

---

# “I Cannot Get Along without the Books I Find Here”: The American Library in Paris during the War, Occupation, and Liberation, 1939–1945

MARY NILES MAACK

---

## ABSTRACT

The American Library in Paris remained open to readers throughout World War II, and its history during the darkest period of the occupation is a tribute to the leadership and courage of an American-born countess, Clara Longworth de Chambrun, and her small but dedicated staff. This article presents the drama as it unfolded—through the phony war, the fall of Paris, and the bleak years following the American declaration of war on Germany. The concluding section offers a brief analysis of the American Library’s unlikely survival and explores its complicated wartime history by using concepts borrowed from institutional sociology.

## INTRODUCTION

During the war scare that preceded the Munich Agreement of 1938, Dorothy Reeder, the dynamic director of the American Library in Paris, declared: “We did not close, we had no idea of closing. Each member of the staff was notified to go and was told that whatever they decided was right. They all stayed. . . . Our public took it for granted we would continue war or no war and many offered volunteer help. After all the Library was founded in the last war.”<sup>1</sup> The following September, just days after the French and British declaration of war on Germany, the American Library in Paris launched an ambitious volunteer service to send books and magazines to soldiers. Dorothy Reeder later wrote that the American Library’s mission was to “help to serve in the field of morale to the best of its ability.”<sup>2</sup> Because the library was founded as a memorial to those who died in the First World

War, she fervently believed in its special mandate to reach out to another generation who would need the comfort and solace of books.

### THE AMERICAN LIBRARY IN PARIS, 1919–39

Since the American Library's World War I heritage held great symbolic value for the young institution, it is important to briefly recount its history, which began with the Library War Service of the American Library Association (ALA). By the time of the armistice the ALA had shipped more than 1.5 million books for the use of the American Expeditionary Forces in France (Young, 1981, p. 63). This massive operation was directed by Ohio librarian Burton Stevenson, who also oversaw the dismantling of the camp libraries after the war. Many books were shipped to a warehouse, but in Paris a central reference library was created. As soon as it opened to the public, this library attracted a clientele of American residents as well as demobilized soldiers, French students, and other English speakers. Aware that there was strong interest in keeping the library in Paris, Stevenson called a public meeting in November 1919 to test the level of local financial support. Among the first donors was Charles Seeger, father of the poet Alan Seeger, who was killed in action and is best remembered for his poem "I Have a Rendezvous with Death." After Seeger donated 50,000 francs from the royalties of his son's poetry, many others came forward with large and small donations. Supporters were French and British as well as American, and they included highly placed political figures, diplomats, writers, teachers, journalists, and business people.

Impressed by the enthusiastic support in France, the ALA established the American Library in Paris as a private, nonprofit organization incorporated on May 20, 1920, under the laws of the state of Delaware. Led by Seeger and Stevenson, the Paris organizing committee decided that the library would have three goals: "(1) to memorialize the American Expeditionary Force, (2) to promote understanding and knowledge of America, and (3) to provide an example of American library methods to the librarians of Europe" (Thompson, 1964, p. 180). Eager to promote American librarianship abroad, ALA leaders also hoped that the library would become "an ALA outpost in Europe," as well as serve as "a first class public library" that provided "a free, expert information service for statesmen, publicists, journalists and general readers seeking knowledge on public affairs and conditions in America."<sup>3</sup> Throughout its turbulent history, the American Library in Paris was infused by the idealism embodied in these goals. Despite danger, hardship and woefully inadequate funding, a small cadre of staff and library board members remained deeply committed to its work. And it was this belief in the library's role in cultural diplomacy that justified the ALA's close ties with the American Library in Paris and its support for fundraising efforts in the United States.

ALA continued to pay for the operation of the library until November 2,

1920, when the collection of 25,000 books and other property were deeded to the new corporation. However, despite ALA's goal that the library represent the best in American public library service, as a private institution with no government support, it was forced to charge subscription fees. Thus, although the American Library in Paris may have resembled the local public library that its expatriate users knew back home, as a nonprofit U.S. corporation located in France, it was actually an innovative experiment in adapting an American institution to a different national context. By 1938 about one-third of the library's subscribers were French, but it was not until after the outbreak of World War II that the majority of its readers were French nationals.

During the nine months following the outbreak of the war, the library remained an American nonprofit corporation. In addition to serving local subscribers, it administered a volunteer program that provided books to enlisted personnel. Thus the initial phase of the American Library's complicated wartime history dated from the French and British declaration of war in September 1939 and ended with the fall of Paris in June 1940. The second phase began with the reopening of the library under regulations imposed by Nazi authorities and ended with the United States' declaration of war in December 1941. During the first eighteen months under German rule the library held the status of a "neutral" American institution in an occupied country, and as such it experienced relatively little interference. However, once the United States entered the war, Americans in France became enemy aliens and their property was subject to confiscation. To forestall this, Countess Clara Longworth de Chambrun, who was serving on the library board, arranged for the library to be placed under the administration of a French cultural organization. Thus the third phase of wartime service was largely due to the efforts of the countess, who was designated library director—a role she had filled since May 1941 when Dorothy Reeder reluctantly returned to the United States. Although the countess managed to keep the library open against all odds, after August 1944 the transition to peacetime brought its own dangers, partly because of the countess's close connection with the Vichy regime.

### THE KEY PLAYERS

If one is to understand how the American Library in Paris survived as a foreign institution in an occupied country, the role of several key people must be acknowledged. The president of the library board at the beginning of the war was Dr. Edmond Gros, who headed the American Hospital in Neuilly. He provided guidance and direction to the library until he was forced to leave France because of ill health. Another influential board member was Edward A. Sumner, who launched a fundraising campaign for the library in the United States in 1939 and spearheaded the formation of friends groups in major American cities. An executive of the American

Radiator Company, Sumner had lived for many years in France and was passionately dedicated to the library. During the first two phases of the war, library director Dorothy Reeder showed enormous courage and resourcefulness in maintaining and expanding the library's services. Her contact at international library conferences with Dr. Hermann Fuchs, director of the Berlin Library, also proved to be an important asset. Appointed to head the Bibliotheksschutz (the German agency responsible for overseeing libraries in occupied territories), Dr. Fuchs became a key player in this drama, and it is quite likely that the American Library could not have survived without his protection.

