Background
As a prelude to their careers as prominent Sovietologists, William F. and Harriett Fast Scott first began collecting research materials during then-Col. Scott’s first assignment as air attaché in Moscow, 1962 through 1964. Harriet Scott characterizes this period as “full of ups and downs, and plenty of excitement. We had an inside view of the Soviet Union during a time that began with the Cuban Missile Crisis and ended with the ouster of Nikita Khrushchev.” Both of the Scotts had taken intensive Russian language courses before arriving in Moscow, and this made their purchase of books and journals there and in other cities much easier during their two assignments to Moscow, and during numerous subsequent visits as late as 2002. Through their Soviet contacts they were actually able to acquire “bezplatno” materials meant only for internal distribution in the military, so that UK Libraries now holds quite a few one-of-a-kind resources. Besides these purchases, the collection was boosted by gifts from the Library of Congress and several U.S. defense installations.

The Scotts’ associate and close friend, Gertrude Schroeder Greenslade, was a Soviet economic expert who likewise spent many years researching in Moscow and Eastern Europe, eventually accepting a professorship at the University of Virginia.

Features
The publications—well over 15,000 volumes—range from books printed during the entire Soviet era, beginning with Revolution and Civil War periods (1917-1921), to journals and encyclopedia sets that appeared during the ascendancy of Gorbachev and his programs of glasnost and perestroika, as well as post-Soviet publications into the 1990s.

Among the important runs of official journals, books, maps, and posters, one can find:

1. A scarce, complete Soviet military encyclopedia set, plus editions of both compact and multivolume Soviet general encyclopedias
2. A 1942 field manual detailing the mounting of an anti-tank gun on a horse.
3. Several editions of naval terminology and slang dictionaries, updated for currency.
4. Three different multivolume histories of the Great Patriotic War (WWII). The veneration of the victories and losses of this war constituted the Soviet state religion, which persists in the Russia of today. Many thousands of monuments were built all over the country, some resembling shrines to martyred saints
Features—continued

5. Several starkly-designed, early and mid-1960s Intourist posters enticing Americans to tour the USSR, including the Central Asian City of Tashkent—now rebuilt after the 1966 earthquake and ready for visitors. A large, laminated campaign map of the Great Patriotic War.

6. Collected works of such literary giants as Leonid Brezhnev and Konstantin Chernenko, whose hard-working ghost-writers will never receive the credit due them.

7. Propaganda and discipline-engendering classroom aids.

8. Training poster sets detailing proper hygiene, uniform care, formation marching, the construction of urban and rural bomb shelters, and much, much more.

9. Biographies of both notable and humble Soviet military figures.

10. Hundreds of tactical and strategic studies of battles won by Soviet forces, full of details, charts, and maps unavailable in most Western accounts.

11. Political handbooks for soldiers and officers at all ratings and ranks, as well as “teachers’ editions” for each unit’s political indoctrination officer to employ in “keeping the faith.”

Audience
Scholars from areas such as history, political science, international economics, military studies, as well as sociology, anthropology, policy studies, and economics will find much of value in this collective, exhaustive case study of what once was considered the most fearsome power on earth, and despite whose relatively sudden absence will nonetheless continue to inform Russia’s self-identity for some time to come. The intellectual, political, social, and historical record of this now mostly defunct entity is preserved in this collection.

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