



THE HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

# NEWSBOY



*Horatio Alger, Jr.*

1832 – 1899

A magazine devoted to the study of Horatio Alger, Jr., his life, works, and influence on the culture of America.

VOLUME LVIII

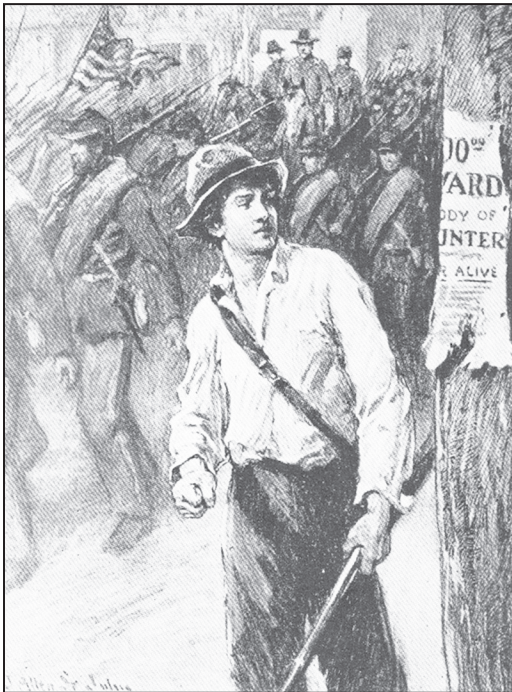
MARCH-APRIL 2020

NUMBER 2

COVID-19 world pandemic:

## 2020 H.A.S. convention canceled

-- See Page 3



## A son of Michigan

*A short biography of Byron A. Dunn*

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Roy J. Snell on selling, promoting books for young people

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## President's column

### A sad, but necessary, announcement

Good morning from cloudy Houston, Sadly, we have had to cancel this year's convention. The worldwide pandemic has forced our hand. Bob Eastlack had done a spectacular job over many months in planning what would have been an outstanding 2020 meeting hosted by Gettysburg College. Alas, it was not meant to be. Executive Director Bob Sipes provides additional details on Page 3.

Hopefully, the national health crisis will abate as time goes by and resuming our daily lives will be a matter of course. Preliminary discussions are underway for the 2021 convention and we hope to be able to announce something definitive in upcoming issues of **Newsboy**. Until then, please be careful and be safe.



We hope this doesn't become "the new normal."

\* \* \*

In the meantime, I am focusing on getting some work done on my online 19th century bibliography. The site is organized by publisher. In addition to the listed series/libraries, I try to include pieces of ephemera related to the publishing house or certain books/authors.

I have been working for several months on Lothrop. Daniel Lothrop established the Boston-based publishing house in 1868. The story of his firm will be reviewed in an article down the road. Suffice it to say that this firm, whether as D. Lothrop & Co. (1868-1887), D. Lothrop Company (1887-1895) and Lothrop Publishing Company (1895-1904) was by far the most prolific publisher of 19th century children's series and libraries. There are more than 500 (that's right, 500 plus) that will be listed in the bibliography.

Shown on Page 7 are two of the more interesting pieces of Lothrop ephemera. **The Five Little Peppers** is a 12-book series by Margaret Sidney that was published

(Continued on Page 7)

## HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr. and to encourage the spirit of *Strive & Succeed* that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes. Our members conduct research and provide scholarship on the life of Horatio Alger, Jr., his works and influence on the culture of America. The Horatio Alger Society embraces collectors and enthusiasts of all juvenile literature, including boys' and girls' series books, pulps and dime novels.

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Membership applications, renewals, changes of address and other correspondence should be sent to **Horatio Alger Society, 1004 School St., Shelbyville, IN 46176**.

**Newsboy** is indexed in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography. You are invited to visit the Horatio Alger Society's official Internet site at [www.horatioalgersociety.net](http://www.horatioalgersociety.net).

**Newsboy** ad rates: Full page, \$32.00; one-half page, \$17.00; one-quarter page, \$9.00; per column inch (1 inch deep by approx. 3 1/2 inches wide), \$2.00. Send ads, with check payable to Horatio Alger Society, 1004 School St., Shelbyville, IN 46176.

The above rates apply to all want ads, along with ads offering non-Alger books for sale. However, it is the policy of the Horatio Alger Society to promote the exchange of Alger books and related Alger materials by providing space **free of charge** to our members for the **sale only** of such material.

Send advertisements or "Letters to the Editor" to **Newsboy** editor William R. Gowen (PF-706) at 23726 N. Overhill Dr., Lake Zurich, IL 60047, or by E-mail to [hasnewsboy@aol.com](mailto:hasnewsboy@aol.com)

# 'Gettysburg Campaign' canceled

By Bob Sipes (PF-1067)

Executive Director, Horatio Alger Society

We are living in unprecedented times. I trust everyone has and will remain healthy throughout this global event. The Horatio Alger Society has held an annual convention for 55 years, but due to the Coronavirus outbreak and COVID-19, the H.A.S. Board of Directors has made the decision to cancel the 2020 Convention, "Gettysburg Campaign." We considered moving it to later in the year, but with no firm direction from federal, state and local governments, along with Gettysburg College (which has shut down its campus until July at the earliest) and knowing the uncertainty of our personal schedules, we decided to cancel the convention.

It is our host, Bob Eastlack, who more acutely feels the loss of the convention. Over the past year, the preparation performed by Bob has been on prominent display in the many articles published in recent issues of *Newsboy*. I know he was looking forward to displaying to our membership the collection he donated to Gettysburg College. I am certain the displays would have been excellent and interesting.

I was looking forward to visiting Gettysburg, not only for the convention and to view his collection, but for the tremendous history of the area. I personally (and on behalf of the H.A.S. Board and membership) thank Bob for his efforts to host what would have been one of the best conventions of the past decade. I know from conversations with Bob that he has personally thanked each of the speakers scheduled to speak and we also thank them for the time and effort spent in preparing for the convention. A couple of the speakers have communicated their willingness to present at a future convention and I am certain we will take them up on the offer.

Earlier this spring, Carole Thorp, wife of Jim Thorp (PF-574), consigned Jim's Alger collection to the 2020 convention for auction. She generously gave a 25 per cent commission to the Society, and Bob Eastlack drove to New Hampshire, picked up the collection and inventoried the approximately 1,000 books in preparation for the auction. Considering the H.A.S. convention cancellation, Bob decided to hold an e-mail auction of the collection with the exception of the first editions, dust jacketed books and additional scarce items.

The inventory of items available was e-mailed to the membership and bids were managed via e-mail. The auction had a good number of bidders and a majority of the items sold. While there were some issues requiring attention during the auction (this was not unexpected)

the overall auction was a success. The auction results will be published in a future issue of *Newsboy*. The items from the Thorp collection that were held back or did not sell during the recent auction will be available at the H.A.S. 2021 convention, except for a few items that may be made available on eBay.

Our annual H.A.S. Board meeting and subsequent membership meeting provide for the nomination and approval of new directors to the Board. Since the convention has been canceled, the H.A.S. leadership recommended that we extend all positions (officers and directors) by one

year to ensure we have continuity of leadership for the next year.

