

Newsboy



EDITOR

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



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth Butler

Meet where so many prestigious American groups have met.

In Boston

in Boston

IN BOSTON



This year's Horatio Alger Society Convention promises to be one of the best we've ever had. There will be notable persons like the Honorable John W. McCormack, retired Speaker of the House of Representatives; Herbert R. Mayes and Ralph D. Gardner, both authors of Alger biographies; and Florence Ogilvie Schnell, granddaughter of Alger publisher J. S. Ogilvie. Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis will proclaim the week of the convention as "Alger Week," and present a proclamation to the Alger Society officers at the State House in Boston. We are fortunate in that this convention is in "Alger country," and HAS past President Dr. Max Goldberg will arrange an Alger memorial service and conduct a tour of the places and locales with which Alger was associated. HAS Director Dick Seddon is hosting this event, and it will be held from May 12-15, 1977, at the Waltham Motor Inn in Waltham, Massachusetts (a suburb of Boston). Plan now to attend — convention time is almost here.

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 date — — Thursday, May 12 through Sunday, May 15, 1977, in Waltham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston.

* * *

NEW MEMBERS REPORTED

PF-508 Harry R. Smith
615 1st Street N. E.
Hampton, Iowa 50441

Harry owns 438 Alger books, of which 88 are different titles. A manager of an oil company and owner of a book exchange, he learned of HAS through the Antique Trader and Jack Schorr.

* * *

BOOK MART



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

Harvey Seidel, R#1, Box 1820, Cody, Wyoming 82414, has the following Algers for sale or trade. Publishing companies are unknown. Bob Burton, Bound to Rise, Do and Dare, Erie Train Boy, Facing the World, Jack's Ward, Joe's Luck, Making His Way, Paul, The Peddler, Shifting for Himself, Walter Sherwood's Probation.

* * *



Don't wait until the last minute and end up pulling your hair out. "Booked in Boston" is almost here. Make your preparations NOW to attend the thirteenth annual convention of the Horatio Alger Society!!!

PORTRAIT OF THE NEWSBOY AS A YOUNG MAN:
SOME REMARKS ON THE ALGER STORIES
by John G. Cawelti

(Editor's note: The following article, originally presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association in Chattanooga, Tennessee, November 9, 1961, is from the Winter, 1961-62 [vol. XLV, #2], issue of the Wisconsin Magazine of History. I wish to thank Paul H. Hass, editor of this journal, for kindly permitting me to reprint the piece for the benefit of Newsboy readers).

Subliterature, is, in general, short-lived. It fills some immediate need, expresses some passing idea or fashion, and then fades into an obscurity only occasionally disturbed by curious historians in search of information on popular attitudes. Sometimes, however, a writer of subliterate retains his hold over a culture, and defies the forces of time and change over a long period of time. Such is the case with Horatio Alger. Despite generations of criticism and condemnation, his name lives on as a household word, and his books, though largely unread, continue to be objects of reverent sentiment in many circles. While I was in the process of preparing this paper, Luke Walton, or, The Chicago Newsboy was serialized by a major metropolitan daily, The Chicago Daily News.

Yet, there is little danger that Ragged Dick or Grit, the Young Boatman of Pine Point will replace Gone With the Wind or Peyton Place on twentieth century best-seller lists. Though Alger's books are occasionally reprinted with great eclat, this is the exception rather than the rule. They are often defended or criticized, but rarely read.

Still, Alger's name itself is probably more widely known among adults today than it was at the time his books were enjoyed and loved. As the late R. Richard Wohl pointed out in an excellent article on Alger, we are confronted with the paradox of a widely known and

respected author whose books are almost totally unread. (1)

The usual explanation of this persistence of Alger's reputation stresses Alger's association with the theme of success, the rise of the poor young man from rags to riches. Thus, it is argued that as "the dream of success" has persisted as a theme in American culture, so has the name of Alger, its chief exponent.

The trouble with this explanation, as more sophisticated observers have noted, is that Alger was neither the only, or even the chief exponent of success, nor did his stories embody the values of individualism, enterprise and vigorous competition with which they are usually credited. (2)

The social and economic values reflected in Alger's stories were not those of unbridled success, but the traditional middle-class virtues of industry, integrity, piety, social respectability, neatness, punctuality, temperance, kindness, and generosity. These virtues had formed the major content of didactic literature since at least the seventeenth century, and can be found with equal force in Alger's forgotten predecessors. (3)

Wohl has suggested that twentieth century advocates of success borrowed Alger's name and slogans and transferred them "as something known and esteemed, to a new explanation, a new rhetoric of persuasion." (4) This, I think, suggests the process by which Alger the writer was transmuted into Alger the contemporary symbol of success and free enterprise, but does not explain why Alger, and not some more obviously appropriate figure—was chosen to occupy this important symbolic role.

Somehow Alger made an impact on the generations who read him of such a kind that he was remembered favorably when others associated with the theme of success were either forgotten or had fallen into public disfavor. Probably

one important factor was Alger's very traditionalism. His stories presented the triumph of simple virtue at a time when the brutal competition of large corporations with its accompanying manifestations of political corruption, depression, monopoly, and industrial warfare were shaking the nation. Alger's successful heroes suggested that traditional values were still operative, and thereby helped reassure a frightened middle class that social change had not made their traditional ideals obsolete.

