



[Solon J. Buck Papers.](#)

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Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut
Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

September 12, 1916.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minn.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

As you will see by the enclosure, the Yale Press is planning to publish a new history of the American people. Without repeating the words of the Prospectus, I will simply say that we believe the time is ripe for bringing to the reading public a fresh, literary presentation of our history, in a series of graphic narratives. We have neither the wish nor the intent to publish historical monographs like the valuable volumes in the American Nation series. Indeed, we do not wish to duplicate any of the histories now available. More than in most enterprises of this nature we shall lay stress upon literary form. Without abating a jot or tittle of historical accuracy, we shall aim to make these volumes readable.

You have probably anticipated my purpose in writing. I want your cooperation. One of the most important volumes in the series is still unsigned. And it is a volume which you are particularly fitted to write. It is the volume which I have called "The Farmers' Movement". Will you not undertake it?

The contents of this volume I have suggested in the following rough outline:

THE FARMERS' MOVEMENT

A Chronicle of the Granger in Politics.

The beginnings of the Grange (1867), the Alliance, and the Populist Party (1891). The political and economic movement and the men related to it. The Panic of 1873 - Greenbacks - Railroads - Weaver - Panic of 1893 - Free Silver - Bryan - Presidential Election of 1896.

(40,000 words)

Regarding financial compensation, I will say that Mr. Glasgow has determined to pay outright for the manuscripts rather than to offer royalties. The sum which I am authorized to offer you is the same as that given to my two colleagues, Andrews and Farrand, and to others: namely, seven hundred and fifty dollars. But I must make this offer conditional upon the delivery of the manuscript within a year from date. The plans for the series call for early publication.

The list of authors is nearly complete, and you will find yourself in a goodly company, including not merely members of college faculties, like Bliss Perry and Munro of Harvard and Dodd of Chicago and Becker of Minnesota, but also gifted writers who have strong historical interests like Miss Mary Johnston, Stewart E. White, and Emerson Hough. I hope that you will consent to join the group. May I ask for an early reply? It is imperative that these last volumes should be assigned.

Believe me, with cordial regards,

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

September 16, 1916

Professor Allen Johnson
Yale University
New Haven, Conn.

My dear Mr. Johnson:—

I have your letter of September 12 and after giving careful consideration to the proposition which it contains, have decided to accept the offer.

I have been very much interested in the Chronicles of Canada series, and thought when the first of these volumes appeared that the idea was an excellent one and could be applied in the field of American history. Your letter, however, was the first information I had that such an arrangement had been made.

I shall consider it a great privilege to be associated with the men whose names you mention in the preparation of the series. The only thing which caused me to hesitate is the date which has been set for the completion of the volume. My regular work for the Minnesota Historical Society and the University of Minnesota takes most of my time, and I have on hand a volume for the Illinois Centennial Commission which will take a month or two to complete. The greater part of my work on the proposed volume, therefore, will have to be done next summer.

A. J. 9/16/16--2

I am assuming that the volumes are to be similar in character to those in the Chronicles of Canada series. I shall want to know more, however, as soon as possible about the plans for the other volumes in the group in order to make mine fit in with them.

Sincerely yours

Approved:

Allen Johnson
Editor

THIS AGREEMENT made this Twenty-first day of September, 1916, between Robert Glasgow, Publisher, of Toronto, Canada, of the one part, hereinafter called the Publisher, and Solon J. Buck, Author, of St. Paul, Minnesota, of the other part, hereinafter called the Author, WITNESSETH:

1. The Publisher has entered into an agreement with the Yale University Press for the publication of a series of historical narratives under the general title of "The Chronicles of America" and the Publisher has requested the Author to co-operate in the literary preparation of the said Series.
2. The Author agrees to prepare the manuscript for one volume of the said Series, namely, the volume indicated by the following title in the Editor's prospectus of the Series:

THE FARMERS' MOVEMENT
A Chronicle of the Granger in Politics.

