



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 XLVI

MARCH-APRIL 2008

NUMBER 2

A new discovery!

Horatio Alger's last short story

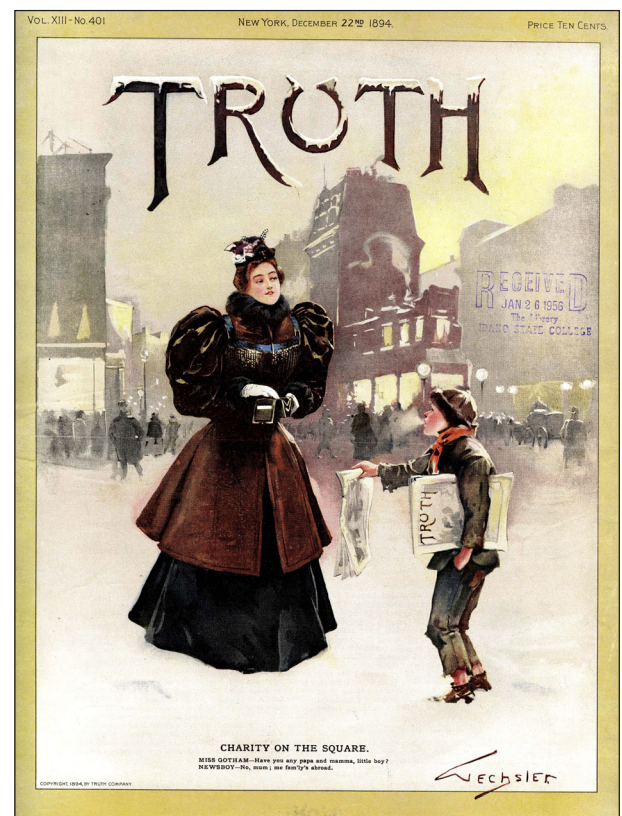
Percy Manson's Lesson

-- See Page 5

'Finding a Fortune in Carson Valley'

More to see and do at the 2008 H.A.S. convention

-- See Page 3



The Dec. 22, 1894 issue of *Truth*, in which appeared Horatio Alger, Jr.'s "Percy Manson's Lesson."



Games people play (and young readers, too)

-- See Page 8

President's column

One of the perquisites I enjoy as the H.A.S. Web site manager is to talk to members of the public about the life and work of Horatio Alger, Jr. I recently had an e-mail conversation with an Abraham Lincoln researcher (Nancy Clayton), who had heard that some Alger reprints included filler stories about Lincoln. As I was going through my seemingly endless accumulation of Alger reprints helping Nancy look for Lincoln-related filler stories, it dawned on me that consulting Brad Chase's bibliographies might save us some time.

Sure enough, Brad mentions these Lincoln stories (on page 102) in his *Horatio Alger Books published by M.A. Donohue and Co.* bibliography as appearing in some titles of the Candle Format (format 33) series. With this information, Nancy then contacted Lynne Thomas at N.I.U. and was able to get copies of a number of these Lincoln stories from Brad's Donohue research material (which he donated to N.I.U. some time ago).

Brad himself wrote during this conversation: "I remember including that [Lincoln stories] comment in my book just in case a Lincoln collector might be interested." Right you are, Brad!

And while we are on the subject of the Chase bibliographies, I ran across A.L. Burt format references (as defined in Brad's A.L. Burt bibliography) in a recent eBay auction listing. As the Burt formats cited in the auction listing were specifically mentioned in the January-February 2007 *Newsboy* article "Forty-six missing titles; or let's Adopt a Format" that I reprinted on the Web site, the seller read this article and did not just consult our on-line bibliographical checklist, as is commonly done by on-line Alger booksellers.

This interest in Alger (and our Web site) encourages my belief that the premise associated with Alger's name is still relevant: if you (an underprivileged young person living in North America) work hard, behave ethically and make the most of whatever advice and opportunities come your way, you can migrate from poverty to the middle class. I had a long talk with Doug Fleming the other day. He is doing very well indeed and thanks all of you for the many get-well cards and messages. Doug won't be able to make the convention this year, but is looking forward to seeing all of us at the 2009 convention.

If you are planning to attend the 2008 convention, please make your hotel reservations soon as our block of

(Continued on Page 4)

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 — youngsters whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and inspired hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans for generations to come.

OFFICERS

MICHAEL MORLEY	PRESIDENT
LAWRENCE R. RICE	VICE-PRESIDENT
CHRISTINE DeHAAN	TREASURER
ROBERT E. KASPER	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
THOMAS KLINE	(2008) DIRECTOR
LEE SWITZER	(2008) DIRECTOR
MILTON F. EHLERT	(2008) DIRECTOR
BERNARD A. BIBERDORF	(2009) DIRECTOR
KYOKO AMANO	(2009) DIRECTOR
CAROL NACKENOFF	(2009) DIRECTOR
ROBERT PETTITO	(2010) DIRECTOR
BARRY SCHOENBORN	(2010) DIRECTOR
MARY ANN NYBERG	(2010) DIRECTOR
LEO "BOB" BENNETT (1932-2004)	EMERITUS
RALPH D. GARDNER (1923-2005)	EMERITUS

PAST PRESIDENTS

KENNETH B. BUTLER	GEORGE W. OWENS
JACK ROW	WILLIAM R. WRIGHT
DR. MAX GOLDBERG	ROBERT E. KASPER
STEVE PRESS	MARY ANN DITCH
JUDSON S. BERRY	JOHN CADICK
LEO "BOB" BENNETT	CARL T. HARTMANN
JERRY B. FRIEDLAND	ARTHUR P. YOUNG
BRADFORD S. CHASE	CAROL NACKENOFF
ROBERT E. SAWYER	ROBERT G. HUBER
EUGENE H. HAFNER	ROBERT R. ROUTHIER
D. JAMES RYBERG	

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 \$25 (\$20 for seniors), with single issues of **Newsboy** \$4.00. Please make remittance payable to the Horatio Alger Society.

Membership applications, renewals, changes of address and other correspondence should be sent to **Horatio Alger Society, P.O. Box 70361, Richmond, VA 23255.**

Newsboy is indexed in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography. You are invited to visit the Horatio Alger Society's official Internet site at **www.thehoratioalgersociety.org**

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, P.O. Box 70361, Richmond, VA 23255.

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

Convention update

'Finding a Fortune in Carson Valley'

By Janice Morley (PF-957)

When in town for the 2008 HAS convention, you'll want to take advantage of these historic and scenic attractions — easy trips from our hotel. If you're planning to spend all of your time at the convention, these trips might entice you to take advantage of our special room rates and stay a few extra days.

Before you begin

These tips may be useful when traveling in in our area.

Road maps are available for viewing in the hospitality room. If you want your own maps, there is an AAA office about a mile south of our hotel on U.S. 395 (east side).

This is a high-altitude area, so take things easy. We are over 4,700-foot elevation, so keep that in mind. Some of the trips are much higher, especially Bodie California State Park, which is over 8500 ft. Don't overexert yourself if you're not up to it, or if you think your health may be compromised. Even if you're an experienced hiker, take things at a "stroll" pace. If

you are in doubt about your physical abilities, you can enjoy many of the trips suggested in this handout from your car—still fun for everyone in your group.

Due to today's gas prices, see if anyone else might be interested in arranging a carpool group. Check the hospitality suite for more information.

Bring sunscreen, lip balm, hand lotion, a hat, and layered outer clothing. Temperatures can vary widely during the day, and can drop dramatically in the evening.

Keep plenty of pocket change on hand in case your cell phone doesn't work in a given area. If you happen to travel to a place that does not have good cell service — Nevada is known for this — you may need to use a pay phone.

We also suggest that you notify the hospitality suite so we know where you might be headed. This is a big (and sometimes desolate) area. We want to be able to find you in case you need assistance.

