

The American Legion Exhibit



INDIANA WORLD WAR MEMORIAL
NOVEMBER, 1937

FOREWORD

● The American Legion was founded in March, 1919, at a Caucus in Paris, another one in May in St. Louis and a National Convention in November in Minneapolis. A national charter was granted by Act of Congress on September 16, 1919. It was at the National Convention in Minneapolis in November, 1919, that the National Headquarters was authorized to be established in Indianapolis.

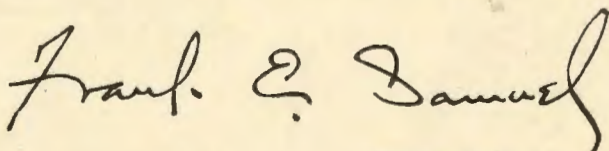
Early in the history of The American Legion the desirability was recognized of establishing a library to collect and preserve data on the World War, as well as historical material of The American Legion itself. In developing our National Headquarters library it has been our primary purpose to include in our collections all material pertaining to The American Legion. It has been a further policy to include as much World War material as would be especially useful and interesting to our organization.

Our historical collection is preserved in our National Headquarters building, and through a desire to acquaint members of our own organization and the public in general with some of the work that has been accomplished, the idea of this exhibit was born.

It is during the month of November that our annual meetings are held at National Headquarters. These meetings are attended by Department Commanders, Department Adjutants, National Executive Committeemen and others from every state in the Union, as well as from our territorial possessions and outlying Departments of The American Legion. The month of November, therefore, is an opportune time to display this exhibit, and we ask our friends to share with our members the opportunity of studying this interesting material. Only a portion of our collection is included in the exhibit but it is complete enough to convey both a typical and general idea of its character and completeness.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Indiana World War Memorial Commission for providing the exhibition hall in the Memorial Building for the exhibit.

We cordially invite you and your friends to view the exhibit at your convenience, anytime between the hours of 10:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M., both week days and Sundays, beginning with the opening on Armistice Day, November 11, and extending throughout the entire month. It is our hope that you will enjoy this exhibit and at the same time gain a more intimate knowledge of The American Legion and its extensive public service program.



FRANK E. SAMUEL,
National Adjutant.

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

● FOR GOD AND COUNTRY WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES: TO UPHOLD AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER; TO FOSTER AND PERPETUATE A ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICANISM; TO PRESERVE THE MEMORIES AND INCIDENTS OF OUR ASSOCIATION IN THE GREAT WAR; TO INCULCATE A SENSE OF INDIVIDUAL OBLIGATION TO THE COMMUNITY, STATE AND NATION; TO COMBAT THE AUTOCRACY OF BOTH THE CLASSES AND THE MASSES; TO MAKE RIGHT THE MASTER OF MIGHT; TO PROMOTE PEACE AND GOOD-WILL ON EARTH; TO SAFEGUARD AND TRANSMIT TO POSTERITY THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY; TO CONSECRATE AND SANCTIFY OUR COMRADESHIP BY OUR DEVOTION TO MUTUAL HELPFULNESS.

NATIONAL OFFICERS THE AMERICAN LEGION

COMMANDER—DANIEL J. DOHERTY, Woburn, Massachusetts.

VICE-COMMANDERS—DRURY M. PHILLIPS, Huntsville, Texas.

PHIL CONLEY, Charleston, West Virginia.

HARRY M. JOHNSON, Anaconda, Montana.

JAMES F. DANIEL, JR., Greenville, South Carolina.

JAMES R. MAHAFFY, Honolulu, T. H.

CHAPLAIN—REV. FRANK J. LAWLER, Hume, Illinois.

HISTORIAN—THOMAS M. OWEN, JR., Washington, D. C.

TREASURER—JOHN R. RUDDICK, Indianapolis, Indiana.

JUDGE ADVOCATE—RALPH B. GREGG, Indianapolis, Indiana.

ADJUTANT—FRANK E. SAMUEL, Indianapolis, Indiana.

OUR EXHIBIT

MRS. VERNA B. GRIMM, LIBRARIAN

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

● When you were a child a certain picture, perhaps not especially valuable, or perhaps the work of a famous artist, hung over the mantelpiece of the living room in your home. Imagine your delight when, in later life, suddenly you come across the same picture in a shop window! Doesn't it bring to mind the days of childhood, all its pleasures and its heartaches, and don't you recall those memories with certain tuggings at your heartstrings? Or it may have been an old book, or a vase or almost any object, which when you see it again after a long time overwhelms you with a wave of poignant recollections. We all get an emotional satisfaction out of such an experience.

