

Newsboy

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Monthly publication of the HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY,
a magazine devoted to the study of Horatio Alger, Jr.,
his life, works, and influence on the culture of America.

Jack Bales, Editor
1214 W. College Ave.
Jacksonville, IL 62650



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth B. Butler

"COME ON SPARK PLUG! TIMES AWASTIN,
WE GOT TO GET ON DOWN TO THE BIG
'JACKSONVILLE JAMBOREE,' THE FOUR-
TEENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE
HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY, TO BE HELD
FROM MAY 4-7, 1978 IN JACKSONVILLE,
ILLINOIS."



—drawn by HAS member Ralph R. Keeney

HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr., and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes — lads whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and flamed hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

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Newsboy, the official organ of the Horatio Alger Society, is published monthly (bimonthly January-February and June-July) and is distributed to HAS members. Membership fee for any twelve month period is \$10.00. Cost for single issues of Newsboy is \$1.00 apiece.

Please make all remittances payable to the Horatio Alger Society. Membership applications, renewals, changes of address, claims for missing issues, and orders for single copies of current or back numbers of Newsboy should be sent to the society's Secretary, Carl T. Hartmann, at 4907 Allison Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48910.

A subject index to the first ten years of Newsboy (July, 1962 — June, 1972) is available for \$1.50 from Carl Hartmann at the above address.

Manuscripts relating to Horatio Alger's life and works are solicited, but the editor reserves the right to reject submitted material.

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REMEMBER: The HAS Convention — the "Jacksonville Jamboree" — will soon be here!! Don't forget the dates, Thursday, May 4 through Sunday, May 7, in Jacksonville, Illinois.

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COMMENTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Jack Bales

As you have noticed, the Newsboy has a new masthead. When my brother (also a member of HAS) and I were visiting Gil Westgard a couple months ago, I decided that the Newsboy needed a face-lifting. The three of us came up with a new description of our publication (on the first page), and my friend Louis Bodnar drew a picture of Alger for me. We hope you like it all.

I enjoyed Jerry Friedland's column last month on book designs. Some of the ones mentioned I have — a mint first of Wait and Win, for example, and the six books in the "Ragged Dick" Series by Porter and Coates, all green with the shoe box on the spine.

But there are other good designs too. How about the Henry T. Coates books that have the lion and shield on the cover and the shield on the spine? Much fancy scrollwork is also on the cover. Or, I have a couple beautiful Donohue editions (don't knock these — some of them are really nice). These two have a boy holding an oar on the cover of the book and a boat is in the background. On the spine is the title and Alger's name in gold, plus a picture of a boat. Very nice books.

Who says Algers are hard to find? My brother and his wife were at an antique show (he's a top insulator collector) and they noticed a woman with some Alger books for sale. As they know that I have a pretty fair collection, they did not buy any, but told me what was there. A quick letter from me brought back a prize — a mint with dust jacket Grosset and Dunlap copy of The Young Book Agent. Only cost me five bucks.

Then there was the friend (a former professor of mine at the University of Illinois) who cleaned out his attic and found a half dozen mint Hurst Algers and sent them to me. He wanted no money — he just knew that I collected them. Ahhh, such are the things from which memories are made!!!

A NEW ALGER SHORT STORY?

Following is a letter to me from Dick Seddon, an HAS Director:

"I have in my possession a short story which may well have been written by Horatio although I am at a loss as just how to prove it. This story appeared in the American Union on July 1, 1854 (vol. 12, #10) and is entitled, "Mrs. Brown Stout; Or, The Victimized Bachelor." "A Story for Gentlemen" follows this, and it carries the by-line Carl Cantab.

"I know of no other instance where this name was used by Alger, yet a Ralph Adimari writing in Dime Novel Round-Up of September 15, 1959 lists this name among pseudonyms used by Alger. Also, Cantab is short for Cantabrigians, by which name Harvard men and particularly athletes were often referred to during the last century.

"In this period Alger contributed many short stories to other publications such as Flag of Our Union, True Flag, Gleason's, etc. The writing could be his and in fact one could easily imagine the story being autobiographical.

"I realize that none of the above is evidence of Alger's authorship but it might be interesting to print it in the Newsboy and request our members to give their opinions and/or to offer evidence to prove or disprove the identity of Carl Cantab."

Thanks go to Dick for sending me the short story in question, and I take great pleasure in printing it for the Horatio Alger Society members.

MRS. BROWN STOUT;
Or, The Victimized Bachelor
A Story for Gentlemen
by Carl Cantab

June 1. Having just learned that my landlady is about to retire from the service, having accumulated during her ten years experience as keeper of a

boarding-house an ample fortune, a circumstance which, taking into consideration her high rates of board and very indifferent fare, I do not consider at all strange—in view of all this, I would say, I find myself under the very unaccountable necessity of seeking new quarters. There is nothing I dislike so much as going the rounds of the lodging house keepers for such a purpose. In the first place my extreme diffidence, for I am a very modest man, renders it disagreeable, and I am likely to take up with a poor one at last, from my inability to say no, when the advantages of a place are set forth by the valuable tongue of the proprietor.

I think, therefore, that it will save trouble, in lieu of applying, to place myself in the attitude of the one applied to. In other words, I think I will advertise for board. In that case, I shall have a variety of chances offered, the best of which I can make a selection of.

