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Hasty Departures: The Evacuation of American Citizens from Europe at the Outbreak of World War II

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Much of the focus in the historical record about the United States in the early weeks of World War II has centered on how the government adapted its foreign policy to suit the evolving situation in Europe.¹ This is not surprising, considering that soon after war began in Europe in September 1939, a debate raged in the halls of Congress and on the American radio airwaves about how the government should proceed. Some politicians buoyed by public personalities including famous aviator Charles Lindbergh and Catholic priest and radio personality Charles Coughlin demanded the continuation of strict American neutrality. Others including US president Franklin D. Roosevelt disagreed, surmising that not assisting Britain and France would precipitate a rapid German military advance that would threaten all of Europe. Indeed, Roosevelt was so focused on the easing of existing neutrality restrictions that he called for a special session of Congress to debate this issue.² By attempting, as in the words of David M. Kennedy, “to ease neutrality revision through the treacherous legislative process,” Roosevelt hoped the levers of American democracy would open the doors, even if slightly, to the arsenal of American arms in support of the Allies.³

By the time Roosevelt called Congress on September 21 to reassess American neutrality, US citizens had already been directly impacted by the war. Eighteen days earlier, the British passenger liner *Athenia* was torpedoed by a German U-boat off the coast of Ireland. This incident led to thirty American fatalities and as noted by Francis M. Carroll, “brought the war to the United States even if it did not bring the United States into the war.”⁴ Carroll’s 2012 book centered on this event provides vivid accounts of the passengers and officials who became caught up in this transnational drama and provides an important glimpse into the prevalent social and political aspects of the early weeks of World War II. Most importantly, Carroll’s study provides

the foundation for further analyses of those American citizens who returned home at the outbreak of the war along with the US government officials who made this possible.

The following article thus attempts to build upon Carroll's analysis by broadening the scope beyond the *Athenia* tragedy and providing a broader introspection. Following a similar model undertaken by Torsten Feys and Per Kristian Sebak in their recent study of the repatriation of Americans at the beginning of World War I, this study will offer insight into the evacuation of Americans from Europe twenty-five years later.⁵ By utilizing newspaper accounts, recollections, and first-hand reports from government officials, as well as correspondence to and from consular officers, this work will delve into the obstacles that were posed as well as the decision-making that was processed both in the US Department of State (DOS) and in the consulates in western Europe. This article will also offer a window into those Americans who were impacted, and the transnational activities that were affected. Revealing these evacuation stories and examining the cooperation between DOS officials, shipping representatives, and consular officers is important, as it provides a prelude into the wide-scale transnational coordination and logistics that would contribute to a successful American global wartime strategy when the US entered the war two years later.

A “furor throughout Europe”

On September 2, Breckinridge Long, a longtime confidante of President Roosevelt with deep international experience that included serving as US ambassador to Italy during the mid-1930s, was asked by Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles and Assistant Secretary of State George Messersmith to overtake a new Special Division in the DOS “created to handle emergency matters arising out of the war situation.” Of most immediate concern was the “relief and repatriation of Americans abroad.”⁶ Besides providing safe passage for the tens of thousands of Americans living across Europe, “tourists, calm and frightened, who had come for a last venture on the continent,” also had to be assisted.⁷

One such American traveler caught up in this maelstrom of conflict was 18-year-old David Stamper from Moberly, Missouri, who had toured western Europe during the summer on a bicycle. This adventure covering fifteen hundred miles and taking place between the months after his high school graduation and before his first semester at Massachusetts Institute of Technology was not done alone. Rather it was part of an organized tour with fifteen other like-minded and athletic American and European youths who were intent on experiencing the landscapes, customs, and cultures of various European nations.⁸

After connecting with the group in Plymouth, England, Stamper and his fellow cyclists traversed the moors of southwest England, visited Dartmouth Prison, and spent four days in London before making their way to the European continent. Upon cycling through Belgium, Stamper was largely unimpressed. Besides observing the

countryside as “flat and dirty,” he was surprised to encounter “quite a bit of poverty.”⁹ Any sense of dullness and monotony however began to disappear as the group moved into Germany. Here, Stamper came across numerous military personnel and witnessed individuals greeting others with the perfunctory Nazi salute. As the group set their sights on Paris in early August and embarked on the final leg of their journey, they passed through the Maginot Line. Although this fortification that extended up and down the French border would have displayed the precarious rivalries that existed in Europe, Stamper’s focus was much more superficial as his eyes honed in on the “sloppy” uniforms that the French military officials wore. This youthful ignorance coupled with the fact that he did not read any newspapers over the previous few weeks meant he was largely unaware of the impending dangers that were rapidly emerging.¹⁰

Anxiety had spread during the spring and early summer as German forces moved into and gained control of the western and southern borders of Poland. Sensing the danger of these brazen moves, Britain and France subsequently promised military assistance to Poland if Germany invaded any Polish territory. By August, the mood turned to an overarching fear once reports began to surface that German and Russian officials had begun negotiating between themselves. After a series of face-to-face meetings between the foreign ministers of Germany and the Soviet Union, a Nazi–Soviet nonaggression pact was signed on August 23. The response to this agreement in Britain and France was rapid as troops were subsequently mobilized, and women and children were evacuated from urban areas.¹¹ A “furor throughout Europe” erupted, for as described by the US minister to Norway, Florence Jaffray Harriman, “tourists and refugees tried to move fast lest the storm imprison them on a doomed continent.”¹²

After arriving in Paris at the end of August, David Stamper witnessed the evacuation of “whole loads of children” and used his new camera, purchased in Heidelberg, Germany, to take photographs of people waiting to receive gas masks. Although fully aware that the US consulate was warning Americans to depart immediately, he did not change his plans and instead spent a week in the city enjoying its cultural splendor. When he finally did set out for the port of Le Havre and eventually boarded the ship, *Ile de France*, he was actually “disappointed” not to have witnessed a German air raid. For Stamper, the only real aggravation during this period was that he was unable to telegraph his parents in order to let them know that he was safe.¹³ By the time Stamper departed France on September 2, Germany had invaded Poland. In response to this “aggression,” Britain and France quickly issued a “final warning,” demanding the withdrawal of German military forces from Polish territory.¹⁴ Once it was clear that military disengagement would not occur, both countries declared war on Germany the following day, on September 3. With the currents of war rapidly escalating, Stamper’s departure proved very fortunate. For the estimated one hundred thousand American citizens who still remained in Europe, repatriation would not be as easy.¹⁵

