



[Solon J. Buck Papers.](#)

Copyright Notice:

This material may be protected by copyright law (U.S. Code, Title 17). Researchers are liable for any infringement. For more information, visit www.mnhs.org/copyright.

February 11, 1931

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits
48 Whitson Street
Forest Hills Gardens
Long Island, New York

Dear Mr. Paltsits:-

I have been very much gratified for some time at the interest which you have shown in the Minnesota Historical Society and its work, and consequently it gives me much pleasure to have the privilege of enrolling you as a corresponding member. Your offer to be of real service to the society by calling our attention to items in our field is very much appreciated and I am sure that this service will be helpful to us.

As for the Public Archives Commission, it is true that I received notice of and accepted appointment thereto, but I did not realize how much I was letting myself in for. Your and Leland's selection of me to run the conference of archivists at St. Louis is highly complimentary to me, and this is one of the sort of things which I simply cannot refuse to do, although I don't see how on earth I am going to find time to attend to half of the things that I am supposed to look after.

I trust that your suggestion that I preside over the conference does not mean that you do not expect to be there, and if you are going to be there, I think that it would be very much better for you, as chairman of the Commission, to preside even though I do the work. I shall write to Greene immediately about the place on the program, but it is probable that I shall do nothing about the program for the conference itself until after the meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association in May, when I will have an opportunity to talk the matter over with people from the other states. In the meanwhile any more definite suggestions concerning this program which may occur to you will be very much appreciated. Your ideas as to the annual report seem to me quite excellent and proper.

Sincerely yours

B/P

SEP 19 1921

476 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y.
September , 1921

Dear Dr. Buck :

Some of us believe it would be valuable to the American Historical Association and a proper tribute to Professor Herbert E. Bolton, of the University of California, if he were selected as vice-president at the forthcoming meeting at St. Louis. He has served the Association as a member of the Executive Council and on various committees or commissions. His productive scholarship is well known. He has been connected with educational and historical interests in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Texas, and California, and stands at the head of a distinct historical movement in this country. It would seem to be timely to put in line for the presidency a representative of the Pacific coast.

If you agree, will you kindly express this wish to Professor Frank H. Hodder (of the University of Kansas), 1115 Louisiana Street, Lawrence, Kansas, preferably during September? He is chairman of the Nominating Committee.

Yours very truly,

Victor H. Paltsits

Forest Hills Gardens, L.D.

February 1, 1921

Dear Buck:

No doubt you received formal notice from the secretary of the American Historical Association of the re-establishment of the Public Archives Commission after its brief suspension, and of your appointment by the Executive Council as a member thereof.

Today, Leland and I went over the ground with respect to some programme which might be carried out during the year 1921, notwithstanding the fact that no appropriation whatever was made for the Commission's use. Leland says, however, that he will manage to beg, borrow, or — well, you may surmise, some writing paper, postage stamps, etc., and says he will see that the expenses, incident to organizing an annual conference of archivists at St. Louis next December, will be met out of the programme committee's budget. I have faith, so pass it on to you.

One of the things we agreed upon in our discussion was this. There should be held at St. Louis, as stated, a conference of archivists, at which the centralizing idea should be, the interest of archival work and its needs in the Mississippi Valley. The organization of the programme for this conference and giving local publicity to it, is to be placed entirely in your hands. You are also to preside over the conference and ^{to} arrange to have the conference's discussions recorded, so that when the conference is over we shall have a textual

2

record, revised by you, of the papers, discussions, etc., as printer's copy. This copy will come to me, as part of the Commission's materials to go into its Annual Report, which I shall edit. Other parts of the said report are, tentatively, as suggested, to be a ~~brief~~ summary of legislation relating to archives, for the period since we left off reporting the same; European notes or archival news; and a bibliographical account of current archival publications issued in America. The purpose is, to farm out the various lines of work among members of the Commission. That has led me to put your part right up to you, before it gets cold through neglect on my part. As to the conference itself, you should arrange with E. B. Greene, who is Chairman of the programme committee, for a proper place (day and hours) on the programme. The early bird will catch the best reservation. There is now an opportunity for you to put through a conference, virtually a regional conference, in which the ideas of closer coordination and co-operation which formed part of our recommendation to the Council can be carried to fruition.

