

Monthly publication of the HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY,
a magazine devoted to the study of Horatio Alger, Jr.,
his life, works, and influence on the culture of America.

Newsboy



Horatio Alger, Jr.

1832 - 1899



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See page 4 for
details concerning
this mystery. Writ-
ten by Alger biog-
rapher Frank Gruber,
the story revolves
around a copy of
Alger's Ralph Ray-
mond's Heir.

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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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: The HAS Convention — the Connecticut Conclave — will soon be here!! Hosted by HAS Vice-President Brad Chase, the May meeting will surely be a noteworthy event.

* * *

THE ORPHAN WANDERER
COMES TO GRAND RAPIDS

—James Byron Brown's Autobiography—

(The following excerpts are from The Grand River Valley Review, the Fall, 1979 issue. Evelyn Grebel sent the article to me, remarking that the person's career resembled that of an Alger hero. Here are portions from the article).

The subject of this sketch was born in the year 1837 in the Green Mountains of Vermont. He was early left an orphan, but, amid untold difficulties and sorrows, arose to manhood and qualifications of usefulness by untiring individual efforts. . . .

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During the winter following our arrival in Michigan I attended school three months, nearly. The term continued four months. The next winter, also, I went to school, and that is about all I can say, for I was so poorly supplied with suitable books, that I learned but little, either winter. I wished to study arithmetic, but my master would not purchase me a book, so I took an old Day Boll's Arithmetic to school with me, and learned something concerning simple numbers. I learned a very little about adding and subtracting.

Notwithstanding these things, I would have remained with him, if his conduct towards me had been kind, and he had ever seemed satisfied with what I had done. I could never do so much, but what he was anxious to have me perform more. He never gave me a holiday, excepting on the Fourth of July. I worked in all kinds of weather, never losing time on account of storm or cold.

It fell to my lot to do the most of the running and choring. I had not time for rest, as I would most usually be employed in taking care of the teams (cont. on p. 15, bottom right column).

Richard R. Seddon, 75

Operated firm in Cambridge

Richard R. Seddon, 75, a businessman who for 40 years operated his own refrigeration and air conditioning company in Cambridge, died yesterday after a short illness at the Choate Memorial Hospital, Woburn. Mr. Seddon had been a resident of Andover for the past six months and formerly lived in Winchester and Belmont.

Born in Quincy, Mr. Seddon was educated in the Hallowell, Maine, school system and came to Boston at the age of 17.

His interest in refrigeration resulted from a job he held with the Chicago-based Mills Novelty Co. At Mills he sold, fixed and installed the firm's slot machines and ice cream freezers.

In 1930 he and a partner established the Miller & Seddon Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Co. Inc. Two years later he bought out his partner but did not change the name of the company. He sold the firm 10 years ago and it continues to operate in Cambridge.

Mr. Seddon was an active member of the Society of American Magicians' Boston Assembly No. 9 and had served as director and treasurer of that club. He was also an avid collector of Horatio Alger books and belonged to the Horatio Alger Society of America. He was a director, and past vice president and membership chairman of the organization. Mr. Seddon was also a member of the State Club of Massachusetts.

He leaves his wife, Mary (Sacco); a daughter, Judith Barton of Lowell, and a granddaughter.

Funeral services will be held Friday morning at 11 at the Lane-Allen Funeral Home, Andover. Burial will follow at the West Parish Cemetery, Andover.

February 26, 1980 saw the passing of one of the finest men I have known. Anyone who knew Dick Seddon liked him. I loved him and will always remember him.

There was almost a thirty year difference in our ages yet I considered him one of my close friends. But that was the unique quality about Dick. Everyone was comfortable with him and he was at ease with all. When I told my nine year old son of Dick's passing away his reaction of personal sadness emphasized what a wonderful man Dick was.

A true gentleman in every sense of the word, Dick Seddon was one of those rare human beings who will be missed by all but never forgotten.

Horatio Alger might well have written a story based on Dick's life, for he was a true Alger Hero, having achieved success through hard work. He was always ready to do anything within his power to help a friend.

His family may well be proud of Dick as Dick was of them, and all of us whose lives Dick touched are better for knowing him.

To me, it was a privilege to have Dick Seddon regard me as a friend.

—Jerry Friedland, President, Alger Society

MURDER '97
by Frank Gruber

CLYDE'S face was filmed with perspiration, and tears trickled down his cheeks. Blood gushed from his mouth. He fell sideways. His eyes remained open and staring. Simon Lash looked over at the sheriff. The man's body had stopped twitching. He was dead.

Two men had met violent death. A third was murdered in California. A fourth in Mt. Miller, Illinois. And it all revolved about a little boy's death certificate stating, simply, "pneumonia" forty-seven years before.

