

ALGER SESQUICENTENNIAL

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



Jack Bales, Editor  
1407A Winchester St.  
Fredericksburg, VA  
22401

*Horatio Alger, Jr.*

1832 - 1899



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth B. Butler

Volume XX

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Numbers 6 & 7



Above is the illustration that will appear on the Horatio Alger, Jr. commemorative postage stamp (minus the lettering). The stamp will be issued on April 30, 1982 at the Horatio Alger Society Convention, and all Society members are encouraged to be on hand to celebrate "Our Hero's" Sesquicentennial.

### 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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- |                      |                |
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*Newsboy*, the official organ of the Horatio Alger Society, is published bimonthly (six issues per year) and is distributed to *HAS* members. Membership fee for any twelve month period is \$10.00.

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.

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

#### NEW MEMBERS REPORTED

- PF-629 John B. Schnell  
621 Hollywood Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20904

Florence Ogilvie Schnell says of her son Jack: "He graduated from Texas Technological College in 1951 as a 2nd Lieutenant and served in the Korean War with the 378th Engineers, in charge of 400 Koreans building roads and bridges for the U.S. forces. He is now Research Director of the American Public Transit Association in Washington, D.C.

- PF-636 Oscar Mezey  
1350 Timberview Trail  
Bloomfield Hills, Mich. 48013

Oscar writes that "I read most of the Algers when I was in my teens—don't have any left, unfortunately." His interest in Alger is as "an inspiration and hero."

- PF-638 Andrew Miscio  
316 W. Olive  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Andrew heard of *HAS* from Ralph Gardner. He is a real estate broker with 56 Algers, and is interested in collecting a complete set of titles, then working on a collection of first editions. He also enjoys fishing.

- PF-639 William R. Wright  
16826 US 50  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601

William is an engineer whose hobbies include reading and collecting Alger books, crafts, puzzles, art books and genealogy. He learned of *HAS* from a book dealer at an antique fair.

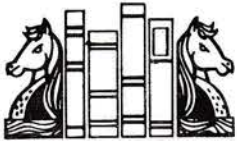
- PF-640 Harry F. Phillips  
Rt. #1, Box 954M  
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

Harry is a retired teacher and diamond broker who enjoys racquetball besides reading Algers.

#### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

- PF-474 David H. Mills  
2358 8th St. N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002
- PF-590 Charles W. Rainwater  
8100 Pinelake Court  
Alexandria, VA 22309
- PF-607 Leonard Homel  
P.O. Box 3217  
Thousand Oaks, Calif. 91359





## LETTERS

2436 Sabado Street  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89121  
December 23, 1981

Dear Jack:

My brother Brad's enthusiasm for Horatio Alger, what the *HAS* has meant to him, and his description of the particular friends he has met led me to set tentative feet in Algerland. I've enjoyed Alger friends and embarked on a goal of obtaining first editions, Hursts and New York Books.

First edition collecting has proved to be difficult but rewarding. It gives Kitty and me something interesting to do no matter where we are. During the past year, however, a major problem has developed. It bothers me and I suspect it mightily bothers others, too. I believe that Ralph Gardner's book that defines first editions has been accepted by *HAS* as the "official authority". Bob Bennett's recent book contains numerous first edition differences - many to my way of thinking very significant.

I have met Ralph and applaud him for his pioneering work. I also have met Bob. His book is superb. His work, on top of Ralph's and others, has given all of us more knowledge of "what is what" with Alger books. I suspect that none of us, however sophisticated or naive in Alger lore, wants to make the choice of Ralph or Bob when deciding whether a book is or isn't a first edition.

I have gone through both books and have found 24 examples of what I judge to be major points of conflict. A prime example is *Ragged Dick*. I know the location of a beautiful copy for \$350.00 which fits Ralph's points exactly (even being a thin one), but differs from Bob's because of the binding. I haven't spent the \$350.00 (but am surely sorely tempted) because Bob thinks it is worth only about \$100.00 and is not a "first". There are probably also differences in their thinking on paperback firsts but because Ralph does not define them very well, this is hard to ascertain.

It is my suggestion that the *HAS* bite the bullet on the first edition issue. To do otherwise would be unresponsive to the need and unfair to all. I am sure

that both Ralph and Bob would welcome clarification of the issue. I further suggest that the only basis for deciding the issue must be truth. The engineer in me wants only to know that sufficient research has been done to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that a certain edition is *the* first edition. If doubt remains, additional research should be done and the question should remain open. Personalities should not enter the picture. I think the *HAS* must rise above the people involved and search out the paramount issue—what is the truth. Let's get started in Philadelphia.

Very truly yours,  
Rolfe B. Chase



240 E. Country Line Rd.  
Hatboro, PA 19040  
December 27, 1981

Dear Jack:

I've been thinking of writing for some time but just never did get around to it.

Anyone who has items for the Auction may go ahead and send them along to me. It will take some doing to surpass last year's goal but if we have some nice items I think we can do it.

Bob Williman called me last night. It looks like the stamp presentation is all set up for April 30. Should be quite a event, something no one will want to miss.

On information to members who do plan to attend. If you are arriving by air, you will fly into Philadelphia International Airport. Go to the baggage claim area where limousine service is available. You want to get "Liberty Limousine" which will take you to the Motor Lodge. Make sure you get the one for George Washington Motor Lodge Willow Grove. There is a small charge for this service and the ride to the Motel is about forty-five minutes. The limousine leaves once an hour from the airport.

Anyone arriving by bus will come into center city. There they can walk or catch a cab to the Reading Terminal at 12th and Market. There you can get the Local to Willow Grove. The train station is about one mile from the Motor Lodge. You can call the Motel and someone will pick you up. Or, the Willow Grove Taxi Co. is located at the train station where you can catch a cab.

If you're coming by Amtrak the train will let you



off at 30th St. station (30th and Market). Catch a taxi to 12th and Market, then the local train to Willow Grove. I guess I have covered about every way to get there. For those driving they will get on the Pennsylvania Turnpike and exit at Willow Grove (Exit 27). When exiting go 611 South and the Motel will be on the right.

The registrations are coming in, Gene Hafner being the first. I have a packet made up already listing local bookstores, flea markets and tourist attractions. Also have name cards finished and I am still working on a Souvenir.

I'm open for ideas that you may have, so please feel free to write if you have anything that may be of help.

Best Wishes,  
Bill Russell

PS. There is a nice indoor pool at the Motel. So bring your swim suit.

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Rt. 3, Box 337  
Little Falls, N.Y. 13365  
October 27, 1981

Dear Jack,

I have in hand a copy of *The Foundation Library*, volume VI, "The Story of Literature," copyright 1911. Chapter 38 is devoted to American Literature (80 pages).

Under the subheading of "Other Writers for Children" are listed 23 names. Jacob Abbott tops this list with "fully 300 volumes."

"Closely competing in interest, but in the line of fiction are Horatio Alger's Ragged Dick Series which had a wide popularity, but seems to have lost its hold" (in 1911).

Perhaps you had found this before; I didn't check yours and Gary's book. However, I will say that every ten cent store at the time still had a good selection of Algers in New York Books and Donohues.

Sincerely yours,  
Milton R. Salls

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S. Lorenzo, Castelforte  
Latina, 04021  
Italy  
November 27, 1981

Dear Mr. Bales,

As you surely know I have joined the HAS a few months ago and my name appeared in the *Newsboy*

of June-July 1981. I am very sorry that we couldn't meet personally this past April and I missed the convention by only 2 few days. However, I am looking forward to the next year's convention, and by that time, hopefully I will have some material to submit to the *Newsboy* editor.

