

High Culture, Low Culture: The Singular Duality of the Library of Congress

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In 1870, the Library of Congress became the official copyright registry for the books, pamphlets, periodicals, maps, prints, and music published in the United States. It was already the largest library in the country, and as nineteenth-century tradition had it, the nation's chief "storehouse" of knowledge, but with the appearance of massive copyright deposits, the library assumed an equally important, if generally unacknowledged, role in the transmission of culture. By acquiring and retaining the material records of American thought and activity, the library made possible, in theory, the study and perusal of any part of that civilization.¹

However, no library can collect everything; and even the Library of Congress had to become selective. Its preservation of the cultural record extended much further than the collection of any other library in the country, but necessarily relied on library officials' valuation of particular materials, and their opinions generally conformed to contemporary ideas of what libraries should keep. They did not consider in their planning future needs for materials to be acquired or acquired and later discarded. Neither did they consider changes in the library's role. Nonetheless, during the ensuing decades, several developments helped to redefine the institution.

In 1924, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge offered the library funds for the construction of an auditorium and for music performances. Four years later, Librarian of Congress Herbert Putnam and Music Division chief Carl Engel created an

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Archive of American Folksong in the library. Coolidge's gift was the first of a series of 1920s bequests and gifts to the library. The folk song archive introduced another "first": the collection of songs, not from books or manuscripts, but from oral culture. Both events were unprecedented, both for libraries in general and for the Library of Congress in particular as a federal agency. But while the Coolidge gift funded primarily activities relating to the library's dominant focus on high culture, the archive introduced not only new materials but new methods of collecting aimed at the capture of the songs of rural people and workers. While historians have commented on the surprising blending of "high and popular culture in unlikely places such as . . . the Library of Congress" early in the twentieth century, a closer look at the "blend" reveals a complex procession of negotiations to define the national collections.² Introducing the performance of high culture and documentation of the oral tradition required reducing or removing barriers of critical tastes, congressional opposition, and professional tradition.

Forming the National Collections

Since the mid-nineteenth century, the leaders of the library had aspired to emulate the British Museum's policy of collecting material worldwide. Even though the small appropriations provided by Congress did not allow the purchase of foreign materials on a scale comparable to the accessions brought in by copyright, the Librarians of Congress had through gifts and exchanges been able to build the nucleus of more comprehensive collections. But upon completion of the Jefferson building (1897) and for several years thereafter, Congress provided substantial increases in the appropriations for library materials, thus allowing strategically planned collection development. For American scholars, who had to travel abroad to use the comprehensive collections and unique materials they needed, the impact of such development would be far-reaching. University libraries in the United States at that time could not match continental resources, despite the rapid expansion of higher education, the adoption of the European model of graduate training, and growing institutional emphasis upon original research and publication. But if the Library of Congress assumed the responsibility of serving researchers, the leadership exerted at the national level and supported by federal funds would make domestic scholarship far more feasible—and would provide strong potential for increasing American intellectual output in the sciences, the humanities, and the arts. Herbert Putnam, who became Librarian of Congress in 1899, eagerly undertook the task of creating a national intellectual workshop for scholars as part of his vision for the national library. He was also intent on establishing the library's national authority and securing its recognition as the center for providing cataloging for libraries, bibliographies, answers to reference inquiries, and interlibrary loans. While recognizing that it would take years of patient collecting for the library to amass

comprehensive research collections and extend their use to the country at large, Putnam nevertheless worked ceaselessly toward that goal.³

His efforts would reflect several important influences on the library. One of these was the fast-growing profession of librarianship; Putnam and many of his division chiefs were among the first professional librarians employed at the library, and they planned to organize and administer the institution in accordance with the highest standards of professional practice as the initial means of establishing the library's national hegemony.⁴ Following the lead of their colleagues in libraries throughout the United States, they intended to select "the best reading" on any given subject for the collection. Standards for such decisions remained undefined, however, and librarians in general consulted the opinions of critics, scientists, authors, and scholars when choosing material for their collections, thus employing the cultural authority of experts rather than relying on their own knowledge.⁵

The library profession's caution in defining appropriate collections fitted well with the library's relationship to its chief constituent, the Congress. Librarian Putnam considered maintaining senators' and representatives' confidence his top priority, and his collecting policies therefore adhered closely to standards of taste that Congress could be expected to endorse. Putnam made the final decisions on all purchases himself, and he ordered his division chiefs to review the copyright deposits daily to select only those items deemed suitable for the library's collection. At first the rejected material was simply stored.⁶ However in 1909, a new copyright law gave the librarian and the Register of Copyrights the power to dispose of unneeded items by sale, exchange, transfer, or return to the copyright claimant. Putnam then asked the chiefs to develop a formal selection policy. Over time, they selected only about one-fourth or less of the books and pamphlets for permanent retention.⁷ Among the types of material they found unsuitable for the national library were advertising matter, patent medicine almanacs, "boys' magazines and books of the Nick Carter and Jesse James type," joke books, illustrated children's books, telephone directories, posters, vaudeville and minstrel music, and comic books. Thus even though a wide variety of material entered the library, it did not necessarily also enter the national collections.⁸

The usual mandate of a national library to amass the literary and cultural output of the nation was one of Putnam's primary concerns, but he planned first to enlarge the library's collection of western European thought and culture, both because of its importance as the background to the formation of the United States and because he considered it the first step toward comprehensive collecting. To build high-quality, authoritative collections, he sought to employ experts in relevant subject fields. When seeking a music division chief, for example, he was fortunate to discover Oscar Sonneck, an American educated at the universities of Heidelberg and Munich, and in Bologna, Florence, and Vienna. Sonneck's knowledge of the classical repertoire fit Putnam's desire for such

expertise, but just as important was that he had compiled and was about to publish a pioneering *Bibliography of Early Secular American Music*. Experts in American music were few, and the subject in 1900 remained largely unexplored in the United States.

