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Who's News Today

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Messersmith Swung To Consular Service When He Was 31

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By DELOS W. LOVELACE.

It is logical to figure George S. Messersmith pulling up short twenty-nine years ago and saying, "See here! Am I getting anywhere?" He was 31 years old then and not doing badly. He had a degree from Delaware College; he was vice-president of Delaware's State Board of Education after working his way through five or six county school superintendencies. But he must have been dissatisfied, else why did he swing into the consular service? There he went far after a slow start and now he is mentioned for the post of Under-Secretary of State if Sumner Welles and Cordell Hull do not make up.

Messersmith was born in Pennsylvania, but Delaware is his home State and he still keeps a place in Wilmington, though he is seldom within sight of it. After that break in 1914, which was also the year of his marriage, he had a humdrum term as consul at Fort Erie, Canada, but then he began to see the world . . . the Dutch West Indies, Antwerp, Buenos Aires, Berlin. He got to be Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Uruguay and Austria, was Assistant Secretary of State six years ago and then ambassador to Cuba. He has been our envoy to Mexico for a year or so.

A career diplomat right up to his boutonnieres, Messersmith is 60 now, suave, competent, easy to get along with. He wears stiff collars, likes double-breasted suits, high fedora hats and is seldom without a cane. His mouth buttons up pretty tightly, and he does not smile often.