

THE YOUNG AMERICAN HERO ERA

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newsboy

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5868 Heath, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49002



Monthly Newsletter of
the HORATIO ALGER
SOCIETY. The World's
Only Publication Devoted
to That Wonderful
World of Horatio Alger.



Horatio Alger, Jr.

(Span of life: 1-13-1832 - 7-18-1899)

Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth Butler

This frontispiece illustration was originally from the A.K. Loring editions, but also used in some Porter & Coates and Winston editions. It is one of the most popular, and perhaps the most fami-

It was our dream that this scene might be reproduced, using manikins in a store window display for our coming "Kalamazoo Occasion" but suitable authentic attire on such short notice is our problem.

RAGGED DICK SERIES BY HORATIO ALGER JR.



liar illustrations which identify the New York City street-boys as portrayed in many of the Alger stories; a Baggage Smasher, a Footblack, a Newsboy, and a possible Match Boy, or a District Telegraph Messenger Boy.

We are hopeful to capture the pose on posters to be strategically placed in store windows for publicity purposes, and to revive the memory and the image of "Our Hero" and announce the time and the place of our Annual Convention.

RANDOM THOUGHTS FROM ALGERLAND

by Max Goldberg, President

JOHN MAYNARD OF LAKE ERIE: The Genesis of a Legend, by George Salomon (continued)



Paradoxically, the legend of John Maynard was to find its most durable form in a foreign land, at the hands of an author who never saw the United States; the German Theodor Fontane (1819-1898). He is known as the father of the realistic middle-class novel in Germany, also as a distinguished writer of occasional and narrative verse.

Early in life he became thoroughly familiar with English literature, an interest deepened by repeated stints as a newspaperman in England during the 1850s. He belonged to a literary club in Berlin in which the ancient Scottish folk ballads were favorites; his "Archibald Douglas," first read in 1854 there, transposes the Scottish style into German with magnificent effect, and has become his best-known work.

The English speaking countries supplied much of his inspiration. When a large new railroad bridge near Dundee in Scotland collapsed during 1879, plunging a passenger train into Firth of Tay, he turned the incident into a dramatic ballad, which became an overnight success. Probably about the same time, he wrote his version of "John Maynard," a close counterpart, in structure and style, of the poem about the Tay disaster.

Though Fontane seems to have left no record of his source, internal evidence leaves little doubt that he, like Alger, worked from Gough's "Pilot." His rendering contains several details found in none of the other versions; the ship, (here called Schwalbe, i.e. "Swallow") is bound for Buffalo from Detroit; the fire occurs just before the end of the voyage; and the captain uses a speaking trumpet.

But though Fontane used the same raw

material as Alger, what he made of it is vastly different. Instead of formal stanzas, he employs lines of loose, at times almost prosaic, rhythm simply rhymed in pairs. Where Alger's narration is rhetorical, Fontane's is concised, even clipped. Dialogue is used freely and dramatically, and the story is reduced to essentials; for example, the efforts to put out the fire are not described.

Alger makes little of the drama of diminishing time and distance, while Fontane turns the ticking-away of precious minutes into a recurrent theme ("still twenty minutes to Buffalo"), then ("fifteen, finally ten") steadily building up tension toward the climax.

Fontane's ballad soon became a favorite in the German-speaking countries and, unlike Alger's, gained a permanent place in literature. Probably few Americans living today could identify John Maynard; but thousands of miles away in Central Europe, generations upon generations of school children still memorize the record of his heroic deed.

In reference to the changing of the "Ragged Dick Award" to the "Strive and Succeed Award" let it be thoroughly understood, that the changing of the name of the Award, was NEVER intended as an affront to Forrest Campbell. The great contribution to our Society by him cannot be underestimated. We all acknowledge the time, personal expense and planning he was compelled to do all by himself, until the Society became self supporting.

Ralph Gardner, V.P. Steve Press and I weighed the action and decided that the change was best for the Society and advisable in view of the public reaction against the "Ragged Dick Award." There was a preponderance of evidence against the name, by ministers, editors, and the public at large. Not being Algerites, they could not conceive the real meaning of Ragged Dick. Like the password of a fraternity, only those who belong understand it.

Ever so often one finds in buying a book, some clippings inserted among the

pages, pertaining to the book or to its author. This clipping contains quite an article on Alger's birthday, titled:

BLASE AGE IGNORES ALGER'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

"There was no playing of municipal trumpets to mark the 100th Anniversary (1932) of the birth of Horatio Alger, Jr., nor were there so far as could be learned, any pilgrimage to his grave. As sophistication lays hold upon the youths of today Alger's vogue wanes; he seems nevertheless to be on the verge of apotheosis. He is a candidate for that Valhalla which goes under the name of Americana.