3. The said manuscript is to consist of about forty thousand words and is to be, as to literary form and arrangement, a fresh and original writing.
4. The Author agrees to deliver the manuscript to the Editor of the Series on or before October 1, 1917.
5. The Publisher agrees that the manuscript shall be read and considered with reasonable despatch and the Author agrees to amend and add as may be necessary to fit the manuscript for the Series, according to the judgment of the Editor. The Publisher agrees to set the manuscript in type with reasonable despatch, on notice from the Editor that it conforms to the requirements of the Series, and submit to the Author a proof which the Author agrees to read and return promptly.
6. The Publisher agrees to pay to the Author the sum of seven hundred and fifty dollars (\$750.), one-half to be paid on delivery to the Editor of the manuscript and one-half when the Author has read the proof.
7. Copyright and all property in the manuscript shall vest in the Publisher or in the Yale University Press; and the Author agrees that the manuscript shall contain nothing infringing any existing copyright.
8. This agreement shall be in force when approved by Allen Johnson, Editor of the Series, who shall signify his approval by subscribing his name on the margin hereof.

AS WITNESS our hands and seals and on the margin hereof the hand of Allen Johnson, the Editor of the Series aforesaid, to signify his approval of these presents, this the day and year first above written.

Edna Garner
Witness to the Publisher

Robert Glasgow (L.S.)

Mary E. Palmer
Witness to the Author

Solon J. Buck (L.S.)

Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut
Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

September 21, 1916.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

Your letter of the 16th. gave me great pleasure. It is a great satisfaction to know that you think highly of our enterprise and are willing to join our ranks. In reply to your query, I am sending a copy of the original prospectus. It has undergone many changes since it was struck off; but the outlines of the several volumes may give you a clearer idea of the niche which your volume will fill. You are right in thinking that the Chronicles of Canada will serve as a general model, though in many particulars we shall improve upon that series.

I am inclosing duplicate copies of the contract which we are asking all the authors to sign. You will note that I have set October 1, 1917 as the date for the delivery of your manuscript. This will give you the summer months to finish your writing. Please do not regard this as an elastic date which may be stretched on indefinitely. It is imperative that that the manuscripts should be delivered on time.

Within a few days I will send ^{to} you some further details about the series. If you will sign both copies of the contract and return one to me, we can then dismiss the business end of our relations.

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

September 28, 1916

Professor Allen Johnson
Yale University
New Haven, Conn.

My dear Mr. Johnson:-

I have your letter of the 21st containing the preliminary prospectus of the Chronicles of America and the duplicate copies of the contract, one of which I am returning to you enclosed as requested.

I shall be glad to receive further information about the series at any time. I would especially like to know the names of the authors of the other volumes in the group with mine, as it seems to me that considerable care will have to be exercised to prevent an undue amount of duplication.

I am wondering if you would consider the possibility of changing the title of my volume. There are two things about it in its present form that seem undesirable. In the first place, it is so similar to the title of my Granger Movement that some may suppose it to be similar in scope. In the second place, the word "Granger" was not used in connection with these movements after 1880. A substitute for this title which occurs to me just now is "The Agrarian Revolt (or Uprising); a Chronicle of the Farmer in Politics."

Sincerely yours

Early in Oct. 1916

1st of missing

Page 2.

in typewritten form. It is of mutual advantage, I think, to see the narrative in cold type.

In view of the title of the series and the explicit words of the prospectus, it would seem unnecessary to point out that we wish narratives, and not essays or commentaries upon American history. We are writing for a public which is not greatly interested in history and which is extraordinarily ignorant of American history. Even cultivated men and women express astonishment that American history has enough of permanent interest to fill fifty volumes. To arrest and hold the attention of the reading public, we must put our history into graphic narrative form. We dare not take much for granted, and we must be concrete. May I venture to suggest, at the risk of repeating a commonplace, that we should not rest content with a manuscript which is merely accurate in its details. If it does not grip the reader, it has failed to measure up to the requirements of the series.

I see no objection to changing the title of your volume. "The Agrarian Revolt: a Chronicle of the Farmer in Politics" is a good title. Suppose we let it stand for the present. Please write to me freely, whenever I can be of any assistance. If you should give me your manuscript before the contract date, I would rise up and call you blessed. At all events, let me have your outline as soon as the subject has taken definite shape in your mind.

Believe me, with all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

October 19, 1916.

Professor Allen Johnson,
637 Montgomery Avenue,
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

My dear Mr. Johnson:-

I received your letter of the 14,
and am glad to have the additional information about
the "Chronicles of America", especially the list of
authors. As soon as possible, I will send you a brief
outline of my volume, and later on I will elaborate
this somewhat, before beginning to write.

Sincerely yours,

NOV 20 1916

Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

637 Montgomery Avenue,

Bryn Mawr, Penn.,

November 18, 1916.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minn.

