Guide to the Edwin Forbes Etchings from "Life Studies of the Great Army"
MSS.3408

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May 31, 2011
Describing Archives: A Content Standard
Table of Contents

Summary Information ........................................................................................................................................... 3
Biographical/Historical note .......................................................................................................................... 4
Scope and Contents note ............................................................................................................................... 4
Administrative Information ........................................................................................................................... 5
Collection Inventory ....................................................................................................................................... 6
Summary Information

Repository | W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama
Title | Edwin Forbes Etchings from *Life Studies of the Great Army*
Date | after 1876
Extent | 2.0 Linear feet
Language | English
Abstract | Ten etchings by Edwin Forbes from his *Life Studies of the Great Army*.

Preferred Citation note
Edwin Forbes Etchings from *Life Studies of the Great Army*, W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama
Biographical/Historical note

Edwin Forbes was born in New York City in 1839, and began studying art under Arthur Tait, a specialist in painting action scenes of scouts and Indians on the Western Plains. Forbes' career as an illustrator began in 1861 when he became a staff artist for Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper and was sent to cover the campaigns of the Army of the Potomac. He followed the Union Army from Cross Keys in the Shenandoah Valley to the battles at Manassas in 1862 and the siege of Petersburg in 1864. Making quick sketches on the battlefields, he refined them later before sending them to New York for publication. He had a strategic spot to observe the Picket's charge at Gettysburg, and he was the first of the "special artists" to produce drawings of the battle to send to Leslie's.

He resigned from Leslie's in 1864, but he continued to produce images of the war. Many of these drawings were made into copper plate etchings and published as Life Studies of the Great Army (1876). General William T. Sherman purchased the first proof and donated it to the United States government.

Forbes' illustrations also appeared in Beyond the Mississippi (Hartford, 1869), as well as numerous other publications including Pebbles and Pearls for Young Folks (Hartford, 1868), Specimen Pages and Illustrations from Appleton's Journal (New York, 1870), and The Atlantic Almanac (1871). In 1878, he opened a studio in Brooklyn, and in 1890, he published a summary of his work in Thirty Years After: An Artist's Story of the Great War.

Forbes died in 1895 in Brooklyn and is buried in Green-Wood Cemetery.


Scope and Contents note

The collection contains ten etchings by Edwin Forbes from his Life Studies of the Great Army, including: (Plate 6) "A Thirsty Crowd" / "Newspapers for the Army, Racing for Camp"; (Plate 10) "A Slave Cabin" / "The Old Grist Mill" / "Sam" / "Got Any Pies for Sale Aunty?" / "A Picaninny"; (Plate 15) "The Return from Picket Duty"; (Plate 18) "The Rear of the Column"; (Plate 19) "Stuck in the Mud" / "A Flank March Across Country During a Thunder Shower"; (Plate 22) "On Picket at the River Bank" / "The Old Saw Mill" / "Waiting for Something to Turn Up"; (Plate 25) "The Distant Battle"; (Plate 27) "A Hot Day" / "Beef Steak, Rare!" / "A Straggler" / "A Quiet Nibble on the Cavalry Skirmish Line" / "An Orderly"; (Plate
28); "Newspapers in Camp"; and (Plate 29) "A Watched Pot Never Boils" / "A Hasty Supper" / 'Played Out" / "Drummer Boys".

Administrative Information

Publication Information
W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, The University of Alabama May 2011

Conditions Governing Access note
None

Provenance
Gift of Wade Hall, 2006

Processed by
Martha Bace, 2011
**Collection Inventory**

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