While the four individuals mentioned above all played key roles, it was the Countess de Chambrun who proved a constant source of strength throughout the war years. Born into a wealthy, prominent Cincinnati family, Clara Eleanor Longworth grew up surrounded by relatives who were active in civic and cultural affairs. Her father was a judge on the Ohio Supreme Court and her brother Nicolas Longworth served three decades in the House of Representatives, where he was Speaker from 1925 to 1931. By 1906 when he married Alice Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt's daughter, Nicolas Longworth had become a part of Washington's inner circle. Although Clara Longworth often returned to visit her family in Ohio, she spent much of her adult life in France following her marriage in 1901 to Count Aldebert de Chambrun. Born in Washington, D.C., where his father was a legal advisor to the French Embassy, the count was equally comfortable in the two countries—and because he was a direct descendent of Lafayette, he held both American and French citizenship. Although the Chambrun family was prominent in civic affairs in France, the count chose a military career, attaining the rank of general. Despite her social obligations as the wife of a rising army officer, the countess pursued serious scholarly research on Shakespeare. In 1921, at the age of forty-eight, she earned a doctorate from the Sorbonne, and five years later she received the Bordin Prize of the French Academy for a book on Shakespeare, which she wrote in French. This was followed in 1928 by her election as a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor.<sup>4</sup>

One of the founding members of the American Library in Paris, the countess served as a trustee from 1921 through 1924. Although she dropped off the board while she and the count were posted to Morocco, she again became active during the 1930s when the library faced a financial crisis that nearly forced it to close. The countess not only sought out donors among her extensive circle of French and American contacts, but she also persuaded her husband and son to act as guarantors. While all the trustees worked hard to make the library financially viable, the Chambruns were most instrumental in the board's successful appeal that the library be excused from paying French property taxes. Access to those in the highest echelons of government was assured for the countess in 1935 when her

son René married Marie José Laval, daughter of Pierre Laval, who was then serving as premier of France. Whether or not Laval himself intervened, the French government recognized the public utility of the American Library by granting it a subsidy of 210,000 francs over a period of four years—and this was in addition to excusing a portion of its back taxes.<sup>5</sup>

The Countess was also instrumental in procuring new quarters for the library when it abruptly lost its lease on the elegant mansion at 10, rue de l'Élysée. The board considered several buildings before settling on a spacious house situated just ten minutes walk from the Arc de Triomphe. This property was recommended by the countess, who recalled that the board had “finally succeeded in obtaining from some diplomatic friends a long lease on their charming home situated between a spacious court and a pretty garden at 9 rue de Téhéran. The building was conveniently placed between three main thoroughfares, and possessed an atmosphere of homelike tranquility thoroughly appropriate to readers and students” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 89).

While the countess played an important role behind the scenes, Dorothy Reeder oversaw the library's day-to-day operations. After working at the Library of Congress (LC) for six years, Reeder was sent to Spain with a set of LC cards in Spanish to install at the Seville Exposition. As she told friends, she loved Europe and decided to stay (Sumner, 1941, p. 372). Reeder soon obtained a position at the American Library in Paris in the circulation department. By 1930 she was promoted to head the periodicals department, where she remained through the difficult years of the Depression, when salaries were meager and working conditions difficult. After being named director in 1936, Reeder worked closely with the board on fundraising as well as supervising the move to 9 rue de Téhéran.

Held on Thanksgiving Day in 1936, the gala reception to celebrate the opening of the new building was attended by several French dignitaries as well as U.S. Ambassador Bullitt, who had become an honorary member of the library board. The patronage by the diplomatic and business community aided the board in attracting funds from wealthy French, American, and British patrons. These individuals, including General de Chambrun, acted as guarantors who would agree to cover the library's budget deficits for three years. Despite occasional setbacks, the library's finances gradually improved, and prospects began to look much brighter in November 1937 when the Carnegie Foundation granted the library \$25,000 to be used for book purchases over five years (Reeder, 1938, p. 614). Throughout the financial uncertainties of the 1930s, Reeder demonstrated unshakeable optimism—a trait that would serve her well in the years ahead.

To gain additional support for the library, Reeder sought out press coverage whenever possible, and there are several publicity photographs that present her as a slender, well-dressed woman, sometimes wearing a stylish hat, but always in a pose that showed her intent on her work.<sup>6</sup> Reeder

also used broadcasting opportunities to promote new services, and in one instance a radio interviewer described her as “the charming director of the library.” He went on to say that “Miss Reeder is young, attractive and full of pep—with, at the same time, that quality of friendly but efficient leadership that has made [the library] . . . a smoothly running machine. She has got a grand sense of humor, as well as good sense, and the fact that all the members of the staff are completely devoted to her speaks for itself.”<sup>7</sup> Dorothy Reeder’s accomplishments at the American Library in Paris also came to the attention of colleagues visiting from the United States. Following a trip to Europe in late August 1939, J. Periam Danton reported to the ALA:

I am impressed with the magnitude and the quality of the job that the Library is doing on a pitifully small income. Exclusive of special Carnegie Corporation funds . . . the total expenditure for the last fiscal year was a little over \$8,000. On that budget, the library which is open from 1:30 to 7:00, employed the equivalent of seven full time persons; kept records for and served 1,300 subscribers, approximately one third of whom are French; lent some 44,000 volumes; sent out over 1,000 volumes on out-of-town extension service to eight European countries and twenty-two university and municipal libraries in France; besides serving during the busier seasons an average of 300 daily users in the library.<sup>8</sup>

Danton also attended a board meeting and “was once more impressed by the genuine interest which all members appeared to have in the Library and the unconditional manner in which they support Miss Reeder.” Danton’s report provides a vivid snapshot of the last months when the American Library functioned normally. Just days after his visit, Hitler invaded Poland, and on September 3 France and Britain declared war on Germany.

#### FROM THE FRENCH DECLARATION OF WAR TO THE FALL OF PARIS

The events of that first week of September 1939 brought an immediate opportunity to reaffirm the mission of the American Library in Paris. Dorothy Reeder asserted: “There was never a thought that we should close. We knew our place even before war was declared, so the day the news was told to the world at large, the entire staff gathered at the building to decide the first step. It was to paste brown strips of paper on all our windows as protection against falling glass in the case of bombing. It took two full days to accomplish this.”<sup>9</sup> Although the staff had gas masks handy, they continued to go about their work in as normal a fashion as possible.

On her return to Paris, the countess found the city little changed during the day, except for “the addition of tons of sandbags heaped-up” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 87). However, she described the city at night as dangerous and depressing because of black-out precautions enforced after dark. In fact, having to knock furtively at a darkened door of a Paris restaurant in

the evening and then being quickly “whisked inside” reminded her of visiting New York speakeasies during prohibition (Chambrun, 1949, p. 88). Because of black-out regulations, the American Library ended its evening hours. However, the countess recalled that her friends were very surprised to learn that the library had remained open at all. As a board member, she wholeheartedly supported that decision, believing that the war had brought “an opportunity of showing a bold face against adverse circumstances and attempting what is humanly possible to maintain our neighbors’ courage by showing what we can do of our own” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 88).

