

1930-1932

VEBLEN, O.

Biography

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

POLICIES

Administration

Early correspondence between Dr. Flexner and Prof. Veblen reveals the great importance of Veblen's role in the setting up of the Institute and Flexner's sense of luxury in being able to discuss, and apparently to reach conclusions harmoniously with Prof. Veblen on proposed policies and strategies. Referring to Flexner's early correspondence with Dean Eisenhart, Department of Mathematics, Princeton University, reveals that he was never as close to the Dean as to Veblen, and that since Veblen came from Eisenhart's Department to the Institute he was the pivot on which the happy relationship between the two institutions swung.

Flexner's first letter to Veblen was written on Jan. 21, 1930 when he notes that Veblen was quoted in the Times as having said that "America still lacks a genuine seat of learning and that American academic work is inferior in quality to the best abroad." Flexner agrees and asks Veblen for a copy of the speech. (A. Flexner to Prof. Veblen, Jan. 21, 1930. File IV-21, Vault)

Veblen replies regretting that his remarks were made extemporaneously and without notes, the occasion being a request by the National Research Fellowship. It was a speech about the research professorships then recently established and related indications of treating scientific research as an end rather than a by-product. He confesses to quoting an epigram of a young English mathematician: "the difference between Cambridge and Princeton is that Cambridge is a seat of learning whereas Princeton is an educational institution." Veblen is willing to substitute any other American institute for Princeton. He alludes to the scientific fund "which we owe largely to you and your colleagues on the General Education Board." Together with Princeton's new mathematics building "which is going to be devoted entirely to research and advanced instruction" as being in the line of the "mathematics institute" which he has ^{in mind}. (Veblen to Flexner, Jan. 24, 1930. Ibid.)

Flexner then asks "What would American scholars and scientists do if some fellow or some foundation set up a 'sure enough' institute of learning? Is it a necessity to carry the millstone of a college about the neck of the graduate school?" (Flexner to Veblen, Jan. 27, 1930. Ibid.)

Not until June was the first ^{intimation} ~~intimation~~ of the Institute made ^{public} ~~possible~~ apparently, for Veblen notes it and says wisely "I realize now what you ~~have been~~ were thinking about when you wrote to me last January." He expresses the wish that the Institute might locate itself in Princeton so that there might be mutual interchange of the facilities of the university and that they might be made available. (Veblen to Flexner, June 10, 1930. Ibid.)

To this Flexner responds tardily because he had been away in Europe: "it seems incredible but the fact is that this whole development has taken place since the first of March. My letter in January was due to the fact that I was getting ready for publication of the Rhodes Lectures on universities." As always the two men exchange urbane greetings. (Flexner to Veblen, June 7, 1930. Ibid.)

There is a break in the correspondence here with Veblen endeavoring to renew it at the year's end. He writes on Dec. 23 that he hopes Princeton is still a possible site: "the communal back-ground for it would be good, and if you do not desire to build everything complete at first, the promises of a new group of scholars would make the gaps in your group less important. But, of course, what generally interests me is that it would strengthen our efforts to make this university, to some extent, a seat of learning." (Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 23, 1930. Ibid.)

Flexner went to Princeton in January, there is no record of what transpired. Subsequently Veblen evidently, at Flexner's request, gives the latter a long-hand written letter on his proposals which Flexner acknowledges and says he is taking to Canada along with others on the same subject to read and reflect upon with the greatest care. "I see, though I am sure less clearly than you do, the difficulties inherent in any form of management. We could in this country adopt either the German or the English system in its entirety. I wonder if we cannot evolve something new, namely, a board consisting of (1) a few men of affairs who would be interested in financing the institution, (2) a group of scholars holding important posts in other institutions, (3) a similar group of professors in the Institute itself. Would not three such groups check and stimulate one another?"

"I should propose to put the director on a par with the professors as to salary, social position, and everything else."

"AS I wish the institution always to be small, the influence of the academic groups should be decisive." (*Italics added. Flexner to Veblen, June 25, 1931, Ibid.*)

In the several months which follow there is scant correspondence remaining out of what must have been fairly frequent interchanges of ideas. In July they discuss academic calendar and Flexner finds it difficult to arrange a satisfactory calendar because of the difficult summers which cut short the fall semester, with the long spring period cut short by the Easter vacation and the onset of summer. (Flexner to Veblen, July 16, 1931. Ibid.)

On December 9, 1931 Flexner submitted ^{to Veblen} his confidential report of September 26th ~~which was~~ submitted to the Trustees at the meeting on October 13, 1931, and asks for Veblen's comments.

Veblen agrees with the memorandum but raises a danger signal. He does not believe that the desirability of going ahead in a particular field is dependent upon meeting "the right man". He says that there are sufficiently ~~many~~ good men so that a man of the right sort can be secured. "For example in mathematics, if you cannot secure the man whom you have picked out and whom I agree is the best first choice, there are a number of others who are surely as good and who may, in fact, be better." He thinks that Johns Hopkins might "have held out longer if departments had not so often been built around one man." Veblen also warns Flexner not to be "so afraid as you some times seem to be of 'the dead hand'. Your program is experimental only in its details. The general idea is perfectly conservative and is regarded as sound by every competent judge." (Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 15, 1931, Ibid.)

Flexner to Veblen - Dec. 16, 1931.

Flexner replies with a maximum of President Gilman that every generation needed a new start but that he did not take this too seriously. Then he adds "Whenever you know your California address, let me have it...You have been so kind and so helpful that - will you believe it - you even haunt my dreams, for the other evening, while I was probably sleeping soundly, I had a conference with you, though the next morning I was unable to recover any part of it."

Veblen to Flexner - Jan. 1, 1932

"...I listened to a paper by Birkhoff in New Orleans and am more than ever convinced that your choice is a good one. He evidently has a lot of genuine mathematics in him yet."

Flexner to Veblen - Jan. 4, 1932

"Thank you very much for yours of the 1st. Should anything occur to you in the course of your travels that has any bearing whatsoever upon our project, please let me have the advantage of it for I lean upon your judgment, experience, and sympathy.

"I am delighted that Birkhoff's paper was so excellent. I have not yet reached the point of a final choice and shall not until I have had another opportunity of speaking with you, which I shall seek when I reach the Coast.

"..."

No further correspondence until April when Veblen goes to Europe.

Veblen to Flexner - Apr. 24, 1932, from Friedlanderweg, Göttingen

Veblen wrote that Birkhoff had advised him that he had declined Flexner's offer, with Birkhoff's wife advising Veblen that Birkhoff was deeply disturbed over the decision.

He wrote also that he had seen Weyl who he thinks "would not be averse to the move but his wife is very well satisfied with her position here..." Furthermore, the Weyl's are not disturbed with the political situation even though Hitler is predicted the winner at the elections here that very day.

Apparently Flexner met Veblen and Weyl in Göttingen afterwards since there is a lack of correspondence until June 2nd when he informs Veblen from Hamburg that a member of his wife's family has died and his plans are disarranged. He informs Veblen that he is writing Professor Weyl "the details of the recommendation that I am prepared to make to the Board if he is willing and shall send you a copy. This will give him the time necessary for careful consideration and consultation with the Berlin authorities.

"As to you, my mind is clear. If Miss Jones and Professor Eisenhart interpose no obstacles which hinder you, I shall on hearing affirmatively from ~~you~~ recommend your appointment on the following terms:..."

"Salary \$15,000, - 5% to be contributed by you and an additional 5% by the Institute to a retiring allowance fund;

"Retirement at 65, unless extended by mutual consent, on pension of \$8,000;

"Pension of \$5,000 to your present wife, should she survive you;

"Sabbatical year on full salary every seven years;

"Your service to begin next fall, though the ~~Institut~~ Institute cannot expect to operate until the fall of 1933.

"All other details to be left in ~~obeyance~~ obedience, until I return to American and see what the financial situation is. (Yesterdays Frankfurter Zeitung contained an extract from a speech by Senator Read that was very dark.)

"..."

Flexner to Veblen - June 4, 1932

"...I have a feeling that you ought to postpone writing to Eisenhart until I have myself seen him. I cannot tell you how anxious I am that every step I take shall be marked by the utmost courtesy and consideration for you and for those at Princeton and elsewhere who have been so largely interested in the Institute and who have helped me so freely and generously."

On June 6th Flexner quotes Veblen "Feuer unt Flamme dafür" and notes that the information

is highly confidential and Einstein must straighten the things out with Milliken with whom he "has no definite understanding but who rather expects him to come again..."

Veblen has asked that the Institute take over the salary of Vanderslice, his assistant, (\$1,000). Flexner assures him that details like "secretary, books, publications, will be provided for..."

On June 18th, 1932 Veblen says "Your news from Berlin/~~W/L~~ is very exciting and you must feel that...you are returning with a good 'bag'." He reports Weyl's situation as apparently favorable.

On June 22nd Flexner cables Veblen "Arrived yesterday Saw Eisenhart today Approves enthusiastically Will cable you himself after communicating with ~~Weyl~~ acting President Duffield."