Preparations and Precautions

For more than a year, the DOS had been preparing for the possibility of a European war. Besides engaging in various high-level diplomatic initiatives with the European powers, the DOS had also begun to consider how to account for and reach out to those American citizens living overseas. In March, a circular issued by the DOS to US embassies and consulates throughout Europe outlined certain steps that were needed for possible evacuation efforts.¹⁶ Consular staff also conducted local efforts to calculate how many Americans resided in their jurisdiction.¹⁷ For example, in Liverpool, England, consular officials through the help of the local chief constable ascertained that five hundred seventy American men, women, and children were currently living in the city. It was believed that around one-third of them would “want to return” to the US if a conflict broke out.¹⁸

As the summer progressed and war became seemingly inevitable, further measures were taken. On August 21, a department-wide notice was distributed which prohibited any chief of mission or foreign service officer from taking vacation “even if such leave had been previously granted without specific or renewed authorisation.”¹⁹ One day later, Sumner Welles held a meeting in Washington, DC, with representatives from the Navy and the departments of State, Treasury, Justice, and War and discussed appropriate methods of ensuring the safety and eventual repatriation of Americans living and traveling in Europe.²⁰ By this time, US consulates and embassies had begun publicly imploring Americans to consider departing Europe as soon as possible.²¹ In London, US ambassador to Britain, Joseph Kennedy, declared in an address broadcast over the radio that the “international situation” had “reached a point which makes it advisable for American travellers to leave England.” He and his staff felt a “duty to warn those Americans ... that, by remaining longer, they are running the risk of inconvenience and possibly danger.” He “urged” that “all those who do not have any important reason for remaining” should “return to the United States without delay.”²² As each day passed, the sense of seriousness increased and “thousands of Americans” soon heeded these warnings and became intent on “rushing to book passage home.”²³

When the German army invaded Poland in the early morning hours of Friday, September 1, American authorities were unsurprised. Indeed *The New York Times* noted that on the previous day, “officials, guided only by incomplete and delayed dispatches from Europe” had become “inclined ... to take the gravest view of the situation abroad ... fearing war was merely a matter of hours.” The “official silence” which had been adopted the day before changed to a much more vocal nature.²⁴ President Roosevelt’s customary Friday morning press conference included a pledge that the US would not engage in any military action.²⁵ On Sunday evening, he delivered a similar message to a much broader audience during a live national radio address which aired between 10 and 10:15 pm. Declaring that “[t]his nation will remain a neutral nation,” Roosevelt further added, “[w]e seek to keep war from our firesides by keeping war from coming to the Americas.”²⁶ This message, intended to provide

comfort in an uncertain time, was soon tested only hours later when reports surfaced that the British passenger liner *Athenia* had been sunk off the west coast of Ireland.

As the frantic rescue efforts of the *Athenia* began in the early morning hours, David Stamper was likely sleeping onboard the *Ile de France*. After departing from Le Havre with around a thousand passengers, the ship called into Southampton, England, to collect hundreds more, many of whom would have been fully aware that Britain had just declared war on Germany.²⁷ A few hours later, as dinner was being served, the loudspeakers on the ship announced the subsequent French declaration of war.²⁸ With the precariousness of the Atlantic crossing now becoming obvious, especially with the developing *Athenia* tragedy, the captain of the *Ile de France* proceeded westward with a greater degree of caution. On the first day in the open ocean, Stamper and other passengers realized that the ship was traveling more northbound than usual, evident as the southern coastline of Ireland could be seen in the distance. A number of British naval vessels also approached the ship early in its journey to properly identify it, and at night, the lights on board were turned off to provide some cover in the darkness. By taking these precautions, the captain assured passengers that all was being done to ensure their safety. Some of the tension was also eased when a rumor spread that a convoy, situated just beyond the line of sight of the *Ile de France*, was supposedly providing an escort.²⁹

Life on the vessel, according to Stamper was “virtually normal.”³⁰ The daily leisurely activities provided a welcomed distraction and the ship’s orchestra maintained its daily schedule and played every evening to the delight of dancers who did not mind the darkened ballroom. Although the middle of the ocean crossing included two days of stormy weather which left many seasick, the journey was largely uneventful. For some, the only drama was listening to the daily 6 pm BBC News broadcasts which featured stories about the developing war. Once the *Ile de France* was within a couple of days of New York, some of the precautionary measures were relaxed and the lights on board were again turned on at night. It was by this time that passengers realized to their surprise that the ship had in fact made the transatlantic journey unaccompanied without a convoy.³¹ Finally on the night of September 8, the ship arrived into New York Harbor. After lying overnight in quarantine, the *Ile de France* docked the following morning at the West 48th Street pier. Upon being processed by immigration officials, the arriving passengers were provided with landing cards, but their passports were seized.³² For Stamper, watching his passport being confiscated would have provided a definitive conclusion to his adventure, an experience he soon claimed was “worth a year of school” that he “wouldn’t trade anything for.”³³

Navigating Logistics

The DOS’s decision to seize passports of passengers entering the US was an attempt to ensure that all individuals who traveled overseas in the future would receive proper clearance. This measure, announced by the secretary of state, Cordell Hull, on

September 4, was one of many undertaken by Long's special division in order to cope with the rapidly evolving international situation.³⁴ Long had immediately immersed himself into his new leadership role and on September 3 he met with representatives of the Maritime Commission, the Navy, and Army, along with a number of leaders from various DOS bureaus. By this time, two "long cables" had arrived from Joseph Kennedy and the US ambassador to France, William Bullitt, both of which criticized the current evacuation efforts. It was clear to Long that the two ambassadors had become "swamped by travellers who [had] stayed too long." Although he was not critical of the ambassadors' protests, Long held little sympathy for those seeking repatriation, as these "tourists ... caught in a jam ... had ample notice of an approaching crisis."³⁵ Upon retiring to bed after listening on the radio to Roosevelt's speech on American neutrality, Long was abruptly awoken with an urgent telephone call from the DOS with the news about the sinking of the *Athenia*. After quickly dressing and returning to his office to prepare his staff, he immediately heard "hundreds of telephones ... coming in." By now, the "news of the sinking had been broadcast" and family members of those on board were making frantic inquiries.³⁶