The reason for writing you is that I desperately need the following stories in order to write a more accurate and complete dissertation:

- Frank's Campaign
- Charlie Godman's Cruise
- Fame and Fortune
- Sink or Swim
- Tattered Tom
- Brave and Bold
- Phil the Fiddler
- Do and Dare
- Digging for Gold
- Chester Rand
- The Young Bank Messenger

I think it is much easier for you to get in touch with other HAS members who might have them. As soon as I get the material, I will make an international money order which will reach the U.S.A. in a few days. If books are not available, I can also use photocopies. I very much appreciate your help and understanding.

Hoping to hear from you very soon, I am.

Sincerely yours,  
Aurelio Di Mambro

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1329 South Sixth St.  
Abilene, Texas 79602  
November 16, 1981

Dear Jack:

I thought you would like this article that was in the *Abilene Reporter News* (reported that Ronald Reagan read Horatio Alger).

I remember when I was eleven I received a copy of Alger's *Helping Himself*. I sat up that night and read the whole thing. The snow was deep around our farmhouse that Christmas Eve. It was one night that I was truly happy—guess that is why I have always enjoyed the Horatio Alger books.

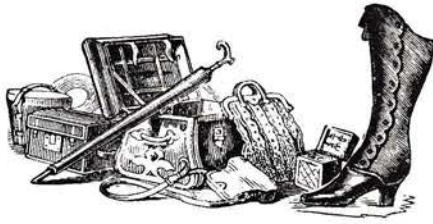
Also, I loved Zane Grey, *The Light of Western Stars*, *Desert Gold*, *Wanderer of the Wasteland*. Also Jack London, The Ruth Fielding books and Gene Stratton Portor. I still collect them.

I was planning on attending the Convention when



it was going to be in Chicago. I was going on to Ireland from there. Don't know about Philadelphia.

Best wishes,  
Evelyn Grebel



### AS I SEE IT by Jack Bales

Phone calls and letters have been coming in with comments on the new *Newsboy*. Though a couple members have said that they prefer the old typewritten issues, opinion has been in strong support of the professionally printed publication on heavier bond paper. Also, since the *Letters* column has proved to be particularly popular, it will definitely be continued.

Bob Williman announces that the design of the Horatio Alger Stamp has been selected. The famous frontispiece of *Ragged Dick*, Mark the match boy, Ben the luggage boy and Rufus the newsboy will be on a beige background, surrounded by the words "Horatio Alger" and "USA 20¢" in red. The stamp will be issued on April 30, 1981 at our convention. More details on this will appear in a future *Newsboy*.

As *HAS* goes into its third decade, I'd like to thank all our members for their continuous support of *Newsboy*. Many contributors receive some sort of acknowledgment in the issues themselves; Louis Bodnar submits cartoons, my long-time friend and collaborator Gary Scharnhorst provides scholarly articles on his research, Gilbert K. Westgard II sends short stories from his collection and Brad Chase writes monthly columns--with all the contributions giving *Newsboy* a well balanced look.

But there are also the people who are not so publicly heralded. Eddie Leblanc kindly gives *HAS* a plug every so often in his *Dime Novel Round-Up*, Bob Sawyer each month arranges the ads page for *HAS*, free lance writer Dave Soibelman clips Alger references from various publications, and both Jerry Friedland and Bob Williman phone often with comments and ideas (Bob also designed the snazzy

first page of last month's *Newsboy*).

One of the most successful ventures of the Society is our annual auction held during the convention. All donations will be gratefully accepted, the proceeds going to the coffers of the *HAS* treasury. Send items--they don't have to be Alger books!--to Convention Chairman Bill Russell, 240 E. country Line Rd., Hatboro, Pennsylvania 19040. In the past members have always been supportive of the auction--some of the donors have never even been to a convention!--and their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

Of course, whenever a few people are singled out, there is the risk of ignoring and offending others. I daily receive letters from *HAS* members (some of whom I have never met) and I appreciate the encouragement that is always given. And one last note. Whenever things go awry, I usually let off steam to long suffering Carl Hartmann. So credit goes to him for understanding for years the maniacal ravings of a rather stubborn editor.

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### ALGER AND THE COMICS by Jerry Friedland

We Alger collectors are always finding new avenues of collecting regarding our Hero. Periodicals, paperbacks, short stories, collecting by series, by cover, etc. Falling into the category of short stories is a relatively fertile area waiting for some forty years to be exhausted: comic books! The existence of a story entitled *Mark the Match Boy* in *Shadow Comics* #2 and another, *Facing the World* in *Doc Savage Comics* #2, were known of for many years. It seemed reasonable that other "Alger" stories might exist in these comics (especially since these two were both published by Street and Smith). So, I started looking for early *Shadow* and *Doc Savage* comics, thumbing through them for Alger stories. Last year I came across two more, in time to have Bob Bennett include them in his Bibliography, to wit: *Bound to Win* (*Shadow Comics* #7) and *From Rags to Riches; Or, Tappy Hart*, in *Doc Savage Comics* #11. Recently I have obtained two more *Shadow* comics with "Alger Stories"--#1, *Bob Burton and the Ranch Mystery*, and #5, *Brave and Bold*.

I believe we now have enough information to support the theory that there could very well be as



many as twenty or twenty-five Algers in these two Street and Smith comic publications. Six are now in my library. Let us examine the chronological appearances of what we know in both publications.

*Doc Savage* was issued quarterly. October 1942 (no. 2) contains *Facing the World* and Jan. 1943 (no. 11) contains *From Rags to Riches; Or, Tappy Hart*. Did other Alger stories appear in number 1 and/or between 3 and 10 or even after number 11?

*Shadow Comics* looks like this: March 1940 (no. 1), *Bob Burton and the Ranch Mystery*; April 1940 (no. 2), *Mark the Match Boy*; July 1940 (no. 5), *Brave and Bold*; November 1940 (no. 7), *Bound to Win* (*Shadow Comics* went bi-monthly with the previous issue). If Alger stories appeared in numbers 1, 2, 5 and 7, doesn't it seem reasonable that they appeared in 3, 4, 6 and even beyond as well? Indeed, on the cover of number 5, along with three other featured stories in the magazine (and at the top at that), is a picture of a boy's head with the words "Horatio Alger" underneath. Inside at the end of the story, *Brave and Bold*, are the words, "Don't miss the next Alger boy story to appear in *Shadow Comics*."

Each Alger story is eight pages (four leaves). Unfortunately, these early *Shadow* and *Doc Savage* comics are not easy to come by since they are highly collectible to comic book collectors, and when available, usually cost from \$25 to \$75 each. On the positive side, they generally contain other material of interest to many juvenile collectors, such as Frank Merriwell, Nick Carter and Mark Mallory stories. The comic book versions of all of these stories—the "Algers" included—used much latitude in deviating from titles, plots, names etc. I.e., all the Merriwells were entitled *Frank Merriwell at College*. (No mention of Yale, much to my satisfaction! I like to feel he actually attended Brown).

Another aspect is that the "period" setting of all the comic book stories is the time the comic books were printed; clothing is of that period, automobiles and telephones are utilized.

The following are thumbnail sketches of the six Alger stories in my collection:

1) *Bob Burton and the Ranch Mystery*. Bob is depicted as a young boy in a cowboy suit, toting a six shooter, protecting his mother from evil Mr. Wolverton's efforts to scare them into selling him their house. (The scoundrel obtained a treasure map that indicated hidden treasure was on the grounds).

2) *Mark the Match Boy*. This pretty much follows the original plot line. In addition to "Mother Watson," we meet Mark's Grand father, Mr. Bates. Although Fosdick is not brought into the story, we find "Mr. Hunter," who is none other than a 1940 full grown version (tall and handsome) of our old friend, Ragged Dick, a friend of Mr. Bates.

3) *Brave and Bold*. Not the *Brave and Bold* Horatio wrote at all. While it borrows a typical Alger plot line, the hero is not Robert Rushton, but one "Bruce Wallace", who, after saving a little girl from being run over by an *automobile* and exonerating the driver from fault, a Mr. Jones, he receives employment from that gentleman. Bruce is then treated meanly by a fellow boy employee for whose mother his mother washes clothes, beats him up a couple of times (his name is "Waddie Wimpleton"), and proves Waddie guilty of robbing Mr. Jones and trying to blame him. A side plot we all will find familiar is Waddie's pool playing sidekick Freddie, who has Waddie join his "exclusive club for young gentlemen of caste."