Bring some snack food (or a lunch) for you and your party. You may need it, or just want a treat for the car. In an emergency, such items can come in handy. Don't forget bottled water for everyone in your group.

We highly recommend that you stay off unpaved roads, with one exception (the short dirt road entering Bodie California State Park) mentioned in this handout. AAA will charge plenty to tow your vehicle from unpaved locations, but if you are on a paved road, you are

fine. Now, on with the show!

Carson City highlights

What you'll see:

Nevada State Museum, State Capitol Building, Governor's Mansion and historic neighborhoods, Nevada Railroad Museum, Bill Jenkins' Comstock Books.

These places are not quite within walking distance of our hotel (with the exception of the Capitol Building),

unless you enjoy walking long distances. However, parking at or near any of these locations is convenient and free.

Nevada State Museum

The Nevada State Museum was formerly the Carson City Mint. This museum has some great exhibits, such as the original (and still functioning) Carson City Mint coin stamp — on special occasions, the mint will strike commemorative coins. Ask at the admissions desk if there are any special coins available for purchase. These make nice collectible souvenirs!

The elaborate silver service from the USS Nevada,

(Continued on Page 14)



The governor's mansion in Carson City, Nevada, host city for the 2008 Horatio Alger Society convention.

Photo by Mike Morley

Editor's notebook

Still haven't made up your mind on attending the 2008 H.A.S. convention on May 15-18? The time to act is NOW. Hosts Janice and Mike Morley are still hoping you'll make a visit to the historic Carson Valley area; they have a wonderful program lined up, and there are plenty of books available in the auction this year.

If you misplaced the registration form enclosed in the previous issue, here's another, along with our schedule of events. You can also register for the convention online by visiting www.thehoratioalgersociety.org

To reserve your room, please call the Plaza Hotel's toll-free reservation number at 1-888-227-1499. Just mention you're with the Horatio Alger Society to receive the special rate. If you have already registered for the convention but have not booked your room, do it right away because the remaining rooms in our block will be released to the general public after May 10. Our basic room rate is \$69 per night, double occupancy.

In his President's Column, Mike has an update on how to arrange for the Plaza Hotel's shuttle from Reno-Tahoe International Airport. Please call or e-mail Mike with your flight number and arrival time so he can help coordinate the shuttle for those of us arriving at about the same time from different parts of the United States.

By the way, this is my 100th issue of *Newsboy* since I became editor in mid-1991. I'll look back over the past 17 years in the next issue!

President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

rooms at the Carson City Plaza Hotel are only guaranteed through May 10. The registration form and convention schedule were included with the January-February *Newsboy*, are also enclosed with this issue, and they can also be accessed from the H.A.S. Web site convention sub-page (www.thehoratioalgersociety.org/convention.html).

It turns out that the shuttle service between the Reno airport and the Plaza hotel in Carson City is not very convenient: the Plaza hotel shuttle will not meet you on arrival; after you land, you need to call the Plaza hotel: (775) 883-9500, ask for Cindy Ceragioli-Perry (Ext. 417), and then Cindy will have the Plaza hotel shuttle pick you up.

If you are flying into Reno, please phone or email to us your flight number and arrival time, so that Janice and I can try to coordinate your arrival(s) with the Plaza hotel shuttle service ahead of time.

Janice and I hope you will join us May 15-18 in Carson City to enjoy our spring (daytime temperatures currently range into the 60s) as well as the convention activities. If you are lucky, you might spot wild horses or eagles while you are driving in the area. And, of course, you will be able to spot good books at the auctions.

Your Partic'lar Friend,
Michael Morley
1891 Colt Lane
Gardnerville, NV 89410
Phone: (775) 265-3063
E-mail: mmorley@carsonvalleybooks.com

MEMBERSHIP

New members

Walter Szot (PF-1102)
P.O. Box 208
Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Matthew Hirshberg (PF-1103)
24 Traymore St.
Cambridge, MA 02140
(646) 709-3070
E-mail: hirshberg@gmail.com

Matt attended the 2007 convention in Shelbyville, Ind., and gave a talk on his research for a forthcoming book on Horatio Alger's place in American popular culture.

New address

Samuel T. Huang (PF-963)
10349 SW 32nd Ave.
Gainesville, FL 32607
(352) 273-2505 (W); (352) 332-0317 (H)
E-mail: Huang888@ufl.edu

Sam is Associate Dean for Advancement and Development, George A. Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

E-mail address

Arthur W. Smitter, Jr. (PF-952)
E-mail: arts1991spiritr@sbcglobal.net

Send all address, phone or e-mail changes to: Horatio Alger Society, P.O. Box 70361, Richmond, VA 23255

Horatio Alger's last short story: The newly discovered 'Percy Manson's Lesson'

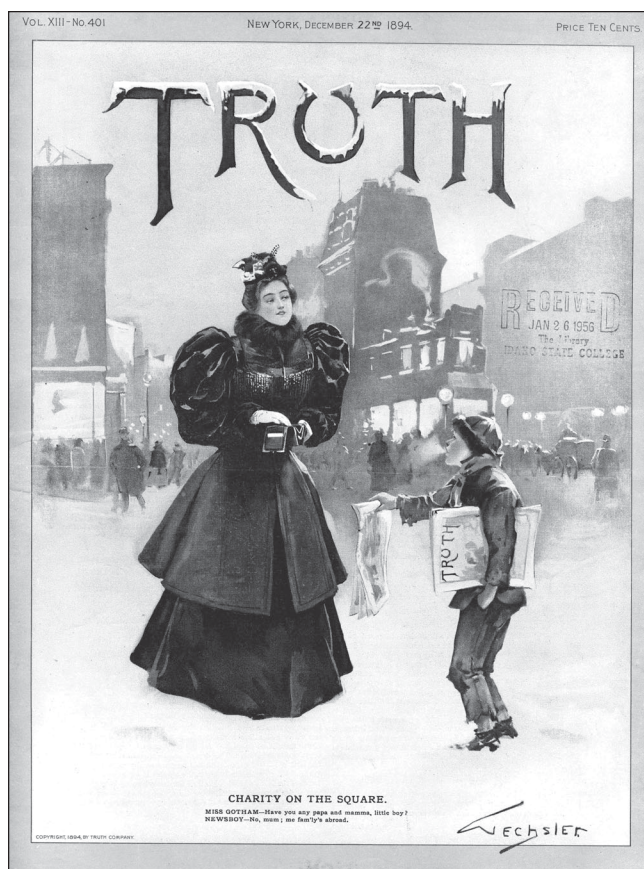
By J. Jefferson Looney (PF-903)

While doing other research, I recently discovered a Horatio Alger short story that is unknown to Alger scholarship and which appears to be the last new piece of short fiction that he published in his lifetime. Entitled "Percy Manson's Lesson," it appeared in *Truth* 13 (22 Dec. 1894): p. 6.¹ *Truth* was a New York general-interest magazine that included society news and commentary, poetry, short stories, jokes, cartoons, and artwork, with a full-color cover and a double-page centerfold illustration in each number. Some issues were given special themes, such as the "Football Number" and "Winter Sports Number" of 17 Nov. and 29 Dec. 1894, respectively. The edition of 22 Dec. 1894 that included "Percy Manson's Lesson" was the "Children's Number."

The editors very likely commissioned the article from Alger as one of the principal special features justifying that overall title, and the use of a newsboy in the cover illustration may also have been a conscious nod to his best-known works. *Truth* is difficult to find in an unbroken run and I have been unable as yet to search it fully for other Alger material, but this may be Alger's only appearance in the magazine. By 1894 he seldom published short pieces.

