

ALGER SESQUICENTENNIAL

Official 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 XXI

October–November 1982

Numbers 3 & 4

RUFUS AND ROSE, Or, How the Victory was Won,

Is the title of the New Continued Story which will appear in
THE SCHOOLMATE, FOR 1870.

By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

Author of "Ragged Dick," "Fame and Fortune," "Rough and Ready,"
"The Campaign Series," and other books.

This Story will be equally adapted to either sex, and will surpass in interest the preceding volumes of this popular author.

Frequent requests having been made for Mr. Alger's Photograph, the publisher has accordingly secured an excellent likeness in the best style of that celebrated artist, J. W. BLACK, and to all our subscribers sending us ONE DOLLAR AND FIFTY CENTS, before November 15th, in payment for 1870, we shall send a beautiful

PHOTOGRAPH OF HORATIO ALGER, JR.

Mr. Alger writes for no other Juvenile Magazine.

JOSEPH H. ALLEN, Publisher,

203 Washington Street, Boston, Mass.

Top Alger authority Gilbert K. Westgard II contributes on page 38 data relating to Horatio Alger's photograph being given away as a Student and Schoolmate "premium." [Advertisement above from the inside back cover of the October 1869 issue of Student and Schoolmate].

Also, Alger biographer Gary Scharnhorst uncovers thirteen new Alger stories and one new poem in the Yankee Blade. Details on page 37.

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.

OFFICERS

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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. Cost for single issues of Newsboy is \$1.00 apiece.

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

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

Newsboy ad rates are as follows: Full page, \$32.00; half page, \$17.00; quarter page, \$9.00; per column (1" x 3-3/4"), \$2.00. Send ads to Bob Sawyer, 204 Mill St., Gahanna, Ohio 43230. Make checks payable to "Horatio Alger Society." Ads are due two weeks prior to the date of the issue in which you want your ad to appear.

NEW MEMBERS REPORTED

PF-674 Henry Avery
2506 St. Michel Court
Ponte Vedda Beach, Fla. 32082

Henry, owner of 10 Algers, is a management consultant and learned of HAS through Max Goldberg. He also collects antiques.

PF-676 Dr. John K. Dixon
17 Arthur Drive East
Fort Washington, MD 20744

John is a computer scientist, whose hobbies include computers, real estate, and electronics. He read of the Society in the World Almanac Book of Buffs.

PF-678 Harold W. Goodin
2524 No. Trail, #83
No. Ft. Myers, Fla. 33905

Harold is retired and says that he "enjoys reading and remembering reading Algers as a child and teenager." He enjoys golf, square dancing, the Perry Mason books, and bowling, among other interests.

PF-680 Bill Strong
8800 Lake Nimbus Drive
Fair Oaks, Calif. 95628

Bill has corresponded with your editor for some months. He collects juveniles and early paperbacks, and has sent me gorgeous color photos of some of the thousands of books in his collection. See Bill's fascinating letter elsewhere in this issue.

PF-681 Kasmir Bileski
870 Kildonan Drive
[mail address: Station B]
Winnipeg
Manitoba Canada

Kasmir heard of us through publicity on the Alger stamp in various stamp magazines. He has forty Alger titles, and is interested in collecting the various editions. He also collects postage stamps (obviously)!!

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

PF-101 Jack W. Row
4445 Vieux Carre Circle
Lutz, Florida 33549

PF-112 Dr. David J. Thompson
12322 Kosich Ct.
Saratoga, Calif. 95070

* * *

L E T T E R S

2019 S. E. 8th St.
Des Moines, IA 50315
July 24, 1982

Dear Jack,

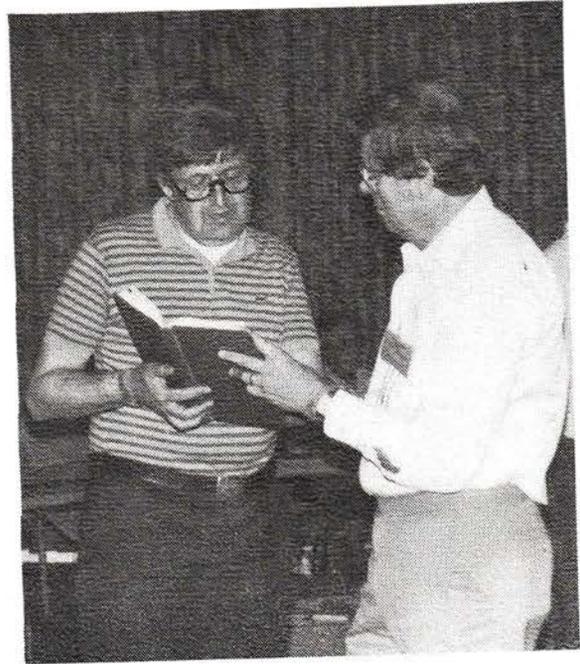
Got Newsboy today, which reminded me that I owed you a couple of letters. Will probably settle down with the magazine tonight and give it my full attention. Looks huge; I noticed in glancing through it that you plan on adding more convention coverage in the next issue. Hope you report the auction results, as you did last year. I always find the items and the prices they netted very interesting. It also adds just that much more to the feel of having "been there" as I wish I had. [Will check on it.—Ed.] Not only that, but I feel kinda bad because I had rounded up some items to contribute to the auction, got busy, and went ahead and forgot to send them out until it was too late. But I do intend to donate them next year, with perhaps a little more to make up for my goof this year. And who knows, I may be able to make it to next year's convention.

Speaking of prices, I have not been buying much this summer. Thought I would slow down a bit before I went broke—I do tend to get a bit carried away. And, alas, there are always a few items that I want but can't afford, simply because some dealer has put an unrealistic price on the item and won't dicker any. I am always curious as to whether or not some of these prices make any sense. From time to time I test the market, just to see. A few months ago, as you may recall, I listed a couple of Federal Alger reprints at

twelve dollars each, in very nice condition, to see if the books, which I had seen advertised at higher prices in antique magazines, would really truly get any takers. As I suspected, no one really feels like buying a \$2.00 book for \$12.00—heck, I wouldn't myself. So, the books sit proudly on my shelf, and somewhere an Alger collector is probably laughing at me...or wondering if I haven't gone completely off my rocker (since most of the books I advertise for sale run around two dollars each). Anyway, it is a good way to test the market, seems to me; one gets better results than from some "price guide" put together by people who collect stoneware but make their living telling us how much our dearly beloved collections of old juveniles are worth.

Oh, did I tell you?—I have begun another collection lately. I got hooked recently on old stereographs, and I find them really fascinating! My brother gave me money for Christmas way back when, and I finally decided in March to buy a stereoscope and cards, and now I have about 150 views, ranging from 1874 photos of Central Park to junk lithograph cards of the 1920s. I particularly like comic pictures or scenes with children, although any view with a striking 3-D illusion usually appeals to me. Alas, I have to limit myself severely with this hobby, too, or go without meals—and I do like to eat. My family has some say about that, too.

Anyway, back to books. I was fortunate enough to pick up two Edwards books with dust jackets last month (Hits the Trail and Editor in Grief). They have some defects, but overall they're in presentable shape. Heck, beats xerox copies any day! One of them I spotted for a dollar in a thrift shop; for once the manager decided not to grease pencil the price on the d.j., but did it on the flyleaf instead. Don't know what came over him! Maybe the spirit of Edward Edson Lee influenced him and stopped him from desecrating it; or perhaps it was Bert Salg whispering in his ear. Or maybe he was just drunk and didn't know what he was doing.



Bob "The Cobra" Bennett (left) holds up an item for auction at the annual banquet at last May's HAS Convention. Behind him are Alex Shaner; Jill Lawrence, who wrote two articles on the Convention for the Associated Press which appeared in newspapers across the country (the second is reprinted in this Newsboy); Jon Friedland (foreground); Dale Thomas (with hand up); John Juvinal; Jack Bales. In right photo, Jerry Friedland (left) goes over some Alger first edition points with Rolfe Chase.

