During 1949 a succession of opportunities brought the Museum more remarkable prints than it has been able to acquire for a number of years. The new acquisitions, which represent printmaking since the late 1400’s, include things so rare and sought after that there seemed little chance of adding them to any collection today. Since many of the prints are duplicates from the Austrian State collection, a selection from them is being shown beside the exhibition of masterpieces from Vienna on the second floor of the South Wing.

One of the earliest prints shows the plan and elevation of a crocketed pinnacle engraved about 1490 by Wenzel von Olmütz with the complicated virtuosity in which Gothic energy finally spent itself. Engravings and drawings carried Gothic builders’ ideas so extensively from workshop to workshop that hard use destroyed most of these once common pictures. The Museum’s engraving, one of three surviving impressions, is the only large Gothic architectural project in our collections.

The Italian supremacy in wall painting appears in a Florentine engraving of about 1460-1480, after Francesco Traini’s lately destroyed fresco of Hell in the Campo Santo in Pisa. As the earliest engraving designated as a copy of a great work of art, it is the first example of the reproductive engravings that were to become an Italian specialty for four centuries. The golden age of reproductive printmaking furnishes the most important single group of the new acquisitions. This consists of about six hundred engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi and his followers after paintings and drawings by Raphael, Giulio Romano, Michelangelo, and other high renaissance painters. Marcantonio established the copying of other men’s designs as a specialty that was eventually to absorb most of the effort that went into printmaking until the 1870’s, when the task was taken over by the photographic processes. The prints he and his school began to make in the early 1500’s carried the Italian High Renaissance to its sudden triumph throughout Europe and taught Western art a manner of drawing and of figure composition that remained standard until Picasso and his fellows started a revision of values about 1905. The engravings and woodcuts by Marcantonio and his contemporaries changed European art more widely and more thoroughly than any other group of prints ever produced. Since many of these prints are now very rare and have never been photographed, it is particularly important to have a representative group of them.

After Marcantonio’s example helped to establish reproductive engraving as a widespread profession in Flanders, the painters of Brussels and Antwerp joined in the task of inventing pictures for Europe and publishing them through prints. Though today no one but the specialist knows the names of Stradanus, de Vos, Heemskerck, Coninxloo, and many more, such painters created most of the pictorial poetry and erudition of the North during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their prints now furnish attributions for unidentified paintings and explain many strange subjects, poems, customs, and habits of thought.
Since these fascinating prints cannot be found in quantity outside Europe's oldest print collections, and rarely occur in today's print market, the Museum is lucky to have obtained nearly two thousand of them from a collection that was formed before 1800, when such sets could still be assembled with a fair degree of completeness.

The first important group of Italian artists to invade northern art were those whom Francis I called together to build his new-fangled palace at Fontainebleau. There, in the wooded wilderness they hated, these young Italians—mostly in their twenties and thirties—created frescoes and decorative stuccoes that were reproduced in engravings and etchings. This first sizable body of copperplate work made in France set the style that official French art has revived periodically to this day. These prints, produced for the small court circle that was then the art public of France, are so scarce today that the acquisition of some eighty of them is worth mentioning. As a kind of epilogue to this group of the Fontainebleau school, the year's accessions also include four etchings by that last and most extravagant of the mannerists, Jacques Bellange.

But perhaps the rarest of the recent purchases are some of the poster-sized wall decorations that were a specialty of sixteenth-century woodcutting in Italy and Germany. The spread of the printed book and the printed picture had by then educated a large public to new and exacting standards of taste, and the flow of silver from Peru gave ready coin to private individuals to buy many forms of art. These enormous woodcuts (one is a procession nearly fourteen feet long) were too big to save by pasting into any ordinary-sized album, and so most perished as wallpaper perishes today. The group recently acquired by the Museum has been almost miraculously well preserved in the cumbersome red morocco portfolios of an old princely print collection. The earliest of these huge woodcuts is the first printed wall decoration ever signed by a great painter, Titian's Triumph of Faith, in five big sections, in the earliest dated edition of 1517. It is the first masterpiece in the series of woodcuts through which Titian's circle revitalized woodcutting in Venice and profoundly affected it elsewhere. The irresistible onward sweep of the procession must have been widely admired, for this woodcut was often copied.

