

**BIG BLUE NEWSLETTER NO.**

Dedicated to the study of the publications  
edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

**4**

# **The Morgue**

**E. Haldeman-Julius**



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**HALDEMAN-JULIUS COLLECTORS CLUB  
CORVALLIS, OREGON**

## From the Editor...

This issue is about two months later than I anticipated, sorry for the delay. It brings to a close the first year of the Haldeman-Julius Collectors Club — I hope that everyone has found the initial issues of *Big Blue Newsletter* to be interesting and informative and that you are all well on the way to making contact with new friends who share your particular interests in the field.

It's time to renew memberships for 2005. Four more issues of this rather esoteric little mag, free ads in each, and whatever other bountiful benefits accrue to members of the club in the coming year are yours for \$10. Please send your dues to Sec.-Treas. Faye Landskov, whose address appears on the back cover. Hopefully with a good rate of renewals and a little membership growth we'll have a couple extra dollars to play with for a special project or two.

Thanks are (over-)due to several HJCCers for material in this issue. Paul Mann (#F-14) performed yeoman's service typing up "The Morgue," the chapter of Emanuel Haldeman-Julius' *The First Hundred Million* that appears on pages 28-38 here. It was nice being freed from this rather tiring task and I appreciate Paul's work very much.

Jake Gibbs (#F-3) passed along a copy of the 1920 Appeal's Pocket Library catalog from which Haldeman-Julius' "The Big Idea!" was taken. This piece is quite an interesting amalgam of socialist rhetoric and capitalist product-hyping ballyhoo, a snapshot from the moment in time when the socialist mission of *The Appeal to Reason* was being transformed into the program of popular education that lay behind the later output of Haldeman-Julius Publications. Jake also made available a nice array of H-J catalogs and price lists that will appear later.

Faye Landskov (#F-4) sent in a xerox of several pages from a volume of *Questions and Answers* that is reproduced here as "Automatic Library — Phase I." There remains a good deal of study to be done on the sales of Little Blue Books through vending machines, but this snippet from the pen of Emanuel Haldeman-Julius makes a good starting point for future research. Now we need someone to really dig into it! How about you?

Tim Davenport, Editor  
MutantPop@aol.com

# Girard in June...

## *Anybody up for playing in a library?*

Faye Landskov and I decided it would be kind of a kick to meet up in Girard, Kansas, and to conduct joint research at the nearby Leonard Axe Library at the University of Pittsburg (Kansas), a mini-mecca for those interested in researching the Appeal to Reason/Haldeman-Julius Publications empire. We'd like to throw open an invitation to any and all Little Blue Book buffs who'd like to join in. If we play our cards right and get a bit of participation from others, we might be able to produce an entire issue of *Big Blue Newsletter* on the spot, so bring your laptop computer if you have one!

The timing and agenda is still tentatively tentative, so anyone who finds the idea at least theoretically interesting needs to pipe up. Get in touch with Faye — she's the organized one! I drive the country many Junes, including this one, with my dog in a strange vacation ritual. I'll be hitting the road early in June and needing to be home in Corvallis not later than July 4, so my window of opportunity for Girard runs from approximately Monday, June 13 through Wednesday, June 29. When hopping libraries, weekdays are generally good and weekends are generally bad, in terms of "open" hours, so the best 5 day blocks of time from my perspective would be *June 13-17* and *June 20-24*; although I could be in town at least part of the week if *June 27-July 1* was the runaway favorite with others.

While I have mentally booked out my time with the intention of spending a full week in Girard this June, others need not be in town for an entire week to participate — even being able to pop down for a day or two would probably be fun and fruitful. So please don't feel that it's "5 days or nothing." It's far more likely that people will participate for pieces of the week, coming or going on various days to fit their own schedules. That's to be expected.

So, give the notion of spending some time in Kansas this June a bit of thought and get in touch with Faye [[stubbil@juno.com](mailto:stubbil@juno.com)] if the concept holds any interest for you. I've got some flexibility with my schedule and I'll leave it to others to figure out what week works best for most people.

I hope to see you there!

—*Tim Davenport*

Use Other Side as Coin Card

## The American Freeman

Girard, Kansas

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E. Haldeman-Julius, the editor of The American Freeman, conducts entertaining and clarifying informal discussions with the readers in the department "Around the Table."

Other excellent departments are Isaac Goldberg's "In the World of Books," which is an ideal guide to the best in literature. Special reporting, brilliant comment and criticism by the well-known popular writer, Marcet Haldeman-Julius. "Have It My Own Way," a department of debunking humor by John W. Gunn--

The American Freeman is growing rapidly in circulation because of its fearless editorial policy.

## Cool Stuff

Jake Gibbs spotted the coin keeper used for *Haldeman-Julius Weekly* in the last issue of *Big Blue Newsletter* and passed along another of the same general sort for us to take a look at here. This one was made for *The American Freeman* — the revised name of the *H-J Weekly* after April 1929. The publication is characterized as containing "news stories and special articles of major interest, giving a clear and intelligent view of world events.... Brief, pungent paragraphs in which wit and wisdom are mingled."

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# John Cowper Powys

(1872-1963)

by Faye Landskov  
(HJCC #F-4)

The branch of the Powys family from which John Cowper Powys came, numbered 11 children. Of these 11 children, three became well known novelists, another became a poet and several of the others published diverse works from lace making to architecture. Together, the Powys siblings produced over 100 books in their combined lifetimes. The popularity of their writing has not faded even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Evidence of this can be found by the number of meticulously updated websites devoted to these authors by present day fans. <http://www.powys-society.org/html/powjcp.htm> is but one of many.

The father of all these children who grew to be painters, poets, architects and authors, was a vicar at Montecute; their mother was a relation of William Cowper, a poet. Other than being the first born of 11 children John Cowper Powys beginnings are unremarkable.

He was educated in England at Sherborne School and Corpus Christi College, and after concluding his studies, he found work as a schoolmaster. In 1904 he launched himself from the schoolroom to America and began a career as a freelance lecturer. He traveled about New York lecturing on Dickens, Dostoievsky, Henry James and other writers of the time.

Lawrence Millman, in his *Atlantic* essay about John Cowper Powys “An Irresistible Long-winded Bore” describes Powys as a man who was not at all concerned about his appearance. The article has the description of a scene in which Powys, just before a lecture was told by his hostess that his pants fly was undone to which he replied “Madame, I wear them that way.”

Whatever his appearance, he must have been a very charismatic speaker. Although I can find no source for it, I believe Emanuel Haldeman-Julius must have run across Powys through the lecture circuit. EHJ notes that Llewelyn, John’s youngest brother who died in 1939 was the “firmer of the freethinkers”, insinuating that John, too, was a man of freethought. Unfortunately, EHJ did not publish any of John’s work after 1928 and it was the following year that *Wolf Solent*, a novel of 900+ pages came out in print.

John Cowper Powys’ writing is filled with imagery of nature. He populates his novels with characters who seem never to fully communicate although the dialogue is well written. His main characters in *Wolf Solent* and *A Glastonbury Romance* are men in their thirties who don’t seem to have much ambition but would go where the world requests them. Neither aims for much more than to be able to make love to a beautiful, slender woman. Seeing the world through their eyes certainly does bring the interest of the book to the physically human level

where it is not a bad thing to ask “Where in this life do I fit?”

Powys pours from his characters a sensual, hedonistic stream of consciousness. His writing borders on poetic it is so descriptive. A lovely read, but behind it all, there is something a little quirky, a little off. Although his characters describe their world in a tactile way, Powys does not let them actually be in contact with the real world. Powys’ main characters are always observing, never fully feeling because they are too busy defining what they feel to truly feel it. They are insulated by their analytic thoughts.

Other characters are two dimensional but solid. They are interesting for what we do not know about them as much as for what we do know of them. Powys defines his secondary characters by imperfect traits, or physical blemishes. I wonder, while I am reading his books how much of this is self-description.

Millman quotes Powys saying “The deepest emotion I have is my malice against the well-constituted as compared to the ill-constituted.” And from Powys’ autobiography, “Dwarfs, morons, idiots, imbeciles, hunchbacks, degenerates, perverts, paranoiacs, neurasthenics, every type of individual upon whom the world looked down, I loved... admired... and *imitated*.”

In 1930, Powys settled in New York with Phyllis Playter at a farm he named Phudd Bottom. Here, in four years, he wrote *A Glastonbury Romance*, *Weymouth Sands*, *Autobiography* and *A Philosophy of Solitude*.

At the age of 63, he moved to Wales to 1 Waterloo Place, Blanenau Ffestiniog where he wrote a few lengthy novels based on historical battles and several novels of fantasy. *Porius*, a sort of historical fantasy, reached the Simon and Schuster offices as a manuscript of 1,589 pages. They did not publish the book, but a London firm abridged it and published it in 1951.

Powys finished his life in Wales with Phyllis Playter. He had penned thousands of pages, most of which were successfully published, all of them dealing with the diversity of his interests. His introspective nature and genius of description are overpowering. He is not a short read, making him a very interesting choice for EHJ and Little Blue Books. Somehow, the two managed a compromise, and a very lucrative one to boot.

### **John Cowper Powys**

#112 *Secret of Self-Development* — Jan 12, 1927; 330,000 copies.

#414 *Art of Being Happy* — Sept. 5, 1923; 138,000 copies.

#435 *Digest of 100 Best Classics* — July 11, 1923; 368,000 copies.

#448 *Estimates of Great Original Geniuses* — Oct. 9, 1923; 30,000 copies.

#450 *Calls to Imaginative Conflict* — Oct. 9, 1923, 30,000 copies.

#451 *Masters of Erotic Love* — Oct. 16, 1923; 20,000 copies.

#1264 *Art of Forgetting the Unpleasant* — May 31, 1928; 42,500 copies.

### **Llewelyn Powys**

#534 *Mystic Materialism* — Feb. 4, 1924; 35,000 copies.

#702 *A Book of Intellectual Rowdies* — March 10, 1925; 20,000 copies.

