

Ptarmigans

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Ptarmigan Books was one of the many special series published by Penguin Books. Apart from the main series of novels, Penguin also produced Pelicans (non-fiction), Puffins (children's) and a range of others covering topics across many fields of knowledge and interest.

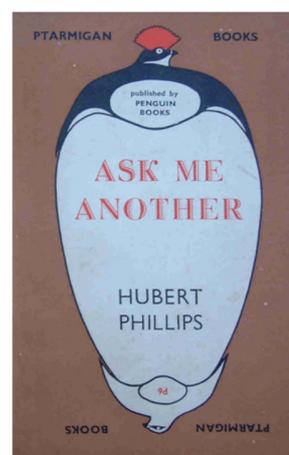
Hubert Phillips was the major influence in the Ptarmigan series, which reached only nine titles. As well as editing the series he was the author, or co-author, of all but one. In an eight-page self-advertising feature at the back of PT1 the series is described as being '*designed to cover, as comprehensively as possible, the field of Games, Puzzles and Indoor Recreations*'.

In the foreword to PT1, Phillips acknowledges the cooperation of Allen Lane in the planning of the collection.

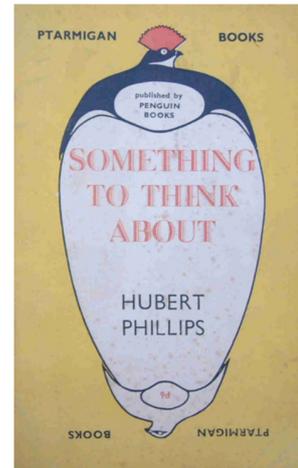
Ptarmigan Books can be grouped into two divisions: those published in 1945 and those in 1947-1948. There seems to be no evident reason for the two-year gap between them. The cover design for the early group (PT1-PT4) consists of a single-colour background dominated by a representation of a double ptarmigan, formed by the ptarmigan in summer plumage at the top, and in winter plumage, upside down, at the base. The name "Ptarmigan Books" appears flanking both heads of this double bird, the lower name being upside down. Title and author's name are printed across the body of the bird. A more abstract representation of a ptarmigan in flight serves as a logo on the title page.

The cover design for the second group (PT5-PT9) is more conventional, again with a single-colour background, the title and author's name appearing in a white rectangle. The only graphic device on the cover is the ptarmigan logo as used on the title pages of the early group.

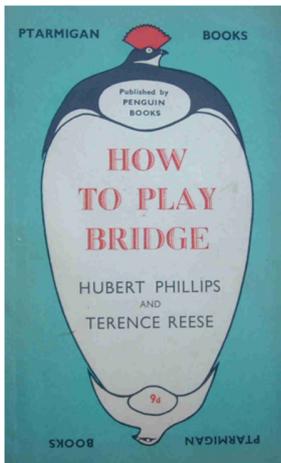
PT1. **Ask me another:** Hubert Phillips, compiler, assisted by S. T. Shovelton; illustrated by Pearl Falconer. Cover: brown. July 1945. This is a collection of 500 general knowledge questions, or 1800 if sub-questions are included, in the form of 50 quizzes.



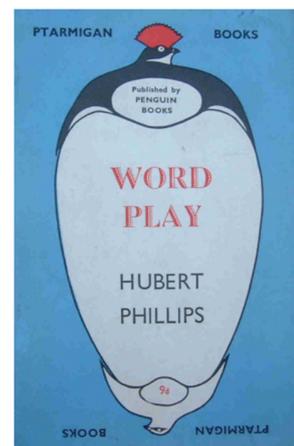
PT2. **Something to think about:** Hubert Phillips, compiler, assisted by S. T. Shovelton; illustrated by Pearl Falconer. Cover: yellow. July 1945. 105 "true" problems grouped into 80 miscellaneous, 9 inferential, 11 mathematical and 5 probability.



