

ALGER SESQUICENTENNIAL

# Newsboy

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22401



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.

*Horatio Alger, Jr.*

1832 - 1899



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth B. Butler

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"Good-by, my lad," said Mr. Whitney. "I hope to hear good accounts of you sometime. Don't forget what I have told you. Remember that your future position depends mainly upon yourself, and that it will be high or low as you choose to make it."

—Horatio Alger, Jr.,  
Ragged Dick



# 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 bimonthly (six issues per year) and is distributed to *HAS* members. Membership fee for any twelve month period is \$10.00.

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, 4907 Allison Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48910.

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

## NEW MEMBERS REPORTED

PF-641 Jonathan Friedland  
6 Elyse Rd.  
Monsey, N.Y. 10952

Jon, son of former *HAS* President Jerry Friedland, is an eleven year old student and co-owner of 104 first editions (and 173 Alger titles). Besides collecting Algers, he is interested in comic books, Big Little Books, non sport cards and related items.

PF-642 Vicki D. Duncan  
1678 Wilkshire Dr.  
Crofton, Maryland 21114

Vicki is a newspaper editor (see page 10 of the January-February *Newsboy*), and covered last year's convention held in Bowie, Maryland. Her other hobbies include writing.

PF-643 Frederick Fry  
R. R. #1  
Camden, Indiana 46917

Frederick heard of the Alger Society through the Indiana State Library. A trucker, he owns 50 Alger titles.

PF-644 Donald Rocke  
19 Eighth Drive  
Decatur, Illinois 62521

Donald, a Professor of Marketing at Millikin University, learned of the *HAS* from an owner of a used book store. Owner of 36 Algers, he wishes to "add as many different titles as I can afford," and is also interested in genealogy, North American archeology, and collecting old baseball records.

PF-645 Richard S. Dayton, Jr.  
3811 Magnolia  
Irvine, Calif. 92714

Richard's interest in Alger is the author's success ethic as it can be applied to modern business. He also enjoys skiing, hunting and fishing. He read of the Society in a library.

## LETTERS

240 E. County Line Road  
Hatboro, Penn. 19040  
February 9, 1982

Dear Jack:

Sorry about not getting a schedule off to you. The thought did pass my mind last weekend. Well, here it is.

Thursday--April 29

Welcome to members

6:00, Get-together in Hospitality Room

Friday--April 30

11:00, Stamp presentation

2:00, Business meeting

6:00-10:00, Annual book sale

Saturday--May 1

Free day to sightsee and go antique and book hunting

6:00, Banquet followed by Awards and Auction

Sunday--May 2

Breakfast and farewells.

Everything is about finished with me. Have name cards all done. Packets are finished and the souvenir is supposed to be in this weekend. It's a pretty good one (at least I think so). I'm not telling anyone what I've made up.

I have been receiving registrations at an uneven pace. Get two or three at once and then there is a dry spell.

Sorry to say I haven't received any first-time convention registrations as yet. Most are the same members that usually do attend.

There should be a lot of flea markets and things for members to do on Saturday, May 1. They are having a big book and paper show near by that day, so I'm sure some members will be going there.

Sincerely,  
Bill Russell

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2045 Central Ave.  
Wilmette, Illinois 60091  
August 14, 1981

Dear Jack:

You may find the enclosed "dramatic reading" interesting. (The poem "John Maynard" by Alger with numbered dramatic gestures to use while reciting it). It may be suitable for use in *Newsboy* or I think it would be interesting if some one could recite it at the convention.

I found this in an old book we have titled, *Peerless Reciter or Popular Program*, compiled and edited by Henry Davenport Northrop and published in 1894. The poem or recitation as it is called, "John Maynard," probably is familiar to many of our members, but I have not seen it before. The intriguing feature here is the guide for gesturing while delivering the reading. The figures in the reading refer to the corresponding illustrations, which I also enclose.

We always enjoy the *Newsboy* and Lorraine and I send our best wishes. Hope to see you at the convention next year if not sooner.

Sincerely,  
Glenn S. Corcoran

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135 Central Park West  
New York, N.Y. 10023  
January 15, 1982

Dear Jack,

Here are a couple news items on how we celebrated Horatio's birthday here. Helen got the idea for the Children's Aid Society event and she did a great job arranging the whole thing. The *New York Times* article went on their syndicate wire and will probably appear elsewhere. Also, UPI was there and did a wire release that went all over the country. Both Helen and I have been doing radio interviews these past few days. Today I did a Public Broadcasting network interview and also with station WXYZ in Detroit. Perhaps you could run a short suggestion in *Newsboy* to members to get similar publicity in their communities. All media love Alger news items and we have so much to offer this year. This would also substantially help members enhance their own collections. Exhibits of some of their books in local banks and libraries are also easily arranged.

Cordially,  
Ralph D. Gardner

P.S. In all news items, exhibits, etc., members should mention (or list) the *Horatio Alger Society*.

(Editor's note: Among the items which Ralph has sent me is "Alger's 150th Year Marked," from the January 14, 1982 *New York Times*. The article says in part: "A ceremony with a three-foot-long birthday cake at the Children's Aid Society headquarters, 105 East 22nd Street, commemorated his birth on Jan. 13, 1932. Helen M. Gray, executive director of the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, presented a small collection of Alger books to Philip Coltoff, the society's executive director. Also in attendance was an Alger biographer, Ralph D. Gardner, a member of the Horatio Alger Society. . ." Another article was "Horatio Alger: Stil Making It," from the January 12, 1982 *New York Daily News*, which also mentioned the Alger Society. A photo of Alger was captioned with: "Alger turns 150 tomorrow.")



7649 Eastlake Terrace  
Chicago, Illinois 60626  
January 17, 1982

Sir:

In addition to the enclosed article, "Horatio Alger and the Golden Safety Net," from the January 11, 1982 *Christian Science Monitor*, there was one in *The Wall Street Journal* recently. Then, last night on National Public Radio's "All Kings Considered," repeated this Sunday a.m., there was a discussion of the Sesquicentennial of Horatio Alger's birth.

Cordially yours,  
Robert L. Bean

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240 E. County Line Road  
Hatboro, Penn. 19040  
February 21, 1982

Dear Jack:

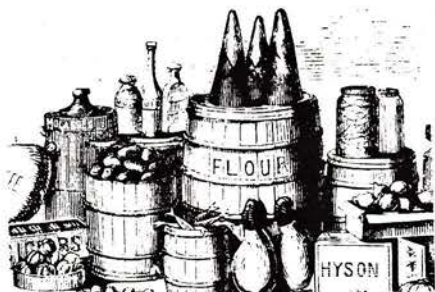
Congratulations on this past issue of *Newsboy*. It was excellent, I thought. I like the new format very much.

I just recently picked up a book called *The World's Best Authors, Their Works and Photographs*. It is a rather large book measuring 10 x 8 x 2 inches, and was published by the World Bible House of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1895. It is a very attractive book with royal blue binding and gold lettering. In it is "John Maynard," Horatio Alger's better known and much published poem. This is a new source apparently, as neither Bob Bennett or Ralph Gardner list it.

I don't deserve the credit for this find, as I bought the book from Milton Salls. And it was Milton who told me about the poem being there, so I'm just passing on some information.

Best wishes,  
Bill Russell

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*Gil Westgard meets what's left of the Erie Train Boy?* While in Illinois over the Christmas holidays, Jack Bales visited Gil Westgard in Chicago, and the two toured Rosehill Cemetery. This cemetery is noted for its elaborate tombstones, and the one shown is for George S. Bangs, inventor of the Fast Mail car that ran between New York and Chicago, with the mail sorted enroute. Bangs died in 1877. The caboose at the foot of his gravemarker used to have a small conductor and railing, but vandals destroyed both, and only the man's shoes remain.

