

Copied from Dean Brimhall
Papers

Ms. 122

March 22, 1939

Mr. Jacob Trapp
1317 E. 6th South
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Jake:

Enclosed you will find a copy of a telephone conversation between Governor Dern and Mr. Woods, of the President's Emergency Committee for Unemployment. You may recall that I promised to send you this in connection with refreshing your mind about what happened before Roosevelt took over the relief program, and your activities in this connection.

You will also find enclosed a copy of what seems to me to be a very remarkable letter addressed to Senator Byrd by a young Virginia housewife, in answer to a letter from him addressed to his constituents. She sent a copy to Eccles and naturally he was very much impressed with it. He doubted, however, that she was as untutored as she represented herself to be. I took the liberty of writing and asking her about her educational background and she replied; a copy of her reply to me is enclosed. The letters are not only remarkable as measured by their origin, but they are remarkable because of the freshness and clarity of the author's thinking. I am sure you will enjoy them.

Sincerely,

Dean R. Brinhall

Rodelle Sawyer

Enclosures
DRB/ec

March 13, 1939

P.O. Box 267
Franklin Station
Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Rodelle Sawyers
Marion, Virginia

My dear Mrs. Sawyers:

I have had the good fortune to read a copy of a letter you addressed to Senator Byrd.

I want to compliment you not only on the excellent presentation you make, but on the insight you have into the nature of our economic and social problems. It seems to me that you have not only a knowledge of these problems but that you recognize the relative importance of each of them.

I wonder if it would be asking too much of you to tell me something about your background? I have a good many friends to whom I should like to distribute your letter and would like to tell them something about you. I know that asking personal information of this sort is somewhat impertinent but I am afraid many of my friends will not believe that the letter was written by a twenty-five year old housewife. I see no reason why it should not be, but I would appreciate, nevertheless, anything you might care to let me know in reply to this question.

I am taking the liberty of sending you a copy of an address I made on the relationship of unemployment to private industry, which you may find interesting. It was given in a western state and refers to some few local problems, but it does have general application.

Very truly yours,

Dean R. Brimhall

Enclosure

P.S. I am an official of the Works Progress Administration but am writing this as a personal letter.

COPY TO MR. DEAN BRIMHALL ✓

*File with
Sawyers letters.*

April 4, 1939

Mr. James Henle
The Vanguard Press
424 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Henle:

I have your letter of March 30 relative to Mrs. Sawyers. I thought you would be interested in her.

As for your suggestion that she do a sort of history of Marion, Virginia, during the past decade or so, it all depends on what she does with it. I think a book by her would be interesting only if it is done ~~without~~ without restraint, and primarily from the personal angle. I do not think another sociological "Middletown" will do the trick; but if this woman can express herself and her ideas through the history of this little town in Virginia, then you may have something. Why don't you drop her a note and see what reaction you get? What would be interesting to me in such a book would be that it was done by a housewife, who has had very little formal education, and who hails from a typical small town.

Anyway, I will be very much interested in what, if anything, you work out; and if I can be of any assistance, please call on me.

Relative to the memoranda attached to the mimeographed letter which I sent you, it all pertains to Mrs. Sawyers. You need not return any of it.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,


M. E. Gilfond

Sawyer File

April 5, 1939

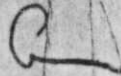
Mr. James Henle
The Vanguard Press
424 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Henle:

Since writing you about Mrs. Sawyers, I find out that Modern Age has also gotten interested in her. The story I get is that they are getting out a 35¢ booklet which will include the following: Senator Byrd's letter to his constituents in answer to Eccles; Eccles' original letter; Mrs. Sawyers' long letter to Senator Byrd; and an autobiography sketch of Mrs. Sawyers.

I don't know whether that will interfere with anything that you were considering. If it does, please drop it and excuse me for not letting you know sooner. But I just happened to find out about the other.

Sincerely yours,



M. E. Gilfond
Information Service