Let me see. How shall I express it? After all, there is a good deal in the expressions. Shall I say that a "gentleman of limited means is desirous of procuring a commodious boarding place on easy terms?" That would prevent the asking a high price, but I am afraid it would cut off all applications from those who could offer reasonable accommodations.

On the whole, I think the following will be as good a form as I can use:

"A single gentleman is desirous of procuring board on reasonable terms. A quiet house is indispensable. Letters may be addressed to A. G., Box 110, Post Office."

There, that contains the whole in a nutshell. Neat and concise. Nothing remains but to take two or three copies, and forward to the newspapers, and then await the result, whatever it may be.

June 3. My advertisement only appeared yesterday for the first time and already I have eleven letters directed

"A. G., Box 110, Post Office."

One of them purports to be from a lone widder, who ever since the death of her departed Flannigan has had to struggle with the cold-hearted world for support, and would be willing to board the single gentleman on the best in the market, and an iligant cook she is, for the small sum of four dollars a week, but if the ginerous-hearted gentleman is willing to give five, she hasn't the ill-manners to refuse it, not she.

Irish all over! If my name is Green, (I believe I haven't announced it before) I am not verdant enough to take up a diet of "Pratees" out of compassion for a lone widder. No, Mrs. Flannigan, difficult as is the task, I must refuse your application.

There is nothing worth notice about the other applications, if I except the following with which I am, on the whole, most favorably impressed. It is frank, and to the point.

"Mrs. Brown Stout has observed in the papers an advertisement for board. Mrs. B. S. is not a professed boarding-house keeper (heaven forbid!) but having an apartment which she does not use at all, would be willing to receive as an inmate a gentleman of character, which she feels assured is the case with the advertisement. Mrs. B. S. not being a professed boarding-house keeper, as she has before had occasion to remark, cannot offer such sumptuous fare as may be found in our first class hotels. She would make no unusual parade for A. G. if he should conclude to become a boarder, but would treat him in all respects like one of the family. The absence of other boarders, and the smallness of her own family may be regarded as sufficient assurance that the house will be quiet.

"In regards to terms, Mrs. B. S. is satisfied that considering the peculiar advantages of the situation socially, being treated as a member of the family, A. G. will not consider seven dollars per week exhorbitant. Mrs. B. S. may be

seen at her residence at 136 ----- Street. Early application desirable."

Evidently Mrs. Brown Stout is a woman of refinement and gentility. I like her frankness in warning me not to expect such fare as may be found in our first class hotels. Of course I do not. Certainly I have never met with it at any of the boarding-houses of which it has been my fortune to be an inmate. As Mrs. Brown Stout (rather an odd name) remarked, it cannot be a noisy house since I shall be the only boarder.

As to the price, I did not think of paying over six dollars a week, that being the price I pay at present.

However, as Mrs. B. S. remarked, the advantages of being treated as one of the family is no slight one. It is so long since I have been regarded in any other light than as a person who has stipulated amount of attention for paying a stipulated sum, that it will be quite refreshing to be treated thus.

I believe I can't do better than to call on Mrs. Brown Stout, and if appearances strike me as favorably as I anticipate, engage board there.

Ten o'clock. Bless me! I did not think it was so late. I will call tomorrow.

June 5. I may now consider myself fairly domiciled at the house of Mrs. Brown Stout.

She is a lady of imposing appearance, being quite as large as her name led me to expect. She seems in some respects to have tastes quite oriental, since she is in the habit of wearing a turban of bright colors. This may be, however, on account of her reluctance to wear a cap, and a substitute for it.

When I introduced myself to her she remarked, "Mr. Green, I am happy to receive you into my family. We have never taken boarders. We never intend to. We do not consider you as a boarder. We shall look upon you and treat you

as a member of the family, and I trust you will look upon yourself in the same light."

Very kind indeed to a stranger!

"Mrs. Stout," I commenced—

"Mrs. Brown Stout, if you please," interrupted the lady. "Stout is a vulgar appellation, add Brown to it, and mark the difference, it becomes aristocratic. For this reason, I always wish so to be addressed by my full name."

"I beg pardon," said I in some confusion, "I was about to say, Mrs. Brown Stout, that your kindness to one with whom as yet you are wholly unacquainted, almost overpowers me, but I trust that I shall not like the adder turn to sting my benefactor."

The figure used in conclusion I regard as rather felicitous on the whole.

"In regard to your room," said Mrs. Brown Stout, "I cannot give you a front room, as there are but two, one of which I use myself and the other I reserve for company. There is, however, a back room directly behind, which commands a delightful view of the—ahem—of the back yard. It is, I confess, a little dark, and if you were a stranger, I should deem it necessary for me to apologize somewhat for putting you in it, but as one of the family I think I may venture."

Of course I assured her that I should be satisfied with any arrangement she might choose to make.

The room is a little dark, I confess, and the furniture rather old and scanty. I am writing this on the wash-stand, there being no dressing table which would be rather convenient for the purpose, or indeed any table at all. I am seated on the side of the bed, the only chair being taken up with a pile of Mrs. Brown Stout's articles which she has not removed as yet.

Frankly, in regard to accommodations,

I was better off in my former place.

But then, as Mrs. Brown Stout remarked, it's an estimable advantage to be treated as one of the family.

