



Norman Rockwell Collection of *Saturday Evening Post* Covers, 1919-1976

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the
Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Acquisition Information

Gift of Richard Wayne Lykes

Extent

3 linear feet

Contents

Covers, tear sheets, illustrations

Access Restrictions

Unrestricted

Contact Information

Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives
Delaware Art Museum
2301 Kentmere Parkway
Wilmington, DE 19806
(302) 571-9590
hfslibrary@delart.org

Preferred Citation

Norman Rockwell Collection of *Saturday Evening Post* Covers, 1919-1976, Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, Delaware Art Museum

Table of Contents

History of *The Saturday Evening Post*

Biography of Norman Rockwell and *The Saturday Evening Post*

Scope and Contents Note

Description of the Collection

History of *The Saturday Evening Post*

The first edition of the *Saturday Evening Post* was published by Philadelphia printers Charles Alexander and William Coate Atkinson on August 4, 1821. This four page newspaper with no illustrations served as light reading before the existence of Sunday newspapers.

In 1839, George Rex Graham was employed as editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*. With the help of Charles J. Peterson, Graham expanded the newspaper and turned it into one of the country's most popular papers. By 1855 the newspaper had a circulation of 90,000.

The *Saturday Evening Post* was experiencing serious financial difficulties and suffered a sharp decline by the late-1890s. In October 1897 Cyrus H. K. Curtis, the owner of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, purchased the newspaper for \$1,000. Curtis hired George Horace Lorimer to redesign and edit the weekly publication.

Curtis created a mythology behind the founding of the *Saturday Evening Post*. He claimed Benjamin Franklin founded, edited and printed the then called *Pennsylvania Gazette* from 1729 to 1765, when he sold his share. After changes in ownership the newspaper was named the *Saturday Evening Post* in summer of 1821. Curtis altered the founding date from 1821 to 1728 and magazine volume from 77 to 170.

In January 1898 the *Saturday Evening Post* reappeared as a magazine featuring articles on current events, popular fiction, human interest, and editorials with an illustration on every page. Lorimer purchased publication rights for different literary works by authors such as Jack London, Rudyard Kipling, and Theodore Dreiser. He commissioned artists such as N.C. Wyeth and J.C. Leyendecker to illustrate the magazine.

Throughout the early to mid-20th Century circulation steadily increased, reaching a high of seven million by 1961. The *Post's* popularity declined in the late 1960s, due in part to a shift in American readership as well as the loss of a monumental libel case brought against Curtis Publishing Company. In 1970 industrialist and entrepreneur Dr. Beurt SerVass purchased *the Saturday Evening Post*. It is now published bi-monthly by the Benjamin Franklin Literary & Medical Society and features health and medical articles for the lay reader.

Biography of Norman Rockwell and *The Saturday Evening Post*

Norman Rockwell was born in New York on February 3, 1894. Rockwell showed a proclivity toward drawing at a young age and studied at the Chase School of Fine Art, the National Academy of Design in New York (1909), and the Art Students League (1910).

By age 16 he was earning his first commission doing cards and illustrations. While a student he began having his drawings published in *Boys' Life* magazine and was made art director at age 19.

Rockwell traveled to Philadelphia in March 1916 to meet George Horace Lorimer, the editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Lorimer immediately accepted two of Rockwell's paintings as covers for the magazine and commissioned three more.

Having joined the US Navy during World War I, Rockwell continued to paint for the *Saturday Evening Post* as well as working for US Navy publications. Rockwell returned to full-time illustrating after the war's end.

In 1941 President Franklin D. Roosevelt made his State of the Union address to Congress setting out the "four essential human freedoms," outlining the reasons for United States support of the Allied nations in the Second World War. Rockwell decided to paint images of the freedoms for the *Saturday Evening Post*. These paintings were finished and published in 1943. The paintings portrayed Freedom of Worship, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Want, and Freedom from Fear.

The Federal government took the original paintings of the Four Freedoms on a national tour to help sell war bonds. The paintings were seen by over one million people and were instrumental in selling over \$132 million worth of bonds.

Rockwell's paintings were realistic in style, idealizing rural and small town America. His models were often his neighbors in Arlington, Vermont. His paintings during wartime focused on the home front, capturing the war's effect on everyday lives of the soldiers and their families.