After the appearance of this story, Alger is only known to have published three essays on the writer's craft.² One supposedly later short story, "Robert Graham's Resolution," appeared in *Good News*, 13 March 1897, and is listed as a separate work in the definitive bibliography by Berch and LeBlanc. A comparison reveals, however, that this story is actually a slightly abridged version of "Robert Graham's Valentines," first published in *Gleason's Literary Companion*, 24 Feb. 1866. "Percy Manson's Lesson," reproduced in its entirety below, is a slight effort. It does deserve some attention, however, not only as Alger's last short story, but because even though it features a young boy, it is clearly geared to adults, complete with irony, digs at dime novels, and ridicule of the contemporary Little Lord Fauntleroy craze.

1. I am indebted to Eric D. M. Johnson, Rob Kasper, Karen Kearns, and Bob Sipes, and to Lynne Thomas of the Northern Illinois University Library, for assistance in preparing this article. "Percy Manson's Lesson" is not listed in Victor A. Berch and Edward T. LeBlanc, comps., *The Short Stories, Articles and Poems of Horatio Alger, Jr.* (Fall River, Mass.,



1990), the standard bibliography. The images of this poem and the cover of *Truth* magazine in which it appeared are supplied courtesy of Special Collections, Eli M. Oboler Library, Idaho State University.

2. "How I came to Write 'John Maynard'," *The Writer*, Dec. 1895; "The Novel: Its Scope and Place in Literature," *New York Railroad Men*, March 1896; "Writing Stories for Boys," *The Writer*, March 1896. This information comes from Berch/LeBlanc.

PERCY MANSON'S LESSON.

PERCY MANSON got on board an early train at Rutherford, and found a seat beside a pleasant looking lady.

Percy was twelve years old, and had long flaxen ringlets. With his refined features, the delicate bloom on his cheeks, and dressed like the hero of a famous children's book he was sure to attract attention.

"Did you ever appear in public?"

"No, ma'am," was his polite reply to the lady's question.

"As little Lord Fauntleroy, I mean?"

"No, ma'am. My mother dresses me this way, but I don't like it. It makes me look too much like a girl."

"Are you traveling alone?"

"Yes, ma'am" answered Percy in some hesitation. Just

(Continued on Page 7)

6

TRUTH

PERCY MANSON'S LESSON.



PERCY MANSON got on board an early train at Rutherford, and found a seat beside a pleasant looking lady.

Percy was twelve years old, and had long flaxen ringlets. With his refined features, the delicate bloom on his cheeks, and dressed like the hero of a famous children's book he was sure to attract attention.

"Did you ever appear in public?"

"No, ma'am," was his polite reply to the lady's question.

"As little Lord Fauntleroy, I mean?"

"No, ma'am. My mother dresses me this way, but I don't like it. It makes me look too much like a girl."

"Are you traveling alone?"

"Yes ma'am," answered Percy in some hesitation. Just then a gentleman on the opposite side of the car rose, and Percy crossing over took his place. Apparently he did not care to answer any more questions. The fact was, he had run away from home, with the bold design of becoming a sailor, fascinated by a story he had read at home of "Forecastle Jack," and it was his ambition to follow in his steps.

When he reached New York he paused a moment in indecision, then asked a small newsboy where he could find a ship?

"What you want of a ship?" asked the boy.

"I am going to be a sailor," answered Percy, with dignity.

The newsboy whistled. "What! In them clo'es?" he asked.

"Oh, well, I can get some sailor's clothes."

"I'll tell you what," said the newsboy, "I know a boat over on the East River. It's called the Davy Jones. The skipper's name is Forbes. Maybe he'd take you."

"I'll give you a quarter if you'll take me there," said Percy.

"'Nough said, I'm your man."

Across the city they went—the ill-matched pair. Presently they reached a dirty and ill-smelling pier, at the foot of which was a small nondescript coasting vessel. Sitting near the bow was a short, rough-looking man, the skipper.

"Cap'n Forbes," said the newsboy, "here's a chap that wants to be a sailor."

Captain Forbes took the short pipe out of his mouth, and surveyed Percy attentively. "Have you ever been to sea, my lad?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"Then you have no experience as a sailor?"

"No, sir, but I can learn."

"Just so. What's your name?"

"Percy Manson."

"That won't do for a sailor, I'll call you Jack."

"All right, sir."

"Then you're willing to ship with me?"

"If you please, sir."

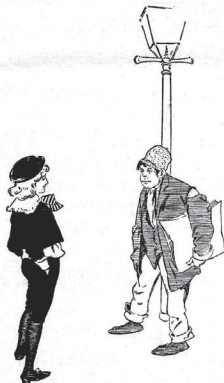
"Very well, but you must have your hair cut. Sailors don't wear long hair."

"All right, sir."

Captain Forbes went below and brought up a large pair of shears with which he ruthlessly shortened Percy's Fauntleroy tresses.

"That's a little more like," he said. "Now I'll try to find a sailor's suit for you." Again he went below and brought up a shabby suit two sizes too large for Percy. "There, Jack, put that on."

Percy did so, though his taste rather revolted at the



unclean substitute for his own handsome velvet clothes. "Now look at yourself, Jack."

The captain held out a hand-glass, and Percy looked in. He hardly knew himself in the shabby suit and ragged hair which confronted him. "How do you like it?"

"The clothes ain't very nice," faltered Percy.

"Sailors mustn't be particular. They don't look as if they had come out of a band-box. Are you hungry?"

"Yes, sir."

"We'll have some dinner."

He led the way down into the little cabin, where a colored cook had laid the table.

The captain took his seat and motioned to Percy to sit opposite.

The meat was salt junk. Percy tried to eat it, but couldn't. He confined himself to some hard tack.

"Now I will tell you how to talk," said Captain Forbes. "You must say 'shiver me timbers!' Then everyone will know you're a sailor. Say it."

"Shiver me timbers," said Percy hesitating.

"That's well. Now, never say 'yes.' Say ay ay, sir."

"Yes sir. I mean, ay ay, sir."

"That's good. You'll soon be a sailor."

This was encouraging, but somehow Percy did not enjoy it as well as he expected. The vessel smelled very disagreeably, and so did the suit he wore.

"I suppose you wouldn't mind climbing the mast, Jack? Of course you will have to do it."

"Ay ay, sir. And when do you start, sir?"

"Sometime to-morrow. I will leave you in charge of the vessel now, as I must go ashore for a couple of hours."

"Ay ay, sir."

Captain Forbes went ashore, and Percy began to reflect. Did he really want to be a sailor? All at once he felt that he did not. He couldn't live this way, and feed on hard tack and salt junk. It was ever so much nicer at home.

Cautiously he left the vessel, and ran breathlessly, looking from time to time over his shoulder to see if he was pursued, till he reached the depot. A train was just starting and he got on board, and in a little over an hour a small shabby figure stood at the door of Mrs. Manson's handsome cottage. He was about to enter when the man-servant said roughly: "What do you want here, boy?"

"It's me," answered Percy faintly.

"Whatever in the world have you done to yourself, Master Percy? Why, you look like a tramp."

"I went to be a sailor, but I didn't like it, and I've come back."

Mrs. Manson almost had a fit when she saw her transformed darling with his beautiful ringlets so roughly shorn, but she was glad to get him back, and the prodigal was forgiven. The next day she went to the city with Percy and obtained his velvet suit, returning the one given him by the captain.

"I thought I'd give him a lesson, ma'am," said Captain Forbes with a grim smile.

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

FAVORITE FLOWERS.

"Which is your favorite flower, Ernest? Violets?"

"When I am with you, Ruth, I prefer two-lips to all the flowers that bloom in the spring."



'Percy Manson's Lesson'

(Continued from Page 5)

then a gentleman on the opposite side of the car rose, and Percy crossing over took his place. Apparently he did not care to answer any more questions. The fact was, he had run away from home, with the bold design of becoming a sailor, fascinated by a story he had read at home of "Forecastle Jack," and it was his ambition to follow in his steps.

When he reached New York he paused a moment in indecision, then asked a small newsboy where he could find a ship?

"What you want of a ship?" asked the boy.

"I am going to be a sailor," answered Percy, with dignity.