Only one of Titian's contemporaries outside Italy learned from him how to vary the scale of a woodcut line to suit the scale of the whole picture. Burgkmair's Italianate ability to subordinate details helped him to achieve a lustrous, dark, and tragic drive in his dramatic Fall of Man of 1525. It is a pity that the hugeness of this Reformation poster has resulted in its sur-
The Carcass. Engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi or Agostino Veneziano. Italian, 1520-1530. Whittelsey Fund

Danaë. Engraving by the Master L.D. School of Fontainebleau, 1540-1556. Whittelsey Fund
living in only six known impressions besides the Museum's. Another rare Burgkmair woodcut in the year's acquisitions, known in four impressions, is his charming Judith among the tents of Holofernes. The group of poster-sized woodcuts also includes rare prints which are of deep interest as records of late sixteenth-century life. One of these is a huge, and unique, print of King Arthur's court in which Jost Amman drew a kind of sampler of all the pastimes of court life as he saw it—its hunting, love-making, lute-playing, archery, and dancing. The more rarely recorded spectacle of daily life appears in detail in a wide panorama, by Tobias Stimmer, of a crossbow contest held outside Strassburg in 1576.

Besides some of the biggest prints, sixteenth-century Germany also produced some of the smallest in the work of the miniature engravers known as the Little Masters. An interesting group of almost forty of these was given by Edwin de T. Bechtel.

The most spectacular discovery among the year's acquisitions comes as the gift of Mrs. John H. Wright. This is Baldung's unpublished black chalk study for his woodcut Head of an Old Man (Curjel 32). This masterpiece of the Northern Renaissance is drawn with as passionate an energy, as sweeping an assurance as any of Baldung's two dozen surviving drawings.

The sixteenth century was the first age of prolific, varied, and personal invention in the field of ornament. Along with many ornament prints, the year's acquisitions include two remarkable series of drawings of this period which were once mounted in the same seventeenth-century scrapbook. One is a series of some seventy pen and water-color designs for tombs of a princely elaboration that emanate from some French sculptor's workshop (perhaps Germain Pilon's) of about 1575-1600. Although this seems to be by far the largest and earliest important surviving group of French sculptors' drawings, and though many of the monuments were obviously designed for the greatest in the land, it has so far been impossible to identify any of these projects from the few tombs that have survived the French Revolution. The other series from the scrapbook comes as the gift of Mrs. Anne Bigelow Scholz and Janos Scholz in memory of Flight Officer Walter Bigelow Rosen. This consists of ninety-three pen drawings of Italian renaissance buildings and architectural projects, some of which seem to be the work of Frenchmen in Italy. Many of these remarkable drawings throw light on Michelangelo's buildings, and are shortly to be published.

One of the most curious and fascinating of the groups of prints recently acquired is a collection of some two hundred title pages torn from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century books. While no modern collector would be so hard-hearted as to murder good old books, he is not above profiting by his predecessors' crimes. Since the typical mannerist or baroque book is decorated only on its title page, a collection of such pages gives a print collection almost all it wants out of a large baroque library. These title pages, often produced by the collaboration of author, publisher, painter, and engraver, represent the most deliberate artistic intentions of their time. When title pages are designed by artists like Hans Holbein, Rubens, or Bernini, they rank with the printed masterpieces of their ages.