Rockwell's last of 317 covers for *Saturday Evening Post* was featured on the December 1963 issue. The magazine decided to abandon paintings on its front cover. Rockwell continued to work for other magazines such as *Look* and *McCall's*. Rockwell died on November 8, 1978.

Sources:

<http://www.curtispublishing.com/sep.htm> (accessed July 29, 2008)

<http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/resources/magazine/history.shtml> (accessed July 29, 2008)

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAsaturday.htm>. (accessed November 15, 2005)

<http://www.scripophily.net/curpubcom.html> (accessed November 15, 2005)

<http://www.answers.com/topic/saturday-evening-post> (accessed November 15, 2005)

<http://www.satevepost.org> (accessed November 15, 2005)

Scope and Contents Note

The Norman Rockwell Collection of *Saturday Evening Post* Covers was compiled by Richard Wayne Lykes. The collection includes a signed letter from Rockwell to Lykes, complementing Lykes on the arrangement of the collection of his work. Rockwell signed the collection and returned it to Lykes, who later donated it to the Museum.

Description of the Collection

Box 1 – *The Saturday Evening Post* Covers, 1919-1939

December 20, 1919 (partial) – [Gramp Encounter]
December 4, 1920 (partial) – [Santa]
December 3, 1921 (partial) – [Merrie Christmas]
December 8, 1923 (partial) – Christmas Trio
August 29, 1925 – Asleep on the Job
February 6, 1926 – Colonial Sign Painter
February 6, 1926 (partial) – Colonial Sign Painter
April 24, 1926 (partial) – Sunset
August 14, 1926 (partial) – Bookworm
December 4, 1926 (partial) – Santa's Good Boys (Santa at the Globe)
January 8, 1927 (partial) – Back to School
February 19, 1927 – The Law Student (Young Lawyer)
June 4, 1927 (partial) – Young Artist
August 13, 1927 (partial) – Dreams of Long Ago
December 3, 1927 (partial) – Christmas 1927
May 5, 1928 (partial) – Hikers
June 23, 1928 (partial) – Wedding March
July 21, 1928 (partial) – Hayseed Critic
August 18, 1928 (partial) – Hobo Stealing Pie
September 22, 1928 (partial) – Serenade
December 8, 1928 (partial) – Merrie Christmas
January 12, 1929 (partial) – Three Gossips

February 16, 1929 (partial) – Dreams
March 9, 1929 (partial) – Doctor and Doll
April 20, 1929 (partial) – Welcome to Elmville
June 15, 1929 (partial) – No Peeking
November 2, 1929 (partial) – Jazz it Up
December 7, 1929 – Merrie Christmas
December 7, 1929 – Merrie Christmas
January 18, 1930 (partial) – Stock Exchange Quotations
March 22, 1930 (partial) – Card Tricks (Magician)
July 19, 1930 (partial) – Gone Fishing
July 19, 1930 (partial) – Gone Fishing
August 23, 1930 (partial) – Breakfast Table
September 13, 1930 (partial) – Home from Vacation
December 1930 (partial) – Christmas
April 18, 1931 (partial) – Delivering Two Busts
June 13, 1931 (partial) – Cramming
July 21, 1931 (partial) – Milkmaid
September 5, 1931 (partial) – Croquet (Wicket Thoughts)
November 7, 1931 (partial) – Trumpeter
December 12, 1931 (partial) – Merry Christmas (Three Musicians)
December 12, 1931 – Merry Christmas (Three Musicians)
January 30, 1932 (partial) – Boulevard Haussmann (Lost in Paris)
October 22, 1932 (partial) – Marionettes
December 10, 1932 – Merry Christmas
December 10, 1932 – Merry Christmas
April 8, 1933 – Springtime 1933
April 8, 1933 – Springtime 1933
June 17, 1933 – Diary
August 5, 1933 (partial) – Summertime 1933
December 16, 1933 (partial) – Rocking Horse (Gramps Joins the Fun)

