



[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.

JAN 7 1929

6

MIAMI UNIVERSITY
OXFORD, OHIO

2

January 5 1929

Dear Buck;

Will you kindly hand
the enclosed letter to Mrs. Abond?
I hope to reach her by this
medium.

Yours as ever
Carter

January 9, 1929

Professor Clarence E. Carter
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

Dear Carter:-

Unfortunately your letter for Mrs. Alvord did not reach here until after she had left on her way back to Italy. I have her address there, however, and am forwarding the letter so it will reach her eventually.

Cordially yours

B/P

June 8, 1931

Professor Clarence E. Carter
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

Dear Carter:-

A rumor has just reached me that you are being considered for the editor of the Territorial Papers to be brought out by the State Department. I very much hope that the position is offered to you and that you will find it possible to accept, as I know of no one in the country who would do a better job. If there is anything I can do to assist in the matter, do not hesitate to call on me.

The copy of your Gage Correspondence has arrived and I thank you very much for it.

Sincerely yours

B/P

JUN 13 1931

MIAMI UNIVERSITY
OXFORD, OHIO

June 11, 1931

Dear Buck:

It is true that I am going down to Washington next week to look into the proposition of the territorial papers, but without having made up my mind in advance. The matter caught me unawares a few days ago, and I felt at first that it would probably be impossible to procure so long a leave of absence as this job contemplated. But the authorities here were perfectly willing (whether that was a compliment I am not sure), and moreover I was assured that my appropriation would stand, so that my research work could be carried on here in any event. In other words I would probably be able to complete what has already been started. But I shall know much more one week from now, and I shall then write you more fully.

Yours as ever.

E. E. Carter

July 25, 1931

Professor Clarence E. Carter
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

Dear Carter:-

If you have the appointment of any assistants in connection with your work in Washington, I should like to suggest Dr. E. Douglas Branch as a possibility. You may have seen him, and, if so, doubtless have an unfavorable impression of him, but there is no question as to his ability. I should be glad to tell you more about him if you are interested.

Sincerely yours

B/P

8

AUG 1 1931.

6

Miami University,
Oxford, Ohio,
July 29, 1931.

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

Dear Buck;

By all means send me a full statement about Branch. I remember having met him out at Iowa City one summer when I was teaching there, and I think that he spent a year at Ohio State University. I do recall that he was a bit eccentric, but that would make no difference if I knew just how to take him, and if he were otherwise ^{qualifier.} But I may say that I have not yet determined just what my set-up is going to be until I have had more time to study the situation at first hand. I shall spend a week or two going over the papers before I make any final arrangements about the kind of help I shall use. There will probably be two helpers, but just how I am going to allocate the work and the salaries I do not know at present. In the meantime I do want to have a line on Branch, and where I can get in touch with him.

I am writing more fully tomorrow about the other matter.

Yours as ever,

W. C. C. C.

August 1, 1931

Professor Clarence E. Carter
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio

Dear Carter:-

Dr. E. D. Branch's address at present is 332 East 47 St., New York City. Since last September he has been working on an encyclopaedia except for the spring term when he substituted for Sears at Purdue. His work on the encyclopaedia will be completed in September or October and he will be ready for another job.

As you state, Branch is eccentric, but I think you could get along with him all right. I suspect that he has an inferiority complex because of his small size and adopts a brusque and cynical manner to cover it up. Unquestionably he is a brilliant writer and I believe that he is capable of sound and thoroughly scholarly work. His last book, Westward, although popular in character, reveals an amazing fund of information and acquaintance with sources. Moreover, it is exceptionally accurate so far as I have been able to check it.

You will certainly want to get information about Branch from others who have had more direct contact with him than have I. My acquaintance with him results largely from the fact that he spent several months here while making a study of Ramsay Crooks under a Social Science Research Council fellowship grant. You will also want certainly to have an extended interview with him, and size up his peculiarities. It might be that he would be of very great value to you and, on the other hand, it is possible that he would not do at all.

Sincerely yours

B/P

December 6, 1932

Dr. Clarence E. Carter,
Editor, Territorial Papers,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Carter:

*In
Wood
fill*

I am much interested in the statement with reference to the Territorial Papers in your letter of November 29. If there is anything that I can do to help improve the situation, let me know about it. Are you planning to attend the Conference of Historical Societies in connection with the AHA meeting in Toronto? If not, it might be well to send them a report of the situation.

