



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Civil War Propaganda Scrapbooks

NMAH.AC.1372

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2016

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Civil War Propaganda Scrapbooks
Date:	1861 - 1861
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1372
Creator:	Campbell, Jean H. (Donor)
Extent:	0.15 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	This collection contains three scrapbooks filled with Civil War propaganda primarily from the North's perspective. The scrapbooks include illustrated envelopes as well as clippings from envelopes, magazines, and almanacs.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Jean H. Campbell, 2016.

Provenance

The donor was unsure which side of her family the scrapbooks came from or who compiled them.

Processing Information

Collection was processed by Rebecca Kuske, 2016.

Preferred Citation

Civil War Propaganda Scrapbooks, 1861, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

In the early years of the Civil War, pictorial envelopes were produced by printing companies, in both the North and the South. Other images came from sources such as almanacs and popular magazines. Propaganda in general was used to enhance morale among the soldiers and citizens that lived in the North and South. It helped spread the goals of both sides in simple terms that were exaggerated, dark, or even comical.

Northern printing companies created a profitable business, primarily printing envelopes that focused on preserving the Union. In the South, the propaganda and envelopes centered around the Confederate flag and what it stood for, but this was not continued at a steady rate throughout the war. Because they lacked manufacturing, the Confederacy was forced to import paper as well as ink from the North and England. This became a large problem for them when the North established the blockade, isolating the South from their usual imports. Ultimately, the North created more envelopes and designs than the South since it did not rely on imports to produce them.

Veronique Greenwood, "Civil War Envelopes are Works of Art – And Propaganda," *National Geographic*, December 10, 2015. <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/12/151210-civil-war-envelopes-art-propaganda-artifacts/>.

Scope and Contents

Three scrapbooks, into which propagandistic cartoons and images have been pasted. Many of the images are on envelopes, and the entire envelopes are pasted into the books. In other cases, images are clipped out and pasted in. With just three exceptions, the items in the scrapbooks are pro-Union and anti-Confederate. Few items are dated but the dates that are included are all 1861. Many of the items are patriotic, and contain images of the US flag, refer to the Constitution, praise Lincoln and various Union generals, or contain inspirational poetry. Most indicate confidence in an eventual Union victory, depict Lincoln, Union generals and Union soldiers as fearsome and heroic. Many others lampoon Jefferson Davis, with images depicting him, or Southerners in general, as the Devil or as one of various animals. Many violent images are included, some showing Jefferson Davis being executed.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged into one series.

Series 1: Scrapbooks, 1861

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Devil
- Executions and executioners
- Flags -- United States
- Patriotism
- Propaganda

Types of Materials:

- Cartoons (humorous images)

Names:

- Davis, Jefferson, 1808-1889
- Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865

Places:

- United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

Preferred Titles:

Military

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Scrapbook 1, 1861
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Box 1, Folder 2	Scrapbook 2, 1861
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Box 1, Folder 3	Scrapbook 3, 1861
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