The lack of recognition of American music and Putnam's determination to build important European collections were not unusual, for during the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, European cultures were most prominently represented in American library collections. American authors such as Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, and Mark Twain considered American literature too imitative of old world forms, but critics pondered whether a democratic country would be able to produce distinctive work in the fine arts or literature. Some concluded that the United States was too heterogeneous to foster an American culture, but while this cultural inferiority complex dominated domestic criticism, American creativity began to be celebrated abroad. The ragtime melodies of Louis Moreau Gottschalk, largely disdained by arbiters of American musical taste, for example, became popular in mid-nineteenth-century Europe. And even more shocking to American music critics was the growing interest of European composers in drawing on the American vernacular—for example, Antonin Dvorak, whose *New World Symphony* (1893) resonated with the African American and Native American motifs he gathered during a three-year stay in the United States. What composers like Dvorak, Frederick Delius, and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and continental critics considered most innovative in American forms, in fact, originated chiefly in humble sources similar to the folk origins of European national art.⁹

Aware of European interest in American folk forms, Sonneck nevertheless considered that American music had not yet produced “masters equal to the great European,” and that the study of European music would always be important.¹⁰ The library possessed the largest music collection in the country in 1900, with about 320,000 musical works, mostly sheet music, on hand. But the material consisted almost entirely of copyright deposits, and Sonneck thought collection quality poor: the representation of classical composers' scores was meager, and the book collection too small to support research. Buying chiefly European material and initially concentrating on the pre-1800 period and on opera, he worked to complete the classical repertoire while also acquiring the output of American composers in accordance with the library's national mission. His acquisitions budget could not be stretched to purchase either rarities or manuscripts, but as he informed the American music community of the library's need for autograph scores, composers and music companies began to donate their works.

Meanwhile, Putnam had stated in his 1902 annual report that “It seems proper that a national library should contain . . . a reasonable representation of the classical and standard material, both scores and literature, for, whether a science or an art, music has been and is too potent an influence to be omitted

from a collection which seeks to exhibit the important factors in civilization."¹¹ There had been no congressional reaction, but when a few years later the librarian proposed raising Sonneck's annual salary from \$2,000 to \$3,000, he sought a stronger rationale. Among the library's nonbook materials, maps, prints and photographs posed few difficulties for congressional relations since the former had strategic value and the latter provided historical documentation. Music, however, was another matter, as Sonneck wrote Richard Aldrich, the music critic for the *New York Times*. "The task will be difficult," he explained, "for the mere existence of such a division puzzles Congress, and even very intelligent Members of Congress. They do not understand the need of a collection of musical compositions and they do not appreciate that there is any great body of musical literature entitled to consideration in the Library, or that has scientific or practical interest for the community." Congress would agree, he explained, that copyright music needed to be kept, but

Our aim on the other hand, as you know from your own inspection, is to build up here a collection of standard and classical compositions and musical literature that shall have interest for the investigator as well as the artist. What is the justification of such an attempt in the National Library? Who will it interest? Who will it benefit? And is the possible benefit one that our National Government can justly promote with public funds?¹²

Putnam also wrote to five more newspaper critics in Chicago, Boston, and New York, and to ten musicologists in prominent music schools, including the New England Conservatory of Music, Northwestern, Vassar, Oberlin, Michigan, Columbia, Yale, and Harvard. He had their answers transcribed (including their high praise for Sonneck) for the House and Senate appropriations committees. In his testimony, the librarian tackled the question of "Why music?" head-on by asserting "Because apart from their use in the *art* (the performance) they [the compositions] are also *literature* and their study is the study of a *science*." He conceded the triviality of much of the music received on copyright deposit, naming ragtime, in particular, and dismissing popular music as "mere parlor songs." But he maintained that folk songs were indispensable to any study of music history, theory, and criticism, and pointed out that such American composers as Edward MacDowell were producing important modern music. Musicians, composers, critics, historians, and teachers, he insisted, needed an authoritative collection, and for only "a slight additional expenditure" the library could provide both "a scientific collection" and "scientific administration." He added that it was the only federal expenditure for encouragement or study of the arts, but the French government spent \$100,000 annually solely on grand opera; and a like sum on drama; Belgium and Little Saxony provided \$100,000 and

\$800,000 respectively, and Russia \$1,500,000. England donated \$500,000 annually for the fine arts in general, and France appropriated an amazing grand total of \$3,000,000.¹³

The European references helped convince congressmen who were sensitive to the lack of an American cultural establishment in comparison both to Europe, and more recently, to America's rising status as a great power. They were also accustomed to the argument that other large libraries had less complete collections and that the Library of Congress's support for research collections was consistent with its goal of supplementing other American libraries' resources. Unusual in the appeal were Putnam's use of outside experts and his definition of musicology as a scientific study, but these revealed the growing authority of the national library in commanding expert opinion and Putnam's concern to identify the library with the increasing American respect for scientific methodology.¹⁴

The hearings accomplished both purposes: Sonneck received a salary increase, and Putnam could be satisfied that the rationale for a comprehensive music collection was acceptable to congress.¹⁵ By the time Sonneck departed the library in 1917, the music division contained nearly 800,000 items, about 720,000 in the form of printed or manuscript music. The collection of American music stretched from the early ballads, psalmodies, and church music to the Civil War songs of both the Union and the Confederacy, to the modern American composers whose scores were prominently represented—Victor Herbert, Edward MacDowell, and Ethelbert Nevin. The division had become the peer of the three or four largest music libraries worldwide.¹⁶

Putnam did not hire a new music division chief until 1922, when he offered the post to Carl Engel, a native of Paris who had studied at the universities of Strasbourg and Munich and emigrated to the United States in 1905.¹⁷ As music editor for the Boston Music Company since 1909, Engel, like Sonneck, sought to apply the standards of continental musicology to American scholarship. Also like Sonneck, he had little use for copyright deposits. While annual receipts of music fluctuated, they had increased from about 24,500 pieces in 1904-05 to 44,500 by 1919-20, and half to two-thirds of the material was being kept when Engel joined the staff. The new chief thought that the flow of material overburdened the small music division staff, and he observed that a flourishing collection of player piano rolls attracted the attention of too many other staff members. Commenting that copyright deposits included "the good, the bad, and the utterly worthless," he recommended to Putnam that much of the popular material be discarded. Putnam quickly consented, noting that selection rather than wholesale retention accorded with the library's general policies regarding copyright deposits. Thus by the mid-1920s Engel was returning about two-thirds of the deposits to the Copyright Office, and he closed the area housing the piano rolls.¹⁸ The music division remained firmly oriented to the classical tradition.