My dear Professor Buck:-

Before you begin to write your volume
on The Agrarian Revolt ^{may} I ask that you make a
rather detailed outline of the contents? I
have made the suggestion to other writers in
the series, and I think it promotes a promotes
a better understanding and a surer cooperation
between author and editor. I am writing this
note chiefly to say that I am planning to attend
the meetings of the American Historical Associa-
tion at Cincinnati and I should be very glad
of the opportunity of meeting you there and of
talking over your volume with you.

Believe me, with cordial regards,

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

November 22, 1916

Professor Allen Johnson
637 Montgomery Ave.,
Bryn Mawr, Penn.

My dear Professor Johnson:-

I have your letter of the eighteenth and note your request for a detailed outline of my volume on The Agrarian Revolt before beginning to write. I shall be glad to comply with your request, but it will be impossible for me to take up this work in earnest until after the holidays.

I am still hoping to attend the Cincinnati meeting of the American Historical Association and have an opportunity to talk over the volume with you, but I have some doubts as to whether I can spare the time.

Sincerely yours

DEC 4 1916

Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut
Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

637 Montgomery Avenue,

Bryn Mawr, Penn.,

November 28, 1916.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minn.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

Some weeks have passed since I promised to send instructions about a bibliography for your volume in our Chronicles of America. I have given the matter much thought, with the desire to aid the reader and spare the author as much as possible. In order to secure some sort of uniformity in the preparation of these bibliographical notes, I will ask you to follow the inclosed general directions as to content, form, and style. Please bear in mind that the bibliography is designed to serve the general reader rather than the special student.

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

DEC 4 1916

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

To aid those readers of The Chronicles of America who wish to consult other books, a bibliographical note will be appended to each volume. These notes will not pretend to be exhaustive but only suggestive. They will be most helpful if a brief, pithy valuation of each book is added to the title. A mere compilation of titles will leave the average reader not much wiser than before.

CONTENTS: A bibliographical note should include chiefly titles of books which give special, authoritative information. In addition to these secondary authorities, mention may be made of primary sources. The author may take advantage of this opportunity, since frequent use of footnotes is deprecated, to point out and evaluate briefly the sources which he has used. For the most part, however, stress should be laid on books which the reader is likely to use.

LENGTH: The character of the subject will determine the length of the bibliography. It should not exceed eight hundred words; that is, about four pages in the format which will be used.

STYLE: Each item in the bibliographical note should give, besides the exact and full title, the author's surname with initials, the number of volumes (if more than one), the latest edition (if more than one), and the date of publication; e.g.,

Francis Parkman, Pioneers of France in the New World. (1865)

J. F. Rhodes, History of the United States since the Compromise of 1850. 7 vols. (1893-1906)

James Bryce, The American Commonwealth. 2 vols. (4th ed. revised, 1910)

Justin Winsor, Editor, Narrative and Critical History of America. 8 vols. (1884-1889)

JAN 25 1917

Dale University
New Haven, Connecticut
Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

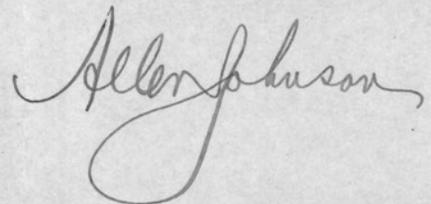
637 Montgomery Avenue,
Bryn Mawr, Penna.,
January 23, 1917.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

As the manuscripts for our Chronicles of America come in, the need of carefully planning the scope of each volume becomes clearer and clearer. It is trying, I grant, to sit down in cold blood and draft a scheme of chapters, but the editor cannot be sure that the opposite method - plenary inspiration at the moment of writing - will produce a volume which will fit into the series. One instance has occurred where the author, following his own sweet will and scorning the advice of the luckless editor, has written a manuscript which has little or no relation to what precedes or follows. The work will have to be done over, with much travail of spirit. It is to avoid a repetition of this unhappy episode that I beg you to send an outline of your volume, even if it be no more than a series of chapter headings. Verbum sat sapienti!

Sincerely yours,



February 5, 1917

Professor Allen Johnson
637 Montgomery Ave.,
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

My dear Mr. Johnson:-

I received your letter of January 23 and I quite agree with you as to the desirability of the careful planning of each volume in the "Chronicles of America."

I shall certainly submit an outline of my volume to you before I begin to write. At present I am swamped with proof for a volume which is being published by the Illinois Centennial Commission, but I will get to work on this outline at the earliest possible moment.