His first editions are not yet eagerly sought by collectors, but dealers in first editions ask as much as \$10 to \$15 for some in good condition. He was one of the most successful writers of juvenile fiction in the history of this country. He impregnated at least one generation with his doctrine that honor and wealth are the rewards of virtue. At that time the racketeers had not yet risen to challenge Alger's tenet. A letter of Alger's on the rewards of authorship that came to light recently, has been acquired by -- from --, it reads:

233 West 34th St. N.Y.C.
March 16, 1894

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

Yours Truly,
H. Alger, Jr.

Despite the large income from his writings, his generosity left him at death, a poor man. During the 30 years that he lived here, he produced scores of books, which had a wide influence on youth. In all, Alger produced 119 books. His interest in charity took him to the Newsboy's lodging, founded

by Charles Loring Brace. There his warm heartedness won him the affection of the boys, and from their lives, he drew much of his material and sentimentalizing it for use in his books, which flowed from his pen. It has been said Alger was himself timorous and that the heroes he created, represented a form of compensation."

Betty Flynn of the Chicago Daily News, November, 1968 wrote an article stating: RAGS TO RICHES TYPES TO DOMINATE WHITE HOUSE SCENE "It will be a group of which Horatio Alger himself would be proud. Like President-elect Richard Nixon, most of his closest friends... have travelled the Rags to Riches route. Two of Nixon's best buddies, Elmer Bobst, the 82 year head of Warner-Lambert Pharmaceutical Co., and Billy Graham, got the Horatio Alger Awards at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in June 1965. Maurice Stans, 60, Director of Budget Bureau under Eisenhower, started as an office boy in a Chicago Accounting firm. Robert Finch, 42, Lt. Governor of California worked part time during the last three years of high school to help a widowed mother. Don Kendall, 47, President of Pepsi-Cola International began as a fountain salesman. With such a galaxy of Algerites perhaps reason and common sense will prevail again."

The Boston Globe in 1957 wrote a half page story about Olin Downes, an Alger Musical Critic. I am giving an abstract of it. "When Olin Downes, the music critic for the New York Times for 32 years died at 69, he was the foremost musical critic in the U.S. Lucien Price of the Boston Globe in a personal memoir on his friend wrote: His career was a story by Horatio Alger scored for full orchestra. Those who knew him will tell you that his formal schooling ended in the elementary grades and he started here across Washington Street at the Boston Post running an elevator. He was born in Evanston, Ill., came to Boston at the age of 8 and attended public school. Within 10 years he was teaching piano and playing the viola in a string quartette. At 20 he became music critic for the Boston Post. They were written against pressure of a deadline, but they were soon watched by the whole country. (continued on page 4)

RANLON THOUGHTS FROM ALGERLAND continued

In 1923 the N.Y. Times hired him to take over the post that he graced for 32 years." Milton Salls, PF-020, sent me the following information:

"On a recent television program named Jeopardy, questions were asked and rewards given for correct answers. One question was; Who was the author whose first book was Ragged Dick? One of the contestants answered correctly. An Alger story was in a Sunday Supplement. It was a full page story of Lynda Bird Johnson. She compiled a list of favorite authors from her friends in Washington. She found that their favorite was Louisa May Alcott, but in second place was Horatio Alger. Of course many of her friends were Senators, Congressmen, Supreme Court Justices, and Members of the President's Cabinet. She didn't mention whether her father had been an Alger reader." Many thanks to our Particular Friend for that nugget of information. Morris Olsen, PF-106, informs me that the AB magazine says a copy of Alger's Seeking His Fortune, sold for \$190 at a recent book auction.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Since Max has appointed me as the Great Lakes Regional Director, I have prepared the following announcement for inclusion in the April Newsboy.

All members and friends of the Horatio Alger Society are invited to attend the First Great Lakes Regional Meeting in Des Plaines, Illinois, May 16-17-18, 1969. These dates were chosen to enable those who attend to also attend the gigantic Brandeis University Booksale. This is a circus tent just loaded with books that have been sorted according to subject, making it quite easy to browse in your areas of interest. Bring your own books for sale or trade with your fellow society members. Motel rates: Single, \$13 and \$17 double. Friday afternoon will be for checking in at motel, followed in the evening by an informal dinner-get-together.

