

Lester Dent *1904-1959* WØCBL - American pulp fiction writer, author. Best known as the creator and main author of the series of novels about the Superhuman scientist adventurer, “Doc Savage.” The 159 novels written over 16 years were credited to the house name “Kenneth Robeson.”

In 1904 Dent started out life in a place called LaPlata, MO., with roots in Wyoming. The only child of Bernard (rancher) and Alice Norfolk Dent. Alice was a teacher before her marriage. Dent’s early years were spent in the lonely hills of Wyoming. He attended a local one-room school house, often paying for tuition with furs that he had caught. He had few companions or friends; this early loneliness may have helped develop his talents as a novelist. In 1919 the Dent family returned to LaPlata for good, completing his elementary and secondary education. In 1923 our subject enrolled at Chillicothe Business College in Missouri, his original goal was to become a banker. However while standing in the application line, he chatted with a fellow about career options, learning a telegraph operator earned more than a aspiring banker. He changed his major at CBC to telegraphy, after completing his course he worked for CBC temporarily. In 1924 began a series of opportunities with Western Union, then Oil and gas. Finally for Associated Press in Oklahoma. One of Dents fellow workers had published a story for a pulp magazine earning the huge sum for the time of 450 dollars. Dent a voracious reader thought he would try his hand at it and his first professional sale was in 1929.

In 1940 the Dents returned to LaPlata for good. Our subject continued to write for Doc Savage, but also found time to work in the other genres. The Dents traveled extensively as well, enough so to earn Lester a membership in the Explorers Club.

Mr. Dent suffered a heart attack in February 1959. He was hospitalized but subsequently expired 11 March 1959. Since his death, Lester Dent has lived on in reprints and new stories discovered and marketed by his literary agent, Will Murray.

There is a formula in the name of Lester Dent; The Master Fiction Plot, often referred to as the Lester Dent formula, widely circulated guide to writing a salable 6K word pulp story, it has been recommended to aspiring authors. By summarizing the formula “split your six thousand word story into four fifteen hundred word parts. Part one, hit your hero with a heap of trouble, Part two double it. Part three, put him in so much trouble there’s no way he could ever possibly get out of it..All your main characters have to be in the first third. All your main themes and everything else has to be established in the first third, developed in the second third and resolved in the last third.” – The Dent call WØCBL lives again for the N.E. Missouri ARC.



Partially scripted from Wikipedia - suggested by Randy Rogers AD7ZU, QSL from the files of Bob Green W8JYZ - and the fingers and hands of W8SU part time writer and finger talker. W8SU 2013