



# 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 XXXIII

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1995

NUMBER 5

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## President's column

Your new membership roster should be enclosed with this issue of **Newsboy**. Thanks to Bill Gowen's hard work, the 1995 roster is being published at a fraction of the former cost. Also, since all members are now listed in the executive secretary's computer, it will be much easier to keep the names and addresses up to date.

As an added bonus, this computerization will allow an updated roster to be published and distributed each summer, instead of once every three years as in the recent past.

Because of the newsboy theme present in so many of Horatio Alger's books, it is worth mentioning the 100-year anniversary of the country's oldest public newsboy statue, being celebrated this month in Great Barrington, Mass. If you're in the area, stop by. Details on the event are on Page 3.

Looking for a book and can't find it? Try the on-line services. I had been trying to find a copy of Leslie McFarlane's *Ghost of the Hardy Boys* for several years. Twice, I had answered an ad which offered this title, but both times it had already been sold. Last month, I posted a message on CompuServe asking for this work. Within 48 hours, I had a reply from someone who had the book for sale. I sent my check and three days later I had the book.

Using the Internet does have limitations, of course: no one has yet answered by inquiry for *Timothy Crump's Ward!*

Well, in a moment of dementia, I have rented a space in an antique mall which is being constructed about 20 minutes outside of Omaha. The best thing I can say in my defense is that it seemed like a good idea at the time. I remember distinctly saying to myself, "Well, here's something I enjoy that I can do on the weekends in the winter. The rent isn't high and the mall owners will handle all sales, tax reporting and payments. I'll just put some books out." I did everything but sing "These are a Few of My Favorite Things."

The next thing I remember is clearly saying, and not just to myself, is "Wait a minute, you want me to assign a separate inventory number to each book?!" By Oct. 1 I will have had the bookcases in place, somehow filled them, inventoried the books for sale and maybe even learned to walk and chew gum at the same time. This may be trickier than I had thought. Too bad there isn't an Alger book titled *The Middle-Aged Antique Mall Booth*

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## 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).
- Horatio Alger Books Published by Whitman Publishing 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.



# The centennial of 'The Newsboy'

*Oldest surviving statue is celebrating its 100th this fall*

by William R. Gowen (PF-706)

The New England Association of Circulation Executives is planning a 100th Anniversary celebration in honor of the world-famous Newsboy statue in Great Barrington, Mass. on Saturday, Oct. 14.

The bronze statue and fountain, the oldest of its kind in the United States, its face streaked with the tears of time, has maintained his vigil in a small park on Route 23 just west of downtown Great Barrington for 100 years. It survived the devastating May 1995 tornado which swept through Great Barrington, destroying the Barrington fairgrounds on U.S. Route 7 and causing millions of dollars of damage to homes and businesses.

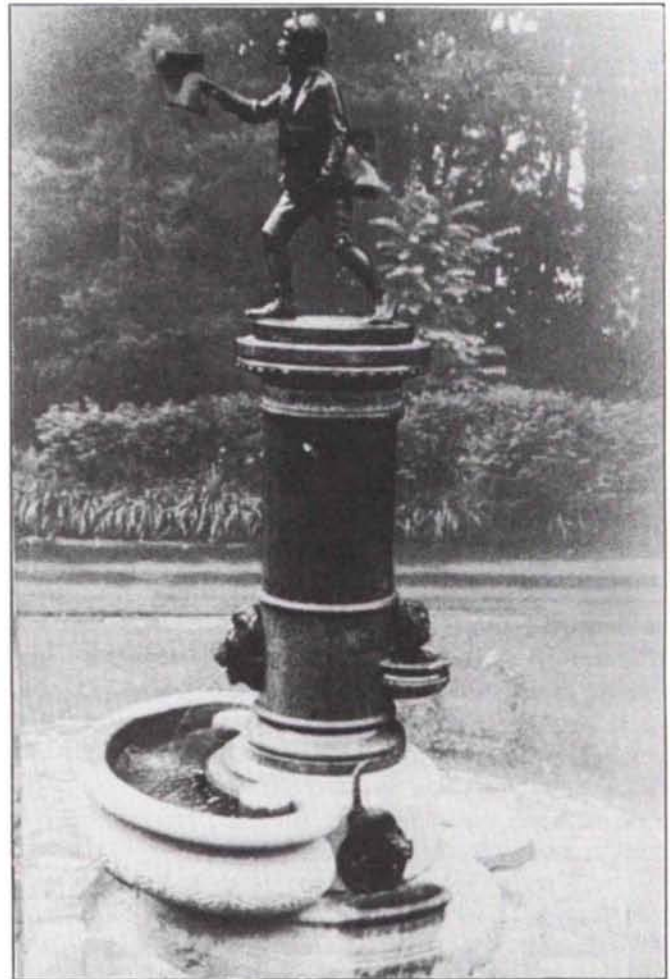
Nobody has ever been able to find out the name of the boy who modeled for the statue a century ago, but his lifelike image has captured the imagination and hearts of people the world over who have visited this historic site.

The statue was created by respected sculptor David Richards and presented to the Town of Great Barrington in 1895 by Colonel William Lee Brown as a tribute to hard-working newsboys everywhere. During the late 1800s, Col. Brown was part-owner and business manager for the first **New York Daily News** (no relation to today's tabloid). He also served as a state senator from New York's 5th District before retiring in Great Barrington. Brown began his publishing career as one of the first owners of an Ohio paper, **The Youngstown Vindicator**.

Ceremonies on Oct. 14 (rain or shine) will begin with a parade at 11 a.m. and end up at the Newsboy Park, located on Rt. 23 at Silver Street. The master of ceremonies will be David M. Jameson, circulation director of the Brockton, Mass. **Enterprise** and president of the New England Association of Circulation Executives.

Participants in the ceremony will include national, state and local officials. Governors William F. Weld of Massachusetts and George E. Pataki of New York have been invited to attend and bring greetings.

In addition, many carriers, both boys and girls, along with men and women representing newspapers from throughout New England and New York, are expected to attend, as well as "newsboys" of yesteryear, who will be invited to participate in the parade. The ceremony is expected to attract several hundred enthusiasts from near and far.



**"The Newsboy" has been keeping a constant vigil over Great Barrington, Massachusetts since 1895.**

*Photo courtesy of Barrie J. Hughes (PF-617)*

The ceremony will also include a balloon launch and the dedication of a bronze plaque listing contributors to the Newsboy Statue Restoration Campaign conducted under the auspices of the New England Association of Circulation Executives. In 1992 that organization joined local historians in completing an extensive restoration of the statue and its two fountains, which have now been brought back to their original condition. Also, considerable improvements were made to the surrounding park.

