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ABSTRACT

This booklet evolved from research for the exhibition "Uncle Sam Speaks: Broadsides and Posters from the National Archives," which opened at the National Archives in February 1986. The booklet is presented chronologically, beginning with broadsides from the American Revolution and ending with posters of the 1980's. Accompanying text explains the significance of each poster or broadside. This publication attempts to show a variety of posted notices that demonstrates how messages remain the same or change over time, and represents some of the interesting choices made through 200 years regarding language, artistic designs, and graphic styles.  
(EH)

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CONGRESS JULY 4, 1876  
NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD MONUMENT  
SITTING BULL  
CUSTER BATTLEFIELD

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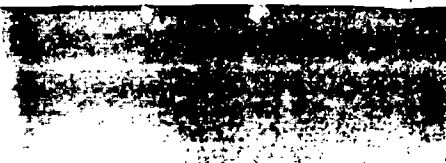
*Lida V. Churchill*

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES  
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Sitting Bull Custer Battlefield



025 672



Case of Washington

41 *In Congress July 4, 1776. A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America in General Congress Assembled, July 4, 1776.*

Engraved and printed by T. D. Bowen, the Continental Printer, 1776.

This Declaration was inserted with several other papers into the fourth number of the Continental Congress to complete the record for July 4, 1776.  
Reprinted by permission of the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20540.

42 *Leonard Boskin, *Silence Is Not an Option**

Photomechanical lithographic print of the Government Printing Office, 1994.  
© The National Park Service.

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*Broadsides & Posters*

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

National Archives and Records Administration  
Washington, DC 1986

*Photograph of a schoolroom, its walls covered with World War I posters, in Hamden Hall, a day school for boys, New Haven, Connecticut, ca. 1918*  
RG 4 Records of the U.S. Food Administration (4-G-24)



# Broadsides & Posters

from the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES



## Acknowledgments

This booklet was prepared by the Office of Public Programs, National Archives and Records Administration in conjunction with the exhibition *Uncle Sam Speaks: Broad­sides and Posters from the National Archives*, which opened at the National Archives in February 1986. The booklet was compiled and written by Nancy E. Allyn and designed by Gerard Gagné, under the direction of Christina Rudy Smith, Exhibits Branch, Division of Exhibits and Educational Programs. Special appreciation is extended to William Cunliffe, Director, Special Archives Division.

## A Note about the Illustrations

All broadsides and posters shown here are part of the holdings of the National Archives. They are referred to by record group (RG) number and title. The title for RG 360, Records of the Continental and Confederation Congresses and the Constitutional Convention, has been shortened to Records of the Continental Congress. The title for RG 45, Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, has been shortened to Naval Records Collection.

Following each record group title, specific citations are provided in parentheses. The number code following most of the posters was assigned by the Still Pictures Branch of the National Archives and is used to identify posters within their holdings.

Artists' names, to the extent they are known, are provided in the first line of the caption. Titles are derived from the text on each poster or broadside. Dimensions are given in inches; width precedes height.

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1 *Base Ball*, 1903

Linocut and letterpress, printed by Naegle & Co. Printer, Helena 24 x 36

RG 393 Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands, 1821-1920 (Fort William Henry Harrison, Miscellaneous Records)

**B**ROADSIDES AND POSTERS are vivid records of events, concerns, and ideas. Printed quickly in the heat of the moment, designed to be circulated and posted prominently, they are just as quickly forgotten when the moment passes. However, posted notices of the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as those made as recently as one week ago, are all documents of historical events, great and small. They are valued today for the historical and cultural clues they can provide, the concerns and emotions they record, and the aesthetic choices and styles they embody. Aside from their value as documents, many are saved simply because they are humorous, entertaining, and beautiful to look at.

This essay evolved from research done for the exhibition "Uncle Sam Speaks," a show of broadsides and posters drawn from the rich holdings of the National Archives. This essay, like the exhibition, is presented chronologically, beginning with broadsides from the American Revolution and ending with posters of the 1980s. Communication is essential for any government, but in a democracy there is a special requirement that the people be informed of actions and issues. The government has used broadsides throughout its history to convey information to the people. In addition, the government has always used posted notices for their persuasive power, to urge the people to support its programs. This publication (like the exhibition) attempts to show a variety of these posted notices that demonstrates how messages remain the same or change over time, and represents some of the interesting choices made through 200 years regarding language, artistic designs, and graphic styles.

The majority of broadsides and posters within the Archives holdings were made by the government and represent the government communicating to the people. The Archives also has a small number of posted notices that were made privately. Some of these have been included in this booklet because they represent concerns of individuals or groups of people that involve some aspect of the government.



# 18th Century

By the United States in Congress Assembled. A Proclamation.

—Broadside issued by the Continental Congress, 1788

**A** BROADSIDE is a single sheet of paper printed on one side. Designed to be circulated, broadsides are well-suited for speaking out on current events: editorializing, moralizing, proclaiming, and commenting. They first appeared in the 15th century with the invention of printing presses. By the 16th and 17th centuries broadsides were used in England as a cheap popular way to spread ideas and report events. In the American colonies broadsides appeared as soon as the first printing presses were set up. Colonial broadsides were created within a rich English tradition of broadside ballads, satirical or humorous poems, editorials, announcements, and advertisements. The broadside was a place for proclaiming complex ideas and arguments as well as entertaining a wide public with ribald verse.

The English government and the Continental Congress printed broadsides to communicate their acts, regulations, and proclamations to colonists. When colonists began to rebel against English rule, George III issued a two-page broadside in which he condemned acts of sedition and urged his "obedient and loyal subjects to use their utmost Endeavors to withstand and suppress such Rebellion, and to disclose and make known all Treasons and traitorous Conspiracies which they shall know to be against Us, Our Crown and Dignity" (fig. 2).

On December 6, 1775, the Continental Congress responded to George III's proclamation with a broadside printed by John Dunlap of Philadelphia (fig. 3). Entitled simply *In Congress*, this broadside defended the Congress against "aspersions which [George III's proclamation] is calculated to throw upon our cause." Both broadsides are individually important, but as a pair they hold even greater historical value. Together they supply a more complete understanding of the arguments used by both governments in defense of their respective positions. They also bring to life the rhetoric used when each government tried to influence the people.



BY THE  
K I N G,

## PROCLAMATION.

For Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition.

GEORGE III.



WHEREAS many of Our Subjects in several Parts of Our Colonies and Plantations in North America, misled by dangerous and insidious Men, and forgetting the Allegiance which they owe to the Power that has protected and fulfilled them, after various disorderly Acts committed in Disturbance of the Public Peace, to the Obstruction of several Commerce, and to the Oppression of Our loyal Subjects serving on the same, have at length proceeded in an open and avowed Rebellion, by arraying themselves in hostile Manner to withstand the Execution of the Law, and unlawfully preparing, ordering, and levying War against Us.

AND whereas there is Reason to apprehend that such Rebellious Acts have been promoted and encouraged by the traitorous Correspondence, Counsils, and Comfort of divers wicked and desperate Persons within this Realm: To the End therefore that none of Our Subjects may acquiesce or violate their Duty through Ignorance thereof, or through any Doubt of the Protection which the Law will afford to their Loyalty and Zeal: We have thought fit by and with the Advice of Our Privy Council, to issue this Our Royal Proclamation, hereby declaring that not only all Our Officers, Civil and Military, are obliged to exert their utmost Endeavours

above

- 2 *By The King, A Proclamation, Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition,* August 23, 1775

Letterpress, printed by Charles Eyre and William Strahan, London, for King George III of England

12 1/4 x 16 1/2

RG 360 Records of the Continental Congress (Letters from George Washington, Item 152)

right:

- 3 *In Congress,* December 6, 1775

Letterpress, printed by John Dunlap, Philadelphia, for the Continental Congress

10 1/2 x 16 1/4

RG 360 Records of the Continental Congress (Miscellaneous Papers, Broadside Issued 1775-1788)

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IN CONGRESS,  
DECEMBER 6, 1775.