Anyway, I was pleased. I also got a reading copy of Hidden Dwarf this summer, but owe the guy a year's supply of trades in return for it. Actually, I am enjoying it. Still need the other Poppy Ott Detective Story, and a scattering of other Edwards books, and of course need just about everything with d.j.

Thanks for the kind comments on Yellowback Library. The technical quality, I freely admit, has not been what it was when I began in 1981 and had access to a print shop, but I am finding that the subscribers are more interested in what info is provided than in the package itself. At least, so far. Anyway, the subscription list is slowly and steadily growing, and it looks like I will be able to break even on it again this year.

Thanks for sending the photocopies of the reviews, Stratemeyer info., AP article. (The newspaper article did make a

fella feel like he missed something by not being at the convention). Will mention these things in my column in #11, along with Newsboy. This issue I plan on listing addresses of Newsboy and the other mags again, for the benefit of the subscribers I have gotten this spring who were unable to purchase back issues of YL. #3 and #9 are sold out. Have less than ten copies of most of the others, with the exception of #7 and #10.

Wow, have I been rambling! I see it is getting close to supper time around here (as we call the evening meal in this part of the midwest). So I'd better sign off.

Take care---

Gil O'Gara

(Editor's note: Gil edits Yellowback Library, an informative and entertaining magazine, aimed at the juvenile book collector. Cost is \$8/year--6 issues).

October-November

P.O. Box 161
 Baraboo, Wis. 53913
 July 28, 1982

Dear Jack:

Esther has been reading the current issue of the Newsboy most of the evening, and she says to tell you that it is very interesting and informative—and I say amen to that.

We would like to get to one more convention, preferably the one in 1983 at Columbus, but we both have serious health problems, which is not surprising, of course, as we are both in the eighties. So it is dubious that we will make it to Columbus—but we can hope.

I had one hundred Alger titles, all in very good or better condition, but I sold off forty. Am keeping the other sixty, all standard titles, for my daughter. Actually, I have little interest anymore in Alger, and I have switched my collecting endeavors to Zane Grey books, which I understand are now the hottest items in the book collecting world. Luckily, I started four years ago, so I have been able to build up a 160 volume collection—all purchased very reasonably. Three of the first editions that I picked up for five dollars apiece are now worth two hundred dollars each, they tell me.

I want to sell the five Alger books
 (continued on next page)



Some of the literally thousands of items in Jerry Friedland's "nostalgia collection." Unfortunately, the black and white photo does no justice to the brilliant colors of the many posters, buttons and other memorabilia that Jerry collects.

listed below, so please offer them in Newsboy.

The Young Book Agent	G&D	Ex. \$30.00
Randy of the River	G&D	Vg+ 25.00
A Debt of Honor	Burt	Ex. 30.00
Five Hundred Dollars	Vg-Ex.	
Facing the World	Vg-Ex.	

(These last two books are both Hurst miniatures with pictorial covers. They are both for sale for \$35.00).

Hoping that all is well with you,

Sincerely,

Herb Risteen

15 Williams St.
Clinton, N. Y. 13323
18 August 1982

Dear Jack,

Thank you very much for the article on William T. Adams which you sent to Jack Dizer to give to me. [Which Gary Scharnhorst had sent to me--Ed.] It is always nice to know that other collectors look out for each other. I have come upon a number of newspaper and magazine articles on "Oliver Optic" but by no means have I uncovered them all. The one which you sent was unknown to me so thanks again for thinking of me. I have included two articles on Alger, both of which are almost identical, but with the seemingly requisite number of factual errors. Evidently, the date of the photo in question is "1852" and not "1882."

Jack Dizer is fine; I see him quite often. We share letters which we receive with each other from various collectors across the country; also book items of interest to us. He has just received a promotion and is now the Dean of Mechanical Technology at Mohawk Valley Community College. Bill Gowan stopped here a few weeks ago but I was not around and so we did not get a chance to talk books. I understand he had come from Chicago and was passing through. Eddie LeBlanc writes to tell me that Denis Rogers is coming over

again in the Fall. I hope to get a chance to meet them both again if time allows; we had all gotten together at Jack's house the last time for dinner, and the next day Eddie and Denis came over here: Denis to look at my Ellis collection and Eddie to browse through my Oliver Optic's. I do hope to see them again.

When is your book coming out? I understand it is to be a biography. We can always use more material, it seems. I am working on a biography myself (Adams, not Alger) but I am trying to be as thorough as possible. Still collecting information and cataloging, filing, reading, etc. etc. I am fortunate to have found much primary material and this is of course what I will base my book on. But I am still in the process of writing many letters throughout the country, to libraries, village town clerks, private citizens, which can become stifling at times. However, I have hopes that sometime it will be all finished; we might all be white-haired though. As I wrote to Eddie: "The more haste, the less speed."

Enjoyed your article, and filed it away accordingly. . .

Best,

Peter C. Walther

8800 Lake Nimbus Dr.
Fair Oaks, CA 95628
July 30, 1982

Dear Jack:

The photos you sent of your Hardy Boys collection are great! They led me to snap a few shots of my own. Actually, I didn't take the best shot, which is the bookcase in the family room which would show about twelve hundred kids' books. About six hundred show as they are two deep in a seven foot high bookcase about fifteen or sixteen feet long. Anyway, if the photos that I did take come out I'll send a few along to you.

I was filled with envy when I saw the

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photos of the seven early Hardy Boys in d.j. I've got to find a copy of The Shore Road Mystery with the neat old car on the cover!! I don't have The Great Airport Mystery with the early d.j. either. One of these days!! Persistence will win out in the end.

My rapid use of plastic dust covers for my book jackets is because I just recently discovered them and decided to cover my entire collection of kids' books. Went on and covered a couple hundred other books that are also hanging around. It was rather funny since once I decided to do it I spent every evening after dinner until one or two A.M. until the job was completed. My wife complained a lot about being a book widow (it took about ten days). She is a good sport, however, which helps a lot.

I do collect old time nostalgia items. In fact, I consider my kids' books in that category. What kind of items does Jerry Friedland collect? Posters, secret rings, knives, coloring books, Big Little Books, books, or something else! I have about fifty or sixty Whitmans in d.j., almost all in very good or better d.j.'s. Only pick them up when they are in excellent condition and not over priced in an antique shop. I have both Dick Tracy titles in the Whitmans. Have Terry and the Pirates, Captain Midnight, Tom Swift, five Roy Rogers, several Red Ryders, several Gene Autrys, Don Winslow, Stratesphere Jim, etc. Do not have any Shadow pulps but do have about 250 pulps—mostly detective, adventure and western. Like the detective best. Even have an old Blask Mask with an original Raymond Chandler story in it.

Also have a fairly good start on collecting books on books and on book collecting. Not to mention the 3 or 4 thousand paperbacks in boxes in the garage. Since my bachelor's degree was in African and Middle Eastern Studies I have about two hundred books on Africa and the Middle East (I spent six years in the U. S. Foreign Service at Tunis, Tunisia; Algiers, Algeria; La Paz,

Bolivia; Frankfurt, West Germany; and Cotonou, Dahomey—now Benin).

The rest of the books are on a wide variety of topics but must add up to a total of 8-10 thousand books on the premises. Probably a few more hardback than paperback. My kids, 12, 14, & 18 very seldom need to go to the library since I normally have several books on almost any topic they have to research, although they do use the library quite a bit.

Since I've delved a bit into my background I should continue and tell you what I do for a living, since I have read about your job in the sketch on your book on Alger.

I work for a regional bus company that serves the area in and around Sacramento. We are also in the process of adding a light rail passenger train service to our system. I'm the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance, Planning and Administration. That just means that six departments report to me—Accounting, Payroll Systems (data processing), Purchasing, Planning and Fare Prepayment. Keeps me busy during the day and I read a lot evenings not to mention the correspondence, which seems to mushroom on you. But, at a young 44 I'm still able to keep up with you younger guys—at least I keep telling myself that.

