
An Analysis of an 'Over-Crowded Worried Life:'

General Charles Hitchcock Sherrill's Tenure On the International Olympic Committee, 1922-1936

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Preface

Whatever opinion one might have of Charles Hitchcock Sherrill (1867- 1936), by any standard, his was an eventful life. As a Yale undergraduate in 1887, he was the first to use the "crouching start," helping him win multiple intercollegiate championship races at 100 and 220 yard distances.¹ Sherrill was a successful New York City lawyer; an internationally recognized expert on European cathedral stained glass windows; a Brigadier General in the United States Army during the First World War (with domestic duties); U.S. Ambassador to Argentina and Turkey; the Director of Culture and Art at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles 1932, and the author of 22 books.² He was selected a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1922 and served until his death on June 25, 1936.³ Three days before his passing, Sherrill was inducted into the Academic Internationale. His wife Sarah Wynkoop Sherrill, wrote on the last page of her husband's autobiography:

My husband's last speech [at the academic] on Bismarck, delivered in the French language, was, he said to me, 'the crowning honour of my life.'⁴

Sherrill concluded his *My Story Book* with the statement, "Mine was an over-crowded worried life."⁵ This researcher has incorporated that telling phrase into the title of this essay.

There is no such thing as a wholly comprehensive biography, any more than there is a completely objective biography. "You cannot lay materials before a reader without first selecting it," wrote biographer Belina Jack.⁶ The latter years of Sherrill's life coincided with the years of ascendancy of Adolf Hitler and the dictator's

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delayed, but enthusiastic embrace of the Berlin Olympics. Sherrill is featured prominently in scores of scholarly books and essays dealing with this era and with the Games of the Eleventh Olympiad.⁷ While this paper will address these critical years, and Sherrill's activities in particular, this researcher hopes to provide a fuller understanding of the man, his thoughts, and his contribution to the Olympic Movement.

There exists no Sherrill biography written by an Olympic historian. He was possibly, next to William Milligan Sloane and Avery Brundage, the most important citizen of the USA to serve on the IOC in that committee's 108-year history. A full view of the man, and still another look at the IOC, might make a contribution to the growing body of scientific Olympic Games literature.

The Tumultuous Olympic Games Period 1933-1936: Sherrill Contributes to Disquiet in the USA and Europe.

The IOC discussed in 1930 and decided in 1931 that Berlin would host the Olympic Summer Games in 1936.⁸ The IOC refused to change its decision even after Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933. General Sherrill had been an IOC member since 1922 and a long-time member of its executive board. He was a well-educated man professionally and culturally, and was neither the "devil incarnate" nor a life-long saint. Broad brushes rarely work in good biography. 'Cause and motive are extremely difficult to ascertain," said the 90-year-old Jacques Barzun in his recent book *From Dawn to Decadence*.⁹ On January 30, 1933, Hitler was appointed chancellor of a Nazi conservative coalition government and also in early June of that year the IOC met in Vienna to discuss issues of the most perplexing nature.¹⁰ What followed were intense discussions between German government officials, German IOC members, and members of the Organizing Committee.¹¹ Sherrill and several others stepped forward and reminded all that it was insufficient for the Germans to allow all visiting nations to bring "Negroes and Jews" to the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. Sherrill insisted that Jews be represented on the German Olympic team. Writing in his personal diary, *A Journey to Vienna*, Professor Carl Diem, Secretary-General of these games wrote:

The American delegate [Sherrill] presented a pile of letters and dispatches: only a binding commitment from Germany can keep Germany in the Olympic committee . . . Sherrill put it that way—Jews are not excluded as a principle. He wanted certainty that Germany would not treat Jews worse than those from other countries at the Olympic Games.¹²

Historian Arnd Kruger, no admirer of Sherrill, pointed out that he went too far in his proposal: "This demand was unheard of, as it clearly interfered with the rights of a National Olympic Committee to be represented by whom it pleased."¹³ Clearly, Sherrill thought his work well done and wrote "It was a hard fight; victory was complete, and "I am a tired citizen."¹⁴ Almost all reputable Olympic historians agree with Kruger's harsh assessment: "Sherrill's efforts to get a Jew on the German team had been shown to be mere eyewash."¹⁵ Veteran American journalist William L. Shirer, stationed in Berlin at that time, wrote thirty-five years later that Sherrill, his IOC and "the American Olympic Committee above all fell victim to the Nazi distor-

tion.”¹⁶ Without the benefit of hindsight, Sherrill and others thought that some progress had been made. John MacCormac, writing in *The New York Times* [NYT] said that “Sherrill’s insistence carri[e]d the day.”¹⁷

At the late November 1933 joint meeting of the American Amateur Athletic Union [AAU] and the American Olympic Association [AOA], a resolution forwarded by Gustavus Kirby was passed “giving notice” to Germany that the U.S. Olympic team would be unable to participate “unless the position of the German Olympic Committee and the Organizing Committee of Berlin is . . . changed in fact as well as in theory ...”¹⁸ That same day, November 23, 1933, Sherrill wrote to Colonel E. M. House (1858-1938), trusted aide to three U.S. presidents:

As usual your advice proved admirable! . . . I carried the Meeting. Before the vote, I was condemned as anti-Semitic, But after the argument, was hailed by the Jews present as their best friend, and Rabbi Goldstein has invited me to conduct his Thanksgiving Day service from his pulpit.¹⁹

Such was Sherrill’s peculiar form of self-delusion. It failed to get better in the months preceding the Berlin festival. Theodore Lewald and Carl Diem, key officials behind Berlin’s Olympic initiative met with Herbert L. Mathews, a senior political correspondent of *The New York Times*. Assurances were given, once again, that Jewish athletes would be on the German team. Is not the *New York Times* “the property of Ochs, a Jew?” wrote Sherrill to Brundage. Mathews filed his report, a measured essay published on May 9.²⁰ A late May meeting in Athens of the full IOC underscored its feeling that German Jews would be on the Olympic team.²¹

“The tenor of the fight became more vehement . . . in the fall of 1935,” wrote Holocaust historian Deborah E. Lipstadt, in her seminal work *Beyond Belief*. General Sherrill, she wrote, once again predicted an outbreak of American anti-Semitism.²² Sherrill crossed the Atlantic Ocean forty times in thirty-five years and did so again in the summer of 1935 to discuss matters with Adolf Hitler and then communicate with IOC President Henri Baillet-Latour. At the August 24, 1935 meeting with Hitler in Munich, Sherrill underscored the importance of the IOC’s 1933 Vienna accord. Hitler claimed no knowledge that German Jews must be allowed to compete for positions on the national Olympic team. The meeting ended and a shaken Sherrill wrote Baillet-Latour: “You are in for the greatest shock of your entire life. I urge you to talk personally with the Führer.”²³ And yet the star-struck Sherrill sent a post card to his friend in the U.S. White House, Colonel Edward M. House: “My hour as personal guest of Hitler was wonderful. I hope and believe I did some good and reported it to Mr. Roosevelt at Hyde Park.”²⁴ Sherrill rode the diplomatic train from Berlin to the Nuremberg convention and “talked with Hitler for an hour.”²⁵

The September 1935 Nuremberg Party Congress “officially abolished all political rights of German Jews.” The “token” inclusion of half-Jew Helene Mayer on the German team pleased Sherrill, but almost no one else.²⁶ Sherrill’s 1933 view that German Jews must be on their Olympic team had, in the fall of 1935, declined into a warning of “increased anti-Semitism among thousands of young Americans once they get the idea that Jews are scheming to get America to boycott the Berlin Games.”²⁷ Sherrill sailed for home aboard the *Normandie* and upon his return spoke to Albert Allen of *The American Hebrew and Jewish Tribune*. Allen didn’t believe a word of

the General: "Our regard for the General's standard of honesty is not of the highest... the man is an anti-Semite who must be unmasked."²⁸

The months October through December of 1935 must have been difficult for Sherrill. Voices of special interest groups and several liberal media outlets faulted him for his "rosy picture" of German Olympic preparations. He had his defenders, of course, but passionate voices criticizing the 68-year-old IOC member were many, *The Nation* demanded the "immediate withdrawal from the Olympics." William B. Chamberlain, Secretary of the Committee on Fair Play in Sports wrote Sherrill, "Please do not support the Germans in their evil efforts to host the Olympic Games." When Jeremiah Mahoney, President of the AAU, criticized Sherrill's "whitewash" of German racism, General Sherrill responded that Mahoney should first address pervasive and powerful racism in the United States.²⁹ The opinionated Gustavus Town Kirby, long-time member of both the AAU and the AOC, wrote Avery Brundage on October 28, 1935: "Sherrill's statements have certainly been those of a weakling." Iphigen Sulzberger of the family owners of *The New York Times* wrote a letter to "Gus" Kirby "that General Sherrill's remarks are not only unfair towards the Jewish attitude but they are unjust to all us Americans." Mahoney told Jewish war veterans that "Sherrill is no more a friend of the Jew than is Hitler."³⁰ Sherrill absorbed more criticism from the editor of *The Commonwealth* on two occasions.³¹ It must have been a stress-filled calendar year 1935 for the Olympic movement, as well as for IOC member Charles Sherrill.

