

# **Correspondence**

**Henry E. Sigerist – Milton I. Roemer**

**1937–1957**

Edited and annotated by

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**Bern, 2012**

an online publication of the Institute of the History of Medicine,  
University of Bern, Switzerland

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Milton I. Roemer (1916-2001)

Milton Irwin Roemer was born in Paterson, NJ, in 1916. At Cornell University in 1936 he obtained a B.A. in biology, 1940 at New York University an M.D. and in the same year a M.A. in sociology, again at Cornell. After a short internship and work with the New Jersey Department of Health he went to Ann Arbor where he was given a Master of Public Health by the University of Michigan in 1943.

In the same year Roemer joined the U.S. Public Health Service in Washington where he had several functions in various divisions. From Washington he also attended Sigerist's evening seminars in social medicine in Baltimore. Equipped with considerable experience he became director of the health department of a West Virginia county in 1948. The following year saw him as Assistant Professor of Social and Administrative Medicine at Yale University from where he joined the new World Health Organization in Geneva in 1951. McCarthyism being in full swing, the liberal federal employee became victim of a loyalty case and was forced out of office after two years. His next job was in Canada as Director of Medical and Hospital Services of the Saskatchewan Department of Public Health at Regina. His longing for a job with less administration and more research became true in 1957 as Director of the Sloan Institute of Hospital Administration of Cornell University at Ithaca, NY. Finally, in 1962 Roemer was appointed Professor of Health Administration at the Department of Health Services at the University of California in Los Angeles, a job he held for 38 years until his retirement in 1986. He died in Los Angeles on 3 January 2001 at age 84.

Roemer, highly motivated for all aspects of social medicine, served at all levels of health administration, county, state, national and international. He published and taught early on and did field work in several countries. He was the recipient of many awards. His wife Ruth was also his colleague and a professor of health services at UCLA.

Roemer's interest in social medicine brought him as a young student in contact with Sigerist, who in turn provided advice and help in his career, help that soon became mutual. Their relationship is an impressive example of a mutual devotion.

For biographical information see (Pace 2001), (R. Roemer 2001), (Internet 2001), and the Milton. I. Roemer Papers at the Yale University Library archives.

## 1.2. The Correspondence

There are 83 letters of Sigerist to Roemer and 80 letters from Roemer to Sigerist with very few obviously missing ones. All letters are dated, and the majority of the letters are typed. Spelling errors were transcribed as such but are followed by the sign [sic], whereas the frequent errors in punctuation were left unchanged and unmarked as long as they did not distort the sense of a sentence. Literary works are given as, e.g., (Roemer 1947) and listed in chapter 3.

The annotations are given in small print following each transcribed letter. They are meant to help understanding the contents of the letters rather than to interpret them and are therefore kept to a minimum. They also serve as links to former letters and annotations so that persons or things can be explained once only. Persons sufficiently characterized and explained in the letter may not appear in the annotations. The term “medical historian“ for the characterization of persons is used in a wide sense as, e.g., members of the American Association of the History of Medicine. A few persons, most of them mentioned only once, could not be identified and are marked as such in the annotation. However, all persons mentioned in the letters are listed in the name index (chapter 4). A bibliography of all literature mentioned in the letters and annotations is given in chapter 3.

The correspondence begins in 1937 and lasts all the way to 1957, the year of Sigerist’s death. In 1937 Sigerist is professor of the history of medicine in Baltimore, 46 years old while Roemer is a 21 year old student, wishing to study under Sigerist. From 1932 to 1947 Sigerist is head of the Johns Hopkins Institute of the History of Medicine. During Roemer’s years of medical study in New York and his first job in public health in Washington, DC, there is a regular exchange of letters in addition to personal encounters. The number of exchanged letters increases to a maximum in 1946.

The letters are a touching document of the relationship between an admiring pupil and a caring, encouraging master. Roemer, already as a student, is highly motivated for social medicine and asks for Sigerist’s advice in the planning of his whole career. He informs Sigerist about his experiences as a young professional, and the two exchange reprints and books and information about their travels. We learn about the war time in Baltimore, about both correspondents’ leftist political orientation or the combination of research and administration, which eventually leads to Sigerist’s wish to leave the University in order to write a monumental history and sociology of medicine.

When Sigerist in 1947 eventually moves to the Swiss village of Pura the correspondence continues between there and the places of Roemer’s career: Morgantown, WV, Yale University at New Haven, World Health Organization in Geneva, and Regina, Saskatchewan. The master-pupil relationship is turning into a friendship between two colleagues with ongoing mutual help. Roemer sends Sigerist detailed information on his work. Weary of administrative work, Roemer is longing for a research job at a university. We learn of Sigerist’s situation in Pura, his *History of Medicine* and its slow progress, material insecurities, negotiations with Swiss universities, visits of Roemer.

A total of about 54 books and papers are discussed and 174 persons are mentioned (see chapters 3 and 4). The correspondence is a document reflecting the personalities of the correspondents as well as many cultural aspects of America and Europe in the time before and after the Second World War.

## 2. The Letters

*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 24 January 1937*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

Thank you again for the kindness of your conference with me in New York two weeks ago. I have since written to the Dean of my desire to study under you and I am submitting the formal application for admission today.

I am writing to ask if you would speak to the Dean of my case, as you had mentioned, in the near future? Since it isn't the usual practice to admit students into the second year class, I wonder if I might come to Baltimore to explain my purpose to the Dean or the Admissions Committee personally. Would you be kind enough to let me know if such a conference might be arranged?

Thank you very much for any trouble this may cause you.

Respectfully yours,

Milton I. Roemer

R. is a medical student at New York University; S. professor of the Institute of the History of Medicine at the Johns Hopkins University.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 3 November 1938*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I trust you have received the copies of *The Journal* which were sent to you after our meeting in New York at the time you spoke under the auspices of Science and Society. If they have not reached you, we will be glad to supply any copies you may want.

With the rapid developments marking the American medical scene today, the *Journal* is trying hard to present concise accounts of the chief issues to its 25,000 medical students in the United States and Canada. In this connection, *The Journal* is planning to publish a series of articles of the keynote issues of health insurance, group practice, and that much confused subject "socialized medicine". On the basis of your thorough study of a system of socialized medicine in the Soviet Union, you would surely be the most competent author of an article on the latter issue.

I read the extremely lucid article you wrote in the summer issue of the *Yale Review* and something in the same general spirit would be precisely what *The Journal* should like. Would you, therefore, be able to submit to the *Journal* an article of about 2,000 words explaining the real meaning, in the light of present day developments, of the issue of socialized medicine. We should like very much to publish the article in our February issue the deadline for which is January 23rd.

If you will be able to find time to write such an article, would you be good enough to drop me a line to that effect? Thank you very much for any cooperation you may extend. The Association of Medical Students is progressing well along the lines that you so kindly predicted in your talk at its first Convention in Baltimore.

Yours sincerely,

Milton I. Roemer  
Editorial Director

Letter-head: The Journal of the Association of Medical Students; R. is still at the N.Y.U. College of Medicine, and this letter reads like a preview of his career. “medicine in the Soviet Union“ (Sigerist 1937a). Yale Review (Sigerist 1938a). “your talk at its first Convention“ (Sigerist 1937b).

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*Sigerist’s secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 4 November 1938*

Dear Mr. Roemer:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of November 3 to Dr. Sigerist. At present he is out of town lecturing at Yale University but he is expected back the early part of next week. Your letter will be brought to his immediate attention at that time.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary to Dr. Sigerist

Unsigned copy.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 11 November 1938*

Dear Mr. Roemer:

I was out of town giving a course of lectures at Yale University and on my return, I found your letter of November 3.

I shall be very glad to write an article of about 2,000 words for the Journal of the AMS and will let you have the manuscript early in January.

Yours very sincerely,

Henry E. Sigerist

S. had given the Terry Lectures at Yale which later were published in book form (Sigerist 1941a). AMS: Association of Medical Students.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 14 November 1938*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Thank you very much for your kind consent to write the article for The Journal. I recognize how busy you are in your regular medical teaching and can well appreciate the favor you extend us in making the time for this article. I will be waiting for it, as you have written, some time in early January.

Yours very sincerely,  
Milton I. Roemer

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 9 January 1939*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Since I asked you for the article on “Socialized Medicine“ a great deal of material has accumulated which must be published in The Journal at once. This is mostly in connection with our Third National Convention which, you may be interested to know, was highly successful and productive of a great deal of fruitful discussion.

Therefore, it will be entirely satisfactory if you submit your article on “Socialized Medicine“ by March 1st instead of the earlier date that I requested in my last letter. I hope that this will, in some degree, relieve you of the incessant demands made on your time.

Very sincerely yours,  
Milton I. Roemer

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 11 January 1939*

Dear Mr. Roemer:

I greatly appreciated your letter and I am glad that there is no hurry for my paper. You will, however, receive the manuscript by March 1 at the latest.

Yours very sincerely,  
Henry E. Sigerist

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 3 March 1939*

Dear Mr. Roemer:

I am sending you enclosed your article and hope that it doesn't come too late.

Instead of discussing Socialized Medicine at large which I have done very many times, I prefer to draw the attention of your readers to the very interesting work which is being done in New Zealand and Chile.

I wonder if I could get reprints of the article. I would like to have them because I have been asked about New Zealand and Chile often. If it can be done please have 300 reprints made and send them with bill in duplicate to the address of the Institute.

With kind regards, I am  
Yours cordially,  
Henry E. Sigerist

Article: (Sigerist 1939a).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 4 March 1939*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

It was very kind of you to wire and to submit your article to me so promptly. I can easily understand how you tire of discussing the general aspects of “socialized medicine“ and why you find it preferable to discuss a definite program such as those of New Zealand and Chile that you describe in your article. It is undoubtedly advisable to impress upon students that broad plans for medical care do not originate only on the European continent.

We plan then to publish your article in the April issue of the Journal. I will arrange to get 300 reprints to you shortly after the appearance of the April number.

Thank you very much for your continually kind cooperation with the A.M.S.

Yours very sincerely,  
Milton I. Roemer

A.M.S.: Association of Medical Students.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 9 March 1939*

Dear Roemer:

Knowing how interested you are in the history of medicine, I would like to invite you to join the American Association of the History of Medicine as an active member. I am most anxious to get young people into the Association. In the past it was mostly in the hands of old men who had a purely antiquarian interest in medical history. But you know my attitude and know that I am trying to make the history of medicine a living subject that will help to mold the future. The more young men we have in the Association, the easier the task will be.

I am sending you enclosed a copy of the new Constitution and By-Laws and some additional material that will give you more information. We have had a very good response so far, and I am very optimistic as to the future of the Association.

With kind regards, I am  
Yours very cordially,  
Henry E. Sigerist

The American Association of the History of Medicine (AAHM), founded in 1925, had recently been reorganized by S.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 13 March 1939*

Dear Roemer:

I just received new literature on social insurance in Chile and I find that there have been some changes in the distribution of premiums.

I want my paper to be quite up to date and I would therefore greatly appreciate it if you could change the first paragraph of page four of my manuscript as you will find it on the enclosed sheet. If this causes any additional expense, please let me have the bill.

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 17 March 1939*

Dear Roemer:

Just a line to tell you that I am delighted to have you join our Association of the History of Medicine and to acknowledge the receipt of your check. The Bulletin of the History of Medicine will be mailed to you regularly and I personally am very happy indeed to have younger men in our group.

With kind regards, I am

Yours ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 4 April 1939*

Dear Roemer:

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Council of the American Association of the History of Medicine has unanimously elected you an Active Member of the Association.

The Bulletin of the History of Medicine will be sent to you regularly, and I hope that you will be able to attend the meetings of the Association.

If I ever can be of any help to you, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours very sincerely,

Henry E. Sigerist, Secretary [of the AAHM]

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 21 April 1939*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Under separate cover we are sending you 300 reprints of your article, Socialized Medicine Abroad, which appeared in the April issue of THE JOURNAL. We are delighted to

accommodate you with these without charge. The correction in your article, which you wrote about some time ago, was made.

Thank you again for your cooperation with the A.M.S.

Yours very sincerely,

Milton I. Roemer

Article: (Sigerist 1939a). “The Journal“ of the Association of Medical Students (A.M.S.); this is the last letter with its letterhead.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 24 May 1939*

Dear Roemer:

Just a line to thank you for the manuscript of your report and for the 300 reprints of my article, “Socialized Medicine Abroad.“ I greatly appreciated your sending me these reprints.

I also want to tell you what a very great pleasure it was to see you in Atlantic City. I am very proud of the Welch Society which is setting an important example to other schools.

I am putting your name on our mailing list and you will receive reprints of all our publications regularly in the future.

Very sincerely yours,

Henry E. Sigerist

“your report“ not identified. Article: (Sigerist 1939a). Atlantic City, NJ, was the site of the annual convention of the American Association of the History of Medicine. Welch Society: Probably the Student Health Organization of New York University.

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*Sigerist’s secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 2 June 1939*

Dear Mr. Roemer:

I am preparing a bibliography of all the papers and articles written by Dr. Sigerist during the past year, and I find in my possession a carbon copy of a short article entitled “The Future of the A.M.S.“ However, I have been unable to find any reprints of this article, or any evidence of its having been published in the Journal of the A.M.S. for which I assume that it was intended.

Will you kindly tell me if Dr. Sigerist sent this to you, and if so whether or not it was published ? Dr. Sigerist has sailed for Europe and I am unable to discover anything about it in the correspondence.

Very sincerely yours,  
Genevieve Miller  
Research Secretary to Dr. Henry E. Sigerist

S.'s article (Sigerist 1938b). Genevieve Miller (born 1914) was S.'s collaborator and later a distinguished historian of medicine.

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*Roemer to Sigerist's secretary, New York, 5 June 1939*

Dear Miss Miller,

I am sending you under separate cover a copy of the 1938 Convention Book of the Association of Medical Students which contains the article by Dr. Sigerist, "The Future of the A.M.S.." I'm very glad to be able to help you in this small matter.

It must be a big job - and an interesting one - to prepare a bibliography of Dr. Sigerist's writings for every one year !

Yours very sincerely,

Milton I. Roemer

Genevieve Miller see S. to R. of 2 June 1939. Article (Sigerist 1938b).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 9 August 1939*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

There is a prospect of organizing a regular seminar in medical history at N.Y.U. Medical College during the coming year.

In this connection, could you send me a reprint of your article in The Bulletin of the Inst. of Med. Hist. which appeared in 1934, containing a syllabus for a course in the general history of medicine ?

Thank you ever so much.

Yours respectfully,

Milton I. Roemer

Article (Sigerist 1934a).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 22 October 1939*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I trust your stay in South Africa was profitable and enjoyable.

As you may remember, I am in the fourth year of medical college at N.Y.U. and about to begin my internship. My plan is to try to obtain a one-year rotating appointment and after that to take at least two years of graduate study in public health work. My ideal hope would be to do the graduate study at Hopkins so that at the same time I could undertake some work in medical history and medical sociology under your direction.

At the present moment, however, the job is to obtain a good one-year rotating internship in New York, where I must remain for the next year. The best one available seems to be at the U.S. Marine Hospital at Staten Island and since this hospital is administered by the U.S. Public Health Service, it is advantageous in additional ways.

It is not easy, especially for a Jew, to get this appointment - and so I write to ask if you would be so kind as to write a letter of recommendation for me to Dr. Parran, to whom my application must be officially addressed. I am sure a word from you would carry considerable weight.

My master's thesis, "Social Factors Influencing American Medical Practice," on which I have worked for the past three summers, is nearly completed, and I am anxious to show it to you after I have finished the editing. William Welch Society activities are continuing actively, and at present the prospects for a regular seminar course in medical history - to be included in the curriculum - look bright.

Would you be good enough to consider my request as soon as you find the time, since the deadline for application is in early November? I hope to see you soon again.

Yours very respectfully,

Milton I. Roemer

Throughout the second half of 1939 S. was on a lecture and study tour in South Africa. N.Y.U.: New York University. Thomas Parran (1892-1968) U.S. Surgeon General. R.'s master's thesis was for his M.A. in sociology of Cornell University. William Welch Society, of which R. was president, see S. to R. of 24 May 1939.

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*Sigerist's secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 24 October 1939*

Dear Mr. Roemer:

Dr. Sigerist is still in South Africa and is not expected back until the early part of January. Your letter of October 22 will be brought to his attention after his return.

Sincerely yours,

Staff Secretary

Unsigned copy.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 9 January 1940*

Dear Roemer:

I came back from South Africa only a few days ago. I had a most interesting time but am glad to be back again. It was not quite so easy to get home since sailing schedules were entirely upset by the war, but finally I managed to get passage on an American ship.

On my return I found your letter of October 22. I am afraid that it will be too late to recommend you to the Surgeon General but if there is anything I can do, let me know.

I shall be delighted to see your thesis.

With kind regards, I am

Yours ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

Surgeon General see R. to S. of 22 October 1939. Thesis: see R. to S. of 22 October 1939.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New York, 5 February 1940*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I am taking advantage of your willingness to see my thesis, "Social Factors Influencing American Medical Practice," and am sending a copy of it to you under separate cover. It has just been approved and my M.A. has been awarded by the Cornell Graduate School so that it is a relief to have the job finished.

It is nearly three years since I started my summer work on the job so that by now there are many aspects of the subject that I would treat differently. In the main, the method of analysis chosen resulted in a lack of integration in the final picture presented. In any case, I should be more than grateful for any criticism you may have to make.

Thank you for your kind interest in my work.

Yours very respectfully,

Milton I. Roemer

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*Sigerist's secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 13 February 1940*

Dear Mr. Roemer:

Dr. Sigerist has asked me to thank you for your letter of February 5 and to tell you that your dissertation has been received. Dr. Sigerist is very glad to see your dissertation and will write you about it after he has read it.

Sincerely yours,  
Hope Trebing  
Secretary to Dr. Sigerist

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Paterson, NJ, 29 August 1940*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

A thousand apologies for neglecting to return this proof. Being terribly tied up in my first weeks of internship, it completely skipped my attention until tonight.

I trust you went ahead with the galley as you have it, without my proofing of it.

Cordially,  
Milton I. Roemer

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Paterson, 15 December 1940*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

I have been looking forward for a long time to your talk on “Social Factors in the Rise of Public Health“ in the New York Medical History Society Series. The whole conception of the series on Medicine and Social Change has naturally been thrilling to me.

I write, Dr. Sigerist, to ask if you will be able to give me a little time, while you are in New York, to discuss my plans in public health work. I am applying to the Hopkins school and there are many questions about this and other matters I should like to ask you.

If you would let me know at what time and where I might be able to see you for a little while - if you find it convenient - I shall make it my business to be there.

I have learned from my friends in Ithaca what a splendid series of lectures you recently completed there. I only wish they had been give [sic] years earlier so that I might have been one of the audience.

Looking forward to hearing you speak once again -

Very respectfully,  
Milton I. Roemer

Letter-head: Barnert Memorial Hospital, Paterson, NJ. Ithaca, NY, site of Cornell University and College. “series of lectures“: Messenger Lectures (Sigerist 1943a).

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*Sigerist’s secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 27 December 1940*

Dear Dr. Roemer:

Dr. Sigerist is out of town but before leaving he asked me to thank you for your letter of December 15. He is attending three conventions this time but he is most anxious to see you

either on January 2 or 3 and he will get in touch with you as soon as he knows what his definite program will be.

Sincerely yours,

Hope Trebing  
Secretary to Dr. Sigerist

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 18 March 1941*

Dear Roemer:

I read your dissertation once more and I feel very strongly that it should be published. What I like in it particularly is the way you have worked out the whole social setting.

I do not know, however, where and how the dissertation could be published. It is pretty long and would cost a good deal. I have taken the liberty of sending the dissertation to Dr. Michael M. Davis who, as you know, is head of the Committee on Medical Economics (1790 Broadway, New York City) and I hope you have no objection to it. It occurred to me that Michael Davis might know of a possibility of publication. I should advise you to go and see him one of these days.

With kind regards, I am

Yours ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

Dissertation see R. to S. of 5 February 1940. Michael M. Davis (1879-1971) pioneer in medical care.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Philadelphia, 29 September 1941*

Dear Dr. Sigerist

Since the last time you were kind enough to help me - in writing to Commissioner Rice of N.Y. for me - I have not been in touch with you, so that I write now to tell you of the outcome of the job-hunt.

New York City did not grant any new fellowships this year but I was fortunate enough to be appointed medical assistant to the Chief of the Venereal Disease Division of the N.J. State Health Department. It is not exactly what I had wanted (my preference had been general health work) but the job has proved interesting and the state has been generous enough to send me to Dr. Stokes' clinic in Philadelphia for ten weeks of practical experience in syphilis under expert guidance. The field work in venereal disease control among New Jersey's migratory workers earlier this summer was extremely interesting, too, disclosing medical care and health status at a lower ebb than I had yet had experience with.

About my thesis, Dr. Michael Davis to whom you sent it, has been most considerate. He sent it out to the University of Chicago Press with a too-generous recommendation, but they did not find it suitable for publication.

I learned from the Medical Aid to Russia Committee in New York that you have been ill, and I am very sorry; I hope you are feeling better. My father and I have been organizing a Paterson Chapter of the Committee and so far things are going quite well.

If you are able to get to the American Public Health Association Convention this year, I hope that I shall see you there.

Yours very sincerely,  
Milton Roemer

Letter-head: New Jersey State Department of Health, Division of Venereal Disease Control, Trenton, NJ. Commissioner Rice not identified. Davis see S. to R. of 18 March 1941. R.'s father practised medicine in Paterson, NJ.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 9 December 1941*

Dear Roemer:

Thanks for your paper. It is very good and I shall be glad to publish it in the Bulletin. I have a terrific amount of manuscripts waiting for publication but since your paper refers to one previously published, I shall issue it in one of the next numbers and you will receive galley proofs very soon.

With kind regards, I am  
Yours very sincerely,  
Henry E. Sigerist

“your paper“ (Roemer 1942a).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Trenton, NJ, 15 March 1942*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

If you have a little time available, would you be good enough to see me in Baltimore on the afternoon of Saturday, March 28th ?

I should appreciate it very much if you would advise me about several matters involving future work in the field of public health. Will I be able to find you in your office at 4 P.M. on the 28th ?

Thank you very much for publishing my note in the last issue of the Bulletin.  
Very cordially yours,  
Milton I. Roemer

“publishing my note“: (Roemer 1942a).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 17 March 1942*

Dear Roemer:

I shall be very glad indeed to see you on the 28th. If you come in the afternoon, you better come to my home, 3946 Cloverhill Road because the Library closes at 4 p.m.

It would be very nice if you could come earlier and have luncheon with me. At any rate, I shall be at my office until 1 p.m. and thereafter at home.

Looking forward to seeing you soon, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Henry E. Sigerist

The Institute of the History of Medicine was on the top floor of the Welch Library building.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Ann Arbor, MI, 18 July 1942*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Now that I am on my way in the graduate training in public health which I discussed with you in March I want to express my profound gratitude for the advice you gave me.

I want to say that, in times like these, without your advice I would not have had the courage to enter upon a course of graduate training. I chose to go to the University of Michigan because the course started in June, and I shall be finished by January 30th. The training at Hopkins, while the school may be better, would not be finished till four or five months later, and in these times four or five months make a great deal of difference. Dr. Vaughan and Dr. Sinai at the school here are good men.

I hope you are feeling stronger these days and having a pleasant summer.

Yours very truly,

Milton I. Roemer

Nathan Sinai (1894-1974) and Henry F. Vaughan: Professors of public health.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 22 July 1942*

Dear Roemer:

Thanks for your note of July 18. I was very happy when I heard that you felt you had taken the right decision. The Michigan School is very good, perhaps in many ways superior to ours. I visited it last year and liked the whole idea very much.

Your paper in the Annals of Medical History was excellent. You said just what had to be said and put it very forcefully.

I did not meet Dr. Vaughan last year but saw Dr. Sundwall and Dr Sinai. Please remember me to them when you see them.

My love to you both,  
Yours ever,  
Henry E. Sigerist

P.S. I am just writing the last chapters of my Messenger Lectures on “Civilization and Disease“. They will be published by the Cornell University Press and should be out by the end of the year.

“Your paper“: (Roemer 1942b). John Sundwall (1880-1950) professor of hygiene and public health until 1941. Vaughan and Sinai see R. to S. of 18 July 1942. “both of you“: R.’s wife, Ruth Roemer (1916-2005), married in 1939, who made like R. a career in health services as a lawyer. Messenger Lectures: (Sigerist 1943a).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 28 March 1943*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

May I tell you what a source of pride it was to me to discover your citation of my paper on the effects of war on medicine in your article, “War and Medicine“ in the February issue of the Journal of Laboratory and Clinical Medicine. As usual, I enjoyed your discussion tremendously. But that’s an old story.

You may be interested to know that I have been commissioned in the Public Health Service and am assigned as assistant to the Chief Medical Officer of the Farm Security Administration in Washington. As you know, the medical care program of the FSA is an excellent one, and we are hoping that it survives the current Congressional onslaught.

It is a long time now that I have been getting along with a picture of you from the cover of Time Magazine, and it occurred to me that it is high time that I asked you for a real photograph of yourself. If you have one available, I should appreciate it very much. And would your office note my change of address so I do not miss receiving your annual collection of reprints ?

I hope you’ve been feeling well this winter. Warmest regards from us both.

Yours very sincerely,  
Milton

Letter-head: United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Security Administration, Washington, DC.

“my paper“: (Roemer 1942b). “your article“: (Sigerist 1943b). On its January 30 issue of 1939 Time Magazine published S.’s portrait on its cover and wrote about him in the accompanying article.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 21 April 1943*

Dear Roemer:

Many thanks for your letter of March 28. I meant to write you when I first read your paper on the effects of war on medicine, but then I was so busy at the time. I found your paper one of the best I had ever read on the subject and was very glad to have an opportunity to refer to it.

You will receive very soon a set of our last reprints; the spring crop will be mailed soon and I am also very glad to send you under separate cover my picture.

I am, of course, familiar with the medical care program of the F.S.A. and I am delighted to know that you have been assigned by the Public Health Service to the Department of Agriculture. I am sure you will find there a great opportunity for excellent work.

At the Institute we are carrying on as well as conditions permit. We have more students than ever but the staff is shrinking. Dr. Larkey is in the Army and Dr. Temkin spends three days a week with the National Research Council. I myself had to take over the Welch Medical Library and I have in addition a job as Consultant with the Board of Economic Warfare, but I still manage to continue my research and writing.

Now that you are stationed in Washington, I hope that you and your wife can come over some day, perhaps on a Sunday afternoon. We have moved a few houses down the street and live now at 3956 Cloverhill Road. Just give us a ring the day before, Belmont 5785.

With kind regards, I am

Yours very sincerely,

Henry E. Sigerist

“your paper“: (Roemer 1942b). “my picture“, see R. to S. of 28 March 1943. F.S.A.: Farm Security Administration. Sanford V. Larkey (1898-1968) head of Welch Library and lecturer in the history of medicine. Owsei Temkin (1902-2002) medical historian, S.’s associate in Leipzig and Baltimore.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 31 December 1943*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

In the Yale Review of several years ago - I believe it was 1936 or 1937 - I read an article of yours describing an ideal plan for medical services furnished through health centers and salaried personnel. I believe the title of the paper was something simple like “Socialized Medicine“.

I wonder if it would be possible to obtain several copies of this paper. This agency is in the process of preparing post-war planning reports on rural health services for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and it occurred to me that your paper in the Yale Review would provide a valuable guide for the thinking of our field personnel working on these problems. If fifteen or twenty copies are available, we should appreciate receiving them very much. If only one copy is available, we may be able to arrange to get it duplicated.

I should like to take this opportunity to tell you how badly I feel about the conclusion that you have been forced to reach on the preparation of your major work on the history of medicine, of which I read in your Annual Report on the activity of the Institute of the History of Medicine. I believe it is entirely unjust and unsound for you to be burdened with so many administrative responsibilities that you are unable to tackle this job which may deprive the world forever of a monumental study. I know that there are many people who would be only too glad to express this opinion to the administrators of the university if it would bear any weight with them. I feel that something should be done to free you from the medical library responsibilities so that you might devote yourself to preparing the book which we have all been awaiting.

If the whole purpose of the war we are fighting is to be realized, then men like you should certainly be given the time and freedom to do their work.

Warmest greetings of the season from Ruth and me.

Sincerely,

Milton I. Roemer

Yale Review paper (Sigerist 1938a). Annual Report (Sigerist 1943c). “monumental study“: S.’s planned eight volumes of History of Medicine and four volumes sociology of medicine. “Ruth“ Roemer, see S. to R. of 22 July 1942.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 8 January 1944*

Dear Roemer:

Many thanks for your letter of December 13.th. Unfortunately I never had a single reprint of the article that was published in the Yale Review in the Spring number of 1938,

pp. 463-481. It is their policy not to let authors have reprints, which I think is very stupid. An article on a similar subject that I wrote for the Atlantic Monthly was reprinted as a pamphlet in 20,000 copies and was incorporated into three college textbooks.

I greatly appreciated your sympathy. It, of course, was a very great disappointment to me that I had to drop all the work that I really considered essential. Whatever research I can engage in and whatever I am writing now is all done after 9 p.m. which obviously has not improved my health. For a year and a half I have not had one free evening or one free Sunday or one day’s vacation. I am afraid, however, that little can be done about it because the University has the attitude that research is not important unless it has an immediate bearing on the war. They still think in terms of a short war that will merely mean a brief interruption of the regular work.

With all good wishes to Ruth and yourself, I am

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

This letter clearly refers to R.’s last letter, however there is some insecurity as to whether it was dated 13th or 31st December. Article in Yale Review: (Sigerist 1938a). Article in Atlantic Monthly: (Sigerist 1939b).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 13 February 1944*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I wanted to let you know that I have taken up in detail with Leslie Falk and with Charlotte Silverman the question of appealing to the Hopkins authorities to relieve you from your library job.

As a Hopkins alumnus, Leslie has attempted to make a number of contacts of other alumni, who might personally visit Mr. Bowman. No definite group, unfortunately, has been assembled as yet - but I wanted you to know that we are working on the problem.

Please do not trouble to answer this note.

Milton

Leslie A. Falk (born 1915) physician, S.'s former student, later professor at Meharry Medical College. Charlotte Silverman (1913-2003) epidemiologist. Isaiah Bownan (1878-1950) President of Johns Hopkins University.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 23 June 1944*

Dear Roemer:

Thanks for your note. I had no knowledge of a hospital in Santa Fe in 1531 and, of course, it would be very interesting to find out more about it. I happen to have a student who is doing some work on the history of the Southwest and I will ask her to look up the sources and to see what she can find.

