In his November, 1941 report to the members of the AALL, President Sidney B. Hill emphasized the need for all Americans to serve in the national defense. In his final Presidential Report, given at the 1942 Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, he reflected that during his year in office all Americans had experienced two distinct periods of their lives—"through the struggling and uncertain period before Pearl Harbor, and in that period since, in which every individual's life has suddenly become eventful." For law librarianship and many law librarians in particular, World War II was a most dynamic time. This exhibit highlights the effects of the war on AALL and individual law library operations caused by wartime mobilization, the financial constraints of a wartime economy, and the calling of many prominent law librarians into the ranks of the military.

A review of AALL's historical record verifies President Hill's remark that uncertainty existed among many of the Association's members during the months before Pearl Harbor. In 1939, the Law Society of Upper Canada had invited the AALL to hold its 1940 Annual Meeting in Toronto. Because Canada had been at war since September 10, 1939, there was concern among AALL members that Americans might experience travel restrictions in Canada. George A. Johnston, President of the Law Society of Upper Canada, informed Helen Newman in December 1939 that Canada's involvement in the war "makes no difference whatever to American visitors." He added that American tourists might benefit from Canada's wartime economy because the rate of exchange would favor the U.S. dollar.

Item 1: George A Johnson to Helen Newman, December 13, 1939 (Record Series 85/1/202)
Just weeks before the 1940 Toronto meeting, William Roalfe, Law Librarian at Duke University, expressed his concern to Helen Newman about unconfirmed information he had received indicating that American tourists would be required to have passports to enter Canada. Roalfe hoped that Newman, Law Librarian at George Washington University, would be able to use her Washington contacts to confirm or deny his information. On June 13, 1940, Newman responded to Roalfe: "I have talked to two people at the State Department this morning and I am assured that we will not need passports to get into Canada."

Item 2: William Roalfe to Helen Newman, June 11, 1940 (Record Series 85/1/202)

At almost the same time, the Toronto Convention and Tourist Association Inc., had learned of a "volume of unconfirmed comment prevalent in the United States." In this June 14, 1940 letter, T. H. R-McNally, manager of the Toronto Convention and Tourist Association informed AALL that "there are no war-time restrictions upon either entry into the Dominion of Canada or life after you arrive here."

Item 3: Helen Newman Papers, 1940 (Record Series 85/1/202)

Eighty-five American and sixteen Canadian law librarians, spouses, and book sellers attended the Toronto meeting. The majority of them are shown in this banquet photo. The turnout for the 1940 meeting was good considering that only seventy-four Americans and two Canadians had been registered at the 1939 Annual Meeting held in San Francisco. Perhaps the quick responses of Helen Newman and the Canadian tourist association helped allay the uncertainty about travel restrictions.

Item 4: AALL Conference Photographs (Record Series 85/1/157)

The AALL held its 1942 Annual Meeting, the first after United States entry into the war, in Milwaukee, almost simultaneously with the Milwaukee Annual Conference of the American Library Association. The closely coordinated scheduling of the AALL and ALA meetings was reminiscent of their 1906-37 practice of joint meetings, and the AALL included the tentative program of the General Sessions of the ALA Conference in its Annual Meeting Program. The theme of the ALA Conference was "Winning the War and the Peace, How Libraries Can Help."

Item 5: Annual Meeting Programs, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/150)
The 1942 Annual Meeting marked the beginning of a cooperative effort between the ALA and the AALL to assist in the restoration of war damaged libraries. While at the Milwaukee meeting, Elizabeth Finley, Chairman of the Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas for the Law Library Association of Greater New York took the opportunity to confer with John Russell, Chairman of the ALA Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas. AALL Secretary, Helen Newman, aware of Finley’s interest in the ALA project, asked Finley to chair the AALL Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas and to work with the ALA. Finley gladly accepted the position. In her 1943 Committee Report, published in the LLJ, Finley wrote: "the purpose of the Committee is to purchase, collect and store copies of American periodicals of a scientific, technical, and scholarly nature for libraries in war areas whose subscriptions have been interrupted by the war, or whose collections have been destroyed by enemy action."

Item 6: Elizabeth Finley to Helen Newman, November 30, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/202)

The Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas appealed for duplicates for legal periodicals through LLJ and through announcements to local library association groups.

Item 7: Law Library Journal 35 (1942) 161

At the 1966 Annual Meeting, Finley was given the Association's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, in part for her work with the Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas. She is shown (center) in this picture, just after receiving her award, with fellow recipients Sidney Hill and Marian Gallagher.