Soon after coming to the library, Engel was invited to the 1922 Berkshire Festival. Sponsored by a long-time patron of music, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, the festivals were held near her home in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and they were strictly invitational. In a brief letter of thanks, Engel asked Mrs. Coolidge to consider placing in the library her collection of composers' autograph scores for compositions that won prizes at the international competitions preceding the festival, and she later agreed. Moreover, she was seeking a means of perpetuating her concert series through an institution or organization, and consequently proposed that, in connection with the gift, it would be appropriate to sponsor several chamber music recitals in Washington.¹⁹

The Library of Congress was an unlikely venue for chamber music since it had never mounted cultural events and the federal government had never been a patron of the fine arts. In the fall of 1923, in fact, the library's sole music facility consisted of an old upright piano housed in the basement. As chief of a music division in which no music was played, Engel very much wanted to sponsor performances, and he sketched for Putnam his vision of a division that would "take on a new life" through the concerts. His request seems a natural outcome of Putnam's insistence on hiring experts as division chiefs since such experts might well imagine projects reaching beyond traditional library functions. But on this occasion Engel's ambition conflicted with Putnam's sense of mission; the librarian objected that concerts were beyond the library's scope and that there was no concert hall available to government agencies.²⁰ He was unyielding until composer Mary Carlisle Howe suggested the Smithsonian's new Freer Gallery of Art as a site.²¹ Its use carried two important (and to Putnam, probably advantageous) restrictions: the audience would be limited to 300, and it would be necessary to enlist the Smithsonian as a co-sponsor. Thus negotiations ensued among Engel, Putnam, Freer curator John Lodge, and the Smithsonian. It is likely that Putnam quietly consulted the Joint Committee on the Library as well, and he also contacted the chairman of the Fine Arts Commission.²²

Mrs. Coolidge envisioned the concerts "for the pleasure and instruction of a select audience," and they would perform the works of living composers. Her musical agenda was one consideration, but the reaction of federal officials was Putnam's main concern, and he insisted that each concert include one composition that was "safe and sound."²³ The invitation list included the White House, Congress, the Supreme Court, the diplomatic corps, music scholars and teachers, newspaper music critics, and as Putnam later explained, "certain others whose aid may be valuable in governmental recognition of such music, and especially in developing the music collection in the Library." Thus, he said, the list was neither "merely social" nor "widely official."²⁴ Certainly it was both and rigorously select as well. But under his careful management, the concerts, held February 7-9, 1924, were a great success. Praise from Congress and favorable newspaper reports changed Putnam's attitude about involving the library in cultural events, and in his annual report he termed the event "the first notable recogni-

tion by our Government . . . of music as one of the finer arts—entitled to its concern and encouragement.”²⁵

In the fall of 1924 Herbert Putnam attended the Pittsfield Festival, and shortly thereafter Coolidge decided to transfer all her concerts to the Library of Congress. To support the work, in 1925 she offered Putnam \$60,000 to build an auditorium at the library plus an endowment with an estimated annual yield of \$28,200 for festivals and concerts, awards for original compositions, and an annual honorarium for the chief of the music division.

Putnam was delighted at the gift, particularly since during the post-World War I years Congress had either decreased the library’s budget or provided only minimal increases.²⁶ He immediately conveyed Coolidge’s offer of the auditorium to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the speaker referred it to the Committee on the Library.²⁷ Fortunately, although the librarian never mentioned it, the chairman, Robert Luce, had been a college friend of his, and Luce proved a discreet as well as stalwart supporter. Invoking Congress’s acceptance of the Smithsonian Institution bequest as a precedent, he stated cautiously that “Your committee on the library has been unable to find any reason why the gift should not be promptly and thankfully accepted,” implying that the members had searched hard for reasons to reject the offer.²⁸ But as Putnam explained, the meeting went smoothly: “As every one of the members had had in advance a personal explanation from me, the statement was chiefly for the formal record (and incidentally for the benefit of the Press Gallery, the superintendent of which was present in person). There was not the slightest demur, but there were various questions designed to elicit facts which might be useful on the floor.” Two days later he notified Coolidge that the resolution had passed without question.²⁹

Because there was no law allowing a federal agency to accept an endowment, that portion of Coolidge’s gift was proposed separately, to enable Putnam and Senator George Wharton Pepper to draft legislation establishing the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board. The bill created a board consisting of three ex-officio members: the Librarian of Congress, the secretary of the treasury, and the chair of the Joint Committee, plus two presidential appointees; it passed both houses unanimously, without debate, and the president approved it the same day: March 3, 1925. It was an unusual departure for the conservative federal establishment of the mid-1920s: acceptance of the board added a new function to the national government as a receiver and administrator of gifts in the public interest, even while President Coolidge was insisting that “The greatest duty and opportunity of government is not to embark on any new ventures.”³⁰ But Congress chose not to examine the ramifications—at least not publicly.

Putnam always attributed the success of the bill to congressional pride in the library, but he quickly moved to integrate the board with the library’s mission. It is more than suggestive that, in a 1926 brochure about the board, the only illustration other than a picture of the library building was a drawing of the

exhibit case housing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. When the state department transferred the documents to the library in 1921, Congress had approved Putnam's request for funds for a protective case, and the librarian had made the 1924 installation ceremony, attended by the president, the secretary of state, and a representative group of congressmen, an occasion of profound reverence. Any picture of "the Shrine," as it was called, could be counted on to evoke patriotic sentiment, and its image in the trust fund booklet securely consolidated private largesse with American democracy.³¹

The librarian also addressed carefully the issue of the performance of modern compositions. While Sonneck and Engel prided themselves on the music division's reputation for acquiring the works of new and controversial composers, Putnam muted that emphasis. Perhaps thinking that modern music might not be congenial to at least some congressmen, he admitted that such works might be "tentative and ephemeral," but insisted that "some will prove of permanent beauty and value." The audiences, he stated, would be small but they would include "persons of the requisite understanding, seriousness of purpose, and influence in the musical world," which would make the influence of the concerts "far reaching." Finally, he declared that the endowment was "absolutely consistent" with the library's policy of "doing for American scholarship and cultivation what is not likely to be done by other agencies."³²

Under the chairmanship of Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon, who bore the responsibility of ensuring "a responsible and conservative policy," the trust fund board combined official functions with the flexibility of a private corporation.³³ Long-term gifts would be accepted by the board and the Joint Committee on the Library, without further oversight or reports to congress. The board therefore assured privacy to donors who might dislike having their names featured in the *Congressional Record* or newspaper accounts, and the reduction in congressional scrutiny must likewise have been congenial to Putnam, since it enabled him to work discreetly with a much smaller oversight group.

Just five months after the passage of the trust fund act, a flow of gifts began,³⁴ and Putnam stated that the Coolidge gift and the establishment of the board had initiated a "new era" for the library, for Congress had in effect endorsed his far-reaching plans for its future. Private funding would enable the library to command the collections to rival and perhaps even surpass European national libraries. It also permitted Putnam to develop a long-time pet scheme of assembling a corps of experts to build the collections and "interpret" them to students, investigators, and the public at large—"the cultivation of the exceptional, for the stimulus and benefit of the superior understanding."³⁵ Even better, the gifts had the effect of a snowball en route downhill during the expansive, apparently prosperous days of the late 1920s; they rolled up generous appropriations in the process. In 1926 congress approved \$345,000 for the construction of a new stack and a rare book room; in 1928, it approved up to \$600,000 to purchase land for a new building plus a large budget increase; and in 1930 it

appropriated \$1.5 million for the purchase of the Vollbehr Collection of incunabula and up to \$6 million to construct both an addition to the library and a new building.