On June 28th Veblen writes Flexner "...The first problem of cooperation between the University and the new Institute that occurs to me is that of making it clear that membership in either one is no obstacle to getting a good job in the other. We should not let a situation arise in which a young man would hesitate to come to one of the Princeton institutions for fear of missing a better chance in the other later on..."

On June 30th Flexner to Veblen. Eisenhart and Duffield were most cordial "... they feel honored that we are ~~gax~~ beginning with one of their men among others.

"..."

As to the financial situation "... We are in perfectly sound condition; but the general feeling in town is gloomy beyond anything I have ever known. Nobody seems to know what will happen,..." Citing the danger of going off the gold standard which appears passed he continues "...However, I wish to play safe and not at the outset to undertake a budget exceeding one-third of the income upon which it now seems that we may confidently count. This will enable us to take care of you, Einstein, and Weyl - should Weyl accept - with the necessary assistants, assistance, etc...

"Our contribution, in other words, will be made in two ways: (1) by the work of the staff and students; (2) by sending out younger men of superior training to take posts as they open up in other institutions..."

Veblen to Flexner from Berlin on July 7, 1932

Weyl is treating with the Ministerium "...I have managed so far to say nothing except to Weyl and Einstein. On our arrival here we found two letters from Mrs. Einstein and we spent yesterday evening with the Einsteins and Dr. Mayer. It was interesting to find that Einstein is strong for the All Souls idea. He is against luxury. Pressed for details, he said that the public rooms of the Athenaeum in Pasadena are too luxurious but the dwelling rooms are not. I found the latter extremely comfortable, to say the least. The great question in the Einstein family now is what sort of a letter will come from Milliken ..."

He reports on 25 year old Dr. Kurt Gödel "...My suggestion would be to offer him a

lectureship for one year at \$3000 (salary of a Commonwealth Fellow) ... it might be well to get him in touch with American conditions before he has had time to grow into a position here. His value is well understood both in Germany and in Austria...and I should like to have Dr. Alfred Foster taken on as my assistant. He could be very useful in quite a different way from Vanderslice...I should favor offering him \$2000, which would be barely enough for him to get through the year with his wife and baby...has been a Rockefeller Fellow in Göttingen this year..."

Veblen to Flexner - July 8, 1932

"I am writing a note to Weyl to say that you expect to make no public announcement before Oct. 1st. That may help to keep things from getting out in Göttingen.

"...If you get three major appointments through this summer you have made a good start and can well afford to deliberate before going further.

"..."

Flexner to Veblen July 21, 1932

"..."

"I have no authority to take any steps whatsoever beyond those with which you are already familiar, namely, appointments of yourself, Professor Einstein, and Professor Weyl..."

Flexner then opposes a suggestion to employ Dr. Foster though he sympathizes with his position in the depression.

He considers the suggestion of Gödel--"..Mathematical logic is mentioned now for the first time. Is it or is it not a field which we should enter? That point requires to be decided first of all..." Referring to the information Veblen has given him he suggests that perhaps it is better for Gödel to complete "his Habilitation and first regular teaching..."

Veblen to Flexner - Aug. 12, 1932

He has been preparing for publication his lectures and comments that his Hamburg assistant will do the final work after which it will be sent to Neugebauer .

"...

"One of the main things that I have learned in Germany is the value of the highly trained assistant that is the normal appendage of a professor /having a graduate student/ ...is very different from having at our disposal a Ph.D.

"..."

He presses for Foster again.

Veblen to Flexner, Sept. 21, 1932

"Weyl met me in Zürich with the remark that it was practically sure that he was going to accept. But when I saw his wife a day or two later it did not seem nearly so sure. However, I refrained from any searching inquiry.

"The doings in Zürich were very interesting. I heard a good deal that bears on the personal question and it all agrees pretty well with what I had heard before. But I don't think I had better attempt to write it out now."

Veblen got to New York on Oct. 2nd and Flexner missed an opportunity to see him but calls him to New York on Oct. 13th for a conference (Flexner to Veblen, Oct. 7, 1932).

Veblen to Flexner, Oct. 17, 1932

"This morning Eisenhart suggested on his own motion that some kind of a land trading arrangement would probably be desirable. He intends to talk about this in general terms with Duffield and some of the Trustees. He thought the Olden tract (the one near Veblen's house) would be excellent either for use or for trading purposes. The plot he had particularly in mind for the Institute is part of the golf links just below the Princeton Inn. I said I thought the part above it would be better."

Flexner to Veblen, Oct. 26, 1932.

"We have received a good many letters of the type sent you by Miss McKenney. I do not wish to burden you with answering inquiries of this kind. If they reach you, put them in an envelope and mail them to me or Mrs. Bailey. I feel very certain that persons who have not exhausted the opportunities of our graduate schools are not going to be the kind of persons you or Professor Einstein wish to select except in very unusual circumstances. The great thing is to remove from your shoulders all possible clerical and administrative work, though you may be absolutely sure that I shall do nothing involving you positively or negatively without your authorization."

Flexner to Veblen, Nov. 4, 1932 "...if we ever come to the question of setting up a School of Economics, we shall certainly look into the possibilities of theoretical and mathematical economics. I can say for your private information that I have the gravest doubt as to...the value of the National Bureau of Economic Research. From what I know of it, I certainly should not call it 'a first class institute of economics.'" (Please check this statement with his later opinions about Riefler and his connection with the National Bureau of Economic Research.)

Flexner to Veblen, Nov. 14, 1932

"In order that there may be no danger that you and I will get our wires crossed in writing Weyl, I wonder if you would mind sending me a copy of what you wrote him on the subject of the appointment offered. Don't do this if you have any hesitation whatsoever, and don't please misunderstand. I am simply anxious that you and I should talk the same language and mean the same things."

Veblen to Flexner, Nov. 16, 1932

"Here is a copy of my letter to Weyl which was obviously not intended for your eye

but I am glad to have you read it and keep it as I have another carbon. I added a few words by hand, of which I have no record, but which stated that I was more enthusiastic about the Institute now than I was last summer."

In the letter to Weyl, Nov. 11, 1932, Veblen informs Professor Weyl that Flexner is awaiting his decision and does not want to take any further steps in regard to personnel until he hears from you.

"His ideas about the mathematical group seem to have become more definite in this respect; that a sharp distinction will be made between the appointments as permanent members of the Institut~~e~~ and the others. There will be no such spectrum of associate professors, assistant professors, instructors etc., as there is in the usual American university. One will either be a full and permanent member or else on a definitely limited appointment. In an ordinary American university it is easy to use a person who does not live up to his early promises for teaching and administration, whereas in the Institute the scientific work is the only thing."

He says that apparently though financial conditions are bad generally the Institute seems sound and the psychological atmosphere is improving to the effect that ~~that~~ the idea of limiting the major appointments to three is now definitely discarded. "I feel that we can count on going ahead on something like the scale that you and I were talking about in the summer."

Veblen says that ~~ix~~ he is thinking of calling in people for one or two year appointments from American and European universities. "For example, I suggested as a possible way of approaching the problem of getting someone in modern algebra that we should invite Artin and Albert to come for a year at the same time, perhaps for next year. Flexner made no definite response of course, but didn't seem to think it an impossible idea. What do you think of it?"

Veblen was also authorized to inquire about having Gödel here for next year. This would simply be for one year on a very small salary.

Veblen has been at the Institute since the beginning of September and though he is giving his Seminar as usual he is at present correcting the proof sheets of a book by Neugebauer. There have been many applications for admission of students to the Institute. "To all of them who are not approximately at the Ph.D. stage, the answer is that they had better try to get into the Princeton or some other graduate school. The idea is quite definite at present that there are to be no degrees and that only students who are acceptable to the professors are to be admitted."

He discusses site but says that Pine Hall is very pleasant to him and he would like to stay there as long as possible. "Perhaps we can stay here permanently!"

"Flexner stays in New York and has been here only twice. I have been in New York about three times to see him. Between times everything is quiet and I find that thinking about the new plans has disturbed my scientific work very little. It is certainly no more than the equivalent of committees and department meetings that I have gotten out of."

Flexner to Veblen, Nov. 17, 1932.

"I had a mean feeling about asking you to let me see a copy of your letter to Weyl. There was of course the possibility that you might refer my request to the Association

of American University Professors as 'an infringement on academic freedom!' But I really had perfect confidence in your discretion and was absolutely devoid of curiosity...I have the feeling that we ought to talk the same language especially in dealing with so sensitive a person as Weyl. Your letter is admirable in every respect. I am by no means sure that I could have done as well if I had undertaken to write Weyl myself, and I think there is a great tactical advantage in having it come rather casually from you.

"...regarding the relations of the two groups, and I wrote Eisenhart a letter summing up the situation as it now looks to me, but my mind is quite open, and it may be that I shall see things differently in the course of time. Don't be impatient with the slowness with which I seem to move. I can decide things if I have to, but in this new venture and in dealing with subjects with which I am unfamiliar I am a slow learner."

"...and I shall spend the next few days writing a little prospectus which we can send out in response to various inquiries. I hope to have the advantage of your collaboration."

