

CANADIAN PAPERBACK GUIDE

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WM. COLLINS SONS & CO. CANADA Ltd. (White Circle Pocket Library)

Introduction

This is a history and checklist of the White Circle Pocket Library and North Star imprints published by Wm. Collins Sons & Co. Canada Ltd. from 1942 to 1952. The data for each book include the series number, title page, copyright page, page collation, cover artist when known and features that identify different impressions. There are eleven sections:

History

Issues A-50

Issues 51-100

Issues 101-249

Issues 250-299

Issues 300-349

Issues 350-399

Issues 400-449

Issues 450-499

Issues 500-545

Miscellaneous

History

Wm. Collins Sons & Co. Canada Ltd. was incorporated in 1932 as a subsidiary of the Scottish-British firm, Wm. Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. which had been doing business for over 100 years in Canada.¹ Beginning in the late 1930s the British firm's paperbacks² (also called White Circle) were sold in Canada. When the war situation worsened the Canadian firm decided "to print this popular series rather than continue to gamble on getting supplies of the English edition" and the first sixteen White Circle paperbacks were published in April, 1942.³ The new venture received the following favourable comment:

¹ "The House of Collins Expands", *Quill & Quire*, April, 1935, pp. 26, 27.

² Australian White Circles were also published. See Appendix B for more on the British and Australian publications.

³ "The White Circles Are Now 'Made in Canada'", *Quill & Quire*, May 1942, p. 24. See Appendix A for the complete article.

[T]he names of the first sixteen novels form a guarantee of the high quality and interesting contents of the books. [They] form a brand new series of detective mystery escape literature at a moderate price and in convenient portable form. Messrs. Wm. Collins, Sons and Co. [*sic*] can be congratulated on such a delightful enterprise which will assuredly fill a long-felt want and be highly appreciated by the most up-to-date members of the reading public. ⁴

The Canadian White Circle list was different from the British White Circle list. The British list, for instance, featured many western and romance titles, few of which appeared on the Canadian list.⁵ The most overlap was mystery and crime novels. When the last consecutively numbered White Circle was published in 1952, 459 had been published. Thirty were reprints with different numbers. There were also two non-series White Circles and two described by Collins as White Circles published over the next 30 years. Five paperbacks published from 1942 to 1955 were not White Circles. These books are at the end of the checklist.

Bryant Press of Toronto and Advocate Printers of Winnipeg printed the books. Advocate was a branch plant of Bryant.

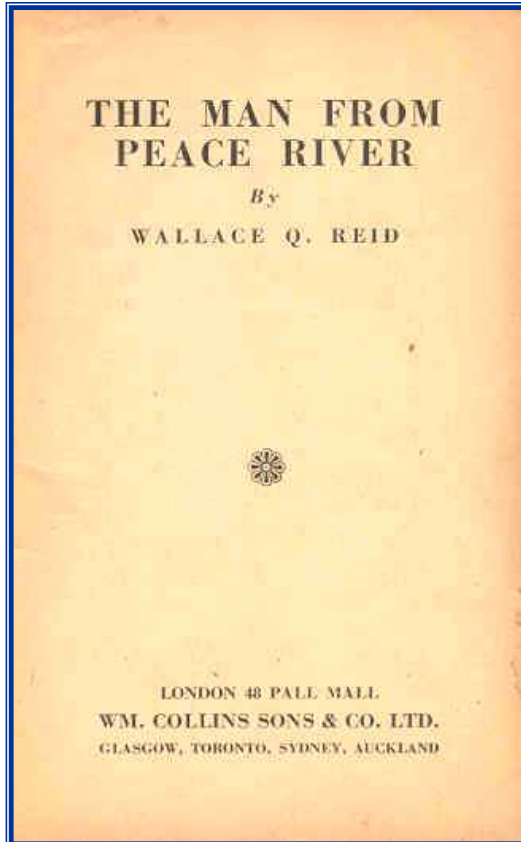
Title Page

There were three title page designs for the 459 White Circle books. Reprints had the design in use when they were printed.