This important change in the Library of Congress's resource base marked another departure from the nineteenth-century concept of the library as a democratic lending institution supported by funds from the public coffers. It highlighted instead a different tradition—that of the nineteenth-century philanthropists such as James Lenox, John Carter Brown, John Crerar, Henry E. Huntington, J. Pierpont Morgan, and William L. Clements whose gifts produced a set of institutions affluent enough to acquire important research collections. These “reference libraries” fit the model of cultural institution formation that Paul DiMaggio has described as the high culture model: the organization of museums and symphony orchestras by the wealthy elite as private nonprofit institutions with boards of trustees. Insulated from the general public, the trustees defined canons of art and music as central to the institutional mission, in effect sealing them off from the public at large and from lower cultural forms, yet allowing entry to those desiring to be educated to the cultural forms the elite deemed most desirable. Given its history of congressional control, relatively late admission of the public, and restrictions on public borrowing, the Library of Congress was arguably as much a product of elitism as it was a public institution. But joining the tradition of the publicly supported library with that of the privately endowed reference library enabled the Library of Congress to surmount the potential weakness of each type: the sometimes shifting levels of government support for public libraries, and public disinclination to come to the assistance of privately funded institutions.³⁶ Public funding had enabled Putnam to achieve his objectives of making the Library of Congress a national organizer of scholarly resources and the leader among American libraries. Private support would enable him not only to build comprehensive collections but also to achieve broader authority for the library as a cultural institution.³⁷

Folk Culture in the National Collections

At about the same time the trust fund board was established, Carl Engel was learning about Robert Winslow Gordon's efforts to amass a collection of American folk songs. Gordon developed an interest in folk song at Harvard, where he studied with Barrett Wendell and George Lyman Kittredge, and when he left Harvard in 1918 to become an assistant professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley, he had begun to collect and record folk songs systematically. Before the 1920s, there was scholarly interest in Native American music among anthropologists and members of the American Folklore Society (established 1888), but Gordon's Harvard mentors were primarily interested in traditional English ballad survivals. Gordon's ideas were more eclectic, and he began lugging an old-fashioned Edison phonograph to the San Francisco and Oakland waterfronts, where he asked workmen and sailors to sing into the machine—

a significant departure from the academic tradition of collecting song texts.³⁸

Gordon was also unorthodox about publication of his material; he chose the popular men's pulp magazine *Adventure* rather than a scholarly journal. From July 1923 to September 1927 he edited a column titled "Old Songs that Men Have Sung," which included unpublished sea-chanties, lumber camp songs, songs of the Great Lakes and the canals, of pioneers and the west, of mountain folk, spirituals, and plantation songs. Asking readers to send him their versions of folk songs, Gordon began a collection that he hoped would encompass the entire body of American folk music. In four years he received more than 10,000 song texts and answered over 4,000 letters.³⁹

Some of Gordon's Berkeley colleagues were unsympathetic to his unorthodox methods. Moreover, the subject of folk survivals was not particularly important in literary studies, and publication in a pulp magazine was not the sort of credential that led to tenure.⁴⁰ Thus the English department let Gordon go, with the cushion of a sabbatical year, and he returned to Harvard, planning to complete his Ph.D. Instead, however, he decided on a year-long collecting journey that would take him from Appalachia to the deep South, to the Great Lakes and the maritime provinces of Canada.⁴¹ Since most collectors restricted their activities to a single area or region, Gordon's ambitious plan marked him as one of the first collectors whose scope was continental.⁴²

Gordon never completed his route; he stopped in Darien, Georgia, his wife's former home, where he was assured of acceptance in the African American community, and settled down to collecting. He had used the Library of Congress during his research on song origins and relationships, and while writing the *Adventure* column, he appealed to the music division staff for assistance in answering readers' inquiries. Hoping to find financial support, he described his vision of a national collection to Carl Engel and asked for advice about funding.⁴³ Describing folk songs as reflecting the values of an earlier America—a simpler society, and a more honest, genuine populace—he pointed out that such music would appeal to a public that worried about the effects of speakeasies and jazz on the American character as well as to those who sought to preserve the remains of early Anglo-America.

Eventually I think the study and preservation of American materials is quite as important as the collection and preservation of our Indian materials. And they are passing just as rapidly now. I'll bet a cookie that a hundred years from now the backers of such a national project would be better remembered by this nation than the man who offered 10,000 or 15,000 or 20,000 for a new stunt aeroplane flight. That's what I'm going to fight hard for later. Whenever I get the chance. I could organize right now a group of real workers, trained collectors, a national bureau if the funds were available.⁴⁴

Unlike the Coolidge concerts, there was a precedent for federal involvement in field collecting; the Bureau of American Ethnology had workers in the field recording Native American languages, music, and traditions as early as 1879. Moreover, collections of ethnographic materials had been established, for example, at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu (1889), the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard (1866), the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles (1907), and the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology at Berkeley (1901). But these collections largely focused on native groups. The interest in American folk song, on the other hand, spanned a variety of efforts, as the academicians tracing bygone English ballads were joined by local collectors fanning out to capture the Appalachian mountaineer and western cowboy traditions. In 1910, John Lomax published his *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*, and Hubert G. Shearing and Josiah H. Combs' *A Syllabus of Kentucky Folk-Songs* appeared the following year. Several more collections, featuring ballad survivals among mountain white people but also including some authentic American ballads, had appeared by 1920.⁴⁵

Engel considered folk music important to national musical development, and he was extremely interested in advancing music research, which he thought had received very little encouragement in the United States.⁴⁶ He hoped that the library might become the headquarters for a postdoctoral department of musicology that would engage scholars in primary research, and to that end, he was pursuing a relationship with the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Gordon, whose comprehensive approach and commitment to historical, philological, and musicological analysis he admired, would be valuable to this project. Accordingly he sought support for an endowment for a "Chair" of American Folk Music at the library. And Gordon, for his part, wrote optimistically of the prospects for "a real clean up" of available material within two years, thus making the task of establishing a collection seem one that could readily be accomplished.⁴⁷

Engel and Putnam enlisted a group of donors for their folk song initiative that was arguably less interested in altering attitudes toward American culture than in supporting the Library of Congress. Two members of the trust fund board provided gifts: \$100 from Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon and \$1,000 from John Barton Payne, who was the director of the American Red Cross, but perhaps more important, hailed from West Virginia.⁴⁸ Other portions of the initial five-year funding came from Mrs. Annie Bloodgood Parker of Strafford, Pennsylvania (\$1,000 per year over five years), a devotee of early American music and a long-time benefactor of the music division,⁴⁹ and from Mrs. Mary Sprague Miller (\$250 with the promise of further gifts).⁵⁰ Finally, a late appeal to Putnam's old friend, Frederick Keppel of the Carnegie Corporation, brought the largest gift of \$2,500.⁵¹