After that long, windy discussion it's time to give you a rest. Take care and keep writing.

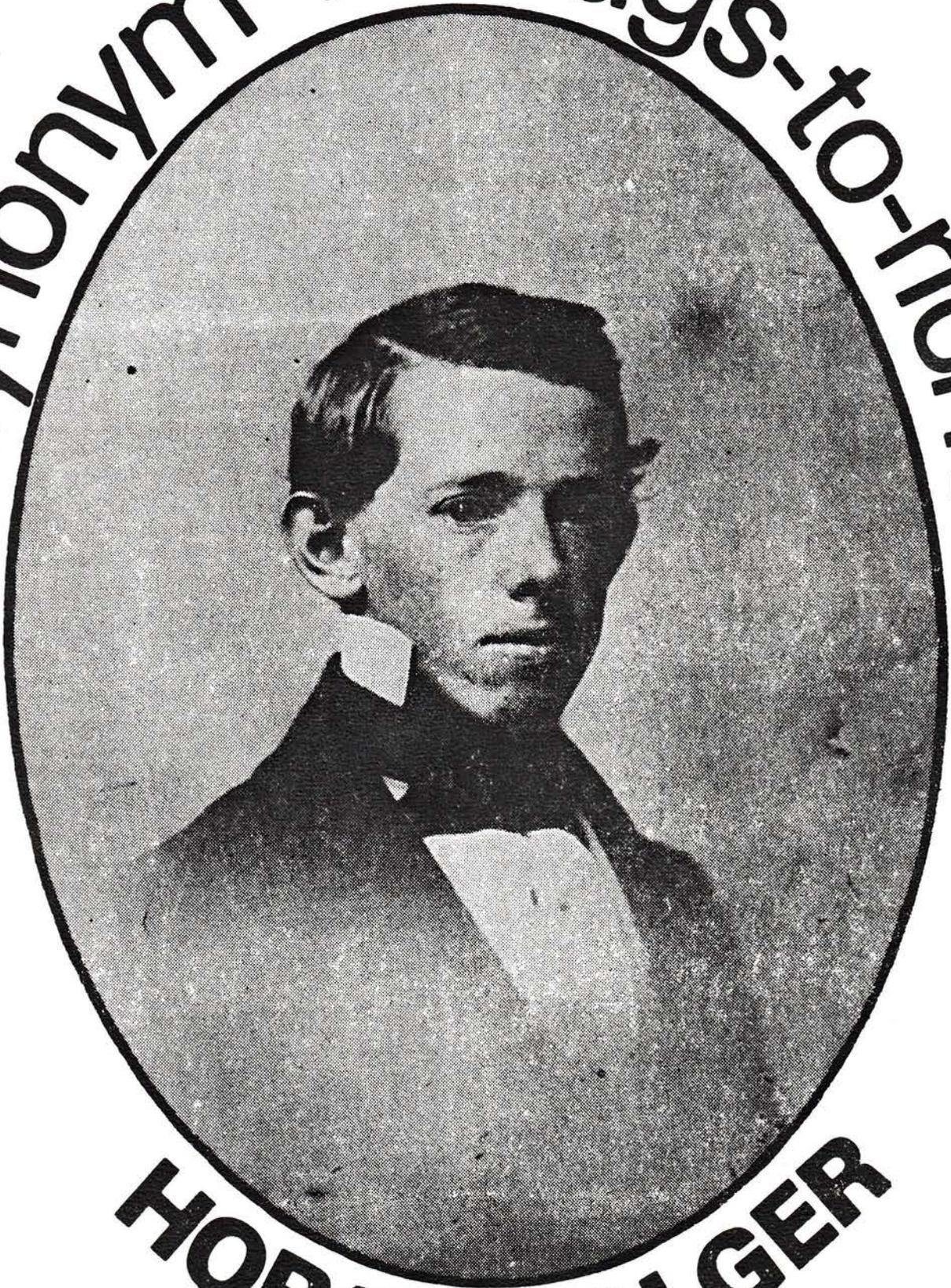
Sincerely,

Bill Strong

* * *

(Editor's note: Besides the Yellow-back Library, mentioned on page 4 in the "Letters" section, other publications that may interest Newsboy readers include the Dime Novel Round-Up, edited by HAS member Eddie LeBlanc, 87 School St., Fall River, Mass. 02720, and the Mystery and Adventure Series Review, edited by Fred Woodworth, P. O. Box 3488, Tucson, Arizona 85722).

A synonym for rags-to-riches



HORATIO ALGER

(Editor's note: As reported on page 4, Associated Press reporter Jill Lawrence covered the 1982 Horatio Alger Society Convention in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. Her first article was reprinted on page 1 of the August-September issue of Newsboy. Her second work—the result of dozens of interviews—is reprinted here by permission of Jill, beginning on the previous page. This particular piece is from the Allentown, Pennsylvania Call-Chronicle, the July 4, 1982 issue. The picture of Alger reproduced is his 1852 graduation photograph from Harvard).

Horatio Alger's stories became the literary symbol of the American Dream: Poor boy follows Golden Rule and becomes rich man. "Strive and Succeed" is a typical title. On the 150th anniversary of his birth, members of the Horatio Alger Society remember the man, the manuscripts — and the myth.

By JILL LAWRENCE
Of The Associated Press

WILLOW GROVE — The smoky conference room is jammed with latter-day Ragged Dicks and Tattered Toms basking in the hard-won comfort of their middle years, their humble origins a distant memory.

One had made millions manufacturing nuts and bolts; another married well. A third left home at 15 to make her way in the world. Another worked his way through college as a barber and ended up owning a printing plant and a museum.

"If I didn't have this, I'd be feverish," cries Bob Bennett, pounding a first edition of "The Telegraph Boy" with his fist.

"If you don't have it, you'd better get delirious and start bidding. . . . If you don't have it, you ought to be after it like a dog after a bone. . . . Sold! You can say you spent more for 'The Telegraph Boy' than anyone else in the world."

The book went for \$425 at the Horatio Alger Society's annual fund-raising auction.

Ronald Reagan's signature on a first edition of his autobiography, "Where's The Rest of Me?," brought a measly \$50. A first American edition of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry sold for a mere \$16.

"We're not scholars. We're nuts," says Ralph Gardner, puffing on a pipe he had made. The bowl was a carving of Alger's head.

Horatio Alger. The name is a myth that far outreaches the author's actual achievements; a synonym for rags-to-riches; the American Dream realized again and again in Alger's 100-odd stories of poor boys en route to prosperity.

Who was he? The record is confusing. The first Alger biography was a hoax, recognized only 10 years ago, that served as the basis for almost all subsequent and supposedly reliable works.

A few things are certain:

— Alger attended Harvard and became a Unitarian clergyman.

— A Brewster, Mass., church dismissed him for "the abominable and revolting crime of unnatural familiarity with boys."

— He never married.

— His moralistic, action-packed books sold hundreds of thousands of copies while he was alive and millions more in the 20-year period following his death in 1899.

This year, the 150th anniversary of Alger's birth in Chelsea, Mass., finds Alger stamps adorning first class mail and a true-to-life Alger hero in the White House.

What could better characterize President Reagan's individualistic self-help philosophy than "Strive and Succeed," an Alger title? In 1969, Reagan won an award from the Horatio Alger Association, which honors prominent citizens — usually conservative ones — who have pulled themselves up by their bootstraps.

The Association, based in New York, is not to be confused with the Society, an international grab-bag of 250 nostalgia freaks, millionaires, businessmen, academics and book collectors of 11 to 90.

Their only common bond is a passion for Alger.

"Politics is one thing we never get into. It's no part of this," says Gardner,

a cherubic-looking Alger biographer and former New York Times reporter. Then, scanning the society members gathered for a four-day convention, he adds: "I certainly don't know any liberals here."

Whether Alger meant to champion conservative politics or free enterprise is doubtful, according to most Alger scholars.