The newsboy whistled. "What! In them clo'es?" he asked.

"Oh, well, I can get some sailor's clothes."

"I'll tell you what," said the newsboy, "I know a boat over on the East River. It's called the Davy Jones. The skipper's name is Forbes. Maybe he'd take you."

"I'll give you a quarter if you'll take me there," said Percy.

"'Nough said, I'm your man."

Across the city they went—the ill-matched pair. Presently they reached a dirty and ill-smelling pier, at the foot of which was a small nondescript coasting vessel. Sitting near the bow was a short, rough-looking man, the skipper.

"Cap'n Forbes," said the newsboy, "here's a chap that wants to be a sailor."

Captain Forbes took the short pipe out of his mouth, and surveyed Percy attentively. "Have you ever been to sea, my lad?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"Then you have no experience as a sailor?"

"No, sir, but I can learn."

"Just so. What's your name?"

"Percy Manson."

"That won't do for a sailor, I'll call you Jack."

"All right, sir."

"Then you're willing to ship with me?"

"If you please, sir."

"Very well, but you must have your hair cut. Sailors don't wear long hair."

"All right, sir."

Captain Forbes went below and brought up a large pair of shears with which he ruthlessly shortened Percy's Fauntleroy tresses.

"That's a little more like," he said. "Now I'll try to find a sailor's suit for you." Again he went below and brought up a shabby suit two sizes too large for Percy. "There, Jack, put that on."

Percy did so, though his taste rather revolted at the unclean substitute for his own handsome velvet clothes. "Now look at yourself, Jack."

The captain held out a hand-glass, and Percy looked in. He

hardly knew himself in the shabby suit and ragged hair which confronted him. "How do you like it?"

"The clothes ain't very nice," faltered Percy.

"Sailors mustn't be particular. They don't look as if they had come out of a band-box. Are you hungry?"

"Yes, sir."

"We'll have some dinner."

He led the way down into the little cabin, where a colored cook had laid the table.

The captain took his seat and motioned to Percy to sit opposite.

The meat was salt junk. Percy tried to eat it, but couldn't. He confined himself to some hard tack.

"Now I will tell you how to talk," said Captain Forbes.

"You must say 'shiver me timbers!' Then everyone will know you're a sailor. Say it."

"Shiver me timbers," said Percy hesitating.

"That's well. Now, never say 'yes.' Say ay ay, sir."

"Yes sir. I mean, ay ay, sir."

"That's good. You'll soon be a sailor."

This was encouraging, but somehow Percy did not enjoy it as well as he expected. The vessel smelled very disagreeably, and so did the suit he wore.

"I suppose you wouldn't mind climbing the mast, Jack? Of course you will have to do it."

"Ay ay, sir. And when do you start, sir?"

"Sometime to-morrow. I will leave you in charge of the vessel now, as I must go ashore for a couple of hours."

"Ay ay, sir."

Captain Forbes went ashore, and Percy began to reflect. Did he really want to be a sailor? All at once he felt that he did not. He couldn't live this way, and feed on hard tack and salt junk. It was ever so much nicer at home.

Cautiously he left the vessel, and ran breathlessly, looking from time to time over his shoulder to see if he was pursued, till he reached the depot. A train was just starting and he got on board, and in a little over an hour a small shabby figure stood at the door of Mrs. Manson's handsome cottage. He was about to enter when the man-servant said roughly: "What do you want here, boy?"

"Its me," answered Percy faintly.

"Whatever in the world have you done to yourself, Master Percy? Why, you look like a tramp."

"I went to be a sailor, but I didn't like it, and I've come back."

Mrs. Manson almost had a fit when she saw her transformed darling with his beautiful ringlets so roughly shorn, but she was glad to get him back, and the prodigal was forgiven. The next day she went to the city with Percy and obtained his velvet suit, returning the one given him by the captain.

"I thought I'd give him a lesson, ma'am," said Captain Forbes with a grim smile.

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

Games people play

(and young readers, too)

By William R. Gowen (PF-706)

What is a game?

Wading through the dictionary's multiple definitions of this common word, for the purpose of this article, let's give Webster's definition of "Games People Play":

GAME – 1. *Activity engaged in for diversion or amusement.* 2. *The equipment for a game.* 3. *A physical or mental competition conducted according to rules with participants in direct opposition to each other.*

The main topic of this article will be late-19th to mid-20th century board games with literary connections, in particular, those tied to series books. Such games came into real prominence in the 1950s and continued into the 1980s. But first, let's delve into a Cliff's Notes version of gaming history.

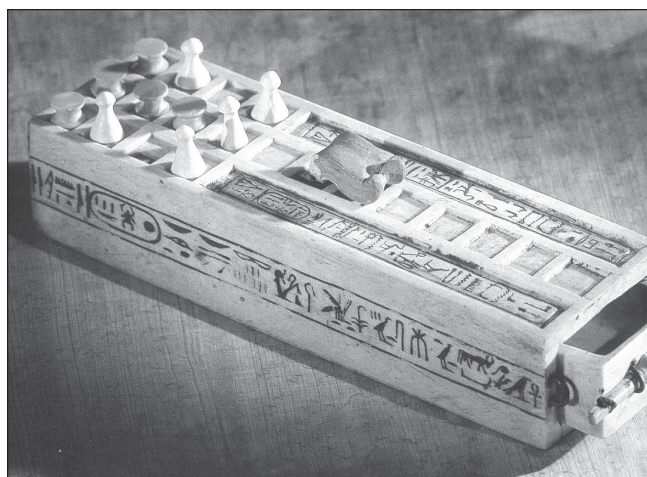
First, we're not talking about physical games such as hunting, fishing or any form of athletics. We're looking at what Americans came to know as "parlor games," those which involved mental acuity instead of physical ability.

Historians believe these kinds of games date back some 5,000 years to such ancient civilizations as Sumer, Babylonia, Syria and Egypt (roughly 3000 to 300 B.C.), well before the Greeks and Romans created the foundation for today's modern society. Gaming objects such as dice (known as knucklebones), pawns and other gaming pieces came into existence during this period, various styles of game boards were invented that became precursors of such modern-day pastimes as chess, backgammon and cribbage. Many were categorized as "race to the finish" games, in which playing pieces were moved in competition around a game board.

Egyptian game boards date back to the pre-dynastic period, with the finest surviving examples coming from the later dynastic periods, around 3500 to 3000 B.C.

The top photo on this page shows a 20-square Senet board, carved out of a solid block of ivory, 13½ centimeters long by 4 centimeters wide, from Egypt's 18th dynasty. It was created for a youth, with half his signature double cartouche (the oval design) visible on the side.

This article was presented as a paper at the 37th annual conference of the Popular Culture Association in Boston, Massachusetts, on April 5, 2007; and also at the 2007 Horatio Alger Society convention in Shelbyville, Indiana.



The ancient Egyptian game of Senet utilized playing boards divided into squares to record the progress of the competitors. This "race to the finish" concept showed up later in familiar games such as cribbage, as well as the many literature-inspired board games produced from the late 19th century until the present.

Twelve of the squares are in a grid at the left, with the final eight squares (the homestretch of the "race") extending to the foot of the game board. The drawer, with an ivory bolt sliding through gold staples, held the knucklebones and game pieces.

The bottom photo shows a larger, more traditional 30-square Senet board. The two competitors used ancient dice or throwing sticks to determine the moves of their color-coded playing pieces, which followed a crib-

bage-like S-shaped path around the board. Codes engraved on the squares gave good-luck or bad-luck information. To win the game, a player had to be the first to remove all his 10 playing pieces from the board by landing on the good-luck squares.

I mention this because Senet, which historians believe to be the oldest confirmed board game, seems oddly familiar.

