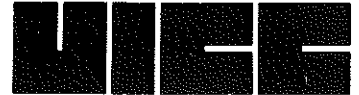


UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680  
TELEPHONE: 996-3260

21 March 1977

To: Josef L. Altholz (History), University of Minnesota  
Walter L. Arnstein (History), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Florence S. Boos (English), University of Iowa  
Joe D. Burchfield (History of Science), Northern Illinois University  
T. W. Heyck (History), Northwestern University  
*Survived* Jerry D. Meyer (Art), Northern Illinois University  
James G. Nelson (English), University of Wisconsin-Madison  
John R. Reed (English), Wayne State University  
Max Sutton (English), University of Kansas  
Nicholas Temperley (Musicology), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



From: Lawrence Poston (English), University of Illinois at Chicago Circle

I would like to thank all of you who have consented to serve on MVSA's interim steering committee. Arrangements to secure a fourth historian are still in progress. I also regret to report that Martha Vicinus is unable to serve because of an impending visiting post at the University of California, Berkeley. The following matters of business (along with any others you may think of) are now before us.

- (1) I am not sure that a meeting this spring is absolutely necessary, but in case it should prove to be so, I'd like you to fill out the enclosed form and return it to me as soon as possible. Realistically speaking, I think we'd have to convene on a Saturday. Since MVSA is budgetless, I hope that members of the committee can secure travel money from their respective institutions.
- (2) We need to draw up a constitution, and I'd like the benefit of your thoughts, if any, on (a) how to guarantee interdisciplinary representation in the offices and on any executive committee, (b) how nominating procedures should be handled, (3) how long terms of office should be and whether or not we should provide for an automatic succession from vice-presidency to presidency. Professor Altholz, who wishes to review any draft, has urged me to invite historians (as opposed to us "literary blokes") to draw up a scheme; consider this an invitation to volunteer, and if no one is forthcoming, I'll swallow bravely and take the plunge myself. Results will go first to him, then to the committee as a whole.
- (3) There's no way around it, however: we ourselves must be responsible for a nominating procedure the first time around, so that we can present candidates at the time of the November conference -- with, of course, the possibility of further nominations from the floor. I would like, with your approval, to set up a nominating committee composed partly of representatives of the steering committee and partly of others for whom there was good support in the recent balloting. I suggest this procedure simply in the interest of maximizing participation by interested members.
- (4) Should we have dues? It has been urged that we forego them altogether. These are inflationary times, and some organizations require only a host department willing to pay

To: MVSA interim steering committee / 2

the cost of stationery and postage (and, one presumes, an occasional long-distance call). Others may feel that if we have a newsletter (which might require more than "courtesy" support), or if we might sometimes want to pay a small honorarium to, or help defray the expenses of, a visiting speaker, we may need some cash reserve for these and any unanticipated expenses. Presumably, of course, we may from time to time turn a small profit through registration fees at meetings. Please consider the question and, if you feel we should have dues, suggest a maximum figure.

(5) The date, place, and focus of the spring, 1978 meeting all remain open. On the basis of the end-of-the-year poll, I recommend St. Louis as the location, and will assume your approval unless I hear to the contrary. (St. Louis ran second to Chicago, where, of course, we're having our briefer organizational meeting this November). Professor Richard W. Davis (History, Washington University) has kindly offered to locate persons who might be willing to oversee local arrangements, whether in downtown St. Louis or at one of the three major campuses there. Obviously, therefore, dates will depend in part on local convenience. We do know that by moving to a spring date we will avoid the competition with MMLA and the Midwest Conference on British Studies which haunts us this fall, but what we do not know -- since discussions this far have been confined to people in English and history -- is whether spring presents any potential conflicts with other disciplinary societies which might be significantly competitive. If you know of any such instances, please advise.

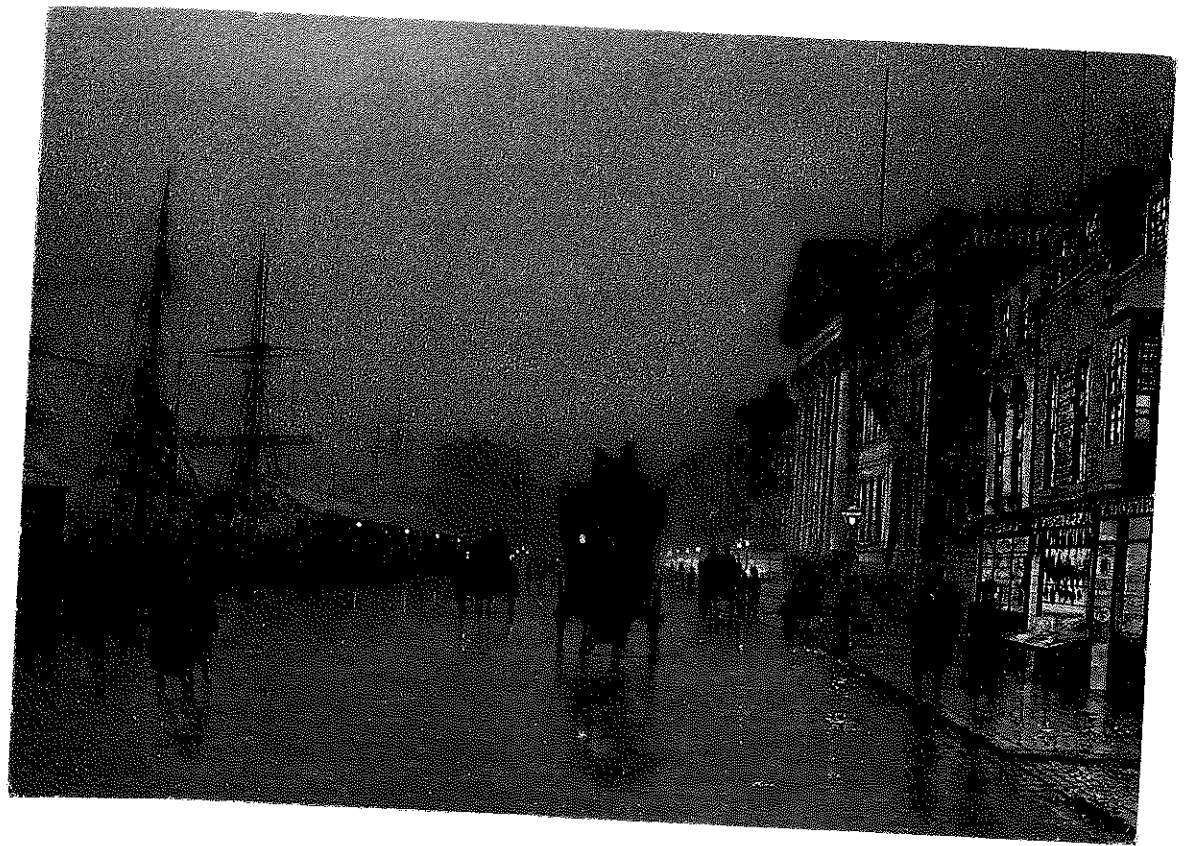
More importantly, there is the question of conference topics. On that matter, I pass on the following comments received thus far:

From Professor Reed: "I feel that there should be an organizing theme for the conference. It can be broad, but I think it should be, in some way, coherent. Random papers invite random attention and attendance."

From Professor Altholz: "I hope that you do not confine yourself to one theme; if you do, those who have no special interest in that theme will not attend. There should be as many themes as there are sessions. Perhaps the themes need not be set in advance. Instead, you might solicit for papers generally, and see if they tend to cluster around certain topics."

From Professor Temperley (regarding the list of topics sent around a couple of months ago): "I feel that you should also...[make] sure that the first conference topic is not a purely literary one. I would rule out all the ones in the first paragraph of your list, and also (even more so) the 'single literary figures' in the penultimate paragraph."

To these comments, let me add a question of my own, prompted by Professor Altholz's remark in particular. So far we have roughly 110 persons who have indicated an active interest in MVSA. Granted that the list will lengthen in the next few months, will we be large enough to float an entire conference on a single theme both broad enough to be roomy, and narrow enough to be coherent? Your reactions on the program issue, more than any other, will probably determine whether we must meet this spring.



LIVERPOOL DOCKS BY MOONLIGHT

By courtesy of Michael Danny Gallery, London

ATKINSON GRIMSHAW (1836-1893) was born in Leeds, the son of an ex-policeman. He taught himself to paint and was considerably influenced early in his career by the Pre-Raphaelites. He was interested in photography and used a camera-obscura to project outlines onto his canvases. He also mixed sand with his paint to get desired textural effects. His specialization was moonlight scenes, often painted near docks, and exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1874 to 1886.

March 10, 1977

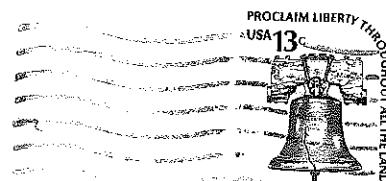
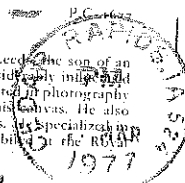
Dear Professor Poston,  
I will be very happy to serve  
on the Midwest Victorian  
Studies Interior Steering  
Committee. I anticipate  
no difficulty in attending  
both meetings.

Sincerely,



© The Medici Society Ltd., London  
Printed in England

Florence Bow



Professor Lawrence Poston,  
Department of English  
University of Illinois at  
Chicago Circle

Box 4348

Chicago, Illinois 60680

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
MADISON 53706

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
HELEN C. WHITE HALL  
600 NORTH PARK STREET

12 March 1977

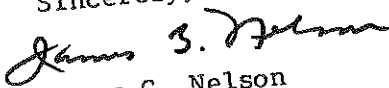
Professor Lawrence Poston  
Dept. of English  
University of Illinois at Chicago Circle  
Box 4348  
Chicago, Illinois 60680

Dear Professor Poston:

Thank you for your letter asking me to serve on the interim steering committee for the Midwest Victorian Studies Association and detailing plans for future meetings by which the Association can become a reality. Of course, I shall be very happy to serve on the interim committee and look forward to meeting and working with you and others soon.

Let me say that I am delighted with the work you have accomplished thus far in this important matter. You certainly deserve all our thanks for your endeavors.

Sincerely,

  
James G. Nelson

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

309 Gregory Hall  
Urbana, Illinois 61801  
(217) 333-4193

3/10/77

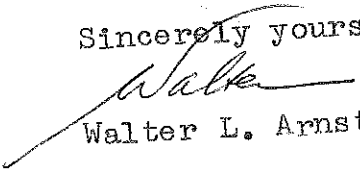
Prof. Lawrence Poston  
Department of English  
Box 4348  
Chicago, Ill. 60680

Dear Larry:

Thank you for your letter of March 4th. I shall be pleased to serve on the interim steering committee for the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. I almost made it to the related meeting in late February, and I ought to be able to attend the next meeting you call--unless it should happen to conflict with some unbreakable prior commitment.