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### AS I SEE IT by Jack Bales

"As a child, he stammered. His sister, Olivia, a year younger, spoke before he did. In Revere, Mass., where he was born, he was called 'Holy Horatio' by young people because his father, a minister, would not allow him to associate with boys and girls of his own age."

--"He Made the American Dream Come True," absurd syndicated article by Frederick John, appearing in January 1982 in many U.S. newspapers.

"In themselves, the legends of American history seem harmless enough. Pocahontas, Betsy Ross and the exploits of Christopher Columbus have amused and excited countless children. 'Why can't we leave these instructive stories alone? Can't we keep them just like Santa Claus? After all, he doesn't exist but look what he does for Christmas.' So goes the refrain. It all appears reasonable and sensible--until we realize that once the standard of truth is



*abandoned we are helpless against those who demand that history further special political, religious and national interests."*

--**The Myth of the Britannica**, by Harvey Einbinder, New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1964, pp. 181-182.

As I indicate elsewhere in this issue, Jack Dizer's new book was a mammoth undertaking, and Jack deserves much credit for dissolving many of the myths surrounding boys' books and their authors. As most of you know, Horatio Alger, Jr. is surrounded by more than his share of these irritating canards; perhaps now that Alger will be immortalized by his own postage stamp, we in HAS can see that these fanciful stories are recognized for what they are.

1) *1834 is the year Alger was born.* Many members of HAS have launched their own vendetta against this onerous "fact" about Alger. Over ten years ago Forrest Campbell and Ralph D. Gardner finally persuaded the editors of the *World Almanac* to change Alger's birthdate. Alger's own autobiographical sketch in the *Harvard Class Book of 1852* indicates 1832, as does Arthur M. Alger's *A Genealogical History of That Branch of the Alger Family*. Furthermore, since Horatio's sister Olive Augusta was born in November 1833, a January 1834 birthdate for Horatio gives poor Mrs. Alger reproductive powers never before known in medical science! Incidentally, the 1834 date was established when Alger lied on a form that he filled out for his inclusion in *Who's Who In America, 1899-1900*, published in 1899.

2) *Alger living in the Newsboys' Lodging House and becoming its Chaplain.* Herbert R. Mayes is frequently castigated for writing his hoax biography that portrayed Alger as a hopeless neurotic who led a bohemian life of reckless abandon in Paris, later spending fruitless days chasing married women. Ironically, nothing much is said about the *positive* myths that he also invented, and this one ranks among the top. While visiting Jerry Friedland some years ago I spent many hours researching in the archives of the Children's Aid Society and turned up nothing that indicates that Alger ever lived in the Newsboys' Lodge. Of course, anyone familiar with his New York stories knows that Alger was well acquainted with the Lodge and the Society; indeed, Gary Scharnhorst discovered an Alger sketch about the Lodge which was reprinted in the January-

February 1982 *Newsboy*. Alger's preface to *Julius, the Street Boy* praises the Children's Aid Society. Also, I located in the Society's archives Alger's name in a list of donors to the organization. (See pp. 153-154 of Gary Scharnhorst's *Horatio Alger, Jr.* Boston: Twayne: 1980).

3) *Horatio Alger is America's all-time best selling author whose books have sold half a billion copies.* This has been ridiculed for years. Frank Luther Mott estimates about sixteen to seventeen million in his *Golden Multitudes*. (New York: Macmillan, 1947). In the December 1965 *Newsboy* Herb Risteen writes:

"... I believe that such estimates ... are extremely farfetched and contrary to fact. From what I can deduce total sales of Alger books probably did not exceed ten million. By way of proof I quote from the preface of *Jerry, the Backwoods Boy* as follows. 'During the past thirty years over three million copies of Mr. Alger's books have been sold.' ... Thirty years would extend back to 1878. Now Alger's books didn't really move much until *Ragged Dick* in 1868. In the ten years between 1868 and 1878 the books certainly didn't sell more than a million copies at the outside due to our small national population at that period and also because of the high price of the Loring Algers, many of them \$1.25 per copy ... As I see it, the great bulk of the Alger books were sold in the period from 1905 to 1915 when Donohue, New York Book and other publishers turned them out extensively in very cheap editions. But it is not safe to assume that total sales in this decade exceeded five million at the most ..."

Personally, I don't know *who* America's best selling author is. Western writer Louis L'Amour must hold some sort of record. A recent article in *Publishers Weekly* states that his books have sold more than 90 million copies.

4) *Alger's Phil, the Fiddler brought about an end to the pandrone system.* This myth first appeared in 1885 after an interviewer wrote a biographical sketch of Alger for *Golden Argosy* and included the story. The essay says in part: "Within six months from the appearance of the book, the leading newspapers of New York, having vigorously co-operated in exposing the cruelties practiced by the pandrones, the system was effectually broken up, ...". Unfortunately, Alger's efforts must have been slight at best. Not only is his name absent from the New York papers in 1872, but well into 1873



pandrones were still being arrested on New York's streets.

The list goes on and on. Maybe some day some of these tales will be verified, but no primary research material today can substantiate any of them. And, speaking as a devoted Alger reader and collector, I see nothing wrong in finding out that Horatio Alger *wasn't* larger than life. His influence was widespread, and few names of nineteenth century American authors of books for young people are so readily recognized today as his. But of more importance than verifying age old stories, perhaps eventually the many incredibly *awful* articles about Alger like the one at the beginning of this editorial will be virtually nonexistent.

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### ODDS AND ENDS

by Brad Chase, President, *HAS*

This is an exciting time for us as a Society and I'm pleased as punch to be associated with such a fine group of interested, intensive and willing-to-contribute individuals. As everyone knows, I hope, the big news for the Society this year is that there will be a commemorative stamp issued by the Postal Service to honor Horatio Alger Jr. Preparation for this event is extensive and many have offered to pitch in and help as the stamp will be issued at our Convention in May.

The announcement of the Alger stamp culminates over three years of fairly intensive effort, initially to develop an appropriate submittal package to the Postal Service and more recently to lobby in the right places with the right people using the right words. The significance of this overall effort may be better appreciated when one realizes that literally thousands of requests for commemorative stamps are received each year by the Postal Service with only an average of 15 to 20 issued annually.

Several of us were involved initially three years ago, including the marvelous late Dick Seddon of Andover, Mass. as we struggled to put together an appropriate submittal package. Some of you reviewed that package before it was sent and offered valuable suggestions and most importantly, encouragement. Many of you wrote your Congressman and applied needed pressure there. Helen Gray of the Horatio Alger Awards Committee was extremely helpful in drumming up support of influential people to put pressure in the

right places. Many shared the workload in this labor of love and now we all should share the fruit.

Personally, however, my hat is off to Bob Williman of Bowie, Maryland who picked up the stamp effort a couple of years ago and orchestrated the contact and lobby effort. Bob, a stamp collector and dealer as well as an Alger collector (and last year's Convention host) seemed to know just the right strings to pull and keys to punch to move the decision process in a favorable direction. Good job, Bob. Your chairmanship of the Society's Stamp Committee has been a milestone of success. And good luck in your current efforts to prepare for the issuance of the stamp in Pennsylvania the last week in April at our Convention.

Somehow it just fits that we would be successful in obtaining a stamp commemorating Horatio Alger's contribution to the world. Success as the result of honest hard work was a major message Alger drove home to his loyal readership. It is therefore fitting that through the hard work of many Society members, Mr. Alger himself will now be honored. A lot of us feel very good about that.





