

Newsboy



EDITOR

Jack Bales
1214 W. College Ave.
Jacksonville, Ill. 62650

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



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth Butler

TIMOTHY CRUMP'S WARD;

OR,

THE NEW YEARS LOAN,

AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

BY

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

Timothy Crump's Ward—the rarest of all Alger books—is now available in a high quality reprint edition. See page twelve for details.

GILBERT K. WESTGARD II

764 HOLIDAY LANE
DES PLAINES, ILL. 60018
1977

HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr., and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes — lads whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and flamed hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

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Newsboy, the official organ of the Horatio Alger Society, is published monthly (bimonthly January-February and June-July) and is distributed to HAS members. Membership fee for any twelve month period is \$10.00. Cost for single issues of Newsboy is \$1.00 apiece.

Please make all remittances payable to the Horatio Alger Society. Membership applications, renewals, changes of address, claims for missing issues, and orders for single copies of current or back numbers of Newsboy should be sent to the society's secretary, Carl T. Hartmann, 4907 Allison Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48910.

A subject index to the first ten years of Newsboy (July, 1962 - June, 1972) is available for \$1.50 from Carl Hartmann at the above address.

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

* * *

REMEMBER: Convention time will soon be here!! Don't forget the dates — — Thursday, May 12 through Sunday, May 15, 1977, in Waltham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston.

* * *

1977 CONVENTION NEWS

by Dick Seddon,
HAS Director and
Convention Chairman

By now you all know that our annual convention is being held at Waltham, Massachusetts, on May 12-13-14-15, 1977. Waltham is a suburb of Boston and we have selected a fine motel, Waltham Motor Inn, located only ten miles from downtown Boston on our route 128 which is a circumferential highway encircling Boston. All highways entering Boston intersect with 128 so it is easy to find. Maps and motel registration cards will be mailed in plenty of time to all convention registrants. Room rates are \$22.00 single and \$26.00 double occupancy.

While all of our conventions have been delightful and informative, this one has a special attraction. It is being held where it all began and ended — in Alger's home town. Horatio Alger, Jr. was born in Revere, Massachusetts, educated at Harvard University at Cambridge, Massachusetts, grew up, lived in, died, and was buried in Natick, Massachusetts — all within a half hours drive from your motel. Any or all of these places may be visited if you are interested. In fact, for those of you who will stay over for part of Sunday the 15th, Max and Ida Goldberg are arranging a memorial service and Alger tour, taking in many of these historic sites. We suggest you bring cameras to record this trip in your Alger scrapbook.

All of the usual and necessary convention activities will be scheduled: business meeting, book sale, election of officers, auction, awards, banquet, etc. etc. etc. Harvard University has promised to have a Horatio Alger display at the famous Widener Library. Perhaps we can persuade Gil Westgard to accompany a group to see this exhibit and to point out the actual rooms Alger lived in while attending Harvard. Gil knows Harvard, having spent much time there researching Horatio's life and works.

Waltham MOTOR INN

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Located in a beautifully landscaped setting, the Waltham Motor Inn is minutes away from historic Lexington and Concord and 10 miles from downtown Boston.

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BUS TOURS WELCOME

Former speaker of the House of Representatives in Washington, the Honorable John W. McCormack, an Alger buff and admirer, will be one of our featured guests at our banquet. Also, our Governor Michael Dukakis will proclaim "Alger Week" and pose with our officers for a picture while presenting the proclamation. This will be done at the State House in Boston, which is only a few blocks from the oldest antiquarian book shop in the country, the Brattle Book Shop, run by George Gloss, who is nationally famous in his field.

The complete agenda has not been finally frozen. To be honest, we are still sorting out ideas and trying to fit them all in without having a too breathless schedule. Paul Miller's lovely wife Ruth has promised to play the piano for an old fashioned sing along. This will probably be Friday evening or if not at this time will be Saturday evening after the banquet.

At any rate, we promise a fine time with lots of good Alger talk and the chance to pick up a few rare titles, as well as to meet all of your old friends and make some new ones. You can help us in several ways. Send in your registration early, donate some interesting

item to our auction (proceeds help keep us in the black), and above all, plan to be with us. If you have duplicates or collectible memorabilia that is interesting to Alger collectors, bring it to sell to those of us who have tired feet from hunting for it.

* * *

B O O K M A R T

The listing of Alger books in this department is free to HAS members. Please list title, publisher, condition, and price.

Offered by Robert E. Kasper, Box 8525, Clemson, South Carolina 29632.

Mark, The Matchboy	Loring	G	\$15.00
Risen from the Ranks	Loring	Vg	25.00
Try and Trust	Loring	F-g	17.50
Ragged Dick	Loring	G	35.00
The Young Acrobat	S&S	Vg	7.50
From Farm Boy to Sen.	McKay	Vg	10.00
Facing the World	HTC	Vg	10.00
The Young Explorer	HTC	G	7.50
The Young Miner	HTC	G	7.50
Ben Logan's Triumph	G&D	Vg	10.00
Lost at Sea	G&D	G	7.50
Jerry, Backwoods Boy	G&D	G	7.50
R. Raymond's Heir	Lupton	G	15.00
Out for Business	Mershon	F	15.00
Risen from the Ranks	P&C	G	8.00
(title page loose but intact)			
Ben Bruce	Burt	Vg	8.00
(early edition)			
A Debt of Honor	Burt	G-vg	7.50
(early edition)			
Tom Turner's Legacy	Burt	G-vg	15.00
(first edition)			
Tom Thatcher's Fortune	Burt	G	8.00
(deluxe ed.-cover worn-pageboy head in diamond)			
The Train Boy	Burt	Vg	10.00
(deluxe ed.-pageboy head in diamond)			
Tom Temple's Career	Burt	Vg	15.00
(deluxe ed.-pageboy head in diamond)			
Horatio Alger, Jr.: A Biography and Bibliography, by Frank Gruber, 1961, Grover Jones Press, very good, \$10.00.			
Struggling Upward and Other Works, also includes Jed, The Poorhouse Boy, Ragged Dick, and Phil, The Fiddler, 1945 with dust jacket, Bonanza, Vg, \$10.00.			
Strive and Succeed, includes Julius & Store Boy, Holt, ex., 1967, dj, \$7.50.			