Anything you may want of me in the matter will be at your service. Uncle Sam will carry our exchanges and bring us nearer together.

Yours sincerely
Victor H. Pallnitz
Chairman

FEB 17 1921

New York, February 14, 1921

Dear Dr. Buck:

I am pleased to have your letter of the 16th instant. Your proposals with respect to preparing for the conference of archivists at St. Louis seem to be logical. You will be able to meet your men at the May meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, scent the problems, invoke the coöperation, and get a logical and practical programme. It is entirely in your hands. I hope to be present at St. Louis.

You certainly must be busy; but that is good for the health. I am writing now about one A.M.; but it is an early hour. It is yet some while before train time in the morning! Perhaps you have not heard that I am bound to produce the summing-up volume (vol. 51) in the Chronicles of America series, namely, a Dictionary and Index, of about 250,000 words. Along with it I have four jobs at the New York Public Library; have to raise my year's supply of vegetables; remember that I am married; have some concern about my grandchildren - those here and those expected; and, withal, keep up an interest in archives and some other things. When I was younger I thought I was busy, but now I know I am enjoying too much leisure. Recently I congratulated Henry Vignaud

on the occasion of his 90th birthday and said,
it is a great encouragement to us younger men
to find that one can write history and remain
ninety years young. It all depends upon where
we look - backward or forward. When I look
ahead and see the older men, I feel youthful
myself.

I will remember my duty to the
Minnesota Historical Society.

With thanks and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Victor H. Palmieri

P.S. I miss a typewriter and a stock of
Public Archives Commission writing paper. I hope
you will make allowances for the poverty
represented in the lack of both. Som I will
be forced to write on bark if this dogged
condition continues.

JUN 3 1921

The New York Public Library

Astor, Tenoer and Tilden Foundations

476 FIFTH AVENUE

New York, June 1, 1921

Dear Buck:

How did you make out at the meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, with respect to laying out the programme for the St. Louis Conference of Archivists? Keep me informed of progress.

I hear that Mr. Tail is leaving you for a place in New York. He is a coming man and I am glad he is going

up the ladder, although
naturally sorry you lose
so good a coworker.

I trust all goes well
with your interests in general.

Sincerely yours,
Victor H. Talbot

July 12, 1921

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits
476 Fifth Ave.,
New York City

Dear Paltsits:--

I talked over the matter of the Conference of Archivists in St. Louis with a number of people at the M. V. H. A. meeting, but without making much progress.

I understand that Dr. Mereness, who has had charge of cooperative calendaring in the Washington archives for a group of northwestern states during the last six or seven years, has evolved the idea of some sort of a semi-public archives bureau in Washington to render assistance to historical agencies in locating and making use of material in the Washington archives. What do you think of asking him to prepare a paper on this subject, or perhaps on the broader subject of "Archival materials in Washington of special interest to state historical agencies, and how to get at them"?

This might be followed by an account of the methods, work, and results of the group of cooperators in the Northwest, by some member of the group, and the rest of the meeting could be given over to a discussion of these subjects. I take it that you will have some sort of a report to present to the Conference, with a statement of the work and prospects of the Public Archives Commission and especially of the "Archives Primer."

By the way, do you know of any competent person, who might be interested in the position of curator of our manuscript division at a salary of eighteen hundred. I want to get, not a mere custodian, but someone with training in historical research and the use of manuscript material, for he or she will probably be called upon to assist me in research and editorial work. Miss Nunns, the assistant superintendent of the Wisconsin Historical Society, has suggested Miss Weeks, formerly of their staff, who she says is now with you. Would the salary be sufficient to interest her?

Sincerely yours

B/P

JUL 10 1921

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

(Organized in September, 1884. Incorporated by Act of Congress, 1889.)