When Aunt Clarissa gave little Stuart a copy of Horatio Alger's *Ralph Raymond's Heir* for his birthday in 1897, she thought the book cost a dollar and a quarter. Little did she realize that this particular copy would cost untold grief, four lives, fabulous sums in blackmail and send Simon Lash, the rough, tough detective in there slugging fifty years later in an attempt to solve

MURDER '97

(Editor's note: Virtually all Alger collectors recognize the name Frank Gruber. Author of probably the first authoritative checklist of the works of Alger ("The Books of Horatio Alger," Antiquarian Bookman, November 13, 1948), his effort was expanded into his 1961 book, Horatio Alger, Jr.: A Biography and Bibliography.

But book collecting was only a hobby, for he earned his living by writing. The entry in the 1941 Current Biography observes that he wrote mystery stories and pieces for the movies. Of the former it says that "Frank Gruber writes a complete mystery novel in 16 days and then 'uses the other 14 days of the

month to knock out a historical serial for a magazine.' . . . In writing his mystery stories Gruber uses only two rules: 'I always make the murderer one of the principal characters. You can't have a fellow killed by a chauffeur or butler. And I don't cheat the reader. Everything should be in the story so the reader can figure it out if he wants to.'"

Murder '97 was brought to my attention by HAS member Evelyn Grebel, and the story - based on an inscribed copy of Alger's Ralph Raymond's Heir - was one I found so intriguing that I was determined to publish portions of it for Newsboy readers. The cover of the paperback book is reproduced on page one of this Newsboy. The back cover is reproduced at left.

The paperback edition was printed by New York's Readers-Choice Library. The original edition was published in 1948 by Rinehart and Company).

CHAPTER ONE

The books that lined the walls of Simon Lash's combination office and library hadn't been touched in a week. Lash hadn't been out of the apartment in all that time and he hadn't shaved for four days. For hours at a time he sprawled on the red leather couch, staring at the ceiling. For other hours he roamed through the five-room apartment. He went to bed too early to sleep well and sometimes he got up at three or four o'clock in the morning and smoked a half package of cigarettes and kept Eddie Slocum awake in his own bedroom. Eddie, though, knew him too well to talk to Lash when he was in one of his moods, so very few words had passed between them during the long hours of these days.

On the eighth day, Eddie Slocum came into the office, carrying a book. He found Lash seated on the couch, his chin in his cupped hands, his elbows on his knees.

Eddie said: "There's a man here wants to see you."

April

"Tell him to go away," Lash replied, without looking up.

"He sounds interesting."

"I said, send him away."

Eddie gritted his teeth and weighed the book in his hand. He was tempted to throw it at Lash, walk out of the apartment and never come back. While he was debating the idea, Lash said:

"How's the bank account?"

"Good enough," snarled Eddie. "Which you know damn well, or you wouldn't be layin' around like this for two weeks without openin' the mail or talkin' to anybody. I turned away four clients this week."

"Well, make it five!"

Eddie slammed the book to the floor. It skittered to within inches of Lash's feet. Eddie tore out of the room. When he returned three minutes later, he found that Lash had picked up the book and was leafing through it.

Eddie said: "Maybe it's just as well. The guy was crazy. He wanted you to find the kid who owned that book fifty years ago . . ."

Lash looked up. "What?" he asked sharply.

"There's a kid's name on the inside of the book and the date when his aunt gave him the book—eighteen ninety-seven. This nut wants you to locate the kid . . . on'y he wouldn't be a kid by this time."

"Get him back," Lash snapped. "Run outside and bring him back. . ."

Eddie's mouth fell open in utter astonishment. Then Lash roared: "Get him back!" and Eddie leaped to the door. He pounded down the stairs, whipped open the street door and sprang out upon the sidewalk.

"Hey, Mr. Knox," he yelled at a man who was just turning the ignition key in a car parked at the curb. "He wants to see you . . ."

The man shut off the ignition and got out of the car. He was a rather seedy-looking man of middle age, wizened and slightly stooped. He said to Eddie: "Changed his mind, eh?"

"I thought he might, but not so soon. It was the book that did it. He's a sucker for books, you know."

"That's what I heard."

They crossed the sidewalk and re-entered the door that led to Simon Lash's apartment. They climbed the stairs and going into the combination office and library found Lash still sitting on the couch, looking at the book.

"Mr. Sterling Knox," Eddie Slocum announced.

Lash gave the caller a sour glance and got to his feet. "What's this nonsense about finding the boy who owned this book fifty years ago?"

"I've got the money to pay for it," growled Knox, stung by Lash's tone.

Lash crossed to his desk and went around behind it. He seated himself in the swivel chair but did not invite his caller to sit down. But Knox, scowling at Lash's discourtesy, seated himself on the couch vacated by Lash.

Lash held up the book. "This is a first edition."

"Of course," said Knox.

"You collect first editions?"

"Only Horatio Alger, Jr."

"Why?" Lash asked bluntly. Then, seeing that Knox looked puzzled: "I mean, why should you collect Horatio Alger?"

"Because I read the books when I was a boy."

"So did I, but I grew up," Lash retorted.

