

RONDOUT  **COMICS**



Origin Issue!

by Kevin Ahearn



Cover: *Hidden Death* by William Holman Hunt

Note: "RONDOU Comics" is pure fantasy.
All references to actual persons, alive or dead,
made for a good story.



***“Who knows what evil lurks
in the hearts of men?”***



“HA, HA, HA, HA, HA!”



“The SHADOW knows!”



Walter Brown Gibson (September 12, 1897 – December 6, 1985)

Part 1



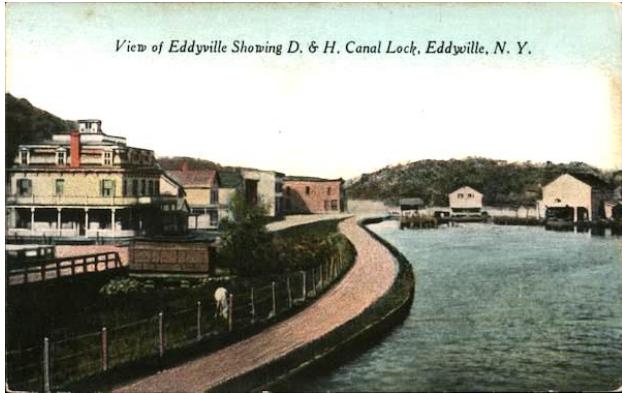
*“On July 31, 1930, Radio gave birth to my voice—
threatening, unforgiving, and charged by a mocking laugh!*

*“With literary ‘sleight of hand’, an aspiring magician
brought me fully to life, then brought me to Eddyvile, New
York.*

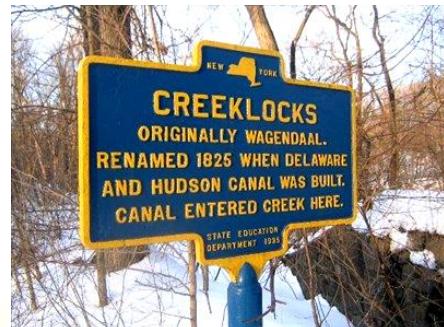
“You know, on the Rondout...”



***"What? Do you mean to tell The SHADOW
you've never heard of EDDYVILLE?"***



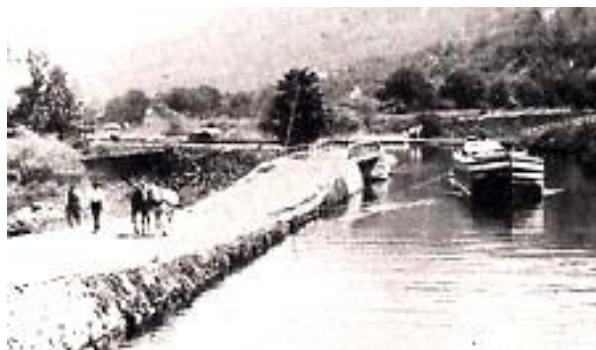
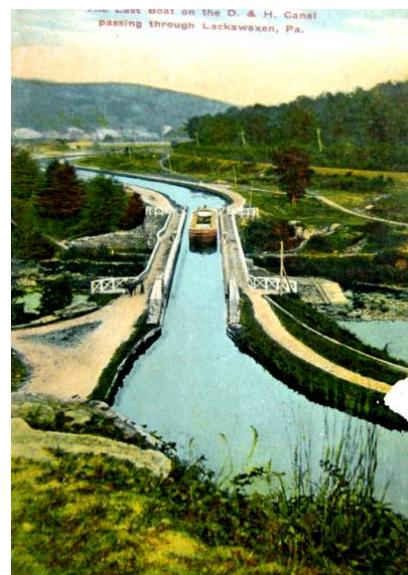
***"That's because the village started out by
another name: CREEKLOCKS!"***



"Located between Kingston and Rosendale, Creeklocks was also the beginning of the Delaware & Hudson Canal, the 'aorta' of the Rondout Region."



In 1828 "Creeklocks" (Route 213 Esopus) began the D&H Canal which meant jobs for the locals, working the canal itself, the cement works, the blue stone industry, hospitality, brickmaking, woodcutting, ice cutting, and fishing."





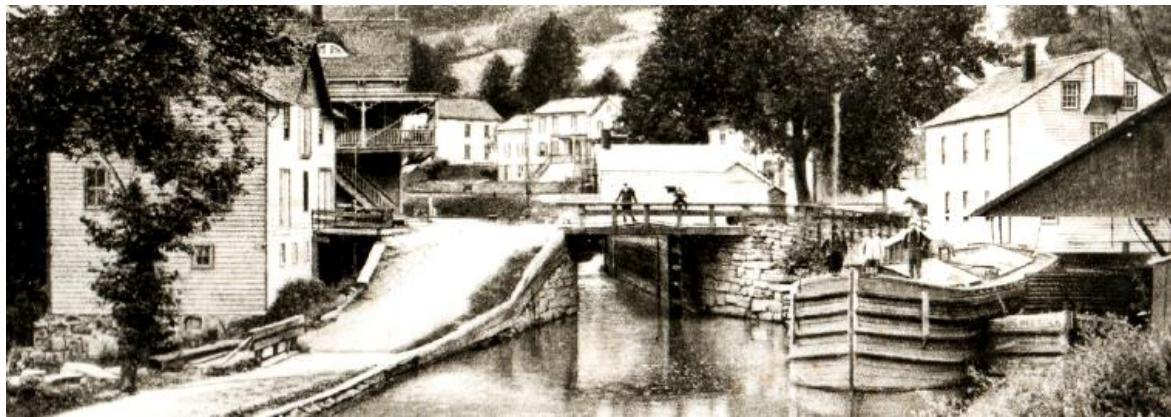
"The village was named after George Eddy, a mill owner whose family established a cotton mill and a sawmill on the Rondout, Eddyville became a thriving hamlet completely dependant on the Delaware and Hudson Canal."



"These Rondouters were a hardy lot, enduring blizzards and floods to stay afloat."



"But a new century was coming and the technology that would come with it would doom the Delaware & Hudson Canal Community!"