H. MORSE STEPHENS, *President*, Berkeley, Cal.
GEORGE L. BURR, *First Vice-President*, Ithaca, N. Y.
WORTHINGTON C. FORD, *Second Vice-President*, Boston

WALDO G. LELAND, *Secretary*, Carnegie Institution, Washington
CLARENCE W. BOWEN, *Treasurer*, New York
EVARTS B. GREENE, *Secretary of the Council*, Urbana, Ill.
A. HOWARD CLARK, *Curator*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington

PUBLIC ARCHIVES COMMISSION

VICTOR H. PALTSITS, *Chairman*, New York
CLARENCE W. ALVORD, Urbana, Ill.
CHARLES M. ANDREWS, New Haven, Conn.
SOLON J. BUCK, Minneapolis, Minn.

GEORGE S. GODARD, Hartford, Conn.
THOMAS M. OWEN, Montgomery, Ala.
A. S. SALLEY, JR., Columbia, S. C.

Office of the Chairman

~~1055 Morris Avenue, New York~~

July 15, 1921

Dear Buck:

I have your letter of the 12th before me. The programme is in your hands and the plan you suggest seems to me to be satisfactory. Keep right on with the organization and let me know when the programme has been laid out, with topics and speakers. It will be my duty to report to the secretary in the autumn, as usual, for the information of the executive council.

Probably I shall be at St. Louis. My daughter now lives there. My son-in-law is general superintendent of a large pharmaceutical corporation in St. Louis. But it is too far off to know now what I can do in December.

As you know, the council made no appropriation for the work of the Public Archives Commission. Not one cent have we

I am using writing paper of 1917 and personally pay the postage of the Commission. Under these circumstances it is not encouraging to do very active service. As to the Primer, I might say that Leland thought it better to suspend on it this year. He goes to France in the autumn, I believe, and says he will work on it next year. Meanwhile, we have the papers read at conferences and printed. They cover the entire field and in more words than could be given in a condensed Primer. As far as I am concerned, no thought can be given to it until the Chronicles of America Dictionary of History is finished, so not this year or next year.

Miss Weeks has \$1800. with me and an easier job than yours would be. However, I never stand in the way of any member of my staff going, if dissatisfied or for improvement. Dr. Asa Currier Filton is no longer with me. He might take your job for a while. He never sticks long in one place, but he is exceptionally good and a hard worker while it lasts. I thought you had Miss Virtue.

Sincerely yours,
Victor H. Paltsits

August 13, 1921.

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits,
New York Public Library,
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Paltsits:

The Conference of Archivists
is still in a very unsettled condition.

In accordance with your original suggestion that the Conference should deal with whatever matters the archivists of the Mississippi Valley are interested in, I have been trying to find out what these matters are, but without success. The only concrete suggestion which I have had is from Fuller, who wants a paper by some one with experience on "How to Conduct a Campaign for an Archives Building". My idea of having a paper by Mereness on "Material of State and Local Interest in the Washington Archives and How to Get at It", including a discussion of his proposed Archives Bureau, ran up against a snag, in that Parish had already engaged Mereness for a paper on this subject at the Conference of Historical Societies.

Leland suggested the possibility of a joint conference, and I have had some correspondence with Parish about this. There are obvious objections to such an arrangement, however. I think that Parish would let us have Mereness if we insisted, but his subject is just as appropriate to their Conference as to ours, and I do not like to take him away from them.

In looking over the reports of, and thinking over, previous Conferences of Archivists, it seems to me that pretty nearly the whole range of possible subjects has been covered at some time. Some new ideas on the

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits 8/13/21 --2--

subject have just come to me, and I am shooting them to you without giving them time to mature.

It strikes me that the subject of Archives is not and cannot be made one of general interest and popularity. Why not recognize this fact, give up trying to attract an audience and arrange for a real but informal conference of the few people actively interested in archive matters? A general topic such as, "What Shall be Done About State Archives" might be selected and some half dozen men persuaded to agree to take part in the discussion. I would have no formal papers whatever, but would prepare a list of sub-topics to be taken up for discussion and send this in advance to those who agree to take part. A Conference could then be conducted in a very informal manner, with the Chairman guiding it by asking questions when necessary to keep the ball rolling.

This may be half baked idea, but I would like to know what you think about it. The result would probably be a sort of experience meeting, something similar to those which frequently develop spontaneously at the meetings of our Conference of Directors of State Historical Agencies in the Upper Mississippi Valley.