With kind regards, to you both, I am

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

R.'s note is missing.

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*Roemer to Sigerist's secretary, Washington, 26 November 1944*

Dear Miss Trebing –

I have been trying to locate a copy of Dr. Sigerist's early book Man and Medicine, to give as a gift to a young medical student, and haven't had any luck.

I wonder if there happen to be any copies available in Baltimore, new or second-hand, which I might purchase. If so, I would greatly appreciate it if you could have one sent to me.

If this is not available, I would be interested in obtaining a copy of American Medicine, which I have also been unable to locate through several of the usual outlets.

I learned of Dr. Sigerist's trip to India with much joy, because it was encouraging that the Indian government should be interested in having a man of Dr. Sigerist's views analyze their problems.

I do hope he returns safely.

Incidentally, I wonder if I am any longer on the mailing list of the Institute for receipt of the year's crop of reprints of the work of Dr. Sigerist and the staff. The last reprint I have received was dated July, 1943 - and I should hate to miss those that have followed. I'm particularly anxious to have the "Bismarck to Beveridge" series, to the extent they are available.

Thank you for all your trouble.

Sincerely,

Milton I. Roemer

*Man and Medicine* (Sigerist 1932); *American Medicine* (Sigerist 1934b), both books have been translated from the German. Invited by the State Department, S. visited India (Sigerist 1945). Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) Prussian and German statesman. William Beveridge (1879-1963) father of the British post-war National Health Service. *Bismarck to Beveridge* (Sigerist 1943d).

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*Sigerist's secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 30 November 1944*

Dear Dr. Roemer:

Many thanks for your letter of November 26. It was good to hear from you and I am sorry to have to disappoint you in your request. MAN AND MEDICINE has been out of print for some time and we have not been able to locate either a new or second-hand copy. You might try writing directly to the publisher, W. W. Norton (70 Fifth Avenue, New York City) and inquiring if any copies of AMERICAN MEDICINE are still in his stock. Unfortunately I cannot help you in this situation as we have not a single copy on hand of any of Dr. Sigerist's earlier books.

You are indeed still on our mailing list and the only reason you've not received anything recently is that we have not been mailing the general list. However, I shall be delighted to send you under separate cover the recent publications and to bring your files up to date. So far only the Period of Bismarck has been written in the Bismarck to Beveridge series. Dr. Sigerist expects to complete the series, in a not too distant future, in a little book on the subject.

I shall give your greetings to Dr. Sigerist when he returns. We expect him some time in early January.

Sincerely yours,

Hope Trebing

Secretary to Dr. Sigerist

*Man and Medicine* (Sigerist 1932). *American Medicine* (Sigerist 1934b). From the planned Bismarck to Beveridge series only the first part (Sigerist 1943d) has appeared.

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*Roemer to Sigerist's secretary, Washington, 5 December 1944*

Dear Miss Trebing –

Thanks for your thoughtful note, although you don't have a copy of Dr. Sigerist's earlier books.

Thought you might be interested to know I finally located a copy of American Medicine through Schuman's Book Shop in New York. It had formerly been in the library of John Fulton at Yale, which made it all the more interesting. Looked as though it was acquiring the dignity of a rare „First Edition.“

Sincerely,

Milton I. Roemer

*American Medicine* (Sigerist 1934b). John F. Fulton (1899-1960) physiologist and medical historian, friend of S..

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*Sigerist to Dr. and Mrs. Roemer, Baltimore, 25 February 1945*

Dear friends,

I was very happy to hear that you have a boy[,] that Ruth and he are fine and I am sending you my warmest wishes.

I was, of course very pleased to hear that you gave him my middle name and I hope it will bring him good luck, that it will be a stimulus to him and that his life will be as full and rich as mine has been.

I am sending John Ernest a few books as a nucleus of his future library. By the time he can read them they will be out of print so I better send them now.

I shall always watch his development with warm interest.

In great affection I am always yours

H. E. Sigerist

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 11 March 1945*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

John Ernest was so pleased with the wonderful gifts you sent him, he has asked me to thank you for him and to say he cannot wait to get this growing-up business over with, so he can get down to reading them. He points out, however, that there was really no need to send them now, since he is sure he will be able to get them, in a tenth or twentieth re-printing, by the time he's ready for them.

John Ernest has also asked Ruth and me to send you a little something that might help along in the late hours of the night - or any other time - when you are writing the "History" and the "Sociology" which he and his parents and thousands of other John Ernest's and their parents are waiting for.

It was so good to see you at the post-war planning meeting a couple of weeks ago and to find you apparently in such good health. I was very happy to learn also that you are planning to give some attention to the Farm Security health program in one of your seminars. Your suggestion about Dr. Greenberg was very fine and I hope we can work out some arrangement to have his services soon after Victory in Europe, or before then, though in any event that should be soon !

With all the affection in the world from the three of us

Very devotedly,

Milton

John Ernest see S. to R. of 25 February 1945. “History and Sociology“ of Medicine see R. to S. of 31 December 1943. Farm Security health program see R. to S. of 28 March 1943. Dr. Greenberg not identified.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 14 March 1945*

Dear Milton:

I have read your paper “History of the Role of Government in Medical Service in the United States“, with great pleasure. I do not know of any other such survey and would therefore very much like to publish the paper in the Bulletin. You will have to revise it somewhat, changing the tense in a few paragraphs since a good deal has happened in the last two years. You will also notice that I made a few question marks. Thus, page 6: I do not think that Bellevue Hospital was the first pest house in the United States. It may have been the first permanent pest house but similar temporary places were undoubtedly used in times of epidemic in other sections of the country.

Page 14: we may have more medical sects today than other countries but sectarian medicine is a heritage that we received from England where they still have a very large number of sects.

Page 15: it might be better to say that post-graduate medical education for American physicians was in Europe. The whole paragraph is somewhat vague.

Page 19: I do not think that the Pennsylvania Hospital had an outpatient clinic although I am not sure. You better check it.

These are a few very minor items. Send me the paper when you have revised it and I will publish it in one of the next numbers of the Bulletin.

Many thanks for your very good letter and my love to you all.

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

Paper (Roemer 1945). Bellevue Hospital in New York City.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 20 March 1945*

Dear Milton,

Tell John Ernest that he is a most lavish young man who has spoiled me a great deal. I have not had a decent Scotch for a very long time and a whole box of cigars is a rare sight nowadays. And so, you see, the gifts are greatly appreciated. It has been good of you to [...] me in such a delightful way.

As I told you an [...] begin writing my book this year. I have offered the University to resign my present position if they would give some kind of a research job instead and I would

be satisfied with a small [...] salary. I am not too hopeful that they will accept and in that case I will look for something else but the book will be written if I had to sacrifice everything.

My love to you all

H. E. Sigerist

John Ernest see S. to R. of 25 February 1945. “my book“: S.’s History of Medicine.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 23 May 1945*

Dear Milton:

Thanks for your letter and manuscript. The paper is greatly improved and I shall be glad to publish it in one of the next numbers of the Bulletin.

I am on my feet again although I do not feel too strong and I plan to be away from the office for the whole summer. I will go to Saratoga Springs first where I always had very good results and then we shall spend several months in Ithaca. My daughter, Nora, is taking a summer course there in the Slavic Department and we have just rented the house of one of the professors (Dean Betten) on Cayuga Heights, and I expect to be there until September. I will write the first chapters of Vol. I of the History and I only hope that it is not too late.

I like Ithaca very much. The Library is excellent and the climate much better than here. So I am looking forward to the summer.

My love to you all.

Yours ever,

[H. E. Sigerist]

R.’s letter is missing. “manuscript“ (Roemer 1945), see S. to R. of 14 March 1945. Ithaca, NY, the site of Cornell University. Nora Sigerist (born 1922) S.’s younger daughter, studied slavic languages. Cornelius Betten (1877-1962) entomologist.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 6 July 1945*

Dear Dr. Sigerist –

I hesitate to break into your time at Ithaca even for a few minutes, but I am leaving the country for a while and I wanted simply to say ‘good bye’.

After two and a half years in rural health administration at the Washington level, I felt strongly that I wanted to get closer to war-torn Europe. The death of President Roosevelt made me feel that much of what we had been working on would suffer a delay or setback for a year or so, so that this made the decision to break away a little easier.

I expect to be district Medical Officer for UNRRA in northern Italy. The work involves mostly relations with the Italian health agencies so that I expect it to teach me a lot about health organization and practices in another nation. Dr. Castiglione [sic] has told me about many of his friends in Italian medical and public health circles.

Ruth and John Ernest are both well and they send their love. John Ernest is very, very busy learning to sit up at the moment.

By the time I see you again I hope you will have had the opportunity to make a great deal of progress on the History.

Very sincerely yours,  
Milton

“time at Ithaca“ see S. to R. of 23 May 1945. Roosevelt, John D. (1882-1945) 32nd President, Democrat, 1933-1945. UNRRA: United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Arturo Castiglioni (1874-1952) Italian medical historian, exiled in the U.S.. Ruth and John Ernest Roemer. “History“ of Medicine, S.’s planned book.

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*Sigerist’s secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 27 September 1945*

Dear Milton:

We have received for review in the Bulletin a copy of Harry S. Mustard’s Government in Public Health, which is the second volume of the series “Studies of the New York Academy of Medicine Committee on Medicine and the Changing Order.“

It occurred to me that you might be interested in reviewing it for us, since it covers the subject that you discussed in an article appearing in the July issue of the Bulletin (soon to emerge from the printer, I hope). If you give your consent, I shall be pleased to send the book to you. Review books, incidentally, remain the property of the reviewer and need not be returned to us. The customary time limit for reviewing is three months.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely

Genevieve Miller

Associate Editor BULLETIN OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

Harry S. Mustard (1889-1966) of the U.S. Public Health Service; (Mustard 1945). “article“: (Roemer 1945) . Genevieve Miller, see S. to R. of 2 June 1939, was S.’s scientific secretary and associate editor of the Bulletin of the History of Medicine.

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*Roemer to Sigerist’s secretary, Washington, 29 September 1945*

Dear Genevieve:

Thank you for the invitation to review Dr. Mustard’s new book, Government in Public Health. I would be delighted to try my hand at it for The Bulletin.

As it happens, I’m co-authoring another volume in the same Academy of Medicine series - the one on Rural Health and Medical Care - so, living in a glass house, I’ll have to be careful.

Sincerely yours,

Milton I. Roemer

Genevieve Miller, see S. to R. of 2 June 1939. Mustard see S. to R. of 27 September 1945.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 9 October 1945*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

The fortunes of war and peace operated in such a way as to keep me from getting overseas with UNRRA. Less than twenty-four hours before I was to leave for Italy my trip was cancelled, then later another trip to China was cancelled. I suppose that the new Parri government in Italy decided that they could get along without an UNRRA office in the North, and I am sure that I cannot blame them. I am afraid that the UNRRA people in this country have not appreciated the perfectly reasonable desire of the new and young governments of liberation in European countries to prove themselves by doing an effective job without interference from “foreigners“. They certainly need plenty of supplies, but the notion that UNRRA officials had that Europe needed administrative personnel from the outside was apparently way off the track.

I learned from Henry Makover that you have been able to make substantial progress on your “history“. This was good news and I certainly hope you will be able to continue working on it without too many interruptions.

I am enclosing a reprint which might possibly be of interest to you.

Sincerely yours,  
Milton

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UNRRA: United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Ferruccio Parri: Italian Prime Minister 1945. Henry B. Makover (1908-1987) professor of public health, R.’s colleague. “history“ of medicine.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 7 November 1945*

Dear Milton:

I am attending a meeting of the Medical Advisory Committee of the UAW-CIO in Washington this Friday evening and expect to stay over night and be in Washington during this Saturday. I am having lunch with Cosmo MacKenzie in Arlington and supper with Leslie Falk but if you are at home in the afternoon, I would very much like to drop in and say hello and shake hands with John Ernest.

With kind regards to you all, I am

Yours as ever,  
Henry E. Sigerist

P.S. Dr. Sigerist had to leave before he signed this letter, so I’m doing the honors. But his heart is in the right spot for you all, and do excuse my having to sign. Best regards,

UAW-CIO: United Automobile Workers – Committee of Industrial Organization. Cosmo G. MacKenzie, probably a biochemist. Falk see R. to S. of 13 February 1944. John Ernest Roemer see S. to R. of 25 February 1945. The P.S. is likely to have been added by Genevieve Miller.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 10 January 1946*

Dear Milton:

Thank you ever so much for that excellent bottle of Scotch. It is perfectly delicious and I am enjoying it very much. John Ernest is a very generous young man. I greatly enjoyed seeing him. He is a fine boy. Tell him that I will be able to send him a new book, soon I hope, a collection of addresses and essays that will be published in February under the title "The University at the Crossroads."

Otherwise I am still working on my big book. I am progressing with Volume I and I enjoy writing it very much indeed.

With all good wishes to the three of you, I am

Yours very cordially

Henry E. Sigerist

John Ernest Roemer see S. to R. of 25 February 1945. "new book" (Sigerist 1946a). "big book": S.'s History of Medicine.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 20 January 1946*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Thank you for your nice letter of January 10. I am so happy you are able to go ahead with your big book. There is nothing more important, I think, that you can spend your time on.

I hope that by now the U.A.W. Health Institute has found a Director. If Wilburn Gaden [?] is taking the job, I would appreciate having his address, so I can tell him some of my reactions to the situation, as I saw it. There are great potentialities in the job, but also plenty of hazards of which he should be aware.

I have been given a new assignment I am quite happy about. Dr. Mountin has asked me to draft the Manual of Operations for a national health insurance program, on the assumption that the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill or something like it will pass before long. In any case, when the Surgeon General testifies at the Hearings on the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, he must be prepared to answer any type of question on exactly how the program would work. I report weekly on this work to a very good committee that has been set up, representing jointly the Public Health Service and the Social Security Board.

John Ernest is a constant source of pleasure and education to us and he and Ruth join in sending you our warmest good wishes for the new year.

Very sincerely yours,

Milton

U.A.W.: United Automobile Workers. Wilburn Gaden [?] not identified. Joseph W. Mountin (1891-1952) of the U.S. Public Health Service, R.'s boss. Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill for compulsive health insurance, pending in Congress. John Ernest and Ruth Roemer.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 22 January 1946*

Dear Milton:

Just a line to thank you for your letter and to tell you that I have no idea how the situation in Detroit is. I have not heard anything since the last meeting in Washington.

Cordially as ever yours,

Henry E. Sigerist

“situation in Detroit“, with the U.A.W. Health Institute, see R. to S. of 20 January 1946.

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*Roemer to Sigerist’s secretary, Washington, 12 March 1946*

Dear Hope

Here is the book review on Stieglitz’s little book. I hate to be so critical in the review, but if you’ve seen this job, you’ll agree that some of the stuff in it is incredible in its backwardness !

This review has had the approval of my superior officer (Dr. Mountin), which just means that it need not have a Public Health Service “disclaimer“ attached, as did my other review.

Greetings to you and, of course, Dr. Sigerist.

Sincerely,

Milton I. Roemer

P.S. May I have copies of the Bulletins in which these reviews appear ?

“Hope“ Trebing. Book review probably on (Stieglitz 1945). Mountin see R. to S. of 20 January 1946. “this review“ (Roemer 1946a). “other review“, of (Mustard 1945), (Roemer 1946b).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 14 March 1946*

Dear Milton:

Just a line to tell you that I am delighted with your review of Stieglitz’s book. It is a silly and reactionary piece of work that spoils the whole series and I am very glad that you did not mince your words. The review will be in the March number of the Bulletin.

I have just suggested your name to UNRRA for a mission to Russia. They were looking for a man of your training and experience to go with that mission to Minsk and other sections of White Russia for a period of six to nine months at a salary of \$ 6,000 - \$ 6,500 plus expenses. Richard B. Scandrett will be head of that mission. I do not know what your chances are but I should think that it would be an extremely interesting and valuable experience.

With kind regards, I am

Yours very cordially

Henry E. Sigerist

The review of (Stieglitz 1945) is (Roemer 1946a). UNRRA: United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Richard B. Scandrett (1891-1969) of Allied Reparations Commission 1945 and UNRRA.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 29 March 1946*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I want to thank you for having thought of me in connection with the UNRRA mission to Russia. I have not heard from Mr. Scandrett which is undoubtedly because Leslie Falk had already been contacted for the assignment and agreed to take it. It is certainly a magnificent opportunity and we all urged Leslie to seize it. He is eminently qualified to do a wonderful job.

I am afraid I could not have gone, in any case. I am getting involved more deeply every day in the administrative plans for a national insurance program and it is important, I think, that I stick by it. The US Public Health Service has so relatively few liberal people in the headquarters staff and yet the responsibilities that would be entrusted to it under a program like that of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill are, of course, enormous. I am working closely with Dr. Mountin who, as you know, is an interesting and imaginative though unpredictable guy.

The hearings on the W-M-D bill will be going on all through April. We should have a better idea about the prospects of some type of health insurance legislation by the end of them, though the temper of this Congress gives little basis for hopes. Still, if the Democrats want to make it a real political issue, something might happen before the 1948 elections.

Thank you for your comments on the review of Stieglitz's book. Ruth and John Ernest join in sending you our warmest regards. We hope your "History" is progressing well.

Very cordially,

Milton

UNRRA mission and Scandrett see S. to R. of 14 March 1946. Falk see R. to S. of 13 February 1944. Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill and Mountin see R. to S. of 20 January 1946. 1948 presidential elections. Review of Stieglitz (Roemer 1946a).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington ?, 30 May 1946*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

It was very good to see you in Atlantic City. I am sorry that it wasn't possible for us to stay for the main day of the convention, but Ruth and I both had to be back in Washington on Monday.

As I mentioned, we are planning a farewell party for Fred Mott either on June 8 or June 15. We will make it, whichever of these dates you would be able to come to Washington. We want you and the Motts for dinner, before the party later in the evening.

If you will let me know on the enclosed card if you can make it either of these dates and, if so, what train you will arrive on, I would like to meet you at the station. If you would like to stay over in Washington Saturday night and return Sunday morning, we would love to put you up, or could arrange for a hotel room, whichever you prefer.

Sincerely,

Milton

P.S. If it is entirely immaterial to you, the earlier date would make it possible for some friends to attend who will be away on the 15th. But please decide on the basis of your convenience.

Atlantic City, NJ: Annual convention of the American Association of the History of Medicine 1946. Frederick D. Mott (1904-1981) chairman of Saskatchewan Health Services Planning Commission.

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*Sigerist's secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 6 June 1946*

Dear Milton:

Dr. Sigerist asked me to tell you that he is looking forward to the evening on Saturday and that he plans to arrive at the Station on the train which comes in at 5:40 p.m. Since the station is so crowded and large, he suggested that you both meet at the Information Desk. He also said to tell you that he would like to come back to Baltimore on the train that leaves Washington at midnight.

Do stop in and see us sometime when it is possible and when you do, please bring some snaps of the big boy. I'd love to see him. Please excuse this smeary looking letter but something has gone wrong with the ribbon.

My best greetings to your wife and you.

Cordially,

“crowded and large“: Washington's Union Station. This letter, not signed on the copy, was most likely written by Genevieve Miller.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 7 July 1946*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I meant to let you know how pleased the Motts and all the others were that you were able to come in for the farewell party last month. I hope the journey back and forth wasn't too exhausting.

Thank you for letting me see Galdston's letter. My first reaction was to ignore it, but then I went ahead and prepared the brief reply, which is enclosed. So far as I am concerned,

Galdston is hopeless. I believe you said the last word on him when you remarked simply that “he wants Fishbein’s job“.

I certainly hope your trip to Europe is enjoyable and that you find your mother in good health. Ruth and John Ernest send their warmest greetings.

Sincerely,

Milton

Mott see R. to S. of 30 May 1946. Iago Galdston (1895-1989) medical historian at New York Academy of Medicine. Reply to Galdston’s letter (Roemer 1946c). Morris Fishbein (1889-1976) editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association. S.’s first trip to Europe after WWII in summer 1946. S.’s mother, Emma Sigerist-Wiskemann (1865-1954).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 26 July 1946*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

In recognition of the expanding horizons of public health work, the Public Health Service is planning to conduct an intensive three-week course in problems of medical care administration for selected officers from each of the districts. A tentative outline of the course indicating its content and method of presentation is enclosed.

As you will note, we have taken the liberty of scheduling you as a member of the “faculty“ on November 1 to lead a general discussion on “Trends and Issues in the Organization of Medical Care“. We felt that there would be no one better qualified than you to present the final windup discussion to the three-week institute in medical care administration. What we should like to have is a presentation of the overall trends in medical care organization from the broad historical and sociological perspective that only you can give.

The scope of the material which we should like you to cover will probably be evident by glancing over the program and seeing how your subject fits into the whole picture. The time for the formal presentation and for discussion is indicated. If further clarification is needed, please let me know and I will try to be more explicit.

If you are able to help us in giving this course, arrangements will be made to appoint you as a “special consultant“ to the Public Health Service for this purpose. This will entitle you to reimbursement for transportation expenses, a per diem allowance of \$ 6 for living expenses, and compensation of \$ 25 a day for your services.

We very much hope that you can make it and that the Service officers will have a chance to get the benefit of your knowledge and experience in this field. If it is impossible for you to come on the day scheduled, but if you could come a few days earlier or later, please let me know. You can see, however, that the schedule is quite tightly arranged according to a definite plan and we should like to avoid shifting things around, if that is possible.

If you have available any brief articles or reports on the subject you are to cover, they would be very helpful to have beforehand for distribution to the students. About 30 copies of such material would meet our needs. You can see from the plan of the institute that we want to stress the freest discussion of the subject possible. In this spirit, your presentation need not be any more formal than you want to make it. Whether you wish to read a prepared paper or speak from notes is up to you.

If you remember, I spoke to you about this project in Atlantic City in May and you thought, at that time, that you could make it. I realize that this letter will be arriving when you are away in Europe but I trust that Miss Trebing will be able to let me know whether we can tentatively count on your coming. I would appreciate having some word by August 16.

Sincerely yours,

Milton I. Roemer

R. was the organizer of the three-week course. Atlantic City, NJ: Annual convention of the American Association of the History of Medicine 1946. Trebing see S. to R. of 13 February 1940.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 30 September 1946*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Because of unanticipated restrictions in travel funds, unusual demands for personnel associated with new legislation, and other considerations it has been found necessary to postpone the Institute in Medical Care Administration until a later date. We expect that it may be held shortly after the first of the coming year.

Your cooperation in the arrangements for this project has been greatly appreciated and I regret having to inform you of this change in plans. I trust this will not cause you too much inconvenience and that we may count on your help again when the course is to be held. In the meantime, I would appreciate it if you would send along any printed material you had planned to furnish us for distribution to the students, if this has not already been done.

Sincerely yours,

Milton I. Roemer

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*Roemer to Sigerist's secretary, Washington, 7 October 1946*

Dear Genevieve:

Thanks for your letter of September 11 in which you mentioned the use of my paper "Government's Role in American Medicine" in a new manual for high school and college debate teams. I guess this makes me a virtual handmaiden to the young debaters of the nation since I have had to prepare, with Dr. Palmer Dearing, a chapter in another debate handbook to be published by the National University Extension Association Committee. I hope this material helps the cause of national health insurance just a little bit.

It was kind of you not to mention in your letter my book review of Cleanliness and Godliness which is long overdue. In view of your courtesy, I hurried up and finished the review, cleared it through the legal channels, and enclose it herewith. What a book !

I am sorry to learn that Dr. Sigerist will not be back at the time expected and I hope the delay will not be great.

I hear that you are in for congratulations these days. It was great news to learn of your marriage.

Sincerely yours,  
Milton

Genevieve Miller. Paper (Roemer 1945). Palmer W. Dearing of the U.S. Public Health Service. *Cleanliness and Godliness* (Reynolds 1943). Genevieve Miller was not married, see S. to R. of 11 October 1946.

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*Sigerist's secretary to Roemer, Baltimore ?, 11 October 1946*

Dear Milton:

You've congratulated the wrong gal ! It was Hope who got married and not I. She is now Mrs. Douglas Boston. I passed your good wishes along to her.

Your review of Cleanliness and Godliness is delightful. Many thanks for preparing it for us.

H.E.S. finally got back after a delay of a few days in Paris (which was no hardship). He looks fine and had a really good summer far from the heckling affairs of his office.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Genevieve Miller

“Hope“ Trebing, see S. to R. of 13 February 1940. Review (Roemer 1946d).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 22 October 1946*

Dear Milton:

I meant to write you long ago but you know how it is when you come home after having been abroad for a few months. I meant to thank you for your various letters and to tell you that I am very interested in the program of the Institute in Medical Care Administration. I was much relieved, however, when I heard that you had postponed it because November 1 would have been rather early as far as I am concerned.

Europe was very interesting. I spent most of the time in Switzerland which is a good watchtower because you see a lot of people from many countries. I also spent a very delightful week in France where I found people very cheerful in spite of the uncertainties of the future. The chief impression I had was that nowhere did I ever hear any war talks or find any war scare. The people are fed up with war and talk of reconstruction, social reform, literary and artistic plans, new chairs in universities, etc.

Well, I hope to see you some day soon, in the meantime my love to you all.

Cordially as ever yours,  
Henry E. Sigerist

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 1 December 1946*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I have just written Henry Schuman to ask if he can see Leslie and me about the Journal of Social Medicine project this coming Saturday.

If you could find it possible to drop him a note about the whole idea, it would surely help a great deal. I'm also writing George Rosen to be along at the meeting.

You know how much we all appreciate your guidance and help.

Sincerely yours,  
Milton

Henry Schuman, publisher in New York. "Leslie" Falk see R. to S. of 13 February 1944. A Journal of Social Medicine has not been founded in the U.S.. George Rosen (1910-1977) public health officer and historian of medicine.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 10 January 1947*

Dear Milton:

The tea was a delightful surprise and I am ever so grateful to all of you for the very charming thought. It is a great pleasure to have Chinese teas back again, and I enjoyed the Jasmin tea particularly since I had not had any for a good many years.

Joseph Mountin was here a few days ago and spoke very highly of you. He seemed much impressed by what he had seen in England. John Ryle is coming over in March and will take part in a symposium on social medicine at the Academy. We hope that he will give a lecture at Hopkins, and I think Mountin is planning to make some arrangements to have him come to Washington.

With all good wishes and warm regards, I am

Yours very cordially,  
Henry E. Sigerist

S. was fond of teas. Mountin see R. to S. of 20 January 1946. John Ryle (1889-1950) professor of social medicine in Oxford, England. "Academy", probably New York Academy of Medicine.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Baltimore, 13 June 1947*

Dear Milton:

I have just been cleaning out my desk and it occurred to me that you might care to have some of my original manuscripts. I remember that you liked the editorial, „Beginning a New Year“, particularly and I am sending you enclosed the manuscript of this. I am adding to it the manuscript of my translation of Johann Peter Frank's address, "The People's misery, Mother of Disease", that I made at Ithaca while I was giving the Messenger Lectures.

I just notice that at the end of the same blue book there are a few fragments of articles that I began but never finished.

Books and furniture are packed and are leaving today. We expect to fly on the 24th.

With all good wishes to you both, I am

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

In early 1947 S. had made the decision to leave the Johns Hopkins University and to retire to a village in Switzerland in order to write his History and Sociology of Medicine. These were his final days in America. *Beginning a New Year* (Sigerist 1946b). *Johann Peter Frank* (Sigerist 1941b). Messenger Lectures see S. to R. of 22 July 1942.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 17 June 1947*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Before you take leave of this country, I wanted to remind you of two things which only you can do for us.

Could you possibly find time to drop Dr. Boas a note concerning your feelings about a Journal of Social Medicine, in answer to the "Prospectus" we sent you on March 10 ? A written record of your judgment will be of tremendous help in our dealings with the Rockefeller Foundation on this matter.

Secondly, may I ask you to write a letter to Surgeon General Parran some time in the next year or so, when the occasion presents itself, on the advisability to send a Public Health Service officer to study medical care organization in the Soviet Union, just as Dr. Mountin and Mr. Perrott studied it in Western Europe ?

I always meant to thank you for suggesting my name to the Southern Branch of the American Public Health Association, when you were doubtless unable to accept their invitation to speak. I went to Memphis and spoke, but was not permitted by the Service to deal with the broad, sociological subject which was requested. I had to confine my remarks to certain field observations, with a minimum of interpretation. That is the pressure these days.

John Ernest is growing up beautifully and we have hopes that he may some day approach justifying his name.

Once more, au revoir from all three of us.

As ever,

Milton

Ernst Boas (1891-1955) head of Physicians Forum, a liberal organization. A Journal of Social Medicine has not been founded in the U.S.. Parren and Mountin see R. to S. of 24 October 1939 and 20 January 1946, respectively. George Perrot of the U.S. Public Health Service.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, 24 July 1947*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

I don't have to tell you what a thrill it was to receive your wonderful parting present - the manuscripts of your article on Pettenkofer and "Beginning a New Year." It was absolutely magnificent. I would have written sooner but I was away for three weeks - teaching a summer session course in "Rural Health Services" to agricultural personnel in Colorado.

I did not realize how soon it would be after your departure that I would want to come to you again for advice. Restrictions on creative work in the federal service are getting tighter every day, and I have about decided to look elsewhere for an opportunity to work in the social aspects of medicine. From where I stand the university campus looks greener, despite all the limitations of which you have written. There is still some tradition, however browbeaten, of academic freedom.

I have been wondering about the possibility of advancing the cause of "social medicine" by working in some medical school toward the objective of establishing a liaison between the department of preventive medicine and the department of social sciences in the liberal arts college of the same university. Perhaps in this way, medical students could be given a social point of view and at the same time undergraduates could be trained for future administrative positions in public health or medical care programs.

Do you think it would be feasible to work out such a position in a university that had both a strong medical school and a strong department of social sciences? Where do you think I might look?

Genevieve has written that you are delighted with your house and that you are all settled. I hope that you all get a good rest before you start in on your 12-hour daily schedule. You made the mistake of telling us that four of these hours will be for letters and other "extra-curricular" matters, so that is why we still write you about our problems.

Fred's and my book is finally being set into type; it is a great relief, but still not yet finished. Ruth is working hard in the struggle to hold labor's head above water in the current flood of reactionary legislation. John Ernest is very fine indeed. Our warmest greetings to Mrs. Sigerist and to Erica. And a toast to the Casa Serena, with thanks again for the magnificent present which I shall cherish forever.

Cordially yours,

Milton

P.S. I am enclosing a few recent reprints. The Southern Public Health Association talk was given in 1946; the proceedings of the 1947 meeting, where you had been invited, have not yet been issued.

