

# PRINTING FOR THE MODERN AGE

Commerce, Craft, and Culture in  
the RR Donnelley Archive

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY

2006



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KIM COVENTRY

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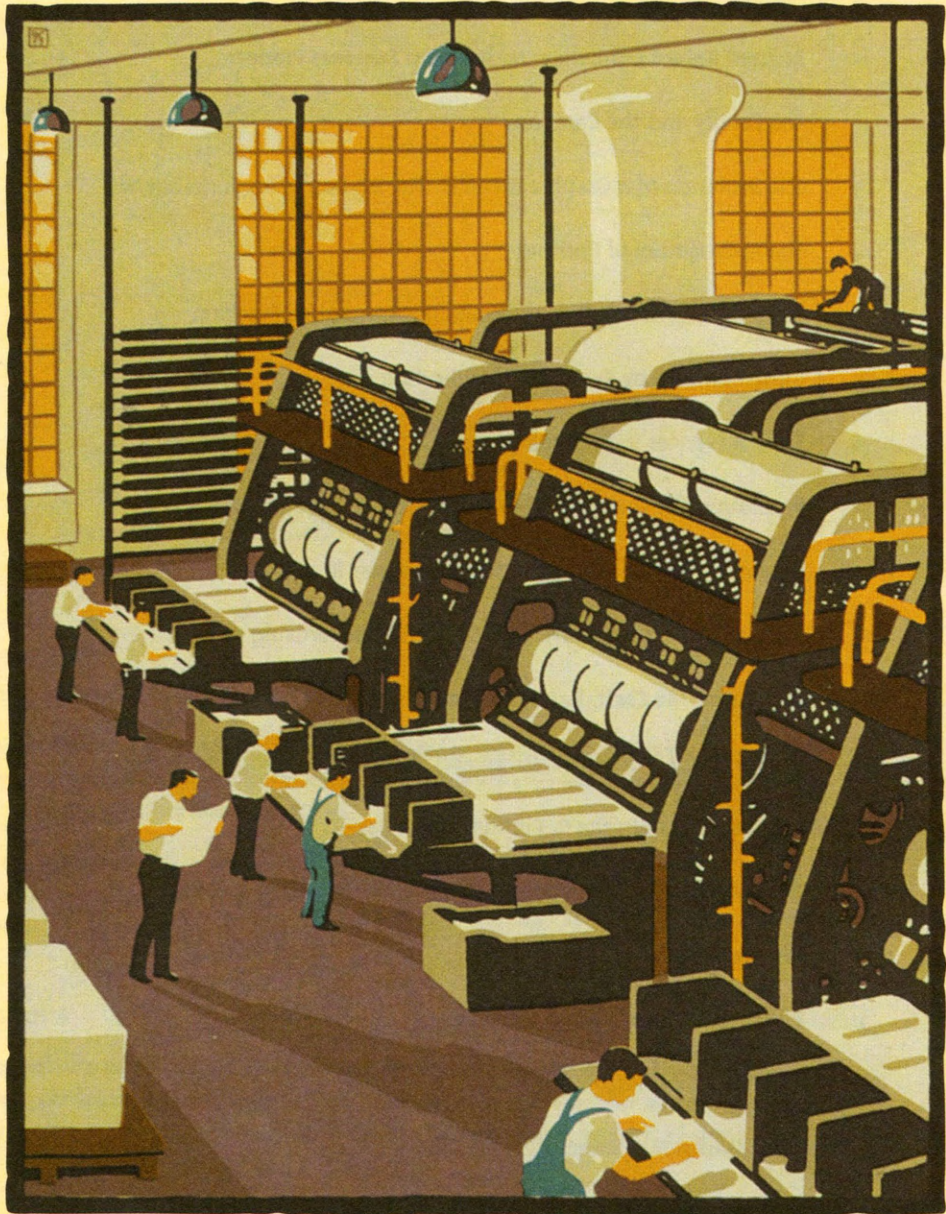


Front cover: *Detail from a 1929 brochure illustrated by graphic designer Rudolph Ruzicka, which featured RR Donnelley's recently completed plant at Calumet Avenue and 22nd Street.*

Frontispiece: *Women replaced men in many manufacturing jobs during World War II including work at the delivery end of RR Donnelley's large gravure presses, as seen here.*

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*Part of a series issued between 1921 and 1929, The Lakeside Press was designed under the direction of William A. Kittredge, RR Donnelley's head of graphic design. This and other illustrations in the booklet were by Richard Fayerweather Babcock.*



## FOREWORD

### “Printing for the Modern Age: Commerce, Craft, and Culture in the RR Donnelley Archive,”

the exhibition which this publication accompanies, explores the enormous impact that printing technology and print media have had on modern life. Materials in the exhibition are drawn from the RR Donnelley Archive, the historic corporate archive of R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, the Chicago-based firm that has become the “largest provider of print and print-related products and services in the world.”

Since its founding more than 140 years ago, RR Donnelley has produced a remarkable range of printed material. Retail catalogs, books, encyclopedias, illustrated popular magazines, and color-printed advertising for corporate customers have all originated at RR Donnelley. The company’s impressive industrial capacity has been matched by a strong interest in quality craftsmanship based on the expert work of its typographers, printers, and binders and the success of the Donnelley apprenticeship training program.

The cumulative impact of RR Donnelley on modern American life has been equally extraordinary. In nearly every aspect of home or business life, Americans have encountered RR Donnelley-printed products—Sears, Ward’s or Penney’s retail catalogs, city telephone directories, magazines from *Time*, *Life*, and *Business Week* to *Sunset* and *National Geographic*, best-selling books from trade publishers such as Random House and Penguin and sets of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* or *World Book*, promotional circulars in the local newspaper and direct-mail advertising, financial documents and corporate publications—all printed by RR Donnelley or with RR Donnelley technology and, increasingly in more recent decades, delivered directly to consumers by the company.

These printed products and their complex relationship to modern American society, along with many other topics, will now be available for detailed study and research through the RR Donnelley Archive. Presented as a gift to the University of Chicago in 2005 and housed in the Special Collections Research Center of the University of Chicago Library, the RR Donnelley Archive preserves a fascinating array of original historical materials dating from the mid-nineteenth to the late twentieth century. In the RR Donnelley Archive, researchers will find documentation of technical processes and printed formats; sketches by RR Donnelley book designers and illustrators; correspondence from company managers and craftsmen; documentary photographs of printing technology and RR Donnelley’s near South Side Chicago neighborhood; records of the group life of RR Donnelley employees; and artifacts of the modern printing trades and RR Donnelley company history.

The Archive offers great potential for students and scholars in modern social and cultural history, the history of printing and the graphic arts, the history of advertising and mass consumption, economic and labor history, Chicago urban and community history, and modern cultural studies, among many other fields. The RR Donnelley Archive also illuminates the enduring connection between successive generations of the Donnelley family and the broader Chicago civic and cultural community of which R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company has been such an important part.

The University of Chicago Library wishes to express its deep appreciation to RR Donnelley for the generous gift of its corporate Archive. It is particularly appropriate that the Archive will be preserved and made available for research at the University of Chicago. Members of the Donnelley family have been generous supporters of the University for more than a century. Richard Robert Donnelley was among the first officers of the University of Chicago Press when it was incorporated in 1892, and R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company subsequently printed many of the books and other publications that established the Press as a leading academic publisher. Three members of the Donnelley family have served successively as members of the Board of Trustees of the University of Chicago: Thomas E. Donnelley, son of Richard Robert; Gaylord Donnelley, grandson; and Strachan Donnelley, great-grandson of the founder of RR Donnelley.

In the Special Collections Research Center, the unique research resources of the RR Donnelley Archive will be further enhanced by the company's earlier gift of volumes from the RR Donnelley Training Department Library, a donation highlighted in *The Printer's Craft: An Exhibition Selected from the R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company Collection* (University of Chicago Library, 1982).

The Library is grateful to RR Donnelley for ensuring that both the Archive and the Training Department collection will be preserved for scholars, students, teachers, and others pursuing research on the world of modern printing.

The research and writing for *Printing for the Modern Age* was undertaken by Kim Coventry, who worked with the corporate archives at RR Donnelley as curatorial consultant for fourteen years; Kim brought to the project a detailed understanding of RR Donnelley's corporate history and an extensive knowledge of the collection. Additional research and writing for the exhibition was provided by Maija Anderson, Archives and Manuscripts Accessions Manager in Special Collections. Kerri Sancomb, Exhibition Specialist in Special Collections, designed and installed the exhibition with characteristic style. The Library is grateful to the RR Donnelley Foundation for supporting the publication of this catalog.

**DANIEL MEYER**

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS RESEARCH CENTER

## PREFACE

In 1993, RR Donnelley undertook a major initiative to arrange, describe, and preserve its historical records and to make them broadly accessible far into the future. During the course of this effort, it became apparent that the materials had significance beyond the company. Spanning from the nineteenth century into the twentieth, these materials contribute an important chapter to the history of printing's influence on commerce, craft, and culture in the past 145 years. No less important is the very specific contribution the collection makes to the history of Chicago.

