

BUCK, J[ohn] Lossing, agricultural economist and government official, was born in LaGrange Township, Dutchess Co., N.Y., Nov. 27, 1890, son of Vincent Morgan and Grace (TenHagen) Buck. His father was a farmer. J. Lossing Buck received his preliminary education at public schools in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., and attended Cornell University, where he was graduated B.S. in 1914, M.S. in 1925, and Ph.D. in agricultural economics in 1933. After receiving his B.S. degree, he was employed by the Department of Correction, New York City, as a farm instructor at the New Hampton (N.Y.) Reformatory Farms, supervising inmates and farming. In 1915 the American Presbyterian Mission sent him as an agricultural missionary to Nanhsuchou, Anhwei Province, China, where he had charge of agricultural experiment and extension work, taught short courses, and tested and introduced new seeds. He remained in that capacity until early 1920, when he went to the University of Nanking, China, to establish a department of agricultural economics in the College of Agriculture and Forestry. He was professor and head of the department until 1934, serving also as acting dean of the college during 1920-22. While at the college, he participated in training some of China's most able agricultural leaders, and his department was considered the only significant program in agricultural economics in China at that time. His students, who were trained in methods of obtaining economic information where little or none previously existed, were taught to collect data systematically in the field, analyze the data, and organize the results for publication. His department undertook short-run crises projects occasioned by floods and famine and was recognized by public officials as a dependable source of useful information. The department also undertook more traditional studies of farm management, cooperatives, marketing, land use, and prices. In 1934 Buck returned to the United States and joined the U.S. Department of the Treasury as a monetary adviser on ways to correct the adverse effects on the Chinese economy of the U.S. Silver Purchase Act of 1934. He remained in that work until 1935, when he became the Department of the Treasury representative in China. In that capacity he consulted frequently with the officials of China, as well as of the United States, including the secretary of the treasury. In 1939 he left that position to become an adviser to the Ministry of Finance of the Chinese Nationalist government, with his headquarters in Chungking. During the Sino-Japanese War he advised the ministry on the transport of wood oil to the United States to repay a U.S. loan to China. Buck remained with the ministry until 1940, when he returned to his position as professor at the University of Nanking, which was moved to Chengtu, China, after the Japanese army advanced toward Nanking. He continued as a professor in the university's department of agricultural economics until 1944, engaging also in research and serving as editor of Economic Facts, a monthly periodical of the department. From the latter year until 1946, he was chief economist of the National Agricultural Engineering Corp., Chungking, which was chartered by the Chinese government to manufacture and import

agricultural implements. While in that position, he acted as adviser and also promoted cooperation of U.S. firms and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in developing the use of farm machinery in China. Additionally, as a technical adviser to the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., in 1945-46, he assisted with the organizing of a China-United States Agricultural Mission. For six months, until late 1946, he served as a member of the mission, giving particular attention to marketing problems. He traveled with the mission in China, participating in interviews, and assisted in the mission's report to the Chinese government. In early 1947 Buck joined the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations as the first chief of the newly established Land and Water Use Branch (later the Land Water Development Division), with headquarters in Washington, D.C., and Rome, Italy. In that capacity he was in charge of staffing the new branch, and by 1952 he had a staff of ten specialists in various aspects of land and water use and seventy professional men in FAO member countries to fulfill technical assistance requests. His branch arranged international meetings to improve agricultural land use, and by the time he left the branch in 1954, his staff had prepared thirteen publications under his direction which were published as FAO development papers. In the latter year Buck became director for agricultural economics of the newly established Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs (later the Agricultural Development Council), New York City, and he continued in that post until his retirement in 1957. The council was established in 1954 by John D. Rockefeller, 3d, as a nonprofit organization for the purpose of supporting training and research related to the economic and human problems of agricultural and rural development in Asia. As director for agricultural economics, Buck was involved in initiating and developing a program of training and research in agricultural economics in Asian countries. This involved five separate and extended trips to visit agricultural economists; promote more vigorous activities; grant fellowships for study abroad; provide visiting professors, books, and equipment; and encourage improved methods of teaching and research. Buck's prestige was considered an important factor in drawing favorable attention to the council and its program in the Far East. Following his retirement in 1957, he continued to engage in research and writing to the close of his life. He was engaged primarily in independent research on food grain production in mainland China before and after the advent of the communist regime. In addition, he served for several months in 1964 as a specialist with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. In that capacity he traveled to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan, conducting seminars on the results of his study of agricultural production in mainland China. Apart from his other activities in China, Buck was an economic adviser to the Farmer's Bank of China, Chungking, in 1945-46. He was the author of "Chinese Farm Economy" (1930), which was published in the United States for the University of Nanking and the China Council of Pacific Relations by the University of Chicago Press. For this book, Buck, with the assistance of his staff at the University of Nanking, gathered data from 2866 farms in seventeen localities of seven provinces