However, such explanations do not fully take into account the fact that Alger wrote for children, and presumably made most of his impact on a juvenile audience. In this discussion, I want to suggest some sources of Alger's appeal quite different from either his advocacy of the gospel of success or his expression of traditional virtues, by considering his work in the context of children's literature.

Alger began his career at a time when American children were, for the most part, confronted with a choice between parentally approved juvenile literature of a strongly didactic character, European fairy tales, and the stories of romantic adventure found in shilling shockers and dime novels. (5)

Even Jacob Abbott, the best of the early 19th century children's writers, had no doubt that moral and religious instruction was the central purpose of books for children. (6) Though Abbott's *Rollos* and *Calebs* manifested their creator's love for and understanding of his young heroes, his stories were always built around a series of episodes in which the central character learned an important moral lesson from benevolent adults. In Caleb in the Country, for example, the entire story was devoted to the narrative of how the hero learned to work through the gradually increasing dosages administered by a wise and kindly uncle.

To a contemporary reader, most of Abbott's works seem more like manuals for parents than books for children.

One can easily see why children turned with delight from this strenuous moralism to the excitement of fairy tales and adventure stories. Yet, most of these tales were either wholly of the supernatural or set in far-away lands and times beyond the experience of American children. Children who had outgrown the fairy-tale stage and wanted more realistic stories must have found much that perplexed and dissatisfied them in the romantic adventure tale.

Alger was one of a number of enterprising children's writers who set out to create a juvenile literature native in setting and exciting in incident, with enough didactic flavor to win the approval of parents. Though the basic framework of most of the Alger stories did show a virtuous young man's rise from poverty and obscurity to social respectability, thus containing an obvious moral message, it should be emphasized that the major portion of the narrative presented adventures which had little relation to this didactic scaffolding. Hairbreadth rescues, narrow escapes from the plots of villainous criminals, the defeat in combat of brutal bullies, the hero's revenge on those who had snubbed or cheated him, these, presented in terms readily comprehensible to young children, were the real heart of the Alger story. Along with other enterprising writers like Oliver Optic and Harry Castlemon, Alger transformed the romantic adventure story into a form more meaningful to nineteenth-century American children and more acceptable to their parents. (7)

But Alger went even further in his appeal to children than his successful contemporaries by adopting, probably unconsciously, a child's perspective on the world. An analysis of the plot and characters of Alger's stories suggests very strongly that the major source of their appeal lay in Alger's ability to express and resolve some of his juvenile audience's deepest ambivalences toward the adult world. (8)

The Alger plot presented a boy-hero who overcame the villainous machinations

of a group of adults, winning for himself the coveted status of manhood. Every Alger book began with the hero not only impoverished, but also suffering under the tyranny or treachery of one or more adults. The story itself was devoted to the suspenseful narration of how the hero overcame this enemy, and it was always accomplished in the same fashion. By some act of personal bravery and daring—for example, an exciting rescue from runaway horses—the hero encountered a benevolent elderly patron who helped him escape from the plots of his enemies. Sometimes this patron was a wealthy merchant, who gave the hero a start in business, but in many of the stories an elderly well-to-do lady filled this position.

The importance of this patron in the Alger books is a source of some difficulty if we try to interpret the stories in the light of the contemporary Alger symbolism, for the hero of free enterprise is supposed to make his way alone and unaided, not on the coattails of sweet old ladies. Only if we examine their actual function in the stories do these patrons make sense. The major role of the patron was to accord adult status to the hero, by giving him dangerous and responsible missions, by treating him as an equal and asking his advice, and by presenting him with such symbols of adulthood as a gold watch and a new store-bought suit. It is significant, I think, that the patron was always an elderly person; Alger was probably reflecting here the special relationship of sympathy that often grows up between grandparents and children.

The major event of every Alger book was the hero's encounter with this idealized elderly adult who accorded him adult status and helped him to escape from the authority and control of other adults. Most of the other characters were representations of aspects of the adult world resented by children. Prominent in the typical story was the figure mentioned above who tried to keep the hero in childish subservience. This figure was frequently a foster-father or wicked uncle, for it should not surprise

you by this time to hear that all the Alger heroes had lost their fathers.