Countless episodes documenting RR Donnelley's role in the development of and impact on mass communication are to be found in the Archive. This impact was broadened when, in 2004, RR Donnelley acquired Moore Wallace, whose activities include short run commercial printing, statement processing, corporate identity, labels, and business forms. Its long reach can be seen in one example of an everyday chain of events that begins when an individual purchases a Sunday newspaper in a bookstore, which will likely include an advertising circular (printed by RR Donnelley) featuring books (also printed by RR Donnelley). If a yellow- or white-pages directory is used to find the bookstore (which itself will be full of bestsellers, magazines, illustrated books, paperbacks, travel guides, and other trade books printed by RR Donnelley), it was most likely printed by the company. If the purchaser of the newspaper pays for it with a credit card, he or she will receive a register receipt and later a credit-card statement with advertising stuffers, all printed and mailed by RR Donnelley. A similar scenario could be written for almost every transaction that involves the vehicles of mass printed communication. With recent acquisitions and expanded capabilities on four continents, RR Donnelley's printed products and services have become ubiquitous throughout the world.

This exhibition is intended to showcase the important historical materials in the Archive, which are particularly strong in the period from 1900 to 1970. As such, this exhibition is not a history of the company in full as much as a means to whet the appetite of researchers, who, now that the company Archive is at the University of Chicago, will find it a broad and valuable resource.

**KIM COVENTRY**



*Church, Goodman & Donnelly, located at 108/110 Dearborn Street, was by the 1870s among the largest book, directory, and periodical printers in the West.*

## RICHARD ROBERT DONNELLEY: MIDWESTERN BUSINESS PIONEER

**Richard Robert Donnelley, the founder of the company** that would bear his name, arrived in Chicago in 1864. A native of Canada, Donnelley was drawn to the rapidly growing city because of its already substantial reputation as a printing center. By the time of the Civil War, Chicago boasted twenty-nine printing firms, whose operations had spurred the development of type foundries, bookstores, and a vibrant community of indigenous writers. With Chicago's population already reaching 170,000, Donnelley could claim in an early business prospectus that the city had all "the accessories of a literary center" including "two universities—those of Chicago and Northwestern—its law schools; its fine medical school; [and] its divinity schools."

In 1870, Donnelley restructured his business as the Lakeside Publishing and Printing Company. "A great publishing corporation has just been organized," proclaimed the *Chicago Republican*, "which promises to be largely instrumental in the development of Chicago as a literary center." The company's plans included a six-story building offering "every convenience...editorial rooms for those engaged upon the periodical and works published by the company; fire-proof vaults for stereotype, and electrotype plates, etc....commodious business and consultation rooms."

In the autumn of 1871, the new Lakeside Building was nearly complete; presses and other equipment had been moved in, and some manufacturing was underway. But on October 8 and 9, the great Chicago Fire swept through the city. Donnelley's son

Thomas Elliott, only four years old at the time, later recalled racing with his father north across the Chicago River to escape the flames. The blaze destroyed the city's bustling business district and left 18,000 businesses in ruins. Among the casualties were over 100 printing offices including Donnelley's new building, which was a smoking ruin.

Within days of the fire, which also destroyed his home, Donnelley boarded a train East to seek new presses, type, trimmers, and the other tools of his craft. His business partners, Edward Goodman and Reverend Leroy Church, withdrew after the fire, but Donnelley was determined to press ahead. In rebuilding his business, he was participating in the most dynamic period of growth for Chicago, and one of the most remarkable for any American city. ◉

### THE FAMILY AND THE COMPANY

**Richard Robert Donnelley and his family played a central role** in the growth of the new printing business, and they also assumed a significant position in the social and cultural life of Chicago. The RR Donnelley Archive documents five generations of Donnelleys who have been associated with the company, and it contains particularly rich materials on the careers of Richard Robert Donnelley and the first two generations of Donnelleys who succeeded him.



*Richard Robert and Naomi Shenstone Donnelley as a young couple.*

Richard Robert Donnelley was born in 1836 in Hamilton, Ontario, the son of Jane Elliott and John Donnelley. John, who had emigrated from Armagh County in 1822 and settled in Hamilton in 1834, was killed in a railroad accident when his son was still an infant.

At age 13, Donnelley became an apprentice in A. J. Chatterton's printing office in Hamilton. For two years, he attended high school part-time while he continued to work. At age 21, he traveled to New Orleans for his first job in the printing industry, with the *True Delta* newspaper. But in 1862 he returned to Canada (via Chicago, when he got his first look at the vibrancy of the city) to wait out the Civil War. The following year, Donnelley eloped with Naomi Ann Shenstone of Brantford, Ontario. She was the eldest daughter of Mary Lazenby and Thomas Shenstone, both natives of England.

In 1864, a few months after Naomi gave birth to the couple's first son, Reuben Hamilton, the family left Ontario to settle permanently in Chicago. Over the next nine years, the Donnelleys had three more children: Thomas Elliott (T. E.), Benjamin Shenstone, and Naomi Ann. Despite the demands of motherhood and running a growing household, Naomi in the early years was influential in many aspects of the family's printing business.

With the death of Richard Robert Donnelley in 1899, T. E. (1867–1955) assumed the presidency of the family company. His talent as a salesman, commitment to quality craftsmanship, and vision led the company into the new century. Reuben (1864–1929), the eldest son, took over the company's directory publishing subsidiary; by 1917 it was incorporated as The Reuben H. Donnelley Corporation, an independent publisher of telephone directories.

Lifetime careers in the company were the norm for the third generation of Donnelleys, which included T. E.'s sons Elliott and Gaylord and his son-in-law General Charles C. Haffner, Jr. Haffner, who was named chairman of the board in 1952, headed the company through its period of post-war growth. In 1956 he took the company public, presiding over the sale of \$25 million in stock and debentures. RR Donnelley stock appeared on the New York Stock Exchange in 1962. Elliott entered the company's apprentice school in 1925. He left the company for a number of years to run his own business, but after World War II, he returned to head the Product Development Division

and in 1953 was named vice chairman. Gaylord held many positions with the company, including chairman of the board from 1964 to 1975. He also sat on numerous outside boards, both business and civic.

Dedication to the company continued. In the fourth generation, Charles C. Haffner III and two of Elliott's four sons, Thomas Elliott II and James R. spent their entire careers working for the company. In the fifth generation, Niel (James R.'s son) was named an account manager in retail sales, while Matthew (Elliott's grandson) became a manufacturing-manager trainee. Shawn (Gaylord's granddaughter) has also worked for the company. ○



In 1897, seven years after the Indianhead appeared on the outside of the company's Printer's Row building, Leyendecker's concept was formally adopted as the RR Donnelley printer's mark and trademark. For nearly thirty years, the Leyendecker Indianhead was used in books, as well as on stationery, business cards, training manuals, advertisements, and the covers of the Lakeside Classic book series.

Keeping pace with and often leading trends in the graphic arts, RR Donnelley redesigned (or updated) its trademark more than twenty-five times over the next eight decades. The changes in the look of the Indianhead mirror the evolution of graphic design from the ornate linear style of the early twentieth century to the simplified approach of the late twentieth century, and every vogue in between. ○

*Joseph Leyendecker's Indianhead architectural ornament for the exterior of RR Donnelley's plant in the Printer's Row district.*

## THE EVOLUTION OF A GRAPHIC IDENTITY: THE RR DONNELLEY INDIANHEAD

**From the late nineteenth century onward, RR Donnelley's corporate identity** was associated with its distinctive Indianhead trademark. The image, according to Gaylord Donnelley, depicted one of the region's natives "silhouetted against a blockhouse on the shores of Lake Michigan," creating a link between "frontier life and midwestern development" and the expanding business enterprise of R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company (hereafter RR Donnelley).

Originally conceived by Chicago architect Howard Van Doren Shaw as an exterior ornament for the company's manufacturing plant on Plymouth Court in Printer's Row, the design was created by Chicago artist Joseph C. Leyendecker, who became famous for his *Saturday Evening Post* covers and for advertising imagery such as the Arrow Shirt Man.

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF PRINTING

**Having outgrown the post-fire building at Clark and Adams Streets**, the family erected a new building at the corner of Polk Street and Plymouth Court, south of the Loop, an area that would soon be called Printing House Row (known today as Printer's Row). The architect of the new plant was Howard Van Doren Shaw, who had attended Yale with T. E. Donnelley. When the first phase was completed in May 1897, it was immediately touted by the press as the largest and most modern plant in one of the most important printing districts in the country.

Inside were a composing room, electrotype foundry, press rooms with twenty-two cylinder presses, eight high-speed rotary perfecting presses, twenty job presses, one rotary offset press, folding machines, gathering machines, and patent binders, with annual capacity of 2.5 million books and 75 million booklets. A second phase of the building was completed in 1901, nearly doubling the manufacturing space.

Business expanded so quickly that within a decade the Plymouth Court building was cramped, and RR Donnelley executives planned a new plant on Calumet Avenue, between 21st and 22nd Streets. Again, Shaw was asked to design the building, an eight-story Gothic structure with a tower that was completed in several phases over the next seventeen years.

Once completed in 1929, the Calumet Plant was the largest building in the United States devoted to printing. It contained over 1.1 million square feet of floor space. The daily capacity of the case bindery was 25,000 books; the mail-order bindery could deliver several hundred thousand catalogues and telephone books.

The building's exterior featured terracotta shields with fanciful designs evoking English heraldry and the marks of history's great printers. The initials of T. E. and Reuben H. Donnelley and of Howard Van Doren Shaw were carved on either side of the portal of the 22nd Street entrance.