For the eighteenth century most of the new accessions are French, which may be a proper balance since France dominated European art during that century almost as much as during the thirteenth. The most important single group consists of about one hundred and twenty-five portraits given by Joseph Verner Reed. This includes, among many rarities, a good many of the discerning and urbane profiles that Cochin drew of his contemporaries. Another Cochin etching has come by purchase—his rare and charming print of a patient lady being measured for a dress. In the intimate and sober mood of the dix-huitième are two large portraits by the pastelist Liotard, made to illustrate his treatise on painting. The effect of things half seen by twilight or in a dusky looking glass is achieved by a peculiar technique, which Liotard claims to have invented, of soft-ground etching through cloth. This interesting process has lately been revived with
The Triumph of Faith, one of five sections of a woodcut after Titian, published in Venice in 1517. Whittelsey Fund
Saint Peter Nolasco being carried, when dying, by two angels to hear mass. Engraving by Claude Mellan. French, 1627. Whittelsey Fund
Black chalk study for a woodcut by the German painter Hans Baldung. The upper right margin seems to have been dated 1507. Original size 151 x 112 mm. Gift of Mrs. John H. Wright
fine results by Stanley William Hayter and Atelier 17.

England is represented by two large, late eighteenth-century mezzotints, after Joseph Wright of Derby, that forecast the developments in industry and science of the next century. One of these is the splendid dark and sparkling Blacksmith’s Shop by Earlom, and the other is Valentine Green’s Air Pump, which shows ladies and gentlemen watching, by can-

The artist’s daughter. Etching by Jean Etienne Liotard. Swiss, 1780. Whittelsey Fund
delight, the affecting spectacle of a bird being asphyxiated. The rarest of the English prints is a group of six of the sixteen soft-ground etchings by Gainsborough. These landscapes, which sold in 1797 for sixpence apiece, have sometimes survived in one recorded impression. At the time they were criticized for their simplicity, but today they delight with the deft assurance that is required for this technique.

The chief purchase of eighteenth-century Italian work consists of the rarest set of views of the time, G. F. Costa's Delizie del Fiume Brenta of the 1750's. This series of one hundred and forty etchings in the manner of Canaletto carries one up the Brenta as though one were drifting in the horse-drawn omnibus barge that used to pass rococo villas fenced with allegorical statues, surrounded by meanders of box, and crowned by urns spouting stone flames. These architectural follies, which Guardi loved to draw, achieved the final ruin of many a Venetian fortune.

For the nineteenth century the acquisitions have been fewer, but many of them are of the highest interest. From the estate of Alfred Stieglitz the Museum received, through Georgia O'Keeffe, a fine group of his photographs that rounds out our representation of his work to include all its phases. Selections from his comprehensive collection of John Marin's etchings, which were given at the same time, will be shown in the summer exhibition of the last fifty years of American art. The present show includes some of the very fine Toulouse-Lautrec lithographs that also came as a gift of the Stieglitz estate, among which the set of Elles
Color lithograph, one of a set called Elles, by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1896. The Alfred Stieglitz collection
deserves particular mention for its wonderful freshness. Mrs. Imrie de Vegh gave several of Mary Cassatt's sensitive etched portraits and three extremely rare etchings by Degas, among them the most intense and brutal of his portraits of Manet. Victorian England is represented by very fine proof impressions of about one hundred and fifty engravings of contemporary life. These large prints of royal weddings, the Queen inspecting the Great Exhibition, the Queen riding at Osborne will form the nucleus of a print exhibition that is planned for 1951, when England will celebrate the centenary of the Crystal Palace. These once common prints now rarely occur in good condition because many are too large to go into ordinary portfolios without folding and those that have survived in frames are sunburned and stained. As an American equivalent the Museum also bought three of the big handsome lithographs that were made in Paris after Mount's paintings. The panorama of American interests appears in wide variety in the nineteenth-century cigarette insert cards, of which J. R. Burdick has given the Museum a remarkably well-selected collection.

One curious discovery deserves to be mentioned: a small portfolio of ill-printed, smudgy etchings by R. C. Lucas, the British sculptor who is supposed to have made the wax bust of Flora that the Berlin Museum bought as a Leonardo da Vinci. The notoriety of this scandal has distracted attention from the large amount of work that Lucas accomplished in a lonely building near Southampton, known as the Tower of the Winds. His amateurish etchings seem to have been made under the compulsion of nightmare, with a black imagination that reminds one of Bresdin.

The most heartening aspect of the year's accessions is the fact that so many of the prints do not duplicate the holdings of other American collections, and therefore enrich the artistic resources available in the United States.