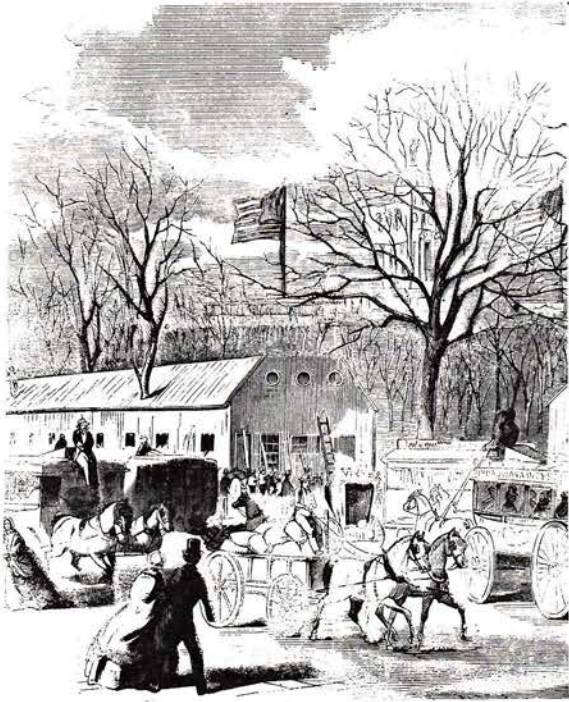
4) *Bound to Win*. A bastardized title, starting off as *Sink or Swim*, complete with Harry Raymond, his father's railroad death, and the mean Squire Turner and his rotten son (riding in a car). The plot suddenly changes. Harry of course saves a pretty girl, but he also studies chemistry, discovers a new explosive, and captures *Nazi spies!*

5) *Facing the World*. Harry Vance (not Vane) saves a train, escapes from a viciously run orphanage, and hooks up with Frank Hemmingway, a sports promoter from Australia. Harry becomes a boxer, is shipwrecked with Mr. Hemmingway, finds hidden treasure and reforms the management of the orphanage.

6) *From Rags to Riches; Or, Tappy Hart*. A little of *Phil the Fiddler*, except Tappy tap dances and is blonde, but "Rodero" with whom he performs beats him as much as the pandrone beat Phil. He runs away, gets punched out by a tramp who steals his pennies, and is found by one Sam Hart, a grocery errand boy who helps him. Later the Roderos try to get Tappy back but Sam Hart (whose name I see Tappy is given in the comic's subtitle) intervenes, beats up the Roderos, and a "copp" comes and arrests everyone and brings them before a judge. After the judge looks at the picture in Tappy's locket (shades of *Phil*), he naturally realizes that he is Tappy's grandfather! Hooray!!

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## STORY OF ONE MAN IS STORY OF CITY by Shelley Uva

(Editor's note: Horatio Alger Society member Peter Eckel collects "any item relating to the homeless waifs who wandered the streets of 19th century New York City, surviving by selling newspapers." (Quote from *The Where to Sell Anything and Everything Book*, N.Y.: World Almanac Publications, 1981). One of his many projects was the 1977 compilation of the photo exhibit, "Drumgoole's World." This told the story of the homeless newsboys of New York City who were befriended by Father John C. Drumgoole of Mount Loretto on Staten Island, one of the largest childcare institutions in the United States during the 1800's. The exhibit traveled extensively throughout the New York City Metropolitan area, and the following article is a newspaper summary detailing Drumgoole's work and Pete's exhibit. Besides being a member of HAS, Pete belongs to various professional photographic organizations).

It was the best of times and the worst of times, Charles Dickens wrote of the French Revolution in "A Tale of Two Cities." His description, however, might easily be applied to a time and place closer to ourselves — New York in the late 19th century.

In those days while rich Americans made the

Grand Tour and swallowed oysters at Delmonico's, and estimated 40,000 homeless, deserted children lived in the streets of lower Manhattan.

One of the few benefactors of these forgotten boys and girls was Father John C. Drumgoole, a janitor turned priest and Grand Street's own version of Father Flanagan.

Peter J. Eckel, staff photographer for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, has spent the last 10 years gathering photographs depicting the life of Father John and his children. His work, prepared in cooperation with the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce and the Staten Island Historical Society, has resulted in a photo show, The Father John C. Drumgoole Exhibition, which can be seen around New York this fall.

The old photographs, made for the most part more than 100 years ago, depict both the story of Father John and the conditions that led to his work.

The earliest photo in the exhibit dates from 1857 and shows Father John as a young man, years before he entered the priesthood. Other photos in the show clearly illustrate the working and living conditions of times and the building of Mount Loretto on Staten Island. That institution, founded by Father John, grew into the largest child care organization in the United States.

It was during his 21 years as janitor of St. Mary's Church on Grand Street that Father John first met his army of children. At the age of 53, the janitor became a priest and one of the most interesting photos in the exhibit shows the new Father John addressing his children in his first chapel on Warren Street in 1872.

The sponsors of the Father John Drumgoole Exhibition believe Father John's life exemplifies what can be done. In spite of his own humble origins, Father John refused to ignore what he saw in front of him and his ordination at an age when we now begin to consider retirement may also provide food for thought.

Father John's story is also, according to the show's sponsors, the ultimate illustration of the power of photography to record and inspire. These photos may stand as historical documents recording the failures and triumphs of America just about halfway between the country's founding and its present.

"It is true that few inventions have enriched the human experience more than photography, but the real worth of old pictures has seldom been realized



or appreciated," Peter Eckel comments. "Photos of yesterday capture time frames in a world that has vanished forever. Perhaps if we study them, we will gain a cleared understanding of where we are today."

The Father John C. Drumgoole Exhibition will appear in its entirety (300 photographs) at the Henry Street Settlement in October, Historical Richmondtown, Staten Island in November and at the World Trade Center in December.



### HARRY'S NEW SKATES

By Horatio Alger, Jr.

*(Editor's note: As reported in the December 1981 Newsboy, this Alger short story is a previously unknown one, discovered by Gary Scharnhorst. It originally appeared in the February 16, 1867 issue of the Liberal Christian, p. 6).*

Harry Benton set out one Saturday afternoon in excellent spirits to buy a new pair of skates. They had been long promised him, and today his ardent longing was to be realized. In his little pocketbook there were two crisp five dollar greenbacks, all of which was to be expended on his new purchase. You will see by this that the skates were to be no sham articles, but a neat, elegant, and substantial pair, which would do him good service, and excite the admiration of his companions. Harry knew precisely what skates he meant to buy. He had already picked them out, and had them laid aside, and this very afternoon his father had given him the money to buy them. After they had come into his possession Harry was going to the Central Park to make a trial of them.

He had nearly reached the store when, on turning the corner of a street, he encountered a boy about his own age with a pitiful expression upon his thin face. It was a very cold day; but to Harry, with his warm overcoat and thick comforter, it proved pleasantly exhilarating only. But this boy had no overcoat and no comforter. His red hands were without gloves, and probably he had no warm underclothing. He shivered with the cold, and his thin face wore a look of patient understanding.

As Harry passed he instinctively put out his hand. Harry stopped and looked at him, and his boyish heart was filled with pity.

"Are you cold?" asked Harry.

"Cold and hungry," was the reply.

"I should think you would be cold without an overcoat or mittens. Have you had anything to eat today?"

"No; there wasn't only a crust of bread, and I gave that to mother."

"Where do you live?"

It was on a cross street between Avenue A and B, so the boy said. His mother was sick, and he could get very little to do. Today he had come out in the cold, hoping to get a little help for his mother, whom he could not bear to see suffering. But nobody had heeded his appeal, and he was half frozen.

