

WAR SIRENS:
HOW THE SHEET MUSIC INDUSTRY SOLD WORLD WAR I

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ABSTRACT

During World War I the U.S. Committee on Public Information (CPI) sponsored a national culture of war in posters, speeches, and films. Against this war-soaked cultural backdrop, the sheet music industry echoed the pervasive messages of the CPI, often using images of women to appeal to the American people. Connections between sheet music and CPI poster themes reflect the cultural dominance of war messages, and themes from various CPI-sponsored materials recur as motifs in the era's sheet music. The sheet music covers, lyrics, and musical cues reinforced prototypical roles for women during the war (from angelic nurses to flirtatious tomboy recruits) as established in the poster art, revealing a gendered cultural code. By purchasing sheet music and carrying it into their homes, American citizens literally bought into the war propaganda, heeding the siren call of the female imagery in CPI advertising to invest materially and emotionally in the war effort. Analysis of cover art, titles, lyrics, and musical examples highlights the use of archetypal images of women from poster and advertising traditions, suggesting that the sheet music industry was an unofficial partner of the CPI.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the Conservatory of Music and Dance, have examined a thesis titled “War Sirens: How the Sheet Music Industry Sold World War I,” presented by Kristin Griffeath, candidate for the Master of Music degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of the modern advertising industry, images of women have sold the American public everything from soap to soda pop, but as the clouds of World War I darkened the nation's horizon in 1917, they sold messages of war. Women were featured in war posters, advertising, films, and cartoons as the work of visual artists began "flooding the whole country with stirring pictures."¹ An emphasis on feminine imagery in war materials was not surprising given the era's general fascination with those images. Historian Martha Banta explains, "However masculine the political and commercial activities that controlled the 'main world,' the images dominating the turn-of-the-century imagination were variations on the figure of the young American woman and permutations of the type of the American Girl."² Artists enlisted prefabricated themes that highlighted women from advertising and other popular cultural outlets for use in war propaganda. Artistic portrayals of women in war propaganda were akin to war sirens that beckoned the nation toward the violent battles of World War I. General war fever also swept the sheet music industry, and more than 35,000 war-inspired marches, patriotic anthems, and ballads documented the global conflict.³ Despite the fact that the war occurred before the age of radio broadcasting, over 200 of these war songs were recorded and sold directly to American consumers by companies like Edison, Victor, Columbia, Decca, and Gramophone,

¹ Taken from the title of an article published in 1918: "C.D. Gibson's Committee for Patriotic Posters: Artists Have Been Organized to Help America Win the War by Flooding the Whole Country with Stirring Pictures," *New York Times* (January 20, 1918), www.proquest.com (accessed February 5, 2011).

² Martha Banta, *Imaging American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), xxxi.

³ Frederick G. Vogel, *World War I Songs: A History and Dictionary of Popular American Patriotic Tunes, with Over 300 Complete Lyrics* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1995), ix.

confirming the songs' popularity with and potential influence on the general public.⁴ Where did the industry's composers and lyricists of these war tunes turn for inspiration? The sheet music industry recycled ready-made war messages that had been created and disseminated by the U.S. Committee on Public Information (CPI), emulating themes found in war posters and other propaganda to sell song versions of war ideals to the American consumer. In order to build and maintain support for the war effort, President Wilson established the CPI as a publicity machine that set the tone of the conflict in American culture, installing George Creel as committee chairman. Creel embarked on what he considered "a plain publicity proposition, a vast enterprise in salesmanship, the world's greatest adventure in advertising,"⁵ explaining:

Realizing public opinion as a vital part of the national defense, a mighty force in the national attack, our task was to devise machinery with which to make the fight for loyalty and unity at home, and for the friendship and understanding of the neutral nations of the world. ... We did not call it 'propaganda,' for that word, in German hands, had come to be associated with lies and corruptions. Our work was educational and informative only, for we had such confidence in our case as to feel that only fair presentation of its facts was needed. ... There was no part of the great war machinery that we did not touch, no medium of appeal that we did not employ. The printed word, the spoken word, the motion picture, the poster, the signboard—all these were used in our campaign to make our own people and all other peoples understand the causes that compelled America to take arms in defense of its liberties and free institutions."⁶

The CPI used a variety of persuasive media to reach its targeted American audience; speeches, films, posters, and pamphlets bolstered public support for the war. Images of women appeared prominently in war propaganda as CPI officials, many of whom were advertising industry specialists, harnessed the power of the female form to appeal to a wide audience. Though not officially associated with the CPI, the sheet music industry could not avoid the influence of such

⁴ John Druessedow, "Popular Songs of the Great War: Background and Audio Resources," *Notes*, Second Series 65, no. 2 (December, 2008), www.jstor.org (accessed July 21, 2010).

⁵ Stephen Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines: Democracy, Nationalism, and the Committee on Public Information* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 141.

⁶ George Creel, *The Creel Report: Complete Report of the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information: 1917, 1918, 1919*, Reprint ed. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920; New York: Da Capo Press, 1972), 1-2.

a pervasive advertising campaign, and a thorough understanding of the use of feminine imagery in sheet music repertoire from this era must be predicated by a consideration of CPI methods and messages.

In 1920, Creel penned a book on the CPI titled *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information That Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe*. Creel offered further evidence of the committee's roots in an aggressive advertising philosophy that stretched beyond the borders of the United States to the international arena. Using every medium possible—from propaganda films to posters plastered from coast to coast, all rife with female imagery—Creel's war messages indelibly transformed the United States' cultural environment. Creel partnered directly with advertising experts, turning “almost instinctively to the advertising profession for advice and assistance.”⁷ With Wilson's approval, Creel enlisted established advertising gurus for the CPI Division of Advertising, including William H. Johns, president of the American Association of Advertising Agents; Thomas Cusack, a leader of the poster and painted bulletin industry; William H. Ingersoll, former president of the New York Advertising Club; W.H. D'Arcy, president of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World; O.C. Harn, chairman of the National Commission of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World; and Herbert S. Houston, former president of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World. Creel crowed that “every advertising man in the United States was enrolled in America's second line, and from the very moment of their enrolment [*sic.*] we could feel the quickening of effort, the intensification of endeavor.”⁸ William H. Johns led the CPI advertising division, steering the group toward an advertising policy that encouraged companies to donate ad space to the war cause. As historian

⁷ George Creel, *How We Advertised America*, Reprint ed. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1920; New York: Arno Press, 1972), 156. Page references are to the 1972 edition.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 158.

Stephen Vaughn details, participating advertising firms received thank-you letters from Johns and were allotted space beneath the seals of the CPI and Division of Advertising materials to print their company names:

It was probably good business to associate a product with the national cause. Johns often encouraged businesses to link their products to a message from the government. The Central Oil and Gas Stove Company helped the Fuel Administration conserve coal by advertising the advantages of oil heat. The same firm later offered space to the Food Administration in its drive to convince Americans to can and dry vegetables and fruit, and Johns sought a statement from the Food Administration that would once again help the company tie its product to government directives.⁹

By linking commercial products with war symbols and messages, businesses encouraged Americans to associate the consumption of everyday goods with patriotism. Simply by purchasing the item, American consumers felt vitally connected to the soldiers at war. Visual symbols of the war in the form of a stamp or other war endorsement on packaging or ads became a selling point for that product. What was good for general business was also good for the sheet music industry, and song publishers quickly caught on to the trend. War-themed stamps often appeared amidst musical notation in the sheet music (see Figure 1). War stamps were displayed prominently in the folds of the scores to hook consumers to the patriotic ideals of the CPI. Purchasing war-themed sheet music allowed customers materially and emotionally to buy into the messages they observed in war posters or other propaganda. Sheet music consumers then carried public messages of war directly into their private homes to tuck into music benches or display on piano music stands. This strategy worked brilliantly for publishers, and the popularity of sheet music pieces with stamps or other war-themed imagery and lyrics soared.

⁹ Vaughn, 148-9.



Figure 1. Food-themed stamp inlayed on sheet music page fold for “I’m Going to Follow the Boys Over There.” Courtesy of UMKC Special Collections.

The CPI’s Division of Advertising soon partnered with the Division of Pictorial Publicity, and the two branches worked in tandem.¹⁰ Illustrator Charles Dana Gibson (nationally famous for his iconic “Gibson Girls” in pre-war *Life* illustrations) led the Division of Pictorial Publicity, and the “list of associate chairmen serving under Gibson was a Who’s Who of American art—Herbert Adams, E.H. Blashfield, Ralph Clarkson, Cass Gilbert, Oliver Dennett Grover, Arthur T. Matthews, Joseph Pennell, Edmond C. Tarbell, Francis C. Jones, and Douglas Volk.”¹¹ Altogether, Gibson recruited 279 artists and thirty-three cartoonists who were among the most talented and influential professionals in their field.¹² Artists donated their talents for

¹⁰ “[T]he Division of Advertising worked closely with Gibson’s division [of Pictorial Publicity], and the two sections’ efforts must be considered together. Whenever the illustrations or sketches were needed, the Division of Advertising, lacking funds, looked to the Division of Pictorial Publicity. Though the advertising division might offer suggestions on subjects and layout, Gibson’s division did the drawing.” See Vaughn, 149.

¹¹ James R. Mock and Cedric Larson, *Words That Won the War: The Story of The Committee on Public Information 1917-1919*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939; Facsimile, Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1964), 102.

¹² Alan Axelrod, *Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 139.

poster art, cartoons, and advertising illustrations, and many also worked with the sheet music industry to create cover art.¹³ Gibson's approach to persuasion differed from Creel's. Creel focused on persuading the American public through rational means.¹⁴ While Creel believed that the CPI should simply "inform the public," Gibson instead asserted:

One cannot create enthusiasm for war on the basis of practical appeal. The spirit that will lead a man to put away the things of his accustomed life and go forth to all the hardships of war is not kindled by showing him the facts.¹⁵

Gibson preferred to appeal to the raw emotions of his audiences, pulling at their heart-strings to enlist war support. These two contrasting approaches—Creel's appeal to reason and Gibson's appeal to emotion—foreshadowed what later advertising experts would dub the "hard" versus "soft" sell in persuasive advertising.

General principles of advertising hold that persuasive ad campaigns fall into one of two primary categories: informational appeals (the hard sell) and emotional appeals (the soft sell).¹⁶ CPI divisions used both techniques in their efforts to convince the American public of the need to support the war. Selling war is no easy task; governments must convince citizens of the need to sacrifice their livelihoods and even their lives for the greater good. The CPI was aware of the challenges ahead of them, as Creel asked, "Could we be sure that a hundred million—the fathers, the mothers, the children of America, alien born and native alike—understood well enough so that they would support one loan after another, would bear new burdens of taxation and send wave after wave of America's young manhood to die in Flanders fields?"¹⁷ Undaunted and

¹³ Unfortunately, relatively few of the artistic sheet music covers include identifying information regarding their creators. Further work to explore the identity of these artists is needed. Thus, direct connections between poster artists and sheet music cover artists are not covered herein.

¹⁴ Alan Axelrod asserts that a philosophical "gulf separated the bureaucrats and the artists." See Axelrod, 141.

¹⁵ Vaughn, 150.

¹⁶ Monle Lee and Carla Johnson, *Principles of Advertising: A Global Perspective*, 2nd ed. (New York: Haworth Press, 2005), 173.

¹⁷ Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 99.

armed with expertise of the advertising specialists, the committee moved forward in an attempt to sway the public through both hard and soft sell appeals.

The hard sell focuses on practicality, using “rational motives” such as convenience, economy, or necessity.¹⁸ CPI divisions used hard sell tactics in pamphlets, bulletins, editorials, and mini-speeches by the Four-Minute Men that presented to the American audience logically structured arguments regarding the justification for war. Creel described the power of hard sell pamphlets, boasting, “All in all, more than seventy-five million copies of these pamphlets went into American homes, each one a printed bullet that found its mark.”¹⁹ The CPI also used soft sell techniques to make their case to the American people, most significantly in arts-related projects such as films, posters, and cartoons. These mass media outlets were ideal vehicles to showcase emotional images through dramatic, evocative scenarios. The soft sell reaches its target audience in a more visceral manner:

These appeals use an emotional message and are designed around an image intended to touch the heart and create a response based on feelings and attitudes. Advertisers can use emotional appeals in many ways in their creative strategy. Humor and sex appeals, or other types of appeals that are very entertaining, upbeat, and/or exciting, affect the emotions of consumers and put them in a favorable frame of mind. Fear appeals can be equally dramatic in arousing emotions but have an opposite effect on the viewer’s frame of mind.²⁰

The ultimate goal of the soft sell is to engage the attention of the target consumer through his or her emotions in order to change attitudes toward the subject at hand—motivated by fear, admiration, pleasure, or even laughter.

Fear appeals focusing on German cruelty were popular with poster artists, as Gibson discouraged the simple depiction of guns and food on war posters in favor of “pictures that would cause the same emotions as are felt when one sees a Belgian child dying for want of food,

¹⁸ Ibid., 175.

¹⁹ Ibid., 114.

²⁰ Lee, 175.

or an American soldier slain for lack of ammunition.”²¹ These emotional appeals focused on the monstrous “Hun,” capable of the most despicable evils. The sheet music industry highlighted enemy atrocities with songs like “When the Lusitania Went Down” (c. 1915). A British song entitled “The Bravest Heart of All” (1915) told the story of the martyred nurse Edith Cavell, who was shot behind enemy lines. Lyrics in “War Babies” (1916) described two orphaned children held by their dead Belgian mother, with the following chorus designed to awaken American sympathies:

Little war babies, our hearts ache for you,
Where will you go to, and what will you do?
Into a world full of sorrow you came,
Homeless and helpless, no one knows your name.
Gone is the mother love tender and true,
Gone is your dead daddy, too;
But you’ll share in the joys
Of our own girls and boys,
War babies, we’ll take care of you.²²

Fear appeals did not, however, always make for the best song subjects. Instead, more positive, rousing themes dominate the sheet music repertoire, and humorous versions of the soft sell appeals are prominent.²³ References to the German enemy are often couched in a surly, teasing tone, as in the 1917 “We’ll Knock the Heligo-Into Heligo-Out of Heligoland!” The hit song “Sister Susie’s Sewing Shirts for Soldiers” (1917) also uses hilarious tongue-twister lyrics in a humorous appeal. But perhaps even more than humor, sex appeal was the soft sell tactic that

²¹ Axelrod, 141. Axelrod draws this particular quote from a 1918 article in the *New York Times*: “C.D. Gibson’s. Committee for Patriotic Posters: Artists Have Been Organized to Help America Win the War by Flooding the Whole Country with Stirring Pictures.”

²² Glenn Watkins, *Proof Through the Night: Music and the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), www.ebrary.com (accessed May 15, 2011), 261. Watkins continues, “The fact that Al Jolson could turn such a song into a hit tune in 1916...indicates the degree to which American sympathies for the European crisis had already been fine-tuned before Wilson declared war. To further challenge America’s neutrality, the cover of the sheet music bore a photograph of a row of Belgian orphans.”

²³ As the World War I song collector Edward Arthur Dolph explains, “The greater part of these songs which were popular with the soldiers are sentimental and nonsensical, rather than serious... The soldier undoubtedly preferred the lighter songs. He even parodied those that were a bit too serious or sad... War and preparation for war were serious enough without making them more so by singing serious songs.” Edward Arthur Dolph, “*Sound off!*” *Soldier Songs from Yankee Doodle to Parley Voo* (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1929), 80.

found its way into the heart of the sheet music industry. Sexy tomboy recruits were featured repeatedly in sheet music covers—as they were on posters—and portrayals of sexually available French vamps that soldiers would ostensibly encounter overseas (for example, in the lyrics of “Oh You La La” from 1918) were also common. The sheet music industry became adept at mimicking the CPI’s soft sell advertising of the war—through fear, humor, or sex appeals—in the repertoire.

That the CPI’s goal to saturate American culture with war messages was definitively achieved is seen in one measurable standard: the extent to which even non-CPI-sponsored artistic products were influenced by CPI messages. As James R. Mock describes in his 1939 book on the CPI, *Words That Won the War*, “[A]ny news story, feature, picture, cartoon, poster, book, short-story dealing with the war either carried the official seal of the CPI, or carried no less clearly, to our latter-day eyes, the stamp of CPI influence.”²⁴ The statement applies as aptly to sheet music with war-themed titles, lyrics, and covers. Mock continues, “Writers, actors, and musicians still tried to make people laugh, and sometimes cry, but now it was for a higher purpose and in an ennobling common cause.... Next to the products of Tin Pan Alley...the movie film was both the easiest way of presenting propaganda in the form of entertainment and one of the most important items in a broad program of civilian morale.”²⁵ The CPI did not officially enroll the motion picture industry in the war effort until July of 1917, primarily because the industry had already volunteered its products. Axelrod explains:

The fact was that the American film industry had enlisted in the Great War well *before* President Wilson even asked Congress for a declaration. As early as 1915, the Vitagraph Company released *The Battle Cry of Peace*.... The film depicted the invasion of the United States, followed by the naiveté of American pacifists and heralded by the bombardment of New York City. By April 1917, when war was finally declared, at least a dozen films described as “war pictures” were already in the nation’s theaters.... Not

²⁴ Mock, 112.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 131.

only did studios begin to produce propaganda before the government did, they volunteered their services before being asked to do so... The fact was that, in contrast to the newspapers, the movie industry was already in the propaganda business, retailing to the public on a weekly basis, in matinees and evening shows, various incarnations of the American dream and democratic ideals... As Creel quickly came to realize, movies were a most natural and readymade medium for propaganda.²⁶

The committee eventually dedicated a Division of Films to fight what Creel would dub “The Battle of the Films.” In addition to short features, the committee also produced longer films such as *Pershing’s Crusaders*, *America’s Answer*, and *Under Four Flags*.

The film industry’s spontaneous support for the war was mirrored by the sheet music industry. Although the production of sheet music was never formally co-opted by the CPI, popular war tunes were used in an official capacity by Creel’s Four-Minute Men. Well-respected community leaders were trained as Four-Minute Men, speakers who gave patriotic, four-minute speeches before films in local theaters and at other community gatherings.²⁷ A bulletin published in September of 1918 described “Four Minute Singing” as a variation on the monthly topic that could be substituted at any time “for general use.”²⁸ The bulletin urged speakers to “get it going with a swing,” as James Mock describes:

[T]he bulletin advised that if the official Four-Minute Man could not himself lead the music he should secure a qualified substitute and “be among the others to sing heartily.” The industrial army of the inner lines, it was believed, would be kept at a “white heat” of patriotism through the program of song. “The Singing Army, whether it be a fighting army or a working army, cannot be beaten,” said the Four-Minute Men, to the delight of music publishers.²⁹

By leading groups in patriotic singing, the Four-Minute Men could mix their hard sell appeal speeches with an emotionally charged, soft sell singing session. Tin Pan Alley’s hits, as well as

²⁶ Axelrod, 148-149.

²⁷ According to Creel’s report, “When the armistice brought activities to a conclusion the Four Minute Men numbered 75,000 speakers, more than 7,555,190 speeches had been made, and a fair estimate of audiences makes it certain that a total of 134,454,514 people had been addressed.” Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 85.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 87.

²⁹ Mock, 124.

patriotic standbys, were also used officially in Army training to build and maintain soldier morale. Major General Leonard Wood believed that it was “just as essential that a soldier know how to sing as that he should carry rifles and know how to shoot them.”³⁰ The YMCA officially trained song leaders for the Army, Navy, and Marines. It prepared a pamphlet titled *National Repertoire of Required Songs* for training purposes, presenting a variety of patriotic, folk, and marching songs. The booklet offered the following practical advice for new song leaders:

Note:--The marks at the beginning of each chorus are “hiking counts,” for starting the song while marching. The song-leader calls out the song, next gives the pitch, then says: “Ready, 1—2—sing,” or “Ready, 1—2—3—sing,” as the case may be. By starting “1” when the left foot goes down, the rhythm of the music and the cadence of the march step will coincide, like the drum-beat. It is important to give the hiking counts in the same tempo in which you want the song to be sung.

1. Songs to be sung on the march must always be rehearsed in march time. All holds, ritards, or changes in tempo must be omitted.
2. Songs to be sung on the march must be memorized, words and music. You can't put any “pep” in singing when you aren't sure of the words and the melody.
3. Hold your first rehearsals indoors with a piano if possible. Have the men mark time to accustom themselves to singing in rhythm.
4. It is best to secure a pitch-pipe or a mouth organ to give the key of the song. Otherwise you are apt to start it too high or too low and spoil the effect.
5. Omit the close harmony. Unison singing is best for the hike, unless you have a particularly well-trained company.

Enthusiasm is absolutely essential to success in song leading. Equally important is that the song leader shall absolutely know the words and music of everything he is trying to put across.

To start a song successfully there are two essentials:

1. Start in the right key
2. Have the men begin together

The first beat of each bar must be absolutely clear and distinct. Many variations to lend novelty and variety for singing on the march are available: whistling, solos, solo squads, dividing of companies into sections and rotating the repeated choruses. But best of all is

³⁰ Dolph, 79-80. Dolph continues, “No other war has witnessed such an organized effort to promote singing in the army. Song books were prepared by the Commission on Training Camp Activities, thousands of pieces of band music were purchased, and hundreds of song leaders were scattered throughout the camps. Never before has the inspiring sight of ten thousand soldiers singing in unison been witnessed in our army.”

to arrange medleys of popular choruses all sung in the same key, and teach your men to go from one song to the next without stopping.

Remember that the importance of singing on the march cannot be over-estimated. It means more miles with less fatigue, good cheer instead of grouch. Keep smiling!³¹

In another example of the fluidity that existed between artistic and propaganda realms, composers of sheet music lyrics borrowed war “buzzwords” that Four Minute Men and CPI war posters would have helped popularize in the national consciousness. Phrases such as “Everyone’s *doing their bit*” returned time after time in the song literature, ricochets of key terms that were prominently featured in CPI materials. Furthermore, the CPI Division of Films produced a feature film in their “Says Uncle Sam” series on the subject of singing as it relates to troop morale. Paramount-Bray Pictograph helped produce a one-reel film, *Says Uncle Sam: Keep ‘Em Singing and Nothing Can Lick ‘Em—the purpose and method of the vocal training of the Army and the Navy*.³² The blurring of official and unofficial propaganda in artistic realms such as film, visual art, and music reinforced the far-reaching cultural influence of the CPI’s agenda.

Scholars often describe the committee’s success in terms of its posters, and they were so successful that World War I is sometimes nicknamed “The Poster War.” Creel recognized the arresting power of poster images, admitting that “the printed word might not be read, people might not choose to attend meetings or to watch motion pictures, but the billboard was something that caught even the most indifferent eye.”³³ Gibson led a powerful poster campaign that caught the imaginations of American citizens, and sheet music publishers wisely connected to the popular themes from poster campaigns in order to appeal to consumers. It is difficult to

³¹ *National Repertoire of Required Songs*, as used in connection with YMCA Training Schools for Army, Navy and Marine Song Leaders. Issued by: Music Committee of the National War Work Council. Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

³² Dolph, 127.

