



THE HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY OFFICIAL PUBLICATION NEWSBOY



Horatio Alger, Jr.

1832 — 1899

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

VOLUME XXXII

JULY-AUGUST 1994

NUMBER 4

'Tom the Bootblack'

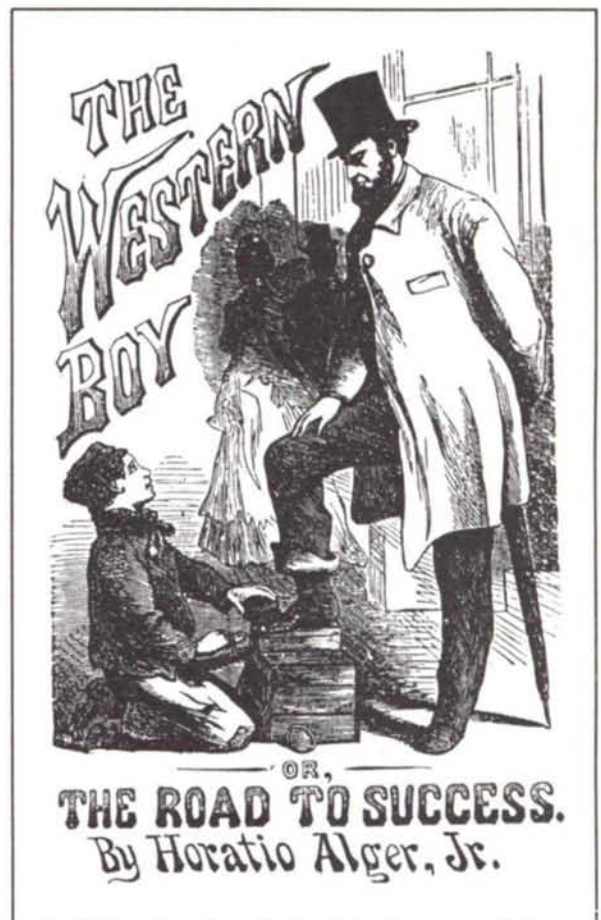
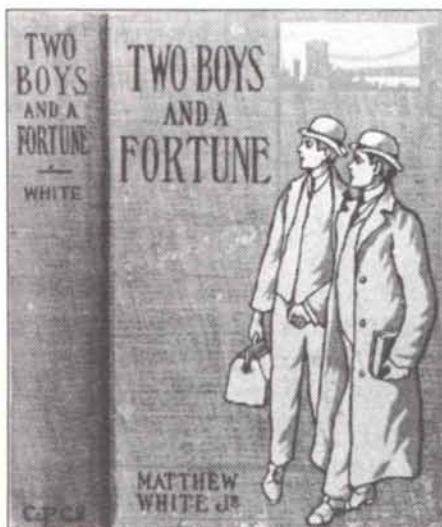
*The evolution of one
of Alger's most popular titles*

-- See Page 5

By the Beautiful Sea:

An 1886 summer at Old Orchard Beach

-- See Page 9



Matthew White, Jr.:

A bibliographic profile

-- See Page 15

President's column

Under the capable hands of Dick Pope (PF-740), preparations continue for the 31st annual convention of the Horatio Alger Society in Corning, New York. Mark your calendars: the dates for next year's convention will be May 4-7, 1995.

We have heard preliminary talk of a series book convention planned for the weekend of April 28th in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Plymouth, located between Boston and Cape Cod, is around 440 miles east of Corning, a one-day drive. It will provide members an opportunity, particularly those traveling the greater distances from the midwest and west coast, to plan a week's vacation and attend two conventions on one trip. And, of course, in between, there is all that New England book-hunting to do! As more details of the Plymouth event are learned, we'll pass them along.

The Horatio Alger repository at Northern Illinois University has received a wonderful start with the generous donation by Bob Sawyer (PF-455) of his extensive Street & Smith Alger paperback collection, all of which have been protected in custom bindings. Generosity must be an ingrained habit with Bob. In my first year as a Society member, I purchased a book from him, and I thought the box, when it arrived at my door, was a little large for just one book. Inside the package was not only the book I had bought, but an entire set of his *Sun Series* reprints, an issue of *Harper's* with an Alger article and a related book, not by Alger, of "The Young Apprentice." It was a wonderful start for me as a member of the Society; now, Bob has started off Northern Illinois University's Alger repository in the same grand manner. Thank you, Bob!

Well, I haven't been finding many books this summer although I did find several early Oliver Optics in such nice condition that I felt I had to bring them home. The next week, I found two more. In looking at my shelves, I now see a small row of Optics starting and, my mother not having raised any foolish children, I can read the writing on the wall.

In closing, please return the enclosed self-addressed postal card to Executive Secretary Rob Kasper as soon as possible because we want to get the most up-to-date information in our new membership roster.

Your partic'lar friend,
Mary Ann Ditch (PF-861)
4657 Mason
Omaha, NE 68106

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 newsletter of the Horatio Alger Society, is published bi-monthly (six issues per year). Membership fee for any 12-month period is \$20, with single issues of **Newsboy** costing \$3.00. Please make all remittance payable to the Horatio Alger Society. Membership applications, renewals, changes of address and other correspondence should be sent to Executive Secretary Robert E. Kasper, 585 E. St. Andrews Drive, Media, PA 19063.

Newsboy is indexed in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED BY H.A.S.

- Horatio Alger, Jr., A Comprehensive Bibliography*, by Bob Bennett (PF-265).
- Horatio Alger or, The American Hero Era*, by Ralph D. Gardner (PF-053).
- The Fictional Republic: Horatio Alger and American Political Discourse*, by Carol Nackenoff (PF-921).
- Publication Formats of the 59 Stories by Horatio Alger, Jr. as Reprinted by the John C. Winston Co.*, by Bob Sawyer (PF-455) and Jim Thorp (PF-574).
- Horatio Alger Books Published by A.L. Burt*, by Bradford S. Chase (PF-412).
- Horatio Alger Books Published by M.A. Donohue & Co.*, by Bradford S. Chase (PF-412).
- The Lost Life of Horatio Alger, Jr.*, by Gary Scharnhorst with Jack Bales (PF-258).

Newsboy ad rates: Full page, \$32.00; one-half page, \$17.00; one-quarter page, \$9.00; per column inch (1 inch deep by approx. 3 1/2 inches wide), \$2.00. Send ads, with check payable to Horatio Alger Society, to Robert E. Kasper, 585 E. St. Andrews Dr., Media, PA 19063. The above rates apply to all want ads, along with ads offering non-Alger books for sale. However, it is the policy of the Horatio Alger Society to promote the exchange of Alger books and related Alger materials by providing space **free of charge** to our members for the **sale only** of such material. Send such ads or "Letters to the Editor" to **Newsboy** editor William R. Gowen (PF-706) at 923 South Lake St., Apt. 6, Mundelein, IL 60060.

This card is the first step toward the computerization or the Horatio Alger Society membership list. We are endeavoring to eliminate the factual and typographical errors that have appeared in previous editions of the official H.A.S. Roster.

Horatio Alger Society Roster Update

Name: _____ PF #: _____
(Please type or print all information)

Street: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Mailing address (P.O. Box): _____
(if same as street address, please note)

City, State and ZIP Code: _____

Spouse's name: _____

Number of Alger titles owned: _____ First editions: _____

If you collect other authors or series, list them here: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Why this card is *important* . . .

A month doesn't pass without the Executive Secretary hearing from a member who notes an error in his or her H.A.S. Roster listing. Most often, it's simply a case of an address change or new telephone number or area code.

Many times it's a misspelled name, street name or the digits having been inadvertently transposed in a street number, post office box or phone number. Also, we are continually receiving updated information on the number of Alger titles and/or first editions in the member's collection.

This fall (hopefully), the Horatio Alger Society will be producing the official membership roster for 1995. In the early years of the Society, the roster was published annually; in recent years, it became an every-other or every-third-year proposition. We want to get the roster back on an annual basis for obvious reasons, the main one being the need for it to be as up-to-date as possible.

In the past, the listings for the roster were meticulously hand-typed, proofed and sent to a printer. More recently, it was done on an electronic typesetting system that left a lot to be desired from a visual point of view.

With the advent of desktop publishing, those methods have become obsolete. *Newsboy* is published this way, so why not our roster?

The following system is being set up as you read this:

The current mailing list is being converted over into a computerized data base, so that dues can be recorded,

issues of *Newsboy* mailed, etc. Because this system depends upon the information listed at the time each of you (1) joins the Society and (2), subsequently sends your annual dues in the familiar white self-addressed envelope, often it is many months before changes in address or personal status are officially recorded with the Executive Secretary.

Many times, it's been a chance meeting at the annual convention or a casual letter to Carl Hartmann that included the comment, "... by the way, I have a new mailing address and phone number" or, "... did you hear that I was married last month?"