Now, let's turn our attention to the modern era. The iconic 20th century child's game is Howard Garis' "Uncle Wiggily" Game. Instead of 30 squares as used by the Egyptians, we have a winding path from Uncle Wiggily's bungalow to Dr. Possum's house, where the winning "Uncle Wiggily" token will receive his rheumatism medicine. Along the way are plenty of bad "hops," such as the Skee-zix and Bad Pipsisewah, which results in a loss of playing turns in the "race" to reach the doctor's office first.

Once you study Uncle Wiggily and other contemporary games, including their playing pieces, boards and rules, you'll see the ancient game of Senet has been updated in mid-20th century clothing. History does have a way of repeating itself, over and over again.

Classic American board games have been classified by collectors into several major periods: **Early Age** (1744-1880), **Golden Age** (1880-1913), **Silver Age** (1915-1945) and **Modern Age** (1946-present).

Since we're discussing literary games tied to books for young people, we have to look back to the Golden Age for our starting point. Famous classic story books often resulted in games of the same title.

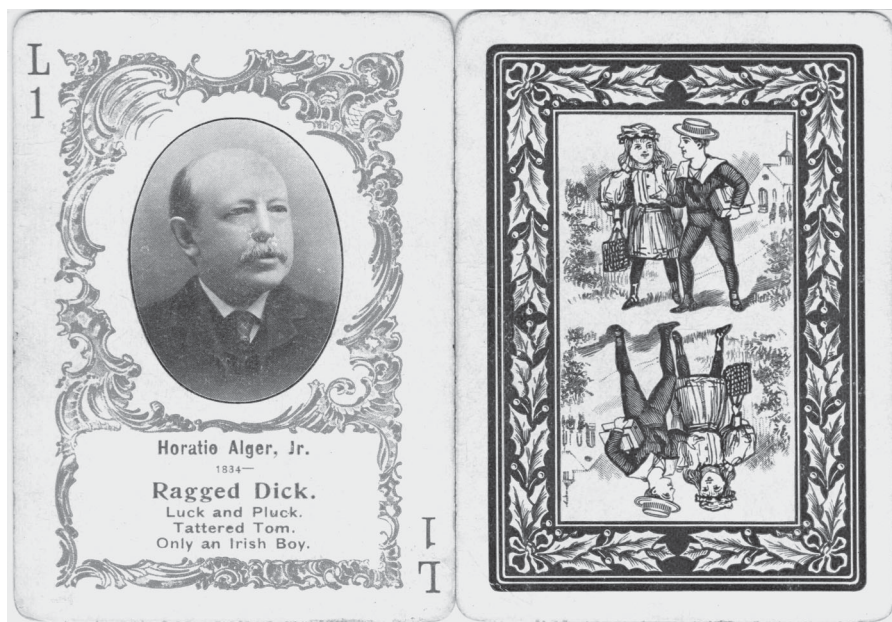
Such examples include *The Robinson Crusoe Game*, ca. 1900, was produced by McLoughlin Brothers, a firm which actually dates back to the 1870s, but by the late 1880s and through the turn of the century produced game boards and boxes by the color chromolithograph printing process. As a result, many of McLoughlin's early games are worth several thousand dollars in collectible, mint-in-box condition.

George Parker of Salem, Massachusetts, entered the game business in the early 1880s, and Milton Bradley came along around the turn of the century. An example is Milton Bradley's *Peter Rabbit Game* from 1910.

With the Golden Age ending in the teens, McLoughlin, also a book publisher, sold its game business to Milton Bradley in 1920.

We now turn our attention to the earliest examples of games either devoted to, or influenced by authors of popular series fiction for young people.

The popular game of "Authors" included a version aimed at young readers: *Young Folks Favorite Authors*, was produced in 1897 by The Fireside Game Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio, soon to be part of the Cincinnati Game Company. Horatio Alger, Jr., was prominently featured, with his 4-card "set" being *Ragged Dick*, *Luck and Pluck*,



Horatio Alger, Jr. was featured in "Young Folks Favorite Authors," produced by the Fireside Game Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1897.

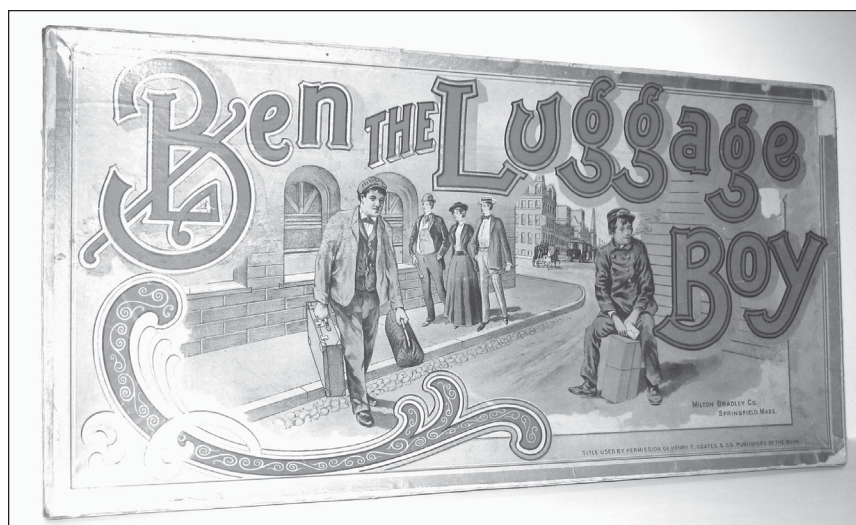
Tattered Tom and *Only an Irish Boy*, four of his most popular titles.

Alger was joined in this game by three other popular authors for young people: Charles A. Fosdick, known as "Harry Castlemon"; William T. Adams ("Oliver Optic"); and John Townsend Trowbridge, author of the *Jack Hazard* books and other popular titles (see illustration on Page 13).

Alger's "Rags to Riches" stories were also influential on several Golden Age board games. The most important is Milton Bradley's *Ben the Luggage Boy* (ca. 1896), which used the actual Ben Brandon title character from Alger's story, first published by A.K. Loring in 1870 and reprinted by several publishers. On the game's box top is the statement: "Title used by permission of Henry T. Coates & Co., Publisher of the Book." So, the Alger tie-in is confirmed.

The game board for the *Ben the Luggage Boy* game even captions one of the illustrations as *Ben Looking for Work: "Smash Yer Baggage, Sir?"* This is nearly identical to the caption used for the book's frontispiece illustration.

(Continued on Page 10)



The highly collectible *Ben the Luggage Boy* game by Milton Bradley. The game board, at right, is divided into squares, advancing the winning player to the office of Ben Brandon's father.

Games people play

(and young readers, too)

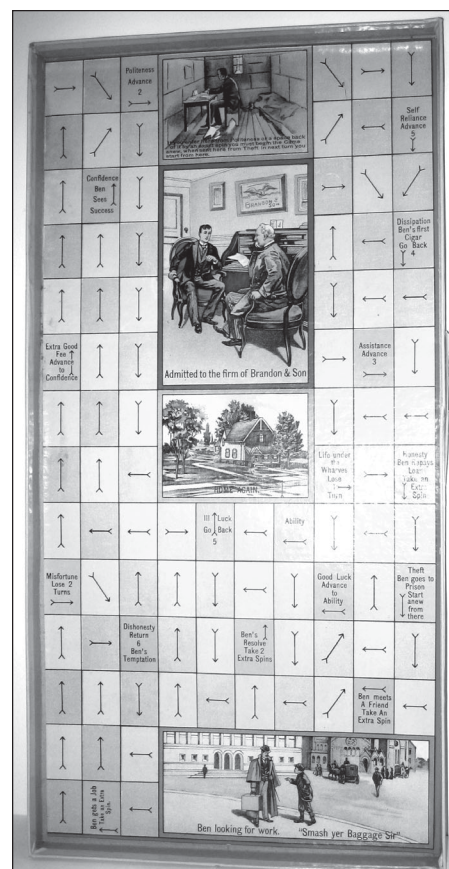
(Continued from Page 9)

tion, "Smash yer baggage, Mum?"