Library use remained steady, and Reeder reported that paying subscriptions “held up well all during the war.” This was quite remarkable since so many American subscribers had fled Paris. Some took library books with them and later sent messages saying that they were caring for the books and would return them as soon as possible. Shortly after war was declared, free cards with a red, white, and blue stripe at the top were given to those enlisted in the French and British forces, and many came to the library while they were stationed in Paris. Acutely aware of the needs of readers, Reeder recalled that initially there was heavy demand for “light and amusing books,” but gradually this changed, as people asked for more historical and political works. Reeder commented: “We noticed that as Hitler attacked each country, the circulation of books we had on that country would increase. Maps, books giving the historical backgrounds, and authors who delved into the political situation were asked for.” Reference work with students was much the same as usual and journalists continued to verify facts and dates, making heavy use of the nonfiction collection and vertical files on World War I.

While managing a busy library, Reeder also launched an ambitious Soldiers’ Service staffed by volunteers eager to provide books for British troops and for French soldiers who wanted to use their spare time to study English. Reeder noted that such requests not only came from professors and students but also from waiters, hotel clerks, and small shop keepers. Files for individual soldiers were divided into three categories: English only, French only, or both French and English. Since everything was donated, when a soldier was done with his books, he passed them on to another man or gave them to the canteen. Many thank you letters came from soldiers grateful to have reading material during the long, inactive weeks of the phony war. One French officer who had previously worked in advertising appreciated being able to maintain his English language skills. Others sent back small gifts or souvenirs from the front as tokens of their gratitude.

In February 1940, just five months after the Soldiers’ Service was launched, the Paris-based *Herald Tribune* reported that 12,000 books had been distributed. All were donated by individuals, organizations, and publishers who responded to the library’s public appeals. Volunteers shipped most books by parcel post, but many volumes were carried by staff working

for the Quaker International Center, the YMCA, and the Salvation Army as well as the Royal Air Force and the French Air Force. Over half of the books went to individual French and British soldiers, but collections of 150 books and 50 magazines were also deposited in various canteens and foyers. The countess credited the success of this program to Dorothy Reeder, “who moved heaven and earth to get together an immense quantity of books” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 90).

The special Soldiers’ Service was almost entirely supported by donations in kind and by outside funds. Even the space for the huge shipping operation was donated in a building next door to the library, and heat, light, and water were provided free of charge. Equipment was furnished partly by the library and partly by the volunteers. Reeder declared: “I can truthfully say that I had the best group of volunteer workers that I have ever had the pleasure of working with, and I really believe that they enjoyed every minute of the many hours of the hard labor that they put in.” In the space of barely nine months, these volunteers had distributed 100,000 books and magazines. Throughout the phony war, the library as well as the Soldiers’ Service became an important hub of activity. Reeder wrote: “Nine rue de Teheran [*sic*] was not only a library in those days, it was a rendezvous—for all doing charitable work, for friends to meet and discuss the prevailing situation, and for others to tell you of their loved ones far from home. It was a meeting place for good will, good humor and understanding.”

Life was busy in Paris, and during the beautiful, balmy spring of 1940 the invasion of France seemed inconceivable to most residents. However, the French army was not prepared for the German Blitzkrieg, which combined tanks with close air support. Nor were they able to stop the advance once Hitler’s troops had bypassed the Maginot Line and rapidly moved through the Ardennes. Then, the unthinkable happened: the Germans entered Paris. Since French authorities quickly declared the capital an “open city,” the conquering troops faced little resistance (Pryce-Jones, 1981, p. 3).<sup>10</sup> Instead they found the streets almost deserted following the chaotic exodus of hundreds of thousands of residents. Recalling the events of June 1940, the countess wrote: “The panic which was rife in Paris is utterly indescribable” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 98).

Although Reeder and the library board clung to the hope that Paris would be spared, they had nonetheless prepared a plan for evacuation. As Reeder noted, all staff were instructed to meet at the library and to bring “one suitcase only, one blanket, one pair of heavy walking shoes (on the feet), pack only warm clothing and gas masks, medicine, food for three days.” After much reflection and discussion with the board, Reeder decided to stay in Paris “to look after the building and through whatever channels possible, keep in contact with America and the Trustees there.” However, the staff were given the choice of staying in Paris or going to what was “then thought to be free France and holding strong.” All decided to leave, and

Dr. Gros, president of the American Library Board, gave them letters and instructed them to go to Angoulême where they would offer their services to a unit of the American Hospital. Reeder gave each of them a two-month salary advance and provided the secretary with additional money to cover expenses for lodging, food, and transport. The librarian, Evangeline Turnball, and her daughter were sent ahead by private car, since they were Canadian and therefore British subjects who could be interned as enemy aliens. The remaining staff piled into cars supplied by the American Radiator Company, a firm directed by board member Edward Sumner.<sup>11</sup>

When she arrived at the library on the morning of June 10 the countess found that Reeder “was left quite alone” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 101). The two women discussed plans for the future and agreed that Reeder should remain and “wave the flag of neutrality.” After vowing that “come what might” she would be back in Paris by September, the countess observed that the young librarian “appeared to be getting what she termed ‘quite a kick’ out of the position in which she was left as the sole guardian of the premises . . . certain that the American Embassy would back up her decisions” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 101). Reeder expressed no regret about her decision to stay, but she vividly described the sense of abandonment experienced by those who remained. She portrayed Paris on June 11–13, 1940, as “a dead city”:

Everything was closed, locked and deserted. Even the fall of a pin could be heard. A few last cars were making their way out of town with families looking for refuge. The stations were packed with those who had sat up all night waiting for a train, which never left. Seven thousand women, children, soldiers and aged I saw waiting in the rain in front of closed gates of the Gare Montparnesse, the afternoon of June 13.

### IN AN OCCUPIED CITY: JUNE 1940 TO DECEMBER 1941

After the countess left, Dorothy Reeder went to the American Embassy where she offered her services. On June 14, when the embassy took over the Hotel Bristol “to house all Americans as an emergency step,” Reeder was placed in charge of checking passports to verify that only Americans were living on the premises. Residents at that time included heiress Anne Morgan as well as representatives from the Rockefeller Foundation, U.S. ambulance units, and the American Red Cross. For nearly six months Reeder lived at the Hotel Bristol and continued to act as the delegated representative of the American Embassy. However, she noted that these responsibilities in no way interfered with her work at the library.

Throughout the remainder of June 1940 Reeder and the concierge were at the library every day, although it was not open to the public. Nevertheless, when any subscribers rang the bell Reeder welcomed them and allowed them to check out books. She also took books to the Hotel Bristol, where there were many elderly residents who could not walk to the library.