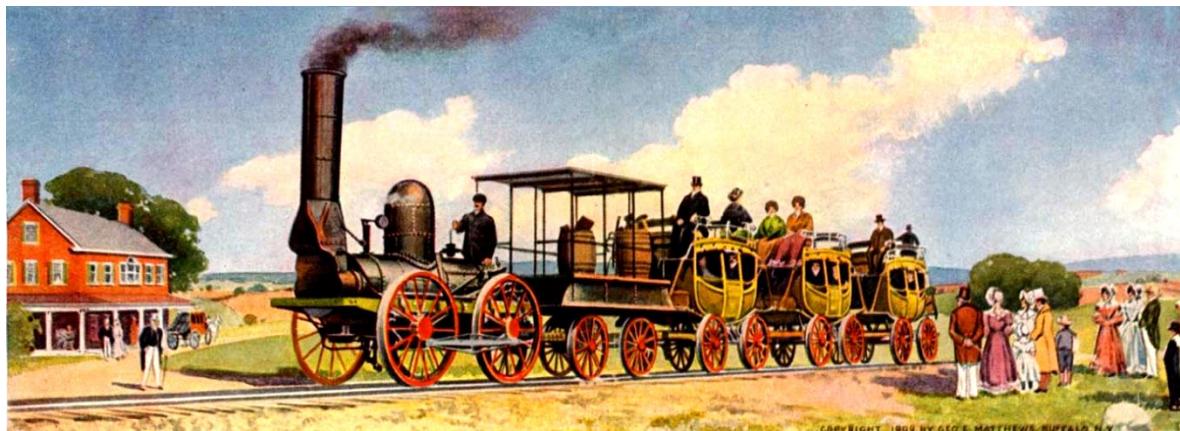
Whoever digs a pit will fall into it



Proverbs 26:27(a)



"And that's just what happened!"

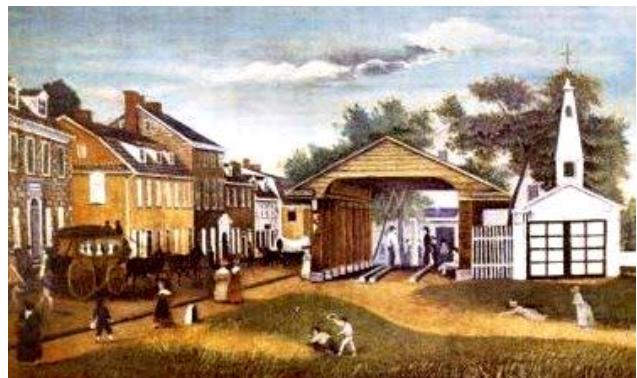
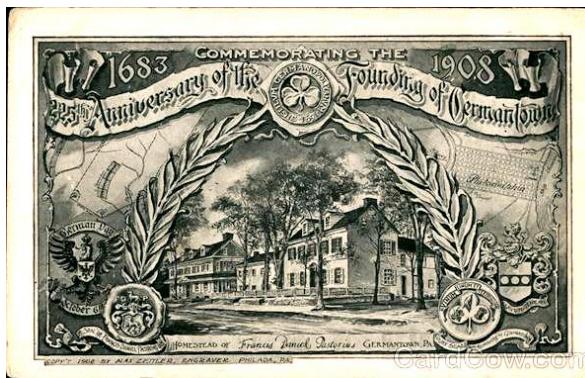


"After the end of the 1898 season, the D&H Company opened all the small overflow dams called waste weirs and drained the canal. Catskill rail magnate Samuel Coykendall purchased the canal and used the northernmost section, from Rondout to Kingston, to transport Rosendale cement and other materials to the Hudson—he abandoned that business in 1904.

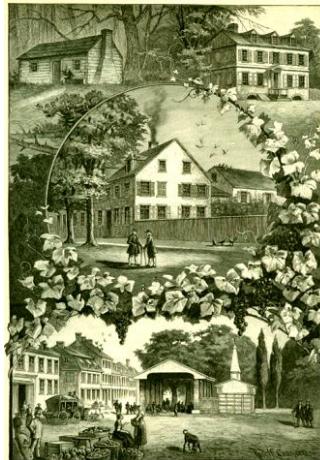
"The D&H Canal was never used again."



"It was about this time when the magic behind my beginning was growing up in Germantown, Pennsylvania!"



"Walter Brown Gibson was a bright, curious, ambitious boy who very early on, became obsessed with magic!"



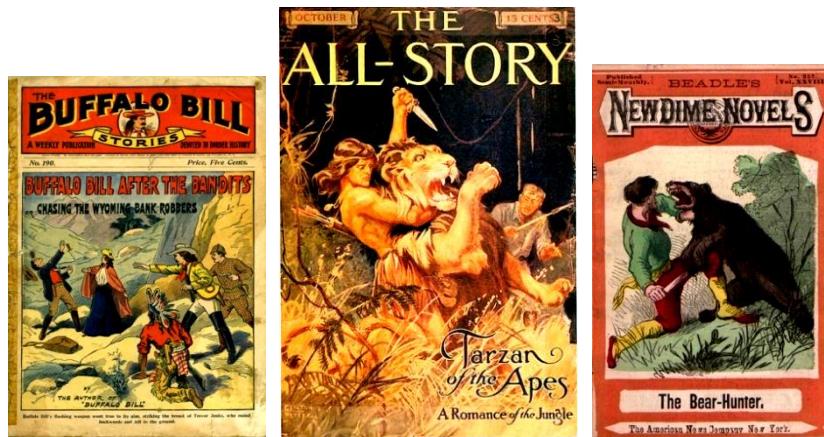
"Young Walter was a reader and researcher, with a soft spot for exotic puzzles; He submitted one he created to St. Nichols, a popular youth magazine."

(4) Change this figure to another system of notation and it will give you the name of a rare old plant." IV = Ivy



*"And they published it! A 'real' writer at age 7!
Infused with confidence, Walter's smoldering creative
spirit ignited and he never let up!"*

*"By 1912, at age 15, Walter was casing magic shops, his interest
in magic and mystery alive in his stories and his puzzles, in
his books and magazine articles.*



*"That was the year of the "Big Bang" that created the "Pulp Universe"!
A galaxy of 'dime novels' (Some of which cost a nickel!) had existed
for decades. Tarzan of the Apes would prove very quickly that there
was big money with a 'franchise character'!"*





"When he graduated from Colgate University in 1920, Walter had been published more than 200 times!"

"The 'Roaring Twenties' – The Government gave us cheap credit; righteous politicians gave us Prohibition!"



"Which brought about the rise of ruthless organized crime! Law and Order was rarely to be found, but easy to buy!"



"Then the banks, and America went bust!"





"Young Walter was growing as a professional, supplying daily features to Philadelphia's Ledger Syndicate and other publishers.

"He had written for Harcourt, Brace, and Company, and was a regular contributor to Macfadden's True Strange Stories.

"The cherry atop the sundae - Walter was also a ghostwriter for Harry Blackstone, Harry Houdini, and Howard Thurston, penning articles and books under their names, impersonating master magicians!"



"Then on July 31, 1930, I was born, technically, on the radio!"