You'll also notice the game board is filled with squares, advancing the winning "Ben the Luggage Boy" from life in the streets into the offices of Brandon & Son, his father's firm, where he has just been hired. Again, it's a look back at Senet and other ancient games.

There are several additional Golden Age games in which Alger is more peripherally related. An example is *The Errand Boy* (another actual Alger title), published by McLoughlin in 1891. The game board for *The Errand Boy* includes a spinner device, which was used for a majority of board games from this period to move contestants along the board. In this case the destination is Square Number 43, the final (and winning) play.

The *Game of The Telegraph Boy* (McLoughlin, 1888) relates somewhat to another Alger character. The photo of the box cover on Page 1 of this issue shows off the publisher's stunning color graphics. The game board moves the contestants along a concentric path toward the President's Office. The metal game pieces (at right) are typical for



board games of this period. These "telegraph boy" game pieces are made of a tin-lead alloy and are hand-painted, reminiscent of the die-cast metal rabbits used in earlier versions of the *Uncle Wiggily* Game.

The *Game of the District Messenger Boy* (McLoughlin, 1899) is another game following a rags-to-riches Horatio Alger theme.

Now, let's move into the 20th century's most popular era of series books. Howard R. Garis (1873-1962) created *Uncle Wiggily* as a famous illustrated serial and book character for younger readers, appearing in 1910 in the *Newark Evening News*, the paper from which Garis had retired as a day-to-day journalist in 1908.

In 1917, according to son Roger Garis' memoir *My Father Was Uncle Wiggily*, the elder Garis "... invented the 'Uncle Wiggily' Game, which has become the largest-selling children's game in the world."

The game has been around ever since, with the aforementioned game board recognizable to four generations of young Americans.

The *Uncle Wiggily* Game had not gone unnoticed by Edward Stratemeyer. Howard Garis had written under contract for the Stratemeyer Syndicate since its earliest days, and Stratemeyer, in a letter dated July 21, 1919, wished Garis luck with his game.

Stratemeyer apparently was also intrigued by the popular *Polyanna: The Glad Game*, issued by Parker Brothers in 1915. In a letter of May 24, 1913, Stratemeyer wrote to L.C. Page of Boston, publisher of the *Polyanna* books as well as the Syndicate's *Pioneer Boys Series*. In the letter he proposes that a souvenir pennant, "in black or gold, on blue cloth," with the phrase "Be Polyanna and Be Glad," be produced by a badge maker for girl readers, or displayed in a Sunday-school classroom.

At any rate, Stratemeyer became interested in games to such an extent that in 1915 he wrote to both Parker Brothers and Milton Bradley about the possibility of issuing a *Rover Boys' Treasure Hunt* game. Stratemeyer presented a solid case on why he felt such a game would succeed, stating:

As you will see by the enclosed circular, the publishers have sold nearly two million of my 'Rover Boys' books. This ought to make a 'Rover Boys' game sell like hot-cakes.

Correspondence between Stratemeyer and the game-makers went back and forth over several months, discussing copyrights, royalties and other details, but for whatever reason, a *Rover Boys* game did not reach the



market. Stratemeyer is said to even have created a mock-up for the game for publishers to examine.

It turned out that Stratemeyer died in 1930 with no board game tied to his books.

However, during the leadership of his daughter, Harriet Stratemeyer Adams, the Syndicate finally in the 1950s got into the game business with Parker Brothers and Milton Bradley.

In 1956, the *Hardy Boys* appeared as a serial on the popular "Mickey Mouse Club" afternoon network television show. Harriet, who despite a distaste for Hollywood in general, found Walt Disney's family-oriented films and TV programs quite wholesome, and she agreed to allow Disney to use the *Hardy Boys* as characters in a filmed serial to be shown on the "Mickey Mouse Club." The program was filmed on Stage 2 of Disney's studio in Burbank, California.

The serial was titled "The Mystery of the Applegate Treasure," and was based on the first book of the *Hardy Boys Series*, *The Tower Treasure* (1927). The film starred young actors Tim Considine and Tommy Kirk as Frank and Joe Hardy, respectively.

Disneyland, in Anaheim, California, by the mid-1950s had become established as THE vacation or day-trip destination for young people (and families in general), and what better way to have a home remembrance than a Disneyland-themed game?

At the same time, in 1957, the success of the *Hardy Boys* TV serial inspired the creation by Parker Brothers

(Continued on Page 12)



The Errand Boy, another game using an actual Alger title, was introduced by McLoughlin Bros. in 1891.

Games people play

(and young readers, too)

(Continued from Page 11)

of Walt Disney's **Hardy Boys Treasure Game**. With a playing time of about a half hour, the winner was the first player to reach the finish line with a sack of gold, following the theme of the TV series. Again, this is ancient Senet updated — a true race to the finish.



The **Hardy Boys Treasure Game** was inspired by the Mickey Mouse Club serial "Secret of the Applegate Treasure," broadcast in late 1956. The opening of Disneyland led to a series of board games tied to the theme park's major attractions,

As I noted, a selection of Disneyland-related games came out at about the same time as Walt Disney's **Hardy Boys Treasure Game**, all issued by Parker Brothers. These games featured "Frontierland," "Adventureland," "Fantasyland" and "Riverboat," all popular Disneyland attractions. Also, Disney's animated feature films began to inspire board games, such as the **Snow White Game** issued by Cadaco in 1977.

Of course, with a **Hardy Boys** game in print, a **Nancy Drew** game was a necessity for the fans of those books.

The Syndicate reached an agreement with Parker Brothers to issue **The Nancy Drew Mystery Game** in 1957, which proved even more popular than the **Hardy Boys** game. In the same year, to satisfy even younger readers, **The Bobbsey Twins on the Farm Game** was produced by Milton Bradley. It uses a spinner to count the moves, as dice were considered too reminiscent of gambling to the younger audience for which this game was targeted.

Syndicate-authorized games continued to evolve during the 1960s and 70s. Parker Brothers reissued **The Hardy Boys Treasure Game** in 1960, the same as the original but with new box-cover art minus the Walt

Disney reference. In 1969 came **The Hardy Boys Game** (Milton Bradley), which was tied to the animated TV series running at the time. Contestants (playing Frank and Joe) attempt to help their father Fenton Hardy solve the mystery of the Golden Idol. This game, targeted for an older audience, uses dice to move the pawns along the board.

In 1978, Parker Brothers brought out **The Hardy Boys Mystery Game: The Secret of Thunder Mountain**. This one was inspired by the 1970s live-action **Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew** TV series, starring Shaun Cassidy and Parker Stevenson as the youthful detectives. Cassidy and Stevenson are illustrated in character on the box cover. A French-Canadian version of this game was issued concurrently by Parker Brothers.

The **Nancy Drew Mystery Game** continued to be popular, with a redesigned box brought out by Parker Brothers in 1959. At about the same time, the **Nancy Drew** game's popularity was evidenced by its appearance in several foreign editions, including a version from Norway, *Froken Detektiv Spillet*.

In the mid-1960s, the Stratemeyer Syndicate and Parker Brothers also attempted games tied to other series still in print. In 1965 came the **Dana Girls Game**, and in 1966 it was the turn of **Tom Swift, Jr.** to be immortalized. Neither of these games proved to be good sellers, but are highly sought after today by collectors.

Parker Brothers also issued board games tied to non-Syndicate series. An example is the **Cherry Ames Nursing Game**, produced in 1959.

