



[Solon J. Buck Papers.](#)

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WHA  
Out  
Curt  
Carr

January 5, 1939

Mr. George S. Godard, State Librarian  
Connecticut State Library  
Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Godard:-

Herewith I am sending you the bill for the remainder of the work on the Minnesota archives. I shall see to it that the report is completed and prepared for publication as promptly as possible.

Sincerely yours

B/P

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION ENDOWMENT FUND

Office of Indiana Committee

334 State House  
INDIANAPOLIS

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May 9, 1930.

*National Committee*

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*Secretary*

*Indiana Committee*

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EVANS WOOLLEN  
JAMES A. WOODBURN

Dr. Solon J. Buck,  
University of Minnesota,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Dear Buck:

You were doubtless notified some time ago of your appointment to the committee on endowment of the American Historical Association. The other members of the committee are Dr. James P. Baxter, 23 Brewster St., Cambridge, Mass.; Harry J. Carman, 701 Hamilton Hall, Columbia University, New York City; Charles Moore, 1719 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C.; Conyers Read, 1218 Snyder Ave., Philadelphia; and myself as chairman.

I am informed that the object of this committee is not to raise the endowment itself but to consider ways and means of doing so, and also propose expenditures of income from the endowment. We are to report to the council and later to the Association a program as definite and detailed as possible for procedure in the whole matter.

The location of the members of the committee would seem to make some place in the east most feasible for the meeting if it can be arranged. Washington, New York, and Philadelphia seem possibilities. Please let me know whether you have any plans for the next month or so which would bring you into touch with other members of the committee. So far as I know, the committee has no money for expenses so it will hardly be possible to ask members to make special trips. If no meeting is possible, perhaps we can transact our business by correspondence.

Professor Dexter Perkins, secretary of the Association, has intimated that some members of the council feel that in lieu of an endowment of its own, the Association should depend on getting subsidies from other endowments for special projects. This I suppose should be considered by our committee but the Association has so thoroughly committed itself to raising a million dollar endowment and has accepted so many subscriptions on this basis that it would certainly be dishonorable to abandon the endowment campaign before every possible exertion has been made.

On the other hand, the campaign has probably lost all of its momentum by this time and financial conditions are not favorable. The committee, therefore, has a difficult task requiring the fullest possible information and resource-

fulness to think out a promising line of action to recommend.

I am taking the liberty of writing to representative leaders of local campaigns, etc., to find out how much existing machinery there is which can be used, and also asking for suggestions.

I would be glad to hear from you as fully as possible and upon any line of suggestion whatever.

Very truly yours,

*L. B. Coleman*

CBC-G

P.  
A H A - Endowment

May 19, 1930

Mr. C. B. Coleman  
334 State House  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Coleman:-

I have read with interest your letter of May 9 with reference to the new committee on endowment of the A.H.A. The only time this year when it would seem to me feasible to attempt to hold a meeting of the committee would be in September. I expect to go East about the second week in September to attend a meeting of the committee on whose stationery this letter is written, and the meeting will probably be held at Stamford, Connecticut, about the time when Jameson has his annual gathering of historians there. Would it not be feasible to arrange for a meeting of the committee on endowment at the same place?

It is my feeling that the Association should get all it can from the various councils and foundations for special projects, but, at the same time, should continue its endeavors to build up a general endowment fund. It seems to me at present that the greatest need of the Association, both in connection with the raising of the endowment and for the management of its general activities, is a secretariat. I believe that a full time director or permanent secretary could get in enough money every year to more than pay his salary, and, from my experience on the endowment work, I think that there would be a great advantage in combining the general management of the Association with the campaign for funds. Moreover, the lack of a secretariat was one of the obstacles to persuading men of large means to make contributions to the Association. Some of them were not satisfied with the available machinery for managing the affairs of the Association.

In addition to a secretariat, the Association needs a home -- some visible evidence of its existence -- as a means of impressing prospective donors in addition to its other advantages. In one case I believe that we failed to get a large contribution, primarily because the prospective donor couldn't understand why the Association had no home.