I appreciate the confidence which you show in me in telling me to go ahead and make arrangements, but I also remember that you promised to advise and assist me, and I want your advice before making final decisions in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

B-N

AUG 18 1921

The New York Public Library

Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

476 FIFTH AVENUE

New York, August 17, 1921

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

Dear Buck:

I am very sorry to learn that the organization of the forthcoming Conference is yet in penumbra. I hope the difficulties will soon be in eclipse.

The subject suggested by Fuller is a very good one. I should suppose that you could have one or more persons provide papers with respect to experiences in cases that have produced results. Your own State could make a contribution. Then, a discussion or round table talk would surely be stimulating, first, on the aforesaid subject, and then on some secondary subject, such as you have suggested on "What shall be done about State archives?"

Since my foregoing suggestions modify so little yours outlined in your letter, I think you might care to go ahead on some such plan. This would provide something written down as printer's copy for the Annual Report and leave enough time for informality. I should hope that we could preserve, through expert stenographic report, the substance of the discussions, as a matter of record.

and for the information of absentees. I enclose a tentative outline, merely to see how it would look. You need not, of course, follow it. I have put the whole matter in your hands and am not going to hamstring you in the execution of it. You just Buck-lee down to it!

The trouble with the A.H.A. is -- we don't get money; we are expected to produce copy and results; we are too scattered for talking things over; we have a few hours for a conference, perhaps interrupted by luncheons, and the results cannot be what we wish.

Thanks for your willingness to go right on, and with kind regards, I am

Yours sincerely,

Victor H. Pallnitz

VHP:LR.

CONFERENCE OF ARCHIVISTS

- 1- Introduction, by presiding chairman
- 2- Papers on "How to conduct a campaign for a History and Archives Building" - by representatives of two or three states which have succeeded, as Minnesota, North Carolina, Connecticut (State Library), or others.
- 3- Round table discussion on
 - (a) The above subject
 - (b) "What shall be done about State archives?"

Perhaps another subject for discussion would be, "What should the American Historical Association do with the Public Archives Commission, and what should the Commission do for the Association?"


Aug. 17/21

4
August 26, 1921

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits
New York Public Library
476 Fifth Ave.,
New York City

Dear Paltsits:-

With the assistance of the suggestions contained in your letter of August 17 I have evolved what I think will be a satisfactory program for the conference of archivists. A copy in tentative form is enclosed herewith. I have not secured acceptances from any of the people as yet, but do not anticipate much difficulty on that score.

It seems to me that the subject "How can the states be persuaded to take proper care of their archives?" would cover Fuller's suggestion with reference to a building campaign and give room for discussions on related subjects as well.

Your suggestion that the Public Archives Commission itself might be a subject for discussion strikes me as an excellent one, and you are obviously the man to start it off. I think the papers ought to be restricted to about fifteen minutes and the discussion to five minutes for each speaker. How does this strike you? Any suggestions will be very much appreciated.

I have sent a copy of this tentative program to Greene and will send copies to the people whose names appear on it, with the requests for their participation.

I am leaving tomorrow for a vacation but will be back about September 20, which will be in ample time, I suppose, for getting the program in its final form.

B/P

Sincerely yours

CONFERENCE OF ARCHIVISTS

- 1 Subject: "How Can the States be Persuaded to Take Proper Care of their Archives?"

Paper: "Lessons from North Carolina,"

R. W. D. Connor

Paper: "Lessons from Iowa,"

C. C. Stiles

Paper: "Lessons from Connecticut,"

G. S. Godard

Discussion lead by representatives of five or six other states.

- 2 Subject. "The Future of the Public Archives Commission"

Paper: "The Achievements and Possibilities of the Commission,"

V. H. Pallats

Discussion lead by J. F. Jackson, past and present members of the commission, etc.

October 19, 1921.

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits,
New York Public Library,
476 Fifth Avenue,
New York City, New York.

Dear Paltsits:-

I trust that you received my letter of August 28 enclosing a tentative program for the conference of archivists. I enclose another copy of the program for your reference in case you do not have that one at hand. Everyone on it, but yourself, has now accepted and I am taking it for granted that you would have notified me before this if you were not intending to prepare the paper assigned to you.