## REPORT OF THE COMMEMORATIVE STAMP COMMITTEE

by Bob Williman, Chairman

Everyone I've talked to in the Society is completely elated at the announcement of our stamp. The consensus is that the design chosen is excellent. Robert Hallock, an artist who has designed several other commemorative stamps, selected the frontispiece showing the four boys from the Ragged Dick Series (second edition). The original artist is unknown as far as I have been able to ascertain. It is a handsome stamp and will be a part of every collection of United States stamps throughout the world. Hundreds of millions of the Horatio Alger stamp will be issued by the Postal Service. It will be on sale at every post office in the United States for a period of 3-6 months following its first day of issue at Willow Grove, Pennsylvania on April 30. The stamp will not be obtainable anywhere else until May 1.

### *Promotion*

With the issuance of the stamp commemorating Alger's 150th birthday comes a great opportunity for all of our members to promote Horatio Alger and have some fun in doing it. I have had four articles written by the local media in the last month, two of them with pictures. Every time I have called or written the paper about Alger, they were happy to print an article. Local papers are always anxious to have stories of local people (you). While you are thinking about it, write yourself a note--"Call paper and tell them about my Alger collection." Libraries love exhibits and promote the fact that they have them. Xerox few pictures from Gardner's book, add *Phil the Fiddler* and *Ragged Dick*, a first edition or two, and a 3 x 5 card for each telling its story, and you have an exhibit that your neighbors will enjoy seeing. Call your library and tell them you have "some of the rare Alger books" and want to exhibit them in the library. In terms of days, my Alger exhibit has been on display at libraries for over a year, and the comments have been very rewarding. The library will promote your exhibit in the local papers, too. Do it, it's great fun.

### *Meeting of February 6*

A meeting was held at my home on February 6. The purpose was to coordinate the efforts of the United States Postal Service represented by Fran Feldman), The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans (represented by Helen

Gray and Linda Neglia), and the Horatio Alger Society (represented by Ralph Gardner and myself). We worked all day on our promotional efforts for the first day ceremony, the strive and succeed theme and name of Horatio Alger. Every member of the Society is a member of the commemorative stamp committee. You did a good job in writing to get the stamp issued. Now your job is to promote it with your local media and library. I know I can count on you to follow through as you did before.

### *The Ceremony*

For those of you who have attended a Postal Service first day ceremony, you know it is a gala event. The Postal Service has given me the privilege of planning the ceremony (usually they plan it themselves). It is completed except for small details. In general terms it will go something like this: A local postmaster presides. The Willow Grove Naval Air Station Color Guard dressed in early naval uniforms will present the colors followed by the local high school band playing the National Anthem. The pastor of the Unitarian Church at Washington Crossing will deliver the invocation. Brad Chase will deliver a welcoming address and introduce those taking part in the ceremony. I will then introduce distinguished guests. Helen Gray will speak, followed by a short address by Ralph Gardner. There will then be a musical interlude which is being planned by the Willow Grove High School musical director. The Postmaster will then introduce the Postmaster General of the United States who will deliver the dedication speech. This is followed by the presentation of special Horatio Alger Stamp commemorative albums to distinguished guest and participants. The minister will close with a benediction. Everyone who attends the ceremony will be given one official program with the Horatio Alger stamp attached and cancelled "First Day of Issue." These programs are printed by the Postal Service and are always beautifully done. They are scarce and desirable collectors' items. There will be no programs available to anyone who does not attend the ceremony. This is your only chance to get one. The ceremony is free and open to the general public. We have obtained the large convention center for the ceremony. We expect hundreds of people to attend including stamp collectors, school children, and local and nationally prominent people. We expect media coverage by newspaper, radio, and television.

We are making history this year and you as a member of the Horatio Alger Society have a



special opportunity to be a part of it. Don't put off sending in your reservation. Do it right away so that you won't risk being disappointed if the Motor Lodge becomes completely filled. If you have never attended a convention, take it from one who has not been able to get away for a vacation for over five years. Since I attended my first one I wouldn't let wild horses keep me away. We have a great group of people in *HAS*. You will feel welcome and have the time of your life at our convention. Get to this one. There will never be another like it.

#### *Booksale*

Since we have obtained the convention center for the stamp ceremony and "own" it for the day, we are planning our booksale at the center for 6-10 p.m. that evening. We are inviting local bookdealers to come and bring their books. Bill Russell has printed hundreds of flyers which he is distributing to dealers and collectors. People attending the ceremony will see posters telling them about the

booksale later in the day. Want some Algers or other books for your collection? This will be the place to get them as well as sell your duplicates.

#### *First Day Covers*

The Horatio Alger Society in conjunction with the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans will issue a set of five different "official" first day covers. Several thousand dollars is being spent on the professional development and execution of these covers which will be on premium laid paper envelopes. The will be priced as a set for \$10.00. No sets will be broken. The covers will be available at the ceremony and for the remainder of the convention. They are being privately financed with a donation going to *HAS* for every set sold. About 100 first day cover manufacturers will prepare covers for the Alger stamp. Many will attend the ceremony and will offer their covers for sale. Our "official" first day cover set will be available by mail order from the Horatio Alger



Alger enthusiasts gather at Bob Williman's home to discuss the Alger stamp. Fran Feldman of the U.S. Postal Service shows an Alger to Linda Neglia. From Left to right in rear is Helen Gray, Bob Williman and Ralph D. Gardner.



Society, Box 415, Bowie, Maryland 20715 for \$10.00 plus SASE for each set ordered. This will be a limited edition and will be sold on a first come, first served basis. Mail order sets of covers will be reserved for those who place paid orders in advance of the ceremony. Checks should be made payable to Bob Williman. The Postal Service will set up a special postal station at the Convention Center where the Alger stamp will be sold and first day of issue cancellations will be provided. You may send any mail you desire from this station on April 30.

I think I have covered everything although I'll be happy to answer any of your questions about the stamp if you will write to me. John Juvinall will tape the whole first day ceremony and will sell cassette tapes to *HAS* members who can't attend the convention. More on this in a later *Newsboy*. Don't forget your tax deductible auction donations. Send them to Bill Russell. Anything is acceptable. Hope to see you at the convention.



## THE OLD MAID'S CAT

by Horatio Alger, Jr.

(Editor's note: The following Alger short story is from the collection of Gilbert K. Westgard II. It originally appeared in the *Gleason's Weekly Line-of-Battle Ship*, July 9, 1859).

"Scat! Give it to her, boys. Now another volley."

A large tortoise shell cat fled in terror of her life up one street and down another, pursued by three or four boys, whose love for sport had steeled their hearts to compassion. Otherwise the evident terror of the poor hunted animal would have restrained them. But boys are thoughtless, and these were led by one who was more than thoughtless. John Hodges, the oldest of the pursuing party, had a bad reputation in the village as a frequent truant and reckless idler.

A volley of stones was thrown. One of the missiles hit the poor animal and lamed her somewhat. Still she ran on in wild terror, limping as she ran.

"Isn't that enough," said one of the younger boys, holding back. "We don't want to kill the cat."

"Pooh, Tom," sneered John Hodges. "You haven't turned sentimental? No danger of killing a cat. Didn't you ever hear they had nine lives?"

Tom was silent.

"So I say here's for another volley."

The cat had by this time clambered up a tree, and was crouching on one of the upper branches, fancying perhaps that she was safe. But in this she was mistaken. The boys led on by John Hodges, prepared to fire another volley, when a neatly dressed boy of perhaps fourteen came up the street.

"What are you doing, boys?" asked Sidney Waite, for that was his name.

"We're only hunting a cat," said John Hodges, carelessly. "Won't you join us? Look, there she is perched up on the highest left hand limb. Looks about frightened to death. Come, Sidney, just pick up a stone and then we'll all fire together. Whoever hits her is the best fellow—"

"Stop a minute," said Sidney, "I want to ask you a question."

"Well, have ahead."

"What harm has this cat done to you?"

"What harm? That's a queer question. She hasn't done any that I know of."

"Then what are you hunting her for?" inquired Sidney.



"What should we hunt her for? For fun of course."

"Do you suppose it is any fun to her?"