The Board approved this motion and with the exception of Marlena Bremseth, who decided to step down after completing her term as a director, our leadership team will remain intact until the 2021 convention. We appreciate Marlena's time and efforts on the behalf of the Horatio Alger Society, and recognizing that she has



Jim Thorp, host of the 1984 convention, "Nostalgia in Nashua."

many additional obligations (including the editorship of *Dime Novel Round-Up*), wish her much success in her current and future endeavors. She was scheduled to speak at the "Gettysburg Campaign," and we hope to have her present at a future convention.

While we will not have an annual H.A.S. board meeting in the traditional sense, we will most likely host a virtual annual meeting for the board in the near future. Barry Schoenborn, H.A.S. Treasurer, will close the books on the 2019-20 fiscal year in early May, and we will review and approve the financials and publish the financial report in a future issue of *Newsboy*.

We are already soliciting a host and location for the 2021 convention. There are a couple of options on the table, and we hope to provide the approximate timing and location in the near future.

Again, I would like to express my appreciation for all the hard work Bob Eastlack put into a convention that will not take place. It is our loss that we are unable to experience the "Gettysburg Campaign" for ourselves.

## Editor's notebook

### *We move on, and look ahead to 2021*

For three decades-plus, I have attended the annual H.A.S. convention — most importantly, for the renewal of friendships with Partic'lar Friends after a year away, and second, to document the convention for Newsboy, which includes gathering information for the annual convention report, taking photos and helping out with the consignment and donation auction.

Of course, that won't be happening this spring, as events not of our control have caused the cancellation of "Gettysburg Campaign." Executive Director Bob Sipes gives details on Page 3. Host Bob Eastlack began his preparations well over a year ago, and he started sending me preview articles last summer — major preview pieces published in the last four issues, plus much else, including the "word search" puzzle appearing in the most recent issue.

Bob is obviously disappointed his hard work ended in vain. Our host, Gettysburg College, most recently closed its campus into July at the earliest. Who knows how much longer the COVID-19 pandemic will shape our lives? For example, Virginia Commonwealth University recently canceled its on-campus fall semester, extending the "virtual" on-line education protocols that have taken over nearly all of our colleges, high schools and elementary schools.

As Bob Sipes mentions in his article, we will be publishing our annual fiscal year reports in upcoming issues, including the Treasurer's Report, **Newsboy** Report and other administrative reports usually appearing in the post-convention issue.

We also hope to have some advance news about the 2021 convention, with our hopes that next year will be a healthy one for not only us personally, but for our nation and world as well.

\* \* \*

At this point, I must offer an apology for not previously mentioning the death of longtime member Doug Fleming (PF-899) on May 2, 2019 (a year ago this week) at age 87. A resident of Pakenham, Ontario, Canada, he died in an Ottawa hospital, with services and burial held on May 25, 2019, in Pakenham.

Doug was one of our most loyal members despite not having a serious interest in collecting Alger books,

although he did have a collection of some 75. I believe he became interested in the Society through his friendship with fellow Canadians Ivan (PF-722) and Marg McClymont, who ran an apple farm in the rural town of Varna in western Ontario, and who hosted the 1996 H.A.S. convention in nearby Stratford. In 1999, Doug received the Richard R. Seddon Award at that year's



**Doug Fleming (PF-899) holds the Richard R. Seddon Award, which he received at the 1999 convention in DeKalb, Illinois.**

convention in DeKalb, Illinois, during which he announced he would volunteer to host in 2001 (West Chester, Pennsylvania had been set for 2000).

Doug came up with one of our most creative convention titles: "2001 – An Alger Odyssey." It was a wonderful convention, as attendance was 41, including 30 members. During our free time Saturday afternoon, since I was unfamiliar with the Ottawa area, Doug gave me a grand

driving tour, including the impressive houses of Parliament, the city's vast tulip gardens (which were just starting to bloom) and the historic Rideau Canal.

Another of Doug's traditions was donating a pair of one-liter bottles of Canada's "gold of the gods," pure maple syrup, to the annual auction. Due to advancing age, he didn't attend recent conventions, and we missed his presence greatly.

## MEMBERSHIP

### **New address**

Joseph T. Slavin III (PF-880)  
8334 Idylwood Road  
Vienna, VA 22182

### ***Are you moving or have other updates?***

Please send any changes to your residential address, email address or telephone number to Horatio Alger Society, 1004 School St., Shelbyville, IN 46176.



## EDWARD'S TEMPTATION.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.

It was six-o'clock in the afternoon. This time the great wholesale warehouse of Messrs. Hubbard and Son was wont to close, unless the pressure of business compelled the partners to keep open until later.

The duty of closing usually evolved upon Edward Jones, a boy of fourteen, who had lately been engaged to perform a few slight duties for which he received the sum of fifty dollars annually. He was the "boy," but if he behaved himself so as to win the approbation of his employers his chance of promotion was good.

Yet there were some things that rendered this small salary a hard trial to him — circumstances with which his employers were unacquainted. His mother was a widow. The sudden death of Mr. Jones had thrown the entire family upon their own resources, and these indeed were but slender.

There was an older sister who assisted her mother to sew, and this with Edward's salary constituted the entire income of the family. Yet by means of untiring industry, they had continued thus far to live, using strict economy, of course. Yet they had wanted none of the absolute necessities of life.

But Mary Jones — Edward's sister — grew sick. She had taken a severe cold which terminated in a fever. This not only shut off the income from her own labor, but also prevented her mother from accomplishing as much as she would otherwise have been able to do.

On the morning of the day which our story commences, Mary had expressed a longing for an orange. In her fever it would have been most grateful to her.

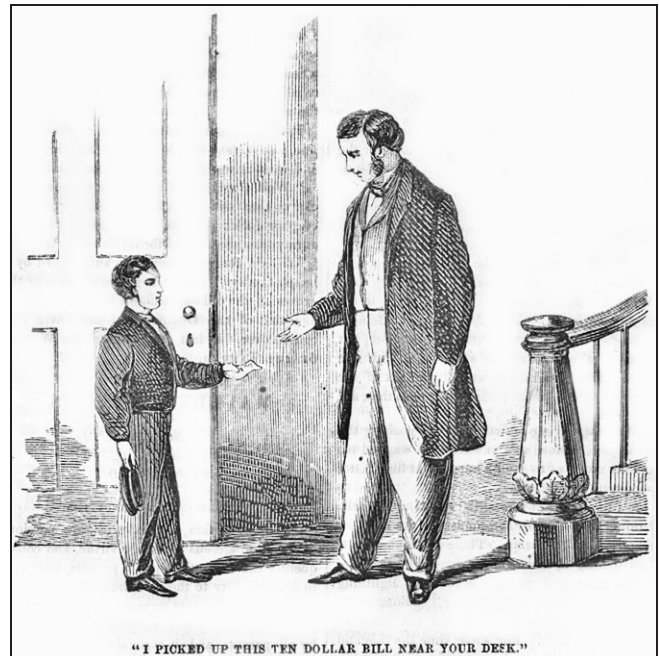
It is hard, indeed, when we obliged to deny to those we love that which would be a refreshment and a benefit to them.

Mrs. Jones felt this, and so did Edward.

"I only wish I could buy you one, Mary," said Edward just as he set out for the store. "Next year I shall receive a larger salary, and then we shan't have to pinch so much."