Flexner to Veblen, Nov. 25, 1932. There has been further correspondence with Weyl and Flexner himself has written to him sending a copy to Veblen.

"Your visit on Wednesday was a timely and helpful one, for that evening and walking yesterday in the park the feeling grew upon me more and more strongly that we have discussed the opening gambit sufficiently and that it is now time for us to make preparations for a genuine start next autumn, for, if we do not start next autumn, we shall lose another entire year. How then shall we start? After the Civil War there was for a decade interminable discussion about the resumption of specie payments. When John Sherman became Secretary of the Treasury and was asked what his policy would be, he said, 'The way to resume is to resume', and that he did on the first of January following.

"... "Now we have in you and Einstein two persons certain...You have, I suppose, already written Gödel, and you mentioned Whitney the other day.

"I enclose copies of correspondence which I have had with Richtmyer and Reed. From Tisdale I have as yet no response.

"Should Weyl accept, we shall treat him similarly. Pursuing this policy, the Institute will be a going concern next autumn, and you will have leisure and opportunity to do your own work and to stimulate and guide those with whom you surround yourself. It may well be that a concrete nucleus in operation will be more attractive to other mathematicians whom we may wish to secure than the nebulous Institute as it has had to be up to this time."

Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 2, 1932.

"The other letter raises a question which you spoke of yesterday, but did not exhaust, I think. At present it seems to me that your idea of giving a few fellowships approximately equivalent to the National Research Fellowships is a good one. Do you propose to put something about that in your announcement? I should think that we would want a couple of years of experience before arriving at any very definite policy."

Veblen enclosed a proposed statement in which it was firmly said that "in mathematics it is intended to admit to the Institute only such ~~xxx~~ students who are already advanced in their work enough to have received the Ph.D. degree, or whose training is equivalent to that represented by the Ph.D., in a good university." It is further stated that only

students will be ~~accepted~~ admitted as are acceptable to the professors with whom they wish to work and that the students are expected to work entirely independently with occasional conferences and advice from the professor.

It is stated "Professor Veblen intends to conduct a Seminar in collaboration with certain of his associates in the Institute, which will meet weekly for the discussion of the problems in which they are interested. The usual procedure at a meeting of the Seminar is the presentation of some piece of mathematical work by one of the members of the Seminar and its discussion by others."

Institute students "will be admitted to lectures and Seminars" when they are acceptable to the professor in charge without the payment of fees. The arrangement is reciprocal so that it is to be expected that there will be a number of the members of the University attending the corresponding exercises of the Institute.

Free use of Fine Hall by the students is provided for.

Then Veblen suggests the enclosed statement be modified to include a specific statement of what his seminars will cover.

Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 5, 1932. He mentions Flexner's informing him that Jessen has been awarded a fellowship.

He alludes to reporters from New York papers twice calling him that afternoon about Einstein and the American Counsel in Berlin. I had nothing to say and thought that comments from me would only complicate matters.

He also mentions that Prof. H. A. Simmons of Northwestern University and Whitney would be coming to Princeton and Veblen ~~says~~ is not sure Whitney will do but wants a conference with him. ~~Simmons~~

Flexner responds on the 7th to ask Whitney to come to Princeton at the Institute's expense.

Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 8, 1932. The son and daughter of Mrs. Marquand visited him on Dec. 7. Mrs. Marquand was too ill still to decide whether or not to sell the property. Veblen referred them to Mr. Maass and they are to write Flexner.

He asked them what they know about Mrs. Pyns's place. They seemed to think that none of her heirs would want to keep it up and therefore it would likely be on the market but Veblen thinks both the Marquand and the Pyns places will be too expensive, more so than any of the others the Institute has so far considered.

Flexner to Veblen, Dec. 9, 1932. "I have given a good deal of thought to our conversations of last week." He then asks for a meeting with Veblen and the other mathematicians whom I may wish to see on the following Tuesday evening, so that I can have a talk with you and them on Dec. 14, Wednesday.

Flexner does not keep the appointment.

Flexner to Veblen, Dec. 13, 1932

"Unforeseen conditions interfered with my trip to Princeton today. As I thought

things over at intervals, I became more and more reluctant to show myself on the Princeton Campus before Eisenhart had threshed the matter out with Mr. Duffield, the mathematical group, and any other bodies concerned. Perhaps I am punctilious to the point of squeamishness, but just because our relations with Princeton will be so intimate, I wish to give no one the slightest ground for criticism. I am not reluctant to act - quite the contrary. I want to act, but I would not for the world have any one associated with Princeton feel that we had been inconsiderate or unmindful of the great kindness and courtesy which Princeton has shown ~~me~~ us."

Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 13, 1932, a formal acceptance of a Professorship in Mathematics on the terms laid down in Flexner's letter of Dec. 1st.

Veblen to Flexner about the letter of formal acceptance, Dec. 13. "It had not occurred to me that you would want one because I have never given one before. However, I did not find it a heavy undertaking.

"I looked up two papers by Mr. Bardeen. Without having studied them I judge from the type of problem attacked...that he would want one year more of graduate study before attaining the Ph.D. degree..."

"Perhaps the best answer to make would be to encourage him to come to Princeton as a graduate student and candidate for the Ph.D. degree. The case seems to me very much like the case of Mr. Bleick. It might be a good plan to give a small amount of financial help, provided the student can not get this from the University...There are great advantages, however, in having a Ph.D. degree and a regular place in the academic hierarchy"

Flexner to Veblen, Dec. 14, 1932. "I have just had the enclosed letters from Weyl and Courant [they are not enclosed]. I am submitting my answers to you before forwarding them. Will you please read them carefully and make any suggestions that they seem to you to require?"

Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 16, 1932. He has had this correspondence half an hour and is responding immediately so that there will be no delay. He suggests modification of the first sentence from their announcement so as to read as follows: "Instruction will be given either by individual contact with students, by courses, by seminars, by lectures or by other methods. Each professor will be free to follow the method which he prefers and to vary it from year to year." He is very diplomatic in making the suggestion.

"The general question which Weyl has raised has a bearing on the problem as to whom to admit ~~in~~ as students in the Institute. My own inclination is to admit competent men rather freely without any commitment as to whether they will work with a particular member of the staff. This would admit them to our group. At the least, they would be members of Weyl's and my audience. At the most, they would establish personal relations with one of us. I feel that we would find better material ~~at~~ for our more intimate work if we had a reservoir of this sort. It looks now as if there would be a large enough group of men wishing to come and sufficiently competent to constitute a satisfactory reservoir."

He comments on A. W. Raab who has newly taken his Ph.D. as a determined rather than a brilliant student. He feels he could not strongly recommend him for a National Research Fellowship or for a fellowship to the Institute. (He is quoting Bliss here.) Veblen suggests that he would admit him as a student to the Institute without tuition charges

but without a fellowship also.

He suggests offering Weyl to recommend an assistant whose function would be primarily to help him over language difficulties and also an assistant whom he regards as a very promising man in Algebra.

He says "I wonder whether it is wise to admit that he is making a great sacrifice. I think he will come actually because he expects the gains to out-weigh the losses."

At the end Veblen is very diplomatic saying that these suggestions represent a search for a change to be made in Flexner's letters but that the letters are really admirable as they stand.

Flexner to Veblen, Dec. 17, 1932.

He is on his way to Washington to make arrangements with the State Department about our foreign appointees. I have adopted the change suggested in our memorandum.

As to Professor Weyl's assistant, I am inclined to let the matter ride until we have a chance to talk with him.

"I rather fear that if we admit Dr. Raab, remitting tuition, we shall find ourselves establishing a precedent to the disadvantage of Princeton. My inclination is to leave it entirely to you and to your associates as to whether you wish to admit him or not, and then let him come on a regular basis, unless he is of such outstanding ability - which does not appear to be the case - as to make him worth our while to make every possible effort to secure him.

"I shall omit from the letter to Weyl the reference to sacrifice, though I do think that in leaving Göttingen he and his family are sacrificing a good deal. On the other hand, I hope it will turn out that they will be gaining more than they lose."

Veblen to Flexner, Dec. 17, 1932 enclosing a letter from Dr. Whitney with Veblen's reply [not in the file].

"I was tempted at first to make some comment on what seems to me the anything but admirable behavior of the Harvard people. On second thought, however, I decided to make no comment of any sort."

Flexner to Veblen, Dec. 22, 1932.

"I feel great satisfaction in what we accomplished yesterday and genuine gratitude to you and to Dean Eisenhart. At the same time, nothing could exceed my desire that Professor Lefschetz should ~~shd~~ derive as much satisfaction for the arrangements arrived at as the rest of us. So I want you to make clear to him - (show him this letter if you please):

"1.) That as between him and Alexander, I have no choice. Indeed, I could not have any, for I am too deeply ignorant of the whole subject to appreciate either man.

"2.) That the consideration which I had to bear in mind was the importance of getting together a group, all the members of which would not grow old at the same time.