I admire your assiduity in getting this ball rolling, and it would seem to me very appropriate indeed that you should serve as steering committee chairman--at the very least until a regular constitution is drawn up and agreed upon.

Sincerely yours,

  
Walter L. Arnstein

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE

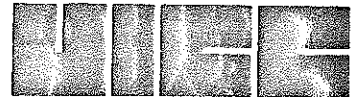
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680

TELEPHONE: 996-3260

March 4, 1977




Professor Jerry D. Meyer  
Department of Art  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Dear Professor Meyer:

I am very pleased that you are able to serve on the interim steering committee of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. Since last writing, I have discovered that probably two meetings will be required, one this spring and the other, in all probability, on the eve of our Chicago conference--after dinner the night of Thursday, November 17. I hope this will not cause a problem, and in case a member were not able to attend one or the other meeting, I would of course consult with him or her by telephone.

Yours sincerely,

rk

Northern Illinois University   
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Department of Art  
815 753 1473

February 15, 1977

Lawrence Poston  
Department of English  
University of Illinois at Chicago Circle  
Chicago, Illinois 60680

Dear Professor Poston:

I just received your letter of February 11 and will be happy to serve on the interim steering committee. I regret that there were not more art historians available to choose from; hopefully, that situation will change for the better at a later time. I will look forward to hearing from you in the spring.

Sincerely,



Jerry D. Meyer



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680  
TELEPHONE: 996-3260

March 4, 1977



Professor Nicholas Temperley  
College of Fine and Applied Arts  
School of Music  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dear Professor Temperley:

I am very pleased that you are able to serve on the interim steering committee of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. Since last writing, I have discovered that probably two meetings will be required, one this spring and the other, in all probability, on the eve of our Chicago conference--after dinner the night of Thursday, November 17. I hope this will not cause a problem, and in case a member were not able to attend one or the other meeting, I would of course consult with him or her by telephone.

Yours sincerely,

rk

# University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

---

College of Fine and Applied Arts  
**SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

18 February 1977

Urbana, Illinois 61801  
(217) 333-2620

Dear Professor Poston:

Thank you for your letter of February 11. I appreciate your full explanation of the course of events.

I shall be happy to serve on the steering committee for the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. But I must tell you that I shall be out of the country from June 10 to August 22. If the one meeting of the committee is to be held between those dates, you may feel that it would be more sensible to appoint somebody else in my place; I am willing to leave this decision in your hands.

Sincerely,

*Nicholas Temperley*  
Nicholas Temperley

Klara Court  
130, Haverstock Hill  
London N.W.3  
12 March 1977

Professor Lawrence Poston  
Department of English  
University of Illinois at Chicago Circle  
Box 4348  
Chicago, Illinois 60680

Dear Professor Poston:

I am somewhat dismayed but nonetheless pleased that I have been selected for the interim steering committee of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association in absentia. On the understanding that I must perform my duties by correspondence until next fall, I accept. I will be able to attend the fall meeting, since I do intend to attend the RSVP conference, which is fortunately scheduled late. This letter may also serve in lieu of attendance at steering committee meetings, as I can give you my advice on the points you mention.

1) I would hope that we can avoid having dues. The Midwest Conference on British Studies should be your example here. The Secretary (whose functions correspond to yours) is repeatedly re-elected from an institution (or rather department) which is willing to pay the expense of stationery and postage, which is really the only ongoing expense. If such an institution and person can be found, there is no need for dues. With the current inflation, scholars are cutting back, not increasing, the number of dues-paying organizations to which they subscribe. 2) The steering committee, guided by the results of your poll, should serve as a nominating committee for permanent officers, and may wish to ensure that there are sufficient nominees to fill out a board of directors (or whatever we call the permanent steering committee); but the latter may otherwise be left to a free vote of those who show up in November. 3) I am somewhat of a constitutional expert, and I would like to see the draft constitution if there is time to send it to me. Have it drafted by the historians rather than the literary blokes. 4) If you can arrange to fit in a steering committee meeting on the 18th or 19th of November, it would be better than asking us to come early on the 17th. Check with RSVP to get the schedule of their sessions to see if this is possible. You will need to do this anyhow to schedule the full meeting of the Midwest Association. 5) As for the program of the spring meeting: I would hope that you do not confine yourself to one theme; if you do, those who have no special interest in that theme will not attend. There should be as many themes as there are sessions (~~2xxxx~~). Perhaps the themes need not be set in advance. Instead, you might solicit for papers generally, and see if they tend to cluster around certain topics.

From April 15 to June 30, my address will be c/o Randolph Hotel, Oxford. After that, write to me at Minnesota.

Sincerely,

  
Josef L. Altholz



# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48202

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

March 15, 1977

Dear Larry,

Yes, I shall be happy to serve on the steering committee for the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. I can't say yet if I will be able to attend the meetings in Chicago, but I hope so. For example, the MMLA will be meeting in Chicago this fall as you well know. It may not be possible to prolong my stay in your fair city if the two conventions come close together. I don't know the date for MMLA. Is it the same as last year? In any case, I must attend the MMLA, because I am in charge of a forum on the Nineteenth Century. The topic for that forum, by the way, is "Literature and the Pictorial Arts." So far, I have George Landow signed up to help with that and have written to Stanley Weintraub and Marcia Allentuck. Others with whom I communicated are unable to participate (Bob Patten, Mike Steig, Karl Kroeber, Jeffrey Meyers). Do you know of anyone active in the area of literature and art who might be interested in participating? I would like to have at least three panelists, and I have about four more names to try, but after that I shall begin to become desperate.