"Never mind, Edward," said Mary, smiling faintly "I ought not to have asked for it, knowing how hard you and

*This Alger short story, in Newsboy for the first time, initially appeared in the Sept. 17, 1864 issue of Gleason's Literary Companion (Vol. V, No. 38). It subsequently was published in The Home Circle in 1873.*



mother find it to get along without me."

"Don't trouble yourself about that, Mary," said Mrs. Jones soothingly, though her heart sank within her at the thought of her empty larder. "Only get well, and we shall get on well enough afterwards."

It was with the memory of this scene that Edward went to the store in the morning.

All around him were boxes of rich goods, representing thousands of dollars in money.

"Oh," thought he, "if I only had the value of one of those boxes, how much good it would do poor Mary." And Edward sighed.

The long day wore away at last, and Edward was about to close the warehouse.

But as he passed the desk of his employer his attention was drawn to a bit of paper lying on the floor beneath.

He picked it up, and to his great joy found it to be a ten dollar bill. The first thought that flashed upon him was, "How much good this will do Mary. I can buy her the oranges she wants, and she shall have some every day. And perhaps she would like a chicken."

But a moment later his countenance fell.

"It isn't mine," he sighed. "It must be Mr. Hubbard's. This is his desk, and he must have dropped it."

"Still," urged the tempter. "He will never know it. And after all, what are ten dollars to him? He is worth a hundred thousand."

Still, Edward was not satisfied. Whether Mr. Hubbard could spare it or not was not the question. It was rightfully his, and must be given back to him.

"I'll go to his house and give it to him this very night;

(Continued on Page 6)

## EDWARD'S TEMPTATION

*(Continued from Page 5)*

otherwise I might be tempted to keep it."

He determined to go to Mr. Hubbard's before he went home. The sight of his sick sister might weaken his resolution, and this must never be. He must preserve his integrity at all hazards.

He knew where Mr. Hubbard lived. It was a large, fine-looking house, on a fashionable street. He had passed it several times, and wondered whether a man must not feel happy who was able to live in such style.

Without any unnecessary delay, therefore, he went to the house, and ascending the steps, rang the bell.

A man servant came to the door.

"Well," he said.

"Is Mr. Hubbard at home?"

"Yes, but he has only just come in, and I don't think he can see you," was the rather supercilious reply. "I am in his employ," said Edward, quietly, "and just come from the store. I think he will see me if you mention this to him."

"Very well, you can come in."

Edward was left standing in the hall while Mr. Hubbard was sought by the servant.

He came out in a moment, and looked at Edward with a little surprise.

"Well?" he said inquiringly. "Has anything happened?"

"No, sir," said Edward, "but I picked up this ten dollar bill near your desk, and supposed you must have dropped it. I thought I had better bring it here directly."

[SEE ENGRAVING]

"You have done well," said Mr. Hubbard, "and I will remember it. Honesty is a very valuable quality in a boy just commencing a business career. Hereafter I shall have perfect confidence in your honesty."

Edward was gratified by this assurance, yet as the door closed behind him, and he walked out into the street, the thought of his sister sick at home again intruded upon him, and he thought regretfully how much good could have been done with ten dollars. Not that he regretted that he had been honest. There was a satisfaction in doing right, but I think my readers will understand his feelings without any explanation.

Mrs. Jones brought some toast to her daughter's bedside, but Mary motioned it away. "I thank you for taking the trouble to make it, mother," she said, "but I don't think I could possibly eat it."

"Is there anything you could relish, Mary?"

"No," she said hesitatingly, "nothing that we can get." Mrs. Jones sighed — a sigh which Edward echoed.

It was with a heavy heart that Edward started for the warehouse the next morning. He had never before felt the craving for wealth which now took possession of him.

He set about his duties as usual. About two hours after he had arrived at the warehouse Mr. Hubbard entered. He did

not at first appear to notice Edward but in about half an hour summoned him to the office, which was partitioned off from the remainder of the spacious rooms in which goods were stored.

He smiled pleasantly as Edward entered his presence.

"Tell me frankly," he said, "did you not feel the impulse to keep the bill which you found last night?"

"I hope you won't be offended with me, Mr. Hubbard," said Edward, "if I say I did."

"Tell me about it," said Mr. Hubbard with interest. "What was it that withheld you? I should never have known it."

"I know that," said Edward.

"Then what withheld you from taking it?"

"First, I will tell you what tempted me," said Edward. "My mother and sister are obliged to depend upon sewing for a living, and we live very poorly at the best. But a fortnight since Mary became sick, and since then we have had a hard time. Mary's appetite is poor, and does not relish food, but we are to get her nothing better. When I picked up that bill, I couldn't help thinking how much I might buy with it for her."

"And yet you did not take it?"

"No, sir, it would have been wrong, and I could not have looked you in the face after it," Edward spoke in a tone of modest confidence.

Mr. Hubbard went to the desk and wrote out a cheque.

"How much do I pay you now?" he asked.

"Fifty dollars a year," said Edward.

"Henceforth, your duties will be increased, and I will pay two hundred. Will that please you?"

"Two hundred dollars a year!" exclaimed Edward, his eyes sparkling with delight.

"Yes, and at the end of the year, that will be increased, if, as I have no doubt, you continue to merit my confidence."

"Oh, sir, how can I thank you?" said Edward, full of gratitude.

"By preserving your integrity. As I presume you are in present need of money, I will pay you one quarter in advance. Here is a cheque for fifty dollars which you can cash at the bank. And, by the way, you may have the rest of the day to yourself."

Edward flew to the bank, and with his sudden riches hastened to the market where he purchased a supply of provisions such as he knew would be welcome at home, and then made haste home to announce his good fortune.

A weight seemed to fall off the hearts of mother and daughter as they heard his hurried story, and Mrs. Jones thanked God for bestowing upon her a son whose good principles had brought them this great relief.

And Mr. Hubbard slept none the worse that night that at a slight pecuniary sacrifice he had done a kind action, confirmed a boy in his integrity, and gladdened a struggling family. If there were more employers as he, there would be fewer dishonest clerks.

# President's column

*(Continued from Page 2)*

between 1880 and 1916 (post-1905 books were printed by Lothrop, Lee & Shepard).

Example 1 (below) is a very rare Five Little Peppers jigsaw puzzle that was published by Lothrop Publishing Company. The puzzle came in a box. This picture (Examples 2 and 3) is another great Lothrop related piece. Both views show a number of D. Lothrop & Co. books in the background, and at the bottom left of the close-up there is a \$1,000 Prize Series book.

W. B. Conkey Co.

Walter B. Conkey founded his namesake company in 1877. It was located in Chicago (with the publishing plant in Hammond, Indiana) and was active from the 1870s until 1949. The book production consisted mainly of reprints in publisher's series in the early 1900s. It printed the first Sears, Roebuck catalog.

As pieces of ephemera go, this one offered by Conkey is quite unusual. It is a letter opener (Example 4).

