Preliminary Guide to the Helen McKie / World War I Drawings Collection

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Preliminary Guide to the Helen McKie / World War I Drawings Collection, ca. 1917-1919

Collection number: Bernath Mss 24

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Helen McKie / World War I Drawings Collection
Dates: ca. 1917-1919
Collection Number: Bernath Mss 24
Creator: McKie, Helen Madeleine
Extent: .3 linear feet (1 oversize box)
Repository: University of California, Santa Barbara. Library. Department of Special Collections
Santa Barbara, California 93106-9010
Physical Location: Annex 2.
Abstract: Drawings from the Great War Collection.
Language: English.
Access Restrictions
None. Collection is stored off-site; advance notice required for retrieval.
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Acquisition Information
Undetermined.
Scope and Content of Collection
The collection contains 65 signed drawings, mainly pen and ink, along with a few watercolors, by British artist/designer Helen Madeleine McKie. The drawings depict World War I scenes, including several of women involved in the war effort. Most are portraits or caricatures of individual soldiers from various service branches or small groups of men and women in informal, social settings, with a few set in France and Flanders. None depict battle scenes. Most seem to be of British military and civilians, although a few are of Americans in uniform, as well as French, Turks, and Germans.

Nearly all of the drawings have accompanying captions such as "American with his amazing gift of the gab," "Chaplain is often called Padre or Sky Pilot," "1918 [soldier standing watch in a trench]," "Over there in Flanders, ," "People with money who obviously had nothing to do with the war," "The Pessimist," "Putting Gas Helmets on Carrier Pigeons," "Straight on to Berlin," "Teas for Wounded Soldiers," and "Those Heroic Men."

The drawings vary in size, from about 15 cm x 20 cm to about 32 cm x 42 cm. Penciled notes on some of the drawings, such as "Urgent, 5:30 p.m.," suggest that they may have been created for newspapers or other publications with very short deadlines.

Helen McKie is perhaps best known for her later art and publicity work with British railroads, especially the 1948 poster of Waterloo Station in London.

There is no container list for this collection.