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The Acton Memorial Library Foundation, Inc.*

Are You 100% American? Prove It! Buy U.S. Government Bonds Third Liberty Loan

Illustrator: Joseph Stern
Published by U.S. Dept. of the Treasury
1918
AML Archive no. 77.1.72

Buy Liberty Bonds, with quote from Gettysburg Address

Image by: United States. Department of the Treasury
Published by American Lithographic Company
1917
AML Archive no. 77.1.62

Fight or Buy Liberty Bonds. Third Liberty Loan

Illustrator: Howard Chandler Christy
Published by Forbes of Boston
1917
AML Archive no. 77.1.77

Good bye, Dad, I'm off to fight for Old Glory, you buy US Gov't Bonds

Illustrator: Lawrence Harris
Published by Sackett and Wilhelms Corp.
1917
AML Archive no. 77.1.60

Halt the Hun! Buy U.S. Government Bonds. Third Liberty Loan

Illustrator: Henry Raleigh
Published by U.S. Dept. of the Treasury
1918
AML Archive no. 77.1.74

My Daddy bought me a Government Bond of the Third Liberty Loan--Did Yours?

Illustrator: Unknown
Published by The United States Printing & Lithograph Co.
1917
AML Archive no. 77.1.67

Over the Top for You. Buy U.S. Gov't Bonds. Third Liberty Loan

Illustrator: Sidney H. Riesenberberg
Published by Ketterlinus
1918
AML Archive no. 77.1.73

Remember the flag of liberty--Support it! Buy U.S. Government Bonds. 3rd Liberty Loan

Illustrator: Unknown
Published by Heywood Strasser & Voigt Litho. Co., N.Y.
1918
AML Archive no. 77.1.68

Ring it Again. Buy U.S. Gov't Bonds. Third Liberty Loan

Illustrator: Unknown
Published by Sackett & Wilhelms Corp
1917
AML Archive no. 77.1.76

Third Red Cross Roll Call

Illustrator: Haskell Coffin
Published by American Red Cross
1918
AML Archive no. 77.1.71

U.S.A. Bonds. Third Liberty Loan Campaign. Boy Scouts of America. Weapons for Liberty

Illustrator: J.C. Leyendecker
Published by American Lithographic Co.
1917
AML Archive no. 77.1.75

These World War I propaganda posters beautifully illustrate a remarkable period during which advertising arts and technique and the need for shrewd economic management intersected. In 1917, when the United States entered World War I, the task of finding a way to meet the costs of the war fell to the Treasury Department and the newly formed Federal Reserve, both under the leadership of Treasury Secretary William Gibbs McAdoo. McAdoo favored a combination of a progressive tax increase (The rate on earnings over \$1 million reached 77 percent) and loans by the public, in the form of Liberty Bonds. The purchase of these bonds would have the benefit of raising funds and, by increasing savings rates, of reducing consumption, freeing production capacity for the war effort. But first, enthusiasm and support for the war had to be whipped up. McAdoo knew that "Any great war must necessarily be a popular movement. It is a kind of crusade; and like all crusades, it sweeps along on a powerful stream of romanticism." Support for the war was by no means a given. Woodrow Wilson had campaigned on the slogan "He kept us out of war". Wilson now had to convince the American public that entering the war was necessary, that "the world must be made safe for democracy."

The Liberty Bond Drives were the subject of a massive advertising campaign. It was managed by the Committee on Public Information, which developed techniques still in use today. Its object was not just to sell bonds, but to sell the war. The posters illustrate a broad range of appeals to psychological and emotional needs: sense of family ("My Daddy bought Me a Government Bond"), fear ("Halt the Hun"), and social pressure, among others. The campaign was a resounding success. By the war's end, \$18 billion had been raised. As a share of the gross domestic product, this corresponds to \$6.3 trillion today.

Most of the posters exhibited at the library are for the Third Liberty Loan Drive. Many American organizations contributed to public information efforts in support of the war. The Boy Scouts of America were active in selling Liberty bonds, a deliberate use of their patriotic image. The American Red Cross was a small organization until the United States entered the war. They used posters to recruit volunteer nurses with romantic (and highly unrealistic) images of nurses, as well as to ask women on the home front to knit socks and other items and all citizens to support families of soldiers.

Sources

McDermott, T.P. "USA's Boy Scouts and World War I Liberty Loan Bonds," *SOSSI Journal*, May/June 2002. <http://sossi.org/journal/scouts-ww1-liberty-bonds.pdf>.
"Over the Top: Supporting The Great War." *USA Today*, Jan. 2009, p. 34+. *U.S. History in Context*, <http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A192590002/UHIC?u=act&sid=UHIC&xid=f4718e30>.
Sutch, Richard. "Liberty Bonds, April 1917-September 1918." https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/liberty_bonds.
Watson, Susan. "A History of Service: The American Red Cross During World War I." "Ring it Again. Buy U.S. Gov't Bonds. Third Liberty Loan" <https://redcrosschat.org/2017/04/10/history-service-american-red-cross-world-war>

World War I "Third Liberty Loan" Posters

Acton Memorial Library

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