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# Dating Little Blue Books

by Jake Gibbs  
(HJCC #F-3)

Determining the exact date when a particular copy of a Haldeman-Julius pocket book was published can be difficult. In a great many cases it is only possible to fix an approximate date of origin, as most titles were reprinted many times from the same typographic plates with few or no changes to the sheets. Internal alterations were extremely irregular — in many cases the name of the series on the title page was not changed even though that particular series was no longer issued. For example, many title pages proclaim a book to be part of the “Ten Cent Pocket Series” despite the use of a wrapper for the “Little Blue Book” series and an obvious comparatively-recent date of origin. Therefore, it is usually best to attempt to date Haldeman-Julius pocket books from their wrappers rather than from internal clues. Unlike the sheets of the book, the covers do show a great deal of variation.

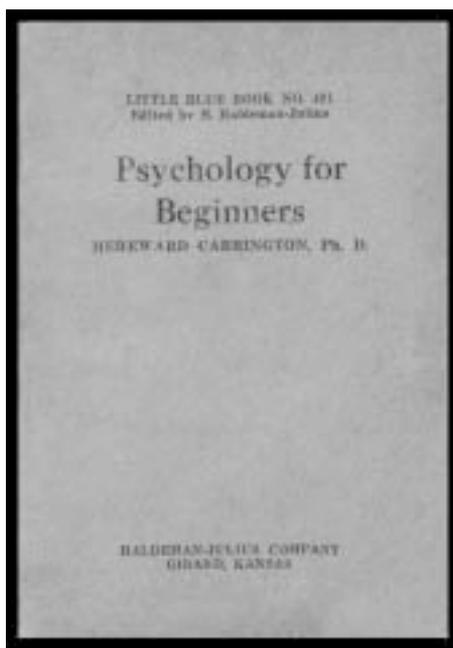
What follows is an attempt to provide some guidelines for dating a particular book, in most cases by examination of the wrapper. Due to space considerations I have not included here all the evidence for the claims I make. I'd be happy to supply more specific information upon request.

Emanuel Haldeman-Julius began issuing “pocket books” in February 1919. His series went through a number of name changes until the name “Little Blue Books” was settled upon late in 1923. In their 1970 article “The Haldeman-Julius ‘Little Blue Books’ as a Bibliographical Problem” Richard Colles Johnson and G. Thomas Tanselle provide the following chronology of the Haldeman-Julius pocket books project:

<b>Appeal's Pocket Series</b>	Feb. 1919 — July 1921
<b>People's Pocket Series</b>	August 1921 — Early 1922
<b>Appeal Pocket Series</b>	Early 1922
<b>Ten Cent Pocket Series</b>	April 1922 — September 1923
<b>Five Cent Pocket Series</b>	September 1923
<b>Pocket Series</b>	October — November 1923
<b>Little Blue Books</b>	November 1923 — End

In the case of the Appeal's Pocket Series, Appeal Pocket Series, Five

Cent Pocket Series and Pocket Series there was only one wrapper design for each series. Dating books from any of those series can be done by referring to the Colles and Tanselle listing above. For example, a book that has an Appeal Pocket Series wrapper was very likely issued in 1922. Dating the People's Pocket Series and Ten Cent Pocket Series is more complex. The People's Pocket Series was issued with a great variety of wrapper designs over a relatively short period. Establishing the sequence of that series' wrappers is complicated and must be left for another time. The Ten Cent Pocket Series wrappers all have the same front cover design but show three variations for the back. Those with blank backs are the earliest printings. Books with advertisements for two Haldeman-Julius publications came next. Those with three advertisements were the last in the series.



In late 1923 Haldeman-Julius began to issue pocket books as the Little Blue Books. The earliest version of these displays the book number in the same size type as the words "Little Blue Book No." which precedes it, i.e., about 2mm in height (*see left*). It should be noted that many books with this small number present the author's name in upper case letters. Also, the wrappers, like the late Ten Cent Pocket Series, Five Cent Pocket Series and Pocket Series have the company imprint at the bottom front of the wrapper and ads for three Haldeman-Julius periodicals appear on the back.

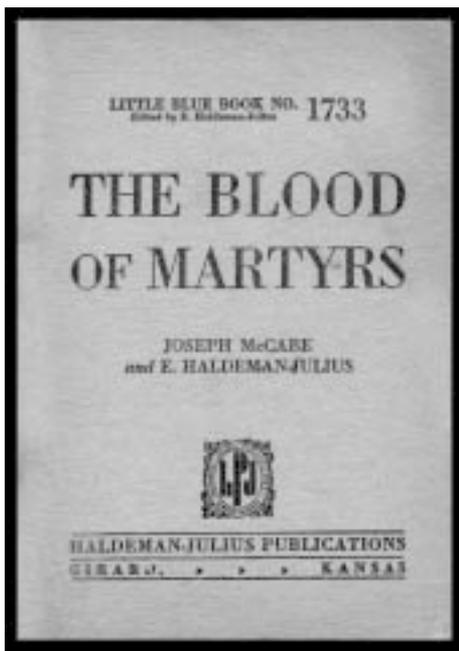
Sometime in 1924 this first wrapper format of the LBB was abandoned and a new basic format was used that would persist until the late 1930's. This format I refer to as "the standard" since it was the wrapper during the heyday of the series. These wrappers have the series number increased to 5 mm and the backs are blank (except for "Made in the USA" stamped on some). These books were all issued with blue wrappers.

This standard format was of long duration. While a great many of the books in this format carry a copyright date that date does not pinpoint the issue of a particular book. Most of these books were reprinted many

times without any alterations. In most cases there is no way to discern a wrapper printed in 1925 from one printed in 1935. However, within this standard format there are some variations that can offer tips on distinguishing an early from a late printing. For example, some books with the large number and blank back maintain the company imprint. It is assumed that these were printed shortly after the switch to the larger numbers since the imprint is a carry-over from the earlier format. Likewise, some standard wrappers have the author's name in upper case letters. Again, since this in an apparent carry-over it is assumed that these are relatively early printings, ie., 1925-26. (Upper case was again used for author's names later in the series. Books numbered in the 1700's often have upper case author lines.)

There is one minor variation in the standard format that may give dating hints. Several books have wrapper titles in a sans serif type face. Sans serif wrappers have copyright dates ranging from 1925-29. While I'm not absolutely certain, it appears that these books are early printings, quite likely the earliest printing of a title.

In the early 1930's an addition was briefly made to the standard format. Judging from the relatively small numbers of books bearing this wrapper the style was not employed for long. The bottom third of this front wrapper carried a new version of the company imprint (*see right*). The initials "hpj" surrounded by an oval bearing the words "Haldeman-Julius Publications (the name the company adopted in 1927, abandoning the earlier name Haldeman-Julius Company), Girard Kansas". The oval is surrounded by a ring of foliage. Below that are two lines of type between three solid lines. The first line bears the company name, the second the location.

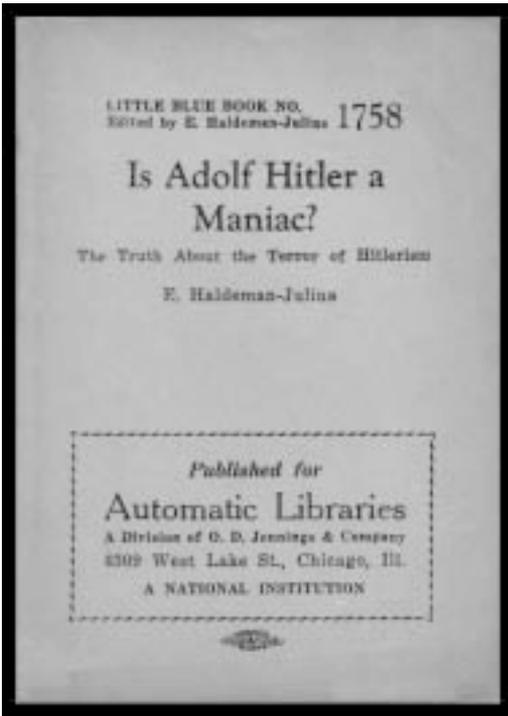


It's likely that most wrappers with this new imprint were issued in 1933-34. However, I have seen a few books that have the imprint but the non-blue color and logos on the back indicate they were printed in the late

1940's.

When confronted with more than one copy of a title with the standard wrapper an examination of the sheets may help determine if one copy is from an earlier printing. Haldeman-Julius often reduced the number of pages for a title. For example, some books that first appeared with 64 pages were later issued with 32 pages. It's safe to assume the shorter version is the later. Also, the advertising matter on the last few pages of some books can yield clues. Often a Little Blue Book published in the first few years of the series carried a list of other titles in the series while a later printing of that number may leave those pages blank. My guess is that the blank page versions began being printed around 1927 or 1928 since by then there had been many replacement titles rendering the original lists obsolete.

An interesting wrapper variation appeared in 1939. For about two



years Haldeman-Julius tried selling books from vending machines. The books produced for this endeavor have a rectangle on the lower half of the wrapper noting "Published for Automatic Libraries" followed by the name and address of the distribution company (*see left*). Below the box is an 11 mm wide "union made" label. This union label had been used on some Appeal's Pocket Series and People's Pocket series but not again until the late 1930's. All Automatic Libraries issues have blue wrappers.

At some point in the late 1930's the "standard" format was abandoned. I've not been able to determine the date. I can say with certainty that it happened after 1934 and before 1941. My guess is that the shift came in 1938 or 1939.

The first wrappers to vary from the standard have a smaller version (7 mm wide) of the union label than the one used on the Automatic Libraries wrappers. The union label sometimes is accompanied by the number one

to its right, indicating “Local no. 1” (*see below*). The wrappers bearing the union label on the front appear in various colors, some still blue but more commonly yellow, orange and white. This is the first time anything but blue had been used since the days of the People’s Pocket Series (a very few Appeal Pocket Series titles had white wrappers). At some point the union label



was moved to the back. Once on the back both sizes of the union label were used. There does not seem to be a clear sequence in the use of the two sizes. I’m reasonably sure that they were used at the same time on different books.