John W. McCormack
9th Dist. Massachusetts

The Speaker's Rooms
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.
March 17, 1964

Eugene C. Kinnaly
Administrative Assistant

Martin Sweig
Legislative Assistant

Boston Office:
James N. Hartrey
Secretary

Washington Office:
Walter W. Flaherty
Secretary

Mr. Gilbert K. Westgard II
1433 North Hoffman
Park Ridge, Illinois 60068

Dear Mr. Westgard:

As a boy and a young man, I was an ardent reader of the Horatio Alger books. I have repeatedly and publicly stated that it should be a "must" with parents to have their children, particularly boys growing up, read the Horatio Alger books. I have found my reading of these books to be most constructive and influential in my lifetime. I cannot too strongly urge the youth of our country to read the Horatio Alger books.

Sincerely yours,



Some years ago, Gilbert K. Westgard II wrote a number of prominent Americans and asked them to comment on the impact Horatio Alger's books had on their lives. Above is one reply. John W. McCormack will be a featured speaker at "Booked in Boston," the 13th annual convention of the Horatio Alger Society, held from May 12-15, 1977, in Waltham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston.

March

Offered by Jack R. Schorr, 853 So. Lemon St., Anaheim, Calif. 92805.

Rough and Ready	Loring	G	\$15.00
Luck and Pluck	Loring	G	15.00
Fame and Fortune	Loring	G	10.00
(small tear, top spine)			
Slow and Sure	Loring	G+	15.00
Phil, The Fiddler	Loring	G+	15.00
Risen from the Ranks	Loring	G+	15.00
Ragged Dick	Loring	G+	15.00
(bottom spine worn)			
Ben, The Luggage Boy	Loring	G+	12.00
(front endpaper missing, foxing)			
C. Codman's Cruise	Loring	G+	15.00
Slow and Sure	Loring	F-g	7.00
(spine faded)			
Paul, The Peddler	Loring	G	7.00
(spine faded)			
Paul, The Peddler	Loring	F-g	5.00
(edge hinge split outside)			
Tom Thatcher's For.	Burt	G+	7.50
(boy's head in diamond design)			
Tom, The Bootblack	Burt	G+	7.50
(3 roses, boy and belongings on stick)			
The Train Boy	Burt	Vg	7.50
(boy's head in diamond design)			
The Errand Boy	Burt	G+	5.00
(3 roses, boy with belongings on stick, inside hinge repaired)			
Brave and Bold	Burt	G+	7.50
(same Burt type as previous one)			
Only an Irish Boy	Burt	G+	7.50
(same Burt type as previous one)			
Joe's Luck	Burt	G+	7.50
(boy's head in diamond design)			
Falling in w/ Fortune	Mershon	G	7.50
P. Prescott's Charge	P&C	G-Vg	5.00
(inside hinge split)			
The following 8 Porter & Coates books are the small brown editions.			
Try and Trust	P&C	G+	7.00
Luck and Pluck	P&C	G+	7.00
Bound to Rise	P&C	G+	7.00
Young Outlaw	P&C	G+	7.00
Fame and Fortune	P&C	G+	7.00
Strive and Succeed	P&C	G+	7.00
Ben, Luggage Boy	P&C	G-	5.00
Strong and Steady	P&C	G	5.00
The following 5 Porter and Coates books are gray and yellow.			
Try and Trust	P&C	G+	7.00
Bound to Rise	P&C	G+	7.00
Risen from the Ranks	P&C	G+	7.00
Luck and Pluck	P&C	G+	7.00
Bound to Rise	P&C	G+	7.00

Struggling Upward	P&C	G	\$5.00
(beehive edition)			
Ben's Nugget	P&C	F-g	4.00
Digging For Gold	HTC	F-g	5.00
(spade and pick on spine)			
Sink or Swim	HTC	G+	5.00
Herbert Carter's Leg.	JCW	G+	7.00
The following 3 books are Hurst minia- ture volumes.			
Risen from the Ranks	Hurst	G+	3.50
Risen from the Ranks	Hurst	G-	3.50
The Cash Boy	Hurst	G-	3.50
Canal Boy to Pres.	Anderson		
(3 copies, G+ to Vg, blue, 7.00 each)			
Canal Boy to Pres.	And.	Vg	10.00
(russet binding)			

Jack also has some Winston Library Edition volumes in good condition, priced at \$4.00 each. Has some H. T. Coates in the Tattered Tom Series, G+ or better at \$4.00 apiece. Also many cheap reprints).

Offered by Edward T. LeBlanc, 87 School Street, Fall River, Mass. 02720.

The following four books are Alger first editions - bids invited on each.

Phil, The Fiddler	Loring	Vg
Slow and Sure	Loring	Vg
Julius, Street Boy	Loring	Vg
Canal Boy to Pres.	And.	Vg
Tattered Tom	Loring	
(early edition, not first. Ad shows Second Tattered Tom Series in preparation)		

Abbreviations used in this month's BOOK MART: Ex = Excellent, G = Good, Vg = Very good, F = Fair, G+ (Good plus) signifies that condition is a little bit better than just "good." G- (Good minus) shows that condition is a little bit worse than "good." G-Vg = Good to very good, F-g = Fair to good, S&S = Street and Smith, HTC = Henry T. Coates, P&C = Porter and Coates, G&D = Grosset and Dunlap, JCW = John C. Winston, and And. = Anderson.

* * *
Carl Thieme is looking for early Altshelers and Heyligers, both published by Appleton. Condition must be very good or better. Carl's address is 3216 S. 56th St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53219.
* * *

NEWSBOY BOOK REVIEW

by Jack Bales

McFarlane, Leslie. Ghost of the Hardy Boys. Lawrence, Massachusetts: Two Continents Publishing Group, 1976. Introduction by the author. 211 pages. Hardbound. \$8.95.

"Profanity, it went without saying, was a no-no. A Hardy boy or a Hardy chum might cut loose with a 'gosh' or even 'golly' under extreme provocation, but that was as far as he went. Even the villains, when duly captured—and they were always duly captured—never cursed their lot. Not even a d...n or a h..l, such as one might find in the racier adult novels of the day. Usually, they just grumbled that they would have escaped scot-free if it hadn't been for 'those confounded Hardy boys,' which was mighty strong talk one had to admit.