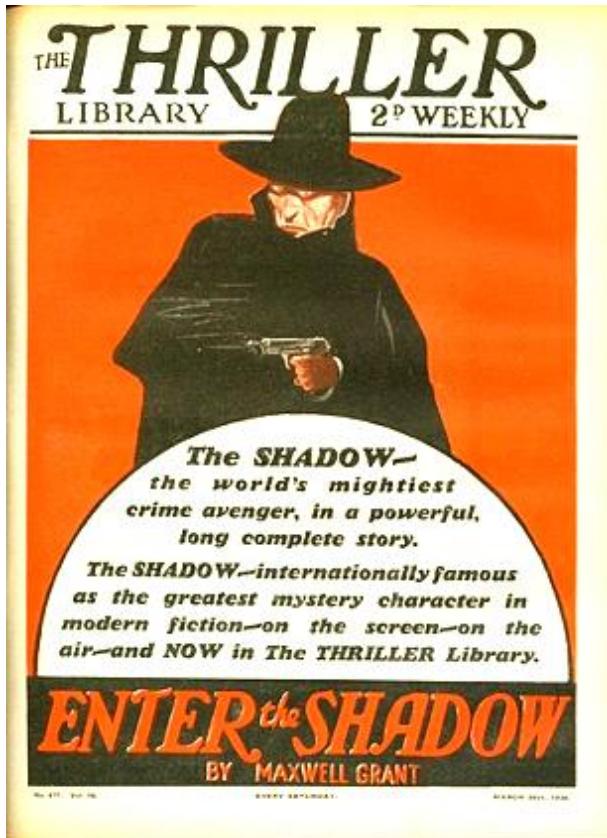
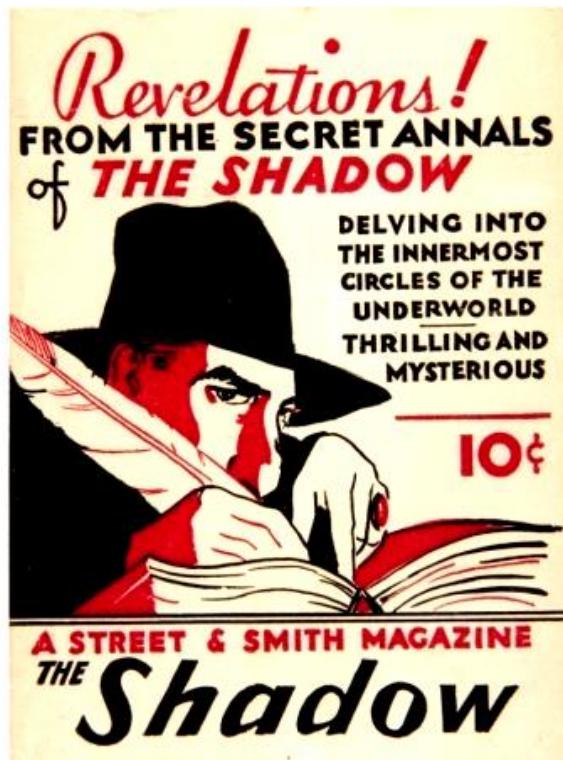
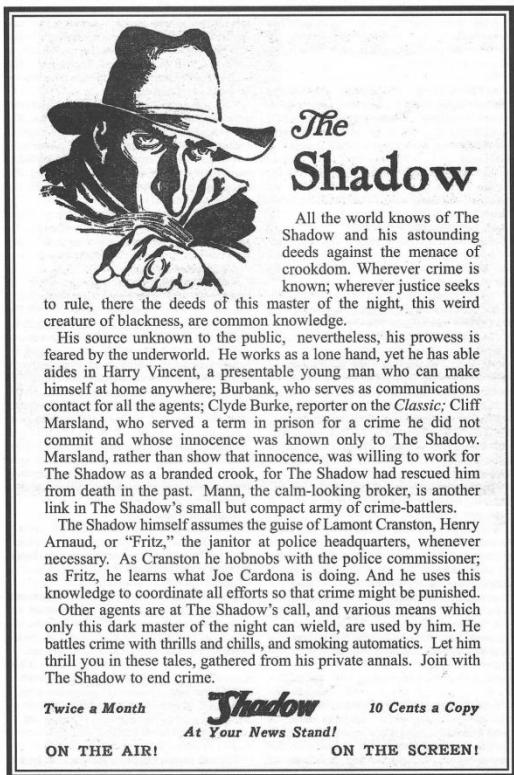


"Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?"

"Said the narrator for The Detective Story Hour, a CBS radio program sponsored by the Street & Smith pulp chain that dramatized stories from the publisher's Detective Story Magazine.

"The SHADOW Knows!"

"Walter Gibson was about to find out."

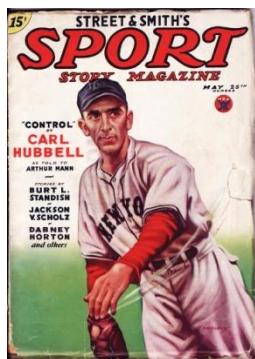




"I will never forget that afternoon early in 1931 when I stopped in at the editorial offices of Street & Smith. I had just landed a pair of book contracts-- a sequel to my Houdini book, and Blackstone's Modern Card Tricks."



"Detective Story was S&S's #1 seller, but there was a problem that maybe I could help them solve. Meeting with the editor and publisher, I imagined them to be best-selling S&S heroes!"



"Mr. Gibson, the voice of the Shadow is so successful that readers demand a Shadow magazine!"

"We want you to create a Shadow character and write his novels, one per month. You're the aspiring magician! Got any tricks up your sleeve?"



“Up my sleeve I had ideas, including mixing magic into the make-up of The Shadow!

“The editor told me to use my character as The Shadow and pick it up from there, putting The Shadow and his agents on the track of a mystery involving murder and robbery with whatever cross-purpose or false trails I needed. I was to come back with a few opening chapters and a general outline within a week.



“No time to waste! My big ambition: to crack the mystery field with a hard-cover, full-fledged novel.

“For that, The Shadow would be a mystery in himself, moving into the affairs of lesser folk much to their amazement. By combining Houdini’s penchant for escapes with the hypnotic power of Tibetan mystics, plus the knowledge shared by Thurston and Blackstone in the creation of illusions, such a character would have unlimited scope when confronted by surprise situations, yet all could be brought within the range of credibility.

“On the train back to Philadelphia, I hit the keys and got the opening chapter half done!”

"On April Fools' Day, 1931...

*"Those were the 'Good ol' Days' when people read,
and God bless every one of them!"*



"Behold the magic of Walter Gibson! For my very first appearance, you'd think the cover would display me in all my glory! No, just a shadow!"

"And I don't literally 'appear' at all! My loyal and obedient agents, men whose lives I had saved, they took all the risks to beat the vicious criminals. And when you, dear reader, least suspected it, out of nowhere, The Shadow would suddenly appear and save the lives of all who deserved it!"

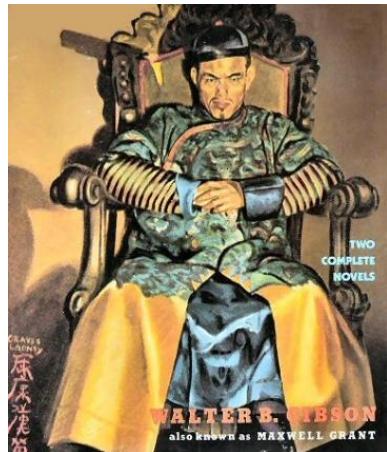
"Dear Reader, NO! You were not going to get to know The Shadow, not yet. To do so, you'll have to buy the next issue!"