"There's so much bunk going around about what Alger did," says Jack Bales, a 30-year-old college librarian from Fredericksburg, Va., who is working on an Alger biography.

"He meant his books to be didactic moral tales for children," says Bales, the oldest of nine children and an Alger reader for 15 years. "There was nothing in his mind about rags-to-riches. . . . The idea of rags-to-riches is a 20th-century interpretation."

The hallmarks of an Alger book are industry and adventure and a conspicuous lack of romance. "There were a couple of girls that got kissed, but not many," says Dale Thomas, a Cleveland manufacturer whose CB handle is Ragged Dick, Alger's hardy bootblack.

The innocent tales, propelled by preposterous events and uncanny coincidences, abound with menacing villains and good-hearted heroes. And although goodness is always rewarded, it is never its own reward.

Trusting Rodney Ropes, his fortune lost by a careless guardian, makes a mint in the Montana gold mines. Forlorn Phil the Fiddler, beaten and starved by a cruel padrone, is adopted by a wealthy doctor. Cheerful Fred, the Erie Train Boy, his family on the verge of eviction, lands a lucrative job with a stockbroker.

"Alger was obsessed with money. The dollar sign was always lurking in the background. . . . Good was translated into wealth. Some financial gain was at the end of the rainbow," says Bennett, the auctioneer. The Central Michigan University administrator is believed to own the world's largest collection of Alger first editions — 127 of 132 available.

Whether they buy into the rags-to-riches myth or not, Bennett and most of his colleagues have no illusions about Alger's work.

"It's not literature. You have to face the fact that he was not a literary giant," says Ed LeBlanc of Fall River, Mass. "I can read them for enjoyment — but you must suspend realism."

Bales, weary after half a lifetime with Alger and ready to "retire from the whole thing" when he and a coauthor finish the biography, is more blunt: "The books are stilted, very corny, very outdated."

Discussing the author's style, Bennett says, "Alger's heroes never walked home. They trudged homeward. . . . Frank always replied resolutely. He didn't just reply."

He adds, "I think it's fascinating that a guy that had no more writing talent than he did could so thoroughly capture the market. Most authors grow during their careers. Alger was the same from start to finish. The last book he wrote is as bad as the first. It's pitiful."

Nevertheless, avid collectors have been known to part with as much as \$2,000 for a single first edition. Their conversations are peppered with prices and titles and arcane disputes

"'Timothy Crump's Ward' is the hardest to get," Gardner asserts during one heated discussion.

"'Dan the Detective' is harder," interjects Jerry Friedland, an attorney from New York.

"'The Erie Train Boy' is impossible," Bennett cuts in.

"'Frank's Campaign' . . . " began Thomas.

"Hard but not the hardest," Bennett says.

What drives these people? For some, it's the thrill of the chase.

"I like the covers and the designs and the challenge of completing the sets that I have," says Brad Chase, a state official from Enfield, Conn. "My kick is to bring a set together on my bookshelf and have all the spines the same."

Some members have fond childhood memories of Alger.

"I used to like to sit down for two hours and disappear into a little fantasy," says Brad Alexander of Brockport, N.Y., adding that he read in a

(continued on next page)

ALGER

► Continued

linen closet to escape the other five children in the house.

"When I was a child, the moral part really sank in — about having courage," says Bea Fortner, who grew up with seven brothers on an Illinois farm. "I left home when I was 15, and I'm sure that had a lot to do with the Alger books. I made my own way from then on."

Others find residual appeal in the books even now.

"Reading these things doesn't take too much thought," says Friedland. "It's very relaxing. I put myself to sleep."

Horatio Alger Society members tend to be middle-aged or older. But there are a couple of youngsters who grew up with Alger-obsessed parents and became Alger aficionados themselves.

"When I read the books I find the message, try and understand it, try and live with it. It gives you a motto, like 'Strive and Succeed' or 'Try and Trust.' I think all kids should read them," says 15-year-old Diana Thorp, a budding collector from Nashua, N.H.

Gardner, who wrote a paean called "Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era," may be Alger's most enthusiastic booster.

"In every book there is a blueprint for success. It works. I can

assure you," says Gardner, who at 13 labored in a steel mill and went on to become a reporter, foreign correspondent, author, advertising agency owner and radio interviewer.

Some of Alger's contemporaries — including Louisa May Alcott — accused him of sensationalism. But Gardner argues that unlike lurid dime novels of the time, Alger offered valuable moral guidance in a way palatable to both children and their parents.

"His books were filled with action, but it was action that parents permitted into the parlor," he says.

"His style was unique. There are no counterparts today. There never have been."

BOOK MART

The listing of Alger books in this department is free to HAS members. Thus, it is assumed that all books can be returned if the buyer is not satisfied with them. See August-September 1982 "Book Mart" for criteria in determining condition of books. Please list title, publisher, condition and price. If book for sale is a first edition, give bibliography used to determine same.

Offered by Gil Kapelman, Steep Hill Road, Weston, Conn. 06883.

Ben's Nugget (boy with knickers)	Winston	Vg	\$6.00
Dan, the Newsboy (deluxe edition)	Burt	V-F	15.00
Falling in w/Fortune	G&D	Vg	12.50
H. Carter's Legacy (color plates)	Winston	V-F	10.00
Jack's Ward (nice binding)	P&C	Vg	22.50
The Store Boy	HTC	Vg	17.50
Tom Temple's Career	Burt	Vg	12.50
Tom, the Bootblack (boy with knapsack)	Burt	G-Vg	8.00

Offered by Robert E. Williman, 12437 Kimmerton Lane, Bowie, Maryland 20715.

Alger: A Bio. W/o a Hero, 1st ed., by Herbert R. Mayes, 1928	G	\$45.00
Bob Burton	Dono	G 4.00

(thick edition)			
Bound to Rise	Burt	Good	\$6.00
Brave and Bold	Burt	Fair	3.00
The Cash Boy (thick edition)	Dono.	Fair	2.00
Cast Upon Breakers (has d.j.)	D-day	Fine	5.00
Dean Dunham	Aeonian	Fine	6.00
Do and Dare	Whitman	Fair	2.00
Driven from Home	Mershon	Vg	5.00
Facing the World	NYB	Good	3.00
Frank's Campaign (thin edition)	Donohue	F-G	2.50
Canal Boy to Pres. (no errata slip)	And.	Fair	20.00
Grit	Burt	Good	6.00
Grit, the Young Boat. (thick edition)	Donohue	G-F	6.00
Hector's Inheritance (thick edition)	Donohue	G-F	5.00
Harry Vane	NYB	Fine	4.00
Helen Ford	P&C	G-F	8.00
Helping Himself (thick edition)	Donohue	Fair	3.00
H. Carter's Legacy	NYB	F-G	3.00
In a New World (with d.j.)	Media	Fine	6.00
Jack's Ward (thick edition)	Donohue	Good	3.50
Joe's Luck (thick edition)	Donohue	Fair	3.00
Julius, the Street Boy	NYB	Fine	4.00
Luke Walton (thick edition)	Donohue	Good	4.00
Making His Way (paperback)	Value	Fine	3.00
Mark, the Match Boy	Winston	Fair	4.00

Mark Mason's Victory	Donohue	G-F	\$3.50
Paul the Peddler	Donohue	Fair	2.50
P. Prescott's Charge (thin edition)	Donohue	Good	3.50
Phil the Fiddler	Burt	F-G	4.00
Ragged Dick	Winston	Fair	4.00
R. Raymond's Heir	Burt	G-F	6.00
Shifting for Himself	Donohue	Good	3.50
Slow and Sure	Donohue	P-F	2.50
Strive and Succeed (has d.j.)	Holt	Fine	5.00
Store Boy (New Warner ed.)		Good	4.00
Struggling Upward (thin edition)	Donohue	Fair	3.00
Tom the Bootblack	Burt	Good	5.00
Try and Trust	Whitman	Fair	2.50
Wait and Hope	NYB	Good	3.00
W. Sherwood's Proba.	NYB	Fair	2.50
Young Acrobat (thick edition)	Donohue	Good	4.00
Young Explorer	Donohue	Good	4.00
Young Musician	Burt	F-G	4.50
Young Salesman	NYB	Fair	2.50

Offered by Herbert L. Risteen, P.O. Box 161, Baraboo, Wis. 53913.