"As for booze and tobacco, if a Hardy Boys' villain ever took a snort or broke open a pack of fags he did it on the sly between chapters. This probably created no end of puzzlement for young readers who attended movies, where the bad guys always did their plotting in smoke-filled dives and drank rotgut straight, using the empty bottle to smash someone over the head, and where even the good guys rolled their own and bellied up to the bar like everyone else. Literature these books were not but, by God, they were Moral! You could fault them on any grounds you liked, but never on turpitude!"

—Leslie McFarlane, p. 178,
Ghost of the Hardy Boys

I grew up on a steady diet of the Hardy Boys books. In my veins flowed not blood, but water from Barmet Bay. To me and my twin brother, an excursion worth remembering was a trip with our parents to all the used book stores in Chicago (forty miles from our home in Aurora, Illinois), searching for those familiar tan colored hardbound volumes.

Ahh!! Frank and Joe Hardy!! Those two intrepid teenagers who successfully

fought evildoers in the city of Bayport and who consistently made buffoons out of Chief Collig, Detective Smuff, and Constable Riley. Who needed today's Ian Fleming and James Bond, or John MacDonald and Travis McGee? We had our own Franklin W. Dixon, and we felt sure that J. Edgar Hoover conferred with him nightly on his toughest cases.

Although I eventually relegated the Hardy Boys books to boxes in my family's attic, the question of their authorship continued to intrigue me. A few years ago I learned that the series was a property of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, yet still I wondered—just who was Franklin W. Dixon?

Well, now comes the answer in Ghost of the Hardy Boys, the wryly humorous, irreverent, and iconoclastic autobiography of Leslie McFarlane, the man who contributed over two million words in this series from 1926—1946. The writer commenced his association with Edward Stratemeyer and the Syndicate as Roy Rockwood, author of the Dave Fearless Series, and he wrote several of these books until he grew tired of the travel stories. Fortunately for McFarlane, Stratemeyer had other plans for him—he wished the ghost writer to begin a detective series involving two high school boys who solved mysteries. Stratemeyer sent along a plot outline of The Tower Treasure, and thus began the Hardy Boys Series.

McFarlane details much about Stratemeyer and his literary house. Chapter Five, "A Book is a Book is a Buck," tells the uninitiated about the Syndicate—how Stratemeyer sent plot outlines of books to authors who would write the stories under house pseudonyms. "The Motor Boys" and "The Rover Boys" were all Stratemeyer Series. McFarlane relates the famed Edward Stratemeyer-Franklin K. Mathiews feud, which resulted in the notorious (and rather absurd, in the opinion of this writer) article entitled, "Blowing Out the Boy's Brains." (See elsewhere in this issue of Newsboy for the text of this work).

Other chapters deal with McFarlane's personal reflections on the books and authors with which he was familiar. Frank Merriwell—who never failed to hit a home run when the bases were loaded in the last of the ninth and Yale was losing 4-1 with two men out; Elsie Dinsmore—a heroine of sickly saccharinity; and of course, Horatio Alger, Jr.—one of American history's biggest proponents of the Great American Dream.

But besides offering readers his personal reminiscences about his life as a "ghost" for the Stratemeyer Syndicate, McFarlane weaves with remarkable transition throughout the volume his experiences as a journalist on small mining town newspapers in Canada. Anecdotes abound! He relates how he once talked to a reporter on the Toronto Star Weekly—"a bright young fellow named Ernest Hemingway"—about a story. He discusses (on personal authority) the consequences of violating a sacred unwritten law of newspaper work—never tell the truth about an amateur theatrical show.

McFarlane has been a writer for fifty years and has published four novels, one hundred novelettes, two hundred short stories, and numerous articles. He has written seventy-five television plays and fifty movie scripts. Some readers, perhaps, may find his reflections in Ghost of the Hardy Boys as being too frank, flippant, and/or callous. I disagree. I regard the entire book to be refreshingly honest and candid. Humorous? In sections it's hysterically funny, and I envy him his writing style. Though at times he's delightfully satiric and somewhat blunt, in no place he he "robbing-the-hand-that-feeds-him" as he gives his impressions of the writing field as it existed in the 1920's-1940's. In fact, in several chapters he acknowledges debts he owes other authors.

Ghost of the Hardy Boys is one of those books that is simply fun to read. There is no message, moral, or hidden symbolism. The book is there only to fascinate you, to amuse you, and

to transcend you back to an era when ex-Polish sailor Joseph Conrad had not yet cut his teeth on Lord Jim, and when playwrights Eugene O'Neil and George Bernard Shaw were men of which no theater critic had yet heard.

Every student of late nineteenth and early twentieth century series books should read—and probably will heartily relish—Ghost of the Hardy Boys. It's a heckuva entertaining book. I'd love to meet the author.

Thanks go to the Two Continents Publishing Group (5 South Union Street, Lawrence, Massachusetts 01843) for sending me a review copy of this book. Also, thanks go to HAS member "Dashin' Dave" Kanarr for telling me about the volume in the first place. Also, to Dave goes the credit for the "Alger head" on page 11 of this Newsboy.

* * *

Coming up bigger than ever



Horatio Alger Society Convention Chairman Dick Seddon is hard at work making plans for "Booked in Boston," the thirteenth annual convention of the Society. Plan now to attend! The dates are May 12-13-14-15, 1977, in Waltham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston.

BLOWING OUT THE BOY'S BRAINS

BY FRANKLIN K. MATHIEWS

CHIEF SCOUT LIBRARIAN, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

(Editor's preface: As many collectors of boys' books know, educators (primarily librarians) regard these volumes as the bane of all youth. As both a boys' books aficionado and a librarian, I regard this notion as deplorable.

Franklin K. Mathiews, Chief Scout Librarian during the early part of the twentieth Century, was disgusted at the proliferation and popularity of "series" books, and persuaded Grosset and Dunlap Publishers to reprint "acceptable" juveniles which would be sold at the same price as the "trashy" volumes. His next blow against the boys' books industry (and especially against Edward Stratemeyer and his Syndicate) was to write "Blowing Out the Boy's Brains" for Outlook Magazine (November 18, 1914), maintaining a premise that reading series books "overstimulates the boy's imagination."

As they said in the old days, poppycock!! I ask anyone to show me a Stratemeyer volume which is vile and/or offensive. None of Mathiew's other slams hold water either. Among others, he makes the absurd implication that a writer using pseudonyms produces sub-standard literature.