At this point we need to introduce the topic of staples. Since 1919 pocket series books had been bound with two staples. Sometime after the switch to colored wrappers the books received a single staple. (The company changed back to two staples in the 1950’s. That will be discussed below.) All Automatic Libraries have two staples so it seems clear that the change in staples came after that series was discontinued in 1940. All books with the union label +1 have two staples. I have seen a collection of 38 books in the original box dated March 1, 1941. All the books had two staples. All were either standard or had the front union label. This is a rather small sample but it leads me to believe the switch to one staple had not come about by March 1941.

Some books with just the union label on the back have two staples but most have one. It is reasonable to assume that the staple switch came while they were issuing wrappers with the union label on the back, the double staple versions, obviously being earlier.

It seems likely that the switch to one staple came sometime between 1941 and 1943. 1943 is the copyright date on #1762 by Joseph McCabe. It was the first of a string of McCabe titles running up to #1811, all dated 1943 or 1944. All had a single staple. (Most of these display the large union label on the back but on a few have the union label on the front. They are the only one staple books to have it located there.)

Given the number of books issued with one staple and union label (small or large) on the back that format must have been used for quite some time. My guess is that it lasted from 1941-45. One interesting variation of this basic form is that a number of books were published in thin gray or brown wrappers that carry an apology for the paper quality. These books were surely issued during American involvement in WW II, most likely 1943.

The small union label without any other logos was also the format on the back of the Haldeman-Julius periodicals *Fillers* and *The Critic and Guide* which were issued in 1947 and 1948. These publications were also part of the Little Blue Book series. It's not clear if this format was revived for use on the backs of these or if the company continued to issue books with just the union label at the same time it used other designs. Clearly by the time the *Fillers* were being issued new wrapper designs described below had been introduced. My opinion is that the *Fillers* and *Critic and Guide* were the only books issued in the late 1940's with just the union label.

By 1946, possibly a year or so earlier, a series of major changes began. There are a few books copyrighted in 1946 that in addition to the



union label bear a new logo, the circular University in Print device (UIP) (*see left*). At the time the UIP was introduced Haldeman-Julius also began issuing illustrated wrappers. These illustrated wrappers have the book number and the editor line moved to the back.

Shortly after the introduction of the UIP a portrait of the editor, E. Haldeman-Julius, appeared on the wrapper back. The portrait shows the head and upper torso. The same portrait was printed in three different sizes, 37 mm, 46 mm and 49 mm in height, the variations coming as a result of enlargement, or in a change in how much of the torso was displayed. The 46 mm version has what appear to be initials inscribed just below the drawing, presumably

those of the artist. On the 49 mm version the initials are blocked out. On the 37 mm version the area that showed the initials is cropped out. My guess is that the portrait was used from around 1947 to 1951. It seems likely the sequence was 46 mm portrait was used first, then the 37 mm, followed by the 49 mm. The portrait was always used in conjunction with the union logo, and sometimes with the UIP (*see right*).

In the early 1950's the wrappers began to evolve in another direction. Not long after the death of E. Haldeman-Julius in 1951 a shift was made

back to two staples. At about the same time mention of E. Haldeman-Julius began to disappear from the wrapper. The portrait was retired, and soon after the line that stated "Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius" which had graced the wrappers since the later versions of the People's Pocket Series in 1921 disappeared. With the reintroduction of the double staple the union label was relegated to the trash heap.

These new style wrappers often use a lighter weight paper than the card stock that was traditionally employed. In most cases the paper is white but with the front coated in a different color, usually in a tight crosshatch pattern.

The first of the new two staple versions have the UIP logo, usually on the back, and these retain the editor line. Given the small number of copies seen in this style it is assumed it was short-lived, possibly limited to 1951-52. Soon the two staple books were stripped of the editor line. There is a great variety of wrappers styles that have in common the lack of any reference to H-J (H-J was also being removed from the title page in many



cases). Many of the wrappers have illustrations, but almost always these wrappers have the number on the front as opposed to the illustrated wrap-



pers of the late 1940's that placed the number on the back. A very few of the new wrappers have wrappers with a single photograph on the front (eg., #1616 *How to Improve Yourself Physically* bears the photograph of a bathing beauty)(example: see left). In some cases these two stapled books have blank backs but more frequently they carry lists of other books in the series on the back wrapper, and sometimes on the inside wrapper as well. On some books the back has a mail-in coupon for the request of a catalog (This encouraged reader to ruin the wrapper by clipping the coupon. I take it as evidence that the new editor

was something less than a bibliophile. I am happy to report that I have never seen a book with the coupon clipped.). Some wrappers carry advertisements from printing services and for various types of merchandise (eg. Hernia belts, razors.)

Any Little Blue Book with a copyright 1952-55 (1955 is the latest I've seen) has a wrapper of the two staple variety described above. It is assumed that reprinted numbers with the late two staple designs began to be printed during this time and were issued until the company ceased printing. As noted above, books bearing the UIP device were the earliest of this type. There may be a sequence of the various backs of the late two staple books (blank, list of books, coupons, printing and merchandise ads) but so far I've not been able to discern it.

The company — no longer known as Haldeman-Julius Publications but rather The Little Blue Book Company — continued to sell books until its destruction by fire in 1978. But it is likely the presses had been idle for sometime before that. The latest printing I can discern is # 1372, *Why I Am Not a Christian* by Bertrand Russell. Above the title it states: "The Famous Philosopher Bertram Russel (sic) writes." Below the title is an address that includes a zip code. Zip codes became mandatory in 1967. I have seen only this one book with a zip code so it seems very few were issued. I suspect the company did little to no printing for the decade be-

fore the fire.

I hope that some collectors and librarians find this essay helpful. Many clues will no doubt emerge to allow more precise dating as interest in these books grows. I'd be very interested to hear from anyone who comes across of such clues.

### *Summary for Little Blue Book Wrappers*

1. Small number, blue, two staples: 1923-24.
  2. Large number, blue, two staples: 1924-late 1930's.
- Note:* Haldeman-Julius Company imprint and/or the author's name in upper case letters are likely early printings: 1924-26.
3. Wrappers with sans serif type face: 1925-29.
  4. Haldeman-Julius Publications logo on front: 1933-34.
  5. Automatic Libraries logo, blue, two staples: 1939-40.
  6. Small union label on front (often accompanied by a 1), various colors, two staples: circa 1939-41.
  7. Union label (small or large) on back, various colors (most commonly light orange), two staples: circa 1941.
  8. Union label (small or large) on back, various colors, one staple: circa 1941-45.
  9. UIP logo and small union label on back, various colors (these include the first illustrated wrappers), one staple: circa 1945-47.
  10. H-J portrait (three sizes, 37 mm, 46 mm 49 mm), union label (usually small but on occasion large), UIP sometimes, various colors, one staple: circa 1947- 51.
  11. UIP logo (front or back) without union label, various colors, two staples: circa 1951-52.
  12. Editor line removed, various backs (blank, list of books, merchandise ads, mail-in coupon), various colors (often white with another color coating the front), two staples: circa 1952 to end of series.
  13. Zip code in address on front wrapper: circa 1967 to end of series.

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# “The People’s Books”

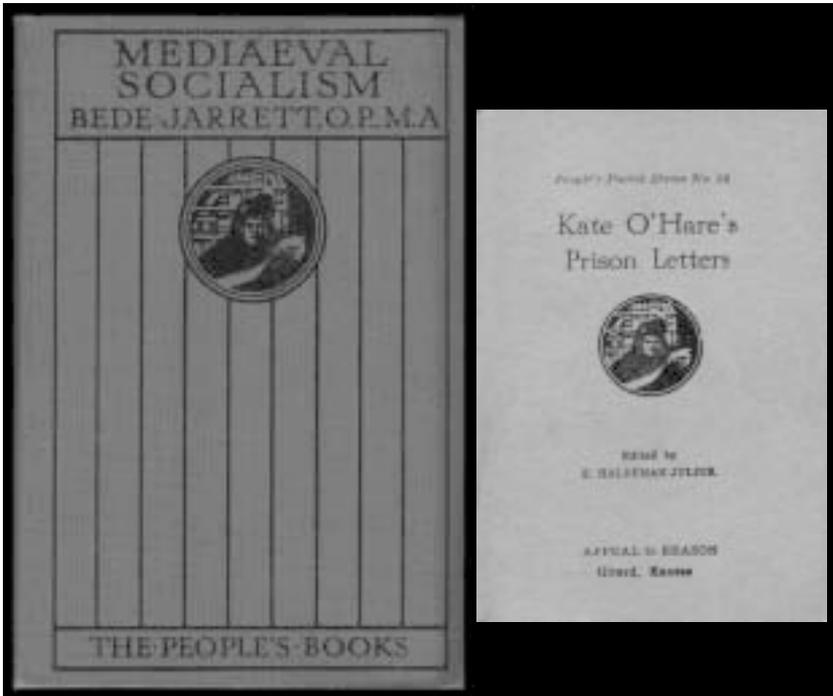
## Forerunner of EHJ’s “Pocket People’s Series.”

by **Tim Davenport**

HJCC #F-2

Few people have ever accused Emanuel Haldeman-Julius of stunning originality. He didn’t invent the five cent pamphlet — the socialist publisher Charles H. Kerr & Co. produced a series of more than 60 titles and sold tens of thousands of copies from 1899 to 1915. Nor did he invent the notion of a series of published works to develop self-education of the masses — others beat him to that punch as well. Emanuel Haldeman-Julius’ brilliance was in adapting the existing ideas of others and taking them to another level of commercial and popular success.

One forerunner, whose influence should be immediately obvious, were “The People’s Books,” produced by the London publisher T.C. & E.C. Jack. About 135 of the green hardbound titles were planned or produced from 1912 until the series was interrupted by World War I in 1914. It’s clear the name and logo of this uniform series was borrowed by Haldeman-Julius for his “People’s Pocket Series” in 1921. The company’s description of the series and a bibliographic list of the series follows (not all titles listed are confirmed to have been released).



## The People's Books

### A Library of New Books by Writers of Distinction, Bringing Within the Reach of All the Results of Modern Knowledge

Of the manufacture of reprints of the works of the great writers there has been no end. Reprints represent in the main the work of the last generation. Their value no one questions, but we live in a world that moves on, and moves rapidly, to the conquest of new knowledge. More rapidly than of your, therefore, the old standards become antiquated, while the conditions of modern life demand at every turn some acquaintance with the most recent results of investigation. Yet no attempt has been made to throw open to all the treasures of Science, Philosophy, History, and Literature, which are known to scholars of the present generation.