These are things we need to know as quickly as possible. We will continue to ask for updates when we send your dues renewal envelope. However, to get caught up and start from a clean slate, we have designed the prepaid, self-addressed postal card enclosed in this issue.

We urge you to **today . . . right now . . . this very second . . .** fill out the card and drop it into your nearest mailbox. As you know, Rob Kasper has taken the Executive Secretary's reins from Carl Hartmann, so that's why the card is addressed to him. For those of you who talk to Carl regularly and pass along any change of membership status, I'm sure he'll be happy to turn the information over to Rob.

Please mail the card **even though** you may be certain

(Continued on Page 8)

Editor's notebook

By the time you read this, I'll have traveled east and paid a visit to our 1995 convention host, Richard L. Pope (PF-740) in Corning, N.Y.

Those of use who attended Dick's series-book convention in 1986 know what a beautiful, historic city Corning is, located at the foot of New York's scenic Finger Lakes region, famous for its wineries, wonderful lake swimming and boating. The September-October *Newsboy* will include photos of Corning and the surrounding area.

Dick and his wife Jackie already have preliminary planning for the convention under way, and his official letter of welcome can be read on Page 13. We'll publish more information on the convention leading up to our "Convention Preview" issue of January-February, 1995, which will include the complete agenda along with convention and hotel registration forms.

Let's make this the best-attended convention ever! The dates are May 4 through 7, 1995.

As president Mary Ann Ditch mentions in her column in Page 2, there is a series-book convention planned for Plymouth, Mass., the previous weekend (the last weekend in April). When this event was scheduled, the planners were not aware that the Horatio Alger Society holds its annual convention the first weekend of May or the final weekend of April, depending upon the calendar (we always avoid Mother's Day weekend).

To prevent a head-to-head conflict, we've scheduled our 31st convention for May 4-7. Because the two locations are 400-plus miles apart, it sets up the possibility of avid book collectors among our Particular Friends to go to Plymouth April 28, grab "a piece of the rock" (in other words, a lot of books) and then head to Corning the following weekend for our get-together. You can also use the days in-between to go to bookstores in the New England and New York areas.

Presumably, the Plymouth convention is being offered for many of the collectors in the east who can't travel to California this fall for "Series Book Collectors in Earthquake Land." The dates are Sept. 22-25 and the location is the Buena Park Hotel and Convention Center, adjacent to Knott's Berry Farm.

For more information or to register, see the official "Program and Registration Information" form enclosed in this issue.

More information on this event as well as, presumably, next spring's Plymouth, Mass., convention, also

may be seen in upcoming issues of *Yellowback Library*.

In other news, we have continued to receive positive comments about our tribute (in reality, that of his hometown newspaper) offered to 1990 convention host Bill McCord, who died in May. While we can accept thanks for publishing it, it is the measure of the man that makes the tribute possible. It is people like Bill who have made the Horatio Alger Society so special.

A straight-talker who never forgot that were in this hobby to have fun, Bill never lost his sense of humor, right to the end. Because he lived in a village (Catskill, N.Y.) near where I grew up, his tales of small-town politics after he became village president really rang true. Even though he grew tired of the political wrangling associated with public office after one term, I think deep-down he enjoyed fighting the good fight.

Ed Mattson (PF-067) recently submitted an obituary from the *Baltimore Sun* of a prominent local lawyer, Jacob Blum, 80, who said it was reading Alger and his contemporaries as a youth growing up in a Baltimore immigrant east-side ghetto that inspired his successful career.

"On my way to and from school, to which I walked, I passed a store that sold stories by these authors in editions on racks for five cents each," Blum said.

"I became a good customer. It was these stories with heroic tales of poor boys, who because of their bravery and honesty became rich and powerful, it was because of their ever-successful defense of the poor as lawyers, that stimulated my desire for the profession."

One only wonders if members of today's generation have the appreciation of the poverty experienced by many of their immigrant ancestors. One thing is certain, they don't have Alger books available for sale on the corner newsstand to read for inspiration.

In this issue: Beginning on Page 5, executive secretary Robert E. Kasper (PF-327) gives a brief overview of one of Alger's most fascinating books, "Tom, the Boot-black," which began its hard-cover existence as "The Western Boy."

Also, starting on Page 9, Ralph Gardner (PF-053) shows how an innocent-appearing item like a century-old hotel register can give clues to the vanished world of the 1880s, when Horatio Alger was in his prime as a writer.

Peter C. Walther (PF-548) gives a fascinating glimpse of one of those writers — Matthew White, Jr. — who contrived mightily to the dime novel era but is largely unknown today.

Coming in September-October: "Rediscovering Alger," by Carol Nackenoff (PF-921) and "Gilbert Patten: A Look Beyond the Merriwells" by your editor, both of which were given as presentations at the 30th H.A.S. convention in Grand Rapids, Mich.

'The Western Boy'

by Robert E. Kasper (PF-327)

Horatio Alger, Jr.'s "The Western Boy" made its first appearance in the newspaper-sized *New York Weekly* during the year 1873. The first installment appeared in issue No. 34, dated June 30, and ended in No. 45 on Sept. 15, 1873.

It was not until five years later that G.W. Carleton published the first hard-cover edition (see Example 1). This first-edition book is unusual for several reasons: First, the scarcity of this edition is indicative of a very small printing or very poor sales. I find this curious since the 1870s supposedly was the apex of Alger's popularity.

Second, this title, although used once again, was quickly abandoned and reissued as "Tom, the Bootblack." This was, of course, one of Alger's most admired works and was issued by scores of publishers.

Third, in 1878, A.K. Loring of Boston was Alger's exclusive publisher and had been since 1864 when it published "Frank's Campaign." One can only speculate how Carleton obtained the rights to publish this story. After "The Western Boy" was published in 1878, Loring managed to issue three new Alger titles before going out of business in 1880.

The connection with the American News Company, whose name appears on the spine only of the Carleton edition, is not known at this time. Ralph D. Gardner, in his 1964 biography/bibliography, "Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era," speculates that this company served as a distributor only and was not part of the production process.

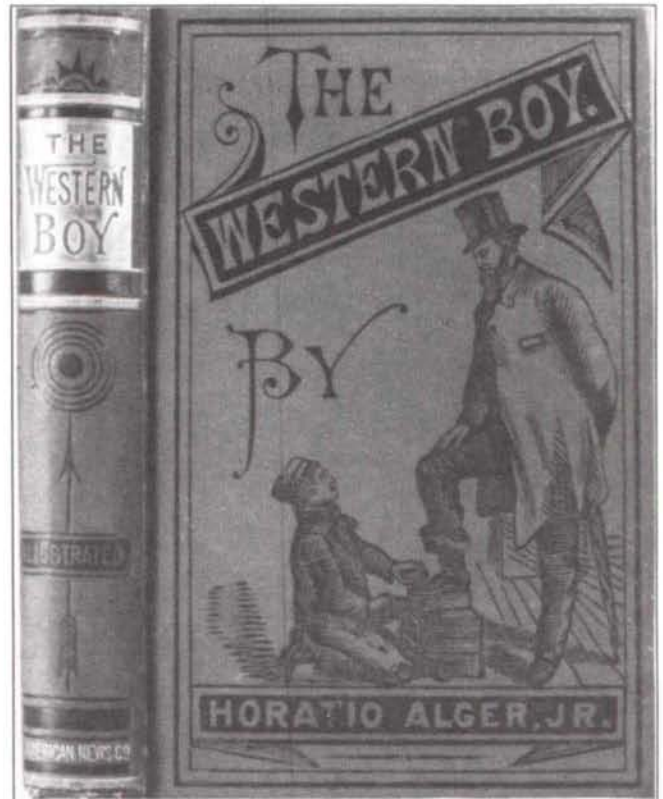
The next appearance of this story, now in its new title "Tom, the Bootblack," was published by John S. Ogilvie in 1880 (Example 2). This extremely rare reprint was issued as Volume 1 of its Dare and Do Right Series (The title page and frontispiece are reproduced on Page 6).

The second volume of the Dare and Do Right Series is the first edition of "Tony, the Hero" in an identical binding. Since both titles are listed on the frontispiece of "Tom, the Bootblack" as well as in the advertisements in the rear of the book, I would guess that these two books were published simultaneously.