The article was published during "Safety First Book Week"—another of Mathiew's gimmicks—and was reprinted in pamphlet form. Writer Leslie McFarlane in Ghost of the Hardy Boys (pp. 55-56) writes:

"Mr. Mathiews was no slouch when it came to mounting a nationwide campaign. The Safety First Book Week got a lot of newspaper space when the new series was launched in a blizzard of pamphlets. 'Blowing Out the Boy's Brains' was the headliner, of course, but a Safety First booklet explaining how to recognize and cope with brain-blowing literature was issued to every Boy Scout. He was

required to read this, probably on pain of being deprived of his toggle.

"As Mr. Mathiews was aware, nothing upsets a Boy Scout more than having his toggle lifted.

"Thousands of volunteer helpers rallied to the cause. Sound the tocsin of national peril and hordes of well-meaning folk with nothing much to do always materialize from nowhere. They itch to meddle in great matters of which their comprehension is usually pretty dim, and have no objection to getting their names and pictures in the papers. A good organizer can always conjure them up in swarms.

"For a while the Stratemeyer products suffered a loss of sales, but only for a while. Eventually, as the volunteers drifted off into other causes (their indignation span being notoriously short), sales recovered. It only proved that you can lead a kid to an approved book but you can't make him read it. Especially if you tell him it is good for him."

For more material on this same topic, I refer you to "For It Was Indeed He," the infamous (and completely asinine) article in Fortune, April, 1934; and to Anthony Comstock's Traps for the Young, introduction by Robert Bremner, Cambridge, Mass., Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967, originally published by Funk and Wagnalls in 1883. An analysis of this latter work appeared in the January-February, 1976, issue of Newsboy.

For a well written study of the Fortune and Outlook articles, read "Fortune and the Syndicate," Parts I and II, in the Fall, 1970, and Winter, 1971, issues of The Boys' Book Collector. It brings up more points than I can here).

"WHAT 1,500 School Children Did between Friday and the Following Monday" and "The Hobbies of 933 Boys" were the captions of two charts that attracted universal attention at the Rochester, New York, Child Welfare Exhibit recently held. In both cases reading claimed the largest percentage of time. That is most gratifying; but it must be understood that practically in all surveys of children's reading made by librarians and teachers almost without exception the unwelcome fact is disclosed that the books of the "underground library" are as influential as those circulated by public means.

Happily, though, the volumes of the dime or the nickel novel are fast disappearing from this private circulating exchange. Through the good influences of the public libraries and schools and the successful competition of the "movies" the "yellow-back" is being hard hit. But, alas! the modern "penny dreadful" has not been banished quite so completely as at first appears. Its latest appearance is in the disguise of the bound book, and sometimes so attractively bound that it takes its place on the retail book-store shelf alongside the best juvenile publications.

In making a survey of children's reading in a certain Southern city recently, in the very best book-store I found the famous Frank Merriwell nickel novel series bound in cloth and selling for fifty cents. And I happen to know that the author of this series, under another name, is writing other books for the same publishing house. The fact of the business is that the passing of the half-dime novel has meant lean times for the authors of this type of reading. I have it upon very good authority that the circulation of the leading nickel novel has been reduced from 200,000 to 50,000 a week. Consequently these writers must find a new market for their output; and this is supplied for the most part by some of those publishers whose books are written by authors whose motives and methods are similar to those of the original producers of slot-machine juveniles.

The public will, I am sure, be interested in knowing just how most of the books that sell from twenty-five to fifty cents are, not written, but manufactured. There is usually one man who is as resourceful as a Balzac so far as ideas and plots for stories are concerned. He cannot, though, develop them all, so he employs a number of men who write for him. I know of one man who has a contract to furnish his publisher each year with twenty-five books manufactured in this way. Another author manufactured last year more than fifty. By such methods from year to year the popular-priced series are kept going, the manager of the writing syndicate being able to furnish the publisher upon demand

any kind of a story that may be needed.

In almost all of this "mile-a-minute fiction" some inflammable tale of improbable adventure is told. Boys move about in aeroplanes as easily as though on bicycles; criminals are captured by them with a facility that matches the ability of Sherlock Holmes; and when it comes to getting on in the world, the cleverness of these hustling boys is comparable only to those captains of industry and Napoleons of finance who have made millions in a minute. Insuperable difficulties and crushing circumstances are as easily overcome and conquered as in fairy tales. Indeed, no popular character of history or legend or mythological story was ever more wise, more brave, more resourceful, than some of these up-to-the-minute boy heroes are made to appear in the Sunday supplement juvenile stories.

I have just been reading a book of this type in which the captain of a new submarine craft is represented to be a boy of sixteen; "though so young, he had," so the author says, "after a stern apprenticeship, actually succeeded in making himself a world-known expert in the handling of submarine torpedo-boats." Continuing, we are told that with this brilliant young genius there are two other sixteen-year old boys, and it is (here I quote from the book) "rumored, and nearly as often believed, that these three sea-bred young Americans know as much as any one in the United States on the special subject of submarine boat building." In a previous volume of the series, "these three young friends secured the prize medal at Annapolis, where for a brief time they served as instructors in submarine work to the young midshipmen at the Naval Academy."

"Never mind how big a rascal he may be,
Every fellow is another entity!
There's a good man and a bad,
Both a sane man and a mad,
In most every human being that we see."

I will leave my readers to decide whether it was "a good man" or "a bad," "a sane man" or "a mad," who wrote the book from which I have taken these extracts.

Because these cheap books do not develop criminals or lead boys, except very occasionally, to seek the Wild West, parents who buy such books think they do their boys no harm. The fact is, however, that the harm done is simply incalculable. I wish I could label each one of these books: "Explosives! Guaranteed to Blow Your Boy's Brains Out."

One of the most valuable assets a boy has is his imagination. In proportion as this is nurtured a boy develops initiative and resourcefulness. The greatest possible service that education can render is to train the boy to grasp and master new situations as they constantly present themselves to him; and what helps more to make such adjustment than a

lively imagination? Story books of the right sort stimulate and conserve this noble faculty, while those of the viler and cheaper sort, by overstimulation, debauch and vitiate, as brain and body are debauched and destroyed by strong drink.