³³ Creel, *How We Advertised America*, 133.

imagine what it would have been like to walk down the streets of an American city that was wall-papered in war propaganda posters, but the following poem by Wallace Irwin approximates that experience:

Thoughts Inspired by a War-time Billboard

I stand by a fence on a peaceable street
And gaze on the posters in colors of flame,
Historical documents, sheet upon sheet,
Of our share in the war ere the armistice came.

And I think about Art as a Lady-at-Arms;
She's a studio character most people say,
With a feminine trick of displaying her charms
In a manner to puzzle the ignorant lay.

But now as I study that row upon row
Of wind-blown engravings I feel satisfaction
Deep down in my star-spangled heart, for I know
How Art put on khaki and went into action.

There are posters for drives—now triumphantly o'er—
I look with a smile and reminiscently fond
As mobilized Fishers and Christys implore
In a feminine voice, "Win the War—Buy a Bond!"

There's a Jonas Lie shipbuilder, fit for a frame;
Wallie Morg's "Feed a Fighter" lurks deep in his trench;
There's a Blashfield's Columbia setting her name
In classical draperies, trimmed by the French.

Charles Livingston Bull in a marine composition
Exhorts us to Hooverize (portrait of bass).
Jack Sheridan tells us that Food's Ammunition—
We've all tackled war biscuits under that class.

See the winged Polish warrior that Benda has wrought!
Is he private or captain? I cannot tell which,
For printed below is the patriot thought
Which Poles pronounce "Śladami Ojcow Naszych."

There's the Christy Girl wishing that she was a boy,
There's Leyendecker coaling for Garfield in jeans,

There's the Montie Flagg guy with the air of fierce joy
Inviting the public to Tell the Marines.

And the noble Six Thousand—they count up to that—
Are marshaled before me in battered review.
They have uttered a thought that is All in One Hat
In infinite shadings of red, white, and blue.

And if brave Uncle Sam—Dana Gibson, please bow—
Has called for our labors as never before,
Let him stand in salute in acknowledgement now
Of the fighters that trooped from the studio door.³⁴

Surrounded by the emotional posters created by the country's best artists, American citizens were inundated with calls to support the war effort. Several lines in Irwin's poem underscore the importance of feminine imagery in the poster art with references to the "Christy Girl," the "Fishers and Christys," and "Blashfield's Columbia." Images of women were used extensively in the poster art, gradually evolving into a battery of World War I feminine archetypes.³⁵

The sheet music industry borrowed prototypical depictions of women as they were modeled in CPI war posters for its titles, lyrics, and especially cover art. An understanding of the context created by poster artists, CPI-based or otherwise, is therefore critical to success in decoding sheet music imagery. Martha Banta devotes an entire chapter of her 1987 book, *Imaging American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History*, to a discussion of depictions of women in their "Poster Lives (1898-1918)." A significant portion of this chapter focuses on World War I iconography, and she emphasizes the semiotic power of World War I imagery. According to Banta, "The female type took full command over two categories of posters for World War I. One is the Amazon Warrior (called for official purposes Columbia, Liberty, or America). The other is the Protecting Angel (labeled as the Red Cross nurse, the Rescue Mission

³⁴ Ibid., 140-141.

³⁵ "World War I poster art in its heavy and selective use of women's images effectively encouraged a controlled expansion of women's established social roles, including war production and voluntarism." Michele J. Shover, "Roles and Images of Women in World War I Propaganda," *Politics and Society* 5, no. 4 (1975), 486.

lady, the YWCA girl, or the women in the Land Army). It is fascinating to watch images from one category start to infiltrate the emotional shadows of the other group and to notice at what juncture images pull apart for the fulfillment of their distinctive functions.”³⁶ Amazon Warrior imagery allowed artists to depict women as symbolic figures, representing countries (the United States, or France) or ideals (such as liberty). The Protecting Angel prototype was often portrayed with nurturing undertones of motherhood and became associated with nursing or other service roles for women overseas. As Banta suggests, the line that separated these prototypes was permeable, allowing for a wide variety of re-interpretations in specific posters and sheet music covers. The complicated interplay between these two prototypes is at work in a famous poster by A.E. Foringer. Thanks to his 1918 poster that features an oversized Amazon Warrior nurse dressed in classical drapery and seated in a position that recalls Mary’s posture in Michelangelo’s *Pietà* sculpture, the Red Cross as an institution became known as “The Greatest Mother in the World” (See Figure 2).³⁷

³⁶ Banta, 562.

³⁷ According to the Red Cross Museum’s website, “The theme for the poster was introduced by an advertising executive to convey an image of mercy and tenderness... Widely reproduced, some ten million copies were distributed in towns and cities across the country. Its tremendous popularity inspired a host of imitations, from musical revues to plastic sculptures. The theme of the Greatest Mother became synonymous with the American Red Cross, and it was re-interpreted in subsequent posters during the following decades.” American Red Cross, “Images of Hope: American Red Cross Posters, 1918-1951,” www.redcross.org/museum/exhibits/posters.asp (accessed March 26, 2011).



Figure 2. Alonzo Earl Foringer, “The Greatest Mother in the World,” 1917. Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The committee’s advertising perspective added a third foundational prototype to the poster art conventions: the American Girl.³⁸ This figure emerged at the turn of the century to captivate American audiences in advertising campaigns and magazine illustrations; incorporation of this imagery was instinctive to the advertising-based CPI.³⁹ The American Girl “expressed many of the qualities Americans liked best—the type of youth, physical attractiveness, charm, energy, and independence.”⁴⁰ She was simultaneously sexually attractive and virginal.⁴¹

³⁸ For further information on all three prototypes, see Banta’s book, *Imaging American Women*.

³⁹ “No war propaganda of the period can overlook the comic-earnest American image of ‘The Girl.’ The commercial advertising which poses the dominant pattern for American war propaganda is particularly apparent here, although the image also appears in other nations’ characteristic translations of it. The war postermakers then simply used the image of ‘The Girl’ that had already been made commercially successful by the popular artists, James Montgomery Flagg and Howard Chandler Christie [sic].” Shover, 482.

⁴⁰ Banta, 417.

Advertising industry variations on the theme of the American Girl—like the Gibson Girl or the Christy Girl—added a modern sex appeal to the more conservative Amazon Warrior or Protecting Angel prototypes in poster art. For example, the Amazon Warrior—inspired Columbia is sexualized when she is dressed in clinging Grecian robes, or when she adopts a seductive pose, revealing the influence of the American Girl. Similarly, Red Cross nurses and other American service women who would often be classified as Protecting Angels might also be portrayed flirtatiously in posters and sheet music, hinting in sheet music lyrics or cover art of an interest in doing more than just taking the soldier’s temperature.

Artists’ and musicians’ flexible approaches to the three basic archetypes (Amazon Warrior, Protecting Angel, and American Girl) produced a diverse cast of feminine characters in World War I poster and sheet music portrayals. Table 1 highlights the array of sub-archetypes that the three primary categories spawned.

Amazon Warrior	Protecting Angel	American Girl
Columbia, America, and (“Miss”) Liberty Other European national symbols, including Joan of Arc	Mothers at Home Madonnas (mother-nurses) “Angels of Mercy” (angel-nurses)	Gibson Girls & Christy Girls as “Red Cross Girlies” Sister Susie Sews at Home The Girl He Left Behind

Table 1. Chart, Archetypal Portrayals of Women in WWI Posters and Sheet Music

These archetypes are rooted in the advertising-driven propaganda efforts of the CPI. The fact that other artistic genres such as films or cartoons feature similar depictions or archetypes is a mark of the committee’s power to dominate American cultural production. These primary archetypes influenced sheet music portrayals of American women at home, abroad, and as impersonal, national symbols. The 1917 Billy Baskette hit, “Good-bye Broadway, Hello France!” highlights the kinds of roles for women that would dominate the repertoire, with

⁴¹ Banta describes the “American Girl with charm that is innocent and knowing,” as opposed to “Columbia as stabilizing power and aggressive action.” See Banta, 1.

references in the song's lyrics to "Miss Liberty," the "soldier's sweetheart," and the "soldier's mother, drying her eye."⁴² References to women serving as Red Cross nurses and Salvation Army volunteers also appeared prominently in publications. The sheet music industry embraced these themes from poster art and other CPI-inspired sources. Though contemporaneous Broadway musicals also featured many similar war-themed songs, the focus of this thesis will remain on the sheet music publications only. The following chapters explore the sheet music industry's use of feminine poster archetypes in detail, unfolding in three broad categories: depictions of American women at home, depictions of young American women volunteering overseas, and depictions of women as national symbols. Analysis of lyrics, titles, musical cues, and cover art imagery in the repertoire reveals a connection between sheet music and other official World War I propaganda materials, suggesting a significant link between the sheet music industry and the activities of the CPI. Through deliberate use of feminine imagery, the sheet music industry sold the American public songs of war that echoed the posters' siren call to arms.

⁴² Watkins observes, "Filled with references to Miss Liberty, sweethearts, wives, and mothers, it [the song] went on to hail Pershing's arrival in France as America's way of repaying its debt to that country for Lafayette's role in the American Revolution." Watkins, 253.

Part One: American Women Keep the Home Fires Burning

CHAPTER 2

MOTHERHOOD AND WAR

At the heart of depictions of women on the home front was the American mother. The link between motherhood and war was not altogether straightforward, however, because the pacifist movement had initially tied itself to motherly perspectives when the war broke out in Europe. On August 29, 1914, a women-only peace parade marched down New York City's Fifth Avenue (See Figure 3).¹



Figure 3. Photograph, “8/29/14 Peace Parade.” Bain News Service. George Grantham Bain Collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, [LC-DIG-ggbain-17021].

Women connected their roles as mothers to their antiwar sentiments, marching with peace banners and baby strollers. Leaders like Jane Addams (1860-1935) founded pacifist organizations such as the Woman's Peace Party and were pictured en route to an international

¹ Molly M. Wood, “The Experience of Women on the Home Front,” in *Personal Perspectives: World War I*, ed. Timothy C. Dowling. (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 2006), 273-296, 273.

peace conference. The photograph in Figure 4 includes Chicago's philanthropist and Hull House founder Jane Addams, second from the left in the front row of delegates, on board the *Noordam* as she heads toward the Women's Congress at The Hague, April 1915.



Figure 4. Photograph, “Peace Delegates on NOORDAM -- Mrs. P. Lawrence, Jane Addams, Anita Molloy.” Bain News Service. George Grantham Bain Collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, [LC-DIG-ggbain-18848].

Viewing such public displays of antiwar sentiment expressed by prominent older women, the American public soon began to associate motherhood with pacifism. The sheet music industry endorsed this link with the song, “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier” (1915). The song was immensely popular; the Leo Feist Publishing Company claimed that it sold over 700,000 copies in the first eight weeks following its release.² The popularity of the piece earned it a permanent place in the American public’s consciousness. As a result, the song became a powerful thread in the fabric of American history as the nation stood at the brink of war. The lyrics of the chorus rallied listeners against United States involvement in the fighting overseas:

² Vogel, 21.

I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier,
I brought him up to be my pride and joy.
Who dares to place a musket on his shoulder,
To shoot some other darling mother's boy?
Let nations arbitrate their future troubles,
It's time to lay the sword and gun away.
There'd be no war today if mothers all would say,
"I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier."

Scholars have noted more than a coincidental resemblance between the mother depicted on the sheet music's cover and peace advocate Jane Addams (See Figure 5).³

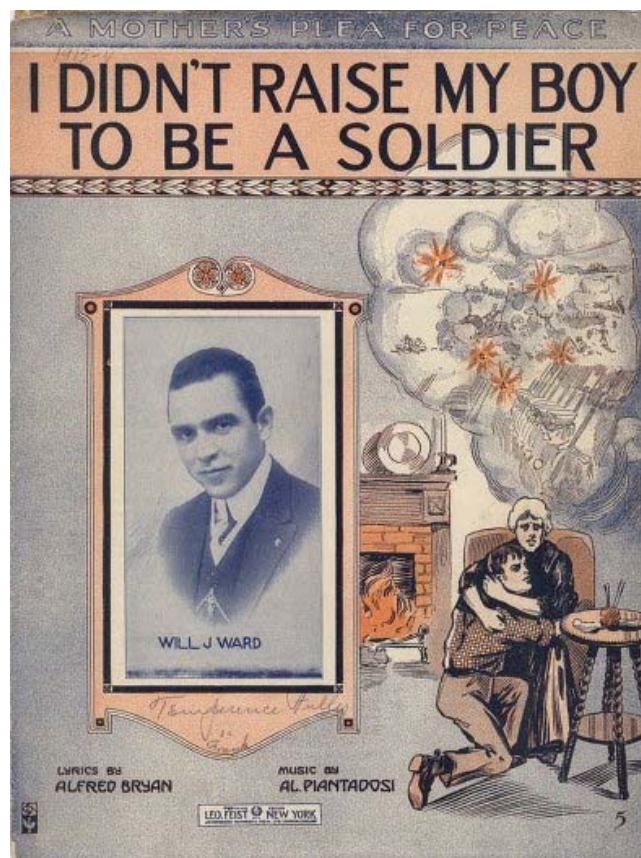


Figure 5. Cover, Al Piantadosi, "A Mother's Plea for Peace: I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" (New York: Leo Feist, 1915). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

³ Susan Zeiger, "She Didn't Raise Her Boy to Be a Slacker: Motherhood, Conscription, and the Culture of the First World War," *Feminist Studies* 22, no. 1 (Spring, 1996), www.jstor.org (accessed April 23, 2010).

According to musicologist Glenn Watkins, the song appealed to citizens who opposed the war and “continued to sell well until April 1917, the month the United States entered the war, when the Victor Talking Machine Company understandably withdrew the recording.”⁴

President Wilson vehemently opposed pacifist women like Jane Addams, and comments from his public presidential papers openly refer to the peace advocates' “shortsightedness,” “folly,” and “sentimentality.”⁵ As the war dragged on and the United States began seriously to consider the possibility of entering, officials were aware that they would first face a formidable battle in changing the opinions of the nation's citizens and that they would need to undermine the sentiments entrenched by Al Piantadosi's song, “I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier.” CPI officials soon began to target women, especially mothers, in war propaganda—hoping to undermine the “lingering rhetoric of the peace movement's appeal to their 'natural' inclination to oppose all wars.”⁶ Consider the following war poster, designed to recast mothers in pro-war public positions (See Figure 6):

⁴ Watkins, 249.

⁵ David Patterson, *The Search for Negotiated Peace: Women's Activism and Citizen Diplomacy in World War I* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 63.

⁶ Wood, 279.



Figure 6. Poster, R.H. Porteous, “Women! Help America’s Sons Win the War,” (1917). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Posters like these most directly connect to the Protecting Angel archetype, seen as the mother above adopts a Madonna-like pose with outstretched arms.⁷

Though the song had been a major success, reactions to the Piantadosi hit had been mixed from its debut, reflecting the country’s conflicting opinions regarding the prospect of war. Parodies of the song quickly appeared, and composers created approximately twenty songs between 1915 and 1917 with the express intent to “bitterly denounce or mock” the original tune.⁸ Consider the following list of representative titles: “I’d Be Proud to Be the Mother of a Soldier;” “I Raised My Boy to Be a Soldier;” “I Tried to Raise My Boy to Be a Hero;” “What if George Washington’s Mother Had Said, ‘I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier?’;” “I Did Not Raise My Boy to Be a Coward;” “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Slacker;” “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to

⁷ For further information on the Protecting Angel archetype, see Part II, p. X.

⁸ Vogel, 22.

Be a Soldier, But I'll Send My Daughter to Be a Nurse;" or even, "I Didn't Raise My Dog to Be a Sausage," and "I Didn't Raise My Ford to Be a Jitney."⁹ These songs resisted pacifist ideals presented in the lyrics of the Piantadosi song, essentially creating a national debate in a popular sheet music forum.

Tin Pan Alley's hits were designed to be catchy, a quality that is normally considered a positive trait in a popular song, but the pervasiveness of "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" created a cultural crisis when the political tide turned. It nearly became a matter of national security to undermine the song's message when the United States officially entered the war in 1917, and the sheet music industry quickly responded with a flurry of pro-war mother songs. Titles such as the 1917 "If I Had a Son for Each Star in Old Glory (Uncle Sam, I'd Give Them All to You)" openly refuted the message from the original Piantadosi hit. The strength of the backlash against the Piantadosi hit surged as pro-war sentiment attempted to wipe out the pacifist song in the American collective memory. Arthur Lange's 1917 song, "The Sentiment of Every American Mother: America, Here's My Boy," aggressively confronts Piantadosi's lyrics. Figure 7 highlights some of the conflicts between the two pieces of sheet music.

⁹ For more information about this heated sheet music debate, see: Susan Zeiger, "She Didn't Raise Her Boy to Be a Slacker: Motherhood, Conscription, and the Culture of the First World War." *Feminist Studies* 22, no. 1 (Spring, 1996), www.jstor.org (accessed April 23, 2010); Watkins (247-249); and Vogel (20-22).

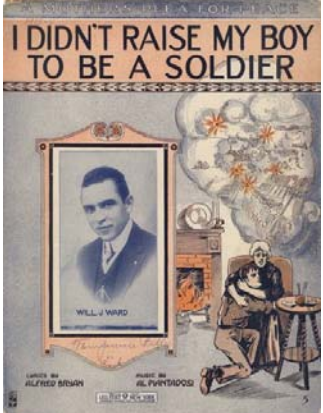

Element (inscription, line of text, etc...)	“I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier”	“America, Here’s My Boy”
Cover (Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC)		
Inscription	“A Mother’s Plea for Peace” “Dedicated to every mother— everywhere!”	“The Sentiment of Every American Mother”
“Millions of mothers” References in the text	<i>Verse 1:</i> “Ten million soldiers to the war have gone who will never return again. / Ten million mothers’ hearts must break for the ones who died in vain.”	<i>Verse 2:</i> “There’s a million mothers waiting by the fireside bright / A million mothers waiting for the call tonight / And while within each heart there’ll be a tear, / She’ll watch her boy go marching with a cheer.”
Chorus, line 1:	“I didn’t raise my boy to be a soldier”	“America, I raised a boy for you”
Chorus, line 3:	“Who dares to place a musket on his shoulder”	“Place a musket on his shoulder”

Figure 7. Comparison Between “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier” and “America, Here’s My Boy.”

Viewed side by side in this brief chart, the two works clash powerfully in several ways. Even Lange’s inscription tries to outdo Piantadosi’s dedication “to every mother—everywhere!” by claiming that his song represents “the sentiment of every American mother.” Lange’s inscription also subtly plays into nationalistic tendencies with the inclusion of the word, *American* to describe his mothers. Piantadosi’s 1915 song opens with the following grim lyrics: “Ten million soldiers to the war have gone / Who will never return again. / Ten million mothers’ hearts must break / For the ones who died in vain.” To combat these ideas, Lange’s second verse borrows

the “million mothers” image but changes their political outlooks—suggesting that, though it might be difficult, they would support the war. The cheering mothers described in Lange’s song are clearly at odds with the “ten million mothers” with “broken hearts” from the 1915 Piantadosi song.

A comparison of song covers reveals how the body language between mother and son has completely transformed (Figure 8, or see chart, Figure 7). On Lange’s cover, the son stands armed with a bayonet and gun, rather than kneeling at his mother’s feet. His back is turned to her, and though they look in the same direction, the intimate connection between mother and son that appears on the Piantadosi cover has been broken. The mother stoically stands behind him, pushing him forward into the conflict instead of protecting him from potential danger. In the background, images of home and fireside have been replaced by a map of the United States, as if to suggest that duty to country during a national crisis replaces the family’s private pain and fear. The cloudy images of violence in Piantadosi’s cover are conspicuously absent from the Lange cover.



Figure 8. Cover, Arthur Lange, “America, Here’s My Boy” (New York: Joe Morris Music Co., 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Consider the lyrics of Lange's chorus, sung from the mother's perspective:

America, I raised a boy for you.
America, You'll find him staunch and true,
Place a gun upon his shoulder,
He is ready to die or do.
America, he is my only one;
My hope, my pride and joy,
But if I had another, he would march beside his brother;
America, here's my boy.

The mother proudly presents her son like a sacrificial offering, suggesting that she intentionally raised her child in order to swell the military ranks. She even offers up an imagined second son, swearing, "But if I had another, he would march beside his brother." The lyric describing a mother who enthusiastically encourages the country to "place a gun upon his shoulder" is strategically placed in the third line of the chorus, the exact position of the lyric "Who dares to place a gun upon his shoulder?" in the chorus of "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier." The deliberate positioning of this lyric represents a direct rebuttal of the Piantadosi song.

The same technique appears in a song by Harry Tierney, "It's Time for Every Boy to Be a Soldier" (1917). The cover art completely removes the mother from the equation (See Figure 9).

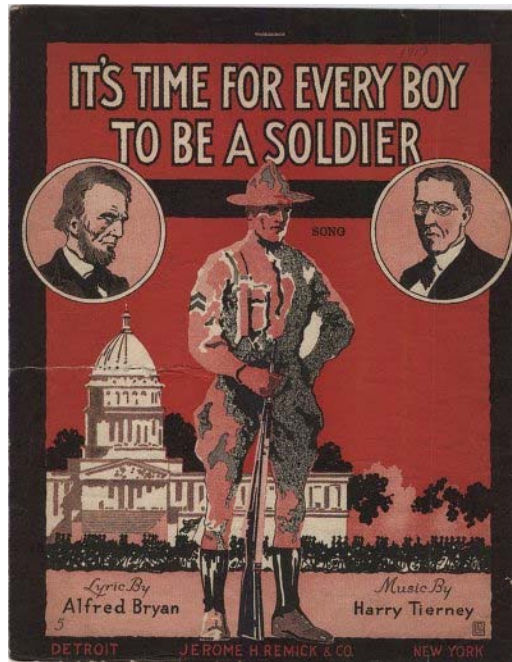


Figure 9. Cover, Harry Tierney, “It’s Time for Every Boy to Be a Soldier” (New York: Jerome H. Remick and Co., 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Both mother and home have been replaced by the nation’s capital, with two presidential figures hovering in the background: Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson. Again, national concerns symbolically trump the soldier’s family life. Consider the first and third lines of the song’s chorus:

It’s time for ev’ry boy to be a soldier,
 To put his strength and courage to the test
 Place a musket on his shoulder
 And wrap the Stars and Stripes around his breast,
 It’s time to shout those noble words of Lincoln,
 And stand up for the land that gave you birth,
 “That the nation of the people, by the people, for the people,
 Shall not perish from the earth.”

Both the Tierney and Lange choruses intentionally replace these strategic lines of the Piantadosi chorus with pro-war lyrics in an effort to rewrite the sentiment in popular American culture.