in China. The book demonstrated that farm management principles in China were the same as in this country, although the application was different because the most economical size of farm in China was smaller. Buck's next work, "Land Utilization in China" (3 vols., 1937), was published in both English and Chinese by the University of Nanking as part of the International Research Series of the Institute of Pacific Relations. A survey of land utilization in rural China, this work contained an analysis of data obtained from 16,786 farms in 168 localities and 38,256 farm families in twenty-two provinces of China between 1929 and 1933. The study included many noteworthy findings, such as the fact that the density of farm population in the spring-wheat area of north-west China was about one half that of the Yangtze rice-wheat area in central China. On the other hand, the highest production per man was in the latter area, where population was twice the density but the climate was more favorable for high production. The volumes, which brought Buck international recognition, were considered the most detailed study ever made of any aspect of Chinese life and in 1942 the Chinese edition received the first award of the Chinese government Board of Publications as the best volumes published in China after 1937. Buck wrote "Farm Management in China" (1942) with William M. Curtiss, and it was published by the University of Nanking in simplified English and later translated into Chinese, and "Food and Agriculture in Communist China" (1966) with Owen L. Dawson and Yuanli Wu, which was published in this country for Stanford University's Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace. The latter book included a chapter by Buck entitled "Food Grains in Mainland China Before and During the Communist Regime," which was a comparison of the precommunist period from 1929 to 1937 with the communist period from 1949 to 1958. The many monographs that Buck wrote included "An Economic and Social Survey of 102 Farms near Wuhu, Anhwei, China" (1924) and "An Economic and Social Survey of 150 Farms, Yenshan County, Chihli Province, China" (1926), both published by the University of Nanking; "Farm Ownership and Tenancy in China" (1927), published by the committee on christianizing the economic order of the National Christian Council, Shanghai; "The 1931 Flood in China; An Economic Survey" (1932), published by the University of Nanking in cooperation with the National Flood Relief Commission, Shanghai; "An Agricultural Survey of Szechwan Province, China" (1943) and "Some Basic Agricultural Problems of China" (1947), published by the Institute of Pacific Relations, New York City; and "Development of Agricultural Economics at the University of Nanking" (1973), published as a Cornell International Agricultural Development Series bulletin. An entire issue of *Current Scence*, a journal, was devoted to his monograph entitled "Reliability of Communist China's Data on Food Grain Production" (Mar. 1965). In addition, Buck contributed chapters to other authors' books and was the author or coauthor of numerous articles that were published in periodicals in both this country and China. He also presented papers and gave talks before various meetings and symposia at different times in his career. Buck was decorated by the Chinese government with the white cravat with red and blue borders of the Order of Brilliant Jade in 1938. In 1958 the department of agricul-

tural economics of Kyushu University, upon receiving a special collection of publications in the field of agricultural economics from the Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs, placed the collection in a special place in its library and formally named it The John Lossing Buck Library in honor of Buck's first visit to that department on behalf of the council. Buck was a member of the International Conference of Agricultural Economics, Society for International Development, American Agricultural Economics Association, Asia Society, China Institute in America, Sigma Xi, Phi Kappa Phi, the Cosmos Club of Washington, D.C., and the Cornell Club of New York City. His religious affiliation was with the First Presbyterian Church, Pleasant Valley, N.Y. Politically he was a Republican. He was interested in and collected Chinese art. He was married twice: (1) in Kuling, China, May 30, 1917, to Pearl Buck (q.v.), and had two daughters: Carol and Janice; he was divorced from his first wife in 1935; (2) in Chengtu, China, Oct. 11, 1941, to Lomay, daughter of Tingwen and Suc-Tze (Chi) Chang of Tsungming, China, and had two children: Rosalind Grace, who married Forbes Taylor Lewis; and Paul Lossing. J. Lossing Buck died in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Sept. 27, 1975.