When I read in your letter that it costs about nine thousand dollars to print a sizable volume at the Government Printing Office, I am inclined to doubt the advisability of having such things done by the Government. I suppose one of the reasons for the high cost is the necessity of having a large edition printed so that all Congressmen can have plenty of copies for distribution. If all political and personal considerations could be left out of the picture, I believe that an edition of one thousand would be sufficient, and such an edition could be printed today in a private establishment for three thousand dollars. As a general rule, I am inclined to stand up for the efficiency of our Government, believing that, by and large, they do about as well as privately-owned businesses. This situation would seem to be an argument on the other side however.

Of course, this is all beside the point, and what we have got to do is to deal with the situation as it exists.

Sincerely yours,

Solon J. Back

SJB:AM

DEC 22 1932

2



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 20, 1932.

Professor Solon J. Buck,
The Western Pennsylvania
Historical Society,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Dear Buck:

On November 29 I wrote to Coleman, as Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Conference of Historical Societies, with reference to the progress being made on the territorial papers project, and embodying also certain suggestions which I hoped would be passed on to the members of the Committee. I enclosed a number of copies of a report which I made to the Division some four months ago, and a draft copy of a preface to the first full volume of papers. For an unaccountable reason I have had no acknowledgment from Coleman, and I rather fear that he has not forwarded the data as suggested in my letter to him. I am writing him today in order to ascertain whether my letter actually reached his office. In the meantime I shall pass on to you a copy of my letter to Coleman and a copy of the report, as well as a revised copy of the preface.

It is necessary to type out this letter with my own hands, as my typist has been ill with flu for the past ten days, and I do not care to send it through the stenographic bureau of the department. In part, therefore, this is a confidential letter, the details of which are not to be made public except as hereinafter noted.

First of all I may say, along confidential lines, that I have been up against a rather difficult situation during the past year; in a sense I have been between two fires and I have had to step along rather gingerly in order to avoid being singed. Before Dr. J- became ill last Spring I rarely saw him that he did not impress upon me the necessity of keeping very strictly within the limits of Parker's Calendar; that to go beyond that boundary would probably mean that in the end the project would fall down because of lack of funds. As you know, the Parker volume was in reality one

*See Conf. of Hist. Soc. for
docs, etc.*



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

of his children. But Dr. J- evidently did not know that the Parker Calendar had only skimmed the surface, and that a very considerable number of items listed therein had been printed. You know the gentleman in question well enough to know that it would be very hazardous, certainly undiplomatic, to offer criticisms of that enterprise. A further embarrassment lay in the fact that I knew that he, more than anyone else, was responsible for my appointment. Now on the other hand: my employer is the Department of State; the Historical Adviser, under whom I am directly working, while not assuming to dictate my policy in detail, early let it be known in a very diplomatic way that the Department would be unwilling to place its name on a work, or be responsible in any way for a series of publications that would be so evidently incomplete if the Parker were adhered to in so strict a manner. Indeed, Mr. M- has been so enthusiastic about the possibilities of the project as to urge me to pay no particular attention to what has already been printed. His position in regard to documents printed in the American State Papers, for example, is that that series is rapidly becoming obsolete and anything appearing therein should be considered as requiring a new printing. I think you can see what I have been up against. When I suggested that we might be unable to finish the project if it were expanded too much he asserted that once it got under way he was sure that the money would be forthcoming.

Now what I have I done? I have gone ahead, without too much consultation with anyone in Washington and worked out my plans largely in accordance with my own ideas. My feeling was that neither of the above positions were right; that the real solution of the problem lay somewhere in between the two rather extreme positions. The result has been that I have rejected a great many Parker items because they were either already printed, or were irrelevant, and have dug up in the Washington archives a great many items which were entirely missed by Parker. I have also gone afield to find letters to fill the gaps in the official correspondence. The enclosed draft of my preface will indicate the extent of the latter materials which are incorporated in the work to date. Of the total number of items for the Northwest Territory, less than 15 per cent come from places outside of Washington and these are only such letters as are necessary to supply certain missing links. If



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

we take into consideration the entire textual matter, without reference to individual items, very much less than 15 per cent will be found to have been acquired from collections outside of Washington. The same is true with reference to materials already printed. Without saying very much to my immediate superiors I have gone ahead and eliminated most of the papers that have heretofore been printed. As you will see in the preface, only about 7 per cent has been printed, most of which has been printed in absolutely unreliable form. I believe that I have brought down that kind of material to an irreducible minimum. Again, if we take into account the entire subject matter it will be found that very much less than 7 per cent has ever been printed before.