In "THE PEOPLE'S BOOKS" the publishers are making a bold effort to supply this claimant demand. Their ambition is not a modest one, as the details of the scheme given below will show, but it has been entered upon with full knowledge of the difficulty of the enterprise, and with a determination to carry the scheme to a successful conclusion.

#### *Features of the Scheme —*

1. SCOPE. The Series has been carefully planned to cover ultimately the whole field of modern knowledge. It will be a carefully articulated Series presenting every side of the knowledge of today.

2. AUTHORSHIP. Each book is written by an author whose name is sufficient guarantee of the standard of knowledge which has been aimed at. The list of "THE PEOPLE'S BOOKS," appended, will show that the publishers have been successful in securing the cooperation of writers of the highest qualifications.

The volumes already arranged for cover the chief branches of Science, the world's great philosophies and religions, historic movements and characters, and social and economic themes. The Series will be extended on similar lines, and volumes will be included treating of the more important side issues in connection with the pioneers who initiated them.

3. SIMPLE STYLE. Much care has been taken to secure that the books are written in as simple and attractive a style as possible. They are ready-to-hand guides to the world of knowledge, each volume a notable introduction to its subject and fascinating reading for its own sake.

4. GUIDE TO READING. Each volume opens up a new subject, and it does more, it guides the reader to future study. At the end of each volume will be found a course of reading — a list of books to read with some words of guidance as to their volume.

1. Whetham: The Foundations of Science.
2. Leighton: Embryology — The Beginnings of Life.
3. Henderson: Biology.
4. MacBride: Zoology: The Study of Animal Life.
5. Stopes: Botany: The Modern Study of Plants.
6. Dickson: Bacteriology.
7. Bonney: The Structure of the Earth.
8. Goodrich: Evolution.
9. Garstang: Darwin.
10. Watson: Heredity.
11. Baly: Inorganic Chemistry.
12. Cohen: Organic Chemistry.
13. Campbell: The Principles of Electricity.
14. Phillips: Radiation.
15. Maunder: The Science of the Stars.
16. Phillips: The Science of Light.
17. Lempfert: Weather Science.
18. Hutchinson: Hypnotism and Self-Education.
19. "A University Woman": The Baby: A Mother's Book.
20. Scharlieb and Silby: Youth and Sex.
21. Davidson: Marriage and Motherhood.
22. Russell: Lord Kelvin.
23. Leighton: Huxley.
24. Maunder: Sir William Huggins.
25. Loveday: The Meaning of Philosophy.
26. Carr: Henri Bergson: The Philosophy of Change.
27. Watt: Psychology.
28. Rashdall: Ethics.
29. Lindsay: Kant's Philosophy.
30. Lindsay: The Teaching of Plato.
31. Davids: Buddhism.
32. Coxon: Roman Catholicism.
33. Ward: The Oxford Movement.
34. Bennett and Adeney: The Bible and Criticism.
35. Meynell: Cardinal Newman.
36. Nevison: The Growth of Freedom.
37. Powick: Bismarck and the German Empire.
38. Johnstone: Oliver Cromwell.
39. O'Neill: Mary, Queen of Scots.
40. Colvin: Cecil John Rhodes, 1853-1902.
41. Hardinge: Julius Caesar.
42. Hearnshaw: England in the Making (Before 1066).
43. O'Neill: England in the Middle Ages.
44. Waugh: The Monarchy and the People (1485-1689).
45. Jones: The Industrial Revolution.

46. Veitch: Empire and Democracy.
47. Fawcett: Women's Suffrage.
48. Muir: The Working of the British System of Government To-day.
49. Meredith: An Introduction to Economic Science.
50. Kirkman: Socialism.
51. Herford: Shakespeare.
52. Masson: Wordsworth.
53. O'Neill: Pure Gold.
54. Skemp: Francis Bacon.
55. Masson: The Brontes.
56. Watt: Carlyle.
57. Howell: Dante.
58. Webster: Ruskin.
59. Alexander: Common Faults in Writing English.
60. Gray: A Dictionary of Synonyms.
61. Howard: Home Rule.
62. Macpherson: Practical Astronomy.
63. Walker: Aviation.
64. Hall: Navigation.
65. Ash: Pond Life.
66. Bryce: Dietetics.
67. Taylor: Aristotle.
68. Mugge: Friederich Nietzsche.
69. Jones: Eucken: A Philosophy of Life.
70. Valentine: Experimental Psychology of Beauty.
71. Carr: The Problem of Truth.
72. Masterman: The Church of England.
73. Foster: Anglo-Catholicism.
74. Shillitoe: Hope and Mission of the Free Churches.
75. Levine: Judaism.
76. Besant: Theosophy.
77. Wilson: Nelson.
78. Redway: Wellington and Waterloo.
79. Jarrett: Mediaeval Socialism.
80. Harley: Syndicalism.
81. Hallsworth: Labour and Wages.
82. Clayton: Cooperation.
83. Robertson: Insurance as a Means of Investment.
84. Stirling: Classical Dictionary.
85. Compton-Rickett: A History of English Literature.
86. Skemp: Robert Browning.
87. Masson: Charles Lamb.
88. Herford: Goethe.
89. Harris: Balzac.
90. Sacher: Rousseau.

91. Hardinge: Ibsen.
92. Spiller: Training of the Child: A Parent's Manual.
93. Watson: Tennyson.
94. Jourdain: The Nature of Mathematics.
95. Ogilvie: Applications of Electricity.
96. Bartlett: Gardening.
97. Young: The Care of the Teeth.
98. Bartholomew: Atlas of the World.
99. —*no evidence of any title having been issued or projected.*
100. Fearenside: A History of Greece.
101. Agate: Luther and the Reformation.
102. Kirkman: The Discovery of the New World.
103. MacDonald: Turkey and the Eastern Question.
104. Bell: Architecture.
105. Clayton: Trade Unions.
106. Adams: Everyday Law.
107. Masson: Stevenson.
108. Waterlow: Shelley.
109. Webster: William Morris.
110. Kirkman: British Birds Illustrated.
111. Hill: Spiritualism.
112. Froebel Union: Kindergarten Teaching at Home.
113. Beer: Schopenhauer.
114. Wheeler: The Stock Exchange.
115. Bensusan: Coleridge.
116. Clathrop: The Crusades.
117. Skene: Wild Flowers.
118. Williams: Principles of Logic.
119. Cook: Foundation of Religion.
120. Giles: A History of Rome.
121. Verinder: Land, Industry and Taxation.
122. Fairford: Canada.
123. Winstanley: Tolstoy.
124. Tillyard: Greek Literature.
125. Hislam: Navy of Today.
126. Thomas: Keats.
127. Besant: Indian Nationalism.
128. Conacher: French Self-Tutor.
129. Waugh: Germany.
130. Mugge: Treitschke.
131. Innes: Hohenzollerns.
132. MacLean: Belgium.
133. Atteridge: British Army.
134. Giles: Roman Civilization.
135. Sister Matilda: Nursing.

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# The Big Idea!

by Emanuel Haldeman-Julius

Originally published as the introduction for a catalog of *The Appeal's Pocket Series*, 1920

A little over a year ago *The Appeal to Reason*, Girard, Kansas, decided to issue a Pocket Series, the purpose of which was to print the best kind of literature at only 25 cents per copy. We are more than gratified with the reception accorded our series. No fewer than 130 titles have already been issued, many of them going into several editions each, and quite a number of them going into their ninth edition. In twelve months we have distributed more than 1,250,000 copies of these attractive, fine books.



It was the late J.A. Wayland — he of sacred memories in the homes of hundreds of thousands of toilers — who often uttered the following truism:

“To remain ignorant is to remain a slave.”

It is safe to say that this pearl of sound wisdom was the basic thought that guided his motives during all the years that he gave to the work of educating the men and women who earn their bread by the sweat of their own brow and not by the sweat of somebody else's brow. He published the *Appeal* so that the ignorant might be rescued from the oblivious darkness of muddled thinking. He knew that education opened the gates to a better world of peace, harmony, and prosperity based on justice for all. That J.A. Wayland did his work better than well even his bitter enemies (and he had many such enemies) will be ready to admit. His heart bled for the suffering victims of the system. His brain knew the way to freedom, so he devoted his life to the work of educating the masses.

When Wayland passed on he left us with a mission. He handed down a torchlight, which we were to carry on. We have taken that torch of enlightenment and we have given the best in our hearts and souls to the mighty tasks with which he has entrusted us. *The Appeal* has gone on from battle to battle — unbeaten, unbeatable, beyond the lure of pelf and the promises of vain ambition.

Our fight today is the age-long fight for justice. We fight fairly, using logic and clear thinking, instead of efforts at blind violence. The *Appeal* reaches at the common man's reason. It deals in truth, in facts, in sound opinions. It does not resort to distortions, to falsehoods, to outbursts of senseless rage. We appeal to the minds — the thinking minds — and so long as we continue that appeal we shall go forward. The people are learning the truth very rapidly, and we think you will agree with us when we say that the *Appeal* has been the most powerful medium through which people have been educated in the principles of industrial democracy.

But we have learned an important lesson in this tremendous work of education. We have seen that where the *Appeal* counterattacks against the capitalist daily press, we have been without a weapon to meet the barrages of the capitalistic book publishers. We win a mind from a capitalist daily newspaper, and then there is danger that that same mind may pick up a poisoned book and be lured back to unsound thinking. You see, as things are constituted today, the book publishers are all about the same, administering doses of poison of only varying degrees. They are all dangerous, though some are more dangerous than others. They are usually very respectable people who keep a dignified front. Their most powerful weapon is silence. They merely refrain from publishing the things they do not like. In the place of genuinely good things to read they administer powerful capsules of sentimental slush. The masses are not expected to want anything good to read. They are supposed to be a great class of fools, and so are fed up with the cheap fiction of the best sellers.