"Well, I guess she'd find it fun if we hit her."

"Do you think you shall feel any better if you succeed in hitting her?"

"O, you're preaching. If that's all you can do just go along and leave us alone. We ain't responsible to you as I know of."

"I won't have anything to do with it any way," said Tom, who had spoken before, throwing down his stone.

"O, well," sneered John Hodges, "if you've been converted under the preaching of the Rev. Sidney Waite we'll excuse you. We can get along without you, I guess."

The other boys were half ashamed of the business they were engaged in, and would have thrown down their stones, but that they stood in some dread of the sarcastic tongue of John Hodges. There is nothing so much dreaded by the young as ridicule.

"You may call me what you please," said Sidney composedly, for he had too much self-respect to be moved from a good purpose by the rudeness of another. "I hope one needn't be a clergyman to have some particle of humanity about him."

"Do you mean to insinuate that I have none?" asked Hodges, fiercely.

"Judging from appearances I should say you had but very little."

John Hodges was a bully, and if Sidney had spoken less firmly would have attempted to bully him. As it was he contented himself with saying:

"I've got an account to settle with you, Sidney Waite, and I'll do it some time you may be sure of that. I'm going to stone that cat, and you may stand preaching there all day and that'll be all the good it'll do. I say, boys, get your stones ready. What, have you thrown them down? All been converted. Well, thank goodness, I ain't such a coward."

He was preparing to throw a stone, when Sidney Waithe stepped up to him.

"Throw that stone at your peril, John Hodges."

"What!" shrieked John in surprise and fury.

"I say you shan't throw that stone."

"What's to prevent me I'd like to know," said John, folding his arms akimbo and looking defiant.

"I will try."

"You will, O? And what'll be the consequences if I throw it, young jackanape?"

"I'll throw you if I can."

"If you can. That's well put in. Well, I'll give you a chance to try."

And he threw the stone, though such was his anger that his aim was spoiled, and the stone did not come within a rod of hitting the terrified mark.

A moment afterwards and he staggered under a vigorous blow from the fist of Sidney Waite.

"I'll whip you until you can't stand," said he, infuriated, turning to defend himself.

The other boys gathered about the two combatants. At first sight the odds seemed to be in favor of John Hodges. He was strongly built, and at least two inches taller than his adversary. Sidney however was much quicker in his motions. His personal strength indeed was not equal to that of Hodges, but he knew better how to direct and use it to advantage.

"Now come on," bellowed Hodges; "I'll teach you to interfere in what I choose to do, you young rascal."

Sidney did not call any names nor deal in provoking language. But he kept a wary eye upon the movements of his opponent, and when the latter struck out he was ready to parry the blow. The fact was that Sidney had received some instruction in the elementary principles of boxing from a cousin who had visited him from the city the summer previous, although Hodges knew nothing of this.

Hodges "pitched in" as the phrase is, with great impetuosity but very little caution or science. By strictly watching him Sidney succeeded in warding off wholly or partially all his blows, while the other's want of prudence gave him frequent opportunities of striking him home when he was off his guard. Evidently Hodges found him harder to overcome than he anticipated. He felt that he was losing his reputation before the boys, and this with the consciousness that he was being worsted by a boy smaller and not so strong as himself provoked him sorely. He became more and more reckless in his blows till at least a powerful blow of Sidney's rolled him in the dust.

"That wasn't fair," he exclaimed furiously, "I slipped."

"It was fair enough," interposed one of his late companions. "You had better give up."

"Never," he exclaimed, springing to his feet and renewing the contest.

Sidney kept perfectly cool and this gave him a great advantage. This, added to the little knowledge he possessed of boxing, was more than sufficient to



counterbalance his opponent's superior strength and height.

The second contest was briefer than the first. Again Hodges was overthrown, and this seemed to take away his desire for fighting, for as he rose slowly he went off muttering threats of vengeance against his conqueror.

"Now, boys," said Sidney, when Hodges had left the ground, "I hope you will bear me witness that I didn't want to fight. I don't like it. I don't think it is right to fight unless one is obliged to in order to prevent some act of oppression. If I hadn't fought with Hodges now he would have been stoning all the cats in the neighborhood."

"That he would," said Tom.

"Who does this cat belong to?" continued Sidney.

"To old maid Hill."

"She seems to be lame. Just you go behind the wall and I will call her down and carry her home. She'll be frightened if you are here."

The cat was at first a little cautious about answering the call, but at length seeming to be satisfied that no harm was meant came down. Taking her up Sidney discovered that she was somewhat hurt.

Old maid Hill lived about quarter of a mile distant. She was a maiden lady of about fifty, reputed to be sharp tongued and of rather an acid disposition. She had considerable property, but nobody knew how much as she was not communicative about her personal concerns, but delighted in keeping people in the dark on this and other points. She lived very much alone—had few or no female friends, and seemed to be quite satisfied with her solitary mode of life. Her affections, which must have some object, seemed to be given to the cat who has already figured in our story. She had nursed her from a kitten, and having been nearly her only companion for five years, the cat was strongly endeared to her. Let us not laugh at this affection. The human heart is so constituted that it must cling to something, and we may pity but not ridicule her who finds no worthier object on which to lavish her attachment.

Sidney Waite knocked at the door of Miss Hill's small house. She opened it and looked at him in some surprise.

"I am afraid, Miss Hill, your cat is a little hurt. I found some boys stoning her in the street, and I brought her away."

"Poor puss," said the old maid with an air of deep concern. "Where is she hurt."

Sidney told her. She noticed for the first time that his face was bruised.

"How did you get hurt?" she asked.

"Why," said Sidney, hesitating, "I had to fight to get the cat away."

"From whom?"

"From John Hodges."

"He's a bad boy and a disgrace to the town, and you're a brave fellow. Come in and I will give you a bowl of water to wash your face."

By the time Sidney had done this, Miss Hill brought in a savory mince pie and set it on the table.

"Won't you take a piece of my pie?" she said, graciously.

The pie looked so attractive that Sidney accepted without hesitation.

Miss Hilly usually so frosty, actually looked quite hospitable. Sidney knew how forbidding her general appearance was, was quite surprised, and enjoyed the proffered pie, even accepting a second piece. When he prepared to go Miss Hill held out her hand and said abruptly:

"I am not very social. Perhaps I am not very good tempered. At any rate there are plenty that say so. But you mustn't judge altogether from appearances. You have done me a service today, and cross-grained as I am I shall remember it longer perhaps than you think."

---

We pass over ten years. They have not slipped by without their full share of change. Sidney Waite has entered into business on his own account, and retaining as he does the good qualities which distinguished his boyhood he bids fair to succeed well. John Hodges, his youthful antagonist, has also gone into business. He has got over his bullying propensities in a measure, finding them likely to injure his interests, and in their place has taken up what is quite as bad a crafty way of managing, which makes him far from reliable.

Such is the position of the two when the commercial revulsion sweeps over the country. Both have started in business in part on borrowed capital. Nevertheless this would not have troubled them in ordinary times, but in a season of panic when every body distrusts every other, the parties who furnished it have resolved to call it in, fearing that otherwise they may lose it altogether.

Sidney Waite, who had recently married an estimable girl, went home one day in great depression of spirits.



"What is the matter?" asked his wife, anxiously.

"Ruin stares me in the face," was the reply.

"But I thought your business prospects were flattering."

"So they were, but Mr. Graham who furnished me with fifteen hundred dollars of my capital, has suddenly apprized me that he has immediate want of it, and I don't know where to raise it for him."

"Has he a right to make so sudden a call?"

"Yes, that was the agreement."

"Do you think he really needs it?"

"No, that is the worst of it. It is only because he thinks I may fail, and judges that it is best to make sure of his money, which, if he only knew it, would not in the least be endangered by remaining in my hands. It is such men who make the panic worse than it would otherwise be."