Saturday morning there will be a brief meeting, leaving the rest of the day free to visit the numerous Chicagoland book-

stores. In the evening the Brandeis University Booksale will begin. On the first day of the sale a \$2 contribution is asked. This, and all proceeds of the sale go to help buy books for the library at Brandeis University. There will be a Sunday morning farewell breakfast that will be over in time for those who may wish to revisit the Brandeis sale without charge. Further information and motel reservation cards may be obtained by writing to: Gilbert K. Westgard, II 2317 Oak Tree Lane, Park Ridge, Ill. 60068

(E.N. Due to the overflow of material on this page, the customary editorial statement and listing of our officers is curtailed accordingly)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

PF-230 Mr. Alan Sam Diky
1105 Edgewater Drive,
Naperville, Illinois 60540

MEMBERSHIP REINSTATEMENT

PF-035 Mr. Keith H. Thompson
21 Otis Lane,
Bellport, L.I. New York 11713

PLEASE MAKE THESE ADDITIONS TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP ROSTER AND KEEP IT UP TO DATE.

GOOD NEWS AND OTHER REPORTS OF INTEREST

Founder Ken Butler lost his mother, 88, (last remaining parent) recently, and Founder Forrest Campbell lost his last remaining brother, age 83. Mrs. Max (Blanche) Friedman, PF-001, recently had cataracts removed from both eyes. The operation was a complete success, and Mrs. PF-001 is well on the way to complete recovery. Her plans for the ladies luncheon seem to be assured. John Sullivan, PF-074, and Executive Director of Friendship House, Ottawa, Illinois, has just received the Silver Beaver Award from the Boy Scouts of America! Congratulations, John, you have earned it, and you are deserving of the award. The Society is very proud to have you on our membership rolls!

Our congratulations to the sponsors of all "DECENCY RALLIES" in the U.S.A. This is indeed, GOOD NEWS!

BOOK MART

The listing of Alger books in this department (space permitting) is free to our members. Please list title, publisher, condition and price. Editor disqualified due to first notice. First editions underlined. Requests for special privileges are discouraged.

Offered by Dan Fuller, 1121 W. Badger Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53713. (PF-142)

Frank & Fearless,	Whitman	F	\$ 2.00
<u>Frank Fowler,</u>	A.L. Burt	G	11.00
Frank Fowler,	A.L. Burt	V G	5.00
*Grit, (Young Boatman)			2.00
Jacob Marlowe's S. Superior		F	3.00
Joe's Luck,	A.L. Burt		5.00
Ragged Dick,	P&C	F-G	8.00
Rough & Ready,	P&C	F-G	5.00
Rufus & Rose,	P&C	G	6.00
** <u>Tom, The Bootblack,</u>	Burt	G	11.00
Tom Temple's Career,	Burt	V G	5.00
Tom Thatcher's Fortune,	Burt	V G	5.00
<u>Tom Thatcher's Fortune,</u>	Burt	V G	12.00
# <u>Tony, The Hero,</u>	A.L. Burt	G	10.00
Wren Winter's Triumph,		F-G	14.00

(*This is title #72 on our numbered list of titles from Gardner's book. ** is a reprint title. # was first published by J.S. Ogilvie & Co. The seller's description "first hardcover" lends to the confusion)

THE KALAMAZOO OCCASION (July 8-11th)

For the benefit of any new readers, and a reminder for the rest of our members, the registration fee is \$1 per member, \$1 for spouse, and \$1 for adult guests in advance. Upon receipt of your registration fee, plus a six-cent stamp for reply you will receive a room reservation card.

At this early date, members from four states are already registered, and due to our mid-west location a record turn-out in attendance is expected with membership representation from 15 states.

Members from the east and west should, if traveling by car, use I-94, and members from the south should use U.S. 131

which crosses I-94 in the suburban area, southwest of Kalamazoo. There are many exits from U.S. 131 and I-94 but all motorists are urged to use exit #76 from I-94. This approach to the City of Kalamazoo is via "our great white way" (our version of Broadway) where some of our shopping centers and many of our suburban restaurants are located. A detailed map which will direct you to our motel will be printed in the June Newsboy.

It is important, and we encourage you to report at our motel headquarters before six P.M. of the first day. We will be officially welcomed in the evening of the first day by our local Chamber of Commerce, to be followed by an Alger Free-Forum (public invited) Discussion Period. The selection of a moderator for this event of the evening will depend upon the time of your arrival.

The general agenda will be business sessions in the morning, conducted by our President. Visiting bookstores in the afternoon, with Alger discussions scheduled for Tuesday & Wednesday evenings, and our Banquet on Thursday evening.