The *Athenia* tragedy not only "shocked the country" but also placed a heavy burden on the special division, now in operation for a mere three days. During an 8:30 am meeting the following morning, Long met with various DOS officials and Max Truitt, the head of the Maritime Commission, in order to implement a safe and effective repatriation strategy for those Americans still in Europe. For Long, the fact that these events played out on the Labor Day holiday weekend was "a good thing in many ways as it permitted a quiet atmosphere with only a few people around and made easier the thinking out of original problems and policy." He believed that creating a plan "ought to be a slow and careful process in the beginning." It was vital to be deliberate "so that later action and policy will not be built on a mistaken foundation."³⁷

On September 5, the official proclamation of American neutrality was issued by President Roosevelt.³⁸ Also invoked were the terms of neutrality established by the Senate and House of Representatives through the Neutrality Act of 1937. Among the restrictions was the stipulation that American citizens would only legally be allowed to return to the US on a "belligerent" country's vessel over the next ninety days.³⁹ Although a clear period was now set for Americans to utilize all available shipping options to return, the reality was that scheduled sailings aboard foreign vessels had already been seriously impacted. For example, when David Stamper and nearly eighteen hundred other passengers stepped off the *Ile de France* on September 8, the ship did not return to Europe, but rather remained docked at its New York pier. The same fate befell another French Line ship, the *Normandie*, which had arrived only a few days earlier.⁴⁰ The British Cunard vessel, *Queen Mary*, also did not make a return journey after passengers disembarked. Instead, as *The New York Times* reported, workers were "daubing gray paint over the black and red stacks" of the ship. Even for those foreign ships that were still active, it was impossible to get a booking until the middle of October.⁴¹

With these shipping options decreasing, it had become vital for extra American vessels to become involved with evacuation efforts. Before the conflict in Europe began, Joseph Curran, the president of the National Maritime Union (NMU), revealed publicly that the DOS had begun making plans for this.⁴² Now, under the direction of Long's special division, a request was made to send two United States Lines vessels, *President Roosevelt* and *Orizaba*, from New York to Europe in the early hours of September 6. However, delays quickly surfaced due to what Long described as "Labor Union troubles." With the new wartime conditions, American seamen represented through the NMU demanded "a 40 per cent increase in wages" along with "a bonus of \$250 for each voyage per man and individual insurance for the unlicensed personnel in the amount of \$25,000."⁴³ As the negotiations dragged on through the afternoon, Long grew weary, believing that "some drastic change of policy would have to be made in order to repatriate American citizens." Although a final agreement was not reached, by 5:30 pm all sides had agreed to "continue discussions of the question" in the future. As Long described, "if extra compensation and insurance was agreed upon later, it would be made retroactive to cover the present sailing."⁴⁴ At 8:05 pm, the *President Roosevelt*, with a full crew onboard the transatlantic liner, departed from the West 19th Street pier.⁴⁵ Two days later, the specially chartered *Orizaba* also departed from New York.⁴⁶

Over the following days, the US government chartered four other ships, the *Acadia*, *St. John*, *Shawnee* and *Iroquois*, for repatriation purposes. The *Acadia* and *St. John* had been used primarily for New York cruises as well as for journeys between New York to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, while the *Shawnee* and *Iroquois* mainly sailed to points between New York, Florida, and Texas. The urgency of the situation was evident when the *Iroquois*, which had recently sailed to Puerto Rico with around two hundred people on board left the island three days early to return to New York and prepare for its new role. Although those vacationing onboard were expectedly upset that their trip was curtailed, the crew were delighted, as they were now expecting to receive special bonuses. Taking on a transatlantic journey meant that these smaller ships that on average weighed around six thousand two hundred gross tons and were three hundred and ninety feet long, would be operating at the limit of their seaworthiness. These ships could normally accommodate anywhere from five hundred to seven hundred and fifty passengers, but now, in the "present emergency," extra cots were set up throughout the vessels, including the public rooms, in order to take on more passengers.⁴⁷

Contentious Crossings

The issues facing Breckinridge Long and other government officials in Washington during this period paled in comparison to the challenges that US consular officers and staff endured in Europe, for as overseas representatives of the US government they had the responsibility of assisting Americans in need. In France, Britain, and Ireland,

American officials were especially busy as each country had important passenger seaports that provided gateways to the US. In early September, it was reported that in France upwards of eight thousand and in Britain four thousand Americans needed to be repatriated respectively. In Ireland, around another twenty-eight hundred Americans were also seeking to return home.⁴⁸

In France, the closure of the English Channel ports of Cherbourg and Le Havre created numerous logistical issues. Once the American government announced that United States Lines ships would be arriving into the southwestern port of Le Verdon-Sur-Mer for evacuation purposes, the adjacent town of Bordeaux was by mid-September inundated with more than three thousand American travelers.⁴⁹ Many people had been forced to make long diversions either by train or by car. Horace R. Cayton, Jr., a well-known African American sociologist from Chicago who had spent the previous few weeks touring with his wife in Edinburgh, London, and Paris, was forced to leave behind most of their luggage before enduring fourteen and a half hours of “standing up in an overpacked train” to Bordeaux.⁵⁰ Upon arrival, the Caytons discovered that the majority of hotels were fully booked. After seven attempts, they finally secured a room, which they then proceeded to share with an English family whom they had befriended after arriving in the city.⁵¹

Faced with many anxious and irritable travelers, some of whom were “short of funds,” the local office of the United States Lines soon became overwhelmed with “total confusion.” Local law enforcement officials tried to enact some order, but unfortunately added to the stress.⁵² A correspondent with *The New Yorker* who witnessed the scenes noted that collective resentment increased when police “prevented” a number of travelers from entering the shipping offices. Some people were reportedly forced to stand on the sidewalk “for a week, with time off only for meals and sleep, in order to have their return sailings ... properly verified.” Even those who did have their tickets documented had to wait outside “for their baggage tags.”⁵³