"I'll go home with you," said Harry with a sudden impulse, "if you will let me."

"Will you?" said the boy gratefully.

Harry did not quite understand what he meant to do, though a faint purpose was forming in his mind. He followed the boy, whose name he found to be George Connor, through a cross street which, beginning with stately residences, grew more squalid as it neared Avenues A and B.

Halting before a high but miserable tenement-house, his guide plunged into a dark covered passage which led to a building fronting on a back yard, poorer even than the house on the street.

"It is away up," he said.

Harry followed him to a room on the fourth floor, small, dark, and almost bare of furniture, where, on a miserable bed, reclined a sick woman—George's mother.

"Mother," said George, "I've brought a—gentleman to see you."

She looked up, and was surprised to see the fresh face of a boy of thirteen.

"Are you much sick?" asked Harry gently.

"Very weak," said Mrs. Connor; "but it's more the want of good food nor anything else."

"You are very poor?"

"We haven't a penny; and if it wasn't for my boy here, and the neighbors that are kind—though it's little they have themselves—I should have starved before this."

Accustomed to a comfortable house, Harry looked about him with much pity. He wondered how he should feel if he were compelled to see a sick mother suffering for food. It was that last consideration that decided him. Impulsively he pulled out his pocketbook, and drawing one of the five dollar greenbacks from it he extended it to George, saying: "Buy something good for your mother. I wish I had more to give you."



"Five dollars!" exclaimed George in amazement; and the two began to shower blessings upon their young benefactor, which he received with embarrassment.

"I'll go right out and buy you some tea and a roll, mother," said the boy; "you shall have a nice supper."

"It's what I've been prayin' for," said the sick woman, her eye lighting up with anticipation.

Harry went down with his protege, who no longer looked miserable and woebegone, but cheerful and happy. At the end of the passage they parted.

"I can't buy the skates I wanted to," said Harry, slowly; "but I don't care. I've made two people happy, and that's better. I'll get a plain pair of skates. I've no doubt I shall enjoy them as well."

Harry went to the store and bought some serviceable skates, though in appearance they did not compare with those he intended to buy. But he had a capital time skating at Central Park, and, though the weather was cold, he had a warm feeling at his heart which somehow made him feel very happy.

When he told his father what he had done he received his warm approval, and a promise to befriend Mrs. Connor and obtain her work when she got well.

The winter is more than half over, and Harry has used his skates many times; but I don't think he has ever once regretted the handsomer pair which he might have had if he had not listened to the promptings of a generous heart.

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### ODDS AND ENDS

by Brad Chase, President, *HAS*

One of the things that I have been most impressed with as a member and now President of the Society is the willingness of members to help out and share the workload. A recent example of this is the way that member Bill Russell stepped into a vacuum and helped us solve a very difficult problem about finding a site for the 1982 Convention.

As many of you know, originally Bea Fortner of Olympia Fields (Chicago), Illinois had agreed to host the 1982 convention working with John Juvinal. We were pleased at the location because it gave our Midwest members an opportunity to attend a convention close to home. Unfortunately, during the spring and summer, because of very serious illness in her family, Bea found it

increasingly difficult to concentrate on convention arrangements. After wringing our hands on the phone we both reluctantly agreed that it would probably be best if she did not host the convention this year. Bea was extremely disappointed to have to do this as she wanted to show off her part of the world to her Alger friends, but she really had no alternative.

When it rains, it pours. At the same time that Bea and I were wrestling with her problem, I received word about the Alger stamp. Of course, the Postal Service people wanted to know when and where our convention was to be. They indicated that since we initiated and sponsored the stamp request, it would be issued in conjunction with our activity. A flurry of phone calls followed involving Jerry Friedland, Carl Hartmann, Bob Williman and me plus several other members and, when the dust settled, Bill Russell had agreed to host the convention in his area just outside of Philadelphia, Pa. It should be made clear that I made the final decision as your President and under the circumstances feel it was the right thing to do.

It was gratifying not only to have Bill step forward and take on a big responsibility but to experience the real concern, interest and togetherness as several of us struggled to find a "right" solution as well. The cost, of course, is that the convention site will again be located here in the East. During our struggle, none of us were aware of any potential hosts in the Midwest as we had surveyed many of the members at the last convention for this purpose in order to line up sites for the next few years. And, a couple of more recent phone calls there produced similar results.

Since the 1983 convention is scheduled for western New York State and the year after in New Hampshire, let me suggest that anyone wishing to host the convention from the Midwest should let me know and perhaps we can switch, transfer or in some other way accommodate having a Midwest site in the near future. Knowing the grit that our Alger members are made of and how they rise to meet a need, I'm sure I'll get a response. It's up to you...





This article is from page 1 of The Journal (January 12, 1982), "Prince George's County's Daily Newspaper"

# Viewpoint

## They Strive And Succeed Like Horatio

By Vicki Duncan  
Journal Staff Writer

On April 30, when the U.S. Postal Service issues a 20-cent stamp commemorating the birth 150 years ago of Horatio Alger Jr., Bob Williman will be there for the ceremony. So will I.

The ceremony will be in Willow Grove, Pa., during the annual convention of the Horatio Alger Society, whose members are book collectors, book lovers, believers and practitioners of the axiom synonymous with Alger's name: that diligent, honest hard work will bring success no matter the odds.

Williman, as chairman of the committee that lobbied successfully for the stamp designation, could hardly be more elated. The 41-year-old Bowie resident, like his society colleagues, has been deeply influenced by the Alger ethic, and many of the members are living examples of a philosophy that

preaches the virtues and reward of hard, honest work as the key to success. It's a message no less pertinent today than in the late 19th century when Alger's prolific writings were eagerly read and disseminated.

The Alger stamp is one of 17 commemorative to be issued in 1982 by postal authorities. The stamp will not bear Alger's resemblance, but instead, the frontispiece of the novel that first brought Alger to prominence as a writer in 1868, "Ragged Dick."

With red lettering and a black line drawing on the vertical beige stamp, the commemorative was designed by Robert Hallock, who has created several such commemoratives out of his New York studio.

How Williman got the Alger stamp approved is a story right out of the standard Alger mold: succeeding despite slim odds on sheer determination alone.

Every year the advisory panel which selects commemoratives for the U.S. Postal Service is inundated with thousands of applications. Few are chosen, although many call.

Alger Society members knew 1982 had to be their year. If they failed, they might as well pack in the plan for some years to come since a chief requirement for a stamp is that the date of issue bear some special significance. In this case, 1982 is the 150th anniversary of Alger's birth.

The Society's bid was twice rejected by the postal panel, but the two previous



Staff Photo by Lor Slepicka

### Alger Stamp A struggle

rejections only served to motivate Williman and friends to strive harder toward their goal. Williman himself talks of personally lobbying each and every member of Congress.

Persistence paid off. Helping mightily was a national magazine article written last May by Ralph Gardner — Alger's



# Old Landmark Soon To Pass Into New Hands

## Horatio Alger's Old Home On Broad Street Now For Sale; Famous Author Familiar Figure Here Years Ago

Marlboro—One of Marlboro's oldest landmarks is soon expected to pass into new hands. The house once occupied by famed Horatio Alger, Jr., at 9 Broad street, is now for sale by its owner, Mrs. Mabel Mullaney Foley. Edging along in years, Mrs. Foley is reluctant to leave the property pass from her hands, but circumstances will not permit otherwise.

Probably few of the younger generation realize that the famous author of boys' fiction once made his home in Marlboro, but many of the older generation are aware of the fact. Born in Chelsea in 1832 where his father was pastor of the Unitarian church in that community, Alger had a storm life before he passed from the scene at South Natick on July 18, 1899.

During his life in Marlboro he attended Gates Academy, formerly located on the site now occupied by the high school. He then matriculated at Harvard University where he prepared for the ministry, however he left the university before graduation and fled to France where he led a brief Bohemian life.