The *Appeal* has thrown down the gauntlet to the capitalist book publishers. And we are winning. Mark that: not going to win — we are winning right now. For the *Appeal's* book program will be as great a success because we have entered a field that really needs us.

Please bear in mind that these books are well printed. They range in size, beginning at 64 pages. Some are 96 pages, others are 128, and others contain still more. If we were to follow the policy of the capitalistic publishers of books we might dress these books up a little, make them “fancy,” waste a lot of paper, and then charge you a dollar and a half. Many of these titles that we are announcing cannot be had in cheap editions, while others cannot be had at all. We use fine book paper and each book is bound in a neat cover. They are three and a half by five inches in size — just the right size for your pocket. Remember, we do not try

for bulkiness; we aim rather for compactness. We economize in space, so that you may economize in money. These books are set in very readable type. You will be able to take a few of these booklets to work with you and read them at your leisure. You will not be weighted with literature if you take several with you on a journey. They will never be in the way. And after you have read them they will make ideal books to pass on to your friends.



Into the *Appeal's* Pocket Series have been collected the best works from a group of writers who have caught so much of the humor, of the pathos, of the unshifting realities of life that the world cannot forget them. When you add this set of books to your library you give your intellect and your character a new dignity — you also bring yourself uncounted hours of rich entertainment, you are adding a value to your environment that cannot be measured in money.

Why be like a sphinx? The Sphinx with all its wisdom looks only to the East. It has no vision for the South, North, or West. Many people are like the Sphinx in that they look continually and narrowly in one direction. The *Appeal's* new set of 130 volumes embraces the circle of the whole world in its information.



In this new catalog the *Appeal* offers you a season's delightful entertainment and serious instruction, a mental tonic and an intellectual feast at the same time. Nothing has been included in the *Appeal's* new volumes which does not possess both real and literary value and true popular interest. Here are books that can be taken up for a moment with pleasure and interest or studied for years with ever increasing benefit.

Do you know that the fashion in which books are issued by the regular capitalistic publishers in this country is quite different from that adopted abroad? In England, France, Italy, Spain, Russia, and Latin America, the best books are issued in popular editions. Millions of books are sold in this form — the best new book and the best works of all kinds of standard literature. Why? Because the book buyer abroad has learned to prefer good paper and print at a low cost, to cheap make-up in a fancy binding. Think of it! You can buy the ordinary new

books abroad for 25 to 50 cents, while in this country it costs from \$1 to \$2.50. In other words, you pay a tremendously disproportionate price for costly bindings.



These volumes will give you a liberal education. Would you like to be a brilliant conversationalist? Would you like to think cleverly and quickly? Would you like to be a good public speaker? Would you like to be a good writer?

The answer is this new set of 130 volumes which will put at your pen's point and your tongue's tip the brightest thoughts of the brightest minds of all the ages. Fifteen minutes a day spent in reading the masterpieces in the Appeal's Pocket Series will soon make your conversation, your correspondence, your reading, your thoughts, your viewpoint, your actions vastly more interesting and profitable.

For here are thousands of pages which will give you an intimate association with the most brilliant minds of all the ages — bringing you a power of words — a confidence and intelligence — that will make your own speech tingle with vibrant power. The reading of these great masterpieces of both ancient and modern times will develop your own vocabulary into a high potency of expression, giving you the ability to say the right thing in the right way.

The world's great authors have written the words that give you power to move your fellow men. This written eloquence and wisdom will give you the right word, the right thoughts, the right fact, the right course, the right training that will bring laughter, happiness, poise, knowledge, and power to you — give you intellectual and moral confidence and force.

You will get the eternally charming, witty, eloquent, or tragic words which the human race has accepted as super-eminent.

The *Appeal* offers you a delightful entertainment and a serious instruction, a mental tonic and an intellectual feast at the same time. Nothing has been included in the *Appeal's* volumes which does not possess both real and literary value and true popular interest. Here are books that can be taken up for a moment with pleasure and interest or studied for years with ever increasing benefit. •

*There follows 85 pages of advertising for individual titles in the series...*

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# “LAST CALL!”

## Emanuel Haldeman-Julius’ Phoney “Going Out of Business” Sale of 1925

by Tim Davenport  
(HJCC #F-2)

In the world of retail selling, there is nothing like a “Going Out of Business” sale to generate traffic. The result of a “GOB” announcement is a tidal wave of panic-stricken customers — bargain hunters and loyal regulars alike — a mass feeding frenzy, a force of nature... The failing business shutting its doors ironically finds itself in its last moments swimming in cash as merchandise is liquidated down to the walls, often with only modest price-cutting required. Modern specialists in liquidation sales use a rule of thumb that

the first month of a GOB will generally *triple* the volume of the busiest month in the history of a retail store! There is absolutely no comparable method of generating sales.

For this reason, false GOBs have been used by unscrupulous merchants for decades. These fake quitting business sales are regarded by the authorities regulating trade as a dishonest tactic (false advertising) and are today generally banned by state and local regulations.

In the Spring of 1925, Emanuel Haldeman-Julius bulk-mailed a catalog falsely indicating the demise of his popular series of Little Blue Books — a fake GOB sale



obviously unleashed to generate sales traffic. The cover (shown at left) reads: “On June 30, I shall quit publishing Little Blue Books! Order till then at 5¢. I am going to stop because I must give full attention to my immensely successful *Haldeman-Julius Monthly*. The

Enterprise of bringing out 868 good books has been sensational — over 75,000,000 sold in five years. Order now — today — before June 30, the quitting date! ORDER NOW OR NEVER!”

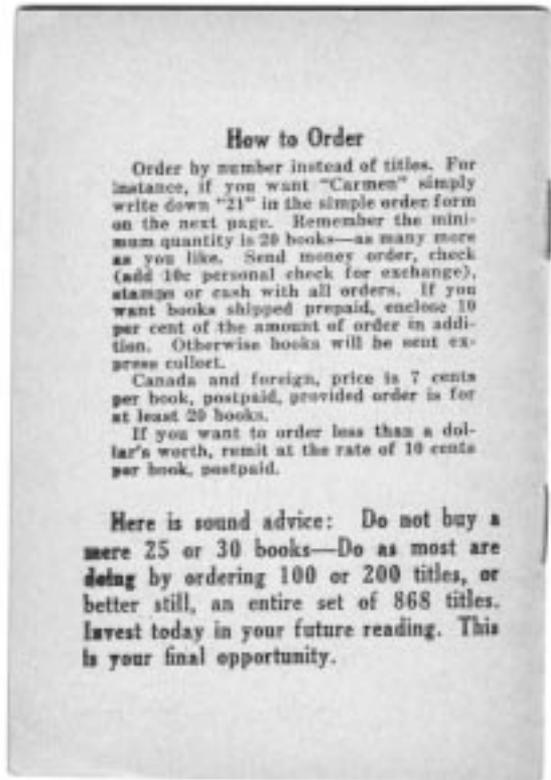
Of course, Haldeman-Julius’ dire warning that “After June 30, it will be too late” was just so much hot air, one of his artificial “limited time offers” taken to the next level. After the Date of Doom the price of the books would be the least of the customer’s worries — the entire Little Blue Book series would be terminated! But Mr. Haldeman-Julius was interested only in the best interests of his reading public, he had some “sound advice” to tide his friends over during the coming dry years. On the last page of the 32 page catalog he implored:

“Do not buy a mere 25 or 30 books — Do as most are doing by ordering 100 or 200 titles, or better still, an entire set of 868 titles. Invest today in your future reading. This is your final opportunity.”

While it would take a perusal of Haldeman-Julius’ monthly sales figures to confirm the theory, there seems little doubt that this deceptive and false “Going Out of Business” sale was a financial boon.

The former radical journalist and socialist newspaper publisher had fully transformed himself into a huckstering marketeer who roared through the 1920s flogging an apolitical catalog of self-help books, biographies, plays, poetry, fiction, philosophy, joke books, popular science tracts, and compilations of maxims and epigrams — art and fluff. The nature of the Appeal to Reason publishing house had been fundamentally changed within a year or two of Emanuel Haldeman-Julius’ purchase of the operation and the man lost little time employing every marketing

device, no matter how sordid, in the unseemly pursuit of the almighty dollar. •



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# Automatic Library — Phase I

## The First Use of Vending Machines for the Sale of Little Blue Books, 1938

by E. Haldeman-Julius

Originally published in *Questions and Answers #15*. [Haldeman-Julius Publications, 1939].

**Q. Recently I flew into Lambert Airport, St. Louis, MO, and while walking through the waiting room I came on a vending machine that struck me as being something revolutionary. There, at its top, was the name of E. Haldeman-Julius, and inside, subject to call by way of dimes, were four Little Blue Books. What's it all about?**

On July 5, 1938, I drove to St. Louis just to have a look at those machines, and while there was interviewed by a reporter for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. What follows is taken from the July 7, 1938, issue of that newspaper:

Sixty days ago Milton W. Greenwald, St. Louis linen importer, and William Hartman, an investment banker of the Chase Hotel, "dropped in" on E. Haldeman-Julius, publisher of the Little Blue Books, at his office in Girard, Kansas, to discuss their idea for distributing the books from automatic vending machines.

Yesterday Haldeman-Julius was in St. Louis to inspect the first of the machines, which have already been given preliminary tests here which indicate they will be successful. The publisher, who has sold 200,000,000 Little Blue books in almost 20 years, asserting he was setting a goal of 2,000,000,000 for the next 20 years.

Hartman, who asserted automatic vending is a new idea in the distribution of literature, said ten of the machines are now in use in St. Louis, and that a thorough test will be made in this city before national distribution begins. It is planned to manufacture the machines, which will vend from 4 to 18 titles, in St. Louis.

Haldeman-Julius said current tastes in literature are more serious than they were a few years ago.

"It may seem farfetched, but President Roosevelt has had a tremendous effect on the people's reading," he said. "Economic subjects are in demand as never before. I think the President has turned people toward liberalism and broadened the horizon of their interests."

The publisher expressed the belief recent business improvement will continue, and credited the governmental spending program with the upturn.

An ardent foe of Fascism, he described it as one of the greatest dangers faced by this country, asserting a vast amount of undercover organization work is going on at present.