Knox pointed to the bookshelves. "I notice you collect Americana and history. Alger's history too. His books give you a better picture of the sixties, seventies and eighties than you can find in history books. And the stories are about a class of people that are extinct today. Poor people. Proud people who were hungry at times, but who got their food through their own efforts, by their own sweat. They were individualists, those people. They didn't go whining to the government. Sometimes they were exploited by the employers, but they thought that was better than being exploited by mealy-mouthed politicians, because they hoped to become employers themselves. And sometimes they did. They were the people who made this country. They were the only kind of people who could have made a country like this."

"Not bad," said Lash, "considering you haven't got a soapbox."

Knox flushed. "All right, I'll cut it short. There's an inscription in that book—"

Lash opened the book and read: "To Stuart, on his 11th birthday, from his Aunt Clarissa, February 2, 1897." He looked up at Knox. "You want me to locate the person to whom this book was inscribed?"

Knox nodded. "Yes."

"Why?" Lash asked.

Knox frowned slightly. "I don't know that I have any reason. Curiosity, I guess. Those inscriptions have always interested me—I get to thinking every now and then, who were those people? What became of them . . . ?"

"And you're willing to spend money—a lot of money—to satisfy an idle curiosity?"

"I spend a lot of money buying books," Knox said testily. Then he gestured to the bookshelves. "And so do you. And you can't tell me you've never been curious about the inscriptions in all those old books."

"Maybe I have," Lash conceded grudgingly. "But not curious enough to spend a lot of time trying to run down one of the people."

"Well, I'm willing to spend the time," Knox said, "or rather the money to pay for somebody else's time."

"Just how high are you willing to go?"

"Whatever's necessary."

"This inscription is fifty years old. The book may have changed hands fifty times. A secondhand book is a hard thing to trace; I may run into a dead end."

"They say you can find anybody—or anything," Knox said, "if you try hard enough."

Lash shook his head. "That's not so; they've never been able to find Dorothy Arnold. Or Judge Crater. Thousands of people walk out of their homes every year and nobody ever hears from them. The easiest thing in the world is to lose yourself."

"But this is a book," Knox reminded. "It's a tangible object. Somebody has owned it all during these fifty years. You just have to trace the owners until you come to the original one. A person named Stuart, who was eleven years old in eighteen ninety-seven—"

"He may have died in eighteen ninety-eight," said Lash. "The book may have been sold to the junkman. Try to find a junkman who bought a book fifty years ago . . ." He hesitated. "You want to find just this Stuart? Or anyone who owned any book fifty years ago?"

"I want to find one definite person," Knox said.

"But suppose I run into a dead end? You've got other books with inscriptions. . . . I could tackle one of those, then?"

Knox shook his head stubbornly. "No, you can't jump around from book to book. You got to pick one certain book and stick to it."

"You picked this book at random?" Lash held it up. "Ralph Raymond's Heir. Why not Ragged Dick, or Tattered Tom—or The Young Explorer . . .?"

"I see you remember your Horatio Alger," Knox said. "As it happens, I have a Ragged Dick with an inscription: it's eighteen sixty-eight—which is perhaps too long ago. I decided on Ralph Raymond's Heir because the even fifty years appealed to me."

Lash studied the Horatio Alger book for a long moment. Then he exhaled. "Mr. Knox, I'll take the job."

"Good!" cried Knox. "Now let's talk terms. How long do you think it'll take you to run this down?"

"Who knows? But I'll make a flat price for the job. One thousand dollars. . . ."

"I'm willing to spend that."

"All right, I may lose money on the deal but that'll be my hard luck. The price'll be a thousand dollars if it takes me six days, or six months—"

"But what if you fail altogether?"

"Then I'm out a thousand dollars. Now, I want to know just two things. When did you get this book and from whom did you get it?"

"I bought it just a couple of days ago from a local rare book dealer, Oscar Eisenschiml."

"I know Eisenschiml."

"He's the man who recommended you. I

got to talking with him about these inscriptions and mentioned that I thought of hiring a detective agency some time to see if I couldn't trace a book back to its original owner and he said—"

"All right," Lash cut in, "you've hired your detective."

Knox got to his feet. "About a retainer . . . will you want—"

"Yes," Lash snapped. "I insist that a client get his feet wet. Five hundred dollars. . . ."

Knox took out a wallet and after fumbling for a moment, counted out six bills, four hundreds and two fifties. He dropped them on the desk. "You can reach me at the Lincoln Hotel," he said. "I'm retired. Sold out a shoe business in Iowa . . ."

"I'll get in touch with you when I've got something to report," Lash said impatiently.

Knox shook his head and, scowling, headed for the door. Eddie Slocum followed him out. When he returned to the room, Lash was back on the couch, reading the Horatio Alger book.

"What do you make of it, chief?" Eddie asked.

"I'm reading," Lash snapped.

Eddie winced and, getting his hat, left the apartment.

Outside, he walked to Sunset Boulevard, where he caught a bus, and rode down to Vine Street. On Vine he strolled to Hollywood Boulevard and decided to see the picture at the Pantages Theatre. The picture turned out to be two pictures and with newsreel and cartoon consumed three hours.

It was four o'clock when he let himself back into the apartment. And, as he had expected, Lash was still sprawled on the couch. But he was no longer

reading. The book was lying open on his chest and he was staring at the ceiling.

