



[Solon J. Buck Papers.](#)

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Urbana, Illinois, October 15, 1909.

Dr. Selon Justus Buck,
Indiana University,
Bloomington, Ind.

My dear Sir:

The University of Illinois is looking for the right man to appoint to a position as research associate in history, at a salary of approximately \$1200.00 a year. The title associate in our University stands between that of instructor and assistant professor. The position, as its name implies, is one for research only, and the purpose of the position is to assist in an undertaking that we have already started, namely, the writing of an elaborate history of the state of Illinois, based upon scientific research, for the centennial celebration which will occur in 1918. This is the most elaborate piece of research work undertaken in this state, or in any state that I know of. The plan is very comprehensive, and will be carried out in the purest scientific spirit. Funds will be available for conducting the research in all lines to the fullest extent. Professor Hart of Harvard has recommended you in the most cordial

Dr. Buck #2.

way for the position. This letter is written simply to ask you if you would wish to consider yourself a candidate, and if so, to ask you to fill out the enclosed blank. It is desirable that a recommendation for appointment should be made with as little delay as possible. For this reason we are taking this direct method of getting at our data in the case of three or four possible candidates.

Sincerely yours,

Clarence W. Alvord

Enclosure.

C.W.A.-W.

Urbana, Ill., December 7, 1909.

Mr. Solon J. Buck,
Indiana University,
Bloomington, Ind.

My dear Mr. Buck:

You have every reason to desire information in regard to the situation here in the University. For reasons best known to themselves, the authorities have not yet acted, but I expect to be able to give you some information, favorable or otherwise, in a letter tomorrow or the day after.

Sincerely yours,

Clarence W. Alvord

C.W.A.-W.

Urbana, Ill., December 9, 1909.

Mr. Solon J. Buck,
University of Indiana,
Bloomington, Ind.

My dear Mr. Buck:

You have probably already received notification by Dean Greene in regard to your appointment to the research position concerning which we have had correspondence. Dean Greene felt that he ought to make it quite evident to you that no pledges beyond the eight months could be made and as an executive officer he is probably right. There are, however, certain things which I feel that it is possible for me to say. The centennial history of Illinois is as yet in the experimental stage, but it is extremely good proposition. President James is very interested in it, and has already had a talk with Governor Deneen concerning the same, and Governor Deneen expressed himself as very friendly to the idea, so that if we can get the movement in such a way by spring, President James will feel able to go to Governor Deneen, and set the whole thing before him and ask for his support for a liberal appropriation for the work. If these plans succeed, and I see no reason for expecting

Mr. Buck #2.

failure, the undertaking will prove to be a very big one, and will make the reputations of a great many men that are connected with it. If you are the man for the place, you will have proved within the eight months that fact, and the position will have been made, so that the university could not afford to drop it. This is my expectation. You are young enough now so that you could afford to do some speculating, and certainly the position is as permanent as the one you hold, or the average instructorial position in the universities. It is my hope that you will decide to accept the proposition, and I do not believe that you will have cause to regret it. Dean Greene, as executive officer, is unable to say as much about the future of this position as I am. In the first place, he could not afford, as executive officer, to tie himself by any promises. In the second place, he must know whether you are the right man for the place; and in the third place, I am not certain that he knows as much about the future of this proposition as I do. The matter has been placed in my hands, and I have had several intimate talks with President James in regard to it, and I know that he places great weight upon it being carried through to completion.

Sincerely yours,

Clarence W. Alvord

C.W.A.-W.

Urbana, Illinois,
June 11, 1910.

Mr. Solon J. Buck,
Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania.

My dear Buck:

Webb was so anxious to see his best girl that there has been a hitch in the matter of copy; whether or not he is sending any copies to you from East St. Louis I do not know, but he turned some of it over to Jackson in a rather indefinite way and Jackson has been unable to get it done. I am sending the originals to you in care of the Pennsylvania Historical Society. If you can correct the originals so that there will be no doubt as to the reading, you may do so. If, however, you think that there is some doubt as to the possibility of correcting these copies, employ a typist or two to copy for you and then correct their copy. On the whole, this latter would probably be the better way. This work must be done, so that if you are obliged to go to Boston before it is finished, it will be necessary for you to return to Philadelphia later.

I am now more certain than ever that it will be best for you to return by way of Canada. I have a fairly good lead on some fur trade material, concerning which I will write you later on.