April 21, 1934 (partial) – Spirit of Education
May 19, 1934 (partial) – Bargaining with Antique Dealer
June 30, 1934 (partial) – Summer Vacation 1934
September 22, 1934 (partial) – Boy Gazing at Cover Girls
October 20, 1934 (partial) – On Top of the World
December 15, 1934 (partial) – Tiny Tim (God Bless Us Everyone)
February 9, 1935 – Signpainter
April 27, 1935 – Springtime 1935
July 13, 1935 – Exhilaration
September 14, 1935 – First Day of School (Back to School)
November 16, 1935 – Autumn Stroll
November 16, 1935 – Autumn Stroll
December 21, 1935 – Santa at His Desk
December 21, 1935 – Santa at His Desk
January 25, 1936 – Puppy in the Pocket (Big Moment) (The Gift)
January 25, 1936 – Puppy in the Pocket (Big Moment) (The Gift)
March 7, 1936 – Hollywood Starlet
April 25, 1936 – Springtime 1936
April 25, 1936 – Springtime 1936
May 30, 1936 – Medicine Giver (Take Your Medicine)
May 30, 1936 – Medicine Giver (Take Your Medicine)
July 11, 1936 – On Top of the World
July 11, 1936 – On Top of the World
July 11, 1936 – On Top of the World
September 26, 1936 – Barbershop Quartet
October 24, 1936 (partial) – Exasperated Nanny
November 21, 1936 – Overheard Lovers
November 21, 1936 – Overheard Lovers
December 19, 1936 – Feast for a Traveler
January 23, 1937 – Missing the Dance

April 24, 1937 – Ticket Agent
June 12, 1937 – Gaiety Dance Team
July 31, 1937 – At the Auction (Found Treasure)
October 2, 1937 – Spilled the Paint (Road Liner Painter's Problem)
December 25, 1937 – White Christmas
February 19, 1938 – Movie Star
April 23, 1938 – See America First
June 4, 1938 – First Flight (Airplane Trip)
October 8, 1938 – Self – Portrait ((Artist Facing Blank Canvas (Deadline)))
December 17, 1938 – Merrie Christmas (Muggleston Coach)
February 11, 1939 – Jester
March 18, 1939 – Pharmacist
April 29, 1939 – Sport
July 8, 1939 – 100th Year of Baseball (100th Anniversary of Baseball)
August 5, 1939 – Summer stock
September 2, 1939 – Marbles Champion (Knuckles Down) (Marble Players)
November 4, 1939 – Sheriff and Prisoner
December 16, 1939 – Santa at the Map

Box 2 – *The Saturday Evening Post* Covers, 1940-1976

Letter from Norman Rockwell to Richard Wayne Lykes, July 30, 1946. Signed by Rockwell in green ink.

March 30, 1940 – Decorator
April 27, 1940 – Census Taker
May 18, 1940 – Full Treatment
July 13, 1940 – Joys of Summer
August 24, 1940 – Home from Camp
November 30, 1940 – Hitchhiker to Miami
December 28, 1940 – Santa on a Train
March 1, 1941 – Cover Girl
May 3, 1941 – Hatcheck Girl

July 26, 1941 – Two Flirts
October 4, 1941 – Willie Gillis' Package from Home
November 29, 1941 – Willie Gillis Home on Leave
December 20, 1941 – Newsstand in the Snow
February 7, 1942 – Willie Gillis at the U.S.O.
March 21, 1942 – Boy Reading his Sister's Diary
April 11, 1942 – Willie Gillis on K.P.
June 27, 1942 – Willie Gillis in a Blackout
July 25, 1942 (partial) – Willie Gillis in Church
November 28, 1942 – Thanksgiving Day Blues
December 26, 1942 – Santa's in the News
April 3, 1943 – April Fool's 1943
May 29, 1943 – Rosie the Riveter
June 26, 1943 – Willie's Rope Trick
November 27, 1943 – Refugee Thanksgiving
January 1, 1944 – New Year's Eve
March 4, 1944 – Tattoo Artist
April 29, 1944 – Armchair General
May 27, 1944 – No Smoking
July 1, 1944 – War Bond
August 12, 1944 – Travel Experience
September 16, 1944 – Willie Gillis Generations
November 4, 1944 – Undecided
December 23, 1944 – Union Train Station, Chicago, Christmas
March 17, 1945 (partial) – Income Taxes
March 31, 1945 – April Fool 1945
May 26, 1945 – Homecoming G.I.
August 11, 1945 – Swimming Hole
September 15, 1945 – On Leave
October 13, 1945 – Homecoming Marine

November 3, 1945 – Clock Mender

November 24, 1945 – Home for Thanksgiving (Thanksgiving: Mother and Son Peeling Potatoes)