The most remarkable feature of this building was the elaborate Gothic-style Memorial Library on the tower's eighth and ninth floors. "We want to build a room...so unusual...and so refined," T. E. Donnelley declared, "that it will be the talk of the country,...the crowning glory of the building." ◉

## TRAINING CRAFTSMEN: THE RR DONNELLEY APPRENTICE PROGRAM

**In 1908, RR Donnelley developed a program that would become** a model for the rest of the printing industry and serve as an important step toward meeting America's need for industrial training, which was not keeping pace with the demands of modern technology.

The School for Apprentices was the creation of T. E. Donnelley, who was inspired by a similar endeavor that a leading French printing firm, Imprimerie Chaix, had founded in 1863. T. E. made the crucial decision to appoint a professional educator, Edward E. Sheldon, to organize the school. Sheldon had headed the Webster Training School in Omro, Wisconsin, and was well-versed in modern teaching techniques. RR Donnelley developed its own textbooks for the school, including *Rules for Compositors*, *Applied English for Compositors*, and *Applied Arithmetic*.





*The young men in the apprentice school were responsible for designing, typesetting, and printing an annual holiday greeting.*

as well as a series of course texts called "Printing Practices" on topics such as prepress, practical composition, elementary photoengraving, cylinder pressmanship, and case binding.

The school admitted boys between 14 and 16 years of age with a grammar-school diploma and "special promise and ability." Students entered a rigorous seven-year course consisting of "craftsmanship combined with cultural studies," beginning with a pre-apprentice program of two years, divided equally between the classroom and the factory. In addition to mathematics, English, design, arts, science, civics, reading, and language, pre-apprentice students were also introduced to proofreading, typesetting, pressmanship, engraving, and binding. This was followed by a five-year apprenticeship comprising full-time factory work under master craftsmen. Apprentices received \$5 per week (pre-apprentices started at \$2.40 a week) and most of the benefits of regular employment, as well as two weeks of paid vacation.

In 1915 the first graduating class of apprentices boasted twenty-four members. By 1933 the company had matriculated a total of 354 journeyman printers. Armed with a diploma and journeyman's certificate, all the graduates were virtually assured lifetime employment. They automatically became employees of RR Donnelley, and were also sought after by other printing establishments. Nonetheless, the appeal of the home company remained strong, and in 1928, twenty years after the school's founding, over eighty percent of its graduates were still working for RR Donnelley. ◉

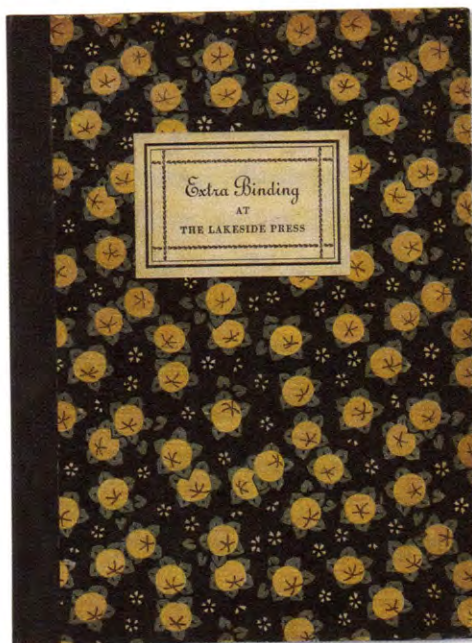
#### **CRAFTSMANSHIP BY EXAMPLE: FINE BINDING**

**From 1921 to 1981, RR Donnelley operated a hand bindery,** one of the few printing companies in the United States to do so. Commissions for one-of-a-kind bindings came from important collectors, universities, corporations, and libraries throughout the country. RR Donnelley management recognized that the Extra Bindery, as it was called, while not really a profit center, underscored for other sections of the company, the importance of fine craftsmanship as exemplified by an age-old craft.

For thirteen years, the Extra Bindery was headed by the distinguished English bookbinder Alfred de Sauty, who was recruited by T. E. Donnelley from the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London. De Sauty immediately set the standard for American bookbinding when he hired three European-trained bookbinders; William Anson, Basil Cronk, and Leonard Mounteney. As was the European tradition, hand-binding at RR Donnelley was a team effort. The head of the bindery generally established the design and specified the materials. From there, a book passed through the hands of several staff members, each responsible for a particular aspect of the process; sewing, backing, tooling, and finishing.

RR Donnelley promoted hand-binding by hosting exhibitions on the subject and by publishing a number of notable books, including *Extra Binding at the Lakeside Press* (1925), *A Rod for the Back of the Binder* (1928), *All the King's Horses* (1954), and others.

*Published in a limited edition in 1925, Extra Bindery at the Lakeside Press showcased RR Donnelley's custom binding services.*



When de Sauty retired in 1935, Harold Tribolet, who began as an apprentice with RR Donnelley in 1927, became the head of the Extra Bindery. In 1966, the company sent Tribolet to Florence, Italy, after a disastrous flood to help restore the collections of the many libraries that were damaged.

In 1970 the Extra Bindery department's name was changed to Graphic Conservation to include paper conservation and restoration, which had become an essential part of the work. One notable commission in that year was the conservation of a copy of the Declaration of Independence printed in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776. ◉

## EARLY ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY

**RR Donnelley's position as the printing industry's leader** depended on a continuous program of research and development. RR Donnelley initiated its own "R and D" as early as 1917, when Press D-2, a sheet-fed letterpress in use since the previous century, was outfitted with plate cylinders and a web-fed paper feeder. After months of trial and error, D-2 was printing 6,000 rotary impressions an hour as compared to 3,600 sheet-fed impressions.

In 1932 RR Donnelley engineers pioneered advances in offset lithography to improve halftone plates. Later that year, the company acquired exclusive rights to a patent for a lithographic halftone etching method that utilized a sensitized photographic plate. This led to RR Donnelley's patented Deeptone process, one of its most important



Water Color Printing, featured here in a 1933 advertising piece, was one of many experimental technologies promoted by RR Donnelley.

trademarks of that period. Deeptone plates enabled coated papers to be printed with finer screens, which made for better tonal values and more faithful reproductions, especially large-format illustrations and photographs.

Three years later, in 1935, when publisher Henry R. Luce wanted to inaugurate a glossy weekly picture magazine to be called *Life*, RR Donnelley made further strides in the high-speed reproduction of quality images. The challenge was to find a way to dry ink on machine-coated paper by means other than absorption. The breakthrough came with a new process called heat-set printing—company engineers introduced a ceramic cup (and later a heater) to contain and control a flame directed over the web-fed paper as it passed through the presses at high speeds.

Rolling off RR Donnelley's heat-set printing presses, *Life* was soon America's largest-circulating magazine, guaranteeing advertisers a distribution of 5.2 million copies a week by 1947. That same year,

**Exploding Ink!**

OR six years after Gutenberg invented printing, the printing of glossy black pictures on shiny white paper was possible. How? Because his colored-ink ink took their own sweet time to dry. There was no hurrying them. Printers adopted rotary presses, mechanical type-cases and all kinds of time-saving machines and processes, but when quality counted... using black pictures on glossy paper... the drying time of ink was still the bottle-neck.

In 1931 one of our clients wanted to publish a new magazine—*LIFE*—a magazine to reproduce magazine quality with news speed. They wanted to take photographs one day and ship finished magazines the next. Furthermore they wanted their pictures printed with all the snap and

**THE HEAT-SET METHOD** solves both sides of the paper, dries the ink, and holds the finished printing almost instantaneously. It is a method to produce what you want to produce quickly, in a reasonable unit cost, a high rate quantity of finished magazine pages, with no possibility of printing on coated paper. (The paper has a layer of wax on its surface right up to the ink. This layer of wax is removed the instant the paper, the heat is applied.)

brilliance possible—and less of course.

Fortunately, for six months we had been experimenting with a new combination of methods and materials: new ink, new paper, and a new gadget called a rotary press—a heat furnace on a small scale. The new ink was made new with the traditional heated oil, but with something very like naphtha. The instant after ink met paper, the printed paper, traveling hundreds of feet a minute, flashed through the flames, and right there—at 3200° F. or so—the "smoking" was up; in a second, reflected right out of the ink, leaving the pigment hard and dry... *LIFE* like pictures at high speed.

Today we print over 5,000,000 copies of this magazine every week, and the pictures are better

than any other pictures ever printed before at such speed. We got the publisher's O.K. to print at 3:30 Sunday afternoon—and the first magazines are shipped Monday morning—in time to reach the news stands while they're still new!

The engineering skill, the craftsmanship, the good management, and the know-how that developed this "heat-set" printing and that enabled us to keep pace with the incredible and completely unexpected mushrooming of the magazine's circulation are typical. The Lakeside Press brings to American business new money-making, time-saving printing methods—plus carefully trained craftsmanship. We will welcome the opportunity to talk to you about your printing problems, big or small. No obligation, of course.

**THE LAKESIDE PRESS**  
**R. R. DONNELLEY & SONS COMPANY**  
 330 East Twenty-second Street, Chicago  
 Eastern Sales Office: 103 East Forty-fifth Street, New York

RR Donnelley built a new facility in Chicago, the South Plant, dedicated entirely to the *Life* account. Because the magazine continued to grow, RR Donnelley never knew exactly how many copies it would print in a given week. "We simply printed as many copies as possible," RR Donnelley's company magazine reported, "right up to the moment when the next issue was ready for the presses." ⦿

"Exploding Ink" featured in this early 1940s advertisement refers to heat-set technology that made it possible to print a four-color, high-quality magazine. It was first used in 1936 to launch *Life* magazine.