One of the more tranquil locations in the area, however, was at the US consulate. Here, the consul general, Harry S. Waterman, and his small staff worked fourteen-hour days and “functioned admirably, patiently, and paternally.”⁵⁴ Waterman, who had only settled into his new job three weeks earlier, proved flexible and adapt in initiating progress. With no definitive word as to when a large transatlantic liner would arrive, he arranged for the freighter, *Pipestone County*, to take on board forty-eight American travelers. Since the vessel could only legally hold twelve passengers, he received special permission from the DOS and also arranged for the ship to be fitted with extra cots and blankets. On September 7, the ship departed from Bordeaux for what was to be a two-week crossing to New York. Realizing that more administrative assistance was needed to cope with the extraordinary circumstances, Waterman also welcomed help from a number of volunteers, including Rhode Island businessman Henry B. Cross and Cross’s son, Deming.⁵⁵

The arrival of the *President Roosevelt* in late September was a welcome relief to the consulate staff. However, contacting people to “go to the shipping office” in order

to be booked for the upcoming transatlantic passage was “almost impossible,” according to Henry Cross. Many Americans were “scattered over a wide area, living in hotels and pensions” and communication channels had become disrupted, for “mail was delayed, telephones couldn’t be used and telegrams had to be censored by the military.”⁵⁶ On September 20, the ship departed from Pauillac, a small port between Bordeaux and Le Verdon, with Henry and Deming Cross and Henry and Irma Cayton and a little more than two hundred other passengers onboard.⁵⁷ After calling at Cobh, Ireland, to collect another three hundred and seven people, the journey to New York according to Cross was “peaceful and comfortable,” as the Atlantic Ocean was for the most part like a “mill-pond.”⁵⁸ Nonetheless, a group of thirty-five disgruntled Americans onboard signed a petition objecting to the fact that ninety-two of their fellow passengers were not US citizens. Those protesting felt that only “United States citizens stranded in Europe” should have been accommodated. People needed “to return to their employment ... as soon as possible” and “many ... could ill afford the expense of a long stay in Europe.”⁵⁹ According to one signatory, the “priority of registration was ignored in many cases ... Lots of American kids without money who should have been brought back were left abroad.”⁶⁰

A similar complaint was issued about a week earlier by US Senator for North Carolina Robert R. Reynolds (Democrat), who had made a journey across the Atlantic aboard the *SS Washington*. Upon arriving in New York, Reynolds reported that during the journey foreign nationals were “occupying berths and cots that should have been occupied by American citizens.” Believing that government officials had “fallen down miserably,” he exclaimed it was “a shame and an outrage that Americans in Europe were refused transportation.” Reynolds promised to write a letter to Cordell Hull, the US Secretary of State, in order to find out how many “aliens” were aboard.⁶¹ For his part, Hull publicly contested Reynolds’s unsubstantiated assertion and noted that only two hundred and fourteen non-American passengers out of seventeen hundred and forty-seven were on board. Of these, seventy-seven had traveled with valid American reentry permits while another twenty-three were carrying transit permits. Sixty-nine of the travelers were visiting for three months while only forty-five were actually “quota immigrants.”⁶²

Complaints such as these could be expected, especially considering the cramped conditions on board. For example, when the *SS Washington* departed from Southampton on September 12, passengers slept on cots set up in the swimming pool, the lounges, and the covered deck.⁶³ Those aboard non-American ships endured even further stress as these vessels faced the possibility of being targeted by German vessels during the transatlantic crossing. When the *RMS Aquitania* departed from Southampton with six hundred and sixty-nine Americans aboard, a British gunboat provided a special convoy for a day. Besides setting up machine guns on a movable gangplank, two 12-pound guns were erected on deck in order to provide a “purely defensive” position.⁶⁴

Those on the *Aquitania* also faced an extra layer of tension due to the actions of Joseph Kennedy. While the ship was held “incommunicado ... for two days” in Southampton in order that the “arrangements for the ship” remained “carefully guarded,” American consul G. K. Donald boarded and met with those American passengers who were about to depart. He read a message from Ambassador Kennedy declaring that “American citizens taking passage on vessels of belligerent nations ... being convoyed” such as the *Aquitania* were at risk, for an “opposing belligerent may take this opportunity to sink them without warning.” Although the message made clear that this did “not mean that convoyed vessels are more unsafe than unconvoyed vessels,” the warning was passed on “to acquaint American passengers with contingencies that might arise.”⁶⁵ As expected, this terse statement alarmed many. According to one passenger, Kennedy’s words “scared the gizzard out of us” and some individuals became “most irate and resentful.”⁶⁶

When the ship departed Southampton, the collective anger did not subside. A protest was written up and subsequently telegraphed to Kennedy. It noted that his “statement ... caused great alarm, even consternation” and asked, “Is it not possible for you to give us constructive advice in this moment of our very great anxiety?” Within an hour, the passengers received a reply from the ambassador through Donald, which described how the DOS agreed with the former’s “point of view.” Noting that he did not intend to add “anxiety,” Kennedy declared that he believed that passengers would “want all the facts as I see them.” Sensing that this reply would not soothe the growing unrest amongst the passengers, Donald also sent Van Vechten Shaffer, serving spokesperson for the passengers and the president of the Guaranty Bank and Trust Company in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, a “confidential” telegram which related that Kennedy’s “warning” was issued after “he had ... received information which led him to believe that the *Aquitania* might be convoyed.” Upon arriving in New York, Shaffer spoke with a reporter from the Associated Press and publicized the passengers’ dismay towards Kennedy. On the following day, he spoke by telephone with a journalist from the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* and noted he was intending to file a protest with the senators from Iowa along with Secretary of State Hull and possibly even President Roosevelt. Characterizing Kennedy’s actions as “inexcusable,” “terrorizing,” and “half-cocked,” Shaffer also criticized the embassy’s handling of the evacuation, noting that it had offered inadequate assistance and failed to implement an appropriate plan.⁶⁷

