

This Day in History... November 8, 1978

Death of Acclaimed Illustrator Norman Rockwell

On November 8, 1978, the world lost one of its most prolific artists – Norman Rockwell.

Norman Rockwell was born in New York, New York in 1894. His illustrations were first published in *Founders of Our Country* in 1912. That same year, he was hired as a staff artist for *Boys' Life* magazine, the official publication of the Boy Scouts of America. In this role, he received \$50 a month to produce a cover and a set of story illustrations. The following year at just 19 years old, Rockwell was promoted to art editor for the magazine. In addition to creating his own art for the publication, he also supervised the work assigned to other artists.

Soon, other publishers began to hire him to illustrate children's books and magazines. He continued to work for *Boys' Life* until 1916, when he received a coveted position with *The Saturday Evening Post*. During his tenure at the *Post*, Rockwell also did illustrations for the American Red Cross' monthly magazine. He continued to include images of Boy Scouts in his work for both of these publications.



Stamp pictures Rockwell's Doctor and Doll which appeared on the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1929.



Rockwell worked with the scouts longer than any other organization.

In all, Rockwell created over 4,000 works, including 321 *Saturday Evening Post* covers. He also illustrated covers for many other magazines including *Family Circle*, *Life*, *McCall's*, *Popular Science*, and *TV Guide*.

Although good training, technique and meticulous research all played a part, much of his popularity is due to the sensitivity and deep affection he brought to his subjects. Author Robin Langley Sommer stated, "His feeling for the beauty and importance of everyday life was of a rare order, and his ability to make others feel it as well was surely not far removed from genius. This gift for perceiving what E.B. White called the glory of everything is Norman Rockwell's most enduring legacy."



Rockwell's famous Triple Self-Portrait, created in 1960.



In the 1930s, Rockwell was commissioned to paint scenes from the Mark Twain novels *Tom Sawyer* and *Huck Finn*.



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