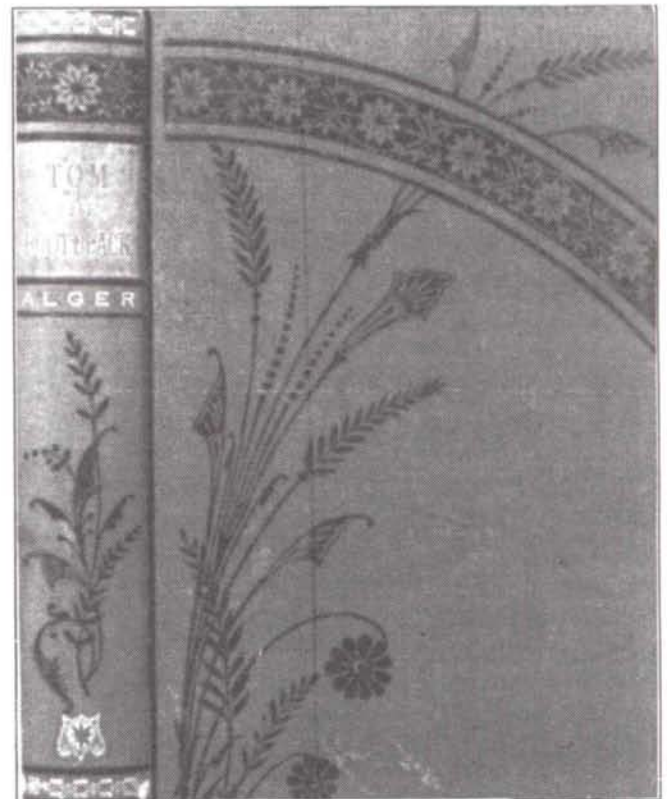
Nine years later, A.L. Burt of New York published "Tom, the Bootblack" as part of its Boys' Home Library Series. This series was published in both hard-cover and paperback formats. The scarce paperback edition (Example 3) was published in March 1889 as No. 19 in the series and the hard-cover edition (not pictured) was issued at the same time. Burt reissued "Tom, the Boot-

(Continued on Page 6)

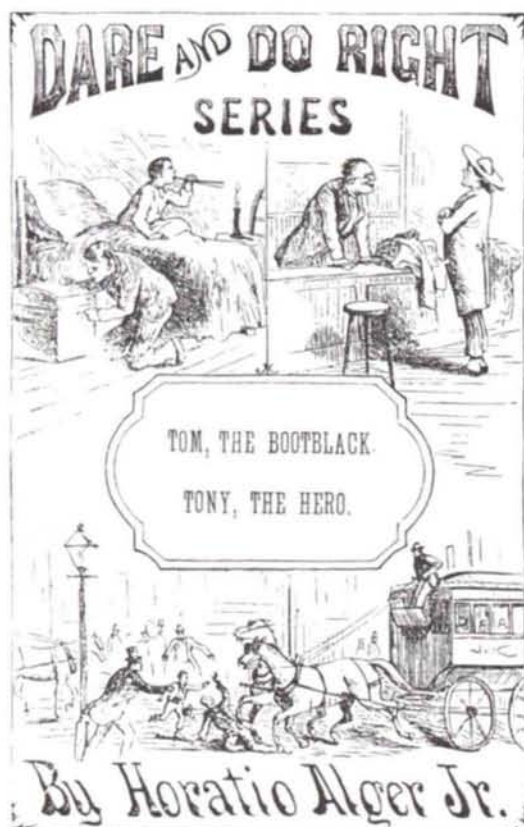
Alger at first glance



Ex. 1: The hard-cover first edition of Alger's "The Western Boy," published by G.W. Carleton in 1878.



Ex. 2: In 1880, John S. Ogilvie published "The Western Boy" under its new title of "Tom, the Bootblack."



TOM, THE BOOTBLACK.

By HORATIO ALGER, Jr.,

AUTHOR OF

"TONY, THE HERO," "ABNER HOLDEN'S BOUND BOY," ETC., ETC.

NEW YORK:

J. S. OGILVIE AND COMPANY,
29 Rose Street.

The frontispiece and title page for J.S. Ogilvie's 1880 reprint of "The Western Boy" under the new title of "Tom, the Bootblack" as part of its Dare and Do Right Series. The first edition of Alger's "Tony, the Hero" also appeared (presumably simultaneously) in this series with both titles shown on the frontispiece.

'The Western Boy'

(Continued from Page 5)

black" in various other hard-cover formats over the years.

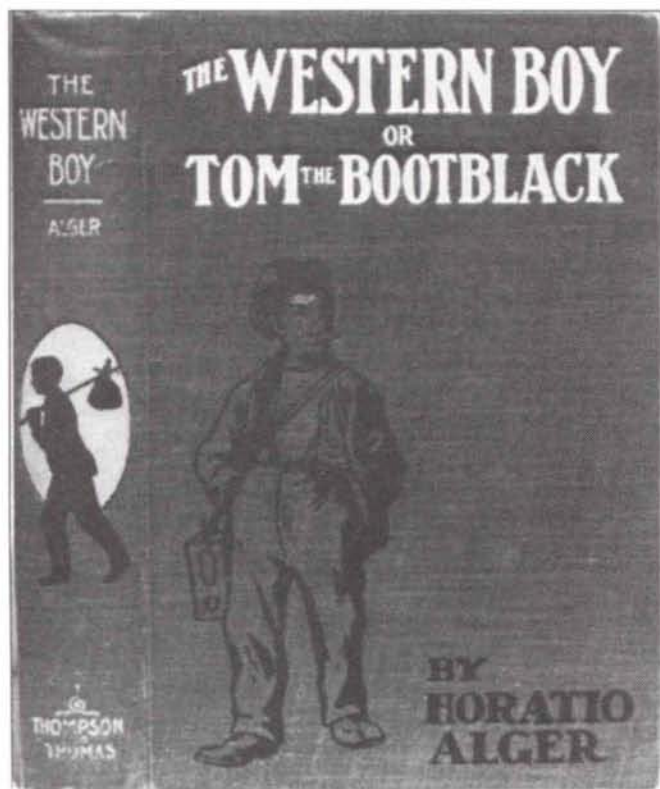
This story was next published by the Chicago firm of Thompson & Thomas sometime during 1902. For some unknown reason, Thompson & Thomas resuscitated the original title, "The Western Boy," although "Tom, the Bootblack" appears prominently on the cover (see Example 4) and title page. This is the second of two hard-cover editions of "The Western Boy" appearing under that title.

From this point forward the original title was dropped, never to appear again. All of the publishers henceforth — and there were scores of them — used the reissue title, "Tom, the Bootblack."

In addition to hard-cover editions issued by Chatterton-Peck, M.A. Donohue, Federal, Hurst, Burt



Ex. 3: A.L. Burt's paper-back edition of "Tom, the Bootblack," was published on March 1889 as No. 19 in its Boys' Home Library Series. Burt also issued a hard-cover edition of the title at the same time.



Ex. 4: The 1902 reprint by Thompson & Thomas of Chicago revived the original title, along with "Tom, the Bootblack," on the cover. This represented the last time the title "The Western Boy" was used.

'The Western Boy'

(Cont. from Page 6)

and others, there were several paperback reprints, including Westbrook, Donohue and Street & Smith.

One of the Street & Smith edition (No. 37 in its Alger Series, published in May 1917) is shown as Example 5. Street & Smith also issued this title in its Medal Library series (No. 192) on Feb. 7, 1903.



Ex. 5: Street & Smith's Alger Series paperback edition of "Tom, the Bootblack," published in 1917.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Gowen:

At the recent convention I obtained from Carl Hartmann a number of old *Newsboy* issues, some of which contained Alger short stories.

I used a copying machine to reduce by 65 per cent the print size of these stories so that they could be pasted in a bound 5" x 8" scrapbook.

Some of these stories are rarely available to the Alger collector. As such, I found this task a most enjoyable pastime and trust that other members may share in this delightful pursuit, adding their own personal touches (photos, sketches, etc.).

I will gladly purchase (or trade) with any member for those *Newsboy* issues containing short stories or poems not shown below. My collection consists of:

<u>Newsboy</u>	<u>Title</u>
December 1972	"Boy Substitute"
(Reference: N.Y. Weekly, Feb. 20, 1882)	
May 1982	"Ties of Old" (song)
(Reference: Psi Epsilon fraternity, 1857)	
May 1982	"Mark Henderson's Failing"
(Reference: Gleason's, Jan. 28, 1860)	
March 1983	"Aunt Dorothy's Visit"
(Reference: American Union, May 21, 1853)	
July 1983	Ordination of Horatio Alger
(Reference: Brewster Unitarian Church, Dec. 8, 1864)	
September 1992	"How John's Idea Came Out"
(Reference: Philadelphia Inquirer, Oct. 29, 1893)	
Since I am missing all issues from 1986 to August 1992 and those prior to 1974, I trust that someone may have some of these elusive items.	