**W**hen the Deputies of the thirteen American Colonies met in the most august and solemn manner at the Court of St. James's on the 1st day of August last, the names of the Colonies were read, and, on that account, it became a matter of importance to give off, in the name of the people of these United Colonies, the following declaration, which it is calculated to throw upon our side; and to prevent, as far as possible, the undesired punishments, which it is desired to prevent to our friends.

We are assured of "expressing the allegiance which we owe to the power that has protected and sustained us." Wholly the authority and necessity in what ought to be (to plain and clear, as that he who runs may read it.) We are allegiance is that we forget! Allegiance to Parliament! We never would we never owned it. Allegiance to our King! Our words have ever accorded to the same, and has ever been consistent with it. We condemn, and, such arms in our hands—a reference which Freeman will never part with—oppose the claim and exercise of unconstitutional powers, to which neither the Crown or Parliament ever extended. The British Constitution, our birth inheritance, rights, as well as duties, by detaching the former: We should not in diametrical opposition to both, if we permitted the claims of the British Parliament to be established, and the measures performed in consequence of their claims to be carried into execution among us. Our signatures and names provided grounds against the constitution of tyranny and despotic power on ourselves, as well as against that of faction and insubordination on the other. On which side has the breach been made? Is it objected against us by the most intemperate and the most unaccountable of our enemies, that we have demanded any of the just prerogatives of the Crown, or any legal extension of those prerogatives? Why, then, are we accused of usurping our allegiance?—We have performed our duty: We have yielded in those cases, in which the right to resist is dispensed as necessary, on our part, as the right to govern is, in other cases, reserved to the part of the Crown. The breach of allegiance is removed from our resistance as far as tyranny is removed from legal government.

It is alleged that "we have demanded to us open and avowed rebellion." In what does the rebellion consist? Is it thus defined?—"Arriving ourselves as both in a manner to withstand the execution of the Law, and transgressing property, violating and breaking our oaths to the King." We know of no laws binding upon us, but such as have been transmitted to us by our ancestors, and such as have been confirmed to be modified or our representatives elected for that purpose. What laws, against which their characters, have we withdrawn? We have indeed defended them; and we will defend every thing, do every thing, and suffer every thing in their defence. To support our laws, and our liberties established by our laws, we have prepared, ordered, and levied war. But is that treasonable, or against the King? We never hear as the Constitution requires him: That will he be can do no wrong. The cruel and illegal attacks which we support, have no foundation in the royal prerogative. We will not, on our part, lose the distinction between the King and his Ministers: Happy it would have been for some former Princes, had it been always preferred on the part of the Crown.

Notice all this we observe, as this part of the proclamation, that "rebellion" is a term undefined and unknown in the law. It

has been expected, that a proclamation, which, by the British constitution, has no other operation than making that of enforcing what is already law, would have had a known legal effect to have created a correspondence between the inhabitants of Great Britain and their brethren in America produced, to better losses, much farther to our disadvantage, and much advantage to the public.

By what criterion shall one, who is unwilling to break off this correspondence, and is, at the same time, anxious not to expose himself to the dreadful consequences threatened in this proclamation—by what criterion shall he regulate his conduct? He is admonished not to carry on correspondence with the persons now in rebellion in the colonies, and who are not? He confuses the law to learn the nature of the supposed crime: the law is silent upon the subject. This, in a country where it has been since said, and formerly with justice, that the government is by law and not by men, might render him perfectly safe. But proclamations have been found to contain dangerous engines in the hands of the law power. Information is demanded to be given to one of the Secretaries of State of all persons who shall be found carrying on correspondence with the persons in rebellion, in order to being to condone punishment the authors, persons or abettors of such dangerous designs. Let us suppose, for a moment, that some persons in the colonies are in rebellion, and that those, who carry on correspondence with them, might learn, by some rule, which Britons are bound to know, how to distinguish them: Does it follow that all correspondence with them deserves to be punished? It might have been intended to separate them from their danger, and to reclaim them from their crime. By what law does a correspondence with a criminal transfer or communicate his guilt? We know that those who had said advice to the King's enemies do so enable them to carry their designs on effect, are crossed on the eyes of the law. But the law goes no farther. Can proclamations, according to the principles of reason and justice and the constitution go farther than the law?

But, perhaps, the principles of reason and justice and the constitution will not prevail: Experience suggests us on the doubt: If they should, we shall reflect, no arguments drawn from a very different source. We, therefore, in the name of the people of these United Colonies, and by authority, according to the power and manner of representation derived from them, declare, that whatever punishment shall be inflicted upon any persons in the power of our country for forwarding or assisting the trade of American Liberty shall be returned on the same kind and the same degree upon those, in our power, who have favoured, aided or abetted, or shall favour, aid or abet the system of reciprocal opposition. The essential difference between our trade and that of our enemies might justify a severe punishment: The law of retaliation will unquestionably warrant one equally severe.

We mean not, however, by this declaration, on occasion or to multiply punishments: Our sole view is to prevent them. In this unhappy and unaccountable controversy, in which Britons fight against Britons and the defendants of Britons, let the calamities sensibly inherent in a civil war follow. We hope additions will not, from whatsoever be made to them on one side. We shall require the necessity, if law under the necessity, of making them on the other.

Extract from the Minutes.  
CHARLES THOMSON, Secy.  
PRINTED BY J. DUNLAP.

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1776  
July 16  
Thought July 16, 1776  
I replied that an application for aid from the  
burgh of Long Island for aid from the  
burgh of Hempstead and other burghs requested to contribute  
their militia for the flying camp without any  
aid from the city of New York  
I replied that it was a committee of the whole to take  
into their consideration  
The president of the assembly  
after the aid had been refused to a Committee  
I believe was then appointed to  
assist to the aid of the flying camp

1776  
July 16  
I received from the Committee on the Militia  
I replied that the committee appointed to examine  
the petition for aid from the burghs  
that committee has been laid before the  
Council Assembly and a resolution  
was passed by aid to the flying camp  
I replied that the committee on the Militia  
has been laid before the Council  
I replied that the committee on the Militia  
has been laid before the Council  
I replied that the committee on the Militia  
has been laid before the Council

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.  
**A DECLARATION**  
BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,**  
IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

**W**HEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that the Reasons which impel them to the Separation should be published to the world and that they should solemnly publish and declare that they have solemnly invoked the aid and Blessings of Heaven upon their Undertaking, and that they do hereby affirm the Truth of the Declarations contained in this Declaration, that the United Colonies by these Declarations, do declare that they are united into one People, that they have dissolved all political Connexion with Great Britain, that they are free, sovereign and independent States, that they have the full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, enter into Commercials, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the Support of this Declaration, with a firm Assurance to all mankind of the Truth and Intention of the same, we have subscribed our Names to the following Declaration, in Witness whereof we have hereunto set our Hands and Seals, this fourth day of July, 1776.

He has refused to assent to our Petitions, and to dissolve the British Parliament, and to declare that he holds us bound in Obedience to the Acts of that Parliament, notwithstanding their Injustice and Oppression.

He has refused to assent to our Petitions, and to dissolve the British Parliament, and to declare that he holds us bound in Obedience to the Acts of that Parliament, notwithstanding their Injustice and Oppression.

He has refused to assent to our Petitions, and to dissolve the British Parliament, and to declare that he holds us bound in Obedience to the Acts of that Parliament, notwithstanding their Injustice and Oppression.

He has refused to assent to our Petitions, and to dissolve the British Parliament, and to declare that he holds us bound in Obedience to the Acts of that Parliament, notwithstanding their Injustice and Oppression.

He has refused to assent to our Petitions, and to dissolve the British Parliament, and to declare that he holds us bound in Obedience to the Acts of that Parliament, notwithstanding their Injustice and Oppression.

JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.  
CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY.

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The most important broadside in the records of the National Archives is the Dunlap broadside of the Declaration of Independence. In the evening of July 4, 1776, John Dunlap printed the draft of the Declaration of Independence that Congress had approved that day. By the next day the broadside was ready to be distributed. Congress reserved one copy and inserted it into the rough journal of the Continental Congress for the 4th of July (fig. 4). This is the Archives' copy and it remains in the rough journal to the present day. Congress directed that the broadsides be distributed to the states and to the commanding officers of the Continental troops. The Dunlap broadside was the first printed version of the Declaration of Independence and the first vehicle for transmitting the Declaration to the people. It supplied the exact text for all subsequent printed versions, as well as for the famous engrossed copy which was signed by all the delegates and is on permanent display at the National Archives.

