World War I posters in the Princeton University Library

Chronology of collecting history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915-1916</td>
<td>Annual report of the librarian for this academic year reports: “Two European War Collections - one of war posters by John W. Garrett ’95, and one of war relics by Richard Ridgeley Lytle ’13 - have attracted much interest.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Exhibition recorded in 1916 book prepared for ALA visit. Two pages relevant to this exhibition are found on following pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-1917</td>
<td>Annual report of the librarian for this academic year reports: “Noteworthy gifts include several lots of war posters, books and medals sent by J.W. Garrett ’95, S.R. Taber ’83, Clifford N. Carver ’13, and J.S. Morgan ’88..”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Exhibition listing and text. Julia B. Anthony, who evidently organized the 1918 show, provided three pages of explanatory text. The exhibit was shown both on Washington’s Birthday and at Commencement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-1918</td>
<td>Annual report of the librarian for this academic year reports: “Special attention is called to the Benjamin Strong Collections of war posters, war currency, and bound newspaper clippings, including 1,403 items. The extensive literature of the Liberty Loans, also given by Mr. Strong, is not yet organized for report. Mr. Strong is adding to all these collections, with special attention to books and pamphlets on the economic aspects of the war.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>War posters collections documented in photostatic book of 139 pages with facsim. and supplement. These were distributed to a small number of libraries, such as the Hoover Institute at Stanford. Cataloguing records follow:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Main**

**Title:** War poster collections: Strong, Garrett, Taber, Fisk, Wright, Turnbull, McClenahan [and] miscellaneous collections.
**Corp Author(s):** Princeton University Library.
**Publication:** [Princeton] Princeton university library,
**Year:** 1919
**Description:** 1 p. l., facsim. (1 p. l., 134 p. of illus.) 24 p. 30 cm.
**Language:** English
**Standard No:** LCCN: 42-745
**SUBJECT(S)**
**Descriptor:** Posters.
Posters -- Facsimiles.
World War, 1914-1918 -- Pictorial works.
**Note(s):** Photostat (positive)./ Imprint date covered by label with date (in manuscript) 1920./ "This list includes about 2000 posters, of which about 100 are duplicates, being found in different collections. The Strong collection, which forms the basis, contains 1200 posters."/ Includes printed Alphabetical finding list (24 p. at end).
### War poster collections: Strong, Garrett, Taber, Fisk, Wright, Turnbull, McClanahan [and] miscellaneous collections. Supplement 1, posters added Apr. 7 to May 10, 1919.
- **Published/Created:** [Princeton] Princeton University Library, 1919.
- **Description:** 18, 29 p.
- **Notes:** Photostat (positive)
- **Pt. II:** Supplement 1: Posters to May 10, 1919.
- **Subject(s):** Posters.
- **Location:** Seeley G. Mudd Library (Mudd)
- **Call Number:** P51.74.471

### 1946-1947
Princeton librarian’s annual report: “from Mrs. Van Santvoord Merle-Smith, 135 posters of World War I, and 55 Australian posters of World War II;” Mrs. Merle-Smith was the wife of Van Santvoord Merle-Smith, Princeton class of 1911.

### 1963 / 1967
The Library transferred the collection to the Smithsonian. According to the Smithsonian finding “The Princeton University Library donated this extensive collection of World War I and World War II materials to the Smithsonian Institution in 1963 and 1967. The bulk of the 1963 donation, stored in six large wooden crates, was sent to an off-site storage location. Other posters donated in 1963, primarily World War II British in origin, were stored in the Division of Political History; they were later transferred to the Division of Armed Forces History. In 1967, Princeton donated an additional five albums of posters that had been overlooked in 1963; these albums were also stored in the Division of Armed Forces History.” “There are between 9,400 and 10,000 items in the collection. Although it consists primarily of posters and broadsides, it also includes transit car cards, window displays, pamphlets, handbills, advertisements, maps, newspaper supplement sheets, broadsides, and various other types of ephemera. These items range in date from approximately 1906 to 1950, but the bulk of the collection dates from World War I and World War II.”

### 1990
The Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution takes over custody of the posters from the Military History unit. At the Smithsonian, the WWI posters are part of a 10,690 piece collection known as “The Princeton University Poster Collection” with SI accession number “1990.3118 (NMAH Acc.).” Finding aids available at SI: “Partial item-level database online in SIRIS (several thousand records). Complete set of item-level catalog worksheets available in repository.” At SI, the collection is “currently stored off site. Special appointment and directions required.”