Sincerely yours,

Plarence W. Alvord



Chicago
November 13, 1910

Dear Buck.

yours just received.
Congratulate you on your
success. I shall not reach
home until Wednesday.
and shall not be able to
send stuff to Chester till
Thursday afternoon. Let me

know your movements

Sincerely

Clarence W. Howard

November 17, 1910
Urbana, Illinois

My dear Buel:

I am sending under separate cover the copies, but in looking them over I realize that I have left out so much that should be transcribed that it will be almost impossible to do justice to the record unless the volume is sent here. I could get it copied inside of six weeks and in the interest of history I feel that the book should be sent. If Mr. Roberts and Mr. Mudd will assist you I believe due authority can be obtained. Give my best regards to all friends.

Sincerely yours
Clarence W. Alvord



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Editor of the Collections.

Illinois State Historical Library
STATE OF ILLINOIS,
SPRINGFIELD.

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to introduce Mr. Solon J. Buck of the University of Illinois who is acting as agent of the Illinois State Historical Library. Mr. Buck is on a mission for the above institution and bills that he may contract for the institution will be promptly paid by the same.

Respectfully yours,

Clarence W. Alvord

C.W.A.-W.

1911

Letter of Directions for Solon J. Buck.

When you go to Canada, it will probably be better for you to go first to Ottawa and see Doughty, although I may change these directions provided I receive favorable information from Quebec, but certainly I should not stop in Montreal until I had seen Doughty.

There is quite a large collection of Illinois-Wabash Land Company papers, 1773 and following, in the possession of a gentleman by the name of H. Joseph of Montreal. Doughty can tell you all about it. He is a millionaire and one not inclined to show his manuscript riches. Still, he has promised that I should have a look at them, but we have never been able to get together. Having talked with Doughty on the subject, I think I should not notify Mr. Joseph I was coming, but call upon him with a letter from Doughty or from Sulte, or both, and demand as circumstances dictate a sight of the letters and a right to have them copied. He may kick you out of the office but never mind. Return and ask him again.

I have been thinking over the question of fur trade material and I think that you had better read the latter part of Turner's Wisconsin Fur Trade, and the first ten pages of Chittenden's Fur Trade in Missouri. You will find that mighty little is known of these fur trading companies, but the following should be investigated for material of any sort all along the line: The Northwest Company, the Michillimackinac Company, the X. Y. Z. Company, the Southwest

Mr. ~~B~~uck #2.

Company, and the American Fur Company. All of these traded in northern Illinois more or less.

You will likely find a good deal of material on the fur trade in C. M. Burton's library and very likely he can tell you where other material is to be found, but I should go into the whole matter with Doughty very carefully.

I will not write more on this subject, as I can keep in touch with you as you travel along.

I am including a letter to Wilfred Campbell of Ottawa, because you will find him amusing and somewhat of a bore, but he is probably the best known Canadian poet of the time and while you are in the Canadian Archives you might as well meet him. He has a mighty pretty daughter.

I have left orders with Webb to copy all the letters of the American Philosophical Society and send them to you.

for Illinois history and then have copied only the fur-trade papers, at present, reserving the others for future use.

Mr. Stock would be willing to undertake the work if the Department had no objections and Jameson seems to think it can be arranged for him to do it this summer. He receives \$110 per mo. from the Carnegie Inst. but Jameson thought he ought to have \$125 for this work. It would, I should judge, take him about two months. ~~But~~ Judging from what Thwaites paid, I am inclined to think that we could get all of the Illinois material in the State office copied and collated for

312 C St. N.W. Wash. D.C.

June 1, 1911.

My dear Professor Alvord: -

I have just completed a survey of the materials in the Indian office and find there some 60 or 70 ~~too~~ letter-books or bound volumes of letters received besides a considerable mass of letters, papers, etc. all of which will have to be searched for material on fur-trade. The files of papers are undergoing rearrangement at present, many of them being put into ~~flat~~ vertical files, so it would not be advisable to attempt to do anything with them until that work is completed which will probably be several months from now. The letter books and bound

volumes, on the other hand, might be worked immediately, I should think. I went into them sufficiently to find out that they contain a great deal of valuable stuff for Indian history of Illinois both with relation to the fur-trade and to other matters. It occurred to me that it would be a loss of time in the end to work these merely for fur-trade material for ultimately it should all be secured.