June 6. Until today, I had not seen, with the exception of Mrs. Brown Stout, any member of the family of whom I am henceforth to be treated as a member.

I had considerable curiosity on the subject, as was not unnatural, but it has now been satisfied.

There are two other members of the family—viz., Alphonso and Cordelia.

Of Alphonso, I need not speak at great length. He is, I believe, an Ensign or Cornet, or something in the military line. At all events, he has a precious pair of whiskers which impressed me not a little.

As to Cordelia, she is a young lady of perhaps twenty-two. She looks rather faded. At least her hair does, being of—I can find no better descriptive term than tow color, which is to use a common proverb, "more useful than ornamental." I should think she was rather insipid, but perhaps it is ungenerous to my kind-hearted and considerate entertainer to hazard such a conjecture.

The introduction was very pretty and feeling.

"Mr. Green," said Mrs. Brown Stout, taking my arm, let me introduce you to the other members of my family—my son Alphonso and my daughter Cordelia, who will henceforth look upon Mr. Green as a member of our family, entitled to share in all its privileges and in our mutual confidences."

"Proud of the honor of making your acquaintance, Mr. Green," said Alphonso, twirling his mustache.

"I am delighted," said Cordelia, curtseying, "to find that my ma has with her usual good taste selected one



—the above cartoon was drawn especially for Newsboy by HAS member Louis Bodnar, PF-490. Louis is an amateur cartoonist and lives at 1502 Laurel Ave., Chesapeake, Virginia 23325.

who I judge from his appearance will become a valued member and an ornament of our household circle."

It is not unpleasant, after being tossed about in the world so long as I have, to come at length into the company of such delightful people, whose constant anxiety it seems to be to make you happy.

June 8. When I came down to dinner today, I found merely a dish of sausages in the centre of the table, with vegetables. This was followed by rice pudding.

"Our family, Mr. Green," remarked Mrs. Brown Stout, "are very plain in their tastes. They do not believe in luxurious living. It is condemned in the Bible. (Cordelia, my dear, after dinner you may find the passage in which mention is made of riotous living), and frowned upon by our organization, and of course, also by the physicians. So we regard it therefore, as a sacred duty which we owe to our healths to abstain from indulging in what otherwise might serve to gratify our palates. Considering you as a member of the family, we do not feel obliged to deviate from our usual course."

Of course, I said that I trusted she would not on my account.

At the same time, I am free to confess that if there are two dishes in the world for which I cherish a distaste, they are sausage and rice pudding.

However, I smothered my dislike, (it would have been very ungrateful in me not to have done so), and bolted the sausages, and swallowed two or three spoonfuls of the rice.

When inquiries were made as to my poor appetite, I asserted that I was subject to dyspepsia, a misrepresentation which I trust will be pardoned when the motive is considered—an unwillingness to wound the feelings of my fair entertainers.

June 9. No improvement perceptible at the dinner table. Today we had fried liver in the lieu of sausages, and rice pudding over again.

I was again troubled with dyspepsia which prevented my eating much; feeling hungry afterwards, I repaired to an eating house where I made up for my forced abstinence by a plate of roast turkey, &c.

I wouldn't have Mrs. Brown Stout know it for the world. In fact I couldn't enjoy my dinner so well, being apprehensive that my presence might be detected by some friend of the family, and so come to the ears of Mrs. Brown Stout.

At tea-time, Mrs. Brown Stout read from the evening paper that Madame Sonntag was to give her last concert in the city that evening.

"How I should delight to go," said Cordelia. "Won't you carry me, Alphonso?"

"Impossible," said he. "I have agreed to go in company with some of the officers of my regiment, and of course it wouldn't do for me to be accompanied by a lady."

"What a pity," said Cordelia, in a tone of the greatest disappointment. "I would go alone, but it would not look well, and rather than incur public remark, I will forego the pleasure."

"It is a great pity," remarked Mrs. Brown Stout.

"If," said I, with some little embarrassment, "I could be of any service as an escort, it would give me great pleasure to accompany the young lady."

"May I go, ma?" said Cordelia, eagerly.

"Certainly, my love," said Mrs. Brown Stout, "since Mr. Green is kind enough to offer. If he were a stranger, I should say no; but being a member of

the family, it's perfectly right and proper."

I accordingly went out and procured tickets, for which I was obliged to pay a considerable premium.

I am not particularly fond of music myself—I blush to record it; but the consciousness of doing Cordelia a favor, reconciled me to sitting out the evening.

"My dear sir," said she, "how can I ever repay you for the gratification you have this night given me."

"Only," I replied, rather felicitously I think, "by treating me as you have hitherto done, as a member of the family."

"Kind, noble heart," murmured Cordelia.

I felt not a little flattered, as may readily be supposed.

July 10. I have now been domiciled at Mrs. Brown Stout's for upwards of a month. During that time I have been invariably treated as a member of the family.

In my last entry I mentioned going to hear Sontag with Cordelia. I have been with her to various places since. Somehow, her brother always has some other engagement which prevents his going with her. I suppose he has a great many duties to attend to, and that explains it.

I can't say our living has improved. Certainly, the Brown Stouts do live very plain indeed. I don't see how they can bear it themselves. For my part, I almost always have to finish out my dinner elsewhere.

