



Shakespeare & Co. is located in the 5th arrondissement of Paris's Left Bank – just across from Notre Dame. In addition to being a bookshop it is also a lending library, specializing in English-language literature. The upstairs serves as a makeshift dormitory for travelers, known as "tumbleweeds," who earn their keep by working in the shop for a couple of hours each day – though one has to be a published writer of considerable talent to live so cheaply... The history of the shop (In a different location) began in 1917 with Sylvia Beach, one of the leading American expatriate figures in Paris between World War I and II. She was interned for six months during World War II, but kept her books hidden in a vacant apartment upstairs at 12 rue de l'Odeon. The shop was symbolically liberated by Ernest Hemingway in person in 1944 but never re-opened in the original location. In 1951, American George Whitman opened a bookshop using the name of Le Mistral. Much like its predecessor the store was a focal point for literary culture in bohemian, left-bank Paris serving as a base for many of the writers of the beat generation like Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso and William Burroughs. Upon Sylvia Beach's death, the store's name was changed to Shakespeare & Co. Whitman's daughter, Sylvia, now runs the shop.