It seems to me at present, therefore, that the first thing to do is to set up a secretariat, charged with the management of the affairs of the Association and the endowment campaign. If the council feels that it is not safe to make such a move without more funds than are at present available the first efforts should be directed toward raising a fund for the specific purpose of establishing a secretariat. Perhaps

C. B. C. 5/19/30 -- 2

one of the foundations would make a grant for maintaining a secretariat for a period of years. The next step, I believe, should be an effort to get money for a modest headquarters building -- possibly some old historic building in Washington could be remodeled for the purpose.

If it is agreed that the above points are well taken, it will be obvious that our committee should work in close cooperation with the committees that are considering the matters of a secretariat and permanent headquarters. In general, it seems to me that one of the weaknesses of the Association is the fact that different committees are working on related problems -- sometimes without much knowledge of each other's activities,--and that there is no one responsible for co-ordinating their work.

I shall be very glad to hear what you think of my ideas, which are only tentative, of course, and open to revision.

Sincerely yours

B/P

P.  
LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT  
OF THE STATE OF INDIANA

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U. H. A. Endowment ~~Aug 14 1930~~ 6  
**Historical Bureau**

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August 12, 1930.

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

My dear Buck:

Many thanks for your reprint of "Trans-Mississippi West - The Problem of Adequate Historical Collections." I have been interested in checking up our situation in Indiana with the various items you stress. It was a profitable but not altogether pleasant experience.

I got no satisfactory leads for a meeting of our committee on recommendations for the Endowment campaign. We may have to make up a report by mail.

Furthermore, some of the members, notably Conyers Read, is thoroughly off of the whole thing, and inclined to fall in with the suggestion passed by Dexter Perkins from the Council that the effort to raise an endowment for historical research, etc., be abandoned in favor of the possible policy of asking various endowed foundations for subsidies for specific enterprises.

I hope that we will have a majority of the committee behind a strong report insisting that the million dollar endowment be completed in some way at some time, even if it cannot be done immediately. If the Endowment campaign is abandoned, I will probably have to leave Indianapolis. I certainly cannot face Mrs. Beveridge and Mr. Fesler and a few others who really worked hard on the proposition. The mere suggestion of the possibility of not raising a million dollars and of using the Beveridge fund for a secretariat or something of that sort which reached Mrs. Beveridge sometime ago at New York led her to remonstrate with me most vigorously. Mr. Fesler thinks that though there is no legal basis for asking money back, the Association would lose all standing and be guilty of a breach of faith if it does not carry out the original program.

As I remember, only three, possibly four states, raised what might be considered a reasonable quota. The state and local organizations, are, for the most part, I suppose, virtually extinct. Do you know, from personal contacts, any states

where anything is to be hoped for from the organizations created three or four years ago? Could anything be done with the old organization in Minnesota?

I do not think the organizations by states ought to be given up, even though in most cases, the personnel would have to be changed, at least in part. Its abandonment would create bad feeling in the states which have contributed beyond their proportion and would also shut off sources from which considerable contributions might be secured. Probably a committee on large gifts could draw up a list to be exempt from independent local approach and by a protracted and judicious campaign might secure enough large contributions to complete the million.

So far as I have gone, my own conclusion would be that the effort to complete the million dollar endowment, while it has been suspended, should be renewed and kept up until successfully finished. Second, that the appeal to the states as states through individuals and committees should be renewed and third, that a special committee on large gifts should be empowered to withdraw names from solicitation except under its direction and should plan a long campaign, if necessary, for securing gifts of \$25,000, \$50,000 and \$100,00 or more.

Please sit down some time and write me the outline of a report you would make if you were asked to do so, a report covering the whole object for which our committee was appointed.

Very truly yours,

*Christopher B. Coleman*

CBC-G

P  
A. H. F.

August 15, 1930

Dr. C. B. Coleman, Director  
Historical Bureau  
State House  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Coleman:

Your letter of August 12 arrives just as I am leaving for two weeks on the north shore of Lake Superior, so I can only acknowledge it at this time. I shall think about the matter, however, and write you more at length latter on.