## A history of "The Newsboy"

How did Col. William Lee Brown (1840-1906) come to build this unique statue?

Brown, who served in the 88th and 125th Volunteer Regiments in Ohio during the Civil War, went to Montana after the war, where he made his fortune in mining. He returned to Ohio in order to earn a law degree and

*(Continued on Page 8)*



## Editor's notebook

Your official 1995 Horatio Alger Society roster is enclosed. Although the planning and execution of this project took longer than anticipated, I feel the result was worth the effort.

Although we have striven to make it completely accurate, an occasional error is bound to occur; in fact, we have already caught one transposed telephone number. If you find anything inaccurate in your address, we'll list the correction in the next issue of *Newsboy* in the "Membership" section.

That brings up a related subject. We just got a note from longtime member Ann Sharrard (PF-325), letting us know that as of October 1 her address was changing from Michigan to Florida. "Sorry to complicate matters, but we have two addresses," Ann notes.

This is an increasingly common tradition (a summer home in the north and winter residence in Florida or Arizona). So, we've decided to list your semiannual change of address in *Newsboy* upon notification, but keep your permanent address (usually the one in a northern state) in our main database. This will allow fellow members to correspond with you but at the same time maintain the integrity of our main membership list (and its use in the official roster).

I will try to set up a short "tickler" list of winter residences in order to mail you *Newsboy* on schedule. If I overlook someone, hopefully the post office will forward your mail.

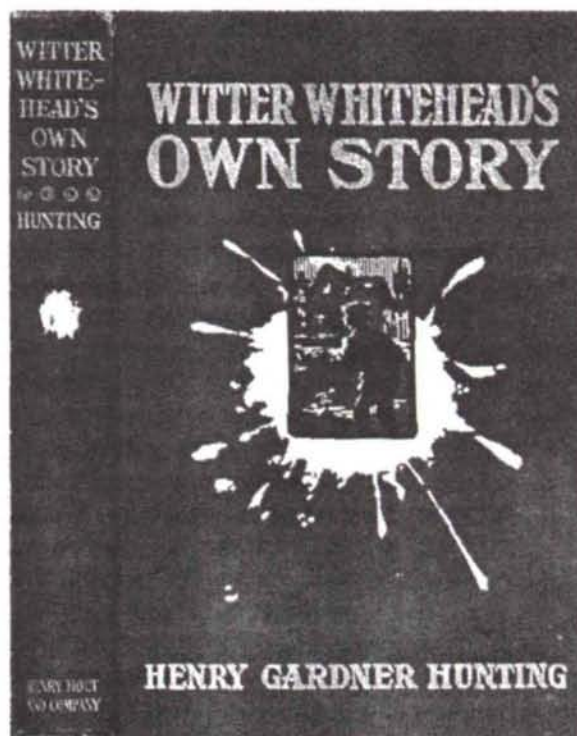
After talking this situation over with the Executive Secretary, we decided that we can't play "tango" with our main address database (from which our mailing labels are printed). Your main address is the one we'll use until you make a permanent change of residence. But I'll try to mail *Newsboy* directly to your warm-weather address. Hopefully, this will work out to everyone's satisfaction.

### On the book-collecting scene . . .

Bart Nyberg's letter to the editor on Page 15 outlines his recent discovery of two previously unknown series. The respective authors are Henry Gardner Hunting and Ellery H. Clark. Just by coincidence, last month I found a copy of *Witter Whitehead's Own Story*, and the cover and title page are reproduced at the right. I assumed this was a single title until Bart's discovery that it does indeed have a sequel.

This is another example of high-quality boys books produced by publishers better known for their non-

(Continued on Page 16)



## WITTER WHITEHEAD'S OWN STORY

ABOUT A LUCKY SPLASH OF WHITE-  
WASH, SOME STOLEN SILVER, AND  
A HOUSE THAT WASN'T VACANT

BY

HENRY GARDNER HUNTING

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
H. S. DELAY



NEW YORK  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY  
1909



# 'Striving to Succeed in Stratford'

## A '96 H.A.S. convention update

by Ivan McClymont (PF-722)

We have now come up with a general outline for the 1996 convention at the Queen's Inn in Stratford, Ontario. The agenda will have some open spots to accommodate any extra book auctions.

We have obtained written confirmation of arrangements with the Inn and I have been most impressed by the helpful attitude of Innkeeper Larry McLean and his staff. As I mentioned in my previous letter, the rate for all rooms, including some suites suitable for couples with children, will be \$55, Canadian. This would be about \$42 U.S. at the present exchange rate. (If you reserve your room by major credit card, the exchange rate will be computed automatically when you receive your bill).

Congratulations to Bernie and Marcy Biberdorf, who were the first to book a room at the Inn. Dick and Jackie Pope reported a good meal there when they stopped at the Inn on their way to Varna in June for an overnight visit with us.

While the Queen's Inn is equipped with an elevator, there are a few rooms at the end of the hall accessed by several steps, so anyone with a handicap should ask for a room on the level.

There has been some concern expressed by members

regarding taking books across the border. We have attended seven conventions and have always had several hundred books going both ways without any problems. Members who have taken a short cut through Ontario to or from other conventions also report no problem. One word of warning: **Leave your guns at home.** Canadian customs are very strict about handguns and you will not be allowed to bring one in.

We plan to have the hospitality room open most of the time from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. with coffee, cold drinks and snacks. The exception will be Friday afternoon and evening when the action moves to Varna. The hospitality room will open at 2 p.m. on Thursday and close at noon on Sunday.

Because of the stairs at our Varna church, the old-fashioned roast beef supper which Marg and I are hosting will be held at the Brucefield United Church, four miles east of Varna. We are arranging for some local entertainment and if there is to be a **Strive and Succeed** scholarship presentation, it would be done at this time.

At the Saturday night banquet at the Queen's Inn, there will be a choice of entrees — beef or chicken — which we will need to know in advance. The Sunday morning breakfast will be a full Canadian breakfast. All other meals are on your own.

We hope to have a tentative agenda put together sometime soon for publication in **Newsboy**.

## A man of the 'century'

Longtime H.A.S. member and frequent **Newsboy** contributor John T. Dizer (PF-511) of Utica, N.Y. has been a bicycle rider all his life, and one of his major avocations along with book collecting and research is the restoration of antique bicycles.