See Herb's letter in this issue, pp. 5-6.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS MONTH'S "BOOK MART": G = Good, F-G = Fair to Good; P-F = Poor to Fair; V-F = Very good to Fine; Vg = Very good; NYB = New York Book; P&C = Porter & Coates; G&D = Grosset & Dunlap; D-day = Double-day; HTC = Henry T. Coates.

* * *

FRANCINE NEFF RECEIVES ALGER STAMPS by David M. Dennis

Francine Neff, former Treasurer of the United States, was honored by the U. S. Postal Service at a ceremony in Albuquerque, New Mexico on Thursday, June 24, 1982. The event took place at 11:30 a.m. on the lawn of the Rio Grande Valley Bank, 5th and Tijeras, New Mexico. Mr. Richard J. Pino, Albuquerque Postmaster, made the presentation. Mrs. Neff received an engraved folder and a sheet of the new commemorative Horatio Alger stamps.

Following the presentation, the Rio Grande Valley Bank hosted luncheon for a group of attending guests. Representatives from the New Mexico Congressional delegation, the media, Mrs. Neff's daughter, Cindle and bank officers were present. Ed Auten, PF-564, and Dr. David Dennis, PF-622, who are New Mexico's only HAS members, were also present.

After lunch, Mr. Albert T. Ussery, Chairman of the Board and President of the Rio Grande Valley Bank, introduced the people at his table. Mr. Richard Baille, Vice President and Main Office Manager, then introduced the guests at his table. Following introductions, Mrs. Neff related her own "rags to riches" story. She had grown up in Mountainair, a small village sixty miles southeast of Albuquerque, as the daughter of an oil field worker. She didn't quite know where the "riches" came into her life unless it was because she was next to all that money in the U.S. Treasury. Money or no money, Ed and Dave think she is one elegant lady and that the Rio Grande Valley Bank really knows how to make every guest feel like "Our Hero" who had come to the end of a successful Alger story.

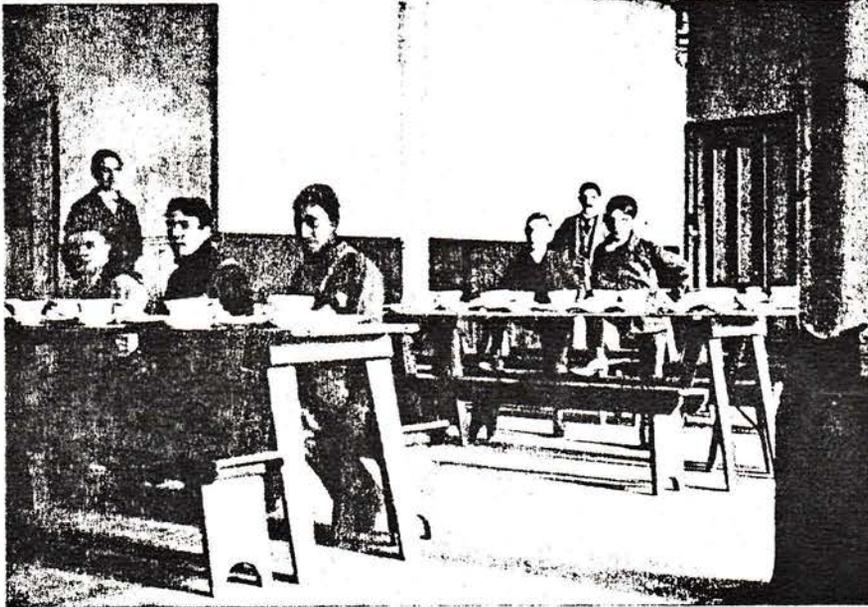
(Editor's note: HAS member David M. Dennis sent this article with some photographs taken by fellow HAS member, Ed Auten. Unfortunately, they could not be printed in Newsboy as they were in color [small color shots do not reproduce well in black and white]. Francine Neff, the 35th Treasurer of the United States, is on the 1982-83 Horatio Alger Association Board of Directors. She received the Horatio Alger Award in 1976).

* * *

JUST A REMINDER!! It's not too early to start thinking about next year's HAS convention. Columbus, Ohio is a central location, so we should have a huge turnout. Bob Sawyer, next year's host, will regularly have columns in Newsboy publicizing the event--and an event it certainly will be. Don't forget--May 5-8, 1983, in Columbus, Ohio.

The material on this page is from the collection of Gilbert K. Westgard II. It is from The Bookman, September 1915, (Volume XLII). "Mr. Chimmie Fadden" is a section of the larger article, "The New York of the Novelists," by Arthur Bartlett Maurice. The text below can be found on pages 24 and 26 of this article.

As most Alger collectors know, Alger was familiar with the Newsboys' Lodging House. The third Lodge, on New Chambers Street, is mentioned in Wren Winter's Triumph.



ON NEW CHAMBERS STREET WAS THE BRACE MEMORIAL NEWSBOYS LODGING HOUSE. IT WAS THERE THAT MR. TOWNSEND FIRST FOUND CHIMMIE FADDEN, WHO WAS FOR A TIME, ABOUT TWENTY YEARS AGO, THE MOST TALKED OF CHARACTER IN AMERICAN FICTION. CHIMMIE'S POPULARITY WAS AKIN TO THE POPULARITY THAT MR. DUNNE'S MR. DOOLEY ENJOYED A FEW YEARS LATER

✧ MR. CHIMMIE FADDEN

How many readers of the younger generation are acquainted with the virtues and eccentricities of Chimmie Fadden? Probably very few. Yet, for a time, some twenty years ago, Mr. Edward W. Townsend's little Bowery boy was the most talked of character in American fiction. He was as famous, if not as permanent, as Mr. Dunne's Mister Dooley. In an age when rules of deportment and expression were, outwardly at least, more rigid, debutantes found his "Wot'ell" convenient and expressive. Chimmie was the spirit of the old Bowery, its crudities and its finer impulses. Like Mr. Dooley, he came into existence casually. Mr. Townsend, then with the *New York Sun*, was sent to report a newsboys' dinner. There he found the idea of Chimmie, and the woman, a slum worker, who was the original of Miss Fannie of the stories. The first tale was written, and Charles A. Dana sent out word calling for the

second. Soon the stories began to be known and quoted and Mr. Chester S. Lord, then the managing editor of the paper, said: "Can't you run up and find the little Bowery boy you've been writing about and get him to talk some more?" "Oh," said Mr. Townsend, "he's purely an imaginary character." "Then imagine some more about him." There came a time when the author applied to Mr. Dana for the privilege of bringing out the stories in book form. In giving the required consent the editor added extravagantly: "And I hope you sell ten thousand of them." A few months later a dinner was given to Mr. Townsend in celebration of the hundred thousandth copy of *Chimmie Fadden* sold. The next morning Mr. Dana went to Mr. Townsend's desk in the *Sun* office, and after referring to the dinner, said: "Can you tell me why *Chimmie Fadden* has reached a hundred thousand?" "Because," replied Mr. Townsend, "of the sentimental relations of Chimmie Fadden and Mr. Paul toward Miss Fannie."

CHARLES DEAN'S SUCCESS
by Horatio Alger, Jr.

(Editor's note: The following Alger short story is from the collection of indefatigable Alger collector Gilbert K. Westgard II. It originally appeared in Gleason's Literary Companion, February 18, 1860).

"Well, my day's work is over, and I am glad of it," exclaimed John White, with an air of relief.

Seven o'clock had just struck, and at this hour the store in which he was employed was always closed for the day. The remark which he had just made was addressed to Charles Dean, a boy of his own age and standing in the store.

"You don't look as if you felt particularly glad, Charley," continued John.