These overt attempts to reverse popular opinion through sheet music underscore the genre’s potential impact on American citizens’ political mindset, a power that sheet music shared

with poster campaigns. Yet despite the surfeit of pieces that were written to replace the sentiments of “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier,” officials continued to fear the lingering influence of Piantadosi’s pacifist song. Film portrayals of pacifist mothers who held back “slacker sons” from enlistment (dramatized embodiments of the Piantadosi “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier” characters) served as cautionary tales. Films such as *The Slacker* (1917) and *Her Boy* (1918) attempted to shame pacifists into war support with portrayals of men who had avoided enlistment only to be racked with guilt.¹⁰ In *The Man Who Was Afraid*, a young man suffers taunting from his more “patriotic” friends, and as he watches a military parade pass outside his window, he turns to his mother and exclaims, “My God, you made me a coward.”¹¹ The nagging persistence of the pacifist message that had been ingrained by Piantadosi’s sheet music hit was a force to be reckoned with throughout the war, a sign of sheet music’s lasting potency. The concern over women’s motherly support for the war (or the lack thereof) reflected the growing cultural value accorded to women’s opinions in the early twentieth century, marked by officials’ desire to earn their support for the war through the use of targeted pro-war propaganda and sheet music.

Some sheet music publications emphasized traditional roles for mothers at home in a time of war, featuring elderly women in long, black dresses with lacy, white collars—women who demurely sat in rocking chairs to knit socks, shirts, and bandages. Knitting was seen as one of the best ways for women to “do their bit” for the war effort, as the following posters demonstrate (See Figure 10).

¹⁰ Larry Wayne Ward, *The Motion Picture Goes to War: The U.S. Government Film Effort During World War I* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1985), 54.

¹¹ *Ibid.*



Figure 10. American Red Cross (Anonymous), “Our Boys Need Sox – Knit Your Bit” (New York: American Lithographic Company, 1918). Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, WWI Posters, [LC-USZC4-9863]. Wladyslaw Theodore Benda, “You Can Help – American Red Cross” (1918). Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, WWI Posters, [LC-USZC4-9645].

The following sheet music cover fits the patriotic knitting trend (See Figure 11):

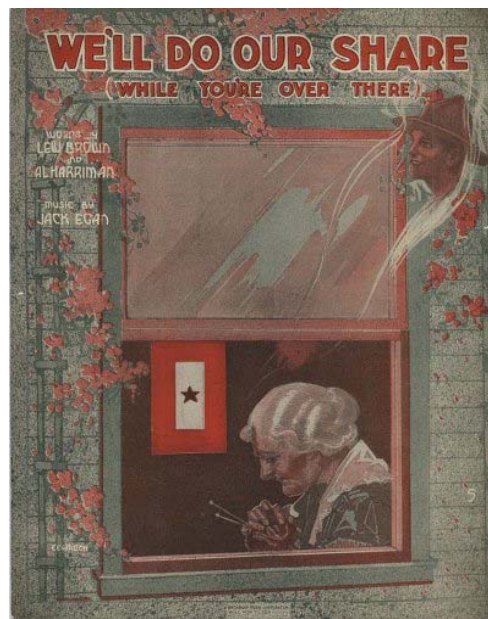


Figure 11. Cover, Jack Egan, “We’ll Do Our Share (While You’re Over There)” (New York: Broadway Music Company, 1918). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The chorus features the text of a mother's letter to her son: "You know the victory must be won / And it's up to you my son / We'll do our share while you're over there." Though none of the lyrics specifically mention knitting, the cover art makes it clear that, when it came to mothers, "doing our share" meant knitting or sewing for the boys.

Lyrics in "Each Stitch Is a Thought of You, Dear" (1918) also confirm this role for mothers at home, another example of sheet music's connections to poster campaigns:

Verse 1:

By the lamplight's glow in the evening
Sits a mother old and grey,
Silently knitting, with fingers worn,
For her boys so far away;
Tho' her heart is heavy with sorrow;
And her brow all wrinkled with care,
With ev'ry stitch that is fashioned,
She breathes a gentle pray'r:

Chorus:

"Each stitch is a thought of you, dear,
Woven with loving care,
I'm knitting my heart in each garment, dear,
To send to you somewhere;
My hands are old and worn, dear,
The stitches may not be true;
But there's love in each one, a mother's love for her son,
Each stitch is a thought of you."

Though most of the sheet music from the World War I era tends to be written in energetically up-tempo, march-like duple meters, this song is set in a 3/4 waltz meter that heightens the sentimental mood. The lilting style harkens back to Stephen Foster-era songs, evoking a rich tradition of nostalgia and longing. The first page of the song includes a surprising inscription above its title, claiming to be "Dedicated to that Army of Noble Women – Mothers – Wives – Sisters and Sweethearts who are doing their bit for the boys Over There." The inscription's

inclusion of the phrase, “Army of noble women,” is oddly discordant with the cover's image of one gray-haired woman bent over her knitting needles (See Figure 12).

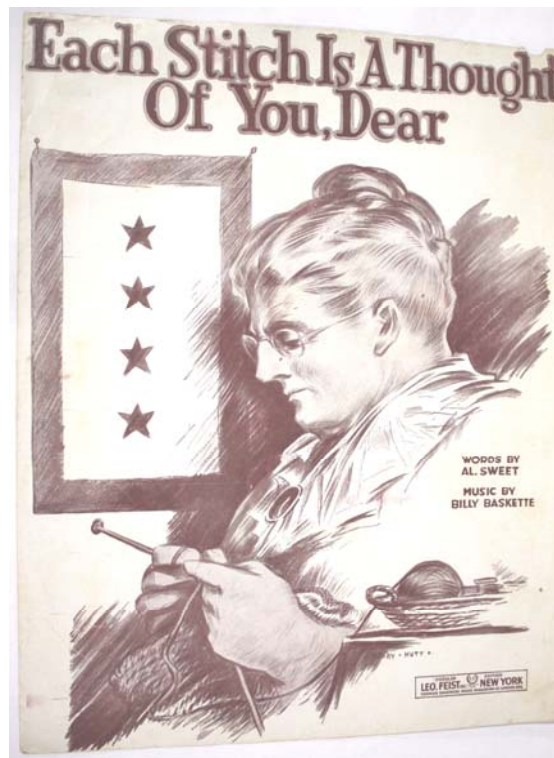


Figure 12. Cover, Billy Baskette, “Each Stitch Is a Thought of You, Dear” (New York: Leo Feist, 1918). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The incongruous dedication hints at women’s newfound power as the younger generation explored new roles in society, indicating that the role of women at home may have been more active than the song’s title and lyrics suggest.

CHAPTER 3

SISTER SUSIE SEWS AT HOME

Just like their mothers, younger American women were encouraged to sew in support of the war. Sewing was the most traditional and therefore least threatening outlet for young women who hoped to contribute to the war effort, and English audiences embraced sewing as a proper activity for young women with the hilarious tongue-twister hit, “Sister Susie’s Sewing Shirts for Soldiers” (1914). Al Jolson helped popularize the tune in the United States as part of the show *Dancing Around*, which premiered in New York at the Winter Garden Theater in October 1914.¹ In addition to Jolson’s Columbia recording, Billy Murray recorded the song for Victor, and the popularity of both recordings helped earn the song a place in *Variety Music Cavalcade*’s listing of American hits from 1914.² Lyrics from the chorus describe a hopelessly inept “Sister Susie” at her sewing:

Sister Susie’s sewing shirts for soldiers
Such skill at sewing shirts our shy young sister Susie shows!
Some soldiers send epistles, say they’d sooner sleep in thistles,
Than the saucy, soft, short shirts for soldiers sister Susie sews.

Comedic lyrics lightened the darkening mood as the war churned into action in 1914, but from a soft sell advertising perspective, witty songs also helped establish underlying positive attitudes toward the conflict. Modern military recruitment still relies on such emotional appeals for enlistment purposes, as the following quote demonstrates:

¹ Watkins, 245.

² Julius Mattfeld, *Variety Music Cavalcade, 1620-1969: A Chronology of Vocal and Instrumental Music Popular in the United States*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 330. For recordings, see Columbia 1671 (39664), and Victor 17659.

From the hypothesis that emotional responses are very important for broadcast messages, we infer that broadcast advertisements can contribute to enlistment goals in a complex and indirect manner. More specifically, broadcast messages may create attitudes (such as that the military is an attractive career option) that make young people attend to print advertisements [i.e. hard sell approaches] months (or even years) later when they are prepared to make early-career choices. But broadcast messages may also provide an emotional impetus that induces a youth to promptly sign an enlistment contract that he or she has been discussing with a recruiter or military job counselor. Thus, broadcast messages may have both long-delayed and almost immediate effects on enlistments.³

Posters and sheet music laced with positive (and often funny) war messages functioned in the same way as do modern “Be All That You Can Be,” “Army of One,” or “Army Strong” campaigns on television, internet, radio, or movie ads, subtly instilling a positive attitude in the public mindset. Pro-war propaganda that entertained audiences with funny or otherwise emotionally stimulating messages bolstered war support among the general public and may even have encouraged enlistment among young men.

Knitting was a popular activity for mothers at home but was also suggested as a means by which their young daughters could contribute to the war effort. Sheet music and other popular culture outlets encouraged young women on the home front to “Knit your bit!” Titles like “Knit, Knit, Knit” (1917), “Knitting” (1917), “Knit, Girl, Knit” (1918), “Knitting Song” (1918), “Knitting a Sock” (1918), and “Knitting for Our Soldiers” (1919) suggest the lasting appeal of the knitting theme in sheet music portrayals of young women at home. “Knit, Knit, Knit, Sister Sue” (1914) is a sequel to “Sister Susie’s Sewing Shirts for Soldiers.” The song invokes a comical connection to the original tune; chorus lyrics are delivered from a soldier brother’s perspective, asking Sue to start knitting some socks instead:

Knit, knit, knit a little Susie,
For what good is a shirt
When all our “Tootsies” hurt?
My poor big toe sticks out,

³ James N. Dertouzos, *Is Military Advertising Effective?: An Estimation Methodology and Applications to Recruiting in the 1980s and 90s* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2002), 16.

You know it doesn't like the snow.
Oh my left foot is red white and blue.
'Pon my sole, there's a big blister too.
The soldier's toes are froze to bits,
"Holy Hoses" Susie,
It's a long tramp, tramp to Tipperary
So knit, knit, knit Sister Sue.

The cover art features a woman bent over her knitting as she rocks in a chair (See Figure 13).



Figure 13. Cover, Raymond Walker, "Knit, Knit, Knit Sister Sue" (New York: Broadway Music Corp., 1914). Karen C.K. Ballard, "Threadwinder.info — WWI Knitting and Sewing Songs," <http://threadwinder.info/pubs/hist/sheetmusic/WWI/kkkSister.htm> (accessed June 18, 2011).

With her hair piled in a Gibson Girl chignon, the young woman depicted on the cover resonates with the American Girl archetype, but in this sisterly form, she appears in one of her most strictly virginal incarnations.

The saga of Sister Susie was completed in 1915 with a final song, "Sister Susie's Marrying Tommy Atkins Today." Like most American Girls, Sister Susie's marital fate was never really in question, as historian Frederick G. Vogel observes:

Ignoring the fact that she was described as married, and pregnant as well, in the obscure third verse of “Sister Susie’s Sewing Shirts for Soldiers,” Weston and Darewski announced her impending marriage in their followup song, “Sister Susie’s Marrying Tommy Atkins Today.” She had fallen in love with a British soldier, and he with her, the songwriters noted in reporting the forthcoming nuptials. Tommy apparently appreciated sleeping in her nightshirts, flaws and all, and presumably would live with her in domestic harmony forever after.⁴

Sister Susie represented young women sewing or knitting on the home front, a comfortable role for women in a time of war that reached back to nineteenth-century portrayals of women knitting during the Civil War. Yet when they were not engaged in domestic sewing, what other activities kept them busy?

Young women at home during the war began to explore nontraditional roles and often took on jobs that had formerly been handled by men. American women transformed their identity as citizens during World War I, and unlike the changes that nurses and volunteers serving abroad experienced, the changes for women at home were witnessed by the American public on a daily basis. The public had a complicated relationship with these working women, as Alexandra Christine Adinamis explains in her thesis on portrayals of women in World War I literature:

Unfortunately, even the dire need for their labor and the enthusiastic, though condescending, praise from the press did not prevent women from being criticized for doing men’s work. They were taking the jobs of men who were sacrificing their lives in the trenches, and it was feared that soldiers would come home to face unemployment once the war was over. For that reason, it was understood in no uncertain terms that women would leave men’s work at the end of the conflict.⁵

Tension between positive and negative portrayals of working women played out in the era’s sheet music, reflecting society’s unease with the new roles for young women as they took on jobs and activities that had formerly been reserved for men. This uncertain approach to

⁴ Vogel, 27.

⁵ Alexandra Christine Adinamis, “Women and the War: Attitudes Towards Women in World War I Literature” (MA Thes., Eastern Michigan University, 2001), 10-11.

portrayals of working women can be observed in the Alfred Solman 1917 song, “We’ll Keep Things Going ‘Til the Boys Come Home (Won’t We Girls?)” The cover depicts a speaker as she engages a throng of female listeners (See Figure 14).



Figure 14. Cover, Alfred Solman, “We’ll Keep Things Going ‘Till the Boys Come Home (Won’t We Girls?)” (New York: Joe Morris Music Co., 1917). Courtesy of the World War I National Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

With her arms raised in an orator’s gesture, the speaker displays a confident stance that connotes women’s growing leadership in the public sphere. The song opens with a positive perspective on women in their new roles, and lyrics in the first verse include several progressive statements:

Listen girls, it’s up to us, we’ve got a lot to do,
The Boys are going over, and they’ll stay till they get through,
And now’s the time for ev’ry girl to show her Yankee grit
For ev’ry girl must do her little bit,
They’ll tell us that we can’t, we know we can
And a girl will take the place of every man.

The speaker's animated spirit is represented musically with an active melody set in eighth-notes that quickly moves between C4 and C5, as if musically confirming her sincerity by representing her eagerness to jump into action (See Example 1, mm. 11-14, and 23-27).

² We'll Keep Things Going Till The Boys Come Home
(Won't We Girls?)

Words by
ANDREW B. STERLING

Music by
ALFRED SOLMAN

Piano

Lia-teng girls, its up to us We've got a lot to do, The Boys are go-ing ov-er, and they'll
Lia-teng girls, we'll cast a-side the Paint and Pow-der Puff, The girl be-hind the Plow, the thing al-
stay till they get through, And now the time for ev-ry girl to show her Yan-kee grit, Fur-
thought the work is rough, We'll keep the Fac-tories running will make am-mu-ni-tion too, And
ev-ry girl must do her lit-tle bit, They'll tell us that we can't, we know we
ev-ry boat will have a la-dy crew, There'll be a girl eon-duct-ress on each
can, And a girl will take the place of ev-ry man;
car, And by jing-os there'll be la-dies tend-ing bar;

J. M. Co. 505-2 Copyright 1917 by The Joe Morris Music Co., 145 W. 45th St. New York, N.Y.
The Publishers reserve the right to the use of this Music or Melody for any Mechanical Instruments.
International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Alfred & Son, Australian Agents, Sydney

Example 1. Alfred Solman and Andrew B. Sterling, “We’ll Keep Things Going Till the Boys Come Home (Won’t We Girls?)” (New York: Joe Morris Music Co., 1917), p.2. Courtesy of the World War I National Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Her call to action is peppered with a trumpet-like call in the melody at the conclusion of the verse, spurring the listener to join the cause (See Example 1, mm. 26-34).

Lyrics in the first verse strike a feminist tone, claiming, “They’ll tell us that we can’t, we know we can.” If referring to “Yankee grit” in connection with a woman is unusual, then the image of a girl “taking the place of every man” is revolutionary. The chorus begins to complicate matters as the formerly positive view of women’s capability is suddenly challenged by comedic references to women’s struggles in adapting to new responsibilities. The chorus relates the embarrassing story of a mother tearing her overalls as she’s working:

We’ll keep things going till the boys come home, Won’t we girls?
Bet your life, ev’ry sweetheart and wife,
Will do her bit for Yankee Doodle,
We’ll take care of all the Boodle, Won’t we girls?
You bet your life, Mother’s taking Father’s job he was a steeple Jack,
She wears a pair of Overalls, that button up the back,
And she’ll have a “Ripping” time some day when she climbs up a stack!
But we’ll keep things going till the boys come home.

The song continues to vacillate between the narrator’s cheeky bravado in the verse and the chorus’s thinly veiled suggestion that the women would prove incompetent in the workplace.

The lyrics continue:

Verse 2:

Listen girls, we’ll cast aside the Paint and Powder Puff,
The girl behind the Plow’s the thing, although the work is rough,
We’ll keep the Fact’ries running we’ll make ammunition too,
And ev’ry boat will have a lady crew,
There’ll be a girl conductress on each car,
And by jingos there’ll be ladies tending bar.

Chorus:

We’ll keep things going till the boys come home, Won’t we girls?
Bet your life, ev’ry sweetheart and wife,
Will do her bit for Yankee Doodle,
Show the world we’ve got some noodle, Won’t we girls?
You bet your life, Aunt Priscilla just to show she couldn’t hold aloof,

Now runs an elevator isn't that sufficient proof,
And the other night she got mixed up and ran it through the roof!
But we'll keep things going till the boys come home.

Despite the inclusion of phrases that highlight women's enthusiasm to help, suggesting they were keen to "show the world we've got some noodle," the lyricist's placement of women's incompetence as a subject near the end of the song's repeated chorus, rather than within one of the song's verses, tilts the balance of the text in favor of female ineptitude. The song implies that women—though eager to contribute—could not handle men's work. The inclusion of a fermata over the most embarrassing images in the lyrics (right above the words *stack* in the first chorus and *roof* in the second chorus) allows the listener plenty of time to linger on the unflattering images of women as they incapably tackle men's work (See Example 2, m. 3).



Example 2. Alfred Solman and Andrew B. Sterling, "We'll Keep Things Going Till the Boys Come Home (Won't We Girls?)" (New York: Joe Morris Music Co., 1917), p.3, mm. 26-32. Courtesy of the World War I National Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

This sudden pause after the nearly constant eighth-note activity that precedes it is heightened by a *rallentando* in the accompaniment, further emphasizing the unfortunate images. The mix of positive messages in the verses and negative images in the chorus was not uncommon. This dichotomy of attitudes legitimately reflects the nation's mixed reactions as women occupied traditionally male professions.

A slightly more positive portrayal of working women on the home front is revealed in another song from the 1917 show by Jas. W. Tate, *Everything*: “Ev’ry Girl Is Doing Her Bit.” The cover art evokes the American Girl with a young woman who is stylishly dressed (See Figure 15).

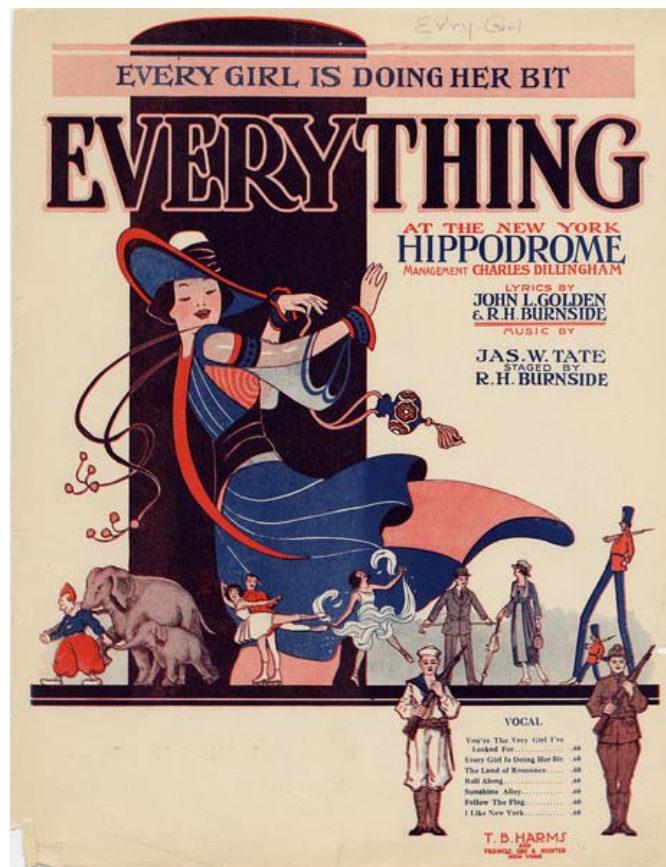


Figure 15. Cover, Jas. W. Tate, “Every Girl Is Doing Her Bit” (New York: T.B. Harms and Francis, Day and Hunter, 1917). Brown University Library Center for Digital Initiatives: World War I Sheet Music, <http://dl.lib.brown.edu/catalog/catalog.php?verb=render&id=1107964618796875&view=pageturner&pageno=2> (accessed June 24, 2011).

Her active pose suggests an athleticism that was common to the American Girl archetype. Lyrics in the first verse boast of skilled women who delight “in showing the world” what they can do:

The boys of the U.S.A. are fighting,
 And helping us here to see things thro’
 So every girl is now delighting,
 In showing the world what she can do.

No matter the jobs to which you place them,
Girls never have tried them p'rhaps before,
But yet you see them bravely face them
And they do them well what's more!

Women's unquestioned competency is featured in the opening verse, and the chorus continues this trend, proudly stating:

Ev'ry girl is ready to do her duty,
Lots of girls are doing it rather well,
Work you thought they could not do,
Girls are putting their shoulders to,
While the boys are giving the Germans more than they bargained for.
All the girls are doing their bit for freedom,
Doing it rather nicely, so they say,
And as the boys to the front have gone,
The girls will help to carry on.
Ev'ry girl is doing her bit today.

References to female success in the chorus are condescendingly diluted by the inclusion of the word "rather" in the second and seventh lines of text, but the overall impression is one of women capably meeting the challenges of their new responsibilities. The text expresses some surprise that women tackled "work you thought they could not do" and that they were "doing it rather nicely," but the celebration of women's contributions seems sincere. The melody itself supports this straightforward interpretation of the text. Consider the triumphant, "sol – do!"⁶ ending to the final phrase of the chorus as the singer proclaims, "Ev'ry girl is doing her bit today" (See Example 3, mm. 4-6). The song's second verse subtly undermines this unusually progressive approach to the portrayal of working women, assuring listeners, "But one little thing is well worth knowing: / To equal the men is not our aim; / We simply want to keep things going, / We are women just the same." Even within sheet music arenas, women had to avoid seeming too comfortable or successful in jobs more traditionally held by men lest they appear unfeminine.

⁶ Readers unfamiliar with solfege should instead imagine the move from the dominant-inflected scale degree 5 to the tonic-inflected, scale degree 1.

Though most of the song celebrated women's achievements, such positive statements could not go uncensored by the lyrics of the second verse.



Example 3. Jas. W. Tate, "Every Girl Is Doing Her Bit" (New York: T.B. Harms and Francis, Day and Hunter, 1917), p. 5, mm. 9-17. Brown University Library Center for Digital Initiatives: World War I Sheet Music, <http://dl.lib.brown.edu/catalog/catalog.php?verb=render&id=1107964618796875&view=pageturner&pageno=2> (accessed June 24, 2011).