The other day I saw some strawberries coming into the house. I congratulated myself on a probable improvement in the living—but they haven't appeared on the table. It can't be possible that the Brown Stout's live plainly in public,

and purchase delicacies in private. I can't for a moment believe it. Still, it is rather mysterious about those strawberries.

July 12. I am perfectly overwhelmed. I hardly know where I am, or what I am about. Mrs. Brown Stout has just been to see me in my room, and on such an unexpected subject.

"Mr. Green," said she abruptly. "May I inquire what are your intentions in regard to my daughter, Cordelia?"

"Good Heavens! madam," said I, "what do you mean?"

"Mr. Green," said she, "do not evade me in that manner. You must know that the poor girl is in love with you."

"Really, I never remarked it," said I, "and I am truly sorry for it."

"This will not do, Mr. Green. Ever since your arrival, you have paid systematic attention to Cordelia, striving in every way to gain her affections. You have succeeded too well."

"In what way?" I inquired.

"Do you ask?" she replied. "Have you not carried her to concerts, and other public places? Have you not accompanied her to parties, and escorted her home? Have you not led everybody to expect that you were strongly in love with her?"

"On my soul, madam, I never meant any such thing. Besides, you will do me the justice to remember that I only volunteered on such occasions when she expressed her regret that her brother could not accompany her. In fact, if you will oblige me to say it, when I received unmistakable hints that such an offer would be acceptable. You will also permit me to remark that you have always requested me to consider myself as a member of the family, and that in that capacity it was quite proper for me to accompany Miss Cordelia."

"Mr. Green," said the lady, "I perceive that you are an unprincipled trifler with ladies' hearts. But your base subterfuges shall not avail. Alphonso!"

Alphonso rushed into the room with a loaded pistol.

"Villain," he exclaimed, "make reparation for your crime, or I forthwith challenge you to combat—deadly combat—muzzle to muzzle."

"Give me til tomorrow morning," said I, trembling, "to consider the subject. At present I am so overwhelmed that I am not myself."

After some hesitation they agreed to do so.

I am alone now, but not free from agitation. I am timid, constitutionally, and cannot fight Alphonso. On the other hand, I do not wish to marry Cordelia. There is but one alternative—I must fly. Tonight, when darkness has enveloped the earth, I shall steal from the house with such of my worldly possessions as I can get into a carpet-bag, and take the earliest train out of the city.

Alas! When I came here on the footing of a member of the family, I little thought that they intended to make so in reality.

Henceforth, when I engage board anywhere, I shall stipulate as an indispensable condition that they shall not treat me as a member of the family!

If any HAS member has information on this short story, please write your editor.

Again, thanks go to Dick Seddon for providing me with a copy of "Mrs. Brown Stout; Or, The Victimized Bachelor."

* * *

Don't forget the next HAS Convention. Full convention plans will be in the January-February, 1977 Newsboy. See you in Jacksonville, Illinois!!

LITTLE ROCKET'S CHRISTMAS by Vandyke Brown

(Editor's note: The following poem was sent to me by HAS member Dave Kanarr. It originally appeared in Emma Lumm's Speaker's Library (date unknown).

I'll tell you how the Christmas came,
To Rocket—no, you never met him,
That is, you never knew his name,
Although 'tis possible you've let him
Display his skill upon your shoes;
A bootblack—Arab, if you choose.
Has inspiration dropped to zero
When such material makes a hero?

And who was Rocket? Well, an urchin,
A gamin, dirty, torn, and tattered,
Whose chiefest pleasure was to perch in
The Bowery gallery; there it mattered
But little what the play might be—
Broad farce or point-lace comedy—
He meted out his just applause
By rigid, fixed, and proper laws.

A father once he had, no doubt,
A mother on the Island staying,
Which left him free to knock about
And gratify a taste for straying,
Through crowded streets. 'Twas there
he found
Companionship and grew renowned.
An ash-box served him for a bed—
As good, at least, as Moses' rushes—
And for his daily meat and bread,
He earned them with his box and brushes.

An Arab of the city's slums,
With ready tongue and empty pocket
Unaided left to solve life's sums,
But plucky always—that was Rocket!
'Twas Christmas eve, and all the day
The snow had fallen fine and fast;
In banks and drifted heaps it lay
Along the streets. A piercing blast
Blew cuttingly. The storm was past,
And now the stars looked coldly down
Upon the snow-enshrouded town.

Ah, well it is if Christmas brings
Good will and peace which poet sings!
How full are all the streets to-night
With happy faces, flushed and bright!
The matron in her silks and furs,

The pompous banker, fat and sleek,
The idle, well-fed loiterers,
The merchant trim, the churchman meek,
Forgetful now of hate and spite,
For all the world is glad to-night!

All, did I say? Ah, no, not all,
For sorrow throws on some its pall;
And here, within the broad, fair city,
The Christmas time no beauty brings
To those who plead in vain for pity,
To those who cherish but the stings
Of wretchedness and want and woe,
Who never love's great bounty know,
Whose grief no kindly hands assuage,
Whose misery mocks our Christian age.
Pray ask yourself what means to them
That Christ is born in Bethlehem!

But Rocket? On this Christmas eve
You might have seen him standing where
The city's streets so interweave
They form that somewhat famous square
Called Printing House. His face was
bright,
And at this gala, festive season
You could not find a heart more light—
I'll tell you in a word the reason:
By dint of patient toil in shining
Patrician shoes and wall street boots
He had within his jacket's lining,
A dollar and a half—the fruits
Of pinching, saving, and a trial
Of really Spartan self-denial.