On returning to this country, he was ordained and accepted a pastorate at the Unitarian church in Brewster.

On many occasions young Alger visited his folks in Marlboro

This undated newspaper clipping was found

pasted in an old Alger

book in a library in

Massachusetts.

Alger played a central role in the downfall of what was known as the "padrone" system, a forced labor system imposed on immigrant children in the late 19th century in New York City. He was rightly appalled when he learned the Italian "padrones" literally bought poor boys from their Italian parents, promising the poverty-stricken parents the American dream for their sons.

Instead, the boys were forced to beg and steal, were beaten and starved if they failed to meet quotas, and even murdered as examples to the other boys to show what would happen if they escaped and were caught. The youths spoke no English, and they were given no schooling by the padrones, which helped them maintain their control.

Alger's novel, "Phil the Fiddler," based on the life of one of these boys who successfully escaped with the aid of some who wanted the system abolished, produced so much outrage it helped lead to the adoption of new law that ultimately crushed the padrone system.

Now, at this 130th anniversary of Alger's birth, it may be time for schools and libraries to rediscover the prolific writings of Alger and introduce today's young people to the stories that had so much impact in our nation's history.

As literature, Alger's works may pale in some comparisons, but as philosophy, his strive-and-succeed-on-your-own theme may be just the right reading prescription for today's disillusioned, drifting youth.

chief biographer — in which Gardner chronicled the story of President Reagan's 1969 award from the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans.

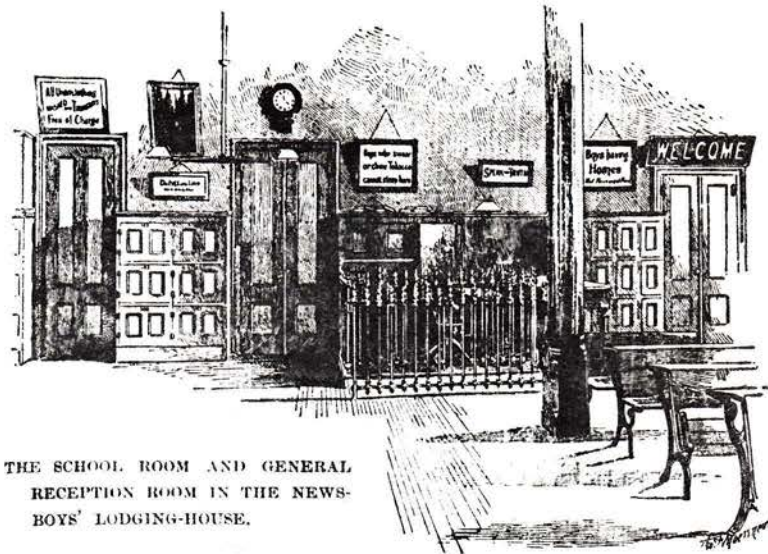
The coveted award, presented to Reagan by Norman Vincent Peale, goes to one who exemplified the characteristics of an Alger hero — one who starts out from modest beginnings and achieves success through his own efforts. The list of recipients reads like a "Who's Who in America" compilation.

William is hoping to wrest Dr. Peale for the first-day ceremony in Pennsylvania, which will come during the society's annual get-together and which is likely to draw media attention this year. President Reagan will be among those receiving special first-day commemorative cover albums from the society, William said this week.

Although Alger's name is widely recognized, familiarity today seems largely limited to the name and stops there. Few young people today have read Alger. Yet, he is one of America's all-time best-selling authors. It may be he is ignored today because time and conditions are so different.

Alger's specialty was adventure stories for boys, all on the rags-to-riches, strive-and-succeed theme. He dramatized beautifully the pitiful plight of homeless orphan boys in cities such as New York and was instrumental in improving their lot. A favorite of his — the newsboy — serves as the symbol for the society's monthly newsletter.





THE SCHOOL ROOM AND GENERAL RECEPTION ROOM IN THE NEWSBOYS' LODGING-HOUSE.

This "fourth generation" photograph (hence its haziness) is from the remarkable collection of newsboy memorabilia collector *extraordinaire* Peter Eckel. It shows a boy depositing a coin in the Savings Bank at the Newsboy's Lodging House in New York City, and is one of the few known photographs of the interior of the third Newsboys' Lodge (at the corner of Duane, William and New Chambers Streets). The two signs behind the boy say, "Boys who swear or chew tobacco cannot sleep here," and "Boys having homes not received here." This photo can be compared with the accompanying line drawing showing the entire room. For example, the object at the top left center of the photo is a clock which is easily seen above the door in the drawing. Interestingly enough, in the artist's attempt to be authentic he even duplicated exactly the lettering style used in the actual signs. (This may not be clear in the *Newsboy*, as the photograph where this is visible is a "third generation" one, sharper than the reproduction shown).

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### THE NEWS-BOYS LODGING-HOUSE

(Editor's note: This essay, reprinted from the *New York Independent*, was discovered in the *Christian Register* (November 18, 1954, p. 184) by Gary Scharnhorst. This article was first written shortly after the Lodge opened its doors for the first time on Saturday, March 18, 1854).

"How much money have you in the bank?" I heard a gentleman inquire of a boy. "A dollar and a half," he replied. I looked up, and saw before me a slender, blue-eyed lad, about fourteen years old. The pantaloons he wore had evidently belonged to a full-grown man, and were rolled up at the bottom to make them short enough for the present wearer. His coat had been abbreviated in the skirts, and the sleeves hung loosely about his hand. His shirt was

not particularly clean, neither was it very dirty. His face, however, had been nicely washed, so that there was nothing repulsive about the little fellow. The gentleman talked with him a few moments. I was quite interested in the conversation, and learned from it, that he was one of the news-boys of New York.

Partick, for by this name I shall call the boy, sleeps at the lodging-house for news-boys, in Fulton street, and is there learning to read. I concluded that I would go there, and see for myself what had been done for the improvement and salvation of these energetic, active boys. I found the building to which I had been directed, but could not readily find the entrance which led to the room I was seeking. I inquired of some poorly-dressed children where it was. A boy about ten years old guided me. He asked if I wanted a boy. I was sorry to say "no," for he



looked so bright and active, that it seemed a pity not to give him some employment.

I ascended one flight of stairs, and another, and still another and another, before I came to the right door. I knocked and was admitted by Mr. Tracy, who had the oversight of these boys. The room which I entered was nicely painted and whitewashed. There are many seats with desks as in a school-room, and there were books and slates on them. Maps and pictures hung on the walls, and there was a library for those who can read.

The room was neat and tidy, and quite inviting in its appearance. At the farther end of it, was an office for Mr. Tracy, and a bathroom, where Croton water can be used without stint or measure. The boys enjoy the free use of the water, though probably many of them never bathed in their lives, before they came into the lodging-house. If "cleanliness is next to godliness," much has been already accomplished.

The school or sitting-room opens into the dormitory. This is a large and well ventilated apartment, and being in the sixth story, overlooks most of the buildings in the vicinity. There are now accommodations for fifty boys, and the room is large enough for eighty. Each boy has a separate bed. They are arranged in two tiers, as in a steamboat. They were all neatly made, and looked quite comfortable. Many of these boys have never slept in a bed except in this room. The remarks which they made to each other when comparing their beds, with their clean white sheets and pillow-cases, with the boxes, areas, and crannies where they have been accustomed to sleep, are very amusing.

It is a remarkable fact, that since the opening of the lodging-house no news-boy has been ill there. They are a hardy set, accustomed to constant exposure, and invigorated by their active life.

I am happy to know that there has been a constant improvement among the boys. They grow more orderly, and are more easily restrained, and some of them give promise of making useful men. They are not allowed to use profane language, to fight nor to smoke in the rooms, and generally manifest much kindness of feeling towards each other.