This is R.'s first letter to S. at Casa Serena, Pura, Switzerland. Pettenkofer, erroneously for Johann Peter Frank (Sigerist 1941b). *Beginning a New Year* (Sigerist 1946b). "Genevieve" Miller. The four hours for letters etc. are hardly exaggerated. "Fred's and my book (Mott/Roemer 1948); Frederick D. Mott of the Saskatchewan Health Program. Mrs. Emmy Sigerist-Escher from Zurich. Erica, elder daughter (1918-2002). R.'s 1946 talk (Roemer 1946e).

*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, Switzerland, 4 August 1947*

Dear Milton,

Thanks for your letter of July 24. I am not astonished to hear that you think of leaving the government service, and I am sure that some of our other friends will be doing the same soon. I have no doubt that some day the government will call you back, but in the meantime it is losing its best workers.

Yes, I think a university would be a good place for you to be. You have the proper training for this kind of work, you are interested in research and you are a good teacher, and I am sure that a man like you would be a great asset to any faculty. The chief difficulty will be to find the right university, one that is not afraid to employ liberal forces.

Before I left Baltimore, Stebbins told me that he had the money available for an associate professorship of medical care administration in his department and that he was thinking of somebody “like Dean Clark“. Dean is undoubtedly not available at this moment, but the chair might be tempting to you. If so, you might get in touch with Stebbins, and I shall be glad to write him about you if you want me to. Hopkins, as you know, is not strong in the social sciences, but there are possibilities that could be developed.

I do not know what the chances are at Harvard, and whether they plan to appoint anybody besides Goldmann. Hiscock is probably not anxious to do so, but Winslow still has a good deal of influence.

There is also the possibility of some state university, and you might get in touch with Dr. Erwin H. Ackerknecht, who could tell you what the situation is at Wisconsin, where he now has the chair of medical history, and Dr. Pablo Lucia, who is professor of preventive medicine at the University of California.

Let me know how things develop and when you have any specific plan in mind I shall be glad to write and recommend you. At any rate I think that your decision is a very wise one.

We are by no means settled yet, and I do not expect to be able to resume work on my History before September 1. My library is still in chaotic condition, and a large shipment of books is being detained at Antwerp by a strike. I have been at work, however, for the last two weeks establishing a routine, writing book reviews and papers, most of which you will find in the Bulletin. We are very satisfied with house and garden, and the view on lake and mountains is perfectly beautiful.

My very best wishes to Ruth, yourself and John Ernest.

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

New names:

Ackerknecht, Erwin H. (1906-1988): medical historian in the U.S. and Europe

Clark, Dean A.: member of the American Public Health Association (APHA)

Goldmann, Franz (1895-1970): of Harvard School of Public Health

Hiscock, Ira V.: Professor of Public Health at Yale University

Lucia, Salvatore Pablo (1901-1984): professor of preventive medicine and medical history at UCSF

Stebbins, Ernest L. (1901-1987): director Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health  
Winslow, Charles-Edward: professor of public health, Yale University

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Washington, December ? 1947*

To Dr. and Mrs. Sigerist and Erica:

Greetings !

From Ruth, Milton, and John Ernest Roemer - we think of you often

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*Sigerist to all, Pura, Christmas 1947 (printed)*

DR. AND MRS. HENRY E. SIGERIST

Remember their American friends

in affection and gratitude

and send their warm wishes

for a Merry Christmas

and a Happy New Year

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 4 February 1948*

Dear Milton,

Today a marvellous parcel came. Our warmest thanks to you, Ruth and John Ernest. I think you are a little crazy to spoil us in such a way. Whatever you sent was of course most welcome and pleased us no end, but really the food situation in Switzerland is no longer in any way acute. Meat has not been rationed since last autumn and just today, February 4, the rationing of milk, butter, cheese and sugar has been abolished, so that the only foods still rationed are bread, flour and certain cooking fats. But the rations are ample so that we actually have more than we can use. The prices of all foods and basic commodities are completely controlled by the government and there is no black market. It is perfectly amazing how well stocked the foodstores are in Lugano, our nearest town and shopping center. Prices are high as a rule but not as high as in the States and have not risen appreciably since we came last summer. Unions, employers and government got together and agreed on a plan to prevent inflation.

Even the fuel situation is much better than I had expected. What I dreaded most was the cold after having spent 15 winters in overheated American rooms, but we have not been cold once. We had Polish coal, which is rationed and in addition you can buy as much wood as you like. We have central heating in the house which functions very well and economically. The winter, moreover, was very mild and the region in which we live is by far the mildest in all of Switzerland. There has not been one day the whole winter that I had no fresh flowers from the garden on my desk, and today I saw the first narcissus in bloom. We have a good many fruit trees in the garden, and this summer I plan to plant vegetables. Yesterday I bottled

my wine that I had made last fall from our own grapes. I wish you could come and taste it. You should try to have the PHService send you to one of the Geneva meetings.

The longer I am here the more I like it. Leading a quiet life has greatly improved my health and the book is growing slowly but steadily. Volume one is not quite finished yet. Quite apart from writing the text, there is so much to be done getting illustrations, completing references, looking for maps, etc.

My warm wishes to all of you in which the family joins and again many thanks for your great thoughtfulness that has moved us very deeply.

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

PHS: Public Health Service. “Geneva meetings“, of the World Health Organization which was founded in spring 1948.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 17 March 1948*

Dear Milton

Some time ago I received the last number of the Journal and I read your article and I want to tell you again how very much I appreciated every word you wrote. I was vividly reminded of the delightful evening we had at the Gruenberg home. From many of our friends I have heard, from some I have not, but I can all too well imagine that all of you must have difficult times. The USA seems to have gone completely crazy. We read Time magazine and every week we find it more difficult to believe what we read. Seen from the European angle the world situation is so totally different. There is not going to be any war unless the USA runs amok [sic] or decides to commit suicide. The Czechoslovakia affair was expected for a long time and nobody here was surprised. Masaryk was always a weakling and his father and Benes made about all the mistakes that statesmen could make. The chief danger spot in Europe is De Gaulle who, backed by the Catholic Church, the USA and all anti-democratic forces of France, may launch a first-class fascist movement.

Thank you for your friendship and the warm words you have written. They mean a lot to me.

Love to you all,

H. E. Sigerist

“Journal“ of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences. “your article“ (Roemer 1947). Gruenberg not identified. “difficult times“: McCarthyism. Czechoslovakia affair: The communist takeover of the country in 1948. Jan G. Masaryk (1886-1948) Foreign minister of Czechoslovakia after WWII. “his father“ Thomas Masaryk (1850-1937) first President of Czechoslovakia. Edvard Benes (1884-1948) second President of Czechoslovakia. Charles de Gaulle (1890-1970) French general and post-WWII President of France. “words you have written“: in either a missing letter or in (Roemer 1947).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Morgantown, WV, 7 April 1948*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Many things have happened since your thoughtful letter of last August. I was extremely grateful to have your encouragement about an academic career and I explored the possibilities enthusiastically. Several interesting opportunities turned up, the most promising of which were a professorship of preventive medicine at the University of Kansas Medical School and an associate professorship in “medical care administratiuon“ at the University of California School of Public Health. Dr. Stebbins had me give three lectures at the School of Hygiene, but there was no job offer.

I was about to take the California position when the Public Health Service came forward with a totally different and interesting proposal. It was to handle an experimental county program in a modern scope of comprehensive public health services, integrated with local programs of medical care (for the indigent, vocational rehabilitation, United Mine Workers program, etc.). Having worked at the federal level for five years and the state level for one, I felt it would be wise to do this for two or three years at the local level before going into a university.

So here we are in a most interesting county of northern West Virginia. It has about 60,000 people of whom about 35 per cent are families of miners, 20 per cent farmers, and the rest industrial and middle class. The University of West Virginia is here in Morgantown, and I am already doing some teaching in the School of Social Work with plans for a course to students in the two-year medical school next semester. Our staff is much better than in the average county of this size, with four public health nurses, three sanitarians, a dental hygienist, a venereal disease investigator, three clerks, a janitor, and numerous part-time phsicians for clinics. Shortly we are getting another nurse, a health educator, and our friend Martha Eaton is coming down to help make studies of the administrative problems involved in an integration of public health and medical care. We have a modern, well-equipped health center wich is directly across the street from the chief general hospital in the county and we hope to develop various relationships with this institution.

We are going to try to develop the health department as the central administrative agency for all organized health services in the community - not merely the conventional programs of communicable disease control and sanitation. We hope to tie in closely with all the voluntary agencies, the schools, the public assistance agencies, the farm agencies, organized labor, etc. In the public health sphere we hope to launch programs in mental hygiene, cancer control, diabetes control, industrial hygiene, nutrition, and such newer fields. I am discovering already that there is no limit to the scope of activities to which a local health officer can address himself if he has (a) the time and (b) the interest. Although our conventional American definition of “public health“ has been quite narrow, I find that under this mantle one can really enter the kind of broad fields implied in the concept of “social medicine.“

It was very nice to get your letter of early February saying that our Christmas parcel had finally arrived. We are delighted that the food and fuel situation is better than we had suspected. I am especially delighted to learn that you feel your health has improved. Still, I'll bet you drive yourself in the Casa Serena as much as you did in Baltimore.

Your letter to Dr. Boas on the proposed Journal of Social Medicine was wonderful. It should eventually help a great deal and yet, when we submitted our whole report with letters from 130 leading persons, 90 per cent of them favorable, the Rockefeller Foundation turned it

down. I feel the main reason was pressure from the American Public Health Association people (through John Grant) who feel - with some merit to the argument - that the American Journal of Public Health should be broadened to include the kind of material we envisaged in the new journal. Already the AJPH has taken steps to broaden its contents considerably, so we can feel some good has been accomplished even if our Journal of Social Medicine is delayed a few years. It's like Henry Wallace and the Third Party. The Democratic Party is being driven slightly to the left on some issues, even though a Third Party will not win for some years.

The general world news here is, of course, terrible. Our present administration is driving toward a new war at an incredible pace, though sometimes it seems as though the war hysteria is raised simply for the most vulgar partisan political purposes. The press here speaks of the forthcoming elections in Italy, so close to where you are, as the turning point of world affairs - the crucial test between "democracy" and communism. The U.S. is carrying on a frantic campaign to bring about defeat of the Italian Communists.

I wish I could come to one of the World Health Organization meetings in Geneva, but I'm afraid we will be at the grass roots here for about the next two years. We are finding the change from Washington to a town of 20,000 quite gratifying and, besides, life in Washington is suffocating for a progressive these days. Ruth is busy here already with a labor union and with her Wallace campaign. We are settled in a comfortable apartment and John Ernest is attending the University nursery school. Enclosed is a snapshot of him and some reprints.

All our warmest wishes to you, Mrs. Sigerist, and Erica, and waiting most anxiously to see Volume I.

As always,

Milton

Stebbins see S. to R. of 4 August 1947. Martha Eaton not identified. Boas see R. to S. of 17 June 1947. John B. Grant (born 1890) public health officer, with the Rockefeller Foundation. A Journal of Social Medicine has not been founded in the U.S. Wallace, Henry A. (1888-1965), Roosevelt's Vice President 1941-45, his Progressive Party's campaign of 1948.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 14 April 1948*

My dear Milton,

Thank you ever so much for your good letter of April 7, for the charming photo of John Ernest - what a big boy he has become - and for the reprints which interest me very much. I was, of course, particularly happy about the one that you dedicated to me and I just cannot remember whether I wrote you about it. I meant to do it and may have written you a letter in longhand some time ago, but I am not sure of it, but at any rate, I want you to know how deeply I appreciate this warm tribute.

I was most interested to hear about your present work. I know your region very well, because I gave lectures at the University of West Virginia twice. Once I was invited by the students of the Department of Sociology and they took me around all over the neighborhood. It was at the time of the depression when most of the coalminers were out of work, and I have rarely seen such abject misery. It was simply terrifying, particularly when you realize that you were only a few hours from the national capital and from one of the nation's great industrial

centers, Pittsburgh. Now of course there is work for everybody and conditions must be very much better.

I knew the professor of sociology Saposnekow and the professor of economics Keller quite well and also the professor of botany whose name I cannot remember at the moment, also Mrs. Mildred O. Posten whose husband I believe was attorney-general of the state for a while and then professor at the Law School. If you happen to meet any of them, please remember me to them.

You did very well to accept the present position, because you can get an academic job at any time and your teaching will be the more valuable the more experience you have had. I can also well imagine that you must be glad to be away from Washington.

We read Time magazine every week, because this is the best way to keep informed on what is going on in the States. The European edition is issued almost simultaneously with the American one, but every week it is a shock to see what the people of America are being told. Of course, I read other journals also, such as the New Republic, Masses & Mainstream, etc. There is no war hysteria of any kind in Europe. We are 2 miles from the Italian border here, but nobody is excited about the elections. We have an Italian maid, and the Italian government is paying her travelling expenses to go home to vote, but she is not a bit nervous either. Everybody in Europe knows that the trend is towards some form of socialism, and this is generally accepted.

American propaganda is extraordinarily stupid. The treatment of Mme. Joliot-Curie, the attitude toward Franco, the denial of a passport to Isaacson have opened the eyes of the people to what America means by “democracy“, quite apart from the support of the rotten Greek, Turkish and Chian Kai-Shek [sic] governments.

A good many people come to see me, so that I have first-hand reports, and I always feel sorry that the American people never hear what an enormous amount of constructive work is being done in Europe. The minister of education of the Eastern Zone of Germany spent a good deal of time here, and it was interesting indeed to hear what splendid work they are doing under very difficult circumstances. A few days ago I had the visit of an Austrian doctor and his Chinese wife who had spent 8 years in Communist China and were most enthusiastic about their agrarian reform program. I expect Stampar from Yugoslavia in a couple of weeks.

I tried to understand the policy of the U.S. and it seems to me that it is entirely dictated by fear, - fear that an overexpanded war economy will collapse as soon as times become normal, fear that the workers of America will not accept another depression as meekly as they did the last, fear of the socialist section of the world that will not be hit by a depression, fear also of the awakening Asiatic people. The Marshall plan is first of all an attempt to postpone depression in America by maintaining the war economy. It is, second, an attempt to fight or rather to postpone Communism in Western Europe and finally it is mortgage on the Western European economies. I think most people are aware of this, but since they need food and certain commodities, they have to accept the plan. There is no doubt, however, that the countries that did not join the plan will be better off in the long run.

I am sorry that the Journal of Social Medicine did not materialize, but if the project succeeded in activating and broadening the American Journal of Public Health, the efforts were not quite lost.

My work is proceeding very satisfactorily. It is a terrific job to write such a book, but it is very gratifying, and the manuscript of volume one should be ready in the near future.

The season is beautiful now with camellias and wisterias in full bloom and I hope that one day you will be able to come and see for yourself where we are. In the meantime I am sending my warm regards to all of you, in which the family joins.

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

“Warm tribute“ (Roemer 1947). *New Republic: Magazine of politics and arts. Masses and Mainstream: Literary Magazine. Marshall Plan: European Recovery Program after WWII.*

New names:

Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975) Chinese general and head of the nationalist government

Franco, Francisco (1892-1975) Spanish general and dictator

Isaacson, Leo (1910-1996), leftist congressman, New York

Joliot-Curie, Irène (1897-1956) French chemist and physicist.

Keller not identified

Posten, Mildred O. „ „

Posten, Roscoe P. „ „

Saposnekow, Jacob C. (1896-1956)

Stampar, Andrija (1888-1958) expert in social medicine and public health in former Yugoslavia.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Morgantown, 19 April 1948*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Just a few days after writing you about our current situation, your lovely letter of March 17 arrived.

My words to you in the Journal were only a very small part of what I - and hundreds of other young people - have felt for a long time. We try to pay our debt to you every day, in working as best we can for human betterment through science.

If there is any small way in which I might be able to help you in your work - finding some American reference, some statistical figure, getting a photograph, or what not - would you let me know ?

Love from us all,

Milton

“Journal“ of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences (Roemer 1947).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Morgantown, 24 May 1948*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

We have read your wonderful, long letter of April 14 a dozen times since it arrived, especially your comments on the American war hysteria and the meaning of the Marshall Plan.

Your comments on America's motives in Europe are so incisive that some of the people in the Wallace movement here would like to quote them publicly. I am thinking of paragraphs no. 6, 7, and 8 in your letter - of which I am sending back a carbon copy, on the thought you may not have kept one. Would you let me know whether you have any objections to public citation of these remarks? I realize they may be somewhat casual, but they are powerfully and convincingly stated points just the same and would be of value here in educating people, if their source were given.

The work in this rural-mining-industrial county continues to be extremely interesting. There is no end of problems, even in an area of 60,000 people - as many as there were in Washington, where the work encompassed 140,000,000.

It is good to learn that Nora and her husband will be joining you soon.

Warmest greetings from us all,

as ever,

Milton

Marshall Plan see S. to R. of 14 April 1948. Henry A. Wallace movement of 1948 see R. to S. of 7 April 1948. 140,000,000 population of the U.S. in 1948. S.'s daughter Nora see S. to R. of 23 May 1945; her husband was the composer Jack Beeson.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 2 June 1948*

Dear Milton,

Many thanks for your letter of May 24. I have no objection to your circulating my letters among our friends or to having passages read to certain groups, but I would prefer them not to be published in print, because in such a case I would have to formulate matters more carefully.

What I wrote about the Marshall Plan is not only my personal view but what millions of people in Western Europe think, but since they need the food and raw materials, they had to accept the plan. I am afraid that it will have a demoralizing effect. Already you can hear Italian people say that since they have voted the American-Vatican ticket, it was now America's duty to feed and support them.

You know, of course, that the Greek government is not fighting the partisans in the north. It considers this America's business and all it does is to shoot prisoners wholesale in the hope that this will please America.

The refusal of a passport to Isaacson by the State Department was particularly grotesque because it happened just at the moment when freedom of the press was being discussed in Geneva, and the American delegation with instructions of the State Department was pressing the point that correspondents should be permitted to circulate freely. The incident gave the American delegation a very weak position and it also showed that Marshall has no control over his own department.

The Eastern European countries will have very hard years ahead, but they will rebuild their economies through their own efforts and they will coordinate them in a way that has never been done in the Balkans before. The Iron Curtain is largely our own making because we refuse to let our people know anything that is good in the USSR or in Eastern Europe. Stampar's visit was most interesting. We have been old friends for such a long time that he

could speak very freely to me. He was not uncritical of certain features of his government, but as a whole most enthusiastic about developments in his country.

With warm regards to you all I am

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

Marshall Plan, Isaacson, and Stampar see S. to R. of 14 April 1948. George C. Marshall (1880-1959) WWII chief of staff of Armed Forces, 1947-1949 secretary of state, formulated the “Marshall Plan“.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 18 September 1948*

Dear Milton,

Thank you ever so much for having sent me your and Mott’s book. It is an amazing piece of work and I am glad that you refused to cut it down as the New York Academy wished. Every chapter in the book is important and such books are the more needed now at a time when the New Deal is being slandered and smeared from all sides. They are objective accounts of the positive achievements and gains that the New Deal initiated and brought forth. I have not read the whole book yet, but what I have read so far impressed me very much. I shall also write Fred Mott and tell him how much I like the book.

Things are going their normal and uneventful way here. Volume one of the History is nearing completion at last. It took a little more time than I had foreseen, but I hope to send the manuscript of 200,000 words across the ocean very soon. We had lots of American visitors among whom were a number of AIMS men on their way to Prague and Eastern Europe. I still do not believe in the possibility of war, because nobody could possibly win a war; stupid as generals are, I still do not believe that they are stupid enough to start a war unless they have at least a chance of winning it.

You cannot blame the Russians for becoming nervous when they see how completely encircled they are by American airbases (Iceland, Britain, Germany, Austria, Greece, Turkey, Iran, China, S. Korea, Japan, Alaska). The missing link was between Iran and China, but a few weeks ago the papers reported that a mission of Tibetan Lamas was on its way to Washington to establish friendly relations with the USA, which obviously means airbases.

More than ever the European danger spot is France and not Germany, because the more the French governments of the center fail, the more support De Gaulle is getting from the small bourgeoisie. André Malraux is becoming the French Goebbels, but he is unfortunately more clever. The French left wing is very much stronger and very much better organized than that of Germany was in 1933, and I do not think that it would capitulate. The result would be civil war, and this would change the European and the world situation very considerably.

With warm regards to all of you I am

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

In the book (Mott/Roemer 1948) the dedication reads “To Doctor Henry E. Sigerist: incomparable leader of social medicine everywhere in the world – Milton I. Roemer, August, 1948. “New York Academy“ of Medicine. New Deal: F. D. Roosevelt’s economic program of the 1930s. Mott see R. to S. of 24 July 1947. AIMS not

identified. Lama: Tibetan teachers. De Gaulle see S. to R. of 17 March 1948. André Malraux (1901-1976) French author and statesman. Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945) Nazi propaganda minister.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 29 June 1949*

Dear Milton,

I just heard from Leslie Falk that you have been appointed to a chair of social medicine at Yale University. This is the best bit of news I have had in a long time, and I wish to congratulate you most heartily. I am delighted to know that you are no longer in the government service. A university is certainly the better place in which to be, particularly at the present time. Yale will give you a great opportunity for constructive research and teaching, in which your previous experience will prove extremely valuable. And I know, that your teaching will be most inspiring to the students. Leslie did not write any details, and I am anxious to hear more about your appointment. You realize that we are now both on the same faculty, but unfortunately with the ocean between us.

I hope that the family is well. The children must be big by now.

Here in Pura things go their normal way. My first volume is in the press. I am writing the second and preparing the third. It is a gigantic piece of work and I greatly enjoy it. The second volume is devoted entirely to Graeco-Roman and Indian medicine. I think I have an original plan for the volume, and present the subject as has never been done before. This is the charm of the book, at least for the writer, that it leads along untraveled paths.

I shall write you soon again, but was anxious to let you know as soon as possible how pleased I was with your appointment.

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

Falk see R. to S. of 13 February 1944. "on the same faculty": S. was professor in *absentia* of Yale's faculty of medicine. R.'s children see R. to S. of 11 July 1949.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New Haven, CT, 11 July 1949*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Your letter of June 29 took me by surprise because I had no idea you knew of our recent move and I was just planning to write you about it.

Since last summer when I sent you our book many things have happened. I'm sure Leslie has written you about some of them. The situation in the federal government became extremely difficult about last September; it took about a year for the F.B.I. to collect its data and the President's Loyalty Order had been issued in October, 1947. Trouble started for me in October, 1948.

It is a long story and some day I would like to tell it to you. For some people, it was best to resign, but in my case it seemed best - after very careful consideration of all angles - to attempt to fight it out. There were correspondence, phone calls, discussions, and decisions to be made almost daily for six months; the F.B.I. investigations go back for 10 years. At the end

of April, it was finally settled. I was found by the Federal Security Agency to be “loyal.” This could still be reversed by the National Review Board, but it is extremely unlikely.

In the meantime, from October on, I had to search for a new job because - if I had to resign suddenly - there had to be a new position as the ostensible reason. The trouble with the whole business was that you couldn't fight back in the open or give convincing reasons to associate in the public health field for the sudden explorations for a new job. I wanted a university position and, of course, these develop slowly, at least in the field in which I am interested. It was especially hard to find such a job in the fall, just after the new academic year had started.

In the course of my job search, Dr. Hiscock invited me to give a lecture at Yale and then he proposed that the Public Health Service assign me here to teach, do research, etc. He did not have the money to give me a direct appointment. A few other job possibilities outside the federal government had developed, but none was as close to what I wanted as this at Yale. Meanwhile Dr. Hiscock requested the Service to assign me here (as part of a general program of Government aid to the Schools of Public Health) and when I was cleared, the Service sent me here. So I am still with the Government officially, but on loan to Yale University.

The appointment is as Assistant Professor and Head of the Section on Medical Care. It is the post formerly held by Franz Goldmann, who is now at Harvard. They don't quite have the courage to call it “social medicine“ but I am hoping to define the subject this broadly. At Yale the School of public health is actually a large department within the medical school, so that I shall be teaching both the medical students and the students of public health. A good two-thirds of my time will, I expect, be available for studies and consultations. One of the interesting local problems will be the development of a program of medical care for the indigent, in the New Haven Health Department, and the planning of a general program of care for chronic diseases in this area. If things work out well, I am hoping that Yale will offer me a permanent faculty position, so that I will finally be able to resign from the government service.

The 16 months as a county health officer in West Virginia were excellent experience, despite the heartaches of the last 6 months. I would not have missed a day of them and I'm glad I made the decision to do this before going into academic work. Now I can feel satisfied that I have had my hands in health administration at the federal, the state, and the local levels.

The goal of integrating all organized health services in a rural county, which we set out with, is one that would take a lifetime to reach, but we made a little progress toward it. I helped to build up the local public health program. (enlarging the staff of health workers, for example, from 11 to 19), tie together the activities of the local Tuberculosis Association, Cancer Society, Board of Education and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation with the public health program, when they had formerly been carried out quite autonomously. We were on our way to a major liaison with the Welfare Department program when I had to leave. We built a County Health Council representing farm groups, labor, women's clubs, and all the health agencies in the county. It was a good lesson to see how many months of work were required to introduce certain preventive measures in the local general hospital, like routine chest x-rays and blood tests for syphilis on all admissions.

We made a study of all organized health services in the county, which I am still working on. We considered all types of services, whether preventive or therapeutic; all types of control, whether public or voluntary; and all levels of origin, whether federal, state, or local so long as the activity had an impact on the 60,000 people in this county. Strange as it seems, we found some 157 agencies involved, affecting this single county. It is a reflection of the complexity - and the confusion - of health administration in the United States; for, despite

the multiplicity of programs, most basic health needs are not being met. The study may eventually be published as a Bulletin of the Public Health Service.

The political and social situation here I know you are informed on from your visitors and the periodical you receive. The general frenzy over Communism does not seem to die down; it seems that some people must feel desperate as they see the rest of the world go more and more socialistic. The really small proportions of the Democratic Party “victory“ in the elections of last November become clear as we see the failure to wipe out the Taft-Hartley law, which was, after all, the biggest issue of the Democratic campaign. The Third Party is extremely weak but many people feel that, if we continue to have more and more unemployment and adequate social legislation is not enacted, it will grow.

In the health field, no one holds out any hope for any basic medical care legislation, though small measures will probably pass. A new School Health Bill, which has already passed the Senate, will provide medical care, as well as preventive services, for school children - and each state may decide whether to make all children eligible or only indigent children. The United Mine Workers program, in which Leslie is working, is making some important headway which will set patterns for other industries.

General recognition of the importance of medical care as part of the general field of public health continues to grow. The character of the American Public Health Association and its Journal is changing tremendously, and the newly organized “Medical Care Section“ is growing beyond anyone’s expectations; it is becoming a real meeting ground for persons from all fields of work interested in the social aspects of medicine. I am convinced that our efforts on a “Journal of Social Medicine“ accelerated this development greatly, so that the work was far from wasted.

I am happy to learn that Volume I is in press and that you are already working on Volumes II and III. It will be a great thrill to see it. The Cushing Historical Library here is very impressive, and I have spent a few hours browsing there and plan to spend many more. If there is anything I can possibly help you get from this collection, I hope you will let me know. I am going to write a little history of public health in Monongalia County, West Virginia, incidentally, based on sources which we collected going back to 1828.

Ruth and John Ernest and Beth Mary (born January 5, 1949) are fine. Ruth will be sitting in on some law courses here at Yale and when John Ernest goes to public school and Beth is ready for nursery school, she will probably go back to work again. We have a house now for the first time, on the outskirts of New Haven, and we are happy to have some land for the children to play in. Enclosed is a snapshot and some reprints.

We all hope that you and Mrs. Sigerist and Erica are feeling very well and are getting a little rest from your labors over the summer. We send you all our love.

As ever,

Milton

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“our book“ (Mott/Roemer 1948). “Leslie“ Falk, see R. to S. of 13 February 1944. F.B.I.: Federal Bureau of Investigation. Hiscock and Goldman see S. to R. of 4 August 1947. “elections of last November“: Presidential elections with Truman as winner. Taft-Hartley Law: Labor-Management Relations Act. Third Party, see R. to S. of 7 April 1948. Volumes I – III of S.’s *History of Medicine*. Cushing Historical Library: Yale University’s library of the history of medicine, originally a combination of the private libraries of Cushing, Fulton and A. C. Klebs. Ruth Roemer worked as a labor lawyer representing unions, later-on she was also active in public health.

*Roemer to Sigerist, New Haven, 31 May 1950*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

It is almost a year since we have heard from you and since I wrote you about my appointment at Yale. (I hope this letter of July 11, 1949 reached you all right.). It is a great honor to be on the same faculty as you are and, even though there is an ocean in-between, we think and speak of you very, very often. Just last week-end George and Beate Rosen stayed with us and we had a nice luncheon with the librarians of the Medical Historical Library who help George to put out the Journal of the History of Medicine. Miss Stanton told us of your visit to London.

The work here has been very gratifying. I have enjoyed the teaching a great deal and the opportunity to think and to write. My study of the scope of organized health services in the United States (prevention and medical care; governmental and voluntary action; local, state, and federal in support), as seen from the vantage point of a single West Virginia county, is completed and may soon be published (when it has been “cleared“ by governmental authorities). We are making plans for some long term field studies on the role of various social factors in the cause and course of disease. As I believe I mentioned in our Christmas card, I have the good fortune of leading, with Dr. Harold Aaron, a group of medical people to Europe this summer. Enclosed is the announcement of the studytour, distributed here. It looks as though there will be about 15 in our party, including physicians, nurses, statisticians, a dentist, a chiropodist, a school teacher, a social worker and perhaps others. The agency sponsoring the trip is the successor of the agency which sponsored your tours to the U.S.S.R. and we have been working with Pierre Nadetsky and John Rothschild whom you know.

Naturally I am very anxious to pay you a visit while we are in Switzerland. It will not be possible for everyone to come to Pura, but I could come, with perhaps one other person. Our plans are to leave Stockholm by air for Geneva on Saturday, August 26. While the party goes on to Geneva, I could get over to Pura, if that would be all right. Then on Sunday, August 27, I would go on to Geneva.

Would you let me know if this would be agreeable ? Please do not change anything else you might have planned for this time. If, by any chance, you were going to be in or near Geneva during August 26 to 30, then it would be wonderful if our whole group could meet you. I don't want to interrupt your schedule for such a meeting, unless you were doing something in Geneva then anyway.

I have written to Dr. Martha Eliot for help in planning our visit to the World Health Organization and other places in Switzerland. If you would care to make any suggestions about places or persons to see in Switzerland, or elsewhere (England, Sweden, and France), I would be very grateful.

Ruth, John Ernest, and Beth Mary are all fine and I wish they could come along, but it is hard with small children. They send their warmest greetings to you and Mrs. Sigerist and Erica, as I do. And, by the way, please be sure to tell me anything I can bring you from New Haven or elsewhere over here.