That dollar and a half was more
Than Rocket ever owned before.
A princely fortune, so he thought,
And with those hoarded dimes and nickels
What Christmas pleasures may be bought!
A dollar and a half! It tickles
The boy to say it over, musing
Upon the money's proper using;
"I'll go a gobbler, leg and breast,
With cranberry sauce and fixin's nice,
And pie, mince pie, the very best,
And puddin'—say a double slice!
And then to doughnuts how I'll freeze;
With coffee—guess that ere's the
cheese!

And after grub I'll go to see
The 'Seven Goblins of Dundee.'
If this yere Christmas ain't a buster,
I'll let you rip my Sunday duster!"

So Rocket mused as he hurried along,

Clutching his money with grasp yet
tighter,
And humming the air of a rollicking
song.
With a heart as light as his clothes—
or lighter.
Through Centre street he makes his way,
When, just as he turns the corner of
Pearl,
He hears a voice cry out in dismay,
And sees before him a slender girl,
As ragged and tattered in dress as he,
With hand stretched forth for charity.

In the street-light's fitful and flick-
ering glare
He caught a glimpse of the pale, pinched
face—
So gaunt and wasted, yet strangely fair,
With a lingering touch of childhood's
grace
On her delicate features. Her head was
bare,
And over her shoulders disordered there
hung
A mass of tangled, nut-brown hair.
In misery old as in years she was young,
She gazed in his face. And, oh! for the
eyes—
The big, sorrowful, hungry eyes,—
That were fixed in a desperate
frightened stare.

Hundreds have jostled her by to-night—
The rich, the great, the good and the
wise,
Hurrying on to the warmth and light
Of happy homes—they have jostled her
by,
And the only one who has heard her cry,
Or, hearing, has felt his heartstrings
stirred,
Is Rocket—this youngster of coarser
clay,
This gamin, who never so much as heard
The beautiful story of Him who lay
In the manger of old on Christmas day!

With artless pathos and simple speech,
She stands and tells him her pitiful
tale;
Ah, well, if those who pray and preach
Could catch an echo of that sad wail!
She tells of the terrible battle for
bread,
Tells of a father brutal with crime

Tells of a mother lying dead,
At this, the gala Christmas-time;
Then adds, gazing up at the starlit sky,
"I'm hungry and cold, and I wish I
could die."

What is it trickles down the cheek
Of Rocket—can it be a tear?
He stands and stares, but does not
speak;
He thinks again of that good cheer
Which Christmas was to bring; he sees
Visions of turkey, steaming pies,
The play-bills—then, in place of these,
The girl's beseeching, hungry eyes;
One mighty effort, gulping down

The disappointment in his breast,
A quivering of the lip, a frown.
And then, while pity pleads her best,
He snatches forth his cherished hoard,
And gives it to her like a lord!
"Here, freeze to that; I'm flush, yer
see

And then you needs it more 'an me!"
With that he turns and walks away,
So fast the girl can nothing say,
So fast he does not hear the prayer
That sanctifies the winter air.
But He who blessed the widow's mite
Looked down and smiled upon the sight.

No feast of steaming pies or turkey,
No ticket for the matinee,
All drear and desolate and murky,
In truth, a very dismal day.
With dinner on a crust of bread,
And not a penny in his pocket,
A friendly ash-box for a bed—
Thus came the Christmas day to Rocket,
And yet—and here's the strangest
thing—

As best befits the festive season,
The boy was happy as a king—
I wonder can you guess the reason?

* * *

Carl Hartmann and Gil Westgard are working on the new HAS Directory. If you have any corrections (change of address, number of Alger titles), drop a line to Gil as soon as possible at 9561 N. Dee St., Des Plaines, Ill. 60016. Also, talk has been going on in the society of having an international Alger convention in Japan in 1982. If you are interested in this, please let Gil know.

ALGER LETTER FOUND

by Jack Bales

A couple years ago I went through every volume of the New York Times Index (back to the 1850's), jotting down references to Horatio Alger. I am now in the process of acquiring all the articles in the Times relating to Horatio, and one such article—in the January 14, 1932 issue (page 23)—reprinted an Alger letter that had "been acquired by John J. Madigan, 18 East Forty-seventh Street, from Mrs. Edith Burbank, Augusta, Maine." It reads as follows:

223 W. 34th St.
New York, N. Y.
March 16, 1894

Mr. Harry E. Burbank.

Dear Sir:

An author's compensation consists less in the checks he receives from his publisher than in the evidences of appreciation afforded by such letters as yours. Few adopt the literary profession as a means of gaining a livelihood. The true author finds his greatest pleasure in his work.

Yours truly,

Horatio Alger, Jr.

Note the address above of 223 W. 34th Street. Some years ago Stanley Pachon—a long time Alger collector—did research to discover Alger's places of residence in New York. Following are the results of his work (taken from the August, 1966 Newsboy):

1872-1876	26 West 34th Street
1876-1879	133 East 46th Street
1879-1880	107 West 44th Street
1880-1885	could not be found
1885-1887	52 West 26th Street
1887-1891	could not be found
1891-1896	223 West 34th Street
1896-1899	could not be found

Thanks go to Stanley for providing us with this useful information.