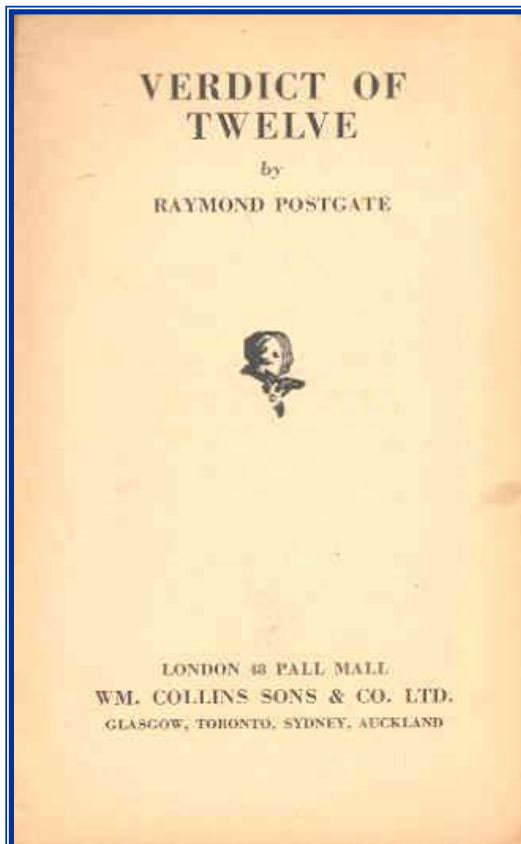
The first title page design had five variants and was used in 138 books.

⁴ "Book Reviews", *Toronto Evening Telegram*, May 2, 1942, p. 23.

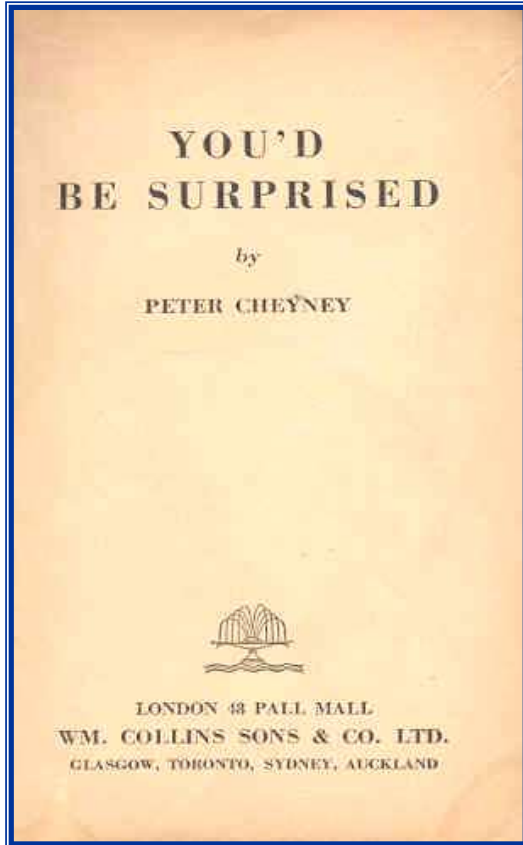
⁵ *Ibid.*, *Quill & Quire*.



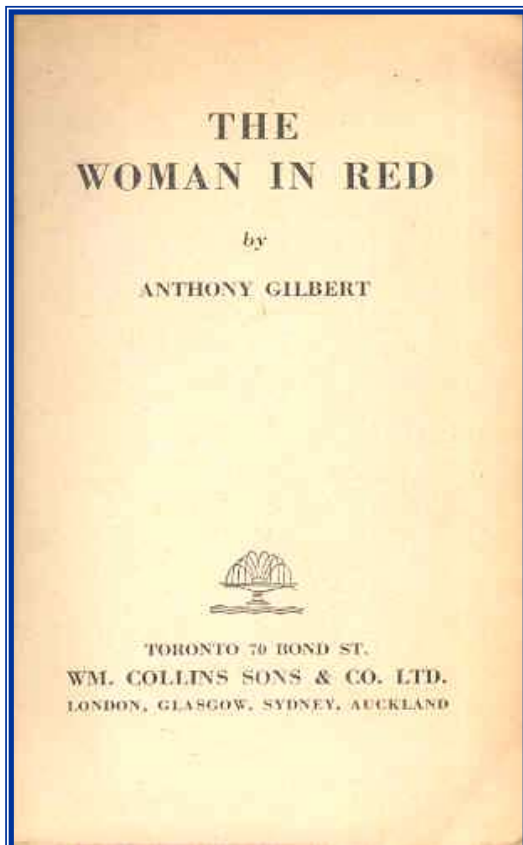
This variant was used on 22 books (A, C, G, H, I, J, O, P, Q, R, B1, B2, B4, B7, B8, C2, C4, D1, D2, 41, 43, 46).