Sincerely yours

B/H

*S.P. program*

A. H. A.

September 23, 1930

Dr. C. B. Coleman  
Historical Bureau  
State House  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Coleman:-

I believe I promised to write you my thoughts on the Endowment problem. I have given a good deal of thought to the matter but have not arrived at any satisfactory conclusion. I agree with you that the effort to obtain an endowment fund of a million dollars should not be dropped, but I am very doubtful about the success during the next few years of any such general campaign as was attempted before. I know very little about the situation at the present time with reference to the various state and district committees; doubtless you can get this information from Garman. So far as Minnesota is concerned, however, I can say that the campaign is definitely defunct, and it would be impossible to bring it to life again. That does not mean that I think no more money can be raised in Minnesota, but I feel that it will have to be done as a fresh project and on a new basis.

I fully appreciate the feelings of the Indiana people in this matter, but I think perhaps they do not realize the advantages that Indiana had over most of the other states. Could we have found such enthusiastic, deeply interested, and influential people in the other states as Beveridge, and such excellent aids as yourself and Mr. Fesler, the campaign would have gone over with a bang. Those in charge of the general campaign did their best, but they were up against a stone wall composed of two elements: (1) Ignorance of the Association and its needs, and the possible value of its work on the part of those likely to contribute to such things, and (2) Lack of energy on the part of those in charge of the campaign in the various districts. I believe that, in the long run, the best work of the committee will prove to have been its publicity work, and I think that foundations were laid that will bring support in the future.

Now as to what we should do. I would suggest that a campaign be staged for large contributions for specific purposes, taking them up one at a time. For example, there might be a campaign for a fund for the publication of documentary material in American history; another for a fund to endow the American Historical Review; others for funds for research in various special fields. I have in mind, of course, not contributions to be used up but endowments funds to be kept intact, with only the interest available for expenditure. From the point of view of the Association, it is advantageous of course to have the endowment unrestricted, but my experience leads me to believe that it is easier to

believe that it is easier to get large contributions for specific purposes than for general purposes.

In the second place, I would suggest a widespread and vigorous campaign for life members of the Association. The life membership dues, as you know, go into the Endowment Fund. I believe that there are thousands of business men, professional men, etc., who could be induced to take out a life membership, provided the Association would give them something in return that they would appreciate. For this, I would suggest that the Association start the publication of a popular historical magazine. By popular, I mean, of course, one that, while accurate and scholarly, presents its material in such form as to interest the layman. I believe that there are available now enough competent historical scholars, with literary ability, to make a go of such a publication, and I see no reason why the general public should not be interested in and support historical activities as extensively as it does geographical work -- for example, the National Geographic. There is no point, it seems to me, in sending the American Historical Review to most of the non-professional members of the Association. Each member might be allowed to choose which of the two publications he would receive; if he wanted both of them, he could receive one as a member and be given the other on a reduced subscription basis. The outstanding difficulty in the way of this suggestion, of course, is how to get such a publication started, and probably the best way would be to make that the first of the projects to be endowed by large subscriptions. I strongly suspect, however, that any proposition for publishing a popular magazine will meet with a good deal of opposition in the Association.

This is not intended to be a draft for a report of the committee, as you suggested, but merely suggestions that you can draw upon as you see fit. I should be very glad, of course, to know how they strike you.

Sincerely yours

B/P

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NOV 17 1930

# Historical Bureau

STATE HOUSE  
INDIANAPOLIS

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November 13, 1930.

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DR. WILLIAM P. DEARING

2

*P*  
*Am. Hist. Assn.*

Mr. Solon J. Buck,  
Minnesota Historical Society,  
Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Dear Buck: -

I enclose a copy of a letter I have received from Dexter Perkins, together with a rough draft of suggestions for a report of the Committee on Endowment of which you are a member. In these suggestions, I have tried to embody the ideas of members of the committee as obtained by correspondence.

Will you please note any objections you may have to the proposed report, put down any additions and return to me at your earliest convenience?

Very truly yours,

*Christopher B. Coleman*

CBC:CH

NOV 17 1930

## AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The Secretary  
The University of Rochester,  
Rochester, N.Y.

November 10, 1930

Mr. C. B. Coleman,  
State House,  
Indianapolis, Indiana.