The general was in concert with his IOC and AOC colleagues that the Olympic Games must be held in Berlin during August 1936. No record exists of his reaction to the January publication of the Nazi party "Reichs Diet" document "German Pronouncement for the People of the State and Athletics." Ralph W. Barnes of *The New York Herald Tribune* had a copy and wrote "that, whatever expectation may be made in connection with the Olympic Games, there has been no modification in general of the Nazi policy which excludes German Jews . . ."³² Sherrill and his ideological friends were criticized in 1936, as they were a half-century later. The Games in Berlin were highly successful. Lipstadt was convinced that the German people interpreted this success "as a sign of its legitimization of Hitler's policies." She further wrote that "The German people may have enjoyed the Games, but it was the state that reaped the bounty."³³ Another scholar, Shlomo Shafir, concluded that "General Sherrill . . . had for years voiced pro-Fascist sympathies," and in so doing had contributed to "the Reich leadership's belief in American non-interventionism and weakened the credibility of the Jewish voluntary boycott [in the USA]."³⁴

Sherrill died on June 26, 1936. His body was brought back from Europe to be buried July 16. The famous Rev. Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, President of Union Theological Seminary, pronounced the eulogy. "It is a strange and sad coincidence that on the very day that the American Olympic team should sail," he said, "General Sherrill should be buried."³⁵

Sherrill autobiographies, biographies, and obituaries.

With privileged background and every available opportunity, Charles Hitchcock Sherrill, born April 13, 1867, in Washington, D.C., earned degrees B.A., LL.B., M.A., and LL.D. from Yale University and New York University.³⁶ "My ancestors

were Anglo-Saxon," he wrote in his *Sherrill Genealogy*, "the descendants of Samuel Sherrill of East Hampton, Long Island, who came to America in 1674."³⁷ C.H. Sherrill's father, with the same name, was born in 1818 - a canal expert who helped build the Erie Canal.³⁸ The younger Sherrill left for Yale University in 1885, graduated in 1889, and earned high grades and the title of fastest university sprinter in the nation.³⁹ He continued running after graduation as a member of the New York Athletic Club (NYAC) and pioneered the international track and field competitions between his university and Oxford and Cambridge Universities during the last half decade of the 1890s: "In 1900, he took a Yale team to England to meet Oxford University in a dual meet."⁴⁰ In his autobiography, *My Story Book*, Sherrill wrote that in that same year, 1900, "I captained the American team at the Paris Olympic Games."⁴¹ He must have been a faithful diarist because he wrote that these two trips to England and France were the first of a "series of ocean crossings now totaling eighty-eight."⁴²

With unusual overlap of careers, preoccupations and passions, Sherrill kept very busy until his death in 1936. Greatly facilitating his eclectic interests was expertise in French, Spanish, and knowledge of seven other languages."⁴³ His legal career with specialization in international corporate law spanned 1892-1917. His firm Sherrill and Lockwood proved prosperous. Sherrill did not limit the use of some of his personal qualities to his professional life.⁴⁴ He was United States Minister to Argentina (1909-1911) and, under the Herbert Hoover administration, Sherrill served a tumultuous term in 1932 and 1933 as ambassador to Turkey. During the First World War, the United States War Department asked Sherrill to serve as draft chairman of New York State and charged him with guarding "aqueducts, canals, railways, etc. throughout the state." He did his work well and was raised to the war-time rank of Brigadier General.⁴⁵

General Sherrill wrote twenty books on athletics, art, painting, European stained glass windows, international politics, American political history and two autobiographies.⁴⁶ *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* list Sherrill as honorary member of twenty-seven domestic and international societies. Two of them were memberships in the American Olympic Committee-American Olympic Association (AOC-AOA) and the International Olympic Committee. And during the Games of the Xth Olympiad in Los Angeles, 1932, Sherrill was director of the Art and Culture exhibition and competition.⁴⁷ His sudden death in June of 1936 resulted in several obituaries. "Many countries decorated Gen. Sherrill for his diplomatic work," wrote *The Washington Post*. A thousand-word obituary appeared in the *NYT*, recognizing him as a commander of the French Legion of Honor and a key figure in the extreme controversy surrounding America's participation in the 1936 Olympic Games.⁴⁸ The IOC President Henri Baillet-Latour, wrote Mrs. Sherrill: "We shall never forget the memory of your husband, a man of soaring spirit, a great athlete and a devoted apostle of the Olympic Idea."⁴⁹

Sherrill's Event-Filled Years 1886-1922

During the presidential administrations of McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft and Woodrow Wilson, there were 220 letters exchanged with C.H. Sherrill. Almost none of these letters (on microfilm) dealt with sport and the Olympic Games.⁵⁰ There is, however, a lively correspondence between Sherrill and Yale football coach Walter

Camp, who later became a member of the AOC and attended two Olympic Games.

President Taft appointed Sherrill in 1909 as “envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Argentina,” where he was “directly responsible in increasing trade between the two nations from \$47 million to \$80 million.”⁵¹ Sherrill’s appointment may have come about, in part, because of a ringing endorsement by Theodore Roosevelt to the soon-to-be president, William H. Taft:

Sherrill does first-class work among both business men and labor men. Sherrill is a mighty good fellow and a mighty efficient fellow...Permit me to say something on his behalf. You will remember him as a Yale man, the runner, and a very cultivated person.⁵²

The complex Sherrill would, in this first decade of the century, begin a thirty year odyssey of studying stained glass windows in Europe’s greatest medieval and Renaissance cathedrals. His four books on the subject received good reviews. *New York Times* art critic, Ryan Walker commented: “Mr. Sherrill has an eye for the beauties of nature and a cultivated taste for splendid architecture and knows how to paint vivid pictures of the things he sees.”⁵³ Sherrill himself spoke scores of times about “the wonderful beauty that the stained glass window can alone reveal” and in the same 1908 *Stained Glass Tours in France* he called the 700-year old windows a place “where light lies imprisoned.” He continued: “This harmony of colours, this melodious flowing of tone into tone is a glimpse vouchsafed to us all into the solemn mystery that dwells within this enchanted bower of light.”⁵⁴ A year later, this time describing Lincoln Cathedral’s “Bishop’s Eye” window, he wrote of “light and color, the beauty of stained glass.” He wrote in reverential tones about: “...this rose window a jewel of the glazier’s art...the mason as well has added a wondrous charm by the lightness of his stone traceries and the curious interpenetrated stone frame which he has placed upon it.”⁵⁵

Sherrill wrote in a similar vein in his 1913 *A Stained Glass Tour in Italy* and twenty years later wrote *Mosaics*, an eloquent description of 12th century decorations made of small pieces of inlaid stone and glass and the “thrilling ‘naiveté’ of mosaics.” He went on: “There is the child still lurking within all grown-ups. The Palermo Cathedral...its greenish-gray mosaics...Abundant light makes Gay springlike interiors...”⁵⁶

During these important years before Sherrill’s 1922 appointment to the IOC and in between his frequent “stained glass tours,” the highly successful corporate lawyer and American diplomat accepted a gold medal from a grateful Argentine government; found reason to formally object to not being selected ambassador to Japan; spoke to 10,000 New Yorkers in the Madison Square Garden as representative of the “Business Men’s Non-Partisan Anti-Tammany League” and addressed the American Manufacturing Export Association on the need for an expanded Merchant Marine, as “war clouds hang over Europe.”⁵⁷ As State of New York Adjutant General, Sherrill wrote to an ailing Theodore Roosevelt on August 28, 1918, informing him that the war necessitated the drafting of “810,000 men from this state to the Federal Colors.”⁵⁸ Following the holocaust of war, Sherrill wrote his friend, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, William Howard Taft (1857-1930) and received a prompt reply: “I shall be very glad to join with you in efforts to promote the Yale Law School.”⁵⁹ The

year was 1921, and Sherrill was on the edge of another appointment...a member of that particular organization, the IOC.