Rockwell Kent's dramatic illustrations (right) for RR Donnelley's three-volume, 1930 edition of *Moby Dick* (opposite), destined the book to be the definitive illustrated edition.



### PROMOTING THE CRAFT: THE FOUR AMERICAN BOOKS CAMPAIGN

In 1926, RR Donnelley launched its famous **Four American Books** promotional campaign. Materials about the campaign in the RR Donnelley Archive are important not just for what they reveal about the company's goals, but also for what they contribute to an understanding of the commercial book trade of the time.

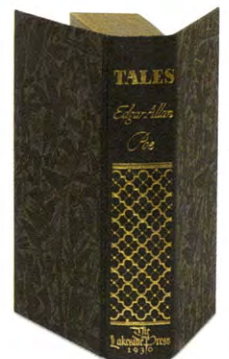
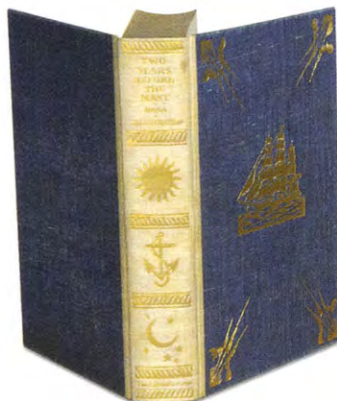
rapidly expanding mass-market book industry and establish the company as a printer of fine trade editions.

The Four American Books campaign was orchestrated by C. G. Littell, vice president and treasurer, and William A. Kittredge, head of the department of design and typography. Between 1926 and 1930, Littell and Kittredge developed a list of possible books to include, identified authoritative texts, hired the finest illustrators, manufactured the books, and managed an extensive marketing and distribution plan.

One important consideration in compiling the list of books was to find titles that had not been previously illustrated. Four well-

RR Donnelley's 1930 edition of *Richard Henry Dana, Jr.'s Two Years Before the Mast*, was designed by Edward A. Wilson. Rudolph Ruzicka designed *Henry David Thoreau's Walden*, and W. A. Dwiggins designed *Edgar Allen Poe's Tales* (left to right). *Moby Dick* and *Walden* were recognized for superior design by the *Fifty Books of the Year* competition in 1931.

RR Donnelley wanted to use the campaign to demonstrate that illustrated books could be printed on modern commercial machinery to a standard that was as good if not better than that of high-quality presses in Europe. The company also hoped the Four American Books would support it in the



## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AFTER WORLD WAR II

known book designers were then asked to select from the list and commissioned to design and illustrate a new edition. Rockwell Kent selected Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*; W. A. Dwiggins, Edgar Allen Poe's *Tales*; Edward A. Wilson, Richard Henry Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*; and Rudolph Ruzicka, Henry Thoreau's *Walden*. Every detail—the choice of paper, typeface, ink, binding materials, and in one case even the design of the wrapping paper and mailing label—was managed by the designer.

The campaign was so successful that in the following years, RR Donnelley received orders for trade books from Random House, the Literary Guild, Harcourt Brace, and others. RR Donnelley's three-volume edition of *Moby Dick* is still regarded as the definitive illustrated edition of Melville's great work. ○



Throughout the 1950s, demand for printed goods put pressure on the company's capacity. In 1951 RR Donnelley produced 136,638 sets of *World Book* encyclopedias, a 50-percent increase from the previous edition. Between 1952 and 1954, the Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible sold more than four million copies.

In response to these enormous jobs and an increased customer appetite for books, RR Donnelley had to speed up the entire production process, beginning with binding. Drawing on General Motors's assembly lines as a model, RR Donnelley's engineering department began to refashion the binding operation, building seven automated binding lines at the company's Crawfordsville, Indiana, plant between 1952 and 1958. With speed and utter precision, RR Donnelley could now print and bind more books, magazines, directories, and catalogs in one eight-hour day than could be printed in a week just two decades before.

The same, however, could not be said about typesetting, which, in the late 1960s, remained the slowest and most costly operation in the manufacturing process, involving hundreds of workers at keyboards manually entering each character. RR Donnelley addressed the type-composition problem in 1967 by forming the Electronic Graphics Division. By 1968 this section was using an IBM 360/40, the most advanced computer of the time, and a RCA Videocomp 832, the only character-generating cathode-ray tube then in commercial use.

## "UNDIVIDED RESPONSIBILITY": RR DONNELLEY ADVERTISING

Another advance was in response to a question from a long-time RR Donnelley customer, *Farm Journal*: how could the editorial content of a magazine or catalog be tailor-made to reflect an individual reader's interests? The solution was Selectronic, an RR Donnelley patented technology that combined increasingly powerful computers with the company's automated in-line binding lines to put together a magazine that was flexible in content. If the Selectronic computer tape showed that someone lived in a high-rise, a catalog could be assembled omitting pages of lawn-care products that would be included in mailings sent to suburban homes. Selectronic technology also provided high-speed variable address labeling on the outside of a magazine or catalog using ink-jet technology developed in partnership with the A. B. Dick Company, a leader in the field.

*An award-winning brochure, "Jacob Wrestled With an Angel," was conceived and written in 1949 by Harry J. Owens, RR Donnelley's advertising and sales promotion manager.*

In 1984, RR Donnelley, through its Singapore facility, was the first printing company to link the United States, Europe, and the Far East through satellite transmission. ○

Advertising samples form an important part of the RR Donnelley Archive, reflecting the major role that direct advertising played in promoting the company's products and services. "Demonstration of quality has been our long suit from the beginning," wrote Harry Owens, head of RR Donnelley's advertising department from 1945 to 1962. "We do not expect that our list of customers and prospects will ever grow to mass-market proportions. For this reason, the major part of our advertising and promotion is direct."

Starting in 1921 with its first multiyear, direct-mail advertising effort, RR Donnelley sent examples of products enclosed in special wrappers to its advertising list as a demonstration of the quality of its work. The first such mailings were a series of fifteen promotional booklets, issued over a period of eight years. The objective, wrote T. E. Donnelley, was for customers to see and feel for themselves "the quality and diversity of the product."

Each booklet showed off the capabilities of the company's presses, art department, and designers. Some were illustrated by Chicago's best-known illustrators; some featured a single process such as offset or rotary printing. Others focused on the importance of typography, the elements of good bookmaking, or RR Donnelley's philosophy of "undivided responsibility." Yet others targeted particular customers such as publishers of supply-catalogues and banks.

The designs were the work of William A. Kittredge, who was hired in 1922 and given an extraordinary free rein (and budget) to elevate RR Donnelley's reputation for quality typography and graphic design.



He was convinced that, while phone books and encyclopedias were enormous commercial projects, there was no reason why they should not be well designed. Kittredge became one of the most influential graphic designers in the United States.

Another early notable effort targeted the publishers of cookbooks and other products for women. Titled "Lemon Pies or Wash Tubs," it was launched in 1934 and included ten mailings over five years. The pieces featured the company's work for customers such as Libby, McNeill & Libby, Standard Brands, Carnation Milk Company, Land O'Lakes, and Quaker Oats Company. Over these printed booklets, RR Donnelley added decorative wrappers, enthusiastic testimonials from the publishers, and clever advertising prose.

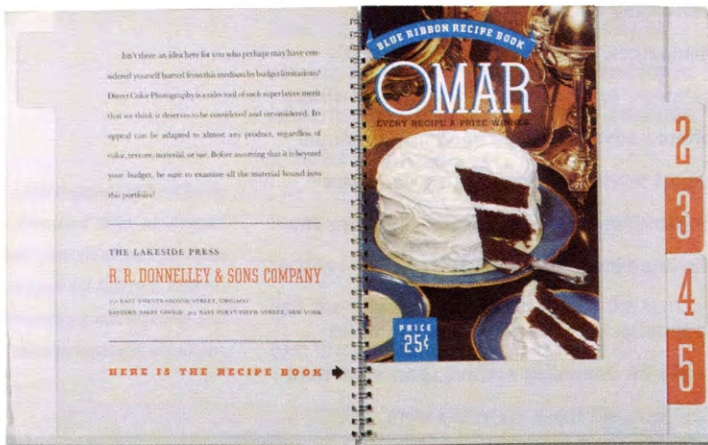
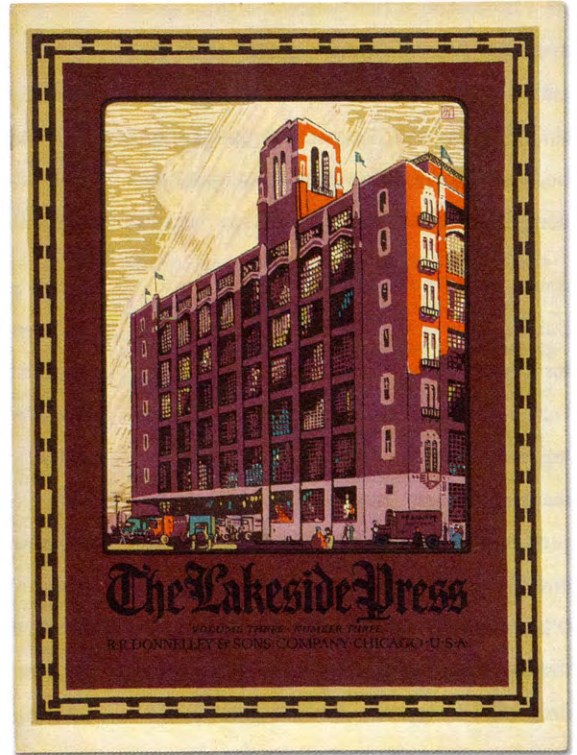
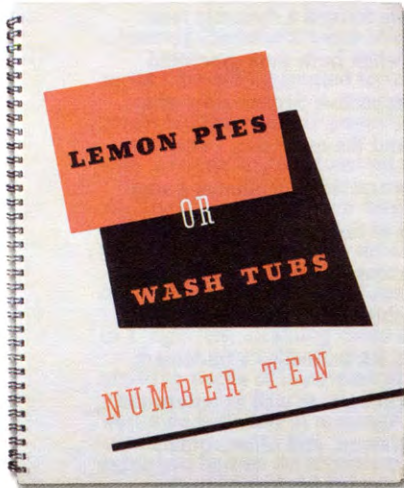
Harry J. Owens, who joined RR Donnelley in 1936, was a highly talented copywriter who developed a distinct voice for the company's direct-mail advertising. Among the many award-winning pieces Owens produced was a 1949 brochure entitled "Jacob Wrestled with an Angel," a brilliant bit of writing that won acclaim in the advertising trade as well as the printing industry. "The production of an RR Donnelley advertising piece," says the brochure, "provides something of an occasion for flexing the muscles of our craftsmanship—for stretching a little farther that length of our reach toward perfection. We try to fly as close to the sun as we can without letting it singe the feathers of our wings." Naturally, with a talented design staff and RR Donnelley's presses at his disposal, Owens was careful to make sure that each piece was singular. For the drawings, he hired artist Jon Corbino.