Throughout the occupation private cars were banned, forcing Parisians to walk or use bicycles —especially on weekends when the buses and metros were closed to civilians. By July people had begun to return to Paris, and Reeder declared that she would never forget how glad she was when four of her staff came back to work. Soon they were busy preparing packets of books for prisoners in internment camps in France. Despite invitations from the Germans to visit these camps, Reeder was cautious and preferred to rely on volunteers and staff from organizations such as the American Red Cross to deliver books. Although French prisoners in Germany sent cards asking for books, the Nazi authorities did not allow the library to fill these requests. The Soldiers' Service was forced to close, and the remaining book donations were sent to prisons, hospitals, and British internment camps in France.<sup>12</sup>

In September the library officially reopened in the afternoons. When the countess returned to Paris, she found Reeder reassured that the Germans were “doing their level best to curry favor with all neutral nations, while at the same time impressing them with Germany’s strength” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 145). The countess also believed that

Hitler’s avowed object during the initial phase of the occupation was to make Paris look pleasant to neutrals who came there. The citizen went his way undisturbed. . . . The German regulations fixed the percentage of meat, bread, sugar, flour and coal allowed to each inhabitant, but the consumer remained as before, in touch with his Parisian butcher, baker, grocer, etc. . . . This system of “collaboration” was a happy invention, and certainly obviated many a skirmish and much bloodshed. (Chambrun, 1949, p. 143)

The countess disapproved of early protests by university students that brought harsh reprisals, and instead advocated The Hague tribunal rules for an occupied country, which she interpreted to mean that “any provocation against the foe is, in fact, leveled at fellow citizens” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 144). A staunch supporter of Laval, she believed that his strategies were “a masterpiece of constructive resistance he had put up against German claims and extortions” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 264). Because of her loyalty to Laval, the countess was later accused of pro-German sympathies—a completely unfounded claim. In fact, the first volume of her autobiography, published in 1936, revealed deep-rooted anti-German sentiments, and in her 1949 memoir she declared that for her the sight of huge Nazi banners hung on official buildings was like “receiving a blow between the eyes and a stab which reached the heart” (Chambrun, 1936; Chambrun, 1949, p. 142).

German officials were another visible symbol of Nazi authority over French and foreign institutions. When a German officer arrived at the library wearing a Prussian uniform, Dorothy Reeder did not recognize him as Dr. Hermann Fuchs, director of the Berlin Library. However, her anxiety changed to relief when he greeted her warmly and recalled their previous meeting at an

international conference.<sup>13</sup> The countess remarked that Reeder and Fuchs “held each other in high esteem, so everything went smoothly from that moment” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 144). Fuchs not only praised the American Library but declared “that nothing in Europe compared to it, and promised that it should remain open during the German occupation and continue to function normally.” However, he added: “You will necessarily be bound by certain rules imposed on the *Bibliothèque Nationale* where certain persons may not enter and certain books may not circulate” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 144). When Reeder asked whether the library was required to destroy such books, Dr. Fuchs responded indignantly: “No my dear young lady. What a question between professional librarians! People like us do not destroy books! I said they must not circulate” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 144).

Fuchs then asked Reeder about the members of the board. According to the countess’s version of the story, he apparently assumed that the countess had retained American citizenship, and he was not disturbed to learn that her husband was a French general. She observed:

On learning that I had been appointed president . . . the information that I was a Shakespearean scholar of respectable standing and had earned my Sorbonne degree after . . . sustaining my thesis, removed any doubts from his mind regarding my right to the position. So, during the ten months that the Library remained under American control I was never called upon to meet Hitler’s representative. Negotiations for the maintenance of our institution devolved upon the American directress, aided and advised by the United States Embassy, the French element being prudently kept in the background. (Chambrun, 1949, p. 144)

Although Dr. Fuchs remained a trusted ally, Reeder did have occasional visits from other Nazi officials who asked numerous questions about the library, its board, and its finances. She writes that most of these inspectors were librarians or teachers, but they always came in uniform and had their offices at the Hotel Majestic, the General German Headquarters. According to historian Pryce-Jones, the offices for civilian affairs at the Majestic were staffed by professionals who were often recruited from the ministries in Berlin and “were almost all selected for their technical competence.” Although conservative and nationalist in outlook, since “their ethics as well as their skills had been in pre-Hitler Germany,” these officials did not use their military authority as “a pretext for party methods” (1981, p. 31). However, Reeder recounted an incident that left the German library inspectors nonplussed. One day they arrived with their first list of banned books, all of which were in French. She reported that when they learned “our books were all in English they did not know what to do. We had about ten of the books and, in the end, were allowed to keep them as long as they remained in my private office and not on the open shelf.” According to later accounts, the banned books were later crated and stored in the basement. Eventually American authors such as Steinbeck, Hemingway,

Sinclair Lewis, and CBS Berlin correspondent William Shirer were added to the list (Grattan, 1993, p. 228).

While German censorship was a fairly minor problem for the library, Reeder was greatly troubled by another issue. She complained: "No Jews are allowed in the library by Nazi police regulations. Some of them are our best subscribers, and I don't see how we can permit them now to take out their books." The countess responded: "I possess a pair of feet, so do Boris and Peter. I am ready and willing to carry books to those subscribers who are cut off from them by any such ruling, and feel sure that every member of the staff will be happy to do the same" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 145). There is no indication as to how many books the countess and staff delivered to Jewish subscribers or whether this service continued through 1944. Had they known about it, the occupation authorities would not have approved of this quietly subversive service, although visiting Jewish homes was not explicitly forbidden. At beginning of the war 150,000 Jews lived in Paris. However, those who did not leave the city became subject to increasingly repressive treatment. Ten weeks after Paris fell all Jews were required to register with the police. Three months later Jewish businesses had to post a yellow sign, and by the end of 1940 wholesale confiscation of Jewish property began. The first deportation of foreign Jews occurred in May 1941. One year later French Jews were forced to wear the yellow star and by July 1942 they were also being deported (Cole, 1999, p. 221–222).

Aside from the "underground" service for Jewish subscribers, the library continued to function as usual, supported by steady income from subscription fees. Although the number of users remained much the same as before, French readers made up a majority of subscribers since so many American and British residents had left the city. The American Embassy ordered wives and families of its personnel out of Paris, but for those who stayed in the unoccupied zone, the library supplied books that were sent on embassy trucks. While the library offered an outward appearance of tranquility, anxiety and uncertainty were part of life under the Nazis. One of the most compelling stories recounted by Reeder concerned her secretary's sister, who was accused of being a spy for the British Intelligence Service and was sentenced to death. In her final report Reeder stated: "Through a great friend of the Library, the sentence was commuted to life in prison in Germany. This is confidential and should not be discussed as it may cause more trouble." After the war, the countess elaborated on this incident, remembering the bright November day when she heard the awful news and walked as quickly as possible to the Hotel Matignon, where she appealed to Pierre Laval to intercede in the case. She recalled that the prime minister knew immediately that some grave affair must have brought her. On hearing the countess's story, Laval summoned a representative of the German ambassador whom he convinced to have the sentence commuted. After the German defeat, the woman was released and returned to Paris (Chambrun, 1949, p. 147).