### 2005
The remnants of Princeton’s ‘War Poster Collections’ are now grouped as GC156, a collection administered by the Graphic Arts Collection, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Firestone Library.

---

Prepared by Stephen Ferguson, Curator of Rare Books
March 31, 2005; revised 20 December 2005; revised 16 March 2007
The following pages are documents either mentioned or relating to this chronology.
Special Exhibits
in the
Princeton University Library
1916

WAR POSTER EXHIBITION.

Princeton, N. J.
THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
1916
WAR POSTER EXHIBITION.

An extensive collection of war posters, French, English and Italian, presented by the Hon. John W. Garrett, ’95.

A catalogue of this collection formed by photostat reproduction was exhibited in this connection. A descriptive printed catalogue is being prepared. See illustration.

THE POLISH VICTIMS RELIEF FUND
II. HAYMARKET, LONDON, S.W.
MRS. LAURENCE ALMA-TADEMA, Hon. Secretary.

EUROPEAN WAR POSTERS
Made from Photostat Reproductions
The Princeton University Poster Exhibit.

In the revolutionary days of John Witherspoon as in the war times of Madison and of Woodrow Wilson, it can never be said of Princeton that she has sought cloistered serenity at the price of patriotic service. The poster exhibit prepared for alumni day and still on view is a modern instance of this immediate contact of the university with the world outside.

John W. Garrett, '95, has given one hundred and fifty-five posters which have already made their appeal in several other places. They are, for the most part, French, among them good examples of the work of Friant, Germaine Lemaire, and Poulat.

Joshua Bell Wright, '99, collected the Russian ones and the rest are given by Benjamin Strong, governor of the Federal Reserve bank of New York City, whose son is a member of the university.

Mr. Strong has also given to the library eighty-seven large volumes of skillfully mounted clippings from four New York dailies - the Sun, Times, Tribune, and Evening Post - giving in narrative, comment, and illustration a contemporaneous history of the world war of great and increasing value.

Mr. Malcolm Robertson, '15, has deposited a collection of grim relics - rifles, pieces of shell, German and French helmets, gas-bags, and other bits from battle-fields whose very muteness makes the conflict more realizable.

Besides the posters, there are proclamations and mobilization orders, and reduced photographic facsimiles of placards posted by the Germans on the walls of cities, towns, and villages in invaded France and Flanders form a series of unbelievable "inhuman documents".

"A poster," says Leo Simonson, "should be an advertisement made beautiful in order to be more convincing.....a sonorous clashing of color that shall sound
above all other noises of the street with the insistence of trumpets or drums", so
that "the community shall see its problems tangibly presented in the streets."
What are the world problems which these posters present? Recruiting an army;
providing it with munitions and with sustenance by means of liberty bonds and their
international equivalents, as well as by the labor of workers in factories and fields
and by conservation in the home; and providing for the victims of war -- non-combatants
as well as soldiers. These posters of the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Russia,
and the United States give examples of each of these appeals.

Most of the French work shown advertises various accours and naturally bears the
pathetic figures of the orphaned and the widowed, but a Poulbot of a boy orator urging
an appreciative audience of street gamins to support a Franco-Belgian relief entertain-
ment with 200 enfants exécutants. "Tous les petits pour les petits", draws a smile even
among the tears of things, as does a large Gallic cock bearing down upon a man with
"Pour la France, verrez votre or, l'or combat pour la victoire." Two poilus show in
their faces that whimsical tackling of the every-day job which their soldiers' diaries
have revealed to us.

The Raemakers are all familiar to us, the one from Life of the woman bound to
the cross of barbarism and slavery making the strongest national appeal, even without
Roosevelt's "America! stand by Uncle Sam against tyranny."

In the United States collection the most decorative are Kenyon Cox's Liberty
holding a sword, Joan of Arc calling for woman's aid, Maurice Ingres's violet-eyed
girl with the blue field of our flag forming a liberty cap, and Britton's dark-breasted
American eagle forming a background for a shield and a row of marines, while the
orange of his beak is repeated in his claws. Several of J. Montgomery Flagg's have
the human touch.

In the British collection Lord Roberts in uniform with "He did his duty. Will
you do yours" flanks a rather rare copy of General Haig's appeal to the workers of
Great Britain to forego their usual August holidays— an appeal that met with generous response. One of Frank Dadd's expresses quick action in a marching squad, one recruit of which is stopped by a veteran in scarlet for farewell with "I wish I were as young as you."