On the whole it makes a very well rounded work, I think. And I do not see how either of the parties referred to above can have any very reasonable ground for criticism. I have attempted to keep within the law, and at the same time give to scholars what it seemed to me was what they would most want. When I turned the manuscript over to the Publications Section of the Department, I was told that it probably could not be issued in less than two volumes. If the Journal were taken out of course one volume would take care of it nicely. But the Journal is the heart of the thing and I could not think of throwing it out. But I still have hopes that the printers may find a way to get in all in one volume. We have made some effort to induce the Appropriations Committee to reinstate the item for printing for next year in order to take care of this additional matter. One of the most skilled committee propagandists in the State Department, a man who has no connection with this Division, took over the job and made a very favorable impression on the Committee. But the bill for the State Department has not yet been reported and we do not know whether the item was restored or not. I rather doubt it, because of the pressure being brought to bear from other quarters to cut all expenses.

Now what you are free to say to all who may inquire at the Toronto meeting, which I cannot attend, is that the editor has prepared two full volumes and one preliminary short print (the latter to contain only a general introduction to the series and possibly a little additional matter, later to be completed as a general volume, numbered I), and that we have gone pretty far in the preparation of the materials covering the Southwest and Mississippi territories, and a beginning on Indiana Territory. In fact, but for the hold-up



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

on the printing, the project would move along very rapidly. Of course anything that you may say about the latter, the small amount of money available for printing, will be to the good also.

With reference to the cost of the volumes, I am told that the Foreign Relations volumes, which are not put out in very attractive form, either as to type, paper or binding, cost \$6.50 per page; Miller's Treaty volumes, which are in good form, cost \$16.70 per page. The chief of the Publications Section tells me that if our volumes are put out in presentable form they will cost about \$9.00 per page. But it is always to be remem^{ber}ered that the printing office estimates never square with the outcome; they are always much below the actual cost. I am told, however, that the \$9.00 figure is based upon the experience of the Department in similar publications.

I do not know whether you realize it or not, but there is a joker in the law in regard to our publications. One section of that law provides that the work of copy preparation (that is, the insertion of necessary press marks, etc), proof reading and index making shall be done by the Publications Section of the State Department, and the cost charged against the appropriation. It is estimated that this will take from \$2000 to \$2500 out of my money. I raised a lot of hell about this, and finally induced the Publications Section to permit me to read at least one of the proofs and to make the index. I felt that such a step was absolutely necessary to conserve the money and make it go as far as possible.

I shall be glad to hear from you after you have read this letter, together with my letter to Coleman and the other enclosed papers.

Yours sincerely,



Editor, Territorial Papers

December 23, 1932.

Dr. Clarence E. Carter,
Editor, Territorial Papers,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Carter:

I have read with much interest your letter of December 20 and the enclosures. I had not heard a word from Coleman about the matter. I understand that he has been assigned by the Council of the AHA to confer with me about the travel bibliography that is being compiled under my direction, but I have heard nothing from him about that either. It may be that he is ill.

I think you have shown most excellent judgment in the solution of your editorial and "diplomatic" problem, and I am not able to make any suggestions or criticisms. I may add that I am not at all surprised at some of the difficulties that you have encountered.

About the only thing that I can do at present, as I see it, is to take along with me to Toronto the material that you have sent to me, and, if Coleman is not there, to get in touch with as many members as possible of the Advisory Committee and to lay the situation before the Conference of Historical Societies. I take it that what is needed is pressure to obtain the requisite appropriations for printing. I am not personally, of course, in a good position now to do anything about this, because Pennsylvania was not one of the territories. I shall be glad, however, to write to any Pennsylvania congressman, who may be in a position to be of influence in the matter, if you will indicate their names to me. I should think the best procedure would be for you to make up a list of the men who will really make the decision, and then suggest to the historical agencies of ~~these~~ states that they urge them to support the appropriations.