If you take gasoline and feed it to an automobile a drop at a time, you get splendid results, because you have confined and directed it with intelligent care and caution. Take the same quantity of gasoline and just pour it out and you either don't get anywhere or you get somewhere you don't care to go. Here is an apt illustration of the proper use of the elements that must enter in to make good books for boys. For, let it be understood, the good book for the average boy must be one that, as the "Century Magazine" says, is "wholesomely perilous." And what is meant is this: the red-blooded boy, the boy in his early teens, must have his thrill; he craves excitement, has a passion for action, "something must be doing" all the time; and in nothing is this more true than in his reading.

The difference between a "Treasure Island" and a modern "thriller" in its many editions is not a difference in the elements so much as the use each author makes of them. A Stevenson works with combustibles, but, as in the case of using the gasoline, he confines them, directs them with care and caution, always thinking of how he may use them in a way that will be of advantage to the boy. In the case of the modern "thriller" the author works with the same materials, but with no moral purpose, with no real intelligence. No effort is made to confine or direct or control these highly explosive elements. The result is that, as some boys read such books, their imaginations are literally "blown out," and they go into life as terribly crippled as though by some material explosion they had lost a hand or foot. For not only will the boy be greatly handicapped in business, but the whole world of art in its every form almost is closed to him. Why are there so few men readers of the really good books, or even of the passing novels, sometimes of real worth? Largely, I think, because the imagination of so many men as boys received such brutal treatment at the hands of those authors and publishers who give no concern as to what they write or publish so long as it returns constantly the expected financial gain.

The natural thing would be for me to tell you the titles of these books. Space will not permit. It would take pages to give the titles even of those that have been published in the last three months, which, with scores of others, will make up the annual supply for the holiday season, when these books are sold by the million. And the very fact that so many are used for Christmas gifts makes all our children liable to this pernicious influence. Indeed, at that time tens of thousands

of them will be distributed through Sunday-schools at the annual children's Christmas festival, and it is very possible that you will yourself purchase them for your own children, since they are on sale everywhere, even many of the denominational publishing houses listing them in their catalogues.

How shall we find a way out? It cannot be said too emphatically that, if supervision be given, it is comparatively easy to win children from any form of these sensational books. Boys read these books because they have in them just those elements that appeal so much to boys. But that is not to say that boys will not read better and the best books.

I discovered a striking instance of this as told by a bookseller in South Carolina. I found in his store a table of nickel novels. He said that the sale of these had in the last few months fallen off ninety-five per cent, and he also told me, with considerable pleasure, the cause. The sale of the modern "penny dreadful" had been made among the mill boys of his town, but recently the mill-owner had engaged a Young Men's Christian Association secretary to work among his boy employees. This welfare worker, recognizing the worth of boys' reading, has promoted a system of traveling libraries through the several mills, with the result that the nickel novel has become a thing of the past. And it is always so. A multitude of as successful experiences might be cited.

What about the bookseller, then? I would answer with confidence that the average bookseller is not disposed to promote the sale of pernicious or wicked books. In a number of instances booksellers have told me that they would remove from their stock any book I thought objectionable. Not long ago the manager of the book section of a department store in a New England town read an article condemning cheap and poor children's books. He realized that it was exactly the kind of books that he was selling mostly. Through a friend he sent some of these books to the local children's librarian, whose report, of course, confirmed his fear that they were not wholesome. Since then he has not pushed so hard the sales of such books, and has paid more attention to the better books for children.

So we must look further, but not far—only to the other side of the counter. The chief reason why so many of these trashy books are circulated through the retail trade is because they are so cheap. The "weakness" is not with the boy's taste, but with the parent's pocketbook: the fault lies not so much behind the counter as in front of it. But help is near to meet this weakness and correct this fault. Many of the reputable publishers are placing in competition with the trashy books reprint editions of some of their very best juveniles, all of them written by those modern authors whose books are so

popular with all boys. These retail for fifty cents. Printed from the original plates, they are in every way practically equal to the editions which sold on first publication at prices ranging from one dollar to one dollar and fifty cents. So widely have these reprint books been distributed through the retail trade that they may be found wherever books are sold.

Just as I am closing this article there comes to my desk a letter from a scoutmaster in Lansing, Michigan. To the letter a postal card is attached signed by the sheriff stating that "information is wanted relative