His wife essayed such consolation as she could think of. Still it was with a heavy heart that our young merchant went back to his store.

"Here is a lady waiting for you in the back office," said his clerk.

"A lady?" How long since she came in?"

"About half an hour."

Hurriedly entering the office he recognized the tall, gaunt form of old maid Hill, whom he had scarcely met to speak to since his youthful defence of her cat. That affair did not occur to him at the moment, and it was with no small surprise, though courtesy preventing his exhibiting it, that he greeted her.

"I hear," she commenced abruptly, "that Mr. Graham is about to withdraw the capital with which he supplied you."

"It is true," said the young man, puzzled to know how Miss Hill had ascertained this fact.

"May I inquire how large a sum you owe?"

"Fifteen hundred dollars."

"And will it seriously affect your business?"

"It will compel me to fail. I need make no secret of that."

"If this sum could be retained in your business could you go on?"

"Without a doubt. My business is on a very good footing."

"Then I will supply you an equal sum."

"You, Miss Hill?" said the young merchant, starting. "How have I deserved such kindness at your hands?"

"I have not forgotten the day ten years since, when you saved my cat from cruelty and perhaps

from death. I want to show you I can be grateful. The money will be ready for you this afternoon at three if you will call at my residence."

Miss Hill left the office, not remaining long enough to receive the grateful thanks of the young merchant whom she had saved from ruin. As for John Hodges, no such friend in need came to his aid, and his failure was announced within a week. He little suspected that the cat which he had abused ten years before had been the means of sustaining the credit of his old rival, Sidney Waite.

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## NEWSBOY BOOK REVIEW

by Jack Bales

*Tom Swift & Company.* By John T. Dizer. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., Inc., 1982. Introduction by J. Randolph Cox. Illus. 183 pages. Hardbound. \$17.95 plus \$1.25 per book for postage and handling; order from McFarland & Co. Inc., Box 611, Jefferson, North Carolina 28640.

Perhaps I am not qualified to review this book. I'm a librarian, and as Jack Dizer implies



throughout his work (pp. 1, 5, 7, 15 plus), he has little respect for the average librarian's intelligence when it comes to judging series books for children. (He's probably right, though the attitude is changing)! However, his daughter is a librarian, as is Randy Cox, who wrote the introduction, and since McFarland & Co. *did* send me a review copy, I'll take a chance!

This work was years in the making and the final product was well worth waiting for. *Tom Swift & Company* offers a penetrating look at series books in general and the Stratemeyer Syndicate in particular, as it decisively cuts through the nonsense that has been written on both for untold years. Though my own specialty is Horatio Alger (with smatterings of Hardy Boys and Leo Edwards thrown in), even a neophyte collector must surely recognize as idiocy the assertion (by a children's librarian!) that Edward Stratemeyer was an "arch friend" and that his books "are devices of Satan to capture our youth." Armed with a thorough knowledge of all the volumes in question, Dr. Dizer disposes of the arguments with much neatness and dispatch.

Some of the chapters in his book are particularly outstanding. Being a staunch supporter of sound scholarly writing, I regard his "*Fortune and the Syndicate*" as a superb expose of the renowned 1934 *Fortune* article, "For It Was Indeed He." In "The Men Who Wrote for the Boys," Dr. Dizer writes with unabashed fondness--yet with no loss of scholarship or objectivity--of Oliver Optic, Burt L. Standish and others. Accustomed to seeing myth after published myth on Horatio Alger, I was pleasantly surprised to see that Dizer's comments concerning the author are "right on target." For example, while discussing Alger's total sales, Dizer deliberately states, "... a reasonable sales figure is about 16 or 17 million in all." This is much more realistic than the figure of half a billion that is so often bandied about. Furthermore, all of Dizer's many assertions and disclaimers are backed up by literally hundreds of quotations--from the series books themselves as well as secondary sources. "Stratemeyer and Blacks" swarms with such quotations as the author analyzes the use of dialect in Stratemeyer's and other authors' writings.

But Professor Dizer's greatest love is Tom Swift, and the Swift enthusiast will find it all here, in such chapters as "Tom Swift, Aeronautical Engineer," "Shopton, Home of the Swifts," "Tom and Science

Fiction/Fact," as well as the all-inclusive "Stratemeyer and Science Fiction." Though many academicians aver that the science fiction adventure story originated with Jules Verne, Dizer just as emphatically counters with "hogwash! . . . The mainstream of the popular boys' scientific adventure in this country has been much more influenced by Ellis, Senarens and later, Stratemeyer, than by Verne."

Although this obvious labor of love shows years of painstaking research, the reader does not get bogged down in innumerable footnotes; indeed, at times I wished sources were identified. On page 10 Russel Nye comments on Horatio Alger's stories. Was this from a letter? From Nye's *The Unembarrassed Muse*? On pages 10 and 11 are quotations from Gilbert Patten and George Jean Nathan similarly neglected.

Fortunately, this small annoyance pales as the reader grasps the magnitude of the task that Dizer assumed while researching this book. The meticulous bibliographer will particularly find the "Stratemeyer Bibliography" of immeasurable use in tracking down the hundreds of volumes written by the author. Admittedly, I was disappointed when I did not find much biographical information on Stratemeyer nor a complete listing of the series publications written by him and members of the Syndicate. Perhaps expecting such a complaint, Dizer notes, "It is to be hoped that Harriet Adams, in her definitive history of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, will list *all* the series published both by her father and, later, herself. No accurate and complete listing exists, outside of the Syndicate offices."

But despite these omissions (slight as they are), John T. Dizer's *Tom Swift & Company* remains a readable yet scholarly history of a long neglected and much maligned literary era. Dr. Dizer, a long time collector (and more significantly, a *reader*) of series books, is an able and fitting author of this volume, as his many articles in *Dime Novel Round-Up* will testify. Quite frankly, there are simply few collectors who possess the knowledge and scholarship needed to undertake a work of such tremendous breadth. And from a much more unashamedly mercenary point of view I applaud his efforts--at long last we collectors of series books are obtaining the classic reference volumes that are so necessary to further our own individual research and collecting interests.





THE BAGGAGE SMASHER.

## THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF HORATIO ALGER, JR.

by Gilbert K. Westgard II

(Editor's note: In a recent letter to Gil, I asked the question, "How many photographs of Alger are in existence?" Here is his answer).

The known pictures and representations of Alger is an interesting topic, and I spent several hours last night putting the following bit of information together:

1852, Graduation from college, daguerrotype, shows front & right. The original daguerrotype appears to have been lost, but a photo of it, showing the image and the frame, is bound in the 1852 *Class Book* in the Harvard Archives.

A sepia-tone reproduction of this picture appears opposite page 6 in *Annals of the Harvard Class of 1852*, by Grace Williamson Edes, Privately Printed (at the University Press), Cambridge, MA, 1922. A half-tone reproduction of this picture appears on page 18 of *Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era*, by Ralph D. Gardner, The Wayside Press, Mendota, IL, 1964.

1872 photograph, front and left. An engraving based on this picture appears in *New York Weekly*, August 5, 1872. This same engraving appears on a card in the "Authors" game, 1873. (see *Newsboy*, March 1981, page 10.) A reproduction of the engraving appears on page 18 of *Horatio Alger, or*

*The American Hero Era*, by Ralph D. Gardner, The Wayside Press, Mendota, IL, 1964. A half-tone reproduction of the original photograph appears on page 13 of *Horatio's Boys, The Life and Works of Horatio Alger, Jr.*, by Edwin P. Hoyt, Chilton Book Co., Radnor, PA, 1974. It is erroneously labeled as "Horatio's brother, James."

1885 photograph, front and left, but right ear also shows. This photograph is in an album in the Harvard Archives that shows members of the class of 1852 twenty years later. *This picture has never been published.* I have a picture of it that I took with my Minox in 1963.