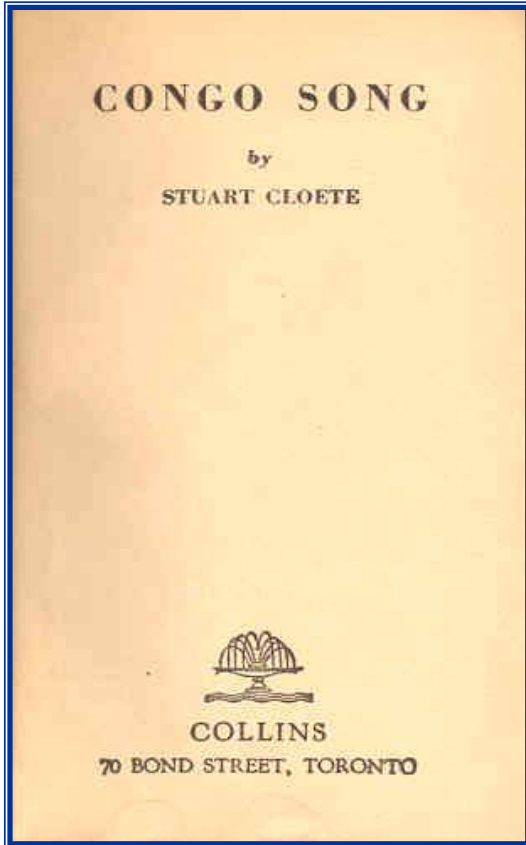
This variant was used on 21 books (B, D, E, F, K, L, M, N, S, T, A1, A2, B3, B5, C1, C3, 37, 38, 42, 44, 45).



This variant was used on 79 books (B6, 39, 40, 47-98, 101-110, 112-117, 200-207, 211).

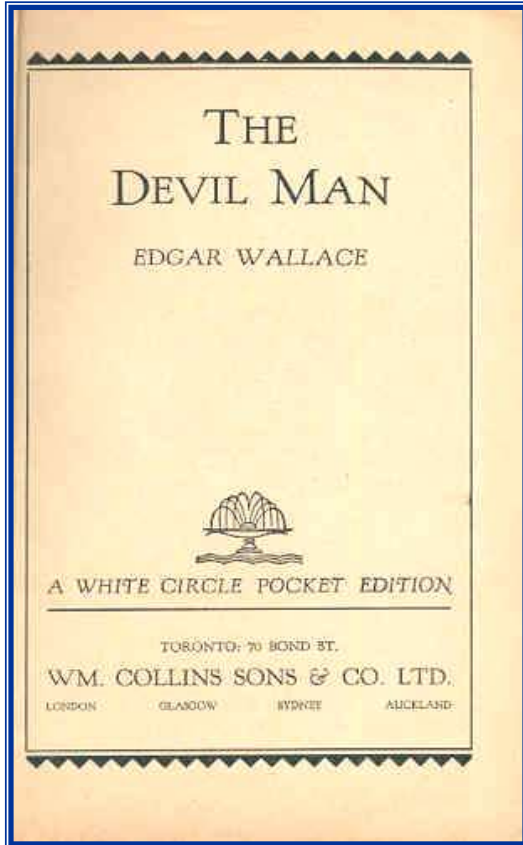


This variant had a change of address to 70 Bond St., Toronto and replaced Toronto with London in the list of cities. This was used on 12 books (99, 111, 118, 214-222)



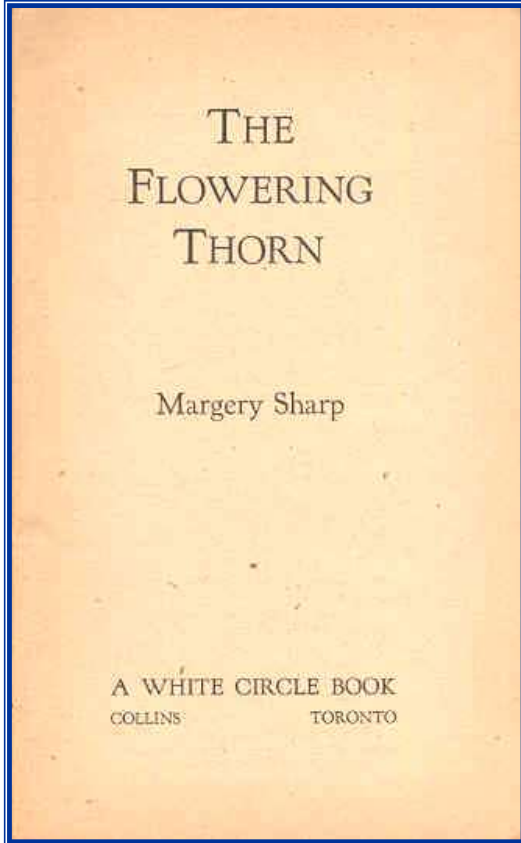
This variant removed the cities, shortened the publisher's name and changed the form of the address. This was used on four books (208, 210, 213, and 223). Book 223 had a slight difference with "By" instead of "by".