As designer, he engaged Walter Howe, who joined RR Donnelley in 1936 and became the head of design a decade later, after the sudden death of William A. Kittredge.

Owens and Howe formed a dynamic team. Between 1946 (when both were promoted to head their respective departments after World War II) and the mid-1960s (when they retired), Owens and Howe produced a staggering number of direct-mail pieces that promoted the company's latest technology and greatest achievements. Some emphasized Deeptone, RR Donnelley's trademark color printing process, as well as letterpress printing, rotogravure, and offset. Others were directed at the publishers of books (including encyclopedias), as well as magazines, telephone directories, retail catalogs, and financial printing. Still others offered advice—"A new economical annual report service for fewer than 5,000 shareholders," or "Type Fitly Chosen," or "Are You Having a Bookbinding Problem?"

As a collection, the advertising samples in the RR Donnelley Archive span more than 120 years. All these materials were conceived, developed, written, designed, and manufactured "under one roof," a concept that RR Donnelley pioneered in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. As such, they provide a unique look at commercial image-making in an environment where there were few limitations on imaginative design. ○

Lavishly illustrated by Danish-born, Chicago-based artist Richard Fayerweather Babcock, this 1925 promotional booklet depicts the various stages of production at the RR Donnelley Calumet plant.



"Lemon Pies or Wash Tubs" was a RR Donnelley advertising campaign aimed at companies that catered to the domestic audience. This example, the last of ten, was issued in 1939.



The galleries at RR Donnelley's flagship plant at 22nd Street teemed with indirect natural light. Off the main gallery, seen here in the 1930s, were three smaller rooms.



**PROMOTING THE CRAFT: PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS  
IN THE LAKESIDE PRESS GALLERIES**

When RR Donnelley completed the last phase of its flagship building at 22nd Street and Calumet Avenue in 1929, it launched an exhibition program that matched in quality those of some of the city's leading museums and galleries. The Lakeside Press Galleries were located on the eighth floor of the "D" wing of the building, which was also the location of a suite of wood-paneled executive offices and the Memorial Library, with its collection of important materials manufactured by the company. These spaces were designed as showplaces, and the public was welcomed.

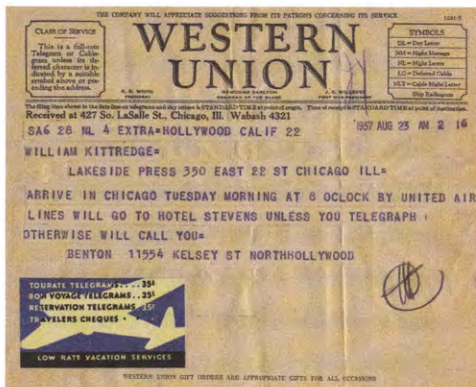
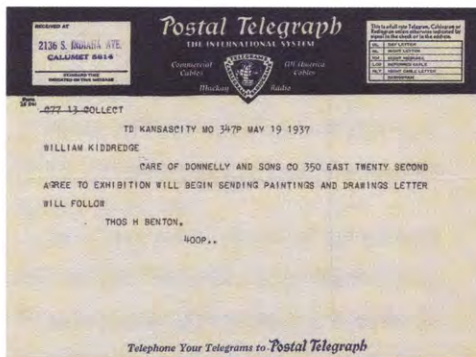
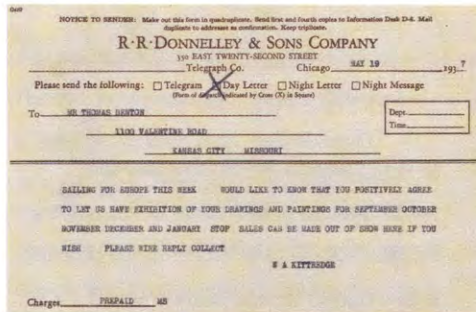
In 1930 the galleries hosted five exhibitions, all organized by the advertising and graphics-arts departments. The topics included American and English woodblock prints, European posters, aeronautical prints, and contemporary American book illustrations. The following year, which was just as active, included an exhibition on Czechoslovakian printing and modern photography. Between 1930 and 1961, when its corporate headquarters moved to a new building, the company organized more than 130 exhibitions; the galleries closing only during World War II.

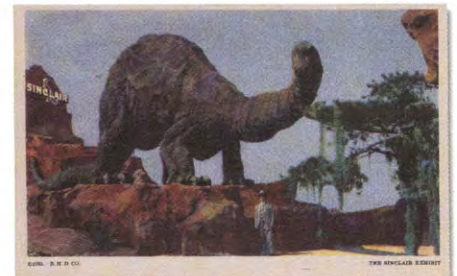
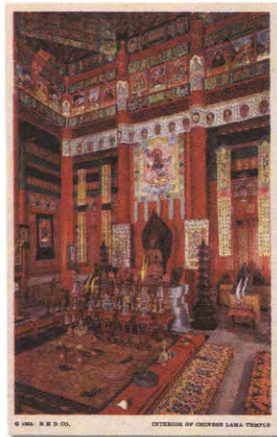
The materials for each exhibition came from a variety of sources. They featured works on paper from important private collections; for example, color aquatints owned by Mrs. James Ward Thorne, flower and fruit prints from the holdings of Gordon Dunthorne, and early Chicagoana amassed by Joseph T. Ryerson. Other displays focused on technology, such as commercial bookbinding, halftone engraving, direct-color photo reproduction, intaglio printing, and offset lithography, to mention a few. Exhibitions were devoted to artists Thomas Hart

Benton, John Stuart Curry, Grant Wood, and typographers R. Hunter Middleton and Bruce Rogers.

RR Donnelley's exhibitions received regular coverage in local newspapers, often alongside reviews of shows at the Art Institute of Chicago. Each show was announced with a printed invitation and accompanied by a catalog (often very elaborate) designed and produced by the company. These represent some of the best design and printing available at the time. ○

*In 1937, William A. Kittredge and Thomas Hart Benton exchanged telegrams concerning an exhibition of the painter's work to be on view in RR Donnelley's galleries.*





## PRINTER TO THE MODERNIST MOVEMENT: "A CENTURY OF PROGRESS"

*Postal cards of "A Century of Progress" were published by the Reuben H. Donnelley Corporation, which shared office space with R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, the printer of the cards. Pictured are the Italian Pavilion, Interior of Chinese Lama Temple, Pabst Blue Ribbon Casino, Sinclair Exhibit, and North Midway Luncheonette.*

**In 1933 Chicago set out to show the world how far it had come** in the century since its founding as a city. In the process, it also sought to demonstrate how it was overcoming the effects of the Great Depression. The proof would come in the form of "A Century of Progress," the 1933–1934 Chicago world's fair for which RR Donnelley was official printer.

Printing for "A Century of Progress" was an important undertaking, not only because of the event's sheer size (in its first year, the fair attracted more than twenty-seven million visitors), but also because the fair was an extravaganza of modernist design. From tickets, postcards, and maps to fliers, brochures, magazines, and booklets, the materials produced for the two-year fair demonstrated that RR Donnelley's designers were at the top of their craft and able to provide a graphic look as accomplished as anything being generated by the nation's great graphics firms.

To reinforce the message, RR Donnelley sponsored a large printing exhibit in the Graphic Arts Pavilion at the fair, where visitors could see the progress of a four-color book from prepress to manufacturing to binding.

Conveniently, the fair was located immediately east of the RR Donnelley plant at Calumet Avenue and 22nd Street, and the public was invited to the company's exhibition galleries to see a special exhibition on the fair and to view the fair's electrical display at night from the building's rooftop (said to be the best view of the fair from anywhere in the city). In 1933 alone, the company welcomed 25,000 visitors into its building.