As illustrated above, depictions of young American women at home who were "doing their bit" for the war fell generally into two categories: young women who fit traditional roles by knitting or sewing for soldiers, or trail-blazing women who explored new roles in society, presenting complex views of the new citizenship that women were carving out for themselves. These two tracks represented the conservative and radical paths available to that generation of young women, and the dichotomy of positive and negative reactions to working women reflected society's struggle to accept these radical changes. The sheet music industry therefore takes an accurate count of the nation's cultural pulse, for if Charles Hiroshi Garrett's assertion that "institutions such as Tin Pan Alley and the recording industry attempt to mold public perceptions

about the nation”⁷ is to be believed, then society’s changing attitudes toward women as they explored new roles quite naturally appear in the period’s popular music. Unfortunately for those working women who earned income through war work in jobs that had formerly been reserved for men, phrases in the sheet music such as “We’ll keep things going *till the boys come home*” were usually prophetic, and many working women were laid off from primary and secondary war industry jobs when the boys came home following the Armistice announcement on November 18, 1918.⁸ Despite this setback, the temporary acceptance of working women—however tentative, condescending, or fleeting—could only help suffragists in their bid for the vote following the end of the global conflict.

7 Charles Hiroshi Garrett, *Struggling to Define a Nation: American Music and the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 13.

8 Wood, 295.

CHAPTER 4

THE GIRLS THEY LEFT BEHIND

Soldiers' sweethearts who pined for their distant loves often captured the imagination of sheet music publishers, and numerous titles refer to "the girls they left behind."¹ The following list of titles evidences the popularity of this theme: "The Girl I Left Behind Me Is Before Me All the Time" (1917); "I'll Wed the Girl I Left Behind" (1917); "The Girl He Left Behind Him (Has the Hardest Fight of All)" (1918); "The Girl I Left At Home" (1918); "The Girl I Left Behind in America" (1918); and "The Girl He Left Behind Him Over There" (1919). Like the sewing or knitting "Sister Susie," the girls portrayed in these songs tended to fit conservative roles in the culture with a focus on women who patiently waited for the boys as a means of supporting the war. The 1917 Harry von Tilzer song, "It's a Long, Long Way to the U.S.A. and the Girl I Left Behind" mixes images of the "Girl I Left Behind" with references to the soldier's isolation. The face of a beloved girlfriend appears amidst a cloud of smoke in the sheet music cover art (See Figure 16). The title played on the popularity of a British tune readily adopted by American audiences, "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary" (1912)—a song that became synonymous with separated lovers and was "one of the best remembered of all World War I songs."² The connection to the British title was maintained by its similar juxtaposition of a sobering text with

¹ War posters did not often adopt this theme, so they will not be discussed. The Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog includes one related poster, titled, "Get Behind the Girl He Left Behind – Join the Land Army." It features a woman working in a garden with the shadowy figure of a soldier hovering at her side. Copyright protection did not allow for its inclusion here. To view the image online, visit: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00652171/> (accessed June 25, 2011). The use of typical poster archetypes (the American Girl, for example) will be discussed in this chapter.

² Vogel, 28-29. Vogel describes the original song's mixture of moods, explaining, "Despite the peppy rhythm, however, the words conveyed an undercurrent of sorrow in their new wartime context."

surprisingly cheerful, march-like music. Lyrics reset the story in American contexts to appeal to state-side audiences.

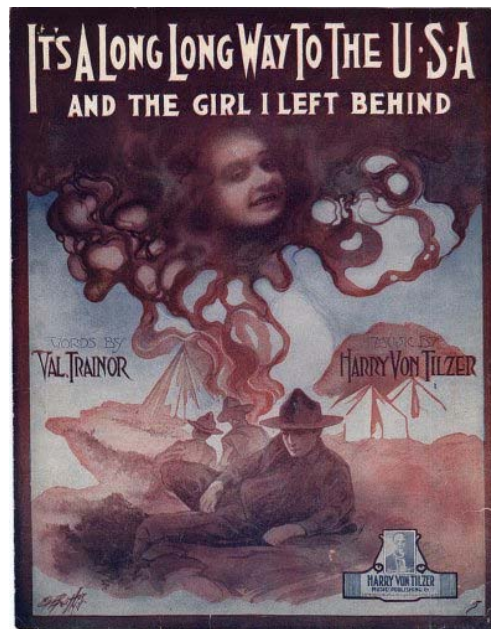


Figure 16. Cover, Harry von Tilzer, “It’s a Long, Long Way to the U.S.A. and the Girl I Left Behind” (New York: Harry von Tilzer Music Publishing Co., 1917), p. 3, mm. 5-37. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The melancholy text of the chorus parallels the sad affect of the original song, delivered from a wounded soldier’s perspective:

It’s a long, long way to the U.S.A. and the girl I left behind,
And if you get back someday, give my love to her and say
That her boy was true, tell dear mother too,
Just to always treat her kind,
It’s a long, long way to the U.S.A. and the girl I left behind.

Despite the gloomy text, the piece keeps the original song’s bright musical outlook with a jaunty, up-tempo 2/4 meter. Dotted rhythms contradict the seriousness of the soldier’s words (See Example 4, mm. 4, 12, and 20). Note the stride action of the left hand material within the piano accompaniment, evoking ragtime traditions with octaves and broken chords (See Example 4., mm. 25-32). These musical traits serve as a blithe foil to the dark lyrics.

Chorus.

It's a long, long, way to the U. S. A. and the girl I left be - hind -

And if you get back some day - - - give my love to her and say - - -

That her boy was true, tell dear moth - er too, Just to al - ways treat her kind - - - It's a

long, long, way to the U. S. A. and the girl I left be - hind - - - It's a - - -

It's a Long etc. 2

Example 4. Harry von Tilzer, “It’s a Long, Long Way to the U.S.A. and the Girl I Left Behind” (New York: Harry von Tilzer Music Publishing Co., 1917), p. 3, mm. 5-37. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The English song “Keep the Home Fires Burning” (1914) maintained a more sentimental character in its treatment of the distance between soldiers and their loved ones.³ The song was Ivor Novello’s (1893-1951) first major hit, securing its composer an international reputation. An early war favorite that earned a beloved place in the hearts of American audiences, it too carried implications for the girls they left behind. As one of the biggest hits in the United States in 1915, the song was recorded by artists on no less than five different American labels: Columbia,

³ The cover for this title contained words only, so no images are discussed in this analysis.

Paramount, Emerson, Gennett, and Victrola.⁴ The lyrics are addressed to the families of soldiers as well as their sweethearts, advocating a typically British “stiff upper lip” approach to waiting for the boys:

Keep the home fires burning,
While your hearts are yearning,
Though your lads are far away they dream of Home;
There's a silver lining
Through the dark cloud shining,
Turn the dark cloud inside out,
Till the boys come home.

The sense of wistful “yearning” is heightened by longer rhythmic values in the chorus to highlight words like *burning*, *yearning*, or references to soldiers who “dream of Home” (See Example 5, m. 2, 4, 7-8).

7

REFRAIN

Keep the Home-fires burn - ing While your hearts are Yearn - ing, Though your lads are

P-f 2nd time

far a - way They dream of Home; There's a sil - ver lin - ing

Example 5. Ivor Novello, “Keep the Home Fires Burning (Till the Boys Come Home),” (New York: Chappell and Co., Ltd., 1915), p. 7, mm. 1-10. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

⁴ See: Columbia 6028, Paramount 2011, Emerson 934, Gennett 10025, and Victrola 64696. *Variety Music Cavalcade* lists it as one of the most popular tunes of 1915. See *Variety Music Cavalcade*, p. 337.

Lyrics to another Ivor Novello hit that made its way to the New York market, “The Laddie in Khaki (The Girl Who Waits at Home)” (1915), represent the ultimate in female devotion to the soldier abroad:

Verse 1:

There is a girl who waits at home
Who’s full of charm and grace,
Tho’ her heart is sadden’d yet,
She keeps a smiling face,
Ask her whom she’s thinking of
All the live-long day
With a smile that lights her face
She will softly say:

Chorus:

“Laddie in Khaki, I’m waiting for you!
I want to know that my heart beats true;
I’m longing and praying, and living for you,
So come back little Laddie in Khaki!”

The words-only cover lacks cover art depicting the physical attributes of “the girl who waits at home,” but the lyrics alone paint a demure enough picture of the patiently waiting young woman. Interestingly, this song contains one of the few uses of the adjective *little* as applied to a male character, seen in the final line of the chorus as the woman pleads, “So come back little Laddie in Khaki!”

The song “Watch Hope Wait Little Girl (‘Till I Come Back to You)” (1918) suggests a similarly passive role for women on the home front. Presented as a letter from the front lines, the song includes lyrics of a soldier who asks his girl to:

Watch little girl and hope little girl, and wait, little girl for me,
Pray little girl, ev’ry day, little girl, while I’m across the sea,
Give my love to Ma
Say “Hello” to Pa.
And you know I’m longing, dear, to know just how you are,
So write, little girl, ev’ry night, little girl,
And promise you’ll be true,
And I’ll fight, little girl, with all my might, little girl,

‘Till I come back to you.

Composer Will Clayton highlights the main activities for the soldier’s sweetheart—watching, hoping, and waiting—with an accent above the singer’s melody as each verb appears on the downbeat (See Example 6, mm. 1-3). Clayton adds further emphasis to these words by asking the performers to interpret the chorus “with marked rhythm.” The frequent repetition of the words *little girl* is represented musically through a motive that makes use of the small interval of a minor second, appearing as a lower neighbor in the vocal melody (See Example 6, mm. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6).

3

Example 6. Will Clayton, “Watch Hope Wait Little Girl (‘Till I Come Back to You)” (New York: Broadway Music Corporation, 1918), p. 3, mm. 1-9. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The composer also uses a sixteenth note, a small rhythmic value, to set the second syllable of *little* in the above examples. With such a multifaceted musical emphasis on the word *little*, one might expect a younger sister figure like Sister Susie to appear on the cover, but the depicted woman depicted in the cover art is most definitely a sweetheart (See Figure 17). With her hair pinned up and a hand resting on her small waist, the woman on the cover is a Gibson Girl look-

alike. A second, alternative cover for the song does take a younger spin on the “little girl” character, but she still evokes an adult sweetheart, armed with a charmingly shy smile and a coyly tilted head (See Figure 18). In both published covers, the depicted women directly relate to innocent interpretations of the American Girl archetype.



Figure 17. Cover, Will Clayton, “Watch Hope Wait Little Girl (‘Till I Come Back to You)” (New York: Broadway Music Corporation, 1918). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.



Figure 18. Cover, Will Clayton, “Watch Hope Wait Little Girl (I’m Coming Back to You)” (New York: Broadway Music Corporation, 1918). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Depictions of “the girls they left behind” in sheet music from the war stressed the importance of patient, passive waiting as a proper activity for the girls at home. Songs like these ultimately sold promises of female fidelity as a reward for soldiers’ heroic service in the war. No matter what kinds of amorous adventures the soldiers might be exploring abroad, the assumption was that the girls they left behind would remain faithful. Only a few titles made suggestions to the contrary, and most were couched in a humorous tone.⁵ The 1918 song popularized by singer Emma Carus, “There’ll Be a Hot Time for the Old Men (While the Young Men Are Away),” took a comedic approach and played with the suggestion that older men might take the young

⁵ “Songs with the potential for evoking more resentment than merriment, however, were rare throughout the war.” See Vogel, 62.

men's absence as a romantic opportunity.⁶ The cover features inlays of scenes with an older man seated at a table (presumably on a date) with at least two women (See Figure 19).



Figure 19. Cover, George W. Meyer, “There’ll be a Hot Time for the Old Men (While the Young Men Are Away)” (New York: Leo Feist, 1918). Courtesy of the World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The final lines of the first verse ask, “Young men they are sailing ev’ry day / Who will love the girls while they’re away?” The chorus responds:

There’ll be a hot time for the old men
While the young men are away
When the young men go to France,
Oh, Won’t the old men have a wonderful chance,
To raise the dickens with all the chickens
They’ll have everything their way.
Now that the young men have all disappeared
Ev’ry young girl grabs a man with a beard,
There’ll be a hot time for the old men
While the young men are away.

⁶ Ibid.

While the song addressed the gender and generational imbalance that challenged the nation as a result of the war, the lyrics were just silly enough to be rendered inoffensive to the soldiers overseas.

Some titles included more blatant references to women's attention as a reward for enlistment. These depictions utilized a more sexualized portrayal of young women at home who waited for the boys. The actress Mollie King, "Star of the Screen," was featured prominently on the cover for the 1918 tune, "I Want to Be Loved by a Soldier" (See Figure 20).



Figure 20. Cover, Abner Silver, "I Want to Be Loved by a Soldier," (New York: Joe Morris Music Co., 1918). Courtesy of the World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The lyrics support the idea that this woman would welcome attention from any man in uniform:

Verse 1:

I know a girl who's very fond of military men,
She loves to have some soldier's lover ev'ry now and then
She wants a man with gallant ways the kind you see in photo plays
Ev'ry day you'll hear this girlie say:

Chorus:

I want to be loved by a soldier

Won't someone show me the way
I want someone to please me,
I want someone to squeeze me, ev'ry night and day,
I find that there's something about them
That carries me away
And if they'd only want to give me a chance
I'd even follow some young fellow to France
'Cause I want to be loved by a soldier
Won't someone please show me the way?

Alternative lines in the chorus state, "So many girls I know do nothing but knit / If I love a soldier ain't I doing my bit?" Interpretations like these called forth the more flirtatious side of the American Girl archetype, and this type of war material used sex appeal to encourage young men to enlist for the war.

Tom Mellor's and Harry Gifford's song "All the Boys in Khaki Get the Nice Girls" (1915) likewise offers up young women as a reward for military service. A British tune that was also sold in New York, its lyrics tell the story of Johnny Brown, a "dandy" who notices that the girls "passed him by."⁷ A "lady recruiting sergeant" offers him some romantic advice in the chorus, explaining:

All the boys in khaki get the nice girls,
And the boys in blue get the nice girls too.
Maidens by the score, flappers in galore,
Every time you give them a kiss they shout "Encore!"
All the boys in khaki get the nice girls
Eyes of grey, eyes of brown, eyes of blue,
So John, John, John put a bit of khaki on,
And you'll get the nice girls too!

These lyrics not only invoke soft sell sex appeals, but also fear- or shame-based appeals; after all, if Johnny Brown does not follow the sergeant's advice, his love life is assuredly doomed by his implied cowardice. A similar fear-based approach is used in many modern advertisements for deodorant or breath mints—suggesting that failure to consume the product could lead to social

⁷ This title included a words-only cover, so there will be no discussion of cover art imagery.

ostracization. In this case, the lyrics advise Johnny to get some khaki or else he will not be able to find a girl. Lyrics in the second verse assure Johnny, “All the little girls you know will follow you ev’rywhere / When once they see you boy, shouldering up your gun.” Enlistment is recommended as a cure-all for his love-life problems, and female attention is proffered as a reward for military service.

Depictions of “the girls they left behind” generally evoked the American Girl, expressing the entire palette of potential interpretations of her archetype: from innocent portrayals of faithful girlfriends at home to sexualized portrayals of girls who would go crazy for men in uniform. In all cases, attention from women is presented as a reward for military involvement in the war, and women are portrayed as objects “left behind” without identities or goals of their own.

Part Two: Young American Women Overseas

CHAPTER FIVE

ANGELS AND MADONNAS

Matronly images in the sheet music of World War I were not just confined to depictions of mothers who waited at home for the return of the soldier sons, but were also applied to portrayals of younger American women—especially those who served as Red Cross nurses. The Red Cross during this period was nicknamed “The Greatest Mother in the World,” thanks to a successful poster campaign (See Figure 2), and sheet music publishers bolstered this theme with songs like “The Greatest Little Mother in the World” (1918), “Greatest Little Mothers in the World” (1918), and “The Greatest Mother of Them All” (1919). The association between the caretaking of nursing and that of motherhood endured and the Red Cross renewed in the Second World War with the new poster caption: “Still the Greatest Mother.”¹ Yet none of the young women who enlisted as nurses or YWCA volunteers overseas would have been free to do so had they actually been mothers, so what explains this connection? Maternal imagery “blunted” the newfound power that women volunteering as nurses gained in their work overseas, softening their public image with an emphasis on motherly concern.² After all, motherhood was a far more acceptable role for women in American society, more comfortable and familiar to the public than the new and independent roles explored by women who traveled abroad to face the dangers of war-torn Europe. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 2, motherhood had been associated with antiwar sentiment at the outset of the war with songs like “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a

¹ Shover, 476-477.

² Carolyn Kitch, “The Girl on the Magazine Cover: Gender, Class, and the Emergence of Visual Stereotypes in American Mass Media, 1895-1930” (PhD diss., University of Georgia, 2000), 447-448.

Soldier” (1915). By directly employing mother imagery in depictions of Red Cross and other war volunteerism, the CPI recast mothers in active, pro-war roles within American popular culture.

Motherhood imagery was often tinged with religious iconography in posters and sheet music of the era. Women were regularly pictured with white nursing veils that bore a close resemblance to images of the Virgin Mary in religious art. Compare the following sheet music cover for “My Red Cross Girlie” (1917) to the Currier and Ives lithograph of the Virgin Mary (c. 1848), (See Figure 21).



Figure 21. Cover, Theodore Morse, “My Red Cross Girlie” (New York: Leo Feist, 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC. Currier & Ives, “The Virgin Mary” (New York: N. Currier, c. 1848). Library of Congress, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, [LC-USZC2-3145].

This comparison places a 1917 song cover beside a lithograph from 1848, yet the lithograph imagery is classic enough to assume an ageless quality. Archetypal images of women in World War I propaganda often relied on visual codes that were long-established in American culture,

and the Marian images of the Protecting Angel archetype especially turned to older traditions from art history or religious contexts. The nurse's white veil is nearly identical to Mary's traditional white head-covering, and the sheet music cover art is dominated by red, white, and blue colors. The recurring choice of these specific colors for sheet music covers featuring nurses had more to do with traditional images of the Virgin Mary—who usually wore those colors in artistic renditions—than with the colors of the American flag. These religious depictions transformed Red Cross nurses into “modern madonnas,” a staple of war propaganda.³ Consider the following war poster, which portrays a Red Cross nurse with her arms outstretched in a typical Marian pose (See Figure 22):



Figure 22. Poster, Haskell Coffin, “Third Red Cross Roll Call,” 1918. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, WWI Posters, [LC-USZC4-9549].

³ Kitch, v.

The poster renews the red, white, and blue coloration tradition. Artists have chosen the same open-armed, palms-facing-up gesture for statues and paintings of the Virgin Mary for centuries, and sheet music publishers, like their poster artist colleagues, eagerly embraced the ready-made Madonna imagery for use in the repertoire.

Jack Caddigan's and James A. Brennan's "The Rose of No Man's Land" (1918) was a particularly popular song from World War I exemplifying the pedestal approach to portrayals of women in service abroad, and the piece contains suggestions of the nurse's saintly role in the war. Featured as part of the YMCA song pamphlet *Victory Songs*, the song was assured widespread popularity. At least 2,500,000 copies of the mini-songbook were distributed by the National War Work Council of the YMCA.⁴ The song was also recorded several times by artists on the Columbia, Emerson, and Victor labels, further evidence of its strong appeal to American soldier and civilian audiences.⁵ Its chorus loftily chimes, "It's the one red rose the soldier knows / It's the work of the Master hand / 'Mid the war's great curse, / Stands the Red Cross Nurse, / She's the Rose of 'No Man's Land.'" The *moderato* tempo lends solemnity to the piece, and the fermata in the final line of the chorus invites the listener to stop and reflect on the nurse's sacrifice (See Example 7, m. 4). The lyrics describe the nurse's holiness with several references to her heavenly origins in the second verse:

Out of the heavenly splendor,
Down to the trail of woe,
God in his mercy has sent her,
Cheering the world below;
We call her "Rose of Heaven,"
We've learned to love her so.

⁴ This songbook is part of the National World War I Museum Archives. *Victory Songs*, N.P.: Transportation Bureau, National War Work Council of the Young Men's Christian Association, c. 1918.

⁵ See: Columbia 2670, Columbia 6098, Emerson 9130, and Victor 18508. The song also appears in several post-war song collection recordings.



Example 7. James A. Brennan and Jack Caddigan, "The Rose of No Man's Land" (New York: Leo Feist, 1918), p. 3, mm. 11-17. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Since the medieval era, the rose has been a symbol of the Virgin Mary, so the imagery of the nurse as the "Rose of No Man's Land" is also related to Marian traditions. The original cover depicts a nurse's head nestled in the petals of a rose amidst a violent battlefield, but the Feist Publishing Company also released a second "patriotic" edition (See Figure 23). Printed on smaller paper to conserve resources, the patriotic edition cover features a nurse basking in a ray of sunlight that appears to be of divine origin. Her arms are outstretched with palms facing up in a Madonna-like gesture, while her uplifted face is turned to God.

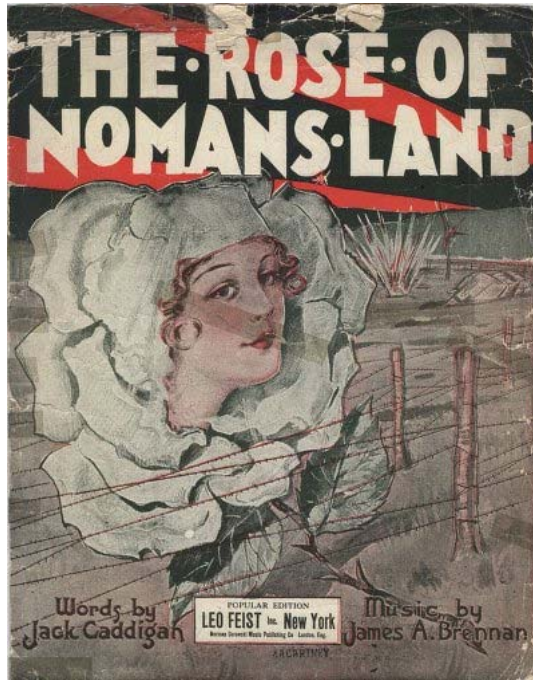


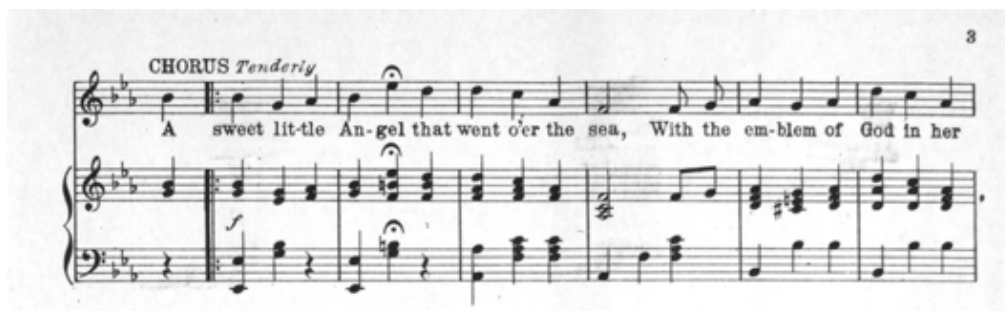
Figure 23. Covers (original and “patriotic” versions), James A. Brennan and Jack Caddington, “The Rose of No Man’s Land” (New York: Leo Feist, 1918). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Portrayals of nurses as matronly saints put American women at a safe distance—high above on pedestals—enveloped in sanctimonious sentiment. A related religious image, depicting women nurses and other war volunteers as angels, corroborated this trend. Songs like “Angles of the Cross of Red” (1918), “The Angel of No Man’s Land” (1918), “There’s an Angel Missing From Heaven – She’ll be Found Somewhere Over There” (1918), and “Angels of the Trench” (1918) all featured cover art involving Red Cross nurses in angelic contexts. Angelic imagery also applied to other women who served in the war. The chorus of “Don’t Forget the Salvation Army (My Doughnut Girl)” (1919) describes the Salvation Army volunteer as “just like an Angel,” a woman who is paradoxically “as brave as a lion but meek as a lamb.” Another classic example of angel imagery applied to Salvation Army women volunteers can be found in the chorus of the 1919 song, “Salvation Lassie of Mine:”

A sweet little Angel that went o’er the sea,

With the emblem of God in her hand,
 A wonderful Angel who brought there to me,
 The sweet of a war furrowed land
 The crown on her head was a ribbon of red,
 A symbol of all that's divine,
 Tho' she called each a brother, she's more like a mother,
 Salvation Lassie of mine.