Sincerely,
Angelo Sylvester (PF-928)
P.O. Box 53
Tamworth, NH 03886



Ralph Gardner, Jerry Friedland and Bill Leitner get together at the annual H.A.S. banquet at the 1994 convention in Grand Rapids, Mich. Photo by Ruth Miller

MEMBERSHIP

New members:

Karen Swanson (PF-942)

1615 Harrow Dr.

Newport Beach, CA 92660 (714) 645-7698

Karen is a registered nurse who owns around 80 Alger titles. Her other hobbies include antiques/collectibles and gardening. She learned about the Society from new member Bruce Swanson (PF-939).

(Editor's note: In the May-June issue, Karen's PF Number was inadvertently assigned to Arthur T. Seybert of Chicago, who rejoined the Society and thus still has his original PF Number, 850).

David Lee Collier (PF-943)

1845 Crestmont Ct.

Glendale, CA 91208 (818) 246-2468

David works in motion picture and television production and enjoys Alger for leisure reading, owning about 50 percent of the titles. His other hobbies are old cars and player pianos. He learned about the Society from Gary Scharnhorst.

David B. Edwards (PF-944)

318 S. Church St.

Moorestown, NJ 08057 (609) 234-3256

David is an active-duty warrant officer whose main hobby is collecting and dealing in series books. He learned about H.A.S. from another member.

Change of address:

Rolfe B. Chase (PF-602)

4731 Fox Creek Rd.

Carson City, NV 89703 (702) 885-6812

(Phone number in roster is incorrect)

William Schnase (PF-932)

250 Brandywine, S.E.

Poplar Grove, IL 61065

Clyde E. Willis (PF-119)

P.O. Box 63

Westerville, OH 43086-0063 (614) 882-4644

(New ZIP code)

Even if your address is accurate in our records, please return the self-addressed postal card enclosed in this issue. This will form the basis for our new roster.

Why this card is *important* . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

we already have the most up-to-date information, please mail the card. Most of the information is the basic stuff, but it's important for our records. Please print or type so we can be certain everything is spelled correctly.

When all the cards are in Rob's hands, he will make the changes necessary to his computerized listing so that everything is up to date. At that point, the list will be copied into our desktop publishing program and formatted into a roster booklet for printing and mailing free to each member.

We are in the process of designing a new cover for the booklet. At this point, we intend to retain the 3 1/2-by-8 1/2-inch format so that it conforms to past rosters and fits easily into a jacket pocket.

You'll notice an additional category on the postal card: "other authors or series." We felt this was useful information because as the Horatio Alger Society has evolved over its three-plus decades, it has become more than a specialist group of Alger collectors.

Many of our members collect other books like Optic, Stratemeyer, Ellis and various authors of earlier titles, not to forget dime novels and story papers. Also, of course, is the great number of newer members whose interests include Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew, Tom Swift and other products of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, as well as such non-Syndicate staples as Rick Brant, Judy Bolton, Chip Hilton and Ken Holt. There is no reason Algers and other books can't coexist on your shelves and we welcome collectors of the latter to the Society.

When all the cards are in, we'll inform you in **Newsboy** when the new roster will be available.

No, we don't intend to make this postal card survey an annual event. It's a one-time deal in order to start fresh on our new data base.

What happens if you move in the weeks or months ahead? Simply write to Rob Kasper as soon as you get your new address and phone number and he will pass the information along to **Newsboy** for publication in the next issue (see listing at left).

One thing about address changes: When you move, the U.S. Postal Service provides cards that you can send to all organizations or publishers of periodicals needing such changes.

This card is not ideal for the Horatio Alger Society. While it offers the old and new addresses, it does not have a spot for the phone number as well as other information unique to the Society (number of titles, first editions, marital status, etc).

So when you move, please don't just send the Executive Secretary the Postal Service change-of-address card. We need that additional information!

By the Beautiful Sea . . .

A tale of Old Orchard, 1886

by Ralph D. Gardner (PF-053)

An apparently innocuous note, picked from my mail one morning some months ago, became the key to a mysterious Pandora's Box. It was also to transport me back to the summer of 1886, to the majestic, long-vanished Hotel Fiske that once faced Saco Bay from the shores of Maine's Old Orchard Beach.

It happened like this:

A lady who read an article I had written on nineteenth-century American authors wrote that she had found an old hotel register in an antiques shop near Kennebunkport. It contained the signature of Horatio Alger, in whom I have been long interested, inscribed when the famed author arrived for a brief vacation. The shopkeeper, told that I might want the register, agreed to put it aside for a couple of weeks.

With the suggestion that I correspond directly to the dealer, the writer closed. Immediately my check went to the post office along with a warm letter of thanks to my unknown friend, from whom I never heard again.

The large book soon arrived, musty smelling from decades of storage, but still sturdily bound. It had blue marbled endpapers and crisp — though yellowed — pages. The name, Hotel Fiske, was clearly gold-imprinted upon its leather spine.

What at first inspection appeared to be purely the listing of an elegant hotel's guests that long past summer was actually a marvelous discovery. I owned the unique documentation of a delightful, yet barely remembered aspect of New England's social history.

Reading between the lines of signatures, it is easy to envision the genteel, unhurried pace of a seaside holiday at Old Orchard a century ago. One learns something of preferred transportation routes to the Maine coast, then quickly some costs of an 1886 vacation.

A brief section at the front of the register, commending some of the other hotels throughout our then unsophisticated land, reminds one that accommodations with meals included were available at from one to three dollars per day (the Fiske was in the top-priced group). It shows lodgings for New England cities and resorts,

VIEW FROM PIER LOOKING SOUTH, OLD ORCHARD BEACH, ME.



for metropolises, and also room and board rates at such far-away-sounding frontier settlements, crossroads and rail junctions as Sundance, Wyoming; Sleepy Eye, Minnesota; and Caddo, Indian Territory — as Oklahoma was then known.

But from all other contents of that hefty volume, one learns much about the Fiske clientele, its tastes and recreations during that carefree season. This is neatly illustrated by advertisements for local goods and services that appear on the register's blotting sheets.

A number of these establishments that probably enhanced visitors' enjoyment were a livery stable offering carriages and "first class teams for hire," gift and souvenir shops, a confectionery, bookstore, photographer and a custom tailor, among others. One is almost able to inhale fragrant aromas of ice cream and fruit-flavored tonic syrups at the candy store, and then wonder how many book shop browsers left with copies of such current best-sellers as "King Solomon's Mines" or "War and Peace." Small boys probably preferred "Kidnapped" to "Little Lord Fauntleroy." Their sisters undoubtedly enjoyed "Jo's Boys" and Heidi!

The antiques dealer had inserted a marker into the page indicating the arrival of Horatio Alger, Jr. on Tuesday, July 6th. He still used the "Jr." and continued to do so all his life, although his father, a prominent Unitarian minister, had died years earlier.

Horatio's familiar signature was there, followed by a clerk's notations that he had checked in at tea time, with afternoon temperatures reaching 92° (which, according to weather and tides information jotted atop most pages, made it one of that summer's hottest days).

Glancing at various inscriptions — most of them in
(Continued on Page 10)

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in *New England Galaxy*, Summer 1974. The author notes that for many years Horatio Alger, Jr. spent part of every summer at the Fiske, often with his sister and brother-in-law, Augusta and Amos Parker Cheney.

By the Beautiful Sea . . .

(Continued from Page 9)

rounded, well-formed letters characteristic of Platt Rogers Spencer's style of penmanship then being taught — I suspected other interesting autographs might also be present.

From casual inspection it became clear that the entire volume was indeed a historical treasury of a summer and an era long forgotten. I continued to study it; once involved, I couldn't leave it. Soon much spare time was occupied with research to produce answers to lingering questions. Meanwhile, this old register's hidden tale became more and more fascinating.

Even before the romance of that day-to-day chronicle became apparent, search was rewarded with another Alger signature — he returned in August for a second stay at the Fiske — as well as those of Ben C. Truman and Will Carleton, two other popular writers of that period, of which more will be said later.

The hotel opened on June 1st and even before its High Season began with the July 4th weekend, the guest list was a veritable roll call of Boston society. Daily arrivals included the Winthrop, Adams, Aldrich, Quincy and Lowell families, these followed in continuing succession by Parkers, Conants, Coolidges, Robinsons, Brooks, Phillips, Lodges, Coffins, Cabots, Forbes, Lees, Littles, Gardners, Sargents, Sawyers, Claflins, Lawrences, Lymans, Converses, Houghtons, Loring, and possibly others I couldn't decipher well enough to authenticate.

The festive activities, beautiful beach, and crisp Maine climate also attracted foreign and titled visitors. From London came "Lady Seymour and maid." A half-dozen other Londoners were also in residence at the Fiske that summer. "A.F. de Jersey" listed Guernsey, England, as home. There was "the 2nd John Shute & Lady Shute & Son." There were two arrivals from Liverpool, one who simply wrote "England," and many, many Canadians. A Don Camilo de la Guardia came from Panama. Some names were preceded by "The Honorable."