Cordially yours,

Milton

“same faculty“: S. was professor in *absentia* of Yale's School of Medicine. Rosen see R. to S. of 1 December 1946; editor of the Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences; his wife Beate Casparis.

“librarians“: Madeline E. Stanton and Elizabeth H. Thomson. „My study“ (Roemer 1951). R. ’s Christmas card is missing. Harold Aaron: Medical Adviser to Consumers Union. “announcement of the studytour“: A six-week’s tour to England, Sweden, Switzerland, and France. “your tours to the U.S.S.R.“ of 1935, 1936, and 1938. Nadetsky and Rothschild not identified. Martha May Eliot (1891-1978) pediatricist, president of the American Public Health Association and of the National Conference on Social Welfare.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 16 June 1950*

Dear Milton,

I just came back from England, where I spent two very pleasant weeks lecturing at Oxford and London, and on my return, I was very happy to find your letter of May 31, and to hear that I shall have the great pleasure to see you in August.

Yes, I did receive your long letter of July 11, 1949, and always intended to answer it, but there was so much I wanted to tell you that I postponed the letter from week to week. Although I have no academic duties anymore, I somehow manage to be very busy. The book is extraordinarily absorbing, and there is so much technical work that goes with it. The first volume was delayed for a long time by the publisher but is entirely in proof now and should come out in the early fall. The second volume is growing steadily but more slowly than I had anticipated because the material is rather overwhelming. Still, I hope to finish it so that it will appear one year after the publication of Volume I.

I was sorry to hear from your last year’s letter that you had had so much trouble, but I am happy to know it is all over and that you are well settled at Yale, doing very important, and I am sure, very interesting work. You will have to tell me all about it when you come.

I expect to be in Pura the entire summer and am most anxious to see you and to have a long talk with you. If you fly from Stockholm to Switzerland, you will arrive in Zurich at 1:15 p.m. The group will then, I suppose, continue its flight to Geneva, but you could take a train from Zurich to Lugano, leaving Zurich 3:35 p.m. and arriving in Lugano at 7:23. We would meet you with the car and bring you to Pura. On Sunday you could rejoin the group in Geneva. You would have to do it by train as there is no airline from Lugano to Geneva. It would be a very short visit but would give us a chance to talk, and I would love to have you see the place where I live and work. If I can arrange it, I may come with you to Geneva to meet your group. Erica is a librarian at the World Health Organization, and I always stay with her when I am there. She, of course, will also be very glad to help you in any way she can. The end of August seems very far away so that I cannot make any definite plans yet, but we must meet under any circumstance.

I had a very good impression of England. General conditions have improved considerably. Everybody I talked to criticized the National Health Service, but all agreed that it was a great step forward and no one would dream of giving it up. The administration of the Service is rather clumsy as it is directed from three different centers with insufficient co-ordination, but this undoubtedly will be improved in the future. You will in all probability see Jameson, Mackintosh and will have interviews in the Ministry of Health, so that you will obtain all the desired information without difficulty. If you go to Oxford, get in touch with Dr. Janet Vaughan who is the Principal of Somerville College, and at the same time Chairman of the Regional Hospital Board, a very remarkable woman. The Future of the Institute of Social Medicine is very uncertain now that John Ryle has died. In France you should get in touch with Dr. R. H. Hazemann, Directeur Départemental de la Santé de la Seine, who has a good understanding of social medicine, and who certainly will be able to steer you around.

About conditions in Switzerland, you will get all the information you want in Geneva. I do not know if you plan to travel around in Switzerland; if you do, you should see the very beautiful new hospitals in Basle and Zurich. Basle would probably also be a good spot to study the local health insurance scheme and also the very highly developed co-operative movement.

It is great to know that you will be here soon.

My love to all of you

Yours as ever

Henry E. Sigerist

P.S. Remember me to John Rothschild when you see him. It was always a pleasure to work with him and his staff.

“The book“: S.’s *History of Medicine*. “much trouble“ because of the President’s Loyalty Order, see R. to S. of 11 July 1949. Wilson Jameson, an architect of the British National Health Service. James M. Mackintosh (1891-1966) Dean of London School of Hygiene and Public Health. Janet M. Vaughan (1899-1993) pathologist, administrator, radiobiologist. Ryle see S. to R. of 10 January 1947. “Basle and Zurich“: University hospitals. Rothschild see R. to S. of 31 May 1950.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New Haven, 20 July 1950*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

It was wonderful to get your letter of June 16 and find out that all goes well with you in Pura.

Plans for our tour are proceeding very nicely and there will be fourteen in the group. There was one cancellation because of the war in Korea. Your suggestions were very helpful. I am afraid we may not be able to get to Basle or Zurich because of the limited time in Switzerland. We are planning to see Dr. Hazemann in Paris and will count heavily on him to advise us on persons and places to see in France.

The plan for me to come to Pura on Saturday, August 26 is wonderful. The Party is scheduled to take a Swedish Airline Plane which goes by way of Copenhagen and Amsterdam, but I am sure I can arrange to take the flight which you have described, arriving in Zurich at 1:15 p.m. I will then take the train from Zurich which is scheduled to arrive at Lugano at 7:23 p.m. It really is not necessary for you to meet me because I am sure that I would be able to find transportation to Pura.

The next day, Sunday, we would all be thrilled if you could come to Geneva to meet with our entire group. I do not want to press you to do this because I know what a tremendous schedule of work you are bearing. I want you to know, however, that if you can make it, it will be entirely at the expense of our agency. They have authorized me and encouraged me to invite you. Mr. Pierre Nadsen (Nadetsky) sends you his special regards.

It might be the simplest for you to let me know your answer, by writing me in Sweden where I will be August 19-25. I can be reached there care of Reso Travelbureau, Box 820, Stockholm. If there is any change in the train schedule regarding my arrival in Lugano I will let you know from Stockholm. We all send you our love and I only wish that the rest of the family could join me on this journey.

Cordially yours, as ever,  
Milton

Hazemann see S. to R. of 16 June 1950. Pierre Nadsen see Nadetsky, R. to S. of 31 May 1950.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 19 August 1950*

Dear Milton:

I hope you had a good trip so far. Dick Weinerman was here the other day and told me a good deal about medical conditions in Scandinavia.

Now about our plans: I still intend to go to Geneva and to spend a few days there. Gregory Zilboorg is expected to be here on August 28 and I am anxious to see him also. I very much hope that you can come to Pura Saturday the 26th and unless I hear from you to the contrary I would meet you at the station in Lugano at 7:23 p.m. Should we miss one another, do telephone the house: 3 61 52. We could then travel from Lugano to Geneva together the following day taking a train in the later afternoon.

Should it be too inconvenient for you to make the detour via Pura I would, of course, understand it and in such a case we would meet in Geneva where I shall stay with Erica. Her apartment is Bourg-de-Four 27; telephone 4 37 06. But I would love you to see what Pura is like and where I live.

Looking forward to seeing you very soon I am

Yours as ever  
Henry

E. Richard Weinerman (1917-1970) physician, social medicine, Yale University. Gregory Zilboorg (1890-1959) psychiatrist in New York, friend of S.'s.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Stockholm, 22 August 1950*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

We are all delighted that you are definitely planning to come to Geneva to meet for a little while with our whole group.

I have been looking forward for a long time to visit you at Pura and I am taking the plane to Zurich that you suggested on Saturday, August 26. I will take the train that arrives at Lugano at 7:23 p.m. I am sure I can get a taxi to your house, so please do not bother to meet me.

On Sunday, when we arrive in Geneva, the group would like to get together with you in the evening, if we don't arrive too late. Otherwise, Monday late afternoon or evening, after visiting the W.H.O. and I.L.O. would be good.

The trip has been wonderful so far and the best days are still ahead !

Yours as ever,  
Milton

W.H.O.: World Health Organization. I.L.O.: International Labor Organization.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 30 August 1950*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

We are on the train en route to Paris and everyone is sorry to leave Switzerland. These rapid-fire American trips are tough on the nervous system because you begin to build up real attachment for a place and the people in it and then you must leave. But it can't be helped with costs of travel what they are.

When I return home and can catch my breath a little, I want to write you a proper letter, to tell you what a wonderful experience it was to see you again - but now let me tell you how very much the whole group appreciated your discussion Tuesday night. They have all come to tell me what a thrilling experience it was [to] hear you and your original presentation of complex problems - both those who had known about you through your writings and the few who had not known of you before. They're all going out to get your books now.

You know, I think it highly important that a biography be written of you. I do not think you should spend time on it but someone like Erica, Genevieve, or George Rosen should undertake the task - or someone whom you might select.

I will never forget these wonderful few days at Pura and Geneva and until I write you again

Au revoir

Milton

Erica Sigerist and Genevieve Miller see S. to R. of 24 July 1947 and 2 June 1939, respectively. George Rosen see R. to S. of 1 December 1946.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New Haven, 10 October 1950*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I wish I had the time to tell you in detail what a wonderful experience our trip to Europe was, and especially the visits with you in Pura and in Geneva. It is no exaggeration to say that this was the most exciting and stimulating six weeks of my whole life. My chief regret was that Ruth could not have been with me.

The other day I gave a talk to the whole public health class on the main lessons of our visit to Europe - treating the experience as an entity instead of making a country-by-country analysis. I think it was the most effective talk I ever gave, because it came from the heart as well as the mind. I tried to show the dependence of Europe's health insurance and medical service programs on social and historical forces, and to explain how the various difficulties of European medicine are a consequence of social and economic conditions and not of particular laws that have been passed. These laws, in fact, are also a result of the same social pressures,

designed to correct the economic problems; without these governmental programs the quality of European medicine would be much worse.

To me the special thrill of being in Europe at this time was undoubtedly the generally liberal spirit, despite the problems of the cold war. It was like the atmosphere that characterized the large cities in the United States around 1935. There were plenty of grave social problems, but they were being attacked with vigor and zeal, and the socially acceptable assumptions of people were on the side of collectivism rather than individualism. I don't have to tell you how different things are in the United States today.

I am enclosing copies of the snapshots I took of you and Claire. Please show this letter to Claire and tell her it is meant for her, too. I want to thank her for her thoughtfulness in writing me and sending me so promptly the program of the Conference on the Social History of Medicine. I am seriously counting on a visit from Claire when she returns to the United States and before she goes West; we would love to have her stay with us a few days. We do not have a view over the Lake of Lugano to offer, but we have a comfortable guest room and a picture of Dottore on the wall.

Enclosed also is the little clipping from the New York Times of July 27, 1950 announcing your book. I will be looking for it very, very eagerly in November.

After we left Geneva, the group didn't stop talking about the experience of meeting you and hearing you talk that night at the Cercle de la Presse. The story is such an old one for you that you may not realize what a new adventure it is for most Americans to be exposed to your world viewpoint. Just this week I was in Boston on some public health business and had lunch with one of our tour members who is a research worker for an insurance company; when I asked her what was the most memorable event of the entire trip (and activities were scheduled nearly every morning, afternoon, and night for six weeks), she said immediately "the talk by Dr. Sigerist."

Your kindness to me in Pura was totally undeserved. I shall never forget that warm, gracious visit - every minute of it. My fear is that you are too kind and let unimportant visitors like me take too much time from your work.

The work here is going well, although the depressing effect of the general national atmosphere is inescapable. Everyone talks of it, conservatives and liberals alike. The exhilaration [sic] of the time in Europe was so wonderful by comparison that my mind keeps wandering to England, Sweden, Switzerland, and France. Perhaps this is something I will "get over," but in the meantime I have been thinking seriously of exploring opportunities for work in social medicine in England or the continent. I am humiliated for my ignorance of language but, if an opportunity comes along, I would apply myself to learn at least some French and German. Outside of the World Health Organization, where I have made some contacts, would you have any suggestions? I wondered if there were any exchange-lectureships in public health or social medicine between European and American universities.

I wish you the greatest progress with Volume II and can hardly believe that you might possibly come to New Haven for a year when it is completed. I have spoken with John Fulton about your appointment and gather that the delay had no significance and it has been straightened out.

Ruth will add a note about the lovely Casa Serena pitcher that now stands proudly on our mantelpiece.

As ever,

Milton

“Claire“ Bacher, S.’s American secretary, succeeding his daughter Erica. Anglo-American Conference of the Social History of Medicine in Pura, summer 1950. “she goes West“: Claire Bacher’s home was in Utah; she used to call S. “Dottore“. “In November“: As a matter of fact volume I of S.’s *History of Medicine* appeared in 1951 only. “visitors“: R.’s apprehension is correct; S. had up to 100 visitors in a year (Bickel 1997). “come to New Haven“: S. never returned to the U.S. after 1947. John F. Fulton (1899-1960) physiologist and medical historian at Yale University. “your appointment“: In Pura S. was living on Foundation stipends which threatened to terminate in 1950. Casa Serena: Name of S.’s house in Pura.

*Roemer to Sigerist, (El Salvador), 8 February 1951*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I have been reading the first volume of your History of Medicine, and I want to tell you how thrilling I am finding it. It is everything that I expected - which was a lot. There is such a wealth of thought in every line and yet you have written, as always, with such utter simplicity. The whole experience of reading about the diseases that people have suffered, the ways that were used to treat them and to preserve health, and the whole social and geographical setting is wonderful - so much more significant than the conventional story which is confined to the development of medical knowledge and technology.

Since mid-December I have been here in Central America as a consultant for the World Health Organization. Just before leaving we had a delightful visit from Claire Bacher and, while she was in New Haven, we both saw the pre-publication copy of Volume I, which had been sent to Dr. Fulton. You may like to know that we had to snatch the copy from the desk of the President of the University, to whom Dr. Fulton had sent it. I then wrote to the Oxford University Press, and they were good enough to send me a pre-publication copy so that I was able to take it with me here.

You have been to South Africa and other under-developed regions of the world, but for me it has been quite an experience to see a semi-feudal economy at first-hand. As in so many parts of the world, the land here is concentrated in the hands of a small number of families and with it the economic power, prestige, and political control. The mass of the people - fully 90 to 95% - live at a subsistence level. In 1931 there was a peasant rebellion in which it is reported that 20,000 people were killed by the Army. Since then on and off there have been progressive governmental regimes which have felt compelled to do something to improve the general welfare. Such a government is now in power, and it is under it that the demonstration area program, on which I am working, is being planned in cooperation with WHO.

The idea of the program is to attempt to organize a full range of public health and medical care services in a limited area of the country containing about 100,000 people. The World Health Organization is putting a relatively large sum of money into this, and it is being matched by the Salvadorean [sic] government. Everyone recognizes that the health problems are secondary to poverty and ignorance so that some efforts are also being launched in the area on the improvement of agriculture, better working conditions, and basic education. The FAO, ILO, and UNESCO are involved in these efforts, working with different ministries of the Salvadorean [sic] government. Nothing much is being done about fundamental problems of land ownership and lack of industrialization, but some little improvement in the life of the people may be expected from our efforts. Seeing one of these Latin American republics gives

one quite a dim view of the meaning of the “free world“ and its various representatives in the U.S.

Ruth and John Ernest are here with me, and they are getting a great deal out of the experience too. One thing glorious about El Salvador is the weather, and we don't relish returning to icy New Haven in another two weeks. I will have to double up on my courses in the School of Public Health to make up for this absence during the winter trimester. I'm afraid I still have the wanderlust pretty badly and am looking forward to the possibility of another trip to Europe next summer, this time with Ruth. World Studytours asked me to lead another group, but then with the war scare it decided to cancel all tours for this summer. Just how I'll be able to swing another trip I'm not sure. I feel certain that there will be no war in Europe this summer, if only because of the fact that the United States is not yet fully prepared.

I know that you have no secretary at present; so please don't bother to answer this letter. I hope progress is going well on Volume II and that you and Mrs. Sigerist are both in the best of health. With warmest wishes,

As ever,

Milton

Bacher and Fulton see R. to S. of 10 October 1950. WHO: World Health Organization. ILO: International Labor Organization. UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 16 February 1951*

My dear Milton:

Ever since your visit last summer I meant to write you but my correspondence seems to be hopeless. The end of summer was a busy period. Early in October I spent a week in Copenhagen where I gave four lectures at the University and before various societies. They have a Society of the History of Medicine with 600 members ! And you know, one week of lecturing abroad actually means interrupting the work for three weeks because I need one week for preparations and one to get reorganized and to work up the impressions of the tour. Well, and then Claire left and I have been without a secretary ever since early November. I manage to keep my writing going but I waste a lot of time with pure secretarial work and my correspondence suffers most. So you must be patient with me.

It was just wonderful having you here last summer. I enjoyed every minute of your visit and greatly enjoyed going with you to Geneva and addressing your very nice group. Thanks for the photos. I look rather worried on them, I probably was afraid that my chicken would burn. I am including a few snaps I made and I am only sorry that there is not one with the two of us together. I am so glad you came to Europe not only because it gave me the pleasure of your visit but because I wish many Americans to see the European scene, to see that the European “way of life“ is not bad either and that nations can live through difficult periods without becoming hysterical. Today the general atmosphere is very much as you found it last summer. I have not met one sensible person here who believed in the possibility of a Russian attack. Why should they attack anybody, people will tell you, when time is working for them anyway ? They made sure that their immediate neighbors would be friendly. This they have reached. The only danger is that they may be forced into a war but I doubt very much if any European country would march against them that is, be forced to march against them. I would make any bet that a Western German army would side with Russia when it came to the test.

The Korean [sic] war is very far from here and is generally considered a purely American or even MacArthurian adventure. I think the general feeling here is that Asia is for the Asiatics. Somebody asked me the other day if I thought that the UN would move if Tito attacked Bulgaria. I am sure that not only would the UN not move but would immediately declare Bulgaria the aggressor. Power politics in the ancient style and nothing else ! Merely the actors have changed.

I get enthusiastic letters from China. This is the first real revolution in China since the beginning of the century. There is a tremendous movement in all groups of the population and the students of all universities are in the forefront leading and teaching the people. Enormous efforts are made in the health field against almost unsurmountable odds. You'll be interested to hear that my book "Medicine and Health in the Soviet Union" was translated by the Deputy

Minister of Health of East China personally. Since June 1950 the book had three editions with a total of 22,000 copies. They ask me all the time if I have new literature on Russian medicine which shows that they are not spoon fed from Moscow. The Deputy Minister Dr. Gung Nai-chuan is in charge of the administration of health of a population slightly larger than that of the United States. He has a splendid record for the work he did during the Japanese war, organizing health services for the partisans and later for the Army. He apologized to me for not having asked for my permission to translate the book and the reason why he did not do it was that at that very moment he was with the People's Liberation Army crossing the Yangtze river which soon thereafter liberated the whole mainland. There is one thing we can learn, that ideas cannot be fought with money or guns. The early Christians were fed to the lions and we know with what results. We offer the people of Asia a ballot sheet with which they may

elect - usually corrupt - politicians to office. The others offer redistribution of land (I am a poor typist and I have a new machine to which I am not quite accustomed as yet), cancellation of unjustified debts, literacy, hospitals, maternity homes, nurseries, schools, free higher education, theatres and other cultural institutions, faith in a future that they will build with their own hands. No wonder what they prefer. I have much information about India also but this is too long a story for this advanced hour. There is no doubt that they are in the Kerensky stage at best. A very high Indian official told me the other day that Nehru was a mere figure head at the moment. He spoke very highly of him as an absolutely honest and sincere man who, however, had lost power to the Indian capitalists who are now exploiting their country as the Britishers did before. Patel who recently died, was their exponent. What an interesting time we are living in ! Experimental history !

How small are our personal happenings compared to those of the world scene. I hardly dare talk about them. Well, you probably know that my first volume after endless delays finally came out. I keep working on Vol. II and III but have been progressing rather slowly. In between I wrote an essay for Benjamin Miller's book. I think he told you about it. We had perfectly awful winter weather with pouring rains, heavy snowfalls and very little sunshine. Avalanches in the Alps killed a great many people. Entire valleys of the Ticino and Grisons are cut off from the world and have been so for weeks. The government is feeding the people and delivering the mail by airplane and helicopter. The St. Gotthard Line on which we travelled together last summer, has now been cut off entirely by avalanches for four days although they are clearing the line with highpowered machines. Erica was here to recover from an attack of flu and went to Geneva by way of Italy.

Who knows ? I may be giving my sociology seminar next winter again, this time at the University of Berne. They offered me a chair with the assurance that I would not be burdened too much. I do not know yet what I shall do. My Yale appointment was renewed but so far

without salary because money could not be found. Fulton is doing his very best. I am torn between the desire to continue here with all the uncertainty involved or to go back to the university. In the last three years I was offered five chairs and two other positions but a few years from now if I am still alive, I should be rather old for a new job. Well, this is confidential and at any rate I shall enjoy my work and my garden here for the spring and summer.

Give my regards to our friends and tell them to be patient. I shall write them all but it will take some time. My warm love to you and the family

As ever

Henry E. Sigerist

“Claire“ Bacher, see R. to S. of 10 October 1950. “my chicken would burn“: S. was a hobby cook. Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964) US Army chief of staff during WWII and the Korean war. Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980) communist dictator of Yugoslavia. “my book“ (Sigerist 1947). Alexander F. Kerensky (1881-1970) leader of the first Russian revolution of 1917. Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) prime minister of India. Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950) Indian politician. “essay for B. Miller’s book“ (Sigerist 1952). Fulton see R. to S. of 10 October 1950. “five chairs“: Jena, Zurich, Berlin, Leipzig, Bern.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, New Haven, 19 June 1951*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Your wonderful letter of February 16 must have crossed in the mail with the one I sent you from El Salvador. I have re-read it many times and shown it to some of our good friends who were anxious to know how you were and what your views were on some of the world’s problems.

We returned from an extremely interesting two months in El Salvador at the end of February and shortly afterwards the World Health Organization asked me to make a similar survey in Ceylon. (I sent you a copy of my report to the W.H.O. last month, along with my West Virginia study, and I hope they reached you.) At the end of next week I am due to leave for Ceylon and will arrive in Geneva on July 2 for a few days en route. I am hoping to see Erica and will try to reach you by telephone.

We are planning for Ruth to come to Europe in August and meet me after my return from Ceylon, except that there is a strong possibility that our whole family may be coming to Geneva in September for an extended period, instead. The W.H.O. has offered me a regular appointment as chief of a new section on medical care, health insurance, rehabilitation and related problems. I am thinking very seriously of taking it, but it is a difficult decision, because the work here at Yale is very gratifying and I have been given an appointment as Associate Professor for next year on the Yale budget (instead of the U. S. Public Health Service). I will want to get your opinion on this.

Although I will be hoping to speak with you before long, I want to be sure to tell you about how glad all of us are that Rockefeller came through with the grant for your work. Dick Weirnerman, Leslie Falk, and several others were greatly distressed by the difficulties which Claire Bacher indicated, and we were prepared to raise a sum of money by voluntary contributions, to go to Yale for matching the Whitney money. Although Rockefeller came through just in time, I am sure hundreds of your former students and friends stand ready to do whatever is necessary, if the need should arise.

You know, of course, about John Fulton's appointment as Professor of the History of Medicine here. Perhaps someone has already told you about his lecture on March 14 which was devoted to a review of your Volume I and a general tribute to you and your work. There was an excellent audience and he did a beautiful job.

With love from everyone and looking forward very much to speaking with you soon,

As ever,

Milton

West Virginia study (Roemer 1951). Ceylon: Today's Sri Lanka. "Rockefeller" Foundation. Weinerman see S. to R. of 19 August 1950. Falk and Bacher see R. to S. of 13 February 1944 and 10 October 1950, respectively. "Whitney" Foundation. Fulton, see R. to S. of 10 October 1950, Yale professor of physiology, switched to the newly founded chair of the history of medicine.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Madras, 19 August 1951*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

I had every intention of writing you from Ceylon, but here I am in Madras, en route back to Geneva and New Haven. First I must stop at Delhi, at the W.H.O. Regional Office to report on the survey.

It went very well, although the big job of organizing the Health Demonstration Area, of course, lies ahead. Ceylon is a good place for this project because it has all the backwardness of the feudal sections of the world, and yet a great deal has already been done there in way of social services. The British must have always dealt with Ceylon in a special way, because - compared with India or other colonies - there is a remarkable development of education, health services, public assistance [?], co-operatives, roads, etc. Most of this has occurred since 1931 with the Donoughmore Constitution, which gave suffrage and wider power to the elected Parliament. Then with independence in 1947, there has been a further spurt of improvements. It is social democracy per excellence, however, for despite the social services, the great mass of the people remain impoverished - very similar to conditions in El Salvador.

We have a reservation for the whole family on La Liberté coming back to Europe on 25 September and we're naturally excited about coming to live in Geneva. We'll surely see you then. I hope the work has been going well and you have been feeling fine. Greetings to Mrs. Sigerist.

As ever,

Milton Roemer

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 9 October 1951*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

This is just a note to say that we have arrived in Geneva and are very happy to be here. I was terribly sorry to learn on calling the library that Erica is apparently not fully recovered as yet but I hope she is having a pleasant convalescence at Pura.

I thought you might like to have a little clipping that Ruth had saved from the New Haven Register one day in July while I was away.

I am so glad to learn that Dr. Montus had accepted my suggestion to invite you to become a member of the Panel of the Section on Social and Occupational Health and also that you have accepted the invitation. We are awaiting the formal approval of the Swiss Government concerning your appointment and when that arrives you will receive an official letter of appointment from Dr. Chisholm.

From the members of the Panel we are choosing an Expert Committee on medical aspects of social security and I do hope it will be possible for you to serve on that. We will be writing you officially about this in due time.

We are all thrilled to be here in Switzerland and look forward to seeing you before long. I do hope that everything is going well with the book and that you are feeling fine. It was nice to see Mrs. Sigerist briefly at the end of August and we send her and Erica our warmest greetings.

Cordially yours,  
Milton

Erica Sigerist was librarian at the World Health Organization in Geneva. The clipping says that S. c/o Yale University had received a \$ 15,000 grant for three years from the Rockefeller Foundation. Dr. Montus, probably an officer of WHO. Brock Chisholm (1896-1971) Canadian, director general of WHO.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 26 October 1951*

Dear Milton,

I am delighted to know that you have arrived in Geneva with the family, and I hope to see you soon. The American medical students of the University of Geneva have asked me to address them and this I will in all probability do before Christmas.

Thanks for your letter from Madras. It reminded me of the day when I gave a lecture there at the University, sweating while the North-East monsoon was blowing and the countryside was flooded with heavy hot rains. I shall be very interested to hear more of your experiences in Ceylon.

Thanks also for your letter from Geneva and the clipping from the New Haven Register. I am sure that the family has become acclimatized to the new environment, and I am glad to know that you are not in the States at this moment. The news I get from there is far from encouraging.

I am including the snapshot I made of you at Erica's last July. Her recovery was slow, but she is much better now and will be back at work soon.

I am trying to get a good secretary and have indeed advertized in the Tribune de Genève as well as in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung. I have several girls in view, but have not made any choice yet. It is not a good season to find the right type of girl, but I need somebody urgently in order to finish my second volume.

With all good wishes to yourself and family I am

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

“when I gave a lecture“, in November 1944. “your letter from Geneva and the clipping“, see R. to S. of 9 October 1951.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 6 November 1951*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

Thank you so much for your good letter of 26 October and for the snapshot which you took. I am afraid this year it was my turn to look glum in a picture, while the photograph of you came out very well and I will send you a copy of it shortly.

It was good to see Erica back in Geneva and apparently in good health and good spirits. We hope to see a good deal of her, especially when we get settled in our apartment. Erica tells me that you have virtually made a final choice of a secretary who seems to be highly qualified. That is very good news indeed.

I was delighted to see that you might well be coming to Geneva sometime before Christmas. As it happens, I was just about to write you to ask if you could come for a brief consultant service, on 17 and 18 December. For the first time, the International Labor Office has requested advice from the World Health Organization on the final preparation of its new proposed International Convention on Social Security, insofar as that document includes references to medical care.

In order to advise ILO properly, we have decided to gather a small consultant group of four or five persons for a discussion of just a day or a day-and-a-half to review the ILO document and pass along some comments. The actual provisions for medical care in the Convention are fairly brief, so that I do not think the task will be very great. Dr. René Sand has already agreed to come to Geneva for the meeting and I hope to have two or three other outstanding men whom you probably know.

I will be writing you again, of course, about the exact material for discussion if you can join us at this session. In the meantime, would you be good enough to let me know if those dates are satisfactory. I am hoping you might be able to combine this visit to Geneva with your address to the medical students at the university.

With kindest regards, as ever,

Cordially yours,

Milton

René Sand (1877-1953) Belgian physician, wrote on social medicine.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 8 November 1951*

Dear Milton:

December 17 and 18 suit me perfectly for a conference and I shall be very glad to attend it. I just heard that I have to give a lecture in Lausanne on the 13th and one to the American medical students in Geneva on the 14th. This will give me a weekend with Erica during which I also hope to see you and the family.

Yes, I engaged a secretary who seems to have all the qualification required and even more: 26 years old, intelligent, English mother-tongue, perfect command of German, good knowledge of Italian, Spanish, French and as she is a citizen of Israel she also knows Hebrew and Arabic. I expect her very soon and what a relief this will be after a whole year without secretary.

Erica seemed in very good shape when she left here. She still has a few leucocytes too many (16,400) and should have another blood count in 2 or 3 weeks. By that time the blood picture may be normal.

What a pleasure it will be to see you soon again.

Yours very cordially

Henry E. Sigerist

New secretary: Ruth D. Berlowitz.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 22 November 1951*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

I will be writing you in a day or two about the meeting on 17-18 December which I am delighted you can attend.

In the meantime, I wanted you to have the snapshots of you and Erica and Mrs. Sigerist which I took over the summer.

With warmest regards,

Cordially yours,

Milton

I do hope the Italian floods are not affecting your food supply or causing other difficulties.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 23 November 1951*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

I was so glad to get your letter of 8 November indicating that you would be able to attend the meeting in Geneva on 17-18 December regarding medical aspects of social security. It is grand that this fits in with your plans to be in Lausanne and Geneva anyway, for other

purposes. Naturally, I am going to be in touch with Erica regarding the possibility of seeing you over the week-end preceding the meeting.

I am writing you at this time to give further details about the meeting and to furnish you with certain working papers which will explain the subject for our discussion. I hope that the materials and the introductory sheet on the reason for including each item will be self-explanatory. Briefly, our purpose is to prepare a statement for submission to the International Labor Office giving critical comments on the proposed Conventions of the ILO on Social Security, one Convention on Minimum Standards and another on Advanced Standards.