Item 8: Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C. Publications (Record Series 85/1/696)
The 1942 Milwaukee meeting came to be particularly important to law librarians because the cancellation of the 1943 and 1944 meetings meant that it would be two years before many of them met again. The Milwaukee meeting included a one day excursion to the University of Wisconsin at Madison, where law librarians posed for a photo in front of the University Faculty Club. Hill is on the far left. Layton Register, Law Librarian at the University of Pennsylvania, did not attend the meeting, but in a letter to William Roalfe dated June 29 1942, Register remarked that he wished to someday hear the stories that circulated at the "Milwaukee War Meeting."

Item 9: A. Mercer Daniel Photo Collection (Record Series 85/1/302)

In March 1943, President Bernita Long announced to AALL members that the Executive Committee had recently decided that a 1943 meeting would not be planned because "the Director of Defense Transportation has recommended that all meetings whose activities are not closely related to the war be deferred." The cancellation of the meeting created considerable governance problems, particularly in regard to the election of officers, a function normally carried out at the annual meetings and for which no alternative provisions were made in the AALL constitution. Because the AALL had been recently incorporated, the election of officers was a legal issue. In a February 12, 1943 letter to Helen Newman, Long asked Newman to consult with a corporation attorney regarding the possibility of a mail ballot. Eventually a plan was adopted that called for a nominating committee, an opportunity for each member to make additions to the ballot, and a vote by mail. The cancellation of both the 1943 and 1944 annual meetings also meant that most committees were forced to conduct all of their business by mail over this two-year period.

Item 10: Bernita J. Long to Helen Newman, February 12, 1943, (Record Series 85/1/202)

At the first Annual Meeting after the close of the European war in 1945, Sidney Hill reported on the progress of the AALL and ALA joint effort to aid law libraries in war areas. In 1943, Hill had been appointed as the AALL representative to a subcommittee of the ALA International Relations Board, which dealt with the problem of distributing material to libraries in war devastated areas. Hill noted that the International Relations Board obtained trust funds from the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations in the amount of $450,000 "for the purchase of periodicals and text materials published since 1939 to be distributed at some future date to libraries in war areas." Furthermore, he noted that the work of Elizabeth Finley's Committee was instrumental in securing duplicates for approximately 300 post-1939 American serials to be distributed to libraries in war areas.

Item 11: Annual Meeting Programs, 1945 (Record Series 85/1/150)
With the budgetary restrictions inherent in a wartime economy and the diversion of human resources to defense, many academic law libraries were finding it difficult to maintain the standards required for membership in the American Association of Law Schools (AALS). According to the 1940 Handbook of the AALS, member schools were required to maintain the services of a "qualified" librarian, and to spend a minimum of $1,500 each year in maintaining library acquisitions. In response to wartime conditions, the AALS Executive Board passed four Emergency Resolutions in December, 1941. Resolution number three dealt with the temporary suspension of law library standards. Member schools had to make individual application to the AALS for relaxation of standards, and not all applications were granted. In fact, applications from the Universities of Mississippi and Alabama were denied.

Item 12: Law Library Journal 35 (1942) 10

The Joint Committee on Cooperation between AALS and AALL, under the Chairmanship of William R. Roalfe, studied the problem of relaxing law library standards and submitted a general policy to the AALS Executive Board in February 1942. The policy was used at the Board's discretion to evaluate whether a member school's application for relaxation of standards should be granted. Among its recommendations, the Joint Committee emphasized that if financial constraints required that a full-time law librarian need be eliminated, then the responsibility for maintaining the law library must be delegated to a faculty member or another person capable of library administration.

Item 13: William R. Roalfe Papers, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/209)
Item 14: AALL Conference Photographs (Record Series 85/1/157)
Many law librarians, like Marian Gould at the University of Utah, welcomed the relaxation of standards because of decreased state support during the war. Without the relaxation, small schools with small endowments may not have been able to meet the minimum AALS criteria for accreditation during the war. At the same time, since the relaxation allowed schools to eliminate librarian positions, several librarians, like Ewing Baskette at the University of Kentucky, lost their jobs.

