

Emmett & White

ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Complete set of Fougasse 'Careless Talks Costs Lives' posters.

Sold



REF: 7620

Height: 31.74 cm (12.5")

Width: 20.31 cm (8")

Description

A very scarce complete set of eight lithographic 'Careless talk costs lives' posters by Fougasse (Cyril Kenneth Bird CBE, 1887-1965). Published by the Ministry of Information, 1940.

The eight lithographs feature the words 'Careless talk costs lives' along with a cartoon often featuring Hitler or other prominent Nazis eavesdropping on a seemingly private conversation.

The eight messages featured are:

"Strictly between you & me ...".
You never know who's listening!
"Of course there's no harm in your knowing!"
"... but for Heaven's sake don't say I told you!"
"... but of course it mustn't go any further!"
"... strictly between these four walls!"
Be careful what you say & where you say it!
Don't forget that walls have ears

These lithographs were printed on poor quality wartime issue paper very few have survived so a complete set is a real rarity. There are signs of use - pin holes to some - but they are still a wonderful series of artworks. Now framed in oak behind Tru Vue conservation UV glass.

The lithographs are accompanied by a copy of James Taylor's book 'Careless Talk Costs Lives' that explores Fougasse's light-hearted, witty approach to propaganda.

Fougasse was the pen name of Cyril Kenneth Bird, one of Britain's most celebrated cartoonists. Best known for his witty observations of everyday life, he contributed regularly to the satirical magazine Punch and later became its editor.

During the Second World War, Fougasse created memorable government safety and public information posters, including the famous "Careless Talk Costs Lives" campaign, combining humour with clear messages. His distinctive, economical drawing style and sharp sense of irony made his work instantly recognisable.

Today, Fougasse is remembered as a master of British cartooning whose illustrations remain charming, insightful and historically significant.