Anger towards Kennedy was not just confined to those aboard the *Aquitania*. On September 7, Breckinridge Long noted in his diary that “Kennedy has been terribly explosive” and “seems to think that the only people needing repatriation are in the lobby of the American Embassy in London.” He was “condemning everybody and criticizing everything and has antagonized most of the people in the Administration.” Long believed that Kennedy was “hurting himself” with his actions. In a tense time such as this, it was imperative that leaders maintain “a calm head and a cooperative brain rather than a vituperative tongue and a scattering of energy.”⁶⁸

Kennedy's relationship with Long and other government officials remained on edge over the next few weeks and was certainly not helped with the publicity arising from those passengers aboard the *Aquitania*. In early October, Long described how Kennedy and the US ambassador to France, William Bullitt, were passing on "deprecatory opinions" to the DOS about the special ships that had been chartered for evacuation purposes.⁶⁹ Kennedy believed that the *Orizaba*, which had been sent to Glasgow in order to bring home passengers rescued from the *Athenia*, was too old and small. He was particularly dismayed that nearly half of the estimated 370 passengers on board would be forced to sleep on cots set up either in cabins or in public rooms. As many of these passengers had been subjected to traumatic near-death experiences while on board the *Athenia*, Kennedy felt that they deserved better than a cramped transatlantic crossing. Although he tried to prove his point by relaying copies of terse letters from passengers to the DOS, officials in Washington did not alter any plans.⁷⁰ Upon departing Glasgow on September 19 with one hundred and fifty *Athenia* passengers, the *Orizaba* sailed to Galway, Ireland where it collected ninety-seven more survivors. The ensuing Atlantic crossing was largely uneventful, except for an "electronic fault" that, as to be expected, caused some panic.⁷¹

"Stranded" in Ireland

During the three weeks following the outbreak of war, only two American-bound vessels, the *President Harding* and *President Roosevelt*, actually called at the southern Irish port of Cobh, where together they welcomed four hundred and forty-two passengers.⁷² Unlike France and Britain, Ireland remained neutral once hostilities broke out, which meant that the repatriation of American citizens from the country was not as urgent. Nevertheless, for those fifteen hundred Americans who remained "stranded" in the country by the end of September, their lives were of course seriously impacted.⁷³ For example, Margaret Moriarty from Brooklyn, New York, who had traveled to Ireland with her two children during the summer, was "very anxious" to finally return home in order "to get them back for school."⁷⁴ Jersey City, New Jersey residents Helen and Charles McCahill who had arrived in Ireland in early August for what was to be a one month holiday, were now fearful that the extended delay could cost Charles his brakeman position with the Delaware Lackawanna Railroad.⁷⁵ Thankfully, relief soon appeared, when on September 27, the *Irish Press* reported that the US government-chartered ship *Iroquois* would be calling at Cobh within the next week.⁷⁶ Moriarty and her two children along with the McCahills and around five hundred and forty-three other Americans were subsequently granted passage on the ship, which departed on October 3.⁷⁷ Any excitement the passengers had about finally heading home, however, was soon overshadowed by an ocean crossing that proved perilous.

One day after the *Iroquois* left Cobh, a note from German admiral Erich Raeder was delivered to the American attaché in Berlin, describing how the ship was under

threat. According to Raeder, the German government had received word that British or French vessels were about to attack the ship and then subsequently blame Germany for the sinking. This elaborate ploy according to Raeder was to be orchestrated in order to coax the US to align itself with Britain and France against Germany. Although American officials did not believe Raeder's outrageous claim, they were suspicious of German intentions. Indeed, when the *Athenia* had been sunk one month before by a German U-boat, the German government in fact publicly blamed Britain for the action.⁷⁸

This threat against the *Iroquois* was "thoroughly discussed" at a White House cabinet meeting and, on the evening of October 5, its details were revealed to the public.⁷⁹ In what was described as a "precautionary measure," President Roosevelt authorized a Coast Guard vessel along with four other naval ships to accompany the *Iroquois* once it neared the east coast of the US.⁸⁰ E. A. Chelton, the captain of the *Orizaba*, who had received word of the threat after it was received, decided against notifying those onboard, fearing that widespread panic would ensue. Nonetheless, he did request that the passengers on board go to the baggage hold, where officers were instructed to search through their luggage. Crew members also went around the ship and confiscated every radio set on board. As expected, these unique security measures caused suspicion and rumors began to spread. Some passengers suspected that a German U-boat attack was imminent, while others believed that a volunteer from the Irish Republican Army had placed a bomb in a piece of luggage while the ship was anchored in Cobh. Adding to the growing anxiety was the fact that the ship had sailed into a "violent" storm and was forced to deal with strong gales and "mountainous" waves. Even though "600 tons of Belgian blocks" had been placed inside the ship for extra equilibrium, it "rolled excessively" in the stormy conditions, which, according to one of those onboard, Father Michael Grace, led to "passengers ... saying their rosaries most of the time."⁸¹

When the storm finally abated on Sunday October 8, the US Coast Guard cutter ordered to accompany the ship had finally arrived. Once two American naval destroyers appeared several hours later, Captain Chelton gathered the passengers in the "main saloon" and explained why the ship would be escorted to New York. Upon hearing the news, some passengers began singing "The Star-Spangled Banner," while two musicians joined in with bagpipe and accordion. Although the final four days of the journey proved mundane, news of the ship's escapades had captured public attention. By the time the ship sailed into New York Harbor during the afternoon of Wednesday, October 11, a crowd of people grew so large at the arriving pier that "extra details of police and pier guards had difficulty keeping them inside the lines." Once it docked at 8:30 pm at the pier on West Eighteenth Street, the crowds began "cheering and shouting" and journalists scrambled to find those disembarking passengers willing to provide details of the voyage.⁸²