There were no further threats to the library staff or their families during the next year, but living conditions under the occupation were extremely difficult. In February 1941, Reeder insisted that her remaining American staff return home because she believed it was “the just and wise thing to do.” She declared: “It is not easy to live . . . when you have no news of the outside world—not even from your own family; . . . and when most of your friends are gone and some of those left in jail.” Reeder herself stayed another three months, but in April 1941, as the prospect of United States entry into the war became more imminent, the board urged her to leave. Although reluctant to go, in her last letter from Europe Reeder wrote: “Food gets harder & harder in Paris. The lines waiting make your heart sad. No soap—no tea—no nothing. . . . The iron clamp is working—granted in a most polite way—but hard—oh very very hard.”<sup>14</sup> Despite Reeder’s unswerving belief in the mission of the library and her gratitude for the support of the Chambrun family, she was no longer optimistic about its survival. The countess recalled their last meeting: “When our popular directrice Miss Reeder departed, after a whirl of cocktail parties and as much cheer as bunches of souvenirs could give, she left on a desk, which was to become mine, a card solemnly delegating me to fill her place, together with the verbal encouragement: ‘Of course you will never be able to keep open.’” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 167).

The countess was nearly sixty-eight when she took over the directorship of the American Library. Not daunted by the task ahead, she considered her age an advantage. She later wrote:

Accordingly, here I was, obliged to add to my duties of President *pro tem* the more arduous task of directing the Library, a position for which no previous training fitted me. What I did possess . . . was long human experience, a sense of justice . . . and a sense of humor capable of carrying me over very rough ground. Above all, the so-called *weight of years* which popular opinion views as a detriment, I found an asset which served me in the place of technical knowledge. My small staff—in which absent Americans were replaced by graduates from the *Ecole des Chartes*—seemed to take for granted that any one so old must necessarily be wiser than they and accepted my dictates cheerfully. (Chambrun, 1949, p. 167)

Recruited from the oldest library and archival training program in France, this new staff showed a great deal of zeal, as well as “remarkable technical knowledge” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 167). In addition to their public service work, they helped to catalog 600 books that had been received in the final shipment from the United States. By 1942 the total library staff reported to the Germans was only five.<sup>15</sup>

Finding skilled staff proved easier than resolving what status the library would hold if the United States declared war on Germany. Even before the departure of Reeder, the board began to discuss this dilemma. The countess

recalled: "To close down would mean seizure. To keep open we would have been obliged to be financed by other than American resources" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 133). At first the board considered giving the collection to the Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), then headed by Bernard Faÿ, who had used the American Library for his own research and for his course on American civilization. The board proposed to transfer the collections to the BN only if Reeder should leave or in case of American entry into war; all books were to be returned to the American Library at the end of the war. Although quite willing to take the collection on these terms, Faÿ felt it necessary to consult the German library authorities. According to Reeder, they insisted that the transfer take place "within twenty-four hours and include all our material and resources. Naturally, my answer was no."

The countess had also been uneasy about transferring the books to the BN because she was afraid that the Germans might eventually decide to confiscate all the holdings of the national library. Another strategy was needed—one which would "camouflage the library by a fictitious incorporation" as a French organization, since German authorities maintained a policy of noninterference with "any French institution recognized of public utility and financially sound" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 149). Similar tactics were used by other American-based organizations, such as the American Hospital at Neuilly, which was temporarily taken over by the French Red Cross. The countess credited her son, Count René de Chambrun, with the solution she presented to the library board. The young count, who practiced international law, had in 1934 created the French Information Center (Office Français de Renseignements) whose purpose, ironically enough, had been to combat German propaganda in the United States as well as to provide French firms with information on American commerce. Although based in New York, this organization still had cash at its disposal in France; furthermore, its board was headed by General de Chambrun, who was already a strong supporter of his wife's efforts on behalf of the library. The countess believed that placing the library under the auspices of the French Information Center was the only possible method that would allow it "to continue functioning when our reserve funds were exhausted" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 149). The confidential reports from Reeder to the ALA indicate that she had reservations about this plan. However, when she left, she instructed her secretary to follow the wishes of Countess de Chambrun, "who has been such a devoted friend to us over a period of many years."

#### FROM THE U.S. DECLARATION OF WAR THROUGH THE LIBERATION

While the Countess of Chambrun was dealing with the library's precarious position in Paris, Edward Sumner continued his fundraising campaign in the United States. However, by summer 1941, several months before

the U.S. declaration of war completely cut off American aid to France, the Rockefeller Foundation notified Sumner that no further payments would be made to the library. At about the same time the ALA also withheld \$7,500 from the Carnegie grant it administered for the library. ALA executive secretary Carl Milam later explained that he had withheld the Carnegie funds because it was feared that the library "might become a tool of the German Occupation Forces or of the collaboration" (quoted in Kraske, 1985, p. 128). Furious that the funds were withheld at this crucial time, Sumner and the other board members in the United States cabled the countess delegating her to make whatever decisions she thought best for the library. Despite the Paris trustee's reluctance to authorize her plan, a report to the Germans indicated that the transfer had occurred in July 1941.<sup>16</sup> The board of the French Information Center voted a total of 600,000 francs over the next three years when the library operated without help from America. The countess later commented: "This scheme, which looked uncertain, worked perfectly" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 149).

Once this new administrative structure was put into place, two signs were made for the library: one with the words "Office Français de Renseignements," and another that read "The American Library in Paris directed by C. Longworth de Chambrun, Doctor of the University of Paris" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 150). While the countess seldom used academic titles, she believed that her scholarly credentials would help establish her legitimacy with the German authorities. However, she met none of the German library inspectors until June 1942, when Dr. Hermann Fuchs called at the library dressed in his full military regalia. Although she described him as "an officer with the stiffest back and the most piercing spectacles I ever remember to have encountered," she was less put off by his appearance than he was by finding her in place of Dorothy Reeder (Chambrun, 1949, p. 169). Although disappointed that Reeder had left despite his guarantees as to her safety, he repeated his assurances that the library should remain open. He then cautioned the countess that there could be no sales of books or furniture and no change in salaries.<sup>17</sup> And before leaving he gave her his telephone numbers in Paris and Berlin and told her to call him if the German military interfered with the library in any way (Chambrun, 1949, pp. 169-70).

