

## LETTERS TO THE Book Review Editor

### Mother Oswald

I WAS DISAPPOINTED that the editors of *SR* find Jean Stafford's *A Mother in History* worthy of the lead-off spot in LITERARY HORIZONS [*SR*, Mar. 5]. It is hard to determine which is worse—Miss Stafford's book, Mr. Granville Hicks's lengthy article on the same, or Miss Stafford's decision to do the book in the first place. . . .

I fear Miss Stafford has succumbed to Mrs. Marguerite Oswald's commercial suggestion that they "collaborate . . . and make a lot of money." If this book is a sample of what they have to offer, I sincerely hope they both fail.

VIRGINIA B. DE FORGE.

New York, N.Y.

GRANVILLE HICKS WRITES of Mrs. Oswald (and of how many others!): "Such women, if you don't listen carefully to what they are saying, seem to be making sense, and if you do listen carefully and point out their inconsistencies, they pay no attention to you."

I hope I will never forget that wise and thoughtful sentence; I have heard poorer thoughts, expressed at great length, described as sermons.

FRED E. GALBRAITH, JR.

Arlington, Va.

THAT MRS. OSWALD is a sturdy, egocentric personality given to random outbursts and propositions came as no surprise. . . . Like Mr. Hicks, I have met numerous women with traits such as these and I agree with his tolerant attitude towards them. That he does not pursue this understanding further and see that Miss Stafford's account is verbally abusive and lacking in insight or any grain of compassion for its subject is disappointing. That the aforementioned flaws should appear in a work by Miss Stafford comes as something of a shock. . . .

Perhaps some other author will be as disturbed as I was by [Miss Stafford's] patronizing portrait of Mrs. Oswald and be moved to write a definitive study of her life as an important peripheral work to the most shocking event of our times.

FRED LAWRENCE GUILLES.

New York, N.Y.

MRS. OSWALD WAS NOT a Dallas mother in history; she resides in neighboring Fort Worth. . . . Dallas had Lee Harvey as a temporary guest; don't give us his mother.

LONNIE SEARS.

Dallas, Tex.