"I am quite satisfied to be through, although I enjoy very well being employed."

"That's more than I do, I can tell you. You wouldn't catch me working if I wasn't obliged to. I only wish some old fellow would leave me a fortune."

"Would you be content to do nothing, John?"

"Wouldn't I, though? I'd cut a dash—travel—see the world—and enjoy myself generally."

"I am afraid it would be the worse for you."

"You needn't look so sober about it, Charley. Unfortunately, there isn't any immediate prospect of the fortune coming to me. But come, let us go to the theatre tonight."

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"I have another engagement."

"Which isn't one half as pleasant, I'll be bound. What is it, if it isn't a secret?"

"I devote two hours every evening to studying bookkeeping."

"And what good do you suppose it will ever do you?"

"Perhaps," said Charles, smiling, "I can keep your accounts when you come into your fortune. Seriously, though, I think it is something which every one who is in business ought to know something about, and I might as well learn now as any time. Suppose I take my turn in inviting you to join me?"

"You won't catch me wearing out my eyes over any such stuff. You'd better give it up tonight and go with me. There's a perfectly splendid play tonight—a live horse brought on the stage, Jim Lane told me."

"I can see plenty of 'live horses' every day in the streets, John."

"O pshaw, Charley! you're as cold-blooded as Hercules, or any of the other old Greek philosophers."

"I never knew before that Hercules was a philosopher," said Charley, smiling.

"Well, it doesn't make any difference about names. Then you won't go?"

"I couldn't, John."

"Won't, you mean, Charley. Well, I wish you joy over your old bookkeeping. I'm thankful I've got better taste."

So saying, the lively boy threw on his coat and hastily left the store, while Charles Dean more deliberately arranged things so as to save trouble the next morning, and then followed his friend's example.

The conversation which has just been detailed will explain the differing characters of the two boys. Charles

Dean was as lively and pleasant in his manners as John, but much more thoughtful and considerate for the future. Already, at sixteen, he had thought considerably of the proper means for securing success in life, and had resolved, as far as it was in his power, to deserve success. Both boys were favorites with their employer, because their pleasant faces and agreeable manners attracted customers. They had entered the store together, and both had shown themselves quick to learn the routine of business. John, however, had never had any thought in all this beyond the present time. He was polite and obliging, because his nature prompted him to be; and quick, because he was gifted with natural quickness.

Charles Dean had ascertained that a good bookkeeper was paid considerably higher than an ordinary salesman, and felt that it might sometime be of service to him to understand something of it. He accordingly engaged to take lessons of a competent instructor, and although he was of course obliged to pay for this instruction, he did not spend one-third as much as John, who frequented public places of amusement nearly every evening in the week.

Both boys were allowed their wages for clothes and miscellaneous expenses, their board being paid by their parents. This allowance--they having been two years in the store--amounted to one hundred and fifty dollars a year, or twelve dollars and a half a month.

The difference between the two boys may be further illustrated by the fact that while John was always behindhand, Charles always had something laid up.

"John, your coat is getting to look quite shabby," said Charles, one day.

"That's a fact," said John, surveying it rather ruefully.

"You've had it quite a long time, haven't you? Why don't you buy a new one?"

"It's all very well to say that, but suppose a fellow hasn't got the money?"

"What! Is all your last month's allowance gone?" asked Charles, in surprise. "You were paid only three days since."

"O, well, what's twelve dollars and a half? I owed five out of it to Jim Lane; then I've been to the theatre two or three times, and I had to treat two or three fellows the other night; and, besides, I had to buy a pair of gloves. Yes, that accounts for it," said John, with an air of satisfaction.

One might have thought that the gloves cost two or three dollars, from the importance which was attached to them in the list of expenses, whereas their exact price was thirty-three cents, and from that sum John had obtained a reduction of three cents.

"Then," said Charles, "it seems that twelve dollars and a half have done you no good beyond buying a pair of gloves."

"Well," said John, reluctantly, "of course a fellow has other expenses besides clothes. The truth is, however, I am confounded ashamed of this old coat."

"How much did you pay for it?"

"Fifteen dollars."

"And you could probably get another good one--good enough for your purpose--for that amount."

"Yes, but where's the money to come from? The tailors are mighty shy about trusting us shop-boys, I can tell you. I don't want to tell the governor, for he would say I was an extravagant dog, and give me a good scolding."

"I'll tell you what, John--I'm not the one to see a friend in difficulties, when I can help him. I'll lend you the money."

"Charley, you're a perfect trump. I always knew you were a capital fellow,"

said John, impulsively.

"Wait till I get through, John. I will lend it, but on conditions."

"O, well, I'll agree, if they are reasonable."

"I think you will find them not unreasonable. You are to pay me back, half at the beginning of next month, and the rest at the beginning of the month succeeding."

"That's all right, Charley. I agree to that. I was only afraid you would want me to let the whole of next month's salary go in payment, and that would leave me rather hard up."

"I won't be quite so hard with you as that."

"But, I say, Charley, how in the world do you contrive to have so much money ahead as to be able to lend fifteen dollars?"

"For that matter, I've got forty dollars laid by."

"How in creation did you contrive to do it? I don't see. You have better clothes than I do."

"Perhaps I don't spend so much on small expenses."

"O, I'm sure you do. You've paid fifteen or twenty dollars for the privilege of being bored to death by that miserable old bookkeeping."

"I'm alive yet," said Charley, laughing, "so I can't have availed myself fully of the privilege. But it wouldn't take long for your theatre charges to mount up to fifteen dollars—the tuition I pay."

"O, yes it would. You're mistaken there."

"Don't you average twice a week at the theatre, or some other place of amusement?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"And that would amount to a dollar a week."

"Yes."

"There are fifty-two weeks in the year, John," said Charles, significantly.

"O bother! Who could have patience to make such a calculation?"

That evening the two boys went together to a clothing establishment to look for a new coat. They found an excellent one, which could be obtained for fifteen dollars, and an inferior article, which would be sold for twelve.

John half intimated that he would prefer the cheaper coat and the balance of the loan in cash; but as Charley did not look favorably upon this proposition, the fifteen-dollar coat was purchased, much to the improvement of John's appearance.

In this way three years passed. Neither of the boys changed essentially in that time. Both received, as before, equal salaries, though considerably larger than when first introduced to the reader. Charles had now three hundred dollars deposited in the savings bank, while John, as before, found it hard to make both ends meet. He was often obliged to be indebted to Charles for a temporary loan, although the latter always stipulated strictly for its payment at fixed times. This he did not do so much from parsimonious feelings as from the knowledge that the money would otherwise be expended in some foolish way by his friend.

About this time it happened that on coming down to the store one morning, Charles Dean learned that Mr. Harrison, the bookkeeper, was detained at home by sickness.

This was particularly embarrassing to the head of the firm, as the first of January was approaching—a time when a

bookkeeper's duties are usually somewhat increased.

Charles Dean stepped forward modestly, and remarked, "I think, Mr. Percival, that I could take Mr. Harrison's place while he is sick, if you should see fit to have me."

"You!" exclaimed Mr. Percival, surprised. "I did not know you understood bookkeeping."

"I have given considerable attention to it evenings since I have been in your employ."

"That is, you have studied it, but have you any practical acquaintance with it? There is a good deal of difference between theory and practice."

"I know there is, sir, and so I have often volunteered to assist Mr. Harrison when he had more than usual to do."

"I think I will try you then, I believe."

Charles was forthwith installed at the bookkeeper's desk, and commenced his duties. He had a clear head, and showed himself no novice. So regularly and systematically did the work go on, that Mr. Harrison was not missed.

Mr. Percival, in order to test Charles Dean's competency for the post which he temporarily occupied, rapidly surveyed his books each evening, evidently with satisfaction, though he was not a man to express his approbation as freely as some might have done.