"HE WROTE FAST," SAID TOM, SWIFTLY
by Hazel Geissler

(Editor's note: The following article originally appeared in the April 9, 1974 issue of the St. Petersburg Independent [Florida] of which Mrs. Geissler is a staff writer. It was later reprinted in the March, 1977 [vol. I, no. 1] issue of The Book-Mart [P. O. Box 243, Decatur, Indiana 46733] from which I obtained it. It is now printed again in Newsboy with the permission of Mrs. Geissler).

Mrs. Edna C. Squier died at the age of 79 on March 26.

Perhaps the name means little to you. Or maybe you associate it with the Pinellas County Child Guidance Clinic, to which she contributed substantially.

But what about names such as Nancy Drew? The Bobbsey Twins? Tom Swift? The Hardy Boys?

When they come to mind, think of Mrs. Squier. As a writer, she contributed to Nancy Drew, the Bobbsey Twins and other children's book series. As a partner in the business founded by her father, she had a part in the creation and publication of children's books until her death.

The legacy lives and will be felt by generations of youngsters yet to be.

Ask youngsters such as Harry Cafferty, 12, who lives in St. Petersburg. He has 52 of "The Hardy Boys" books and, as he says, "That's every one of them."

He was addicted to Tom Swift when he was 10 but about a year ago he began to concentrate on the super sleuths, Frank and Joe Hardy.

Harry says they are mystery adventures. The brothers are always getting themselves involved in an adventure and the story formula gets the problem unraveled on the final page.

"I like to read and when there's

nothing much to do, these are good mysteries to read."

Some of Harry's books were purchased new — others were used.

Tom Swift was created in 1910. The Hardy Boys were born full grown in 1927. Both series were conceived by Edward Stratemeyer, Mrs. Squier's father.

Stratemeyer wrote his first story at age 25 on a length of brown wrapping paper in the store where he was working. In ensuing years, he wrote more than 800 books under 65 pen names; books which have been translated into 12 languages.

By 1926, his books were the favorite of school children all across the country as shown in a national survey by the American Library Association.

As he continued to sell his stories to magazines of the time, he joined the staff at Street and Smith where he worked with the authors of Horatio Alger, Oliver Optic and Nick Carter. When two of them died he finished 11 books under Alger's name. He was able to assume the writing form easily.

He wrote his own first book, finished it and began another. Soon a steady flow of books were being mailed out to the leading publishers of the day. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard bought Under Dewey at Manila, written shortly after the victory of Admiral Dewey in Manila Bay. It was the money-making book of the book publishing industry in 1899.

Sequels followed and they became the "Old Glory" Series. The Stratemeyer series had begun. He had moved from a story to a book to a series. He had now turned to writing as a full-time job. He found an office, hired a stenographer and began to work seriously, often completing a book in two or three days. The opinion of adults toward his characters was "clean, manly fellows, wholesome in spirit and full of excitement."

Jenkin Lloyd Jones

The Golden Trashery

(C) Los Angeles Times

—sent in by Ed Gross



High up on my library wall is the shelf of what, with apologies to Palgrave, I call my "Golden Trashery." It is a modest collection of some of the worst writing ever produced in the English language — "boys' books" from the era 1850-1920.

Here on pages bearing childish scrawls and jam stains lie painful moral homilies, sweetened by feats of youthful derring-do. Here grasping squires and sycophant "toadies" fall to the virtues of the honest poor. Here probity, beset and misunderstood, contends with evil, temporarily triumphant, until the angels swoop down in the last 10 pages and set everything to right.

So Oliver Optic wrote 122 years ago in "All Aboard" that "Captain Sedley likes to have the boys enjoy themselves in everything that is reasonable and proper; but not to the detriment of their manners and morals, or to the neglect of their usual duties."

IN HORATIO ALGER'S "Brave and Bold," after Robert Rushton, the poor factory boy, suffered snubs from Halbert Davis, the vain rich kid, and was wooled around for 270 pages by various dastards, the sun came out with a vengeance in the last paragraph:

"The rumored engagement of Hester Paine and Robert is highly pleasing to both families. For if Hester is fair and attractive, Robert is energetic and of excellent principles, and possessed of precisely those qualities which, under the favor of Providence, will insure his success in life."

Tom Swift's aerial warship, a dirigible armed with cannon, would draw hoots from knowledgeable moppets of today, for his solution to the problem of recoil — that of firing water backward equal to the weight of the projectile going forward — wouldn't work, and most modern kids know it.

But in the struggle with "foreign spies" intent on securing this priceless invention the Stars and Stripes is shamelessly waved and a grateful government predicts that Tom's squirting gasbag "will be the naval terror of the seas in any future war."

The Rover Boys in Southern Waters were no more able to rid themselves of the pestiferous Dan Baxter than they had been in *The Rover Boys at School*, in the Jungle, on the Ocean, in the Mountains, Out West, etc.

But incessantly, indeed, ad nauseam, there was drilled into formative minds that whenever a beautiful girl like Dora Stanhope was embarrassed by the unwanted attention of a Baxter it was incumbent upon all red-blooded American boys like Dick Rover to put him down, for womanhood is sacred.

So it goes with all the yellowed and torn volumes in my Golden Trashery. Unmitigated corn. Unabashed goody-goodyism. Brainwashing, if you will, in behalf of patriotism, honesty and courage.