To expedite this task, we have prepared the enclosed series of questions around which the discussion may be held, leading to the preparation of a statement. We do not mean this list of questions to be restrictive in any way and if there are aspects of either of the ILO Conventions on which you should like to make comments, it would, of course, be entirely appropriate to do so.

On the introductory sheet, we have tried to indicate the particular sections of the enclosed documents which are our principal concern so that, if you are pressed for time, you need not feel obligated to read every word of this material. It is all included, however, to give you any background you may wish on any particular aspect of the ILO Conventions.

It is intended that our group will convene on 17 December at 9.30 a.m. in the Palais des Nations, Room F.3.

With regard to travel, we are, naturally, going to provide you with transportation arrangements and so I would appreciate it if you would let me know what kind of accomodation you would like and the approximate time that you wish to reach Lausanne, on the 13th. I am sure our Travel Section can arrange a round-trip ticket which will take you from Lugano to Lausanne and Geneva and thence back to Lugano. If you will let me have your wishes, the Travel Section will send you the necessary tickets. I assume that you will be staying with Erica in Geneva but if you would, for any reason, want hotel accomodation please let me know.

I hope you will keep open the evening of 17 December at which time we should like to have a little reception for the consultant group. You may be interested to know that the other members of the group are: Dr. Axel Höjer of Sweden, Dr. Leslie Banks of England and Dr. René Sand of Belgium.

If there is anything else that requires clarification regarding this meeting, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Milton I. Roemer

The Palais des Nations in Geneva had been the site of the League of Nations after WWI; after WWII it was taken over by the UN. Axel Höjer (1890-1974) director of health services, Sweden. A. Leslie Banks, professor of human ecology, Cambridge, England. René Sand see R. to S. of 6 November 1951.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 29 November 1951*

Dear Roemer,

Very many thanks for your letters of 22 and 23 November, and for the very charming photos.

I was very interested in the agenda of the meeting on 17 and 18 December, and will study the literature you sent me very carefully. I am looking forward to seeing my old friend René Sand, and meeting Dr. Höjer and Dr. Banks, whom I have not met before.

Lausanne is on the way to Geneva; I have to go through this city anyway. Hence no special arrangements are necessary, and all I shall need is a return ticket Lugano- Geneva dated 12 December. I shall in all probability travel to Lausanne on 13 December, but may decide to go there a day earlier, as I must see a few people. On the 14th I have my lecture in the evening in Geneva and will probably have to attend a lunch in Lausanne, as the Professor of Medical History, Dr. Goldschmid, will be celebrating his 70th birthday.

Of course I am looking forward to seeing you again as well as the family. I hope they are well and getting acclimatised to Geneva.

With warm regards, I am,

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

Sand, Höjer, Banks see R. to S. of 23 November 1951. Edgar Goldschmid (1881-1957) German pathologist and medical historian in Lausanne.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 28 December 1951*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

On behalf of the Director-General of the World Health Organization allow me to thank you for your excellent service in Geneva on 17 and 18 December as a member of the Consultant Group on Medical Aspects of Social Security. We are extremely pleased that so large a subject was successfully handled in only a day and a half and we are sure that this was possible only because of the rich background of knowledge and experience which you and other members of the Committee brought with you to this meeting.

On the basis of the decisions arrived at by the Consultant Group I have prepared a draft of a statement which could be submitted, through the WHO Executive Board, to the International Labour Organization. I hope that this statement faithfully records the judgement of the Group on all questions.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would review this statement and return it to me with any suggestions for editorial or substantive changes which you may wish to make. I am enclosing two copies of this statement so that you may retain one for your files.

As you know we are forced to meet certain deadlines if the statement is to be submitted to the WHO Executive Board and thence to the ILO. May I ask therefore that you make every effort to get your comments back to me by 16 January.

May I add personally what a great pleasure it was to work with you on this task and to say that I hope we may be able to call on you again for assistance from time to time. This was the first formal meeting of experts called by WHO to consider a problem directly in the sphere of social security or medical care and because of your participation I feel that the Organization has made an excellent beginning.

With cordial greetings for the New Year.

Sincerely yours,

Milton I. Roemer

The draft of R.'s statement is a typescript of 17 pages.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 2 January 1952*

Dear Milton,

I just found the picture of the statue of Spartacus that I had promised to send you.

Thanks for the draft of the statement of our conference that I remember with great pleasure. I shall return it early next week. At the moment I am just getting ready to go to Basle for the wedding of a niece - a nuisance but unavoidable.

I was awfully sorry to hear that John was sick and hope he has recovered entirely. Thanks to Ruth for her good letter. Beginnings in a foreign country are always difficult but you will feel at home soon particularly when the good season sets in. My love to you all

H. E. Sigerist

Spartacus: Roman leader of a revolt of slaves (1st century B.C.). Draft of the statement, see R. to S. of 28 December 1951. S.'s niece was Marianne Bickel, daughter of S.'s sister. John: Probably R.'s son John Ernest.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 5 January 1952*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Thank you very, very much for the wonderful picture of the statue of Spartacus. It is so characteristic of you not to have overlooked sending it. I am sending it on directly to Howard Fast, and perhaps he will write you.

Enclosed are extra prints of the snapshots of the Sigerist Family. I was flattered when Erica told me that Mrs. Sigerist wanted them. We are looking forward to seeing Erica again after the holidays, especially that we are now settled in our flat.

The children are better now and we are all very happy with the whole aspect of life in Geneva and Europe.

Warmest greetings as ever,

Milton

Spartacus see S. to R. of 2 January 1952. Howard Fast (1914-2003) novelist, wrote *Spartacus* (Fast 1951).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 11 January 1952*

Dear Milton,

I read your statement very carefully and I think it is an admirable summary of our debates. The whole conference had been prepared so very carefully that our task could not have been easier, particularly as we all were in agreement on basic principles. I am sure ILO will be very pleased with your statement, the result of our common work, and there can be no doubt that the stand we took was sound and progressive. As you once remarked, it would have been difficult to get such a consensus of opinion in America on this set of problems.

Page 2, on the last line from the bottom I first thought that “phase“ might not be the right word as it implies stages of development and might look as if one program had to be fulfilled before the next could be tackled. But on the other hand, there is progression from constructive services to restorative services, so feel free to disregard my remark.

It was good to hear that the children are well again and that you are well settled by now. I hope to see all of you in Pura as soon as the spring flowers are out. Very many thanks for the excellent photos. My wife was delighted with them and will send some of them to Nora in New York.

With warm regards, I am,

Yours very cordially,

Henry E. Sigerist

“your statement“ see R. to S. of 28 December 1951. ILO: International Labor Organization. “Nora“ Sigerist Beeson, S.’s younger daughter.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 1 February 1952*

Dear Milton,

You will very shortly have the visit of an Italian physician, Dr. Attardi, who will look you up on behalf of the World Congress of Physicians to be held in Rome at the end of May. Dr. Attardi wants to get in touch with WHO and I gave him your name. I do not know much about this congress. They have the strangest list of sponsors, some avowed communists, others not. They plan to discuss four points, -

- (1) living and health conditions of populations;
- (2) repercussions of war on physical and mental health;
- (3) the physician’s duties in front of these problems;
- (4) cultural and medical exchanges; whatever this may be.

I do not think they are trying to compete openly with WHO, and the whole affair appears to me as being the medical part of the Peace Movement. Of course it is sound and we are all for it, but I do not think that much will come out of such a meeting that will be branded as communist from the start, and I do not think WHO can do much more than send an observer.

They want me to be one of their sponsors, but I am not particularly anxious to stick my neck out at the moment, especially not in an affair over which I do not have the slightest

control. Do let me know what you hear and think in the matter. I know that René Sand has also been approached.

Warm regards to yourself and the family,

Yours as ever

Henry E. Sigerist

Attardi not identified. Sand see R. to S. of 6 November 1951.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 7 February 1952*

Dear Doctor Sigerist,

I have been waiting before answering your good letter of 11 January 1952 regarding the Statement on Medical Aspects of Social Security until our Executive Board had reviewed the document.

I am now pleased to be able to report to you that the Executive Board acted favourably on the document and approved its transmission to the International Labour Organization. I am enclosing a copy of the final document (in both the English and French versions) as it was presented to the Executive Board, incorporating the comments on the first draft received from you and other members of the Consultant Group. It was not possible to re-consult each of you on minor changes made on the suggestion of a particular member of the Group. The changes recommended altogether, however, were rather minor and I hope you will find that the final Statement is a faithful reflection of the views expressed at the December meeting.

You will probably be interested to know that the only criticism of the Executive Board was not that the Statement went too far in making recommendations on medical care organization, but rather that it did not go far enough. For this reason, the Board attached to its resolution transmitting the document to the ILO a note that “the opinions expressed therein are not necessarily those of the members of the Board and should not be taken as an expression of policy by the World Health Organization“. I believe the document will now be published by the ILO in the preparatory material for the 1952 International Labour Conference.

To make quite clear their judgement on these issues, an additional resolution was passed by the Executive Board on “Medical Care in Relation to Public Health“, calling for “(1) joint studies to be undertaken with other international agencies on the relationships between public health, medical care, and social security, and (2) the appointment of an Expert Committee to consider the problems in achieving sound organization of medical care as experienced by nations with different social and economic backgrounds“.

I am sure you will agree with me that the Statement of the Consultant Group has had great value, not merely in rendering advice to the International Labour Organization but in stimulating our own Organization to undertake further explorations of the large problem of medical care administration.

I am sure you will be pleased to know that Dr. Axel Höjer added his name as a signatory of the Statement when I sent it to him, even though he was unable to be present at the meeting.

It was a great pleasure to have worked with you on this project and I do hope we may be able to call on you again as our activities in the field of social medicine develop.

With every good wish,  
Sincerely yours,  
Milton I. Roemer

“Statement“ see R. to S. of 28 December 1951. Höjer see R. to S. of 23 November 1951.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 18 February 1952*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

It has recently been decided that another Medical Officer may be appointed to help me in the Social and Occupational Health Section and I am writing you to ask if you can give me any suggestions for a specific candidate.

You are familiar, of course, with the general type of work required in the World Health Organization. The specific responsibilities of our Section include:

- (1) Occupational health
- (2) Medical aspects of rehabilitation
- (3) Chronic disease control and geriatrics
- (4) Medical aspects of social security and medical care organization
- (5) World-wide distribution of medical personnel
- (6) Hospital planning and administration
- (7) Hygiene of seafarers
- (8) Medical-social services and related activities.

Obviously, with our limited resources we cannot do a great deal in any of these fields but I think we are in the early stages of developing an international programme in these aspects of social medicine related to general public health and preventive activities.

I am looking for someone who has a broad social point of view and some general sophistication about the entire field of social medicine, with perhaps some particular strength in rehabilitation or hospital administration. My preference is for someone between 35 – 45 years of age but this is not essential. He, or she, may come from any nation except the United States or Great Britain from which countries we already have a good many personnel.

There are several candidates whose names have been brought to my attention by our Personnel Section who seem to be very promising. Because of your broad contacts in social medicine, however, I did not want to make a decision until I had asked your advice and heard whether there are any particular individuals whom you could recommend for this post.

With every good wish,  
Sincerely yours,  
Milton I. Roemer

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 23 February 1952*

Dear Milton,

Many thanks for your letter of 18 February, in which you state that WHO decided to appoint another medical officer to help you in the Social and Occupational Health Section. Of course I could easily recommend you half a dozen highly qualified men for the job, but they would all be American or possibly British, and as you say, the job should be filled by some national from another country. I have given the matter careful thought, and I am giving you the names of a few men that occur to me, and who might be available for the position:

(1) Dr. Georges METTROP, who is at present with WHO in charge of Mother and Child Work for the Near East. He was here two years ago when he was offered a chair in social medicine at the University of Utrecht. I had a very good impression of him, and although his work was rather specialised in recent years, he might very well qualify for the position. You can easily obtain further information about him at WHO.

(2) Dr. T. S. SZE, who at present is professor of social medicine at the University of Hongkong. He is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, was Medical Officer of the Red Cross with the Chinese Armies during the last war, spent two years in England doing post-graduate work with the late John Ryle, with Crew in Edinburgh, and a few other departments of social medicine, and has now been for two years professor at the University of Hongkong. I know that he is anxious to work on the Chinese mainland, but I am sure he would be interested in the job at Geneva, and would be perfectly qualified for it.

(3) Dr. Mahendra J. BHATT, who at the moment is in charge of health education in the National Health Department of India at Delhi. He is American trained, was two years in the States, one year at Tulane University and one year at the School of Hygiene of Harvard. During that time his wife was trained as medical social worker, and is now teaching medical social work at the University of Delhi. Like Dr. Sze, Dr. Bhatt has a most pleasant personality, and in my opinion would be highly qualified for the job. I have been in constant touch with him ever since he came to the States.

(4) I also remember having had a Chilean woman post-graduate student in my seminar who was very bright, Dr. Tegualda PONCE. Her training was mostly in mother and child work, but I know that she had very wide social medicine interests. However, I have not been in touch with her in recent years, so that I do not know how she developed.

(5) In Switzerland I would know only one man, Dr. St. ZURUKZOGLU. He is Chief Statistician in the Federal Health Department and Privat-Dozent of Social Hygiene, as they call it here, at the University of Berne. He has very broad interests, but I do not think that he would give up his position.

It seems to me very essential that you get somebody who speaks English well, as there is to be a very close collaboration between the two of you. I do not know who is available from Scandinavia, but I am sure that Höjer could advise you along that line.

I am delighted to hear that your Division is developing so well, and with kind regards, I am,  
Yours very cordially,  
Henry E. Sigerist

T. S. Sze see also S. to R. of 18 March 1952. Tegualda Ponce see also S. to R. of 23 July 1952. Ryle see S. to R. of 10 January 1947. Höjer see R. to S. of 23 November 1951.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 5 March 1952*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

I am terribly grateful for your most helpful letter of 23 February suggesting the names of possible candidates for the post of Medical Officer in the Social and Occupational Health Section.

This was exactly the kind of suggestion I needed and I have already written to Dr. T. S. Sze and Dr. M. J. Bhatt to ask if they might be interested in this post. We had information on both of these men in other connections at headquarters but I would not have known about their specific suitability for the position in my Section if you had not written me.

The selection of personnel in the public health administration field always devolves on the question of whether the most suitable candidate is the individual with specific experience in the specialty involved or with a broad public health point of view and world outlook. I tend to favour the latter consideration, recognizing that the specific factual information on occupational health, rehabilitation, etc. can be easily mastered by the individual who brings to his work a good general background and viewpoint. On this principle, either Dr. Sze or Dr. Bhatt might be excellent, if available. There is also the advantage of an associate from the East to complement the viewpoint of an American.

I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Dr. Massenti regarding the Congrès Mondial de [sic] Médecins. Naturally, I am sorry that I missed Dr. Attardi who arrived when I was in Paris on a short trip. Apparently an invitation was sent directly to our Director-General and his decision was to avoid direct sponsorship but probably to send an observer.

I hope your work continues to go well. People continually ask me when volume two will be published. My father sent me a copy of your article in the Atlantic Monthly and I may say it is a moving piece. You did a masterful job of relating a personal subject to a whole philosophy of life and social developments. It was a great pleasure for Ruth to have seen Mrs. Sigerist the other day and for us both to have seen Erica. I gather that things in the library are getting quite well stabilized.

Thank you so much for your help and with warmest regards from us all,

Cordially yours,

Milton

Sze and Bhatt see S. to R. of 23 February 1952. Attardi see S. to R. of 1 February 1952. “your article” (Sigerist 1952).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 18 March 1952*

Dear Milton,

I just had a cable from Dr. Sze saying that he was very interested in the WHO position and willing to accept it, and asking me to recommend him. I am delighted to do this, because I am convinced that he is an excellent man and that you would find him most satisfactory. I have little to add to what I wrote you in my last letter, but I am not sure [?] whether I mentioned that he had been a member of my seminar while at Hopkins, and had belonged to my inner circle. I have been in close touch with him for a good many years now, and he came to see me at Pura two years ago on his way to China. So I know him really well and have complete confidence in him.

He has a very charming wife whose father was dean of the chief engineering school of China, and who married an English girl, so that although Chinese she is partly English.

All in all I am sure that he would be a safe bet.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

Sze see S. to R. of 23 February 1952.

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*Roemer's secretary to Sigerist, Geneva, 19 March 1952*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 18 March in connection with Dr. Sze's interest in the post of Medical officer in this section.

Dr. Roemer is at present absent from Headquarters on an official mission in the Eastern Mediterranean Region from which he expects to return on about 6 April. Shortly after his departure on Monday, we received a cable from Dr. Sze expressing his interest in the appointment. I shall be writing to Dr. Roemer about this and will acquaint him with the contents of your letter.

Yours sincerely

J. H. Bousfield

Secretary

Sze see S. to R. of 23 February 1952.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 29 April 1952*

Dear Dr. Sigerist,

Your letter of 18 March, which Miss Bousfield acknowledged, was awaiting me when I returned from a field trip in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

I very much appreciate your comments on Dr. Sze and I am happy to be able to let you know that he was appointed by the Selection Committee to the position about which I wrote you.

I am sure he must be an excellent man and I look forward very much to meeting him when he arrives here around early July.

With every good wish,

Cordially yours,

Milton

Bousfield see R. to S. of 19 March 1952. Sze see S. to R. of 23 February 1952.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura ?, 6 May 1952*

Dear Milton,

I just spent ten very pleasant days in Italy, attending a convention in Bologna, looking for illustrations for the second volume of the History, and enjoying Florence, and when I came home last night, I found three letters on my desk, yours, one from Erica, and one from Dr. Sze, all telling me of Dr. Sze's appointment. I am very happy to know that he will be working with you, and I am sure you will find him a very pleasant and very able co-worker. He himself is looking forward to working with WHO and particularly with you.

You must be very busy now that the World Health Assembly is on, but once it is over, do take the family and come to Pura. It is an easy day's drive.

With warm regards, I am,

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 21 May 1952*

Dear Doctor and Mrs. Sigerist:

Thanks very much for your note about Dr. Sze. We look forward very much to seeing him here about the middle of July.

Yes, we should like very much to come to Pura for a week-end and I have just chatted with Erica about it. It's grand news that Nora and Jack will be with you this summer. We should like to drive on Saturday 14 June, arriving that night. We would be in Pura Sunday and then drive back on Monday. We will probably have the children with us and will be reserving rooms at the Paladina Hotel. Perhaps Nettie Price (whom you may remember as a bright nurse from Hopkins) will be with us.

I hope this will not be an inconvenient time for so many visitors. We want Erica to come with us, too, but she doesn't yet know if she can make it.

As ever,

Milton Roemer

Sze see S. to R. of 23 February 1952. “Jack“ Beeson see 24 May 1948. Nettie Price, the R. children’s nurse, see R. to S. of 28 May 1952.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 28 May 1952*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Miss Berlowitz gave me the message and, of course, we understand perfectly why the 15th of June would not be a convenient week-end for our visit.

Since she said that the following week-end would be fine, we will count on coming then - arriving on Saturday night the 21st, visiting with you on Sunday, and leaving on Monday.

I have just checked with Erica again and she had returned from Paris only an hour before. She will let me know if she can come with us. Also, we may like to bring along Nettie Price, the nurse, if she is still with us or otherwise the Gunther Steins who are in Geneva (you may recall some of his books on China).

We are writing separately to the Paladina for rooms and just before we leave we will phone you to confirm the plans.

With warmest wishes to everyone,

As ever,

Milton

Ruth D. Berlowitz, S.’s new secretary, see S. to R. of 8 November 1951. Price see R. to S. of 21 May 1952. Günther Stein, German journalist in China.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura ?, 30 May 1952*

Dear Milton,

As Ruth told you the other day, I have to attend a class reunion on 15 June in the northeastern corner of Switzerland, and although I plan to be back the following day, I may have to remain for a day or two in Zurich or Basle to look up a few things in the university libraries. The weekend of 21 June, however, would be most convenient, and I shall be looking forward to seeing you all here. It would be fine if you could persuade Erica to come along, and of course Nettie Price and the Gunther Steins would be most welcome also.

The Paladina is not full at this time of year, so that you will have no difficulty about getting rooms. Do call me up before you come, and in the meantime I am preparing a program that will show all of you not only our place but also something of the neighbourhood.

With all good wishes, I am,  
Yours as ever,  
Henry E. Sigerist

“Ruth“ Berlowitz, see S. to R. of 8 November 1951. Price see R. to S. of 21 May 1952. Stein see R. to S. of 28 May 1952.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 26 June 1952*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

What a wonderful surprise to find When Doctors are Patients in the morning mail, the morning after returning from Pura ! We will treasure it along with our other Sigerist volumes.

We have just learned that Paul Draper, the well-known American dancer, who is now in Geneva, will be dancing in Lugano this Saturday, June 28. You may have heard about his cause celebre - one of the many civil liberties cases. He is a very fine, progressive person and when he learned you were near Lugano he hoped very much that he could meet you briefly Saturday afternoon. I told him you were very busy, but that perhaps you could spare a few minutes. He has read your book on Soviet medicine and is interested in social medicine as well as social affairs in general. He will probably be telephoning you.

That was a perfectly delightful Sunday and, since we know what a load of entertaining visitors you all carry, we appreciated your and Mrs. Sigerist's graciousness all the more. All our love to all of you.

As ever,  
Milton

*When Doctors are Patients* (Sigerist 1952). Paul Draper (1910-1996). Soviet medicine (Sigerist 1937a).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura ?, 23 July 1952*

Dear Milton,

I am writing you a private letter, as I think I can write more freely if I address it to your home than if I address it to your office. It concerns Dr. Tegualda Ponce who just wrote me that she is in touch with Dr. Verhoestraete, and that she is applying for a position in the section of Maternal and Child Health.

You know Dr. Ponce as you were with her at the School of Hygiene in Ann Arbor, and you may remember that I mentioned her to you once before. I really can recommend her most warmly, and she will in all probability give my name as reference. She was a very active member of my seminar in 1942 and I came to know her very well. I have a very high opinion of her ability, and I think she is just the type of Latin woman that would be extremely useful to WHO, because she had all her specialised training in the States, where she learnt not only techniques but also how to put in a full working day.

Politically I would say she is a socialist without being extreme. Last November she was Vice-President for Chile at the third congress of the Pan-American Women's Alliance in

Montevideo, where she took a very courageous stand. She was elected Vice-President of the fourth congress which I believe will be held this year. She is a very energetic woman who in addition has a delightful personality. Everybody liked her at Hopkins, and she was very close to Charlotte Silverman, Kamala Ghosh, and that whole group which was at Hopkins at the time. I am sure WHO could not make a better choice,

You probably know that she is married to a Swiss lithographer who could get a job in Geneva without any difficulty. Personally I would be very happy to know Tegualda in Geneva. Soon my whole seminar will be assembled there.

With warm wishes to all of you, I am,

Yours as ever

Henry E. Sigerist

Ponce see S. to R. of 23 February 1952. Verhoestaete, probably Louis, WHO Consultant. Silverman see R. to S. of 13 February 1944.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 9 August 1952*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

Many things have been happening here, or I would have answered your good letter of 16 July sooner. Your excellent photography puts me to shame, but here are a few of the pictures that I took in memory of our wonderful visit to Pura. We sent on the extra set of photos to Nettie Price, and I hope she has written you.

It was terribly kind of you to see Paul Draper on such short notice. He told us how perfectly delighted he was by his visit with you, including the heat and massage treatment of his sore back. You certainly helped to assure the success of his dance in that way, even though you couldn't see it.

I have been very pleased, of course, to know that Tegualda Ponce is interested in the possibility of working with W.H.O., and I appreciate very much your writing me so fully about her. I remember Tegualda very well indeed, and I do hope that some position can be found for her. I had suggested her name originally to Dr. Verhoestraete and have spoken to him again. At the present time the opportunities seem to be out in the field, but perhaps something would develop later in Geneva. I've written Tegualda all about it.

Things have been rather difficult for me lately related in the first place to the problem I discussed with you in Pura and in the second place to the highly controversial nature of my particular responsibilities in W.H.O. and my effort to follow a principled position. The statement on "Medical Aspects of Social Security" by you, René Sand, and the others has caused me endless difficulties, following attacks on it by the World Medical Association and its American and British components. I am, in retrospect, accused of "bad judgment" in not having a "practising physician" in the Consultant Group, despite the fact that the I.L.O. was delighted with the statement. This is only one example of many headaches of this type. I do not know how much longer I can stay in the highly vulnerable post I now hold.

Dr. Sze and his family have arrived, and it is a real pleasure to have them here. Already I am convinced of how sound our advice was about Dr. Sze. He is a first-rate person, with real understanding of social medicine and so quick to catch on to the problems of international health work.

We spent a week in England recently and had a nice tourist's holiday. August seems to be the month that Americans reach Geneva, and we have been having an incessant stream of visitors - close friends like the Axelrods and Goldwaters, but also casual and distant acquaintances, and then friends of friends who assume that every American in Europe is a natural tourist agency. I can fully sympathize with the plight of the Sigerist family in the same respect.

We are very uncertain about the future, and I hope I am not deluding myself to think that a university position somewhere would give me the proper setting I need to do creative work. Aside from other difficulties, the administrative demands of my job here are absolutely overwhelming and I do not intend to continue with them. The big question is whether I should seek something in a university in the U.S.A., with all the frustrations and difficulties there today, or look elsewhere. There might conceivably be a chair in social medicine in India, but that's a big step to take.

The trip to Israel last month was extremely interesting. It is undoubtedly making progress compared with the Middle East, but people compare it with America and are discouraged. The basic problem is Israel's forced choice between the cold war camps, and her decision on the side of American loans and free private enterprise in the domestic economy. But it is certainly the "welfare state" par excellence.

It was good news that Ruth passed the translator's exam and the enclosed article from the "UN Special" may serve as a post-script for her.

With all our warmest thoughts for all of you,

As ever,

Milton Roemer

S.'s letter is missing. Cy Axelrod, member of the American Public Health Association. Goldwater not identified. "Ruth" Berlowitz, see R. to S. of 28 May 1952.

Names mentioned before:

Draper	R. to S. of 26 June 1952
Ponce	S. to R. of 23 February 1952
Price	R. to S. of 21 May 1952
Sand	R. to S. of 6 November 1951
Sze	S. to R. of 23 February 1952
Verhoestraete	S. to R. of 23 July 1952

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura ?, 14 August 1952*

Dear Milton,

Thank you ever so much for your letter and for the perfectly charming pictures. Everybody is delighted with them and they will find a place in my scrap book.

I was sorry to hear that you had so much trouble, particularly also with our very tame team and I think rather conservative statements on Medical Aspects of Social Security. Everything went off so smoothly that it was almost too good to be true. The Report after all was approved by the Executive Board, and ILO seemed very satisfied with it. I fail to see what a "practising physician" could have contributed to our discussions, as the problems were primarily such of social medicine. However, we know what the AMA and BMA are, and it is not surprising that

they are now criticising our actions. I heard how Austin was criticising the ILO during the last session. Still, we must go ahead, and we know that time is working for us. I readily understand, however, that you are beginning to be fed up with the whole organization and that you would prefer an academic position. But this presents problems now, too. You know well enough what conditions in the States are, and in a country like India you can do extremely useful work, but you are far away from the main road. Sometime in the fall we shall have to discuss the whole set of problems, either here in Pura or I shall come to Geneva.

Tegualda Ponce I am sure would be glad to get away from Chile, where there are strong reactionary trends at the moment. And since she has a Swiss husband Geneva would be a good place for her for the time being. I am glad you know her. I was always very fond of her.

With warm regards to the family and yourself, and hoping to see you before long, I am,

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

ILO: International Labor Organization. AMA: American Medical Association. BMA: British Medical Association. Austin not identified. Ponce see S. to R. of 23 February 1952.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 18 January 1953*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Erica has just told me of your plan to visit Geneva around the 20th of February, and I want to say how very pleased we will be to see you.

I have just started working in the WHO Library and so it is nice to see Erica a little more often. My work as a „Consultant“ started on 1 January, and I am expecting to spend six months studying “administrative relationships between public health, medical care, and social security“ throughout the world. It is a fascinating assignment, but I can probably only scratch the surface in six months time. In July, 1953 my resignation is effective, which completes two years with WHO. What we shall do then is still not at all clear, and as so often before, I very much want to ask your advice.

I hope all goes well with you, that you have found a good secretary, that the work moves along, that you and Mrs. Sigerist are feeling fine. The Report of the Nancy meeting, which I just read, is excellent.

As ever,

Milton

As a result of a loyalty case R. had resigned his post and was working for WHO as a consultant. Meeting in Nancy, France, see S. to R. of 23 January 1953.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 23 January 1953*

Dear Milton,

I am most anxious to see you and to have a long talk with you. As Erica told you, I shall be in Geneva around the 20th of February, and I shall get in touch with you immediately. In

April, when the Camellias are in full bloom you must come to Pura with the family. You saw our region in the summer and you will find it very beautiful in the spring also.

I am terribly sorry that things turned out in such an unsatisfactory way for you in Geneva, and what a nuisance that you will have to move again so soon. However[,] I was glad to hear that you found the work as a “Consultant“ interesting and you certainly have a big assignment. It will not be easy to make a decision as to the future and we shall have to talk the matter over very thoroughly.

The meeting in Nancy was very pleasant, Gzergorzewski was careful as he had learned from your experience. Our report could have been stronger, but I think the main recommendation that every Medical School should have a fully organised department of Preventive and Social Medicine will have some influence, particularly in certain European countries where the subject is very much neglected. The Medical Director of one of the largest health insurance funds in Switzerland (it includes 400,000 people) was here recently, and told me that the health insurance funds had approached the University of Zürich urging that the students be given some instruction in Social Medicine. The University answered that they did not see the need for such instruction. Now the Funds will, I am sure, make wide use of the World Health Report once it is published.

All good wishes to yourself and the whole family,

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

In Nancy, France, December 1952 the WHO held a meeting on the teaching of preventive and social medicine. Edward Grzegorzewski (1906-1982) Polish hygienist.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 8 March 1953*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Here at last is the pendant for your watch. I'm sorry that the jeweler seems to have polished it up, but it will tarnish soon enough, I'm sure. I debated which side to attach the coin to the strap, but decided that, since Louis lost his head in 1793, it was best that it should hang upside down, while the new Constitution is right side up.

It was wonderful seeing you here. I'm afraid my plans to avoid too much wining and dining failed, but you seem to have a cast-iron stomach and stood up to the regime very well. I hope you're now recuperating on the vegetable diet.

I hope you don't mind that I keep using your name as a reference. I just sent off a formal application to the University of Manchester, Department of Social and Preventive Medicine and listed you. In a few weeks I will be in England and will try to look into the situation both at Manchester and at Belfast.

