

**PICTURES OF WAR WORK IN AMERICA:
REPRODUCTIONS OF A SERIES OF
LITHOGRAPHS OF MUNITION WORKS MADE
BY HIM
WITH THE PERMISSION AND AUTHORITY OF
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, WITH
NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION BY THE ARTIST**

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Pictures of War Work in America: Reproductions of a Series of Lithographs of Munition Works Made by Him with the Permission and Authority of the United States Government, with Notes and an Introduction by the Artist by Joseph Pennell

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JOSEPH PENNELL

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INTRODUCTION—MY LITHOGRAPHS OF WAR WORK

I HAVE come back from the Jaws of Death—back from the Mouth of Hell—to my own land, my own people. I have never passed such an exciting year in my life—and beside, I hope I have been able to accomplish something in my work which shall show one phase of the Wonder of the World's Work of to-day. I was honoured a year ago by being permitted by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, then Minister of Munitions in England, to make drawings in the various factories and works and shipyards which were engaged in war work in that country—and the records of what I saw were published as lithographs of War Work in England and in a previous volume in this series. Now, though I do not believe in war, I do not see why some pictorial record of what is being done to carry on the war should not be made—made from an artist's standpoint—for we are in it—being in the world—but I am not of it.

When my work—or as much of it as I was allowed to do—was finished and exhibited and published—I was invited by the French Minister of Munitions, M. Albert Thomas, to visit the front and make studies of similar subjects in France, but—owing to a combination of unfortunate circumstances—though I went to France twice during the Summer of this year, I was unable to get anything of importance. This was my fault, or my misfortune—I failed—and the memory of my failure will haunt me, and be a cause of regret to me, all my life—unless I am able to wipe out my failure—in another visit to France. But though I failed to make any drawings—any records of the subjects I was so freely shown—I was shown on my two visits many subjects, which were supremely interesting, could I have but drawn them—had I been able to do so they would have been worth doing. Not only was I taken to the front, which was not the part I saw, picturesque, but I was also taken to see some of those parts of France which have been fought over, some of the towns which have been destroyed, some of the land which is desolate, and I have also seen some of the French munition factories. Then I came home, for I believe the place for an American at the present time is

at home. And on my arrival I was authorized to make records by our Government similar to those I had made in England, and had failed to make in France—what I have done in the United States is shown in this book.

I have had more opportunities of seeing what is being done in war work in England, France and the United States than any one else—and in a fashion that no one else has been permitted to see. I have seen war in the making. Yet I did not do these drawings with any idea of helping to win the war, but because for years I have been at work—from my earliest drawings—trying to record The Wonder of Work, and work never was so wonderful as it is to-day. And never had any one such help—such aid, such encouragement given him to record its wonder—and by the Governments of the three great countries which are engaged in “this incredibly horrible, absolutely unnecessary war, easily avoided war,” to quote a British Statesman.

Not only have I seen the Wonder of Work in these three lands—but before the war I saw it in Belgium, Germany and Italy. I have drawn it everywhere, save in Luxembourg, and there, too, I have seen it—but made no drawings—for it was so easy to get to that land—and so that country was put off for a more convenient season—a season I fear which will never come again. I am not going to make comparisons—but I am going to say that the Wonder of Work is more wonderful in the United States than anywhere else in the world to-day. True, we are not working with that unbelievable energy which the French and English—yes, the English—have put at last into their work—but we do so much more—with so much less—appearance of work—we are working for the Allies—but they are not working for us. And we are doing for them what they cannot do for themselves. In Europe the war worker works all day and every day in the year. Here most of the great industrial works have only added war work to their peace work, in Europe scarce anything else but war work is being done.

And also in America the women have not to any extent gone into the factories, mills and shipyards of the country. And I hope they never will. I have never seen a woman shell maker here, yet I know of factories in France and England where there are scarce any work

people, save women, one where there are ten thousand women. Here they are only making fuses and doing other light work, but I have not seen a woman at a lathe as I have seen them in France and England. I have never seen a woman ship builder here—yet I have seen women in shipyards abroad doing work that men would have grumbled at when put to it—because it was thought hard work—before the war.

And I am glad that our women are not forced to undertake such work, and hope they never may be, for I have seen the black side of this work, which already has led to strikes and labour troubles in Europe—and when the war is over, will lead to greater trouble—for the Captains of Industry in Europe tell me that women run machines better than men—they devote themselves to the machine—never try to improve it—to make changes in it—only to keep it going and in good order, while the man is always trying to improve it, to make it do more, so that he can do less. “Stick matches in it,” one manager said—while the women just run the machines as they are shown how.

But making shells is more interesting than washing dishes, or waving flags and marching in parades—and more exciting—but there will be an end to that some day; and the lathes—which have been turned to war work—will be turned back to peace work—and the question is, will the women go back to their dishes?—and if they do not there will be more trouble. I have seen a women’s strike—or a little of it—for with the manager who was showing me around, I left at once. It was not an orderly, peaceful, or womanly strike. That shop was no place for me. Those women were not lady-like.

But just as the greatest human energy has been given to war work, given to make things to explode, to kill, to destroy; so the greatest machines have been turned to do this work with the greatest skill and accuracy and the greatest speed—the workers are but a necessary detail—and it is the working of the great machinery in the great mills which I find so inspiring—so impressive—for the mills are shrines of war. The mills are the modern temples and in them do the people worship. And if only the engines turned out were engines of peace—how much better would the world be—but everything made in a war factory is made to destroy and to be destroyed. But one must not think of that, for if one did the war would stop, and not every one

wants it to stop—or it would stop to-day—a universal demand for peace would make peace,—really would have prevented war. But war work in America is the most wonderful work in the world and that is the reason why I have drawn some of the work I have seen—seen in these endless looms of time—where history is being woven. The attitude of the workman toward the artist is curious; in France he understands, in England he looks down on you as a poor thing who has to work—in America you are regarded as a fellow workman, as an artist is!

I want to thank the Secretaries of the Navy and of War, Messrs. Daniels and Baker, Mr. Creel and the other members of the Board and staff of the Committee on Public Information, and the various heads of the various sub-departments of the Army and Navy, who stood my pestering and querying and obtained for me permission to visit every industrial establishment I wanted. In every plant, camp, yard, works, field, which I wanted to work in—I was taken to, and treated with courtesy. I should like to thank and mention by name the various officials, government and civilian, who gave me every facility to see and to draw everything I wished in the War Works they directed—but we are at war—and I am not permitted to say where these drawings were made, and if I mentioned the names of some of the directors of these works the places in which I made the drawings would be known. As it is, I imagine many of them are pretty well known already.

Finally I wish to thank my life-long friend, Dr. F. P. Keppel—who suggested, directed, arranged, calmed down and cheered up all those with whom I was brought in most interesting contact. He knows what he did and I know—and I shall not forget.

PHILADELPHIA, THANKSGIVING DAY, 1917

JOSEPH PENNELL

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