1872 photograph, front and left, but right ear also pose used on *Newsboy*.) Harriet Stratemeyer Adams has two actual prints of this familiar picture. One is inscribed to her father. An engraving of this picture appears in *The Golden Argosy*, October 17, 1885. An engraving of this picture appears in *Munsey's Magazine*, Vol. 8, Oct. 1892, page 60. A half-tone of this picture appears in *Commerce*, June, 1962, page 18.

1890 photograph, front and right. Original is in the Harvard Archives. Autographed and dated May 15/1890 on back of the photo. This is a cabinet size photo. A line drawing of this picture appears in *The San Francisco Daily Morning Call*, November 9, 1890, page 12. A half-tone of this picture appears opposite the title page of *Alger Street, The Poetry of Horatio Alger, Jr.*, Edited and arranged by Gilbert K. Westgard II, J.S. Canner & Co., Inc., Boston, 1964. (This also reproduces the inscription.)

1892 photograph, front and right. A half-tone of this picture appears on page 19 of *Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era*, by Ralph D. Gardner, The Wayside Press, Mendota, IL, 1964. A half-tone of this picture appears in *The Saturday Evening Post*, May-June 1981.

1888 photograph, left profile, Alger with Amos P. Cheney and Louis Schick. A half-tone of this picture appears in *Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era*, by Ralph D. Gardner, The Wayside Press, Mendota, IL, 1964, page 20. Is pictured and dated ca. 1888 by Edwin Hoyt on page 218 of *Horatio's Boys*.

Late 1860's (?) or early 1970s (?) photograph. I believe *Student & Schoolmate* published a steel engraving of such a picture, as it was mentioned in the "Editor's Easy Chair" sections we examined at Bob Bennett's home in November 1979. Unfortunately, I did not make a notation of the date of this reference (perhaps you did?), as I was more

March - April



concerned about copying a reference on Oliver Optic's picture, a steel engraving which I have, on page 95 of the March 1865 issue. The Optic engraving is very fine, and also reproduces his signature (William T. Adams), and if a matching steel engraving of Alger can be located, it will be a really important find. These were printed on one side of a heavy paper with plenty of white space surrounding the subject, and were intended either for framing, or were sometimes bound into full volumes of the magazines as frontispieces. If the reference can be located, an examination of bound volumes of *Student & Schoolmate* may yet locate this missing picture.

Charcoal drawing, signed Bry. Probably drawn from 1885 photograph. Appears as frontispiece in *Alger, A Biography Without a Hero*, by Herbert R. Mayes, Macy-Masius, New York, 1928, reprinted by Gilbert K. Westgard II, Des Plaines, IL, 1978. Appears in *The Fiction Factory, or From Pulp Row to Quality Street*, by Quentin Reynolds, Random House, New York, 1955, page 37. Appears as frontispiece in *From Rags to Riches, Horatio Alger and The American Dream*, Macmillan Co., New York, 1963. Appears on back cover of ten year *Newsboy* index, 1973.

Color printing of 1885 photograph. Printed as frontispiece in some books printed by John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia, late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Line drawing, signed G.G. (?), with reproduction of Alger's signature. Probably drawn from 1885 photograph. Accompanies article on Alger in *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*.

Oil painting, color, captioned "His pen inspired a nation's boys." Appears as part of a John Hancock advertisement. See *Newsboy*, October 1969.

Line drawing of Alger's head and shoulders. (One of the worst Alger portraits!) Appears in *Publishers Weekly*, April 3, 1954. Kingsport Press Adv. Reprinted in *Newsboy*, May, 1981.

## BOOKS BY DOVER PUBLICATIONS

by Jack Bales

*Children: A Pictorial Archive from Nineteenth-Century Sources*. Dover Publications, Inc. 180 Varicck Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. \$3.50

*New York in the Nineteenth Century: 317*

*Engravings from Harper's Weekly and Other Contemporary Sources*. Dover Publications, Inc. 180 Varick Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. \$6.00.

Write Dover in care of "Dept. Pictorial Archive" for free catalogues. Please indicate field of interest. Each year Dover publishes over 200 books on fine art, music, crafts, and needlework, antiques, languages, literature, children's books, chess, cookery, nature, anthropology, science, mathematics and other areas.

Many Alger collectors are familiar with *Eight Dime Novels*, edited by E.F. Bleiler and published by Dover Publications of New York. When I happened to mention to Ralph Gardner that I could use some 19th century photos as "filler" for *Newsboy* he suggested that I contact Dover. Soon I received *Children: A Pictorial Archive from Nineteenth-Century Sources, 240 Copyright-Free Illustrations for Artists and Designers*, and *New York in the Nineteenth Century: 317 Engravings from Harper's Weekly and Other Contemporary Sources*.

The latter book is of particular interest. Some of the elegantly printed old woodcut illustrations are of the ragged street boys in New York City. I was particularly interested in the fine reproduction of a series of illustrations for which I have spent years looking: the nine pictures that showed the interior of the first Newsboys' Lodging House, printed in the May 18, 1867 issue of *Harper's weekly*. The caption reads: "There were thousands of newsboys in New York in the nineteenth century, a great many of whom were homeless orphans, and one of the city's most notable charities was the Newsboys' Lodging-House above the *Sun* offices in Fulton Street. The Lodging-House was established by the Children's Aid Society in 1854 and provided a place where newsboys could live while they pursued their trade and received, in the evenings, a rudimentary education. As the newsboys earned money during the day, they were charged a nominal amount for their upkeep-four cents a meal and five cents a night for a bed in 1867."

Other pictures showed the Blizzard of 1888, Robert E. Odum's famous jump off the Brooklyn Bridge in 1885, and an 1875 projected view of the Statue of Liberty.

Some of the illustrations in *Children* are also reminiscent of Alger's street youths. Although the



publisher's note says that most of the pictures were taken from English periodicals, the one of a crying street boy on page 71 I recall seeing printed in Charles Loring Brace's *Short Sermons to Newsboys* (see page 4 of May 1976 *Newsboy*).

The introductions tell much about the artists who perfected the art of the woodcut engraving. Similar to today's newspaper reporters, these individuals sought to depict events and scenes in a matter which was just as exquisitely detailed as a modern photograph. Ugly or beautiful, the persons, places or events were printed in the many periodicals specializing in woodcut engravings between the 1850s and early 1890s. For anyone wishing to admire a pictorial view of a long gone era, I suggest any number of Dover's books.

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The following is from the collection of Gary Scharnhorst. It is from Theodor Fontane's *Werke*, vol. 20. Munich: Nymphenburger, 1962.

*John Maynard*

John Maynard!

«Wer ist John Maynard?»

«John Maynard war unser Steuermann,  
Aus hielt er, bis er das Ufer gewann,  
Er hat uns gerettet, er trägt die Kron,  
Er starb für uns, unsre Liebe sein Lohn.  
John Maynard.»

\*

Die «Schwalbe» fliegt über den Eriesee,  
Gischt schäumt um den Bug wie Flocken von Schnee;  
Von Detroit fliegt sie nach Buffalo —  
Die Herzen aber sind frei und froh,  
Und die Passagiere mit Kinder und Frau  
Im Dämmerlicht schon das Ufer schaun,  
Und plaudernd an John Maynard heran  
Tritt alles: «Wie weit noch, Steuermann?»  
Der schaut nach vorn und schaut in die Rund:  
«Noch dreißig Minuten . . . Halbe Stund.»

Alle Herzen sind froh, alle Herzen sind frei —  
Da klingt's aus dem Schiffsraum her wie Schrei,  
«Feuer!» war es, was da klang,  
Ein Qualm aus Kajüt und Luke drang,  
Ein Qualm, dann Flammen lichterloh,  
Und noch zwanzig Minuten bis Buffalo.