Lash said, without looking at Eddie:
"Ever read Horatio Alger, Eddie?"

"Not since I was twelve years old," Eddie replied. "He wrote kid stuff."

"That's right, one hundred and seventeen books."

"That's a lot of books."

"More Horatio Alger books have been sold than books by any other author, living or dead."

"Is that good?"

"Not necessarily, but a hundred million, more or less, of his books were printed. And almost all of them have disappeared. Worn out, maybe. Or burned, or used as scrap paper to make new books."

"I remember one of them," Eddie said. "I think it was this Ragged Dick you mentioned to Knox. It was all about a kid who sold newspapers and found a rich guy's wallet and give (sic) it back to him. So then the rich guy gave him a job and in a little while Ragged Dick married the guy's daughter and got all the old coot's money."

"Well, what was wrong with that?"

"Nothin', only I was readin' in the paper last week where a poor cabby found a rich guy's wallet with thirty-five hundred smackers in it and you know what he got for a reward?"

"A hearty thank you."

"Nah, the guy give him five bucks. Imagine, a fiver for findin' thirty-five hundred leaves of lettuce."

"So you think he should have kept the wallet?"

"All I can say is, let me find a wallet with thirty-five hundred in it!"

Lash picked up the book from his chest and swung his feet to the floor. "Look at this, Eddie."

Eddie crossed the room and reached for the book, but Lash shook his head and pointed to the open pages. Eddie stooped and followed Lash's pointing finger.

He read: "You are aware, I suppose, that this is a subtle poison—"

"No," said Lash, "read only the words that are underlined in pencil."

Eddie read again: "This is poison . . ."

Lash turned a few pages, then stopped. "Now read again—just the underlined words."

". . . They have given me . . ."

Lash riffled pages quickly. "Again!"

"If I die . . ." Eddie read.

Once more Lash turned pages and again Eddie read: ". . . My cousin, Paul . . ."

Then Lash turned pages for the last time and Eddie read: ". . . is the murderer . . ."

Lash looked up at Eddie Slocum. "How did the whole thing read?"

"This is poison they have given me," Eddie repeated. "If I die, my cousin Paul is the murderer . . ." He looked blankly at Lash. "What is it, some kind of a game?"

"I didn't mark the words."

Eddie's eyes widened. "Sterling Knox?"

Lash shrugged. "Maybe. Maybe not."

"I thought there was something fishy about that guy."

"Then why did you insist I talk to him?"

"Because I only wanted to—" Eddie stopped. He had almost said that he had only brought Knox in because he wanted to rouse Lash from his long lethargy.

Lash said, "I knew damn well that Knox had more on his mind than he told me."

"You think you shouldn't have taken the case?"

"Knox won't put anything over on me."

Eddie suddenly exclaimed, "Say, do you suppose he knew about those marked words and wanted you to read them?"

Lash got to his feet. "They still sell erasers for a nickel." He crossed the room and, opening a closet, reached in and got out his coat. He slipped into it. "I'll be back in an hour."

"Where're you going?"

"Down to Eisenschiml's."

"You mean you're going ahead with this book thing?"

Lash made no reply.

CHAPTER TWO

The lettering on the window, rather small and away down on the right-hand side, read: Oscar Eisenschiml—Rare Books—Autographs. The store was a small one, containing not more than two thousand books.

Eisenschiml was in his early sixties, a rather heavy-set, balding man, with a disposition as irascible as that of Simon Lash. He sat behind the ancient rolltop desk at the rear of the store and frowned at Lash.

"A lot of people are collecting Alger these days," he said. "They exhibited Ragged Dick at the Grolier Exhibit of the Hundred Significant American Books

and it's got so you can't get a copy of the book for less'n a hundred dollars—"

"I'm not starting an Alger collection," Lash interrupted. "I just want you to tell me what you know about this man, Sterling Knox. He said you sent him to me."

"He asked me if I knew of a good private detective and I gave him your name. Actually, I know very little about him. Except that he's got money. He came in here two or three months ago and told me he wanted to start collecting a set of Alger. I only had two or three books in the store, but I've been running some ads in the trade papers and I guess I've gotten him twenty-five or thirty books so far. He always pays cash for them."

"How much did he pay for this copy of Ralph Raymond's Heir?"

Eisenschiml hesitated. "That's one of Alger's later books, but it's quite scarce for some reason or other. I had to charge Knox twenty dollars for it."

"How'd you get it—through an ad?"

"Either through an ad, or from a book scout."

"Don't you know how you got it?"

"Of course I know. I—I got it from a fellow who scouts for me."

"What's his name?"

"The name wouldn't mean anything to you, Simon."

"Look, Oscar," said Lash, "I want to talk to this book scout . . ."

"Why?"

"I want to ask him where he got the book, that's all." Lash scowled. "And I don't care what he paid for it—or what he sold it to you for."

"Then why do you want to talk to him?"

"I just want to, that's why. Now, are you going to give me the man's name and address, or aren't you?"