Please thank Mrs. Sigerist for her very charming note to Ruth and me. Ruth and I both send you both our love.

As ever,  
Milton

“Louis“ XVI, king of France. Belfast, see S. to R. of 16 March 1953. “Ruth“ Roemer.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 16 March 1953*

Dear Milton,

I am most enthusiastic about the pendant, and I have been wearing it ever since it arrived. I think it was most appropriate to have the angel of liberty writing the new constitution in the front and Louis XVI in the back. It is an irony that the coin was issued in 1793 probably just a few months before he was beheaded.

Erica just spent a week-end with us and we recalled the delightful days we had in Geneva. The photos just came and they will remind you of the various events we shared, culinary and others; I think they turned out quite well. I only regret that I did not have my camera when I was at your home. I would have loved to make snaps of the children, but we will have to wait until you come to Pura. We count on your visit at Easter time. It is still beastly cold, this morning when I came down I read 1°C. This is very unusual for our region and the garden is weeks behind, but it may change from one day to another.

Please do use my name when you apply for positions. I wrote to Belfast as soon as I was back from Geneva and had a nice acknowledgement from Professor Stevenson.

By the way my stomach behaved very well and didn't show any symptoms of strain after the days in Geneva. I am afraid I have not lost much weight yet, but will reduce seriously soon.

The book is progressing, but rather slowly I am afraid. The curse is that many of my friends have either reached the Festschrift age or are dying, so that I have to turn out articles on the conveyor belt. To-morrow I have to send out an article commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Karl Sudhoff, a few days later an obituary of Castiglioni for the Bulletin, before the end of March an article for a Festschrift of a professor in Zürich who is Secretary of the Swiss Society of the History of Medicine. This is all frightfully time consuming, and on Saturday and Sunday we are having a Medical-Historical Conference in Pura, with 9 papers, discussions and exhibits. This is an annual affair that brings together the Swiss teachers of medical history, the editors of journals and a few invited guests. Of course it requires a lot of preparation.

My love to all of you and do come soon,

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

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Louis XVI see R. to S. of 8 March 1953. A. C. Stevenson of the Belfast Department of Social and Preventive Medicine. Karl Sudhoff (1853-1938) German medical historian in Leipzig, S.'s teacher and predecessor; (Sigerist 1953a). Castiglioni see R. to S. of 6 July 1945 and (Sigerist 1953b). “professor in Zurich“: Hans Fischer (1892-1976) pharmacologist and medical historian: Festschrift article (Sigerist 1953c).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 6 April 1953*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Your photos of the week-end in Geneva are wonderful, and I blush to send you, enclosed, a couple of mine of such inferior quality in return. The subjects of them, however, are another matter. I gave Erica a copy of the one with the three of you, just before she left for the States. She was quite excited about her trip, of course. It was very kind of her to take along a little present for Ruth's mother.

I've just come back from ten days in Britain, where I attended the British Sociological Association conference - the first one, of a new society. The theme was "social science and social policy" with the keynote address by Gunnar Myrdal. It was quite good, and the session in which I participated, on health, was persuaded that public health and social medicine are fields calling for close collaboration between physicians and social scientists.

I visited Manchester and Belfast in connection with the lectureships, but nothing is at all settled yet. The job at Manchester, I think, would be interesting and fruitful, since it is a new department with ambitious plans and a good man at the head. There is plenty of provision for research, and the teaching program includes both medical students and physicians getting the D.P.H. The University has yet to make a decision, however, and then there are all the legal difficulties on work permit, passport, etc. we would have to work out.

When you were here, I believe we mentioned Tom Winner, who knows Nora from Columbia University. He was in Europe for a year (1951-52) and is now back at North Carolina teaching. But he is extremely anxious to return to Europe and has sent his curriculum vitae, copies of which are enclosed. He is a first-rate person, with broad language abilities, modest, charming, and thoroughly competent in his field. Perhaps you would know someone in a European university who would be interested in Tom. He would be most interested in a teaching post in England, but - since he is fluent in German and French, as well as Czech, Russian, and English - he would be glad to go elsewhere. You can imagine how he feels these days in the States, with his subject. If you could use additional copies of his curriculum vitae, we have them to send to you.

I'm afraid my trip to England cut into our plans to spend Easter in Italy, stopping at Pura. We do hope to do this soon, however, and want very much to spend a night at the Paladina. With many thanks for your invitation and with all our love to you and Mrs. Sigerist,

Cordially as ever,

Milton

Gunnar Myrdal (1898-1987) Swedish economist and politician. D.P.H.: Doctor of Public Health. Thomas G. Winner (1917-2003) Czech-born slavist and linguist. "Nora" Sigerist. Paladina: Hotel in Pura.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 9 April 1953*

Dear Milton,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 6th April, and for the photos which I find very good indeed.

Of course I wrote letters to Belfast and Manchester recommending you very warmly, and I also wrote a personal note to Dr. Schilling in Manchester, who as you know, teaches Industrial Medicine at the University under the auspices of the Nuffield Foundation. I met him in London at Jerry Morris' last November, and I thought he might be helpful. Obviously I have no idea what the chances are. If they have good British candidates they will give them preference, but there are so very few people in the field and I wouldn't know of anybody as well qualified as you are, possessing [sic] such a wide range of experience. Let us hope for the best.

Thanks for recommending Tom Winner. I have a vague recollection that I once heard him speak in Owen Lattimore's seminar, although I know that he came to Hopkins as a Fellow just after I had left. It will not be easy to find something for him in Europe, but I will keep the matter in mind and look around and I will also get in touch with Nora. Her teacher Ernest Simmons spent half of last year in Europe, and was in touch with all the centres of Russian studies. Maybe he will have an idea and at any rate I will follow the matter up.

We much regret that you could not come over Easter, but we expect you at any time, whenever it suits you. I will be in Basle for lectures and work at the library from May 16th to the 22nd, but otherwise will be in Pura all the time.

Gregory Zilboorg was here over Easter and brought the latest gossip from New York. We have good news from Erica who is rediscovering New York and seems to be enjoying her vacation very much.

With all good wishes to all of you and hoping to see you soon, I am,

yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

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Richard S. F. Schilling (1911-1997). Nuffield Foundation, funding research in education, science, etc.. Jerry N. Morris (born 1910) professor of public health. Winner see R. to S. of 6 April 1953. Owen Lattimore (1900-1989) scholar of Central Asia. Ernest J. Simmons (1903-1972). In Basel S.'s two lecture topics were Social Medicine and the Hippocratic Oath. Zilboorg see S. to R. of 19 August 1950.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 23 May 1953*

Dear Doctor Sigerist:

Your kind of [sic] letter of 9 April about my application to the English universities, about Tom Winner and other matters is still unanswered.

It has become a saga - all the ups and downs, ins and outs of my job hunt. I was, in fact, selected for the Manchester post, but the University demanded clearance from the British Home Office by a deadline of 9 days. This was impossible to get, and so the next man was chosen. Professor Brockington tried hard, but the Secretary of the University was nervous about the whole thing and really set conditions which, with the passport problem, were impossible to meet.

It looked for a while as though WHO would send me to a professorial post in India, but then they again backed out. Everyone admits the reasons are purely political.

The latest possibility is a direct Indian job, having nothing to do with WHO - Professor of Public Health Administration at the All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health in

Calcutta. I am making formal application for it and have already spoken with the Minister of Health about it, while she was at the World Health Assembly.

Would you write a strong letter to her ? She is Hon. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Minister for Health, New Delhi, India. I have already explained the political difficulties to her, and she seemed entirely sympathetic. She is now actually on a visit to Moscow but will be back in New Delhi by June 15.

I have to keep bothering you for these letters so often - perhaps it would be simpler for you if you prepared a kind of “testimonial“ for me, marked “to whom it may concern“ which I could use in various connections.

My contract ends in only another five weeks. I have asked for a slight extension, but have no idea if I will get it. We just live with new decisions and judgments from day to day. We still want to get to Italy, stopping in Pura for a day, whatever may happen. Tentatively we are aiming at June 5-15, stopping over at the Palladina [sic] the night of the 6th, Saturday, and driving on to Italy the next day. We’ll phone you to confirm it, if we can really come.

We hope that you and Mrs. Sigerist are both well, and send you both our warmest wishes.

As always,

Yours,

Milton

Winner see R. to S. of 6 April 1953. Colin Fraser Brockington (1903-2004) professor of social and preventive medicine. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (1889-1964). Paladina: Hotel in Pura.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura ?, 28 May 1953*

Dear Milton,

Thanks for your letter, it was perfectly delightful to hear that you may be here next week, do call me up and let me know in time when we may expect you and do make plans so that I can have all of you for supper here on Saturday and for lunch somewhere in the neighbourhood on Sunday. If you are going to Italy we may accompany you as far as Como, which is a very nice spot with a beautiful cathedral, and we may have lunch there. You certainly are having a full load of troubles and I am sorry that you did not get the Manchester post. The University of Manchester is considered to be the most liberal in England, they have a good faculty and I am sure that you would have liked it there.

The All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health in Calcutta is well known to me, I was there with Grant in 1944, the Institute has a very high standard and is doing excellent work. Of course you realise that the climate of Calcutta is very trying, but you can spend the summer in the Himalaya mountains as most people do, and for a few years a post at that Institute would be very interesting indeed. I am writing a strong personal letter to Amrit Kaur recommending you, and I am sure that a chair of Public Health Administration in the Institute would be a good choice under present circumstances.

Of course I shall be very glad to write you a general letter marked “to whom it may concern“ but will do it after you have been here so that we may discuss it together and be sure that I have all the data concerning you [sic] career straight. So far I was always able to write personal letters and of course I shall be very glad to do this in the future whenever this seems

opportune. I do hope you will soon find a suitable job. It is awful to have a man of your ability and experience wasted.

I am sure you have considered the possibility of going back to America, there would obviously be a good deal of unpleasantness involved, but many of our friends do have good jobs inspite of all. Dr. Bluestone of Montefior hospital was here recently, he seems to have maintained quite a liberal attitude and through such people it could be possible to get jobs in the States without having to undergo all the ordeals of investigation. (Our latest visitor, by the way, was Stokowski, he is conducting a concert here to-night.) Well, we shall have to talk this over when you come here.

I recently spent a very pleasant day with Lillian Hellman, the play-write [sic], in Milano, she had a restricted passport that did not include Switzerland, so I met her in Italy. She had a full load of trouble, was investigated for only twenty minutes, but then they went for her tax returns, investigating those for the last twenty years and in the end fined her \$130,000 so that she had to sell her farm and practically everything she owned. They did the same with her friend Dashiell Hammet [sic] who was in gaol five months, where his job consisted of cleaning the toilets and now the Treasury Department takes all his royalties so that he is practically without income. These of course are special cases, I am not optimistic as to Owen Lattimore although the judge took a pseudo-liberal attitude. Hopkins by the way acted very decently in that they gave him leave of absence with full salary.

I do hope that you will be here soon, and with my warm wishes to you and the family, I am,

Yours as ever,

Henry

Como: Italian town south of Lugano. Grant: member of S.'s medical tour in India fall 1944, see R. to S. of 7 April 1948. Amrit Kaur see R. to S. of 23 May 1953. E. Michael Bluestone, physician at Montefiore Hospital, New York. Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977) conductor. Lillian F. Hellman (1905-1984) playwright. Dashiell Hammett (1894-1961) mystery and crime writer. Lattimore see S. to R. of 9 April 1953.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 17 June 1953*

Dear Doctor and Mrs. Sigerist:

We want to tell you what a delight it was to spend the week-end with you in Pura. You were so kind, as always, and it is amazing how you always find some new place to visit and dine at, where we haven't been before.

Our trip was wonderful in every way, even though we had bad weather a few days. We found Venice most intriguing because it is such a combination of fantasy and reality - there one sees the gondolas, just like in the pictures, and they are not merely romantic show-pieces, but fulfill the basic needs of the people. Florence was grand, too, for its statues and paintings, even though the city itself is a little depressing. The ruins from the war are everywhere, and we were dismayed to find that more workers seemed to speak German as their second tongue, than French, with all that reflects of the close ties of the Rome-Berlin Axis. Coming up to the coast on the west, we had a most pleasant day with the Collings family near La Spezia. He has the usual sad tales to tell about life in the U.S., which he left in January.

Nothing new to report here. I am waiting to hear from India, and at the same time am making a few last explorations in Britain and Canada.

I saw Erica and am very sorry to hear about your (Henry's) mother. I do hope the teaching assignment in Basle works out; it would be valuable in so many ways.

With all our love,

As ever,

Milton

Collings not identified. S.'s mother, see R. to S. of 7 July 1946 and S. to R. of 4 July 1953. There were negotiations between S. and the University of Basel, see S. to R. of 4 July 1953.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 4 July 1953*

Dear Milton,

Amrit Kaur sent me a copy of the letter she wrote you and I was very sorry to hear that this chance is lost too. I was never too hopeful, because I know that Indians tend to employ their own people whenever possible, and they will give preference to a second rate local man over a foreigner. One cannot blame them although they are losing many opportunities in this way and I do not see why they should not employ foreign scientists on contracts limited to a certain period of time. Well, there is nothing we can do about it and I am afraid that your chances to find the right job in Europe are getting rather slim. I am enclosing a letter of recommendation addressed "To Whom It May Concern", as I promised last time you were here.

It was very good to see you the other day and I was happy to hear that you had a good trip in Italy. Here are the two little snapshots I made at Morcote. I did not realise that I had made so few pictures that day, and I am afraid that they are not particularly good.

I had a rather disturbed month of June on account of my mother's illness. She is somewhat better now, but at the age of 87 you never know what may happen and I shall probably have to go back to Basle in a week or two. She is in very good hands in an excellent hospital. I hear from the Medical Faculty that they have appointed a committee to go into the matter of Social Medicine, but the vacation begins next week and I am sure that nothing will be begun before next winter. Of course I am not in a hurry and it would not be more than a part time assignment anyway, but the more I think the matter over, the more tempted I feel to do some teaching. Let me know how things develop, and should you decide to go back to the States I would very much like to see you before you leave. I may be in Geneva in August for a day or two.

My love to all of you,

Yours as ever,

Henry

Amrit Kaur see R. to S. of 23 May 1953. Morcote: Village on the Lake Lugano. S.'s mother see R. to S. of 7 July 1946.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Geneva, 8 August 1953*

Dear Henry:

It was wonderful to see you here on your surprise visit to Geneva. The beautiful gladiolas are still very much alive in the living room, and they look as though they'll never wilt.

I'm afraid I didn't thank you for the kind testimonial letter you sent me on 4th of July. I hope I shall not have to use it for a long time - that our next move to Saskatchewan will allow us to settle down and do some solid work for several years. The way things have been going, we find it hard to look ahead for more than a few months at a time.

Also, your pictures of our stop at Pura en route to Italy were lovely. Enclosed are mine. Since I took them with the benefit of your lightmeter reading, on the same day, with a Leica, and since they're not so good as yours, I'll have to just admit you're a better photographer.

We are getting adjusted psychologically to the idea of moving to a cold, rural prairie region and we hope that the spirit and energy of the C.C.F. movement will help us find life worth while. I'm going to try to finish my study on world-wide patterns of medical care organization, in the evenings, but a few comments made here already cast doubt on whether WHO will be willing to publish it in the end, the subject being so "controversial". Perhaps a Canadian publisher might be interested.

I still hope that, after a few years, I can find a university post in Canada. Just yesterday I received an offer of a lectureship in social medicine in Hebrew University, Israel, but it is too late to revise the Canadian plans, and Israel has so many disadvantages. If you think of any academic people in Canada I should meet, I know you'll let me know.

Our boat reservation is for 5th September on a small Dutch ship not reaching New York till the 15th. I hope we will be in Regina by the end of the month. We'll let you know if all goes well.

These two years in Europe have been a magnificent education in more fields than public health. And I don't have to tell you about the special place in our memories occupied by the visits to Pura and your visits to Geneva. The subject you discussed with T. S. Sze was

most exciting, and we will be anxious to learn the outcome. Also the Basle situation, we will be eager to learn about.

Kindest regards to Mrs. Sigerist from us both, and looking ahead to brighter days,

Affectionately, as ever,

Milton

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Saskatchewan: Province in Western Canada, Capital Regina, since 1944 ruled by the C.C.F. (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation), a progressive party; S. helped to organize its medical services in 1944. Sze see S. to R. of 23. February 1952. "Basel situation" see S. to R. of 4 July 1953.

*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 14 August 1953*

Dear Milton,

Many thanks for your letters and the photos which I find very good. I am sending the one of Emmy and me to my grandson, so that he may remember his grandparents the way he saw them last year.

It was so good to have an evening with you the other day before your leaving Geneva. I cannot tell you how sorry I am to know that you will be so far away and that it may be years before we meet again. Besides I do not know how many years I have left. But the bond between us is such that it will hold no matter how many thousands of miles of ocean may separate us.

It will be a change for you to live in the Canadian Prairie after Geneva, but I really feel that this is the best that you could have found at the moment. You will find the work satisfactory and the people understanding and basically progressive, very democratic, anxious not to have things done for them, but to have them done by their own efforts. I have extremely warm feelings towards Saskatchewan and a great admiration for its premier, who is a very fine person indeed and has done extremely well. Of course I hope that this is only a stepping stone for you and that sooner or later you will be back in a University post. Once you are in Canada there should be possibilities for you to get into one of the larger universities, Ontario or McGill. And all in all I think that it is better for you to be in Canada than in some Indian or other Eastern University where life would not be easy on the family for reasons of climate and many other factors. See that the children do not forget their French. Johnny speaks it so nicely and you know yourself what a great advantage it is to have a second language.

I do not know if you receive the Saskatchewan News, a Bulletin they publish twice a month. If not[,] drop me a line and I will send you a handful of recent numbers because it gives a very good picture of what is going on in the Province.

I think I did not adequately express to Ruth how much I enjoyed her dinner. I had never made the Soupe Vichysoise and I think it was just delicious. I have the recipe and will try to make it next week. The roast beef was excellent also. In Saskatchewan you will get such delicacies as Prairie Chicken, and marvellous wild ducks, fish cooked in the Indian way wrapped in algae, but you will find the liquor situation rather complicated. Every Canadian Province has different laws. Of course one gets the liquor and wines, but it is much more complicated than in Geneva.

Soon the month will be over and I am keeping my fingers crossed hoping that you will get to Regina without further difficulties. You are leaving many friends in Europe who will miss all of you greatly and among them quite particularly,

Yours,

Henry

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S.'s grandson, son of his daughter Nora, was Christopher Beeson (1950-1976). Premier of Saskatchewan from 1944 to 1961 was Tommy C. Douglas (1904-1986). "Johnny": John Ernest Roemer.

*Roemer to Sigerist, Basel, 30 August 1953 (postcard)GG*

Dear Henry:

Greetings from Basel, our last stop in Switzerland before [...] plane to London + then ship to America. It's our first visit here - very lovely town and we do hope you will be teaching here next year ! Your marvellous letter warms our hearts still and I will answer soon. Warmest to Emma from us all. As ever, Milton

“Emma“: Emmy Sigerist.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 13 October 1953*

Dear Henry:

Your sweet wire to the Veendam has been in my wallet since we found it in our cabin on boarding the ship, and now that our long journey is at an end, it is time that I wrote you that we arrived here safely in Saskatchewan and all is well.

The ten days on the ocean were a pleasant rest, although the week in London beforehand was marred by poor little Beth coming down with chickenpox. We were afraid we might be stopped from sailing, but no one seemed to notice the marks on her face - great commentary on international quarantine. (As the London pediatrician said, any adult on the ship couldn't catch it, and any child who hadn't had it should catch it.) But there were no epidemics on the high seas.

On arrival in New York, we were prepared for all kind of questions, but for some reason our paper-less state must have signalled the wrong reaction. What happened was a fantastically thorough search of all our baggage - eight valises and two trunks - as though we were concealing the Maharadja's rubies. The toothpaste was squeezed, the heels of the shoes were tapped for sound - everything was literally emptied from the trunks and palpated. As for the papers [...]

Our fellow-passengers on the dock looked on in amazement, especially since - as U.N. personnel - the steamship line had seen to it that we were the first passengers escorted off the ship, but aside from the [...] embarrassment, nothing significant happened. Our passports, which the Purser of the ship dutifully passed to the Immigration Officer (without the touch of a Roemer hand), were dispatched directly to Washington, and that was that.

This experience only served to fortify our decision to move along to our destination without delay. The first night home I saw Fred Mott for advice on Saskatchewan, next day went to Washington to consult lawyers, came to Paterson to buy a car and [...] with the draft board (doctor draft), and on the fourth day we were off on our way to Canada.

It was a good trip, if a little wearing. We drove directly north to Montreal, where the border crossing was quick and casual. Then for 2000 miles across Canada, including an overnight boat-ride across Lake Superior, we saw this vast undeveloped country of trees, lakes, hills, and prairies. It's crazy that so much land should be unattended while millions squeeze the dry plains of India. On the 26th September we reached Regina.

Quite a change from Geneva and Europe, to put it mildly. You remember Regina, of course, which is perhaps even more of a boring pioneer town than when you were here in 1944. There's quite a change from my last visit in 1947. A tremendous amount of new construction going on and business is thriving. The discovery of oil in the province has had an enormous effect. The wheat marketing situation is bad because the world cannot pay the price for Canadian (and U.S.) wheat, the elevators are full, and there's no place to store the new harvest. But everyone looks to oil to maintain the level of prosperity.

Despite the new houses going up, housing is extremely tight and I've been spending almost full-time looking for a place to live. We are going to have to buy a house, which may mean a loss later because prices are terribly inflated, but what can we do ?

I haven't had much time on the job, but I feel it will be interesting and useful. The C.C.F. Government is still high-spirited and there are many good people working hard to develop a broad welfare program. There are plenty of difficulties trying to build a "semi-

Socialist" program on an agricultural base, with industrial organization along conventional lines in the surrounding provinces. The hospitalization insurance program is going well and, in the next few years, it may be possible to expand into [...]

We are still in a hotel, but John Ernest is happily inscribed in school and Ruth and Beth are busy getting acquainted with Regina. I must say this business of getting settled in a new community gets to be a routine which in longer [...] is a thrill. It's the 7th time in 14 years of married life - the price of public health experience which I hope we will have paid before long. We miss Europe and Geneva terribly though, far more than we ever missed the U.S. from the other side. Inwardly I get a good feeling from seeing the Queen's picture in all the shop windows, because it suggests the possibility someday perhaps of being able to travel again. Canadian citizenship would be a big decision to make, however, because my lawyer assures me that under the circumstances it would mean a permanent bar from reentry to the U.S. We shall [...] that in another year or two, for the time being we count our blessings for the cool, free air we breathe.

Please write how you are and how the work goes on the working up of Volume II. We are seeing that the Regina Library which has 2 of your older books, orders the others. We think of you and Pura so often. Warmest wishes to Mrs. Sigerist. Our love, as ever,

Milton

This longhand letter, written in pencil, has a very poor legibility; illegible words are shown by the sign [...], illegible sentences by a skipped line. The letterhead reads: Province of Saskatchewan, Department of Public Health. Veendam: Name of the Dutch Boat. Beth see R. to S. of 11 July 1949. Mott see S. to R. of 18 September 1948. Paterson, NJ, R.'s home town. C.C.F. see R. to S. of 8 August 1953. "Queen" of England.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 22 October 1953*

Dear Milton,

I was much relieved when I heard from Gunther Stein that you had arrived safely and just a day later I got your long letter of the 13th October. The way your luggage was searched sounds perfectly ludicrous. They must have assumed that your paperless state was due to the fact that you were diamond smugglers or something similar or it was simply done to annoy you. In the early thirties we almost had a similar experience. We arrived with twentytwo

pieces of luggage including a typewriter, violin case, files etc. the children were small, the boat arrived late, whereupon the customs man declared that the examination of our luggage would take three to four hours, but then he added that of course he could shoot us through and when I put a bill in one of the handbags that he was just looking at the whole affair was settled and we were out in five minutes. But those were other times.

Now I am very glad indeed to know that you are in Canada and I hope that you will find a house soon. I can well imagine that life will be very different from that in Geneva in every respect. The winter will be long and cold. I was there in September and October and the weather was extremely pleasant. When I left[,] the wild ducks just started their flights to the south and the prairie was really most impressive. Sooner or later you must go back to an academic position but for the time being your present job is probably the most satisfactory you could have had as circumstances are. I keep quite well informed about the province because they very kindly keep sending me the Saskatchewan News. There is no doubt that the province has progressed tremendously under the C.C.F. Government, but of course they have been very lucky, had no drought, no locusts, good crops at a time when prices were high, and now oil.

I also took the trip from Montreal to Regina, by rail and found it very interesting as it gave me a good picture of Canada. But it is long and on my way home I took the air plane which left Regina in the morning and landed in New York the same night.

Well I hope that all of you will feel at home soon and will have a good winter. There is no hurry in making the decision about Canadian Citizenship. I doubt very much that you could be barred permanently from the U.S. with a British passport. A few years from now we will see much more clearly although I am not too hopeful.

There is not much to report from here, I am struggling to get four books in print by the end of the year, Volume II, the revised German edition of Volume I, the Heath Clark lectures and the new edition of the *Great Doctors*. I have hardly left Pura during the year, but tomorrow I am going to Verona for a few days to attend the meeting of the Italian Society of the History of Medicine. Next month I will be in London for a few days, but this is about all.

When you see the premier Tom Douglas give him my warm regards and tell him that I have very fond memories of Saskatchewan.

My love to all of you and all good wishes in which Emmy joins,

Yours as ever,

Henry

Stein and C.C.F. see R. to S. of 28 May 1952 and 8 August 1953, respectively. Heath Clark lectures (Sigerist 1956). *Great Doctors* (Sigerist 1933) was the English translation of the German original of 1932; S. was preparing the 3rd edition. Douglas see S. to R. of 14 August 1953.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 26 January 1954*

Dear Henry:

I can hardly believe it is more than three months since you wrote your very sweet letter of 22 October. Since then so many things have happened, and we have now almost reached the point of feeling like citizens of Regina, Saskatchewan in these Canadian prairies.

Since early November we have been in a house which we bought after exploring every piece of property for sale in this “boom town“ with its highly speculative real estate market. It was a real experience looking for a house, to see the way people live and the kinds of adjustments that are made to the housing shortage. The house we bought we are very pleased with because it is spacious and, by Regina standards, oldish, which means something over 40 years of age. The city of Regina was established only in 1903 before which it was only a small trading settlement, originating in the 1880’s, not justifying the exalted status of being a Canadian “city.“ The province is celebrating its 50th jubilee only next year, since before 1905 it was simply part of the Northwest Territories. The occasion is presenting opportunities for historical research and the publication of a book on Saskatchewan history.

My job is turning out to be far more interesting and alive than I had expected. One might have thought that after the pioneering proposals of Henry Sigerist and the efforts of Fred Mott and Len Rosenfeld, all the problems would have been solved. In fact, of course, there is never an end to the problems of social medicine, and we are now facing acutely all the questions relating to chronic disease and geriatrics, improvement in the quality standards of medical care, effective regionalization of hospital services, etc., which are faced by countries where the communicable scourges have been eliminated - all complicated here by the numerous difficulties of a sparsely settled rural population. The working set-up is very congenial and while one naturally gets bogged down to a certain extent with day to day administrative problems in the insurance plan, the medical service program for the indigent, and so on, there is still plenty of opportunity for creative thinking to meet the unsolved problems.

As you probably know, the University hospital is nearing completion, and the new medical school is getting rapidly organized. The professor of preventive medicine had been selected almost a year ago in the form of an excellent clinician in the province who had a social, though basically clinical, point of view. Just a couple of months ago, however, he withdrew from the post, which has led to an invitation by the Dean of the Department of Public Health to outline a prospectus for the creation of a Department of Social and Preventive Medicine. As you can well imagine, I am going to be working hard on this, and perhaps we can persuade the governing board of the medical school that social medicine and public health should be taught from the sociological and community viewpoint rather than as a by-product of bedside clinical medicine or of the laboratory. Whatever may be decided about the appointment of a particular professor I am fairly sure that the Department of Public Health will be invited to play some role in the teaching and research program at the school.

In connection with the opening of the University hospital and the four-year medical school (there was a two-year medical course formerly), there is an exciting possibility which I want to whisper to you. Since you made the survey that launched the entire Provincial health program including the medical school itself, thought is being given to inviting you over in early 1955 to give the dedicatory address, accept an honorary degree, and perhaps give the first few lectures in a “Henry Sigerist Lecture Series on Social Medicine.“ I shouldn’t be saying all this because it may not work out, but you can be sure the idea is getting plenty of backing. As a matter of fact, I didn’t originate the idea, but you can imagine my response when Dr. McLeod, Dean of the Medical School, asked me what I thought of it.

If the invitation should materialize, the question is would you be able to accept? Will you be in India at that time or maybe in China (if the efforts of our Chinese friends in Geneva are successful) or maybe busy as the devil in the medical school in Basle? Anyway, we shall see and perhaps this advance tip may influence the possibility of your accepting.

Ruth and John Ernest and Beth are very well and very happy. Ruth’s mother has come to live with us, which has enabled Ruth to accept a position four days a week doing research on

the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life. It is kind of a brain trust body making long-term social, economic, and governmental plans for the Province, and it is doing an interesting job of combining technical judgments with recommendations which grow out of detailed sampling of opinions of the farmers and others at the grass roots. Some people have been critical of the CCF government for some of its economic policies in recent years, but to us it still appears to be a very vital movement. The exploitation of oil was, it is true, handed over to American corporations, but then there is probably a limit to the degree of socialization possible by an isolated province of 850,000 people on a continent of 200,000,000 in a capitalist framework.

As far as issues like civil liberties are concerned, the CCF is first-rate. I had a heart to heart talk with the Minister of Public Health about our own situation, and his response was wonderful in every way. He said that on one occasion he had ruled against the employment of someone because of a “political record“ against him, but now with what he sees going on in the States he has resolved never to make that mistake again. A few weeks ago, Premier Douglas gave a fine talk on the menace of McCarthyism, and as we heard it we could hardly believe that we were only 75 miles or so from the American border. I gave him your warm regards, incidentally, and he asked me to return them to you many fold.

In November, I know you were in London to receive another honorary degree, and I hope it was enjoyable and not too exhausting. I hope all goes well at Pura and Mrs. Sigerist is fine. How is everything with Erica in Geneva ? Naturally, I get news of WHO and while we continue to miss Geneva and Europe greatly, I must say we have no regrets at being out of the international bureaucratic merry-go-round.