"And thousands upon thousands did just that, my first two issues sold out in a flash! Walter Gibson had fashioned himself a marketable character, and a steady job!"



*"Oh, the joys of being alive, on paper and in color!
Being read by as many as 300,000 Americans every month
gave me spirit, purpose and meaning!"*

*"But like the first cover, a 1919 reprint, the Eyes of
the Shadow was not original either. Would I ever
get my own Art Department?"*



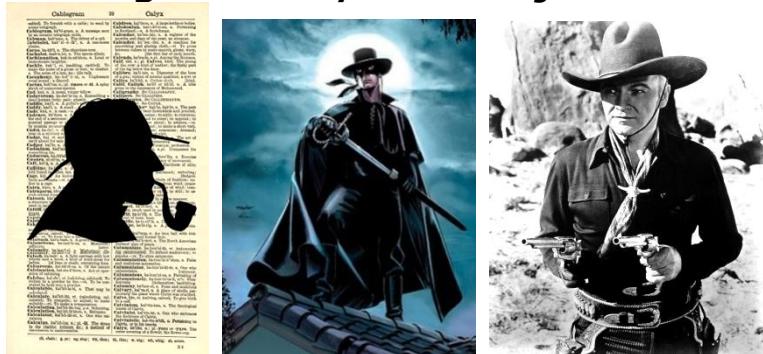
*"My enemies came from all over, but as the 1930s wore on,
new foes appeared beyond my reach!"*



"How 'original' am I?"

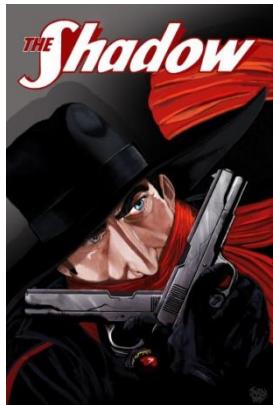


"An inquisitive mind, a black wardrobe, a 'secret identity', two guns and a passion for justice!"



*"I wrote in the shadows of immortals!
What my readers knew and my critics could
never figure out was that The Shadow could not be
known, it was the mystique, the mystery conjured
up by that wizardly Walter that kept
my fans enthralled!"*



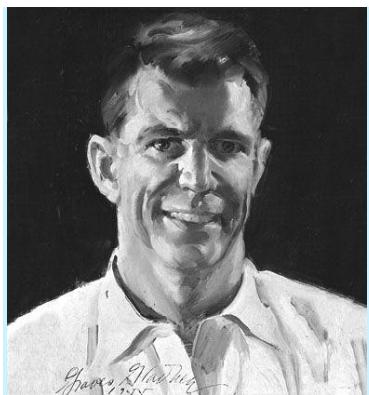


"Right off the bat, I sold like hotcakes! Street & Smith quickly moved me from quarterly to monthly publication, and then to twice-monthly.

"But all the credit does not go to Walter Gibson. A tip of my hat to Theodore Tinsley, who would write 27 of my stories!"



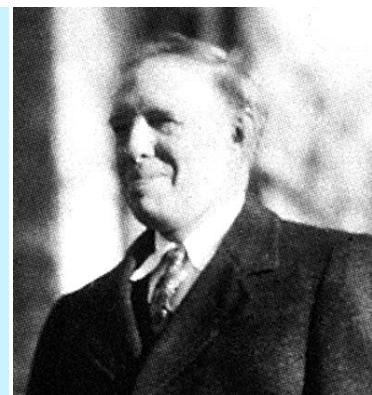
"With every issue. I appeared stronger, more threatening and better looking, thanks to Smith & Street's team of cover artists!"



Graves Gladney



Paul Orban



George Rozen



"No, you can't judge a book by its cover, but my artistic image sold Max Grant by the millions!"

"My weapons? Walter had to choose wisely. He consulted experts, and just before deadline..."



"These US Colt 45 1911As worked just fine!"

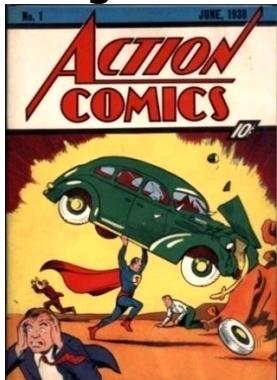
1937 – A RED-BANNER RADIO YEAR!

"Heard for the very first time, the sweet, enchanting voice of Margo Lane, the socialite girlfriend of The Shadow!"

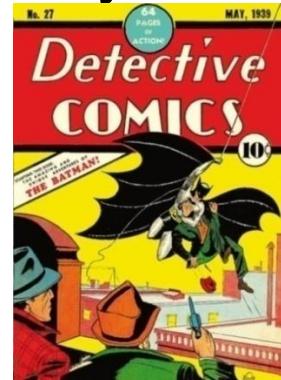


"If this movie had love interest, it would gross twice as much!"

August 1938



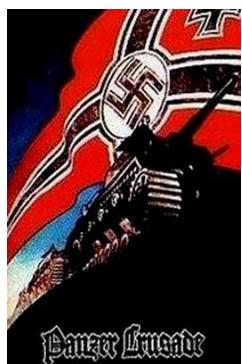
May 1939



"A double 'Big Bang'! Are costumed crime-fighters the heroes of the future?"

"Are the pulps to be usurped by monthly comic books? Are these prime samples the beginning of my end?"

WORLD WAR II BEGINS SEPTEMBER 1, 1939





“While the Nazis raged across Europe, The Shadow had spread to the newspapers as a daily comic strip.

“Easy money! I adapted some of my novels and Vernon Greene drew the pictures. The strip lasted only two years, but it proved that The Shadow from the radio to pulp, could flourish in a third medium!”



“Shadow Comics also started in 1940 and in 1941 we reprinted some of the newspaper strips.



“After the reprints I scripted the comic stories with plot elements from The Shadow Magazine until 1947. The comic itself was published until August 1949, a total of 101 issues.”



"Conceived out of thin air, born on the printed page, I was eager for the Silver Screen!"

"But a nobody suddenly somebody beat The SHADOW to the punch!"



"A pretty-boy Hollywood hack in an absurd, unnecessary costume. And good enough for a sequel!"

"Then it was my turn!"





"My serial starred Victor Jory, a real actor and Veta Ann Borg as Margo Lane, Lamont Cranston's assistant!"



"Margo and Jory pitted against the Black Tiger, a merciless fiend with invisibility powers set to dominate the world's financial systems!"



"Victor Jory is a fine actor with a terrific voice! Veta Ann Borg played a lovely 'Damsel in Distress'! Of course, after a score of fistfights and car chases, all professionally staged, Lamont Cranston prevails! With just one gun!"