"Communists have become so alarmed they are ready to support capitalistic democracy in an effort to avert Fascism," he said. "Fascist elements would be a real danger today if they had the right leader. What they need is a man like Huey Long."

Like the late Will Rogers, all I know is what I read in the papers. I know little more than is told in the newspaper story above. The vending machines are attractive, and, while I know absolutely nothing about this business, it seems to me as though the near future is going to see some amazing developments in the distribution of reading matter. I have nothing to do with these machines, my contract being limited only to my supplying the company with unlimited quantities of Little Blue Books, a job I'm always glad to do. Mr. Hartman and Mr. Greenwald operate under the name of Vend-A-Book Co., 503 N Taylor Ave., St. Louis, MO, to whom inquiries should be addressed by persons interested in obtaining distribution rights to the machines.

While having lunch with Greenwald and Hartman, in the Hotel Chase dining room, I was told that the place was crowded with *Freeman* readers. And, sure enough, I soon learned this was no exaggeration, for, as a result of the friendly efforts of a set of 19-year-old twins, busboys Joseph and Anthony Arico, practically all of the other employees, including several waitresses, were steady readers of the pious journal. Needless to say, I was flattered down to my toes. And, by the way, let me add that the twins are just about the cutest little fellows you ever saw — sturdy, manly chaps, with wide open grins, bright eyes, and intelligent, expressive countenances. It was a joy just to look at them, though I grant you I couldn't tell which was which. They are the finest type of self-educated workers. Their reading is of the very best, including heavy portions of Joseph McCabe's substantial mental fare. Born in Stauton, Illinois, where they graduated from high school, they went into the big, cruel world to make their own way — and they're doing well, all things considered. They manage to keep themselves supplied with excellent literature, which they read every night until the desire for sleep puts them out of commission. Freethinkers to the core, they lap up all my books which attack supernaturalism and theology. They soon got their fellow-employees reading my stuff. One in particular struck my eye with a reverberating bang. She's a black-haired, black-eyed, olive-complexioned, red-lipped, shiny-toothed, glamorous miss, with more beauty to her 110 pounds than you'll find in several famous Hollywood stars. And she's one of my steady readers. Maybe that didn't help whet my appetite.

I tried to look up my favorite reader, C.A. Lang, at his home at 7442-A Hazel Ave., Maplewood, MO, but I got no answer to my ring of the bell. The house was in darkness, and, as it was about 9 pm, I concluded the family must have gone to a movie. I should have given them some warning. I'm sorry I missed Lang, his wife, and their two beautiful daughters, but there'll be more chances to come. I then wrote to the Arico twins telling them to get in touch with reader Lang, adding I thought they'd make great friends, for their tastes run pretty well in the same directions. I then wrote to Lang suggesting that he look out for the boys. And thus, having done my Boy Scout deed for the day, I turned in for a well-earned snooze. •

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# The Morgue:

*What Happens to the “Failures” Among the Little Blue Books.*

by E. Haldeman-Julius

An excerpt from *The First Hundred Million* [NY: Simon & Schuster, 1928].

This is the most painful part of the story. Those books which go into The Hospital and do not come out are consigned, with regrets, to The Morgue. The Morgue is filled with books that have not found a large audience among the readers of today. It is also filled with many a bitter lesson, and some experience, though negative, the value of which cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

I have never had a complete failure, if by that you mean a book that did not sell at all — a copy at least now and then. It appears that there is always someone to buy a few copies of any book you could possibly print and offer for sale, provided it is a good book of its kind. But I had as near a failure as I ever care to come with the *Short Poems of Friedrich Hölderlin*. It was a good book, but it was poetry, plus the fact that no one knew — or cared! — who Mr. Hölderlin might be. I printed 10,000 copies of this book. My confession is complete when I add that I finally baled, after a year and a half, 8,000 of these. This book went into The Morgue and stayed there, for it was certainly dead.

One book that went into The Morgue is still a profound regret in my memory. I hated to delete such a title from the list. I argued with myself, and for a time I let the book ride along merely for the prestige and satisfaction it gave my *amour propre*. For Sir Richard Burton's version of *The Kasidah* has been a favorite of mine ever since I first read it as a young man. I always wanted to make an edition of that book available to the public at far less than the several dollars it usually costs. But *The Kasidah* kept coming into The Hospital. There seemed nothing that could be done with it. At last it was consigned to The Morgue. But one of these days I'll find a way to sell *The Kasidah*, at a fraction of a dollar, and it will be brought back to the light.

Just when does a book go into The Morgue and any remainder into the bales of waste paper? Well, as I have said, in order to sell Little Blue Books at a

nickel apiece it is necessary for each title to sell to the extent of at least 10,000 copies annually, speaking in round numbers. If every book sells at least its quota, then, with 1,260 titles the total distribution must be 12,600,000 — in one or two bad years, and at first, the sales for a year fell below this figure, and in 1927 exceeded 20,000,000. Some books sell far better than 10,000 copies a year, and help to support those which fall behind and which it is, for one reason or another, desirable to keep in print.

In general, the rules which slate a book for The Morgue are not too drastic. But if a book sells less than 5,000 copies annually, and nothing can be done to increase that total, it goes into The Morgue and any remainder is sent to the baler. If a book sells 6,000 copies in a year I may keep it on sale, especially if it is a thoroughly good book, and lends prestige to the series. I may try to jump up that sales total — but the book may not immediately go to The Morgue even if it does not do better than 6,000 a year.

In a sales test made in 1925, in 400 orders selected for the test, ranging from 20 books each and over, up, in some cases, to as many as 100 books in a single order — not one order was received for the following books. These were, in other words, at the zero mark — most of the stock of them was standing still in the warehouse and accumulating dust. This is the list of dead-heads discovered in October 1925:

- Herbert Spencer: His Life and Works
- Defense of Poetry. Percy Bysshe Shelley
- Rudolph Eucken: His Life and Philosophy
- † Witticisms of Madame de Sevigne
- Aphorisms. Thomas Huxley
- Literature and Art. Goethe
- Poems. Robert Southey
- \* Addison and His Time. Charles J. Finger
- † Guide to Stoicism. St George Stock
- † Yugoslav Proverbs
- † Literary Stars in Scandinavian Firmament. Julius Moritzen
- † Essays on Rousseau, Balzac and Hugo. John Cowper Powys
- † Essays on Emily Bronte and Henry James. John Cowper Powys
- The Unworthy Coopers. E and M Haldeman-Julius
- † Essays on Euripides. Alexander Harvey
- † Essays on Aeschylus. Alexander Harvey
- † Essays on Sophocles. Alexander Harvey
- † Poems of Carew, Sucking, Lovelace and Herbert
- † Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma

† Proverbs of West Africa  
 A Guide to Aeschylus. Henry T. Schnittkind  
 Camoens: Central Figure of Portuguese Literature. Dr Isaac Goldberg  
 † Georg Brandes' Main Currents of Nineteenth Century Literature  
 Essays on the Friends of Jesus. Alexander Harvey  
 Götterdämmerung. Theodore M. R. von Keler  
 The Gospel of Luke  
 The Gospel of Mark  
 † Prince Hagen. Upton Sinclair.  
 \* A Collection of Apothegms. Francis Bacon  
 † Poems and Prose of William Blake  
 \* Cup-Bearers of Wine and Hellebore. Llewelyn Powys  
 † Short Poems of Frederick Holderlin  
 † Poe as a Literary Critic. Dr Isaac Goldberg  
 † Hauptmann and Sudermann: Two German Dramatists. George Seibel  
 † Talks with Lamb, Coleridge and Goethe  
 † Revolt in German Drama. Pierre Loving  
 † Perkin Warbeck and Other Poems. Lord Alfred Douglas  
 King Henry VI. William Shakespeare  
 \* A Ballad of a Nun, and Other Poems. John Davidson  
 \* What the Editor's Wife Is Thinking About. Marcet Haldeman-Julius  
 † Mexican Poetry: An Anthology. Dr Isaac Goldberg (editor)  
 † The Acharnians. Aristophanes  
 † Proverbs of Turkey  
 \* Sonnets of a Portrait-Painter. Arthur Davison Ficke

Those starred (\*) were saved by title changes as discussed in the chapter entitled "The Hospital." Those with a dagger (†) against them are in The Morgue, or soon will be. The others are still awaiting remedy or removal.

A glance at this list shows that it is crammed with titles of limited or rather scholastic appeal. Many of these sooner or later went into The Morgue. But I should explain that although not one person out of the 400 selected at random for this test ordered a copy of any one of these books, they did not actually stand still without a single copy ever being sold. Some of them, taking it by and large over a year with thousands of orders pouring in, would do around 5,000. Some of them were saved by the efforts of The Hospital, already described.

Then, too, it is never possible to make replacements wholesale. There is always a waiting list for The Morgue — unfortunately this will always be true in a list as large as that of the Little Blue Books — and as a rule those go into the discard first which somehow or other show on the inventory at 5,000 copies or less on hand. That is why some books are still waiting for The Morgue. Others, which it is necessary to drop, reach the deadline sooner. Some day, if a few of

these books do not move at all, they will be dropped forthwith. I have baled, in one or two instances, as many as 28,000 or 30,000 copies of a book. This is expensive, but I needed the warehouse space and it is better to list a book which moves a little than to waste space on one which does not move at all.

In the preceding list you will notice, if you look carefully, two books taken from the Bible. It is customary to cite the Bible as the best selling book in all publishing history — but I must be intrepid enough to point out that this does not mean it is the most widely ready book in print. On the contrary, for, as I have already proved, a Little Blue Book is purchased, if any book is, in order to be read — and no one, generally speaking, will buy the Bible in Little Blue Book form. I have both *The Sermon on the Mount and Other Sayings of Jesus* and *Essence of the Bible*, besides the two listed above, and all are poor sellers.

I once had a compilation of the *Words of Jesus*, made by Henry C. Vedder, in two volumes, nicely couched in the best of modern English. I think that modernizing the language of an ancient book is desirable — but people do not care for the Bible in modern English. They do not want to read it anyway, you see — or at least they don't want to make any sense out of reading it, and want it just because it is the Bible and one really ought to have one somewhere on the premises.