The song's moderate tempo in a triple meter creates a poignant waltz, and *fermati* in the chorus over the words *Angel* and *brother* add to the nostalgia (See Example 8, m. 2, and Example 9, m. 6).



Example 8. Chick Story and Jack Caddigan, “Salvation Lassie of Mine” (New York: Leo Feist, 1919), p. 3, mm. 1-6. Courtesy of the World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.



Example 9. Chick Story and Jack Caddigan, “Salvation Lassie of Mine” (New York: Leo Feist, 1919), p. 3, mm. 21-34. Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Composer Chick Story's melodic line highlights the word *divine* by placing it at the end of a rising line on an Eb5 (See Example 9, m. 3). The word is also emphasized rhythmically, set as a dotted half-note that is tied across the bar. A hint of the Madonna version of the Protecting Angel archetype is present in the penultimate line of the chorus, which states, "Tho' she called each a brother, she's more like a *mother*," but the sheet music cover art avoids the typical Marian imagery and instead presents a serious looking young woman in uniform (See Figure 24).

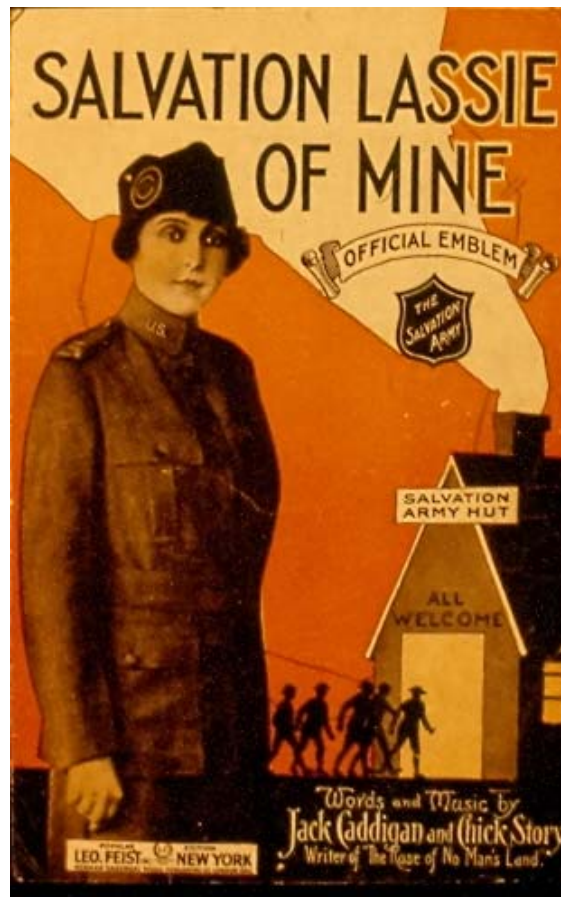


Figure 24. Cover, Jack Caddington and Chick Story, "Salvation Lassie of Mine" (New York: Leo Feist, 1919). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Overly sentimental, worshipful attitudes like those seen in "Salvation Lassie of Mine," resulted in frustrations for both men and women in the wake of the war that contributed to a widening

gender gap. Women could not live up to these angelic ideals, causing soldiers to feel forsaken by their “Angels of Mercy.”⁶

No more realistic than depictions of madonna-nurses, over-glorified portrayals of angel-nurses contrasted sharply with more down-to-earth references to young men in service as “our boys,” as Michael T. Coventry observes in his article on gender and visual stereotypes in American cartoons of the World War I era:

The appeal of referring to soldiers as “boys” was designed to invoke parental tenderness and concern and sympathy in the public. “Our boys” (or the variant, “our soldier boys”) created an image of soldiers as an army of national sons, sons who were the responsibility of all Americans. Focusing on their need to invoke sympathy and make female welfare workers and nurses be perceived *in loco parentis* for their young men, artists draw these in far more realistic ways than they did those representations of women intended solely to evoke high idealism.⁷

Nothing evoked high idealism better than images of women depicted as angels or the Virgin Mary, and this trend dominated posters and sheet music art and lyrics. Images of young American women as saintly mothers or angels generally fit under the umbrella of the Protecting Angel archetype, an idealistic type that reached back to the late nineteenth century.⁸ Artists and sheet music lyricists showcased the women as beautiful, loving yet virginal, perfect and pure. These portrayals seem innocent and flattering enough on the surface, but Mary Banta explores some of the dangerous undercurrents inherent to this approach:

The woman who is allegorized is, by that act, summed up as zero. Her original identity is lost in the effort to image the imageless entity of Woman. . . It is redundant to speak of the damage done to women when the spiritual and aesthetic qualities expected of them by society left no room for human frailties and earthly energies. Late nineteenth-century women were “idealized,” “placed on pedestals,” and viewed by males as “paragons of

⁶ Adinamis, 2. Adinamis explores the frustration that such idealistic imagery led to, especially since “real women” were not always as “angelic.”

⁷ Michael T. Coventry, “Editorials at a Glance: Cultural Policy, Gender, and Modernity in the World War I Bureau of Cartoons,” *The Review of Policy Research* 24, no. 2 (March, 2007), from Academic OneFile via Gale: www.find.galegroup.com (accessed February 2, 2010).

⁸ Banta devotes an entire chapter of her book, *Imaging American Women: Ideas and Ideals in Cultural History*, to “Angels at the Threshold” in the late nineteenth century. This theme in American culture has a long history, and Banta considers Abbott Handerson Thayer’s artistic portrayals of angelic women at length. See Banta, 428-462.

virtue” in order to keep them under control. We all know this often-told story, and each of us can refer to heinous examples of how women were penned within notions of perfection so they might not participate in a human world as human beings.⁹

Young American women serving overseas in World War I had not yet been granted the right to vote, lending credence to Banta’s suggestion that overtly religious portrayals of young women did little to help them gain an equal role in society.

Pieces like Harry von Tilzer’s “The Little Good for Nothing’s Good for Something After All” (1918) offered stories of the redemptive power of nursing for the Red Cross. Lyrics express a town’s surprise that the local good-for-nothing tomboy, “little Mary Brown,” grew up to redeem herself by “giving up her life at duty’s call” for the Red Cross:

Verse 1:

It’s funny how a nickname clung to little Mary Brown,
They called her good for nothing, a tomboy ‘round the town
As she grew up where’er she’d go they’d call her by that name
But if she’s good for nothing angels must be just the same.

Chorus:

They always called her little good for nothing
Just because like other children she was wild
Tho’ she wasn’t all to blame
Still she couldn’t bear the name
That clung to her since she was but a child
But now she’s over there, she joined the Red Cross
Giving up her life at duty’s call
And the ones that used to sneer are the first ones now to cheer
The little good for nothing’s good for something after all

Verse 2:

In her hometown they used to frown but now you’ll hear them say
I knew our good for nothing would make us proud some day
It may be strange but still it’s true how often you will find
The ones we thought were angels ‘turned out just the other kind.

⁹ Banta, 417-418.

The lyrics suggest her angelic nature (see line four of the chorus) while the cover art recalls Madonna imagery—featuring a nurse with her hands demurely folded in front of her (See Figure 25):



Figure 25. Cover, Harry von Tilzer, “The Little Good for Nothing’s Good for Something After All” (New York: Harry von Tilzer, 1918). Duke University Libraries – Digital Collections: Historic American Sheet Music. http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/hasm_b0837/# (accessed June 16, 2011).

Roses on the cover also connect to Marian traditions, freely mixing maternal and angelic imagery to transform Mary Brown into a powerful Protecting Angel character.

Many of the sheet music pieces combined angel- and madonna-nurse imagery, as in the 1918 hit by Willie Weston, “The Greatest Little Mother in the World.” The cover art invokes Marian imagery with its red, white, and blue coloration (See Figure 26).



Figure 26. Cover, Willie Weston, “The Greatest Little Mother in the World” (New York: Kendis-Brockman Music Co., 1918). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The final line of the chorus reiterates the matronly role from the song’s title, while the fourth line of the chorus mixes in angel imagery for good measure:

Over in “No Man's Land” you'll find her,
 Kneeling beside each mother's son,
 Leaving all thoughts of fear behind her,
 Like an Angel above, there to comfort and love,
 Helping and cheering those who need her,
 There with her bright Red Cross unfurled,
 She's the bravest of the bravest,
 And the greatest little Mother in the world.

The recruiting and fund-raising role of the song is underscored by the lyrics of the second verse, which encourages listeners to “do your bit just for humanity” by being willing to “give and give, keep giving,” or “continue sending” in support of “her ev’ry plea.” This direct appeal for monetary support emulated Red Cross campaigns in the poster repertoire. In addition to the mixture of Madonna and Protecting Angel imagery present in the chorus, the first verse refers to

another powerful archetype—the Amazon Warrior in her guise as Columbia.¹⁰ The final lines of this verse read: “Tho’ there’s danger lurking, / Duty never shirking, / Fair Columbia answers ev’ry call.” In this piece the Amazon Warrior (as Columbia) and the Protecting Angel (both as angel and Madonna) archetypes combine to create a compelling call to duty, one example of cross-archetypal pollination that resulted in even more effective propaganda. A similar mixture of the Amazon Warrior and Madonna-inspired Protecting Angel archetypes occurs in the following poster, featuring Columbia wearing an American flag cap, arms outstretched in the typical Marian pose as if pleading for mercy for the victims behind her (See Figure 27):

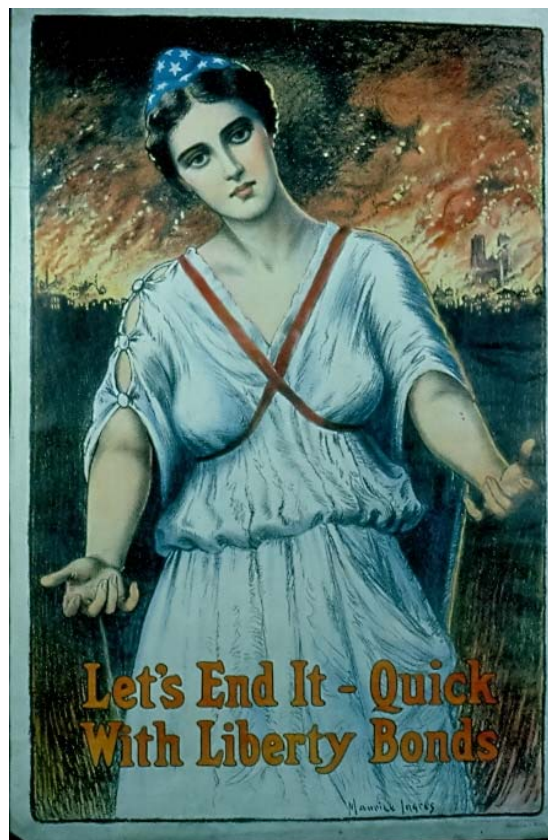


Figure 27. Poster, Maurice Ingres, “Let’s End It – Quick / With Liberty Bonds,” 1917. Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

¹⁰ For more information on Columbia imagery, see Part III: Women as National Symbols.

Posters and songs that connected to this Marian or angelic imagery attempted to strike an emotional chord with the American public in order to engage their support for the war, a classic soft sell persuasive advertising technique.

CHAPTER 6

RED CROSS GIRLIES AND SALVATION LASSIES

Young American women were perhaps most famously represented at the turn of the century by poster artists like Charles Dana Gibson and Howard Chandler Christy, illustrators who in prewar contexts had popularized the ideal of the American Girl as a pervasive cultural archetype. Gibson's work creating the iconic "Gibson Girls" with their thin waists, upswept hair, tall frames, and ample curves had transcended his *Life* illustrations and become a part of the national consciousness.¹ As head of the CPI Division of Pictorial Publicity, Gibson exerted a powerful influence on the committee's propaganda campaigns, and CPI materials that feature American Girl archetypes typically bear a trace of his signature Gibson Girl style. Howard Chandler Christy created a "more delicately and conventionally feminine" version of the Gibson Girl that became known as the "Christy Girl."² Both the Gibson Girl and the Christy Girl were iterations of the American Girl archetype that dominated early twentieth-century advertising and magazine illustrations, a character that represented the spirit of the new generation. The American Girl was portrayed as young and athletic, beautiful yet virginal—a provocatively mischievous character. Banta defines the American Girl as decidedly "not the type of the Mother. She stands before us in her crystalline, virginal state, not in that later, more shadowy state of fecundity. But her physical suitability, the guarantee that the future of the United States will be populated by the right kind of Americans, is always implied."³ Portrayals of the

¹ "[T]he Gibson Girls which he drew had become part of our culture and there must have been few literate Americans in 1917 who did not know Charles Dana Gibson and his work." Mock, 101.

² Axelrod, 136.

³ Banta, 109.

American Girl strike a delicate balance between sexual appeal and innocence; she is flirtatious yet seemingly just out of reach.

Artists like Gibson and Christy blazed into action with patriotic fervor as the United States entered the war, eager to contribute their expertise to CPI and related propaganda activities.⁴ Artists put the American Girl to work in poster appeals for war support, and she donned military uniforms to show a willingness to give her all for the recruitment and volunteer effort. Her hair often defied control and peeked out from underneath military caps, signifying her impish nature (See Figure 28).



Figure 28. Poster, Howard Chandler Christy, “Gee! I Wish I Were A Man – I’d Join the Navy” (1917). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

⁴ Axelrod, 137.

The young woman in Christy's poster juts her hips forward, embodying a "sexy, saucy 'come on' to war" in the classic American Girl tradition.⁵ The object of this poster was to shame men into enlistment, if not from guilt, then at least through sex appeal.⁶ Sex appeal was commonly invoked in soft sell approaches involving the American Girl, and sheet music lyricists and cover artists responded to this trend. The poster suggests a naive willingness to go abroad and serve alongside the boys. If Christy's poster girl could sing, then perhaps she would perform the suggestive lyrics to James Monaco's and Howard Rodgers' 1917 song, "I'm Going to Follow the Boys." Lyrics in the chorus highlight her carefree attitude toward the war:

I'm going to follow the boys over there,
Anywhere, I don't care,
I'm just dying for one little dance,
But all my dancing partners are "Somewhere in France."
I never nursed anyone, I'll admit,
But I'm strong to do my bit,
And if one little kiss or more
Can help them win the war,
Why, I'm going to follow the boys!

Monaco sets the phrase "Anywhere, I don't care" with wide melodic leaps in the vocal line (See Example 9, mm. 6-9). This disjunct melodic motion paints her carefree attitude; she casually dismisses the considerable distance she would have to travel in order to reach the front lines, as well as the potential danger she would encounter once she arrived. She admits to a lack of experience, saying, "I never nursed anyone," but she remains nonchalant about the duties she might have to perform, singing the phrase, "But I'm strong to do my bit" with the same flippantly disjunct melody that appears in mm. 6-9 of Example 9. Note the melodic chromaticism in the opening notes of the refrain (see Example 9, m. 2), which returns as the singer proclaims, "I'm just dying for one little dance" (Example 9, mm.12-13).

⁵ Shover, 482.

⁶ Adinamis, 22.

REFRAIN

dea. I'm going to fol - low the boys o - ver there, An - y - where,
 list. I'm going to fol - low the boys o - ver there, An - y - where,
 I'm going to fol - low the boys o - ver there, An - y - where,

I don't care. I'm just dy - ing for one lit - tle dance, But
 I don't care. I'd just love to be hugged by some - one, But
 I don't care. Sub - ma - rines have no ter - rors for me, One

Example 9. James Monaco and Howard Rodgers, “I’m Going to Follow the Boys” (New York: M. Witmark and Sons, 1917), p. 3, mm. 1-14. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Chromaticism was the musical equivalent of the American Girl’s wild, windblown hair—flirtatiously defying the confines of the key signature just as her hair refused to be tamed under her military hat. The sensuality of the chromatic lines supports assumptions that women serving overseas are boy crazy, and the lyrics of the chorus freely admit that she is more concerned about tracking down her missing dance partners than about taking up nursing or any other volunteer duties. While lyrics in the Rodgers chorus claim that she is “strong” enough to do “her bit,” they suggest that her most valuable contribution to the war effort would come in the form of “one little kiss or *more*.” These sexually charged lyrics are reconfirmed in the verses, highlighting her general naïveté regarding the war:

Verse 1
 I’ve always had a lot of boys around me,
 Wherever boys were, that’s the place you found me,
 Now I’m lonesome most ev’ry night,
 There’s not a single fellow in sight,
 I miss the smiles of Billy, Jack, and Harry,
 Percy was a dear;
 I never felt so blue, But I know what to do,
 I’ve got a great idea.

Verse 2

I don't know much about the military,
Still, I can help them if it's necessary,
I don't know a thing about war,
I don't see what they're having it for,
But when it comes to things like osculation,
That's where I'll be missed,
If they should ever send a suffrage regiment,
I'd hurry to enlist.

The first verse indicates her promiscuous nature with references to “lots of boys” and lonely nights without them, listing the names of several men. The second verse completes the caricature; her confusion regarding the reasons behind the war coupled with her eagerness to provide kisses for military men suggests that she is not invested in the war effort itself, but rather in regaining male attention from soldiers by serving abroad. Like the Christy poster, Monaco’s sheet music cover depicts a woman in a Navy military uniform with her hair flowing out from under a cap, but the cover employs a color-tinted photograph of the famous Greater Vitagraph film star Gladys Leslie, who poses mid-salute (See Figure 29). Though the woman in the photograph stands at attention, appearing far more professional than the poster representations of women in service, the song’s lyrics belie her conservative pose and dress. The sheet music cover is reminiscent of another Christy recruitment poster, in which another blond woman wears a nearly identical blue Navy coats and matching hat (see Figure 30). It is easy to imagine Christy’s poster girl reaching up her arm to adopt Leslie’s salute on the sheet music cover.



Figure 29. Cover, James Monaco, "I'm Going to Follow the Boys" (New York: M. Witmark and Sons, 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.



Figure 30. Poster, Howard Chandler Christy, "I Want You for the Navy" (1917). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

“I’m Going to Follow the Boys” was a big war hit, recorded at least twice—once by Harry Evans for the Emerson Company (1917), and again by Elizabeth Spencer for Victor (1917).⁷ The Spencer recording demonstrates society’s bewilderment at women’s decisions to serve overseas: a man rudely shouts out in the background of the chorus, “Why dontcha *knit*?!” This outburst comments on her choice to follow the boys, mocking her service and suggesting that she act a little more like proper Sister Susie. The outburst censors her strongest line of the chorus, occurring just after she claims to be “strong” enough to “do her bit.” The song—and the posters that it emulates—downplay the honorable sacrifices women made in volunteering for service, substituting a flighty caricature.

Romanticized portrayals of nurses in love with patients (and vice versa) abound in the sheet music of World War I. This focus on flirtations between nurses and soldiers can be seen in the popular tune “I Don’t Want to Get Well” (1917). Included in the mini songbooks *Songs the Soldiers and Sailors Sing* (1918) and *Tank Tunes: Songs for Camp and March* (1918), the song was popular enough to be recorded by the baritone Arthur Fields on both the Columbia and Emerson labels, as well as in a duet version by the baritone and tenor duo Van and Schenck on the Victor label.⁸ *Variety Music Cavalcade* cites it as one of the biggest hits of 1917.⁹ The cover art presents the image of a nurse tending to a soldier in an impeccable hospital room with a cartoon-like battle scene just outside the window (See Figure 31).

⁷ See Emerson 926 or Victor 18433 for the original recordings on 10-inch, 78 rpm discs.

⁸ See Columbia 2409 (1917), Edison 50457 (1917), and Victor 18413 (1918).

⁹ Mattfeld, 352.

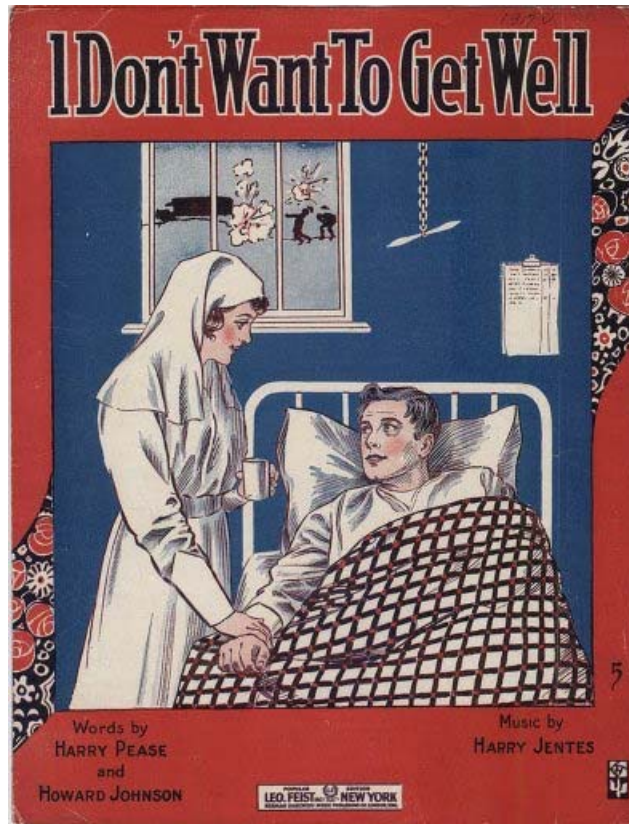


Figure 31. Cover, Harry Jentes, “I Don’t Want to Get Well” (New York: Feist, 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The soldier’s reluctance to leave the hospital is attributed not to his aversion to the fighting but rather to his attraction to the good-looking nurse, as the chorus expounds:

I don’t want to get well, I don’t want to get well,
 I’m in love with a beautiful nurse.
 Early ev’ry morning, night and noon,
 The cutest little girlie comes and feeds me with a spoon;
 I don’t want to get well, I don’t want to get well;
 I’m glad they shot me on the fighting line, fine,
 The doctor says that I’m in bad condition,
 But Oh, Oh, Oh, I’ve got so much ambition,
 I don’t want to get well, I don’t want to get well,
 For I’m having a wonderful time.

The soldier’s petulant attitude is painted musically by a motive that includes a B5 pitch that is repeated by the singer as the soldier whines, “I don’t want *to get well*” (See Example 10, mm.1 and 3).