Visitation of rooms for the purpose of examining books offered for sale, must be by invitation, and the timing should be sandwiched in between our major events.

There may be some outdoor games and entertainment which must also be sandwiched in between scheduled events. All meals, except our banquet, will be open for individual, or group arrangements. The ladies luncheon will of course be a Wednesday noon affair extending for an indefinite period of time at the home of the Friedmans.

All committee reports should be made at our first business session on Wednesday morning. Election of officers should be held at our final business session on Thursday morning, with installation of officers at our banquet on Thursday evening. You must decide upon your arrival if you plan to attend the banquet. Attendance developing from late decisions cannot be guaranteed. We are counting on your attendance, and remember, we've designed this OCCASION with you in mind!



Steve Press

VICE-PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Was our ALGER PROJECT successful last year? Last week Tory B. came to see me and asked if I had any more of "those Alger books" because he couldn't find one in the library. He had already done one book report on the book I had given him. Vivian N. came to tell me that she reads and rereads the Algers I had

given her. She is saving them to give to her brother when he is old enough.

These are just two examples of many who have come back from the high school and talked to me about Alger. They have graduated from my school but yet they felt the need to come back and talk about Alger. And remember, these children are notorious for staying away from reading.

Nine students out of ninety did the first assignment. They looked up in an encyclopedia the name of Horatio Alger, Jr., and copied it onto a piece of paper. Nine students out of ninety. Par for the course! Those students who did the work were praised and rewarded with "extra credit" and each paper was read out loud in class. At the end of that day every student knew who Horatio Alger, Jr. was.

I put the facts on the board and each student copied them carefully (I checked) into his notebook. The facts: correct date of birth and date of death; correct spelling of the name (though all during the many following lessons I received delightful variations --example: Horechal Alerger); approximate number of books

sold, kinds of books, etc., etc. -- refer to your local encyclopedias for this -- corrected by Gardner of course. It was a struggle but the facts were down.

The next step was a bit of history, a page of introduction I wrote, and some pictures I had taken from the New York Times. As I look back now I wish I had handled the pictures better. They were good and eventually evoked a good response but I weakened their use by not recognizing their potential and merely

coupled them with another lesson. The photos, taken from the New York Times, showed New York City slum children from the turn of the century. Wonderful pictures! My students were fascinated by them and were amazed that they were 70 years old. I had the pictures reproduced and each of my students received them.



A newsboy asleep in a subway station

The little piece of introductory information I handed out was, I'm pleased to say, very effective. I told a little story of the Civil War and the youngsters who served in it. And then, together, we read the sheet. I've attached

it at the end of my column. They understood what I tried to say on the paper and they took it to heart. They became curious about the stories that this man, Horatio Alger, Jr., wrote. I had piqued their interest. I was on my way. The best was yet to come!

1865: THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR

The soldiers who had, to the beat of the drum, marched into battle, now straggled home. The drum beat was still.

What happened to the little drummer boy
(continued on page 7)

VICE-PRESIDENT'S COLUMN (continued)

who bravely stood with the soldier in the battle? He was abandoned. Boys, many of them not even in their teens, who had tasted deeply of the adult world in war, its most degraded form, were left to find their own way home to farms and villages -- farms and villages perhaps destroyed by the war -- farms and villages that held no interest for their new way of looking at things.

It was the big city, like New York, that was the lure. And so these boys drifted to a life that was to mold our country.

Welfare was there none. There only existed the boys will to survive and succeed. Their life was terrible -- boxes in alleys for beds, vile quality food, prey to every type of temptation; but they were a hearty lot -- young warriors used to the battle -- and they struggled. Struggled until they found a champion and a friend in a young writer by the name of Horatio Alger. He became their collective voice. And that voice gave off such a shout that it is heard to this day echoing through the very fiber of our nation.

That collective voice was, of course, the books of Horatio Alger -- more than 135 books that sold millions of copies -- that told the story of tough, uneducated youths who saw beyond their poverty and ignorance to a chance in an idea -- the idea of STRIVE AND SUCCEED!

THE MISTAKE THAT WASN'T ALGER'S

by Jack Bales, PF-258

Every Alger enthusiast knows of the blunders that occasionally appear in the books by Horatio Alger, Jr. However, one cannot always attribute these mistakes to Alger himself. Ralph Gardner wrote in his book, Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era, "Considering the urgency for getting his stories into print to satisfy ever-increasing reader demand, the errors are not surprising." But how many of you out there in Algerland know of the mistake that wasn't Alger's, one that defi-

nately could NOT have been caused by Alger.