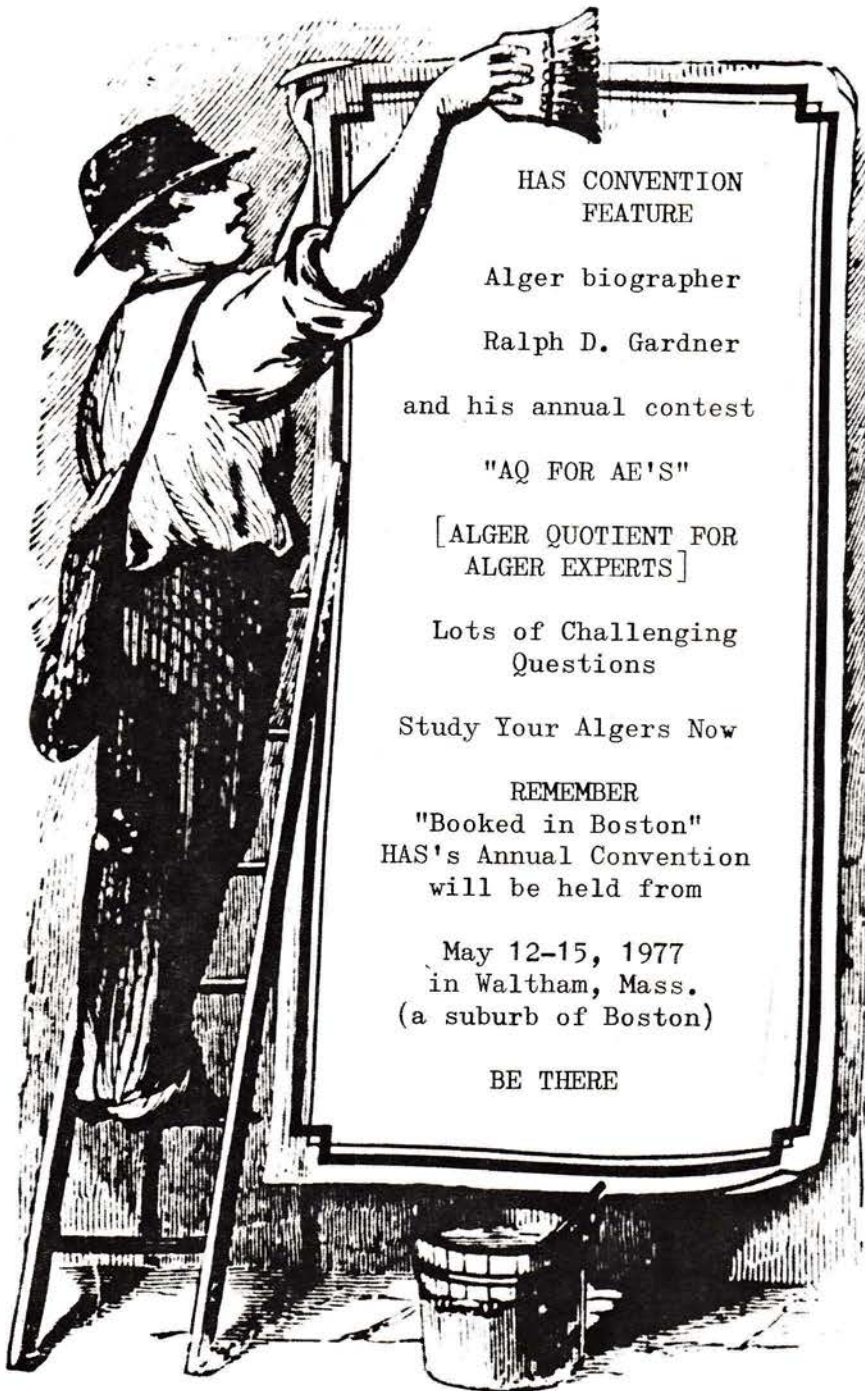
This authority-figure invariably turned out to be a villain who had cheated the hero out of his rightful inheritance, or who sought to exploit the hero's abilities for his own benefit. When his manhood had been recognized by the benevolent patron, the hero was able to expose and overthrow this villain. Other secondary characters caricatured such things as the adult claim to greater sophistication, snobbish superiority to the activities and ideas of children, old-maidish dislike of boyish exuberance and the condescension of young men who had just emerged from boyhood themselves. By far the greater part of the Alger books were devoted not to the hero's industrious pursuit of business, but to episodes in which the boy-hero turned the tables on these representations of the adult world.

I think I can graphically illustrate this aspect of Alger's stories by one brief and striking example of his treatment of the adult-child relationship. So important was the demonstration of adult shortcomings to the Alger story that even the hero's mother does not escape. Contrary to the traditional American mother-worship, the Alger mother was usually a weak, vacillating, helpless female both dependent on, and in awe of, her doughty young son. The following quotation illustrates in brief the way in which Alger expressed both his audience's suspicion of adults and their strong longing for adulthood's privileges and prestige:

The boy spoke with calm and resolute dignity, hardly to be expected in one so young, and with a deep conviction that surprised his mother.

"Luke," she said, "I hardly know you tonight. You don't seem like a boy. You speak like a man."

"I feel so, mother. It is the thought of this man, triumphant in his crime, that makes me feel older than I am. Now, mother, that I feel



Our Fredudian friends would doubtless point out that a universal boyhood fantasy is embodied in the Alger story and that our hero, who overcomes the plots of a wicked uncle and find a new protector who grants his wish to be an adult, is none other than Oedipus disguised as a newsboy. But the popularity of Alger's stories was also rooted in a particular time and place. The later nineteenth century was a period of particular strain on the American family because the impact of industrialism and the influence of romantic ideas of childhood and child-rearing had weakened, but not entirely destroyed the traditional image of the child as an imp of Satan whose moral recalcitrance demanded complete parental dominance. (10)

Children were caught between conflicting expectations, encouraged in the direction of spontaneity and independence, and then pulled sharply back into subservience to parental authority. Alger, probably because of his own psychological makeup, and his own difficulties with the adult world, had a strong sense of these tensions, expressing them in his stories through the plot and characters described above.

that I have a purpose in life. It is to find this man and punish him for what he has done, unless he will make reparation."