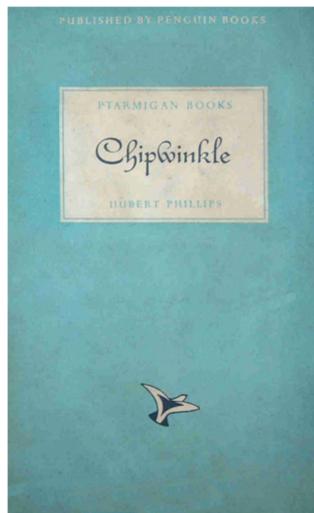
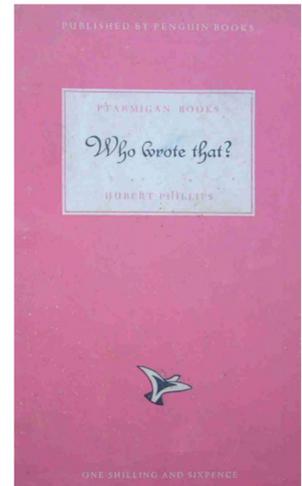
PT3. **How to play bridge:** Hubert Phillips & W. Terence Reese. Cover: green. October 1945. A good introduction to contract bridge with many examples, the principles of bidding and play being clearly explained.



PT4. **Word play:** Hubert Phillips, compiler. Cover: blue. October 1945. Comprises 796 word puzzles of various types, including crossword clues, hidden names, double acrostics, anagrams and misquotations.

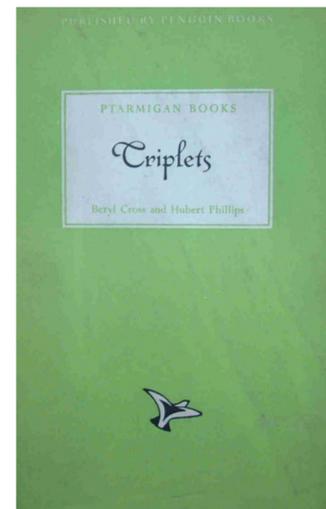


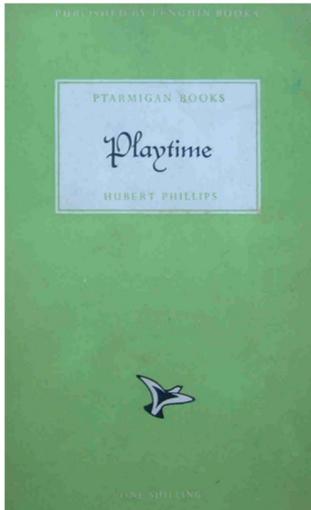
PT5. **Who wrote that?** Hubert Phillips, compiler. Cover: red. June 1948. 400 quotations requiring identification of authors.



PT6. **Chipwinkle:** Hubert Phillips, compiler. Cover: blue. November 1947. 100 crossword puzzles, each containing a quotation from Eugene Chipwinkle's writings. Chipwinkle is a Victorian eccentric invented by Phillips, and there is a fascinating potted biography of him as a foreword.

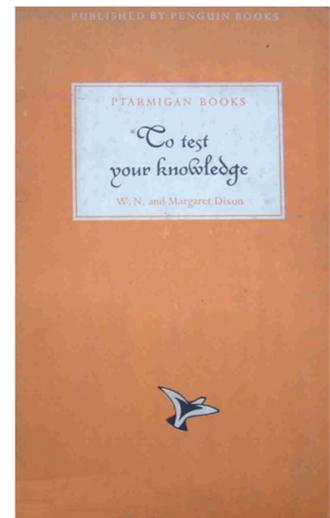
PT7. **Triplets:** Hubert Phillips & Beryl Cross, compilers. Cover: green. October 1947. 50 quizzes of 10 questions, each requiring three related items for a full answer.





PT8. **Playtime**: Hubert Phillips, compiler. Cover: green. October 1947. A description of about 70 parlour games, ranging from activity games to pencil and paper exercises.

PT9. **To test your knowledge**: Margaret & W. Norman Dixon, compilers. Cover: orange. November 1947. 60 quizzes of 10 general knowledge questions, similar to PT1.



PT1 and PT4 both contain a section at the back, describing Ptarmigans "in preparation", and mention three titles which, for some reason, were never published:

- (a) **Alice in Puzzleland**, by Hubert Phillips & S. T. Shovelton; illustrated by Pearl Falconer. A series of problems, like those in PT2, but presented as a third adventure of Alice.
- (b) **Tell Me Who**: verses by Hubert Phillips, amusing pictures by Pearl Falconer. 80 biographical verses with accompanying illustrations, giving clues to the identity of famous people.
- (c) **Men and Women**, by Hubert Phillips. Another biographical puzzle-game, consisting of 100 narrative clues, each in three sections, to the identity of famous persons.

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For more about Penguin Books see: www.penguincollectorsociety.org and www.penguinfirsteditions.com