

# The 1895 Blue Book

by C. Hax McCullough, Jr.



HAT IS CONSIDERED proper in our relations with others is known as etiquette. In America, beginning in 1922, Emily Post recorded what was socially correct in greeting a friend or holding a dance, or a wedding or dinner party. She explained that good manners are really kindness, unselfishness, and consideration being put into practice by good people.

A century ago, there was no Emily Post, but there were the widely accepted actions and conventions of the Victorian Age, named for the Queen of Great Britain. To know what was "right," as well as to know the addresses of "accepted society," *The Pittsburg and Allegheny Blue Book and Elite Directory*, compiled and published by Martha W. Brown Haven, was the book to have. It sold for \$5 — an enormous sum at a time when \$15 was considered a good weekly wage. In the preface to the 1895 edition, Mrs. Brown Haven announced it as her fourth, and "with a pardonable pride," presented several services she described as innovative. Her book, she noted, contained "prominent professional, literary, business and society families," including people from other towns in the region such as Beaver, Beaver Falls, Butler, New Brighton, New Castle, Rochester, Uniontown, and Washington, as well as Salem and Youngstown, Ohio. The 1895 *Blue Book* listed 5,760 families and 23,170 names on 675 pages.

"Neither time nor labor have been spared to keep abreast of the time, if not somewhat ahead," Mrs. Brown Haven wrote, "and maiden names have been added that can render service in tracing one's lineage." After the age of 8, children were referred to as "Miss" and "Master," and "after 14, the youngest gentlemen are Mr." If one needed a physician, there were many listed, along with their office hours. There was an alphabetical list of streets, and a description of their location. The principal listings of names, addresses, etc., were defined as "The Pittsburgh and Allegheny Parlor Director," and many addresses include the railroads one would use for reaching the family or person.

If the individual lived at a hotel or club, its name was listed,

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but not an address. If his or her residence was beyond regular postal delivery, the post office number was provided. Apartments such as the very popular Kenmawr were listed with their addresses. If one planned to visit the Hon. George Anderson, his address was "Grant, Sewickley, Pa.," and "P., Ft. W. and C.R.," which meant the Pittsburgh, Ft. Wayne and Chicago Railroad. Conrad C. Arensberg, one of the area's most distinguished citizens and Civil War veterans, lived at "Oakmont, A.V.R.R." (Allegheny Valley Railroad)

Mrs. Brown Haven published her first *Pittsburgh and Allegheny Blue Book* in 1887 (and guides with the same approximate title persisted until 1972). In the 1887 edition, she identified herself as Mrs. M.B. Haven, Cleveland, Ohio. She called her book "A Private Address Directory." Her ambitions were great. She wrote, "Our purpose is, to make the book so needful to ladies in all their social and business relations, their philanthropic and literary work, that it will ultimately be found on the table of every lady who honors the book with her name." She then noted enthusiastically that every Pittsburgher had reason to be "justly proud of his two cities — Allegheny with her hundred acres of parks in the heart of the City, and Pittsburgh with her charming East End homes, the hills, the groves, and lawns — including the old Aiken farm, the original 'Shady Side'...."

Mrs. Brown Haven must have feared her work would be subject to piracy, for in the 1895 edition, she wrote that "several attempts which have been made to appropriate what belongs exclusively to us, lack the semblance of manliness." She added that "if there were several fortunes in the book instead of one small living, this might be permissible," then ended with the warning that "the best laid plans of mice and men often to astray and leave us nothing but grief and pain."

A century later, it is fascinating to encounter such well-known names as Bissell, Blair, Brooks, Buchanan, Burchfield, and Burgwin. There was a Harvey Childs then as there is now, and an Isaac Craig in 1895, as there was in 1795. Frank R. Dravo's residence was in Sewickley, and Henry Clay Frick's at "Clayton, Penn. ave. se. cor. Homewood ave. East End, P." There was a Thomas Gillespie, Grant McCargo, and Henry Hoffstot. Henry J. Heinz was listed at "Golden Lawn," Penn Avenue, and Philander Knox lived on Ellsworth Avenue. Henry W. Oliver's palatial