The home computer era has brought about the spectacular growth of computer-based games. In 2004, HER International issued a series of **Nancy Drew** games for use on a personal computer, using Windows 98 or

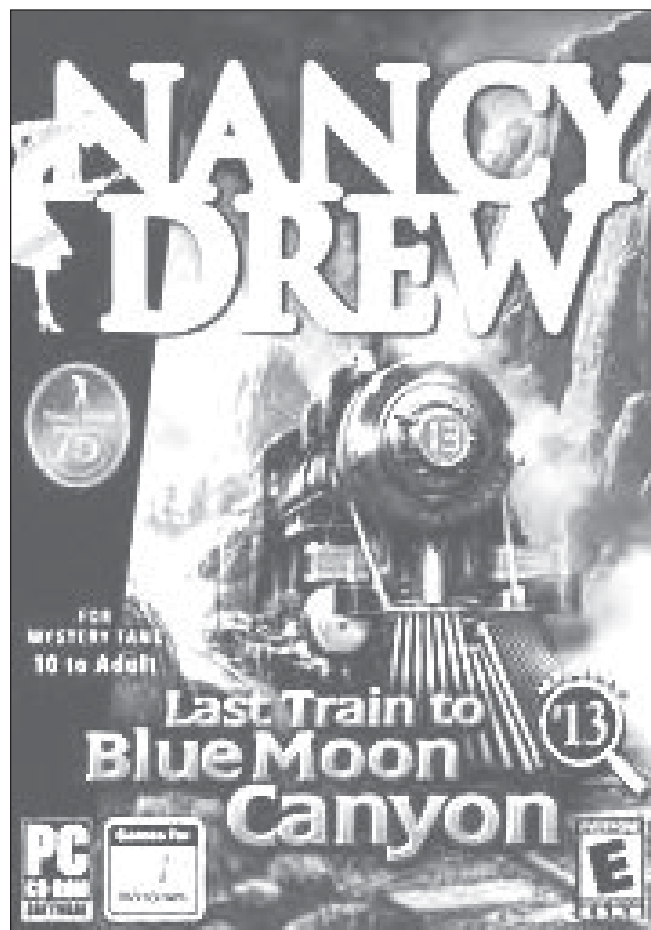
newer. Shown below is the box cover for "Last Train to Blue Moon Canyon," and it also features guest appearances by the Hardy Boys!

To show that even today's most popular series of adventures for young people is a rich candidate for computer immortality, in 2005, Electronic Arts Inc. (better known as EA), brought out a series of **Harry Potter** computer games. Three of the games use titles of books in the series, and the fourth is an interactive game of "Quidditch World Cup," in which you can take on Harry in his favorite Hogwarts sport.

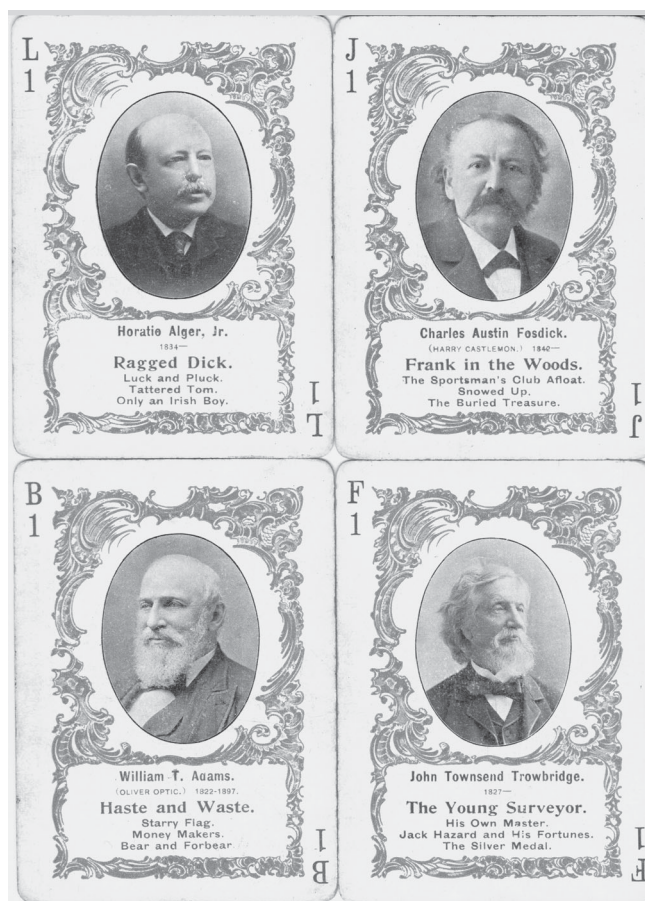
Teens and preteens, brought up in the computer era, can navigate these games easily. Mind you, these are run from the desktop, not with a more sophisticated game console such as PlayStation or Xbox.

Let's take a final look at Senet, which influenced most of the literary board games we have discussed in this article. A certain teenage Egyptian pharaoh, an accomplished hunter and charioteer, used the personalized Senet boards shown on Page 8 in both his life and afterlife.

It's likely King Tutankhamun would enjoy competing against Harry Potter in a digital game of Quidditch!



A series of Nancy Drew games created earlier this decade for the home computer ushered in a new era.



Horatio Alger, Jr. was joined in 1897 by his fellow writers for young people Charles A. Fosdick ("Harry Castlemon"), William T. Adams ("Oliver Optic") and John Townsend Trowbridge in the "Young Folks Favorite Authors" card game.

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My primary source for the general history of games, as well as the publication dates of various Golden Age board games, is *American Games: Comprehensive Collector's Guide*, by Alex G. Malloy (2000, Iola, Wisc.: Krause Publications). Additional information on the rules of Senet was obtained from www.wikipedia.com. The publication dates and descriptions of contemporary series book-based board games was obtained from other Internet sources.

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Robert E. Kasper (PF-327), who provided images of several vintage Alger-themed board games; to Bob Sipes (PF-1067), for images of the playing cards from "Young Folks Favorite Authors"; to James D. Keeline (PF-898) for valuable background information on the board games based on Stratemeyer Syndicate books as well as games with Walt Disney and Disneyland tie-ins; finally, to Neil and Meg Morrison of South Boston, Mass., for information on the Tom Swift, Jr., and Nancy Drew board games and the Nancy Drew computer games.

'Finding a Fortune in Carson Valley'

(Continued from Page 3)

one of the ships damaged at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. The silver service on display was made from Comstock Lode silver and is a state treasure.

A simulated ghost town featuring animated figures talking about life in the mining camps during the late 19th century. With the sound of desert winds in the background, you'll get a good feel for the life early settlers experienced in that period.

Fascinating exhibits on the history of the Native Americans who have lived in Nevada. If you're lucky, there will be an exhibit of the exquisite basketry produced by Dat-So-La-Lee, a truly amazing Washoe ("Wash-OH") artisan who created some of the most beautiful baskets ever fashioned. One of her baskets is the size of a woman's small fingernail; you need a magnifying glass to see the detailed weaving and design.

Vintage slot machines

The museum has a display of vintage slot machines from the Fey Collection, which was formerly on display at the Liberty Belle Saloon in Reno until 2006. Many of these old machines are still functional. Charles Fey invented the first slot machine in 1887, and his family added to the collection of "one-armed bandits" over the years. The collection provides a unique look into how slot machines evolved and the role they played in Nevada's history.

My favorite part of the museum is the simulated mine exhibit that leads you out of the museum in a most unusual fashion. Insider hint: When you get to the stamp mill display, press the not-too-clearly-marked white button on the left wall to run the stamp mill. Hear the loud "clackety-clack" stamp mill and surprise others who are just looking at the exhibit. My siblings and I loved playing this trick when we were kids. Now you are in the know!

Nevada State Capitol Building

We've arranged a private docent-led tour of the building for Saturday from 3 to 3:45 p.m. This is a very special opportunity to see a beautiful public building with a lot of historic significance.