In addition to its work as the fair's official printer, RR Donnelley produced posters and other materials for many individual exhibitors. Among these was a booklet about the Piccard-Compton stratospheric ascension (a balloon launched one evening in the hopes it would attain a world-record altitude), another for the Hall of Religions, and the invitation and program for the Cellophane Ball in honor of Her Majesty the Queen of the Fair. In large part, through RR Donnelley's design and printing for the fair, "A Century of Progress" had an important nationwide impact on the development of modern graphics in many fields. ○

### GRAPHIC DESIGN IN THE C. PRENTISS SMITH PAPERS

In 1935, six years after becoming an RR Donnelley employee, C. Prentiss Smith joined the department of design and typography. Smith soon proved himself such an adept designer that he became essential to projects of all types. Not only did Smith design the company's signs, in-house magazine covers, anniversary pins, retirement booklets, graduation certificates, and awards, he was also the lead designer on several of RR Donnelley's religious publishing accounts, including work for the Presbyterian Board, Pilgrim Press, and Westminster Press.

Smith had an eye for type, a mind for detail, and an in-depth knowledge of technology. The C. Prentiss Smith papers in the RR Donnelley Archive document his correspondence with type foundries, paper mills, ink companies, and even Eastman Kodak, always searching for something new and better and soliciting technical

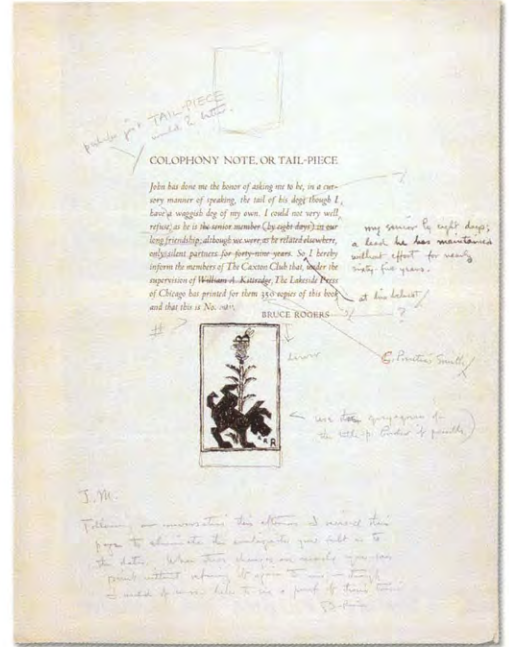
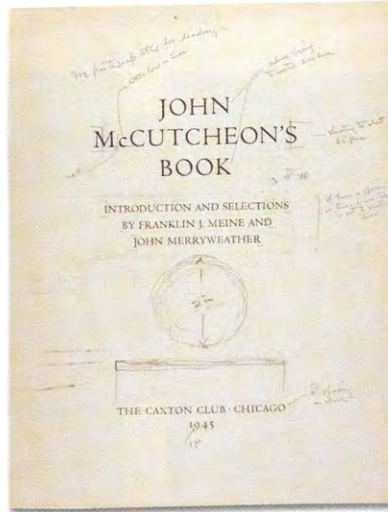
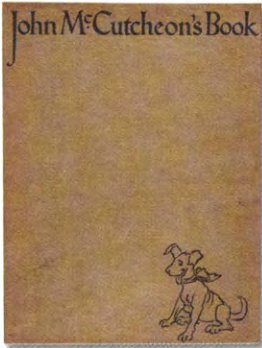


advice that might improve the quality of RR Donnelley's work. Smith's letters include exchanges with notable designers such as Thomas Parkhurst (with whom William A. Kittredge, Smith's boss, had trained), Bruce Rogers, Hermann Zapf, and others.

*As the official printer to the 1933 Century of Progress exposition, RR Donnelley printed the entrance tickets.*

For many years Smith taught the principles of design and typography in the RR Donnelley apprentice training school. When he retired and moved to Carbondale, Illinois, he set himself up with a small press and continued to design and print stationery, business cards, invitations, and other ephemera until the end of this life.

Fortunately, Smith was an inveterate saver. His papers include samples of hundreds of his designs (including, in many cases, the entire design sequence from original sketch to final product), as well as a great many items designed by his colleagues. The Smith collection provides an unusually detailed view of the inner workings of the department of design and typography and the painstaking work involved in graphic design before the advent of the computer. ○



**IMAGING THE CRAFT:  
PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE RR DONNELLEY ARCHIVE**

John McCutcheon's *Book* (1945), a tribute to the noted Chicago Tribune cartoonist, was published by the Caxton Club in 1945. Printed by RR Donnelley, the book was designed by company designer C. Prentiss Smith under the guidance of Bruce Rogers. The design was evidently underway before William Kittredge died in 1945, leading to a change of the design credit in the colophon.

**One of the most comprehensive collections in the RR Donnelley Archive** is the remarkable sequence of photographs that chronicle, from 1864 on, the history of the company and the changes in its printing technology over nearly 140 years. Images in the Archive depict many of RR Donnelley's processes of putting ink on paper, as well as techniques of binding, engraving, typesetting, and photography.

In addition, the photographic collection documents the company's national and international facilities, some of its research into scientific management, images in its annual reports from 1964 to 1989 and in the company magazine from 1974 to 1995, the construction of its former manufacturing complex at 22nd Street and what is now Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, historic homes on Prairie Avenue, the Century of Progress exposition, and many company and employee events.

The manufacturing photographs depict typesetting (letterpress, Ludlow, monotype, and electronic), studio photography, prepress (from plate making with acid to computer-to-plate and everything in between), and binding lines.

Images from *Fortune*, *Life*, *Look*, *National Geographic*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, and *Time* magazines can all be found in the collection, as well as manufacturing images of telephone books for Illinois Bell; encyclopedias for Compton's, Funk & Wagnall's, Britannica, and World Book; catalogs for JC Penney and Sears; and books for Doubleday, McGraw-Hill, and other commercial publishers.



*This photograph of rotary gravure press D-20 was taken by Torkel Korling in 1949 (left).*

*Inserting four-color inserts by hand at RR Donnelley's Calumet plant in Chicago, 1949 (below).*

From the late 1940s to 1962, Chicago documentary photographer Torkel Korling was given unprecedented access to RR Donnelley's Chicago and Crawfordsville, Indiana, facilities. At the time, the company was very guarded about its technology; thus while some of Korling's images were used in company literature, many were not. While he preferred to turn his lenses on wild flowers (a longtime passion) and had regular assignments from *Fortune* and *Life* magazines, as well from Container Corporation of America, Dow Chemical, and Standard Oil of California, among others, Korling took more than 300 images for RR Donnelley. He was a master at staging and capturing the essence of a particular manufacturing function. Korling's images are as much about composition, surface, and light as they are about the printing processes they document. ◯



## PRINTER TO CHICAGO

From the time of its founding, RR Donnelley was engaged in its community, printing for many of Chicago's museums, clubs, banks, department stores, hotels, academic institutions, companies, and publishers (both commercial and private). The work, which included books, magazines, marketing brochures, retail catalogs, directories, and annual reports, was the outgrowth of the Donnelley family's active participation in the civic, cultural, and economic life of the city, backed by the company's reputation for quality work.

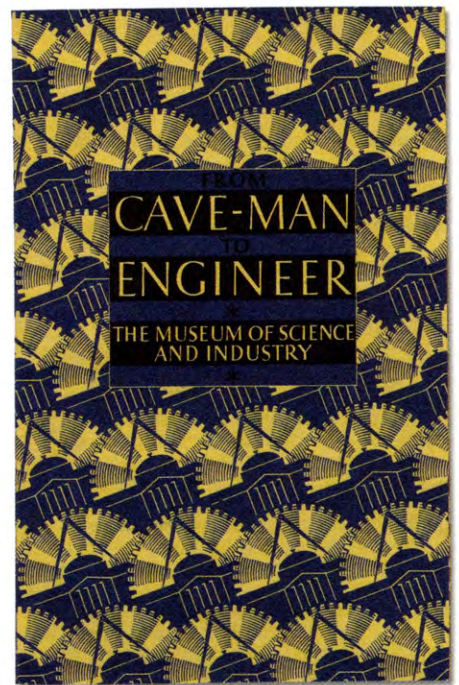
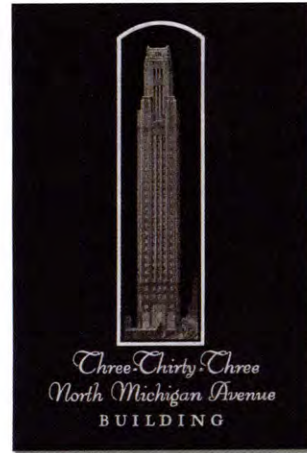


Map of the "L" published for visitors to "A Century of Progress" in 1933.

Three-Thirty-Three North Michigan Avenue Building brochure, 1927 (right, top).

From Cave-Man to Engineer was printed in 1933 for the Museum of Science and Industry (right, bottom).

