison had over 1,000 patents by the end of his life. No other inventor in American history approached that number.

Milan is a picturesque town whose own residents are proud of Edison. If you saw Edison's birthplace home and it were for sale, you would buy it in a minute. It rests on a knoll above the remnants of the old canal that brought ships in from Lake Erie at Sandusky, just north of Milan. On the town square in Milan, you'll find a statue of Edison's mother reading to him. His education was hampered by his hearing impairment, yet he succeeded. The students at Edison High School in Milan put on a remarkable musical production in 1997 for his 150th birthday.

I hope you'll consider this part of Ohio history in the near future. If you visit Milan, I predict you'll remember it as one of the brighter days of your life.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

O.BK

Mr. Brian Lamb, President
C-SPAN
400 North Capitol St., N.W.
Suite 1650
Washington, D.C. 20001

Mr. Donald Gfell
21 So. Main St.
Milan, Ohio 44846-9609
(419) 499-3093 or 499-4433

Edison Birthplace: <http://www.edisonbp.org>
Edison Birthplace e-mail: edisonbp@accnorwalk.com

P.S. Milan, Ohio is pronounced "MY^llan" there.