Mrs. Walton shook her head. It was not from her that Luke had inherited his independent spirit. She was a fond mother, of great amiability, but of a timid, shrinking disposition, which led her to deprecate any aggressive steps. (9)

For children resentful of adult interference with their freedom, and longing themselves for the status of adulthood, Alger's implicit condemnation of authoritative uncles, peevish aunts and snobbish young men, together with his ascription of superior manhood to

a boyhero, must have been a compelling and reassuring message.

When, in the 1920's and 1930's, new standards of adult-child relationships became widely accepted and children found status and new kinds of norms within their own peer groups, the popularity of the Alger stories rapidly declined to nothing. Their impact remained with the last generation who had read them, however, as this generation grew up to face the problems of the twentieth century.

As a source of favorable sentiment Alger's name lived on and became useful in a variety of ways. Journalists found it an effective device for dramatizing the careers of successful businessmen. Defenders of business against the attacks of reformers found that the public esteem for Alger made his mantle a useful one for legitimating twentieth-century business. For those who feared the growing power of government and labor, invoking the name of Alger was a way of expressing nostalgia for the simpler ways of an earlier period when enterprise was not subjected to legislative regulation and the harassment of unions.

As the memory of the real Alger and his books faded, the symbolic Alger became more and more important as the exponent of what people like to consider the peculiarly American values of enterprise and upward mobility. How far this process of symbolic transformation may go on, it is hard to say, but the fact that for the last decade the American Schools and Colleges Association has given, in Alger's name, a widely publicized award for distinguished achievement on the part of men who started in humble circumstances, may be a straw in the wind.

The transformation of Horatio Alger from an obscure writer of popular children's books into a symbol of values which many Americans esteem above anything else illustrates a process of great importance to a culture which is continually changing. The necessity of

constant adaptation to new ideologies, technologies, and social conditions places great strain on a culture's expressive symbols.

The process by which new symbols are created and old ones adjusted to new circumstances is of considerable importance because it is one of the main ways in which a culture expresses its hopes and fears, its aspirations and its understanding of itself. If we could discover more about the operation of this process, not just in the case of Horatio Alger, but of all of our symbols and heroes, we would better understand the course of our history.

FOOTNOTES

¹R. Richard Wohl in Reinhard Bendix and Seymour M. Lipset, eds., Class, Status and Power (Glencoe, Illinois, 1953), 338-395.

²Cf. ibid. and the analysis in John G. Cawelti, "A History of Self-Made Manhood" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1960), 341-378.

³Louis B. Wright, Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Chapel Hill, 1935), 121-201, and "Franklin's Legacy to the Gilded Age," in the Virginia Quarterly Review, XXII:268-279 (1946).

⁴Wohl, op. cit.

⁵May Hill Arbuthnot, Children and Books (Chicago, 1957), 47-50; Monica Kiefer, American Children Through Their Books (Philadelphia, 1948), passim; C. L. Meigs, et al., A Critical History of Children's Literature (New York, 1954), 142-150; Alice M. Jordan, From Rollo to Tom Sawyer (Boston, 1948), 1-13.

⁶Cf. Jacob Abbott, Caleb in Town (New York, 1863), 3-4.

⁷Cf. Jordan, From Rollo to Tom Sawyer, 14-46, for a general account of developments in children's books contemporary with Alger.

⁸The following analysis of Alger's stories is based on a reading of about 40 of the 120-odd books he wrote. A scanning of the remainder suggests that the author's formula, as here presented, holds good for all of them. For a list of secondary materials on Alger, see Cawelti, "History of Self-Made Manhood."

⁹Horatio Alger, Luke Walton, or The Chicago Newsboy (Philadelphia, 1889), 22. This is the book reprinted by the Chicago Daily News. Presumably, it was selected because it was about Chicago.

¹⁰John Sirjamaki, The American Family in the Twentieth Century (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1953), 46-47, 108-113; Arthur Calhoun, A Social History of the American Family (New York, 1960), 3:131-156.

* * *

A COMMENTARY ON

"PORTRAIT OF THE NEWSBOY AS A YOUNG MAN"
by Jack Bales

Author John G. Cawelti—a professor at the University of Chicago—is well-known in the upper echelons of the Popular Culture Association, and he has written many articles for its organ, the Journal of Popular Culture. He has long been interested in the theory of the "self-made man" (his Ph.D. dissertation [State University of Iowa, 1960] was entitled "A History of Self-Made Manhood") and I regard as one of his most intriguing works his Apostles of the Self-Made Man (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965).

His "Portrait of the Newsboy as a Young Man" raises some interesting points and questions, all of which merit a good deal of pondering. First of all, it was Cawelti in his Apostles who coined the catch phrase, "rags to respectability," as used in describing the Alger heroes' eventual perch upon the top rung of the ladder of success, and he has touched upon this philosophy in this article. A careful reading of Horatio's novels will reveal that few of his heroes became fabulously rich—just moderately wealthy. Quoting from the last chapter of Risen from the

Ranks: "The income derived from [the newspaper] was double that which it yielded in the days of his predecessor; and both he and Ferguson were enabled to lay by a few hundred dollars every year. But Harry had never sought wealth. He was content with a comfortable support and a competence."