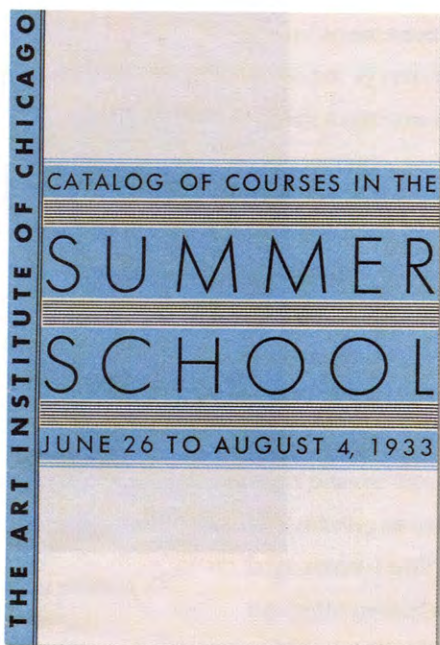
For half a century, starting in the 1920s, the company's list of local clients reads like a roster of prominent Chicago businesses and institutions. It includes Abbott Laboratories, Carson Pirie Scott & Company, Commonwealth Edison, Container Corporation of America, Marshall Field & Company, Harris Trust and Savings Bank, Morton Salt Company, Northern Trust Company, the Palmer House, C. D. Peacock, the Pullman Company, Row, Peterson & Company, Stone & Kimball, Quaker Oats, Schwinn and Company, United States Gypsum Company, Way & Williams, and William Wrigley Company, as well as the American College of Surgeons, the Adler Planetarium, American Library Association, Armour Institute, the Art Institute of Chicago, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the Museum of Science and Industry, Northwestern University, and the University of Chicago, to name only a few.



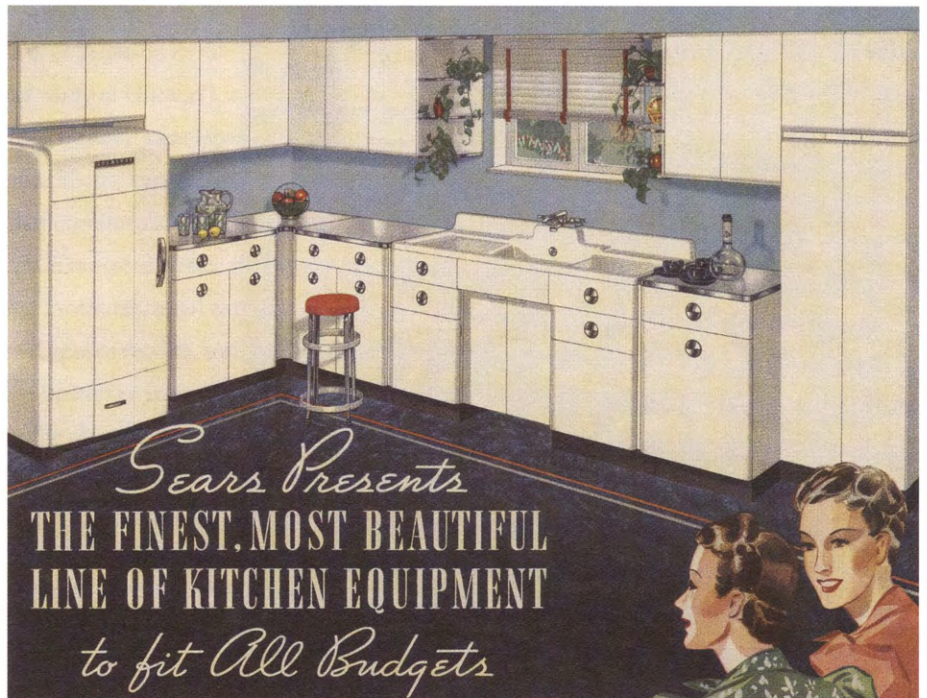
The RR Donnelley Archive contains hundreds of rarely saved printed pieces, most with dates, all in remarkable condition. As a collection they provide evidence for trends in printing technology, but equally important, they reveal much about Chicago's unique approach to marketing. ○



Chicago Civic Opera Masque  
Ball program, 1933.



Art Institute of Chicago  
course catalog, 1933.



*Sears kitchen equipment  
 catalog, 1940.*

*Montgomery Ward catalog  
 for airline radios, 1940.*





## PRINTING FOR THE NATIONAL MARKETPLACE

For nearly 145 years, RR Donnelley has played a pivotal role in bringing to the nation's households and businesses both basics such as Bibles, telephone books, mail-order catalogs, and encyclopedias, as well as consumer essentials such as best-selling novels and fashion and specialty magazines. This high-volume work has been the foundation of the company's success. Typically, these large, long-term printing accounts represented an enormous financial investment in equipment and necessitated construction of new facilities.

One example of the scale of a single large contract is the 14th edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, published in 1936 in 29 volumes in an edition 60,000 sets. It contained 44 million words (all set into type by RR Donnelley), 30,024 pages, 41,000 separate articles, and 15,139 engravings. The printing type for the *Encyclopaedia* weighed 250 tons, and the production of the multi-volume set was estimated to have consumed 513,720 leaves of gold leaf and 100,000 pounds of ink. The skins of 750,000 sheep and 75,000 goats were used to manufacture two types of bindings.

During the same year, the company printed and shipped 7,373,505 telephone books, 15,298,233 catalogs, 50,104,89 flyers, 60,788,777 magazines, 185,334,665 pamphlets and circulars, 726,363 case bound books (not including sets), and 34,254,999 sheets that were sent to other printers. ○

## MAIL-ORDER CATALOGS

In the mid-nineteenth century a confluence of events gave birth to a new and highly successful American industry—the mail order catalog. The construction of a maze of railroads linking rural populations with commercial centers, the introduction of new consumer goods, and advances in printing technology all drew the industry to Chicago, which soon became a the hub of mail-order commerce and the headquarters for Montgomery Ward and Company, Sears, Roebuck & Co., and other smaller companies.

The growth of the industry was remarkable. By 1893, Ward's was receiving 15,000 mail-orders a day. Congress supported the new market by instituting Rural Free Delivery, and in 1912 a parcel-post law was passed providing for economical delivery of large packages. By 1924, more than six-and-a-half million Americans were benefiting from these services.

RR Donnelley's business volume doubled between 1915 and 1919 in part due to a 1917 contract to print the Montgomery Ward catalog. Work for Sears, Roebuck & Co. started at the same time, beginning with print circulars, flyers, and occasional pages for its catalog. On a routine sales call in 1922, RR Donnelley secured the first significantly large contract with Sears for the Dallas edition of the general catalog (or "Big Book") with a print run of four to five hundred thousand copies. Then in 1928, as its contract with Cuneo Press neared expiration, Sears decided to turn the printing of the Big Book over to RR Donnelley and W. F. Hall.

## MASS MARKET MAGAZINES

Hall was to do the composition (this because RR Donnelley compositors already handled the Ward's catalog, with the concern that the two jobs could be mixed up); RR Donnelley was to do the printing. But when Hall's price for composition became too high, RR Donnelley took over the entire production of the catalog.

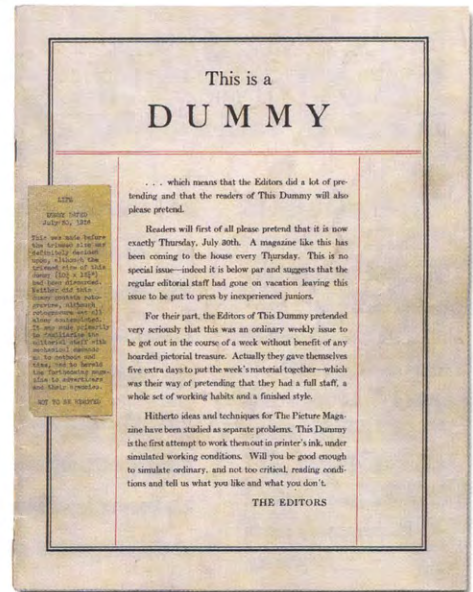
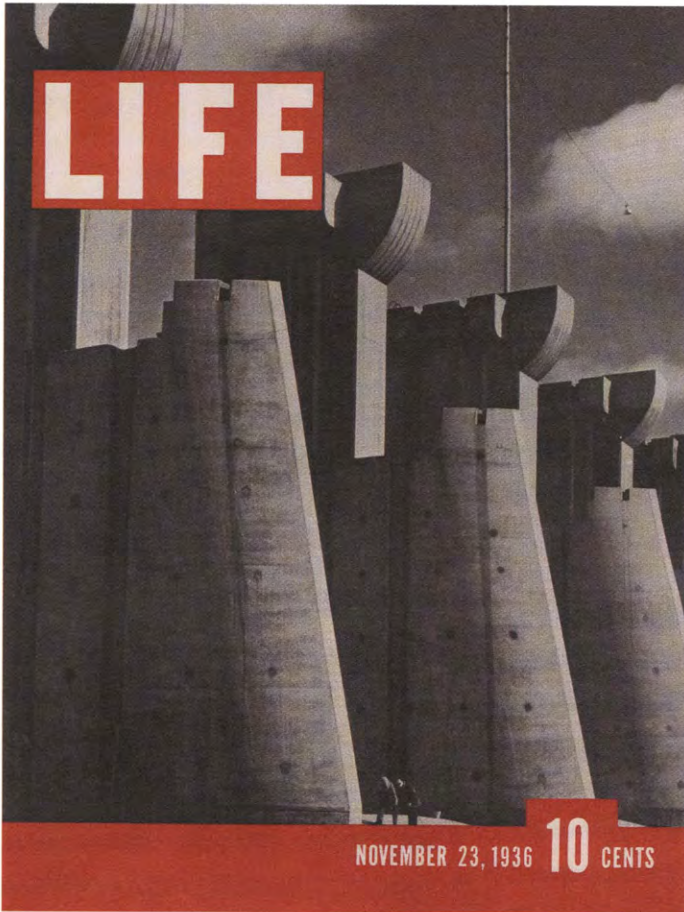
In 1948, RR Donnelley built a two-story, 45,000 square foot facility in Chicago exclusively for printing each of two yearly Sears catalogs with a combined print run of seven million copies. In 1964, RR Donnelley built a plant in Warsaw, Indiana, to produce the JC Penney catalog. RR Donnelley remained the printer for Sears's Big Book until 1993, when the retailer discontinued its catalog service. ○