There was a table in the room, which interested me greatly. It was of black-walnut. In the top there were one hundred and ten different holes, large enough to admit a half dollar. Each of them was numbered. This was the bank in which Patrick had deposited his money. There were one hundred and ten little divisions in the drawer, corresponding with

one hundred and ten openings in the top. The boys each have a certain number for their own use, and if they choose, can safely secure their day's earnings for a time of need. Mr. Tracy keeps the key of the drawer.

Several weeks ago, the boys voted not to take their money from the bank till November, that they might then have the means of purchasing warm clothes for the winter. I had quite a curiosity to look in the bank to see how much the boys had saved. In some of the divisions there were only a few pennies, while in others there were several dollars.

I never looked upon any bank with so much pleasure, as I did upon this simple one of the news-boys. It was teaching them a lesson of economy and forethought, which I trust they will never forget. When they enjoy their comfortable coats and warm pantaloons in the cold weather of winter, they can not avoid remembering, that it was by taking care of the pennies, that they were enabled so nicely to clothe themselves. The news-boys have never been taught the true value of money. They have not hesitated to gamble it away, or to spend it for segars and tobacco, and other unnecessary things. They have been exceedingly improvident, and have had no idea of laying up any thing for the future.

One evening as the boys were gathered in their sitting-room one of them was leaning on the bank. He held up a quarter of a dollar between his thumb and finger, and looking at his companions, said, "You know Simpson, the pawnbroker?" "Yes." "He is a friend in need, but *here* is a friend indeed," and the bright silver dropped, jingling into his bank.

Those news-boys all of them possess more than ordinary intelligence and energy of character. "Every one of them," as a gentleman said, "is worth saving." They are sure to make *men*, and to exert an influence in the world.

After my return from my visit to their rooms, I told some children about the necessities of these news-boys, and how much they need better clothing. A little girl, whom I know, has determined to make a shirt for one of them. I know it will be acceptable; for, frequently when they first go to the lodging-house, they are so filthy that something must be given them to make them decent. Perhaps other children may like to do something to benefit those needy ones, who have no father or mother to take care of them, and provide for their wants.

ANNE H.



## THE POOR BOYS' "ASTOR HOUSE"

by Charles Loring Brace

(*Editor's note:* This article is from the collection of Eddie LeBlanc. It originally appeared in the April 1876 issue of *St. Nicholas*).

Did you ever see a newsboy? He is a queer-looking little fellow. His cap hasn't any front, and it is pulled down so as to hide his hair, which is all tangled up so that you could almost make a bird's-nest of it. He has no shirt, but his ragged coat is buttoned up tightly to his neck, and his trousers seem likely to fall off, if they are not soon sewn together. He has no shoes, and his toes look half frozen this bitter weather

But he doesn't care; he is the most light-hearted youngster you ever saw. Suppose we consider ourselves strangers in the city, and speak to him.

"Where do you live, my boy?"

"Don't live nowhere, sir."

"Well, where do you sleep?"

"Oh, sometimes I sleeps in the hay-barge there by Harrison Street, and sometimes we git 'round the steam gratin's there by Ann Street, and when the M. P.'s drives us off, we finds a box o' sand. Oh, mister, there aint nothing like a box o' sand, 'cause you can kind o' snuggle in and git warm all 'round; but on course, the best is the Astor House, when you aint stuck!"

"The Astor House! What's that?"

"Why, don't you know that, sir?—that big lodge there, which the kind gen'lemen have opened for us bummers!"

"But, my boy, haven'n you a father or mother?"

"No, sir (the bright face looking a little more serious). "You see, me mother was sent up (to prison), and I niver seed her sence; and me father—he licked me with a strap, and tould me for to clear out; and I don't know where he is—I heerd he was dead. But may be, sir, you'd like to see the lodge, and I'll show you my bank (with an important air). I've got fifty-nine cents saved; and I tell you, there's a nice—what do you call it Jim?—something there. I can whirl to the ceiling, and go all 'round the room on the bars!"

We follow our little guide to a large door in Duane Street, near Chambers Street, on the south side of a huge seven-story building, with a sign—"NEWSBOYS' LODGING-HOUSE." We mount a fireproof stair-way.

"I see you can get out if there is a fire here."

"I tell you, sir, we wouldn't be many seconds scootin' down them stairs."

We look into a large dining-hall, the ceiling supported on pine columns, and finished off with Georgia pine wainscoting. A comely matron is setting tables for over a hundred boys, with tea, mutton stew, and good bread. Everything is as clean as a ship's deck.

"That's Mrs. O'Connor, sir; she's just as good as pie. But don't it smell good! We must go upstairs, or I wont be let in to supper."

We enter a large, handsome audience-room, with school-desks and a piano; well lighted and cheerful, and windows on three sides, and no "institutional" smell, though a hundred or more ragged little fellows, with washed faces and combed hair, are waiting about before going down to supper. The notices on the walls are worth reading:

Boys with Homes not admitted here.

Boys wanting Homes in the Country must apply to the Superintendent.

Boys can have their Underclothes Washed, free or charge, on Thursdays.

At the door sits an elderly clerk behind a railing, with keys hanging around him. Our little newsboy falls into a line of boys, till his turn comes.

"Three tickets, sir—lodgin', breakfast, and supper. There's eighteen, sir, and twenty-five I owed you when I was stuck"—*i.e.*, when he could not sell his papers.

"But, Johnnie, where were you last night?"

"You see, sir, I was at the Bowery, and I got to the door just one minit after twelve: and so, on course, I had to turn in under the steps down at Beekman Street."

"Ah, there's where your money goes! You'll never get enough to buy that coat and go out West. There's your key, but get your hair cut and go to the bath before you come to supper."

Johnnie disappears in the ample bath-rooms. We watch his operations. He has warm foot-baths, wherein he plunges his dirty feet, but ingenious spikes on the edges prevent his sitting too long in them; wash-basins and towels are in abundance, and bath-rooms with hot and cold water. For his hair, a large boy takes him in hand, and soon shaves him close, rubbing his head with larkspur, for which operation Johnny rather reluctantly pays his three cents.

Now he rushes out, a clean and decent-looking



boy, so far as his skin.

"Is that clean shirt ready?"

His wet, ragged coat is put in the drying-room, and his valuables are hid away in the locker, for which he has a key, and he puts on a clean, comfortable shirt, and soon enters the supper-room delivering his ticket for payment at the door, and is deep in his stew and bowl of tea. Several boys are hanging about in the upper room, looking rather hungry.

"Why don't you get your supper, boys?"

"Haven't got no stamps, sir; we're stuck."

The Superintendent, a kind, firm-looking man, Mr. O'Connor, comes forward and speaks to each:

"Jack, you know where your stamps went—it was to the Bowery (theater); and, Pat, I told you to let those policy (lottery) tickets alone; and you, Dan, why did you eat all your money up yesterday in that big dinner? As for you (to a quiet, depressed-looking lad), I believe you were unlucky; you shall have 'credit,' so go down!"

We pay the tickets of the others, and they all rejoice in their mutton stew and overflowing bowls of tea.

After supper, they all fly upstairs to the gymnasium, and there is a kind of athletic pandemonium for awhile—boys in the air, boys jumping, boys pulling, climbing, and tumbling—the large room resounding with the laughter and shouts.

"You see," says Mr. O'Connor, "this is our opposition to the low theaters and grog-shops."

Precisely at half-past seven, they all descend to the school-room. We look in at the dormitories: rooms some ninety feet long, filled with double iron bedsteads; the beds of straw, and very comfortable; warm comforters and clean sheets over each.

"That's my bed," Johnny points; "number six! There's where a feller sleeps, I tell you!"

"But don't you ever fall out, or have a lark with another boy?"

"No, sir! Griffith would catch us; besides, we had to be called at five o'clock, and we sleeps like tops!"

There is no smell about the rooms. Everything is clean and pure as passible. We go below to the audience-room.