On the sixth day of Mr. Harrison's sickness, Mr. Percival received a note from him to this effect:

"Dear Sir:--The state of my health induces me to anticipate a step which I should at all events take within two or three years--that of retiring from my post. In doing so, I have pleasure in recommending as my successor, Charles Dean, who is--I have every reason to know, though young--thoroughly

competent to fulfil the duties which such a situation imposes.

George Harrison."

"Charles, will you read this note?" said Mr. Percival to our hero.

His face flushed with pleasure as he did so.

"I shall adopt Mr. Harrison's suggestion," said Mr. Percival, "and offer you the post. What is your present salary?"

"Four hundred dollars, sir."

"For your services as bookkeeper you shall receive a thousand dollars the first year, and a hundred additional each year till it amounts to fifteen hundred--the amount received by Mr. Harrison."

Charles was overjoyed at this promotion, and John a little confounded at the sudden rise of his old comrade. At the present time Charles receives just double the salary paid to John White, who, as a man, is as prodigal and careless of the future as when a boy.

* * *

Readers of Newsboy are familiar with Gary Scharnhorst's many articles on Horatio Alger, Jr. Gary also writes for other publications, and the following article--undoubtedly one of the best analyses of Alger yet written--originally appeared in the Fall-Winter 1980-81 (volume 10) issue of The Markham Review. It is reprinted by permission of The Markham Review, published by Wagner College, Staten Island, New York.

In the "Notes on Contributors" section of this issue of MR there appears this paragraph: "Gary Scharnhorst taught American studies at the Universitat Stuttgart on a Fulbright during 1978-79 and now teaches American literature and interdisciplinary studies at the University of Texas at Dallas. He has articles forthcoming in American Quarterly, the Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual, and other journals. Professor Scharnhorst is the author of the volume on Alger in the Twayne Series."

Demythologizing Alger

Gary Scharnhorst

When Horatio Alger, Jr., died in 1899, one brief obituary reported that this American writer of juvenile stories had been "perhaps better known to the boys of thirty years ago than to the present generation."¹ Available sales statistics tend to support this assertion. Alger's only best-sellers had been published between 1868 and 1871,² and his early modest popularity had so waned by 1881 that he had been surprised by the sale of 20,000 copies of his biography of James Garfield, the President assassinated that year.³ A prolific writer, Alger completed over a hundred juvenile books during his career, yet by his own estimate in 1897 his aggregate sales totaled only about 800,000 volumes.⁴ Sales of the six volumes comprising the early "Ragged Dick series" (1868-70) accounted for about one-fifth of this total.⁵ After his death, however, Alger's popularity soared. By 1910, his juvenile novels were enjoying estimated *annual* sales of over one million⁶—that is, more Alger novels than were sold in total during his life. His books, of which an estimated seventeen to twenty million copies were sold in all,⁷ remained popular until about 1920, when sales plummeted. By 1926, the circle of Alger's middle-class readers had so shrunk⁸ that the leading publisher of his books stopped printing them. By 1932, less than twenty per cent of seven thousand surveyed New York boys recognized Alger's name and only about fourteen per cent admitted to having read even one of his books.⁹ He was described that year in the pages of one mass-circulation periodical as "forgotten" and two years later in the pages of another as "extinct."¹⁰ In 1947, a poll of twenty thousand New York children revealed that ninety-two per cent of them "had never heard of Alger. Less than one per cent had read any of his books."¹¹

On the crests and troughs of this sales curve may be graphed two questions I wish to address in this essay: If Alger's didactic tales were more popular in 1869 than in 1899, why did he enjoy such astounding posthumous popularity? And, more importantly, if Alger was virtually forgotten by the late 1920s, how did he acquire renown as a success ideologue? As Malcolm Cowley has complained, "I cannot understand how [Alger] should come to be regarded as the prophet of business enterprise; nor why the family melodrama that he wrote and rewrote for boys should be confused with the American dream of success."¹² As long ago as 1945, Cowley noted this discrepancy between what Alger is believed to have written and what he actually wrote. He observed that the original Alger hero was not a poor boy who became a millionaire by dint of honesty, enterprise, and patience, but a poor boy who rose to middle-class respectability as a reward for his filial piety.¹³ Alger's unearned reputation as a success mythmaker was institutionalized only two years later with the inauguration, in 1947, of the Horatio Alger Awards for meritorious service to the causes of political or religious conservatism and economic orthodoxy. By tracing ap-

parent transformations in the image of success associated with Alger in the mass media, including literature, between the Civil War and World War II, the network of assumptions governing the American idea of success over several generations may be silhouetted.

I

During that era of the late-nineteenth century known in America as the Gilded Age, Alger was viewed, much as he wished to be viewed,¹⁴ simply as a writer of didactic juvenile stories. His tales were invariably evaluated according to the standard of moral influence—for good or ill—which they exerted on impressionable young minds. Particularly during the late 1860s and 1870s, critical opinion of Alger's fiction, expressed in such prestigious periodicals as the *North American Review*, *Putnam's*, and the *Nation*, generally was favorable.¹⁵ Thomas Wentworth Higginson commended *Frank's Campaign* (1864) as "a good story of home life,"¹⁶ for example, and Lyman Abbott similarly praised *Tattered Tom* (1871).¹⁷ Even late in his career, Alger's defenders insisted that a "fine vein of high morality . . . pervades everything from his pen."¹⁸ However, these defenders gradually were overwhelmed by the superior forces of those who complained about the potentially nefarious effect of his unrealistic and sensational fiction. As early as 1869, parents were warned to beware of Alger's crippling influence on children by a review for the *Nation*, one of the first American magazines to promote literary realism.¹⁹ This complaint, echoed in a variety of forums, crescendoed through the 1870s and 1880s. For example, a reviewer for *St. Nicholas* charged that Alger's *Brave and Bold* (1872) contained characters "such as we do not meet in real life—and we are very glad that we don't meet them."²⁰ In 1877, a Boston minister condemned the "endless reams" of "drivel poured forth" by Alger and other decadent *fin de siècle* juvenile writers and asked why "young and growing minds" should be polluted with "books which can only weaken and demoralize them."²¹ These criticisms tended to undermine Alger's modest initial popularity, and their appearance coincided with the first precipitous decline in sales of his books. The volumes even were removed from some library shelves during this period. Still, whether defenders or detractors, all applied the same critical standard to Alger's fiction: Does it improve and instruct its readers?

This common view of Alger as an aspiring, if misguided, moralist was shared by literary artists of the Gilded Age. At least three late-nineteenth century authors criticized the sensational and unrealistic characteristics of his didactic fiction. In her novel *Eight Cousins* (1875), Louisa May Alcott expressed her conviction that juvenile literature like Alger's damaged its young readers, even though, as she admitted, "The writers of these popular stories intend to do good."²² W.D. Howells, in *The Minister's Charge* (1887), satirized Alger's juvenile stories by writing a realistic version of the country-boy myth. Rather than ridiculing the Alger tradition, Howells in this novel "preserved the tradition in all its essentials, altering only the surface heroics

and popular gilding by which Alger sentimentalized it for his juvenile readers."²³ Although composed of many original elements, Howells's novel bears a strong resemblance to Alger's two-part story about Sam Barker, *The Young Outlaw* (1875) and *Sam's Chance* (1876). Each author described his subsequent misadventures there, and each set at least part of the story in Boston. In Howells's realistic version, Lemuel Barker leaves his home in a New England village to seek success in the city. In quick succession, like a victimized country boy from an Alger novel, he is mistaken for a criminal, cheated of his money by a clever confidence man, robbed by tramps of his few remaining possessions, and jailed for a night after being falsely accused of purse-snatching. Though acquitted and released, he spends a second night in a charity flophouse before, gradually, he begins to rise to respectability. Even the conclusion to the novel realistically revises the conventional Alger ending: Lem indefinitely postpones his marriage and returns to his hometown sadder, wiser, and alone. Similarly, Stephen Crane a few years later satirized Alger's unrealistic plots in one of his comic sketches, entitled "A Self-Made Man: An Example of Success That Anyone Can Follow" (1899), by exaggerating their defects to the point of absurdity.²⁴ In short, Alcott, Howells, and Crane shared the view common during this period that Alger, though well-intentioned, failed to write ennobling fiction for boys.