Sherrill and The IOC Overwhelmed by Ennui, 1922-1932.

The IOC's old concept of absolute and pure athletic amateurism for all competitors in the modern Olympic Games was unenforceable. The untalented athlete was never offered money. The born-wealthy champion needed none, while the skilled but poor athlete frequently "surrendered" and took both the prize and the money. The Games' founder, Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937), and most of his IOC, remained passionate but imprecise about who was eligible and who was not. IOC members, all-wealthy gentlemen during Coubertin's twenty-nine years as president (1896-1925), never stopped talking about amateurism. The circular, interminable discussions on the subject seriously damaged the integrity of the committee, resulting in a type of intellectual ennui and inefficiency. Way back in 1894, Coubertin and his people employed a kind of Socratic methodology in asking seven questions about amateurism in hopes such repetitions would elicit truths and definitions.⁶⁰ It didn't work. At the end of his tenure, at the 1925 Congress in Prague, the question of Olympic Games eligibility remained equally elusive. "There is no denying the evidence," said Coubertin. Every single athlete entering the Olympic Games must take an "individual solemn oath: that he has never accepted athletic prize money," said Coubertin at this, his last IOC meeting.⁶¹ This was the wondrous world in which the IOC and General Sherrill faced in 1922. He adapted quickly and became one of the committee's ideological and administrative leaders. After all, the former college sprint champion had, for more than thirty years, been immersed in what S.W. Pope called Coubertin's "amateur ethos."⁶² The important American historian, William Milligan Sloane (1850-1928), charter member of the IOC, saw in the 55-year-old Sherrill a kindred spirit, someone from his own social and intellectual rank. and so recommended him for IOC membership. "General Sherrill," wrote Dr. Sloane to Coubertin: "...is a retired diplomat 'persona grattissima' [person of highest honor]...with intense interest in clean [amateur] sport....still in his prime, with ample living means [wealthy]. He is a strong man."⁶³

William May Garland (1866-1948) and Sherrill attended their first IOC meeting in Paris, 1922. They had hoped to convince Coubertin and his "court" to discuss the possibility of Los Angeles as a future Olympic Games site. Little was done in what must be the essential role of their committee. Instead, wearisome discussions took place on the exact origins and the meanings of the two words, "Olympique" and Olympiade."⁶⁴ It was too much of a "good" thing.

The new IOC president, Henri Baillet-Latour, wrote no books nor was he a scholar like Coubertin. But, as was their custom at both Executive Committee meetings and full IOC gatherings, wrote historian Karl Lennartz, "they constantly spoke of the amateur problem, which came up time and again."⁶⁵ Coubertin wrote of his last IOC meeting in 1925 where "we opened the corpse cupboard and the amateurism mummy and its retinue were taken out and studied again."⁶⁶ Similar animated and futile conversations about amateurism took place in the United States, on college campuses and especially at AAU-AOC-AOA conventions. Gus Kirby, past president of these three organizations, took 900 words in a *New York Herald Tribune* essay to

say that the “overwhelmingly most important goal of amateur sport is to mold character.”⁶⁷ The economic Depression in 1934 may have had something to do with the outpouring of essays on the sanctity of unsullied athletic amateurism. President of all three committees (AAU-AOC-AOA), Avery Brundage, saved almost everything that crossed his table. For that one year 1934, he read and preserved scores of essays covering forty typewritten pages, all on amateurism.⁶⁸ Brundage wrote Kirby a few years later: “Athletic amateurism is one of the most important subjects in the world of sport today.”⁶⁹

The IOC seemed dumbstruck during this first decade of Sherrill’s membership 1922-1932. Some brilliant men were co-opted, but too often they appeared to be no more than the idle rich seeking travel to exotic cities. Sherrill wrote Baillet-Latour on September 1, 1925. The Belgian count was president and the General was on the IOC Executive Committee: “The Maharajah of Kapurthalah, India, and I were lunching in the Bois [Paris] with the President of the Republic. The Maharajah would make a good IOC member.”⁷⁰

This researcher has no intent to “paint with broad brush” the IOC members during the 1920s as frivolous and empty-headed. But there was little business ambiance about their meetings which were built around family excursions, cultural-musical-theatrical-gambling adventures, so much so that a neutral observer might miss the central focus of this international sporting congress. It is a certainty that Mr. and Mrs. Sherrill took advantage of these lengthy overseas travels to prolong the trip with museum studies, excursions to Europe’s stunning cathedrals, visitations with royalty and diplomatic re-connections with many of Europe’s political, business, and military leaders plus delightful sessions with aristocratic-royal acquaintances. Regrettably, with Sherrill and other IOC members, the growing complexities of preparing for an Olympic Games took second place. If the IOC, as an efficient management organization, had not wholly ceased any progress in Sherrill’s first decade of membership, it was moving as if in some kind of somnambulate state.

An Assessment of Sherrill’s Fifteen Years on the IOC 1922-1936

General Sherrill attended as many AOC and AOA meetings as he was able, and rarely missed an IOC meeting. His ego, his intelligence, and his commitment remained high. His health was excellent, as well.⁷¹ Unlike some of his associates, Sherrill in his own way, made his presence known at these gatherings, both domestic and international. We know that Sherrill was eloquent on his feet and often a charismatic figure. Before fellow members of the combined USOC’s sub-committees, his 2500-word speech received great applause. You are a great organization, he said, as is my “little known IOC.” The President of the United States will meet us at 12:30 this afternoon in the White House, he concluded.⁷² Sherrill kept Baillet-Latour updated about American amateur athletic business, ever-lastingly a total mystery to even the most knowledgeable of the European Olympic leaders. “The fight between our American athletic organizations is over. The smoke has cleared away and the fight was won by the AAU,” he wrote on December 7, 1926. A year later, he informed Baillet-Latour (who probably understood very little): “Yesterday the great insurgent body, the NCAA, voted to rejoin the AOC.”⁷³

Never one to be shy, Sherrill continued his trans-Atlantic voyages serving the

IOC's Executive Committee, the broader IOC membership, and indulging himself by seeking and gaining interviews with Europe's national leaders. As well, he paid "delightful" visits to museums and ancient cathedrals.⁷⁴ Everlastingly seeking the center of attention, Sherrill shared a similar temperament with Los Angeles real estate millionaire, W.M. Garland. The third American IOC member. Ernest Lee Jahncke, never once attended an overseas meeting. Sherrill shared dinner at the Yale University Club with his friend of thirty-five years, Walter Camp. "He's still trim of figure, and full of the same fire and dash...No one has done more for international sport than Charlie Sherrill," wrote the great football coach.⁷⁵ Even Coubertin was in debt to Sherrill, the American general having proposed the Baron's life honorary IOC president upon Coubertin's retirement in 1925. Wrote Coubertin: "On the proposal of General Sherrill, my colleagues had appointed me 'Honorary Life President of the Olympic Games.' Specifying that this honour should never be conferred on any one else after me."⁷⁶ Sherrill always admired such lovely trumpety.

From his Paris home in 1926, General Sherrill announced the establishment of the New York University overseas Summer School of Fine Arts. Sherrill was an energetic booster of the initiative. He paid for most of it.⁷⁷ He was clever and energetic enough, as well as sufficiently wealthy, to meld work with fun and frolic. At the IOC's twenty-fifth session in Monaco in April of 1927, Sherrill and Garland lobbied hard and successfully to bring the 1932 summer Olympics to Los Angeles.⁷⁸ In 1931, "The highest levels of New York City society" attended the Sherrill's 25th wedding anniversary at the Pierre Hotel. The one hundred guests enjoyed themselves, "seated around an 'S'-shaped table."⁷⁹ Lastly, in the decade of the good life for the Sherrills, President Hoover appointed this much-decorated lawyer and loyal Republican leader, to the post of Minister to Turkey. It was March of 1932 and, awkwardly, Sherrill had in that same month accepted the responsible title of "Chairman of the Fine Arts Committee for the Games of the Xth Olympiad in Los Angeles. He left for Ankara and never made it to the Olympic Games."⁸⁰

Talent and Puffery: The IOC and Sherrill Reappraised, 1922-1936.