George W. Childs

Childs published a number of books as a partner in Childs and Peterson (1849-1860) as well as on his own namesake firm. It published the first editions of the Rollo and Lucy Poetry Books in 1863. Visit <http://www.jacobabbott.com/Poetry/index.html>

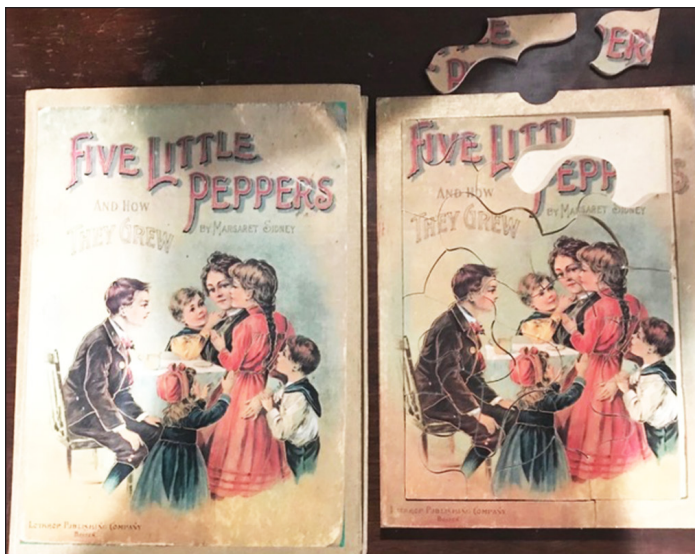
But Childs' real claim to fame was as the owner of the Philadelphia Public Ledger as well as the Publishers' Circular and American Gazette.

Two great pieces of ephemera promoting the Childs publications are this cigar box (Example 5) and an 1887 Altemus bible (not shown) that Childs offered as a gift.

*(Continued on Page 16)*



Example 2



Example 1



Example 3



Example 4

# A story well worth telling ...

By William R. Gowen (PF-706)

**O**n the following pages we present Part 1 of a two-part biography of author Byron A. Dunn (1842-1926), who wrote 13 books organized as three Civil War-based series. The titles of the series, respectively, are The Young Kentuckians Series (1898-1901), The Young Missourians Series (1910-1913) and The Young Virginians Series (1916-1918).

The author of this "short biography," as he called it, was Roy B. Van Devier, a well-known collector and researcher of boys' series books, a longtime resident of Akron, Ohio, who amassed a collection of some 3,500 titles over many decades. James D. Keeline (PF-898) has provided his usual expert assistance in giving us background on Van Devier, who in the 1950s and 1960s was a major contributor to Dime Novel Round-Up. His 10 articles as listed in Bowling Green State University's 1931-1981 DNRU index (compiled and edited by Michael L. Cook) are reproduced at right.

Keeline's research shows Van Devier's birth date as May 13, 1900 and his death on March 11, 1980, just two months shy of his 80th birthday. He was confined to a rest home since 1973 and at that time had placed his entire collection in the hands of a prominent Akron book dealer.

Van Devier had his monograph on Byron A. Dunn self-published as a 27-page, 7 x 10-inch booklet, professionally printed in August 1949 by The Akron Printing and Lithographing Company. It contains numerous high-quality gravure-style reproductions of selected black-and-white plates from Dunn's books, several of which we'll be running with this article.

In Part 1, Van Devier covers Dunn's ancestry (dating back to 17th century Scotland) through the 1861 break-out of the Civil War. Part 2 will cover his service in the Union Army, including his participation in numerous campaigns. Also discussed are his postwar years, and the creation of his three Civil War series for Chicago publisher A.C. McClurg while living in Waukegan, about 40 miles north of Chicago. His final two years were spent between Stevens Point, Wisconsin, and Lima, Ohio, living with various family members.

Also in the May-June issue, I will add an accompanying article describing the publication and various formats of Dunn's 13 books, with illustrations.

Van Devier led off the title of this biography with A Son of Michigan, the state of Dunn's birth. He had plans to do similar short biographies of Joseph A. Altsheler and James A. Braden, as he notes in his Preface. How-

- Van Devier, Roy B.: C.H. Forbes-Lindsay, A Famous India Author, (biog. sketch) 386-97; 387-104**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: Edward Stratemeyer, (biog. sketch and comments), 305-10, 306-20**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: Genealogy of William Thorp, (family history), 394-73; 395-85; 396-101; 397-110; 398-122; 399-133; 400-10; 402-32; 403-44; 404-54**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: James Ball Naylor, A Famous Ohio Author, (biog. sketch), 369-56**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: Josephine Chase and Her Pen Names, 382-61**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: Larry Evans, A Famous American Novelist, (biog. sketch), 388-4**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: letter of comment, 369-58; 382-65**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: Louis E. Pendleton, A Famous Southern Author, (biog. sketch), 374-100**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: The Old Werner Publishing Co. of Akron, Ohio, (later Saalfeld Pub. Co.; publishers history) 286-49**
- Van Devier, Roy B.: Oliver Optic, (biog./ literary sketch), 298-51**

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ever, apparently they were never completed. He was a member of the Sons of the American Revolution in Ohio as a descendant of Private Nathan Thorp (12 May 1759 to 14 Nov 1840). His 10-part serialization chronicling the Thorp genealogy was published in Dime Novel Round-Up. At the time of his application to the SAR in 1951, he was working in trucking and sales.

The late Bob Chenu wrote an article on Dunn and his Civil War series for issue No. 49 of Yellowback Library (July 1988) and in the Yellowback Library issue of May 1993 is published a letter from Clayton L. Christensen of Zion, Illinois (grand-nephew of Byron A. Dunn) seeking fans of the series to provide him copies of Dunn's books so that he could donate complete sets to the Waukegan Historical Society and Lake County (Illinois) Museum.

Keeline reports that as a major Edward Stratemeyer collector, Van Devier corresponded with Stratemeyer in 1917, 1920, 1921, 1923, 1925, 1929 and 1930. However, Keeline notes he has seen only carbon copies of Stratemeyer's replies and not Van Devier's incoming letters.



# A son of Michigan

## *A short biography of Byron A. Dunn*

### INTRODUCTION

**A** tall man, with a noble forehead, keen dark eyes, soft silvery hair and the kindest expression I have ever seen on anyone's face – that was my Father as I knew him. He was one of the most intelligent men I have ever known, as well as the kindest. His interests were varied, and he was well versed in every subject. The Civil War was perhaps his first interest, and his library of books on the War Between the States was said to be one of the most complete in existence.

Politics and current affairs were always vital topics to him. An able speaker, he was much in demand at public affairs of all kinds. He loved children, and they in turn loved and trusted him.



**Byron A. Dunn (1842-1926)**

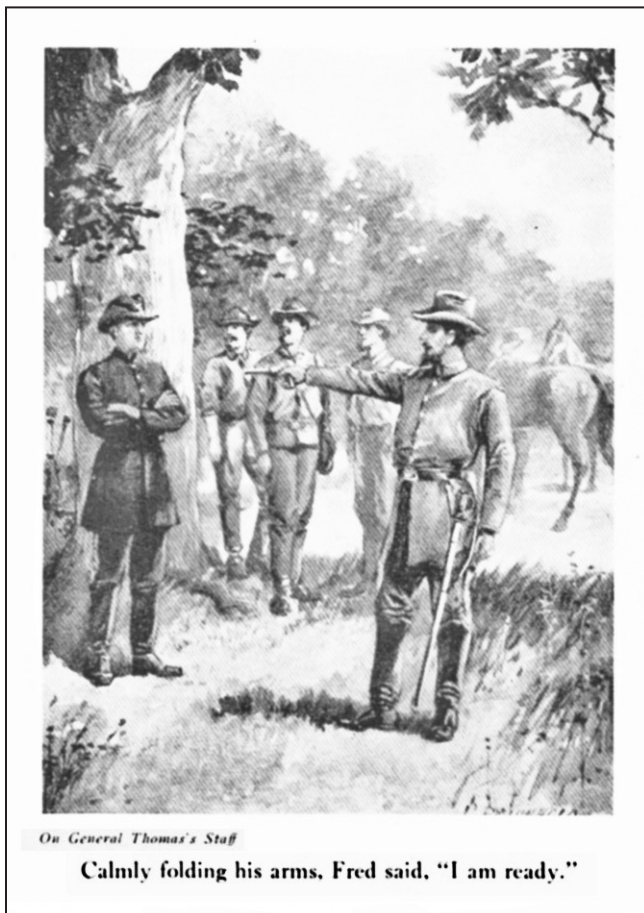
was his critic, typed his manuscripts and read proof on his later books.