Eisenschiml opened a loose-leaf address book on his desk and consulted it. "His name is David Brussell and he lives at eighteen twenty-six McCadden."

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[From later on in the book there is this:]

Halpin spread out gnarled hands. "Look, Mr. Lash, some people spend their money collecting old beer mugs. Some of them play horses. I collect books."

"Do you?"

"What do you mean—do I? I said I did, didn't I?"

"You bought one Alger book."

"I've got fifty-sixty of them at home."

"Have you a copy of Now Or Never?"

"There's no Alger book by that name."

Lash strode to his desk and picked up the copy of Ralph Raymond's Heir. "You've read this book, Halpin?"

"I read it when I was a kid."

"Not since then?"

No."

"Do you remember the story after all these years?"

"I remember most of the Alger stories that I read as a kid. This one's about a boy whose father's poisoned by his nephew. The will appoints the nephew the guardian of the boy and the guardian takes the boy out to the Middle West, where he tries to get rid of him. Only the boy escapes . . . and in the end he gets back his money."

"That's reasonably close, as I recall the story."

"You read it?"

"Yesterday. I also read it when I was a boy."

"I didn't think they were reading Alger when you were a kid."

"I got in on the tail end of his popularity. They don't read him today."

.

[Twenty pages later there is this:]

He turned just as Clare Halpin picked up the book. She opened it and looked at the inscription. "How much is it?"

"Alger's getting pretty rare these days . . ."

". . . How much?"

"As a matter of fact," said Lash, "I have another customer for that book and I really ought to give him a chance to make me an offer."

"Then why did you call me?" Clare Halpin asked sharply.

Lash smiled pleasantly. "In the book business—"

"I didn't come to you for this book," Clare Halpin interrupted. "You solicited me."

"That's right, I did. Well, shall we say—a hundred dollars?"

"A hundred dollars!" cried Clare Halpin. "What do you take me for?"

"You think the price is too high?"

"It's ridiculous. No Alger book is worth anything near that."

"Oh, no? How about Now or Never?"

"I have a copy of Now or Never that I got for ten dollars."

Lash said evenly: "Horatio Alger

didn't write a book called Now Or Never."

Clare Halpin winced a little, but recovered quickly. "I must have confused it with an Alger title. They're so similar. . . . I can't pay a hundred dollars for this—this book."

"I'll give it to you for nothing," Lash said, "if you'll tell me why you really want it?"

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[In Chapter 16 there is this]

There was a small bookshelf under the window in the "boys'" room. It contained fifteen or twenty incredibly dusty books. Lash stooped to look at them, then dropped to one knee.

The shelf contained a half dozen Harry Castlemon books, two or three Oliver Optics, a Henty—and four by Horatio Alger. The titles were Ragged Dick, Ben the Luggage Boy, Phil the Fiddler and Victor Vane. But there was no Ralph Raymond's Heir.

Lash took out the copy of Ragged Dick and flicked the dust off with a handkerchief. There was an inscription in it: "To my young friend, Oliver Halpin, with the compliments of Horatio Alger, Jr. December 25, 1868."

Oliver Halpin, Senior.

Lash put the book back and took down the first of the six Castlemon books—all of which had uniform bindings. The title was Frank the Young Naturalist, and it, too, was inscribed, "To Oliver Halpin, with the best wishes of H. C. Castlemon (Chas. A. Fosdick), January 10, 1865."

Presentation copies of first editions.

"Damn," said Lash under his breath.

For further references to Alger, see Murder '97. This book should belong in every Alger collection.

1980 CONVENTION PREPARATIONS
by Brad Chase

"Remember April 9th" is my battle cry and as far as I'm concerned it ranks right up there with "Remember the Maine" and "Remember the Alamo." But I guess rather than a battle cry it should be a plea on your behalf if you want to stay at the same motel as everyone else who attends our annual convention, held this year in Connecticut the first week of May. Plea, cry or whatever - please be forewarned and send in your registration form to the Tobacco Valley Inn for the rooms are going fast.

Within a week after the January-February issue of Newsboy was sent out (which contained the first set of registration, reservation and agenda inserts) responses were arriving in both my mailbox and at the motel. First to arrive (along with a pleasant note as an added bonus) was the registration of Carl and Jean Hartmann. Theirs was immediately followed by letters from Bob and Kathleen Williman from Maryland and Paul and Ruth Miller and Bob Sawyer from Ohio. Every day brings one or two more. Our venerable President, Jerry Friedland, called me the other night and indicated that he and others were planning to arrive here on Monday, April 28th after book sweeping Boston and other areas east of here. He and several others have offered to help in Convention preparations which Ann and I sincerely appreciate. I must confess that our earlier hesitations about hosting the Convention have now pretty much dissipated as willing hands offer to help which not only makes the load lighter but will foster good fellowship as well. Horatio would indeed be proud!!