No one is even remotely close to perfect. The nearly perfect candidate for the IOC - Sherrill in 1922 - was criticized by the highly respected director of the international Y.M.C.A., Elwood S. Brown, who in a letter to Baron de Coubertin, wrote:

If he [Sherrill] goes to the IOC as a representative of the Kirby School of thought and method, he will in no sense represent the national athletic life of America but a rather particular undemocratic one which is entirely out of working relationships with all [athletic governing bodies] that have flatly declined to affiliate with the new undemocratic, AAU-controlled AOA.⁸¹

The point is not who was "right" and who was "wrong." Decision-making by persons in high places is often visible risk taken. For more than forty-five years, C.H. Sherrill made decisions, many of them wise and, in retrospect, some ill advised. This research effort has in no way attempted to minimize Sherrill's puzzling decisions, nor does history portray him as essentially injudicious. He was multi-talented. almost frenetically busy, and often made controversial decisions, especially late in life. One of the

dimensions of his life that stamp him and his character was a lifetime of mingling with “famous” men and a parallel hero-worship of military and political leaders that helped change the world. Sherrill was absolutely taken by Yale University track coach Mike Murphy and by football coach Walter Camp. Hero-worship began early with the young Sherrill, which in itself is no wrong thing. Hindsight is the greatest historian and so we know that Sherrill lacked sufficient foresight in his admiration for Theodore Roosevelt; David Lloyd George; Emperor Hirohito; General Paul von Hindenburg; Mustapha Kemal (Ataturk); King Haakon VII of Norway; Edward Benes, President of Czechoslovakia; Benito Mussolini; Adolf Hitler and many others. Sherrill met with all of them and wrote praiseworthy essays, comments, and even full texts about them.

Sherrill’s concept of history as essentially the actions of heroic supermen is not unusual. Nowhere in Sherrill’s twenty-two books is there mention of historian Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) and his influential 1841 lectures “On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History.” They were read around the world and Sherrill may have read them. Much discredited by contemporary historians, the hero thesis was strong in Sherrill’s day, a century ago. By reflection, Sherrill may have perceived himself a “great man,” in the shadow pantheon of the rich, powerful, and therefore, influential. French writer Claude Bernard (1813-1878) said that “Great men may be compared to torches shining at long intervals to light up their time.”⁸² Without any hint at playing the psycho-historian, Sherrill believed himself a very special person - a kind of “Roman” leader, someone who stands out from the crowd, and as the historian George Peabody Gooch said of Thomas Carlyle’s philosophy of history: “Like the Calvinistic theologians, he thought that the elect were few.”⁸³ Charles Sherrill, almost surely, believed himself to be a member of the “elect.”

Veneration was very much part of Sherrill’s “ethos.” He dedicated one of his books to his parents and to those “Lands where veneration of ancestors is the cornerstone of civilization.”⁸⁴ Sherrill was talented, vain to the point of exasperation to many that knew him, and stamped himself as a significant person in several disparate domains. There must have been others like him. Thus no easy assessment of the man would be historically sound. Sherrill was forever “star-struck” in the presence of famous men. He wrote his Yale University classmate, the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and former U.S. president, William Howard Taft:

We are here at Skibo Castle, Scotland, at the home of Andrew Carnegie and Mrs. Carnegie. We Yale men are much delighted at your selection as Chief Justice. When I come home may I call upon you to talk about bettering the Yale Law School?⁸⁵

Sherrill’s wanderings took him far afield, interviewing great men of substance in a dozen countries, never criticizing but always using the terms “astute,” “quickly-daring,” “enlightened,” and “a fighting man with intelligence.”⁸⁶ Sherrill never traveled to Japan, but he met the new emperor, Hirohito in Paris and called him and his family “a symbol of stability . . . providing a bulwark against bolshevism.”⁸⁷ While in Istanbul as ambassador, Sherrill wrote his Yale friend and mentor, the productive scholar, William Lyon Phelps (1865-1943): “Dear Old Bill: I got a personal telegram from Mussolini [and] a cordial letter of thanks from Hindenburg for the way that I talked of

him. Not bad, eh what?"⁸⁸

"What an eagle is Mustafa Kemal Ataturk the Victorious," wrote Sherrill in his 1934 *A Year's Embassy to Mustafa Kemal*.^{8 9} Upon leaving Turkey, it is not surprising that the Istanbul press called Sherrill a remarkable American who showed the world something of "the most political phenomena of modern times - Kemal."⁹⁰ In another rhapsodical biography, *The Purple or the Red* (1924), Sherrill said that the world must choose between the "purple" or "ardent nationalism of Benito Mussolini" or the unfaltering evil, the "International Menace of Bolshevism."⁹¹ There's so much more of this fluff and flummery, and for Ambassador-IOC member Sherrill, mighty good times. While in Belgium in the spring of 1934, King Leopold "received" Sherrill and the two conversed for three-quarters of an hour, the first audience King Leopold had given to an American.⁹² Sherrill left members of the press breathless in 1935, praising the old dictator Mussolini and saying nice things about Hitler.

As was his way, Sherrill sailed to Europe in March of 1935, to do Olympic business and to interview Mussolini. He did both, with controversy attached to each. Sherrill no longer felt the urgency of the IOC becoming involved in the "German Jew problem." As well, Sherrill's stand that America should compete in Berlin hardened. Olympic historian Stephen R. Wenn noted Sherrill's complete turnabout from 1933 to 1935, took aim at Sherrill who said at this late date that the issue was "the concern of the German Olympic Committee alone" and not that of the American or any other government.⁹³ Wenn's skepticism-cynicism is well-founded, but there was in the mind and heart of Sherrill a world of difference between 1933 and 1935. a time period which saw Hitler move from a violence-disposed revolutionary to "Der Führer." The runaway hero-worshipping Sherrill was much impressed. He wrote:

I was Hitler's personal guest for four days in mid-September of 1935 . . . It was beautiful! You could almost hear the units click, as each fitted into place, exactly on time.⁹⁴

Lastly, on events in 1935, historian Wenn wrote that

. . . Sherrill. . . fought for, and accepted 'tokenism' in terms of Jewish participation . . . He did a real flip-flop on the question as to whether the Jewish participation question was an integral domestic matter for Germany. He knew the situation in terms of discrimination against Jewish athletes, and did not 'come clean' with voting members of the AAU.⁹⁵

Good historian that he is, Wenn never mentions hero-worship as a Sherrill motive. But then few have read Sherrill's privately published *My Story*, where he concludes with the telling remark that it is far better "for me to become a hero-worshipper than to continue a critic."⁹⁶

Although not always having laudable human traits, Sherrill was unflagging in his multiple enterprises, toweringly egotistical, loyal to his IOC - and, within the parameters of his own upbringing - sensitive and responsive to the larger Olympic Movement. Garland wrote Brundage on August 7, 1935: "I'm sure that you know," he wrote, that "General Sherrill loves the limelight."⁹⁷ Kirby, everlastingly seeking the always elusive IOC membership, wrote Brundage in that same year: "All that he [Sherrill] thinks and cares about is Charles Sherrill."⁹⁸ Almost nothing is simple. The

very highly esteemed president of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler (1862-1947) said of his friend Sherrill: "His life has been one of earnest efforts to play the part of a high-minded citizen."⁹⁹

Reflections and Conclusions

General Sherrill was a "big player" during the 1933-1936 attempts to boycott the so-called "Nazi Olympics." Early in these efforts, Sherrill stood astride the two camps, i.e., the U.S. should participate but only if the German government and its Olympic Committee made clear declarations regarding Jewish citizen participation. Sherrill wavered even more following what he felt were principled declarations. By 1935 and until his death on the eve of the Olympic Games, he became convinced that the American Olympic Committee had but one duty, to select the best team and send them to the Olympic Games. Never for a moment did Sherrill contemplate an American boycott of the 1936 Olympic Games. His resolve on this issue hardened as the Berlin festival approached. It is what "my IOC wishes." The U.S. should be in the German capital, Sherrill told the Advertising Club of New York on October 31, 1935.¹⁰⁰ Sherrill must have been aware that he had compromised principle regarding German Jewish participation. Possibly it bothered him greatly; possibly such disquiet may have contributed to his sudden fatal heart attack in June of 1936.