The government printed broadsides during the Revolutionary War to distribute orders, post the progress of the war, and keep up the morale of the people. They were an important form of communication between government and people, and they contain the sense of urgency prevalent during the war. Broadsides from the postwar years seem less exciting, but they played a critical role in the survival of the new United States; they informed people of the setting up of their new system of government. Broadsides were used in conjunction with newspapers to communicate laws, proclamations, and ordinances to the people.

A well-known early broadside is the *Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States, North-West of the River Ohio*, commonly called the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 (fig. 5). This document is called a broadsheet instead of a broadside because it was printed on both sides of one sheet of paper. It provided for self government of the territory northwest of the Ohio River, and guaranteed settlers within the territory civil and religious liberties that were guaranteed to all Americans by the ratification of the Bill of Rights in 1791.

left:

4 *In Congress, July 4, 1776. A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled, July 4, 1776*

Letterpress, printed by John Dunlap for the Continental Congress  
14 1/2 x 18

This broadside was inserted with wafers of wax into the Rough Journal of the Continental Congress to complete the record for July 4, 1776.

RG 360 Records of the Continental Congress (Rough Journals, 1774-1789, Item 1)

right.

5 *An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States, North-West of the River Ohio, July 13, 1787*

Letterpress, printed (on both sides of one sheet) for the Confederation Congress

8 1/2 x 12 1/2

RG 360 Records of the Continental Congress (Miscellaneous Papers, Broadside issued 1775-1788)

**An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States, North-West of the River Ohio.**

**Be it ordained by the United States in Congress assembled, That the following be the laws for the government of the Territory of the United States, North-West of the River Ohio, in the year 1787.**

**Section 1.** That the said Territory be and the same shall be a Territory of the United States, and shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Territories.

**Section 2.** That the said Territory be divided into counties, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Counties.

**Section 3.** That the said Territory be divided into townships, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Townships.

**Section 4.** That the said Territory be divided into precincts, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Precincts.

**Section 5.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 6.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 7.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 8.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 9.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 10.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 11.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 12.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 13.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 14.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 15.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 16.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 17.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 18.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 19.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

**Section 20.** That the said Territory be divided into parishes, and the same shall be subject to all such laws as shall be enacted by Congress for the government of Parishes.

*[Faint, mostly illegible text from the reverse side of the document, appearing as bleed-through from the other side of the page.]*

*[Handwritten signature or initials in ink.]*



# 19th Century

Americans! You are now called upon . . .  
—broadside issued by the Washington National Monument Society, 1835

**B**ROADSIDES AND POSTERS from the 19th century reflect many aspects of running the country: maintaining territories in the interior of the country and responding to events overseas. They remind us of events and characters in our history, such as the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the outlaws Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (figs. 6 and 10).

One task the government has had throughout its history is to maintain a military service. *Fresh Beef* announced, in 1829, that the government was soliciting bids for keeping the troops fed (fig. 7). This broadside is an interesting forerunner of the present-day bid and contract system used by the government. The recruitment poster *Men Wanted for the Army* conveys not only the uniforms and cavalry regalia of 1908 but also a serene image of military order in the shadow of the Rocky Mountains (fig. 8).

The form of the broadside changed during the 19th century. Lengthy complex discourses common during the time of the Revolution gradually disappeared in favor of text that was abbreviated and highly punctuated. Styles of type became bolder and more decorative. Often one broadside contained several styles of type, large and small, arranged in an eye-catching pattern. The mid-century broadside announcing the \$100,000 reward for information leading to the arrests of John Wilkes Booth and his accomplices has at least seven different styles with the attention-getting words "reward" and "murderer" printed very large (fig. 6). Concurrent with these changes was the increasing use of simple line drawings and designs to further attract attention.

**FRESH BEEF.**

I will receive proposals, till the 25th day of June, inclusive, to furnish with

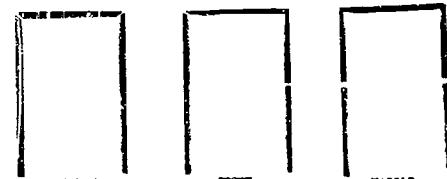
**FRESH BEEF,**

the Troops of the U. S. Army that are, or may be, stationed at or within the vicinity of Cantonment Clinch and Pensacola, from the first of July ensuing, until the 30th of June, 1830: inclusive. The BEEF will be required to be delivered to the Troops on two days in each week, or oftener, as may be, (the days to be designated) in such quantity as may be requisite for their rations on each day. And I deem it necessary to apprise those who may offer to contract for this supply, that no beef, but the best that the Market can afford will be received, and particular attention must be paid to the butchering thereof.—A rigid inspection of it will be required. Unquestionable and ample security will be required for the faithful performance of the contract.

Persons offering to contract for this supply, will deposit in the Post Office at Pensacola, their proposals in writing, sealed and endorsed, "Proposals for furnishing Fresh Beef," stating in a single bill, the rate per pound, for which they will engage.

**A. W. THORNTON,**  
Agent. A. C. B.

Pensacola, 15th June, 1829.



War Department, Washington April 20, 1865.

**\$100,000 REWARD!**

**THE MURDERER**

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,  
**IS STILL AT LARGE.**

**\$50,000 REWARD**

Will be paid for the apprehension of David G. Marshall, member of Booth's conspiracy.

**\$25,000 REWARD**

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN W. BUREAU, one of Booth's accomplices.

**\$25,000 REWARD**

Will be paid for the apprehension of David G. Marshall, member of Booth's conspiracy.

**EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.**

- 6 above: *The Murderer of Our Late Beloved President, Abraham Lincoln, Is Still at Large*, April 20, 1865  
Letterpress, printed for the War Department  
12 1/2 x 24  
RG 94 Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's-1917 (General Records, Letters Received, 1861-1870, oversize)
- 7 left: *Fresh Beef*, June 11, 1829  
Letterpress, printed for the U.S. Army  
9 1/4 x 10 1/2  
RG 92 Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General (Consolidated Correspondence File of the Office of the Quartermaster General)
- 8 right: Michael P. Whelan, *Men Wanted for the Army*, ca. 1908  
Color lithograph, printed by American Lithographic Co. for the U.S. Army  
29 1/4 x 40  
RG 94 Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's-1917 (94-WP-19)



# Men Wanted for the Army



APPLY AT

RECRUITING STATION.

# THE GREAT HEALTH DRINK



Say!  
YOU  
OUGHT TO DRINK



## Hires' Rootbeer.





# World War I

*How Art put on Khaki and went into action*  
—Will Irwin, Thoughts Inspired by a Wartime  
Billboard, no date

**I**N APRIL 1917, when Congress declared war on Germany, President Wilson faced a nation deeply divided about the war. Some supported the English, some the Germans, and some were pacifist, advocating noninvolvement. In the eyes of the government, differing beliefs, normally cherished in a democracy, may suddenly become a threat to a nation on the verge of war. To lessen the threat, the government might feel it necessary to restrict certain freedoms of expression and to persuade the people to willingly cooperate with the curtailment of their freedoms and to sacrifice their own comforts—and their own sons—to aid in the war effort. During World War I the government relied heavily on voluntary censorship and sacrifice to the end of winning the war.

In 1917 posters became a key element in the government's campaign to unify people in support of the war. In a world without television or radio, posters could spread the word—in the form of short, gripping messages combined with powerful images—rapidly to a very large audience. By 1917 the way was paved for the appearance of war posters. Advertising posters were a common sight, and many people who had collected posters during the "poster craze" of the 1890s had them in their homes. Many of the artists called upon to design war posters were familiar and even beloved for their prewar illustrations in weekly and monthly magazines. The first war posters exploded onto the scene on April 14, 1917, when the Women's Suffrage Party, aided by the Boy Scouts, covered the city of New York with 20,000 recruitment posters. Wartime poster production in the United States was higher than in any other belligerent country.