OF ONE COULD view the future of the United States with the cool detachment of a dweller on one of the outer planets one might be intrigued at the

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experiment now going on. For while the brainwashing of American youth is still proceeding, its direction seems to have changed somewhat.

For example, basically clean movie plots are dirtied up a little because PG is better box office than G. The trick is to find that degree of four-letter snickerism that turns on adolescents without repelling parents.

Pot is good, or, at least, not bad.

Heroes are flawed to the point of making them indistinguishable from villains.

Sacred womanhood is involved in the argument whether the high school nurse should tell Dora's parents that she has asked for and obtained free birth control pills.

Whereas, in the Alger era fist fights were rare and skulduggery unbloody, the youth of today witnesses each evening murderous assaults, pistolings and rapes in full color and sound.

Cheating is a but-on-the-other-hand thing. The escalation of cribbing is blamed on "competitive pressures." The inflation of grades to the point where some high school valedictorians require remedial reading in college is billed as compassion.

Finally, patriotism is for the birds. As one graduate student from Minnesota wrote recently: "Those who refused to cooperate with the U.S. military forces are the nucleus of American's conscience . . . all war resisters have a morally justifiable tradition."

Inasmuch as the totalitarian powers are brainwashing their youth in a fashion much closer to the Horatio Alger-Tom Swift-Rover Boys tradition, the observer on — let's say — Pluto might be mildly interested to see what would happen in a test of strength.

In a year there were plans for half dozen more series. Times were changing and the old flowery prose style was dating most of the books of the day. He switched to schools and sports and the Dave Porter Series and Putnam Hall Series were written.

Stratemeyer now had a formula worked out. Twelve years had passed and he was established in the book world. And then came the series that would sell a million. It was "The Rover Boys Series for Young Americans."

Twenty books were written about the Rover Boys and ten more about their sons and daughters. He assumed the name of Arthur M. Winfield for the series and 5 million copies were sold before it was discontinued in 1930. Of all the series before and after, the Rover Boys remained Stratemeyer's favorite.

As soon as the Rover Boys had passed the peak in sales, he was designing a dozen similar series under various names. He took the basic Rover figures, changed the names, associated them with some kind of speedy vehicles or popular scientific device and slipped the new concept into the basic formula.

The automobile was still fairly new. So was the wireless, the motion picture and the airplane. In swift succession came The Motor Boys, The Racer Boys, The Movie Boys, The Motion Picture Boys, The Radio Boys, The Railroad Series. A new name was appearing on some of the series now, that of Victor Appleton.

Stratemeyer moved into the girls' book area. After all, half the juvenile reading public was female. He adopted the names of May Hollis Barton and Annie Roe Carr and Alice B. Emerson (for The Ruth Fielding Series). As Laura Lee Hope he began The Moving Picture Girls, The Outdoor Girls, The Six Little Bunkers and The Bunny Brown books. As Helen Louise Thorndyke he created The Honeybunch Series.

In 1904, Stratemeyer struck gold with The Bobbsey Twins. With the Bobbsey

Twins he was able to achieve a timelessness. As the books were reprinted again and again, they needed only minor revision right up to the present.

To date they have sold more than fifty million copies.

By 1908, the demands for his books exceeded the abilities of one man and he set up a syndicate, a literary production line. He wrote the outlines and it was passed to a contract writer. There were often twenty writers, many of them journalists working for newspapers at the same time. When written, Stratemeyer edited the book and it went on to the publisher.

The syndicate came up with series after series, among them the popular Don Sturdy Series. It was 1910 that Tom Swift, the young inventor, was created. Tom would sell more than twice as much as The Rover Boys — a total of fifteen million.

Tom invented the portable moving picture in 1912, eleven years before the movie industry began using one. His 1914 photo telephone preceded the Bell telephone device by eleven years. His rapid fire electric rifle came five years before the first Browning machine rifle appeared in 1916. His house on wheels was on the road a year before the first auto trailer.

In the late 1950's Tom was allowed to retire, twenty years after Stratemeyer's death. A new Tom Swift Jr. Series was issued by Victor Appleton II.

Tom Swift delighted the youngsters of those days and his successor still does. Every book contained a mystery to be solved and a thrilling vehicular chase. There were jokes, puns and racial and ethnic stereotypes which have since disappeared.

In 1927, Stratemeyer supervised the beginning of two new series that were to outsell all the others except the Bobbsey Twins.

These were the Nancy Drew books and the Hardy books. Stratemeyer was now in his sixties. Three years later he died. Publishers convinced two daughters to carry on the syndicate.

The two daughters, Mrs. Russell S. Adams and Mrs. C. Wesley Squier, carried on the business at its location in East Orange, New Jersey. They continued to turn out the popular series year after year for twelve years. At that time Mrs. Squier retired from writing but stayed on as a partner in the firm.

Andrew E. Svenson replaced her as a writer and eventually became a business partner.

Mrs. Adams and Svenson continue to write new books each year as well as update the old ones, preserving the name of Stratemeyer as the king of the juveniles.

In 1958, Mrs. Squier contributed substantially to the Pinellas County Child Guidance Clinic and continued to support it despite years of ill health prior to her death.

In the clinic there is a plaque. It reads "1862-1930, Edward Stratemeyer, Author, Dedicated to American Boys and Girls. His life and works continue to guide, gladden and inspire the youth of the world."