Attending a meeting this spring might be easy enough for me so long as it does not conflict with other duties here--such as teaching and some public lecturing that I have agreed to. Three Saturdays are already taken up with these public lectures.

You should know what one of my inclinations is on one of the subjects you mentioned that the steering committee would take up. I feel that there should be an organizing theme for the conference. It can be broad, but I think it should be, in some way, coherent. Random papers invite random attention and attendance. Now, as to what the theme should be, I can't really say. The Northeast group is doing Crime this spring! Had they not taken that theme, I would have recommended it for us.

Well, I look forward to receiving more information from you. I marvel that you have the time to take on the management of a concern like this. But I'm glad that you have decided to do so.

Best,

17 March 1977

Professor Max Keith Sutton  
Department of English  
The University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas 60045

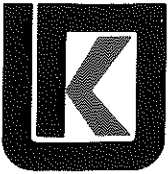
Dear Professor Sutton:

Thank you for your willingness to serve on the MVSA interim steering committee. As I read your schedule, it would conceivably affect your willingness actually to run for office in the newly-constituted organization, but would not affect your duties (such as they are) on the steering committee, since I expect that group pretty much to have concluded its business by the end of this calendar year -- once we've approved a constitution and sent out a mail ballot to elect officers.

So I'll count you in, and get back in touch when I know our agenda and probable schedule in more detail.

Cordially,

Lawrence Poston



THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS/LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66045

Department of English  
913-864-4520

14 March 1977

Professor Lawrence Poston  
University of Illinois, Chicago Circle  
Department of English  
Box 4348, Chicago, Illinois

Dear Professor Poston:

Thank you for your patient letter explaining the duties of the steering committee for the Midwest Victorians. And for all your efforts in getting the Association started.

I feel honored to be considered as a member of the interim steering committee and would happily accept, if plans to be on a half year's sabbatical <sup>from</sup> in Jan. to mid-August 1978 do not disqualify me. I would, of course, have to miss the spring conference, but I would try to attend the meeting on Nov. 17. (That may be difficult, however). At any rate, Barkis is willing, but ideally the interim member should be on the scene for the first conference of Midwestern Victorians. *England*

Please decide as you think best, and best wishes in all you are doing to get the thing off the ground.

Sincerely yours,

Max Keith Sutton

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680  
TELEPHONE: 996-3260

15 March 1977

To: Richard Davis, Bill Heyck, Richard Price  
From: Larry Poston

WICE

It is quite conceivable that we may have to go beyond our list of first choices in Victorian history to make up the steering committee. For the record and your advice, here are the names of other historians who have responded. If you have any strong recommendations as to who would be a good person to ask, would you let me know?

James J. Barnes, Wabash College  
Cynthia F. Behrman, Wittenberg University  
Robert A. Buzolich, Miami University  
James E. Cronin, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
David M. Fahey, Miami University  
Robert S. Fraser, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  
J. N. Hays, Loyola University  
Richard M. Kesner (graduate student), Stanford University  
Gerald Newman, Kent State University  
Lowell J. Satre, Youngstown State University  
Paul Scherer, Indiana University at South Bend - Heyck  
Stephanie Solar, Florissant Valley Community College  
Audrey Short, University of Cincinnati  
R. Vladimir Steffel, Ohio State University, Marion Campus  
Alice G. Vines, University of Dayton

The question is suggested by the fact that Altholz is out of the country, Aydelotte (to whom I have not thus far written) out of the region, and Larkin seldom or never answers his mail. I can, of course, call him, and may do so if I don't hear in the next week.

Heyck - rec. Price - labor history

OR Daniel LeMahieu, Lake Forest College

- intellectual history

DATE: 17 March 1977

TO: Professor Lawrence Poston

FROM: Richard W. Davis, Chairman  
Department of History

- ☐ Please comment
- ☐ Please note and return
- ☐ Please note and retain
- ☐ Please circulate
- ☐ Other:

Dear Larry,

Pardon the writing paper! Of the list you sent me, the only ones I know are Jim Barnes, who would be very good (though he is blind and might not be very mobile); and Stephanie Solar, whom we have just rejected for graduate work.

*Yours,*  
*R*

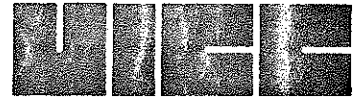


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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680  
TELEPHONE: 996-3260

February 11, 1977

Nicholas Temperley  
School of Music  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



Dear Professor Temperley:

The purpose of this letter is to ask you if you would consent to serve on the interim steering committee for the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. As you know, ballots, consisting of the names of all those who have responded favorably to the idea of such an association, went out at the beginning of January. Run-offs in the fields of English and history will be necessary, and at the time I send out a short ballot I would like to be able to announce the names of those persons in other disciplines who already have a clear mandate to serve. Accordingly, I would greatly appreciate it if you could respond by the end of February.

To recapitulate briefly, the purpose of an interim steering committee is to preside over whatever business of the organization may arise prior to the time at which we approve a constitution and consider a slate of nominees for office. At present, virtually all matters have been in the hands of a group centered in Chicago which has been charged with planning for an organizational meeting in conjunction with the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals this fall. That meeting has now been set for Friday and Saturday, November 18 and 19, 1977. It seems desirable, however, to make longer-range plans with a more broadly representative group of people; hence the recent balloting.

