

Saturday Evening Post periodical collection
RC.2011.2



Norman Rockwell Museum Archives - Reference Center Collection
Processed in 2011

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Summary Information

Repository	Norman Rockwell Museum Archives - Reference Center Collection
Title	Saturday Evening Post periodical collection
Date	1834-1973
Extent	70.0 Linear feet
Contact	Norman Rockwell Museum Archival Collections, The Norman Rockwell Museum, 9 Glendale Road, Route 183 Stockbridge, MA 01262, 413-931-2251 Venus@nrm.org
Language	English
Abstract	This large collection contains over 300 Saturday Evening Post magazines featuring Norman Rockwell covers and illustrations.

Preferred Citation

Saturday Evening Post Periodical Collection. Norman Rockwell Museum Archival Collections, Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA.

Norman Rockwell

Norman Percevel Rockwell, son of Jarvis Waring and Anne Mary 'Nancy' Rockwell, was born on February 3, 1894 at the corner of 206 West 103rd Street in New York City. When Rockwell was nine years old, he and his family moved to the nearby suburb of Mamaroneck, New York. He was enrolled at Mamaroneck High School, but left after his sophomore year to attend at the National Academy of Design, followed by two years spent at the Art Students League.

Still in his teens, Norman Rockwell produced his first published illustrations for Fanny E. Coe's 1912 young adult book, *Founders of Our Country*. He continued to find success with issuers of youth literature as in "Tell Me Why" *Stories and Boys' Life* magazine. In 1916, Rockwell traveled to Philadelphia where he presented his work to Saturday Evening Post editor-in-chief, George Horace Lorimer. The experience was a triumph and he quickly became a regular contributor to the publication. Steady income from the popular weekly periodical supported Rockwell's decision to wed Irene O'Connor and leave the confines of his parents' boarding house quarters. However the union would not last, and was ended by divorce in 1929. Shortly thereafter, Rockwell was introduced to Mary Barstow, a California schoolteacher, and within weeks of meeting, the couple was wed in 1930. They made their home together in New Rochelle, New York and started a family, becoming parents to three sons—Jarvis, Thomas, and Peter. In 1939, the Rockwells relocated to Arlington, Vermont, a rural community which proved to be the ideal setting for some of the artist's most enduring images of American life, including the 1943 Four Freedoms series.

The family moved again in 1953, settling in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Six years later, heart failure unexpectedly took Mary Rockwell's life. In collaboration with his son Thomas, Rockwell published his autobiography, *My Adventures as an Illustrator*, in 1960. On the advice of friend and analyst Erik Erikson, Rockwell remarried to Molly Punderson, a retired teacher, in the fall of 1961.

His last cover for *The Saturday Evening Post* was published two years later, in 1963. Seeking a venue for more socially conscious illustrations, Rockwell began generating artwork for *Look* magazine in 1964, an association which continued for ten years.

In 1973, Rockwell established a trust to preserve his artistic legacy by placing his works in the custodianship of the Old Corner House Stockbridge Historical Society, later to become the Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge. The trust now forms the core of the Museum's permanent collections. In 1976, Rockwell became concerned about the future of his studio. He arranged to have the structure and its contents added to the trust.

In 1977, Rockwell was awarded the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In his eighties, his pace slowed with the onset of cataracts and emphysema. Years of smoking his signature pipe had taken its toll, and on November 8, 1978, Rockwell passed away at home.

Saturday Evening Post

The modern era of the Saturday Evening Post began in 1897 when famed magazine publisher, Cyrus H. K. Curtis, purchased the magazine for one thousand dollars. Curtis, who also founded The Ladies Home Journal, was well aware of the distinguished legacy of the publication. The legendary George Horace Lorimer, who served as editor from 1899-1936, grew the Post from 2,000 copies sold per year to over three million by the end of his tenure. Under his leadership, The Saturday Evening Post became the first magazine ever to reach 1,000,000 copies sold. It was Lorimer who conceived of changing the cover from appearing as page one of the magazine to a distinct cover featuring artwork or illustrations. His innovation fueled the popularity of magazine advertising as well as the success of the Post.

Furthering the advent of the magazine cover, the Post continued to distinguish itself through its cover artwork. These covers, the most famous of which were painted by Norman Rockwell, connected readers intimately with the magazine as a whole. Americans everywhere recognized the art of the Post and eagerly awaited the next issue because of it. On the editorial side, the Post featured short stories and commentary by such famous authors as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sinclair Lewis, Ring Lardner, and many others. Other notable cover illustrators include J.C. Leyendecker, N.C. Wyeth, Charles Livingston Bull, and John E. Sheridan.

Scope and Contents

The magazines in this collection span the more than 40 year period that Norman Rockwell worked for the Post creating cover art. All of his most memorable works are represented, including Rockwell's first Post cover "Boy and Baby Carriage." Also present are two very early editions of the Post from the 1800's. These are in a newspaper type format and are vastly different from the Post's familiar masthead covers depicting scenes from everyday America.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in chronological order.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

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Access

This collection is open to researchers by appointment.

Copyright

Norman Rockwell Museum abides by US copyright law. Even though Norman Rockwell personally contributed his paintings and archival materials to the Museum, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3), publicity/personality rights to his name and likeness belong to the Rockwell family, managed by the Norman Rockwell Licensing Company. Some materials in both collections created prior to 1923 are considered to be in the public domain.

The collections are in the legal care and custody of the Museum and its staff, and are governed by an independent Board of Trustees. There is no legal affiliation between the Museum and various intellectual property rights holders of materials kept by the Museum or with Rockwell's family.

Regarding copies or other reproductions, NRM reserves the right to refuse a copying request if in its judgment fulfilling that request will violate copyright law (Title 17, United States Code). It is the legal responsibility of the researcher to secure permission to publish from the institution with custody of the material as well as the owner of copyright.

Related Materials

Separated Materials

One box of materials containing magazines for the years 1959-1961 has been stored separately from the collection due to active mold.

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- Art

Personal Name(s)

- Norman Rockwell, 1894-1978

Subject(s)

- Illustrators--United States.
- Magazine illustration

•Saturday Evening Post