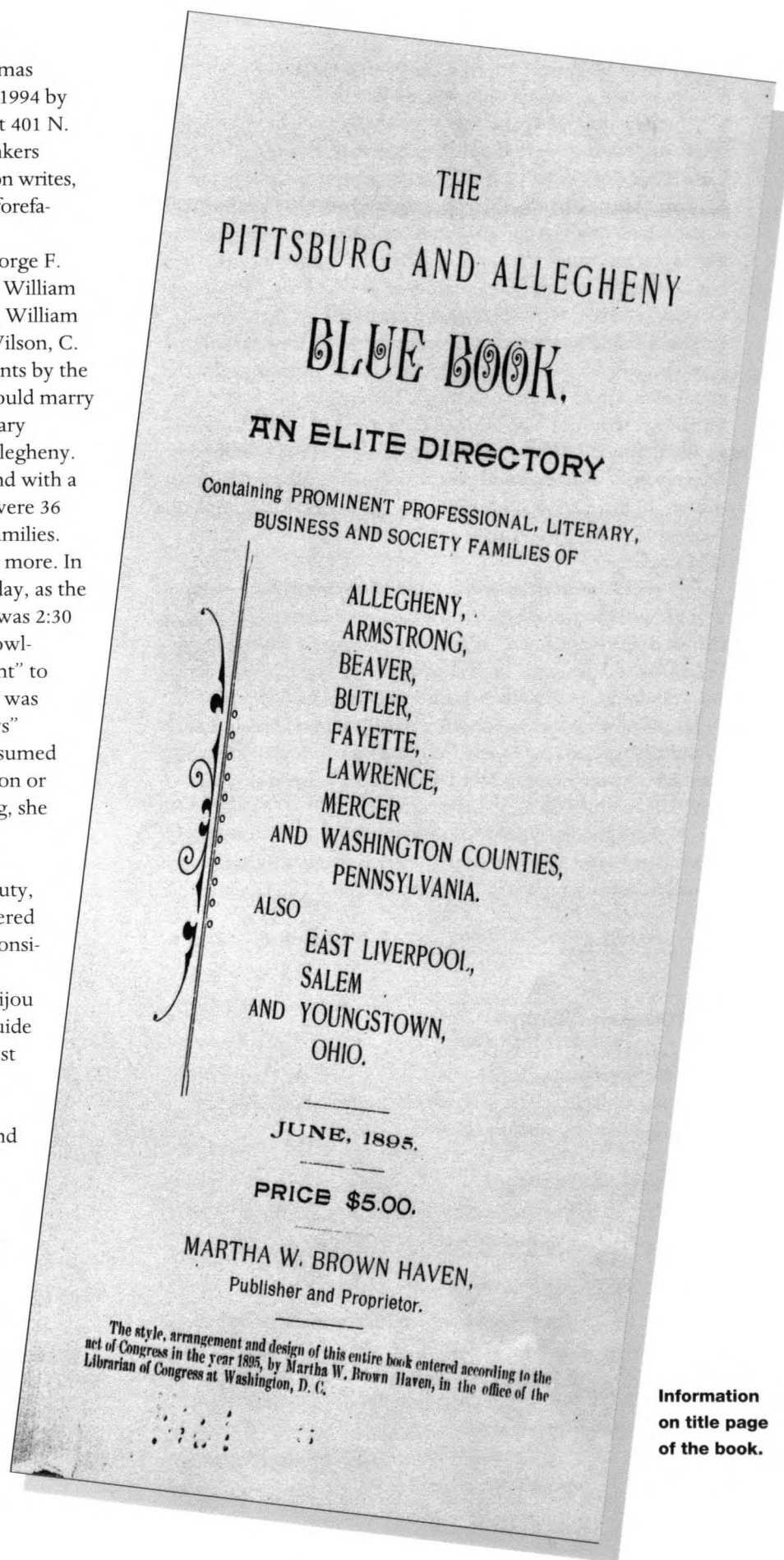
residence was at 268 Ridge Ave., Allegheny. Judge Thomas Mellon, whose 1885 autobiography was republished in 1994 by the University of Pittsburgh Press, lived in retirement at 401 N. Negley Ave., along with his two youngest sons, the bankers Andrew and Richard. In his autobiography, Judge Mellon writes, "If you would know yourself, begin with a study of your forefathers."

Do you recognize any of these names? There is George F. Huff, Oliver McClintock, David B. Oliver, Charles Orr, William H. Rea, James H. Reed, Frank Robinson, Arthur Scully, William Penn Snyder, Hay Walker, Robert Wardrop, George Wilson, C. Holmes Wolfe. They lived in 1895, as did their descendants by the same names in the 1990s. Dr. Stanley Rinehart, who would marry Pittsburgh's famous novelist and war correspondent Mary Roberts Rinehart, lived in 1895 at 293 Western Ave., Allegheny. George Westinghouse lived at "Solitude" in the East End with a summer place, "Erskine Park," at Lenox, Mass. There were 36 Smith families listed, 40 Brown families, and 26 Jones families.

The tidy, up-to-date 1895 *Blue Book* provided much more. In many instances, it listed a day, such as Thursday or Friday, as the appropriate day to visit other people. The proper time was 2:30 or 5:30 in the afternoon, and one's visit was to be acknowledged, according to custom, within 10 days. It was "right" to leave your calling card and receive one when your visit was returned. Many women also had regular "receiving days" engraved on their calling cards. On other days, one presumed people were *not* at home. A woman attending a reception or tea would leave her card upon entering. If not attending, she would send her card to arrive at the time of the event.