Example 10. Harry Jentes, Harry Pease, and Howard Johnson, “I Don’t Want to Get Well,” (New York: Feist, 1917), p. 3, mm. 1-6. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

His immature attitude is heightened by accents on the downbeats of mm. 1 and 3 in Example 10. The accents coincide with the word *want*, a musical gesture that when combined with the text effectively simulates a child’s stomping foot. This motive repeats itself throughout the chorus, reiterated as a melodic “hook” that reappears for a total of three times—a classic comedic device. In the second version of the chorus, the soldier admits, “Though the doctor’s treatments show results, / I always get a bad relapse each time she feels my pulse.” He confesses, “She holds my hand and begs me not to leave her, / Then all at once I get so full of fever.” The references to the “cutest little girlie” and the physical reactions the soldier experiences when she touches him evoke flirtatious depictions of the American Girl. The cover art supports the references to physical contact between them as it shows the blushing nurse holding the red-cheeked soldier’s wrist with their eyes locked above the bed (See Figure 31). The song combines humorous and sex appeal approaches (both of which are reliable soft sell techniques) in its effort to recruit for the war, and the wounded soldier unrealistically proclaims, “I’m having a wonderful time.” The second verse presents the kind of reaction that CPI officials hoped men at home would have when they encountered materials of this sort:

I showed this letter to a friend who lives next door to me,
 And I heard him quickly say,
 “Good-bye, pal, I must be going,
 I’m off to war, and I hope that I’m wounded right away,
 If what’s in this letter here is true,

I'll get shot and then I'll write to you"

If even one young man was encouraged to enlist after hearing this song, then any intent to support war themes as presented in the poster art succeeded.

War propaganda materials that featured the promise of romantic encounters with nurses or other young American women who volunteered to serve abroad enticed young men to war, transforming the American Girl into a war siren. Yet depictions of hospital scenes like the one presented in the song "I Don't Want to Get Well" could not have been more misleading.

Historian Lettie Gavin's description of the overcrowded hospital conditions the nurses faced in reality includes two quotes from World War I nurses, powerfully refuting the overtly romanticized images found in popular works such as "I Don't Want to Get Well:"

Nothing in this popular fantasy could have prepared the nurse for the reality: lice-infested, mud-crusted uniforms, bloody bandages, gaping shrapnel wounds, hideously infected fractures, mustard gas burns, frantic coughing and choking from phosgene inhalation, groans and shrieks of pain, trauma from exposure, fatigue and emotional collapse. Could the nurse have imagined her own horrified reaction when she saw that "every available spot—beds, stretchers and floor space—was occupied by a seriously wounded man. The overflow cases lay on the wet ground, waiting their turn to be moved under cover: We stood, tears mixing with the rain, feeling anger and frustration." "A steady stream of patients was carried into the X-ray room ... where the plates all showed foreign bodies and often the bubbles ... of the dreadful gas gangrene."¹⁰

Such harsh conditions would not have provided fertile ground for budding romances, and portrayals that candy-coated the conditions for nurses working in the war and highlighted their beauty or desirability only contributed to a more hostile environment for the young women.

Sheet music, films, and posters that featured sexualized portrayals of nurses bred sexual harassment for the women who served abroad in the war. Sarah E. Parsons, a chief nurse, complained, "Medical officers were inclined to treat the base hospital as a kind of Coney Island

10 Lettie Gavin, *American Women in World War I: They Also Served* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 197), 43. Quotes taken from an unpublished memoir by Elizabeth Campbell Bickford, Army Nurse Corps – Medical Department, and Julia C. Stimson, *Finding Themselves: The Letters of an American Army Chief Nurse in a British Hospital in France* (New York: Macmillan, 1919), 122.

dance hall or something of that sort.”¹¹ Sheet music and other popular culture war materials were historically complicit in creating this problem, as historian Kimberly Jensen explains:

Whereas nurturing and care of family members were the duty of all women in the gender contract, nursing for pay was still associated with poor women who were sexually available to men. Popular images of nurses in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries often focused on their sexuality and sexual availability rather than their training or skill.¹²

Flirtatious American Girl versions of the Red Cross “girlie” entrenched stereotypes, instead of challenging them with more realistic representations of women serving overseas.

Theodore Morse’s 1917 song “My Red Cross Girlie” similarly focuses on romance rather than rehabilitation of soldiers as the primary domain of the Red Cross nurses. Consider the lyrics to the first verse:

Ev’ry Red Cross girlie likes a soldier,
There’s a feeling in her heart akin to love,
Some laddie with a gun upon his shoulder,
Very often is the one she’s thinking of.
Every soldier laddie has a yearning,
For some noble girlie, all in white,
In his heart the light of love is always burning,
For a little Red Cross girlie day and night.

The nurse is presented as love-sick, perhaps distracted by thoughts of her soldier lover instead of dealing with the medical emergencies at hand. With a cover that conjures Madonna imagery (See Figure 32) and the use of the term *noble girlie* in the sixth line of the chorus, the song freely mixes Protecting Angel traditions in with the American Girl archetype. The soldier reassures the nurse in the chorus, declaring, “My Red Cross girlie, for you I’m calling, / Tho’ you’re many miles away, / My Red Cross girlie, for you I’m falling, / Longing for you night and day. / I need you, sweetheart, for I am wounded, / By a cunning fellow’s dart, / But don’t swoon, dear, for the

¹¹ Kimberly Jensen, *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 116.

¹² *Ibid.*, 119.

wound, dear, / Is only somewhere in my heart.” The chorus suggests that his wound is caused by Cupid’s arrow, not enemy bullets, and the lighthearted approach to the war that highlights the nurse as a swooning sweetheart instead of a hard-working woman typified sheet music portrayals.

Originally published in Columbus, Ohio, Ed C. Cannon’s song “That Red Cross Girl of Mine” (1917) indicates just how pervasive these archetypal depictions were, transcending New York’s Tin Pan Alley market to influence local sheet music production. The song presents a mixture of the American Girl and Protecting Angel archetypes, and the cover art uses Madonna-like red, white, and blue coloration (See Figure 32).

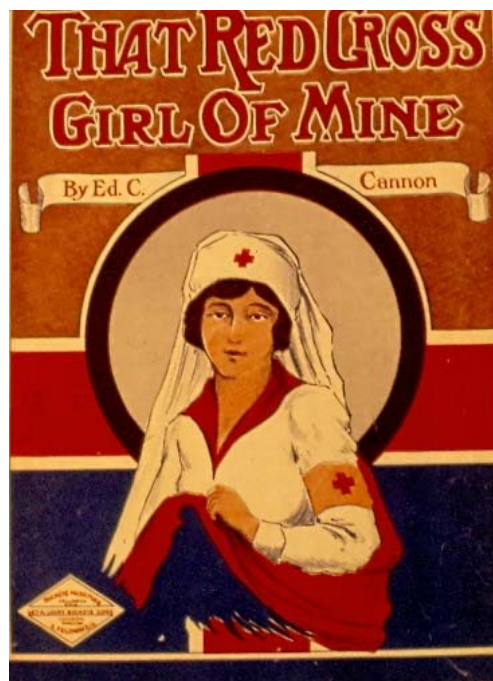


Figure 32. Cover, E.C. Cannon, “That Red Cross Girl of Mine” (Columbus, OH: Buckeye Music Pub. Co, 1917). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The chorus reinforces this concept by describing her as “divine,” a word that is musically highlighted with the use of an E-flat 5 pitch—the highest note in the entire song—that is rhythmically sustained as a dotted half-note (See Example 11, m. 8).

CHORUS

I'll go to sleep to-night and dream Of that Red Cross Girl of mine — She's just the kind of girl to dream of She's love-ly she's di-vine What chance has

Example 11. E.C. Cannon, “That Red Cross Girl of Mine” (Columbus, OH: Buckeye Music Publishing Co., 1917), p. 3, mm. 5-12. Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Lines in the song’s first verse and chorus recall the American Girl archetype, claiming that Red Cross nurses like “Sue” or “Jane” would keep the soldier’s courage “warm” and inspire his dreams:

Verse 1:

There are Sue and Jane in their uniforms
 With a band around their arm
 There are girls next door and across the street
 Who will keep our courage warm
 It’s a sacrifice little girl we know
 It has won our true esteem
 On the field of service while the dark draws o’er us
 Our hearts just seem to sing

Chorus:

I’ll go to sleep tonight and dream
 Of that Red Cross Girl of mine
 She’s just the kind of girl to dream of
 She’s lovely she’s divine
 What chance has Kaiser Bill to win
 When we have a million men in line
 Who have plucky little girls to keep them well

Like that Red Cross Girl of mine.

By mixing Protecting Angel and American Girl archetypes, the sheet music connected to two trends in poster art depictions, appealing to an even broader audience.

Despite an emphasis on the nurse's "lovely" appearance, the unusual inclusion of the descriptor *plucky* in the penultimate line of the chorus hints at the fact that women were indeed gaining some respect for their service overseas, a sentiment that is also present in the lyrics from the first verse (especially in lines five and six). But however sincerely the first verse professes a newfound "true esteem" for the women who served as nurses in the war, lyricists could not resist the urge to qualify references to women as "little girlies," "little girls," or, when it came to volunteers for the Salvation Army, "little lassies." These terms were paralleled by references to soldiers as boys or laddies, but the adjective *little* was seldom applied to men. Still, the sheet music depictions of young nurses and other volunteers adopted an overwhelmingly positive tone despite the infantilizing language that often accompanied the admiration for their service.

When young American women who worked as war volunteers were not represented in the poster and sheet music repertoire as Red Cross "girlies," they often appeared as Salvation Army "lassies." The religious undercurrents of Salvation Army volunteer work usually inspired Protecting Angel characterizations of women serving abroad, but some of the posters and sheet music covers connected to American Girl archetypes. Consider the poster in Figure 33, designed to encourage donations. The woman in the poster appears to be innocently wholesome, but her generous smile together with the hair that peeks out from under her hat conjures associations with the American Girl. The sheet music cover in Figure 34 assumes a similar theme.

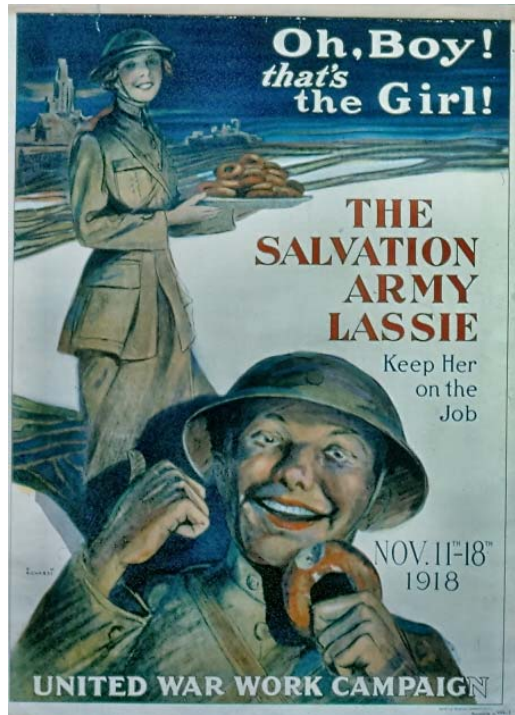


Figure 33. George Mather Richards, “Oh, Boy! That’s the Girl! The Salvation Army Lassie – Keep Her on the Job” (1918). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.



Figure 34. Cover, Robert Brown and William Frisch, “Don’t Forget the Salvation Army (My Doughnut Girl)” (New York: Broadway Music Corporation, 1919). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The title encourages listeners not to “forget” the Salvation Army—code for a donation call. The chorus continues this plea:

Don't forget the Salvation Army,
Always remember my doughnut girl,
She brought them doughnuts and coffee
Just like an angel, she was their best pal,
As brave as a lion, but meek as a lamb
She carried on beside the sons of Uncle Sam
So don't forget the Salvation Army,
Remember my doughnut girl.

The music is set in an energetic duple meter that is marked by jazzy syncopation that often impishly coincides with a musical accent on an unaccented syllable of text (See Example 12, mm. 4 and 6).

CHORUS

Don't for - get the Sal - va - tion Ar - my. Al - ways re - mem - ber
my doughnut girl. She brought them dough - nuts and cof - fee. Just like an An -

This compos

Example 12. Robert Brown, William Frisch, Elmore Leffingwell, and James Lucas, “Don't Forget the Salvation Army (My Doughnut Girl),” (New York: Broadway Music Corporation, 1919), p. 3, mm. 1-13. Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Composed in 1919, the song makes use of American Girl imagery in an appeal to American audiences for continued support of the Salvation Army after the war's end, demonstrating just how entrenched the archetype had become by reaching into postwar, civilian culture.

Fantasies about women who could serve as bona fide enlisted soldiers fascinated American audiences, resulting in musicals like Ivan Caryll’s *The Girl Behind the Gun* (1918).¹³ The cover for “There’s a Light in Your Eyes,” a popular sheet music excerpt from the show, features an uncoordinated woman in uniform who awkwardly holds her gun (See Figure 35).

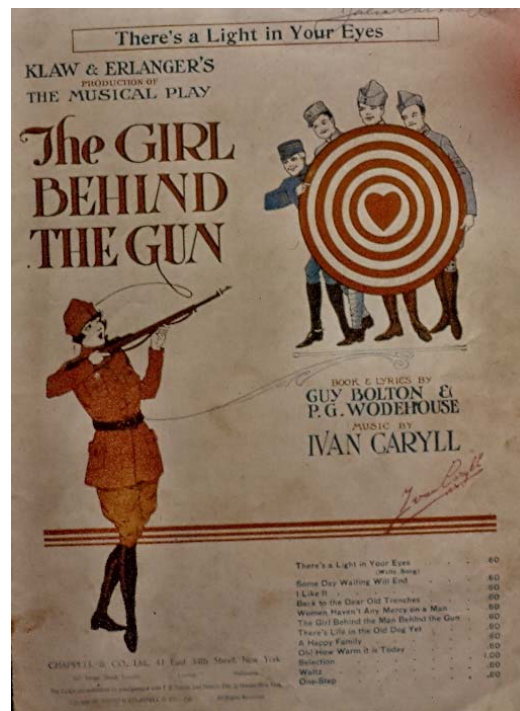


Figure 35. Ivan Caryll, Cover: “There’s a Light in your Eyes” from *The Girl Behind the Gun* (1918). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

She appears to be shooting at a heart in the center of a target held by four men—a clue that she’s really aiming to find love instead of military experience. Titles like “If the Girlies Could Be Soldiers” from the *Ziegfeld Follies* of 1915, and the stock cover for Oliver Morosco’s musical *What Next?* that depicts “a girl in a soldier’s uniform powdering her nose” suggest the pervasive nature of this theoretical scenario.¹⁴ The 1918 Al Piantadosi and Jack Glogau hit “What an

¹³ The author was unable to obtain a score for this musical but suspects the potential for a myriad of connections to American Girl, Protecting Angel, and Amazon Warrior themes.

¹⁴ Bernard S. Parker, *World War I Sheet Music: 9,760 Patriotic Songs Published in the United States, 1914-1920, with More Than 600 Covers Illustrated* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007), 1: 270. The cover of this sheet music hit

Army We'd Have If They Ever Drafted the Girls" also explores this female soldier fantasy. The cover features another uniformed woman, standing in a salute with her curls waving out defiantly from underneath her hat (See Figure 36).

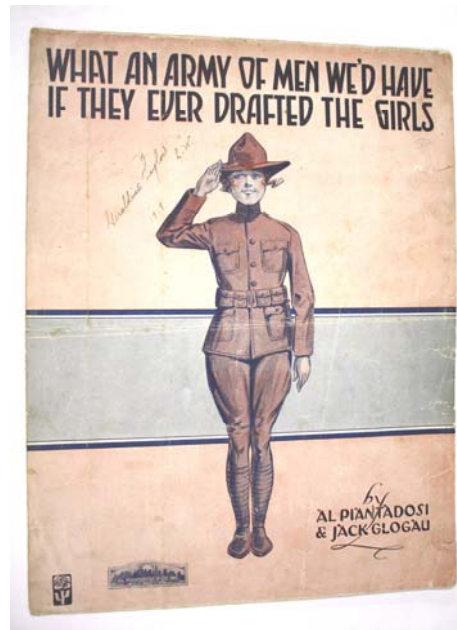


Figure 36. Cover, Al Piantadosi and Jack Glogau, "What an Army We'd Have If They Ever Drafted the Girls" (1918). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The two versions of the song's chorus boast of the benefits of putting women in uniform:

What an Army of men we'd have
If they ever drafted the girls,
There'd be no worklaws in sight,
Each old man would insist that he'd fight,
They'd all flock and enlist as one,
No recruiting would need be done,
Why they'd be swimming out to get to that war zone
You'd have to shoot him dead to keep him at home,
What an army of men we'd have,
If they ever drafted the girls.

What an Army of men we'd have
If they ever drafted the girls,
Each time they'd make an attack,

from the show, "If You'll Be a Soldier I'll Be a Red Cross Nurse" (1917) also lists another hit song from the show, "Get a Girl to Lead the Army." Parker (Volume I), 272.

They would bring a whole regiment back,
All the foe then would just retreat,
Girls would never stand for defeat,
The man was never born could make a girl say “quit”
The enemy would waste their time now you’ll admit
What an Army of men we’d have
If they ever drafted the girls.

The song focuses not on feminine soldier competency but on their sex appeal, suggesting that the mere presence of women in the ranks would make men flock to enlist for war. However, the second verse includes a phrase that credits women’s stubborn strength, bragging, “The grit our Yankee girls possess would whip the enemy.” Like the inclusion of “plucky little girls” in “That Red Cross Girl of Mine,” or the phrase “brave as a lion” in “Don’t Forget the Salvation Army (My Doughnut Girl),” the lyricist’s choice of the word *grit* to describe a hypothetical female soldier represents another subtle example of the respect women were earning through their war volunteerism.

Even when women’s sexuality—and not competency—was stressed in sheet music and other cultural portrayals of the American Girl as Red Cross girlies or Salvation Army lassies, they were generally presented in a positive light. Women’s successful service in the war was often cited as justification for their suffrage rights in debates that followed the war’s end. Heavily influenced by women’s active war roles and perhaps affected by positive portrayals of women in overseas service within sheet music and other popular culture mediums, the United States Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment that granted women the right to vote in 1919. With the states’ ratification of the amendment in August of 1920, women finally earned full citizenship in the country they had so faithfully served during the war.

CHAPTER 7

THE AMERICAN GIRL VS. THE FRENCH FLING

Portrayals of the American Girl serving in the war as a Red Cross nurse or Salvation Army volunteer were often laced with sexual tension, as they were in songs like “I’m Going to Follow the Boys” or “I Don’t Want to Get Well.” The American Girl’s virginity could be challenged, and “[w]hen her image was intended as a guarantee that she was a good breeder, then the lineaments of good breeding were curtailed, even to the point of allowing her the look of pert vulgarity and frank sensuality.”¹ Even before the war, illustrators like Charles Dana Gibson and Howard Chandler Christy pushed the limits of the American Girl’s virginal, youthful image with an implied sexual availability, represented by her flowing hair, flirtatious poses, and vivacious spirit. Sheet music lyricists and cover artists continued this trend in war-themed music. Yet however seductive the portrayals of the American Girl in World War I sheet music repertoire became, they never approached the brazen, smoldering portrayals of her sister, the French Fling. Foreign women were depicted in ways that suggested that they were far more open to amorous advances than their virginal American counterparts. The French Fling, as a contrasting archetype to the American Girl, seemed up for just about anything with the visiting American soldiers. Consider the following list of provocative titles: “Ze Yankee Boys Have Made a Wild French Baby out of Me” (1919); “Wee, Wee, Marie (Will You Do Zis for Me?)” (1918); “I Left a Wild, Wild Woman in France” (1919); “Oh You La La” (1918); “I Love Her, Ooh La La La” (1918); “My French Salome” (1919); “And He’d Say Oo-La-La! Wee-Wee” (1919); and “You’ll Have to Put Him to Sleep with the Marseillaise and Wake Him up with a Oo-La-La”

¹ Banta, 136.

(1918). Titles like these created the impression that American soldiers could expect more than a polite welcome from French women, and forged an additional incentive for young men to join the war. Sheet music covers and lyrics that featured sexually charged portrayals of French women used sex appeal to recruit for the war, a tried-and-true soft sell persuasive advertising technique. If music publishers were to be believed, soldiers would be rewarded for their service by French kisses and more. The sheet music cover for the 1917 hit “When Yankee Doodle Learns to ‘Parlez Vous Français’” features a grinning soldier with two French can-can girls—one on each arm. Their off-kilter posture and the soldier’s red cheeks suggest a drunken stroll, presumably while the soldier was on leave from his service in the trenches (Figure 37).



Figure 37. Cover, Ed Nelson, “When Yankee Doodle Learns to ‘Parlez Vous Français’ ” (New York: A.J. Stasny Music Co., 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The lyrics in the chorus confirm the cover's suggestion that the soldier might spend more time wooing or carousing than fighting in France:

When Yankee Doodle learns to Parlez vous Francais,
Parlez vous Francais, in the proper way,
He will call each girlie "Ma Cherie,"
To every Miss that wants a kiss he'll say Wee, Wee,
On Ze Be, On Ze Bou, On Ze Boule, Boulevard,
With a girl, with a curl you can see him promenade
When Yankee Doodle learns to Parlez vous Francais,
"Oo La La, Sweet Papa" he will teach them all to say.

In these songs, the French Fling often used humor with the insertion of French-sounding dialect, such as *ze* instead of *the*, or the borrowing of French phrases like "Oo la la" or "Parlez vous Français," but sex appeal served as her primary weapon. The sexuality that could only be hinted at in portrayals of the American Girl, or was completely absent in angel- or madonna-nurses, was flaunted in depictions of the French Fling. American women never appeared in such compromising positions with American soldiers abroad, but references to soldiers drinking with French women were not uncommon in the war's sheet music repertoire. Musical cues in the chorus of "When Yankee Doodle Learns to Parlez Vous Français" reinforced these innuendos, and the melodic lines often took chromatic, tipsy turns when directly referencing the French women. The opening chorus melody quotes briefly from the classic American tune "Yankee Doodle" as it moves from D4 to G4 in the first two measures of Example 13. The melody then continues moving upward in a diatonic line that remains rooted in a simple G-major tonality (see Example 13, mm. 2-8). Chromatic complications first appear with a C-sharp in mm. 13 and 14, set to the words *Miss* and *kiss*. Chromaticism continues in mm. 20-23 with the introduction of an A-sharp, referencing "a girl, with a curl" or in mm. 28-30 for the exclamation "Oo La La, Sweet Papa." Chromatic inflections within the vocal line invoke French exoticism and can be directly

linked to feminine references in the lyrics.² Even the diatonic melody that began with the American patriotic tune “Yankee Doodle” becomes infiltrated by French-inspired chromaticism. Compare the second setting of the text “When Yankee Doodle learns to Parlez vous Francais” in mm. 24-25 to its “pure” appearance at the opening of the chorus.