To sell the Bible you must publish it between black covers. The standardized stiff blue card covers used for the Little Blue Books mean, in the eyes of purchasers, that it is not the Bible. For the Bible is not a book — it is an object, a fetish, a piece of furniture. A large mail-order house once tried to sell a cloth-bound Bible — in blue or red covers. They were forced to abandon the project — people did not want the Bible just as a book.

But criticisms of the Bible — ah, that is something else entirely. People early purchase all sorts of adverse comments on the Bible, the truth about its origin, the sources of its myths and legends, a collection of its self-contradictions, facts about forgeries of some of its books, discussions of whether Jesus ever lived or not — as the Little Blue Books of this kind have shown....

Among the recent consignments to The Morgue there is Oscar Wilde's *Critic as Artist*, which I kept in the list for a long time as two volumes in the Little Blue Books. At an earlier date it was found necessary to eliminate Poe's *Marginalia*, and *Critical Excerpts from Poe*, and *Poe as a Literary Critic*. It is disappointing to

have to remove these books, but there was no alternative. They are not books that it is feasible to sell on a basis of mass production.

I did not so much regret the passing of the *Poems of Philip Freneau*. I readily saw that Freneau was in the same depths of obscurity as Hölderlin. It was a bad mistake to put such a book in the list in the first place. The same is true of Saint-Beuve's essays on Chesterfield and Rabelais; good as they are, they were out of place in the general scope of the growing series and they could not be effectively grouped for the best selling emphasis. Likewise, the *Essay on Swinburne*, by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch.

In a somewhat different class was the *History of Printing*, by D'Israeli. This simply seemed to be an example of limited interest. An original work, published in the Little Blue Books for the first time, called *A Newspaperman's Estimate of the Fourth Gospel*, by Olin Wellington Archer, met the same fate for the same reason. I should also list here Charles J. Finger's decidedly interesting brochure entitled *England in Shakespeare's Time*. It went the way of the others, for no other reason than that it had limited appeal.

Certain expansion-centers in the growth of the Little Blue Books would now and then stray beyond the precise boundary set by commercial success. I mean by this that the public would express a desire for a certain class of books, and, to meet this desire, new books being printed of the same class would exceed — when things had quieted down and the first flutter of popularity was over — the capacity that mass production would justify. A clear example is the Greek and Roman drama classification, translated chiefly by Alexander Harvey. It became necessary to withdraw some of these books, including *Iphigenia at Aulis*, by Euripides; *Oedipus at Colonus*, by Sophocles; *The Clouds*, *The Birds*, *The Knights*, *The Acharnians*, *The Wasps*, and *The Peace*, by Aristophanes; *The Captives* and *The Pot of Gold*, by Plautus; *The Self-Tormentor*, by Terence; and so on. A few of these classics, in accord with the popularization of the works of antiquity, as discussed earlier in this chapter, are being retained. There is a real demand for a very limited list of this kind of reading.

At the end of 1927 I find that the series of proverb collections in the Little Blue Books, as series, is a failure. At first there were only nine of these books — Chinese Proverbs, Irish Proverbs, Russian Proverbs, etc. People were much interested in the early days — these collections have always been a unique feature of

the University in Print, embodying, as they do, the crystallized wisdom of various races and nations. But as a wider range of popular books was offered, interest in this form of reading dwindled, until now only three or four of these books are successful — notably the Proverbs of China and those of Ireland. The others — there are 19 books of proverbs in all as I write, and I may retain half a dozen — are slated for The Morgue. They have to go. Even pointing out, by the catalogue listing, that these proverbs are the best wit and wisdom of large groups of humanity has done no good: in general, it has been shown that readers are not interested in such collections.

Occasionally I have found it necessary to send a biography to The Morgue. As a general principle, however, a biography can usually be saved with proper attention to the title, provided it is a good piece of work. The *Life of Keats* was one of the first to go, and also *Whistler: the Man and His Art*. For some reason not altogether clear to me the lives of painters and poets, as individuals, do not interest the greater portion of the reading public. I also killed a lengthy critical study of Shakespeare and his plays. Among others, there was *Diderot and the French Encyclopedists*, probably too pedantic in tone; and, withdrawn for much the same reason, *Hauptmann and Sudermann*, by George Seibel. Among the first to go, incidentally, was an old-timer, *The Trial of William Penn*. Another old-timer, a *Life of Columbus*, was sent to The Morgue, only to be replaced, with fair success, by an edition of *The Diary of Columbus in 1492*.

As I have shown from the beginning, the general development of the Little Blue Books has been along broad lines. Few books of a particular nature, isolated from others similar to it, get into the series. Now and then this has happened, sometimes successfully and sometimes not. Among the failures were such titles as *When the Puritans Were in Power* (although there is now Rupert Hughes' *Facts About Puritan Morals*), *Voices from the Past*, *Satan and the Saints*, *State and Heart Affairs of Henry VIII*, James Anthony Froude's *Science of History*, etc. Others of this class, successful and still in the list, are *Twenty Years Among African Negroes*, Max Beerbohm's *Defense of Cosmetics*, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, etc. I cannot, of course, predict how long some of these titles will stay in the list; some of them I am determined to keep, but others will have judgment passed upon them by the actual verdict of the buyers of the books.

There is one general rule The Morgue taught me. At one time I thought

that longer works, like Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, could be issued in a half dozen or so volumes of the Little Blue Books, making the whole work cost much less than a dollar. I tried this idea out with two-volumes, three-volume, and four-volume works particularly. Every one of them has been a failure. And principally for the reason that when books are offered in this way, your choice at five cents, readers will buy the first volume only, to see what it is like, and then never get around to ordering the rest. A contributory objection, no doubt, is that there is something forbidding about a work in several small pocket-sized volumes. If a book is to be carried in the pocket, and that is one of the points in its favor, then it must be in some sense of the word a brief book.

Among the many-volumed works sooner or later to be found in *The Morgue* are *The Jungle*, aforementioned, and Frank Harris' *Man Shakespeare* (4 vols.), *Psychic Research* (2 vols), *Words of Jesus* (2 vols.), *Dante and Other Waning Classics* (2 vols.), Upton Sinclair's *Millennium* (3 vols.), etc. Although the objection may be advanced that some of these books are, by their nature, as compared with other single-volume works in the *The Morgue*, destined to such a fate, I can also cite the example of the *Memories of Madame de Pompadour*, which was formerly in two volumes and not a satisfactory success. It is now in one volume under the title: *Memoirs of a French Royal Mistress*. The only best seller in more than one volume is Dante's *Inferno*.

A solution of the difficulty has been to give the separate volumes their own titles. This was done with the *Arabian Nights*, and it is at present being tried with the four volumes of Emerson's *Representative Men* and the four volumes of Frank Harris' *Contemporary Portraits*. These latter two, being biographical in nature, are being identified by the men treated in the separate volumes, in the manner of single biographies. This treatment has not always been possible, I am sorry to say.

The story of *The Morgue* has been a long one. It has, indeed, been much longer in existence than *The Hospital*. Buried in it there is more than one corpse, long since a skeleton to haunt the editorial closet. Such ghastly relics as these I hesitate to exhume. But I have vowed that I would tell a straight story, and tell it honestly. In some ways it is ghoulish, but I owe it to the demands of this chronicle to state the facts.

In my younger days I was a Socialist journalist. I mean this in a political and

something of a fanatical sense. All young men who dream dreams are fanatics. When I was in my twenties Socialism was a more important issue, under that name, in America than it is now. People were interested in Socialism. It was being talked about. People wanted to read about it. But the interest passed, Socialism waned, until now it is really a dead issue from any bird's eye point of view you may choose. It lives only here and there. I cannot go into the causes of this decline here. That would make an essay by itself, if not a whole book.

But in The Morgue you will find the remains of an early Socialistic debauch of mine in the Little Blue Books. I can call it nothing else, for the list of such titles is, as I look back at them now, appalling. They went into The Morgue because they ceased to sell. I have space to mention a few of them, and I think the titles are of enough interest to justify it. There was, for example, *Kate O'Hare's Prison Letters*. That brings back many an almost forgotten memory. Then there were the following: *The Socialist Appeal, From Terror to Triumph* (Soviet Labor Laws), Jack London's *Dream of Debs, Shall Church Property Be Taxed?* (A Debate), *Socialism vs. Catholicism, Fight for Your Life, Solution of the Trust Problem*, etc., etc. In the Little Blue Books as they are today you will find issues of the hour treated in a practical truth-telling way, visionary aspects aside. For example, Anna Louise Strong, in a series on Russia, gives the facts about the Soviet Union, as in *How the Communists Rule Russia*. Arthur Garfield Hays tells his side of the story in *What I Saw in Russia*, and so on. Two debates on Socialism are also still in the list, so that the subject has fair representation.

So much for one large area in The Morgue. Another generous group brings back another phase of the Little Blue Book idea in the process of growth and transformation. Many of the titles consigned to The Morgue have been dropped to make room for better books. I mean this in a strictly critical sense, entirely aside from whether the books will sell or not. For there are some books in The Morgue, about which I now propose to tell, which were very good sellers — and yet they were withdrawn.

I refer to a series of a dozen or so books dealing with the improvement of the mind, the personality, and that sort of thing. *How to Strengthen Mind and Memory* was the title of one of these books; *How to Be a Leader of Others* was another. I withdrew these books because they were false. They did not give the facts, but drew rosy pictures, fostered erroneous views of life — in short, these books were

nothing but bunk. They were killed, all of them.

Then, later, it became possible to approach similar subjects from a more scientific point of view. I found a way to offer the facts, instead of falsities, and will you find most of those earlier books replaced in the serious as it is today by books which are sound and authoritative and tell the truth about life. For example, William J. Fielding discusses personality in *The Puzzle of Personality*; Leo Markun has written *The Psychology of Leadership* and *Facts You Should Know About Will Power*, and so on.

The Morgue has taught me that the public does not want large doses of highly-colored propaganda. Some people regard any presentation of facts as propaganda, but I use the word here to signify books which abandon reason and logic and facts and set about creating fanciful notions based entirely on the imagination. The Morgue has also taught me that the public does not want bunk if it can get the truth. I feel entirely justified in killing some earlier "self-help" books, for the new Self-Improvement books thoroughly live up to their aim and do honor to the series as a whole.