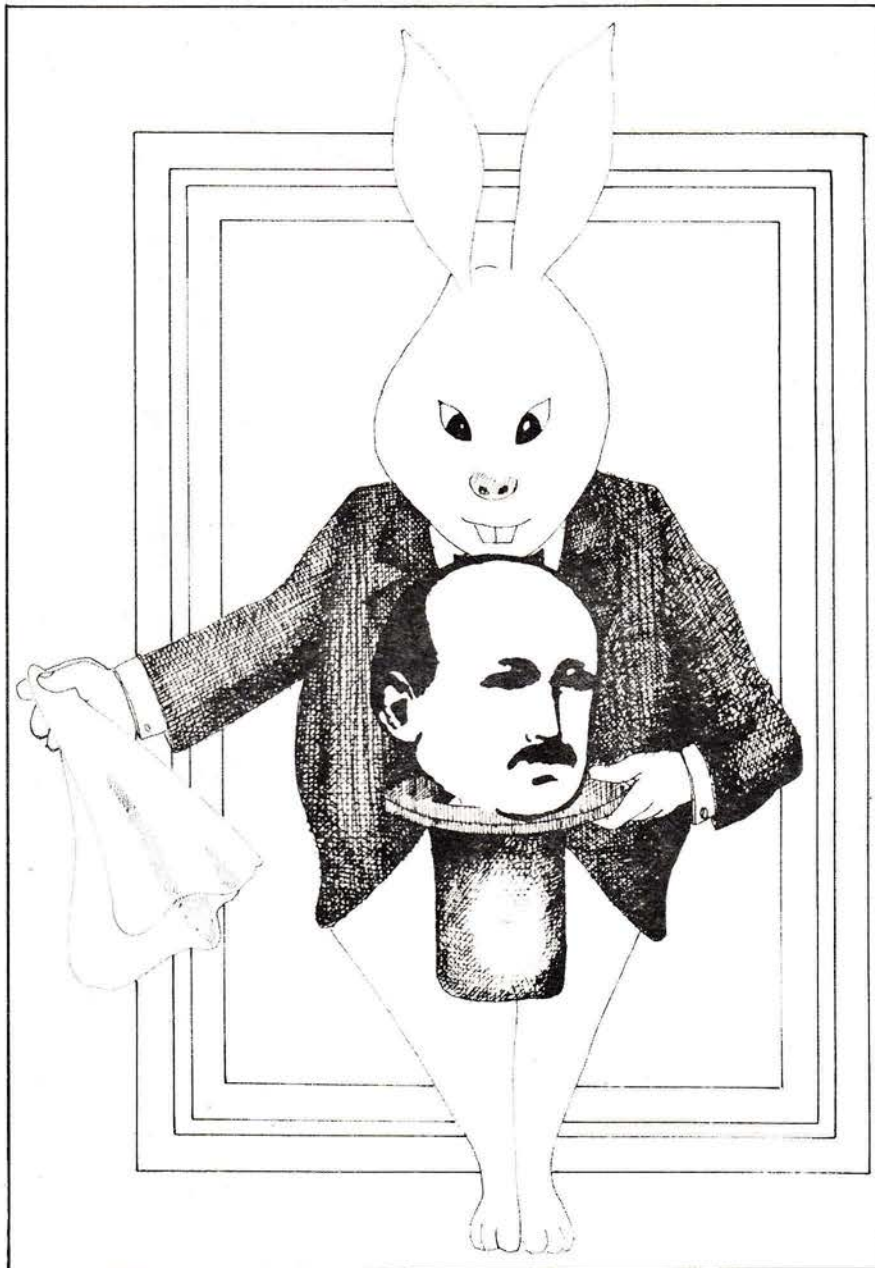
to the whereabouts of Guy Arthur Phinisey, who left his home in Lansing, Michigan, on September 2, 1914," etc. In the letter of the scoutmaster I find these significant words: "From the information I have received there seems to be no reason for his leaving home of his own accord. He has a good home, and his parents seem quiet but thrifty. The only possible clue I can find is 'cheap reading.'"

Of course not every boy who indulges himself in "cheap reading" will be so affected, but who of us is wise enough to know which one it is that will be so influenced?

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Don't lose your head over last minute preparations! Plan NOW to attend the coming convention of the Horatio Alger Society. Send registration fee of \$15.00 per adult (includes banquet — children under twelve admitted free) to Convention Chairman Dick Seddon, 4 Edgewater Place, Winchester, Mass. 01890.

The Convention dates are May 12-13-14-15, 1977, in Waltham, Massachusetts (a suburb of Boston) at the Waltham Motor Inn. The Boston area is pure "Alger country," so this is one meeting no Alger buff will want to miss.

HERE AT LAST!

About a year ago the NEWSBOY asked, "Timothy Crump, where are you?"

The answer now comes, "I'm here in Des Plaines, Illinois, preparing for publication by Gilbert K. Westgard II."

Just like the recently released copies of The New Schoolma'am and Number 91, Timothy Crump's Ward will be published in a limited edition of 200 copies that will be numbered and signed by the publisher. These volumes will have sewn bindings, genuine cloth covers, headbands at the top and bottom of the spine and gold stamped lettering on the spine.

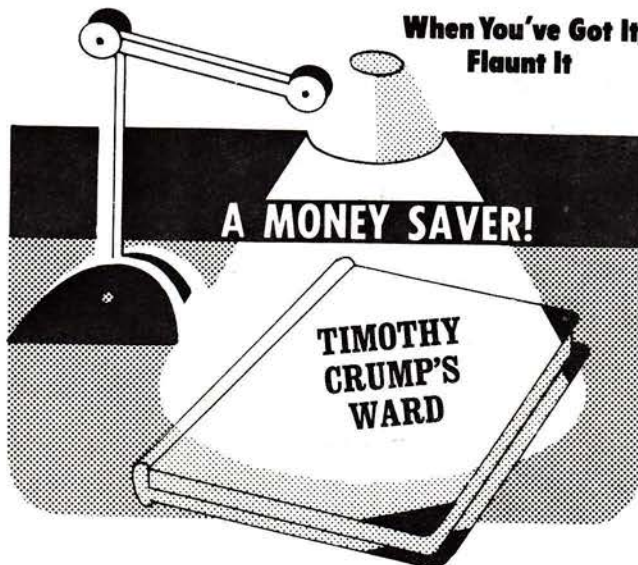
This is the one title that has been eagerly sought after by all Alger enthusiasts with but little success for many years. All previous efforts to make some copies available were makeshift affairs with all right pages on the left and the left ones on the right. The original binding gutter had become the outer edge of a hollow page and the outer edges were now the binding gutter. Anyone who has one of these productions knows what is meant by this description. Everyone now has the opportunity to take advantage of Gil Westgard's pre-publication offer of the first republication of Timothy Crump's Ward since its original printing in 1866.

Until March 31, 1977 the cost will be just \$16.00 per volume. After this date the price will be \$24.00. Now is the opportunity to save 1/3.

Gil also offers a real bargain by making available all three of his rare Alger reprints for only \$39.00. If you ever intended to have these rare titles in your collection, now is the time to act. This is a savings of \$21.50 off the regular price.

The high quality of the Westgard books is well known to those who have already purchased his previous productions. Timothy Crump's Ward is in good hands . . . and it can soon be in yours!

When You've Got It,
Flaunt It



SEND FOR YOUR COPY TODAY!

* * *

WE'LL
FOLLOW
YOU
ANYWHERE

MOVING? Cut out the corner of your NEWSBOY envelope, write your new address below your label and send it to our Secretary: Carl T. Hartmann
4907 Allison
Lansing, MI 48910

WE DON'T WANT ANY PLACE
TO COME BETWEEN US.

March

A COLLECTOR'S FIND

(Editor's note: The following is a letter to me from Bob Fertig, PF-374. I am reprinting it in its entirety so that HAS members will realize that there are Algers still available and that that dream of finding "a long lost supply" in somebody's attic can indeed become a reality).

January 3, 1977

Dear Jack,

I am writing to report a bit of Alger collecting luck which may be of interest to fellow members of the HAS. Nothing on the order of finding Timothy Crump's Ward or The Disagreeable Woman, but to me, nevertheless, quite unusual.