Two broad cultural themes supported the folk song initiative: musical heterogeneity and nostalgia. Just as European composers and critics had made ver-

nacular music more acceptable to American critics, Americans interested in new musical forms were recognizing that jazz, popular songs, and folk music would become part of the American music heritage. Others adopted an anything-is-better-than-popular-music stance. Still others continued to worry that an American national music would never emerge.⁵² Meanwhile, the public was listening to the ethnic programs featured by small, local radio stations, and commercial recording companies were producing blues and hillbilly music for African American and southern audiences, while ethnic record companies recorded the music of immigrants' homelands.⁵³ Significantly, Gordon had emphasized both disappearing tunes and the importance of folk music as an alternative to popular forms in his appeal to Engel. The fear of losing contact with a simpler past—more authentic, more tradition laden, more patriotic, more truly American—gave rise to a desire to make American heritage and traditions more concrete, more knowable, more immediate. For example, the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened in 1923, featuring authentic period rooms and furniture. That same year, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation purchased Jefferson's home at Monticello, and in 1926 John D. Rockefeller committed himself to the rescue of colonial Williamsburg while Henry Ford established the Ford Museum and Greenfield Village.⁵⁴ Such efforts perhaps moved others to re-evaluate historical materials. By the late-1920s, for instance, rare book room curator, V. Valta Parma, had begun to rescue dime novels from copyright storage. And by 1929, the Coolidge Foundation had interrupted its usual classical focus to devote the annual festival to American folk music.⁵⁵

Eager to profit by Gordon's summer fieldwork and by his "his wide-spread influence with collectors of such material, who through his influence may be induced to deposit it here,"⁵⁶ Putnam and Engel moved ahead rapidly. On April 20, 1928, Engel announced that the library planned a national collection of folk songs, to be directed by Gordon, to ensure their preservation and to recognize the value of the folk heritage. "There is a pressing need for the formation of a great national collection of American folk-songs," he stated. "The logical place for such a collection is the national library of the United States, the Library of Congress in Washington. This collection should embody the soul of our people;" Engel responded, "it should comprise all the poems and melodies that have sprung from our soil and have been handed down, often with manifold changes, from generation to generation as a precious possession of our folk. . . . It is richer than that of any other country." Engel emphasized that "The time has come when the preservation of this valuable old material is threatened by the spread of the popular music of the hour;" he specified the need for "a scientific and critical approach," and cited Gordon's qualifications as an authority on American folk song.⁵⁷

In May, Gordon gave a lecture at the library that raised significant interest in his work, and on July 1 he joined the staff, at a monthly salary of \$300.⁵⁸ He then returned to his collecting. He contacted other fieldworkers, but mostly

amateurs and regional collectors rather than scholarly societies, since he had decided to build a network of local organizations to support a national center at the Library of Congress. Busy with these efforts, he made no changes in his method of operation. Putnam and Engel, however, had assumed that he would move to Washington, and Engel prompted him repeatedly for news. By November, Putnam was exasperated enough to telegraph his wife to ask his whereabouts.⁵⁹ Gordon then sent a project report that discussed the production of publications and the formation of a Washington research center as future activities; he responded to Engel's protest that more accountability was required, by declaring that his work lay "largely beyond the frontier of knowledge" and had to be conducted by trial and error. Unsatisfactory, sporadic communications continued through much of 1929. But when Gordon failed to submit a description of his work for the Librarian's *Annual Report* for 1929, Engel threatened to withdraw support unless Gordon exhibited "methodical handling of affairs and a substantial progress."⁶⁰

The threat had the intended effect, and Gordon moved to Washington. But his relations with Engel and Putnam failed to improve since he demanded control over his material, remained uneager to open it to others, and jealously guarded the rights in material others deposited. His close connections with the commercial field led to a report in the trade journal, *The Talking Machine and Radio Journal*, that praised the Library of Congress and the government for recognizing hillbilly and African American music as "the basis of American folk-song and music."⁶¹ But Putnam did not want the library identified with popular music. He was probably also unenthusiastic about Gordon's long involvement (on his own time) with the Victor Company's lawsuit over the ownership of the hillbilly song "The Wreck of Old 97." Eager to return to fieldwork, in 1930 Gordon obtained a \$1,300 grant from the American Council of Learned Societies to improve recordings. But he was dissatisfied with the machines, and instead of leaving Washington he spent his time testing wire, cylinder, and disc recorders.⁶²

Funding for the folk song project was exhausted at the end of 1931, but the Carnegie Corporation provided assistance to continue work until June 10, 1932. In March, Putnam and Engel notified Gordon that the library would not retain his services after the end of the fiscal year (later modified to the end of 1932), and they refused his offer to serve as voluntary director. His final report noted that he had collected approximately 8,000 texts with music for some 700 titles, including 4,000 from his own collection. The archive also contained 900 songsters, more than 1,500 volumes of pulp magazines including folk song columns, and loaned materials from several collectors. Theses, books, journals, and copies of material in other collections had been acquired plus 350 records from the Victor Company in addition to Gordon's 1,000 or more wax cylinder recordings.⁶³

As Gordon left the library, scholarly interest in folk culture had begun to multiply. During the late-1920s, several collections of African American folklore

appeared, and Benjamin Botkin founded the journal *Folk-say* in 1929. Two years later, Constance Rourke published *American Humor*, the first of a series of books on folk culture that declared the interest of American intellectuals in the American heritage, to the grudging acceptance of such notable critics as Van Wyck Brooks. During the early-1930s scholarly organizations such as the Modern Language Association and the American Council of Learned Societies began to organize folklore sections and fund surveys of the field.⁶⁴ In 1933, the library obtained funding from the council for the fieldwork of John Lomax, who became an honorary consultant and curator of the archive. The Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation subsequently funded Lomax's collecting, but appropriated funds were not available until July 1937 when Congress finally provided support.

Critics might have noted that the Archive of American Folksong was established on speculation—or at least on an assumption that folk music would become part of American musicology. The archive was a pioneer in the field, predating the academic establishment of folk song, folklore, and American studies. Moreover the initiative did not come from groups of scholars or field collectors but from the library and the funding through Engel's and Putnam's personal appeals. Their project was atypical in a library profession that deferred to established cultural authorities and in general privileged print over other cultural forms. The active acquisition of folk music was unusual in an institution in which the administrators collected high culture but systematically culled lesser materials. It was highly innovative, but an unlikely candidate for a national library or for appropriated funds.