Sherrill's lineage, autobiographies and biographical sketches, are less speculative. He was proud of his Anglo-Saxon heritage. Mrs. Sherrill was exceedingly proud to be a member of the Society of Mayflower descendants. General Sherrill spoke frequently and with pride, that both of them were "blue-blood" Americans, comfortable in the company of royalty, aristocracy, high military, and very much "at home" in the presence of elite art connoisseurs, prominent scholars and, for him, those men that embodied most of the above. Sherrill avoided excessive hubris by always using the third-person in his *Sherrill Genealogy*. "Charles Sherrill," he wrote, "was decorated by nine foreign governments" as well as forty honorary societies, political, philanthropic, and athletic organizations, as well as the "Athenaeum, St. James and Leander of London; Union, Travelers, Polo, and St. Cloud Golf of Paris."¹⁰¹ None of these honours and privileges came close to his induction at the very end of his life, into the Academic Diplomatique Internationale. Walter Littlefield wrote a praise-filled book review of Sherrill's 1934 *A Year's Embassy to Mustafa Kemal*, and said of the author:

General Sherrill, virtuoso in various fields-statecraft, belles-letters, art, sport [provided a book] serious and whimsical, analytical, impressionistic, at times pragmatic, philosophical, and gracefully written.¹⁰²

As was Sherrill's hero worshipping way, he called the Turkish subject of his biography "Kemal the Victorious...who today has no superior in the field of statesmanship anywhere."¹⁰³ Similar rhapsodical writings came from Sherrill's pen about other "great men" of his personal acquaintance: Lloyd George; German prime minister, Joseph Wirth; "the great Japanese diplomat and Harvard University graduate, Viscount

Kaneko"; and, of course, Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. With regard to the former, Sherrill did himself no service in the eyes of future historians in a 1935 address before the Italian Chamber of Commerce at the Biltmore Hotel in New York City:

Mussolini is a man of courage, in a world of 'pussyfooters.' I am here today to speak for a man I have long known and admired, for a gallant father...and also father of that amazing creation of his brain and heart-the New Italy, now rescued from Red communism. I wish to God he'd come over here and have a chance to do that same thing.¹⁰⁴

Sherrill remained always wonderfully talented but a poor futurist visionary. He was, like most of us, a product of his family environment and early years. He was neither saint nor sinner and led an event-filled life beyond the capabilities of most, elevated much above the social, educational and financial opportunities enjoyed by most.

In this effort at biographical comprehensiveness, Sherrill's "event-filled" life 1886-1922 - from his halcyon days at Yale until his selection onto the IOC -the record must project a person of nearly unlimited physical energy, charismatic, intellectual, ambitious, with pride spilling over to egotism. He used material and psychical resources to further his own agenda. He was recognized by some close friends as selfishly self-centered. On the subject of Sherrill, William May Garland wrote to Brundage in early August 1935:

I have a sense of delicacy and hesitation in offering any criticism. If you know him as well as I do, you would register surprise, but be lenient. It is a well known fact that Sherrill loves the limelight...¹⁰⁵

If he was not born wealthy, Sherrill made a great deal of money in his "on and off" legal career of more than thirty years. His two ambassadorships to Turkey and Argentina; his wartime responsibilities and as dual board chairman of two major business corporations increased his stature as well as his income. His forty years' allegiance to Yale and New York Universities as well as a skillful and deep commitment to the state and national Republican Party resulted in major connections and personal satisfaction. Of urgent and great importance were his earnest allegiances to the national and international Olympic Committees. He lived at least the sum of two persons' successful lives. As a young man, Sherrill was coached by Yale legend, Michael C. Murphy, who introduced him to the "superior crouch start."¹⁰⁶ Sometimes mercurial, almost always overly prideful, Sherrill was, as a writer, best when describing objects of art, especially his beloved cathedral stained-glass windows.

Charles Sherrill was far from a blameless figure. He was talented, complicated, vain and never beatific in his many human interactions. Those that criticize him must do so with specific allegations, just as those who praise his every word and action know little about this IOC member. He worked very hard in his life, and, as far as we know, earned an honest fortune. Coupled already with "genteel" birth, he was fortunate to have for forty years enormous discretionary time. It seemed he used the time well. The main thesis of this paper was to show the variegated ways in which he used this "free" time, especially his thirty-six year connection with the Olympic Games, 1900 until the edge of the Berlin Games.

The IOC, aristocratic, wealthy gentlemen spent a disproportionate amount of time defining the words “amateurism” and “professionalism,” discussing by the hour the absolute necessity of only amateurs in their Olympic Games, and by implication (and frequently overtly) the alleged evils of professional competitive games. “Broken-time” compensation seemed a perpetual topic discussed, a never-solved dilemma for aspiring unwealthy Olympic athletes. The wheel turned and the IOC found little to praise nor could they even define “semi-professional sport.” To the horror of most, the topic of “competitions between amateurs and professionals” was given short shrift at these Olympic Congresses, IOC Executive Committee and full IOC meetings during the 1920’s. Loyal members Garland and Sherrill were there and made appropriate comments about their native U.S. A careful look at the “Garland tile” reveals that his overwhelming IOC agenda was to get for his beloved city of Los Angeles the summer Olympic Games of 1924; and if not that, the 1928 Games and if not that then the Games of the Tenth Olympiad in 1932. He was aided in a real way by Charles Sherrill in obtaining the latter.¹⁰⁸ There is no way by any standard quantitative or qualitative measurement, that one can say that the International Olympic Committee, during the long decade of 1922-1932, was an effective, goal-oriented and efficient organization. Whatever “good” they engendered and whatever unhinged announcements came from that committee leadership, General Sherrill was always there. The Olympic “movement” was important to him.

Sherrill served the IOC from 1922-1936, more than half of that time on the Executive Committee (1927-1936). Attendance at these European continent meetings necessitated many weeks away from home every year and involved long and very expensive luxury sailing crossings and first-class rail travel. He could afford the money, and, apparently, the time. He arrived early and stayed late in his travels with Mrs. Sherrill...researching libraries, museums, cathedrals, and indulging in another passion- audiences with the “rich and famous.” In his first year, 1922, he informed the IOC that many in the U.S. were angry that Los Angeles had not been given serious consideration for either the 1924 or the 1928 Olympic Games. At the Rome 1923 IOC get-together, Sherrill proposed changes in Olympic rowing and fencing, and joined Garland’s strident voice in demanding a “future Los Angeles Olympic Games.” During the next seven months, the Sherrills were in Europe. Returning home in April of 1925, Sherrill told his colleagues on the AOC-AOA and the press that “Amsterdam will host the 1928, and Los Angeles the 1932 Olympic Summer Games.” The General and Mrs. Sherrill were in the Hague for a 1926 Executive Committee meeting, followed by visits to “stained glass factories in Vienna, Germany and Italy.” That same year he found time to instruct a *New York Times* journalist that American professional sport is so corrupt that it will “make amateur sport cleaner” He failed to detail precisely how this might come about. The 1927 IOC session in Monaco was notable with a Sherrill announcement that an American ship would transport European Olympic athletes across the sea, through the Panama Canal and to Los Angeles in the summer of ‘32, and at no cost to them. At this Monaco meeting, the April 14 *NYT* wrote that (of course) the Sherrills would be house guests of the Prince of Monaco. The third American on the IOC during part of this time period was the mysterious millionaire from New Orleans, Ernest Lee Jahncke. He was dismissed from IOC membership in 1936, but as far back as March of 1929, Baillet-Latour received a Sherrill letter, dated March 13, 1929, noting that . . . “your proposal...nomi-

nating Mr. Irving Brokaw [figure skater and artist] to take the place of Commodore Jahncke."¹⁰⁹ There's a great deal more. Jahncke refused to resign and was "fired" in 1936.

History is the careful recapitulation of significant past events; and, hopefully, those that practice the craft are able to do so with a high level of scientific disinterestedness. Selective history is not history. It is an effort to follow a predetermined agenda. In all dimensions of history, including good biography, the whole range of events must be studied; and, with biography, all important "good and bad" happenings about someone must be considered. All of the above need to be brought to the forefront regarding the IOC during the 1920s and early 1930s and the same with C.H. Sherrill. The General possessed sufficient monies and nearly unlimited physical and intellectual energies during his fifteen years as IOC member and Executive Committee policy maker. Olympic Games historians fault Sherrill for bluster and contradictory, puzzling decision-making during the crisis years of 1933-1936, and they are correct. This research paper has attempted to look at more than half a century of the man's active life and to do so thoroughly and accurately, allowing the reader to assess the man as they see fit. And the same is true of the actions and inactions of the IOC.