"This is my bank, sir—number thirty-one," pointing with pride to a mysterious table near the door, with slits in the top, and each slit numbered. "fifty-nine cents; but it's slow work. Oh, I thank'ee, sir!—that makes just a dollar. Two more, and I'll have a Sunday-go-to-meetin' coat and a b'iled

shirt."

The teacher has already begun his evening work, by reading some letters from boys who had made fortunes at the West, and were writing back to their old friends.

"Go West, young man!" whispers our guide, and he seats himself demurely among the scholars. Now the sing in excellent accord the sweet hymn, "If there's love at home." Perhaps here and there a shadow falls across the young faces, as they think of how little "love at home," or anywhere else, they have known: but they all are soon lively and indifferent as ever—as ready for chaffing or being chaffed.

Each boy goes at the lessons as vigorously as he usually works at selling his papers. At the close, a few earnest words are said by the teacher, of "Him who sticketh closer than a brother;" who would befriend them though all others deserted, and who feels for all human creatures; and the more, the poorer and the more unhappy they are. A dirty hand, here and there, slyly wipes away a tear from some begrimed face, at the thought of anybody's caring for them; and perhaps the dream of that "Happy Land" which they sang about crosses some child's mind, and he fancies a mother whom he has never known on earth meeting him there, and a father who never got drunk, or cursed or beat him, at last welcoming him, and a place where hunger or desertion and homelessness are unknown; but before he can think much about it, school is out, and the boy next to him hits him a lick with his ruler, and under a general scrimmage, the stern words "Order! order!" end the meeting and our visit.



### OBSERVATIONS ON FORTUNES OF ALGER HEROS by Milton R. Salls

Many writers in prefaces to Alger reprints and in other printed matter have decried the fact that Alger settled for very small fortunes—never millions.

There are at least two stories in which the hero is definitely described as a millionaire. On the last page of *Tom Brace*, Alger states that Tom will inherit his grandfather's fortune of one million dollars (pages 69 and 70) and a great part of Mrs. Ashleigh's fortune of one-half million (page 253). The Cash Boy also ends as a millionaire.



Who knows the other Alger in which the hero is a 'son of a known millionaire'? There are other books in which the hero's ultimate fortune is mentioned at half a million: *A Boy's Fortune*, *Adrift in New York*, *The Errand Boy*, *Helen Ford* and others.

Fortunes of \$50,000 to \$100,000 are also quite common—in a dozen books or so. \$50,000 at today's inflation would be easily \$5,000,000!

Harry, in *Facing the World* ends the book with only \$600 but he does much better in the sequel.

## Tom Swift® & Company

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John T. Dizer, Jr.

192 pages illus., append., bibliog., index  
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"I read John Dizer's book with great pleasure. He has written what must surely be the final book not only on the Tom Swift series but on Edward Stratemeyer and the Syndicate. Obviously, he has spent years in tracking down details.... Nobody knows more about Tom than he."—Russell B. Nye, Michigan State University.

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John T. Dizer, Ph.D., is currently professor and head of the Mechanical Technology Department at Mohawk Valley Community College, Utica, N.Y. A collector of juvenile books, he has written articles on them for *Dime Novel Round Up* and other publications.

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The December 1979 and December 1980 issues of *Newsboy* contain articles on the renowned "Brewster Incident." Letters from century old church records—including some never before published—support the widely publicized belief that Alger left the ministry in 1866 after engaging in homosexual relations with some of the boys in his congregation. For a different opinion on the whole affair, see "In Defense of Horatio Alger, Jr.," by Max Goldberg, in the December 1981 *Dime Novel Round-Up*.



The latest issue of the *Yellowback Library*, edited by HAS member Gil O'Gara, 2019 S.E. 8th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50315, contains articles on Nancy Drew and the books of Ralph Henry Barbour. A one year subscription (six issues) costs \$6.00.



### ANOTHER NEW ACQUISITION by Jerry Friedland

I recently obtained (from all-time Alger great Morris Olsen) the six volumes of the Ragged Dick Series in a small Porter and Coates format; the format used by P&C for their first editions. You all have seen them—either dark brown (smooth) or a textured tannish gold. But keep reading—the ones Morris sent me are textured *dark green*! There are also other differences: no ad pages in the rear and the paper is thicker, more rag content and of a better quality than what was normally used. It seems that something new always turns up in Alger, like the W.L. Allison of *Slow and Sure* issued in their "Bound to Win" Series cover, the series that is cataloged by bibliographers to only include works of Stratemeyer. This I obtained at the 1981 convention from Harry Smith.





## CITY SKETCHES:

## Our Gamins

(*Editor's note:* The following article is from the collection of Gilbert K. Westgard II. It originally appeared in the *New York Times*, February 18, 1866, p. 6, col. 3).

No city in the world is so like Paris as New York.

Many of the unique features of that gayest of capitals are reflected and reproduced only here. Paris represents the essence and intensity and variety of the Continent, as New-York does the feverish and many-sided forms of life in America.

Paris has her Gamins: New-York has hers no less, and they are as lawless and reckless and idiosyncratic as those who grin in the Boulevard des Italiens, or delude the sympathetic students of sous in the Quartier-Latin.

The New-York Gamins are even more peculiar than the product of France. They are the plants of the shade, the frost-nipped flowers of the untimely season.

Children of poverty and care and sin, what wonder they remain too true to their anteoedents, and reflect too closely the surroundings of their sad and sallow lives? They have genuine virtues, all the greater for the unfavorable circumstances that environ them, and contradict by such possession the monstrous doctrine of Total Depravity.

## THEIR UBIQUITY.

Our Gamins are to be met everywhere between the Battery and High Bridge, East and North River, at every hour of the day and night, in all seasons and under all circumstances. They are *qui generis* and entirely unmistakable—juvenile Democrats of the most ultra and material sort, severe but unconscious students in the school of rugged Nature, practical philosophers and stern iconoclasts, protesting unknowingly against shame of every kind, and daring to be what Nature and Fortune have made them every hour of their peculiar lives.

## PECULIARITIES OF THE TRIBE.

They wake the echoes of the early morning with their clamor, and startle the deepest midnight with the assertion of their independence. They are alike, yet dissimilar—all individuals, yet analogous representatives of a class.

Who could fall to recognize the New-York Gamin with his unkept hair and unwashed face and soiled hands, his tattered clothes and unimmaculate linen,

his world-too-wide boots so guiltless of entirety and blacking?

No believer he, like CARLYLE, in the philosophy of clothes—he despises them, and counts himself richer in his rags than STEWART and ASTOR with their millions. No inducement could bring him to neat attire, any more than could counsel to orderly habits and a life of routine. He obeys the laws of his own being, as no transcendentalist does; defies Fortune to her frowning face, and twirls his digits at all the Fates in their grimmest mood.

## CHARACTER OF THEIR CALLINGS

Our Gamins have no regular vocation. They do what is given them to do, whether it be to carry valises, or black boots, or sell newspapers, or purloin dogs, or distribute circulars. But of these and other callings they prefer the professions of boot-blackening and newspaper-vending to all others, possibly because they are more independent and active, include larger competition and yield opportunity for the study of human nature.

None of them seem to have gone to school, yet nearly all of them can read, and most of them write. They are very intelligent on most subjects, understand politics and law and the philosophy of Life far better than that proser SCHLEGEL, and are secularly wise beyond their position and years.

## THEIR ACQUIREMENTS.

They are great and constant readers of the newspapers and of serial literature; albeit, it must be confessed they are not very choice in their selection.

They delight in the cheap sensational and vulgarly exciting school; affect abductions and burglaries and murders, and cannot obtain aught too highly-spiced for their mental palates. *The Clipper*, *Bell's Life*, *the Pirates' Own Book* and *Adventures of Dick Turpin* are among the journals and "solid" works they especially favor, and with which they most fully sympathise. Few know better than they what is going on in the world. They comprehend the policy of LOUIS NAPOLEON, or at least prate of it, which goes for the same thing; understand the Mexican question, and the cause of trouble between the National Congress and President JOHNSON. Usually, however, they confine their discussions to the forthcoming prize fight, the latest rat-pit contest or the freshest bowl-and-dagger drama at the Bowery.