The introduction of this particular cultural form to the library occurred, nevertheless, at a time when the study of folk song began drawing support from American musicologists and from supporters of high musical culture who became interested in reclaiming the folk heritage. Thus the archive's establishment reflected increasing interest by experts, but the collection became possible only because the formation of the trust fund board enabled long-term private funding. The small budget necessarily shaped the archive's collecting ability, it limited the attempt to establish a national center, and staffing and funding problems became more acute as the economy descended into depression. Thus the intellectual claim remained small in a sense; the archive did not define a canon of American folksong, nor did it claim either systematic documentation or a comprehensive collection.⁶⁵ Progress toward such goals could only be gradual.

On another level, however, its impact was highly significant. First, the claim of cultural significance was largely accepted—by congress, by librarians, by musicologists, and by collectors. It was a large claim; to support the acceptance of American folk song as a field of study was also to assume a role in shaping the American music establishment—and also the developing folklore and American studies fields. It also took part in a more general ongoing reconstruction of American culture achieved through evoking the past and preserving its memo-

ries as part of the composition of American national memory. Every step that Putnam, Sonneck, and Engel had taken to build the music division collection, to assert its authority, to organize a continuing concert series, and finally, to reach toward a research center with a faculty, revealed the ambition to exert national influence on the music establishment. Such a role was entirely congenial to Putnam's efforts to enforce the library's national hegemony and to foster its progress in the 1920s toward what he considered its "appropriate destiny as not merely a collection of material for purposes merely utilitarian, but an embodiment so far as may now be possible, of influences for the promotion of culture."⁶⁶ By expanding the definition of institutional collections to include the oral tradition, by defining the American musical heritage to include the rural poor, the uneducated, and the disadvantaged, and by proclaiming a center for the support and study of a tradition far closer to the popular than the classic, the Library of Congress extended its national authority to a celebration of American memories that would find even more sincere appreciation during the Great Depression.

Notes

1. John Y. Cole, "Storehouses and Workshops: American Libraries and the Uses of Knowledge," in *The Organization of Knowledge in Modern America, 1860-1920*, eds. Alexandra Oleson and John Voss, (Baltimore, 1979), 364-85.

2. Neil Harris, "Cultural Institutions and American Modernization," *Journal of Library History* 16 (Winter 1981): 42; on the blurring of the traditional distinction between high and low culture see also Michael Kammen, *American Culture, American Tastes: Social Change and the 20th Century* (New York, 1999), 9-13.

3. Jane Aikin Rosenberg, *The Nation's Great Library: Herbert Putnam and the Library of Congress, 1899-1939* (Urbana, 1993), 36-41; John Y. Cole, "The Library of Congress and American Scholarship," in *Libraries and Scholarly Communication in the United States: The Historical Dimension*, eds. Phyllis Dain and John Y. Cole, (New York, 1990), 45-61.

4. This case has an affinity with Gramsci's consensual cultural hegemony. T. Jackson Lears has suggested the application of the concept to "hegemonic values in the complex organizations that have shaped modern culture." In the particular case of the Library of Congress, efforts to establish hegemony were directed to institutions or specialized groups (other libraries, Congress, librarians, scholars), and had to be pursued both upward within the government and downward to civil society, rather than the usual Gramscian focus on a dominant group transmitting its culture to the rest of society via coercion or consensus. See T. J. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *American Historical Review*, 90 (June 1985): 587-88; Paul Ransome, *Antonio Gramsci: A New Introduction* (Westport, Conn., 1992), 132-52.

5. Wayne A. Wiegand, "Tunnel Vision and Blind Spots: What the Past Tells Us About the Present; Reflections on the Twentieth-Century History of American Librarianship," *Library Quarterly*, 69 (January 1999): 3-4; Wayne A. Wiegand, *The Politics of an Emerging Profession: The American Library Association, 1876-1917* (New York, 1986), 231.

6. William Warner Bishop, "The Library of Congress, 1907-1915: Fragments of Autobiography," *Library Quarterly*, 18 (January 1948): 3.

7. *Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress* (hereafter abbreviated ARLC) 1909 (Washington, D.C., 1909), 149-82. Sections 59-60 addressed retention of copyright deposits. After the passage of the 1909 act, the library was no longer a library of record, but all copyrighted material was listed in the *Catalogue of Copyright Entries*. In fiscal 1909-10, 27 percent of the book and pamphlet material was deemed appropriate, but by 1924-25 only 17 percent was selected. Copyright deposits of books and pamphlets increased 46 percent between 1909-10 and 1924-25, from 49,000 to over 106,000. During the same period, selected items ranged from 13,000 to 18,000. Figures are calculated from ARLC.

8. Bishop, "Library of Congress," 3; Thorvald Solberg to Librarian of Congress, 21 November 1910; Superintendent of Reading Room to Librarian of Congress, 18 June 1909; Chief, Music Division to Chairman, Copyright Commission, 4 August 1909; Appleton Prentice Clarke Griffin to Herbert Putnam, 25 June, 9 July, 5 August 1909; Chairman, Copyright Commission, to

Register of Copyrights, 6 October 1909, all in Box 135, Central File, Library of Congress Archives, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (hereafter cited CF-LCA). Most of the library's collections were in print format during the early-twentieth century. Copyright deposits of motion pictures began in 1893, but by 1913 they had been discarded because of the highly flammable film stock and lack of fireproof storage. The systematic acquisition of recordings did not begin until 1925 when classical recordings from the Victor Company entered the collections. Sound recordings were not received on copyright deposit until 1972.

9. Kammen, *American Culture*, 62-5; Henry F. May, *The End of American Innocence: A Study of the First Years of Our Own Time, 1912-1917* (Chicago, 1959), 30; Jack Sullivan, *New World Symphonies: How American Culture Changed European Music* (New Haven, 1999), 1-40.

10. Quoted in Carol June Bradley, "Oscar G. T. Sonneck: Architect of the 'National Music Collection,'" *Journal of Library History*, 16 (Spring 1981): 296.

11. *ARLC* 1902, 27; see also Herbert Putnam, "O. G. Sonneck: Remarks at the Funeral Service, November 1st, 1928," *Musical Quarterly*, 15 (1929): 1-2. Putnam may have remembered his decision as somewhat more emphatic than the report indicated, but his insistence that the library would be able to foster study and research in music as no other institution could is entirely characteristic.

12. Herbert Putnam to Richard Aldrich, 7 October 1908, Box 156, CF-LCA.

13. "Music: The Collections" undated typescript, Box 156, CF-LCA.