Immediately after committing the country to war, Wilson appointed a Committee on Public Information (CPI), headed by a well-known journalist George Creel. The CPI was responsible for distributing information about the war that was in the government's best interests. It relied on voluntary censorship of the press and encouraged the publication of items designed to inspire confidence, enthusiasm, and service from the American people. Creel quickly saw the need for enlisting artists who could make illustrations for advertisements and posters. He wrote: "Art is to be conscripted no less than manhood," and asked Charles Dana Gibson, then president of the Society of Illustrators in New York, to select artists to help the CPI. Inspired by the call to duty, the entire Society of Illustrators joined the CPI as the Division of Pictorial Publicity (DPP), with Gibson as their leader.

Although the DPP was not responsible for every government war poster, it did oversee the production of approximately 700 designs. It served as the middleman between capable artists and agencies that needed posters. For each poster needed, a special committee within the DPP would handpick the artist they believed best suited for the job. The selected artists volunteered their time and materials. Gibson called for posters of the highest quality, and he urged artists to stress the spiritual side of the conflict, to represent ideals—the spirit of the war—rather than physical facts. As one artist said, "The game of war has its horrible side, but it is not advisable to look upon that side in a poster."

## TEAM WORK WINS!



12

right:

- 11 L. N. Britton, *Warning! Consider the Possible Consequences If You Are Careless in Your Work*, not dated

Color lithograph, printed by Latham Litho and Printing Co.

28½ x 41

RG 45 Naval Records Collection (45-WP-296)

above:

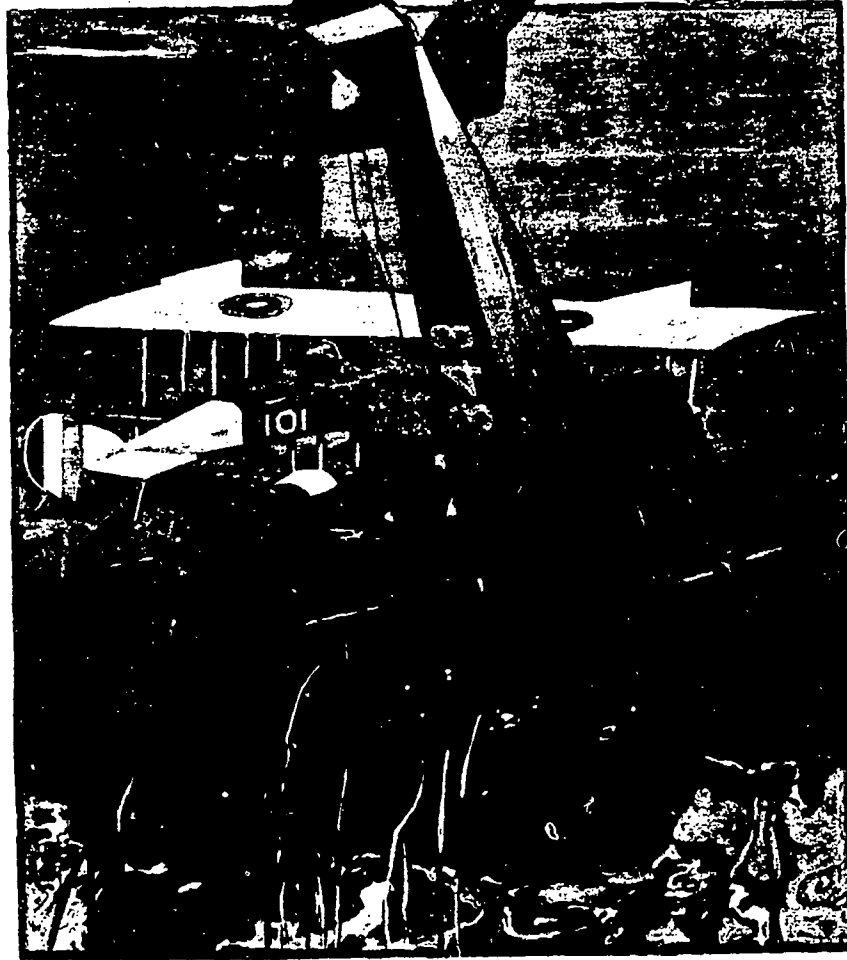
- 12 Roy Hull Still, *Team Work Wins!* not dated

Color lithograph, printed by John F. Eggers Co., Inc., for the Ordnance Department, U.S. Army

27¼ x 42

RG 4 Records of the U.S. Food Administration (4-P-9)

# Warning!



**CONSIDER THE POSSIBLE  
CONSEQUENCES IF YOU ARE  
CARELESS IN YOUR WORK**

# AMERICANS ALL!

## HONOR ROLL

- Du Bois
- Smith
- O'Brien
- Cejka
- Haucke
- Pappandrikopolous
- Andrassi
- Villotto
- Levy
- Turovich
- Kowalski
- Chriczanevicz
- Knutson
- Gonzales

— Howard Chandler Christy, 1919

# Victory Liberty Loan



14  
**THAT LIBERTY SHALL NOT  
 PERISH FROM THE EARTH  
 BUY LIBERTY BONDS**  
 FOURTH LIBERTY LOAN



13

above right:

- 13 Aughet Mistaf (or Mutaf), *Treat 'Em Rough!*, not dated

Color lithograph, printed by National Printing and Engraving Co. for the Tanks Corps, U.S. Army

28 x 41

RG 4 Records of the U.S. Food Administration (4 P-8)

above left:

- 14 Joseph Pennell, *That Liberty Shall Not Perish From the Earth*, 1919

Photomechanical lithograph, printed by Ketterlinus Co. for the War Loan Organization

30 x 41

RG 53 Records of the Bureau of the Public Debt (53-WP-2B)

opposite:

- 15 Howard Chandler Christie, *Americans All!* 1919

Photomechanical lithograph, printed by Forbes, Boston, for the War Loan Organization

26 1/4 x 40

RG 53 Records of the Bureau of the Public Debt (53-WP-4C)

left:

- 16 Maginel Wright Enright, *Follow the Pied Piper*, 1918

Color lithograph, printed by the Graphuc Co. for the Department of the Interior

16 x 20

RG 45 Naval Records Collection (45-WP-266)



The next posters to appear were those concerned with efforts on the home front. *Consider the Possible Consequences* delivered a lengthy message coupled with a colorful but dreadful image reminding workers to be conscientious when building war materiel (fig. 11). *Team Work Wins* spurred war workers on by likening them to soldiers (fig. 12). The U.S. Food Administration produced many fine posters to urge Americans to conserve food. Edward Penfield, perhaps the country's best known poster artist, designed *Save Wheat* (fig. 17). Maginel Wright Enright, who was a prominent illustrator of children's books, drew Uncle Sam followed by a string of children in her gentle poster *Follow the Pied Piper for the School Garden Army* (fig. 16). These posters, like most produced at this time, avoided depicting the grim reality of war in favor of

decorative, gentle, or idealized images. Even the soldier in *Feed a Fighter*, drawn by illustrator Wallace Morgan who actually went to Europe to record scenes of war on the spot, is portrayed in a moment of rest (fig. 18). The poster allows one to sympathize with soldiers without actually going into the trenches with them.

When the armistice was declared, posters continued to be made on the home front to appeal for money and food for wartorn countries. When millions of soldiers returned and resumed former jobs, and the number of jobs dwindled as wartime contracts were cancelled, there was a period of strikes and unrest. The Department of Labor produced several interesting posters to smooth the transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy and to urge cooperation between workers and veterans (fig. 19).