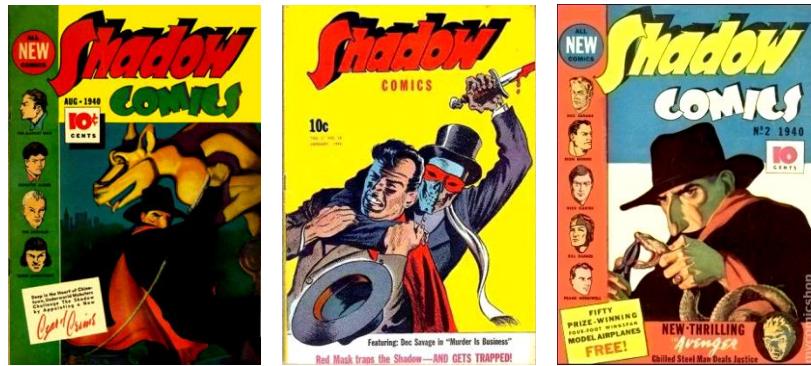
"My audience enjoyed The Shadow movies much more than I did!"



"Lamont Cranston, scientist, criminologist, man about town, radio news reporter and millionaire or whatever Hollywood wanted..."



"Gone was The Shadow's mystery and mystique, replaced by romantic comedy and silly stories! What Walter had put to paper never got to the screen!"



*"As for my fellow comic book heroes...
We all got serials. Then I got six movies
while the lot of them got none!"*



*"From a radio voice with an indelible line
and a haunting laugh to millions of book
sales, to Hollywood stardom, The
Shadow has risen to become..."*

"King of the Pulp Universe!"

"Join The SHADOW's Secret Society!"



THE SHADOW MASK, a perfect disguise that will fool even your closest friends.....10c



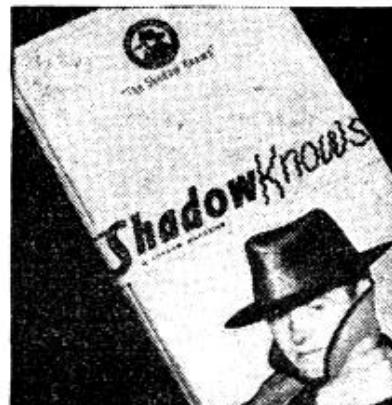
THE SHADOW TEC-LITE, a powerful $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 1\frac{3}{4}''$ flashlight. Hide it in the palm of your hand.....50c



SHADOW BIG LITTLE BOOKS, grand stories and pictures. Buy them at your 5 & 10c store.....10c



THE SHADOW HOLSTER SET, gun, holster, belt, Shadow mask, handcuffs, Shadow's whistle and The Shadow flashlight.....\$1



OFFICIAL SHADOW STATIONERY & ENVELOPES, with Shadow Club insignia embossed in black and red.....20c



THE SHADOW GAME, size $20'' \times 20''$, printed in beautiful colors. A pair of dice, 4 colored tokens, play money, 4 Shadow "black hats," dice cups and colored disks.....\$1



SHADOW OFFICIAL HAT & CAPE, black hat (indicate size: large or small), and 36" red-lined, black cape.....\$1



*“To write **The Shadow**, I adopted my own ‘secret identity’: Maxwell Grant - from two stage magic dealers I knew: Maxwell Holden and U.F. Grant. And in front of my ‘Keys to the Kingdom’, Mr. Grant was off to the other world of **The Shadow**!*

*“I had this idea for a character who would be a mystery in himself ... I put people in jeopardy... and when ... the sinister figure was coming in, he was somebody who was going to put an end to the menace. He was sort of like a benign **Dracula**. ”*

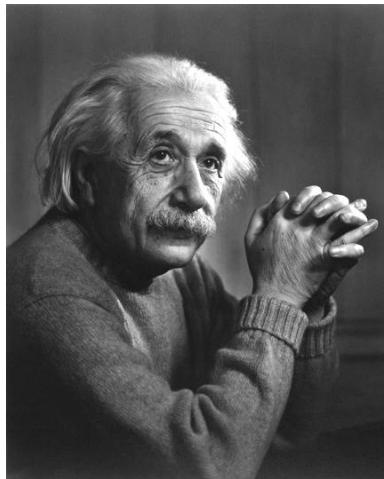


“And how did the ‘Prince of Darkness’ react when compared to me?

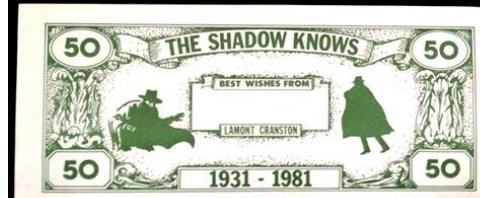
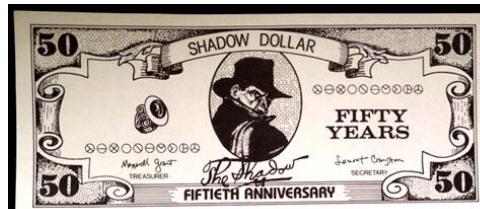




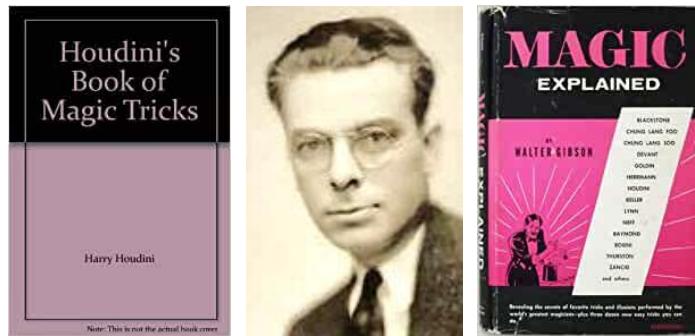
**“The Shadow was a phenomenon of his times.
and I’d be sure to link him with other ‘phenomena’.
Kings and Queens of the Earth and Sky!”**



**“As Maxwell Grant, I got \$400 for my first *Shadow* novel,
\$500 for most, and \$750 near the end. “**



**“The Shadow was never about the money; this
‘aspiring magician’ was after far bigger game!”**



"As Walter B. Gibson, I was the author of a whole series of magic books, explaining while playing with the art!"

"On the other hand, as Maxwell Grant, I had become a storytelling machine, the Omnipotent Creator of My Shadow!"

"But The Shadows are not the same. My hero is still a fantastic crime fighter and arch enemy of evil-doers, but My Shadow did not have any hypnotic powers of invisibility."



"Maxwell Grant was no match for H.G. Wells and Claude Raines!"

"On radio, The Shadow had the mystic ability to hypnotically cloud men's minds so that they could not see him. In the pulp stories, My Shadow had no such ability. He was a figure shrouded in a black cloak, black slouch hat and black gloves. Being enveloped all in black, he could fade into the shadows and achieve 'virtual' invisibility."