14. On the influence of science, see Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday* (New York, 1931), 141.

15. Herbert Putnam to Charlotte Munroe Putnam, "Sunday, 6 p.m." 1908, Box 8, Herbert Putnam Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; "Music: The Collections," LCA.

16. Carl Engel, "Views and Reviews," *The Musical Quarterly*, 14 (April 1928): 299; *ARLC* 1917, 66-68 includes Sonneck's last report, which nevertheless featured a long list of needs.

17. Putnam held the position open in case Sonneck decided to return. See Cyrilla Barr, *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge: American Patron of Music* (New York, 1998), 156.

18. *ARLC* 1922, 73; Carl Engel to Putnam, 7 October 1922; Putnam to Engel, 10 October 1922, Box 156, CF-LCA. Efforts to have the music division examine copyright receipts sent to the library between 1870 and 1909 resulted in only a 2 percent selection rate, mostly second copies; see Thorvald Solberg to Librarian of Congress, 28 August 1917, Box 135, CF-LCA; Carol June Bradley, *American Music Librarianship: A Biographical and Historical Survey* (New York, 1990): 26; *ARLC* 1911, 103-04. Sonneck excluded eight classes of material, including arrangements, minstrel music, vaudeville songs "of a low order," and adaptations; see Chief, Music Division to Chairman, Copyright Commission, 4 August 1909, Box 135, CF-LCA.

19. Barr, *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge*, 156-58. Sonneck had already alerted Putnam to her hopes for perpetuating the festivals; see Cyrilla Barr, "The 'Faerie Queene' and the 'Archangel': the Correspondence of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and Carl Engel," *American Music*, 15 (Summer 1997): 162-63.

20. Bauer, "Carl Engel, July 21, 1883-May 6, 1944," *The Musical Quarterly*, 30 (July 1944): 251; Barr, "'Faerie Queene,'" 163-64; Carl Engel to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, 7, 13 November 1923, Box 54, Coolidge Foundation Collection, Music and Performing Arts Division, Library of Congress (hereafter Coolidge Collection). Putnam defined the Music Division as devoted to music literature rather than music as an art. See "Library Affairs in Congress," 60-2, Folder A, 1 December 1908, CF-LCA.

21. Mary Howe, *Jottings* (Washington, D.C. 1959), 109-110. Howe was a leader of Washington musical activities, a founder of the National Symphony Orchestra, and a frequent accompanist for the gifted amateur violinist and later Speaker of the House Nicholas Longworth; see Clara L. Chambrun, *The Making of Nicholas Longworth: Annals of an American Family* (orig. 1933; reprint Freeport, N.Y., 1971), 211-24.

22. The Commissioners, appointed by the President, were responsible for advising on the location of statues, fountains, and monuments in the District of Columbia and on the selection of models and artists. Putnam did not have far to go to find the chairman, who at that time was Charles Moore, the acting chief of the Library's Manuscript Division since 1918. See "Moore, Charles," Box 187, CF-LCA.

23. Engel to Coolidge, [November or December], 1923, Box 54, Coolidge Collection.

24. Howe, *Jottings*, 110; "The Audiences," Box 156, CF-LCA. Mary Howe states that she composed the list, but Putnam undoubtedly refined it. One list of invitees is in his handwriting.

25. Engel to Oscar Sonneck, "received 2/16/24," Carl Engel Correspondence, Music and Performing Arts Division, Library of Congress, hereafter Engel Correspondence; *ARLC* 1924, 4-5; *Washington Post*, February 10, 1924; *Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), February 10, 1924, pt. 1; "The Audiences," CF-LCA.

26. Putnam to Coolidge, 25 October, 8 November 1924, Box 53, Coolidge Collection; Rosenberg, *Nation's Great Library*, 94-101.

27. Putnam to the Honorable The Speaker of the House of Representatives, 4 December 1924, Box 167, CF-LCA. Nicholas Longworth was elected speaker on December 7, replacing

60 Elizabeth Jane Aikin

Frederick Huntington Gillett. Gillett was also a member of the Committee on the Library. In Putnam to Coolidge, 15 December 1924, Box 53, Coolidge Collection, Putnam intimates that he sent the offer letter so that a specific individual would get it—presumably Gillett.

28. U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, 68th Congress, 2d Session, *House Report 1063*, December 20, 1924, Box 135, CF-LCA.

29. Putnam to Coolidge, 13, 15 December 1924, Box 53, Coolidge Collection.

30. Quoted in Michael E. Parrish, *Anxious Decades: America in Prosperity and Depression, 1920-1941* (New York, 1992), 52.

31. *The Library of Congress Trust Fund Board* (Washington, D.C., 1926), Box 167, CF-LCA; Herbert Putnam, "Our National Library," *Review of Reviews*, 79 (February 1929): 60. Putnam later noted that in dealing with Congress, "though their reason had to be satisfied, the surest appeal was to their emotions;" see Herbert Putnam, "The University and the Library," *Library Journal*, 56 (1931): 348.

32. *ARLC* 1925, 4-5.

33. *Library of Congress Trust Fund Board*, CF-LCA.

34. James B. Wilbur, a Board member, on August 10, 1925, offered 1,000 shares of 7 percent preferred stock of the Public Service Company of Northern Illinois, at about \$100 per share to enable the library to acquire photocopies of manuscripts in European archives that related to the history of the United States. On January 2, 1926, New York publisher Richard R. Bowker established an endowment of \$10,000 for bibliographical services, and the noted collector Joseph Pennell, who died on April 23, willed his estate to the Division of Prints. The bequest of Mrs. John Boyd Thacher who died February 18, 1926, was her husband's collection of incunabula, early printing, and manuscripts. In April, Putnam announced that William Evarts Benjamin had provided an endowment for a chair of American History and the Carnegie Corporation funded a chair in the fine arts. In 1927 Archer M. Huntington endowed the purchase of materials relating to Spain, Portugal, and South America, and in 1928 funded a chair of Spanish and Portuguese literature, while John D. Rockefeller's gift of \$700,000 contributed to the manuscript copying project and to the development of the bibliographical apparatus. Later developments included the organization of "The Friends of Music in the Library of Congress," led by Speaker Nicholas Longworth, establishment of the Beethoven Association's Sonneck Memorial Fund "for the aid and advancement of musical research," and the Daniel Guggenheim Fund for the Promotion of Aeronautics, Inc.'s endowment for a chair of aeronautics and the purchase of material. Finally, it was especially gratifying to Putnam's ambitions for the Library that Henry C. Folger selected a neighboring site to construct a library to house his Shakespeariana collection. All gifts were reported in *ARLC*.

35. *Library of Congress Trust Fund Board*, CF-LCA; *ARLC* 1925, 4-5.