Take your copy of Paul Prescott's Charge and look at the frontispiece. Is it a picture of an elderly lady with an umbrella chasing a little Negro boy? It is in the Winston and Porter & Coates editions, and may well be in more. But the point is, this picture HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE BOOK'S CONTENTS. The publisher or type-setter made a mistake by putting this picture in the wrong book. It really belongs in the book Frank's Campaign, which with Paul Prescott's Charge and Charlie Codman's Cruise, comprise the Campaign Series. The boy in the picture is named Little Pomp and he enjoys playing practical jokes, especially on the woman in the picture.

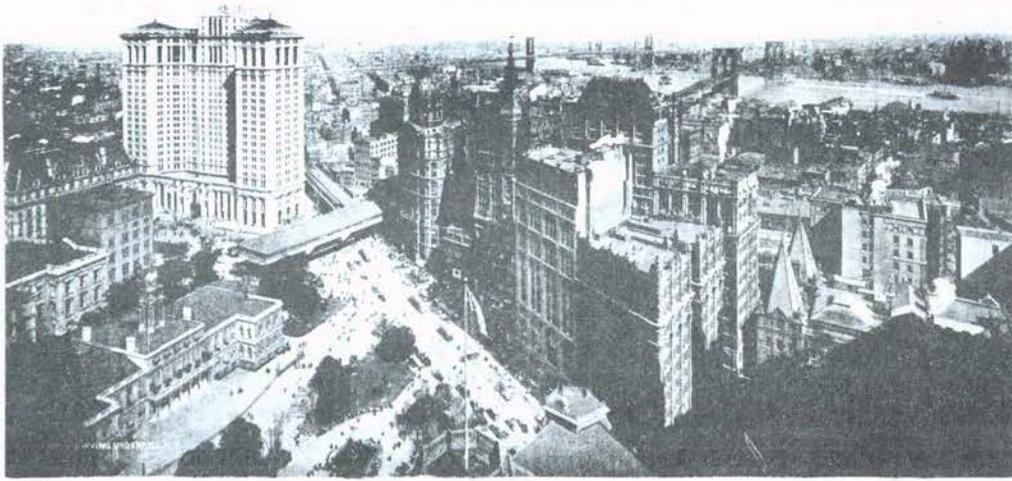
Yes, Alger made mistakes, but so did his publishers and type-setters. And remember, this same frontispiece appeared in at least TWO editions of Paul Prescott's Charge, and as Cicero, one of the greatest orators of all time once said, "To stumble twice against the same stone is a proverbial disgrace."

(E.N. The caption, "Don't catch dis chile again" under the above mentioned 'misplaced illustration' may be found in the dialogue of the story, Frank's Campaign, chapter 23, and page 202 of the Porter & Coates editions)

ANOTHER ENCYCLOPEDIA PUBLISHER CONVINCED

Due to the efforts of Owen Morton, a friend and resident of my area, officials of The World Book Encyclopedia agreed to correct the birth date of Horatio Alger in the next edition of their publication.

Owen's high regard for the accuracy of this publication prompted him to inform the editorial staff immediately upon learning of the error as a result of our research. The facts are simple enough: Since Horatio was the first born, January 13, 1832, followed by his sister Olive Augusta, November 19, 1833, the erroneous 1834 date, which is often quoted, is just not humanly possible. (PF-000)



"THAT WONDERFUL WORLD OF HORATIO ALGER"

Both scenes represent "that wonderful world of Horatio Alger" around City Hall Park, after the turn of the century. The prominent building on the skyline is the new Municipal Building, but the focal point is of course the low two story structure, City Hall, which has never changed in its outward appearance during its history which dates back to 1812.

In the background of the top scene can be seen the Manhattan bridge and the Brooklyn bridge with its approach extending across Park Row at the foot of Center Street. The visible portion of Park Row was once known as Printing House Square and Newspaper Row. The low Bldg. opposite City Hall is the Sun Bldg., once the location of the Newsboys' Lodging



The scene at the top shows a portion of the roof of the Post Office Building which was erected in City Hall Park in the year 1875. The center scene was taken at about the time of its removal and the restoration of the park area in progress. This park which is opposite the entrance to City Hall was the favorite gathering place of Alger's heroes and other street-boys a decade ago.

House, but erected in 1811 and known as Tammany Hall. Across Frankfort Street on the opposite corner is the old World Building, which was built on the site of French's Hotel. The hotel was a seven story structure, and often mentioned in the Alger stories. Lovejoy's Hotel, another popular place on Park Row, but out of the picture, nearer Broadway, was often recommended by the baggage smashers.