Thanks for the very lovely Christmas card, which gave us a twinge in memory of our views from that balcony. I am enclosing a few items that may interest you - the pamphlet, “Saskatchewan“, does a good job of catching the expanding spirit of the Province. My paper on occupational health was done in Geneva, and you may detect the fact that the construction of its title was inspired by a paper entitled “From Bismarck to Beveridge.“ The Ciba advertisement is a nice illustration, I thought, of a point you must be making in Volume II about the validity of a few of the elements of Ayurvedic medicine.

With love from us all and hopes that all goes very, very well with you,

As ever,

Milton

Mott see S. to R. of 18 September 1954. Leonard S. Rosenfeld, public health expert in U.S. and Canada. S.’s Saskatchewan survey of 1944. J. Wendell McLeod (1905-2001). CCF see R. to S. of 8 August 1953. Douglas see S. to R. of 14 August 1953. S.’s fourth honorary degree was a Doctor of science of the University of London. R.’s paper (Roemer 1953). *From Bismarck to Beveridge* (Sigerist 1943d). Ciba: a Swiss pharmaceutical company. Ayurvedic medicine: Indian medicine after 500 B.C.

*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 2 March 1954*

My dear Milton,

I was delighted with your letter of the 26th January, because it sounded so happy, very different from your previous letter. I see that you are getting settled, that you have a home, that you find the work interesting and I was also very glad to hear that Ruth has a job because I can well imagine how much it means to her to feel that she is again taking an active part in

the life of the community. It is a blessing for all of you to have her mother come and live with you, please remember me to her, I have a very vivid recollection of our previous meetings.

Saskatchewan is a good province, but I can imagine that there are still a great many unsolved problems, after all you cannot expect to have a socialist province in the midst of a capitalist country. I have the impression that the government is doing the best that can be done under present circumstances, compromising of course, but this is unavoidable and the province certainly must look different from what it was ten years ago when it had just emerged from seven years of drought and locust.

Would you be interested in taking the chair of Social and Preventive Medicine at the new Medical School of the University of Saskatchewan? If so, and if there is anything I can do in the matter just let me know.

Since you have been whispering into my ear I may as well whisper back, and tell you I would be delighted to come on a visit in connection with the opening of the University Hospital and the four year Medical School. One can fly directly to Canada, and such a trip would not be too strenuous, I would of course also be willing to give a few lectures. I have a very strong sentimental attachment to Saskatchewan and I would like to see how things have developed in the course of the last ten years. I would have to have my expenses paid, I still have my stipend from Yale, on which I can live and work comfortably here, but it is not enough for major extras.

I have no definite plans yet for 1955. This year I accepted an invitation to spend two weeks in Yugoslavia [sic] in May for a few lectures and to see how their health system has developed. Stampar was obviously behind this and the tour is sponsored by the medical societies of the country. I also have an invitation from the ministry of health of a country about which I have written a book before, to spend six weeks there and make a new survey in view of a new edition, but the invitation was for last month and this month, and now at this moment I cannot get away before I have my various books in print. To get them finished is my most urgent task now. So I have the invitation postponed without setting a definite date yet.

Nothing definite has happened with Basle so far, I saw the Dean the other day and [the] Faculty is unanimous in wanting me at least in a part time capacity, but they still hesitate in creating a chair in Social Medicine. So I have no ties from that side either, although there is a possibility that I may give a course next winter. However, it is still very uncertain and I am not quite sure whether I should complicate my life in such a way.

I had a very pleasant week in London last November, I flew over early, because flying in November you are never sure when or where you will land. But I had a perfect flight and had a few days all to myself so that I could put the finishing touches to my lecture and spend three evenings in the theatres. The Graduation ceremony was very colourful and dignified without being pompous. The British [sic] have a marvellous sense of humour which enables them to poke fun at themselves. Otherwise I have kept very quiet this winter, except that I have to go to Basle on and off as my 88 year old mother is very sick. We may expect the end at any moment.

The new German edition of my book Grosse Aerzte came out recently with six additional biographies and it is selling like hot cakes. Schuman was to bring out a new English edition, but you may know that he sold his firm and it is very uncertain what is going to happen.

I like your paper very much, it gives a very excellent picture of the problems in time and space. I have something similar to write on The Rise of Preventive Medicine through the World for the International Congress of Gynaecology and Obstetrics that will be held in

Geneva in July. It is a big assignment for a 45 minute address and I am not sure yet how I am going to tackle it.

Serpasil is widely discussed in Switzerland at the moment since the Ciba Corporation has its seat in Basle. I am sure there are many more native Indian and Chinese drugs which can be used profitably and there is a centre in Jamnagar for the study of indigenous drugs. I am not sure, however, that they have the facilities or the people for making convincing pharmacological investigations, this is not as simple as some people believe. I may try Serpasil on myself one of these days. I have not consulted a Doctor and have not had my blood pressure taken for over a year and a half.

To-day is the 1st of March and a real spring day. The beginning of winter was extremely mild so that we had snow-drops and primroses in the garden early in December, but then we also felt the cold wave that gripped the whole of Europe.

I think this brings you up to date, warm wishes and my love to all of you,

Yours as ever,

Henry

Stampar see S. to R. of 14 April 1948. “a country .... I have written a book“: Soviet Union (Sigerist 1937a); both the trips to Yugoslavia and the U.S.S.R. did not materialize. “various books“ and “Grosse Aerzte“ see S. to R. of

22 October 1953. Graduation and Schuman see R. to S. of 26 January 1954 and 1 December 1946, respectively. “your paper“ (Roemer 1953). *The Rise of Preventive Medicine* (Sigerist 1954). Serpasil (reserpine) an early anti-hypertensive drug.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 14 May 1954*

Dear Henry:

Just now you should be in Yugoslavia having a wonderful time with Stampar and his group at the Zagreb Institute. The other day I had a letter from Dr. Neubauer, the Yugoslavian TB man, when he was about to go off for a two-year mission to Ceylon. He and his wife were certainly lovely people.

I have been waiting before replying to your sweet letter of 2 March in the hope that I would have further information on the possibility of an invitation to you for the opening of the University Hospital in 1955. Dean Wendell McLeod of the Medical School made reference to it again the other day, and we even chatted about what the expense would be for the University for your travel. No decision, however, has been reached as yet, but I hope that some action will be taken soon. There is also talk of bringing back Fred Mott at the same time - and what a wonderful reunion all around that would be !

This is now the tenth year of the CCF Government in power, and so there is naturally much talk about the accomplishments of the past decade. Dr. Murray Acker and I prepared the speech of the Minister of Public Health in the “Throne Speech Debate“ and we based it on a review of accomplishments that have followed the recommendations of the Sigerist Report in 1944. It really makes quite an impressive record, and I am sending you the speech under separate cover along with a page from The Commonwealth, the weekly CCF party newspaper. It is interesting to observe how in some respects the program has not advanced to the level of your recommendations and in other respects it has surpassed them.

The formalities of the “Throne Speech“, incidentally, are quite an interesting spectacle, and Ruth and I enjoyed attending the opening session of the Legislative Assembly at which the Lieutenant-Governor read the speech. It is amazing how the formalities are kept even in this down-to-earth pioneer country. There is certainly strong orientation throughout Canada to Great Britain, and we suspect that it may even have become heightened in the last few years in view of the bizarre behavior in the country to the south.

I have continued to enjoy my work, even though there are terrific demands in way of day to day administrative problems. But there is a principle to be applied in back of each decision, and I try always to defend the progressive viewpoint, even though there are always colleagues who try to insist that something may be good in theory but not in practice. I have never been able to accept the notion that one should not attempt a practical measure if in fact the theory is sound. Our biggest problem is the urgent need for staff. There is a real shortage of qualified people from Saskatchewan because of the relatively poor supply of educated people from the 1930's - that is, being educated in those years. Good people have to be imported, and they are not always willing to stay.

It is sometimes hard to keep one's eye on the ball, with the day to day administrative demands, but I am trying to focus on the main objective of developing an integrated system of preventive and curative service administration at the regional level. I have made a bit of progress, especially in connection with hospitals, but it takes a great deal of continuous promotion throughout many facets of the program - such as, the public health regions, the hospital standards and administration division, the municipal doctor plans, the services for public assistance recipients, etc.

The end of this month I am going to Quebec City for the meeting of the Canadian Public Health Association. I am presenting an analysis of our program of medical care for the indigent which is undoubtedly the most comprehensive service of its kind on this continent. We can almost be criticized, like the British National Health Service, for providing wigs and what not. We are also presenting a joint paper attempting to analyze the reasons for high hospitalization in some areas and low in others. It is illuminating to discover from the statistical analyses that, with economic barriers removed, the major factors influencing the rate of hospitalization are not the rate of morbidity of the population but rather factors like the supply of doctors, the density of settlement, the income level, and the number of beds on hand.

Your paper on “The Rise of Preventive Medicine throughout the World“ should be quite a job to prepare, and I should love to see it. The other day I had to give a lecture to the medical students on “The Scope of Social Medicine,“ and it was quite an exercise to try to put across the broad picture in forty minutes. Our long prospectus on the scheme of organization and curriculum for a Department of Social and Preventive Medicine in the Medical School is finished and now under study. We shall see what happens. One of the jobs I have enjoyed, incidentally, was my course of 16 lectures on “The Sociology of Health and Medicine“ for the student nurses who attend a centralized lecture program (all the girls from 9 nursing schools coming in to the University for six months). A book on this subject for nurses is sorely needed, and I hope some day I might have time to tackle such a job.

The invitation you received to make another survey of the country on which you have written a book is extremely interesting. It would be wonderful if you could combine this with a visit to the other half of northern Asia along the lines that my former assistant in Geneva was exploring. But how can you do all these things and still get your writing done ? I can well appreciate why you are in no hurry to make a decision on Basel.

We get news of WHO, but I have wondered about Erica and how she is. There must be enormous excitement there these days, and the WHO Assembly must be smothered under the drama of the big conference. Our friends, Chu and Sze, must be having a great time. Do you ever hear from them? We received the other day the most beautiful book published in Lausanne with the title, “La Chine dans un miroir.” It is a magnificent integration of the old and the new, and you would be thrilled with it.

WHO surprised me not long ago with a letter that they are anxiously awaiting completion of my study on medical care and public health relationships around the world. I greatly enjoy working at it, but it is hard to find time except on week-ends. I always recall how you worked almost entirely at night on your earlier books. But here there always seems to be office jobs, reading, and other obligations in the evenings. I guess this is why I keep yearning for a university job where the research and writing which I enjoy so much

can be done in the solid hours of the day.

Terribly sorry to hear about your ailing mother. It must be so nice for her to have you close by. Are there other brothers or sisters in Switzerland? You told me once, but I do not seem to remember.

We have taken your advice seriously, and John is keeping up with his French with weekly lessons. Ruth, too, is doing this, but I haven't succeeded in finding the time and try to salve my conscience with luncheon conversations in French. There is so much reading to be done to keep up with events in this fantastic world that I tend to begrudge any evening away from my study. Ruth is enjoying her work with the Royal Commission tremendously. As a British friend wrote us, it is the sign of this pioneering society that a newcomer would be invited to write a history of local government; in England one's lineage would have to be traced at least to Cromwell to be entrusted with such an assignment.

You mention the problem of exploring the efficacy of indigenous drugs in Asia. I will never forget my visit to the Ayurvedic Hospital on the outskirts of Colombo, Ceylon. The pharmacy, with its jugs and bottles, cauldrons being heated and the smell of peculiar fruits and gums, gave the picture that one imagines for a medieval apothecary shop.

We have just had word about Canadian immigration and are now considered “permanent” settlers. We had had plenty of anxieties before the official letter reached us because of the new Canadian Immigration Act passed in 1953, which is amazingly parallel to the U.S. McCarran Act. Apparently, the sweeping clauses of the Act are not being applied, but then the final test will only come five years from now when and if we should apply for citizenship. The next World Health Assembly is scheduled, I see, for Mexico City in May, 1955, and if the two borders between here and there remain free and open as they have been in the past I'm going to try to go.

The winter is over now at last, and it was so dry and clear that we didn't mind the cold at all. The only trial was the length and the slow arrival of spring, which is even now hardly here. It is nice to drive along the prairie roads in the twilight and see the setting sun, but then I must confess we keep looking for the mountains of Switzerland which are not here. The big outdoor news in our family is that John Ernest has his first bicycle and Beth Mary has a shiny new swing in the back yard.

We have had word from Len Rosenfeld who has a community job again after a stint of private practice. He is with the Detroit Council of Social Agencies. On the other hand, Lee Janis and Dick Weinerman are still obliged to continue in private practice to make a living. Ernst Boas has just had an operation, but I do not know how serious it may be; Harold Aaron suggested that it might be quite serious. The ridiculous farce of McCarthyism is now

becoming clearer than ever with the incredible nonsense now going on in the Army hearings. Imagine the level involved when the Great Debate in modern America is on the extent of anti-Communism of the U.S. generals. I look for some awakening on the utter bankruptcy of the present Administration which may be reflected in the elections next November.

I hope that all continues to go well and that all the various writing tasks, especially Volume II, are moving ahead. Ruth joins in sending you and Mrs. Sigerist our warmest love.

As ever,

Milton

S.'s trip to Yugoslavia did not materialize; see S. to R. of 11 October 1954. TB: Tuberculosis. CCF, see R. to S. of 8 August 1953. "Sigerist Report" on public health in Saskatchewan 1944. *Rise of Preventive Medicine* (Sigerist 1954). The relationship between the rate of hospitalization and the number of hospital beds at hand has later been called "Roemer's law". R.'s book on *The Sociology of Health and Medicine* does not seem to have materialized. "another survey", on the USSR, see S. to R. of 2 March 1954. *La Chine dans un miroir* (Roy 1953). R.'s study on medical care (Roemer 1963). S.'s brother Edmond died as an infant; his sister was Marguerite Bickel-Sigerist (1894-1974). McCarran Security Act of 1950 for restricted immigration.

New names:

Acker, Murray S.	Director Saskatchewan Health Services Planning Commission
Chu	not identified
Cromwell, Oliver	(1599-1658) English military and political leader
Janis, Lee	not identified
Neubauer	not identified

Names mentioned before:

Aaron	see R. to S. of 31 May 1950
Boas	„ R. to S. of 17 June 1947
McLeod	„ R. to S. of 26 January 1954
Mott	„ S. to R. of 18 September 1948
Rosenfeld	„ R. to S. of 26 January 1954
Stampar	„ S. to R. of 14 April 1948
Sze	„ S. to R. of 23 February 1952
Weinerman	„ S. to R. of 19 August 1950

*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 11 October 1954*

Dear Milton,

Please pardon me for not having written for such a long time, but I had a rather disturbed summer. Last spring I had two minor attacks of angina, not very serious ones, but it was just before my Yugoslavia [sic] trip and my doctor strongly recommended me to call it off and to keep very quiet during the summer. I had a treatment with Serpasil, which did me a lot of good. My blood pressure went down considerably, and I have not had any attacks since the spring, and last month attended the International Congress of the History of Medicine in Rome and Salerno. Before that I lost my old mother. She was almost eighty-nine, and during her last illness I was constantly on the road between Basel and Pura. Now I hope to have a quiet winter, and hope to proceed more quickly with my work. I am afraid I did not achieve much during the summer, although I kept busy all the time. Next year I hope to be well

enough to undertake a few trips, notably the one in the country whose medicine I have surveyed in the past. I was delighted with your letter of May 14th, but first of all let me thank you for the two pictures you sent me. They arrived on 7th April, which is my birthday, and I like them very much. They give an excellent idea of the Saskatchewan landscape. I was glad to hear that you are satisfied with your work and that Ruth has a job also. Whenever I go to Geneva I miss you very much. Sze is still there and whenever I am in Geneva I have an excellent Chinese dinner at his house. I think he may go on home leave soon.

You may have heard that the Swiss government refused to have American employees of International Organisations investigated on Swiss soil as this was incompatible with national sovereignty. For once I was proud of my government. Of course we all read Kerschaw's story in the Statesman, I congratulated him for having written it.

What you write about your work interests me greatly. Of course it is impossible to have a completely socialist system of medical care in a semi-capitalist society, but one has to go as far as conditions permit and every step forward benefits the people.

I think the world situation looks more promising to-day than it did a year ago. The Russians are ready to compromise and there are strong forces in Germany opposing an alliance with the West and asking for negotiations with Russia. In the Far East things are moving also tremendously. Indo-China was a great victory, and in Japan there is a strong swing to the left, as I hear from every letter I get.

So much for to-day, I shall write you soon again, but wanted to let you know that I am still here and active.

My love to Ruth, yourself and the whole family,

Yours as ever,

Henry

This optimistic letter was written days before S.'s apoplexia and hospitalization. Serpasil see S. to R. of 2 March 1954. S.'s mother see R. to S. of 7 July 1946. "on the road": In Switzerland S. travelled by train. "country whose medicine ....": Soviet Union. Sze see S. to R. of 23 February 1952. Kershaw not identified. Statesman, a British newspaper.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 3 November 1954a (telegram)*

Just learned of your illness please know that we are with you in thought every moment and are certain you will recover completely to continue your magnificent contributions our endless affection

Ruth and Milton Roemer

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 3 November 1954b*

Dear Henry:

Today the letter arrived from Esther Lucille Brown telling about your illness, and I sent you a cable which I hope will tell you how much we are thinking of you. Esther had the news from Gregory Zilboorg whom she met at the American Psychiatric Association meeting in

Washington. Your lovely letter of the 11th October was here when I returned from the public health meetings in Buffalo a fortnight ago, and I gather you were taken sick just a week later. By now I'm sure you must be feeling stronger and, with all the restorative measures used nowadays, I know you will make rapid improvement.

I confess I was a bit worried not to have heard from you for a long time, but in a way I was pleased because I felt that perhaps you had laid down a rule not to indulge your many, many friends with so many nice long letters. But now I see it was because of the pressures from your mother's illness and all the other demands on you over the summer with visitors, the trip to Rome, etc. I was glad to get your greetings from George Silver and to learn in this way that you were well and active in Pura.

It was a great reunion for me to go to the American Public Health Association meeting, for I had missed the previous three conventions and had not seen most of my old friends in three or four years. You know all the social medicine enthusiasts and former students of yours who were there - Leslie Falk, George Rosen, Sy Axelrod, Milton Terris, Len Rosenfeld, Cecil Sheps and Mindel, Fred Mott, Henry Makover, Franz Goldmann, Charlotte Silverman, Lorin Kerr, Paul Lembcke, and many others. Jerry Morris was over from London. The "Medical Care Section" which was really the outgrowth of our explorations on a *Journal of Social Medicine* in 1947 has been an enormous success, and it is a real pleasure to see so many of our colleagues - who for years have been fighting an insurgent, minority battle - now in positions of respect and some influence. This was my first trip across the border, incidentally, and I had some anxieties, but nothing happened. Now that I am out of U.N., I guess I have lost interest for the officials. At least, I hope so.

It is surprising to see the course of events in the States in the Age of McCarthyism. Despite everything, good work continues to be done, although in a definitely more narrow sphere. One doesn't talk about politics or political trends and even national health insurance is taboo - but within acceptable spheres, like the problems of chronic disease, hospital organization, measures for improving the quality of medical care, extension of health education, group medical practice, services for the indigent, and the like, the discussion is quite spirited. From abroad, one naturally takes an oversimplified view of America, or any other country, and finds it hard to believe there are little eddies and currents for the good in the midst of the large waves of reaction. Yet the little bits of useful work are there and in the long run we know they will prevail. One is reminded of the talk during the war of whether there were any "good Germans" and most of us felt that this was an impossibility. Perhaps in Germany most of the good people were killed off, and this has not happened in America as yet. In any case, there are still many "good Americans," even though they have had to make endless compromises to survive.

Of course, the real question is what would happen to these people if the pressures get really heavy. For the time being McCarthy is personally undoubtedly on the decline, but I'm not sure how much this means, since the seven fascist bills have been enacted into law and that was, after all, a principal objective of McCarthy and his predecessors back to Martin Dies in 1935. Only yesterday was the U.S. election and - while the Democrats were not much better than the republicans - the big swing to them in the House of Representatives is undoubtedly a sign of reaction against the Republican leadership, in the face of serious unemployment. One can't say it's a reaction against McCarthyism, since each side claimed it was more anti-Communist than the other, but it surely is a good sign just the same.

The world situation is certainly brighter these days, even though M. Mendes-France capitulated in the end to the pressures for German rearmament. But, as you say, the Russians have been so willing to compromise it seems that any country would have a very hard time to

provoke a hot war. As an economist friend put it, the „cold war“ is such a nice formula, it can go on for years and years. It keeps up the justification for a big army and navy, thereby reducing unemployment and priming the economy, it provides the excuse for anti-Communist measures of all types at home, it justifies various trade restrictions which help certain national economies, and yet it doesn't mean the controls and destruction of war. Shortly before he died, Stalin predicted that the real split would occur in the capitalist camp, and I think he will prove right when the trade interests of Britain and France with China and Russia prove greater than the attraction of U.S. military aid. As for Asia, the progress of social awakening there is amazing.

Here in Saskatchewan the welfare state moves slowly along, although we will suffer some temporary setbacks this year because of the serious crop failure (from too much rain in these usually semi-arid plains). Little gains in our health program are made from month to month, though there is hesitation to move into comprehensive insurance for everyone because of awaiting financial aid from the National Government. Being the only CCF Government in the country, with the Liberals in control nationally, the attitude is to put the blame on the national government for not having complete social medical service. The Liberal Party has, in fact, been theoretically in favor of general health insurance since 1919, but they always find reasons why it cannot be enacted just now. Did you receive the copy of our Minister of Health's speech reviewing the accomplishments of the last 10 years in terms of the recommendations of the 1944 Sigerist Report ?

It's really quite an interesting little world to be working in, and I guess I have a good deal broader scope than I would have anywhere in the States at the moment - sort of being a big fish in a little pond. Our population of 900,000, of course, presents every social problem found anywhere and our hospitals, doctors, etc. present all the problems of health service organization, medical economics, and all the rest. The other day I was appointed to the Provincial Advisory Committee on Alcoholism and those problems are, of course, interesting and cut across every social aspect. We are doing lots of basic planning on the new program of disability insurance and a rehabilitation service along with it. The opportunities for medical-social research are endless, especially with the excellent records of our hospital insurance program. We are working now, for example, on the epidemiological foundation for a prevention of blindness program and also we are exploring a new system of hospital licensure which would be quite revolutionary in North America - one in which certain general hospitals would be approved (and paid for services) only in certain fields. There is tremendous public interest in health and always talks to be given; tomorrow night I speak to high school graduates on "careers in medicine," the next night a talk on prevention of cancer to a Cancer Society and two days later a talk on W.H.O. to the University Women. So it goes.

In my spare time I keep working on the W.H.O. monograph on medical care, which they have asked me to finish by the end of the year. I took no holiday this summer, working instead on this study and now 6 of 8 chapters are completed. I am not completely satisfied with it, because it is too big a subject to tackle in this piecemeal way, but perhaps it will help show that there are an enormous variety of ways of organizing medical care - in all its divisions and subdivisions - throughout the world, and will make evident the need for unification with preventive and public health services. That which is taken for granted in the country about which you wrote a book - the unity of all health service - is still a matter of endless debate in the rest of the world. By the way, did you hear about Karl Evang's trip to Russia ?

The Medical School is making progress, but the appointment of the staff in Preventive and Social Medicine has still not been made. I am afraid the weight of feeling there is still in favor

of appointing a clinician as professor, rather than a public health person. My hope is still to find a university appointment, but I cannot really complain about my present opportunities. The plan now is to dedicate the University Hospital next May, rather than in January as had been originally planned. This is why you have not heard about a possible invitation here for the ceremony and an honorary degree. I may be wrong, but I have an idea you will be hearing something in the near future.

For months I have been holding on to this clipping from the New York Times on the opera by Jack Beeson. It is nice to learn of his progress. We are about to start John Ernest, who is now close to 10, on the piano - although with our peripatetic life we have wondered about an instrument no so difficult to transport. He and Beth are both growing up nicely and happy in the Canadian school. I am sure the setting here is healthier for them than in the country of their birth. Ruth continues very busy with her research job for the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life - now working at it full-time. In addition, she is doing all kinds of community work, such as on the Regina Film Society Board which brings to town first-rate European cinema on Sunday nights.

My nostalgia for Europe is still very real and sharp. We have been here now a little over a year and I can't help but count the months that go by in terms of the requirement of five years for possible Canadian citizenship and freedom to travel again. Perhaps by then, things will be different in the States and this sort of step won't have to be taken. I guess you realize that I draw the plan of my future life along the lines that you have lived yours - in an academic setting, with travel in the summer. These first fifteen years since completing medical school have been a rich period of gathering experience on the practical problems of social medicine, but I feel that the best contribution I can make will be in the teaching and writing.

Perhaps Mrs. Sigerist or Erica would just drop us a note on how you are feeling. Please do not feel that I expect you to answer this letter, among the hundreds that you receive. I have seen some wonderful results with rehabilitation of various forms of vascular accidents and I'm sure that you will regain your muscle power. Is there someone nearby who is specialized in physical medicine and rehabilitation? The outstanding European work of which I know is in England and Scandinavia. Wherever you may get treatment, I know you will have large expenses, even with professional courtesy, so I am enclosing a gift which I hope will be of some little help.

Everyone joins in sending you and Mrs. Sigerist and Erica our warmest love,

Devotedly as ever,

Milton

P.S. I do wish you would be frank and let me know if you could use some real financial assistance because nothing could give me more pleasure than to be able to help by raising funds from your very devoted friends in the States. I could easily collect \$ 1000 or more in very short order if you will please let me know. I know you would not want to accept such an offer, but I hope you realize how much we would all want to help and will be candid.

Love,

M.

“seven fascist bills“, McCarthy's. “U.S. election“: congressional. CCF, see R. to S. of 8 August 1953. R.'s WHO monograph see R. to S. of 14 May 1954. “country about which you wrote a book“: Soviet Union.

New Names:

Brown, Esther Lucille: wrote on nursing education

Dies, Martin Jr. (1900-1972): representative  
Evang, Karl (1902-1981) : Norwegian public health person  
Kerr, Lorin E.: health activist  
Lembcke, Paul (1908-1964): public health person  
Mendes-France, Pierre (1907-1982): French politician  
Silver, George A. (born 1913): public health person  
Stalin, Joseph (1879-1953): Soviet dictator  
Terris, Milton (1915-2003): epidemiologist  
Names already mentioned:  
Axelrod see R. to S. of 9 August 1952  
Beeson see R. to S. of 24 May 1948  
Falk see R. to S. of 13 February 1944  
Morris see S. to R. of 9 April 1953  
Rosen see R. to S. of 1 December 1946  
Silverman R. to S. of 13 February 1944  
Zilboorg see S. to R. of 19 August 1950

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*Sigerist's secretary to Roemer, Pura, 5 November 1954*

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Roemer,

Mrs. Sigerist wishes to thank you very much for your kind telegram. I am writing this on her behalf, as nearly all her time is taken up at the clinic where she stays night and day at her husband's side.

His condition has improved a little recently, and now he is able to say a few words. When he first went to the clinic on October 18th, he was quite unable to speak, and the embolism had also paralysed his right side. He is of course not allowed any visitors or letters. His recovery is obviously going to be a fairly lengthy one, and he is expected to remain at the clinic for several more weeks.

Yours sincerely,

Phyllis H. Arnold  
(Secretary)

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*Sigerist's secretary to Roemer, Pura, 13 December 1954*

Dear Dr. Roemer,

Dr. Sigerist wishes to thank you for the reprint you sent him some time ago. His condition has much improved since I last wrote, and this week he started to sit up in an easy-chair. He can move his arm and leg again, but is still unable to write. His speech has improved too, although he has difficulty in forming sentences. He can read his own mail now, and letters cheer him up considerably, as they do a lot to relieve him from the monotony of the clinic.

Yours sincerely,  
Phyllis H. Arnold  
(Secretary)

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*Sigerist's secretary and Mrs. Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 3 January 1955*

Dear Dr. Roemer,

To-day as I was sorting out the correspondence that came for Dr. Sigerist since his illness, I came across your letter of November 3rd with the cheque, which to my horror I realised had never been answered. It arrived in the period when Dr. Sigerist was still unable to read letters, and very unfortunately got overlooked. Mrs. Sigerist will take it to the clinic to-morrow, as to-day she was unable to go because of a heavy snow-storm. I apologise for this unfortunate mishap.

Yours sincerely,  
Phyllis H. Arnold

Dear Milton,

I think it is really unforgivable ! You don't know how many times I asked the secretary: "is there no letter from the Roemers ? I can't understand it, because they are some of the most devoted friends of Dr. Sigerist. Something must be wrong with them !"

And today she discovered your letter in a pile she never showed me. Many thanks, I shall bring it to Henry to morrow [sic].

[....]

Best of love Yours Emmy S.

[...]: Much of this longhand letter is illegible. It says, in summary, that a specialist from Zurich urged S. to stay another four weeks in the clinic despite his longing to go home. In preparation of his arrival his study is being transferred to the first floor, where a new bathroom is also being added, and a part-time help has been organized. S. has clearly made progress, is able to walk, but his right hand is still unable to write. His speech is still the worst. But there is hope he will further improve once back in his beloved Casa Serena.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Lugano, 6 January 1955*

Dear Milton,

I was sorry to see your letter only now. My leg is doing fine, my arm not so well and I have still difficulty in finding words.

Therefore only a short message will go to you to thank you for your very kind and informative letter and to return you your cheque. I have inherited some money from my mother's estate, not enough - I am sorry to say - to be independent, but it provides some ready cash. I certainly appreciate your thoughtfulness [sic].

Next week I am going home after three months in the hospital and I am looking forward to being back in Casa Serena.

I shall be writing soon again and hope to hear from you.

My love to all of you,

Henry

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 29 January 1955*

Dear Henry and Emmy:

I was so happy to get your letter of the 6th January, Henry, and yours of the 3rd, Emmy, along with the note from Miss Arnold. Of course, I appreciated Miss Arnold's note also in early November and then I have had further reports from Esther Brown and Leslie Falk. I had not really expected an answer to my previous letter; so don't feel bad about its being mislaid.

In fact, I would have written before this, except that I have been under great pressures to complete the monograph for W.H.O. and had put everything else aside in the evenings. Only yesterday I mailed it off, and it is a great load off my mind. Whether they will go ahead and publish it remains to be seen. It is quite a bit longer than was originally planned, and then the subject of medical care administration is "controversial" - which in W.H.O. circles means it might make the American Medical Association unhappy. But perhaps they will have courage and recognize that in the great majority of countries medical care is a public service and the various schemes of organization can be discussed objectively.

We are so happy you are showing such good signs of recovery. I am sure your improvement will continue steadily, now that you are out of bed. Mobility is so important for the rehabilitation of all the functions.

