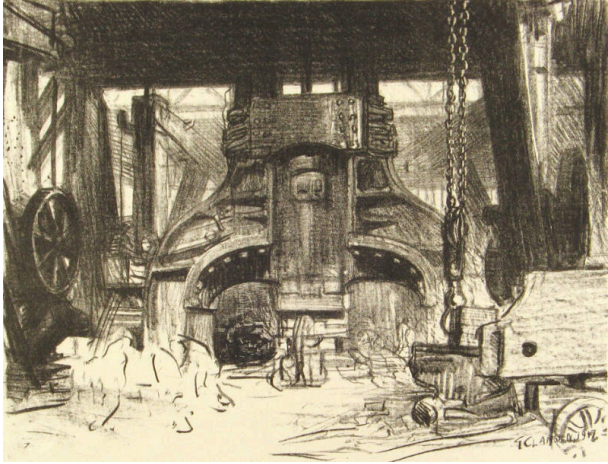


Basic Detail Report



No. 27 "The Great Hammer"

Date

1917

Primary Maker

George Clausen

Medium

Lithograph on paper

Dimensions

34.3 x 45.3 cm

Description

This planographic print (lithograph) is part of a series entitled 'The Great War: Britain's Efforts And Ideals shown in a series of lithographic prints: 'Making Guns' series. There are a total of six lithographs in this particular series, and in total there are ten series. The lithographs are numbered as if the entire ten series are one, so this print is number 27. George Clausen was appointed an Official War Artist in 1917 and soon after was assigned to the Woolwich arsenal. His painting *In the Gun Factory at Woolwich Arsenal* (1918, Collection: Imperial War Museum) is regarded as one of the more successful works commissioned by the Ministry of Information. The lithograph No. 29 *The Radial Crane* is very similar to this painting and confirms the setting of these works as being at Woolwich. The armaments subject matter with its emphasis on heavy industry and the making of immensely destructive machines is in stark contrast to the bucolic nature of much of Clausen's work overall such as *The Haymaker: A Study in Shadows* (1904) in this Gallery's collection. However, Clausen retains his great interest in portraying dramatic contrasts of light and shade and this is particularly evident in the lithograph *The Furnace* where the foreground figure is silhouetted against the bright white-hot molten metal exploding forth. The lithograph *Where the Guns are Made* also offers the opportunity for emphasising changing atmospheric effects caused by the thick black smoke flowing continuously from the many tall chimneys dominating the skyline. The Great War: Britain's Efforts and Ideals Nos. 25-30 *Making Guns* The enormous scale of the armaments being made is clear in the lithograph *Turning a Big Gun* when compared with the minute scale of the worker close by. Contemporary photographs of weaponry reveal the accuracy of Clausen's drawing. Artillery came into its own during the First World War and was used for the siege and bombardment of towns. It was also one of the main causes of deadlock in trench warfare. Clausen's lithographs reveal how as the race to produce bigger and more effect weaponry intensified, the brute force of these armaments was viewed as the principal instrument of victory. Shellshock was a term coined during the War for soldiers believed to be suffering severe psychological trauma from the effect of heavy bombardment. However, the term came to have broader significance when it soon became clear that such bombardment was only part of the horror that many soldiers witnessed and endured. Jessica O'Donnell 2014 In the centre of an industrial forge is an enormous

press for producing the barrels of guns (cannons). The press is shaped like the letter 'm' and its hydraulic mechanisms continue up into the roof space. Clausen attended the design classes at the South Kensington schools from 1867-1873 with great success. He then worked in the studio of Edwin Long, R.A., and subsequently in Paris under Bouguereau and Robert-Fleury. Clausen was an official War Artist during World War I.