Then there were at least a couple of entries that raise questions that must remain unanswered. What occurred on August 24th to make nine persons decide suddenly to check out en masse from Kennebunkport's Ocean Bluff House and arrive unexpectedly at dinnertime? And what became of "Leroy O. Straw and Wife" of Florida, who disappeared (according to a penciled notation) without paying their bill?

In all, there were 1,996 entries in the register, most of them family groups staying for periods ranging from overnight to the entire season. From the earliest days of summer, a number of names reappeared regularly. Can we guess that these were traveling salespeople making

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J. F. STEARNS, UPHOLSTERER. Furniture & Carpets. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	CHARLES W. SHANNON, Organ and Music Teacher. Agent for First-Class PIANO FORTES AND ORGANS. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	H. B. KENDRICK & CO., 100 Water St., Saco, Me.
SAMUEL GARLAND, Fruit & Confectionery. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	WILLIS T. EMMONS, Fire, Marine, Life & Accident INSURANCE! 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	Circulating Library, 100 Water St., Saco, Me.
MAXFIELD'S LAUNDRY. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	W. E. FREEMAN, Merchant Tailor. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	F. C. BRADBURY, CORONER & FUNERAL DIRECTOR, And Embalmer. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.
HOT AND COLD BATHS AT BROWNE'S Hair Dressing Rooms. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	IVORY H. TOWLE, Carriages and Cycles. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	D. F. LITTLEFIELD, FRUIT & PRODUCE. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.
V. LITTLEFIELD, Carriages and Cycles. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	ANDREW W. HEWES, Loom Dresser REEDS. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.	Livery, Feed & Boarding Stable. 100 Water St., Saco, Me.

The blotting sheets from the Hotel Fiske register advertised nearby merchants and professional services.

their accustomed rounds?

Three recurring one-night visitors indicated their connection simply as "B. & M. R.R." May we assume the hotel had some special arrangement to provide accommodations for personnel of the Boston & Maine Railroad, the terminal of which was just a block away?

There were 817 individuals or families who listed homes in Massachusetts, followed by 248 from Maine, 230 from New York, 202 from Canadian provinces and 105 from New Hampshire. Fifty-eight came from Illinois, 45 from Rhode Island and more than 30 each from Vermont, Connecticut and Ohio. Twenty-one arrived from Missouri, 18 from Maryland, 16 from Michigan and Minnesota, 14 from New Jersey and the District of Columbia, with one to five each from Delaware, Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida, Louisiana, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Montana, Texas and California.

The record shows that many families remaining through the summer were joined by husbands returning for weekends. Where there were children, "governess"

or "nurse" was frequently indicated, and their names generally were Irish. Among these were Alice Murphy, Nellie Sullivan, Mary Burke and Annie Riley.

Most guests arrived before dinner, indicating, perhaps that they came on the late afternoon train.

Although the register contains (alongside columns indicating arrival time and rooms assigned) a column headed "Horse," few patrons required stable facilities for their teams.

Those who did came from nearby, excepting a husband and wife from Lake Village, New Hampshire, and another couple who traveled from Providence.

The building — I learned from a contemporary engraving — was a sprawling L-shaped structure. It contained rooms numbered 1 through 134, plus an additional eight suites designated by letters.

During June, only those up to Number 44 were used, giving the impression that they were probably on the ground floor. Throughout the busy period of July-August, higher numbered chambers were opened in sections, only to be closed off in reverse order starting August 30th. By the end of September, when the Fiske was closed for the season, 39 was the highest room number occupied.

Rooms 100 and above seem to have been most often given to men arriving alone. Rather than to keep dashing young ladies out of harm's way, as these arrangements might suggest, it is more probable that they got top-floor quarters because it was easier for them to climb several flights of stairs. Conversely, arrivals whose handwriting shows they may have been elderly, almost invariably got low-numbered first-floor apartments.

Some rooms were occupied 20 or more times, but the average was less than half that total. There was a Room Number 13 which, coincidentally, was assigned 13 times during the season (11 times to men, once to two women and once to a couple), more often than most. Added grist for the superstitiously inclined statistician is the fact that 13 of the hotel's rooms went unused that summer.

The engraving shows an elegant five-story ocean



The elegant Hotel Fiske accommodated 300 guests and offered a commanding view of Old Orchard Beach. It was situated so near the ocean that at high tide, waves beat against the basement walls.

front building with gabled gingerbread roof and an elongated three-story wing. There was a great expanse of lawn upon which guests played tennis, and a semicircular paved driveway entered from Grand Avenue (which appeared to be as yet unpaved).

An article in the **Lewiston Journal** referred to the:

"Hotel Fiske, with accommodations for 300 guests, situated so near the ocean that at high tide waves beat against the basement walls. Built high, the Fiske claimed the best view of the beach. Its specialty was family suites ... the people who came for the season arrived with their private maids, carriages and coachmen, and the scene was of big parties and orchestras and the women dressed up in imported gowns and beautiful jewels."

An 1884 publication, **Historical Sketches of Old Orchard and the Shores of Saco Bay**, described the shoreline:

"During the pleasure season thousands here assemble to engage in seaside sports. Nothing can exceed the gaiety and joyousness of the scene. For miles, gay equipages throng this wave-washed highway and the surf is alive with jubilant bathers. The sportive find lively recreations and the meditative subjects for moral and elevating reflections. Recent scientific investigation has shown that ozone, a peculiar element in the atmosphere, is found most abundantly."

A hotel directory of that year commends the Fiske as "... especially worthy the patronage of the travelling or pleasure-seeking public. Erected in 1882 on the site of

(Continued on Page 12)

By the Beautiful Sea . . .

(Continued from Page 11)

the former Fiske House and St. Cloud, which were burnt in 1881, this has, under the efficient management of C[harles] H. Fiske, become one of the most popular at Old Orchard. A delightful sea breeze is enjoyed at all times. The whole appointments are according to the best modern inventions. Suites of apartments fitted for families are especially attractive. Entertainment for guests is liberally provided. Terms: From \$12 to \$20 per week; special rates for the season; half rates for June and September."

Major Ben C. Truman, the writer of stories with Western backgrounds, arrived from San Francisco with his wife and child the evening of Wednesday, June 30th. Whether he and Horatio Alger had met previously is not known (although Alger spent the year 1876-1877 in California), but their paths did not cross at the Fiske, for the Trumans departed three days before Horatio's arrival.

What Alger, a best-selling author of rags-to-riches adventures for young people, did during that one-week visit and when he returned the following month may be reconstructed from his letters and from what is known of his other vacations at Old Orchard, where for many years he spent part of every summer.

We know he visited with his old chum and Harvard classmate, the Reverend Charles Vinal, who was then minister of the Unitarian congregation at Kennebunk. In Kennebunkport lived another close friend, John Townsend Trowbridge, the prominent editor of *Our Young Folks* and author of the Jack Hazard novels and many others of the post-Civil War era. Horatio would take the horsecars to Trowbridge's recently built cottage where the two men sat through many a sunny afternoon. Ice cream, tea and checkers were the diversions, as were remembrances of times past as they gazed across the wind-buffed ledges that divide Wells Bay from the blue waters of the open Atlantic.

Alger was an indefatigable writer, always working on several manuscripts at once. It is safe to guess that at about this time he was preparing final installments of "Oliver the Outcast," already scheduled for serialization in *The New York Weekly*; "Striving for Fortune," or, "Walter Griffith's Trials and Successes," soon to appear in *Golden Argosy*; "Ned Newton," or, "The fortunes of a New York Bootblack;" and "Tom Tracy," or, "The Trials of a New York Newsboy."

Since he was a favorite among children, we can be sure he handed out many autographs while relaxing on the Fiske's high, breezy veranda or strolling casually along its broad white beach.

The High Season was ending and the weather turn-

92°
 Thursday July 6th 1886
 H. L. Bucks Milton Mass.
 R. A. Kaylor - Burlington Vt. 27
 H. C. Porter Worcester Mass.
 L. C. Phillips
 ✓ Rev. S. Newman 69
 ✓ Mr. W. Baxter } Monmouth 71
 ✓ - S. B. Tenante }
 ✓ H. W. Scott Boston
 ✓ Horatio Alger Jr. New York 5 24
 ✓ Wm. Smith - So. Natick Mass.
 Eldering Portland.
 ✓ Geo. S. Green St. Louis 44

The signature of Horatio Alger, Jr. (fourth from the bottom) in the Fiske's register was inscribed upon his arrival at the hotel on July 6, 1886.

ing cooler when Will Carleton signed the register on Wednesday, September 1st. A Michigan-born writer of poems of rural life — his most popular being the sentimental "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse" — he had already published successful volumes of poetry that included "Farm Ballads," "Farm Legends" and "Farm Festivals."