Back of my Father's career is an outstanding, honorable record of the patriotic devotion of his forbears. Mr. Van Devier has gathered a wealth of the historical material, through long and careful research. Much information that will be valuable to genealogical libraries has been included in this little book, My sister and I

are amazed at the knowledge Mr. Van Devier shows of Father's background and his life, and the patience and persistence he has evidenced in gathering and arranging this material. As he said, it was a "labor of love." I am, sure anyone reading this little volume will realize and appreciate the devotion that has inspired its being.

His high regard for truth is shown in his books. His historical facts are so authentic in detail that it has been said his works could be used as text books on the Civil War.

In a way, those books were a family affair. He wrote some of them while holding me on his lap. My sister Ethel



*On General Thomas's Staff*

**Calmly folding his arms, Fred said, "I am ready."**

Dorothy Dunn Huffman  
San Diego, California  
July 9, 1949

### PREFACE

I read Byron A. Dunn's books a great many years ago, and I take more interest in them each year. I don't think there are any better juvenile books ever written on the Civil War than the Byron A. Dunn books.

These books become more dear to me each year, and I am sure that all of Mr. Dunn's collectors feel the same way. Some of his books, especially the "Young Virginians Series," are rare and hard to locate. I have a few extra copies for sale and will be glad to send a list and price on request.

I wish to thank the following libraries and librarians

*(Continued on Page 10)*

# A son of Michigan

(Continued from Page 9)

who have been so kind to me in sending material to me that I have used in this biography:

Bernadette F. Hall of the Waukegan Public Library; Grace Langan of the Maryville (Mo.) Public Library; Emma Swift of the Rochester (N.Y.) Public Library and Thompson R. Harlow of the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford, Connecticut.

I wish to thank also: Mrs. Hugh L. Huffman and Miss Ethel Dunn, both of San Diego, California, his daughters, and his son Roy Byron Dunn of Waukegan, Illinois. I wish to thank also a daughter-in-law of the author, Miss Bess T. Dunn of Waukegan, who sent me a lot of material and who worked so hard for me in trying to locate a picture of her father-in-law.

His daughter (Dorothy) Mrs. Hugh L. Huffman, sent me the only picture she had of her father, so I could get a cut [engraving] made for this biography. She also sent me her personal scrapbook, with newspaper clippings of her father's life.

Byron A. Dunn is not listed in *Dictionary of American Biography* and he is not listed in the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. He is not even listed in *Who's Who - 1897-1842*.

It is my intention to write other booklets on our famous American authors. Two that I have in mind are: *A Son of Kentucky; or, A Short Biography of Joseph A. Altsheler*, and *A Son of Ohio; or, A short Biography of James A. Braden*.

It has been a labor or love for me to compile this biography; if anyone enjoys reading it as much as I have while working on it, I shall feel that my labor has not been in vain.

Roy B. Van Devier  
Akron, Ohio  
May 11, 1949

## Byron A Dunn, A Short Biography

**Byron's great-great-great grandfather:** Byron A. Dunn's great-great-great grandfather, William Munroe, was born in the County of Ross, in Scotland, in 1625. He was taken prisoner in the battle of Worcester on September 3, 1651, and was deported to America in 1652. He married (1) in 1665, Martha George, by whom he had four children; (2) Mary Ball, by whom he had nine children, and (3) Elizabeth Wyer, without issue. He died at Lexington, Massachusetts, the 27th of January, 1717.

William's descendants played important roles in the early history of New England. Many of them served in the colonial wars against the French and Indians, and 25 of his descendants were in the Revolutionary War.



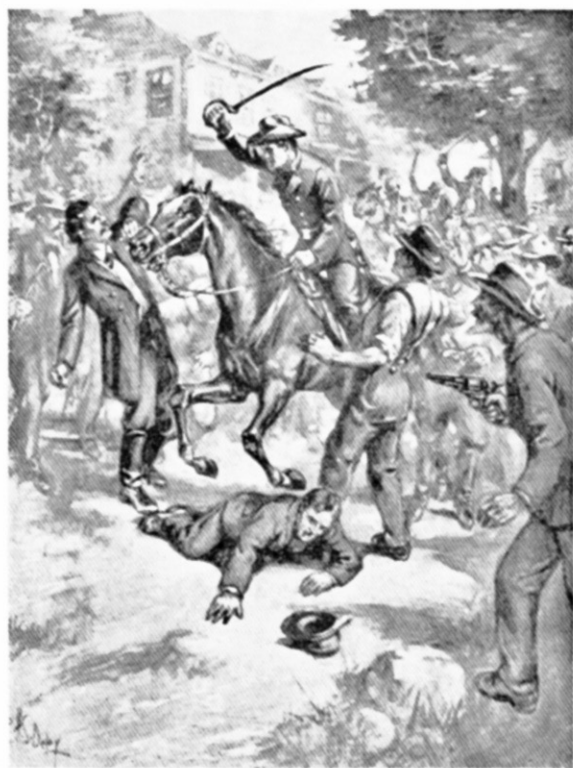
His grandson, Ensign Robert Munroe, was in Captain Parker's company in the battle of Lexington, and he was the first man killed on the Green. Colonel William Munroe, another grandson, was orderly sergeant of the minute-men of the same company.

**Byron's great-great-grandfather:** David, the fifth child of William and Mary Munroe, was born at Cambridge Farms, now Lexington, Massachusetts, October 6, 1680, and grew to manhood there. There is a record of his baptism March 26, 1699, at nearly the same time with several of his brothers and sisters.

At this time emigration was setting in from the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay to Connecticut. Six years later, David's first child was born in Canterbury. During this interval he married Deborah How and established his home in the new settlement at Canterbury, Connecticut. David died June 19, 1755, his wife having preceded him September 1, 1748.

**Byron's great-grandfather:** Josiah, the eleventh and youngest child of David and Deborah Munroe, was born at Canterbury, Connecticut, September 11, 1725.

A record of baptism conflicts with that of his birth. Two records of his marriage conflict with each other,



*The Scout of Pea Ridge*

Straight through the crowd he rode, striking right and left.

and both are probably erroneous. Certain it is, that he married at Canterbury, Sarah Hyde, near the beginning of the year 1752. He inherited in 1755, a portion of his father's estate, and may have lived upon it.