December 15, 1945 – Imperfect Fit

December 29, 1945 – Happy New Year

March 2, 1946 – Picture Hanger

April 6, 1946 – Charwoman

July 6, 1946 – Working on the Statue of Liberty

August 3, 1946 – Changing a Flat

October 5, 1946 – Willie Gillis in College

November 16, 1946 – Commuters (Crestwood Train Station)

December 7, 1946 – Boy in a Dining Car

January 11, 1947 – Piano Tuner

March 22, 1947 – First Crocus

May 3, 1947 – Circus Artist

August 16, 1947 – High Dive

August 30, 1947 – Going and Coming

November 8, 1947 – Baby Sitter (Babysitter with Screaming Infant)

March 6, 1948 – Gossips

April 3, 1948 – April Fool, 1948 (Curiosity Shop)

May 15, 1948 – Bridge Game

September 4, 1948 – The Dugout

October 30, 1948 – Dewey Vs Truman

December 25, 1948 – Christmas Homecoming

March 19, 1949 – Prom Dress

April 23, 1949 – Three Umpires (Game Called Because of Rain) (Tough Call)

July 9, 1949 – Road Block

November 5, 1949 – New T.V. Set (New Television Antenna)

March 29, 1952 – Waiting for the Vet

March 6, 1954 – Girl at the Mirror

March 12, 1955 – Nine Rockwell Post Covers

March 12, 1955 – Nine Rockwell Post Covers

August 20, 1955 – Mermaid

April 1, 1961 – Golden Rule

October 1976 –

Box 3 – Advertisements, Articles, Reproductions, etc.

Advertisements

Calendars

Saturday Evening Post

War Advertising Council

Bell Telephone System

Watchmakers of Switzerland

Pan American

Stories and Articles – by Norman Rockwell

“Norman Rockwell visits a country school,” *Saturday Evening Post*, November 2, 1946

“Norman Rockwell visits a country editor,” *Saturday Evening Post*

“Norman Rockwell visits a county agent,” *Saturday Evening Post*

“Norman Rockwell visits a family doctor,” *Saturday Evening Post*

“Norman Rockwell visits a ration board,” *Saturday Evening Post*

“So you want to see the president,” *Saturday Evening Post*

“All kinds of love,” *American Weekly*, October 24, 1954

Stories, Poems, and Essays – Illustrated by Norman Rockwell

“Freedom of speech” – Book Tarkington, *Saturday Evening Post*, 1943

“Freedom of worship” – Will Durant, *Saturday Evening Post*, 1943

“Freedom from want” – Carlos Bulosan, *Saturday Evening Post*, March 6, 1943

“You’ll marry me a noon” – Vina Delmar, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, January 1945

“The long shadow of Lincoln” – Carl Sandburg, *Saturday Evening Post*, February 10, 1945

“The ship” – C.S. Forester, *Ladies’ Home Journal*

“Lab-lie-by-the-fire” – Elizabeth Goudge

“The death of the G-A-R” – MacKinlay Kantor

Reproductions of Paintings

The Tavern Sign – Saturday Evening Post, February 22, 1936

Maternity Waiting Room – Saturday Evening Post, July 13, 1946

American at the Polls – Saturday Evening Post

The Land of Enchantment – Saturday Evening Post

The Christmas Coach – Saturday Evening Post (2 copies)

The Love Song

The Book of Romance

The Christmas Reunion

Treasures

Christmas Coach

Harvest Moon

Untitled Paintings for *The Saturday Evening Post*

Boy shining shoes with woman peeling apples

Boy and mother visiting doctor (2 copies)

Three men at piano (piano tuner) (2 copies)

Mother and daughter curling hair, December 18, 1937 (2 copies)

Boy and two men in a waiting room (2 copies)

Old woman and girl having tea

Parents putting sons to bed

Colonial woman with bundle at feet

Cover of *Boy's Life*, February 1937

Cartoon Sketches for *The Saturday Evening Post*

“My studio burns down”

“A night on a troop train with the paratroopers”

Box 4 – Miscellaneous Illustrations

Folder

- 1 Advertisements
- 2 Catalog sales
- 3 Advertisements, Cream of Kentucky
- 4 *Boys' Life*, February 1926
- 5 Calendar material
- 6 Story of Louisa May Alcott and "Little Women"
- 7 Illustrated stories
- 8 Unidentified story illustrations
- 9 Reproductions
- 10 Untitled reproductions