Mrs. Brown Haven's *Blue Book* explained in "Card Etiquette" that calling cards were an important social duty, "the neglect of which results in the risk of being considered ill-bred." Leaving calling cards, she added, was the responsibility of the mistress of the house.

The 1895 *Blue Book* included a seating plan of the Bijou Theater (on Sixth Street, downtown) and a shopping guide that provided the names and addresses of sources for just about everything — from laces to lamps, ladies underwear to laundries. This section also included data on jewelers (6), hotels (5), newspapers (18), schools (11), and railroads (5). This was followed by the names and addresses of 71 nurses, 24 of whom were marked as graduates of Allegheny General Hospital and 23 as graduates of Homeopathic Hospital (today's Shadyside Hospital). The physicians numbered 90, all had Anglo-Saxon names such as Blair, Edmundson, Shaw, Thompson, and Wright, and all, it can be said with certainty, were men. Thirty-one of these physicians had offices at addresses on Penn Avenue. Some had two offices and many offered evening appointments. In 1895, patients admitted to one local hospital, Mercy Hospital, were registered by ethnicity or national origin, and most admitted for non-surgical reasons were there for the treatment of drunken-



Information  
on title page  
of the book.



ness. Those who could afford it were cared for at home; polite society visited a hospital only when it had to.

Among the private schools advertised (often with a photograph or drawing) were the Bishop Bowman Institute; "a Collegiate School of Young Ladies," the Pennsylvania College for Women (later to be Chatham College); Thurston Preparatory School (later Winchester-Thurston), and Western University of Pennsylvania (now University of Pittsburgh). Also included were ads for the Pittsburgh Conservatory of Music, King's School of Oratory, and the Berlitz School of Languages. At the conservatory, one could have 20 vocal lessons for \$12.50 or 20 one-hour piano lessons for \$10. Frederic Archer, the Scottish organist and conductor whom Andrew Carnegie had engaged to lead the new Pittsburgh Orchestra, was booked for a series of lectures. As well as instructing on the art of speaking, King's School promised to help teachers, students, and persons with "weak lungs or sore throats, hoarseness or undue fatigue." At the Berlitz School, one could study French, German, Italian, or Spanish with "native teachers."

Travel advertisements in the Blue Book must have been thought-provoking as well as useful. One ad claimed that the Queen & Crescent Route trains were famous for fine scenery, "quick" schedules, and "high class" service. The Excelsior Express and Standard Cab Co. advertisements offered carriages, coupes, baggage delivery, and moving wagons for hire. Carriage and coupe rates quoted for to and from the hotel and depots were also listed by the hour and for theater trips. Rates were \$1 an hour for a coupe and \$1.50 for a carriage.

Perhaps the most interesting ad was by the Pittsburgh & Cincinnati Packet Line, offering river transportation, meals, and accommodations between "The Iron City and Queen City."

*"Our purpose is, to make the book so needful to ladies in all their social and business relations, their philanthropic and literary work, that it will ultimately be found on the table of every lady who honors the book with her name."*

Offered were "large steamers, commodious, airy cabins, elegantly furnished staterooms, good food, the grandest scenery, romantic islands, historical points, thriving towns and cities, pure air, ever-changing panoramas and renewed health," on either the *Keystone State*, the *Hudson*, or the *Iron Queen*. Imagine a seven-day cruise on the Ohio River for \$12! All aboard!

As we seek to understand "Pittsburg and Allegheny" of a century ago, we find a metropolitan population of about 250,000. For many, these people are our ancestors. (All eight of the author's grandparents, for instance, are listed in the *Blue Book*.) While we have no eyewitnesses left to

describe 1895, there are newspapers, photos, books, and business and family records, including correspondence, to teach us what life was like. Big money was being made, and those who had it wanted to impress others by showing, among other ways, the extravagance they could afford. Most successful people were active in clubs, civic and church affairs, and enjoyed social life. They were generally careful that what they did and said were in good taste. Of the historical sources available to list the important businesses and professional people of a century ago, Mrs. Brown Haven's *Blue Book*, 1895 edition, is a valuable resource. ☀

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### Artists Recount "Toy Bop"

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### "Hands-on, All-Over"

Page 148-150 From *The Unwritten History of Braddock's Field*, George H. Lamb, ed. (Braddock, Pa., 1917). Copy lent by Carnegie Library, Braddock, Pa.  
Page 152 Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania Archives  
Page 153 Top, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; bottom, HSWP Archives

Page 154-155 Inset, HSWP Archives, Lyon, Shorb Collection; main photo from Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

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### Tom Gage's Captain Jones: An Appreciation

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