Based upon his observations at the nearby Ocean Park religious camp meeting grounds, Carleton summed up one recollection of his Old Orchard vacation in these lines, titled "Farmer Stebbins at Ocean Grove":

We got here safe — my worthy wife and me —
 And took a tent here in the woods contiguous to the sea
 And everything went easy like until we took a whim —
 My wife and I — one breezy day, to take an ocean swim.
 We shouldn't have ventured on't, I think, if Sister Sunnyhopes
 Hadn't urged us over and again, and said she knew "the ropes."
 And so we went along with her — my timid wife and me —
 Two inland noodles, for our first acquaintance with the sea.
 When all at once a bridle wave, uncommon broad and deep.
 Came thrashing down on Wife and me, and flopped us in a heap!
 Heels over head — all in a bunch — my wife across of me,
 And I on some misguided folks who happened there to be . . .
 We drank 'bout two-thirds of the sea — my gasping wife and I —
 While Sister S. still floated soft, a-gazing at the sky.
 We voted that we'd had enough, and got right out of the way
 Before another wave arrived, and bid the sea good-day!

Thursday, September 30th was mild and clear, with comfortable temperatures. By mid-afternoon all the Fiske's 11 remaining guests had departed and the hotel closed its doors. The season of 1886 had ended.

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July 10, 1994

Dear Fellow Members:

My wife, Jackie, and I are pleased to invite you to attend the 1995 Convention of the Horatio Alger Society here in Corning, New York. Tentative dates are May 4, 5, 6 and 7, and the tentative location is The Lodge on the Green just three miles from downtown. This motel and conference center has offered our group the very special rate of \$49.00 per night.

Corning is the site of the Corning Glass Center which draws nearly a half million visitors per year. The town is located at the gateway to the beautiful Finger Lakes Region which is replete with rolling hills, vineyards, wineries and waterfalls. Our downtown shopping area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and features the Rockwell Museum of Western Art, the premier collection east of the Mississippi River.

Just a few miles away in Elmira is the grave of Mark Twain, who spent many of his summers here writing some of his famous novels and short stories at the farm of his in-laws. A good many bookshops featuring used and rare books are within a 50 mile radius. For the somewhat adventuresome, the Corning area is the "Glider Capital of America."

As to driving time, Corning is about four and a half hours west of New York City, three hours southeast of Niagara Falls, four hours east of Cleveland and four hours northwest of Philadelphia. USAir serves our busy Elmira/Corning airport.

We look forward to seeing you next spring!

Your partic'lar friend,

Dick Pope

Richard L. Pope

'In Search of Treasure'

A look back at
'94 convention



Co-host Chris DeHaan (PF-773) and Joe Slavin (PF-880) take a break during the 30th annual Horatio Alger Society at Grand Rapids, Mich.

Photo by Ruth Miller



Committee chairman Bradford S. Chase (PF-412) discusses with Bob Huber (PF-841) and his fellow H.A.S. directors the merits of the institutions under consideration to become the official Horatio Alger Society repository. Northern Illinois University was voted by the Society's members at the annual business meeting to be the repository. Photo by Joseph T. Slavin III



Neil McCormick (PF-506) awaits buyers at the Saturday H.A.S. book sale.

Photo by Ruth Miller

Matthew White, Jr.: *A bibliographic profile*

by Peter C. Walther (PF-548)

Consider Horatio Alger . . .

Those of us who are reading these words right now consider Alger a mover and shaker in the milieu of nineteenth century juvenile letters. And Justifiably so. Most of us tend to read his books on a fairly regular basis and enjoy, if nothing else, the vicarious pleasures of time travel to a more innocent age: an age of no automobiles, when trains were the primary methods of land transportation, when New York and Boston were wide-open towns enjoying a small-town mythos, and when work was an American ethic to emulate and not to smirk at.

*Other authors...
...other books*

A time of no television, movies nor videos, people have called it a "reading generation" — when one read not only as a means of educating oneself but as a primary source of relaxation and amusement as well. This is all a given, of course; concepts such as the Alger-hero, "Ragged Dick," Carl Cantab, the Brewster affair, and etc. all fall within the purview of our every-day working literary vocabularies.

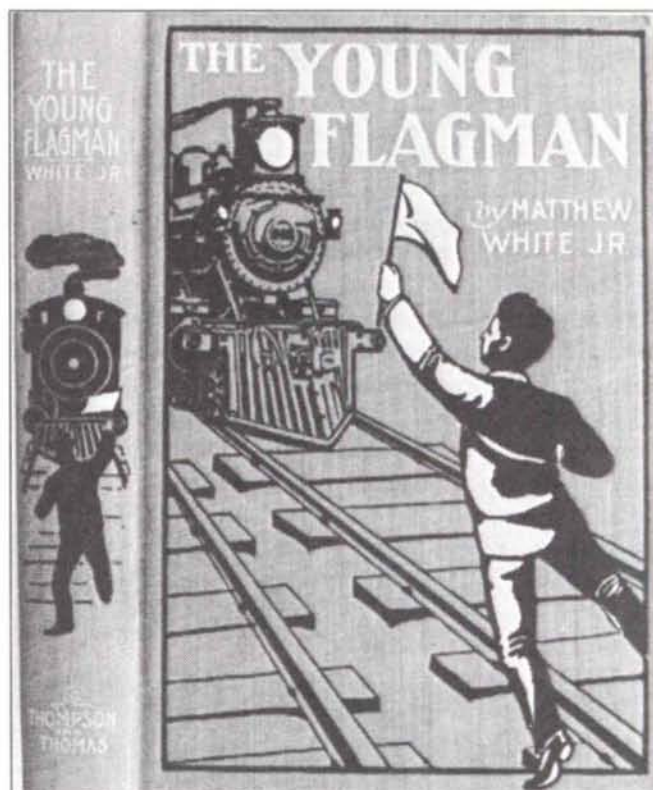
Now consider Alger once again . . .

What about those individuals, a host of them, who know next to nothing about Alger, who don't read his books and pursue and enjoy other venues of research and scholarly commitment?

The Shakespeare scholars, the moralists and philosophers, the Lake poet advocates, the problem novelists, the T.S. Eliot and James Joycers, the folklorists, the Mark Twain crowd and the Dickens school . . . the list is endless. Do they give any thought to Alger?

And how indeed would they regard him? As an also-ran? A blot somewhere? Some vague footnote in the literary record of civilization? Do they even deign to give him notice? In all probability, Alger is not important to them; he does not fall within the periphery of their esoteric pursuits. He does not seem relevant . . . and therefore unnoticed. We certainly regard Horatio Alger, Jr. in the vanguard of our collecting and reading interests, but of course one man's meat is another man's poison. Understandably, Alger practically ceases to exist for them; the literary firmament is extensive enough to allow all of us to ferret out our individual paths of endeavor. A vast cosmos, with room for all.

And now consider Horatio Alger one final time . . .



Matthew White, Jr.'s "The Young Flagman" was copyrighted by Frank A. Munsey in 1890 and published in hard-cover (above) by Thompson & Thomas in 1902.

Depending of course on the framework upon which we work, if Alger leads the literary host, then there must be a trail following far in the rear of imitators and "also-rans," those not quite able to breach the gap, to surmount the pinnacle of public favor and financial acclaim with our nineteenth century juvenile audience.

We can certainly allow them a modest and ephemeral popularity in their day, but what of our day?

I like to think of the "Big Four" as Horatio Alger, Jr., William T. Adams, Edward S. Ellis and Harry Castlemon: top-notchers all, all highly contemporaries and writing much the same type of story for the same readers. But what of the others? What of the second string in this arena of adventure-mongering, serial scribblers? The "rookies" (not used negatively here) who tried as earnestly and devotedly to promote their cause as the "Big Four" did theirs, who never quite captured the juvenile imagination, the appeal and timeless magic of the others?

There were many, let me reiterate, and one of them was Matthew White, Jr., the subject of this brief survey. Whether we consider him an "also-ran" or not is immaterial after all; he is worthy of our notice now and we shall attempt a brief biographical overview followed by a working checklist of his many works, and conclude

(Continued on Page 16)

Matthew White, Jr.: *A bibliographic profile*

(Continued from Page 15)

with a few stray observations.

Matthew White, Jr. was born in New York City on Sept. 21, 1857, the son of Matthew and Sybella (McMinn) White. Mr. White Senior was a malt manufacturer with real estate interests in the West.

Matthew Junior finished his formal education with two years of study in France and Germany. He established the paper **Boys' World** in 1885 but sold it two years later to Frank A. Munsey, at which time he became an editor for the Munsey conglomerate, specifically **Golden Argosy**. He continued as an editor for the firm for more than 40 years, including 28 years as dramatic editor of **Munsey's Magazine**.