For much the same reason, the veteran likes to look at the personal, intimate things connected with his war service. He does not want to recall the horror and the bloodshed and the "bombs bursting in air." But the heroic does stand out; he is interested in viewing the medals recognizing deeds of valor; he likes to go over the files of the army newspaper, such as the "Stars and Stripes" and the "Amaroc News;" he wants to see the old Y. M. C. A. song book and recall the gay song fests in the old Hut; he gets a laugh out of the well remembered placards; he likes to pick out his particular regimental insignia.

The American Legion exists partly to "preserve the memories and incidents of our association in the Great War" and one way to do this is to stress the old mementoes and reminders of those days together. Our library has devoted a part of its work to collecting and preserving just such items as will have this intimate appeal. The World War field is so vast we could not possibly cover it with the resources we have available, nor is it necessary, as other libraries are doing this thoroughly. However, we do believe we should collect such material as our members would appreciate because of the personal associations involved. Since our collection is not complete and always will be in a growing stage, we are pausing for a bit to take stock and to show you part of what we have.

You who "kept the home fires burning" will be interested because these things were connected with your dear ones in the camp and "over there." You will appreciate the posters because they will recall the feverish days of 1917 and 1918 when they were impressed upon you in every activity of your life.

The students and children will be interested in learning of these phases of the World War not found in history text books. They will learn that the war was not just a series of battles, but that with it life had to be lived as gallantly as possible and these personal associations helped make the ordeal endurable.

For these reasons we hope you will like our exhibit!

WAR POSTERS

THE AMERICAN LEGION COLLECTION

● The war poster played an important role in the World War. It was used effectively as a medium of national propaganda and for announcing all forms of activity. Because it could imprint an idea quickly, tell its story in unmistakable terms so any one could grasp it and make a profound emotional appeal, the poster was one of the most powerful and speedy molders of public opinion. Its value was recognized early and exploited to the highest degree.

When the United States entered the war, the Committee on Public Information organized a Division of Pictorial Publicity with Charles Dana Gibson as Chairman, to develop this important "war weapon." A number of artists offered their services through this bureau and more than seven hundred posters were made for the Government and various organizations such as the Red Cross, American Library Association, Salvation Army, Y. M. C. A. and others. The navy had its own pictorial publicity organization with Lieutenant Commander Henry Reuterdaahl supervising, as well as personally executing a number of the designs. There were also private groups issuing posters independent of the organized sources.

At first many of the pictorial posters were crude and the mere output of commercial lithographers. While these were devoid of much artistic value, they will always be interesting in any collection as they did the work required of them in getting the message over effectively. The artists of the country, however, soon became interested, with the result that many excellent items were produced. Thus a pictorial poster collection is important not only for depicting its value as an extremely efficient medium in war time, but also for portraying an artistic endeavor. The World War posters will be of interest to both historians and artists as examples of how wars affect art and art affects wars.

The American Legion collection of United States war posters numbers 421. It contains the most important and significant ones, is representative of the entire period and in this sense is all-sufficient. Attention is especially called to Joseph Pennell's Statue of Liberty poster for the Fourth Liberty Loan (number 45). Other noteworthy posters include: "Books Wanted," by C. B. Falls (number 311), and the boldly executed scenes by Adolph Treidler such as "Make Every Minute Count for Pershing" (number 4), "Farm to Win Over There" (number 282) and "Have You Bought Your Bond" (number 112). W. T. Benda's "Stand Behind the Country's Girlhood" (number 316) is charming and an interesting contrast to the strength of Henry Raleigh's "Hunger" (number 216) and "Blood or Bread" (number 214). "Keep it Coming" (number 206) by George Illian and Wallace

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Morgan's "Feed a Fighter" (number 208) should also be noted. Among many other artists whose posters we show and which can be checked in the list are those of Henry Reuterdaahl, Edward Penfield, Charles Livingston Bull, F. Lens Mora, Albert Sterner and Jonas Lie. Many excellent posters were not signed.

The American Legion collection of foreign War Posters is small and we hope to add to it, especially from those countries which are not represented in our items at present. Poster designing was more highly developed in the other countries than in the United States, so the contrast between American and European posters is most interesting to study. The finest of all the war posters were produced in France where they were originally planned and developed to great perfection. Heading the list of French pictures are those of M. Steinlen whose work was not only artistic, but profoundly moving. We have two of his posters (numbers 459 and 499) on display. The famous caricaturist "Sem" designed two posters which take high rank among all those produced during the war. One of these (number 469) is a symbolic view of the Arc de Triomphe and dramatizes the spirit of intense patriotism, masterfully executed.

The British war posters were not especially significant. Frank Brangwyn was, however, outstanding and his work is vigorous and dramatic. Two of his British posters (numbers 452 and 451) are in this collection.