Despite his supportive manner, when Dr. Fuchs summoned the countess to report to his office in June 1943 she was extremely anxious. When she arrived he questioned her about two charges: that the library was kept open by fraudulent arrangements made through a German official now no longer in favor, and that it had circulated American magazines with anti-Hitler propaganda. Rather impulsively the countess responded: "I assure you, Dr. Fuchs, I am neither knave nor fool enough to betray the institution that I have promised to safeguard" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 187). She then answered both charges. In regard to the first accusation, she reminded Dr. Fuchs that the library's statute had been arranged with him and the U.S.

Embassy and was fully approved by Otto Abetz, the German ambassador to France. In regard to the second charge she pointed out that none of the periodicals circulated, and therefore the ones in question must have been taken from the library by German readers who did not check them out. Fuchs believed the countess and told her never to let any Germans read the magazines unless they brought a card from him. Observing that Dr. Fuchs was very relieved at the end of the interview, the countess suspected that his own fate was somehow tied to that of the American Library. He told her in French that it would have been most disagreeable to him if he had to make an “unsatisfactory” report. “Then he added, in slow precise English, ‘I will not conceal that I am also *very happy for myself*’” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 187).

The countess believed that, having failed to implicate her in any crime, the Gestapo then concocted a plot against Boris Netchaëff, the senior librarian at the American Library. A white Russian émigré married to a Russian princess, Netchaëff had worked at the American Library for over fifteen years and was one of the most trusted staff members. He was accosted at home, shot in the lung, and taken into custody by the Nazis. Soon after hearing the terrible news, the countess went directly to Dr. Fuchs remembering that he had “declared himself responsible for the employees of all libraries in the occupied territory, over whom he claimed sole jurisdiction” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 188). Persuaded by the countess’s vigorous defense of Netchaëff, Fuchs intervened to have him released and sent to the American Hospital at Neuilly. When Netchaëff recovered he returned to the library where he worked for many more years. Although no other staff members were arrested by the Germans, the countess considered one of her most important tasks “to save the masculine portion of my staff from the dreaded deportation for labor in Germany” where some two million French men were already working (Chambrun, 1949, p. 168). The countess recalled having to write letters declaring that the work of these employees was essential to the library. Her intervention always succeeded—even in the case of another Russian employee who was accused of being communist.

Readers continued to flock to the library during the last months of the occupation, even as the power of the Gestapo grew more repressive and ominous. Although the library was only open afternoons, 30,000 books circulated from January to June 1944. This was a total of about 8,000 more than were circulated in a six-month period in 1938, the last normal year before the war.<sup>18</sup> The countess wrote: “The public, hungry for reading and deprived by Nazi decree from access to English books (except here) came to the library in numbers never before seen” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 168). However, in this tense environment there were sometimes disagreements among subscribers or between the readers and staff. Although her sense of humor enabled her to get through most of these encounters, the countess described one particularly trying instance when a woman threatened

Netchaeff with denunciation after he had insisted that she must wait her turn in line. The countess recalled: "I confess that at this I lost my temper, took the lady by the arm and firmly led her to the door with the remark: 'Take back your subscription and never darken our doors again.' At this she began to weep and proffered what I consider to be the greatest tribute ever given us in war-time. 'I cannot get along without the books I find here'" (Chambrun, 1949, pp. 168–69). The countess then relented and told the woman that she could come back and take out her book if she apologized to Netchaeff.

Although the countess assumed full administrative responsibility for the institution, she did not presume to take over the other professional duties of the librarian. She wrote: "instead of exhibiting my technical incompetence in the cataloging department or at the distributing desk, I remained in my office, made regular rounds of the building, and kept myself in readiness to give help in case it was requested" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 170). She often helped university students studying for their English examinations, but while at the library she also found time to work on an ambitious book on Shakespeare's life—a project that continued to consume her after the Liberation.

In her memoir the countess offers a vivid account of her experience in August 1944 when ragtag, poorly controlled resistance brigades from the French Forces of the Interior (FFI) mounted barricades in the streets as the last German troops retreated from the city. She also describes how she and General de Chambrun were brutally arrested on September 9 by an irregular militia of the FFI. She and her husband were then turned over to the neighborhood police station and imprisoned in a small cell. After being questioned and detained for several hours, they were released with apologies once it was established that during the occupation the general was in charge of the American Hospital in Neuilly and the countess was director of the American Library in Paris, which "had brought encouragement, comfort and moral support to many Parisians who care for English literature" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 237).

The countess offers no information on how the American Library fared during the chaos of the August fighting; nor does she say when she returned to her duties. One of the few post-Liberation reports on the library was sent to the ALA on September 29, 1944, by a former vice-president of the Paris library board, Major George C. Sharp, who was assigned to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces. Sharp was impressed to find that the library was fully staffed and had numerous French users, despite the tattered state of its collection and the total lack of books published during the years when no shipments had been received from America (Kraske, 1985, pp. 131–32).

One of the warmest tributes to the library's wartime effort was by Robert T. Pell, assistant political officer of the American Mission in Paris, who

wrote to Edward A. Sumner on October 3, 1944, describing his visit to the American Library. Pell recalled:

I talked to a distinguished visitor who was wearing the rosette of the Legion d'Honneur and turned out to be a Professor at the University of Paris. He said that without the library he would not have been able to continue his courses during the occupation: English books were available nowhere else. Another customer, a younger man, assured me that the library had been a cultural oasis in a time of intellectual dearth and added that it would be remembered for a long time to come in University circles that it had braved the Germans and never closed.<sup>19</sup>

Despite these positive reports, a cloud still hung over the Countess de Chambrun. Although she and her husband had been completely exonerated of any wrongdoing, in the atmosphere of fear and distrust during the last months of 1944 rumors were rife and accusations against them continued—in part because René de Chambrun was the son-in-law of Pierre Laval, who had been charged with treason and was later executed. Shortly after the Liberation there were some accusations from Americans that the countess had used the library for pro-German activities, but no evidence was ever produced and the rumor was discounted.<sup>20</sup>

Even though Pell and Sharp, who were seasoned observers of the French situation, both believed that the countess had performed a commendable service to the library, there was concern among the trustees and ALA leaders that her close association with Laval might put the library in jeopardy. ALA executive secretary Carl Milam and Milton Lord, chairman of the ALA Committee on Library Cooperation in Europe and Africa, agreed that the survival of the library might still be at risk, caught in the midst of purges and backlash against the former regime. In addition to “the very real fear that the provisional French government might close the institution or confiscate its books,” there was also concern “that the U.S. Army might take over the library—either to serve its own needs or to pre-empt confiscation on the part of the French” (Kraske, 1985, p. 133). Given these fears, the trustees were eager to establish good relations with the American military and did not wish to risk the prospect of guilt by association with Vichy. Although Edward A. Sumner, president of the American Library Trustees in New York, had been a strong supporter of the countess, on November 9, 1944, he sent a lengthy report to the annual meeting of members in Paris to caution them against retaining her services. In this document Sumner also quoted from a report dated October 12 by Robert T. Pell that he had received through the Department of State. After paying tribute to the countess, Pell emphasized the urgency of having her step down. He wrote:

The Countess de Chambrun (Clara Longworth) continues to direct the library activities and credit is due her for keeping the library going during the critical period. However, her connections have given rise to some hesitation on the part of the American military authorities to

deal with her or the library and as a consequence it is not playing the role it should be playing in Army morale work under the Division of Special Services headed by Colonel Solbert. . . . He and others are of the opinion that the situation would be materially relieved if the Countess could be retired to an honorary post in the immediate future and an American who has no associations with the occupation period be appointed director.<sup>21</sup>

A few days after Pell's report arrived in New York, Sumner learned that the U.S. Army Special Services was considering requisitioning the library and having it transferred to their headquarters at the Cité Universitaire on the outskirts of Paris. On behalf of the board Sumner offered the army use of the collection at 9 rue de Téhéran and suggested that the American Library could also set up a reading room for soldiers at the Cité Universitaire. He then hurried to get government approval for Milton Lord, head of the Boston Public Library, to go to Paris as interim director. Because of his European experience and his fluency in French, Lord appealed to the trustees. In addition, he had already demonstrated his broad vision by drafting a preliminary postwar plan for the ALA that called for an expanded role for the American Library in Paris. When he finally arrived in Paris in January 1945, Lord was both pleased and saddened by the state of the library. He expressed considerable pride in the library's work and the international clientele it attracted, but he was well aware of the need for new books and improved working conditions for the staff, who valiantly carried out their duties despite lack of heat during one of the coldest winters on record in Europe. However, because he had only a three-month leave from Boston, Lord left Paris at the end of April. He was followed as director by Frederick Stewart, who had formerly been with the American Council of Learned Societies.

By 1945 the Countess de Chambrun was no longer listed among the trustees of the American Library in Paris. Over seventy years of age, she returned to her research on Shakespeare<sup>22</sup> and began writing *Shadows Lengthen*, the memoir recounting her experiences from 1935 to 1949. Here she described the Liberation as the most difficult and bitter time of her life. She believed that those who endured the occupation would agree "that Paris was materially better off during the winters of 1941–42–43 than she was under the DeGaulle regime, with illegal arrests operated not by Germans but by French" (Chambrun, 1949, p. 143). While the countess's anti-Gaullist stance undoubtedly colored her remarks, many other writers do confirm her assessment of the privation and suffering experienced by Parisians during the first four years following the Liberation.

I have found no mention of Countess de Chambrun in the materials published by or about the American Library in Paris during the late 1940s. However, this changed when Dr. Ian Forbes Fraser became director. A former Columbia University professor who knew the situation well, having

served as Commandant of the U. S. Army University Center in France, he warmly acknowledged the countess in articles and in publicity materials for the library. In 1952, for example, he wrote: “thanks to the courage and determination of the Countess de Chambrun, the collection was intact at the liberation of Paris in August 1944. Many of the hosts of French readers who began to use the library during the occupation are still on its membership roll” (Fraser, 1952, p. 44).

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

What inspired the Countess de Chambrun, Dorothy Reeder, and other staff to endure hardship and danger to keep the American Library in Paris open during the occupation? Why did a few devoted supporters like Sumner continue fundraising efforts when future prospects looked bleak? And why did Dr. Hermann Fuchs risk protecting this particular institution from confiscation? Each individual had his or her personal reasons, but the motives of all were inevitably intertwined with a belief that the American Library in Paris represented far more than a collection of books and a place to read. The original ALA goal that the library should play a normative role by transmitting the best aspects of contemporary American librarianship had impressed Dr. Fuchs, who considered it a model of modern librarianship in Europe. A strong sense of professionalism and collegiality influenced his policy of not allowing German military interference with the library or its staff—even after the United States entered the war. In contrast, the countess never wrote of the library as promoting new professional standards but instead conceived of its role as transmitting a “spiritual heritage: art, literature, religion, music accumulated by the ages for the needs of mankind.” She continued: “I firmly believe that the fact that universities, libraries, theaters and concert halls were kept open in France during occupation, bombardments, and blackouts notwithstanding, was an immense asset for the population” (Chambrun, 1949, p. 171).

Other key players were committed to the library as an instrument of cultural diplomacy. Just months before the start of the war, Edward Sumner declared: “I believe firmly that the American Library in Paris is the ablest organization for distribution of books throughout Europe for the development of cultural relations and for spreading a knowledge of American History and ideals.”<sup>23</sup> A few months later he reaffirmed his commitment: “I am not interested in the library as a small local circulating library but I am greatly interested in its possibilities . . . and believe it is desirable to keep the Library functioning . . . for eventual service to promote the cause of democracy.”<sup>24</sup> Dorothy Reeder agreed and saw her work as having both social and symbolic value. In May 1940, just weeks before the fall of France, Reeder reflected: “More and more I realize my responsibility to guard our Library. It stands as a symbol of freedom and understanding, of service to all, a fine piece of democracy.”<sup>25</sup> After the war French ambassador Hugh

Bonnet expressed a similar idea when he referred to the American Library during the occupation “as an open window on the free world” (quoted in Madden, 1946, p. 1659).

While the history of the American Library in Paris is a tribute to the courage and perseverance of individuals, it is also a story of institutional adaptation and survival. In his book *Institutions and Organizations*, W. Richard Scott writes: “Organizations are affected, even penetrated by their environments, but they are also capable of responding to these influence attempts creatively and strategically. By acting in concert with other organizations facing similar pressures, organizations can sometimes counter, curb, circumvent, or redefine these demands” (1995, p. 134). The survival of the American Library in Paris provides a dramatic case study of the way that one institution creatively overcame the odds against it by gaining the support of other organizations (such as the American Embassy, the French government, the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations, and the French Office for Information). Equally important during the period from June 1940 to August 1944 was the protection of the Bibliotheksschutz—the German agency responsible for libraries in occupied territories. Collective action may be essential to organizations, but Scott observes that this “does not preclude individual attempts to reinterpret, challenge, or defy authoritative claims made on them. Organizations are creatures of their institutional environment, but most modern organizations are constituted as active players, not passive pawns” (1995, p. 132). During World War II the American Library became an active player, and one that proved capable of reinterpreting, manipulating, and challenging—in a subversive way—constraints put upon it during the Nazi occupation.