As the matter now stands, you and Einstein are in the early 50's, Weyl in the middle 40's, Alexander in the early 40's - so that we have protected ourselves against any such fate as befell the deacon's one horse shay, which, as you remember, fell to pieces all at once without showing any signs of decay during one hundred years.

"3.) In order that Professor Lefschetz and Professor Alexander may appreciate fully the spirit in which I have acted, we have simply created for Professor Alexander at his own wish and insistence another 'Fine' professorship with the same remuneration and dignity.

"Please make Lefschetz, as well as the other members of the Princeton staff, understand that functionally the two groups belong to one another and that we shall all pull together in the same boat, with you as coxswain.

"Tell Lefschetz, please, that if I had had time, I should have had an interview with him in person but I was bound to get home by dinner time and just succeeded in so doing."

Weblen to Fleener, Dec. 24, 1932.

"I showed your letter to Lefschetz and I think he understands the whole situation very well. Like everyone else here, he feels that the solution worked out is a very good one. He is already quite active on the problem of the new arrangement in the Department."

1930

12/1
12/19

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

MATHEMATICS

Academic Organization

Flexner memo of Interview with Dr. David Eugene Smith:

"Discussed with Professor Smith the subject of mathematics from the standpoint of the Institute for Advanced Study. In his opinion, the one mathematical genius in this country is Dickson of the University of Chicago, though Birkhall is a younger man and may prove he is able. He is going to get into communication with some of the leading men in Europe in order to find out from them whom they know in America and whose work they follow and respect and also whom they regard as promising in Europe."

H. Hadamard to Smith: (attached) - see Chronological file.

File III-17

1931-1950

GENERAL

Academic Personnel

See Flexner's note on dangers of permanent tenure and its evils. Perspective--necessary now for academic freedom.*

Note drift of I. A. S. to permanent membership beyond professorate. Abuse in E. C. P. staff--Bigelow surely (Goldstein no so?)

Analyze reasons for the drift by considering first individuals to whom applied.

* Graduate School in United States.

ECONOMICS

Academic Activities

MITCHELL, BROADUS

Biography

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

Mitchell suggests the following economists to IAS with Who's Who biographical data, to save Flexner trouble.

Bloch, Kurt

Viner, Jacob

Holman, Leo

Thorp, Willard L.

Douglas, Paul H.

Wayforth, Wm. O.

Bernhardt, Joshua

Kaplan, A. D. H.

Mercer Evans and Edgar Johnson as youthful ones.

Letter ^{from} Per Broadus Mitchell (Johns Hopkins, Pol. Economy) to A. Flexner

File III-18 Vault

1931

8/29

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

SALARIES

PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION

POLICIES

Administration

BEARD

Biographical

Beard to Flexner on decent living conditions for scholars-- if they are not written into the "constitution" they will be defeated by scholars who will devise assistantships and various ways for splitting and reducing funds on the interest of expansion.

Was this the reason why Flexner insisted upon one class of professors?

Beard says further: "Management of property requires organization: two kinds possible--faculty as corporation and board of lay trustees. Theoretically functions of management

and learning can be separated; practically not. Unless clearly defined in the constitution trustees will or may exercise powers over teaching, or will be subjected to outside pressure to do so. As inevitable as fate. Power to employ and discharge must be located somewhere. The right to hold a job irrespective of conduct is impossible. Though devised procedure with respect to removals to assure: definition of issues, open hearing, judgment by peers, and responsibility.

1-11 (Beard, Charles A.)

1931

9/25

GENERAL

Academic Procedures

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

FLEXNER, A.

FRANKFURTER

Flexner to Frankfurter, September 25, 1931.

He returns paper, Observations on Graduate Work, to Frankfurter, and differs with it. He has kept a copy of it for the file.

D File, Frankfurter, Felix

1931

9/26

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Facilities

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

Dr. Flemer reported in part:

"In course of time, the buildings may be so conceived and executed as to facilitate intercourse of this type. I have in mind the evolution that in the process of centuries has taken place at All Souls College, Oxford, where, as in the proposed Institute, there are no undergraduate students, and where ~~some~~ advanced students and the older Fellows live under ideal conditions, whether for their individual work or for collaboration and cooperation. No one planned all this. It grew up because scholars were left free to work out their own salvation. It cannot be imitated or taken over; but it is there, as evidence that the thing can be done, if the pace is not forced and if the hand of the executive and administrator touches but lightly the growing organism. There is a school of mathematics, let us say, made up of mathematicians; but the mathematicians will lunch, smoke, chat, walk, or play golf with the physicists; can any possible form of organization give the flexibility, the intimacy, the informality, the stimulus thus attainable? No 'director' or 'departmental head' or 'executive' needs to worry for fear that independent or water-tight groups, ignorant of one another, will form or not form. If the spirit of learning animates the Institute - and without that there is no reason for its existence - men will talk together and work together, because they live together, have their recreation together, meet on the same humane social level, and have a single goal."

Vol. I, No. 4, Report appended to Minutes 10/13/31, pp. 10.

1931

9/26

GENERAL

Academic Organization

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

Director Flexner reported in part:

"...

If I may endeavor to visualize the Institute tentatively, I should think of a circle, called the Institute for Advanced Study. Within this, I should, one by one, as men and funds are available - and only then - create a series of schools or groups - a school of mathematics, a school of economics, a school of history, a school of philosophy, etc. The 'schools' may change from time to time; in any event, the designations are so broad that they may readily cover one group of activities today, quite another group, as time goes on. Thus, from the outset the school of mathematics may well contain the history or philosophy of science; the school of economics, a chair of law or political theory. Each school should conduct its affairs in its own way; for neither the subjects nor the scholars will all fit into one mould. An annually changing chairman would perhaps be the only officer requisite. There should be complete academic freedom as there is in England, France, and Germany. We are, let it be remembered, dealing with seasoned and, I hope, eminent scholars, who must not be seriously or long diverted from creative work. These men know their own minds; they have their own ways; the men who have, throughout human history, meant most to themselves and to human progress have usually followed their own

inner light; no organizer, no administrator, no institution can do more than furnish conditions favorable to the restless prowling of an enlightened and informed human spirit, seeking its intellectual and spiritual prey. Standardization and organization do not aid: they are simply irksome.

...

1951

12/14

✓GENERAL

GREGG, ALAN (Rockefeller Foundation)

PURPOSE

Academic Personnel

Biography

Corporation

Gregg to Fletcher 12.14.51

"Another inadequacy in your statement which comes much nearer being, in view of the importance I attach to it, an omission than an inadequate accentuation, is the topic of the form of recruitment and selection of personnel. Such knowledge as I have of human institutions makes me think that this is more important as a topic than the subjects the Institute may adopt as fields ~~of~~ for work. It is almost as important as the persons since it is the way of finding persons, and it is one of the most certainly effective of the conditions of work in an institution. Your statement seems weak to me, not because it does not say how you are going to select and recruit men, but because it does not acknowledge adequately the importance of this phase of your future. The ways by which a man is going to be acknowledged as a valuable member of the Institute for Advanced Study would interest me more than any other phase of your present exposition. It is evident that recruitment and selection of personnel will be markedly different at the outset from the recruitment and selection at a later period. Your preference to borrowing and your opinions thereon seem to me to be well taken, and I would add that in borrowing from American universities

by means of two and three year leaves of absence, which would give individuals a highly desirable period of reflection, study and writing, might be added to what you imply about borrowing from foreign institutions.

"I am more in sympathy with your sensitiveness to the defects of existent universities than with your assumption that the remedy lies in a new form of organization. You express this feeling in part when you say 'I fear that mere organization and rules will not alone achieve our purpose'. But is it not your major assumption that the different conditions of life to be secured by a difference of organization will produce the desired result? It would seem to me that your fear lies very close to the major assumption you make in proposing a new form of organization. Perhaps that is as it should be and it is well thus to have continued a solicitude for the real raison d'etre of the Institute.

"Your presentation stresses the faults of university life in such a way as to make it reasonable to assume that the Institute for Advanced Study is organized as a protest. What if the nature of university life were to improve independently of your proposed organization? Would it still have something peculiarly useful to do and to be? I would make this point clearer, and I suspect that the best argument here lies in the possible easy freedom of the Institute to create chairs for new subjects or able individuals (cf. Collège de France), a peculiar function that will perhaps always be laborious and even inhibited in the university.

"My main concern in forecasting the future of such an institute as you propose

would be its viability. It is easy enough to father such an undertaking - by whom and how is it going to be mothered? What influences, tendencies, and needs can you safely assume as constantly nourishing the organism you propose to create?"

"..."

Flexner replies Dec. 16, 1931

"..."

"3. Libraries - do you think that I take the library problem lightly? I should say that it is giving me more thought than any other single detail.

"The library problem depends partly on location; it will be solved by equipping with books - and of course, journals, though I do not say so - for the several schools; out of these, the Institute library will ultimately grow."

"I can add for your private ear that the location of the Institute will be decided more upon the basis of library facilities than anything else.