Nothing further is known of his life until the breaking out of the Revolutionary War. As the news of the battle of Lexington spread, the local militia everywhere fell in, in large numbers under their own officers, and, without waiting for orders or authority, marched for the scene of conflict. This action was afterwards legalized and lists made of the soldiers who went. The spontaneous character of the service is indicated by the language used; and Josiah Munroe was one of those who from Canterbury, "Marched for the relief of Boston in the Lexington alarm." On this occasion he held the rank of sergeant and was in the service eight days, in April 1775.

July 11, 1775, he entered as a private in the 7th company of the 8th regiment, which was afterwards adopted into the continental army. In September his regiment was ordered to Boston, where it remained till the expiration of the term of service, and Josiah was discharged December 25, 1775.

The following year Captain Timothy Bachus orga-

nized in Canterbury a company of "Independent Veterans" of which Josiah was a member. This company did duty at New London in September, and in October at West Chester, New York.

April 14, 1777, he enlisted "to serve during the war in Captain Elisha Lee's company of the 4th Connecticut Regiment of the Continental Line, commanded by Col. John Durkee. His regiment went into camp at Peekskill. In September he joined Washington's army in Pennsylvania and "marched in the Connecticut brigade" under General McDougal. At Germantown, October 4, they fought on the left flank. Later, his regiment was assigned to Varnum's Brigade and engaged in the desperate defense of Fort Mifflin, November 12-16. They wintered at Valley Forge, where Josiah died in camp February 19, 1778.

A constant tradition of his death in camp in the service of the Continental army has come down among the descendants of his son, David; and his death in February 1778, is recorded in a little memorandum kept during her lifetime by his daughter, Sara Anna (mother of Byron) and was (in 1912) the possession of Mrs. Daniel E. Bennett, of Marilla, New York. Josiah's widow, Sarah Munroe, was born September 12, 1773. She married Deacon Jonas Bond of Canterbury, March 18, 1793, and died, probably at Canterbury, February 13, 1794.

The record of Josiah's enlistment and death was obtained from the war department in the following letter:

WAR DEPARTMENT  
The Adjutant General's Office  
Washington, November 2, 1911

Respectfully returned to Mrs. B.A. Dunn,  
801 North County St.  
Waukegan Illinois

The record of this office shows that one Josiah Munroe served as a private in Captain Elisha Lee's Company, 4th Connecticut Regiment, commanded by Colonel John Durkee, Revolutionary War. He enlisted April 14, 1777, to serve during the war, and died February 19, 1778. Nothing further of him has been found of record.

F.C. Ainsworth,  
The Adjutant General  
Per. 4

**Byron's grandparents:** David, the ninth child of Josiah and Sarah Munroe, was born at Canterbury, Connecticut, September 26, 1768. He was married to Anna Andrus on January 16, 1794, at Pawlet, Vermont. Soon after his marriage he settled at Cooperstown, New York, and about

(Continued on Page 12)

# A son of Michigan

(Continued from Page 11)

1800 he removed to Penfield, New York, where his wife, Anna, died on June 12, 1817, and is buried there. In 1836 he sold a magnificent farm and came with his children to Pittsford, Hillsdale County, Michigan. He was for many years a deacon in the Baptist church at Penfield, and has been described at a granddaughter as "a noble man of Scotch descent, of generous impulses and strong religious convictions."

He was a large man and his strength was said to have been equal to that of two of his neighbors. A plainly legible tombstone marks his grave, in the Goodrich cemetery, two and one-half miles west of Hudson, Michigan. It reads:

**DAVID MUNROE**  
Died  
July 11, 1837  
In His 69th Year

**Byron's Uncle Lester:** Lester, the first child of Daida and Anna Munroe, was born at Cooperstown, New York, April 16, 1795. He enlisted at Penfield, New York, January 2, 1814, in Caleb Harrington's Company, 52nd New York militia. On account of sickness he was discharged January 14. In April following, he re-enlisted, serving under Captains Bancroft and Clark, and Colonels Upson and Dobson [in the War of 1812].

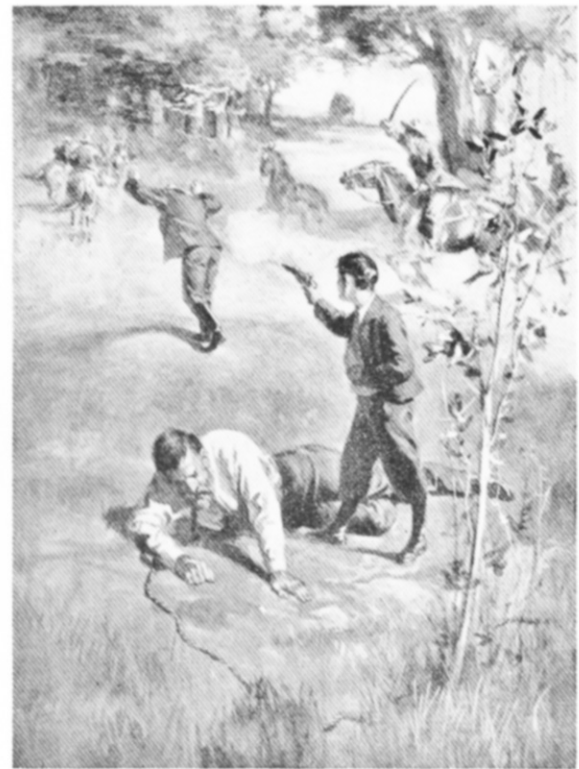
He was in the battles of Chippewa, Lundy's Lane and Fort Erie. On one occasion during a retreat he engaged in a deadly hand-to-hand combat with a British soldier, who endeavored to take him prisoner, but he made his escape, leaving his antagonist dead in the woods. Again falling ill, he was granted a furlough of 30 days, at the expiration of which, not having recovered, his father, David Munroe, reported for him. There is no record of his discharge.

He drew a pension from 1874 till his death in 1890. His last pension voucher, which was never filled out, was in the possession (1912) of Leo C. Northrop of Little Rock, Arkansas.

Lester Munroe died at Kalamazoo, Michigan, on March 16, 1890, his wife Lurany having preceded him in death January 1, 1866. He is buried in the village cemetery at Kalamazoo.

**Byron's parents:** Sarah Anna, a sister to Lester Munroe, who served in the War of 1812, was the sixth and youngest child of David and Anna Munroe.

She was born at Penfield, New York, March 23, 1813. She married Archibald, son of Joseph and Rachel Dunn,



*With Lyon in Missouri*

As he turned there was a report of another pistol.

at Penfield, on February 9, 1834. Her husband was born at Pittsford, New York, March 23, 1810. The following year they emigrated to Hillsdale County, Michigan.

### **Byron A. Dunn's birth and early childhood**

Byron Archibald Dunn was born on a farm somewhere in Hillsdale, County, Michigan, August 4, 1842

Young Byron loved to help his father in the fields, and help to do chores, such as milking the cows, feeding the chickens and pigs. He loved to go swimming and fishing.

When Byron was about 11 or 12 years old, his parents moved to Cass County, Michigan. Young Byron enjoyed having his mother tell him and his brothers and sisters, "stories about his great-grandfather, Josiah Munroe, who gave his life in the Revolutionary War at Valley Forge, and about his cousin, Ensign Robert Munroe, the first man killed at the Battle of Lexington, and of their Uncle Chester, their mother's brother, who served in the War of 1812."

Byron went to the public schools of his native state and worked on his father's farm until the Civil War broke out in 1861.