A member of The Wheelmen of America, Dizer realized a longtime goal on July 14 when completed a "century" ride — 100 miles — on his restored 1883 Columbia high-wheeler during a meeting of the Michigan chapter of The Wheelmen on historic Mackinac Island. The one-day feat took from dawn to dusk.

And in true Alger-hero fashion, Dizer, 73, completed the ride despite a knee injury, the residual effect of a fall a few years ago. He had arthroscopic cartilage surgery last month to correct the problem.

In between his research for articles for **Newsboy**, **Dime Novel Round-Up** and other publications, Dizer also finds time to restore Triumph sports cars and antique organs as well as to visit his five grown children and their families, who live such far-flung places as Virginia, Texas, Ohio, Indiana and Minnesota.



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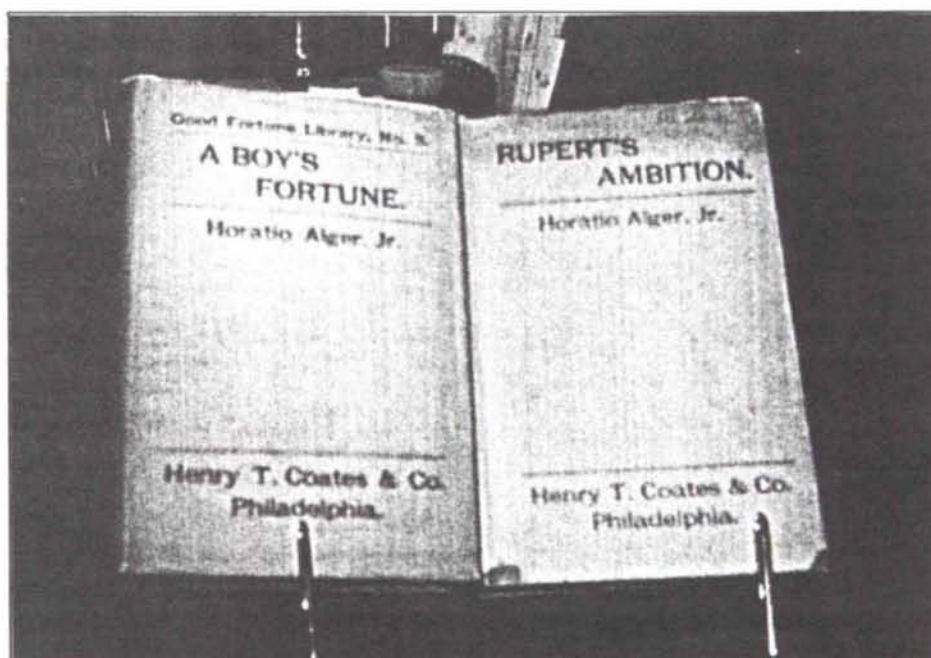
The Henry T. Coates advertisement on the back cover of the dust jacket for *The Young Salesman* lists numerous boys' and girls' books, but no Algers, which is logical because it is the earliest of the three titles examined in this article.

Dust jacket from the collection of Hank Gravbelle



# Alger dust jackets

## —Part III



Dust-jacketed editions of Horatio Alger's *A Boy's Fortune* and *Rupert's Ambition*, from the collection of the author of this article.

by Irving Leif (PF-395)

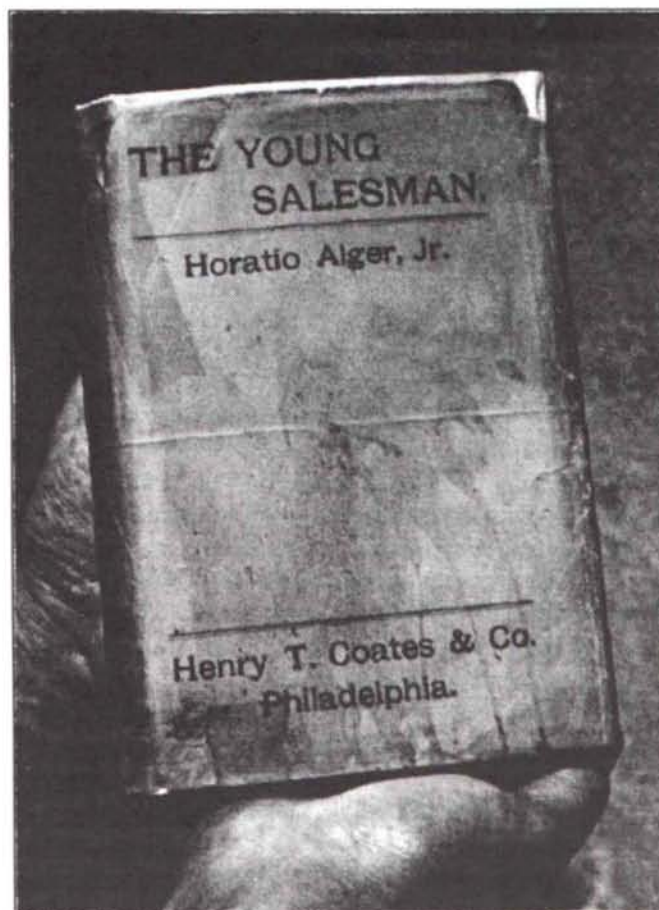
In two previous articles, we have seen examples of post-1900 Alger dust jackets on both first and later editions. In particular, we know of two post-1900 Alger firsts with jackets. This article will describe pre-1900 dust jackets on first editions.

We choose 1900 because there does seem to be a difference. Post-1900 dust jackets are more common and more likely to show up. It would seem that we will find more in the years ahead. Pre-1900 dust jackets were unknown until recent years. All the dust jacketed firsts I will describe in this article were acquired in the early- to mid-1980s. None has turned up since that time. It could very well be that we will never learn of the existence of any other pre-1900 dust jacketed firsts again.

We now know of three pre-1900 Alger firsts in dust jackets. Two are in my collection and one is in the collection of another H.A.S. member. There have always been rumors of another one (but a duplicate of one that will be described here), but I have not been able to verify whether it actually exists.

The three firsts are *The Young Salesman*, *A Boy's Fortune* and *Rupert's Ambition*. All three were published by Henry T. Coates and all are from the same point in time. We can assume from this that other firsts published by Coates from that period also had dust jackets. These include *Frank Hunter's Peril*, *Frank and Fearless*, *Walter Sherwood's Probation*, *The Young Bank Messenger* and *Jed, the Poorhouse Boy*. Two other Henry T. Coates

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The dust jacket for *The Young Salesman* has the same basic design on light tan paper. This book and d/j is in the collection of Hank Gravbelle (PF-584).