"4. Recruitment and personnel as against subjects. They cannot really be separated. If one decides upon Sanskrit, one cannot do Sanskrit unless a first-rate Sanskrit scholar is available. If a first-rate scholar is available, that makes Sanskrit available. I do not see why 'recruitment and selection of personnel' should ever be different than it is at the start. After thirty years Simon selects people at the

Institute precisely as he selected them at the beginning. He does not keep anyone who is not first-rate. He will go to the ends of the earth to get anyone who is first-rate. He will not take a person unless the subject is important. He will not take a subject unless a first-rate person is available. For twenty years he has been thinking of the subject of plant pathology. Only within the last year has he found the right man. I do not see, as I say, how the two things can be severed.

"5. I should not call the new Institute 'an organization'. I should insist that it is a very, very different conception of purpose and that the differences of organization which I describe follow from the differences of purpose. Should the organization be changed in the direction of existing organizations, it would unquestionably hurt the purpose. This memorandum has been read by scholars and scientists all over the world. I think you would be amazed if I could tell you the names of the men who would like to be associated with it. What attracts them primarily is its purpose and of course the easy-going type of organization necessary to realize that purpose. Had I conceived it in terms of organization primarily, I do not think it would have interested any of them."

"..."

1932-35

COMMONWEALTH FUND

✓ WORKERS

GENERAL

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

PHYCE, MAURICE H. L.

SMITHES, FRANK

REED, EDWARD B.

WYLIE, SHAUN

Foundations

Academic Personnel

Academic Standards

Relations W.O.A.I.

Biographical

Excerpts from correspondence between Reed and Flexner, File IV-4

See COMMONWEALTH FUND - Foundations

1932 - 1955

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

(Definitions)

Member One who is admitted by election of the faculty to use facilities becomes a member. He may or may not receive money from Institute. If he is here under 2 years election by the school is sufficient. If he is here for more than two years he must be elected by the whole faculty. He may receive a stipend or grant from the Institute.

Faculty: Professor

A permanent member elected and appointed by Trustees for his life or until he retires at age 68. He receives a letter from Director binding the Institute to this, and is told what he must do in filling the position. For instance, he may not be absent for a term unless excused. He had no obligation to meet with Members on their request. He is required to consult with his colleagues, etc. No requirement to instruct. When a Professor retires he is no longer Faculty, but he is still Professor.

Assistant. Each Professor is entitled to an Assistant who is on salary. If the Professor does not need an assistant, or

chooses instead to convert that money to a stipend for a Member to work in his field, he may do it.

Staff Research and technical assistants, Librarian, Manager, grounds and building, secretaries, etc.

Project Operations

These are projects for and with the Government in geodynamics, meteorology, physics. Principle fellows are on salaries and are doing definite assigned jobs. Such a man may be (and one or two are) permanent Members but are not on the faculty.

Dr. Oppenheimer said that classifications above were confused and obscure, and that the definite arrangements and terminology have been largely worked out during the years since 1947.

Member as used herein has no relation to Member as used in By-Laws of Institute.

Telephone interview, R. Oppenheimer 10/12/55

1932-1955

GENERAL

Academic Personnel

(Definitions)

Faculty Early known as Staff of the Institute, distinguished as professors, assistants, associates or visiting. This listing appears in Bulletins 2 through 12. Current (First Term 1955) Directory carries terms Staff and Members, later broken down into Permanent Members and Members. The term Members first appears in Bulletin No. 3, Feb. 1934. Term Permanent Members in Bulletin first in No. 12 (Oct. 1946, p. ix) with two names. Gödel and Mitrany, and a long list of Members.

In Bulletins Members always follow Staff.

Source: Bulletins

1932-1955

✓GENERAL

ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

Terminology Bulletins #3 (Feb. 1934) to Bulletin #4 (Feb. 1935)

Staff: i.e. Professors, associates, assistants, visiting
Professors

Workers: Younger men later called short-time members

Terminology Bulletins #5 (Feb. 1936) ~~to~~ Bulletin #11 (March 1945)

Term members used instead of workers

Terminology Bulletin #12 (Oct. 1946)

As above with additional classification Permanent Members
(Kurt Gödel, David Mitrany)

Source: Bulletins

2/29, 3/20, 3/28

✓ GENERAL

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

BIRKHOFF, GEORGE D.

FLEXNER, A.

Academic Personnel

Academic Organization

Biographical

After correspondences with Birkhoff over a full year, and subject to authorization by Trustees, Flexner offered Birkhoff professorship of mathematics at \$20,000 per annum, retiring age at 65, 10 per cent to be added to Birkhoff's TIAA accumulations, retirement pension to be \$8,000 per annum with IAS making up deficiency, pension of surviving widow at \$5,000, teaching basis full time, that is, no outside activity for a financial return, select own students, appointment to begin 10/1/32. Invitation is to round out personnel by about 2 more appointments to be selected (not by Birkhoff) with same high standard.

Birkhoff talked to Richardson, the Chairman of his department, and President Lowell. He accepted the position on March 20, and changed his mind and renounced it on March 28, 1932. On March 10 Flexner committed Leidesdorf to ask Trustees for full sabbatical year at full pay.

I-12

1932

3/9

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

BENEFITS

On March 9, 1932, Flexner asked Eisenhart, Yandell Henderson, and Robert Hutchins of Princeton, Yale and University of Chicago respectively what regulations obtained in their institutions on sabbatical year.

Eisenhart said that each transaction was individual between the President and the Chairman of the Department concerned. When a member of the Faculty is on Sabbatical leave for half a year, he receives his full salary, and when for the full year half his salary. No guarantee that all who desire sabbatical leave receive it, but leaves have been granted when desired in practically all cases so far as Eisenhart knew.

Henderson of the Laboratory of Applied Physiology gave it as his understanding that full professors only at Yale are entitled to a year's leave of absence at half pay once every seven years or to half a year at full pay provided that the work should be covered. Probably no such regulations appertain to associate and assistant professors.

Hutchins said the University of Chicago does not provide for a sabbatical year. The statutes there provide for a teaching schedule arranged on the basis of one-year, two-year, or three-year program. Under this arrangement it is possible for a member of the staff to be in residence for three, six, or nine consecutive quarters. The vacation to which a member of the staff should be entitled under this plan would be three, six, and nine months respectively. With the approval of the appropriate administrative officers, it is possible for members of the staff to anticipate vacation, thereby securing relief from residence requirements in advance of the period of earned vacation. Salary payments go forward regularly through the year regardless of vacation periods.

An exception in the case of four quarter appointments which prevail in the clinical departments of the Division of Biological Sciences. In such instances a staff member is entitled to vacation in the twelfth quarter. This is in addition to usual annual vacations which amount to approximately six weeks. The statutes also provide for extra vacation credit, but the term programing has really supplanted that.

Finding the information incomplete, Flexner wrote and said

that he was thinking of higher salaries and higher retiring allowances in ~~the~~ the hope that an example of that sort might have the same effect that Harper's higher salaries had in his day drawn to the academic field a larger number of young men of first-rate ability.

Hutchins said he was enthusiastic about any plans for higher salaries and higher retiring allowances, but wasn't sure they went together. It might be wise to pay rather low retiring allowances and proportionately high salaries with the idea that if salaries are high enough men would perhaps prefer to provide their own way for their old age. A minimum retiring allowance in this view is desirable to protect the institution in case a professor on a high salary is so impoverished as to have left nothing at retirement.

See Lohmann of the Secretary's office at Yale University gave the statute dated February 24, 1923 for Yale. Every professor shall be entitled once in seven years to a year's leave of absence to count as a year of service to the University at

one-half his annual salary. Assistant professors who have entered upon a second appointment as assistant professor and who desire opportunity for consecutive study or investigation at home or abroad may be granted leave of absence for one year on recommendation of the faculty or governing board of the school in which they serve during which time they shall be paid at their full salary but must provide at their own expense a substitute satisfactory to the faculty or governing board of the school to fulfill their duties. Option to both classes for half a year at full pay, but if a professor takes that he should make proper provision for his work during his absence and shall defray any expense. In case of professors.

D, Sabbatical Leave

1932

10/10

✓ TENURE

Academic Personnel

SALARIES

BENEFITS

From Report of Director:

"In conclusion, I should like to emphasize the fact that the entire staff of the Institute will be on what is known as the 'full-time basis'. Salaries, retiring allowances, pensions, and aid in the education of children will be such that the Institute may fairly ask every member of the staff to devote his entire time to the work of the Institute and to refrain absolutely from engaging in any distracting work for mere sake of the remuneration which it may afford. This condition will be embodied in every understanding that is arrived at with any person who becomes a member of the staff."

1932

11/11

MEMBERS

Academic Personnel

✓ADMISSIONS (GENERAL)

Academic Personnel

BARDEEN

Biographical

Correspondence on essentiality of Ph. D. degrees for
admissions in relation to Bardeen.

See Chronological

1932

11/30
12/8

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

~~SEWELYXOT~~ ECONOMICS ~~KNDYKREKXTIEEXX~~

Academic Activities

HISTORY

LEGAL

FRANKFURTER, F.

Biographical

FLEXNER, A.