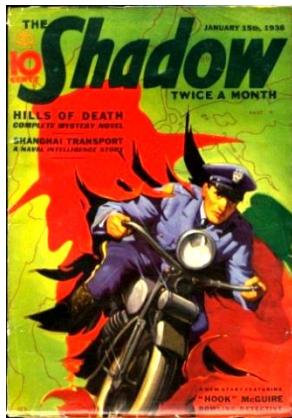




“The Shadow has the power to cloud men’s minds.”



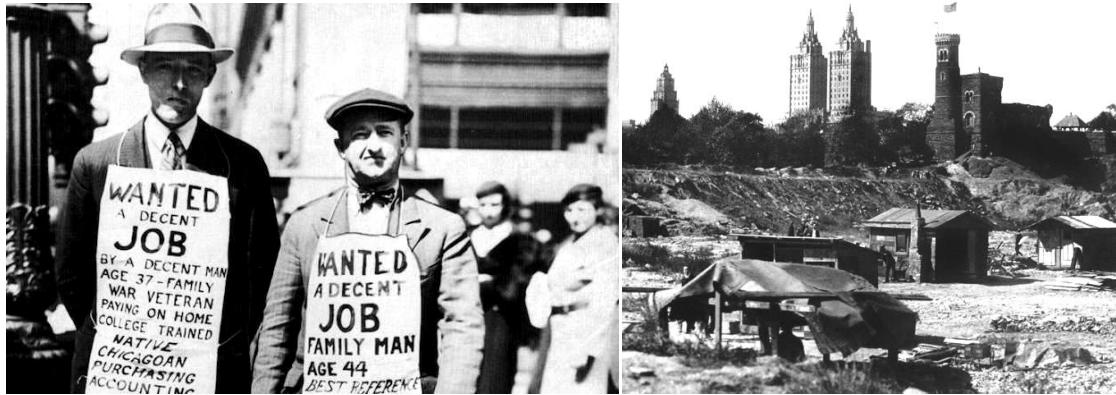
“The Force can have a strong influence on the weak-minded.”



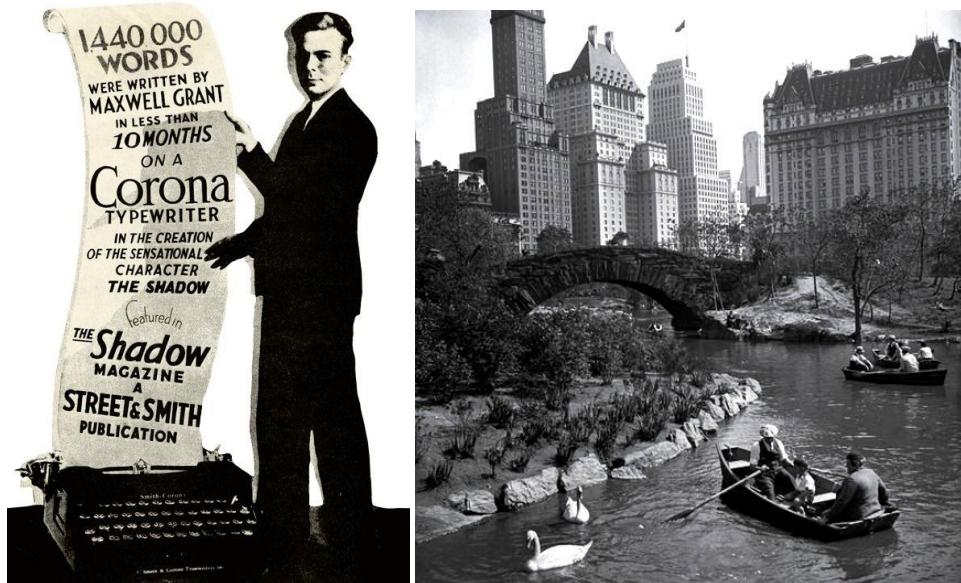
“Maxwell Grant was always way ahead of The Shadow and his fierce foes. Seemingly caught between two giant robots, The Shadow would just duck and the violent machines destroyed each other!”



“By living, thinking, even dreaming the story in one continuous process, ideas came faster and faster. Sometimes the typewriter keys would fly so fast that I wondered if my fingers could keep up with them. And at the finish of the story I often had to take a few days off as my fingertips were too sore to begin work on the next book.”



"It was the Worst of Times in America, but for me, my wife, and young son, living it up in a plush Manhattan apartment, it was the Best of Times!"



"Maxwell Grant turning out a novel every week. The Shadow's circulation over half a million. Christmas, 1941 is going to be the best ever!"



NOW YOU CAN BE THE SHADOW!

YOU can thrill your friends by using your hat and cape to melt into the shadows— You can hide your features with a Shadow mask— You can disguise yourself as a Chinaman, a porter, a ranger—just as The Shadow does— You can write letters in invisible ink, or in code with your own Shadow stationery.

BUY OR EARN THE SHADOW'S EQUIPMENT

Many of you, especially members of The Shadow Club, have asked for this equipment to which The Shadow so often owes his life and success. Everyone may now buy or earn the equipment. Just read how easy it is!

MAIL COUPON TODAY

C. Shadow Disguise Set—Retail Value—\$1.00

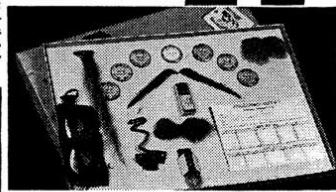
Swell kit contains 6 different face make-up pieces; Chinese mustache; French mustache and goatee; side burns; mask; invisible ink; fingerprint ink; identification records; Shadow code book. It's yours for 90¢ or earn it by getting two one-year subscriptions to The Shadow magazine.



D. Official Shadow Mask—Retail Value—\$1.00. The official mask with intaglia and motto silvered on the curtain which covers lower part of face. 10c in coin makes it yours!



B. Shadow Official Hat & Cape—Retail Value—\$1.00. Large brimmed black hat (indicate size—large, medium, small), and matching cape with vivid red lining. Buy it at the special club discount for 90¢ or earn it by sending in two one-year subscriptions to The Shadow magazine.



E. Official Shadow Stationery—Retail Value—20c. Large size stationery, white, with Shadow Club insignia embossed in red and black on letterhead. Yours for only 20¢!

SHADOW EQUIPMENT • DEPT. A-H-1
79 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y.

EARN—Inclosed please
check () for
one-year subscriptions
to The Shadow. In re-
turn send me B(); C();
E().

Name.....
Address.....
City..... State.....



THE SHADOW!

In London, in Berlin, in Madrid—in all corners of the world—crooks lower their voices when they discuss The Shadow. In Paris, skulking creatures of the underworld still murmur tales of The Shadow's prowess—of that eerie night when an unknown being in black had battled, single-handed, against a horde of apaches. In Moscow, there are men who talk about the time when The Shadow had fought himself free from the midst of a regiment of troops.

When crime becomes rampant, then does The Shadow strike! A living being of the darkness, he comes and goes unseen. Always, his objective is the stamping out of supercrime.

Dying gangsters expire with the name of The Shadow upon their blood-flecked lips. Hordes of mobsmen have felt The Shadow's wrath.