I would suggest, therefore, that we engage Mr. Stock of the Carnegie Inst. to go through all the archives in the Indian office, for Illinois history in much the same way as he did

for Thwaites for Wis. hist. For Thwaites he made a rather full calendar of each paper and sent it on to Thwaites who then indicated what he wanted copied. He still has ~~these~~ these calendars on cards and I have made use of them. He could use them to advantage in doing our work. I ~~before~~ believe we could save time by giving general directions as to certain classes of documents to be copied + thus make it unnecessary for him to calendar any ~~except~~ except doubtful cases. If our funds will not permit of copying in extenso at the present time, we could have him list all the papers

I am looking by every mail for those papers ~~to~~ but collected in Phila. I do not think I can stand this climate more than a week longer, so am planning to go on ~~to~~ to Phil. about Wed. of next week. If you write or if Webb sends the papers I will send or before please address me as this letter is headed; if ~~later~~ later, address me Phila. or San. Reliance. I do not know where I will stop there.

Today I am going to take the general label office.

Very sincerely,

John J. Buck.

~~for~~ \$500 or including Mr. Stock's salary, \$750. If the copying should be limited to fur-trade material the total could probably be reduced to \$4 or \$500.

There is also some fur-trade and Indian material for 2ll. in the Schoolcraft papers in the Smithsonian and Schoolcraft + MacArthur papers in Library of Congress. The War Dept. files doubtless contain some also but that is absolutely inaccessible. Thwaites couldn't get at it with the assistance of half a dozen senators.

Mr. Stock expects to take a vacation June 15 to July 15 and would then be ready

to undertake this work if the arrangement is made. It would be well to settle it as soon as possible therefore. I wish you would let me know what you think about it.

The proof of the calendar of territorial papers has been put at my disposal by Jameson. It lists a lot of Illinois material. He has also turned over to me a bunch of rejected cards for the N.W., Ind., & Ill. territories & I am going to take or send them to Illinois to be copied.

How is this for a plan for some future volumes of the collections?

Indian Series

Fur trade 1778-1833 - 2 vols.

General Indian relations 1790 - 1827. 2 vols.?

Black Hawk + Winnebago Wars, 1827-1833. 1 vol.

Territorial Series

Laws of the territories 1790-1818. 1 or 2 vols.

~~General~~

~~Illinois in N.W. + Indiana Terr.~~
1790 - 1809. ~~General papers.~~

Illinois Territory 1809-1818.

I hope you are able to decipher this letter - it is written under somewhat adverse circumstances.

material relating to surveying of
the public lands in Illinois; complete
series of letters & letter-books; *
plates of every township in Ill. and
copies of all the field notes of
Ill. surveys. These townships
plates have been reproduced by
photo-lithographic process and
copies are for sale at 30 cts each.
Ought we not to have a complete
set for Illinois? It would cost
\$300 or \$400, I suppose. It occurred
to me that some of the field-notes
of surveys along the Reo Plains
might be of interest to you.
I promised not to bother you
with another letter for several days.

Very sincerely,
John G. Burch

312 C St. N.W., Wash. D.C.,
June 1, 1911

My dear Professor Blood: -
I wrote
you one letter this morning but
since then I have seen Jameson
and I took again. Mr. Stock
says he prefers to take his
vacation later in the
summer and so if he is to
undertake this work for us
he would like to begin
the middle of June and
could give us two months
straight until the middle
of August. Jameson says
that he could not spare
Mr. Stock from his work
after the first of October
so if we are going to
get his services it will

have to be during the summer. If it is not possible to secure a definite appropriation from the ~~board~~ trustees for the work I suggested in my previous letter, ^{at once,} can we not at least set Mr. Stock to work and pay him out of the fur-trade appropriation until the other can be arranged? I should like to have some word from you on the subject before I leave Washington, if possible, for then I could go over the stuff with Mr. Stock and indicate to him just what sorts of material should be copied, etc.

The Carnegie people can probably supply us with a good copyist and someone to help collate, probably the same people who did the work for T. Brewster. Mr. Stock will have to list the items in some way and it would be possible to postpone the actual copying until later, I suppose, though I believe it would be best to have it done at the same time and under his supervision.

I have been working in the General Land office today and found a lot of interesting



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Editor of the Collections.

Illinois State Historical Library
STATE OF ILLINOIS,
SPRINGFIELD.