Vertical File, Frankfurter-1

1933

1/24
1/25

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION

"... Flexner to Veblen:

"I shall leave the matter of the nomination of younger men for the American Mathematical Society entirely to you and your associates.

"..."

Flexner to Veblen:

"In organizing the School of Mathematics for the next academic year you and Professor Alexander, who are now on the ground, can feel that you have at your disposal \$15,000 to be used for grants in aid, fellowships, assistants, or loans, as you see fit. I shall at the April meeting of the Board ask a further appropriation of \$5,000 to be placed at your disposal for what you call 'minor appointments'.

"If you will let me know, I will inform the Treasurer as to who the persons are whom you have selected and how and when remittances are to be made beginning with the next academic year.

"For the present I have the feeling that we should in the case of these temporary or short-term appointments avoid titles beyond those included in the actual resolutions of the Board. The experience of the next few years will doubtless help us in deciding details as yet undetermined."

1933

6/17

ECHOLS, ROBERT L.

Biographical

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

Veblen to Mrs. Bailey:

"...I wish to recommend Dr. Robert L. Echols, 55 Christopher Street, New York, for admission to the Institute as a student or 'worker' - I am not sure whether the terminology has been settled. Dr. Echols is a Ph.D. from the Univ. of Virginia where his father is Professor of Mathematics. The young man has been to see me twice and has written several times. He makes a very good personal impression. I discouraged him from applying for a grant-in-aid because he has no published work to show, but encouraged the idea of coming on his own if he could because he seemed to have a good deal of initiative and determination."

File IV-21

1933

July

✓GENERAL (TENURE)

Academic Personnel

SCHOOL OF HISTORICAL STUDIES

Academic Organization

INSTITUTE HISTORY

Institute History

Discusses the nature of history and why men write it. An ideal society of historians should contain ~~as~~ as many diverse types as possible. Would have to establish a rule of mutual tolerance; otherwise, it would dissolve, but there is a danger that if they were too tolerant different points of view would cancel out. This is a real danger: "It has been a factor in making for sterility in the ancient ~~intolerant~~ ~~societies~~ ~~of~~ ~~Oxford~~ ~~and~~ ~~Cambridge~~." There is a danger in making scholarly men, particularly the sensitive and timid, too comfortable and secure. "Life seems very long to a scholar in an assured position, working at a subject which absorbs his interest. He will make a virtue out of industriousness and use 'incompleteness of knowledge' as an excuse for producing nothing."

A small society must be homogeneous to be effective. If it is not, its endowment might as well be distributed to the ~~few~~

firstcomers who can show sufficient technical aptitude.

The faculties of history at the universities of Europe and America are generally supposed to cover the whole field of history. Gifts are received for special periods. "From the point of view of historical studies, there are too many universities, and too many students engaged in what is called historical research. Any new endowments ought not to be directed to increasing the number of universities or of creating something similar to a university under another name." (Probably this was the reason Flexner paid no attention to the memorandum).

There are two types of special schools: (1) *Ecolé des Chartes*--runs the risk of over stressing erudition. No competition with the open market. It spins its cobwebs or makes its honey for itself.

The other is exemplified by the (London) Institute of Historical Research which saves much time and prevents a great

deal of waste energy and presents the danger of slackness and elaboration of machinery that may kill creative work.

Another type--the institutes of politics not concerned with professional training but with the creative work of men of some experience and knowledge of affairs. Such is the Institute of Foreign Affairs in Great Britain which has great value in developing and organizing public opinion, spreading reliable information counteracting untruths, providing a meeting ground for discipline and exchange of ideas. May be of help to administrators and even "in a better organized society they might be of help to statesmen." He would not apply the endowment to this type any more than to the others above.

The endowment must fulfill a purpose--the social good. The most urgent problems before modern society (apart from problems of personal ethics) are those of government. They have been summed up in Aristotle's discussion of the different meanings given to equality, etc.

Problems of government fall into two main divisions: one, theoretical--study of forms, institutions and laws in their

historical setting to get the widest possible generalizations; two, practical problems--history of particular states, etc. Discusses at length. Thinks the endowments (Institute's) problem goes not to the question of whether historical research shall be between theoretical and practical subjects but shall concern methods: (1) trustees might draw up a program which would require thorough investigation; for instance, the influence of law upon public opinion. Necessitates a preliminary survey to show what kind of investigation is necessary. Lines of investigation would become clear with study not only as to kind of study, but countries in which it should be conducted. Would result in a detailed plan of research. The execution of the research would fall outside "the sphere controlled by the endowment," which would be used by three or four workers on one or more aspects, but would also be stimulating other institutions to take up the other aspects. The Institute's own standards of impartiality, relevance, and thoroughness should be an example to the others. Alternative would be that the endowment would act as a directing governing body over research using its resources for the assistance of advanced work upon lines already laid down

elsewhere. Example--present state of the study of international relations. With the opening of archives in the recent years, publication of detailed diplomatic studies, it has been possible to form some idea of policies of powers, great powers, in modern times. The endowment would ~~xxxx~~ undertake the ~~work~~ supervision of work on a section of the problem and not content itself with merely giving financial aid to suitable people to carry it out. Would see it through on a segment.

He recommends better policy to combine these two methods, "To formulate a working definition of the subjects with which the endowment is prepared to deal; to make this definition fairly wide, and within these limits, to look for individuals who have proved their worth by actual work." Individuals to submit their program. Program should be carried on in collaboration.

Choosing of men: two ways; for life or for a certain time. If you appoint him for life your institute takes a flavor and tranquility. But his has dangers which are obvious. You have to live with your mistakes, carry dead weights

over a long period.

Advantages of making appointments for short periods are very great, but offer great practical difficulties. Cannot speak of conditions in America, but in England you can always get good young men for appointments lasting only a few years. You can get senior men for an exchange or visiting professorship tenable for a year. Extremely difficult to get any senior to take a post which is not a life appointment. A man over 35, married or single, must consider the future. Number of academic appointments in England and Scotland limited as to seniors. Anyone who left Oxford for three or four years would find it extremely difficult to get back again. He might have to migrate to an out-of-the-way place, an uncongenial place.

Suggests a staff of four, not counting research assistants, or young men working to learn the methods of research. Of the four, two appointed for life. The other two might be held by younger men who would take a position for ~~four~~, five, six, or seven years in order to get a good piece of work done.

At All Souls where in giving an endowment for research the college does not expect to control the whole of a man's time, it can and does insist upon his doing nothing incompatible with his research obligations. At All Souls most of the research fellows give such time as is not claimed by the conditions of their research fellowships to work within the University. But it is not always the case, and a research fellow might divide his time between two institutions.

As to students he suggests a small number of post-graduates, just enough so that the staff would be able to give advanced instruction without hampering the main work of the endowment research.

Generally keep down the apparatus.

D, Llewellyn Woodward

1933

12/16

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

FRANKFURTER, F.

Biographical

FLEXNER, A.

Vertical File, Frankfurter-1

1935

EMIGREES

Academic Personnel

GENERAL

NOETHER, MISS EMY

Flexner to Veblen, February 27, 1935.

Comments on Veblen's eagerness to make some arrangements to take into the Institute Emy Noether whose year's work has ended at Bryn Mawr. Veblen is at Pine Hall, Flexner at 20 Nassau Street.

"I have a feeling that the Institute has done all that can be done or that can fairly be expected, in the field of mathematics, for German scholars - far more indeed than any other institution has done and we must be careful not to create the impression that we are overlooking Americans in order to help these unfortunate foreigners. This indeed is one of the reasons why I am so pleased that Morse is coming to us, for I have been constantly anxious lest trouble arise for Germans - and incidentally for ourselves - out of this situation."

IV-19

1936

1/27

GENERAL

Academic Activities

GENERAL

Academic Personnel

The Director:

"The Institute has no ordinary teaching duties and is therefore under no obligations to fill a vacant post. In the event that a chair becomes vacant several courses are open.

(1) It may be filled in case there is a person of sufficient eminence and the subject itself is still a living one.

(2) The amount expended can revert to the treasury to be used for any other legitimate purpose of the Institute.

(3) A new professorship in an entirely different subject can be established, provided a person of sufficient eminence and productivity is available.

...The central fact which we must never lose sight of is men, men, men.

"In principle full time prevails throughout the Institution. Any departure from it would be made only in a particular case and after the most careful scrutiny. In no instance should any exception be cited as a precedent."

Minutes 1/27/36, p. 5, Vol. 2, No. 5.

10/17

GENERAL

Academic fPersonnel

FLEXNER, ABRAHAM

Biographical

"Dear President AydeLotte:

"Thank you for sending me the memorandum drawn up by your committee on the teachers' oath legislation. I am thoroughly opposed to such legislation. Anything more ridiculous and absurd than requiring an oath of this kind of teachers it would be very hard to imagine. I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that if I were placed in a position where an oath of this sort had to be taken under duress I should take it and pay absolutely no attention to it subsequently in either my actions or my opinions.