## Alger dust jackets — Part III

(Continued from Page 7)

firsts published shortly after 1900 also were probably issued in jackets (*Lester's Luck* and *Andy Grant's Pluck*).

As you can see from the photographs, the three jackets are very similar. They are all light tan. All three have the same spines and front cover design except for the additional wording at the top of *A Boy's Fortune*. The inside flaps on all three are blank.

The major difference is the book listings on the back cover. *The Young Salesman* has advertisements for many

books, but no *Algers*. This is logical since it is the earliest of the three.

The other two books contain listings of *Algers*, but, logically, only *The Young Salesman* in this series. The listings on these two are identical. The layout of the ads is identical on all three dust jackets.

How much are these books worth? It is hard to give a definitive number, but I can make an estimate. Based on offers I have had from dealers and other collectors, would estimate the value of each of these books as at least \$1,500 but probably more. However, I for one am not selling.

## The centennial of 'The Newsboy'

(Continued from Page 3)

got involved in the newspaper business when he bought *The Vindicator* in 1875. A staunch Democrat, he made the newspaper an influential voice of the party and turned *The Vindicator* around financially.

Two years after getting married, he sold *The Vindicator* and moved with his wife Henrietta and young family to New York, where he became business manager of the original *Daily News*, in 1882 becoming part owner of the paper.

Deeply involved in politics for many years, Brown finally reached elected office, becoming New York's 5th District state senator in 1889 and serving two terms in Albany. He fell short in a bid for the U.S. House of Representatives when he lost a 14th District Congressional election in 1893.

Col. Brown always enjoyed getting away from the city, and it was in the western Berkshires that he decided to retire and build a monument to the newsboys who had played such a prominent role in the growth of his and other New York City newspapers. He formed a committee, consisting of W.E. Tefft, D.W. Morrison and Dr. Samuel Camp, to plan the statue and sculptor David Richards of Utica, N.Y. and New York City, was awarded a commission to create it.

Richards already had to his credit such well-known public sculptures as "Confederate Soldier" at Savannah, Ga.; "The Patriot" in Augusta, Maine and "Columbia Triumphant" in Lowell, Mass.

"The Newsboy" was one of Richards' final commissions; he died two years following its dedication.

The base of the statue was created in Great Barrington by M. Lux Monument Works and is made of blue dolomite, which is native to the Berkshires. The vertical column is made of polished Quincy granite.

"The Newsboy" sculpture itself was cast by the Maurice J. Power Foundry in New York, and is so signed at its base: *Founded by Maurice J. Power*.

The fountains are unique. The lower of two basins is



The News Boy Fountain, Great Barrington, Mass.

This illustration from a post card mailed on Dec. 4, 1906 shows the Great Barrington Newsboy statue as it appeared 11 years after it was erected.

fed by water emanating from the mouth of an angry cat with arched back. The large upper basin, designed to provide water for horses, is fed by a stream from the mouth of a lion.

While other Newsboy statues were erected around the United States during the same period, this is the oldest surviving example. Another extant statue is in Los Angeles, having been built in 1920.

The Great Barrington Newsboy was dedicated on Oct. 10, 1895, and it was rededicated in 1973 following a long restoration effort spearheaded by Barrie J. Hughes (PF-617) of the Watertown (N.Y.) *Daily Times*. Hughes' personal efforts were rewarded with the rededication in 1973 and a 90th Anniversary celebration on Aug. 10, 1985, that signaled the completion of major restoration work. A time capsule was placed in the base of the statue as part of the 90th Anniversary festivities.

For more information on the Oct. 14 centennial observance, contact Dave Jameson, president of the New England Association of Circulation Executives, at (508) 427-6840, or FAX him at (508) 586-7903.



# The serpent in the garden

## Malicious reptiles in juvenile series books

by Alan Pickrell (PF-965)

Once there was a lovely garden which was on loan to a man and a woman. In the garden were all manner of lovely and beautiful things, and the lucky couple had an arrangement with the landlord that they could stay in the garden forever, which was going to be a long time, since the couple was immortal.

Now, the landlord had only one rule that he asked the couple to observe, and as long as they observed that one rule they had the run of the property. However, in addition to the man and woman, there was a serpent in the garden. This serpent tempted the couple to break the one rule that the landlord had set out for them. The proprietor came by to check on the property, discovered that the one rule had been broken and was extremely angry at both the couple and the serpent. The landlord dismissed the couple from the property and on that dismissal, they lost their claim to immortality. The proprietor also had a few words to say to the serpent:

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

*And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

*And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:*

*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Genesis 3: 13-15)*

And, the Hebrews probably took that image of the serpent from the Babylonian epic poem of Gilgamesh. After Gilgamesh braves the sea of death to learn the secret of immortality from Utnapishtim, the Summerian Noah, he dives to the bottom of the sea to pick a plant that will rejuvenate him. The way back to his home leads across a large desert. Overcome by raging thirst, he drops the plant and plunges into the first water that he sees to slake his all-consuming thirst. The plant is stolen by a snake, who, at the first taste of the plant, sheds its



THE ARROW PIERCED THE THROAT OF THE MONSTER  
Bomba in the Abandoned City Page 117

skin and becomes young again. Thus, the snake becomes one of the first characters in all literature, and as well, becomes an enemy to all humankind.

For the ancient Hebrews, the snake was a symbol of treachery, guile, deceit, subtlety, arcane wisdom and evil. Indeed, much of Western culture accepts that image of the serpent, while other cultures tend to see the snake as a symbol of good wisdom, longevity (perhaps even immortality), fertility, good health and give a mostly positive association to the serpent.

Disregarding Freud's observations about human reactions toward snakes which could be, but most probably are not, germane to a discussion of juvenile series books, it is probably safe to say that fear of snakes is a kind of Western Jungian archetype — a sort of inbred

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**Editor's note:** This article was presented as a paper on April 14, 1995 at the 25th annual meeting of the Popular Culture Association in Philadelphia, Pa.



## The serpent in the garden

(Continued from Page 9)

aversion passed down through generations. Admittedly that fear seems to have skipped over the individuals, while others have managed to overcome it by sheer will power.

For those who greatly fear snakes and who, like Emily Dickinson, get a feeling of "zero to the bone" merely on seeing one, it is probably small comfort to know that there are only a few islands in our world that are completely free of snakes. It is less comfort to realize that snakes inhabit every area of our world, for in addition to land snakes, there are tree snakes, water snakes, sea — or salt water — snakes and even flying snakes.