Have you any suggestions for additional people to be asked to take part in the discussion? Greene is quite anxious that the session be limited to two hours and so I think we had better restrict the papers to fifteen minutes each and the remarks of those who take part in the discussion to five minutes each. I don't believe that it would be advisable to have more than two or three people scheduled for the discussion of each subject, so as to leave some time for impromptu discussion.

Greene has asked that copy for the preliminary edition of the program be in his hands by November 1.

I trust that everything goes well with you. I took a much needed vacation of about three weeks and am still trying to catch up with my work.

Sincerely yours

SB-MP

OCT 24 1921

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

(Organized in September, 1884. Incorporated by Act of Congress, 1889.)

H. MORSE STEPHENS, *President*, Berkeley, Cal.
GEORGE L. BURR, *First Vice-President*, Ithaca, N. Y.
WORTHINGTON C. FORD, *Second Vice-President*, Boston

WALDO G. LELAND, *Secretary*, Carnegie Institution, Washington
CLARENCE W. BOWEN, *Treasurer*, New York
EVARTS B. GREENE, *Secretary of the Council*, Urbana, Ill.
A. HOWARD CLARK, *Curator*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington

PUBLIC ARCHIVES COMMISSION

VICTOR H. PALTSITS, *Chairman*, New York
CLARENCE W. ALVORD, Urbana, Ill.
CHARLES M. ANDREWS, New Haven, Conn.
SOLON J. BUCK, Minneapolis, Minn.

GEORGE S. GODARD, Hartford, Conn.
THOMAS M. OWEN, Montgomery, Ala.
A. S. SALLEY, JR., Columbia, S. C.

Office of the Chairman
~~1955 Morris Avenue, New York~~

October 21, 1921

Dear Buck:

Today is the first time I have been able to reach New York since last week-end. I have had a bad attack of bronchitis and still am hors de combat. But I found your letter and reply at once tonight.

Since Greene wants facts for the programme, you had better send him a tentative copy. I am returning yours with recommended changes, so as to be in form. When you write out another copy for Greene, kindly send me also a carbon. I shall soon be obliged to make a Chairman's statement to the secretary of the Association and the schedule will be included.

Feeling as I do now, I am unable to say definitely where I shall be at Christmas. The threatening railroad strike may come off and add another factor to the present indecision. As you know, my daughter and her family now live in St. Louis. That would surely seem to be a drawing card to me. But there is another complication. My daughter is sending weekly letters of her homesickness to her mother and, as she cannot come to the mountain, wants her mother to come to her. I am hoping that I can make the visit at Christmas and have Mrs. Paltsits go later, if I can work it around without appearing selfish. We cannot both go together, partly on account of the double expense at one time and

more because it is an unsolvable problem to leave a suburban house unoccupied in winter. I had hoped to have my son's family keep watch and fire, but they just "kidded" me and got another baby. Then Mrs. P. will want to stay for weeks while I can remain only for days. But I shall no longer trouble you with these matters. When you have grandchildren east and west of the Alleghenies you will have a solution - I hope.

So you have secured acceptances from Connor, Stiles, Godard, and Jameson. All right, let my subject stand. Perhaps I can come or send a written statement. If not, the programme would be long enough for two hours of duration.

I thank you for your work in this matter. This is the first time that I have not had to work out a programme. I know it is no simple job to get subjects and then speakers.

With kind regards I am

Sincerely yours,
Victor H. Faltzitz

CONFERENCE OF ARCHIVISTS

Dr. Solon J. Buck, presiding

- 1 Subject: "How Can the States be Persuaded to Take Proper Care of their Archives?"

Paper: "Lessons from North Carolina,"

R. W. D. Connor

15 minutes

Paper: "Lessons from Iowa,"

C. C. Stiles

15 minutes

Paper: "Lessons from Connecticut,"

~~George~~ S. Godard

15 minutes

Discussion lead by representatives of ~~five~~ ^{three} or ~~six~~ other states, *maximum time of each five minutes* 30 minutes
1 1/2 hrs

- 2 Subject. "The Future of the Public Archives Commission"

Paper: "The Achievements and Possibilities of the Commission,"

V. H. Paltsits

10 minutes

Discussion lead by J. F. Jameson, past and present members of the commission, etc.,

20 to 35 minutes

Note: This arranges for 2 1/4 hrs. It is not likely to run that long. That would be short enough. We have not had a conference for at least two years. If cut down too much, the discussions will not produce the fruit intended. The time notes are set in the margin only for us. *PHU*
Not to be printed of course.