I will see to it that the documents you sent to me are returned to you after the Toronto meeting. I am sorry that you are not going to be there.

Sincerely yours,

Solon J. Buck.

SJB:H

January 6, 1933

Dr. Clarence E. Carter,
Editor, Territorial Papers,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Carter:

Just before I left Toronto, I received a letter from Coleman transmitting copies of the report, etc., that you sent to him with reference to the Territorial Papers. He did not go to Toronto and the only member of the advisory committee there besides myself was Coulter. Coleman had apparently communicated with Hicks and with Perkins and as a result strong resolutions were adopted by the Mississippi Valley Historical Association and the American Historical Association.

It did not seem advisable to have a resolution adopted by the Conference of Historical Societies as it is merely a branch of the American Historical Association but I presented the matter as fully and effectively as I could at the meeting of the Conference and urged that resolutions be adopted and pressure be brought to bear upon Congress by the various state and other societies interested.

I am returning to you herewith the papers that you sent to me. You did not mark the preface to be returned but I have another copy of it now, received from Coleman, and you may have occasion to make some other use of this.

Sincerely yours,

Solon J. Buck

SJB:AM

MAY 29 1933



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

May 27, 1933.

Dr. Solon J. Buck,
Superintendent,
Historical Society Western Pennsylvania,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Buck:

You may be interested to know something of the present posture of affairs with reference to Territorial Papers under the new deal. I shall attempt to detail the situation by the painful process of typing with my own hands, insamuch as there are certain things to be related which I do not care to broadcast to the members of my staff.

You may recall that all the appropriations made by the last Congress were scrapped and new allocations of funds made for the various departments. This was in line with the policy of reducing all appropriations 25 per cent below the ²previous figures. You may also recall that Congress had already cut out all printing for 1934. We rather expected to be cut off entirely since the Territorial Papers might not be considered as essential. But we received our share in the recent allocations, though the sum was short by about the salary of one member of the staff. That meant that the staff would have to be furloughed during the year. Of course after a 15 per cent which had already been given in salaries, I would simply be sunk. I could not afford to

proceed on that basis. I therefore submitted to the Historical Adviser certain propositions which in brief were as follows: (1) to drop the lowest paid member of the staff, (2) to withdraw as Editor-in-Chief, and (3) to operate after next September on a part time basis. The last suggestion was understood to mean, though it was not so stated in a formal way, that I should be permitted to remove my own editorial desk to Ohio and resume teaching until such time as conditions had ^{changed.} removed. A memorandum embodying the several propositions was submitted to the acting Chief of the Division, who forwarded it to Assistant Secretary of State Carr in a covering memorandum, a copy of which is herewith enclosed.

Thus far there has been no response. We feel helpless in the matter, though we are sure that Mr. Carr will leave nothing undone to forward the matter to the desired end. But doubt as to his success is very grave: the Department has been offered certain figures with the instruction that they must be made sufficient. And so it seems almost essential to lay our plans on the basis of the present allocation of funds.

In view of the completely changed situation as compared with a year ago or even six months ago, I do not possess a very ardent desire to prosecute the case much farther. My personal inclination would be to withdraw altogether, especially when I contemplate the great personal satisfaction to be derived from the pursuit of private

research and publication, which is wholly free from the trammels of red-tape incident to a governmental undertaking, and likewise removed from the hard realities^{of politics}. Though I must say that I would rather face a group of hard headed politicians across the committee table than be subjected to the vagaries of the members of the brain trust. I probably would not have held that opinion a year ago; but I have had some practical experience. But the situation has been carefully weighed against other considerations which can scarcely be disregarded. The chief of these is the moral responsibility of standing by until this crisis is over. It would seem, therefore, that the second alternative suggested above, that of resigning, is of doubtful expediency.

It appears unlikely also that approval will be received with respect to the releasing of the member of the staff indicated in the first alternative. The person in question is a member of the Civil Service, and my thought was that it might be possible to shift her to some other branch of the service; but in a conversation with the Chief of the Bureau of appointments I was informed that that Division is already in a very hot spot and that at the present time it could not place anyone.