Perhaps, for most individuals, the major terror of snakes lies in the element of surprise involved. Snakes frequently look like something else and show up where they aren't expected (i.e., a green tree snake can look like a vine or green branch; a water snake can look like a floating twig or branch; a rattlesnake or copperhead can look as though it is a part of a log or rock, or a cluster of sedge, or even a mass of fallen leaves). Only when stepped on, or close to, do the snakes reveal themselves to striking or else, oozing away — and that oozing makes its own effect on the nerves of an individual.

Now, this somewhat lengthy introduction brings us to the crux of our study, which is: Do snakes purposely and intelligently plot and plan to hide themselves in places frequented by human beings just so they can bite us? Or, in other words, are those serpents consciously attempting to bruise our heels before we can bruise their heads?

In many juvenile series books, the answer is an overwhelming "yes," which does not encourage an appreciation of reptiles in most children. In point of fact, the inspiration for this study came from reading the reprint of Kent Winslow's very funny article, "Bomba, the Jungle Boy," in *The Mystery & Adventure Series Review*. As Winslow quotes from Chapter I of the first book in the series:

*Two eyes of which he was not aware were watching Bomba as he approached a narrow part of the rude native trail he was following, wicked eyes, malignant eyes glowing with lurid fires. The eyes were set in the swaying head of a cooanaradi, the most terrible serpent on earth.<sup>1</sup>*

Now, this is a snake that knows exactly what he or she is doing, and why. The Stratemeyer Syndicate's "Roy Rockwood" churned out 20 of the Bomba books that are obviously intended to rival the Tarzan series of Edgar Rice Burroughs. While Tarzan was read by both adults and children, the Stratemeyer Syndicate is making an

all-out bid for the population of male juveniles who will vicariously identify with the adventures of a young male, close to their own ages, set in an exotic locale. Bomba is agile, strong, fearless, muscled like an adult, handsome, independent and wise to the ways of the jungle.

And what gives most kids the shivers? Snakes! And Bomba's adventures are top-heavy with them. Every serpent in the jungle (especially anacondas, pythons, boa constrictors, cooanaradi, jaracaras, mambas and most of their saurian cousins) wants to make a meal off him.

*They shuddered as they looked below and saw that writhing, tangled mass of reptiles, which, in their disappointment and rage in having them balked of their prey, had now in many cases turned their fangs against each other.<sup>2</sup>*

Interestingly, Bomba is always described as "prey," whether to crocodiles, pumas or snakes. Usually, we think of prey as a synonym for "food." Surely the crocodiles and pumas could devour Bomba, as could the anacondas, pythons and boa constrictors, provided they were large enough. However, the cooanaradi and the jaracaras and other venomous reptiles aren't large enough to eat him; in fact, they can't. They can't chew, so they can't tear a big chunk out of him and gulp it down.

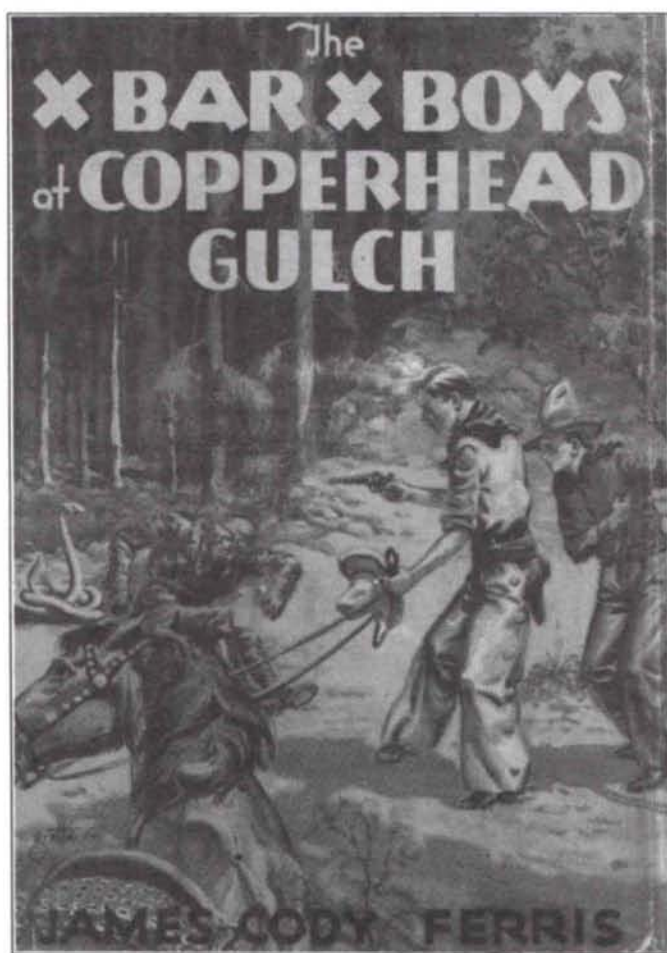
They don't constrict, so they can't ingest him or any part of him. Their only purpose, therefore, is the pleasure of biting Bomba and ridding the jungle of the little pest. In these books, the snakes have an intelligence which leads them to deliberately attack or ensnare human beings simply because they are human beings. The snake wants access to the garden all alone.

This premise holds true in the books about Bomba's African semi-counterpart, Tarzan. While Tarzan has more trouble with lions than he does snakes, snakes do occasionally pose a threat. Since Tarzan conceives of himself as, essentially, an animal, and we see Tarzan going through a reasoning process; and since he explains the reasoning process of some of the wild animals to us, we see a rational process. Animals, snakes included, realize that human beings are the weaker and less protected species and so they rationally choose to hunt us.

This is not a comforting thought, friends. A python hangs from a branch overshadowing a jungle path. Down the path walks a lion and after a while, a rhinoceros, and after a while, a zebra, and after a while, a human being. Who is the python waiting for? Why, the ever-delectable human being, of course.

Out in the American West, the X-Bar-X Boys have almost as much trouble with snakes as they do with rustlers. In *The X-Bar-X Boys at Copperhead Gulch*, a





visitor to the ranch, Hank, tells the story that his grandfather told him in Hank's youth.