*In 1874, RR Donnelley printed and published the Lakeside Directory of Chicago. By 1916, the rapidly growing publishing business became a separate firm, the Reuben H. Donnelley Corporation, while the printing operation remained with R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company. A small 1921 directory for Forrest, Illinois, was the first bound product to come off the presses at RR Donnelley's newly completed Crawfordsville, Indiana, plant.*



Although it was a giant in the printing industry, until the early 1920s, RR Donnelley had little experience in one major commercial market—mass-circulation magazines. That changed when the company, which operated as a non-union "open shop," began printing the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Christian Herald*, *Popular Science*, and other top-selling magazines when the printers of these publications were experiencing labor strikes. RR Donnelley, which was able to keep its presses running almost without fail through these turbulent years, secured contracts with several monthlies including *Motion Picture Magazine*, *Popular Science*, *Prairie Farmer*, and *Rotarian*. While these were prized accounts, one magazine category remained elusive—the coveted weeklies that were then the mainstay of popular culture.

In 1926, when Henry R. Luce was rumored to be considering a change in printer for his news magazine, *Time*, which then had a circulation of 110,000, T. E. Donnelley arranged to meet with Luce to make the case for the account. T. E.'s presentation must have been convincing because as Luce wrote in a letter to T. E.: "Although heretofore your company has not specialized in magazine work...and although it has never printed a high-quality fast weekly, we have faith in your company's long and vast experience in various kinds of printing, and its pride in workmanship, its control of all the factors entering into printing, and above all its expressed desire to undertake the responsibility of printing *Time*." A contract for RR Donnelley to print *Time* was signed in October 1927.



Luce believed that *Time* would never exceed a circulation of more than 300,000, but by 1934 circulation had passed the 500,000 mark (by 1965 RR Donnelley was printing three million copies of each weekly issue of *Time*).

Growth at RR Donnelley was unprecedented after World War II. The reinvigorated consumer market required printing of all kinds, and this meant increased runs for existing RR Donnelley clients, as well as many new ones. Time, Inc., a long-time customer, moved *Fortune* magazine to RR Donnelley in 1948. That same year, a new client, Cowles Communications, signed a contract with RR Donnelley for the printing of *Look*. In 1954 the company became the printer of a new Time, Inc. magazine catering to America's growing leisure culture, *Sports Illustrated*.

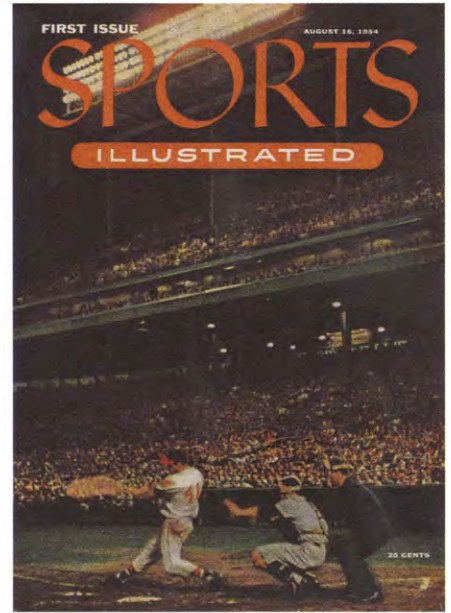
Another coup for the company was securing the printing of the National Geographic Society monthly magazine in 1959. Society president Melville Bell Grosvenor wanted to print a four-color cover (previous covers featured only type, not images). RR Donnelley worked with National Geographic to test various papers, screens, and ink formulae to find a combination of rotogravure speed and quality production. In the end, RR Donnelley was able to print, bind, and mail 2.5 million monthly full-color copies of *National Geographic*.

*This dummy edition of Life magazine was prepared in July 1936. The first issue was published November 1936. By 1942, Life was America's largest magazine with a circulation of four million copies of each issue.*



The first issue of Sports Illustrated, published in August 1954, included a gatefold insert with baseball cards. The magazine's editors were aggressive in seeking an upscale readership with writers such as William Faulkner on horse racing and John Steinbeck on his personal passion for fishing.

RR Donnelley sales representatives successfully captured three more large accounts—*Scientific American*, *The New Yorker*, and *Sunset*. At *Scientific American*, RR Donnelley successfully convinced the editors that the company could print scientific illustrations with precision. At *The New Yorker*, RR Donnelley engineers met the challenge of the magazine's extremely tight closing schedule with a technology that they had been investigating since 1955—facsimile wire transmission. After much testing, William Shawn, *The New Yorker's* legendary editor, was able to announce that the magazine was no longer being printed in Old Greenwich, Connecticut, but in Chicago, Illinois. The third major coup was *Sunset* magazine, which was published in San Francisco. *Sunset's* owner, Lane Publishing Company, was skeptical that the magazine could be produced in Chicago and distributed on the West Coast on time and for a reasonable price, but RR Donnelley once again overcame every objection. By the end of 1964, all three magazines were in production at RR Donnelley. ○



## RR DONNELLEY AND WORLD WAR II

**World War II created challenges that tested RR Donnelley's resources** and its ability to remain North America's leading printing establishment. Because printing was not related to defense, RR Donnelley employees were drafted in great numbers, and raw materials were often hard to procure. The war also had an impact on the company's management. T. E. Donnelley, who celebrated his 75th birthday in 1942, watched as his youngest son, Gaylord, left to serve in the United States Naval Reserve from 1942 to 1945. His son-in-law Charles C. Haffner, Jr. was also called to active duty in the Illinois National Guard.

Despite wartime shortages, especially in paper, RR Donnelley was able to produce books, catalogs, directories, and a full schedule of magazines. Among them were *Life* and *Time* (including special wartime issues), which were crucial to home-front morale at a moment when print media were the nation's most important source of news.



Fortunately, T. E. had excellent contacts both in Washington, D.C., and with suppliers, and he spent much of his time writing eloquent, convincing letters to whoever might expedite shipments to Chicago.

RR Donnelley encouraged its employees to keep in touch with their colleagues overseas, to track their movement, and to publish wartime newsletters. Eleven such newsletters were mailed to the front at company cost.

Among them was *Service News*, for the Men of Department D; *Roto*, which kept absent printers apprised of changes on the factory floor; *The Arbalest*, for the staff of Department A; and *Apprentice to Rookie and Apprentice(d) to Uncle Sam*, for apprentices.

After the war, the reintegration of returning servicemen represented yet another challenge. By 1946 RR Donnelley had grown to 4,440 employees, as compared to 2,300

employees in 1934. The war had also affected the reading habits of the North American public. The United States was already the world's leading magazine-reading nation. An awareness of the larger world fostered by the war prompted its citizens to buy books of all types in unprecedented numbers. ○

#### DEFINING MOMENTS OF THE MODERN AGE

**From the 1950s through the 1980s,** RR Donnelley was arguably the largest commercial printer in the world. Few households in the United States did not own at least one RR Donnelley-printed product—a Sears mail-order catalog, a weekly magazine, a best-selling novel, *Reader's Digest*, a Time-Life series book, a textbook, or a telephone directory. While steadily producing these popular publications for America's homes, RR Donnelley was also called upon by its customers to respond to disasters and triumphs with specially created or substantially revised quick turn-around, "commemorative publications."

*The preface to this volume states that it was created to track the "military moves of the fifty-one men who left Department K to bring stability in a world fraught with distrust and unreality." As was the case with many veterans, Kenneth Dedrick (pictured above) returned to RR Donnelley in January 1946.*

On Friday, November 22, 1963, one hour after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Time, Inc. asked RR Donnelley to shut down the production of *Life* magazine, even though 280,000 copies of the new issue, with football star Roger Staubach on the cover, had already been shipped. By Saturday night, a fresh cover featuring the late president with a new lead story and photographs of the assassination had arrived in Chicago. By early Sunday morning, the presses were again rolling with the new material inserted. Then on Sunday afternoon, Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald. Production was once again suspended so that an image of the shooting could be incorporated. By midnight Thursday, the final version of the magazine was ready for delivery. Although slow by today's standards, producing a news magazine at this pace seemed nearly instantaneous.

Similar stories can be told about the extraordinary measures the company took to provide up-to-the-minute coverage of other major events, such as *Life's* coverage of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 and the funeral of Sir Winston Churchill in 1965, both of which required that the magazine hit the newsstands on time and with the most current photographs.

RR Donnelley also printed special editions of magazines covering events such as the first moonwalk in 1969, the United States Bicentennial in 1976, and the Olympics in 1984, among many others. While these were celebratory events, the company was also called upon to respond to the sudden death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001.



RR Donnelley played a significant role in shaping and redefining modern communication in all forms of printed media. The Archive of R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company offers a newly available resource for understanding the history of the company and the role of printing in the development of commerce, craft, and culture in the twentieth century. ○