But I differ with Cawelti on a major point. One of his theses is in regards to the contemporary concept of Alger's works vs. their actual story lines. Quoting from the second paragraph of his article: ". . . nor did his [Alger's] stories embody the values of individualism, enterprise and vigorous competition with which they are usually credited." Cawelti later supports his opinion by analyzing the functions of the renowned Benefactor and the fortuitous aid always given the Alger Hero.

But what difference does it all make? Are free enterprise and "success through assistance" in that great a degree of diametric contradiction? Did Vanderbilt, Carnegie, Morgan, Mellon, Schwabb, Hearst, and a host of other robber barons and tycoons achieve their prosperity solely through their own unswerving dedication and Ayn Rand Objectivism? I doubt it. So what if Lady Luck dealt the Alger Hero a royal flush once in awhile? The opportunities for advancement were always present in every Alger book, but while the arrogant rich snob passed by these flitting chances, squandering away his time and money among wastrels and profligates, the Alger Hero would seize the bull by the horn and pull up his bootstraps another notch.

Yes, the benevolent patron (or patroness) did play a large a part in most of the stories, but his/her presence and action in no way detracted from the singlemindedness of purpose which each hero continually held uppermost in his mind, nor from the competitive spirit that each boy possessed.

The aforementioned argument notwithstanding, I find Cawelti's work to be one of the better critical articles on

a boyhero, must have been a compelling and reassuring message.

When, in the 1920's and 1930's, new standards of adult-child relationships became widely accepted and children found status and new kinds of norms within their own peer groups, the popularity of the Alger stories rapidly declined to nothing. Their impact remained with the last generation who had read them, however, as this generation grew up to face the problems of the twentieth century.

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⁶Cf. Jacob Abbott, Caleb in Town (New York, 1863), 3-4.

⁷Cf. Jordan, From Rollo to Tom Sawyer, 14-46, for a general account of developments in children's books contemporary with Alger.

BOOKED IN BOSTON

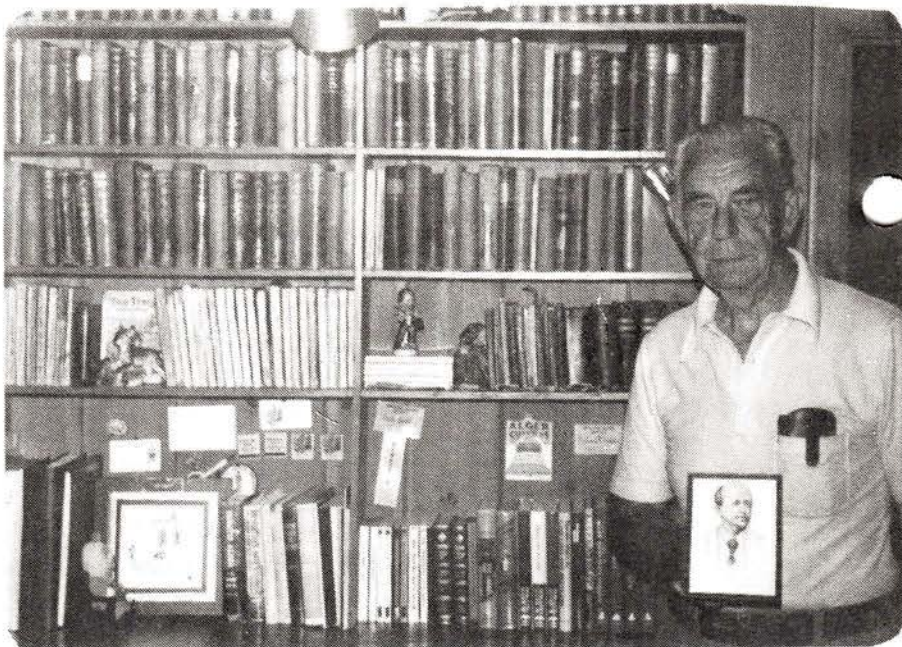
A real treat is in store for you when you attend the annual convention on May 12-15, 1977 at Waltham, Massachusetts.

Thursday, May 12th from 8 to 10 p.m. Dick Seddon and his charming wife, Mary, will host our group at their beautiful home in Winchester.

While there you will view 174 Alger titles, over 80 first editions, 31 of the Garfield Algers, every Alger published in *BRAVE AND BOLD WEEKLY* and *BOYS HOME WEEKLY* plus copies of *Timothy*, *The Disagreeable Woman* and *The New School Marm*.

In August 1971, Dick joined the HAS. At that time he had 10 Algers. To build his collection Dick traveled up and down the New England states, sent cards to book dealers and other collectors and put ads in various trade publications.

As the pictures on this page attest, you would have a hard time finding a better collection anywhere in the world. This is a **MUST** for you — see you May 12th?



COULD HORATIO ALGER'S HEROES
MAKE IT IN TODAY'S BUSINESS WORLD?

by Ralph D. Gardner
Director
Horatio Alger Society

(Editor's note: The following article is reprinted with permission of TWA Ambassador Magazine, copyright Trans World Airlines, 1975. It appeared in the January, 1975, issue of this magazine as a cover story, and I thank both Ralph and TWA for permitting me to print it again in Newsboy).