Item 15: Marian Gould to William Roaffe, February 12, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/207)
Item 16: Ewing C. Baskette to Helen Newman, March 5, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/202)

LEGAL BIBLIOGRAPHY DURING THE WAR

The war resulted in large volumes of new legislation by many countries to deal with rights, liberties, restrictions, and military policy. American law libraries, although under financial pressure, had a responsibility for maintaining up-to-date information regarding legislation during the national emergency. To assist in this endeavor, many law librarians compiled bibliographies of war legislation and texts. The Legist, a bi-monthly publication of the Law Library Association of Greater New York, published several of these bibliographies over the course of five issues from October 1941 through June 1942. These bibliographies included "Selected List of Materials Related to War of Particular Interest to Law Librarians" and "A Reference List of Important War Legislation and Regulations Thereunder."

Items 17 and 18: Archives of the Law Library Association of Greater New York

Law librarians often went to great lengths to secure contemporary publications concerned with war issues. Helen Newman corresponded with the British Information Services to obtain information on how to acquire British publications.

Item 19: J.D.A. Barnicott to Helen Newman, February 27, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/202)
Item 20: Helen Newman to Carswell Printing Company, March 4, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/202)
While law libraries made every effort to keep up with the voluminous war-related material amidst the pressure of decreased budgets for acquisitions, other projects had to be postponed during the war. In a response to William Stern, Foreign Law Librarian at the Los Angeles County Law Library, Hobart Coffey explained that the University of Michigan's project to microfilm English law books printed before 1600 was "interrupted by the war." Coffey explained that "just now there are more important demands on our time, and more important issues are facing us." He proceeded to comment on the value of the books: "Personally, I am not worried much about the delay, because I know that this material has little value to the average library and only a slight value even in great research institutions. Our readers will not suffer much."

Item 21: William B. Stern to Hobart R. Coffey, February 16, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/208)
Item 22: Hobart R. Coffey to William B. Stern, February 27, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/208)

LAW LIBRARIANS AND THE WAR

The call of many law librarians into national service after United States' entry into the war had a dampening effect on AALL operations. For example, in a May 13, 1941 letter, Forrest Drummond, Law Librarian at the University of Chicago, explained his reluctance to serve on the AALL Nominating Committee because of his draft status. In 1942, he was commissioned a lieutenant in the United States Naval Reserve. Drummond is shown in a photo taken by A. Mercer Daniel at the 1942 Annual Meeting in Milwaukee. His call into the service interrupted his work on the Committee on the Cumulation of an Index to Legal Periodicals and on the Budget Committee.

Item 23: Forrest S. Drummond to Helen Newman, May 15, 1941 (Record Series 85/1/202)
Item 24: A. Mercer Daniel Photo Collection (Record Series 85/1/302)
This exhibit has highlighted the ways in which the war affected AALL operations and membership, but the war touched law librarianship in other ways as well. This letter from Layton Register to William Roalfe, quoting extensively from a letter by a Dickinson Law School faculty member, illustrates the adverse conditions under which law libraries operated during the war, including a decreased student clientele.

Item 27: Layton B. Register to William R. Roalfe, March 12, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/207)

Under the threat of enemy attack, many law librarians, especially along the coasts, were concerned about the storage of valuable material. Elizabeth Forgeus, Law Librarian at Yale, shared in this concern. The topic of storage of valuable law materials was not the subject of formal sessions at the 1942 Annual Meeting, but it was a genuine concern among law librarians.

Item 28: Elizabeth Forgeus to Helen Newman, May 19, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/202)

In July 1942 Herbert Hallam, Law Librarian at the University of Florida, told Helen Newman of his disenchantment with his parsimonious dean and his concern about bad news from the war front. He expressed exasperation and wrote that he felt like "enlisting for potato peeling, about the only thing I can do which they would want lawyers for in the army." Despite these criticisms of the law library's administration, Hallam revealed that the wartime conditions, including a threat to the very existence of the law school, affected him in a personal way. He wrote: "I should enter on the credit side the fact that the student body is about as swell as anyone could imagine; which makes it all the sadder when they all go into the service."

Item 29: Herbert Hallam to Helen Newman, July 24, 1942 (Record Series 85/1/202)
This exhibit was prepared by Kevin Morris under the direction of William Maher at the University of Illinois Archives at Urbana-Champaign. The photographs and documents are from the AALL Archives administered by the University of Illinois Archives. Documents were also provided by the archives of Washington University and of the Law Library Association of Greater New York. The Archives welcomes additional AALL records and information concerning the papers of law librarians. Send materials and inquiries to:

AALL Archives, Room 19 Library,
1408 W. Gregory Drive,
Urbana, IL 61801, (217) 333-0798