The image shows a musical score for a chorus. It consists of five systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: "When Yan-kee Doo-dle learns to Par-lez vous Franc-ais Par-lez vous Franc-ais, in the gro-per way, He will call each girl-ie 'Ma Cher-ie!' To ev-ery Miss that wants a kiss he'll say Wee, Wee, On Ze Be, On Ze Bou, On Ze Bou-le, Bou-le-ward, With a girl, with a curl you can see him pro-men-ade When Yan-kee Doo-dle learns to Par-lez vous Franc-ais, 'Oo La La, Sweet Pa-pa' he will teach them all to say. say." The score includes dynamic markings like 'p' and 'f', and articulation like 'acc'. At the bottom left, it says "When Yankee Doodle etc".

Example 13. “When Yankee Doodle Learns to Parlez Vous Francais” (New York: A.J. Stasny Music Co., 1917), p. 3. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The D-sharp that appears in the second melodic setting suggests that Yankee Doodle has been tangibly changed by his encounters with the French Fling. In the hands of American composers,

² As in many popular songs of the era, the use of chromaticism and syncopation was associated with sexual undertones.

the French Fling was given the power to corrupt Yankee Doodle (a symbol of the American soldier) on both melodic and symbolic levels.

Concern regarding the French Fling's wild influence on American doughboys surfaced in more than one war song, especially as the war neared its end. Songs like "How 'Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down On the Farm (After They've Seen Patee?)" (1919) expressed the fear that soldiers would struggle to readapt to American life when they returned from the European battlefield. Arthur Fields made a 1919 recording that helped popularize the song with the American public, and the song suggests direct connections between French women and alcohol. Ironically, the B-side of the Victor record features a Billy Murray performance of the Donaldson and Young comedic spinoff tune "How Are You Goin' to Wet Your Whistle (When the Whole Darn World Goes Dry?)." The concurrent reference to prohibition is a reminder of just how dangerous alcohol was considered in American culture by the war's end, a confirmation of the French Fling's damaging, alcoholic influence on young men. In the second verse of "How 'Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm (After They've Seen Patee?)," a father explains his worries to his wife, clearly blaming French women as a bad influence: "Mother Reuben, I'm not fakin', / Though you make think it strange; / But wine and women play the mischief, / With a boy who's loose with change." The sheet music cover features scenes of French debauchery, as imagined by the father in the foreground. The flirtatious image of a French woman kicking up her leg, a glass of champagne raised high above her head, unmistakably evokes the French Fling (Figure 38).

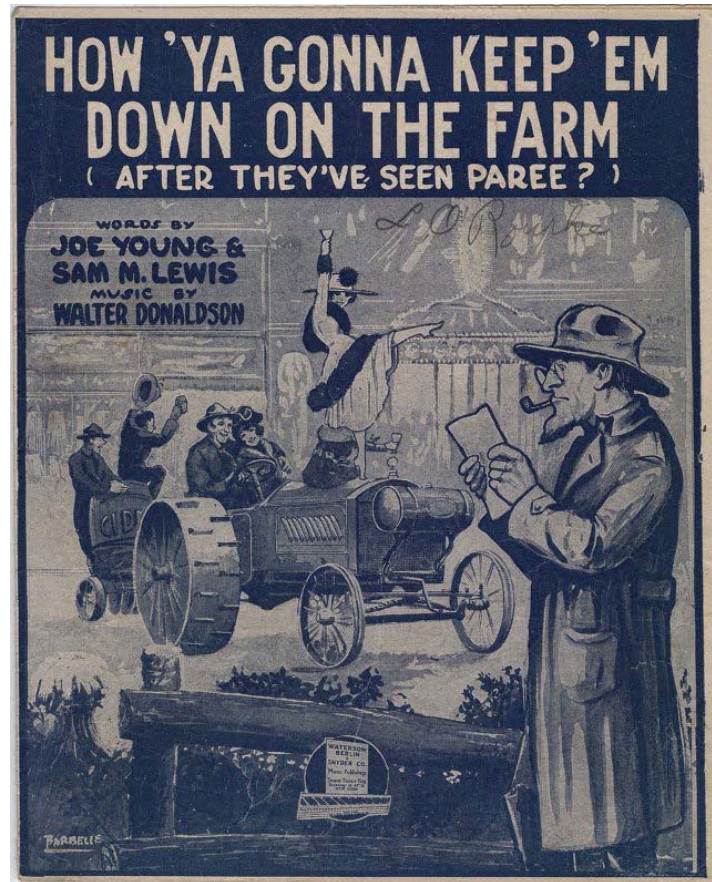


Figure 38. Cover, Walter Donaldson, “How ‘Ya Gonna Keep ‘Em Down on the Farm (After They’ve Seen Patee?)” (New York: Waterson, Berlin and Snyder Co., 1919). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Harry von Tilzer’s “You’ll Have to Put Him to Sleep with the Marseillaise and Wake Him up with a Oo-La-la” (1918) touches on a similar theme, with the French Fling as a source of distress. This time, it is the girls at home who are worried about the French Fling’s potential influence on their soldier boyfriends, and the lyrics seem to embody the worst nightmare of “The Girl He Left Behind.” Fear of the French Fling’s alcoholic tendencies is overtaken by worry regarding her sexual influence on the absent soldiers. The first verse includes the following suggestive phrases: “Girls, he has learned a lot of things in France / Girls when you marry him you’ll get your chance / You’ll have to do your talking in French / When he comes back from the trench.” The chorus continues:

You'll have to do your little parlez vous
You'll have to coo just like the French girls do
You'll have to tease in French
You'll have to squeeze in French
You'll have to la la la la all in French
You'll have to learn to say "comme-ci, comme-ca"
And when you sing for your Pa Pa
It's up to you to sing ze French songs too
Because when you get through with Yankee Doodle-doo
You'll have to put him to sleep with the Marseillaise
And wake him up with a Oo la la.

If the thinly veiled suggestion of sexual activities ("la la la la") were not enough, the second verse intensifies the description of the American soldier's newfound sexual expertise, courtesy of the French Fling:

Verse 2
Girls you have heard about ze French Coquette
Girls she has never overlooked a bet
Picture one now sitting on a bench
Teaching your boy how to spoon in French
Girls "over there" they have such loving ways
Girls "over there" they have no loveless days
And ev'ry kiss is chock full of pep
When he comes back watch your step.

The sheet music cover supports the import of this second verse, depicting the French coquette "spooning" with an American soldier on the bench (Figure 39). The woman is boldly clad in crimson from head to toe, with a red rose tucked behind her ear—evoking a can-can temptress from the Moulin Rouge stage with Carmen-inspired exotic appeal. Surely the American Girl would fear for her hold on the American soldier's heart given his exposure to the wiles of the French Fling.



Figure 39. Cover, Harry Von Tilzer, “You’ll Have to Put Him to Sleep With the Marseillaise and Wake Him Up With A Oo-La-La” (New York: Harry Von Tilzer, 1918). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Perhaps the most infamous of all depictions of the French Fling came in the form of an old British soldier song “Mademoiselle from Armentieres (Hinky, Dinky, Parley Voo).” Originally a British hit with at least forty alternative verses describing the questionable virtues and many flaws of the young Mademoiselle, the tune was embraced by American soldiers who added an array of their own verses during World War I.³ The song was so popular with young soldiers that the Leo Feist Publishing Company included the score in a 1932 postwar American anthology, *Legion Airs: Songs of “Over There” and “Over Here.”*⁴ The song was also

³ “The obvious explanation of *Hinky Dinky’s* popularity... is its adaptability to improvisation. *Tommy Tunes*, an early compilation of songs the British soldier sang (or was credited with singing), called *Hinky Dinky* an ‘heirloom of the British Army which contains over forty stanzas.’ Over forty? It may have started that way, but when the Americans got hold of it the total must have swelled to forty million.” See John T. Winterich, *Mademoiselle from Armentieres* (Mount Vernon, New York: Peter Pauper Press, 1953), 59-60.

⁴ Frank E. Peat, comp., *Legion Airs: Songs of “Over There” and “Over Here”* (New York: Leo Feist, Inc., 1932).

performed in a medley at a 1929 London celebration of Armistice Day, along with other major hits of the war, a clear favorite among the veterans.⁵ The simple song was constructed with an opening phrase “Mademoiselle from Armentieres ‘Parley voo’” that was repeated. Two lines of interchangeable text followed—not unlike limericks that the soldiers often improvised—before the brief piece concluded with a nonsensical tag, “Hinky, Dinky, ‘Parley voo.’” A 1929 anthology, “*Sound Off!*” *Soldier Songs from Yankee Doodle to Parley Voo*, contains several alternative verse pairs that reinforce the stereotypes of the French Fling, as the following examples demonstrate:

The American soldier on the Rhine / Kissed the women and drank the wine.

With her I flirted, I confess, / But she got revenge when she said yes.

From gay Paree he heard guns roar / But all he learned was “je t’adore.”

My Yankee sweetheart looks askance, / At all the mail I get from France.⁶

A Missouri regiment came up with the following alternative verses, collected in a 1921 military songbook:

The girls in France are very fine, parlez vous, (3 xs)
And so’s the cognac and the wine / Hinky, Dinky, Parlez Vous.

I knew a girl in gay Paree, parlez vous, (3 xs)
And all she said was oui, oui, oui / Hinky, Dinky, Parlez Vous.⁷

A 1953 book dedicated to the *Mademoiselle from Armentieres* includes some of the more deliberately risqué alternative verses that gradually evolved, including:

She knew how to neck, she knew how to pet, / She was harder to shake than the national debt!⁸

⁵ *An American Heritage Record: World War I Historic Music and Voices* (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., 1964), LP.

⁶ Dolph, 84-86.

⁷ *89th Division Songs: Kansas City, Missouri*, October 30-November 2, 1921. Courtesy of WWI Museum.

⁸ Winterich, 10.

She wasn't so much when it came to clothes, / But, boy, she had *it* and *them* and *those*!⁹

She could drink a barrel, there is no doubt, / She was going strong when I passed out!¹⁰

She wore her dresses awful loose / And waggled her headlights and caboose!¹¹

I fooled with her, but I fooled too much, / And now when I walk I use a crutch!¹²

The cynical lyrics are coarse and offensive, as John T. Winterich explains: “Not a single stanza has a good word for anybody or anything . . . A song like ‘Hinky Dinky Parley Voo,’ scurrilous, scatological, an endless sequence of vilification, is a splendid and essential safety valve.”¹³ The soldiers turned to the French Fling in songs like “Mademoiselle from Armentieres” as a safe means through which they could express their frustration, longing, anger, and disillusionment with the war.

While the American Girl and the French Fling share certain traits, including a youthful, attractive appearance and an often flirtatious personality, depictions of French women differed sharply from portrayals of American women in the sheet music repertoire of World War I. French women were presented in overtly sexual, wild, or drunken scenarios, a contrast to the merely suggestive sexuality of the American Girl. With the French Fling safely relegated to the role of “Other,” composers and lyricists were free to use her character to explore more dangerous and provocative situations in the sheet music repertoire, placing her in contexts that would have been unacceptable for depictions involving unmarried, white American women at the time. An understanding of portrayals of the French Fling clarifies the role of the American Girl in the sheet music repertoire.

⁹ Ibid., 11.

¹⁰ Ibid., 12.

¹¹ Ibid., 17.

¹² Ibid., 19.

¹³ Ibid., 51-52.

Part Three: Women as National Symbols

CHAPTER 8

COLUMBIA, THE AMAZON WARRIOR

Some of the most powerful images of women in World War I propaganda emerged as artists conscripted the female form for a higher purpose: personifying the nation. Whether nicknamed “Columbia,” “America,” “Liberty,” or France’s “Marianne,” these women transcended their human forms to represent national ideals, and their oversized figures and super-human strength signaled their symbolic roles.¹ Martha Banta describes these figures as “Amazon Warriors,” citing Christy’s version of “America” as “an acknowledged Queen at the peak of her perfection, with the physical scale to prove it.”² Consider the scale of the Columbia featured in the 1916 poster by Frances Adam Halsted and Vincent Aderente (See Figure 40).



Figure 40. Poster, Frances Adam Halsted (designer) and Vincent Aderente (painter), “Columbia Calls – Enlist Now for U.S. Army” (c. 1916). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

¹ Banta, 562.

² *Ibid.*, 518.

She dominates the poster, armed with a sword and an American flag as she stands atop the globe. Dressed in clinging drapery and a flag-themed cap, this Columbia calls for enlistment—selling the idea that service in the war was ennobling. Images of the Amazon Warrior archetype are rooted in the goddess tradition, reaching back to mythological warriors like the Roman Diana or the Greek Artemis. This connection to antiquity explains the classical drapery in which the Amazon Warrior is often costumed. French artist Eugene Delacroix famously recalled the Amazon Warrior in his celebrated 1830 painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple* [Liberty Guiding the People], and the 1886 dedication of the Statue of Liberty in New York laid the groundwork for emigration of similarly romanticized, French imagery of the Amazon Warrior as Lady Liberty to American soil.³

While they were positive, strong, and often inspiring, images of the Amazon Warrior were not necessarily role models for American women. In an article on “Roles and Images of Women in World War I Propaganda,” Michele Shover explains:

Probably the most anomalous symbolic figure attributed to women in posters was that of the Spirit of War [i.e., the Amazon Warrior]. The women so portrayed were almost always classically—sometimes romantically—draped, heroic figures who project alternately stateliness, sensuality, or furious wrath. . . . While these posters often present static images of women, sometimes—as described above—they are compelling creatures. In neither rendering, however, are Spirit of War figures likely to provide role models. Real women cannot identify with their grand scale, their implacable force, their devastating compulsion. Curiously, too, while these women-goddesses radiate commitment, only the most general interpretations of that commitment are possible. Victory, yes. But victory of what? For what? Apparently women can only be identified with great leadership so long as that leadership is vacuously, albeit vigorously, defined.⁴

³ Both Martha Banta and Michele Shover refer to Delacroix’s portrayal of national figures as a precursor to the Amazon Warrior archetype as it appeared in World War I propaganda. “American poster artists borrowed gestures from previous visual vocabularies such as the Mariannes of Eugene Delacroix and François Rudi, but the Gallic edge of profile possessed by the French national icon was altered to accord with that of the American Girl who claimed the ‘regular’ physiognomy of Athenian Nikes and Anglo-Saxon princesses.” Banta, 574. “The French posters present the most uninhibited images of wrathful goddesses. One such poster portrays the mythical Marianne of France, breast bared, hurtling her sword and howling a battle cry. This figure finds her predecessor in Delacroix’s ‘Liberté,’ as a formidable woman-goddess streaming across a body-strewn battle field, her standard aloft and rifle firmly in hand.” Shover, 480.

⁴ Shover, 479-480.

It may have been difficult for everyday American women to relate to the esoteric representations of goddess-like Columbias, Americas, or Lady Liberties. Though some scholars point to images of powerful Amazon Warrior women as indications of the “evolution of women from passive symbols to active fighters for a national cause,” their larger-than-life forms did not always translate in relatable ways to the culture of women in the United States. These representations were caricature-like, lacking the depth and complexity that more realistic depictions of women would have possessed. With statuesque poses and stoic faces, the Amazon Warriors wore classical drapery that effectively symbolizes the distance between these portrayals and the average American woman.

Sheet music publications quickly caught on to the Columbia trend. The cover for “Columbia’s Song” (Figure 41) closely resembles the Halsted/Aderente poster “Columbia Calls” (Figure 40), featuring a formal Columbia armed with both a sword and flag.

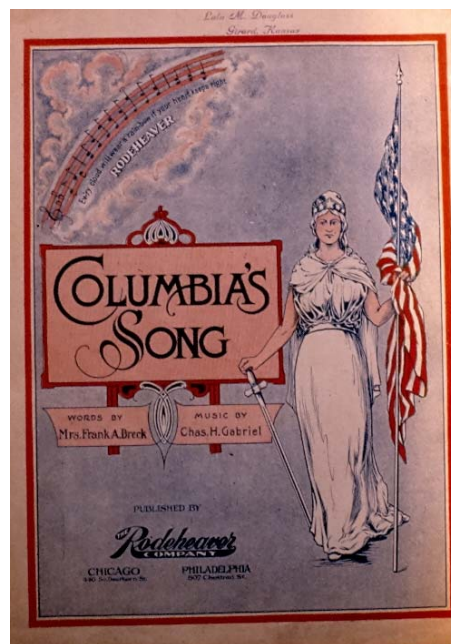


Figure 41. Cover, Charles H. Gabriel, “Columbia’s Song” (Chicago: Rodeheaver Co., n.d.). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Similar song titles that also recall the Halsted/Aderente poster, such as “Columbia’s Call” (1917), “Columbia’s Calling You, Laddies” (1917), and “I Hear Columbia Calling” (1918) support this theoretical link between poster art themes and sheet music production. With numerous references to the “calls” of Columbia, America, or Liberty, sheet music publishers adopted the siren-like role of Amazon Warriors in efforts to emulate war poster appeals. Lyrics for the 1918 song “Miss Liberty We Hear You Calling” entice men to service “across the sea:”⁵

Chorus:

Miss Liberty we hear you calling, calling us across the sea
 Miss Liberty, we’re fighting for you, Uncle Sam and Humanity
 Uncle Sam will enter Berlin riding on a pony
 You just wait and see
 Miss Liberty we hear you calling, calling us to save Democracy.

The music adopts a march-like mood, literally set in a 2/4 metered “tempo di marcia.” The piano accompaniment takes on the character of a military march with footstep-like, quarter-note rhythms in the left hand that are punctuated by sixteenth-note activity that recalls a snare drum snap in the right hand (See Example 14, mm. 1, 7, 9, 11, 15).



Example 14. Geo. S. Lambert, “Miss Liberty We Hear You Calling” (New York: Buffalo Music Publishing Co., 1918), p. 3, mm. 10-25. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

⁵ The song’s words-only cover does not allow for discussion of imagery.

The opening of the chorus evokes a college fight song with a melody that is broken into two phrases, the first of which cadences on a dominant harmony (See Example 14, m. 7), and the second of which resolves to the tonic chord (See Example 14, m. 15). Lambert's musical adaptation of the lyrics takes a comical turn as it reaches the third line of the chorus, quoting from "Yankee Doodle" to set the text "Uncle Sam will enter Berlin riding on a pony" (See Example 15, mm. 1-4).



Example 15. Geo. S. Lambert, "Miss Liberty We Hear You Calling" (New York: Buffalo Music Publishing Co., 1918), p. 3, mm. 26-33. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

With this comedic touch, the song dips into humorous soft sell persuasive advertising techniques to sell its war message.

As the United States joined the fight and the need for volunteers became urgent, artists responded with a pervasive poster campaign. An official "Wake Up, America Day" was set for April 19, 1917, following the April 6 declaration of war by President Wilson. James Montgomery Flagg's "Wake Up, America" poster was displayed prominently in New York and other cities across the United States (See Figure 42).⁶ Featuring a vulnerably slumbering America figure, the poster called for quick action from the public with a text that is set in capital letters and punctuated with exclamation marks.

⁶ *The Poster: War Souvenir Edition* (Chicago, IL: Officers of the Poster Advertising Association Inc., 1919). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.



Figure 42. Poster, James Montgomery Flagg, “Wake Up, America! Civilization Calls Every Man, Woman, and Child!” (1917). Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91726511/> (accessed June 27, 2011).

Sheet music publications borrowed this popular “Wake Up!” alarm in sheet music titles, including the following examples: “Wake up, America, Wake up!” (1918); “Wake Up and Do Your Share” (1918); “America Awake!” (1918); “America Awakes” (1918); “Arise, America” (1917); “Arise, Arise, America” (1917); and “Columbia, Arise” (1917). There is some evidence that “Wake Up, America” themes from the sheet music industry preceded and may have inspired the 1917 poster campaign, since some versions were composed before the United States had officially entered the war. Calls for the country to “arise” or “awaken” to the potential dangers were common to pro-war propaganda before the war began, a kind of anti-pacifist cultural crusade that rebutted messages of songs like “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier.” The 1916 pro-war hit by Jack Glogau, “Wake Up, America!” featured a bold inscription on its cover, claiming to be “the song that inspired all America.” Though the cover features Uncle Sam

instead of a feminine Amazon Warrior (See Figure 43), the lyrics foreshadowed the “Wake Up, America” theme that would come to influence Amazon Warrior portrayals:

Wake up, America,
If we are called to war,
Are we prepared to give our lives,
For our sweethearts and our wives?
Are our mothers and our homes worth fighting for?
Let us pray, God, for peace, but peace with honor,
But let's get ready to answer duty's call,
So when Old Glory stands unfurled,
Let it mean to all the world,
America is ready, that's all!

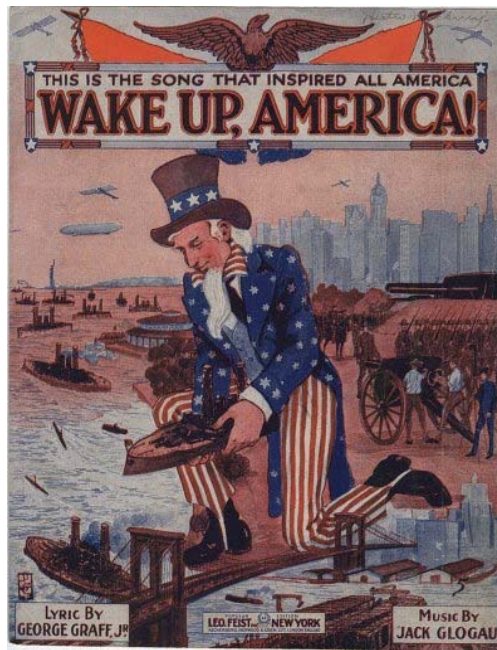


Figure 43. Cover, Jack Glogau, “Wake Up, America!” (New York: Leo Feist, 1916).
Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Note the chromaticism that appears along with textual references to sweethearts, mothers, and wives in mm. 11-14 of Example 16.



Example 16. Jack Glogau, “Wake Up, America!” (New York: Leo Feist, 1916), p. 3, mm. 9-25. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Though often coldly statue-like, depictions of Amazon Warriors were sometimes warmed with hints of the American Girl’s sexuality. This was a natural instinct for CPI poster artists, particularly since the Division of Pictorial Publicity was led by Charles Dana Gibson. James R. Mock notes the transformation of the Gibson Girl version of the American Girl archetype into Columbia figures in his book *Words that Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information (1917-1919)*:

Even before our entry into the war, Gibson’s cartoons, prominently displayed in the pro-Ally *Life*, helped build the spirit which was now dominant in American life. His Miss Columbias became “the noblest type of Gibson Girl . . . The war had moved him as politics had never been able to do. The scorn, the elation, the passionate conviction which make a great cartoonist were now his. Color for a time was forgotten in the power which surged genii-like from his ink bottle. Never had he drawn with such vigor and verve . . . Columbia’s robe swept back outlining her beautifully molded body as she rushed forward toward victory.⁷

Howard Chandler Christy soon followed Gibson’s lead in putting the Christy Girl to work in Amazon Warrior depictions. Consider the provocative pose of the woman in Christy’s poster, “Clear-the-way!! Buy Bonds – Fourth Liberty Loan” (See Figure 44).