Esther Brown wrote that she has been in touch with Nora and that she (Nora) will be coming over to visit you soon. That's very nice. I would like very much to get to know Nora and Jack better some day.

The work here continues at a high level of interest, and one wishes the new problems would only stop coming for a few days, so that one could catch up on the unfinished jobs. Our rehabilitation program is moving along rapidly, and we are soon to take over a large, modern building as a Rehabilitation Centre. Interestingly enough, it was built as a school for delinquent boys, to house 150 of them, but there have only been about 15 lads to keep. So with our good juvenile crime record, we have a ready-made structure for medical rehabilitation services, including plenty of space for physiotherapy, occupational therapy, remedial gymnastics, etc. A therapeutic swimming pool will be added.

Another interesting project is a plan we have to make expensive diagnostic x-ray services a public benefit throughout the province. We plan to start probably with gastro-intestinal and gall bladder x-ray series done in hospital out-patient departments. Anyone will be entitled to these series free, on referral from a doctor. In a way, it's discouraging how one has to chip away so slowly at the big rock of unmet medical need - adding one little segment after another to the sphere of public benefit. This seems to be the formula in "western" societies and, in time, one gets to the point where the private sector is just a small residual part of medical care, at which point, I suppose, one can take the next logical step that the British took in 1948. Perhaps it takes the shock of a war to bring this about.

We have been making some interesting studies into the proper needs for hospital beds by a community, based on the 8 years of experience with the hospital insurance plan. With the costs prepaid, there is an enormous demand for beds here, and there is always pressure to

build more hospitals and add more beds. But to some extent, the hospital is used for the simple convenience of doctor, even when it is not really needed. So we are developing some objective formulae which show the true need of each locality - taking into account the habits of the people, the incidence of illness, the rural-urban composition, distances, etc.

I had a lovely letter from Karl Evang of Norway recently, and he said how much he had enjoyed meeting you in Geneva last year. He is, in my opinion, the best public health administrator in the world and would undoubtedly have been the next Director-General of W.H.O., had he not brought the Catholics down on him by being outspoken on birth control. If the Russians should come back into W.H.O., I am hoping he might become the logical candidate for the successor to Dr. Candau in 1958.

By now you are home again, and I know that must make you happy and be a great boost to your morale. I wish there were some way I could help you in your writing tasks. Please do tell me if there is anything I might be able to do, however small.

I am terribly glad to know that you do not feel hard-pressed for money, but still there are obviously expenses beyond the usual, from your illness, and despite the fact that I recall Lugano was one of the cantons with compulsory insurance for medical care. So I am going to insist that you accept a small gift. This time I have converted it into Swiss francs at the bank; so it will be easier for you. I only wish you would not object if I take the initiative to write to a number of friends who I know would love to help you - and express in that way a little of the gratitude they have for all the inspiration you have given for so many years. I will not do so, however, without your permission.

Our family is fine and everyone is busy as a bee. John Ernest frequently asks about how you are. Ruth and her mother send their love, along with mine,

Devotedly, as ever,

Milton

Arnold see S. to R. of 5 November 1954. Brown and Falk see R. to S. of 3 November 1954 and 13 February 1944, respectively. Monograph for WHO (Roemer 1963). Nora Sigerist see S. to R. of 23 May 1945; her husband Beeson see R. to S. of 24 May 1948. In 1948 the National Health Service was established in Britain. Evang see R. to S. of 3 November 1954. Marcolino G. Candau (1911-1983) Brazilian director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO).

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*Sigerist to All, Pura, January 1955*

TO ALL MY FRIENDS IN MANY LANDS

who have expressed their love and sympathy during my illness I tender my most heartfelt thanks.

I am home again in Casa Serena and I am able to look forward to a complete recovery, and I hope to resume my work very soon.

Henry E. Sigerist

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 15 February 1955*

Dear Milton,

Since you insist I will accept your cheque with many thanks, but I would appreciate it if you did not take the initiative and write to my former students, as long as I still have the generous support of Yale University. My appointment as research associate runs till 1956. I owe it to John Fulton that they have carried me on so long with so little returns. However[,] I hope to finish my second volume this year, and from volume three on I need some help and I am going to call for all my former students in medical history to help me complete the work. In this way I hope to complete the eight volumes in three to four years.

I am vitally interested in the work which you are doing for W.H.O. Do send me a copy.

Of Course I am looking forward to Nora's visit. Jack is developing beautifully. He wrote the music to „Hello out there“ of Saroyan, and it was performed with great success at the Columbia Art Centre, will be performed also at Louisville and there is a chance that it will be televised. He is working on a new opera which has as its subject a revivalist of the Amy McPherson type. Nora is associate editor of the American Slavic Review and Erica was here last week-end.

What you write in your letter interests me tremendously. Above all that you are active and happy in your job.

With warm wishes to all the family, I am

Ever yours,

Henry

Fulton see R. to S. of 10 October 1950. "little returns": Contrary to S.'s original expectation of one volume per year, only volume I had appeared so far, volume II in fact appeared posthumously (Sigerist 1961), and the hope that the planned volumes III to VIII would be written by coauthors did not materialize. "work for WHO" (Roemer 1963). "Jack" Beeson see R. to S. of 24 May 1946. William Saroyan (1908-1981) dramatist and author. Aimée Semple McPherson (1890-1944) evangelist, new media pioneer.

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*Roemer and Mrs. Roemer to Sigerist, Regina ?, 4 April 1955*

Dear Henry:

Happy birthday ! I was so pleased to get your letter of the 15th February, especially because it reflected your usual spirit. It is marvellous how well you have recovered, and to know that you are back to work again.

I am glad to hear that you will ask help from your former students from the third volume on. If I can do anything, however small, I need not tell you how pleased and honored I would be to be of some help.

Things continue to go well with us. I must say I got weary of administrative work, however, and would so much prefer a university post. The position at the University of Saskatchewan Medical College is still not filled and, while I am one of the candidates, I do not know how the decision will go. There are various anxieties there about appointing staff who will meet the approval of the local private doctors.

The formal ceremonies to open the University Hospital will take place in mid-May. Fred Mott will be here and also Esther Lucille Brown. It will be a great reunion, except for you. It was only because of your illness that they did not invite you. In your place, they asked Shryock, at my suggestion, but he was unable to accept. Dr. James Means of Boston, however, will be here to present the enlightened viewpoint on medical-social problems in America.

After the ceremonies, Ruth and I are planning to go off for two weeks to Mexico - the only country outside of Canada, at which there are no border formalities for us. We hope to see Karl Evang, Dr. Stampar, and others at the World Health Assembly, which will be in Mexico City this year.

Please take care of yourself, and know that we think of you all the time.

Our love, as ever,

Milton

P.S. I have just enjoyed reading your little piece on “American Medicine“ in Park Davis’s Therapeutic Notes. Are the Heath Clark Lectures out ?

Dear Doctor and Mrs. Sigerist:

I want to add my happy birthday wishes and love to you both. Although we have just moved from snow to mud, your beautiful garden must be beginning to bud now. I shall never forget my first impressions of Casa Serena - Sunday morning cocktails and visit in your garden overlooking the magnificent countryside.

Here the broad open prairies symbolize for us breathing space and elbow room. What the prairies lack in beauty they have certainly made up in spirit. The children are blooming in this wholesome atmosphere.

Much health and happiness to you both - Love -

Ruth

Mott see S. to R. of 18. September 1948. Brown see R. to S. of 3 November 1954. Richard H. Shryock (1893-1972) medical historian; S.’s successor at Hopkins. James H. Means, professor of clinical medicine. Evang see R. to S. of 3 November 1954. Stampar see S. to R. of 14 April 1948. “Therapeutic Notes“ (Sigerist 1955a). Heath Clark Lectures (Sigerist 1956).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 25 May 1955*

Dear Milton,

I was touched that you remembered my birthday and I wish to thank you for your letter and good wishes.

I suppose the formal ceremonies to open the university hospital are over. How I wish I had been able to be present. Fred Mott and Esther Lucille Brown and James Means were good choices as they represent all of them the progressive point of view. By the way what is Fred Mott doing at this time ?

I envy you your trip to Mexico. I forgot that the World Health Assembly is taking place in Mexico City. I am not sure that you will meet Stampar, as I gather he had some other plans, as a matter of fact I expected him this month in Pura.

I have not seen my little piece on American medicine in Therapeutic Notes yet, nor have I seen my Rome lecture that Marti-Ibañez intended to publish in the May number of International Record of Medicine and General Practice Clinics. The Heath Clark Lectures are in the press, and are to be published by the Oxford University Press of London. It will be some time before they will appear.

I am as well as you may expect, that is to say I feel a certain stiffness in hand and leg, and have still left overs of a motor aphasia, which I hope to overcome completely.

The garden is beautiful. The camelias [sic] are over now, and the garden is full of roses and irises.

My love to Ruth and the children and yourself,  
yours ever,  
Henry

Mott, Brown, Means, Stampar, Therapeutic Notes, Heath Clark Lectures see R. to S. of 4 April 1955. Rome lecture (Sigerist 1955b). Félix Marti-Ibanez (1913-1972) medical historian and author.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 25 June 1955*

Dear Henry:

On returning from Mexico I found your nice letter, and I am happy to learn that you are doing so well. I just sent off a little present that we found for you in Mexico. I remember how much you like to wear white shirts to relax in around your home and garden, and so we thought you would like this hand-woven Mexican variety.

Our trip was wonderful though, of course, too short. We were in transit three and a half days each way, and spent nine days in the country. The trip, which we took by car to El Paso (and then by air to Mexico City) was interesting because we stopped frequently along the way - at the Black Hills in South Dakota, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Taos, New Mexico - where I saw remnants of the Cooperative Health Service plan that Farm Security had sponsored in the 1940's. Then on the way back we stopped at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

Mexico is like all the underdeveloped countries with its handful of feudal lords and millions of impoverished peasants and workers. Under Cardenas in the 1930's, there was a good deal of land reform, however, so that the rich are now more often merchants and industrialists rather than landowners. The climate and country are beautiful, and one can imagine what a more dedicated government could do. The ancient Aztec and then the Spanish cultures are still very much alive and nationalism - such as through Diego Rivera's murals - takes the form of glorifying the Aztec and Mayan civilizations of ancient times, rather than the Spanish. The pyramids just outside Mexico City are amazing, actually larger than those at Giza though not so high. Instead of being tombs for the kings they were altars to the gods and on them human sacrifices were performed. There seems to be great uncertainty as to their true age - certainly over 1000 years, but some claim closer to 2000 years and parallel with ancient Greece in time.

The churches are like in other Catholic countries but not so well maintained due partly, no doubt, to the separation of church and state in the 1870's. Apparently, Argentina is now attempting what Mexico did 80 years before. We enjoyed our stay in Mexico particularly because of staying with a Quaker family, American, who have lived in Latin America for years; he is working for the Mexican Social Security Institute.

The World Health Assembly was a great disappointment. The bureaucracy seems to have grown worse than ever. A reflection was the choice of people from the Geneva secretariat who were there - whole entourages of fiscal officers, personnel officers, public relations officers, document officers, secretaries, and clerks - but not a single technical person. Not a single physician except the Director-General and Assistant Director-Generals. Even the malaria man wasn't there, despite the fact that the main action of the Assembly was in malaria control. Candau was described by someone confidentially as the "Chief Clerk." We were heartbroken to have missed both Evang and Stampar by one day; they had just left.

Yes, the celebration of the opening of the University Hospital was a great event, and I was continuously aware that you were not with us. Dean McLeod of the Medical School asked me to convey to you his deep regrets that it was only because of your illness that you were not invited to the occasion. It was grand, of course, to see Fred Mott again and for him to receive the honorary degree. Very few universities, I am sure, would recognize in this way the type of contribution in controversial spheres that Fred made. Esther Lucille Brown was in fine shape, and she made a great hit, especially among the nursing personnel, who are starved for the kind of recognition she gives them. She is a remarkably mature woman with a real grasp of the subtleties of interpersonal relations. We have just received word from her that she is hoping very much to be in Europe again this summer and to pay you a visit.

I have just received twenty pages of comments from the World Health Organization on my manuscript, and it is disheartening to have to cope with criticisms that spring from ignorance or narrowness of viewpoint. I guess one cannot help this sort of thing in writing under the imprint of a large organization. One wonders, however, how many important contributions to social science would have been thwarted if they had to pass the censorship of an „organization.“ I am reminded of our battles on the rural health book with the Academy of Medicine of New York and how the only way we solved them was to retrieve the manuscript and turn it over to a commercial publisher.

The program of health services here in Saskatchewan continues to move along, and we may be on the verge of something quite exciting. Next week I will be going to Ottawa to participate in a preparatory meeting for a conference this September on large-scale Dominion-Provincial relations. Such conferences are held about every five or ten years, and they determine major national policy. This year it is expected that national health insurance will be on the agenda, and we may really see some action. It seems likely that the national government might at least give grants to the provinces already operating medical or hospital insurance programs. This could mean several million dollars to Saskatchewan and enable us to expand into several new spheres.

Ruth's work with the Royal Commission is drawing to a close, and an impressive collection of reports is coming out. There is real hope that the recommendations will not collect dust on the shelf because many sets of community meetings are being planned to discuss their implementation. The children are fine and thoroughly Canadianized. I think John Ernest is doing credit to his middle name by his exceptional performance in school and his wide interests. He is already torn between social studies and science the way you were and indeed the way I was. Maybe he will choose medical history or public health. Like the UN, he has recently celebrated his 10th birthday, and the world rests heavily on his shoulders. He is

studying the clarinet and keeping up with his French, although he also wants to excel in baseball and swimming. Beth, who is now 6, seems to be just as bright and takes life more gaily.

The prairies are green these days, and the wheat crop looks as though it will be better than last year. We cannot say that we are in love with the scenery of Saskatchewan, but the spirit of the place still pleases us immensely. The University appointment in social and preventive medicine is still unsettled, but a decision will probably be made this summer.

We all send you and Emmy our love and warmest wishes.

As ever,

Milton

P.S. You asked about Fred Mott; he is with the United Mine Workers health and welfare program, responsible for building and organizing 10 new hospitals in the Appalachian region.

Lazaro Cardenas (1895-1970) President of Mexico. Diego Rivera (1886-1957) Mexican painter. “my manuscript” (Roemer 1963). “rural health book” (Mott/Roemer 1948).

Names mentioned before:

Brown	see R. to S. of 3 November 1954
Candau	see R. to S. of 29 January 1955
Evang	see R. to S. of 3 November 1954
McLeod	see R. to S. of 26 January 1954
Mott	see S. to R. of 18 September 1948
Stampar	see S. to R. of 14 April

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 19 August 1955*

Dear Milton,

The shirt arrived and I am most enthusiastic about it. It fits like a glove. Thank you ever so much for your kind thought, you could not have given me greater pleasure than by this present. You remembered of course that I like to wear such shirts.

I wish to thank you also for your kind and very interesting letter from which I gather that your Mexican trip was a full success although disappointing in regard to the World Health Assembly. I still belong to a panel of medical care experts and I just got notice that sometime in June of next year they intend to hold a meeting on the role of the hospital in medical care. I wonder if I should resign from the panel. It seems all so futile, but very much in line with what you wrote, namely that you have received 20 pages of comments on your manuscript.

We had the great pleasure of having Esther Lucile Brown staying in Pura for an entire week. We took her to lake Como and we of course remembered you.

I wonder what happened in Ottawa. Did the National Health Insurance actually come up on the agenda ?

Ruth's work with the Royal Commission which as you write is drawing to a close certainly must have been very interesting. I am hoping with you that the recommendations will not be shelved as happens sometimes, but will be implemented upon.

I am very proud of John Ernest, and Bet [sic] must be a sweet girl by now.

I have progressed in my recovery, but have decided to take the month of September off and go to Zurich where we have the address of a very good speech trainer. I shall devote the entire month to rehabilitation work, practising writing in longhand and typing and taking speech lessons, after which I hope to be my old self again.

With my warm wishes in which Emmy joins to the whole family, I am,

yours ever,

Henry

This letter closely answers R. to S. of 25 June 1955.

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 9 January 1956*

Dear Henry:

I am so happy about the Henry E. Sigerist Endowment Fund and very proud to be serving on its Board of Directors. I hope you realize how much devotion and love go with the financial aid that the fund is intended to offer.

At the American Public Health Association convention in November, I saw dozens of your friends and students. I know how happy everyone is going to be to express his feelings of gratitude and appreciation to you through the fund.

I write this note because I can well imagine that you might have misgivings about accepting this help, but I want you to know that it is you who has given so much to us and it is gratifying to be able to express to you a little of our feeling of indebtedness.

All is well with us, and Ruth, John Ernest, and Beth join in sending you and Emmy our warmest wishes for 1956. You both look very well indeed in your Christmas picture.

As ever,

Milton

When in 1956 S.'s grants from the Rockefeller and Whitney Foundations expired, an endowment fund was created by students and friends (Ackerknecht, Esther Brown, Falk, Fulton, Galdston, Gregg, Robert Leslie, Genevieve Miller, Roemer, Rosen, George Silver, Veith, Zilboorg).

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 10 February 1956*

Dear Milton,

First of all let me thank you and Ruth for the superb book you sent me. How I wish I had seen that very interesting exhibit of photographs that pictures the life of man in all its heights and depths [sic]. I read in the Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune that it is displayed in Paris for the time being.

Now let me thank you most cordially for all you did on behalf of our finances. I am happy that you found a formula which will give me financial security as long as I live, with causing a minimum of embarrassment. I am glad you saw John Fulton[,] and Nora just wrote me that she will expect you for lunch. You of course realize that it is with great hesitation I am accepting money from my old students and friends.[sic] but I have no other choice since I no

longer can count on Foundation money. Be assured of my deep gratitude for all you do on my behalf.

I was thrilled when Dr. Atwater wrote me that I had been elected an Honorary Fellow of the American Public Health Association and it is a deep satisfaction to me that my work on social medicine has thus found official recognition. I am sure that it is at the nomination of my old students and friends that this honor was bestowed upon me and I am once more in your debt.

My work is proceeding slowly but steadily. In the spring my Heath Clark Lectures will be published, that I gave at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine under the title Landmarks in the History of Hygiene. You will of course receive a copy as soon as I have some. Then I wrote the Bryce Lecture that I once gave at Oxford about the Latin Medical Literature of the Early Middle Ages which will also be published by the London Branch of the Oxford University Press. And now I have at last resumed work on volume 2 of my History, but I am progressing with it very slowly as I get tired very easily. Otherwise I cannot complain about my health.

We are hit by a cold wave which plays havoc with the garden. Already the mimosa fell victim to the frost and we are trembling for the oleander and camelias [sic].

With warm wishes to you and the family I am,

Yours ever

Henry

P.S. I am sending you under separate cover my reprints of the last few years.

S.'s finances see R. to S. of 9 January 1956. Fulton see R. to S. of 10 October 1950. Atwater, not identified. Heath Clark Lectures (Sigerist 1956). Bryce Lecture (Sigerist 1958a).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 25 February 1956*

Dear Henry:

I was delighted to get your letter and to know that the present arrangements by which we are expressing our gratitude to you, through Yale University, are fully satisfactory to you.

It was good to see Nora and Jack in New York and John Fulton in New Haven. I must soon send you snapshots I took of them. I had a good talk of Nora, who explained various problems to me. I am sure there is no cause for anxiety now.

We have been terribly busy here as usual. The administrative load never ceases, and I am more determined than ever to try to find an academic post somewhere if at all possible. I am most anxious to dig into a long-term study on patterns of health service organization around the world. The study I did for WHO only whetted my appetite and was, after all, quite superficial. An analysis which would show the different social arrangements by which preventive and curative services are provided, in different social settings, is much needed. I suppose it would take five years at least to do a proper job, but it is totally impossible to do it in the merry-go-round of an administrative job in public health.

Things are very much better in the States, and yet the picture is by no means all bright. I have started proceedings to attempt to regain the right to travel, but I have no idea yet how successful I will be.

There is much excitement in Canada as a result of the conference last month at which the national government offered to help support about 50 per cent of the costs of systems of hospitalization insurance in any province. There are various prerequisites which will not be met, probably, for another two years, but it will doubtless bring many new benefits to Saskatchewan as well as the other provinces. After attending this conference, it was surprising to see how small the impact of the news was on friends in the United States. Perhaps it will take time. I can well appreciate how you used to be struck with the narrow provincialism of so many Americans.

Ruth and the children are thriving despite the bitter cold weather. I hope the European cold wave will pass soon and that the wonderful spring of Switzerland and northern Italy will be with you soon.

Warmest wishes from us all to you and Emmy.

As ever,

Milton

Nora and Jack Beeson-Sigerist see S. to R. of 23 May 1945 and R. to S. of 24 May 1948, respectively. Fulton see R. to S. of 10 October 1950. “study I did for WHO“ (Roemer 1963).

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*Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 28 April 1956*

Dear Henry:

I must tell you how much I enjoyed the reprints you sent me. Your ability to epitomize long historic periods in a few paragraphs and give insight into the human aspects of man's progress continue always to thrill and excite me.

Your piece on the physician's writing and reading was delightful. The other evening I read sections of it to some medical visitors, and everyone resolved to get up ten minutes earlier the next morning and read a poem.

Everything is fine here, though I am no less weary of administrative work and the scores of daily headaches. The other morning, for the devil of it, I made a list of all the items in my in-box - letters, memoranda, reports, notes, etc. - all documents representing a cue or signal for something to be done. The list came to 56 items, and really each of them important for someone or some group of people somewhere. Since one can never do all that is necessary, it is continuously a question of establishing priorities and putting some things aside. In the course of the day another 15 or 20 items came long, and by 6 p.m. I'm not sure whether I was above or below the morning count. In the process, let's hope that people are helped, and perhaps this is the inevitable price of social organization in a complex society. But it doesn't allow one much time to think things through and be creative.

I am in close touch with Dr. Fulton and you know, of course, that the Henry Sigerist Research Fund is in excellent shape. Contributions are coming in from everywhere and people are so happy for the opportunity to express their feelings this way.

Erica wrote a nice letter the other day, and I am glad to learn from her the latest good news about your health. Her own personal news is tough, and I hope that soon she will meet someone else.

I enclose some pictures for your album. Please excuse the frightfully bad printing; the mass production photo studios here are nothing like the ones in Switzerland. The picture of Nora,

Jack, and Bernhard Stern was on a gray, nasty day in New York in early February. John Fulton is in front of his magnificent home in New Haven. The others are our family in Regina over the last year. John Ernest is living up to his name with all A's in school and a tremendous variety of interests.

We think of you often and send you and Emmy our warmest affection.

As ever,

Milton

“physician’s writing and reading“ (Sigerist 1955c). Fulton and Sigerist Research Fund see R. to S. of 10 October 1950 and 9 January 1956, respectively. “Erica“ Sigerist, “Nora“ Sigerist, “Jack“ Beeson-Sigerist. Bernard Stern (died 1956) sociologist and author.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 17 May 1956*

Dear Milton,

I have to thank you for two good letters and for the charming photos. The one of Nora and Jack I like very much, and I was happy to see Professor Stern on the picture. The one of John Fulton I like equally well, but the one I liked best was of you and Ruth and the children. I am very proud of John Ernest’s achievements in school, and the little girl looks adorable.

I just had a letter of John Fulton with the suggestion of reprinting my paper “Thoughts on the Physicians Writing and Reading“, and the idea appeals to me very much. I am happy that my research fund thrives. You probably heard of the most generous contribution to it by Mr. Warburg. I quite understand that you are tired of administrative work and would prefer a teaching and research position in some university. I just had a letter from Ruth whom you met as my former secretary. She says she disadvised you to take a position in Israel. The United States of [sic] Canada would be preferable. So much for that. I was anxious for you to know how delighted I was with your letters and the pictures. I shall write soon again.

With best wishes to you and the family, I am

Yours very cordially,

Henry

Stern and Fulton see R. to S. of 28 April 1956 and 10 October 1950, respectively. “Thoughts on ....“ (Sigerist 1955c). Research Fund see R. to S. of 9 January 1956. Warburg: Possibly S.’s friend Erik Warburg (1892-1969) Danish professor of medicine. “a letter from Ruth“ Berlowitz, see S. to R. of 8 November 1951.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 25 July 1956 (postcard)*

D. M.

I am wearing the shirt that you sent me from Mexico and today I began reading your report addressed to WHO. So I feel very close to you.

Best wishes

HES

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*John Ernest and Milton Roemer to Sigerist, Regina, 29 August 1956*

Dear Dr. Sigerist:

The other night our family got to talking about names, and Dad mentioned that I had been named after you. I have always been very proud of this fact since Dad thinks so much of you. He also mentioned you gave me four books soon after my birth, and I am writing this as a letter of thanks, eleven years late. I am very proud to know that I obtained my first books on medicine from such a reknowned [sic] man.

I have just read for the first time the inscriptions in the books, and I think the one that goes, “ .... cooperative society, democratically ruled on scientific principals [sic], in which all will have equall [sic] duties and equall [sic] rights,” should be a proverb. I have not read the books yet, but I am sure they will prove to be very useful and interesting.

I have been taking typing lessons this summer, and I think that will help explain the mistakes in this letter. This is also the second year I have been taking the clarinet. During the winter I take French lessons to keep from forgetting it. I also play my clarinet in a Junior Symphony Orchestra. Otherwise we just play football in the summer and school and hockey in the winter.

Life in Canada is very satisfactory, and I am sorry about moving back to the States, although I do not doubt it will have many surprises in store for me. I also hope that some day I will return to the beatiful [sic] country of Switzerland.

I hope you enjoyed the summer and are feeling well.

Sincerely yours,

John Ernest Roemer

Dear Henry:

Many thanks for your card, about reading my W.H.O. study. It was so radically edited and cut (about 200 pages) that I'm not at all satisfied with the present result. But this seems to be the price of working for an international organization.

The letter above is entirely John Ernest's idea and composition. We are moving back to the States soon to a research position in hospitals and chronic disease care, about which I will be writing you. We all send our love to you + Emmy.

As ever,

Milton

R.'s WHO study, published in 1963 at UCLA (Roemer 1963) has only 164 pages. R.'s next job was as Director, Sloan Institute of Hospital Administration, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, until 1962 when he changed to UCLA where he stayed for the remaining 38 years of his life.

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*Sigerist to John Ernest Roemer, Pura, 17 November 1956*

Dear John Ernest,

Your good letter reached me when I was on a three-weeks vacation in Zurich. And after my return I had a terrible backlog of urgent letters, so that you will excuse if I write you at this belated hour.

I am very proud of you. Your father wrote me that you are leading your class and your letter gave me a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction with all the good news it contains.

I am writing this letter at your Regina address hoping it will be forwarded to you if you have left already. Tell your father that I am anxiously awaiting a letter from him stating what his new job is like.

My health is improving from day to day and I am back at work after a very pleasant vacation.

Warm greetings to you and the family

Yours very cordially

H. E. Sigerist

R.'s new job see R. to S. of 29 August 1956 and S. to R. of 25 January 1957. "My health": In fact, S. had recovered to a degree that in 1956 he seemed to be his old self. "pleasant vacation": S. , during a vacation in Zurich and Basel, had met several relatives and friends and attended operas and plays.

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*Sigerist to Roemer, Pura, 25 January 1957*

Dear Milton,

First of all let me ask you whether you received a copy of my Heath Clark Lectures "Landmarks in the History of Hygiene" or not. I have no record that I sent it to you. But in my dispatch-book I have considerable gaps. Perhaps I waited until you gave me your new address. If I have failed to send the book to you, know that a copy is waiting for you that I shall send off immediately.

I always knew that you were tired of administrative work and that you wanted something in the academic world. I had hoped that you would get the professorship at the University of Saskatchewan, and I am disappointed to hear that you made enemies among the private doctors. Now I am glad to know you in the States and I know that the Jewish institutions have done splendid work in the field of medicine.

The outline you sent me is admirable and I have little criticism to offer. I used to define the physicians [sic] task as

- 1 The maintenance and promotion of health.
- 2 Prevention of disease.
- 3 Restoration of health.
- 4 Rehabilitation.

It seems important to me that the maintenance and promotion of health be emphasized; to be accomplished through education, general and health education, a physical culture program

and the provision of the best possible labor and living conditions. Of course there is very little difference to the prevention of disease, but it seems wise to me to emphasize the promotion of health as a positive program.

Your reprints came the day before yesterday and I read them with great interest. First of all your paper on “Prepaid Medical Care and Changing Needs in Saskatchewan“. When I made my survey in 1944 the backbone seemed the Municipal Doctors Plan. Yet, the unheard of prosperity changes the picture radically. I was also interested to hear, that the Air Ambulance Service functioned so well.

It must be overwhelming to be back in the States, where the material comforts have reached a peak as we hear all the time from Nora. I only wish, that the cultural aspects might be developed at the same pace. People in academic life have a hard time to make both ends meet, as I hear from my son-in-law.

I am glad to hear that your children adjusted themselves beautifully. Give them my love. The little girl will not remember me, but John Ernest may remember me. I was so glad he wrote me that nice letter. You can imagine how much we look forward to having Nora and her whole family for two months in Pura. And I heard with pleasure that my Research Fund is in good shape.

I am busy working and I hope to be through with my second volume in the course of the year. But I interrupted the work in order to prepare the fourth edition of my “Grosse Aerzte“. 5000 copies of the third edition were sold in three years. The fourth edition will contain additional biographies of Dr. Welch, and the surgeons August Bier and René Leriche. An American edition will be published at the Beechhurst Press, that will contain the additional biographies of the third and fourth German editions.

This is a long letter, so I come to the end. Let me wish you and yours, although belatedly, a very Happy New Year. Drop me a line whether you received my “Landmarks“ or not.

With kindest regards I am,

Yours very cordially

Henry

The letter is addressed to R., 4 Pomander Walk, Teaneck, NJ, a township of suburban New York City, site of several Jewish organizations. S. may have received a letter of R. which is missing. “Landmarks“ (Sigerist 1956). “Prepaid Medical Care ....“: (Roemer 1956). “my son-in-law“: Jack Beeson (see R. to S. of 24 May 1948. “Nora and her whole family“: Jack Beeson, Christopher and Miranda. Research Fund: see R. to S. of 9 January 1956.

The 4th edition of “Grosse Aerzte“ (Sigerist 1959) appeared after S.’s death and contained also a biography of S.. The second American edition of *Great Doctors* (Sigerist 1958b) was published by Doubleday rather than Beechhurst Press. William H. Welch (1850-1934) pathologist, hygienist, medical historian; first director of the Hopkins Institute of the History of Medicine, i.e., S.’s predecessor. August Bier (1861-1949) German surgeon. René Leriche (1879-1955) French surgeon.

This letter was written less than two months before S.’s death on 17 March 1957 and thus is likely to have been his last letter to R..

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