I do not anticipate that the business confronting the interim steering committee will be heavy. There is, however, one major agenda item, and that is the planning for a two-day conference in the spring of 1978. As you are aware, a recent poll of respondents indicates a substantial preference for a spring meeting. We do not want to wait until spring, 1979 for our first full-fledged conference; this, however, means that we must make plans for spring, 1978 in advance of the actual election of officers in November. The steering committee will be asked to consider whether that conference should be focused on a specific topic, or whether it should be open to papers on any aspect of Victorian England, the one firm criterion being an interdisciplinary approach. If the latter is the committee's choice, we can probably get by without convening as a group, but I doubt that we can settle the business of topics through the mail. The interim steering committee will also have to agree on a location for the spring, 1978 meeting.

At least three other items should be taken up by the committee. One is the question of dues, one is the question of nominating procedures, and one is the approval of a draft of a constitution which we can then submit to the members in attendance in Chicago this coming November. I will have proposals

to offer under all these heads as soon as the committee is constituted, but of course I would hope that other agenda items and other approaches to these questions would be forthcoming from the committee itself. The committee may wish to elect its own chairman. I myself will coordinate the correspondence, make arrangements for any meeting the committee may decide is necessary, and distribute any communications its individual members may have to the group as a whole.

Needless to say, I hope very much that you can serve, and I think I can promise that attendance at no more than a single meeting, possibly in the late spring or early summer, would be requested. Your advice would, of course, be sought from time to time over the phone or by mail. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Lawrence Poston

rk

next cou, it at days

This letter goes to

Nicholas Temperley  
School of Music  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
VIA SHUTTLE

Jerry D. Meyer  
Department of Art  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Martha Vicinus  
Editor, Victorian Studies  
338 Ballantine Hall  
Indiana University  
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Joe D. Burchfield  
Department of History  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

February 4, 1977

To: All Assistant, Associate and Full Professors

From: John McWilliams  
Acting Head

Last spring, the Board of Trustees voted to confer an honorary degree upon Paul Feltow. Because the Department of English sponsored the nomination, our faculty have been invited to attend the ceremony. The degree will be awarded on Thursday, February 17, at 4:00 p.m. in Room 1280 Education and Communications Building. Professor James Hosen, Chairman of our Program for Writers, will be making a brief presentation before the conferral of the degree. I urge you to be present on this most important occasion.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
HARRIS HALL

Feb. 11

Dear Larry,

Thanks for your memo on  
MVSA. My reactions:

- a) 15 strikes me as a very high  
number for a steering committee.  
Maybe 9 would be better:  
divided 3 English, 3 history,  
and 3 other.
- b) If 15 is to be the ~~new~~ number,  
divide them 5 English, 5  
history, & 5 other. If there  
aren't 5 "others", then  
3 others, totalling 13.
- c) The name of Lawrence Poston  
isn't on the list. It should  
be no. 1.

Regards,  
Bill Heyde

# VICTORIAN STUDIES

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

BALLANTINE HALL 338

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47401

22 February 1977

AREA CODE 812—337-9533

Professor Lawrence Poston  
Department of English  
University of Illinois at Chicago Circle  
Box 4348  
Chicago, Illinois 60680

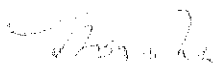
Dear Larry:

Thanks for your letter of 11 February, but I am afraid that I must decline your invitation to serve on the interim steering committee. I will be a visiting professor at the University of California-Berkeley this coming fall, and do not feel that I could serve on a midwest committee very easily. I obviously will not be able to attend the November meeting, and so would not be an appropriate person to serve on the committee. In case I am nominated in November, I think it would be better to decline as I am currently trying to free myself from a good many time-consuming commitments, including what appears to be too many committees. However, I do look forward to attending the conference in the spring of 1978.

I would like to apologize for the length of time we have taken in reaching a decision about your manuscript. We have had readings from two outside readers which conflict, with one reader arguing strongly for rejection and the other for acceptance. The essay is currently in the hands of a third reader, and I hope we will be able to reach a decision before the end of the month.

Good luck in establishing the steering committee and preparing the spring program. You might find getting in touch with the New England VS Association useful, to compare notes on which of their conferences has been most successful. I attended the conference on William Morris, and found it very interesting, though a bit uneven in the quality of the papers and discussion. I liked their theme of the family, and perhaps imperialism would be of interest too, though it is a narrower literary topic.

With best wishes,



Martha Vicinus  
Editor

MV:ehc

24 February 1977

Professor Martha Vicinus  
Editor, Victorian Studies  
Ballantine Hall 338  
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Dear Martha:

Many thanks for your letter of February 22. I wish we could have you aboard at MVSA, but your situation seems insoluble, albeit pleasantly so from your point of view! I do hope that you have a good year at Berkeley, and that we can call on you sometime in the future when you are less committed elsewhere.

Your account of the present status of my article is both reassuring and, I guess, tension-engendering, all at once. I shall be most curious to see the comments, positive and negative, whatever the end result.

Cordially,

Lawrence Poston

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680  
TELEPHONE: 996-3260

Sample

March 4, 1977

Professor Josef L. Altholz  
Clara Court  
130 Haverstock Hill  
London, N.W. 3  
England



Dear Professor Altholz:

The purpose of this letter is to ask you if you would consent to serve on the interim steering committee for the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. As you know, ballots consisting of the names of all those who responded favorably to the idea of such an association went out at the beginning of January. Obviously the voting results were rather diffuse, but you were among those commanding a broad range of support.