Urbana, Ill., June 3, 1911.

Dr. Solon J. Buck,
312 C. St., N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Buck:

I just got your letters and have passed them on to Greene, with a recommendation that there be an appropriation of \$750.00 for this work. As I am obliged to go back to Chicago tomorrow, I shall probably not see him to talk it over, but I have asked him to write me immediately. I have also told him I have written to you to make arrangements with Mr. Stock and that I will send Mr. Stock final orders before the 15th of June as to whether or not he is to go on. If I was to have a personal conference with Greene, I think that I could persuade him, and hope that anyway he will agree with my recommendation. I think the find is excellent; in fact, it would be a great mistake not to have the whole work done right now. It would be a permanent acquisition to Illinois history and I don't doubt but what money will be forthcoming. Certainly I think there will be no doubt but what the \$250.00 will be forthcoming to



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Editor of the Collections.

Illinois State Historical Library

STATE OF ILLINOIS,
SPRINGFIELD.

Mr. Buck #2.

have the lists made.

I should like very much to have you call upon my neices Miss Carol Sherman, Miss Pattie Sherman, and Miss Dorothea Sherman, who are living at 1440 W. Street N.W. Street, Washington. They are Virginia girls, and their uncle thinks they are all right. I have written to my niece Carol to tell her that she may expect to see you, provided you have time, of course.

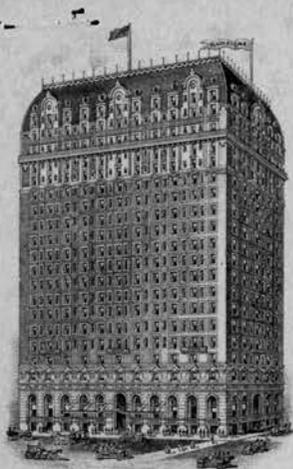
Sincerely yours,

C. W. Alvord

C.W.A.-W.

P.S. We'll send you an installment of the Franklin Pp. tomorrow and the rest by the end of the week.

Carol Sherman is librarian of Dairy Dept, Agricultural Dept. Call her up by phone, if you wish to find out when it will be convenient to call.



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THE BLACKSTONE

MICHIGAN BOULEVARD

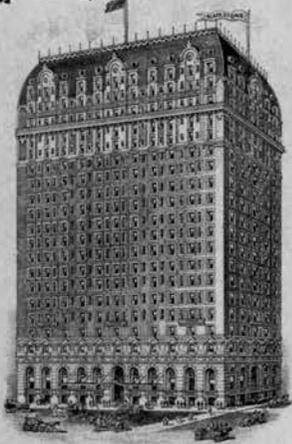
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CHICAGO, June 27 1911

My dear Bull:

What you have done
is well done and I have no
instructions to give you on the
matter. Mrs. Stott may continue
to work on the Indian papers
and on July 1, her services
will be officially engaged. There
will be no question about
this.

The arrangements you made
at Philadelphia are satisfactory
and you needn't return there.
Now to the fairtrade, you may



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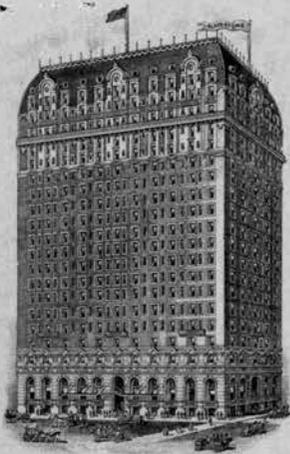
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CHICAGO,

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remember the name Philippe de
Rocheblave who represented Gr.
Britain at Kaskaskia in 1778.
His son, also Philippe, was manager
of the Great Lake region for the
South West Co. in 1816, when
it was sold out to Astor. For several
years I have been in correspondence
with a descendant through ~~his~~
female line, He is G. F. Bouthillier
of St. Therese, Province of Quebec,
St. Therese is near Montreal I
believe. Bouthillier's middle initial
may be V instead of ~~B~~ F. I want



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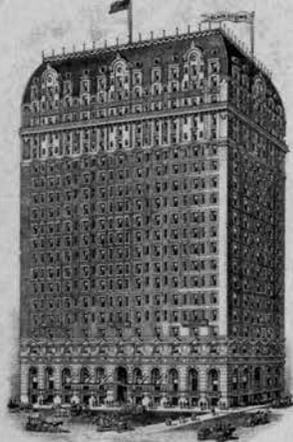
CHICAGO,

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you to call on him and find
out all leads to South West
Fur Co material. He may know
something about the Mackinac
Fur Co. also. Tell M. Bouthillier
that you come from me and
he will be glad to see you.