A few weeks ago a friend of mine who knows that I collect rare jazz and blues 78 RPM phonograph records from the 20's and 30's called me to say that he had bought a house that included the furnishings and that it was full of books and records which were for disposal. I agreed to look at the records and went to see them. When I arrived I was astonished to see approximately 3,000 records and perhaps 2,000 to 3,000 boys' books.

Before I looked at the records I looked through the books. Within minutes I had found at least ten Alger firsts. Some of the more interesting ones were firsts of Luke Walton, Bob Burton, Struggling Upward, Tom Turner's Legacy, Adrift in the City, and Frank and Fearless, the latter with the rare 1897 date on the title page as described by Ralph Gardner. There were also another thirty or forty Algers including a Loring Ragged Dick, a nice Lovell edition of The Young Acrobat, and a Penn edition of Finding a Fortune.

These were nice to find, but the best was yet to come. My friend asked me if I were interested in old bound magazines as there were several piles of them. I said yes and was really stunned when he produced a complete, bound set of the

Golden Argosy and Argosy. Twenty-two volumes from Volume I, number 1, 1882 (with Do and Dare), to Volume XXII, number 6 (including A Cousin's Conspiracy). The set, of course, included Cast Upon the Breakers, Silas Snobden's Office Boy, Number 91, and others. Incidentally, Volume VII, number 4, issue #316 has that nice steel engraving of Alger as a supplement that is used on the society envelope. All of the volumes were in quite good condition.

The Golden Days volumes with two Alger first printings (Andy Gordon and The Young Musician) and the nine different copies of the Boy's Home Weekly with Alger stories were almost an anti climax. It isn't often that one finds over fifty first printings and first editions of Alger all at once.

I did also find one duplicate bound volume of the Golden Argosy running from Volume V, number twenty-seven, issue #235, June 4, 1887, to Volume VI, number twenty-six, issue #286, May 26, 1888. All in excellent condition. This volume contains Luke Walton complete, Walter Griffith complete, Ned Newton Chapter XXV to end, The Young Acrobat Chapter XVII to end, and A New York Boy Chapter I to Chapter XVI. I would be delighted to trade this volume for Alger firsts I don't have.

Along with the Algers, I added to my Castlemon collection. I have all the titles but I picked up seven or eight firsts and very nice copies of the questionable but probable Castlemons: Luke Bennett's Hide Out and Gilbert, The Trapper. Both of these were also in first printings in the Argosy. I also added 117 Henty titles, mostly Blackie, Scribner-Welford, and Griffith Ferran firsts. There are a lot of boys' books left and I would be glad to search for other authors for anyone dropping me a line. I'm going back again next week to make sure I didn't miss anything, tho I didn't find too many records I needed.

Sincerely yours,

Bob Fertig

1977 CONVENTION AUCTION
by Dick Seddon
Convention Chairman

One of the popular features of our recent conventions has been the auction, held after the banquet, during which our genial and witty auctioneer Ralph Gardner sells to the highest bidder items donated to the Society by members. Everyone enters into the fun, bidding is brisk, and many fine collectibles are acquired.

The auction serves another purpose too. As you all know, costs go up constantly. Printing, envelopes, postage, etc. are spiraling, and our dues barely covers the cost of the Newsboy, the Membership Roster and other items furnished the members. Until the auction came along there was actually a deficit in our balance sheet. Even though our officers and editor serve without pay and our Secretary and Treasurer are wonderful managers, money is always tight. The proceeds from the auction have helped greatly.

Those members who appreciate the Society and watch each month eagerly for the Newsboy but who for one reason or another cannot attend our convention should not be deprived of the chance to help out, so this is an invitation to all members to contribute some item to our auction. Alger books and Alger related items are fine, but many other things are good too. Almost anything that is collectible or has some historical or novelty interest is more than welcome. We all have things of this sort that we no longer need and that some one else wants.

As a donation to a non profit organization, it is tax deductible too. You will be furnished a thank you letter showing the amount it sold for to prove your donation.

Look around and if you have something you can spare, send it to the Convention Chairman before the meeting and feel that you have helped. Many thanks!!

* * *

THE BOOTBLACK

Here y'are—? Black your boots, boss,
Do it for jest five cents;
Shine 'em up in a minute—
That is 'f nothin' prevents.

Set your right foot on there, sir;
The mornin's kinder cold—
Sorter rough on a feller
When his coat's gettin' old.

Well, yes—call it coat, sir,
Though 'tain't much more'n a tear;
Can't get myself another—
Ain't got the stamps to spare.

Make as much as most on 'em?
That's so; but then, yer see,
They've only got one to do for;
There's two on us, Jack and me.

Him? Why—that little feller
With a doubled-up sorter back,
Sittin' there on the gratin'
Sunnin' hisself—that's Jack.

Used to be round sellin' papers,
The cars ther was his lay,
But he got shoved off the platform,
Under the wheels, one day.

Yes, the conductor did it—
Gave him a reg'lar throw;
He didn't care if he killed him;
Some on 'em is just so.

He's never been all right since, sir,
Sorter quiet and queer—
Him and me go together,
He's what they call cashier.

Trouble? I guess not much, sir,
Sometimes when biz gets slack
I don't know how I'd stand it
If 'twasn't for little Jack.

Why, boss, you ought to hear him;
He says we needn't care
How rough luck is down here, sir,
If some day we git up there.

All done now—how's that, sir?
Shine like a pair of lamps.
Mornin'—give it to Jack, sir,
He looks after the stamps.

The preceding poem appeared anonymously in Emma Lumm's The Speaker's Library (date of publication unknown). I wish to thank Dave Kanarr, PF-314, for sending it to me.

* * *

Jan. 28, 1977 Jacksonville Courier, Jacksonville, Ill.

Nancy Drew follows Hardy boys onto TV

NEW YORK (UPI) — Some things bridge the generation gap like it wasn't there — pizza, ice cream and Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys.

That's the theory over at ABC, which begins Jan. 30 to alternate hour-long Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew mysteries from 7-8 p.m. (Eastern time) on Sundays, with a "Brady Bunch Hour" thrown in every five weeks.

They had good reason.

Since 1966 the Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew mysteries have been rewritten and updated for today's youngsters and have a whole new following of 9-to-14-year-old readers. That took care of the outdated flavor of the originals for the with-it generation. But what about the older audience?

