

Acknowledgements

In 1987, I was a student in the late Dr. Robert Cazden's History of Books and Printing class at the University of Kentucky. I have Bob to thank for getting me started on Little Blue Books. He knew I have an interest in the history of socialism and thought I'd like to know about the series. After that introduction, I began to pick up a few books here and there. I didn't realize they were addictive.

I met Richard "Chip" Benson in 2000. We had both become enamored of the Little Blue Books and discovered G. Thomas Tanselle and Richard Colles Johnson's 1970 article about the books in *The Papers of the Bibliographic Society of America*. The authors discussed the need for a bibliography of the series. Chip and I decided to take on the task. Chip did much of the groundwork for the design of the bibliography but his other responsibilities, e.g., serving as the Dean of the School of Art at Yale, led him to drop out of the project. He generously gave me his collection of many thousands of Little Blue Books to facilitate the work. After Chip's departure from the project, I communicated extensively with Dr. Tanselle to further develop the design. His patience with an amateur bibliographer was impressive. His assistance was inestimable. However, any flaws are my own.

In addition to my collection, augmented by Chip's -- a total of approximately 20,000 books -- I examined 23 university collections from Yale to Northridge State in Southern California. Librarians at these institutions were invariably helpful but a few stand out. The largest collection of Little Blue Books is at the Axe Library of Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas. I spent a significant part of the summer of 2007 there, thanks to a generous grant from the Bibliographical Society of America, and I made several shorter visits, as well. Director of Special Collections at that time, Randy Roberts, and his assistant, Janette Mauk, were marvelous and have my everlasting thanks.

Julie Herrera of the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor deserves special thanks. The same goes for Roger Adams at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas.

Several collectors of Little Blue Books allowed me access to their treasures, in person, or via email. Emmett Fields of Louisville, KY has vast book holdings, including thousands of Little Blue Books. I spent many hours in his basement vault, with long breaks to chat with Emmett about his books, and the wider world. Faye Landskov of University Park, Washington, and David Williams of Chicago also generously opened their collections to me, and shared their enthusiasm for the books. Bill Palmer of Australia was a bit out of the way, but he sent photos and descriptions of rare editions that were extremely helpful.

Tim Davenport of Corvallis, Oregon is a star. He founded the Big Blue Newsletter. Many articles in the 13 numbers of this small journal, that appeared from 2004-10, provided information used in this project, several of those Tim authored. He also passed on information about the socialist

titles in the Little Blue Book series published in 1931. Other editors of the Big Blue Newsletter, Faye Landskov and Melanie Brown are also much appreciated.

My friends Greg Guenthner and Charles Thompson read drafts of the “History of the Little Blue Books” portion of this work. The work benefited greatly from their scrutiny.

Special thanks are due to my daughters Delia and Delaney Gibbs. They were pressed into service in my many trips to libraries and never complained. Without them the project would have taken even longer, been more expensive, and not been near as much fun. Delia helped at Pittsburg State, Barton County Community College, and Emmett’s vault. Delaney also worked at Pittsburg and Barton plus Yale University, Amherst College, NYU, Bowling Green (Ohio) State University, University of Michigan, Grand Valley State University, Northern Illinois University and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

My wife, Anita Courtney, deserves a medal or a monument for putting up with this project. I spent many weeks away from home, and countless hours at home entering books into the bibliography and writing the related materials. She hardly complained -- she did remark a couple of times that maybe she should have married a handy man instead of a bibliophile.



Delia, Delaney and myself at Barton County Community College, 2007