On the same day that these scenes played out in New York, one of the other US chartered ships, the *Acadia*, was departing from Cobh with five hundred and twenty-

five passengers. Since arriving into the Irish port four days earlier, a certain amount of drama had occurred. However, unlike what had transpired on the *Iroquois*, the events that unfolded were largely due to internal issues centering on the defiant activities of the ship's crew. Revelations of the crew's "insolent, insubordinate, and inefficient" behavior along with their "drunk and unruly" conduct had first been revealed to the US consul in Cork, William Smale, while he was conducting a safety inspection of the ship shortly after its arrival into Cobh on Saturday, October 7. For the seventy-three Americans who had previously boarded in Southampton, England, the journey thus far had been less than satisfactory. A "number of passengers" approached Smale and "explained that they wished to disembark ... and seek passage on another vessel" due to the crew's insolence. Since it seemed that the officers aboard the ship were "fearful of using their authority," the passengers believed the upcoming journey to New York would be "disastrous." Smale immediately spoke with the captain of the ship, who essentially confirmed that the crew "composed of members of the National Maritime Union" had been "definitely recalcitrant and unruly." There was "dissension between colored and white members" and tensions had supposedly escalated after the men were not allowed to disembark during its previous stops. The captain explained that many crew members seemed "more impressed with their rights as union members than their obligations as seamen."⁸³

Further trouble was revealed the following morning when Smale received a phone call from the captain, who personally asked him for assistance as the "members of the crew were in incipient mutiny." After boarding the ship once again, Smale learned that eleven crew members who had "gone ashore without leave the previous night had been so drunk and disorderly ... that the local authorities had placed them in jail." Although these men had been "released ... the following morning," their activities expectedly infuriated Smale and he soon organized an impromptu meeting with all of the crew who were sober enough to listen. He wanted them to know that they were "subject not only to the navigation laws of the United States but amenable to the laws of the country in which the ship was anchored." To those men who were disobedient and left the ship the previous night, he now ordered them to stay on board for the remainder of their stay in Ireland. If they did not comply, any offender faced either the possibility of a lengthy imprisonment in Ireland "until he rotted" or would be "taken back to the United States in irons." This forceful confrontation proved effective and no further discord was reported by the captain. On the following Monday, those passengers in transit, along with certain crew members, were "permitted to go ashore." On Tuesday evening, the US minister John Cudahy arrived from Dublin and had dinner with the crew along with Irish military and police officials. This act was welcomed by the captain and Smale for it helped in "allaying any fears which the passengers might have felt" with regards to their safety.⁸⁴

Although Smale's actions in controlling and pacifying the environment aboard the *Acadia* are certainly commendable, his interactions and support for those Americans who hoped to return home is even more impressive. Surviving consular

records show that Smale corresponded directly with hundreds of Americans who needed advice as well as support during the autumn of 1939. One series of correspondence between him and New York visitor Patricia Godley provides a unique glimpse into his empathetic demeanor. Earlier in the year, Godley had traveled with her infant daughter to Ireland in order to be with her husband, Thomas, who was living in Ballyheigue, County Kerry, and suffering from “bad health” likely associated with tuberculosis.⁸⁵ After a few months of living in this isolated and rural area, she hoped to return to New York for she had had little money and “not sufficient food in the house.” Above all, Godley was concerned about the health of her daughter.⁸⁶ After receiving confirmation from the local sergeant of Godley’s plight, Smale organized for Godley and her daughter to travel down to Cobh and provided her with funds in order to secure passage on an outbound ship to New York.⁸⁷ These actions deeply touched Godley and, after returning to New York aboard the *Acadia*, she wrote a note to Smale describing how she “could never forget the kindness and consideration you showed to me.”⁸⁸

“The Americans are all home from abroad”

On October 14, the last remaining US-chartered special ship, the *St. John*, departed from Bordeaux after a delay of nearly two weeks. It returned at nearly half its capacity and had to actually “wait thirteen days in Bordeaux ... to get such passengers as were finally recruited.”⁸⁹ Among those on board was Creighton Thompson, a singer and actor who had spent the previous twenty years performing throughout Europe. He was one of a number of African Americans who heeded the final “warning” from Ambassador Bullitt to return home. As the *Chicago Defender* noted, Bullitt’s ultimatum resulted in a “wholesale exodus of practically every American black man and woman” in France.⁹⁰

After calling at Southampton and Cobh, the *St. John* arrived in New York on October 26 with around four hundred and thirty Americans on board. According to *The New York Times*, that meant that the “mass exodus of Americans from Europe is nearly completed.”⁹¹ The fact that the ship returned at nearly half its capacity was a clear indication that the repatriation efforts had been exhausted.⁹² A little over one week later, the US Congress passed a new neutrality bill.⁹³ On November 4, the Neutrality Act was signed by President Roosevelt.⁹⁴ Although the arms embargo was essentially eliminated, the act outlawed the travel of American ships to “states engaged in armed conflict.”⁹⁵ The impact of this act was swift, as seen when the United States Lines officially ended its Atlantic crossings to France and England. The company’s transatlantic service would now be between New York and Genoa in neutral Italy.⁹⁶ Its final vessel to arrive in the US after departing from Britain and France was the *SS President Harding*. Among the five hundred and thirty passengers were one hundred and fifty-eight Americans and three hundred Jewish refugees from Germany, including

Erich Marmorek and his wife, Grete. A merchant, Erich was fortunate to have been released from a concentration camp before fleeing to England.⁹⁷

The DOS would continue to deal with requests from people hoping that the US government would “act on behalf of non-Americans to obtain the release of their friends or relatives abroad.” Isolated cases of Americans who required repatriation and assistance would also be processed.⁹⁸ Nonetheless, with the realization that more than seventy-five thousand US citizens had been repatriated by early November, it had become clear to Breckinridge Long that “Americans are all home from abroad.”⁹⁹ As the war in Europe entered a temporary lull, Long’s special division turned its attention to other matters, including coordinating activities with the Red Cross on various European relief projects and also firming up certain American interests on the European continent.¹⁰⁰

The escalation of the European war in 1940 combined with the internal drama of the impending US presidential election and the continued questions surrounding neutrality meant that the American evacuation efforts from only a few months before were quickly forgotten. The collective memory of this period would be further obscured once the US entered the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. However, what was accomplished from September to November of 1939 is significant and showed the capabilities of US infrastructure, organization, and cooperation on a transnational scale.