36. With the founding of the James J. Hill Library in St. Paul (1921) and the Eastman Memorial Foundation in Laurel, Mississippi (1923), the reference library tradition seemed to be reviving in the 1920s. See Robert J. Usher, "The Place of the Endowed Reference Library in the Community," in *Essays Offered to Herbert Putnam*, eds. William Warner Bishop and Andrew Keogh, (orig. 1929; reprint Freeport, N. Y., 1967), 467-73; Paul DiMaggio, "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America," in *Rethinking Popular Culture: Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies*, eds. Michael Schudson and Chandra Mukerji, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991), 374-97; Paul DiMaggio, "Cultural Boundaries and Structural Change: The Extension of the High Culture Model to Theater, Opera, and the Dance, 1900-1940," in *Cultivating Differences: Symbolic Boundaries and the Making of Inequality*, eds. Michele Lamont and Marcel Fournier, (Chicago, 1992), 21-57.

37. The American Library Association heartily approved the library's initiative. See Rosenberg, *Nation's Great Library*, 104.

38. Donald K. Wilgus, *Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship Since 1898* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1959), 143-44, 153-54; Debora Kodish, *Good Friends and Bad Enemies: Robert Winslow Gordon and the Study of American Folksong* (Urbana, 1986), 19-21; 44-48. See also Peter T. Bartis, "A History of the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress: The First Fifty Years" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1982).

39. "Memorandum {Biographical}," undated, Miscellaneous Box, R. W. Gordon Collection, Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress (hereafter Gordon Collection).

40. Kodish, *Good Friends*, 48-49.

41. "The Trip {Biographical}," undated; Miscellaneous Box, Gordon Collection. Gordon financed his travel with a contract with the *New York Times Magazine* for a series of folk song articles, a \$1,200 Sheldon Traveling Fellowship from Harvard, and donations and discounts from the Ford, Eastman, and Edison companies; see Kodish, *Good Friends*, 56-59.

42. Wilgus, *Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship*, 179-80.

43. Kodish, *Good Friends*, 119-20, 152-55.

44. R. W. Gordon to Engel, 14 January 1927, Correspondence and Reports, Gordon Collection.

45. Peter T. Bartis and Hillary Glatt, *Folklife Sourcebook: A Director of Folklife Resources in the United States*, 2d rev. and expanded edition (Washington, D.C., 1986); Wilgus, *Anglo-American*

Folksong Scholarship, 147-48, 157-59, 167-71, 175-77; Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill, 2000), 16-20.

46. Engel, "Views and Reviews," 298. The American Council of Learned Societies created a Committee on Musicology in 1929, and he became its first chair. The American Musicological Society was not founded until 1934, see Bradley, *American Music Librarianship*, 29.

47. Oscar Sonneck to Engel, 23 May 1928, Engel Correspondence; Engel to Gordon, Jan. 28, 1927, 16 September 1927, Gordon Collection; Engel, "Views and Reviews," 300; Gordon to Engel, 25 January 1927; 2 March 1928, Gordon Collection.

48. Putnam to John Barton Payne, 26 May 1928, Librarian's Letterbooks, No. 646, LCA.

49. ARLC 1931, 199-200; Putnam to Mrs. Parker, 26 May 1928, Librarian's Letterbooks, No. 646, LCA. Mrs. Parker headed the committee that prepared *Church Music and Musical Life in Pennsylvania in the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1926-27).

50. Adolph C. Miller, an economist, was a member of the Federal Reserve Board. For the pledges, see pp. 43, 44, 50, and 66, Librarian's Letterbooks No. 650, LCA.

51. Nolan Porterfield, *Last Cavalier: The Life and Times of John A. Lomax, 1867-1948* (Urbana, 1996), 521; ARLC 1928, 144; Putnam to Frederick Keppel, 26 May 1928, Librarian's Letterbooks No. 646, LCA.

52. See, for examples, John Tasker Howard, Jr., "Our Folk-Music and Its Probable Impress on American Music of the Future," *Musical Quarterly*, 7 (April 1921): 167-71; Arthur de Guichard, "Need for American Folk Song as Basis for Musical Education," *Musical America*, 17 (November 30, 1912), 22; H. F. Martin, "Where is Our National Music?" *Musical Digest*, 10 (May 4, 1926): 3.

53. Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 34-39.

54. Allen, *Only Yesterday*, 170-72; Lynn Dumenil, *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* (New York, 1995), 82-83; Paul A. Carter, *The Twenties in America* (London, 1969), 24; Lawrence W. Levine, "Progress and Nostalgia: The Self Image of the Nineteen Twenties," in *The Unpredictable Past: Explorations in American Cultural History* (New York, 1993), 204; Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Presence of the Past: A History of the Preservation Movement in the United States Before Williamsburg*, (New York, 1965).

55. Clark Evans, "Librarian in Disguise: V. Valta Parma and the Development of Popular Culture Collections at the Library of Congress," in *Pioneers, Passionate Ladies, and Private Eyes: Dime Novels, Series Books, and Paperbacks*, eds. Larry E. Sullivan and Lydia Cushman Schurman, (New York, 1996), 24-26; Barr, *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge*, 181, 245.

56. Putnam to Payne, 26 May 1928, LCA.

57. ARLC 1928, 143-44. Neither the announcement nor Gordon's lecture would have taken place without consultation with the Congressional Joint Committee.

58. *Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), May 24, 1928; Kodish, *Good Friends*, 160.

59. Kodish, *Good Friends*, 161, 165, 168.

60. Gordon to Engel, 14 November 1928; Engel to Gordon, 1 September 1929, Correspondence and Reports, Gordon Collection.

61. Quoted in Kodish, *Good Friends*, 178.

62. George Herzog, *Research in Primitive and Folk Music in the United States*, American Council of Learned Societies, *Bulletin* no. 24, (Washington, D.C., 1936), 47; Kodish, *Good Friends*, 176-88; Porterfield, *Last Cavalier*, 292. These were the first experiments with such equipment, and Gordon also employed motion picture film to record and store material—a step toward the use of microfilm.

63. Kodish, *Good Friends*, 189-92; Porterfield, *Last Cavalier*, 292. Gordon salvaged some of the material from copyright rejects; see ARLC 1932, 321.

64. Herzog, *Research in Primitive and Folk Music*; "Report of the Committee on Folksong of the Popular Literature Section of the Modern Language Association," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 1 (June 1937): 1-73; Lewis Perry, *Intellectual Life in America: A History* (Chicago, 1989), 338-40.

65. Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 46.

66. Herbert Putnam, "The Treasures in the National Library," *Current History*, 34 (1931): 238-52.