Dear Coleman:

Are you going to have ready for us a report of the Committee on Endowment at the November meeting of the Council? If the views of the committee are crystallized, we shall be very glad to have you attend in person.

I do hope, however, that you will have had an opportunity for the fullest discussion of the problem. There is some sentiment among members of the Association with whom I have talked that the proper line of policy for the Association is rather to seek support for specific and individual projects carefully defined than to press a general endowment campaign. I hope that this point of view with regard to the matter will be fully presented to the committee. A period of financial depression is likely to be highly unfavorable, I think, to any more general effort to raise money. Indeed, in default of a carefully thought-out program for the expenditure of funds generally raised, I believe that an attempt now to continue the campaign would be a mistake.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Dexter Perkins

DP:H

P.  
Ann. Hist. Assn.

November 17, 1930

Dr. Christopher B. Coleman  
Historical Bureau  
State House  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Coleman:-

I am returning to you herewith your draft for a report of the Committee on Endowment of the A.H.A. It has my full approval. There is a place near the beginning of the third page which is not quite clear to me, and I think perhaps a typographical error has been made or something has been left out. The expression "such quarters" in the third line on that page does not seem to have any particular meaning in the context. Also I am under the impression that the council has already made provision for a special board of trustees to handle the investments of the Endowment Fund. ✓

I do not like the statement in Perkins's letter, or rather the implication, that no "carefully thought-out program for the expenditure of funds" is in existence. Such a program was worked out by the old Endowment Committee and, if I remember correctly, it included the maintenance of a secretariat. The program ought to be revised now, of course, to meet changed conditions, and I think it would be excellent to have a new committee that could meet and canvass the situation and select specific projects for which to endeavor to raise funds.

Sincerely yours

B/P

*W. H. H. Endowment*

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CHARLES N. THOMPSON

December 26, 1930.

Dr. Solon J. Buck,  
Copley Plaza Hotel,  
Boston, Mass.

My dear Buck:

I inclose a copy of the report I have drawn up for the committee on endowment. The only changes are (1) modification of the statement that the Association is already pledged to the raising of a million dollar endowment fund and (2) the addition of a recommendation that a sustaining membership of \$10.00 a year be created, the added amount over the annual dues of \$5.00 to go to current expenses of the Association.

I am sorry that I did not get this to you earlier. If you have any objections to any part of the report, please confer with Professor Carman, who, in my absence, will make the report if called on.

Very truly yours,

*Christopher B. Coleman*

CBC-G



REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON ENDOWMENT  
AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The movement organized at the Ann Arbor meeting of the American Historical Association in 1926 to secure an endowment of a million dollars for the Association, has definitely committed the Association to make every possible effort to secure the sum of \$1,000,000. To abandon the effort with the present results would be a serious blow to the prestige of the Society. Not only that, but since several large gifts and numerous smaller ones have been made in the confidence that the full amount would be subscribed, the standing of the Association in business and philanthropic circles would be lowered by repudiating our announced program. Your Committee therefore recommends that the Society pledge itself to continue its effort until the goal of a million dollars is attained.

Investigation reveals, however, that the original organization for securing the endowment has completely broken down. No state committee has been found which is either willing or able to resume activity. Added to this is the patent fact that the financial situation at present is most unpromising for a general endowment campaign. It seems obvious, therefore, that the only thing to do is to begin the creation of a new organization which will not immediately conduct a general campaign, but will be preparing systematically for obtaining subscriptions and gifts for the Association. It is also apparent that the best prospect is that of securing at least a few large gifts, if not in the immediate future, then in the next year or two. There is some reason for hope that help can be obtained from one or more of the large philanthropic endowments already in existence.

Your committee would therefore recommend that a COMMITTEE ON ENDOWMENT AND LARGE GIFTS be appointed by the Executive Council, to consist of nine members, more or less, five or six of whom would be so located that meetings could be arranged without great inconvenience or expense; that this committee be given an appropriation sufficient to cover the expense of its meetings and its work, and that the appointment of the committee be made in such a way as to make it clear

that it is not the abandonment of the endowment campaign but rather its continuation.