17

They are struggling against starvation and trying to feed not only themselves and children; but their husbands and sons who are fighting in the trenches  
UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION



19

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

above

- 17 Edward Penfield, *Will You Help the Women of France? Save Wheat*, not dated

Color lithograph, printed by W. F. Powers Co. for the Department of the Interior

56 x 36

RG 4 Records of the U.S. Food Administration (4-P-135)

right:

- 18 Wallace Morgan, *Feed a Fighter*, not dated

Photomechanical lithograph, printed by the Strobridge Lithographic Co. for the Department of the Interior

21 x 29

RG 4 Records of the U.S. Food Administration (4-P-136)

left

- 19 Gerrit A. Beneker, *The Past Is Behind Us, the Future Is Ahead*, 1918

Color lithograph, printed by S. Hoen & Co. for the Department of Labor  
15 x 20

RG 287 Publications of the U.S. Government (287-L 19.P26)



# FEED a FIGHTER

Eat only what you need —

*Waste nothing —*

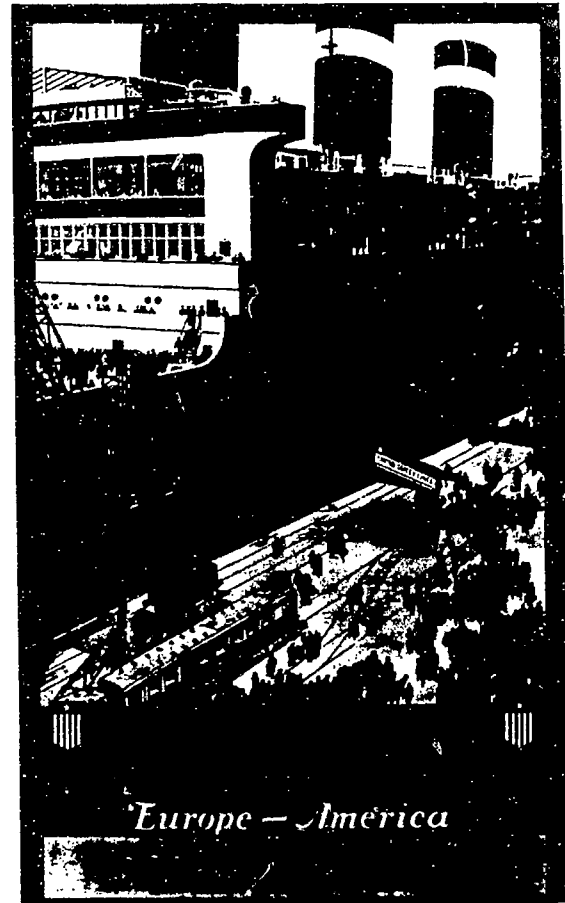
That he and his family  
may have enough

# Between the Wars

*America's present need is not heroics but healing; not nostrums but normalcy . . .*  
—Warren G. Harding, 1920

**A**S THE COUNTRY SETTLED DOWN after World War I, the government produced far fewer posters. But posters had proven themselves an effective form of mass communication; agencies continued to use them to convey peacetime concerns for improving industry, promoting health and education, and celebrating the nation's natural beauty.

New messages and images in postwar posters reflect the country's transition from war to peacetime. *Look, Why Freeze?* shows how messages on military recruitment posters swung from an emphasis on heroism and sacrifice to a peacetime emphasis on personal benefits of signing up—travel, education and recreation (fig. 20). *United States Lines, Leviathan at Southampton* shows a ship that was originally built in Germany for the Hamburg-Amerika Line but in 1917 was confiscated by the U.S. Government and used to transport troops to Europe (fig. 21). After the war the ship again became a luxury liner, this time for the United States. This poster reflects a new modernist aesthetic that originated in Europe and filtered through American graphic arts during the 1920s and 1930s. The sleek glittering ship, decorated with tiny people and portholes and topped with great smokestacks, celebrates both in style and subject matter an excitement with modern technology. *Air Mail Is Socially Correct* is perhaps the most surprising of these transitional posters (fig. 22). One of the by-products of the war was airmail service provided by the U.S. Post Office using army airplanes. This poster shows the government entering the world of social etiquette in 1920, persuading ladies to use airmail for personal correspondence.



21



20

left:

20 *Look, Why Freeze?* 1925

Photomechanical lithograph, printed for the U.S. Navy

15¼ x 15¼

RG 287 Publications of the U.S. Government (287-N17.232:C12)

above:

21 *United States Lines, Leviathan at Southampton*, not dated

Color lithograph, printed for the U.S. Lines

24¼ x 39¼

RG 32 Records of the U.S. Shipping Board (32-P-1)

right:

22 John McEwan, *Air Mail Is Socially Correct*, 1920Photomechanical lithograph, printed by the U.S. Army Engineer  
Reproduction Plant for the U.S. Post Office

14 x 20

RG 287 Publications of the U.S. Government (287-P1.26:A172)

23

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Pt. 26.  
At 12  
Incorra.F



# AIR MAIL

*is Socially Correct*

**5¢ for the First Ounce 10¢ for each additional Ounce**

MADE BY THE AIR MAIL SERVICE

ENGRAVED REPRODUCTION PLATE U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE





**ROOM SERVICE**  
 GEORGE AGGOTS SMASH HIT  
 ST. CHARLES THEATRE  
 JEDY PLUNKING  
 CERTAIN OFFERS

26

**THERE'S DANGER**  
 when people tire too easily  
 when minds are slow to think  
 when bodies can't fight disease




27

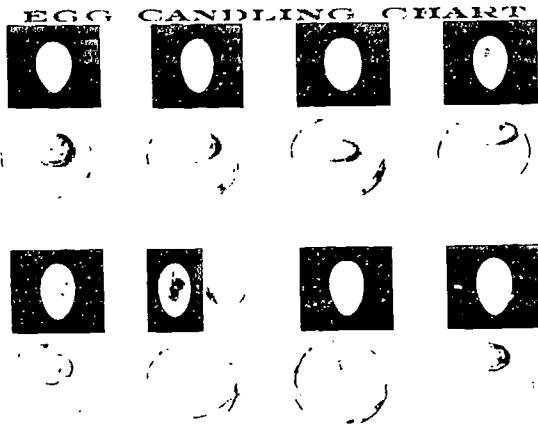


**DEATH RIDES  
 THE FOREST**

**WHEN  
 MAN IS  
 CARELESS**



25



23 BUREAU OF CHEMISTRY, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

above:

- 23 H. M. P., *Egg Candling Chart*, 1914

Color lithograph, printed by Breuker & Kessler Co. for the Bureau of Chemistry, Department of Agriculture

24 7/8 x 19

RG 287 Publications of the U.S. Government (287-A72.EG3)

right:

- 24 Dorothy Waugh, *Adventures of Today Are the Memories of Tomorrow*, 1934

Color lithograph, printed by Burland Printing Co. for the National Park Service, Department of the Interior

27 x 40

RG 287 Publications of the U.S. Government (287-129.20 P84 no 6)

opposite right:

- 25 *Death Rides the Forest When Man Is Careless*, 1933

Color lithograph, printed for the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture

10 7/8 x 16 1/2

RG 287 Publications of the U.S. Government (287-A13 203 D34 933)

opposite above left:

- 26 *Room Service*, not dated

Serigraph, printed for the Federal Theater Project, Works Progress Administration

28 x 42

RG 69 Records of the Work Projects Administration (69-TP-207)

opposite below left:

- 27 *There's Danger*, 1941

Photomechanical lithograph, printed by the Government Printing Office for the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture

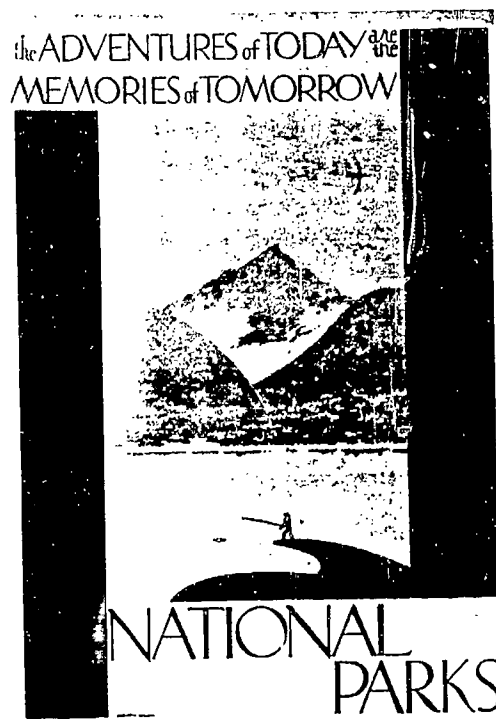
20 x 25

RG 287 Publications of the U.S. Government (287-A43.8.Am3 no 4)

After World War I the government became increasingly involved in many aspects of people's lives. *Egg Candling Chart* is a delicately executed example of informational posters designed by the Department of Agriculture to establish industry standards and educate the public (fig. 23). The Park Service and the Forest Service were both concerned with land conservation. During the 1920s and 1930s posters such as *Adventures of Today Are the Memories of Tomorrow* promoted national parks to a public that could drive across the country in their new automobiles (fig. 24). *Death Rides the Forest When Man Is Careless* is an early example of the fire-prevention posters that became necessary because of the increasing number of visitors to parks and wilderness areas (fig. 25).