*"I had been out hunting all day, and got nothing," he began, "and I was determined that I would spend the night in the woods and try my luck early the next morning. I had just eaten my supper when a big rabbit dashed into the open space in front of me, and picking up my gun quickly I fired and killed it. After satisfying myself that the rabbit was dead, I lay down upon a heap of pine needles. As I was tired, I fell into a sound sleep.*

*"...When I awoke...it was bright moonlight, one especially bright ray falling directly on the dead rabbit. But it seemed to me that I saw the rabbit move. I sat up very quietly and rubbed my eyes. Yes, the rabbit was moving very slowly toward the woods.*

*"Then I became aware that the ground around me was covered with hundreds of moving objects. Thousands of them, I thought at the time, but there were not as many as that. Wriggling and crawling and hissing with their heads raised, I recognized at once that the reptiles were copperheads. And their one objective was that dead rabbit."*

*My grandfather said that "slowly, very slowly, the rabbit was being moved toward the woods by the copperheads. How did they do it? I'll tell you. As many as possible wriggled underneath the animal, while the oth-*

*ers took hold of the first snakes' tails and pushed. Perhaps you've seen a house moved on rollers! Well, that was the way they worked. I watched for a long time, horrified lest the copperheads should attack me, but they never once gave me a thought. On and on toward the woods they moved the rabbit, until at last both rabbit and snakes disappeared in the dark shadows."*

*"Did you find the rabbit in the morning?" I asked, but Grandfather shook his head.*

*"I looked for a long distance...but could find no trace of the rabbit or the copperheads. But to this day...I have a horror of snakes, especially copperheads."*<sup>3</sup>

Now, if that story doesn't hold that snakes have rational thought processes, what does? Grandfather was just lucky that those snakes had their mouths set for rabbit, not hunter. However, Teddy and Roy will meet a few who have a taste for cow puncher before the book is done.

In the depths of Copperhead Gulch, the boys are confronted by a literal river of snakes, not once, but twice. This river is composed of copperheads and various kinds of rattlesnakes. In fact, Teddy is bitten by a rattler, but Roy applies such effective first aid that Teddy is completely recovered in five minutes' time.

Both of the rivers of reptiles are angrily aggressing against the human enemy. The second confrontation results in the boys being treed by the mass of venomous vipers, and like wild dogs, or wolves, the snakes wait at the foot of the boys' tree, hoping to out-wait the boys, who eventually escape by swinging Tarzan-style through the tree branches. Now these snakes definitely have a taste for young cowboys.

Oddly enough, while the X-Bar-X Boys seem to be stalked by sibilant serpents (rattlers seem to lurk behind every rock for the express purpose of throwing themselves in front of the boys' steeds), the Boy Ranchers, who live in a territory almost exactly like that which the X-Bar-X Boys call home, never see a snake, although they, and their pals, talk about them all the time.<sup>4</sup>

For example, there's nearby Snake Mountain — so named because of the rampaging reptiles who live there — and one of the cowpokes, the Yellin' Kid, frequently swears by them: "By the Great Rattler and all the little rattlers."

Another hand is known as "Snake" Pardee, his nickname deriving from his great fear of the scaly beasts. It is he who always inquires of incoming riders, "Did you see any snakes out there?"

Dick Shannon, one of the Boy Ranchers, wakes suddenly in camp one night when he feels something cold and slimy trailing across his cheek. Thrashing wildly, but unable to extricate himself from his bedroll, he rouses the entire camp with his cry of "Snakes, Snakes!" As it turns out, much to everyone's relief, it is not a snake

(Continued on Page 12)



## The serpent in the garden

(Continued from Page 11)

but rather Dick's horse dragging its lower lip across Dick's face. Whew, what a relief.

However, some of our series heroes, like Don Sturdy, actually go out looking for snakes. When they do, they don't have to look far because usually the snakes find them.

Don and his uncles set out for South America to capture giant "Golcondas" (as Jennie Jenks, maid to the Sturdy household, calls them). When the party arrives in Brazil, camp is set up beside a deserted shack in dilapidated condition. The door hangs open and a major portion of the roof is missing. There is no furniture except a rope bed, which is soiled and stained with a rusty red substance. Pay attention; this is foreshadowing.

It is decided that Don, the youngest member of the expedition, should have the bed for the night.

*The novelty of the situation kept Don awake for a long time after the others had settled to slumber. He lay on his rude, rope mattress, watching the moonlight shining through the branches of the tree (that overhung where the roof should have been).*

*Drowsily, he noted how thick and knotted was the bough that hung over the cabin. Were all Brazilian trees as big as that?*

*He closed his eyes sleepily and opened them again. The bough seemed to be bending, moving, twisting.*

*...Something had come between him and the moon. Was it a passing cloud? No, something heavier than that, something sinuous, sinister, horrible.*

*With a startled cry, Don hurled himself from the bed and rolled under it.*

*At the same instant there was a hideous hiss, a whistling rush, and the anaconda struck! <sup>5</sup>*

After a tremendous battle, the 25-foot reptile is captured. It is only then that certain things become clear.

*"And now I know what those stains that looked like rust were on the cords of the bed," he concluded with a shudder. "Those probably were the blood stains of some poor fellow that lay down to sleep there and wasn't as lucky as I was."*

*"Of more than one, likely enough," said the Captain. "Probably the snake has chosen his haunt in that tree just for that purpose. That broken roof was just made for him." <sup>6</sup>*

"Probably the snake has chosen his haunt in that tree just for that purpose." Obviously, the Captain is saying that the reptile has a malignant intelligence which dictates that it hunt and feast on human beings.

Don and his uncles have several adventures with giant snakes, but none of them are quite so unnerving as when Don and his native guide are attacked and pur-



DON'S RIFLE FLEW TO HIS SHOULDER AND HE FIRED.  
Don Sturdy with the Big Snake Hunters.

Page 194

sued by the dreaded cooanaradi ("glowing with all the colors of the rainbow, an evilly beautiful creature"), which can slither faster than a human being can run.

After a shot from his pistol only grazes the snake and barely slows its raging pursuit, Don takes a page out of Bomba's book (literally):

*There was no time for another shot, and the lad turned and ran, the snake pursuing him.*

*Don had a start of about twenty feet. He knew that in all probability he would be overtaken if the chase continued, for the underbrush hindered him more than it did that lithe, sinuous body, winding its way through it like a flashing streak. As he ran, he dropped his now useless revolver and shifted the machete to his right hand.*

*As he reached a comparatively open space, he ventured to look behind. The snake was gaining and barely eight feet away. A moment more and it would be on him.*

*He turned and leaped quickly to one side. The cooanaradi's coils flashed past, the reptile's aim slightly disconcerted by the sudden movement.*

*With all his might Don swung with the machete at his*



foe. The heavy razor-edged weapon caught the reptile at the slender neck and sliced its head from its body. The two parts fell to the ground, where they lay quivering and writhing.<sup>7</sup>

Don's troubles with cantankerous constrictors are not yet done, however. Back aboard their jungle boat, which is afloat on a river filled with piranha and loaded with caged reptiles, the expedition is horrified when one of the cages breaks. On the small boat are loosed an angry anaconda, a raging rattlesnake and a jiggling jaracara — and all of them know who captured them.