To recapitulate briefly, the purpose of an interim steering committee is to preside over whatever business of the organization may arise prior to the time at which we approve a constitution and consider a slate of nominees for office. At present, virtually all matters have been in the hands of a group centered in Chicago which has been charged with planning for an organizational meeting in conjunction with the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals this fall. That meeting has now been set for Friday and Saturday, November 18 and 19, 1977. It seems desirable, however, to make longer-range plans with a more broadly representative group of people; hence the recent balloting.

I do not anticipate that the business confronting the interim steering committee will be heavy. There is, however, one major agenda item, and that is the planning for a two-day conference in the spring of 1978. As you are aware, a recent poll of respondents indicates a substantial preference for a spring meeting. We do not want to wait until spring, 1979 for our first full-fledged conference; this, however, means that we must make plans for spring, 1978 in advance of the actual election of officers in November. The steering committee will be asked to consider whether that conference should be focused on a specific topic, or whether it should be open to papers on any aspect of Victorian England, the one firm criterion being an interdisciplinary approach. The interim steering committee will also have to agree on a location for the spring, 1978 meeting.

At least three other items should be taken up by the committee. One is the question of dues, one is the question of nominating procedures, and one is the approval of a draft of a constitution which we can then submit to the members in attendance in Chicago this coming November. I will have proposals

(cont'd)



to offer under all these heads as soon as the committee is constituted, but of course I would hope that other agenda items and other approaches to these questions would be forthcoming from the committee itself. The committee may wish to elect its own chairman. I myself will coordinate the correspondence, take care of any meeting arrangements, and distribute any communications individual members may have to the committee as a whole.

Needless to say, I hope very much that you can serve. It now seems likely that we will need a meeting some time this spring, so I would be grateful for a response within the next week or ten days. Tentatively, I would also ask members to reserve the night of Thursday, November 17, in Chicago, just before the opening of the fall conference. If you are interested in serving but anticipate difficulty in being present at either the first or the second meeting, I would solicit your opinions by mail or telephone on any matter of business that may be before us.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Lawrence Poston

rk

The attached letter to :

Professor Joe D. Burchfield  
Department of History  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Professor Florence S. ~~Boos~~ Boos  
Department of English  
University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Professor James G. Nelson  
Department of English  
University of Wisconsin - Madison  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Professor John R. Reed  
Department of English  
Wayne State University  
Detroit, Michigan 48202

Professor Max Sutton  
Department of English  
University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045

Professor Josef L. Altholz  
Clara Court  
130 Haverstock Hill  
London, N.W. 3  
ENGLAND

Professor Walter L. Arnstein  
Department of History  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Professor Emmet V. Larkin  
Department of History  
University of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois 60637

ENGLISH 101

In-class essay, February 15, 1977. Write on EITHER Section A or Section B.

Section A

Discuss one of the following Keats sonnets: "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (p. 303), "On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again" (p. 304), "When I Have Fears" (p. 304), "Bright Star" (p. 318). Summarize the line of thought in the sonnet, and make specific comments about HOW Keats gets certain effects: the kinds of words he chooses, his use of metaphors and images, the way in which the sonnet is organized, and anything else you feel should be discussed to explain Keats's technique as a poet.

Section B

Discuss the following questions on The Rime of the Ancient Mariner: (a) Coleridge's basic stanza form (number of lines, rhyme scheme, number of beats per line), occasions on which he varies the pattern and why he does so, and the reasons for his choice of this form; (b) the reason for Coleridge's italicized glosses, or explanations of the action, on the left-hand margin of each page; (c) Coleridge's word-choice and, more broadly, anything you think relevant for talking about his language.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

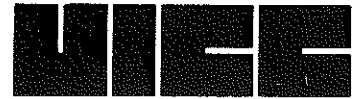
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680

TELEPHONE: 996-3260

7 February 1977

To: Professors Arnstein, Davis, Deering, Heyck, Kennedy, Krump, Price, Stedman, Stern (MVSA Program and Arrangements Committees)

From: Lawrence Poston



Arbitrarily invoking a figure of five votes as a cut-off point, the following persons, by discipline, would appear to be the leading candidates for the Steering Committee:

OK Art Jerry D. Meyer, Northern Illinois University

English OK Florence S. Boos, University of Iowa *write*  
 Dorothy Deering, Purdue University *in England 1977-78*  
 Howard W. Fulweiler, University of Missouri, Columbia *write 2*  
 G. W. Kennedy, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle *write 2*  
 Dale Kramer, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign *write 2*  
 Richard Lloyd-Jones, University of Iowa *UNLIKELY*  
 James F. Loucks, Valparaiso University *write 2*  
OK James G. Nelson, University of Wisconsin-Madison *write*  
 Harold Orel, University of Kansas  
OK John R. Reed, Wayne State University *write*  
 Jane W. Stedman, Roosevelt University *to go spring or summer*  
 Carol Simpson Stern, Northwestern University *write 2*  
OK Max Sutton, University of Kansas *write*  
 George J. Worth, University of Kansas *write 2*  
 Walter F. Wright, University of Nebraska-Lincoln *UNLIKELY*

*write* History OK Josef L. Altholz, University of Minnesota *Call Heyck for number*  
*write* OK Walter L. Arnstein, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign *address*  
*write* OK William O. Aydelotte, University of Iowa *in west this term, then*  
 Richard W. Davis, Washington University *away in fall - returns in January*  
*write* OK T. W. Heyck, Northwestern University *[will serve on arrangements committee]*  
*write* OK Emmet V. Larkin, University of Chicago  
 Richard Price, Northern Illinois University *re. in address*

History of Science OK Joe D. Burchfield, Northern Illinois University

OK Musicology Nicholas Temperley, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

NO Victorian Studies Martha Vicinus, Indiana University

Martha Vicinus, with 32 votes, was the largest vote-getter; Burchfield, Temperley, and

Meyer are obvious candidates in terms of disciplinary coverage. My chief question has to do with the allocation of representation in English and history, ranging from parity in numbers to a straight proportional basis (in which case the committee would, I think unwisely, reflect the present disciplinary imbalance on the entire list -- historians occupying a little under 20% of the total). My disposition is to keep the Steering Committee at 15 members or under; if we get much larger than that, we negate the advantages of having a relatively small interim body which can transact any business quickly. On this basis it seems to me clear that at the very least we must have a run-off of the people in English. I might add that two or three persons who have been unusually eager to help are not represented on the foregoing lists, and I would very much like to be able to call on them somehow.