The Little Blue Books have taken shape as a series of wide appeal. The policy expanded to be nearly all-inclusive: those were dangerous days, full of publishing risks. In those days I talked of going on and on, to two thousand titles, even to ten thousand titles. But I soon saw the only outcome in that direction would be a gigantic warehouse, full of an assortment so large that no one could make a real choice, and so expensive that no one could get any real benefit from it. From a rather indefinite intention to publish almost anything to sell for a nickel, the conflicting forces brought to bear upon the Little Blue Books, as they were offered in the market, chiseled out for them a policy of their own.

The Morgue has removed from the list, and is still removing from the list, those titles that do not coincide with this policy of good books with a wide appeal. That is why Ernest Dowson's *Pierrot of the Minute* is in The Morgue. That is why the literary criticism of John Cowper Powys, his essays on Emily Bronte and Henry James and the rest, are destined for The Morgue. That is why Theodore M. R. von Keler's concise summaries of many of the lesser-known operas will all find themselves one of these days in The Morgue — some of them are already there. These are good books, but they are not of wide appeal.

There has at times been a current, topic-of-the-hour phase of the Little Blue

Books. In general, this is not worthwhile. Sometimes it is all right to put in a book that will stay for perhaps a year and then drop out. I refer to such dated items as the *1926 Price Range of Stocks*, *1927 Directory of Radio Stations*, *1924 Republican and Democratic Platforms*, and the like. The fad of crossword puzzling brought a couple of crossword puzzle books into the list, but these will stay. Their sale is nothing like what I was during the height of the craze, but is it good enough to be worth devoting a number or so to. When the Ku Klux Klan finally fades into oblivion, it may be that the two books on the Klan will go into The Morgue. Meanwhile, there is enough interest to sustain them. And there is no reason why *The Best Jokes of 1926* should not sell for years to come, like the O'Brien short-story anthologies.

I am sorry that such a book as Dr. Isaac Goldberg's *Guide to Cervantes* should have had to go to The Morgue. But even this tells its helpful story. I can put alongside it Goldberg's *Dante: An Esthetic View*, and Julius Moritzen's *Significance of Georg Brandes* and also his *August Strindberg: Literary Enigma*, all of them now in The Morgue, and say to you that this again proves the evolution of the Little Blue Books into a general series of wide appeal. Why is it that Dante's *Inferno* is a good seller, while an introduction to Dante as a whole goes begging? There is only one answer. The reading public is willing to accept guides to anything except reading, speaking generally. People would rather read a famous book by Dante than read about him. They will accept a tabulation of good books, like John Cowper Powys' *One Hundred Best Books*, but they do not care for the significance of Georg Brandes or anyone else when it is written like a thesis for a collegiate degree.

I am sorry, just as I know many who read this candid account will be sorry, that the story, in some of its aspects, is not different from the truth. I would like more than I can say to have kept many of these books out of The Morgue. I wish I could keep them, before even that small portion of the public which would like to buy one of them now and again. But I am, not playing hit or miss, like some playful god — like, at a venture, the Setebos fancied by Caliban in Browning's poetic description of theology on the island! I am not putting in this title and taking another out just because I think I should. It is all a matter of figures, as the Efficiency Expert would say if I had one. The books are wanted or they are not wanted — it is quite simple.

As for general conclusions from *The Morgue*, it can all be summarized by simply saying that the reading public, viewed as whole, wants book that are not too esoteric, not too high-hat, not too refined and highbrow. People as a mass want books for everyday appeal and value, which does not at all mean that they want badly-written books, or books which deal insincerely or half-heartedly with the subject treated.

The worst classes of books, from my point of view, as a publisher in mass quantities, are poetry, literary criticism, biographies of less than international figures and personalities that are known by people of special education or limited interests, compilations of any sort except fiction or humor and work of the better known masters, and the large group of books usually called *belles-lettres* for want of a better name. On the whole, I avoid both the familiar and the formal essay, unless the subject is of wide appeal. Books of orations and speeches are not desirable as a class, though I have succeeded very well with a large group of debates. The printed drama as a group is decidedly not in demand.

If I could have given myself, when I began the Little Blue Books, advice which I now might offer out of my nine years' experience, I would have said something like this: "Whenever you consider a book for publication, pick out twenty-five imaginary readers for it from all levels of life. Pick out a college professor, a scientist, a college student, a highschool boy and a highschool girl, a day laborer, a factory worker, a stenographer, a housewife, a school teacher, a hobo, a chorus girl, a waitress, a Pullman porter, a millionaire, a salesman, a bootblack, an undertaker, a grocery man, a preacher, and a tired business man — and put yourself in the place of each one in turn, and ask yourself candidly whether such a person would buy the book for the price you are selling it if he had the chance. If fifteen out of the twenty-five would probably buy the book, then I would recommend putting it into the Little Blue Books. If less than fifteen would be likely to buy it at some time or other, its success as a Little Blue Book would be doubtful. If less than ten would buy it, its failure would be assured."

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# Secretary-Treasurer's Report

as of Dec. 31, 2004

## *new members*

- F-19 Dan R. Rouser • 1107 N Pinecrest • Wichita, KS 67208  
F-20 Sterling A. Wood • 2014 Palo Alto Avenue • Lady Lake, FL 32159  
F-21 Emmert F. Fields • 514 Eastern Parkway • Louisville, KY 40217  
F-22 G. Thomas Tanselle • c/o John Simon Guggenheim Found. • 90 Park Ave. • NYC 10016  
F-23 Bill Teague • 155 Teague Circle • Eclectic, AL 36024  
F-24 Sally Featherstonhaugh • 9278 Duanesbury Road • Delanson, NY 12053  
F-25 Mark Warda • P.O. Box 7 • Clearwater, FL 33757  
F-26 Joe Lindsay • 2000 Franklin Street • Oakland, CA 94612  
F-27 Terry Hill • 1257 Siskiyou Blvd. #210 • Ashland, OR 97520

## *financial activity*

Previous Balance .....	\$ 141.63
<i>revenue</i>	
Dues Payments Received	\$ 90.00
Cash Donations	\$ 0.00
<i>expenditures</i>	
Postage	\$ 0.00
Printing (Advance on issue #4)	\$ 50.00
eBay Fees (advertising)	\$ 0.00
New Balance .....	\$ 181.63

*Note from Tim Davenport:* My copy machine is currently non-functional and this issue will be printed at a local copy shop. I'm holding an advance of \$50 for printing the issue; I assume the bill will be less than this amount, in which case I'll refund the unused balance. In the event that the tab exceeds this, I'll pay the difference out of pocket. I donated the eBay fees to the group this time around.

## **Addenda to the *Little Blue Book Handlist***

- 0321 Fenton: *History of Evolution* is positively identified to 1922.  
0408 Hudgings: *Introduction to Einstein* is positively identified to 1923.  
0756 Seymour: *The Story of the Sioux Indians* was actually published in 1924.  
1025 Milburn (ed.): *Casey at the Bat...* is positively identified to 1926.  
1250 EHJ: *...Linkey on Companionate Marriage* is positively identified to 1927.  
1447 Birkhead: *Can People Be Made Good by Law?* is positively identified to 1929.  
1527 Norden: *Herbert Hoover: The Man* is positively identified to 1930.  
1578 Gunn: *Was President Harding Murdered* is positively identified to 1931.

Check those copyright dates in your LBB collection and let's see if we can wipe out "circa date" uncertainty. Let us know what you find! [MutantPop@aol.com](mailto:MutantPop@aol.com)

## The Bulletin Board

### LBB NEEDED DESPERATELY:

675 (Love Code of a Parisian Actress).  
Must be in very good condition. Please state price and shipping or trade wants.  
Lee Kirk The Prints & The Paper PO Box 5432, Eugene OR 97405.  
www.kirksbooks.com **leekirk@printsandthepaper.com**

### WANTED —

A copy of *The First Hundred Million* by EHJ. Will buy or trade Little Blue Books.  
**jaxghill@msn.com**

### LORNE BAIR RARE BOOKS • 2621 Daniel Terrace • Winchester, VA 22601

*Radical Books, Pamphlets...Ephemera*. 4 Catalogs Per Year. Active buyer of fine individual items and collections in all areas of American social history. Happy to assist in collection development — send me your want lists!  
**Phone (540) 665-0855 • satmind@earthlink.net**

### IT'S YOUR FREE AD SPACE, WHY DON'T YOU USE IT?

All members of HJCC are entitled to a **free** 50 word ad in every single issue of *Big Blue Newsletter!* Hardly anyone took up the offer this time around, which is a pity. Email your ad copy for the next issue today: **MutantPop@aol.com**

### EIGHTEEN DOWN, TWO TO GO...

I've got 18 of the Socialist Party titles from 1931. I still need these two badly:  
LBB#1706 Hillquit/Fine: *The Practical Accomplishments of Socialism*.  
LBB#1708 Hillquit: *The Political Philosophy of Socialism*.  
Decent copies worth \$15 each to me or let's talk trade. **MutantPop@aol.com**

### FAYE'S WANT LIST!

Needed:  
1900, 1901, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912,  
1913, 1914, 1915.  
Buy or trade. **stubbi1@juno.com**

### *Remember:*

It's time to pay 2005 dues. \$10 will get four more issues of *Big Blue Newsletter* sent to your mailbox. The mailing address appears on the back cover.

P.S. If you have the means and you'd like to make an additional donation to the club, don't hesitate. We could stand to start buying a reel or three of H-J newspaper microfilm and start doing some sleuth work... There's much remaining to be learned...



# **Haldeman-Julius**

*c o l l e c t o r s   c l u b*

**Annual dues for 2005  
are now payable (\$10).**

**HJCC members will receive 4 quarterly issues  
of the group's journal, Big Blue Newsletter.**

**HJCC members are entitled to a free 50 word ad  
in every issue of the newsletter. (Use them!)**

**Please make your check payable to the organization's  
provisional Secretary-Treasurer:**

**Faye Landskov  
4716-C — 97th Avenue W  
University Place, WA 98466**