On May 28, 1913, while he was in London, the **Berkshire Evening Eagle** carried a story of a man who was burned to death in his summer home. That individual was Mr. White, Sr., who at age 79 was residing with the family at their summer home in Monterey, Mass. A daughter, Mrs. Withington, and a maid successfully made their escape from the burning structure in which the parent perished. We can only imagine the son's grief.

Matthew Junior never married. He died in Westport, Conn., of bronchial pneumonia on Sept. 17, 1940 at the home of his sister (with whom he lived) just a few days shy of his 83rd birthday. Funeral services were conducted by Dr. Kenneth Mackenzie, Rector Emeritus of the Church of the Holy Trinity; burial was in Monterey, Mass. Survivors, besides his sister, included his three nephews: Harry Withington of Boston, Ernest Withington of Westport and Chandler Withington of Queens Village, Long Island. Sybella White Withington, two years younger than her brother, passed away a few years later; she was buried in Monterey on Jan. 3, 1945.

A working checklist of the works of Matthew White, Jr. follows:

Short Stories/Sketches

No attempt has been made to make an individual list of all these works. They are scattered throughout many publications, specifically many of the contemporary Munsey periodicals (**Golden Argosy**, **Argosy**, **Munsey's Magazine** and the like) and many of the other story papers, in all probability.

The earliest examples of White's work in this genre have been traced to Volume 2 of **Harper's Young People** (November 1880 to October 1881) in which may be found five stories, the earliest being "The Roverings and

the Parade" in the Nov. 16, 1880 issue. Doubtlessly many more await discovery.

Serials/Long Stories

Two sources have been cited: **Golden Days** and **Golden Argosy/Argosy**, to make a total of 29 individual works.

Reprinted material is not included (for instance, **Army and Navy Weekly** reprinted "Guy Hammersley" as "A Young Breadwinner"); the six well-known Matthew White books which appeared in the Street & Smith (and subsequent Federal and David McKay) **Boys' Own Library** were, of course, the recycled serials into book form. The titles are readily available from any of the volumes, but for the record they are "Adventures of a Young Athlete," "Eric Dane," "Guy Hammersley," "My Mysterious Fortune," "Tour of a Private Car" and "The Young Editor."

Matthew White, Jr.'s serials and long stories are listed below:

- "Bert Haven"
(**Golden Days**, Aug. 27 to Sept. 24, 1881)
- "The Denford Boys"
(**Golden Days**, May 1 to June 19, 1886)
- "Frank Hay"
(**Golden Days**, Nov. 17 to Dec. 29, 1883)
- "The Heir to Whitecap"
(**Golden Days**, Sept. 12 to Oct. 19, 1885)
- "The Adonis of Beetle Crag"
(**Argosy**, March-April, 1896)
- "The Affair of Morris Davidson"
(**Argosy**, October-December, 1896)
- "Allan Kane's Friend"
(**Argosy**, May-June, 1896)
- "Battling with Fortune"
(**Argosy**, Jan. 9 to April 9, 1892)
- "Camp Blunder"
(**Argosy**, June 11 to June 25, 1887)
- "Eric Dane"
(**Argosy**, Sept. 3 to Nov. 27, 1887)
- "A Fight for a Fortune"
(**Argosy**, September-December, 1895)
- "Guy Hammersley"
(**Argosy**, May 17 to Aug. 9, 1900)
- "In the Grasp of Another"
(**Argosy**, Feb. 4 to April 29, 1903)
- "Lloyd Abbott's Friend"
(**Argosy**, Jan. 20 to March 24, 1894)
- "A Lost Identity"
(**Argosy**, September-December, 1894)
- "My Mysterious Fortune"
(**Argosy**, Jan. 26 to April 27, 1889)

New York, Dec. 11, 1906.

Received from Edward Stratemeyer the sum of sixty-seven dollars,
being payment in full for extra work on my two stories, "Russell Gray's
Search," (formerly "Battling with Fortune,") and "Two Boys and a
Fortune," (formerly "The Test of Fortune.")

Matthew White, Jr.

Matthew White's 1892 Argosy story "The Test of Fortune" was reworked under contract to Edward Stratemeyer (above) into the book "Two Boys and a Fortune," published in 1907 by Chatterton-Peck (below) for the Stratemeyer Syndicate and reprinted as part of the Syndicate's eight-volume Enterprise Books library by Grosset & Dunlap.

"Norman Brooke"

(Argosy, Aug. to Nov. 7, 1891)

"On Steeds of Steel"

(Argosy, May 30 to Aug. 22, 1891)

"Out with a Circus"

(Argosy, May-July 1895)

"Penrhyn's Odd Romance"

(Argosy, September-November, 1896)

"A Publisher at Fifteen"

(Argosy, July 29 to Oct. 28, 1893)

"Ray Culver"

(Argosy, Sept. 15 to Nov. 24, 1888)

"The Test of Fortune"

(Argosy, July 9 to Oct. 1, 1892)

"Three Thirty Three"

(Argosy, March 10 to June 16, 1888)

"The Tour of a Private Car"

(Argosy, Feb. 15 to May 3, 1890)

"The Young Editor"

(Argosy, June 1 to Aug. 24, 1888)

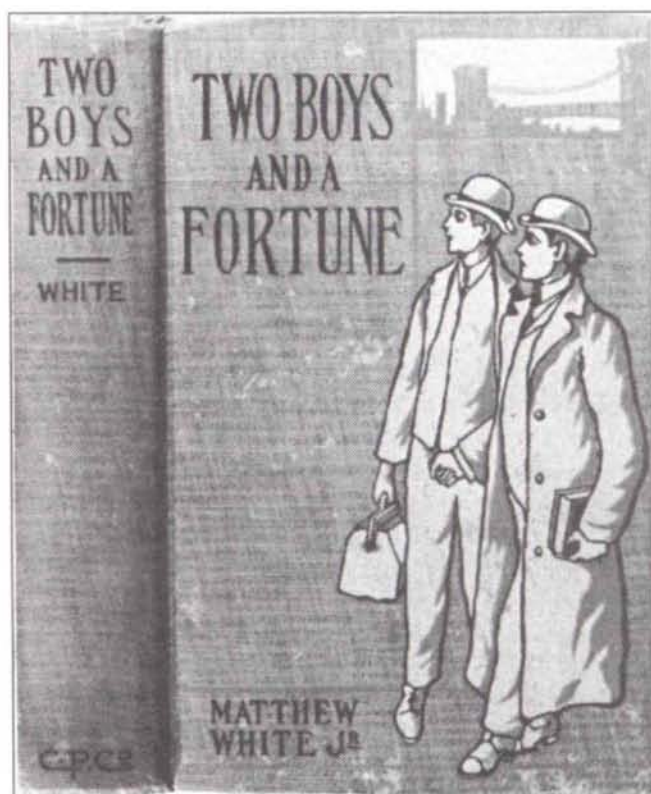
"The Young Flagman"

(Argosy, Nov. 29, 1890 to Feb. 14, 1891)

"The Young Journalist"

(Argosy, Oct. 15 to Dec. 31, 1892)

Quite a few of these serials (especially the later ones) were in turn reprints from **Munsey's Magazine** but we have no listing nor the issues themselves to attempt an accurate reconstruction. It is unknown at this time whether White wrote any dime novels, nor whether he ever employed any pseudonyms. A great many of the serials cited above were never published in book form. A few other stray volumes (Thompson & Thomas' "The



Young Flagman," for instance) can be found in hard-cover editions.

Novels

The following are confirmed as the work of Matthew White, Jr.:

"The Affair at Islington" (New York, Munsey, 1897).

"A Born Aristocrat" (New York, Munsey, 1898).

(Continued on Page 18)

Matthew White, Jr.:

A bibliographic profile

(Continued from Page 17)

"Harry Ascott Abroad" (New York, Authors' Pub., 1879).

"One of the Profession" (New York, Home Book Co., 1893).

"Two Boys and a Fortune" (New York, Chatterton-Peck, 1907).

With the exception of the latter title, these have not been traced as serial stories yet could very well have originated in some obscure newspaper or magazine. "Harry Ascott Abroad" was noted in *Harper's Young People* for Nov. 2, 1880, and would appear at this time to be his earliest book.

Recent research done by James D. Keeline (PF-898) at Yale University and published in *Newsboy* (May-June, 1994 (Vol. XXXII, No. 3, p. 15) has revealed some White data unearthed in the Nancy Axelrad/Stratemeyer Syndicate papers donated to Yale's Beinecke Manuscript Collection.