The second design changed the type and added the vertical and horizontal features. It was used in 67 books.

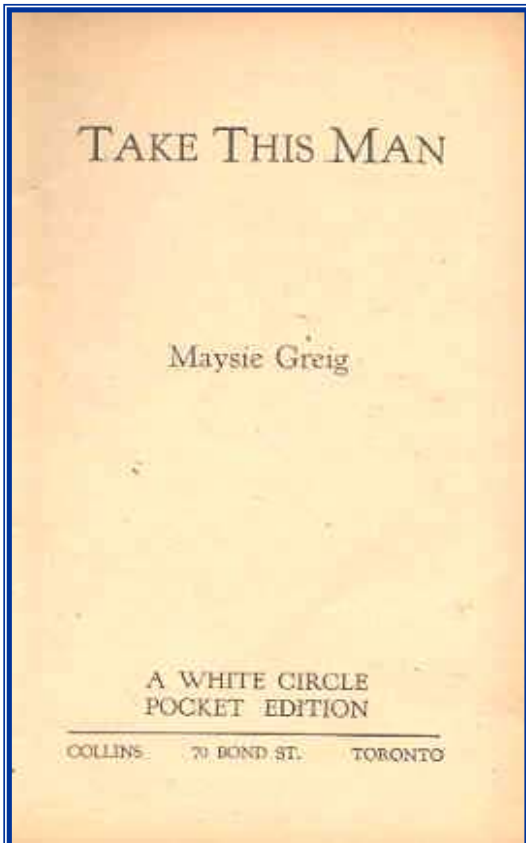


This was used on 67 books (224-256, 259-291). Eight books (280, 282, 283, 285, 288-291) have "*by*" between the title and author and three books (283, 288, and 290) do not have italicized author names.

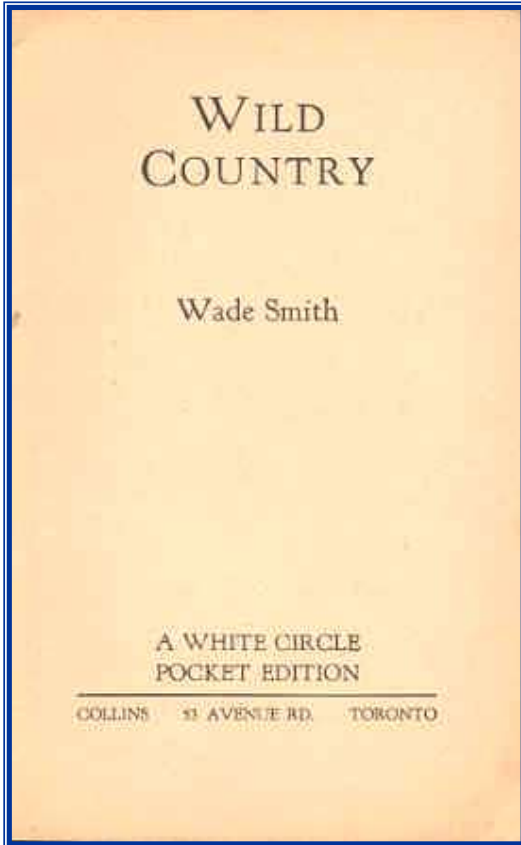
The final design eliminated the fountain ornament, the vertical and horizontal features and the other cities with Collins' offices. It was used in 254 books.



The street address was omitted and the imprint was called "A White Circle Book". This variant was used on 16 books (257, 292-302, 304-307).



The second variant changed "A White Circle Book" back to "A White Circle Pocket Edition". The 70 Bond St. address was added. This was used on 62 books (303, 308-365, 367-369).



The third variant changed to the 53 Avenue Rd. address. This was the final title page variant and was used on 176 books (366, 370-545).