Arlene Sidaris, who with Joyce Brotman co-produces the series, explained in an interview:

"We grew up on Nancy Drew. It was probably my first reading. Nancy Drew just brought back memories of this terrific girl who got into all these wonderfully exciting situations and fought herself out of them. There also was the matter of women's role models but that really came up later. Our first thought was nostalgia."

Speaking to men, they got the same kind of feedback on the Hardy Boys stories. The result is the series of adventures, with the Hardy Boys leading off in "The Mystery of the Haunted House," to be fol-

lowed a week later by Nancy Drew's doings in "The Mystery of Pirate's Cove." Glen A. Larsen is executive producer and writer of the initial episodes.

"We're hoping to get full family viewing," Miss Sidaris said. "We think the kids who are reading the books now will watch, that the format is fun and exciting for younger children and that the older members of the family will be attracted by nostalgia. Certainly they'll view the first shows to see what we've done, and we hope they'll be entertained by them."

The intrepid adventurers may be modernized, but there's plenty for nostalgia freaks to latch onto. Neither the Hardy Boys nor Nancy Drew have emigrated to Southern California. The boys still live in Bayport, Mass., with Aunt Gertrude, Callie and Chet very much in evidence, as is their father, Fenton Hardy, a retired New York City detective turned private investigator.

Nancy still lives with her attorney father, Carson Drew, in River Heights, a suburb of New York City, and she remains friendly with George Fayne and Ned Nickerson.

—see top of page, second column, for comment.

RANDOM REPORTS FROM ALGERLAND by Jack Bales

As most of you HAS members know by now, the Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew books are currently written by Stratemeyer Syndicate copartner Harriet Stratemeyer Adams — honorary member of the Alger Society and daughter of Edward Stratemeyer, the man who completed some of Alger's novels after the author died in 1899.

Keeping on the same subject as the Syndicate, I have one other item to mention. After you have read "Blowing Out the Boy's Brains," I'm sure some readers are wondering why I printed it in the first place, especially since I gave no favorable comments, only negative criticism. Well, I feel that the Newsboy should not be one-sided, and that although I disagree with someone, his/her opinion is worth stating. Besides, this article has achieved such an enormous degree of notoriety, I wanted all HAS members to read it for themselves.

Edwin Gross, 529 Carolina St., Charleston, West Virginia, has many Algers for sale at various prices. Drop him a line if you are interested. In his letter to me, Edwin enclosed a photocopy of an album page that had belonged to his father. In 1887, the man's teacher had written on it his definition of success. It was: "You are starting out upon life's journey — a journey the scenes of which and the end of which no human power can foretell. But to be thoroughly equipped for all emergencies that may arise you should first, while you have such abundant opportunities, learn a good education. Then arm yourself with an honest heart, true manliness, a cheerful disposition and be a gentleman at all times and you will be certain to command the respect and friendship of all good people. This is success."

Chicago Tribune
Almanac 1/13/77

On this date:

On Jan. 13, 1419, the English captured the French city of Rouen.

In 1730, James Oglethorpe and 130 English colonists arrived at Charleston, S. C., to settle in what is now the state of Georgia.

In 1813, the British blockaded Chesapeake and Delaware Bays in the War of 1812.

In 1834, Horatio Alger, author of the famous "rags-to-riches" stories, was born.

In 1848, Canada's Vancouver Island was acquired by Hudson's Bay Company.

In 1864, the American composer Stephen Forster died penniless in New York's Bellevue Hospital.

In 1868, the United States Senate refused to accept President Andrew Johnson's ouster of war secretary Edwin Stanton, and acting secretary Ulysses S. Grant resigned.

In 1915, an earthquake in central Italy killed 30,000 persons.

In 1935, the Saar voted to return to Germany after being administered by France under League of Nations supervision.

In 1967, military leaders in the African country of Togo seized power in a bloodless coup.

In 1972, army officers overthrew the civilian government in Ghana.

In 1976, Japan indicated it was ready to sign a World War II peace treaty with mainland China.



Horatio Alger Jr.

"Booked in Boston" (the social event of the season!) so that they can be autographed.

Alger Society member Gary Scharnhorst had an article appear in the summer, 1976, issue of the Journal of Popular Culture. Entitled "The Boudoir Tales of Horatio Alger, Jr.," the work studies the author's novels that were written primarily for adults.

Irving P. Leif, PF-359, has recently had a book published. Children's Literature: An Historical and Contemporary Bibliography [Whitson Publishing Company, P.O. Box 322, Troy, New York 12181] is a reference handbook containing a listing of all the scholarly research that has been published on all aspects of children's literature. It contains chapters on historical and author studies of children's books, sections on

the writing and publishing of them, and more. Naturally, part of the \$15.00 volume deals with Horatio Alger.

Jack Schorr writes: "I went to a swap meet and noticed an old metal badge with "Newsboy No. —" on it. It was star shaped, heavy, and brightly nickel plated. I guess some newspaper gave them to their boys for prestige and identification. I wanted it for the society but when I went back I couldn't find the booth (which so often happens). I thought other HAS members might keep their eyes peeled for other old newsboy badges and pick them up. I am sure there are others." Thanks very much, Jack, for sending me this information of interesting and historical value.

For those interested in the writings of James Willard Schultz, there is a society named after him. Its newsletter is titled "The Piegan Storyteller." For more information write the society's editor, David C. Andrews, Box 53, Andes, New York 13731.

* * *

Note above clipping with the reference to Alger's birthday. Unfortunately, the compiler of this "Almanac" made the common mistake of stating that 1834 was Horatio's year of birth. As we all know, the correct year was 1832.

Herbert R. Mayes — author of the fictitious Alger "biography" published in 1928 — was the subject of the January-February, 1974 Newsboy which told the story of his Alger: A Biography Without a Hero. Last year he autographed my copy of his book as follows: "For Jack Bales, with affectionate regards, from the man who should have written this book in invisible ink. Herb Mayes."

Herb was made an honorary member of the Horatio Alger Society in 1974, and last year joined the society as a regular member and as a subscriber to the Newsboy. In a recent letter to me he said that he would be attending the upcoming HAS convention and would be present on Friday and Saturday, May 13th and 14th. So . . . to all of you who own copies of Herb's book, bring them to