The typical American success story: From theater usher to Hollywood star. From farm boy to senator. From office boy to chairman of the board.

We read the stories all the time, about how these self-made men—and, increasingly nowadays, women—pulled themselves up by their own bootstraps in the finest Horatio Alger tradition to possess the American Dream.

Horatio Alger, Jr, to be precise, lingers as a synonym for success, but it was success obtained in a far less complicated time—the America of the 19th century. Who, exactly, was this bygone exponent of rags-to-riches achievement? And the principles he advanced, are they still valid, or are they merely the stuff that nostalgia is made of?

Horatio Alger, Jr., was the real name of a real person born at Chelsea, Massachusetts, on Friday, January 13, 1832. As an adult, Alger wrote more than a hundred action-packed stories that were issued in millions of copies during the years between the Civil War and World War I. Even after Alger's death in 1899, his books were avidly read and re-read, bought, borrowed and swapped. Every public library stocked the swift-moving adventures: they were favored as gifts, awarded as school prizes and recommended in sermons. Indeed, there was a very long period during which almost every American boy—and many girls—read and enjoyed Alger.

Even though his literary quality was marginal at best, his influence on a society that aspired to success was phenomenal.

A Harvard-educated minister and teacher, Alger promulgated his own strict principles of success through the lives and careers of his youthful heroes—Ragged Dick, Tattered Tom (who was really a girl), Phil the Fiddler, Julius the Street Boy, Dan the Newsboy. He chronicled their inevitable successes in such stirring tales as Fame and Fortune, Sink or Swim, Rough and Ready, Brave and Bold and Strive and Succeed.

Strive—and succeed—they did. The typical Alger hero was a city waif, or recently-orphaned country boy, forced to leave the mortgaged homestead to seek his fortune. Alger—himself sickly as an infant and affected all his life by bronchial asthma—patterned his hero as he wished him, himself, could have been: not handsome, but physically attractive, "the picture of health . . . slenderly but strongly made, with clear skin and considerable color in his cheeks, dark eyes and straightforward look . . . a winning smile that attracted all who saw it . . . strong lines around his mouth that indicated calm resolution and strength of purpose . . . not one to be imposed upon . . . properly tenacious of his rights."

The ruddy, self-reliant youngster was generally thrust upon Lower Broadway or The Bowery with but a few cents in his pocket. Though ragged, he was bright and ambitious, cheerfully accepting a menial station as bootblack, messenger or peddler. It was a start, and with the sterling qualities endowed him by his creator—honesty, a penchant for hard work, an engaging aggressiveness, temperance, and consideration for others—he couldn't go wrong.

But like anyone on the way up, he had enemies—the swaggering snob, the criminally-inclined guardian, the penurious village squire, the bully, the traveling con man, pickpocket, burglar and kidnapper.

Scoundrels conspired to waylay him on his road to success. They defamed him by false accusation, stole his wallet, dumped him into an abandoned well. But between daring escapes he performed heroic deeds, rescuing a lady or child from the path of a runaway horse, jumping into the East River to save a life, flagging down a speeding train, or preventing an old man from being sandbagged and robbed.

The hero was inevitably rewarded with cash (which he wisely invested in real estate, mining stocks or Erie Railroad shares) and a better job—perhaps as a clerk earning \$10 a week, a fairly decent salary in those days. Then, because he showed initiative and shrewdness, he was sent on a confidential, perilous journey. The mission was always a triumph, and in its course he discovered a secret that cleared up the mystery of his own identity, or accidentally met the benefactor who helped recover his legacy. While the hero most often did not achieve great financial wealth, he was well on his way, with the clouds past, the mortgage paid, and a bright future predicted.

The American idea of success was not invented by Horatio Alger. It probably landed with the Pilgrims and was publicized by Benjamin Franklin, who prescribed thrift, industry and temperance. Alger adapted Franklin's principles, combined the basic plots of Cinderella and Jack the Giant Killer, and to this day remains the legendary exponent of the Work Ethic.

Wouldn't it be interesting, though, if Alger were able to return today to unleash his same hustling heroes on a nation a century older—and more complex—than the one they dealt with? Obviously the Alger heroes would be overwhelmed with culture shock, not to mention hampered by red tape. Dozens of today's ordinances would hinder their ability to earn a livelihood as Alger's boys did: in addition to minimum wage and hour statutes, they'd have to contend with compulsory education rules, income taxes, social security and other

paycheck deductions, license fees, zoning restrictions, and probably a hundred other hindrances.

Becoming a success today just isn't the same ball game. But though the methods have changed, are the principles themselves—honesty, temperance, aggressiveness, and so on—still the same?

"In my opinion, nothing has changed on the road to success," says Mary Wells Lawrence, hard-driving chairman of the advertising agency Wells, Rich, Greene, Inc. "Business life is tough, and it isn't fair. We can be honest; we can work hard and aggressively; we can be sober and considerate—and get no place.

"However, if we are smart, talented and intuitive, it helps to be honest, hard-working, aggressive, temperate and considerate."