A second battle cry should be "Remember the Auction!" Along with his registration and an offer to help, Bob Sawyer indicated that he has been busy over the winter months with his wood-working activities and has made a musical jewel box for bid at the auction. Those of you familiar with the quality of Bob's wordworking will well appreciate the opportunity you'll have to bid

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HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY
**CONNECTICUT
 CONCLAVE**
MAY 1 - 4, 1980



SHERATON TOBACCO VALLEY INN
 450 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE, WINDSOR, CT 06095

(Honors all major credit cards)

on and own and original Bob Sawyer piece. Dick Seddon and Brad Alexander have already donated books and several others have indicated to me that they intend to bring "something for the auction." So send to me whatever you would like to donate or bring it along with you when you come. All donations are tax deductible of course, as 100% of the auction proceeds go to the noble cause of keeping our beloved Society alive and vibrant.

Friday night, May 2nd, should be an interesting treat for most attendees and a little different from what has occurred in previous conventions. If you join us (and it is optional) you'll be able to say that you saw it first at the Connecticut Conclave. The dinner will be followed by an "Alger evening" consisting of a unique presentation by one of our more creative brethren. Curious? Send me your registration and I'll send you a receipt and an agenda explaining all the details.

So all in all things are really starting to happen now as we rapidly move toward May 1st. Ann and I are eagerly looking forward to sharing with you not only the many pre, during, and post Convention activities but our beloved New England as well. And remember, if you want to do the sharing with us as a resident of the Convention Motel, then "Remember April 9th" and get your reservation form to the Tobacco Valley Inn, 450 Bloomfield Ave., Windsor, Connecticut, 06095, by that date!!!!



The above picture of the June, 1902 Supplement to Comfort Magazine - containing Alger's Adrift in New York - appeared in a newspaper article about Dick Bowerman's Alger collection.

Dick, an Alger Society member, is coordinator of developmental education at Edison State Community College in Piqua, Ohio. The article on him and his Alger research was also sent out over the wire services by Associated Press.

NEWSBOYS LEARN TO ROW

How the Lads Live Who Sell The Papers

(Editor's note: The following article is from the collection of Jack Bales. It originally appeared in the July 15, 1888 issue of the New York Tribune, page 8).

"Ah there, Kiddy! can yer row?"

"Row? Naw; never had the chance."

"Come over to der lodgin' den and learn on de Tribune's machines; cricky, but dere fly!" and the two street arabs hurried away to the Newsboys' Lodging House, at Duane and New-Chambers sts., to stretch their arms and backs and strengthen their muscles on the eight new rowing machines, presented and erected in the gymnasium there by The Tribune. As they dash up the broad stone stairway of the big five-story home they pass the open door of a fine light reception-room, where a number of boys like themselves are sitting about in careless attitudes, singing a chorus led by one of the assistants, on a piano.

Up another flight and they halt a second to peep into a big dining-room where long tables, lined with white, big, generous looking bowls stand ready for the coming meal.

Up another story, and two big dormitory doors stand ajar, revealing long rows of narrow, iron bedsteads, with white sheets and red coverlets turned down for the weary little "gutter snipes" that occupy them nightly. Up one more flight and they dash into the big room set apart for the boys' fun, frolic and physical development.

Here, the first gloom of disappointment
(continued on next page)

*Girl Detective Still 18 After 50 Years—***Nancy Drew Is Ageless**

By JANE SEE WHITE
Associated Press Writer

MAPLEWOOD, N.J. — Can it be that Nancy Drew is actually a middle-aged spinster?

Can it be that The Girl Sleuth — the slender, titian-haired amateur detective who breezes dauntlessly around the globe unraveling intricate mysteries — will turn 50 this year?

Yes. And, emphatically, no.

"Nancy Drew is not 50. She is 18 years old. This is an anniversary, not a birthday," sniffs Harriet Adams, who is herself a wizard at the art of aging without growing old.

Under the pen name "Carolyn Keene," this delicate, plucky, 87-year-old great-grandmother has authored 57 Nancy Drew stories since 1930, a little more than one cliff-hanging, globe-trotting and, yes, covertly educational tale a year.

Mrs. Adams's stories bridge three generations of Americans. Readers who learned of Nancy Drew from their mothers have introduced her to their daughters. The books, like *The Girl Sleuth* herself, do not age.

Fifty years after she began, Mrs. Adams says she's not nearly finished with the shadowy world of crime. Neither, she adds, is Nancy. Her 58th Nancy Drew yarn, "The Flying Saucer Mystery," appears this month.



UNDAUNTED ANNIVERSARY — Harriet Adams, at home in Maplewood, N.J., is observing a 50th anniversary--for herself and her pen-child, Nancy Drew. Since 1930, under the pen name "Carolyn Keene," Mrs. Adams has written 57 stories following the adventures of the girl sleuth. An 87-year-old great-grandmother, Mrs. Adams has not finished with that fiction world of mystery and crime: the 58th Nancy Drew yarn is being published this month.

(article continued on next page)

settles on the brow of "Kiddy" and his conductor. True, there are the eight Tribune rowing machines ranged along one side of the wall, shining in new paint, yet unsoiled by usage, but then every one of them has a boy before it working away for dear life, and the long line of "nexts" in waiting shows that the rowing lesson cannot take place just at once. So they turn their attention to the other apparatus, having first filed their claim for a turn at one of the two double machines, next in order after Sandy McGee, who is only four boys off from the present manipulator, whose perspiring brow, bulging eyes and

("Nancy Drew" cont.)