A burst of posters and broadsides ushered in President Roosevelt's New Deal administration. Some, such as broadsides printed for the Farm Credit Administration, were purely informational, introducing people to new programs. Others promoted an awareness of health and social issues, and promoted cultural programs of the New Deal. Many of these were produced by a special poster division set up within the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration. Seeking an inexpensive way to print small numbers of posters, artists on the project revived the silkscreen printing process. *Room Service* is typical of the silkscreen posters that promoted local productions of the Federal Music, Art and Theater Projects (fig. 26).

*There's Danger* marks the end of the Great Depression and the beginning of World War II (fig. 27). It was one of a poster series entitled "Make America Strong," produced by the Department of Agriculture. *There's Danger* conveys the government's concern with the spiritual as well as the physical well-being of the public.



# World War II

*Never before have we had so little time in which to do so much.*

—Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1942

**B**Y 1939, AMERICANS were watching war escalate in Europe and the Far East. Then, in December of 1941, Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States entered a war that now spread across the globe. Once again the government faced the wartime task of persuading the people to make sacrifices. As during the First World War, posters were a dominant form of mass communication. Government agencies and private industry printed them by the thousands as a cheap effective way to promote production, conservation, and sacrifice.

Before war was actually declared, the Federal Art Project made posters to promote increased production of tanks, guns, ships, and planes for Britain and her allies. *Production Lines Are Battle Lines!* is a good example of these early, now rare, war posters (fig. 28).

President Roosevelt gave responsibility to several different offices for spreading war-related information, but he created no central office (comparable to the Division of Pictorial Publicity created during World War I) to coordinate artists and agencies. Each military service had intelligence and propaganda units that produced posters for recruits and servicemen. The inspiring poster *Ready* was produced by the Marine Corps (fig. 29). Between 1942 and 1945 the Office of War Information, the Treasury Department and the Office of Emergency Management all published posters independently to meet their own needs.



POSTER ISSUED BY DIVISION OF INFORMATION OF W.P.A. AND O.E.M.  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF PHOTOGRAPHERS, CALIF., DESIGNER, CONTRIBUTED BY CHES COBB TO THE  
 HOLLANDS SMITH'S EDUCATION... .. U.S.A. SO. CALIF. ART PROJECT



APPLY, OR WRITE, TO NEAREST RECRUITING STATION

28

above:

- 28 Ches Cobb, *Production Lines Are Battle Lines!* not dated  
 Serigraph, printed by the W.P.A. Southern California Art Project for the  
 War Production Board and the Office for Emergency Management  
 24 x 36  
 RG 44 Records of the Office of Government Reports (44-PA-1582)

left:

- 29 Haddon H. Sundblom, *Ready*, 1942  
 Photomechanical lithograph, printed by Alpha Litho Co. for the U.S.  
 Marine Corps  
 27 1/4 x 39 1/2  
 RG 44 Records of the Office of Government Reports (44-PA-1618)

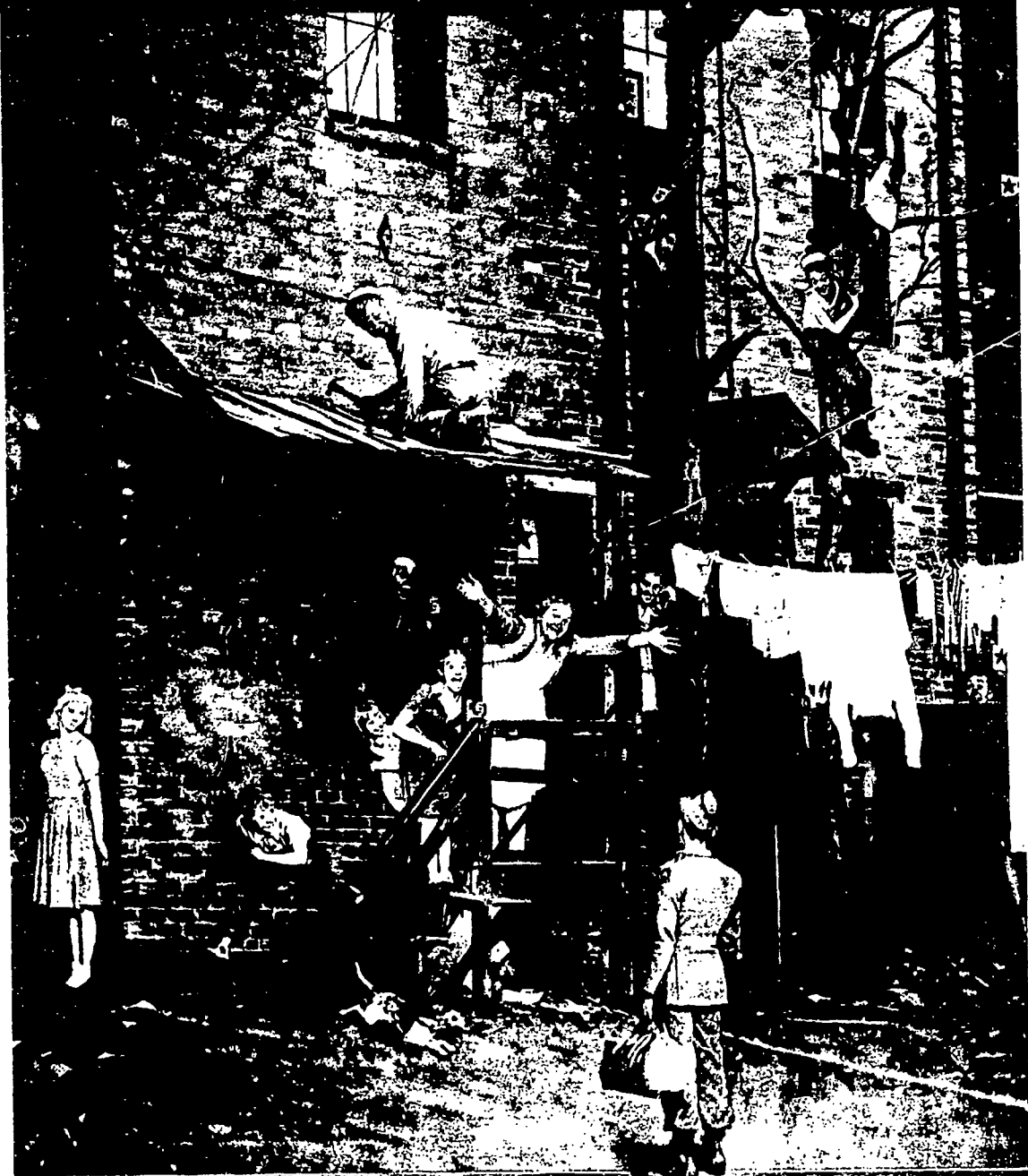
right:

- 30 Harriet Nuiciu, *Deliver Us From Evil*, 1943  
 Photomechanical lithograph, printed for the Treasury Department  
 28 1/2 x 40  
 RG 44 Records of the Office of Government Reports (44-PA-2590)

**"Deliver us from evil"**



*Hasten the Homecoming*



**BUY VICTORY BONDS**

After the experience of World War I most Americans discarded any romantic notions they may have had about war. In contrast to the spiritually uplifting and romantic posters used in World War I, posters from World War II realistically conveyed the grim results of destruction to communicate urgent needs and messages. *Deliver Us From Evil* employs the powerful realism of a photograph to get people to buy bonds (fig. 30). The realistic illustration of a dead soldier, a subject that was very rare in posters of the First World War, appear on *A Careless Word . . . A Needless Loss* (fig. 31). On the other hand, artists frequently used popular cartoon images to frame a deadly serious message in humorous terms. The Emerson Electric Co. printed

*Every Mile You Drive Over 35 mph, Axis Smiles*, which promoted cooperation through comic strip caricatures of Hitler, Mussolini, and General Tojo (fig. 32).