⁷ Mock, 104. The internal quote was taken from Gibson’s biographer, Fairfax Downey.

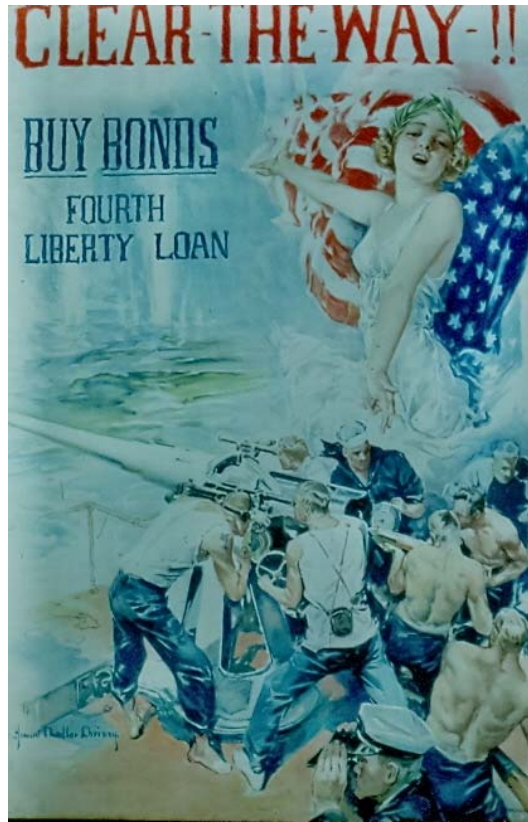


Figure 44. Poster, Howard Chandler Christy, “Clear-the-way!! Buy Bonds – Fourth Liberty Loan” (191-). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

The woman tilts her head back suggestively, her mouth open with cheeks reddened. She gestures to the men below (many of whom are shirtless), and the classical robes of traditional Columbias have been swapped for a white, low-cut negligee. In this poster, the American Girl melds sex appeal with the Amazon Warrior’s traditional call of duty, encouraging Americans to financially support the war.

Sheet music cover art generally shied away from such overt sexuality in depictions of the Amazon Warrior as Columbia, America, or Liberty, but clinging robes that emphasized the curvaceous forms of women were not uncommon. “That’s the American Plan,” a song from 1916 by Ernest Breuer, featured a cover in which “a strong breeze blows Miss Liberty’s dress and flag” while her hair is tousled by the wind—highlighting a mix of American Girl and

Amazon Warrior imagery.⁸ The cover to a 1917 song “For the Freedom of the World” features a similar image of a woman draped in clinging robes (See Figure 45).

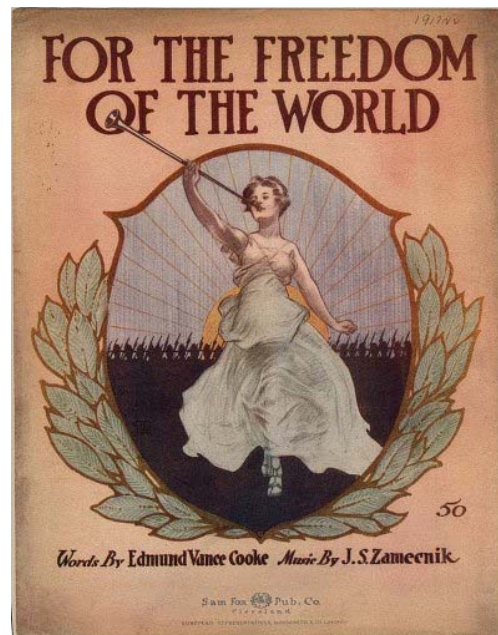


Figure 45. Cover, J.S. Zamecnik, “For the Freedom of the World” (Cleveland, OH: Sam Fox Publishing Co., 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

An emphasis on thighs, hips, or breasts often resulted as the robes swept around Columbia’s form. In this case the woman depicted represents Freedom as an ideal, a variation on the Liberty theme, and the song was broadly dedicated “To All the Allies, Each and Every Nation; To the Splendid Soldiers in the Trenches and to the Brave Women at Home; To All Who Have Offered Their Sacrifice for the Freedom of This World.” The song’s refrain proudly declares, “We come! We come! / To the fife and the drum / For the flag of the free / Which protects you and me; / For each! For all! / We stand or we fall / For the love of our liberty!”

The 1918 song “My Uncle Sammy Gals” also invokes the American Girl as influenced by nationalism—this time with references to Uncle Sam. The cover art is colored in patriotic shades of red, white, and blue, featuring a trio of women watching the soldiers as they parade

⁸ Parker (Volume 2), p. 654 (picture) and p. 656 (details). The music and cover art itself were not available for inclusion.

across the background of the page. One soldier eagerly waves to the brunette in the center of the cover (See Figure 46).

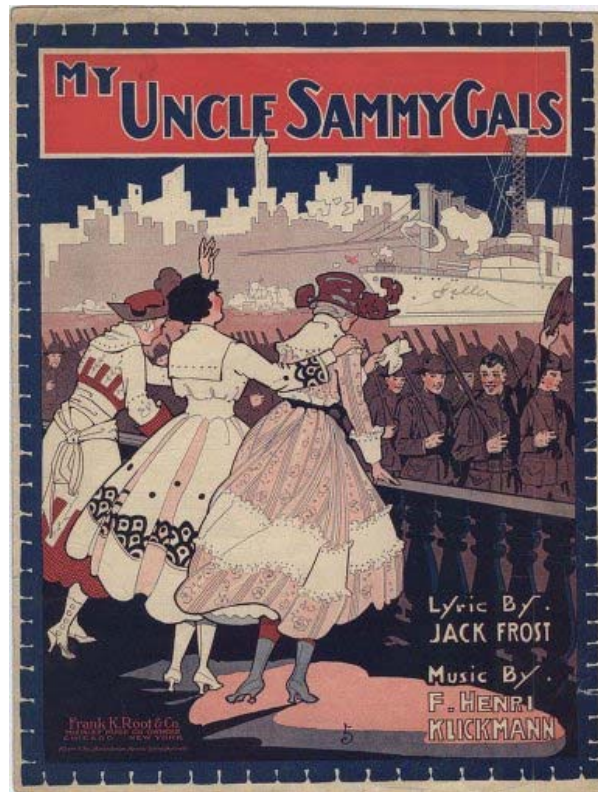


Figure 46. Cover, F. Henri Klickmann, “My Uncle Sammy Gals” (Chicago: Frank K. Root and Co., 1918). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

The lyrics of the chorus are presented from a soldier’s perspective as he bids farewell to the American “gals:”

Goodbye to “Kitty” from “Kansas City,” and little “Della” from “Delaware”
Goodbye to “Minnie” from “Minneapolis,” and “Annie” from “Anywhere”
Goodbye to all of the rest, from the north, east and west
And just tell my little pals
That, like the flag up above, I always will love my Uncle Sammy Gals.

The song’s second verse includes a reference to the Amazon Warrior as Miss Liberty in its fourth line:

So long, so long, “Ida” from “Idaho,” and
Cheer up, cheer up, for though I love you so,
I’m sailing from my Yankee shore;

Though I love you, I love Miss Liberty more.
Write me, write me, when I am far away,
For I'll come back here some day.

As sad as the soldier is to leave Kitty, Della, Minnie, Annie, and Ida, his love for Miss Liberty prevails.

Images of women in Amazon Warrior guises as Columbia, America, and Liberty permeate the posters and sheet music of the war. This imagery ties the repertoire together, united by the female archetypes that represented the nation's ideals. When mixed with elements of the American Girl, the Amazon Warrior's power to sell the war was enhanced by sex appeal, making her call to buy a bond or enlist for service even more difficult to resist.

CHAPTER 9

JOAN OF ARC

Representations of women as national symbols were not only applied to American-themed imagery in the sheet music and poster art of World War I, but were also used in depictions of European allies. The cover for the 1917 “United Nations,” a solo piano march and two-step by E.T. Paull, featured a collection of national women with “America” at the center (See Figure 47).

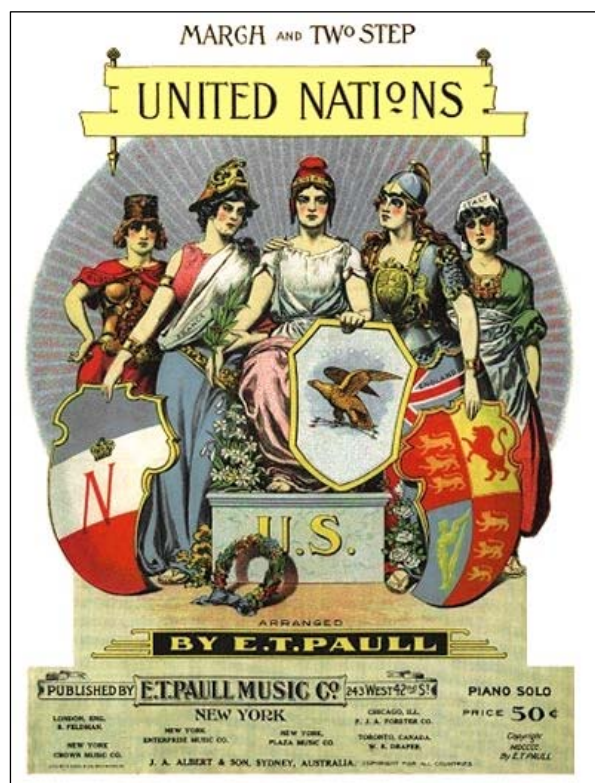


Figure 47. Cover, E.T. Paull, “United Nations” (New York: E.T. Paull Music Co., 1917). “Perfessor” Bill Edwards Piano Ragtime / Old-Time Piano Gallery, <http://www.perfessorbill.com/pbmidi4.shtml> (accessed June 29, 2011).

Each woman represents one of the Allied nations, and the five Amazon Warriors stand shoulder to shoulder as a formidable force with which to be reckoned. A different kind of historical symbol of France also appeared in both the sheet music and poster repertoires, providing a universal call to arms: the medieval Joan of Arc. As a young girl, Joan of Arc led the French army to victory against English forces, was captured, put on trial, and burned at the stake. She became a symbol of France, victorious in her martyrdom. Joan of Arc represented a relatively vulnerable version of the Amazon Warrior, yet her power lay in a stubborn willingness to fight for her country despite the odds stacked against her. War appeals seemed to argue, “If the young Joan of Arc could bravely defy the English, then modern American citizens could certainly support the war through war savings stamps, bonds, or volunteerism.” The 1918 poster by Haskell Coffin effectively asserts this claim (See Figure 48).



Figure 48. Poster, Haskell Coffin, “Joan of Arc Saved France – Women of America, Save Your Country – Buy War Savings Stamps” (1918). Courtesy of the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

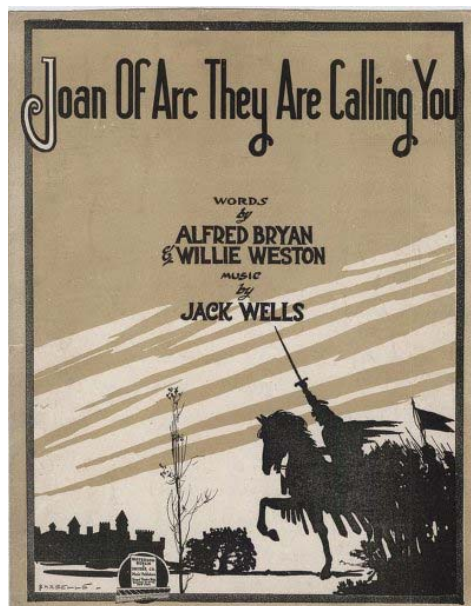


Figure 49. Cover, Jack Wells, “Joan of Arc They Are Calling You” (New York: Waterson, Berlin & Snyder Co., 1917). Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Like the Coffin poster, the 1917 song by Jack Wells “Joan of Arc (They Are Calling You)” resonates with Joan of Arc imagery, and its cover features the silhouette of a charge into battle (See Figure 49). The song’s significant popularity with the American public indicates the degree to which it struck a cultural chord. *Variety Music Cavalcade* cites the song as one of the biggest hits of 1917, and it was recorded on at least three different American labels: Columbia, Little Wonder, and Victor.¹ The song was also included in several mini-songbooks that were marketed to Americans at home and abroad, including *Popular Songs of the A.E.F. (Y.M.C.A.)*; *Army Song Book (U.S.)*; *Songs of the Soldiers and Sailors*; *Tank Tunes: Songs for Camp and March*; *Patriotic and Popular Songs*; and the *Liberty Song Book*.² The YMCA Training Schools for Army, Navy, and Marine Song Leaders advocated its use in their training pamphlet, *National Repertoire of Required Songs*, as part of both the “Berlin” and “Broadway” medleys, a link in the chain of popular song choruses for use by soldiers “on the march.” The Wells song was clearly a favorite of soldiers and civilians alike. Perhaps its surging popularity in 1917 inspired Coffin’s 1918 poster, though a surprisingly similar poster by Bert Thomas, “Joan of Arc Saved France – Women of *Britain*, Save Your Country,” was circulating in England circa 1917 and may have also sparked Coffin’s interpretation.

“Joan of Arc (They Are Calling You)” is written in a moderate tempo, a departure from the brisk marches that typify sheet music of the war in order to create a sentimental mood. The lyrics of the chorus represent a plea to Joan of Arc for help, as if calling on a national saint in a time of danger:

Joan of Arc, Joan of Arc,
Do your eyes, from the skies, see the foe?
Don’t you see the drooping Fleur-de-lis?

¹ See Mattfeld, 353. For recordings, see: Columbia 2273, Little Wonder 692, and Victor 18307.

² See the Bibliography for publication details. All songbooks were included in the National World War I Museum Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.

Can't you hear the tears of Normandy?
Joan of Arc, Joan of Arc,
Let your spirit guide us through;
Come lead your France to victory;
Joan of Arc, they are calling you.

The penultimate line of the chorus is set to a clever musical quotation of the “Marseillaise,” marked *con spirito* for added emphasis (See Example 17, mm.12-14). This brief quotation is a key to unlocking the rhythmic symbolism that unifies the chorus; variations of the “Marseillaise” rhythm appear throughout Example 17 (See mm. 4-6, 6-8, and 10-12). The dotted rhythms that permeate the melodic writing are also culled from this rhythmic motive, indicating regality (See Example 17, mm. 1-2, 2-3, and 8-9). The right hand of the piano accompaniment includes a triplet figure that, when combined with the dotted rhythms that precede it, evokes French *rataplan* traditions (See Example 17, mm. 1, 2, 9, and 10). The rhythmic vitality of the song balances the saccharine nostalgia of the repeated calls to Joan of Arc in mm. 1-2 and 8-10, resulting in a piece that engaged listeners in the war effort on emotional and energetic levels. The popularity of “Joan of Arc (They Are Calling for You)” spawned some knock-off tunes, including “Joan of Arc’s Answer” (1918), whose cover features American soldiers “marching with Joan of Arc on horseback” while “US and Allied soldiers charge into battle together.”³ The imagery on the cover visually cements the bond between American and other Allied forces, united by their shared hero, Joan of Arc. In a 1918 song by Will T. Bingham, “My Yankee Joan of Arc,” the Joan of Arc imagery is applied to American women at the home front. A young woman dressed in overalls and a straw hat waves to the soldiers in the background as she leans on the hoe held in her right hand.⁴ Like Coffin’s poster that calls for women to buy war savings stamps, this sheet music appeals directly to women to support the war through state-side

³ Parker (Volume I), 322. Sheet music was not available for further analysis. The cover alone was included in the Parker text.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 444. Sheet music was not available for further analysis. The cover alone was included in the Parker text.

participation in farming. Both the Coffin poster and the Bingham song uphold Joan of Arc as a feminine ideal of sacrificial citizenship.

3

Chorus.

Joan of Arc, Joan of Arc, Do your eyes, from the skies, see the
Jeanne d'Arc, Jeanne d'Arc, Ah, voyez l'en-ne-mi, est sur

foe? Don't you see the droop-ing Fleur-de-lis? Can't you
nous. Voyez vous les pleurs d'Al-sace Lorraine Les cloch-

hear the tears of Nor-man-dy? Joan of Arc, Joan of
ex de Rheims son-neul en paine. Jeanne d'Arc, Jeanne

Arc, Let your spir-it guide us through; Come lead your France to
d'Arc, Oh! Sol-dats! en-ten-dez vous? Al-lons en-fants de

vic-to-ry; Joan of Arc, they are call-ing you. Joan of you.
la pa-trie! Jeanne d'Arc, la vic-taire est pour vous. Jeanne nous.

dim. poco rit. a tempo f D.S.

Example 17. Jack Wells, “Joan of Arc (They Are Calling You)” (New York: Waterson, Berlin & Snyder Co., 1917), p. 3. Courtesy of LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC.

Poster artists and sheet music publications turned to Joan of Arc to sell ideals of war to the American public, using her historical leadership in the face of danger to inspire wartime

sacrifice by American citizens. Her youth and courage made for an ideal poster and song subject, an image that combined French nationalism with Allied goals.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

The sheet music industry sold messages of war to the American public through the appropriation of proven, CPI poster-inspired feminine archetypes: the Protecting Angel, the Amazon Warrior, and the American Girl. Sheet music publishers therefore acted as an unofficial cog in the CPI propaganda machine, producing war-themed artistic products that were no less persuasive or pervasive than posters, films, cartoons, speeches, pamphlets, or ads that had been officially sanctioned and commissioned by the committee. Sheet music and the associated recordings of the biggest hits became one of the primary mass media outlets in an era before radio broadcasting, a powerful avenue through which to reach the American public both at home and in the trenches. Like their fellow artists in visual, film, or literary realms, sheet music industry composers, lyricists, and cover artists were inspired by the war, eager to contribute musical works that supported the CPI campaigns. Sheet music production naturally borrowed feminine iconography found in other war propaganda in an effort to appeal to the American public. Whether the choice to write war music was driven by business savvy that recognized the marketability of war themes or by a genuine enthusiasm for American participation in the war, sheet music portrayals that invoked sex appeal, humor, evocations of Columbia's heroic "call," or other soft sell persuasive advertising techniques helped build and maintain public support for the war. The following quote by John Philip Sousa, who wrote several war-themed works and was an early supporter of American participation in the conflict, suggests that composers were well aware of the power of music to persuade citizens:

The people are waking up already and they will demand that the politicians stop wrangling and appropriate sufficient money for defense. Men don't clutch their pocketbooks so tightly when their hearts are touched, and that is another reason why such a song as "Wake Up, America" will do much good. In fact, it will not be a bad idea to sing it to Congress! . . . Lecture me, write editorials at me, and I may be convinced that preparedness is necessary, but sing me a song that contains your message and I WILL BE won over at once!¹

Images of women in sheet music and posters were used to convince men to enlist, to encourage women to participate in volunteerism abroad and at home, and to uphold morale as the country braced for the sacrifices war would demand. The role of feminine imagery in war posters is summarized by Michele Shover:

Men were required in greater number[s] than ever before to fill combatant roles. Women, therefore, became indispensable to carry on a fully operative industrial and agricultural system. To develop such an effort required an extensive war propaganda. The problem of the poster propagandist was eased by relying on traditional advertising and artistic categories which had demonstrated effectiveness in commercial work. There the images of women had become well established as effective methods of appeal. These familiar female images, as they were manipulated in poster art, fostered positive attitudes toward the war's legitimacy.²

Sheet music shared this role with poster art, vying for war support as it vied for popularity with the American public, all the while relying on artistic and advertising conventions in its portrayals of women. The Amazon Warrior appeared in the sheet music as America, Columbia, Miss Liberty, or even Joan of Arc. Evocations of the American Girl, depicted as "the girl he left behind" or as a soldier-obsessed "Red Cross girlie" balanced sex appeal with a virginal innocence. The Protecting Angel archetype applied heavenly, spiritualized imagery to young female war volunteers with references to "The Greatest Mothers in the World" or "Angels of Mercy" who lovingly tended soldiers on the battlefield. The reliance on these exaggerated

¹ Vogel, 16. This quote was taken from a "pre-performance interview with the *New York American*," given before a March 5, 1916 concert during which Sousa conducted the pit orchestra for a performance of "Wake Up, America." Vogel credits Sousa with the composition of the tune, though the chorus lyrics that Vogel includes originate from the Jack Glogau version of the song.

² Shover, 472.

archetypes left little room for realistic depictions of American women during the war, though positive representations of women's war service contributed to a postwar cultural climate that led to the 1920 ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. In many ways, sheet music portrayals of women during the war can be credited with pushing the country closer to accepting women as full citizens. However, the unrealistic and often sexualized ways in which women were represented in sheet music and other propaganda contributed to the postwar back-slide into more traditional cultural roles for women when the soldiers returned from the battlefield. Though women earned the vote and had experienced a number of new jobs and opportunities in the wake of these wartime images, the sheet music portrayals did little to tangibly move women closer to an equal social role in American society.

Archival collections of sheet music from World War I are treasure troves with the potential to reveal Americans' attitudes during the war toward a variety of subjects. When cross-referenced with poster art and other popular culture images, analysis of the musical titles, lyrics, melodies, and cover art sheds light on theories applied to other contemporary mediums, potentially verifying or challenging assumptions that may have been based on images alone (as is often the case with scholarship regarding advertisements, political cartoons, or poster art). The consideration of gradually evolving representations of women in popular culture as they stood on the brink of suffrage is one of several historically significant critical lenses through which scholars could view the sheet music repertoire. As Vogel points out in *World War I Songs: A History and Dictionary of Popular American Patriotic Tunes, with over 300 Complete Lyrics*, “[N]ever before 1914 had the country been exposed to so many musical commentaries on any single event in its history. . . . But like history book references to misery in No Man's Land, knitting societies, defense-factory production lines, and scarcities of consumer goods, the lyrics

of most World War I songs described with uncanny clarity the day-to-day personal crises confronting Americans both at home and abroad.”³ Scholars have only begun to explore the importance of this rich and varied collection of American artifacts.

As musicologists and historians continue to evaluate sheet music from this era, they must do so with an awareness of the blurred line between propaganda and art. The heady mix of advertising, political, and artistic perspectives that are reflected in this repertoire creates a fascinating, complex web that scholars must untangle when approaching this material. Parallels between the sheet music and poster repertoires—with shared evocations of the young Joan of Arc, fierce Columbias, angelic Red Cross nurses, and knitting mothers and sisters—undeniably link sheet music production to CPI-sponsored materials. The implications of music “putting on khaki” to support the war is not to be taken lightly. No less of an expert on manipulation of public opinion through war propaganda than Adolf Hitler famously attributed the success of World War I Allied propaganda to “its emotional portrayal of the enemy as barbaric.”⁴ It is likely that portrayals of monstrous “Huns” in World War I posters tragically influenced the dehumanizing artistic portrayals of Jewish people in World War II—one example of the devastating power of art when put to a dark purpose. Similarly emotional portrayals dominated the sheet music and poster art of World War I and carry no less potential danger. Harnessing the emotional power of music, the sheet music industry sold messages of war through siren-like imagery of women that solicited universal support and participation from the American public.

³ Ibid., 7.

⁴ Vaughn, 236. Vaughn cites Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, 181.

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