MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
Tuesday, May 11, 1948

Present: Professor Aydelotte (chairman), Livingston,  
Hewry, Thornton, Petersen and Mosse.  
Absent: Haefner and Hoyt.

Appointment of Beyer.

Mr. Aydelotte raised the case of Carlyle Beyer and the  
matter was discussed.

Moved pro forma (by Mosse, seconded by Livingston)  
that Mr. Beyer be invited to become a member  
of the department. Motion lost (seven to one,  
the votes of Hoyt and Haefner being cast by  
Proxy).

Revision of Degree Requirements.

The Department next discussed the degree requirements.  
Professor Livingston raised the matter of the  
division of British History. Both Professor  
Aydelotte and Mosse objected to having their  
courses become a part of such a division. A  
lively discussion ensued, and it was decided  
to postpone a settlement of the issue until  
the Friday luncheon meeting.

American History Appointment.

Mr. Aydelotte raised the issue of the American History  
appointment. Professor Merrill Jensen was taken  
under consideration to fill the vacancy.

Moved (Livingston) and seconded (Petersen) that  
Professor Merrill Jensen be invited to come to  
Iowa City at our expense for an interview with  
the view, if the interview is satisfactory, that  
he be brought on as professor of history.

Discussion. It was the consensus of the department  
that Professor Jensen should be brought on as  
Professor of History, but not as chairman of the  
department. Satisfaction was expressed with the  
present administration of the department.

Carried (unanimous).

Respectfully submitted,

George L. Mosse, Acting Secretary
1. Perry Miller - Harvard

Believes that he cannot be moved. Columbia recently tried it with the result that Harvard gave him many things that he had been asking for, unsuccessfully, and which satisfied him so that he was unwilling to leave Harvard for Columbia.

2. John Green - Harvard

Does not know him.

3. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. - Harvard

Has come up rapidly. Probably would not be a good head, and might even be difficult as a colleague. Brilliant, with some evidences of intellectual arrogance and at the same time some evidence that he may lack the sound and sure scholarship of his father.

4. S. H. Brockman - Wesleyan (Conn.)

Does not know him well enough to pass judgment on headship. Wrote a sound biography of Roger Williams. Probably sound scholar, but recalls him as rather diffident and retiring and modest as possessing qualities that might not qualify him for a headship. In any event, he should be strongly recommended from (post). Other quarters before being considered?

5. Merrill Jensen - Wisconsin

Looks like good teacher -- not head. Regards him very highly. Articles of Confederation. Sound scholar. Good prospect. His appointment would bring approval and sympathetic understanding in historical circles.

6. Richard Hofstadter - Columbia

Good teacher and scholar, not a head. Intellectual history.

7. Ray Billington - Northwestern - American History

(Strongly recommended by Schlesinger). Would appear well. Not qualified for headship, might even be good graduate dean (as nearly Schlesinger suggested). Has written very little and not likely all of it to write; yet he is still highly regarded, and like Root would have a reputation vicariously by developing sound scholars -- Highly recommends.

American Colonial History. Wrote: Jumae Medlin, Soldier. Book dropped because publisher failed and did not put it. No fault of mine, well wound biography.
8. Dixon Wecter — Huntington

Believes he wants to return to the east where the publishers are. He probably prefers writing to a quasi-popular audience.


Middle western background. Education at Wisconsin. Taught Ohio Wesleyan, Ohio State Teachers College. Knows him well, partly as librarian of AAF project in Washington, where he gave evidence of good administrative ability. Very good man from every angle. Worth investigating.

10. David Potter — Yale — Southern History

Knew him only second hand — good book — good teacher.

Additional Nominees

11. Wesley F. Craven — New York University — Colonial & History of the South (See above)

About 42 — very good scholar and potential head. Connected with AAF project. (Another man was head of a project and failed. Craven, without being head, stepped in and saved the project).

12. Carl Sawyer — Harvard — France after liberation

About 30. Looks like good teacher — not head.

13. Planck — (Finishing at Columbia)

Instructor about fall of 1948. Excellent — Brilliant.


Recommended by Moe, based on letter from Notestain (Yale) which Moe had received shortly before I called at Moe’s office, Tuesday, August 19. When I mentioned him to Krout, he said that he was about to recommend him. Has taught at St. Stephen’s, later Bard College, one year at Columbia, then went into service. Now in London working on materials for Austrian treaty. Has nearly written a book on the subject. Available for appointment fall of 1949.

Teacher, not a head. He is the kind of intellectual young man who knows more than his field of history. Made an impression at Columbia for his balanced learning over broad areas, as well as good historical knowledge.

American Colonial History. Wrote: James Madison, Builder. Book flopped because publisher failed and did not push it. No fault of Smith, well rounded biography.
Interview - Professor John Kroul, - cont'd.

Abbott Smith - cont'd.

Next book: Indentured and Apprenticed Servitude, will be put out by Institute of Colonial History, Williamsburg.

Does not know the following well enough to comment; that he had been asking for, unsuccessfully, and which satisfied him so that he was willing to leave Harvard for Columbia. Would like more.


16. Gale McCoy - Wyoming - Chicago Ph.D.


18. T. O. Clark, Head at Kentucky, West and So. History.

19. David Loeb, Ministy College (?:) - Europe and Far East;

Comparison of intellectual apparatus and at the same time note evidence that he say lack the same and sure scholarship of his father.

4. S. M. Brandt - Conclusion

Feels we would not go wrong on the headship with:

1. Merrill Jensen - Wisconsin

5. Merrill Jensen - Ray Millington - Northwestern

Regarded him very highly. Articles of concordation. Sound scholar. Good prospect. His appointment would bring approval and sympathetic understanding in historical circles.

6. Richard Holztafer - Columbia

Good teacher and scholar, not a head. Intellectual in a vivid history.


Newly qualified for headship, might even be good graduate dean (as Schlesinger suggested). Has written very little and not likely to write, yet he is still highly regarded, and like most would probably have a reputation shockingly by developing sound scholars - approves.

Highly recommends.


Merrill Jensen - Wisconsin


Newly qualified for headship, might even be good graduate dean (as Schlesinger suggested). Has written very little and not likely to write, yet he is still highly regarded, and like most would probably have a reputation shockingly by developing sound scholars - approves.

Highly recommends.