Und die Passagiere, buntgemengt,  
Am Bugspriet stehn sie zusammengedrängt,  
Am Bugspriet vorn ist noch Luft und Licht,  
Am Steuer aber lagert sichs dicht,  
Und ein Jammern wird laut: «Wo sind wir? wo?»  
Und noch fünfzehn Minuten bis Buffalo. —

Der Zugwind wächst, doch die Qualmwolke steht,  
Der Kapitän nach dem Steuer späht,  
Er sieht nicht mehr seinen Steuermann,  
Aber durchs Sprachrohr fragt er an:

«Noch da, John Maynard?»  
«Ja, Herr. Ich bin.»  
«Auf den Strand! In die Brandung!»  
«Ich halte drauf hin.»  
«Und das Schiffsvolk jubelt: «Halt aus! Hallo!»  
Und noch zehn Minuten bis Buffalo. —»

«Noch da, John Maynard?» Und Antwort schallt  
Mit ersterbender Stimme: «Ja, Herr, ich halte!»  
Und in die Brandung, was Klippe, was Stein,  
Jagt er die «Schwalbe» mitten hinein.  
Soll Rettung kommen, so kommt sie nur so.  
Rettung: der Strand von Buffalo!

\*

Das Schiff geborsten. Das Feuer verschwelt.  
Gerettet alle. Nur einer fehlt!

\*

Alle Glocken gehn; ihre Töne schwelln  
Himmelan aus Kirchen und Kapelln,  
Ein Klingen und Läuten, sonst schweigt die Stadt,  
Ein Dienst nur, den sie heute hat:  
Zehntausend folgen oder mehr,  
Und kein Aug im Zuge, das tränenleer.

Sie lassen den Sarg in Blumen hinab,  
Mit Blumen schließen sie das Grab,  
Und mit goldner Schrift in den Marmorstein  
Schreibt die Stadt ihren Dankspruch ein:

«Hier ruht John Maynard! In Qualm und Brand  
Hielt er das Steuer fest in der Hand,  
Er hat uns gerettet, er trägt die Kron,  
Er starb für uns, unsre Liebe sein Lohn.  
John Maynard.»

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The Horatio Alger Society expresses its condolences to member Barrie Hughes upon the death of his daughter, Lyndall Hughes, on January 11, 1982. As many collectors in *HAS* know, Barrie was largely responsible for the restoration of the famed newsboy statue in Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

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## CURRENT CONTENTS

*Dime Novel Round-Up* for February focuses on "The Pulp Hero" by Wooda Nicholas Carr. Includes The Shadow, The Spider, Doc Savage and others. Editor Eddie LeBlanc plugs the *HAS* convention on the back page. For a year subscription, (6 issues), send \$10.00 payable to *Dime Novel Round-Up* to Eddie LeBlanc, 87 School St., Fall River, Mass. 02720.

Gill O'Gara's *Yellowback Library* is achieving



much popularity (did any of you sharp-eyed subscribers see his "editorial" on bottom of page 2 of the January-February 1982 issue)? This issue highlights the Beverly Gray Series and the Nancy Drew books. Well-known collectors Jack Schorr and Harry K. Hudson also contribute pieces. Subscription price is \$8.00 per year. Make checks payable to Gil O'Gara, 2019 S.E. 8th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50315.

*The Mystery & Adventure Series Review* offers in-depth articles in its four issues per year, the latest centering on Nancy Drew. Send check (\$5.00) payable to L.M. Wood to P.O. Box 3488, Tucson, Arizona 85722.



## Time to Begin Celebrations for Horatio Alger

By THOMAS V. DI BACCO

I'm making preparations to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Horatio Alger on Jan. 13. I doubt that other historians will join me (Horatio has been avoided as a serious subject of research), but I hope to enlist the assistance of my undergraduate business students, each of whom has been required to read two of Alger's 106—some say 120—novels. Commemoration of Alger may seem a bit kinky in this day and age, but on closer observation the idea may not be so absurd.

Alger, you see, has been misunderstood. He was not the author of rags-to-riches stories, as is commonly thought. Nor was he intent on making a bundle for himself.

Born in 1832, the son of a Unitarian minister, Alger had a comfortable existence as a young man, attending Harvard College as well as its divinity school. Setting his sights on a career in writing, Alger was too smart and too honest to pass off the incredible story of a street kid becoming a millionaire in late Nineteenth Century America. So he told it like it is: cultivate initiative, honesty, education, good habits and mix with luck. Even with all these ingredients, the end product in his novels is an office boy or clerk making about ten bucks a

week, a modest and credible first level of expectation. To repeat, Alger never promised a rose garden.

More importantly, he did not make a fetish of any portion of his success formula. Luck, or being at the right place at the right time, is an acknowledged fact of life in the books, but initiative could sometimes induce fortuitous circumstances.

Alger's heroes are not religious fanatics and only occasionally attend church. When they do, they appear more interested in hearing the choir than the preacher. They have a good sense of humor, understand the people from their city streets and attempt to get along even with the worst of them. And they can't forget their roots, as in the instance of Ragged Dick, a fading bootblack: "Dick dressed himself with scrupulous care, giving his shoes a 'shine' so brilliant that it did him great credit in a professional point of view, and endeavored to clean his hands thoroughly; but, in spite of all he could do, they were not so white as if his business had been of a different character."

The matter of education was handled sensibly by Alger, perceptive in recognizing that success did not necessarily mean

formal schooling. Many of his heroes are self-taught, often with the aid of a friend. None becomes a truly educated person in the definition of his times. But they all strike an enviable balance between the theoretical and the practical.

"... the reader must not forget," Alger injected, "that Dick was naturally a smart boy. His street education had sharpened his faculties, and taught him to rely upon himself." Dick goes on to land his first job because he could read and write tolerably, knew some arithmetic, and most of all had a working knowledge of the streets, including a good sense of what was benevolent.

What is more, Alger himself practiced what he preached. Before he died in 1899, he gave most of the money made from his books to street boys and their families. Alger's heroes practice philanthropy by befriending identical groups. To build up their funds for such purposes, they rely on the quiet avenue of oversaving and underconsumption trod by generations of rising Americans ("In more ways than one Dick was beginning to reap the advantage of his self-denial and judicious economy").

Additionally, the heroes don't flaunt their virtues, such as honesty, or await the millennium when their majority of morals would prevail. Time would be better spent, for Dick as an example, by "reach(ing) the goal he had set before him, and he had the patience to keep on trying."

To be sure, Alger communicated his stories in a style that is a bit elemental, and my business students, fidgety when it comes to reading novels and contemplating history anyhow, seem to compound their restlessness when I wax eloquent about the relevance of Alger today. However, I am patient, and if they don't all join me in commemoration of Alger's sesquicentennial, maybe a few might want to host a celebration later after they've spent some time on the streets.

Mr. DiBacco is a historian of business at American University, Washington.

This is one of the best articles on Alger that your editor has ever read, and is from the December 31, 1981 issue of the *Wall Street Journal*, page 6. Several HAS members sent copies to him. It is reprinted with permission of the author and *The Wall Street Journal*, (c) 1981 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



## SOME INFORMATION ON "JOHN MAYNARD"

Both Bill Russell and Glenn Corcoran mentioned "John Maynard" in this month's "Letters" column. In addition, Gil Westgard sent to *Newsboy* a copy of the piece of John B. Gough which Alger once read. Quoting from "How I Came to Write John Maynard," appearing in the December 8, 1895 issue of *The Writer* (and also in the January-February 1980 *Newsboy*): "One Sunday in the summer of 1866, my first year in New York, I attended an afternoon service at the Five Points Mission. It was a children's service, and a few speakers were present to address the children of the mission. One speaker told the story of John Maynard, though I cannot remember in what connection. It was told in a dramatic way, and I was so much impressed that after the service was over I inquired of him where I could find the particulars of the incident. He referred me to a weekly religious paper of recent date in the reading room of the Young Men's Christian Association. The next day I went to the reading room, found the story, and copied it. I learned that it had been used by John B. Gough in one of his popular lectures."