Somehow, the party and crew manage to recapture the snakes and reinforce their cages without having to abandon ship and risk the piranha-infested waters.

Yet, none of these adventures quite match those of Allan Quatermain in *The Ivory Child*. In order to rescue Lady Ragnall, who has been kidnapped to become the high priestess of a mysterious cult of Isis, Quatermain and his party must pass through a tunnel which begins at the foot of a mountain and winds, eventually, to the top. Lord Ragnall details what happened when he and his friend Savage entered the cave:

"This is what I saw: About ten paces from me was Savage with his arms outstretched and dancing — yes, dancing — first to the right and then to the left, with a kind of horrible grace and to the tune of a hideous hissing music. I held the lantern higher and perceived that beyond him, lifted eight or nine feet into the air, nearly to the roof of the tunnel, in fact, was the head of the hugest snake of which I have ever heard. Its head was as broad as the bottom of a wheelbarrow — were it cut off I think it would fill a large wheelbarrow — while the neck upon which it was supported was quite as thick as my middle, and the undulating body behind it, which stretched faraway into the darkness, was the size of an eighteen gallon cask..."

"It hissed and swayed its great head to the right, holding Savage with cold eyes that yet seemed to be on fire, whereon he danced to the right. It hissed again and swayed its head to the left, whereon it danced to the left. Then suddenly, it reared its head right to the top of the cave and so remained for a few seconds, whereon Savage stood still, bending a little forward, as though he were bowing to the reptile. Next instant, like a flash it struck, for I saw its white fangs bury themselves in the back of Savage, who with a kind of sigh fell forward onto his face. Then there was a convulsion of those shining folds, followed by a sound as of bones being ground up in a steam driven mortar.

"I staggered against the wall of the cave and shut my eyes for a moment, for I felt faint. When I opened them again it was to see something flat, misshapen, elongated like the reflection in a spoon, something that had been Savage lying on the floor; and stretched out over it the huge serpent studying me with its steely eyes. Then I ran..."<sup>8</sup>

Hans, Quatermain's Hottentot servant, kills the ser-

pent by feeding it a poisoned goat. Quatermain decides that the snake must have been a unique species, since it both struck the poison its prey, and then constricted it. He also theorizes that the serpent must have been centuries old in order to attain the great size, for which it was worshipped as a deity by the cult.

Sometimes, snakes are pawns, used by villains. Ill-meaning people often send or conceal snakes in a person's room, knowing that the snakes will attack the person who finds them. In *The Clue of the Hissing Serpent*, the Hardy Boys receive a warning, which consists of a box containing a garter snake. While it does not frighten them, it does scare their Aunt Gertrude into fits.<sup>9</sup>

However, in the *Hardy Boys' Handbook*, Frank and Joe have their own way of evening up the reptile-human being scoreboard. Stranded in the desert, Joe is showing signs of dehydration. When Frank kills a small rattlesnake to cook for breakfast, he saves some of the raw meat for Joe to chew on, so that the juice can help to get more moisture into Joe.

Joe accepted the chunk of almost translucent meat, looked at it for a moment, then popped it into his mouth.<sup>10</sup>

With nourishment like that, of course, the two boys survive until help arrives.

So the Hardys would probably say that it isn't a bad thing to have serpents in the garden, if you need a bite to eat to survive. After all, Eden was a perfect place until the serpent ruined it for everyone. Africa, Brazil, Texas — at different times, all were referred to as Edens — and they all come with serpents.

So watch your step.

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9. Dixon, Franklin W. (pseud.), *The Clue of the Hissing Serpent*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1972. pp. 121-122.
10. Dixon, Franklin W. (pseud.) with Sheila Link, *The Hardy Boys' Handbook; Seven Stories of Survival*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1980. p. 79.

## MEMBERSHIP

### New members:

Alan Pickrell (PF-965)  
223 King St.  
Abington, VA 24210

Alan, a college English professor, is a collector of juvenile series books who is a regular panelist at the annual meetings of the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association. He joined the Society at the suggestion of Bill Gowen, and his first article for *Newsboy* appears in this issue on Page 9.

Stephen D. Giterman (PF-966)  
362 Fern Drive  
Berea, OH 44017 (216) 234-3919

Steve, whose profession is insurance claims, in addition to books is also interested in model trains and card models. He learned about the Society from another member.

Cynthia Ann Beard (PF-967)  
3194 Birdsong Drive  
Greenfield, IN 46140 (317) 488-6060 (bus.)

Cynthia, who has 80 Alger books, also lists music, travel and computers as hobbies. A corporate tax director, she learned of H.A.S. through America Online on her computer.

Beverly Krennek (PF-968)  
3076 Laurelhurst Drive  
Rockford, IL 61114 (815) 654-7128

Beverly, a bookkeeper who works in retail sales, has 49 Alger titles in her collection. Other hobbies include travel, history and collecting Teddy bears. She learned about the Society through **Yellowback Library**.

Arne R. Johnson (PF-969)  
Hidaway Lane  
Portsmouth, RI 02840 (401) 683-5704

Arne, an attorney whose offices are in Newport, R.I., inherited his Alger collection from his father, a former H.A.S. member.

### Change of address:

Arlene M. Yerty (PF-817)  
43-930 Buena Circle  
Palm Desert, CA 92260 (619) 568-1168

## President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

*Operator to inspire me (Olga the Operator? Booth Bertha? Adrift in a Mall?)*

Please be sure to plan on attending next year's 32nd annual H.A.S. convention in beautiful Stratford, Ontario. Our first-ever convention in Canada, it promises to be a memorable event and I look forward to seeing everyone there. Host Ivan McClymont's latest update on the convention is on Page 5.