Governor's Mansion and historic neighborhoods

Our current Governor, Jim Gibbons, and his family live in Victorian splendor at the George Ferris-designed Governor's Mansion. The mansion is located at 606 North Mountain Street at the corner of Robinson Street (turn west off Highway 395 onto Robinson Street — the mansion is about four blocks away). This beautiful Clas-



Entrance sign for the recently renovated Nevada State Museum, formerly the historic Carson City Mint. The museum is highly recommended by convention hosts Janice and Mike Morley. Photo by Mike Morley

sic Revival building is open to the public for special events such as the annual Easter egg hunt and the Halloween trick-or-treat party (which coincides with Nevada Day, October 31). Mike and I went there on Christmas Eve to see the beautiful lights before we joined friends at a candlelight church service. Do the houses in the neighborhood seem familiar to you? Maybe it's because you recognize them from "The Shootist," John Wayne's last film.

Nevada State Railroad Museum

While relatively small (compared to other railroad museums), the Nevada State Railroad Museum has some interesting locomotives and rolling stock on display. One of the steam engines — the INYO — was used in the MGM film "Union Pacific," starring Barbara Stanwyck. In honor of Armed Forces Day, veterans and active armed forces service personnel can ride for free on Saturday, May 17, and Sunday, May 18. Contact the museum at www.nevadaculture.org for more information.

The Nevada State Railroad Museum will also give you information about our current regional project, the rebuilding of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad from Virginia City to Carson City. The V&T project is scheduled for completion in 2010, but you can currently ride the V&T a short distance. See "Virginia City: The Place You've Heard About" for more information.

P.S. — If you're a heavy-duty railroad buff and have the time to spend, be sure to plan a long day trip to Sacramento, Calif., and visit the California State Railroad Museum in the Old Town Sacramento area. It's awesome. Directions will be available in the hospitality room.

Bill Jenkins/Comstock Books

There's a great specialty book store, Comstock Books, located at 316 South Curry St., a block west from the State Capitol. Bill Jenkins, the owner, is a longtime Carson City resident and is always interested in meeting new people and enjoying a visit. He'll tell you about the history of this area, and he may tempt you into buying some books about Nevada history, Western Americana, and the Comstock Lode. I personally credit (or blame) Bill for getting me hooked on collectible books. He also has a selection of children's series books for sale.

Virginia City — The Place You've Heard About

Are you interested in seeing one of the largest national historic districts in the USA? Would you like to see a place in which you can experience for yourself what it might have been like to be a part of the wealthiest silver strike in the world?

Drive north on U.S. 395, then head east on U.S. 50 to the turnoff for Virginia City. Turn left when you see the brown-and-white sign for Virginia City National Historic District. Here's your chance to see old mining-era buildings, walk on historic board sidewalks, perhaps tour a period mansion, or maybe witness Wild West-style shootout.

Note: If you are only familiar with Virginia City from watching old episodes of "Bonanza" you will be surprised to realize that the city is located on a mountainside (Mount Davidson) rather than the flat town scenery you may remember from the TV show sets.

What you'll see:

Old towns entering Virginia City

From U.S. 50 heading toward Dayton and Fallon, turn left when you see the sign for "Virginia City Historic District" and travel about eight miles to Virginia City, passing through the small mining towns of Gold Canyon and Silver City. As you drive to Virginia City, you'll go through Devil's Gate canyon. This was a toll road during the Comstock Lode period. Look closely and you will see some iron spikes driven into the walls of the narrow canyon. In past days, chains were strung on those spikes to block the road. You had to pay a high toll to pass through Devil's Gate. It didn't matter if you were a silver baron, an ordinary stagecoach passenger, or a down-on-his-luck miner looking for a grubstake. **Everyone** had to pay.

Best bets in Virginia City

Virginia City will be emerging from its winter hibernation, and you are lucky to get a chance to see the town before the main tourist season starts and the summer crowds descend.

Here are some suggestions for your visit:

As you enter Virginia City, you may want to check out the Fourth Ward School Cultural Center (the tall white

building on your right) which has some great exhibits relating to the Comstock Lode. This museum operates on a donation basis, so it can be as inexpensive or expensive as you wish. Park on C Street (the main street) and walk the old boardwalks on either side to check out the stores, saloons, and places of interest. My family enjoys the Bucket of Blood saloon on the east side of C Street. If you go on Saturday afternoons, you might be treated to some great western music by our local favorites, David John and the Comstock Cowboys.

Across the street and near the Bucket of Blood, you'll see the Silver Queen Hotel. Go inside and view the queen herself, a huge mural made of Carson City silver dollars and gold pieces. Seeing the lady herself is a free attraction.

Just north of the town and to the east, a walk through the Virginia City Cemetery and Boot Hill may be of interest. One notable resident is Julia C. Bullette, a "soiled dove" who heroically nursed scores of miners through a massive cholera epidemic and was honored for her selflessness by being elected an honorary Virginia City fire chief. Sadly, she was murdered by a transient for some trivial furs and jewelry. The whole town turned out for her funeral — and even more turned out from outlying areas for her murderer's hanging. Keep in mind, this was a wide-open mining town in its heyday.

Speaking of fire fighters, Liberty Engine Company #1 State Fireman Museum is located at 117 South C St. Fire was — and is — a major concern here in Nevada's western regions. This museum has many artifacts relating to old-style firefighting techniques.

The Virginia and Truckee Railroad should be operating between Virginia City and Gold Hill. The "Queen of the Comstock" train has an interesting history, and is well worth it. The operators will probably tell you about the current plans to have the line extended to Carson City by 2010.

Piper's Opera House, located on B Street, has an interesting history. Many famous individuals have performed here over the years. If you are lucky, a local or internationally-known performance may be in store. In the past, Hal Holbrook has performed his "Mark Twain Tonight!" show at this location.

You also might want to check out Mark Twain Books on the east side of C Street. Mike and I have purchased some very good books from this store over the years. You'll see many books relating to local history, both new and used.

• *For Janice Morley's additional discussion and travel directions for day trips from the Carson City area, visit www.thehoratioalgersociety.org and click on the H.A.S. convention sub-page.*

• *Color photos of places of interest described in this article are on Page 16.*



The Bliss Mansion, part of the Carson City historic district.

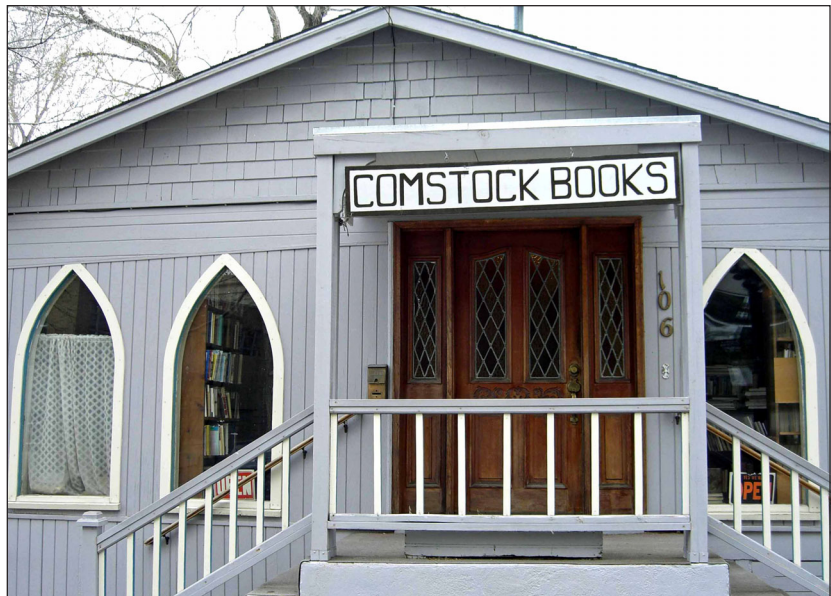
Photo by Mike Morley

Carson Valley sights

Places to visit during the 2008 H.A.S. convention, May 15-18

Comstock Books, located just outside the Carson City historic district. The store is owned and run by Bill Jenkins, a knowledgeable bookseller of the old school.

Photo by Mike Morley



This restored Union Pacific caboose is on display at the Nevada Train Museum in Carson City.

Photo by Mike Morley