Sincerely yours

Dale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

637 Montgomery Avenue,
Bryn Mawr, Penna.,
April 18, 1917.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minn.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

In planning The Chronicles of America the Editor had to assume an air of omniscience which he was far from feeling. It was a constrained attitude, and now that the contributors have been secured, he hastens to step off the pedestal. From the outset he was aware that gaps existed in the series. Critics have not allowed him to forget the error of his ways. If all friendly critics had been equally persuasive, the series would now number seventy volumes instead of fifty. But the publishers sternly called a halt. And only two pleas melted their obdurate hearts. We have added to the series a volume on "The Southwest under Spain: a Chronicle of Colonial Adventure in California and the Gulf Lands", and a volume on "The Armies of Big Business: a Chronicle of the Organized Wage Earners." Both welcome additions.

As the enterprise has taken more definite shape, some of the titles have gained in precision and - we think - in picturesqueness. The Editor is trying to profit by his own advice to the contributors: to avoid the suspicion of discussion and exposition; and to stress the entertaining and dramatic sides of American life. The series can be justified, indeed, only by bringing out the story element in our history. The titles of the several volumes should hold out the alluring prospect of vivid historical narratives dealing with incident, character, and personality.

Please look through the inclosed circular and note the changes in the titles. In several instances the order of volumes has been altered to give greater coherence to the series. After all, we are embarked on a great cooperative enterprise, and we must have an eye to the other fellow's task, as well as to our own. In Franklin's words, we must hang together if we would not be hanged separately.

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

MAY 18 1917

Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut
Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

May 17, 1917.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

Dear Mr. Buck:-

Our series of Chronicles is assuming such proportions and demanding so much editorial assistance that we have decided to establish headquarters in New York City. Accordingly, Mr. Glasgow has leased offices in the Brunswick Building at 225 Fifth Avenue, which will also be my headquarters. I will ask you, therefore, to send your manuscript, when it is ready, directly to this address in New York City. Please address letters to me either at Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut, or at 225 Fifth Avenue, New York City. ✓

Faithfully yours,

Allen Johnson

JUN 4 1917

June 1, 1917.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minn.

My dear Professor Buck:-

In addressing letters or manuscripts to me
at 225 Fifth Avenue, New York City, please add

Care of Robert Glasgow, Publisher.

We have found it safer and more expeditious to send
manuscripts by registered mail.

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

✓ck

JUL 19 1917

UNITED STATES
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED
225 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

ROBERT GLASGOW
PRESIDENT & MANAGING DIRECTOR

July 17, 1917

Professor Solon J. Buck
Minnesota Historical Society
St. Paul, Minnesota

Dear Sir:

At the request of the editor, Professor Allen Johnson, I am posting you today page proof of the first volume of the Chronicles of America to be put in type, "Elizabethan Sea-Dogs", by William Wood. The editor thinks that you will be interested to see this.

Sincerely yours

Robert Glasgow
Managing Director

Separate Cover

August 13, 1917

Professor Allen Johnson
& Robert Glasgow, Publisher
225 Fifth Ave., New York

My dear Mr. Johnson:-

I find it necessary to make a report with reference to the volume assigned to me in the Chronicles of America series which will, I fear, be very unsatisfactory to you.

I had expected to spend about half of my time from the close of the University year and the whole of my month of vacation in working on this volume, but circumstances which I could not foresee, most of which have resulted from the entrance of the United States into the war, have made this program impossible. I have delayed writing to you about this much longer than I should have, hoping against hope that things would so shape themselves that I would be able to fulfill the contract within the specified time. I now feel, sure, however, that it will be impossible.

Shortly after the declaration of war, a committee was formed here, of which I am a member, for the purpose of disseminating information about the war, and I have been out several times to make speeches on the subject in the rural districts. Then the State Public Safety Commission requested me to plan and make arrangements for the examination of the press of Minnesota, with reference to the attitude of each paper and of each section toward the war. The Committee on Public Information in Washington, through Dean Ford who has charge of one of its Bureaus, has called upon me for assistance in various matters, and the National Board for Historical Service has asked me to take charge of its prize contest for teachers in Minnesota in the writing of essays on "Why the United States is at War." I have also felt it my duty to make plans and put them in operation for the conservation of materials for the history of the participation of Minnesota in the war.