It was Mrs. Adams's father, Edward Stratemeyer, who invented Nancy Drew. Before his death in 1930, Stratemeyer cranked out 150 children's books; he hired ghost writers to flesh out his outlines for hundreds more — series like The Rover Boys, The Bobbsey Twins, the Hardy Boys.

Shortly before he died, Stratemeyer drafted the first three Carolyn Keene stories about a young gumshoe from River Heights. On his death, his daughter took over his business — and rewrote his Nancy Drews.

Since 1930, Mrs. Adams has authored 182 Stratemeyer Syndicate books — all of Nancy Drew and The Dana Girls among them — and plotted some 1,200 to be farmed out to ghost writers.

This small, rosy, blonde gentlewoman did all this though she knew her father would certainly have disapproved. The world of work, Stratemeyer felt, was no place for a lady.

"Between college and my wedding, he did let me edit manuscripts and galley proofs. He brought them home to me because he didn't believe ladies should go to an office. I learned a great deal from him by doing that," Mrs. Adams recalls.

Surely, then, this housewife and mother of four — a 1914 Wellesley graduate with a major in music — was utterly befuddled when her father died, leaving manuscript-hungry publishers and a booming syndicate

then producing 17 children's book series.

Not so. Mrs. Adams was undaunted, just as Nancy Drew would have been.

"The publishers were agitated. They wanted to know where the next books were going to come from. I got hold of a couple of the ghost writers my father had used. I learned something from them, too.

"I think my father would be absolutely amazed at what's happened. I doubt that he thought anyone would carry on."

Carry on she did. In the process, she made Nancy Drew her own.

"I changed Nancy from 16 to 18 years old. It gave her more latitude. She could drive a car. I also changed her attitude toward Hannah Gruen. In my father's version, Hannah was more like a servant. I made her the Drew's lovable housekeeper."

Mrs. Adams describes her father as "very strict" and her own girlhood as "well-guarded," yet she fashioned Nancy into a young woman liberated beyond her time: The Girl Sleuth is independent, fearless, resourceful and keenly, unabashedly intelligent.

"If I made Nancy liberated, I was unconscious of the fact. She's like me. I knew what I was writing about. She isn't artificial. She's a modern young woman — the best of the modern young women."

During 50 years as an amateur operative, Nancy has changed little: Her hair went from blonde to a red-

heaving chest are closely marked and hailed as infallible signs that he cannot hold out, in the ordinary course of nature, much longer.

Look at that lame boy as he hobbles across the floor. What does he want with his shrivelled legs in a gymnasium? He has stopped just under the trapeze. Poor lad, how he must grieve to be forever debarred from flying through the air on that dainty swing. Now he is elevating his crutch and has caught the trapeze bar with the handle of that support. There! he has dropped the other crutch and now, gracious! he

has climbed hand over hand up his own crutch in a jiffy and is perched on the trapeze bar with an agility only surpassed by Mr. Crowley, of Central Park. And there he swings, gyrates and cavorts for half an hour in a manner which proves that no matter how useless his lower limbs are, from the waist up his muscles are like whipcord.

But Nancy Drew doesn't smoke, nor drink, nor blaspheme. She is well-groomed, kind, respectful, articulate and compassionate. She has never encountered a divorced or separated couple. Nancy never resorts to violence, Mrs. Adams adds, though her tomboy girlfriend, George Fayne, sometimes indulges in "a little judo" in a pinch.

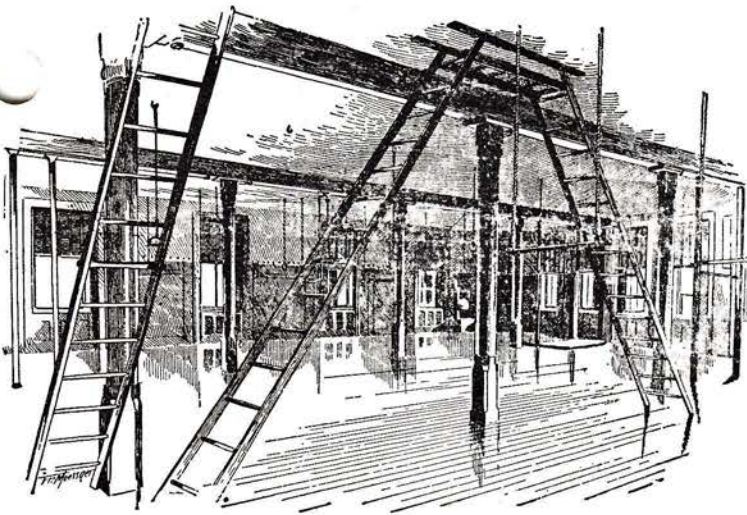
"Too many people base their ideas about young people on young people in the big cities on either coast," Mrs. Adams says. "The country is huge. I get fan mail from everywhere. They love Nancy and they want to be just like her.