Always sincerely,

/s/ Abraham Flexner"

Source: A File IAS (home)

1936

11/7

✓ GENERAL (TENURE)

GOLDMAN, HETTY

SWANN

CAPPS

Academic Personnel

Biographical

Flexner to Veblen.

Answering inquiry on nature of Goldman's appointment--
Swann's and Goldman's appointments both intended to be
indefinite in tenure as all staff appointments are.

IV-20

1938

4/1

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

4/9

LANGER, WILLIAM L.

Biographical

FLEXNER, A.

POLITICS

Academic Activities

Flexner to Langer (Harvard University): 4/1/38

"You have not heard from us since our delightful luncheon with Earle because Earle, as you know, went to the coast, where he spent some six weeks, and has only recently returned. Meanwhile, the financial situation has deteriorated to a point where an institute like ours, which lives entirely in its endowment and has no income from fees, has got to watch its step very closely. We shall therefore make absolutely no additions whatsoever, as far as I can now see, to our staff next year, and our future course will depend almost wholly on (1) previous commitments and (2) improvement in the general financial situation.

"This decision, I need hardly say, has nothing to do with you, for nothing would give me greater pleasure than to have you here working in association with Earle."

Langer (Harvard University) to Flexner (IAS, Princeton University): 4/9/38

"When the vacation came around I felt so tired that I thought I had better run off for a little while, and I have only just now returned. Your telegram reached us just as I left. It is needless for me to say that I deeply regret the impossibility of making any arrangement for next year, but I understand your position fully and absolutely. As a matter of fact, when Ed Earle first spoke to me about it, he made it quite clear that it might be an arrangement feasible for the following year rather than for this coming year, and it was I who raised the question in what I fear was rather urgent fashion, because of various considerations which we discussed in January. I enjoyed my talk with you and Ed very much indeed and I know it would be pleasant and profitable for me to be with you. At the same time I appreciate to the full the financial difficulties under which you must be laboring. If some arrangement could be made for some future time, I should be very happy to discuss it with you again."

1938

5/3

ECONOMICS

Academic Activities

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

FLEXNER, ABRAHAM

Biographical

Flexner to Veblen:

(Damberger)

"I also have talked over with him and President Dodds the idea of going to Europe for the purpose of getting first-hand knowledge of these various new steps in the field of economics. Both agree that it would be infinitely worth while so we have decided to sail on May 11."

File IV-20

1938

6/11

ECONOMICS

Academic Activities

✓GENERAL

Academic Personnel

FLEXNER; ABRAHAM

Biographical

Flexner to Veblen:

"I have had a busy and very interesting time in England and on the continent, and I am hopeful that, with the help which has been freely and candidly given, we may do something new and worthwhile in the field of economics. It is gratifying to find how many really first-rate men have open minds and are eager for the success of an institute which has no bias or preconception. The work of our mathematical group is thoroughly well known - indeed in circles in which I had not expected to find knowledge of it."

File IV-20

1938

6/15

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

BRITISH NATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

Educational Institutions

FLEXNER, A.

Biographical

A memorandum of June 15, 1938, of a conference with Hall, Flexner, Beveridge, Riefler on security of tenure. Beveridge made the point that it ought to be distinctly understood that security of tenure will never be imperiled by a man's making use of freedom of speech. Flexner agrees but cannot see why he ~~is~~ as Director should be on annual tenure and businessmen, lawyers and doctors should be on a precarious tenure while university professors once appointed cannot be touched. He thinks that a professor gone stale should not be allowed to block the road for an indefinite number of years. Of course he ought not under any circumstances to feel that his tenure depends upon what he says or upon incurring favor or upon productivity simply to show he is active.

In England men are appointed to fellowships for definite terms, five years, seven years, etc. Hall has become Director of

the National Institute of Economic and Social Research on a seven-year appointment, and his funds will not carry him beyond that period. He is not uneasy, however. If he succeeds he will get more funds, if he does not, he will be removed.

American tenure may be a compensation for low salaries, but in Flexner's opinion this is wrong. A man should be paid what he is worth and for as long as he is worth it.

He regards security of tenure as possibly contributing to stagnation, cites himself who never had more than a year's appointment since 30 years before he went to the Carnegie Foundation. "At this moment I find it much more difficult to get out of the Directorship of the Institute than to hold on, though I could be retired for age without any other reason being assigned.

"But a rattling of dead bones there would be if the universities of America announced it is their policy henceforth to be guided by results--not immediate results but long-time results. To be sure, it might require that presidents be made

of greater wisdom and experience than they now are. They might be forced to tramp around the universe as I have done instead of staying so largely in their own country, but this too would be all to the good."

D, Institute Organization

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

GENERAL

Relations WOAI

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

POLICIES

Administration

VEBLEN, O.

Biographical

Pages 389-90.

I Remember

1940

1/20

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

AYDELOTTE, F.

Biographical

Aydelotte to Flexner, January 20, 1940.

"You will be glad to know that afternoon tea in the common room has already become a perfectly delightful daily event. Yesterday the Thomas Manns came in, together with David Rushmore, one of our Swarthmore trustees, who knows and admires Warren. I value these occasions highly as an opportunity of meeting the Faculty and members in an informal way, and I am making arrangements for a personal talk with all the members of the Institute next week and the week after."

D File, Flexner, Abraham

1940

9/25

~~GENERAL~~
PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION

Academic Personnel

Faculty agreed radio could be purchased to be played
"properly on Saturday evenings."

Weyl asked to take charge of bus schedule.

Teas began in common room September 19, 1940. (Faculty
wives' committee).

Lunches served generally on concession by Mrs. Dilks.

Later (not Board Room) Lunch room opened to wives for
lunch parties. Later opened to friends and families to
promote Mrs. Dilk's revenue. (9/21/42)

Faculty Minutes, 9/25/40

1940

9/25

✓ GENERAL
PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION

Academic Personnel

Faculty lunch club organized. President: Aydelotte,
Secretary: Morse. 3 Faculty lunches per academic year.
Provided for \$10 dues. Later assessed all Faculty members
(some evidently didn't come in).

Faculty Minutes, 9/25/40

1942-1955

✓GENERAL (FELLOWS)

Academic Personnel

STIPENDS

APPOINTMENTS (PERMANENT)

MEMBERS

Notes

/References taken from faculty minutes on the above
headings are filed in Chronological File under 1942-1955.

Faculty Minutes

1942

9/21

PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION

Academic Personnel

✓ GENERAL

MEMBERS

List of war services by Faculty members. List members reduced to 38: and appendix also.

Faculty Minutes, 9/21/42

1943

7/21

BENEFITS

Academic Personnel

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

WEYL, HERMANN

Biographical

AYDELOTTE, F.

Weyl (in Estes Park, Colorado) to Aydelotte, July 21, 1943.

He thanks Aydelotte for confirmation of previous agreements about his retirement, and states his dates and figures are correct. (Aydelotte's letter is not in the file).

"I deeply appreciate the kind words which you add, concerning continuation of my work in Fuld Hall even after retirement. Hella and I have not yet given serious thought to what we plan to do when this time has been reached. The present state of the world is not so as to encourage any planning so far ahead. But I warn you that I may very well make use of your kind offer! You know that I consider it the greatest stroke of luck in my life to have been associated with the Institute, and you may be certain that my interest

in its activities will never cease, whether I still participate in them or not.

"The fact that retired members of the faculty will be provided with facilities to continue work in Fuld Hall should under no circumstances prevent the Trustees from appointing successors, scholars in the prime of life and research who will keep the flame burning. Of course, I think in the first place of our School of Mathematics. If at all possible, there should be no gap in time between retirement of one member and assuming of office of his successor. I do not forget the financial side nor the difficulties involved in finding the right man (vacancy of a chair for a limited period is better than to fill it with a second rate candidate). But I feel, every reasonable effort should be made to avoid a break in the chain. This seems to me a point of such importance that, out of concern for the future of the Institute, I could not help mentioning it on this occasion."

W (Weyl) File A₁₁

1944

5/29

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

KÖHLER

Biographical

EINSTEIN

Aydelotte asked Köhler for comments on a statement he was going to make about Einstein. Köhler replied May 29, 1944 saying: "It is a tradition of German scholarship not to bother about public affairs. In this respect German scholars do differ from their colleagues in the United States and in England." Then he adds: "It seems to me, however, that in this country the men in natural science are gradually developing the same abstemious attitude.

"Has the great mass of German scholars acquiesced in the vagaries of the Nazis? Some have, many have not. Much depends on the meaning of acquiesce. Then he says that great physicist in Germany does not wish to be concerned with activities which are less precise and more a matter of mere opinion than work in his own field is. This ~~saxx~~ excludes ~~lost~~ lots of things among which political activities are in his opinion only the worst. Therefore it's not acquiescence but

pessimism. What can one expect in human affairs which are intrinsically mothered; that is, unlike physics. Koehler notes that in this country too it is the most exact people who tend to become oblivious of public affairs. Such people will probably be interested as soon as values and political principles could be demonstrated. The consequence of their pessimism is, of course, that their thinking in political matters does not ~~even~~ reach even that modest level which could be attained by any intelligent person. They have no wish to learn anything in a field in which subjectivism seems under all circumstances to play such an important part...