For those Americans who were evacuated during this period, their experiences provide a final view of Europe before the descent of wartime chaos and destruction. These individual stories provide important glimpses into the transnational lives, travel, and outlook that existed between the US and Europe during the time. The outbreak of war and subsequent evacuation was abrupt, as Americans who had been working, living, and traveling in Europe were forced to quickly return to the US. Families became fractured, expatriate communities were abandoned, and cultural experiences came to an end. The vibrant transatlantic social crosscurrents that existed were suddenly forced to cede to a much more sinister military dynamic with deep uncertainty and no end in sight.¹⁰¹

Notes

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¹ Two works that offer fresh analysis into how US foreign policy was shaped during this period are Brooke L. Blower, “From Isolationism to Neutrality: A New Framework for Understanding American Political Culture, 1919–1941,” *Diplomatic History* 38, no. 2 (2014): 345–76; and Stephen Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World: The Birth of U.S. Global Supremacy* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020). Both authors

show how the idea of isolationism in US social and political circles during the interwar period and at the outset of World War II has been misconstrued in the historical record. Examinations of the decision-making process from the executive branch during World War II include Roger Daniels, *Franklin D. Roosevelt: The War Years, 1939–1945* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016); and Waldo H. Heinrichs, *Threshold of War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Entry into World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

² David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 433.

³ Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 432.

⁴ Francis M. Carroll, *Athenia Torpedoed: The U-Boat Attack That Ignited the Battle of the Atlantic* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2012), 157.

⁵ Torsten Feys and Per Kristian Sebak, “America’s First ‘Refugee Crisis’: The Repatriation of Stranded Americans from Europe at the Outbreak of the First World War,” *Journal of Tourism History* 10, no. 3 (2018): 225–46.

⁶ Fred L. Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long: Selections from the Years 1939–1944* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 1.

⁷ Florence Jaffray Harriman, *Mission to the North* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1941), 214.

⁸ The details of Stamper’s European travels were documented in his local newspaper, the *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, on September 11 and 15, 1939.

⁹ *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 11, 1939, 1.

¹⁰ *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 15, 1939, 7.

¹¹ Antony Beevor, *The Second World War* (London: Orion Books, 2014), 19–26.

¹² Harriman, *Mission to the North*, 212.

¹³ *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 11, 1939, 4.

¹⁴ Entry for David Warren Stamper, arrived September 9, 1939 in New York on *Ile De France*, [National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC, Record Group 36], Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897–1957, Microfilm Serial T715, 1897–1957, microfilm roll 6396; line 30, page number 78, www.ancestry.com; and *The New York Times*, September 2, 1939, 1.

¹⁵ Florence Jaffray Harriman, *Mission to the North* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1941), 214–15; and *The New York Times*, August 23, 1939, 1.

- ¹⁶ Circular letter, "Return of American Citizens to the United States," Embassy of United States, Paris, France, September 2, 1939, [National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, USA, Record Group 84], F[oreign] S[ervice] P[osts] of the Department of State, Cherbourg Consulate General Records, 1939, 300, Box 19.
- ¹⁷ Circular issued by Douglas Jenkins, Consul General, London, April 27, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Liverpool Consulate General Records, 1939, 300, Box 33.
- ¹⁸ Phillip Holland, American Consul General, Liverpool to Honorable Douglas Jenkins, American Consul General, London, April 28, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Liverpool Consulate General Records, 1939, 300, Box 33.
- ¹⁹ Circular No. 13, "Cancellation of leave of absence," issued by John G. Erhardt, Consul General, London to American Consular Officers in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, August 22, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Liverpool Consulate General Records, 1939, 300, Box 33.
- ²⁰ *The New York Times*, August 23, 1939, 1.
- ²¹ *The New York Times*, August 27, 1939, 29.
- ²² Statement "For the Press" from American Embassy, London, August 24, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Liverpool Consulate General Records, 1939, 300, Box 33.
- ²³ *The New York Times*, August 26, 1939, 1.
- ²⁴ *The New York Times*, September 1, 1939, 6.
- ²⁵ *The New York Times*, September 2, 1939, 1, 8.
- ²⁶ *The New York Times*, September 4, 1939, 1, 6.
- ²⁷ *The New York Times*, September 4, 1939, 12; and *The New York Times*, September 10, 1939, 34.
- ²⁸ *Toronto Star*, "London during the Real King's Speech," February 18, 2011, https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2011/02/18/london_during_the_real_kings_speech.html.
- ²⁹ *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 11, 1939, 4.
- ³⁰ *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 15, 1939, 7.
- ³¹ *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 15, 1939, 7; and *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 11, 1939, 4.

- ³² *The New York Times*, September 10, 1939, 34.
- ³³ *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, September 11, 1939, 4.
- ³⁴ *The New York Times*, September 5, 1939, 17.
- ³⁵ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 4.
- ³⁶ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 6.
- ³⁷ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 6–7.
- ³⁸ Franklin D. Roosevelt, Proclamation 2348–Neutrality of the United States, September 5, 1939, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=15802>.
- ³⁹ Neutrality Act of May 1, 1937, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/interwar/neutrality3.htm>.
- ⁴⁰ *The New York Times*, September 10, 1939, 34.
- ⁴¹ *The New York Times*, September 7, 1939, 14.
- ⁴² *The New York Times*, August 24, 1939, 3.
- ⁴³ *The New York Times*, September 7, 1939, 14.
- ⁴⁴ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 9.
- ⁴⁵ *The New York Times*, September 7, 1939, 14.
- ⁴⁶ *The New York Times*, September 9, 1939, 7.
- ⁴⁷ *The New York Times*, September 9, 1939, 7.
- ⁴⁸ *The New York Times*, September 7, 1939, 6; and Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 10.
- ⁴⁹ *The New York Times*, September 9, 1939, 9; and clippings from *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, September 29, 1939 and *The New Yorker*, September 30, 1939, 39, in NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936-48, 123W-125.2, Box 16.
- ⁵⁰ *Chicago Defender*, October 21, 1939, 13.
- ⁵¹ *Chicago Defender*, October 21, 1939, 13.
- ⁵² Clipping from *The New Yorker*, September 30, 1939, 39, in NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936-48, 123W-125.2, Box 16.
- ⁵³ Clipping from *The New Yorker*, September 30, 1939, 39, in NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936–48, 123W-125.2, Box 16.