There is something to be said about being a member of the rich and famous, and befriending successful men and women everywhere. The cultural Fine Arts Competition at the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1932 might have been the best ever, before or since. Sherrill's friends served as judges, world art experts from the American Federation of Arts; the Fogg Museum at Harvard University; the Washington, D.C., Corcoran Gallery; the Art Institute of Chicago; New York City's Museum of Modern Art; Los Angeles and Yale University Art Museums.¹¹⁰ Sherrill knew no other behaviour.

The IOC lumbered along during this decade, a prisoner of its narrow and therefore insulated past. They were not "evil" men who pronounced vague discriminatory, disconnected diatribes about the horrors of athletic professionalism as compared to the "pure motives" of amateur athletes. Most of these men were incapable of seeing and therefore understanding that there existed a "gray" area in between. Sherrill was an exceptionally intelligent person; but, like most, he did not possess the prescience to look far into the future. A certain Dora Thornton wrote a Ph.D. dissertation on Italian Renaissance Scholars, their personal libraries, how they wrote, even the very desks on which they collated their body of knowledge. There are 200 illustrations accompanying the text, which concludes with a sweeping statement that might also be a fair description of Charles Sherrill, and possibly, many of us. "This book," wrote Thornton, "has shown how inviting friends, fellow collectors and rivals into one's study was a particular form of social communication."¹¹¹

Endnotes

1. Sherrill's full athletic career is detailed in Lewis Sheldon Welch and Walter Camp, *Yale - Her Campus, and Athletics* (Boston: L.C. Page and Co., 1899), pp. 615-620. Sherrill's track coach, the most famous in the land, Michael Murphy, wrote "The crouching start was first introduced by me...in 1887...and Charles H. Sherrill was the athlete who first demonstrated its superiority." See Michael C. Murphy, *Athletic Training* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918), p.32.

2. Only the title and year of publication will be listed of Sherrill's 22 books:
 - a. *Stained Glass Tours in France* (1908)
 - b. *Stained Glass Tours in England* (1909)
 - c. *The Pan-Americanism of Henry Clay, Sarmiento and Root* (1909)
 - d. *A Stained Glass Tour in Italy* (1913)
 - e. *The South American Point of View* (1914)
 - f. *French Memories of Eighteenth-Century America* (1915)
 - g. *Modernizing the Monroe Doctrine* (1916)
 - h. *Have We a Far Eastern Policy?* (1920)
 - i. *Korea and Shantung Versus White Peril* (1920)
 - j. *Prime Ministers and Presidents* (1922)
 - k. *Stained Glass Tours in Spain and Flanders* (1924)
 - l. *The Purple or the Red* (1924)
 - m. *Stained Glass Tours in Germany, Austria and the Rhinelands* (1927)
 - n. *Bismark and Mussolini* (1931)
 - o. *Sherrill Genealogy* (1932)
 - p. *Mosaics in Italy, Palestine, Syria, Turkey and Greece* (1933)
 - q. *Trois Hommes: Kamal, Roosevelt, Mussolini* (1934)
 - r. *Mustafa Kemal: l'homme, l'oeuvre, le pays* (1934)
 - s. *Some Old Kyoto Gardens* (1935)
 - t. *Roosevelt and Mussolini* (1936)
 - u. *American Track Athletes* (?)
 - v. *My Story Book (autobiography)* (1937)
3. See *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 37 (1951), pp. 21-22; also, *Who Was Who 1929-1940, volume 3, p.1229*; *The New York Times [NYT]*, June 26, 1936, p. 19, and *The Washington Post [WP]*, June 26, 1936, p. 7. Sherrill's autobiography, *My Story Book* (1937), and his *The Sherrill Genealogy* (1932) are essential readings in order to understand the full measure of the man. The book is of course, "slanted."
4. See Sherrill's *My Story Book*, privately published in 1937 and located at Yale University, Sterling Library [hereafter Sterling], p. 347.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 346.
6. Belinda Jack, *George Sand. A Woman's Life Writ Large* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), p. xi.
7. The following list of helpful literature is an extremely reduced list. The full compilation, if not infinite, is very great. See:

Moshe Gottlieb, "The American Controversy over the Olympic Games," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 61 (1972), pp. 181-213.

Stephen Wenn, "Death-knell for the AAU: Avery Brundage, Jeremiah Mahoney and the 1935 AAU Convention," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 13 (December 1996), pp. 261-289.

Stephen Wenn, "A Tale of Two Diplomats: George S. Messersmith and Charles H. Sherrill...", *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 16 (Spring 1989). pp. 27-43.

Stephen Wenn, "A Suitable Policy of Neutrality? FDR and...the 1936 Olympics," *International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 8 (December 1991). pp. 319-335.

Arnd Krueger, "Fair Play for American Athletes: A study in anti-Semitism," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport*. Vol. 9 (May, 1978), pp. 42-57.

Arnd Krueger, "The Olympic Games of 1936 as the Fifth German Combat Games," in *Contemporary Studies in the National Olympic Games Movement*, Roland Naul, ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Pub, nd., circa 2000), pp. 153-174.

Arnd Krueger, "Germany: The Propaganda Machine," in *The Nazi Olympics in World Perspective*, Arnd Krueger and William Murray, eds. (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2001), pp. 14-47.

Arnd Krueger, "The 1936 Olympic Games - Berlin," in *The Modern Olympics*, Peter J. Graham and Horst Ueberhorst, eds. (West Point, New York: Leisure Press, 1979). See chapter 9.

Arnd Krueger, *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936 und die Welmeinung* (Berlin: Bartels 1972).

Manfred Messing and Norbert Muller, editors of *Blickpunkt Olympia* (Sydney, Australia: Walla Walla Press, 2000). See "Die USA die Olympischen Spiele 1936...", pp. 223-240.

Carolyn Marvin, "Avery Brundage and American Participation in the 1936 Olympics," *Journal of American Studies*, 16 (1982), pp. 81-106.

8. See Otto Mayer, *A travers les anneaux Olympiques* (Geneve: Cailler 1960), pp. 130-131 [hereafter Mayer]; and Karl Lennartz on "Henri de Baillet-Latour" in volume one of three volumes, *The International Olympic Committee 1894-1994* [hereafter IOC 1894-1994] (Lausanne: IOC, 1994), p. 254.
9. See p. 654 in Barzun's *From Dawn to Decadence 1500 to the Present* (New York: Harper Collins Pub. Co., 2000). With several exceptions, possibly, it is poor historical biography to portray anyone, living or dead, as completely evil or completely good. For example, see essay "About Avery Brundage" by John Lucas, in *Olympic Review*, Vol. 27-36 (December 2000-January 2001), pp. 25-26.
10. See end note 7; Kruger, "Germany the Propaganda Machine" pp. 15-16.