A man garbed in black, his face unseen beneath the turned-down brim of a slouch hat—that is the spectral form that all evil men fear; that is

THE SHADOW!

Read of the thrilling exploits of this unusual being in

Ten Cents
a Copy

THE
Shadow
MAGAZINE

At All
News Stands

Second and Fourth Fridays of each month

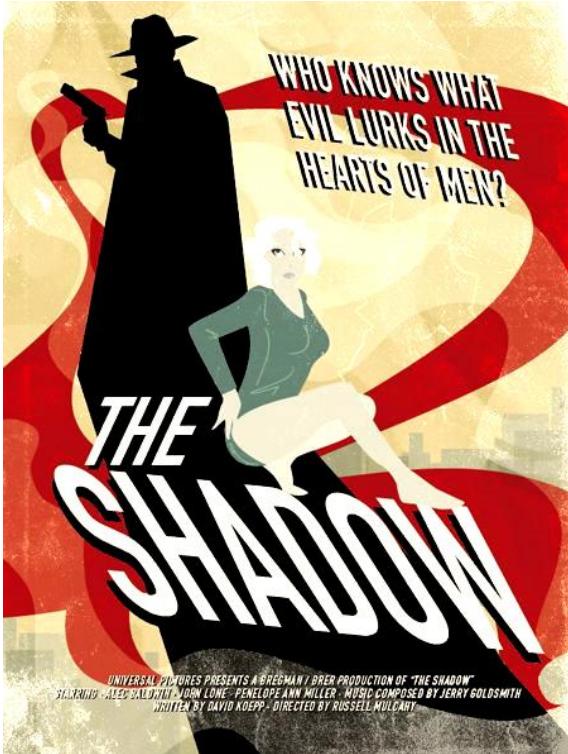
The Shadow MAGAZINE

Issued on the 2nd and 4th Friday
of each month

10c

Tune in on Street & Smith's sure-fire hit.
A great big magazine of detective fiction
for a thin dime! Thrills! Action! Mystery!
Get your copy to-day!

10c



DECEMBER 7TH 1941



*"Welcome back to war, America!
No more whimpers, with a BANG! BANG! BANG!"*

"And America produced thousands of tanks and ships and airplanes to defeat our merciless enemies!"



"While New York pulp publishers churned out a complete shelf of heroes they thought would rival me!"



"But they had no idea who The Shadow was!"



*"And when the war ended with the beginning
of the Atomic Age, The Shadow was still
'King of The Pulps'!"*

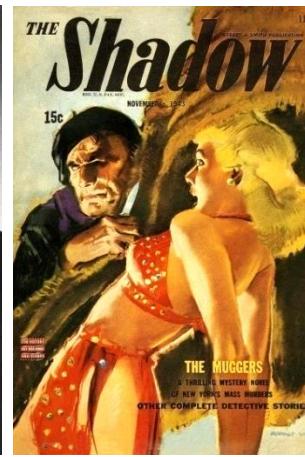


*"But the 'Pulp Universe' itself faced a new breed
of competitors: those 'cheap' comic books!"*

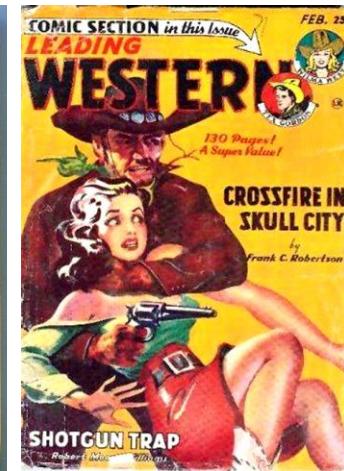
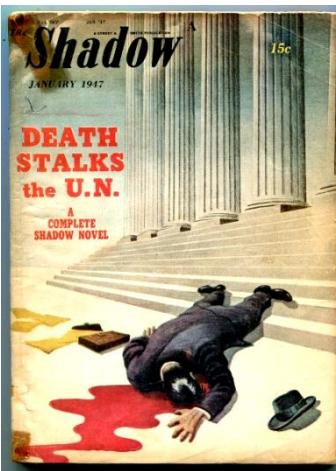


*"For fifteen years The Shadow has fought crime my
way and I've killed scores of murdering scum and my
readers loved me for it!"*

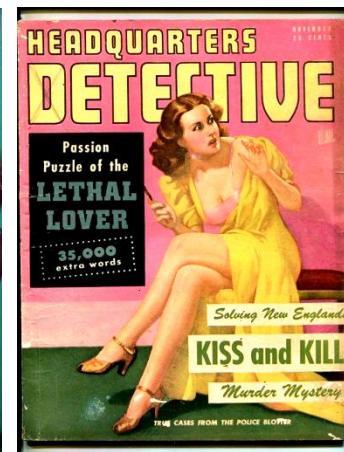
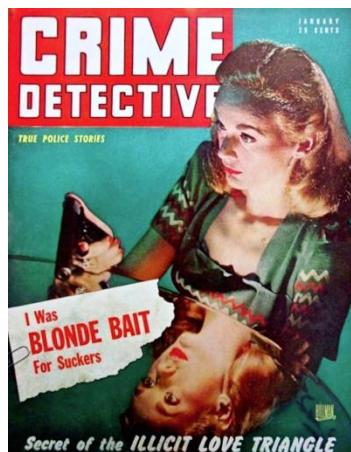
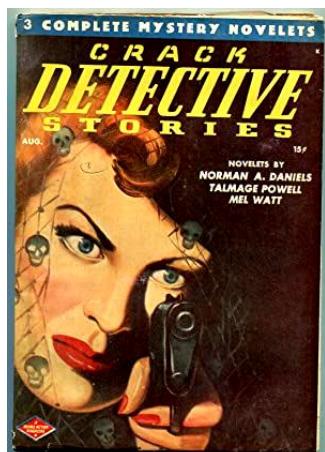
"Was I no longer the hero for post-war America?"



*“America, my country, has become a superpower
in a very different world!
“Westerns and science fiction are hot!”*



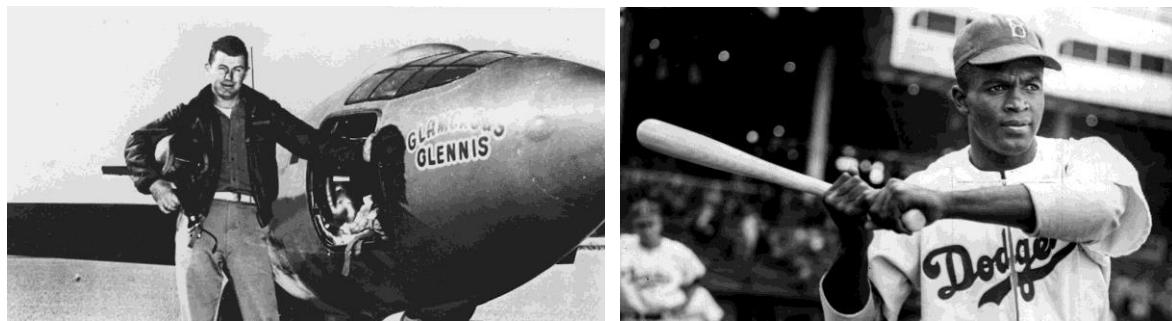
“And crime still sells, especially...