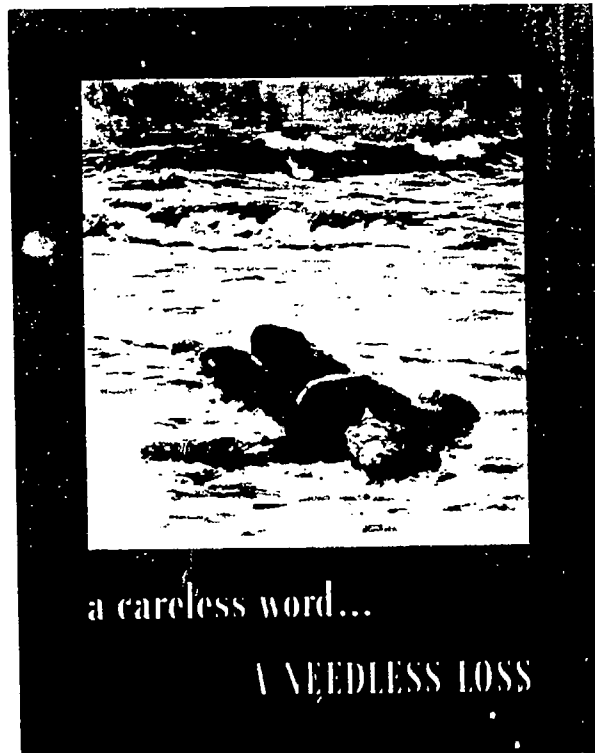
Though less often than in the first world war, prominent artists and illustrators contributed designs for war posters. *The Sowers* is one of a series of posters privately printed by Thomas Hart Benton to, in his words, "be of some help in pulling some Americans out of their shells of pretense and make-believe" (fig. 33). Perhaps the most beloved artist at that time was Norman Rockwell, whose illustration for the Saturday Evening Post was made into the poster *Hasten the Homecoming* (fig. 34).



32



33



31

below right:

- 31 Anton Otto Fischer. *A Careless Word . . . A Needless Loss*, 1943  
Photomechanical lithograph, printed by the Government Printing Office for the Office of War Information  
22 x 28  
RG 208 Records of the Office of War Information

above:

- 32 Pointer, *Every Mile You Drive Over 35 mph, Axis Smiles!* not dated  
Serigraph, printed for Emerson Electric  
15 1/4 x 20 1/4  
RG 179 Records of the War Production Board (179-WP-72)

above right:

- 33 Thomas Hart Benton, *The Sowers*, not dated  
Photomechanical lithograph, printer unknown  
41 x 31  
RG 44 Records of the Office of Government Reports (44-PA-1966)

left:

- 34 Norman Rockwell, *Hasten the Homecoming*, not dated  
Photomechanical lithograph, printed for the Treasury Department  
20 x 29  
RG 44 Records of the Office of Government Reports (44-PA-935)

# After World War II

*Roofs are for shelter. Walls are for expression.*  
—John Chancellor, 1972

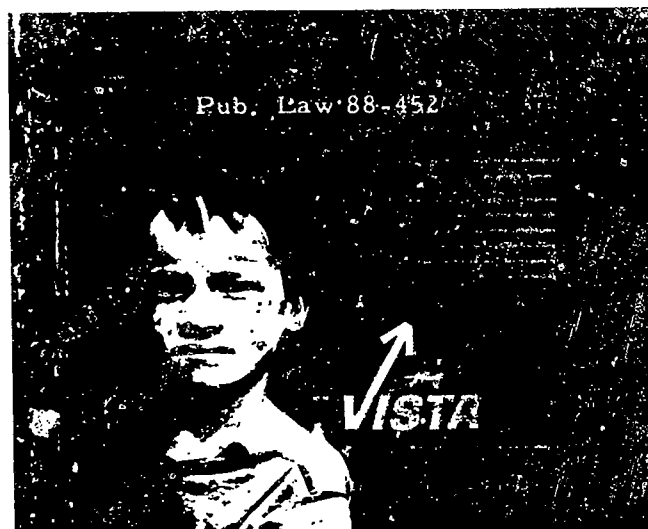
**I**N THE LAST FOUR DECADES modern media, such as television, film, and radio, have replaced posters as the dominant form of mass communication. But posters still provide an effective, inexpensive way to proclaim a message to a large audience. Far from becoming obsolete, posters today are a creative, popular, and forceful medium for conveying artistic ideas as well as current events.

Perhaps the most powerful posters created in recent times have been made outside the government. Beginning in the 1960s, groups and individuals with a cause seized upon posters to promote social or political change. The antiwar, civil rights, and women's rights movements, for example, all relied on posters to communicate their demands for change directly to the people in the streets. At the same time, the poster medium, partially freed from the function of delivering messages, underwent an artistic renaissance. Posters today demonstrate a wide variety of techniques, subjects, and artistic experimentation. Many contemporary artists design posters expressly as decorative artifacts to appeal and be sold to a wide audience.

In the last four decades advertising through television and radio has emerged as a whole new field. Great strides have been made to exploit the persuasive potential of images and words through audiovisual media. Posters are developed as part of large advertising campaigns. Often through the use of a single carefully selected image they remind the audience of the larger campaign. In this way they reflect the ever-increasing levels of sophistication in advertising today.

The effects of these changes are evident in government posters produced since World War II. The Advertising Council, formed in 1946, helps assure that government advertising keeps up with the high quality of private advertising. The council serves as a clearinghouse between the government and advertisement agencies; members of the council donate their time as a public service. The first well-known campaign undertaken with the assistance of the Advertising Council was for fire prevention, and it led to the birth of Smokey the Bear (fig. 35). The council's influence today is widespread and can be seen in public service advertisements warning against drugs and alcohol abuse, educating the public about health issues, selling savings bonds, and promoting a variety of other subjects.

Social protest of the 1960s and 1970s is reflected in posters printed for government programs responding to the protests. *Pub. Law 88-452* for the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program shows the government's reactions to social pressure to help people in poor communities (fig. 36). Another form of recruitment poster, this one makes a humanitarian appeal to potential volunteers. *It May Not Be Much But It's All We've Got*, recruiting people for the Peace Corps, springs from a similar sentiment (fig. 40).



36

*opposite:*

- 35 *Please! Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires*, 1964

Photomechanical lithograph, printed by the Government Printing Office for the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture

13 x 18 1/4

Scheduled to be added to RG 95, Records of the Forest Service

*above:*

- 36 Daniel J. Ransohoff. *Pub. Law 88-452*, not dated

Photomechanical lithograph, printed for Volunteers in Service to America

16 1/2 x 13 1/2

RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services (381-PX-44)