11. See pp. 259-262 in Lennartz, IOC 1894-1994.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 262.
13. See Krueger's end note 7 for "Germany: The Propaganda Machine" p. 19.
14. Sherrill to Frederick Rubien of the American Olympic Committee (AOC), June 11, 1933, in the Avery Brundage Collection [hereafter ABC] on microfilm, box 35, reel 2.
15. See Krueger, end note 7, in "Germany: The Propaganda Machine," p. 30.
16. William L. Shirer, "From Jesse Owens to the Summer of '72," *Saturday Review*, No. 55 (March 25, 1972), p. 42.
17. *NYT*, June 8, 1933, p. 1. The editor of *The Nation* understood Sherrill's efforts to have been a failure and urged "The American delegation [to] withdraw from the Olympics." See *The Nation*, No. 136 (June 28, 1933), p. 710.
18. See "Resolution," ABC, box 30, reel 17.
19. Sherrill to House, November 23, 1933; see *The Papers of Colonel E.M. House*, group no. 466 series 1, box 103, Yale University, Sterling Library Manuscript and Archives Section. The U.S. Consul General to Berlin, George S. Messersmith, thought at the time that Avery Brundage and Sherrill were aware of Nazi viciousness, but that Sherrill's sense of self-importance had blinded him. "Sherrill did not lack for feelings of self-worth." See Stephen Wenn, "A House Divided..." *Research Quarterly and Exercise Science*, Vol. 67 (June 1996), p. 162.
20. Sherrill to Brundage, May 9, 1934, ABC, box 63, reel 37; Herbert L. Mathews, "Reich keeping faith on Olympics, says official, denying bar to Jews," *NYT*, May 9, 1934, p.3. Adolph Simon Ochs (1858-1935) was a Jewish American and long time owner and publisher of the *NYT*.
21. Sherrill to Brundage, May 25, 1934, ABC, box 63, reel 37. The astute Jewish-American sport journalist, Jesse P. Abramson, noted that AOC president Brundage would visit Germany on an "inspection tour." See "U.S. Olympic Body postpones answer to Berlin Bid..." *New York Herald Tribune*, June 4, 1934 p. 19. Upon returning home, Brundage "recommends USA participation." See *NYT*, October 17, 1934, p. 29.
22. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust 1933-1945* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), p. 75 [hereafter Lipstadt].
23. See Sherrill to Baillet Latour, August 30, 1935, reproduced in Karl Lennartz, end note 8, p. 291.
24. Sherrill to House, picture post card, August 1935, located in the Papers of Col.

E.M. House; Stirling Library, Yale University. Also helpful are Krueger's "Once the Olympics are through. we'll beat up the Jews," *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 26 (Summer 1999). p. 359; Wenn's "A Tale of Two Diplomats," pp. 30 and 46; *NYT*, September 14, 1935, p.5; Krueger's dissertation *Die Olympischen Spiele 1936* and his "The Olympic Games as the Fifth German Combat Games," p. 154.

25. *NYT*, September 14, 1935. p.5.
26. See *NYT*, September 27, 1935, p. 2. The perceptive journalist, William L. Shirer, wrote that General Sherrill took no notice of "discrimination" and "lies" associated with the makeup of the German team. *Twentieth Century Journal: A Memoir of a Life and the Times* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co.. 1984).
27. See Lipstadt, p. 76.
28. See Albert Allen, "A General Warns Jews to lay low or else," *The American Hebrew and Jewish Tribune* (October 25, 1935), p. 392.
29. See *the Nation*, 141 (October 16, 1935). 426; Chamberlain's comments appear in the *NYT*, October 21, 1935; p. 3; October 23, 1935, p. 9: and "Mahoney in clash with General Sherrill." *NYT*, October 24, 1935, p. 8.
30. See Kirby to Brundage, October 28, 1935, ABC, box 29, reel 17; Sulzberger to Kirby; no date ABC, box 30, reel 17; "Mahoney renews attack," *NYT*, November 1, 1935, p. 7. The AOC, by the narrowest of margins, decided in December of 1935 that its team would compete in the Games of the Eleventh Olympiad. See Wenn's definitive article "Death-knell for the AAU" (end note 7).
31. See "Gen Sherrill and the Olympics," *The Commonweal*, No. 23 (November 8, 1935), pp. 40-42; and "Parting shot at the Olympics, "December 13, 1935, p. 169.
32. See *The New York Herald Tribune*, January 2, 1936.
33. Lipstadt, p. 69.
34. Shlomo Shafir, "The Impact of the Jewish Crisis on American-German Relations, 1933-1939," Ph.D. dissertation, 2 volumes, Georgetown University Department of History, 1971. See Vol. 2, pp. 578, 584. The great success of the German male and female athletes at their 1936 games "did nothing to harm the nation's belief in its own superiority," wrote Ian Kershaw in *Hitler: 1936-1945 Nemesis* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2000), p. 8.
35. *NYT*, July 16, 1936, p. 18.
36. *The Sherrill Genealogy* (New Haven, Conn.: The Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor Co., 1932). p. 172.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 1

38. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
39. See his privately printed autobiography, *My Story*, located at Yale University's Striling Library, pp. 31-32.
40. See *NYT*, March 28, 1922, p. 14.
41. *My Story*, p. 55.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
43. *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (NCAB), published in 1951, p. 21.
44. *Ibid.*
45. See *Sherrill Genealogy*, p. 1973. On this page and on p. 174 are listed a score of significant volunteer positions held by Sherrill as New York City Grand Marshal (1916); vice-president Yale Law School Alumni Association; member of United States Chamber of Commerce; New York University Council and Honorary Degrees Committee; Secretary of Yale University Class of '89 and Founder of its College of Fine Arts. Many more connections are listed. See also *Who's Who* 16 (1930-1931), p. 2005.
46. See endnote 2.
47. Sherrill organized this Pierre de Coubertin-inspired dimension of the Olympic Games, but never made it to Los Angeles. He was in Turkey as his country's ambassador.
48. *The Washington Post*, June 26, 1936, p. 7; *NYT*, June 26, 1936, p. 19; also "Tribute paid to Sherrill," *NYT*, June 27, 1936, p. 17; "Funeral in Paris for Gen. Sherrill," *NYT*, July 8, 1936, p. 19; "Army rites for Sherrill," *NYT*, July 12, 1936, part 2, p. 6; "Sherrill's body arrives" [from Europe], *NYT*, July 12, 1936, p. 19; and "Military escort at Sherrill rites." *NYT*, July 16, 1936, p. 18.
49. Baillet-Latour to Mrs. Sherrill; letter dated June 1936 located in IOC archives under "USOC-NOC." Mrs. Sherrill was a member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants. She married in 1906, had one son, Gibbs W., and died May 10, 1948. See *NYT*, May 11, 1948, p. 25. See also her wedding to Mr. Sherrill; the best man was Gifford Pinchot, a classmate of Sherrill's at Yale; Victor Herbert and his orchestra gave a specially arranged musical programme. See *NYT*, February 9, 1906, p. 9.
50. See the "Index" to each of these *Presidential Papers* (microfilm), The Pennsylvania State University Pattee Library, Pattee Inter-Library Loan Department.
51. See *NCAB*, p. 21.

52. Roosevelt to Taft, October 10, 1908, *Theodore Roosevelt Papers*, series 2, volume 85, p. 45. See the "index" to both the Roosevelt and Taft Papers for an additional ninety (90) letters exchanged with Sherrill.
53. *NYT*, May 25, 1924, sec. 3, p. 15; *Stained Glass Tours in Spain and Flanders* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1924).
54. See Sherrill's *Stained Glass Tours in France* (London: John Lane, 1908), pp. 21 and 69.
55. See Sherrill's *Stained Glass Tours in England* (London: John Lane, 1909), pp. viii and 56.
56. See Sherrill's *Mosaics in Italy, Palestine, Syria, Turkey and Greece* (London: John Lane, 1933), pages vii and 58. Back in 1913 he wrote *A Stained Glass Tour in Italy* (London: John Lane, Publisher, 1913). At the eastern end of the Milan Cathedral, he wrote,

. . . . the old patterns and colours [have] been followed in an unusually reverent manner. The result is an harmonious whole—a well-attuned chant in melodious tone and tint that echoes all about us
57. See Sherrill to Taft, December 17, 1912, *Taft Papers*, series 6, reel 439, number 3048; also January 9, 1913, series 6, reel 439, no. 3048; *NYT*, February 12, 1913, p. 4 editorial, *Taft Papers*, series 6, reel 439, number 3048, February 8, 1913; *NYT*, November 19, 1913, sec. 5, p. 9; and *NYT*, November 20, 1913, p. 16.
58. See Theodore Roosevelt Papers (microfilm); series 1; reel 290
59. Taft to Sherrill, September 24, 1921, *Taft Papers*, series 3, reel 234.
60. See Yves-Pierre Boulougue, "Congres Internationale Athletique de Paris 1894," in *The Internation Olympic Committee- One Hundred Years*, vol. 1 of 3 vols. (Lausanne: IOC, 1994), pp. 54 and 296. Coubertin wrote in his first autobiography: "Olympic Games amateurism is necessary to withstand the onslaught of professionalism, money and an athletic world of circus and gladiators." See *Une campagne de vingt-et-un ans 1887-1908* (Paris: Librairie de L'Education Physique, 1909), p. 91.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 190, in Boulougue. See also Coubertin, *Memoires Olympiques* (Lausanne: IOC, nd). He wrote: "Here we go again, the same old question of amateurism" (p. 102).
62. S.W. Pope, *Patriotic Games-Sporting Traditions in the American Imagination, 1876-1926* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 31.
63. Sloane to Coubertin, February 7, 1922, hand-written note located in IOC archives under USOC-NOC. See also "May pick Sherrill for Olympic Body," *NYT*, March 28, 1922; p. 14; "Olympic Committee elects Sherrill," *NYT*, June 8,