Although it may not be strictly within the province of this committee to make other recommendations than the above, there are certain matters so closely related to securing a million dollar endowment, that they must be considered in this report.

The committee recommends that the establishment of permanent quarters and a secretariat be made a definite, clear-cut part of the endowment movement, so that funds secured for endowment and not given for other specific purposes, may be used for the establishment of a home and office in which a competent staff can give its entire time to the business of the Association. While money for a secretariat will not be as easy to secure as money for definite projects, your committee believes that at the present time a secretariat is the most pressing and imperative need of the organization, and that it has become absolutely necessary to relieve the intolerable burden of conscientious voluntary officers. Unless the officers of the Association are relieved, we do not see how the Association can expand its work. There is indeed danger that its present commitments may not be properly carried out.

Though it is perhaps outside of the province of this committee, we would respectfully recommend that the Association establish at least one additional class of membership. We would suggest that the payment of \$10.00 a year be regarded as a basis for sustaining membership and that notices of dues and solicitations for membership contain the statement that the dues for a sustaining membership are \$10.00 a year. The proceeds of the additional \$5.00 above the annual

membership dues would probably give the Association additional resources for the maintenance of an office and secretariat.

Gifts and subscriptions made for definite objects must always carry with them the most binding assurances that the objects of donors whose gifts are accepted will be strictly adhered to. Every guarantee known to our institutions must be established by the Association so

that donors will have no doubt about the perpetuity of the endowment and its continued fruitfulness.

The committee recommends, therefore, that the Council at the earliest possible moment give full consideration to the establishment of such guarantees, and to publicity concerning them, whether they are to be found in a Board of Trustees entrusted with the investment and maintenance of permanent endowment funds, in a contract with some large financial institution of nationally recognized security for the custody and investment of endowment funds and payment of interest to the trustees of the Association, or in some other method used by universities and philanthropical endowments.

This committee has every confidence that the million dollars set as the goal for the endowment can ultimately be secured. It is inconceivable that with local and state historical societies enjoying incomes from endowments and other sources and obtaining large gifts and bequests from year to year, that the national organization of historians, an organization whose work is far more extensive and far more valuable than that of any state society, should continue to be without a permanent home, without an administrative staff and without endowment both to carry on historical work and to administer its own affairs.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher B. Coleman,  
Chairman

*P.*  
*Am. M. U.*  
*Pac. Coast Branch*

April 15, 1931

Prof. John C. Parish  
University of California  
Los Angeles, California

Dear Parish:

Recently I saw an item to the effect that the Proceedings of the Pacific Coast Branch of the AHA for 1929 have been published. You were kind enough to supply me with copies of the earlier issues, and I hope that I may receive one of this issue also.

I scarcely expect to have the pleasure of seeing you at the Lexington meeting of the MVHA, but I trust that you are making plans to attend the AHA meeting in Minneapolis next December.

Sincerely yours

B/S

ROBERT G. SPROUL  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
AT LOS ANGELES

NOV - 6 1931

ERNEST C. MOORE  
VICE-PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR

November 2 1931

*P*  
*AAA, Pac. Coast Branch*

Professor Solon J. Buck,  
Western Pennsylvania Historical Survey,  
Historical Building  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Buck:

Your letter of October 23 has reached me. Thank you very much for your interest in the Review. I am not surprised at your hesitation about subscribing since I know from my own case that it is impossible to go beyond a very limited group in the subscription to periodicals. We have sent circulars both to the University of Pittsburgh and to the Carnegie Library, though we have not heard from either one of these institutions as yet.

With best regards, I am

Very cordially yours,

*John C. Parish*  
John C. Parish

JCP  
A'D

*Pub. Archives Com*

August 15, 1931.

Professor Charles W. Ramsdell  
University of Texas  
Austin, Texas

My dear Mr. Ramsdell:-

Your letter of the eleventh to Mr. Buck has arrived during his absence on vacation. He will back for a day or two about the twenty-fifth, but will leave immediately for Pittsburgh, so it is possible that you may not hear from him until after his arrival there about September 1. However, I am sure that you will hear from him soon after that date.

Very truly yours

Secretary to Mr. Buck