Your Partic'lar Friend,  
Mary Ann Ditch (PF-861)  
4657 Mason St.  
Omaha, NE 68106

Eugene P. Bartlett (PF-790)  
5220 Harvest Loop  
Eugene, OR 97402

David Farah (PF-915)  
322 S. Mentor Ave., #8  
Pasadena, CA 91106-3356 (818) 568-8555

Ann Sharrard (PF-325)  
6704 N.W. 33rd Terrace  
Gainesville, FL 32653

## BOOK MART

Robert K. Kasper (PF-327)  
585 E. St. Andrews Dr.  
Media, PA 19063  
(610) 566-5917 (after 9 p.m. EST is best)

The following Alger items are for sale:

**The Cash Boy**  
(Brave and Bold #39, Sept. 19, 1903)  
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**A Bad Lot**, by "Arthur Lee Putnam"  
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**Two vols. bound in contemporary bindings ..... \$100**

**A.D.T. 79**, by "Arthur Lee Putnam"  
(The Argosy; also contains 8 installments of "Jed, the Poorhouse Boy"; May 7, 1892 thru Aug. 20, 1892)  
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### THE CAVE OF THE BOTTOMLESS POOL

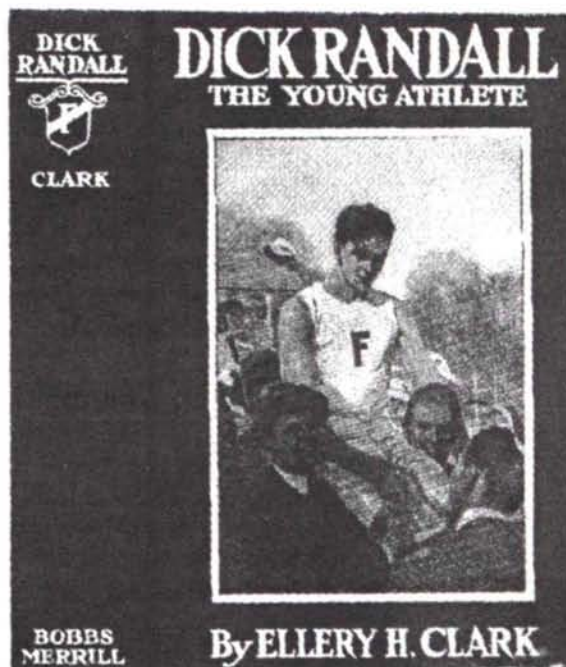
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This ad page at left from C.P. Burton's *The Bob's Hill Braves* (1910) shows a previously unrecognized two-volume series by Henry Gardner Hunting published by Henry Holt and Company. *Dick Randall the Young Athlete* (1910, above) by Ellery H. Clark is Volume 1 of a newly discovered two-volume series published by Bobbs-Merrill and Houghton Mifflin.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bill:

I have again been able to identify two previously unrecognized series. The first of these we can entitle *The Witter Whitehead Series*, by Henry Gardner Hunting (1872-1958). The series is comprised of two titles, *Witter Whitehead's Own Story* and *The Cave of the Bottomless Pool*. Both titles were published by Henry Holt and Company in 1909.

Some readers may be familiar with the writer as the author of *The Sandsy Series* (three titles, published by Harpers in 1915, 1917 and 1924).

Gardner Hunting (as he was known after the two above books were published) was also the author of two other juveniles, *The Young Rival Inventors* (Little, Brown 1915), and *Barry Dare and the Mysterious Box* (A. L. Burt, 1928). I stumbled across the *Witter Whitehead Series* in the ad pages of Charles Pierce Burton's *The Bob's Hill Braves* (Henry Holt and Company, 1910; see illustration, above).

The second new series is also comprised of two books

written by Ellery H. Clark (1874-?). The first title, *Dick Randall the Young Athlete*, published by Bobbs-Merrill in 1910, had been on my shelf for quite some time. I had originally believed it to be a single title.

A recent check of *The United States Catalogue* indicated that the author had written one other possible juvenile. Coincidentally, a month or so later I saw a copy of this book for sale and acquired it. This title, *The Camp at Sea Duck Cove*, was published by Houghton Mifflin in 1912. I was quite surprised to open the book to the table of contents and discover that Chapter One was entitled "Dick Randall Goes for the Mail." These books qualify as a series because the Dick Randall character is carried over to the 1912 title.

I really did not expect this at all, since one rarely encounters a series published by more than one publisher. These two books may be grouped as *The Dick Randall Series*. Clark also wrote *The Lost Galleon* (Chelsea House, 1927) and a series of athletic training manuals.

Sincerely,  
Bart J. Nyberg (PF-879)  
20W450 Rutgers Dr.  
Downers Grove, IL 60516



## Editor's notebook

(Continued from Page 4)

juvenile books, in this case Henry Holt. Others include Little, Brown; Houghton Mifflin; Scribners; Harpers; Putnam; Doubleday Page and Bobbs Merrill. Some produced a decent number of series (Kelland's **Mark Tidd** and **Catty Atkins** books by Harpers, for example) while others had only one or two series in their catalogs.

To help identify first editions (more accurately, first printings) from some of these more uncommon publishers, **Newsboy** will offer a quick guide in either the next or the following issue. We won't deal with Alger first editions because their points are described in the bibliographies by Bob Bennett and Ralph Gardner.

In this issue . . . we welcome a new contributor (and new H.A.S. member), Alan Pickrell, who offers a humorous look at one of boys' book heroes' most feared

natural enemies: *snakes*! I hope you enjoy the article, and if you're looking for more on the subject, I strongly recommend the April 1995 issue of **Dime Novel Round-Up**, which contains an article titled "Biological Bombast; or, A Real Old Naturalist's Secret." The author is Douglas A. Rossman, Curator of Reptiles of the Museum of Natural Science at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. In the article, Rossman debunks much of what he calls "biological nonsense" in series books, in particular the **Bomba Series**.

For more information about obtaining a copy of this article, or to subscribe to **Dime Novel Round-Up**, write to editor J. Randolph Cox (PF-598) at P.O. Box 226, Dundas, MN 55019.

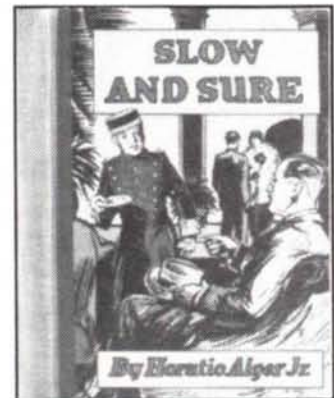
Also in this issue . . . the third and final installment on Alger dust jackets, this time covering pre-1900 first-edition jackets; and a quick update on the 1996 H.A.S. convention by our host Ivan McClymont. Our full convention preview will be in the January-February issue.

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