The well-known poem, "John Maynard," has appeared in *Newsboy* several times. Now, however, is the piece by John B. Gough which Alger referred to in his article.

### THE PILOT.

JOHN MAYNARD was well known in the lake district as a God-fearing, honest and intelligent man. He was pilot on a steamboat from Detroit to Buffalo. One summer afternoon—at that time those steamers seldom carried boats—smoke was seen ascending from below; and the captain called out, "Simpson, go below and see what the matter is down there."

Simpson came up with his face as pale as ashes, and said, "Captain, the ship is on fire!"

Then "Fire! fire! fire!" on shipboard.

All hands were called up; buckets of water were dashed on the fire, but in vain. There were large quantities of rosin and tar on board, and it was found useless to attempt to save the ship. The passengers rushed forward and inquired of the pilot, "How far are we from Buffalo?"

"Seven miles."

"How long before we can reach there?"

"Three-quarters of an hour, at our present rate of

steam."

"Is there any danger?"

"Danger! Here, see the smoke bursting out!—go forward, if you would save your lives!"

Passengers and crew—men, women and children—crowded the forward part of the ship. John Maynard stood at the helm. The flames burst forth in a sheet of fire; clouds of smoke arose.

The captain cried out through his trumpet, "John Maynard!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Are you at the helm?"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"How does she head?"

"Southeast by east, sir."

"Head her southeast, and run her on shore," said the captain. Nearer, nearer, yet nearer, she approached the shore. Again the captain cried out, "John Maynard!"

The response came feebly this time, "Ay, ay, sir!"

"Can you hold on five minutes longer, John?" he said.

"By God's help, I will!"

The old man's hair was scorched from the scalp; one hand was disabled;—his knee upon the stanchion, his teeth set, his other hand upon the wheel, he stood firm as a rock. He beached the ship; every man, woman and child was saved, as John Maynard dropped, and his spirit took its flight to God.

JOHN B. GOUGH.

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S FILES

In a recent phone conversation with Herbert R. Mayes, he told me that his daughter came across a statue of a newsboy "somewhere in Massachusetts." The plaque attached to it. Herb said, mentioned Horatio Alger.

Peter Walther sent in a clipping from the February 21, 1982 *Utica* (New York) *Observer-Dispatch*. Entitled, "How to Marry Money," it says: "For \$21, more than 200 souls are gathering in a Manhattan school gymnasium taking an adult education course called: 'How to Marry Money.' At long last someone is sharing the secret of making it in the Reagan era. People no longer teach Horatio Alger's route to the top; they teach how to meet Horatio now that he's up there."

Some of Pete Eckel's pictures of newsboys are featured in an article on John Drumgoole, benefactor of New York street children in the last



century. "To Save the Children," by Boniface Hanley, is in the current *The Anthonian*, published by the Franciscans. For a free copy, send large SASE (two stamps) to Peter Eckel, 1335 Grant Ave., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080.

Edwin Gross wonders "if there are any old newsboys in the Society? I was one who sold on the streets--never had a paper route though. Only made one cent on one paper--costs 2¢, sold at 3¢. I hoped the customer would let me keep the change out of a nickel! Sometimes sold on the street car. When it stopped the customer would always look to see if it was not an *old* paper he bought!

*Fortune* Magazine has been running an "Alger ad" in a number of periodicals. In the January 26, 1982 issue of the *New York Times* there appears a full page picture of a 19th century newsboy. Above him is the heading, "By diligence, a quick-witted young fellow can rise from rags to riches." Below the photo is the plug for *Fortune*, and the blurb begins with: "A lot of people think the age of rags to riches died with Horatio Alger. Are they wrong! The opportunities are out there as never before--if you have the drive and determination and guts to go after them."

Carl Hartmann sent a clipping from the February 24, 1982 *Detroit News* that related how a teacher at an elementary school "sent letters to about 125 political and Hollywood celebrities, . . . asking them to say something nice about reading and also tell the kids what they read when they were young." One of the respondents was past U.S. President Gerald R. Ford. "My favorite books, as a child, were the Horatio Alger series. I devoured every one and feel they had a great influence on my life and career."

Ralph D. Gardner writes: "I enclose a letter that Governor (and U.S. Senator) Herbert Lehman sent to his life-long friend, Amy Spingarn. He, she, and her brother, Lewis Einstein, were very helpful to me in supplying very valuable information on Horatio, as they remembered him about 1888. If you wish, you can reprint any part of this letter in *Newsboy*. If you do, I'll appreciate it if you mention that I got it from that fine gentleman, Howard S. Mott, the rare book and autograph dealer, of Sheffield, Mass." One paragraph of Lehman's letter reads: "I am sure that Mr. Gardner will be very grateful to you for giving him Lewis' address. He has advised me that he is getting along well with his biography of Horatio Alger, but he lacks information as to the type of man he was and I thought possibly Lewis

might be able to provide him with facts or impressions."

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## ODDS AND ENDS

By Brad Chase, President, *HAS*

Did you ever wonder how other Alger collectors keep track of their books and/or book needs? I venture to guess that most of us have different types of systems--little notebooks, big notebooks, typed pages, handwritten notes, and so on. I bet member Bill Russell, of Hatboro, Pa. has the most impressive system of all: I swear he's memorized his entire collection..it's all in his head. Somehow, with no references, he knows exactly what he has and what he needs.

I suppose the rest of us have some sort of notebook or accumulation of papers on which specific items are noted about the books in our collections: the specific edition, when it was acquired, its cost, its condition, title, etc. Depending upon how much time we have to maintain these note dictates its state of repair. I've seen some so ripped and rabbiteared that the book used to keep track of which Algers the collector has is in worse shape than most of the Algers he collects!

As I recall from several years past, Gil Westgard from Des Plaines, Illinois had a neat little flip page book that had a card for each Alger title with all sorts of information on each book in his collection. I started with a little 2" x 3" notebook which would fit nicely into my pocket. It had a page for each Alger title. As I collected, I'd note the publisher, date of purchase, cost, condition and design of cover for each book purchased. After three or four years, the pages became filled and some of them started to fall out. It was time to try something different. By the time this happened, my Alger interest had changed from collecting purely titles to Alger series collecting. I therefore changed my system totally to an 8-1/2" x 11" standard notebook with one page for titles I needed and many pages devoted to Alger series with drawings of spine formats, together with titles I have in each format.

Somewhere I recall seeing a collector's record book that had some photographs of the books he had by title. I remember thinking how neat that was but knew I'd never have either the resources or ambition to do it myself.

During the convention held here in Connecticut two years ago, four of us went out to an elderly



man's home and bought a bunch of books that were all in excellent condition that were his when he was a boy. The man had been an accountant all his worklife and I recall seeing a notebook there that day in which he had meticulously recorded 70 years earlier each one of his books--the title, author, cost, year and his impressions of the book after he had read it. I remember thinking how much that book with its neat writing and well spaced columns reflected the accountant orientation and the basic nature of this lovely old gentleman. Truly, his book as a child reflected him as a person.

How one keeps track of what is in his collection is an extremely personal kind of thing. It seems to

reflect the basic individual characteristics of the collector. I believe that there is no right or wrong way to keep track of what one has; it is only right or wrong if it does or doesn't work well for the specific collector. If you're a new collector or a seasoned one at the stage of needing a change in the way you record what you need or have, I suggest you *not* copy others directly but find out what others have done and adapt it to your individual needs and circumstances.

Like the expression "you are what you eat", in my view all aspects of your collecting should reflect your specific interests, resources and idiosyncrasies--in point of fact, your collection should be you.

