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AMERICAN BROADSIDES AND EPHEMERA

SERIES I, 1760-1900

An Archive of Americana® collection

An unparalleled Web-based resource, *American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series I* provides students and scholars with a unique way to explore and understand America from the mid-18th century to the beginning of the 20th century. Based on the American Antiquarian Society's landmark collections of broadsides and ephemera, this new digital edition offers easy access to nearly 30,000 fully searchable items.

American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series I is ideal for student assignments and faculty research in diverse academic disciplines and subjects, including history, literature, political science, business and economics, women's studies, arts and theater, cultural studies, the history of science and many others. Novice and advanced users can easily browse or search by subject, genre and many other fields.

“American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series I provides an outstanding resource for scholars and students alike. This unique resource greatly enhances undergraduate and graduate curricula... The unexpected discoveries students make in this newly accessible archive provoke deep critical engagement with the central texts of all my early American courses. You couldn't ask for a better lure into the early periods of literature, history and culture.”

—Meredith Neuman, Assistant Professor of English, Clark University

*“Spectacular. ... A valuable complement to *Early American Imprints, American Broadsides and Ephemera* offers researchers working on 18th- and 19th-century North America many items of great interest in several disciplines. ... One of a kind for looking beyond the printed book or newspaper.”*

—A.G. Roeber, Professor of Early Modern History and Religious Studies, Pennsylvania State University

AMERICAN BROADSIDES AND EPHEMERA, SERIES I, 1760-1900



Broadsides — single-sheet documents printed for public or restricted distribution
Ephemera — printed documents of a transitory nature

Often focusing on popular or newsworthy issues and events, broadsides and ephemera represent perhaps the most prolific form of early American publishing. Most were issued locally for short-lived purposes and were subsequently destroyed. However, those that survive to this day illuminate American history, culture and daily life in ways no other material can.

American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series I offers full-color, high-resolution facsimile images of approximately 15,000 broadsides printed between 1820 and 1900 and 15,000 pieces of ephemera printed between 1760 and 1900. Unlike books, newspapers and other printed items of the time, which were largely textual, many of the often rare broadsides and ephemera in this digital edition are graphically stunning and vividly illustrate aspects of society across the burgeoning nation. Significantly, many items in this digital edition are not catalogued in formal bibliographies of American printing. Yet, broadsides and ephemera portray everyday life, reveal intimate stories and provide uncommon perspectives on ordinary Americans.

Broadsides—a wealth of valuable information on local and national subjects

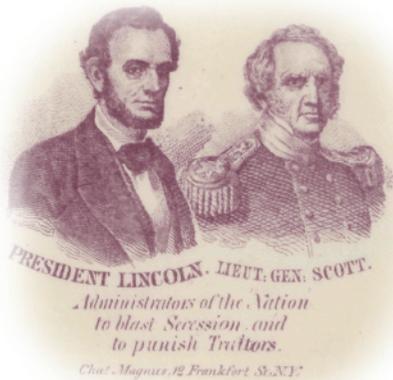
While books were written and read largely by professionals, merchants and others in the upper class, broadsides appealed to all, including the middle and lower classes. Most broadsides were inexpensive, and some were distributed freely. The nearly 15,000 broadsides in this digital edition cover remarkably diverse subjects, ranging from contemporary accounts of the Civil War, unusual occurrences and natural disasters to official government proclamations, tax bills and town meeting reports.

American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series I also offers autobiographies and dying confessions of convicted criminals, theater playbills, sheet almanacs, publishers' prospectuses, advertisements, newspaper carriers' addresses and popular songs and poems. Other items describe controversies, reform movements, political parties and a wide variety of local and national organizations and societies. Additionally, extensive cataloging by the American Antiquarian Society provides information on the author, title, subject, genre, bibliographic reference number, provenance data, illustration technique, printer, date and place of publication and more.

“Broadsides... imply a vast deal more than they literally express, and disclose visions of interior conditions of society such as cannot be found in formal narratives.”

—*Samuel F. Haven, Librarian, American Antiquarian Society (circa 1872)*





“Full indexing allows creative searching and browsing and makes broadsides, calendars, charts, city directories, trade catalogs, print illustrations of many sorts, photographs and children’s literatures, for example, accessible in facsimile from a distance. I have found this wonderful resource immensely useful in my own work as a historian of American visual and material culture.”

—Sally M. Prome, Professor of American Art History, University of Maryland

“Useful insights into the daily life of the 18th and 19th centuries. ... Recommended.”

—M. A. LaMagna, Cabrini College in Choice (September 2006)

Ephemera—a unique look at 18th- and 19th-century American life

American Broadsides and Ephemera, Series I also includes nearly 15,000 pieces of ephemera spanning a variety of genres. From invitations and menus for civic, political and private engagements to illustrated stock certificates with manufacturers’ vignettes, these items—all extensively catalogued by the American Antiquarian Society—enable researchers to make fresh findings on American culture and society, as well as many facets of industry, including agriculture, trade and manufacturing.

For example, full-color clipper ship sailing cards reflect the enormous increase in commerce between the east and west coasts after the discovery of gold in California. Trade cards—generally, printed notices of goods or services—provide insight into consumer culture and business practices, often with vignettes describing items, workers or establishments. Billheads, usually illustrated, not only offer information on tradesmen’s prices and locations but also document the goods and services consumers purchased. Theater and music programs chronicle popular genres and performers from across the country and abroad. In short, these wide-ranging primary sources offer invaluable perspectives not found elsewhere.



About the *Archive of Americana*®

The acclaimed *Archive of Americana*® is a family of authoritative Web-based collections of historical materials printed in America between 1639 and 1980. It features more than 1,000 newspaper titles, landmark collections of U.S. government publications and more than 100,000 books, broadsides and ephemera. The *Archive of Americana*® currently includes:

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“Broadsides and ephemera are visual, easy to get a quick sense of, and have an **immediate impact on students**. As research interests move more towards interdisciplinary subjects, visual culture, and popular culture, broadsides and ephemera will be increasingly important.”

—J. Andrew Armacost, *Collection Development Librarian, Duke University*

“*American Broadsides and Ephemera* contains the scraps and pieces of society—programs, announcements, promotional pieces, schedules, trade cards—anything that was printed to get immediate attention and then thrown away. ... Extraordinary and wondrous phenomena are described in local terms. Quack promoters prey on naive beliefs and superstitions. Slang phrases and expressions spill out from hack writers whose output would never reach print in a sophisticated setting. **Dramatic illustrations and headlines vie for the attention of the wondering multitude.** ... This kind of research was **unthinkable only a few years ago.**”

—Kate Van Winkle Keller, *Scholar*

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