October 25, 1921

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits
48 Whitson Street
Forest Hills Gardens
Long Island, New York

Dear Paltsits:-

I am in receipt of your letter of October 21 and hope that the complications of which you speak will not prevent you from being present at the St. Louis meeting. In view of the fact that you are to appear on the program, I suppose that I can no longer object to serving as chairman.

Herewith you will find a copy of the revised program as it is being sent to Greene. It now seems to me unwise to have more than two people listed to take part in the discussion of each subject. I think I will ask Leland and Oliver of Indiana to be prepared to discuss the first subject, and C. M. Andrews in addition to Jameson, the second subject. I want to have as much time as possible for impromptu discussion.

I am sorry to hear of your illness. I have just taken a day off myself because of a bad cold, and, fortunately, that seems to have cured it.

Sincerely yours

B/P

CONFERENCE OF ARCHIVISTS

Chairman: Selon J. Buck, Minnesota Historical Society

Subject: How Can the States be Persuaded to Take Proper
Care of their Archives?

Lessons from North Carolina

R. W. D. Connor, North Carolina Historical
Commission

Lessons from Iowa

C. C. Stiles, Iowa State Department of History

Lessons from Connecticut

George S. Goddard, Connecticut State Library

Discussion

Subject: The Future of the Public Archives Commission

The Achievements and Possibilities of the Commission

Victor H. Paltsits, New York Public Library

Discussion lead by

J. Franklin Jameson, Carnegie Institution

OCT 31 1921

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

(Organized in September, 1884. Incorporated by Act of Congress, 1889.)

H. MORSE STEPHENS, *President*, Berkeley, Cal.
GEORGE L. BURR, *First Vice-President*, Ithaca, N. Y.
WORTHINGTON C. FORD, *Second Vice-President*, Boston

WALDO G. LELAND, *Secretary*, Carnegie Institution, Washington
CLARENCE W. BOWEN, *Treasurer*, New York
EVARTS B. GREENE, *Secretary of the Council*, Urbana, Ill.

A. HOWARD CLARK, *Curator*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington

PUBLIC ARCHIVES COMMISSION

VICTOR H. PALTSITS, *Chairman*, New York

CLARENCE W. ALVORD, Urbana, Ill.
CHARLES M. ANDREWS, New Haven, Conn.
SOLON J. BUCK, Minneapolis, Minn.

GEORGE S. GODARD, Hartford, Conn.
THOMAS M. OWEN, Montgomery, Ala.
A. S. SALLEY, JR., Columbia, S. C.

Office of the Chairman

~~1855 Morris Avenue, New York~~

Dear Buck:

All right. Go ahead. Perhaps one change might be made, in the item given to me on the programme. Instead of saying "New York Public Library," which means nothing in archival economy, put "Chairman of the Commission". That will give me justification for talking about the Commission and saying some things which I very much wish to say.

I have certainly had a hard time - the worst illness in years; but, happily, I can say I am on the way to recovery, though yet weak. I am glad you are feeling well. I am an old grandpop and suppose I do not heed the years. But even if a pop I still have pep. If I am present at St. Louis, and well, you will see some of it with respect to the subject assigned to me.

Sincerely yours,
Victor H. Paltits

December 22, 1921

Mr. Victor H. Paltsits
476 Fifth Ave.,
New York City

Dear Paltsits:-

I have asked Marshall of the committee on arrangements to provide a stenographer for the conference of archivists. This, I believe, is in accordance with your original instructions, and I understand that the association will foot the bill.

I trust that you are going to put in your appearance at St. Louis.

Your letter of December 7 with reference to the Dakota Friend was received. Our librarian is away on her vacation just now and I am swamped with the distribution of the Folwell history, so I shall have to let this wait until next month, when it will be looked into.

Sincerely yours

B/P