The Irish appeal is to the religious and the material side of the national character. The Russian artists seem to have mastered the secret of depicting motion and their posters require no translation to enable one to grasp the cry for quick reinforcements both of men and munitions.

As the soldier urging his steed "Forward" to the top of its speed makes the right psychological appeal as we enter the exhibit, so the large mural decoration at the top of the room—a soldier grasping the hand of a munition maker "both needed" grips us as Americans at our present stage of preparation. Interesting by reason of its association with Princeton alumni, the exhibit is of further use as showing how art may be a factor in national life and in revealing to us the spirit of our allies in the days of their utmost trial.

Julia B. Anthony.
A

Select Exhibition

of

WAR POSTERS

in the

Princeton University Library

From the collections presented by Benjamin Strong, John W. Garrett, Sydney H. Tabor, Joshua B. Wright, H. W. Turnbull, and others.

COMMENCERENT

1918

The collection of war posters in the Princeton University Library contains 1120 items. The larger collections are those of Benjamin Strong and John W. Garrett, which number respectively 539 and 155.

A complete exhibition was held on Washington's birthday in the History Reading Room.

The present exhibition contains representative selections only, arranged geographically. A list of these follows.

June 14, 1918.
Poster, Call together all in the spring. J. T. Retford/1 N.P. 1917/10/0. TaborFP1200
Poster, Days and nights (11. J. J. Flegel) T. N. d. 19/11/20 Enlist for stamp, StrongFP12447
Poster, Call to duty... the spring (11. J. n.d. 105/20 Enlist for stamp, StrongFP12447)
Poster, Enlist in the navy (11. L. E. Bennet) O.G. n.d. 105/20 Enlist for stamp, StrongFP10525
Poster, Enlist in the Navy (11. L. E. Bennet) N.T. n.d. 105/20 Enlist for stamp, StrongFP10525
Poster, Come along, the moment (11. H. C. Court) L. S. 1914. 74/20 (Parl. recov. comm. 25) StrongFP1708
Poster, Swell idea beckoning (11. L. S. 1915. 74/20 (Parl. recov. comm. 25) StrongFP1708
Poster, Show up the award (11. L. S. 1915. 74/20 (Parl. recov. comm. 25) StrongFP1708
Poster, Swedish call. Enlist now! J. T. n.d. 105/20 Enlist for stamp, StrongFP10525
Poster, Remember the flag (11. J. T. n.d. 105/20 Enlist for stamp, StrongFP10525

1. United States Navy—Help Your Country! Strong BFA Br 1864
2. Preserve
3. This Device on Hat or Helmet Means U.S. Marine Misc BFA 2276 Taber BFA 2197
4. Gee, I Wish I Were A Man Misc BFA 1217
5. Your Navy Calls for 2000 Firemen
6. Enlist in the Navy to Arms Misc BFA 1216
7. Britons and Canadians—Fight Under Your Own Flag
8. Preserve—Cooperation
9. For Home and Country—Victory Liberty Loan
10. U.S. Marine—Be a Sea Soldier Taber BFA 2222 (101 x 76); Taber BFA 2598 (102 x 76)
11. U.S. Marine—Soldiers of the Sea (3 w/different illustrations in center) Misc BFA 1262 (102 x 77)
12. U.S. Marine—Active Service on Land and Sea Taber BFA 1231 Misc BFA 1261 (102 x 77)
13. Taber BFA 2598 (102 x 77) Taber BFA 2599 (102 x 77)
14. Sure! We’ll Finish the Job (Victory Liberty Loan)
15. The Navy Needs You—Don’t Read History—Make It! Strong BFA 1553
16. The Sword is Drawn—The Navy Upholds It (2) Misc BFA 1218 Strong BFA 1555
17. Britons and Canadians—Show Your Loyalty to the Land You’re Living In
18. Spirit of 1917—Join the U.S. Marines Taber BFA 1225
19. 20,000 Apprentice Seamen Needed Immediately
20. British Blood Calls British Blood
22. U.S. Navy—“Here He Is, Sir”—“We Need Him—and You too!” Misc BFA 1219 Strong BFA 1552
23. Help Deliver the Goods (US Navy) Strong BFA 1525
24. You, Wireless Fans, Help the Navy Get the Hun Submarine (3) Taber BFA 2082
25. Speed Means Safety...(3) Taber BFA 2084
26. Halt! Who Goes There? (USMC) Taber BFA 1228/1229
27. Food will win the war—Official pictures of the US Food Administration are shown at this theater Taber BFA 2120