
Guide to the Barbara D. Loughman Le Lièvre Diary

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Title: Barbara D. Loughman Le Lièvre Diary

Creator: Le Lièvre, Barbara D. Loughman, 1918-

Identifier/Call Number: SC.BDL

Extent: 0.20 linear feet

Date: 1945

Abstract: Barbara Le Lièvre kept a diary while living in Washington D.C. and Paris, France in 1945, during the final days of World War II. Early entries in the diary highlight Le Lièvre's daily activities in Washington D.C. and New York, including her attendance with her husband, Lucien, at a formal reception at the French Embassy in Washington where she met the new French ambassador to the U.S. She often refers to world events in her entries, including President Franklin D. Roosevelt's death and VJ Day, about which she wrote on August 16, "V-J Day--official holiday, Japan has surrendered!!" She and her husband sailed for France aboard a ship she describes as "a dingy troop transport," and arrived in Paris by way of Marseille on August 30. She writes that she feels "horror at the sight of Paris" as it rebuilds following the war, but over her time there gradually makes friends, finds a place to live with Lucien, attends dinners and fashion shows, visits museums and other tourist sites like Notre Dame and the Trocadéro, and rides her bicycle or walks through the Bois de Boulogne. Entries are fairly consistent, but end upon her return to the United States in December 1945.

Language of Material: English,French

Biographical Information:

Barbara Davenport Loughman was born on December 31, 1918 in Essex, Massachusetts to parents Edward and Elizabeth (née Sufkin). Following graduation from high school in 1937, Barbara attended Mount Saint Mary's College in New York, and then transferred to Radcliffe College, where she graduated with a degree in English in 1941. While attending Radcliffe College, she met Lucien Le Lièvre, a French lawyer studying law at Harvard University. The couple married on March 10, 1943 in New York. Lucien graduated from Harvard later that year, and in 1944 began work as Associate General Council for the French Supply Council in Washington, D.C. In 1945, he and Barbara spent most of the year living in Paris, returning to the US in November. In 1946, Lucien was admitted to the New York and Massachusetts bar. Barbara was a homemaker and socialite, and worked with a number of charities, including the New York Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Edgartown Boys Club, and other social service organizations.

Scope and Contents

In 1945, as World War II concluded, Barbara Le Lièvre kept a diary while living in Washington D.C. and Paris, France with her husband, Lucien, who was an attorney. The diary's early pages are filled with doodles, notes, and practice signatures, and has a filled-out "Important Phone Numbers" section. Early entries in the diary highlight Le Lièvre's daily activities in Washington D.C. and New York. These include her attendance with her husband, at numerous cocktail and other parties, especially a formal reception at the French Embassy in Washington where she met the new French ambassador to the U.S. She typically stays at the Ritz when visiting New York, and frequently goes to the movies to see films like Experiment Perilous, The Thin Man, The Great Dictator, and others. Other activities include visiting with her sister Betty to discuss Betty's wedding and unhappy marriage, seeing the Ballet Russe, visiting Potomac Falls, picnicking at the Potomac River, and taking weekend trips to Anapolis. She often refers to world events in her entries, including President Franklin D. Roosevelt's death and VJ Day, about which she wrote on August 16, "V-J Day--official holiday, Japan has surrendered!!" She and her husband sailed for France aboard a ship she describes as "a dingy troop transport," and arrived in Paris by way of Marseille on August 30. She writes that she feels "horror at the sight of Paris" as it rebuilds following the war, but over her time there gradually makes friends, finds a place to live, attends dinners and fashion shows, visits museums and other tourist sites like Notre Dame and the Trocadéro, and rides her bicycle or walks through the Bois de Boulogne. Entries are fairly consistent, but end upon her return to the United States in December 1945.

General

Other Information:

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