Köhler disavowed economic motivation on the part of the professors in Germany, entirely aside from the necessity to support their families they did not want to lose their wonderful occupations which filled their lives until they were not interested in anything else.

"They were quite willing to say heil Hitler and to ignore much that was going on around them, so long as submission in this sense allowed them to continue their study of the electron or, say, of the early history of the Spanish language. Most of

my colleagues in Berlin showed this attitude rather than positive acceptance of Hitlerism or an undue preoccupation with our income. I need not emphasize that I cannot approve. Indeed, here lies the greatest dangers of particularistic expertism among the scholars.

D, Albert Einstein, 1934-1944

10/9

BENEFITS

Academic Personnel

✓ GENERAL (FELLOWS)

McILWAIN

Biographical

EINSTEIN, A.

VEBLEN, O.

AYDELOTTE, F.

Aydelotte to Moe, October 9, 1944.

He has sent his proposed report for the next Board meeting for Moe's consideration. "My reference on page number 11 to the fact that all our problems have not yet been solved refers to this. We shall need in the future to get people like McIlwain here who are past the age of sixty-five. We shall occasionally want to keep people like Einstein and Veblen who have been members of our Faculty and who have also passed that age. The solution, in my opinion, is to establish a new category of Fellows of the Institute who can be men of any age, elected for any period of time from one year on and who can have any stipend within our

means or no stipend as the case may be. They would be a little like Guggenheim Fellows. I would put Einstein in this category and Millwain and de Tolnay, fixing the term for each. I am sure we would have many others and indeed it might come to be a more distinguished group than the Faculty. If the Trustees wanted to make me a Fellow, I should be only too delighted. Do you think I ought to insert an exposition of that idea into this report?

"Does the reference to you in connection with the organization of the Guggenheim Foundation in any way impair your neutrality as a Trustee of the Institute? I hope you will not think so but if you do I will cut it out. It seems to me we are here dealing with facts and not formalities."

Neither point was ultimately carried in the report of the Director to the Trustees at the next meeting, December 5, 1944.

A File, Henry Allen Moe

1947

10/21
11/3

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS

Academic Organization

GENERAL

Publications

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

ALEXANDER

Biographical

Alexander asked for permission to change his status to member at half-salary, continuing this arrangement up to normal retirement age. Oppenheimer replied flexibility is desirable, and there was nothing in Alexander's contract that required a formal attendance at meetings or the performance of administrative duties. He stated he would be very reluctant to believe that a professor could not follow his own separate path without the burden of administrative details. Hoped that the School would back him up in doing just what Alexander wishes, if even if he desired to resign his professorship. The mathematicians expressed approval of Oppenheimer's attitude in this matter.

Oppenheimer left doors open for the future, suggesting the possibility of a leave of absence for Alexander. The

question of a new appointment of a professor of mathematics should be separate from Alexander's change of status. Any new appointee should be considerably younger than anyone then on the staff.

Von Neumann wanted an analyst appointed to the Editorship of the Annals of Mathematics instead of Lefschetz's suggestion of ~~Artin and Steenrod~~ Artin and Steenrod. Von Neumann wanted to persuade Siegel.

At the November 3 meeting, Siegel agreed to serve as Editor, and von Neumann, Morse and Siegel were to talk over the Annals of Mathematics situation with Lefschetz.

Appended to the Minutes of November 3 was a note signed by Alexander, von Neumann, Siegel, Veblen, Weyl and Einstein and Oppenheimer to the effect that the Annals informally organized with the editorial work handled chiefly by Professor Tucker in the past has bogged down. Proposal made that the organization be made parallel with that being arranged for a similar series of publications in Physics under the editorial management of Oppenheimer and Smyth.

This suggestion was approved by Artin at a meeting of the Mathematics Department of Princeton University the prior week. Morse was nominated as the Institute's representative on the Editorial Board.

Minutes, School of Mathematics, 10/21/47 and 11/3/47

1950

2/7

PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION

Academic Personnel

LIBRARY

Facilities

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

KENNAN, GEORGE

Biographical

The Director reported to the Faculty, School of Historical Studies of his thinking for the library which he intended to take up with the full Faculty, referring to the report of the Faculty committee. He proposed to expand the library in Fuld Hall, and asked the Trustees for new construction to supply necessary office space.

Director proposed it be regular policy to continue professors emeriti so long as they remain active in their studies with the right to have an assistant as before their retirement though not with the "conversion right" to choose a member instead of such an assistant. There was general agreement that this should be the policy, but that if it became too costly it should be reviewed.

The Director reported that he has told Kenman that financial support for him will be provided if he should decide to come to the Institute next year.

D, Historical Studies, Minutes of Meetings

1951

January - September

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

TAXATION

Government Relations

GRANTS-IN-AID

Academic Personnel

STIPENDS

Correspondence between the U. S. Treasury Department and
Oppenheimer regarding the taxability of grants.

Filed in Vertical File under "T" for Taxation.

D File 4

1951

10/2
11/19
1/30

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

von NEUMAN N, JOHN

Biographical

John C. McPherson, Vice-President, International Business Machines Corporation to von Neumann, October 2, 1951.

Sets forth the terms under which the corporation was ~~making~~ asking von Neumann to act as consultant for it in connection with mathematical and logical planning of computing machines, the uses of computing machines, the mathematical formulation of problems for machine solution and the mathematical and logical planning of setting up and coding problems for computing machines, and activities related to these problems. The contract does not restrict von Neumann in using his knowledge and work in the field, but he must notify I. B. M. before making his services available to other business organizations. Apparently, the corporation is free to use his findings without any patent question arising between the two. His service for the corporation will not interfere with any arrangement he may have or has with the United States Government.

His availability to the corporation would be for consultation for a maximum of 30 days a year, and his compensation, unstated, to be paid monthly; traveling expenses also to be paid. The contract is to run on year after year unless terminated.

November 19, 1951, the Colonel of the Ordnance Corps, J. A. ~~XXXXX~~
~~XXXXX~~ Barclay, does not find the contract unacceptable to the Ordnance Department, nor (November 30, 1951/ Simon to von ^Neumann) does the Department of the Army.

D File, von Neumann, John

1953

4/6

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

OPPENHEIMER, J. ROBERT

Biographical

Oppenheimer to von Neumann, April 6, 1953.

He informs vonNeumann that at meeting of the Board of Trustees, April 3, it was voted to make available to each of the members of the Faculty \$1,000 a year for professional travel. What is not required in any one year may accumulate, but may not exceed \$3,000 in accumulation.

D File, John von Neumann

✓ GENERAL
FOREIGN
SITE (Buildings & Grounds)
FOUNDERS
GEST ORIENTAL LIBRARY
PRINCETON UNIVERSITII
GENERAL
REPORTS
FLEXNER, A.
STEIN
MAASS, HERBERT
VEBLEN, OSWALD
OPPENHEIMER, ROBERT
GOTTMANN, JEAN
LEIDESDORF, SAMUEL D.
ELLIOT, T. S.
TOYNBEE, ARNOLD
LEVY, DAVID M.
BIRKHOFF, D.
EICKELSER
WEYL, HERMAN

Academic Personnel

Facilities
Corporation
Facilities
Relations W O A I
Academic Organization
Corporation
Biographical

(See FLEXNER, A., Biographical - Interview of 10/31/55)

1956

2/16

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

Academic Organization

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

SALARIES

POLICIES

Administration

See Interview Stewart, February 16, 1956 (p. 3)

The one-salary philosophy, and the one-class practice, operated against flexibility in appointing staff in the non-mathematical faculty. Note there was some discussion of 3-5 year appointments of economists 10/8/34; consensus adverse.

Stewart Interview, 2/16/56

1956

6/21

✓ GENERAL (FULL TIME)

Academic Personnel

After war Trustees laid down a rule on outside
consultancies--not more time than 1 month a year nor more
salary than 1 month.

Morse Interview, 6/21/56, p. 6

1956

6/22

✓ GENERAL (SABBATICAL YEAR)

Academic Personnel

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Relations WOA I

Not as an institution, but Oppenheimer at liberty to grant absence from I. A. S. and does for work. Dyson to Columbia University 1956-7--paid by Columbia, not I. A. S. Meritt to Athens, 1954-55 on School Classical Studies with XX I. A. S. pay.

I. A. S. makes no grant to any Princeton men on Sabbatical leave.

Interview History

1956

6/22

✓ GENERAL (LEAVE OF ABSENCE)

Academic Personnel

See History--Interview with Robert Oppenheimer, June 22, 1956.

Interview filed in History file.

Interview with Oppenheimer, 6/22/56

1956

1974 7/9

GENERAL (PURPOSE)

Corporation

POLICIES

Administration

✓ GENERAL

Academic Personnel

NEUMANN, SIGMUND

Biographical

Dinner table conversation with Sigmund Neumann.

Filed in Vertical File under Neumann interviews.

Dinner table conversation with Neumann, 7/9/56