I would like you to consider this question, since at present you constitute the only formal committees of the proposed organization, and get back to me with your thoughts on the subject. I'd also like to ask Carol Stern if she could reserve a spot on the agenda of the February 26 meeting at the Newberry; the Program Committee is planning a meeting at 10 a.m. on that date, and all persons to whom this memorandum is circulated are invited to attend. To sum up: if we can persuade the four persons in neither history nor English to serve, this would leave, say, ten or eleven seats (if you think 15 is about right). How should we handle the question of further allocation and voting?

Further notes: of the 101 persons on the list, 81 received one or more votes. If we discount the single votes, some of them persons voting for themselves, the number is 63. We may also wish to consider whether we should arbitrarily guarantee, for example, a "graduate student slot." Wendell Harris and James Woolf asked not to be considered.

If I don't get much of a feeling of consensus through the mail, then, I'd like to raise all these questions on February 26.

P.S. As an English teacher, I feel compelled to apologize for the dangling participle on which this memorandum opens.

9 May 1977

Professor James E. Cronin  
Department of History  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

Dear Professor Cronin:

At the request of the interim steering committee of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association, I am writing to inquire whether you would be available to have your name placed in nomination for one of the at-large memberships on the projected Executive Committee, the term to expire in 1982.

As you know, one of the reasons for the meeting in Chicago with RSVP this coming November is to formalize our own structure. According to the draft of the bylaws which will be presented for a vote at that time, the Executive Committee is to consist of a President, a Vice-President who will succeed him or her, an appointed Executive Secretary, and four members-at-large with staggered terms. To initiate the organization, however, we must present nominations for both President and Vice-President, and have four candidates for at-large memberships, two terms to expire in 1980 and two in 1982. Happily or unhappily, you seem to have drawn the longer term!

It is, of course, possible that those present and voting in Chicago this November will approve some modification in the bylaws; it is equally possible that more nominations will be made from the floor. All we are asking at the moment, therefore, is permission to place your name in nomination.

Since I hope to get out a mailing in the near future, I would appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience. If you are unable to serve, I must make inquiries of the next person on our list. Needless to say, I hope you will be able.

Yours sincerely,

Lawrence Poston

among the real artists of his time" (p. 391); [Coventry Patmore, ] "The Modern English Drama," North British Review, 29 (1858), 134-135 (hereafter cited as NBR); [Aubrey de Vere, ] "Mr. Henry Taylor's Late Plays and Minor Poems," NBR, 43 (1865), 417; and J. H. Stirling's ranking of Philip above anything by Browning in a review devoted to the latter (NBR, 49 [1868], 387). ~~Much earlier, however, another reviewer had preferred Paracelsus to Philip, though lukewarm on both~~ ~~and [?] William Maginn, [~~

INDIANA UNIVERSITY - PURDUE UNIVERSITY

AT FORT WAYNE

2101 COLISEUM BOULEVARD EAST

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA 46805

Department of English and Linguistics

25 January 1977

Professor Lawrence Poston  
University of Illinois Chicago Circle  
Department of English, Box 4348  
Chicago, Illinois 60680

Dear Professor Poston:

I do not wish to be considered for The Steering Committee for the  
proposed Midwestern Victorian Studies Association.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James D. Woolf", written over the typed name.

James D. Woolf

JDW/lw



Ties will be broken by lot, in the event  
more than one person from the same institution  
and department is a finalist, the person with the highest number of votes

## Master ballot

of the group will be chosen.

STILL MORE CANDIDATES FOR (Vote for no more than two)

David L. Butler (History)

University of Minnesota

|||||

Walter L. Ganssle (History)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

|||||

Eugene R. August (English), University of Dayton

||

William L. Arndt (History), University of Iowa

|||||

Cynthia F. Behrman (History), Wittenberg University

||

David K. Brader (English), University of Wisconsin-Madison

||||

Richard B. Brown (English), Michigan State University

||||

Robert S. Boos (English), University of Iowa

||||

Walter Brock (English), University of Nebraska-Lincoln

||||

John D. Brown (History of Science), Northern Illinois University

|||||

Robert A. Dazlich (History), Miami University

John F. Byrne (Literature and Communication), Illinois Benedictine College

John J. Casagrande (English), University of Kansas

||||

Thomas D. Cheson (English), College of Wooster

||

Joseph J. Chappell (English), Indiana University at South Bend

||

John Claburn (English), Detroit Institute of Technology

|

Joseph B. Connors (English), College of St. Thomas

||

David Court (English), Northern Illinois University

||||

David D. Cresson (English), University of Iowa

||

Richard V. Davis (History), Washington University

|||||

David Dearing (English), Purdue University

|||||

Lawrence J. Decker (English), University of Toledo

David R. Decker (English), Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

||||

David E. Decker (English), Miami University Oxford

||

Robert L. Jordan (English), Xavier University

Arnold B. Fox (English), Northern Illinois University

Robert E. Mower (History), University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire

Howard W. Colver (English), University of Missouri - Columbia ~~||||~~ ||

Bern W. Galie, Jr. (English), University of Minnesota |

Ernst A. Gannos (German), University of Minnesota ||

Joseph M. Giannasi (English), Northern Illinois University |

William J. Greco, Jr. (English), Miami University (Ohio) |||

W. A. Gumbert (Evangelical), Indiana |

Earl Gwizda (English), Iowa State University |

Charles W. Hagelman, Jr. (English), Northern Illinois University ||

William Hardisty (English), Miami University (OH) (OH) |

George G. Harper, Jr. (English), Calvin College |||

X Wendell V. Harris (English), Northern Illinois University || (name withdrawn at his req.)  
later note: ~~||||~~ ||

Nathaniel F. Hart (Humanities), University of Minnesota - Morris ||

J. S. Hays (History), Loyola University of Chicago |||

William R. Hegeman (English), University of Minnesota

E. W. Heyck (History), Northwestern University ~~||||~~ |||

Dana T. Hughes (English), Central Missouri State College ||

John Hughes (Humanities), University of Missouri - Rolla ||

Shamus Isham (English), University of Montreal ||

G. W. Kennedy (English), University of Illinois at Chicago ~~||||~~ ||

James G. Kennedy (English), Northern Illinois University ||

Richard M. Kessler (History), Stanford University

Herbert K. Kirchhoff (English and Linguistics), Indiana University/Purdue University at Calumet

\* |||

August Kurbis (Hungarian) Concordia College (Moberly)

Henry Kurbis (English) Indiana University / Purdue University at Ft. Wayne //

Low Kurbis (English) University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign ###

Jacqueline Krump (English) Northeastern Illinois University //

Y  
Samuel V. Larkin (Hunary) University of Chicago ###

Richard Lloyd Jones (English) University of Iowa ###

Angus Loomis (English) Northern Illinois University

James H. Loucks (English) Valparaiso University ###

Loren B. Luna (English) Western Illinois University

David J. W. Mott (English) <sup>Art</sup> Greentop, Missouri )

Jane Murray (English) Evanston, Illinois //

Richard Maxwell (English) Valparaiso University I

X Harry D. Meyer (Art) Northern Illinois University ### ### //

Edith Mitchell (English) University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee ///

C. H. Moyer (English) Hamline University I

James G. Nelson (English) University of Wisconsin-Madison ### ///

David Noel (English) University of Kansas ### //

Nicholas D. Patrick (English) University of Missouri-Rolla //

Leah Peterson (English) Brown University - ////

Virginia Pratt (English) Loyola University of Chicago

X Richard Price (History) Northern Illinois University ### //

Joan Reardon (English) Saint College

John R. Reed (English) Wayne State University ### ### //

John Rosenbaum (English) Cassiarus Academy College //

Ralph W. Ross (English) University of Evansville //

Gene H. Baker (History) University of North Dakota III

Barbara Quinn Schmidt (English), Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville III

Charles Schuster (History), University of Iowa III

William R. Year III (English), Southern Illinois University I

Lewis Paige Sego (English and Journalism), Indiana State University I

Robin Ann Sheets (English), University of Cincinnati III

Audrey Short (History), University of Cincinnati III

Gerald C. Sorensen (English), University of Illinois at Chicago Circle IV

Stephanie Solar (History), Pleasant Valley Community College I

X Jane W. Stedman (English), Roosevelt University IIII

K. Vladimir Steffel (History), Ohio State University - Marion Campus I

Robert D. Stein (English), Washburn University I

Carol Simpson Stern (Anthropology), Bryn Mawr University III

Max K. Sutton (English), University of Kansas IIII

William J. Sutton (English), Ohio State University - Lima Campus

Alonzo Temperley (Musicology), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign IIII

William B. Thiesing (English), Indiana University

R. M. Turner (English), Southwest Missouri State College

X Martha Victoria (Victorian Studies), Indiana University IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII

Alice G. Vinson (History), University of Dayton II

Nom Welch (English), University of Houston I

Robert W. Wellisch (English), College of St. Thomas

James D. Woolf (English), Indiana University-Bloomington University of St. Mary II

Name withdrawn by request, I

George J. Worth (English), University of Kansas IIII

Michael F. Wright (English), University of Wisconsin-Madison

William F. Wright (English), University of Delaware-Lewes

7/11

John A. Vachon (English), Ashland College

If your name does not appear on the foregoing ballot, it has either been left off inadvertently or correspondence with you has been interpreted as indicating that you do not wish to serve. Please let me know promptly if you wish to be listed on a supplementary ballot.

If your name appears among the foregoing and you do NOT wish to be considered, please inform me.

Student names are those of persons who have identified themselves as graduate students.

MSA current interim committees

For 1977 meeting with MVE: Walter Arnheim (History), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Richard W. Davis (History), Washington University; G. W. Kennedy (English), University of Illinois at Chicago Circle; Jacqueline Kroup (English), Northwestern Illinois University; Richard Price (History), Northwestern Illinois University; Jane Sackman (English), Roosevelt University; Carol Simpson (English), Princeton; Northwestern University.

Arrangements committee for 1977 meeting: Doris Deering (English), Purdue University; T. W. Meyer (History), Northwestern University; Lawrence Posner (English), University of Illinois at Chicago Circle.