When in Ottawa ask Doughty
about M. Joseph of Montreal
who has the Ill.-Walrus Land
Co. Papers.

Greene wants you to come back
as soon as possible but don't
neglect any opportunities.



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MICHIGAN BOULEVARD

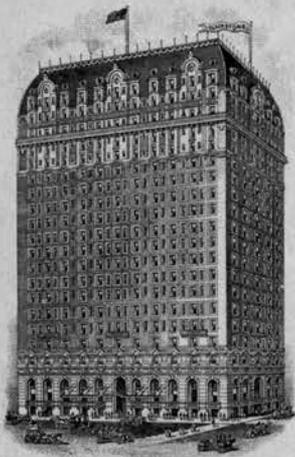
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CHICAGO,

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Keep a look out for portraits
of men which may be used
as illustrations.

Sincerely
yours
C. W. Alford



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MICHIGAN BOULEVARD

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CHICAGO, *June 27 1911*

My dear Buck;

I have written to
^{to day (June 27)}
Brene, that in my opinion your
trip should not be shortened.
He will write you final
instructions. If I were in Urbana
I should have no doubt of
the issue.

I was wrong about the name
of Rochelave. It was Pierre who
went into the fur trade, although
I believe his brother Philippe
did also. In haste
L. W. Shurd

Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library

CLARENCE WALWORTH ALVORD, EDITOR

Urbana, Illinois, October 21, 1912.

Dr. Solon J. Buck,
Champaign, Illinois.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

At the May Meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association in Bloomington, there was authorized the appointment by President McLaughlin of a committee to investigate the possibilities of starting a quarterly magazine devoted to the history of the Mississippi Valley. You may feel that to start such an enterprise is financially hopeless, but it is not expected that the magazine will pay for itself or even that the Association should pay for it. We have very good hopes of securing a guaranty fund for five years of \$1500.00 which will assure the financial side of the undertaking.

A much more difficult and important phase of the proposition is whether the scholars interested in western history are sufficiently numerous to insure the filling of the pages of the quarterly with good contributions and critical book reviews. It is in this phase of the question that the Committee is particularly interested, and it was appointed primarily to find out whether the scholars would guarantee filling the pages for one and one-half or two years.

Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library

CLARENCE WALWORTH ALVORD, EDITOR

This letter is being sent to well known scholars of western history by the Committee for the purpose of obtaining definite knowledge in regard to this matter. Will you kindly, therefore, let us know whether the future editors of the quarterly could count on a contribution from your pen within two years? Would it be possible for you to name approximately the date of a contribution and its character? Furthermore, would it be possible for you to promise from someone else besides yourself such a contribution? Also, would you be willing to review certain classes of books as they appear from the press and if so what class?

Since this matter is important and the Committee is to report to the Executive Committee at Boston next Christmas, it would be a great favor to us if you would answer this at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

C. W. Alvord

For the Committee.

Committee.

Clarence W. Alvord, Chairman.

Benjamin F. Shambaugh.

James A. James.

418 Lincoln Hall, Urbana, Illinois.

Professor C. W. Alvord,

416 Lincoln Hall.

My dear Mr. Alvord:-

In accordance with your request I will state my views with reference to the division of the territory embraced in the Mississippi Valley for consideration in the articles devoted to historical activities in the Mississippi Valley Historical Review. It seems to me that the principle of division should be historical interests, rather than geographic or physiographic conditions. My preference would be therefore for a division into the Old Northwest and Canada; the Old Southwest, including everything south of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi River which comes within our field; the Trans-Mississippi Northwest, including Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, and all states north of them; and the Trans-Mississippi Southwest. Any division by river basins, which would, for example, put Indiana and Illinois in separate groups, would seem to me distinctly undesirable, as the historical affiliations of these two states are especially close. In case it should seem desirable to divide the territory into three instead of four divisions, I would suggest the addition of Kentucky to the Northwest and Canada for the first division; the Trans-Mississippi West, including Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona for the second division; and the Lower Mississippi Valley for the third.

Sincerely yours,

S. J. R./MS