**(To be concluded in the May-June issue)**

# If authors were salespeople

By Roy J. Snell

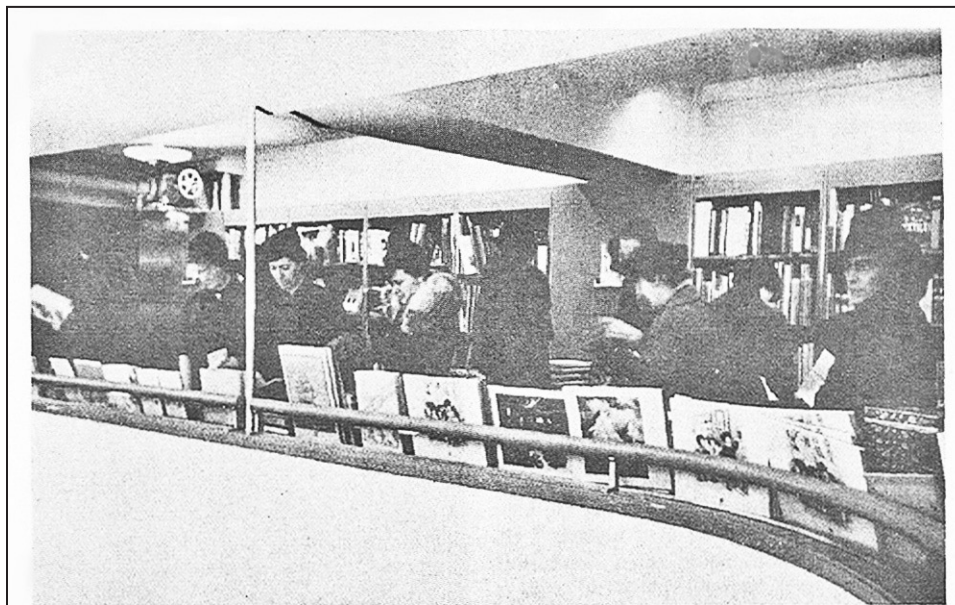
*Introduction: It is often that authors actually sell books over booking counters. Mr. Snell, who has written many popular books for children, has acted as a sales clerk during the Christmas rush for the past 20 years. He has learned a lot about readers and booksellers and the interests of children.*

\* \* \*

If all the authors whose books appear on the tables and shelves this autumn had sold books for a month each year, over a period of years, in some bookshop or book section, I wonder how much difference it would have made to their output. How many of them would have ceased to be authors? How many would have stopped writing highbrow books and tried to write what they discovered people wanted? How many would have been more successful and how many less? Add as many questions as you wish, then see if what I have to tell you answers any of them in the least degree.

A little over twenty years ago I had reached the author's *pons asinorum*; I had had three books well published and not one had set the western sky aglow. I was determined to cross that bridge of asses so I said, "If no one will sell my books, I'll sell them myself." Having a slight acquaintance with a beautiful lady who ran a book section at a great Midwestern store, I asked her to give me a job during the Christmas rush and, as the radio announcer says, "She graciously consented." When I had been in the salesmanship school for two days and came down with a sales book, she said, "Now you may sell where you damn please." Where I damn pleased was, quite naturally, on the boy's teen-age book table where my two newest books were kept.

In four weeks I sold 300 of my own books and a thundering lot of books by other people, more successful than I, had written, for I was working, not playing at selling books. I received a salary of \$25 a week and,



Disraeli

Children's book departments are busy and interesting places during the Christmas rush, as Mr. Snell makes clear in his article. The department above is in the Doubleday, Doran Book Shop on Fifth Avenue, New York. Lena Barksdale is second from left. Mr. Snell works in children's departments in Chicago every Christmas

I hope, earned it. Three hundred books sold will not make an author, far from it. But, to my vast astonishment, I had entered a school for authors which could give me more than any school of journalism in the country. And I kept right on attending that school. Out of the past twenty Decembers I have spent sixteen in some large book section.

Why did I do it? Well, in the first place, there are some great ideas for new books lying around loose in every book section. All you have to do is stick around and pick them up. During that first December, I picked one up that has enabled me to earn more than \$25,000 in royalties and the checks have not stopped yet. I'll tell you about that later.

Every year since then I have been right there with my ear to the ground listening for the rumble of other big ideas. When you first enter the section you think, "Great Scott! Look at all the titles! Why write any books at all!" As you keep on working, you begin to get the books sorted out and to discover things, very much worthwhile, that have not been done and you begin making plans to do them. Then, too, you are able to follow the drift. You may have some boys' or girls' books going fairly well but you want to know whither child interest is heading. Is it sports, mystery, war, adventure, travel? When you

*This article originally appeared in the Dec. 21, 1940 edition of The Publishers' Weekly (Vol. 138, No. 25).*

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# If authors were salespeople

(Continued from Page 13)

have sold enough books, you know.

There are many compensations for such an undertaking. It's the grand way to keep the human touch, and that, for an author, is very necessary. If you can treat the poor, little old grandmother in a ragged shawl, who wants a 50-cent series book for Mike, with the same courtesy you give to the grand dame in a seal coat who wants a \$5 copy of *Pinocchio*, you still have the touch. If you can talk with a reasonable degree of intelligence to a college professor and very simply to a child, you still have it.

And you come really to know your audience, all of it, not part. I have talked to thousands of boys and girls in book sections, talked about my books and other books. Hundreds of them did not know who I was, so they told me the simple truth; and it did not always leave me feeling very chesty. All to the good; if there is a reason your books don't touch the spot, you are the one who should know it.

But I wonder how many authors can, as the girl in the hot-dog stand says, "Take it as well as dish it out." Believe me, if you sell your own books you'll have to take it. I have known of an author who on coming into a section to autograph his books, heard his books criticized and walked right out again.

Here are a couple of examples of what came my way. I was selling one day when I heard the words, "Better than a Snell book anyway." I thought it was a customer who said it; so, after she was gone, I said to the young Christmas rush saleslady, "That woman didn't like my books, did she?" The saleslady said, "I wouldn't sell a Roy J. Snell book for anything." I said, "But I am Roy J. Snell." She said, "Now you've got me blushing. Well, I didn't quarrel with her. She had not read my books. Where she got her impression of them I don't know. She stuck to her guns; not once in four weeks did she sell a Snell book. The ironic part if it all was that she had an M.A. degree from a great



**Roy J. Snell (1878-1959)**

university where she was a sophomore.

I have always felt that my books are the middle-of-the-road sort, not too good nor too wise but quite human. If you sell books year after year your books are likely to be that, for you come to know what children really want, and what their elders want, and you try to strike a happy medium. Parents seem to want fair literary value, real historical or geographical background and a moral tone. Children want mystery, thrills, action, adventure. So why not give it to them, all of it to all of them?

You are bound to be treated a bit roughly at times. One day a well-dressed lady wanted to exchange one of my books for a different title. I made the exchange. "Now," she said, "I'd to see a nice copy of *Huckleberry Finn*." I showed her a copy. She said, "I don't know he'd read this or not. He's been reading these trashy Snell books."