- 1922, p. 17. Future IOC president Sigfrid Edstrom said Sherrill would make a superior choice for membership on the IOC; the French Marquis Melchoir de Polignac wrote Edstrom on March 29, 1922: "Personally I think that Mr. Sherrill is better. He has been recommended by Professor Sloane." See IOC archives under "USOC-NOC."
64. See Otto Mayer, *A Travers les Anneaux Olympiques* (Genève: Cailler, 1960), p. 95.
65. Lennartz in volume 1 of *IOC 1894-1995, Centennial History*, p. 216.
66. See Coubertin's *Olympic Memoires*, translated in 1997 by his grand-nephew, Geoffroy de Navacelle (Lausanne: IOC, nd), p. 220.
67. See "The Amateur Spirit," December 1, 1927, p. 24. See also Kirby to Brundage on amateurism, June 7, 1934, ABC, reel 6, box 10.
68. Scores of viewpoints by different authors, all on amateurism, are located in the ABC, reel 6, box 10. In his AAU presidential speech, Brundage made it clear that "any taint of professionalism in our amateur sports must be stamped out." See *AAU Bulletin*, No. 4 (January, 1929).
69. Brundage to Kirby, January 24, 1938, ABC, reel 6, box 10.
70. See IOC archives under "USOC-NOC."
71. At the 1926 annual meeting of the combined AOA-AOC held in Washington, D.C., Sherrill rose to his feet and delivered a mini-lecture on the "absolute necessity for each of you to devote one's life to a 'sound mind in a sound body!'" He found it not difficult to conclude:
I am fifty-nine years old and I will go out and run any man
that is 59 years old at one hundred yards this afternoon for
the championship of the world.
(*AOA-AOC Minutes*, November 17, 1926, p. 3).
72. Portions of this speech by Sherrill are reproduced in John A. Lucas, "Ernest Lee Jahncke: The Expelling of an IOC Member," *Stadion*, No. 17 (1991), p. 56.
73. Sherrill to Baillet-Latour; December 7, 1926, and also another message dated December 31, 1927, are located in IOC archives under "USOC-NOC."
74. For example, on his way to the 1923 IOC get-together in Rome, Sherrill announced that the French government would award sport-art trophies in sculpture, painting, architecture, literature and music, "proving," he said, that: "...the age-old philosophy that mere physical superiority is not an end in itself, but is a very desirable means there to." See *NYT*, April 7, 1923, p. 11.
75. See *Walter Camp Papers*, reel 30 (microfilm), folder 242, no date, circa 1925.

76. See Navacelle's 1997 translation of Coubertin's *Olympic Memories*, p. 129.
77. See *NYT*, January 12, 1926, p. 7; January 16, 1926, p. 8; and April 16, 1926, p. 11.
78. See Mayer, end note 8, p. 122 and Lennartz, *IOC 1894-1994*, pp. 250-251. Garland and Sherrill "rarely balked at the [overseas] journeys involved," wrote Professor Lennartz.
79. See *NYT*, February 9, 1931, p. 23. Seven years earlier the wealthy, aristocratic Mrs. Barker Gibbs Sherrill donated \$50,000 to her school. Bellevue College, in New York State. See *NYT*, January 8, 1924, p. 25. That sum would be approximately \$600,000 in today's equivalency.
80. See "Sherrill nominated as envoy to Turkey," *NYT*, March 5, 1932, p. 8. He wrote two books on his mission and artistic pastimes. There is a full length photo of Sherrill on page 749 of the "Art Competitions and Exhibitions" in the *Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932 Official Report* (Los Angeles Committee, 1933). Lipstadt, in her book *Beyond Belief* (see end note 22) said of Sherrill's Tour of duty in Turkey: "Sherrill's resignation from his ambassadorial post had been 'joyfully accepted' by the State Department."
81. Brown to Coubertin, March 29, 1922, located in IOC archives under "USOC-NOC."
82. See Bernard quote in *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, 1968, p. 674.
83. See Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 305. See also "Carlyle's heroes" in Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence* (New York: Harper Collins Pub. Co., 2000), p. 526. See also Antonia Fraser, *Heroes and Heroines* (New York: A and W Pub., 1980), pp. 1-4. Among the "new brand" of historian in the 1930s, Harry Elmer Barnes countered that Carlyle was "least worthy as a historian . . . with utter absence of the critical method, and that history is not just the collective biography of the conspicuous public figures through the ages." See his *A History of Historical Writing* (New York: Dover Pub., Inc., 1962).
84. See "Dedication" in Sherrill's *Have We A Far Eastern Policy?* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920).
85. Sherrill to Taft, September 6, 1921, *William H. Taft Papers* (on microfilm), series 3, reel 233.
86. See Sherrill's *Prime Minister's and Presidents* (New York: Charles H. Doran Co., 1922), pp. 63, 113, 130, and 246.
87. See *NYT*, December 26, 1926, p. 23. Like many during the 1920s, Sherrill feared and hated international communism . . . "bolshevism."

88. Sherrill to Phelps, May 25, 1931. See Sherrill Collection at Yale University archives.
89. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, pp. 213, and 235-236.
90. See "Sherrill leaving imprint in Turkey," *NYT*, April 16, 1933, sec. 4, p. 3,
91. Published by George H. Doran Co. of New York City. See "Dedication."
92. See Herbert Matthews, "Reich keeping faith on Olympics, says official [Sherrill], denying bar to Jews," *NYT*, May 9, 1934, p. 3.
93. See Wenn's "A Tale of Two Diplomats," *Journal of Sport History*. Vol. 16 (Spring 1989), p. 41.
94. See Sherrill's autobiography *My Story*, pp. 91-92.
95. Wenn to Lucas, 26 March 2001.
96. See Yale University copy (1937), p. 346.
97. See ABC, reel 33, box 56.
98. See ABC, reel 17, box 29. Two days after Sherrill's death, Kirby wrote Brundage: "I want to succeed him on the IOC." See Kirby to Brundage, June 26, 1936, ABC, reel 17, box 29.
99. Butler in the "Introduction" to Sherrill's *Modernizing the Munroe Doctrine* (Boston Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916).
100. *NYT*, November 1, 1935, p. 15
101. See *Sherrill Genealogy*, p. 174.
102. See the *NYT*, April 22, 1934, sec. 5, p. 5.
103. See Sherrill's biography, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, pp. 236 and viii.
104. "General Sherrill extols Il Duce and Facism," *NYT*, November 27, 1935, p. 14.
105. Garland to Brundage, August 7, 1935, ABC, microfilm, reel 33, box 56.
106. See Murphy's *Athletic Training* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918), p. 32. Olympic champion in 1896, Ellery H Clark wrote a book in 1920 entitled *Track Athletics Up-To-Date* (New York; Duffield and Co., 1920.) in which athletics historian John Corbin is quoted as saying that "Sherrill, of Yale, was the first amateur of note to try the crouching start" (pp. 41-42).
107. The IOC archives in Lausanne, Switzerland, have two folders labeled "W. M.

Garland” and “USOC-NOC.” Scores of letters to and from the Garland-Sherrill duo deal with this topic.

108. See Lennartz, *IOC 1894-1994*; vol. 1, p. 5; “Rome Congress,” *NYT*, March 29, 1923, p. 15; *NYT*, November 3, 1923, p. 11; “Sherrill tells U.S. Committee . . .,” *NYT*, April 19, 1925, sec. 9, pp. 1 and, 4; “Gen. Sherrill . . . toured all Europe,” *NYT*, September 11, 1926, p. 26; “General Sherrill calls professional trend a boon to true amateurism,” *NYT*, September 14, 1926, p. 36; Mayer, *A Travers les anneaux Olympiques*, p. 122; and Baillet-Latour to Sherrill, March 26, 1929, IOC archives under “Baillet-Latour.”
109. For more names and institutes, see *Xth Olympiad Official Report 1932*, pp. 748-766. Sherrill was the absentee director.
110. Dora Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 175.