To cap the climax, the attorney general called upon me recently to assist him in collecting evidence of an historical character bearing upon the dispute between Wisconsin and Minnesota over the boundary line in the Duluth-Superior harbor.

A. J. 8/13/17--2

In view of the fact that I am above draft age and probably physically disqualified for service in the army, I have felt it to be my duty to do what I could and whatever I might be called upon to do that would seem to be of service to the country, and this is the only excuse which I have to offer for my delinquency.

Now as to the future. If you think it best to cancel the contract and secure someone else to write the volume, such arrangement would be entirely satisfactory to me. On the other hand, if you find it possible to extend the time for the preparation of this volume to July 1, 1918, I feel sure that I will be able to produce a creditable piece of work. The Minnesota Historical Society expects to appoint a librarian this fall, which will relieve me of a considerable part of my present work here, and my University work next year will be comparatively light.

Should this arrangement be made, I would secure the services of an assistant in collecting additional material and would devote to the volume all the time that I could spare from my other duties, finishing it if possible before the date suggested. I happen to know that Professor Becker, who is writing one of the early volumes in the series, was allowed until next spring for its completion, and as the volume assigned to me comes almost at the end, it would seem that the suggested arrangement might be made without seriously interfering with the progress of the series. I have already done a considerable amount of preliminary work on the volume, and I enclose herewith a working outline. In case you wish me to continue with the volume, I would appreciate any suggestions which you may care to make anent this outline.

Sincerely yours

AUG 28 1917

Dale University
New Haven, Connecticut
Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

225 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.
August 25, 1917.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

Your letter of August thirteenth is at hand but I can not accede to your request for an extension of time without first conferring with Mr. Glasgow. He is on a vacation at present but will return within a few days. In general I may say that we are reluctant to postpone the publication of the series. The volumes will not appear in chronological order, and to postpone any one volume disarranges our plans for the series. However, I shall write to you as soon as I hear from Mr. Glasgow.

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

SEP 4 1917

Dale University
New Haven, Connecticut
Allen Johnson
Professor of American History

225 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.
August 29, 1917.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
Minnesota Historical Society,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

My dear Mr. Buck:-

A letter has come at last from Mr. Glasgow in reply to yours of August thirteenth which I forwarded to him. I trust that you will pardon the delay. You surely will when I tell you that it has been caused by the death of Mr. Glasgow's elder son. The boy - he was only eighteen - was a sub-lieutenant in a squadron of the Naval Air Service attached to the Royal Flying Corps. He was killed in action on the French front, on Sunday August nineteenth. It is a bitter blow to the father and mother as you can readily understand.

We are agreed that you should have the extension of time which you ask. When a man is doing such effective service as you are, we must make our little undertaking give way to the paramount cause. I do hope, however, that you will be able to give me your manuscript before July 1, 1918.

Regarding the outline I have few criticisms to make. It seems to be well thought

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out and well knit together. In chapter eleven I note that you refer a second time to the panic of '73. I presume that this is a misprint for the panic of 1893. With additional time I hope that you will be able to give even more attention to the dominating personalities in the period.

When I talked with you at Cincinnati you expressed some doubt about this mode of treatment, fearing that the biographical material would be hard to find. With an assistant to collect material for you perhaps you can stress the personal side of history even more than you contemplated in your outline. I do not find any mention of General Weaver. He may not be a great man, but he wielded a rather remarkable influence in Iowa and neighboring states.

Please let me keep in touch with your work.

Believe me, with all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Allen Johnson

September 4, 1917

Professor Allen Johnson
225 Fifth Ave.,
New York City

My dear Mr. Johnson:-

Your letter of August 29 to Mr. Buck has just arrived. He is out of town for a few days on a much needed vacation, but will be back the early part of next week, and your letter will be turned over to him immediately.

He will be sorry, indeed, to learn of the death of Mr. Glasgow's son. It certainly must have been a terrible blow to his parents, and the sincere sympathy of all should be extended to them.

Sincerely yours

Secretary to the superintendent

September 15, 1917

Professor Allen Johnson
225 Fifth Ave.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Johnson:-

Your letter of August 29 arrived during my absence from the city, and as I am leaving again tomorrow for a few days, I have only time to acknowledge it and to state that I will get the manuscript of my book into your hands as soon as possible.

I quite agree with you that it would be desirable to stress the personal side of the history of these movements, and will introduce as much material of that sort about General Weaver and similar characters as seems to be feasible.

Sincerely yours