## NOTES

1. Dorothy Reeder, quoted in “Annual Report of the American Library in Paris, November 10, 1938,” Archives of the American Library in Paris, Record Series B1: Trustees.
2. Dorothy Reeder, “The American Library in Paris, September 1939–June 1941,” Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3. This fifteen-page report contains a moving firsthand account of the library during the phony war and occupation. Although undated, Reeder begins: “As I write this resume [*sic*] of activities of our library in Paris, it is hard for me to believe that I am not there.” The report is labeled “CONFIDENTIAL” and on the last page Reeder states that the date of her arrival in America was July 19, 1941. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from Dorothy Reeder are from this source.
3. Alice S. Tyler and C. H. Milam, “To the Board of Directors of the American Library in Paris, Inc., November 2, 1920.” Letter reprinted in *The American Library in Paris Yearbook 1921* (Paris: The American Library in Paris, 1921), 44–45. Archives of the American Library in Paris, Record Series F1: Publications.
4. “Mme. De Chambrun Dies in Paris at 80,” *New York Times*, June 2, 1954.
5. Edward A. Sumner to Ambassador Bullitt, May 6, 1939, Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3. Sumner noted: “The French Government gave the American Library 60,000 francs in 1935; 100,000 francs in 1936; and 25,000 each in 1937 and 1938. In spite of these facts, the United States Government has never made a grant to the American Library in Paris.”
6. American Library in Paris, Photograph Collection, Box 23, File 6, War Years: Dorothy Reeder.

7. "First Library Broadcast—Life in Paris, February 21, 1941," Paris-Mondial [radio station], Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3.
8. J. Periam Danton, "The Danton Report," August 31, 1939, Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3.
9. Dorothy Reeder, quoted in "Annual Report of the American Library in Paris, November 10, 1938," Archives of the American Library in Paris, Record Series B1: Trustees.
10. According to international convention, an "open city" would not be defended but would be transferred to the occupying power with due process (see Pryce-Jones, 1981, p. 3).
11. Reeder notes that Turnball and her daughter arrived safely in England.
12. Dorothy Reeder, "The American Library in Paris, September 1939–June 1941."
13. Reeder never mentions Dr. Fuchs in her confidential report; she may have feared that his support for the library could have endangered him if known. Therefore we have only the countess's version of the story, which she must have heard from Reeder.
14. Dorothy Reeder to Edward A. Sumner, May 30, 1940, Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3.
15. H. de Fonroque-Mercié, memorandum to Der Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich, Abt. Wi, I V 370 Ind/St, August 25, 1942, Archives of the American Library in Paris, Record Series B1: Trustees.
16. *Ibid.*
17. The countess observed these rules but managed to provide extra money to her underpaid staff through holiday bonuses.
18. C. L. de Chambrun, "Report on the American Library in Paris, January–June 1944," Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 2.
19. Quoted in Edward A. Sumner, "Report for the Board of Trustees to the Annual Meeting of Members," November 9, 1944, Archives of the American Library in Paris, Record Series E1: Annual Meeting of membership 1944–1974.
20. Included with Sumner's "Report for the Board of Trustees" is a very negative letter from Francis Henry Taylor, curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, who was in France on a government mission to investigate Nazi-confiscated art. Although he accused the Chambruns of betraying France, he offers no evidence against them, aside from their relationship to Laval; he also states: "I realize that any opinion on my part is gratuitous."
21. Quoted in Sumner, "Report for the Board of Trustees." Also quoted in Grattan (1993, p. 230).
22. The countess published *Shakespeare retrouvé: sa vie, son oeuvre* in France in 1947. She then translated it into English and revised it before her death in 1954; three years later it was issued by London publisher Hollis and Carter and appeared under the title *Shakespeare: A Portrait Restored*.
23. Edward A. Sumner to Dr. Stevens, May 6, 1939, Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3.
24. Edward A. Sumner to Frederick Keppel, October 5, 1940, Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3.
25. Dorothy Reeder, quote dated May 18, 1940, reproduced by Edward A. Sumner in a circular letter: "To Our Sponsors and Those Whose Interest We Have Solicited," June 11, 1940, Archives of the American Library Association, Record Series 2/4/70 Box 3.

## ARCHIVAL SOURCES

American Library in Paris, Photograph Collection, Box 23, File 6, War Years: Dorothy Reeder. Archives of the American Library Association, University of Illinois, Urbana. Record Group: Executive Board and Executive Director, Sub-group: Executive Director, American Library in Paris Correspondence, 1922–1945. Record Series Number: 2/4/70, Box 3 and Box 4.

Archives of the American Library in Paris. Documents cited are drawn from the following series:

B1: Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes 1926, 1930–1959, Box 2; E1: Annual Meeting of Membership 1944–1974, Box 9; F1: Publications: ALP Yearbooks and Annual Reports (1921–1974), Box 10.

## REFERENCES

- Chambrun, C. L. de. (1936). *Shadows like myself*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons.
- Chambrun, C. L. de. (1949). *Shadows lengthen: The story of my life*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons.
- Cole, R. (1999). *A traveller's history of Paris*. Gloucestershire, UK: Windrush Press.
- Fraser, I. F. (1952). The American Library in Paris. *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 27, 307–308.
- Grattan, M. C. (1993). The American Library in Paris. *DLB Yearbook*, 226–233.
- Kraske, G. (1985). *Missionaries of the book: The American library profession and the origins of United States cultural diplomacy*. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press.
- Madden, E. C. (1946). Our Paris Library needs help. *Library Journal*, 71, 659–662.
- Pryce-Jones, D. (1981). *Paris in the Third Reich: A history of the German occupation, 1940–1944*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Reeder, D. M. (1938). The American Library in Paris 1918–1938. *American Library Association Bulletin*, 32, 612–15.
- Scott, W. R. (1995). *Institutions and organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Sumner, E. A. (1941). “Business as usual”: The American Library in Paris carries on. *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 15(1), 372–374.
- Thompson, S. O. (1964) The American Library in Paris: An international development in the American Library movement. *Library Quarterly*, 34, 179–190.
- Young, A. P. (1981). *Books for Sammies: The American Library Association and World War I*. Pittsburgh, PA: Beta Phi Mu.

---

Mary Niles Maack holds an M.L.S. from Columbia University. After working at New York Public Library she returned to Columbia where she earned her doctorate in 1978. Since then she has conducted research on the history of libraries and librarianship in Africa, Europe, and the United States. She has published one book and several articles based on her research in Africa. Her publications on gender issues in librarianship include a book as well as numerous articles and book chapters. In 1982–83 she was awarded a Fulbright lectureship at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Bibliothèques in France. She serves on the editorial board of *Libraries and the Cultural Record* and for five years she was a member of the editorial board of *Library Quarterly*. Dr. Maack won the Justin Winsor Award of the ALA Library History Round Table and she and Joanne Passet received the Jesse Shera Award of the Library Research Round Table for their study on mentoring. Dr. Maack has been doing research at the American Library in Paris since 2001 and is now working on a monograph dealing with American books in France. She has served as chair of the ALA Library History Roundtable in 1991–92 and in 2006–07.