In the recent past, these principles have been applied by many whose rise from poverty was monumental. Benjamin Fairless (who read Alger in his youth) rose from a part-time school teacher to head United States Steel. Dwight Eisenhower performed odd jobs around his boyhood farm home in Abilene, Kansas, long before he was elected 34th President of the United States. Bernard Baruch was a \$3-a-week clerk who became a leader in finance and adviser to Presidents. Dr. Ralph Bunche worked as a janitor in Detroit while continuing his education, and eventually became the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, holder of more than 35 honorary degrees and recipient of 60 major awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize. Conrad Hilton began his career by renting rooms (in the San Antonio house where he was born) for \$1 a night, including meals.

Now there's a new generation. Men like Charles G. Bluhdorn, who arrived here from his native Austria at the age of 16 and at 32 took over as board chairman of Gulf & Western Industries, Inc. Like Lido A. Iacocca who, after finishing college, joined the Ford Motor Company as a salesman and 22 years

later—at age 44—was named corporation president. And Irving S. Shapiro, who recently took over as chairman of the board of E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc. After getting his law degree in 1941, Shapiro practiced law and served with the Justice Department before joining du Pont in 1951.

Malcolm Bricklin, the 35-year-old founder of the Phoenix-based Bricklin Vehicle Corporation, which has succeeded in bringing out America's first independently made new car in 28 years, dropped out of the University of Florida in 1958 to make his first million developing a chain of hardware stores. He's not the prototype of the American Executive: instead of gray flannel, he wears jeans and open-neck shirts; instead of shiny lace-ups, he's comfortable in cowboy boots; instead of a tie, he sports strands of Indian beads.

But Bricklin is no less a businessman than more-conventional-looking types. And even for today's business world, Bricklin believes strongly in Alger's principles for success: "I think consideration for others is probably the most important part of becoming a success in today's world," he says. "I've seen successful people who aren't considerate of others, which bothers me. I question how they can be successful. The best I can say is that they're temporarily successful—especially today, when there's no such thing as an individual really achieving anything alone, without help."

Bricklin adds a principle of his own: luck. "That doesn't mean you sit in the corner and wait for luck to hit you on the head," he explains. "You know, there are lots of people who own grocery stores. Some just happen to pick what turns out to be the right location. A guy doesn't know it when he picks it. And all of a sudden somebody comes by and offers him \$2 million for the property. He didn't make it in the grocery store business. He made it because he was lucky."

Jeno Paulucci, founder of the Chun

King Corporation and chairman of Jenos, Inc., the pizza/snack company, is a sort of Midwestern Fireball who makes himself heard—even by Presidents of the United States who, on several occasions, have opened the Washington Post to find a full page "open letter" from Paulucci, in which he spells out in no uncertain terms what he thinks the President should or shouldn't do about a certain issue. Paulucci founded Chun King in 1946 and sold it 20 years later to R. J. Reynolds Industries, Inc., for \$63 million. His rise from hawker at a fruit stand to chairman of two of America's best known food corporations won him a 1965 National Horatio Alger Award—presented by the American Schools and Colleges Association.

Paulucci believes that adherence to Alger's principles can result in success in today's business world. But with characteristic candor, he updates the list to include a perhaps not-so-noble but nevertheless realistic principle—contacts. "One of the greatest marks of success," says Paulucci, "is not so much what you do as whom you know. And to be able to either pick up the phone or send a letter to talk to various people who might help in a particular problem. I believe contacts are very, very important."

Honesty. Hard work. Aggressiveness. Temperance. Consideration for others.

Tried-and-true principles, these. Tenets that have stood the test of time—by dint of which, Ragged Dick, Phil the Fiddler and other Alger lads just might make it in today's business world. Formulas for success just haven't changed all that much in the last hundred years, it seems.

Of course, it can't hurt if Tattered Tom and Dan the Newsboy are smart, talented and intuitive (as noted by Mary Wells Lawrence), or have luck (Malcolm Bricklin), or can establish contacts (Jeno Paulucci). And for any Julius the Street Boy who is scaling today's corporate ladder, one further principle may be suggested: show social

responsibility once you've achieved success.

"Like a farmer, you've got to return back to the soil some of each year's harvest," Paulucci says. "The more success you have, the more you should

do for your community. Unless you do, I don't think your success is going to be as long-lasting."

After all, Alger's heroes did return home to pay off the mortgage.

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THE BOY'S BOOK BUFF

The Boy's Book Buff is a new fanzine devoted to collectors of boys' (and girls') series and adventure books. Everything from Tom Swift to Tom Corbett, from Horatio Alger to Leo Edwards is our sphere of influence.

If you are a collector of this field of literature, or are simply curious, then this is the publication for you. You'll find issues filled with long and interesting articles that examine characters, writers, separate series, and backgrounds with a fresh, in-depth approach. Every phase of boys' book collecting is covered in our issues, and we do it with a fresh, informal style.

Our first issue features a study of the Don Sturdy series of adventure titles, also a look with an index at the authorized Whitman hardbacks of the mid forties, and a glance at the Grain and Salt Printing Company. Plus other articles and features that will hold your interest and will help develop your understanding of this often neglected field of popular literature.

Sample copies of The Boy's Book Buff are 75¢, a six issue subscription is a mere \$4.00. If you have a serious interest in this field of collecting, or are simply curious, give us a try. You'll find it worth your while.