⁵⁴ Clipping from *The New Yorker*, September 30, 1939, 39, in NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936–48, 123W-125.2, Box 16; and Cross to Waterman, October 2, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936–48, 123W-125.2, Box 16.

⁵⁵ Clipping from *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, September 29, 1939, in NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936–48, 123W-125.2, Box 16; and *The New York Times*, September 21, 1939, 15.

⁵⁶ Clipping from *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, September 29, 1939, in NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936–48, 123W-125.2, Box 16.

⁵⁷ *The New York Times*, September 29, 1939, 8; William A. Smale, American Consul, Cork, Ireland to Joseph P. Kennedy, American Ambassador, England, 21 October 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 21; and entries for Henry B. Cross and Deming Cross, arrived September 28, 1939 in New York on SS *President Roosevelt*, NAB, RG 36, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897-1957, Microfilm Serial T715, 1897-1957, microfilm roll 6404; lines 4 and 24, page number 9, www.ancestry.com.

⁵⁸ Smale to Kennedy, October 21, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936-46, 320, Box 21; and Cross to Waterman, October 2, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936–48, 123W-125.2, Box 16.

⁵⁹ Protest to United States Lines, September 27, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Bordeaux Consulate, General Records, 1936–48, 123W-125.2, Box 16.

⁶⁰ *The New York Times*, September 29, 1939, 8.

⁶¹ *The New York Times*, September 20, 1939, 15.

⁶² *The New York Times*, September 21, 1939, 7.

⁶³ *The New York Times*, September 19, 1939, 22

⁶⁴ *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 16, 1939, 1, 2

⁶⁵ *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 16, 1939, 1, 2.

⁶⁶ *Zanesville Signal*, September 16, 1939, 1.

⁶⁷ *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 16, 1939, 1, 2.

⁶⁸ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 10–11.

⁶⁹ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 22.

⁷⁰ Carroll, *Athenia Torpedoed*, 133.

⁷¹ Carroll, *Athenia Torpedoed*, 144.

⁷² Smale to Kennedy, October 21, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 21.

⁷³ *Irish Press*, September 27, 1939, 3; and *Irish Examiner*, September 27, 1939, 9.

⁷⁴ Moriarty to American Consul, Cork, September 28, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, Box 22.

⁷⁵ McCahill to American Consul, Cork, September 23, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, Box 22.

⁷⁶ *Irish Press*, September 27, 1939, 3.

⁷⁷ *Irish Independent*, October 4, 1939, 7; *Irish Examiner*, October 4, 1939, 3.; entries for Charles F. McCahill and Helen F. McCahill, arrived October 11, 1939 in New York on SS *Iroquois*, NAB, RG 36, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897–1957, Microfilm Serial: T715, 1897–1957, microfilm roll 6407, lines 9 and 10, page number 24, www.ancestry.com; and entries for Margaret Moriarty, Francis Moriarty and Margaret F. Moriarty, arrived October 11, 1939 in New York on SS *Iroquois*, NAB, RG 36, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897–1957, Microfilm Serial T715, 1897–1957, microfilm roll 6407, lines 23–25, page number 33, www.ancestry.com.

⁷⁸ Carroll, *Athenia Torpedoed*, 133–35; and *Chicago Tribune*, October 6, 1939, 1.

⁷⁹ *Chicago Tribune*, October 6, 1939, 1.

⁸⁰ *The New York Times*, October 6, 1939, 3.

⁸¹ *The New York Times*, October 12, 1939, 6.

⁸² *The New York Times*, October 12, 1939, 6.

⁸³ Smale to Kennedy, October 21, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 21.

⁸⁴ Smale to Kennedy, October 21, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 21.

⁸⁵ Godley to American Consul General, Dublin, September 15, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 22; and Sergeant in Charge, Garda Síochána, Ballyheigue to American Consul, Cork, September 23, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 22. For more information on Thomas

Godley's health ailments, see Gavin Wilk, "'No hope for him unless he can be got out of the country': Disabled Irish Republicans in America, 1922–35," *New Hibernia Review* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 117–18.

⁸⁶ Godley to Smale, September 23, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 22.

⁸⁷ Memo from Smale, September 28, 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 22.

⁸⁸ Entries for Mary P. Godley (aka Patricia Godley) and Mary F. Godley, arrived October 19, 1939 in New York on SS *Acadia*, NAB, RG 36, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897–1957, Microfilm Serial T715, 1897–1957, microfilm roll 6410, lines 14–15, page number 67, www.ancestry.com; and Godley to Smale, 10 Nov. 1939, NACP, RG 84, FSP of the Department of State, Ireland, Cork Consulate, General Records, 1936–46, 320, Box 22.

⁸⁹ *The New York Times*, October 28, 1939, 4.

⁹⁰ *Chicago Defender*, November 11, 1939, 13.

⁹¹ *Irish Independent*, October 20, 1939; and *The New York Times*, October 28, 1939, 4.

⁹² *The New York Times*, October 28, 1939, 4.

⁹³ *The New York Times*, November 4, 1939, 6.

⁹⁴ Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 434.

⁹⁵ Neutrality Act of November 4, 1939, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/WorldWar2/neutrality.htm>.

⁹⁶ *The New York Times*, November 11, 1939, 6; and *The New York Times*, November 23, 1939, 55.

⁹⁷ *The New York Times*, November 25, 1939, 2.

⁹⁸ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 37.

⁹⁹ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 34.

¹⁰⁰ Israel, ed., *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long*, 35–40.

¹⁰¹ One of the first American returnees, the young David Stamper, enrolled in the naval air force after graduating from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the spring of 1942. Upon receiving his wings and being commissioned as second lieutenant, Stamper's life tragically ended on May 16, 1943 after the fighter plane he was training in crashed just outside of Jacksonville, Florida. For more information on Stamper during this period, see

Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat, July 29, 1942, 4; and *Moberly Monitor-Index and Democrat*, May 18, 1943, 1.

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