## DRAMATIC CRITICISM THEIR FORTE.

They are great critics, by the by, and their



specialty is the drama. They repair to one of the Bowery theatres, usually the old Bowery, almost every night, and indulge in peanuts and enthusiasm over the horrors or heroism of some villain or patriot who is the central figure in the latest sensational play. They revel in gunpowder and blue fire, and set their face resolutely against all dramas to which sulphur and saltpetre are not generously burned, and blood profusely spilled. They are more enamored of death than was the love-sick Romeo, when he beheld its cunning counterfeit on the pallidly-beautiful face of his sweet mistress in the vault of the Capulets. They cannot have too much slaughter, too deep or protracted agony; and they had never such a favorite as the young American tragedian who, some years ago, died half a dozen times at the end of the play for their particular delectation.

If you wish to see our Gamins in their glow and glory you must repair to the Bowery pit, (they do not indulge in the euphemism of parquette there,) and observe the unkept urchins before the footlights. Not a whit blase are they. They exercise their lungs, if the curtain does not rise at the appointed minute, and in sotto voce tones anathematize the manager, the actors and actresses and the whole strength of the establishment.

Patience is not one of their virtues, nor self-discipline either. They are querulous, exacting, vehement, denunciatory; and woe be to the actor or actress who falls to meet the requirements of the relentless critic that sits in the pit munching peanuts and employing his tattered coat-sleeve for a handkerchief.

THE GAMIN'S ANTECEDENTS.

The Metropolitan Gamin is usually of foreign parentage, for he develops after one or two generations in this country into a higher type of boyhood than that which is represented in our thronged thoroughfares as a vender of news and blacker of boots. His blood is usually of Milesian or Celtic origin, not infrequently of German source, and his earliest and largest memories are of squalid tenement-houses and corner-groceries, where liquor is retailed, and whither he is sent by his parents as a messenger for its procurement.

He is utterly ignorant of the meaning, in any true sense, of that sweet Baxon word "home," or of the equally tender and beautiful significance of "mother," or the charming associations of the two. No gentle influence breathes upon his life. He is a

stranger to flowers and sympathy, to poetry and music, to kindness and affection. He has no childhood-no boyhood.

As soon as he can walk and talk he is thrust into the street to earn his livelihood, and exposed to the worst of influences and the hardest of fortunes. No marvel he is skeptical and suspicious, violent and selfish, often cruel and relentless, for he learns his lessons in a stern school, where the teachers are Circumstance and Destiny.

HIS DISCIPLINE.

Yet about our Gamin there is nothing morbid, nothing artificial. The Ideal troubles him not, nor does the Esthetic woo him. He is in no danger of the sting of sensibility, nor will sympathy drag him down to the level of all sufferers. He is accustomed to hard blows. He can give and take with the rudest of his tribe. The buffets of Fortune only excite his sense of opposition, and augment his power to endure. Out of all his hard discipline and severe training comes good to him through evil—the power of self-reliance, the courage to do, the strength to bear what Fate has assigned him.

HIS PLACE OF ABODE AND HABITS.

It naturally occurs to the pedestrians along Broadway, or the Bowery, or Broad or Canal-street, as they see the Gamins shivering at the corners, or gazing into the ash-pile for undiscovered treasures, or staring into the shop-windows, and feasting their eyes while possesion starves, how do those urchins live, and where? We marvel if they know themselves. They are unable frequently to determine in the morning whence their breakfast will come; nor do they seem to care. They are more independent than monarchs, for they are without requirements, and free from ordinary limitations. They are freer than any mortal who conforms to Society, and dwells in its midst, for they are outside the pals, and in the largest sense their own prophets, poets, priests.

SHOORENHAUER, with all his pessimistic creed, would believe in them as the incarnations of the ideal man—the exemplifications of his theories concerning will. Certea they are the modern Lacedamoonians; not so simple nor severe as they, but as earnest and determined and brave; as careless of bodily discomfort and regardless of luxury; as capable of effeminating influences, and the touch of the tender passions.

THE CONSERVATIVE CLASS.

Love enters not into their arid life. With their hard toil and careless leisure, between which they



are ever fluctuating, they either have no time or find no opportunity to feel a need of the soul developed under more sunshine and beneath softer dews.

To gain money enough to buy tobacco and beer and theatre tickets is the sum of their desires, though often they accumulate something in their more developed stage, and provide for their parents, and support younger brothers and sisters. Such Gamins are, however, conservative and respectable, and accused by the fraternity of aristocratic and exclusive tendencies. To be a genuine Gamin, you must have no Future and no Past. you must provide for the present, and trust to Fortune for the morrow. "Confide in the Future" is their motto, and "Believe in the Impossible" their creed.

#### THE URCHINS' INDEPENDENCE.

The Winter is their unpropitious season, for then they are compelled to seek shelter within doors, and pay like the creatures of Society for lodgings. They prefer the Summer and Autumn months, when they can lie on door-steps and in the parks, in vacated cellars and basements, and in the stairways contiguous to Printing House-square. They are usually astir with the dawn, to catch the earliest pedestrians who may need the morning paper, or their boots blacked, on their baggage carried to the railway depots. They demand rather than solicit patronage. They insist that those they meet want their aid. If they decline it, so much the worse for their unsophisticated state, and want of the one thing needful.

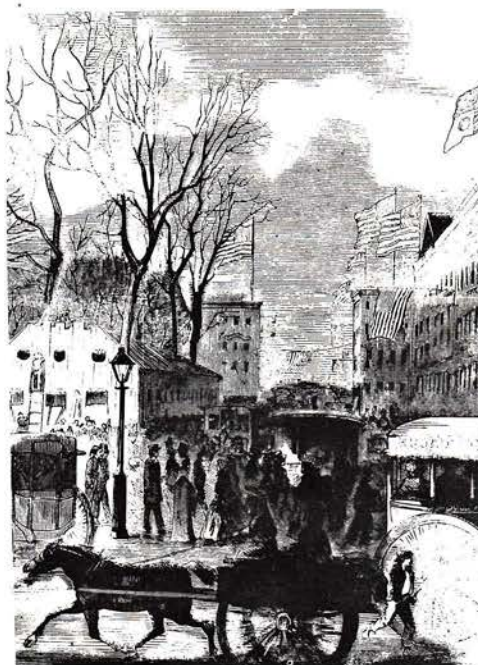
Refusal disturbs not the Gamin. He turns from his sole chance as if empires were his, and untold resources were at his beck. He is a true American in his stubborn independence and reckless indifference to the favor of the multitude. "If you can do without me, I can without you," is read in his bold, defiant face, and inasmuch as he believes he can, he can, and does.

#### DEVELOPMENT.

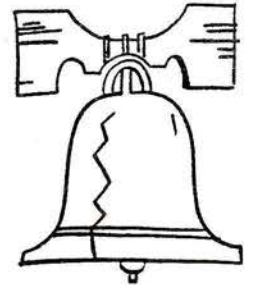
There is great danger to the Gamin in his hard life. He must be stronger than his circumstances, or he will be crushed. He frequently goes to the wall or Blackwell's Island, and afterward graduates at Auburn or Sing Sing. If he be what he aims to be, brave enough and with force enough to resist temptation, to depend on work and honest gain, he manufactures for himself the stuff of heroes, and rises to better and nobler things. All he wants is culture, which is light and religion in their true sense, and as he is daily receiving through various

benevolent sources an increase of that illumination, he is likely to pass more easily and swiftly through the chrysalis state of Gamin and feel at an earlier period than has been his wont the unfolding of his wings.

J. H. B.







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