Robert Jennings, RFD 2, Whiting Rd., Dudley, Mass. 01570

COLLECTING THE VARIANTS
by Jack Schorr

There are many collectors and many different Alger collections. When one hears of an Alger collector, one in the trade thinks of the A. K. Loring Company. Loring and Alger are synonymous. I know of quite a few collectors who don't collect Loring's and this is from choice.

I saw the late Al Vogt's Alger collection, and though his was extensive he didn't own a Loring. He started when he could have picked up good Loring's for \$5.00. He had a large collection of the Winstons with the colored plates which he loved. When he obtained all of those he started on cover color variants. His was an impressive array of three large long rows of Winstons with the boy on the cover. Another friend of mine has all the Winston Library Editions in near mint condition. These indeed make a sharp looking collection and which didn't tie up too much money either.

I met a man in Pasadena whose entire collection is New York Book and he has them all with covers facing out on what appears to be plate racks arranged from floor to ceiling behind glass. You know, they looked great. He was very careful to pick only those in fine condition.

I have seen a collection in Fresno composed of one book from each publisher, and these comprised a sizable collection. I know an elderly gentleman in the Bay area with a fine collection that includes all the McKays and Street and Smiths and those are all dust jacketed. I couldn't believe it until I saw it. I correspond with a young man who collects the color variants of Loring. He has large numbers of fuchsia colored Loring's with spines bright and not faded. If you are familiar with these then you know that they're hard to find.

Porter and Coates turned out some handsome editions. Brave and Bold Series are foremost, with the blue-gray

edition with the beehive on it ("Way to Success" Series) being a close second. And then there is the edition with the winged wheel on the cover, the "Luck and Pluck" Series. These make a splendid looking group if they're in top shape.

The Street and Smith paperback Alger Series make a colorful collection if faced with cover out and protected.

A person can be an Alger collector and have an interesting and beautiful collection without the Loring's and the expense if he chooses. Collecting variants is one way. Arrangement and display is primary to any interesting collection. I have seen \$7,500 worth of Alger's double shelved and they didn't look anything like the \$400 collection of the New York Books, simply because of the latter's unique display arrangement.

So if we are going to put money into a collection, let's add a few bucks and make the room something to remember.



Above is the bookplate designed by HAS member Bob Sawyer. Very nice, Bob!



FROM THE EDITOR'S SCRAP BOOK



Bob Sawyer reports that he will be present at the "Booked in Boston" Horatio Alger Society Convention, and that he will again be donating an "Alger dulcimer" for the annual auction. This item brought into the coffers of HAS quite a bit of money last year, and I thank Bob for his generosity. A dulcimer, sometimes called the Appalachian guitar, is a very simple four stringed musical instrument. Bob carves these by hand, and the one at the previous convention had Alger's head carved into the instrument's neck. All those at the convention will want to see this interesting item.

And again, I hope that many, many things will be donated for the auction. Ralph Gardner, our illustrious auctioneer, is already getting his vocal cords in top shape for an evening of speaking. Here's hoping that the auction will be so long that he cannot talk at the end of it!

Remember the material on Anthony Comstock in the last issue of Newsboy? If you recall, Comstock was the noted reformer who made scathing attacks against "objectionable" literature and material aimed at children. In a recent letter, Bob Jennings writes: "Found the Newsboy to be very interesting. The stuff by Comstock was a riot. You forgot to mention one very pertinent fact about the man, however, and that is that it was discovered after his death that he maintained a secret library which housed one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of hard core pornography then in existence in the Western world."

This just in. Irene Gurman has a change of address. Her new home is at 2607 Marathon Lane, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33312. Remember to mark this change in your membership roster.

I received a nice letter from Leslie McFarlane, who complimented me on my review of his book, Ghost of the Hardy Boys, in the last issue of Newsboy. He says: "It is always gratifying to a writer when a reader appreciates elements on which he prided himself. You noticed the transitions. They presented enormous problems, and of course I used everything from Maugham's time shift to a film editor's jump cuts to achieve the flow I was after. Then again, it delighted me that you enjoyed the book's humor because I had a lot of fun writing it." I hope that many HAS members have purchased this book. For pure entertainment you can't find a better bargain.

Through an oversight, HAS past President Max Goldberg's title, "Doctor," was not printed in the current society roster. Holder of two doctorate degrees, Max deserves this recognition.

Herb Risteen has picked up the entire "Ragged Dick" Series, (six volumes, Porter & Coates). They are in barely fair condition, and are faded and worn, with some flyleaves missing and some hinges cracked. Contents are all there. He is open for bids on this set.

In the last issue of Newsboy I announced that if one wants a good study of the article, "Blowing Out the Boy's Brains," then he should read the Fall, 1970, and Winter, 1971, issues of The Boys' Book Collector. Copies of this magazine are scarce, and author of the analysis, Dr. John T. Dizer, Jr. (10332 Ridgecrest Road, Utica, N. Y. 13502) has kindly informed me that he will send xerox copies of the article free to any HAS member upon receipt of a self-addressed envelope with two stamps ("Fortune and the Syndicate"—in two parts—is a heavy article). Many thanks for your thoughtfulness, Jack!!