A letter dated Dec. 11, 1906 and signed by Matthew White, Jr. (see Page 17) cites a receipt for \$67, "being payment in full for extra work on my two stories, 'Russell Gray's Search,' (formerly 'Battling with Fortune') and 'Two Boys and a Fortune' (formerly 'The Test of Fortune')." "

However, the sentence in the contract appears to me so ambiguously worded that we can draw the following two conclusions: Either (1), Matthew White did the work and Edward Stratemeyer paid him, in which event Stratemeyer had copyright control, or (2), Stratemeyer paid White \$67 in return for White's permission to tinker with the stories, in which event White himself owned the copyrights.

However we wish to interpret it, it now becomes obvious that White material found its way into the Stratemeyer Syndicate fiction factory, and that the ubiquitous Edward slashed his pen right and left to add yet more laurels to his literary brow.

The second title mentioned in the Stratemeyer contract, "Russell Gray's Search," does not anywhere appear in White's list of published works. I can only assume one of the following: (1) it appeared under **another** guise by **another** pen name; (2) it appeared by the **same** guise by **another** pen name; or (3) it only existed as a manuscript.

I feel reasonably certain that White and Stratemeyer first met in the latter months of 1890 when *Argosy* was readying itself to publish the younger author's first

contribution, "Richard Dare's Venture."

Miscellaneous Works

"Dr. Gustav Gottheil, Rabbi of the Temple Emanuel-El, New York City." This was an extract from the *Golden Argosy* (Vol. 6, No. 12, Whole No. 272, Feb. 18, 1888). Whether Munsey published this as a separate item is unknown. Its provenance is found in the *National Union Catalog*.

"Dramatic Criticisms from the *New York World*." Two vols., Jan. 3 to June 15, 1926; Oct. 8, 1926 to June 6, 1927.

"Dramatic Criticisms from the *San Francisco Chronicle*." Jan. 31, 1926 to June 28, 1927.

"A Famous American Manager" (extract from *Munsey's Magazine*, Aug., 1899).

"The Press on Plays and Players: A Collection of Newspaper Clippings Relating to Plays and Operas" (20 Vols., Oct. 5, 1897 to Sept. 28, 1917).

"A Quarter Past Six" (in *Vignettes: Real and Ideal*, ed. by Frederic Edward McKay (Boston, DeWolfe, Fiske & Co., 1890).

"Stop, Look and Listen" (Vaudeville Sketch, 1906); publication information unknown.

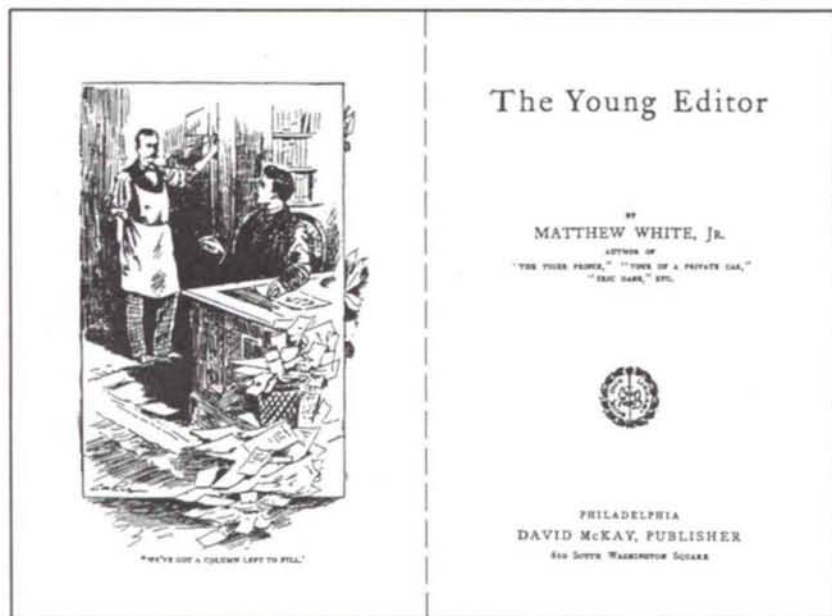
Were most of these private scrapbooks, which the family (or White himself, for that matter) donated to the Library of Congress? It's not possible to say with any certainty. However, one will note his increasing interest in theater and the stage as he became older, and we might offer this progression: Boys' Stories . . . Adult Novels . . . Theater Criticism. There is some cross-pollination, of course, but these seem to be the three areas in which the author excelled.

What constitutes Matthew White, Jr.'s literary legacy? A large corpus of works (which is undoubtedly larger when the uncollectible material can finally be located and catalogued) consisting of 34 "books" as well as many volumes of newspaper clippings and a vast array of short stories over a probable span of two decades which, when once published, vanished from public view.

A photograph of Mr. White has not surfaced as yet but will, I'm sure, at some point. A personal inquiry into the private domains of the White descendants, where much data may still await discovery, has not been attempted. One of the nephews was alive as recently as 1963, but it is difficult to believe at this late remove that any of the three are still living. Their offspring, if any, may still carry the torch.

Five works were read for this brief survey and they are listed below:

(1) "**Eric Dane**." Subtitled "The Football of Fortune," this portrayed the typical Alger themes, with a train wreck and a lad trying to prove his identity thrown in for good measure. Many scenes are laid in New York as well



The frontispiece and title page of "The Young Editor," one of six Matthew White, Jr. books derived from serials and published in the Boys' Own Library by Street & Smith, Federal and David McKay.

as on the stage. One of White's early contributions to the *Golden Argosy*, it represented yet another effort on the part of many authors to duplicate the Alger formula. I enjoyed it.

(2) "My Mysterious Fortune." Another New York story, this concerns an inordinate amount of money literally handed to the hero, who spends the rest of the book trying to figure out the identity of his unknown benefactor. This appears to be a problem he alone faces as it becomes obvious very early on to the reader who this mysterious gentleman is. The protagonist, Harris Kent, tells his tale in the first person, thus bringing the reader quite neatly into his arena of action. This book is dedicated to the author's boyhood chum, Arthur Reginald Little. Recommended.

(3) "Adventures of a Young Athlete." This is the alternate title of the "Three Thirty Three" serial which the publishers doubtless felt was a less marketable name than the other. I won't tell you what "333" means; however, a reading of Mary Roberts Rinehart's "Window at the White Cat" would furnish a clue. The story starts out quite well, with excitement, conflict and suspense but soon deteriorates into boredom and inaction. At least that is my opinion, and it represents for me the least favorite of these five books. A passing reference is made to the half-dime novel on Page 113. A dark beginning to this book but all turns out well in the end (if you can make it that far).

(4) "The Young Flagman." As its title implies, this is a railroad story and I can recommend it; there is much action with some mystery and a lad's character is re-

claimed. It reads well, the plot moves quickly and holds the reader's attention to the end. An action story with some interesting characters.

(5) "The Affair at Islington." Now here's my favorite of all, a really intriguing little murder mystery with the solution to the puzzle *a la* Ellery Queen, literally in the final two pages. The book commences in pretty standard fashion, a typical romantic parlor novel of the time with many of the situations relating to acting and the theater; it soon enough grows dark and ugly, almost vicious, and the final one-third of the book is gripping. I would heartily endorse it to anyone: the final chapters are breathtaking, and I hope a contemporary critic heaped the kudos on Mr. White's brow which were merited and well-deserved. It makes me want to explore his other adult works.

My inclination is that, at least in his early years, Matthew White, Jr. tried to duplicate the Alger formula; although he succeeded

to a degree, with much talent and originality to recommend them, his books lacked the punch, drive and profile of the originals.

Is a bad Alger better than a good White? I don't think so; Alger did, of course, pen (forgive me) some execrable stories as did all his compeers, but Alger's name is part of our popular culture that Matthew White's is not. Whether he could admit it or not, Matthew White found his own distinctive voice and played it out with varying success to the end of his life. Whether or not it was the voice he originally intended it to be is a bootless argument. We recognize him for his legacy and we are none the poorer for it.

Now, of course, the rhetorical question: did the two, Alger and White, ever meet? Quite possibly, I think, but it cannot at this time be proven. Alger was living in New York in this time period and White was doubtlessly burning much midnight (and daylight) oil at his new prestigious position. Yet consider for a minute the following scenario:

It might be the late 1880s or early '90s and a diminutive older gentleman, slightly owlsh in appearance, appears at the offices of the *Golden Argosy* with a manuscript under his arm. He is greeted with affection and respect. Could he see Mr. Munsey for a moment?

"Well, Mr. Munsey is out at the present but could we engage you to meet with one of our associate editors?"

A brief nod in the affirmative. Matthew White, Jr. is seated at his desk; there is a knock on the door. It opens, and into Mr. White's office strides . . .

(Continued on Page 20)

Matthew White, Jr.: A bibliographic profile

(Continued from Page 19)

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ALSO: Telephone conversations with Barbara Swann, Monterey, Mass. Town Clerk and Linda Thorpe, archivist of Corashire Cemetery, Monterey, where Matthew White, Jr. is buried.

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