You will observe from the enclosed copy of Mr. Wynne's memorandum that the Historical Adviser's office is inclined to favor the part time proposition, if and provided no other adjustment can be made. In that connection I mentioned informally my desire to administer the project, after two or

three years more, on a part time basis as a more or less permanent proposition. The job promises to be rather long drawn out and I of course cannot afford to give up my academic connection. The suggestion was endorsed. But it was pointed out that in view of the delicate negotiations which must be undertaken in Congress next winter in order to promote the project, it would be highly desirable for me to remain in close touch with my office and with the Department during the next fiscal year, that is, if it can be done without undue hardship. It is evident that Department officials concerned are rather reluctant to put through the part time proposal immediately, but they will do so as a last resort.

Very little has happened recently to clarify the very murky situation which exists in Washington. With the entire administration of the Government in a state of demoralization, which no person outside of Washington can fully sense, it is not at all surprising that little attention has been given to individual situations. The individual has become nil. That affairs must be settled shortly, however, is clear, or the civil activities of the Government will be completely paralyzed. Each day one hears corridor rumors that the President's reorganization program will be announced to Congress, but to date it has not appeared. The one gleam of hope which some people profess to hold is that the President's message will not embody as drastic a plan of retrenchment as has been currently reported. The basis of this expectation is that there have been numerous revisions of specific budgetary

figures recently. But so far as the State Department is concerned I doubt seriously whether there will be any such revision. Already more than 100 people in the Department, exclusive of the Foreign Service, have been slated for retirement; since the Department has but about 700 employees you can see something of the havoc that is being wrought.

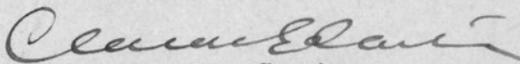
I am told that we have been particularly fortunate in that the Territorial Papers project has been retained though only in skeleton form, since very few special enterprises have been provided for at all. One very important publication of the State Department seems to have been omitted altogether. Probably the fact that a special statutory enactment is at the basis of our work has had something to do with its retention. We have also been able to present the original resolutions of various Historical Societies during the past year in support of the cause; these I feel have had considerable influence. I was also able to get Secretary Hull's signature to the foreword to the first volume, thus directing his immediate attention to the work. I was very careful to mention Tennessee in the draft.

The early appearance of the volumes which are now in type has been jeopardized, however, by an order issued a few days ago by the Director of the Budget to the effect that no money now obligated for printing could be used after June 30, 1933. It has been a time honored practice in all the departments of the Government to obligate moneys for the printing and

binding of works on which the type had already been set up and which would be issued during the next fiscal year. I understand that the Director of the Budget found a large sum thus obligated, including more than \$200,000 for the Department of State alone. If this could be estopped it would represent a very considerable saving for the Government, at least on the surface. Although my volumes are in proof it would be humanly impossible to rush them through by June 30. It would appear, therefore, that Territorial Papers stands to lose some \$15,000. The only way out of this jam seem^{ed} to be for the various departments concerned (they are all concerned) to ask ~~the~~ Public Printer to bill a given Department for the cost of a specific work, which would enable the latter to pay it out of this year's appropriation. It was believed that the Public Printer might ~~be~~ willing to accede to that request, since otherwise there would be hundreds of printers thrown out of work next year. And so we drew up such an appeal this week, which went forward yesterday. I have related this new tale as another illustration of the discouraging and demoralizing situation attending the introduction of the new deal.

I think there is very little that can be done now by pressure from outside; Congress is out of the picture and everything is in the hands of the brain trust. All that we can do is to sit tight. Just what will be the outcome so far as I am personally concerned remains to be seen. But I rather think that I shall be compelled to arrange to leave Washington.

Sincerely yours,


Clarence E. Carter
Editor, Territorial Papers

8

May 29, 1933

Dr. Clarence E. Carter,
Editor, Territorial Papers,
State Department,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Carter:

Thank you very much for informing me so fully concerning the situation with reference to the Territorial Papers. I have read your letter of May 27 and the enclosure with much interest and am returning the enclosure to you herewith. I am inclined to agree with you that it is best not to try to bring any pressure to bear at the present time, but to sit tight and await developments. I believe that as soon as the first volumes are printed and distributed, the ultimate completion of the work will be assured and I think that the support that you are receiving in the State Department should be very gratifying to you.

Sincerely yours,

Solon J. Buck

SJB:AM