# PLEASE!



Only you can prevent forest fires

U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service

43-CFR-26

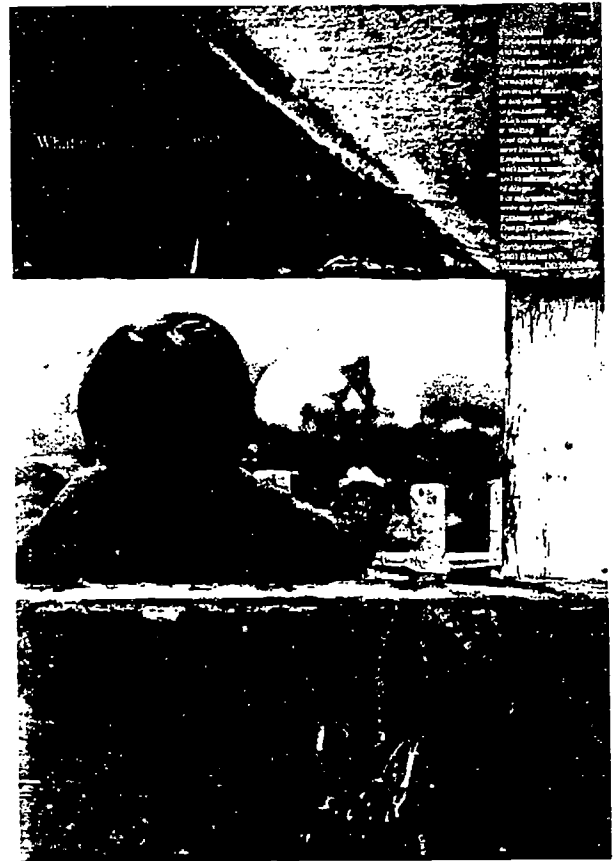
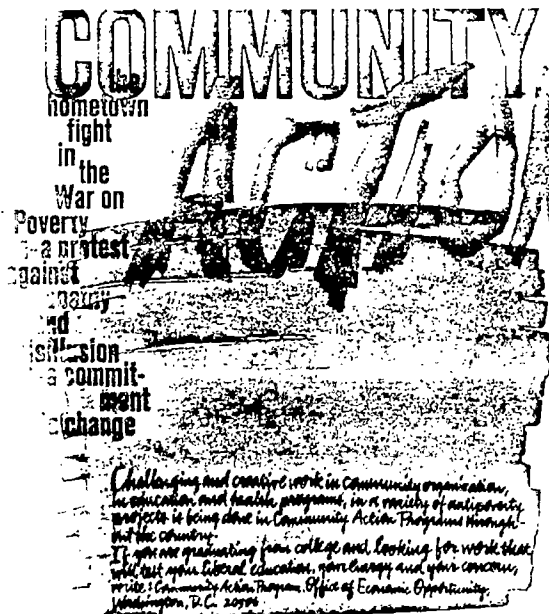
State Forestry Department



The poster *Community Action* more directly refers to social unrest of the 1970s, using strong language that derived from the struggle with urban and rural poverty: "the hometown fight . . . protest against apathy . . . commitment to change." The message urged educated, energetic, and concerned young people to get involved in President Johnson's War on Poverty program (fig. 37).

In addition to its involvement with social welfare, the government, through the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, has awarded grants in support of the arts over the last two decades. *What Makes a City Livable?* is a poster for the Architecture, Planning and Design Program of the National Endowment for the Arts (fig. 38). The subject matter, as well as the poster itself, reflects the government's interest in promoting excellence in artistic design and for improving the quality of American life.

Perhaps in response to the high quality of contemporary artistic posters, posters produced within federal agencies demonstrate the government's effort to improve the quality of its own design. Individual agencies have established high standards for their own graphics programs. The National Park Service, for example, developed a unified graphics program with the assistance of designer Massimo Vignelli. The Park Service printed a series of posters by prominent American artists in conjunction with its new design program. *Thomas Edison*, produced by Michael Melford and Ivan Chemayeff, and *Sitting Bull*, by Leonard Baskin, are from this series (figs. 39 and 40). Related to this, and to its interest in supporting excellence in the arts, the National Endowment for the Arts has established programs specifically to encourage first-rate design within federal agencies. Recent posters designed by artists and designers within the government, and commissioned from prominent artists outside the government, represent a fresh and inventive contribution to the field of posters today.



left

37 *Community Action*, not dated

Photomechanical lithograph, printed for the Community Action Program, Office of Economic Opportunity

17 x 18"

RG 381 Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services (381-PX-2)

above

38 Ivan Chemayeff, *What Makes a City Livable?* not dated

Photomechanical lithograph, printed for the National Endowment for the Arts

24 x 34

Scheduled to be added to RG 288 Records of the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities

right

39 Michael Melford and Ivan Chemayeff, *Thomas Edison*, 1979

Photomechanical lithograph, printed by the Government Printing Office for the National Park Service

29 x 39

Scheduled to be added to RG 79 Records of the National Park Service

# Thomas Edison

Genius enlightening the world



## A Note About Sources

Compiled by William Cunliffe

Newcomers looking for broadsides and posters in the National Archives may profit by some pointers about the records. Generally, records in the National Archives are held in the original arrangement that was created by the branches, divisions, offices, bureaus, and departments of the federal government that sent the records to the National Archives. Performing research in the records requires the researchers and archivists to identify the government office that would have been concerned with the topic, then to locate the series of records most likely to hold such information. Attempting to guide a researcher to specific types of records is not an easy task, because records—in general—are not segregated by physical type.

The broadside—a single sheet printed on one side and meant for posting or distribution—is in many ways a precursor to the poster. Some broadsides issued by the Congress before 1789 appear in the records of the Continental and Confederation Congresses and the Constitutional Convention. Many of these are reproduced on microfilm. Broadsides relating to later activities of the government, such as those printed to inform citizens of land sales in the west or those informing people of laws or governmental programs, are interleaved within the records of specific agencies.

Most posters, because of their special maintenance and storage requirements, have been placed in the Still Pictures Branch of the Special Archives Division. Other large collections of posters can be found in the Library and Printed Archives Branch, Central Information Division, which has custody of Publications of the U.S. Government, Record Group (RG) 287, and the General Branch, Civil Archives Division, which has many posters from the Office of War Information, RG 208.

The Still Pictures Branch has approximately 15,200 posters. Although there are a few that were made in the 19th century, most date from the early 20th century to the late 1970s. Posters in the Still Pictures Branch come from many record groups, with a major segment from military records reflecting wartime concerns. Posters from World War I have been taken from the records of the American Expeditionary Forces, the Office of Naval Records and Library, the Treasury Department's Bureau of Public Debt, and the U.S. Food Administration. World War II posters are from the records of the Office of War Information, the War Production Board, the Office of Government Reports, the Adjutant General's Office, the Office of the Quartermaster General, the Chief of Ordnance, the War Department General and Special Staffs, the Office of Price Administration, the Coast Guard, the State Department, the Office of Inter-American Affairs, and the Gift Collection.

The Still Pictures Branch also has posters that reflect a wide variety of peacetime concerns. These posters are from the records of the U.S. Housing Corporation, Weather

Bureau, Commission on Fine Arts, Works Progress Administration, Army Chief of Engineers, Public Health Service, Office of Economic Opportunity, American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, U.S. Shipping Board, Federal Extension Service, and Office of Civilian Defense.

One group of records, RG 287, Publications of the U.S. Government, contains copies of printed materials published by the Government Printing Office, including posters and broadsides from many government agencies. Posters from this group can be found in both the Still Pictures Branch and the Printed Archives Branch. They depict all aspects of agencies' functions and missions. Military coverage includes posters created by the Army Service Forces, the War Department Special Services Division, and the Office of War Information. A wider range of topics is suggested by the agency functions associated with the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Labor Department Women's Bureau, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Coast Guard, the Public Health Service, and the Treasury Department.

For example, there are copies of many "wanted" posters produced by the Bureau of Investigation, which in 1935 became the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Since the first such poster was issued for an army deserter in 1919, thousands of suspected criminals have found their pictures on the walls of U.S. post offices throughout the country. Each poster, blazoned with WANTED across the masthead, pictured the suspect, provided a physical description, and usually detailed the crimes for which he was accused.

Records of the Office of War Information, RG 208, in the Civil Archives Division, General Branch, include some 50 cubic feet of records of the OWI Graphic Bureau. Created in 1944, this bureau guided agencies and the Government Printing Office in the production and publication of graphics and their distribution both inside and outside the government.

Other places to look for broadsides and posters within the National Archives system are the Presidential libraries. At the libraries there are few systemized collections of posted notices; the ones that can be found reflect Presidential campaigns, and activities and programs related to each President from Herbert Hoover to Jimmy Carter. The Hoover Library, for example, has posters and some original poster designs made for the U.S. Food Administration, which Hoover directed during the First World War. Personal interests of a President are sometimes reflected in a library's poster holdings. The Roosevelt Library has a number of interesting 19th-century broadsides collected by Franklin D. Roosevelt himself.

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40 *It May Not Be Much But Its All We've Got*, ca. 1971

Photomechanical lithograph, printed for the Peace Corps

18 x 24

Scheduled to be added to RG 381, Records of Agencies for Economic Opportunity and Legal Services

**It may not be much  
but it's all we've got.**



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**Don't just talk about a better world. Do something about one.**