"Over the years, publishers and Hollywood have tried to get me to change Nancy, but I won't do it," she says. No wonder.

The Girl Sleuth's popularity has endured through sex education and television, hot pants and marijuana. Currently about five million copies of Nancy Drew mysteries are sold each year. Since 1930, 70 million Drew books have been sold.

"It's very rewarding. I had a letter recently from the father of a girl who had discovered Nancy Drew. He wanted to thank me for the vocabulary she gained," Mrs. Adams says.

This lodging house has accommodations for the bed and board of 800 boys, and it is generally full on winter nights, though many of the lads prefer to sleep in the parks and out-of-the-way places in warm weather. Eighteen cents pays for supper, bread and breakfast, five cents for one of the ordinary beds alone and a dime for a cot among what the boys call the "Upper Ten," a dormitory which boasts some ornament on the walls, a locker at the head of each bed, and



THE GYMNASIUM IN THE NEWSBOYS' LODGING-HOUSE.

crimson curtains on walnut bars that lend a privacy to the sleeper he cannot get in the big bedroom. Formerly the management washed the boys' shirts for them, but dividing the clean garments among the claimants caused too much quarrelling, lying and stealing, and it was abandoned. Every encouragement is given to the boys to save their money. Regular bank accounts are kept with the depositors and interest paid monthly. Many of them make a good deal of money, between \$3 and \$4 a day, and some make barely enough to pay their way into the lodging house. Nearly all of them,

Article on previous two pages was sent in by Paul Miller, appearing as an Associated Press release in a February 17, 1980 newspaper. Harriet S. Adams is a member of the Horatio Alger Society.

however, spend it freely and wastefully on cheap theatres and various forms of boyish gambling, such as pitching pennies, etc., etc.

One of the boys, "Foxy Fred" or Fred Fox, age fourteen, has \$600 to his credit. He hires six or seven smaller fellows to sell papers for him, allowing them a small commission for their services. He will soon set up a newsstand somewhere and will doubtless be

successful, for with all his shrewdness and saving ways he retains the regard and best wishes of his fellows. They lend to one another freely and are surprisingly honest in the matter of paying these debts. Their manners are fairly good when in the home; hats are removed and order is preserved, no matter how badly they act on the streets. A night school is well attended during the winter months, and every effort is made to reclaim those who show any disposition to do better and secure them homes in the West. The most difficult ones to do anything for are the big boys. There seems to be no place in the world for them. They have grown up without any training but that in street trades. The trades unions have kept them from being apprenticed, and they are soon too big to sell papers on the street, for the little boys beat them at it. For these farm life in the West or South seems the only method of elevation and salvation from the yawning pit into which idle and hungry boys in a great city almost invariably fall.

There are altogether too many of these semi-vagrants children in the streets who grow up without "schooling." Truants are compelled to attend school, as a rule, but many slip through from the fact that the law makes an exception of such children as have a "lawful occupation" in the streets. . . . To this class the lodging house offers just what they most need, and many of them have been sent West by the Children's Aid Society, by which the lodging house is connected. One of these, William R. Moore, of whom nothing has been heard for years, wrote from Frankfort, Ind., last year, for so much of his pedigree as the records of the house might show, for use in his application to the President for appointment as United States District Attorney for his State; and another rose to be Mayor of Chippewa Falls, Wis., and a member of the Legislature there.

* * *

("The Orphan Wanderer" - continued)
or doing other work, while the other hands were eating their meals; when



The "Orphan Wanderer" makes his way down the road to Cascade. Drawing by Samuel Pope.

they had finished their dinner, I must be ready for mine, and without a moment's delay, must start again for the field. Thus I could get no time for rest.

In the summer time, after I had done a hard day's work, I would leave the field at sundown, or a little before, and go in search of the cows. . . .

I have come home with the cattle many a night after all the household had gone to bed, milk four and five cows, strain and take care of the milk. After doing a hard day's work, then working till mid-night, I would be too tired for resting, and rising early, still unrested, I would drag myself through the rounds of another day. Thus passed week in and week out, until I scarcely felt that I lived. . . .

The above is just a small section of this interesting article that Evelyn Grebel sent to Newsboy. Thanks go to her for her thoughtfulness.

* * *

RANDOM REPORTS FROM ALGERLAND

by Jack Bales

Bob Sawyer is interested in forming car pools for the Connecticut Convention in order to cut expenses for all involved. Also, rooming together at the motel would keep costs to a minimum. Bob gave me a card with some questions on it that interested persons should answer: I live in _____. I can / cannot furnish a car, with the passengers paying for gas. After arriving at the convention, I would like to share a room with another person. Yes _____ No _____

Please get in touch with Bob if this prospect interests you.

Dick Bales reports that he recently purchased 13 Jerry Todd and Poppy Ott books for \$26. Each was in mint condition and each had a dust jacket!!!! The bookseller selling the books got them at an estate sale for an even lower price. This shows you that bargains can still be found.