Well, when the average clerk enters a high-class department store, he pulls down a mask over his face. He neither frowns nor stares, just looks dumb, if you know what I mean. I looked dumb. She looked me squarely in the face and said, "They are trashy aren't they?" What was the answer? There was none, so I didn't make it. I looked down at *Huck Finn*, one of the grandest boys' books ever written, and said, "When I was a boy I had to steal this book in order to read it," which was the exact truth. She looked up in surprise and said:

"Why? Didn't they want you to read it?"

I said, "Because they thought it was trashy."

Ah! Well! For one such person there are twenty who come to praise your books and tell how much the children enjoy them, if they really do; and in my case they must have, for I have had 70 books published and a million copies sold. The children! Oh, the children! How you come to anticipate their gentle, friendly touch! I've seen them stand and tremble when they were introduced to me as if I were God; and I a book clerk, the plainest simplest soul in all the world. How often have I been stacking books under the table, hundreds and hundreds of them, when someone called my name and I straightened up to hear a fellow clerk say, "Mr. Snell, here is a little girl who would like to meet you."

As I mopped my brow and held out a grimy hand, I wanted to say, "Who? Me?" But God bless the children all the same! I don't think I could go on writing, year after year, if it were not for that constant touch with the grandest audience in all the world. Twenty-five years? Seventy books? What a life!

If it is important for you to keep in touch with your audience it is, perhaps, even more important for you to know how the average person who sells your books feels and thinks. When you have worked side-by-side

with them year after year in the old book section, coming down when they do and going home when they do, stacking books, rubbing shoulders with them, laughing a little and quarrelling a little with them, you really know. One this more is very much worth knowing; the average person who sells books in a high-class bookshop is as intelligent and well educated as the average author. Do you doubt that? Well then, you just don't know.

I promised to tell you how I got my "big idea" for a whole shelf of books that have paid my grocery bill for lo these many years. As I worked in a book section during my first season, many people often said, "I want a book for a boy fourteen years old." I'd say, what does he like, Adventure, History, Sports, what?" Often and often they would say, "He likes something m-y-s-t-e-r-i-o-u-s."

"Ah," I said to myself at last. "I have it! Boys and girls like mystery stories. I told my publishers. They said, "Try it!" And that is how the *Roy J. Snell Mystery Stories* were some seven or eight years ahead of Nancy Drew, Judy Bolton, et al. The old mystery line is still good but

competition is keen and I am once more listening to the rumble of what is to come. I think I hear it right now. I'll be on State Street again this year just to make sure. Then, I'll find a publisher who has imagination and who is, like myself, a trifle balmy, and then we'll go to town.

Just now, however, I am interested in a book for younger children. I wrote it under the pen name Josef Marino. It is called *Hi! Ho! Pinocchio – The American Boy*. It is the story of Pinocchio coming to America and living with his uncle who is a porter in a big department store on State Street. Oh! Yes! There is a book called *Ski Patrol*. It is a story of the Finnish war. When the book was finished the Finns were finished. But they put up a grand scrap. Boys like Finns and to ski, so it should do well enough. I'll be right there, watching over my tables, November 18th to December 25th. Drop in and see me. Where? Oh! Chicago. What store? Shh! You'll just have to look it up.

## Selling books by radio

By Roy J. Snell

I have often spoken on the radio and had in the back of my head the notion of promoting the sales of my books. In some cases I have read from my books for 15 to 30 minutes during the children's hour. At other times I have spoken over the radio of my experiences in collecting material for my stories, especially my adventures in the far North.

I have had rather unusual opportunities in the matter of checking up on the number of sales created by these talks. On three separate occasions during three Christmas seasons, at the time I talked on the radio, I have been engaged in selling my own and other person's juvenile books in one of the largest book departments in the country. Naturally, after speaking on the radio at night, I had my ears and eyes open to discover just how many books were asked for because of my talk. I am free to confess that the results were somewhat disappointing. A few mothers came in to say that their boys wanted every book I had ever written. But there was no standing line.

I had settled down to the feeling that radio, like a sign beside the railway track, sold goods in a vaguely indirect way and was not to be ignored nor was it anything to be excited about. Then, I experienced the surprise of my life. I had been asked by Mrs. Ford to talk to the Mothers in Council about books they should buy for teen-age boys and girls. The hour was 4 p.m.;

not the best one might say. By an oversight I was not announced in the paper of the previous Saturday. It surely looked like the front seats would be vacant. I had been selling books feverishly for days on end and had allowed myself 15 minutes' rest before going in to talk. However, I had my material well in hand. For six years during the month of December I had sold books for boys and girls [in stores]. Thousands of grown-ups had said to me, "I want a book for a boy fourteen years old," or "I want a book for a girl of twelve."

When there was time, I had always tried to be truly helpful by finding out the nature of the child, whether he was the kind who would enjoy a sports story, an adventure book, history, etc. I had been recommending certain juvenile fiction books to such people, so all I had to do was to group a dozen of these books and talk about them as best I could. I talked for 20 minutes about other authors' books and four minutes about my own.

Having completed my task, I put on my coat and hurried back to the store to sell a few more books before closing time, feeling that I had once more done my duty to the great American public by talking to it on the radio, but quite sure that nothing ever direct or definite would come of it.

Imagine my surprise when at 9 the next morning a lady of prominence, Chairman of the Library board in a small city 35 miles away, was in the store buying books from list of the previous day's talk. She took four of my own books and a half-dozen others I had recommended. That was but the beginning of a long

(Continued on Page 16)



Example 5



Example 6

## President's column

(Continued from Page 7)

Board games such as this "Peck's Bad Boy" game (Example 6) are another uncommonly seen type of ephemera. Of course, the newsboy and similar "rags to riches" themed games are of special interest to us in the Horatio Alger Society. [Ed. note: Robert E. Kasper's definitive article (with full-color images) on the Milton Bradley Company's Alger-related games appeared in the Newsboy issue of September-October 2009].

In closing, obviously we are all-concerned about COVID-19. The numbers of symptomatic people are just starting to rise and concern about available medical equipment to care for patients is a real worry. I spent the

better part of my career as a neurologist taking care of patients with very significant issues. The availability of a respirator or other lifesaving and/or prolonging equipment never crossed my mind — until now. You ordered what you needed and it appeared. It is frightening to think that might not be case at this time.

So, please be careful, be safe and remain optimistic. I look forward to the day when this life-altering situation will be just a memory.

Your Partic'lar Friend,  
Cary Sternick (PF-933)  
26 Chestnut Hill Court  
The Woodlands, TX 77380  
(713) 444-3181  
Email: [css3@mac.com](mailto:css3@mac.com)

## Selling books by radio

(Continued from Page 15)

procession of people who bought in that one store from my list. My fellow clerks were constantly demanding to know what adventure book I had recommended, of what quiet book of what girls' book I had spoken of.

We even received a telegraph order from a state a thousand miles away for seven of my own books and five others. This is even more remarkable in that during my talk I did not tell what store employed me. Taking this fact into consideration, the number of stores and

the scope of the radio, I should say that this one talk over the radio must have sold more than sole more than a couple hundred of my own books and probably even more of my fellow authors.

There are only two conclusions I would draw from this experience; one that more mothers have had the loud speaker going while they mend, bake or iron at 4 o'clock than we dream of; and the other being that if one's talk over the radio meets a real need, the response will be prompt and generous.

*This article originally appeared in the July 25, 1925 edition of The Publishers' Weekly (Vol. 108, No. 4).*