“Involving beautiful women!”



“After the war a Communist power arose to challenge the United States!”



“A ‘Supersonic Age’ and a time of social change, and American imagination!”

Well Daily Record
RODNEY NEW MEXICO FEBRUARY 22, 1947

RECORD PHONES
Business Office 2288
News Department 2287
By PRE COPY

**s Army
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Senator
dean
Patterson

**RAAF Captures Flying Saucer
On Ranch in Roswell Region**

**House Passes
Tax Slash by
Large Margin**

**Defeat Amendment
By Dams to Remove
Many from Rolls**

**Security Council
Paves Way to Talks
On Arms Reductions**

**No Details of
Flying Disk
Are Revealed**

Ex-King Carol Weds Mme. Lupescu

Former King Carol of Romania and Mrs. David Lupescu

And later, in Clark Kent's room ... SUPER STRENGTH!
IT'S A LITTLE FRIGHTENING...
MY POWERS GIVE ME THE CHANCE
TO DO A LOT OF GOOD--BUT I
CAN'T LET PEOPLE KNOW THAT
CLARK KENT CAN DO THESE THINGS...
THE KNOWLEDGE MIGHT BE
DANGEROUS. SO --

CLARK KENT SECRETLY FASHION
A COLORFUL RED-AND-BLUE COSTUME--AND THIS IS
BORN --

SUPERBOY

“Street & Smith had cut me back to only one novel per month. Time was rushing by...”



“But The Shadow was still magic!

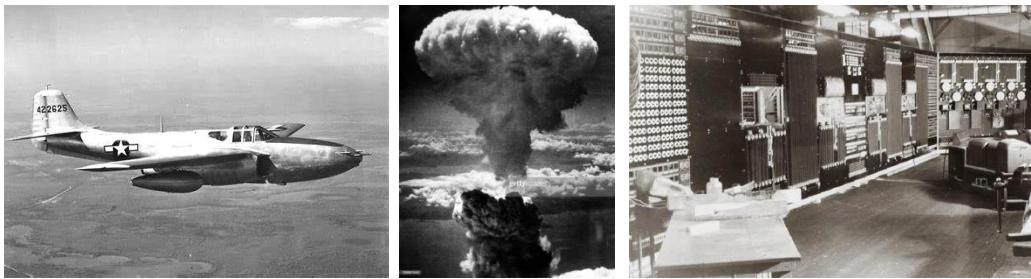
*“For more than 15 years I’ve been writing **The Shadow**, eight, ten, twelve hours a day or more! This story, this world I had created. I loved being in charge of everything. It’s the creative addiction! That makes me a hard man to live with.*

“Been married twice. Both failed. Won’t name them. Can’t blame them. And then, ‘like a bolt out of the blue’, the third time was the charm!



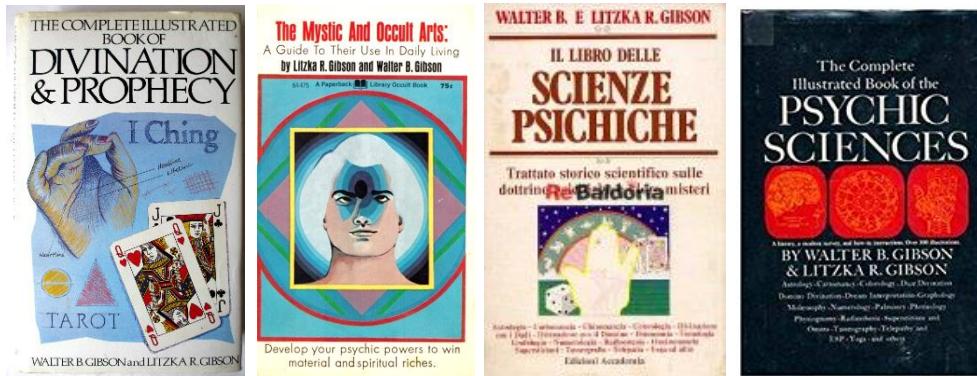
“Pearl Beatrice Litza Raymond, the widow of the famous magician played the harp with her red rooster ‘China Boy’ who was so popular they put him in a comic book!

“Litza had performed at a lot of magic conventions doing her act with the Harps and her Magic act with China Boy. Before I became her husband, I was her manager!”



*"World War Two had given us jet planes,
A-Bombs, and giant computers! Superb story
elements, but none a threat to The SHADOW!"*

*"And with only one SHADOW story a month, that
gave me time to co-author with the lovely Litzta!"*



"All was going swimmingly until that fateful day..."

The New York Times

APRIL 9, 1949 "THE DEATH-KNELL FOR PULP-PAPER FICTION."





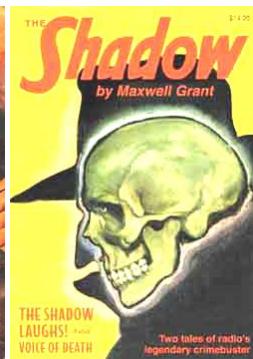
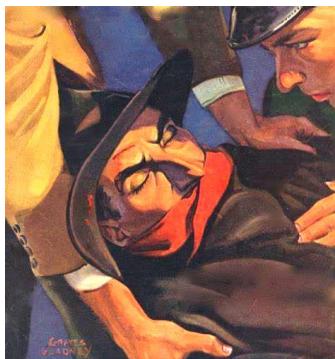
"We weren't making any money any more."



"I had to call up Walter [The SHADOW] Gibson and tell him it was over!"

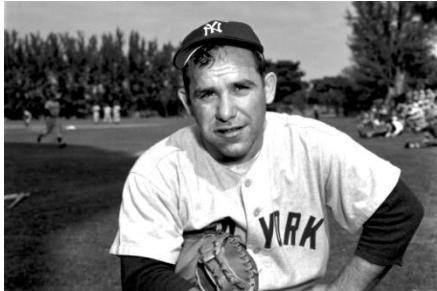
Street & Smith Publications announced that it would stop publishing its line of pulp magazines. Within months, **The Shadow**, **Doc Savage**, **Detective Story** and **Western Story** — the last four of 40-plus pulp titles that Street had put out over 40-plus years — would disappear from the newsstands. Soon after, the American News Co. stopped distributing the remaining pulps.

The **Shadow** Gone forever?





“I shall return.”



“Predictions are difficult, especially about the future.”



“Death, the final, triumphant lover.”



“Do you?”

To be continued...

MORE BY THE AUTHOR: americananthologies.wordpress.com

“All my stories are free to read and always will be.” KA

Will someone, someday. somehow finally discover Kidblackhawk.com