Following is an editor's note which appeared in The Book-Mart reprinting of this article.

The Handbook of Pseudonyms and Personal Nicknames compiled by Harold S. Sharp and published by the Scarecrow Press in 1972 lists seventy pseudonyms under which Stratemeyer and his syndicate wrote. He also wrote under his own name and, as reported in this story, is known to have written a number of "Stratemeyer Algernons."

For an interesting and nostalgic look at the world of Stratemeyer and his contemporary boys' book authors, see Arthur Prager's Rascals at Large; Or, The Clue

in the Old Nostalgia, published by Doubleday in 1971, now out of print.

The Stratemeyer Algernons are described in Ralph D. Gardner's Horatio Alger; Or, The American Hero Era published by Wayside Press in 1964, now out of print.

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At Ralph Gardner's suggestion, I secured a copy of Thirty-two Picture Postcards of Old New York, published in 1976 by Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick Street, New York, N. Y. 10014.

Quoting from the back of the paper bound volume:

"Old New York may no longer exist, but you can recapture some of its remarkable charm in these thirty-two views dating from 1868 to 1928. These rare photographs are reproduced here in the form of actual postcards that you can detach and mail, or keep as authentic records of the city's past.

"Printed in sepia duotone on eight leaves of perforated card stock, these picture postcards show famous buildings and sites, many of which no longer exist. Included are the original Grand Central Station, the second Madison Square Garden (with the tower), Wall Street, the Croton Reservoir on Fifth Avenue, Hester Street on the Lower East Side, Herald Square with the New York Herald building, Pell Street in Chinatown, the Times Building in Times Square, the entire Jefferson Market complex, the old Tombs prison, and twenty-two more!

"Each view is identified on the reverse, where there is also space for your postcard greeting and mail address."

This book is a welcome addition to my collection of material on New York history, and I recommend it to collectors of material on old New York. Unfortunately, the price does not appear on the book (my copy was a review volume—no cost).

The good old days? No thanks!

Technology has become a dirty word for many Americans. In the businessman's vernacular, only "profit" may be more abused and misunderstood by the public.

The latest indication of public disillusionment comes from a recent Harris survey: 61% of the adults polled feel "modern technology has caused almost as many problems as benefits to people;" 65% are of the opinion that "modern technology furthers the progress of society more than the progress of the individual."

People associate technology and progress with the hectic pace of life they find themselves in, with the pollution of our environment, with the atomic bomb and annihilation. How many times have we heard a yearn for the "good old days," for a return to yesteryear.

No thanks. We'll take today. A recent visit to Boston's Freedom Trail, the Mayflower II, and Plymouth Plantation reminded us of how tough living in those "good old days" was—when horsepower was literally the transportation of the day and most people lived a lifetime (an average of 36 years) and never traveled more than a few miles from their place of birth; when household (if that's what you could call it) chores were a full-time job for the women; when children had one chance in a hundred to graduate from high school.

As late as 1900 about 20% of the population still toiled on farms, life expectancy was only 47 years, only 6% of the youngsters could expect to graduate from high school, and the workweek averaged 59 hours.

Comparatively speaking, no one can validly dispute that we are living the "good life" today. Sure there are problems, some a byproduct of our technological progress. But turning our back on technology and blindly calling for a return to the simpler good old days is fantasy.

Only technology can right any wrongs that technology has wrought. For if we say goodbye to technology, we better realize we are saying, "farewell future."

The above article, sent to me by Gil Westgard, is an editorial by Stanley J. Modic from the September 12, 1977 issue of Industry Week. For a similar approach to "the good old days," read the review of the book The Good Old Days — They Were Terrible, which appeared—written by Dick Bales—in the January-February, 1976 issue of Newsboy.

THE VIDEOLAND VIEW: Danny Thomas wants to use some literary works from the mid-1880s as the basis for a 1978 television series. It seems that since Thomas received the Horatio Alger Award in Chicago last month, he has just begun to become acquainted with the famous rags-to-riches stories. And since he has begun poring through such Alger books as "Joe, The Boot-black" and "Dick, The Newsboy," he has come to the conclusion they would translate well to TV and provide a much needed service. "They contain no violence, and they stress hard work and ambition," says Thomas, "something television shows for kids seem to avoid these days."

From an undated Chicago Tribune article

RANDOM REPORTS FROM ALGERLAND

by Jack Bales

A favorite correspondent is Dave Soibelman, and I've recently received another interesting letter from this HAS member in Los Angeles. He's a frequent writer for magazines, and he sent a much enjoyable piece from the June, 1977 issue of Westways Magazine called "Angels' Jubilee." As he put it, "the piece is a kind of memoir out of the many years I spent in City Hall as a reporter and as a p. r. director."

I got another letter from Louis Bodnar a little while ago. As you undoubtedly recall, it's Louis who draws those beautiful cartoons for the Newsboy. Did you know that he was born in Csernely, Hungary, on March 1, 1913, and came to the U. S. in 1914 with his mother and older brother? He can speak the Hungarian language, and still writes letters in Hungary to his relatives there.

Speaking of cartoons, thanks go to Ralph Keeney for sending the one which graces the cover of this month's Newsboy.

Unfortunately, the article on Stratemeyer in this issue had nothing on Harriet S. Adams, an HAS member. What an oversight!

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY!!