II

During the heyday of his popularity early in this century, Alger acquired a reputation as a champion of Uplift whose formulaic fiction blended moral heroism with economic success. As early as 1898, he was praised in a religious magazine for his "clever trick of turning incidents to account," a new twist on the old complaint about his unrealistic plots; and his latest hero was commended as "an admirable boy with wonderful ability to take care of himself."²⁵ Three years later, Carolyn Wells publicly celebrated Alger for teaching "bravery, courage, and pluck through the medium of such characters as newsboys, shoeblacks, match-sellers and luggage boys, who almost invariably rise to fame and fortune by their own persevering efforts."²⁶ Similarly, in 1906, the ambitious hero of Alger's *The Young Musician* was praised in the pages of the *New York Times*.²⁷ Such comments indicate that Alger's original reputation as a writer of simple moral tales for boys had begun to be blurred. When he was criticized, he was less liable to be charged with writing unwholesome fiction than reprimanded for emphasizing the accretion of material rewards.²⁸ Whatever the personal taste of the reader, when read according to the canons of taste which were observed early in this century his moral tracts seemed to praise entrepreneurs who earned and spent their wealth honestly. His books were popular during this Progressive era, a period of intense nostalgia for an imaginary olden time of equal opportunity and equitable trade, because they satisfied the popular desire to reform the institutions of business and government through a "return to fundamental morality."²⁹ As Richard Weiss has noted, Alger

became "a nostalgic spokesman of a dying order. Of middle-class rural origins, he was always an alien in the industrially dominated society of his adulthood. . . . Alger's work reflects an attempt to re-create the more harmonious society in which he was raised."³⁰ Because he idealized in his juvenile fiction the moral certainties of a pre-industrial economy, Alger ironically enhanced his appeal among a later generation of readers for whom he was reinvented as a kind of Progressive prophet. Significantly, some of his books even were packaged for sale as Progressive reform tracts. At least two editions of his novels issued during the first decade of the new century—a New York Book Company edition of *Joe's Luck* and the Street and Smith edition of *Tom Brace*—pictured President Theodore Roosevelt on the cover, though Alger had died before the Great Trustbuster assumed the Presidency and had not referred to him in his fiction. Unlike the more arcane preachments of Edward Ellis, Oliver Optic, and other long-forgotten juvenile writers of the nineteenth century, Alger's moral fables apparently could be adapted to the exigencies of a new age.

Moreover, modern opinions of Alger undoubtedly have been influenced by the confusing mass republication of the books early in this century. Cheap editions of Alger's novels were published by approximately forty firms between his death in 1899 and 1920. However, many of his earliest novels which conclude as the moral hero grasps the bottom rung on the ladder of respectability were rarely reprinted, and some publishers abridged others by deleting as many as seven of the original chapters, often those in which the hero performs virtuous deeds for which he later is rewarded. Thus the most popular editions of Alger's novels garbled the moral message of the original editions. In effect, Alger's work was editorially reinvented to appeal to Progressive era readers. Whereas in his own time Alger was credited with inventing a moral hero who became modestly successful, during the early years of this century he seemed to have invented a successful hero who was modestly moral. The moral uses of money, not moral behavior *per se*, seemed to have been the focus of the stories.

Still, many writers popular during this era adapted Alger's fictional formula, at least as it had been slightly skewed, to their own versions of the success story. Alger's most direct successor, Edward Stratemeyer, who dominated the juvenile market for over two decades before his death in 1930, blended moral heroism and economic success in his fiction. Alger himself wrote to Stratemeyer that "of all the juvenile writers you can write most like me,"³¹ so he arranged for his friend to inherit some of his literary remains. Between 1900 and 1910, Stratemeyer published a total of eleven "completions" under Alger's name. His own works, including the Tom Swift and Rover Boys series, likewise testify to the popularity of the Alger model. As early as 1902, he was praised for writing "the sort of book that used to come from the pen of Horatio Alger, Jr."³² One of the most popular novels for adults published during this era, Owen Wister's *The Virginian*

(1902), of which were sold an estimated two million copies, owed at least part of its sales success to its assimilation of the Alger pattern. Like an adult Alger hero, the Virginian begins as a poor cowboy, becomes the ranch foreman, invests his wages in land, and by the end of the novel is destined to become one of Wyoming's chief citizens.³³ Similarly, Gene Stratton-Porter in her best-selling novel *Michael O'Halloran* (1915) tapped the wellsprings of Progressive sentiment by copying "the Horatio Alger formula, taking a little newsboy up the success ladder on the wings of determination and pluck."³⁴ Her novel might well have been entitled "Ragged Dick Redux."

Alger's new-won popularity as a champion of Uplift also influenced so-called "serious" authors during this period. Theodore Dreiser, who later acknowledged that he had read Alger novels avidly as a Hoosier farm boy,³⁵ probably modeled a chapter of *Sister Carrie* (1900) on an episode in Alger's *Helen Ford*.³⁶ Moreover, Dreiser apparently meant the middle name of his protagonist Frank Algernon Cowperwood, a robber-baron who first appeared in *The Financier* (1910), to be read quite literally: not an Alger hero. Except for the fact that both earn money, Cowperwood and Alger's scrupulously moral hero have little in common. Dorothy Parker years later would chastise Dreiser for "approximating" Alger's style; ironically, her comment evinced his success in adopting the deliquescent Alger formula for his own purposes.³⁷ Similarly, Sherwood Anderson satirized the Progressive view of Alger in *Windy McPherson's Son* (1916), in which he described the hollow success won by an Iowa newsboy who goes to Chicago, becomes rich, and marries his boss's daughter. As long ago as 1916, Waldo Frank discerned "the faint footprints of Horatio Alger" in the novel,³⁸ and Wright Morris again has claimed recently that the "strain of experience" in it "is closer to Horatio Alger" than to Anderson's own.³⁹ Sinclair Lewis also adapted "the tradition of Horatio Alger" to the expectations of Progressive era readers by depicting "the mystique of mechanics, rather than the formula of hard work and brave honesty, as the key to economic success" in his early novel *The Trail of the Hawk* (1915).⁴⁰ Like Wister and Porter, Anderson and Lewis were indebted to Alger although they did not acknowledge that debt. It seems that, whereas the Alger formula was frequently employed in the fiction of the period, Alger himself had not yet acquired symbolic status as the progenitor of an American success myth. Wister, Porter, Anderson, and Lewis did not explicitly confess their debt to Alger partly because, despite the increased sales of his books, his name had not yet acquired widespread cash value in the popular culture.

III

The most radical transformations in Alger's reputation, his canonization as an American success mythmaker, occurred largely after 1920 as his books declined in popularity and lapsed from print. Much as his novels seemed to endorse Progressive reform when read in the benign spirit of the Progressive age, a generation later these same novels,

no longer submitted for correction either to current readers or the bar of critical opinion, were recollected in the acquisitive spirit of the prosperous 1920s. Just as Bruce Barton reinvented Jesus of Nazareth as a business leader in *The Man Nobody Knows* (1924), Alger's hero was reinvented during this decade as a business tycoon. According to a *Time* magazine article published in 1928, "Ragged Dick, Phil the Fiddler, and the heroes of every one of his 119 books survived adversity, invariably achieved fame and fortune at the end of the last chapter."⁴¹ Simply stated, Alger's moral tracts, unlike the less adaptable novels by Ellis, Optic, and other nineteenth-century writers for boys, acquired new meanings in each new cultural context. Alger himself was transformed into a popular symbol of economic triumph. No longer considered merely a writer for didactic fiction, he became, in the words of the *New York Times*, a mythologizer who had created "successful protagonists, ambitious boys who, through one variation or another of an ever-efficient formula, found their way up the ladder of achievement."⁴² The phrase "Horatio Alger hero" also obtained popular currency in the language during the 1920s—its first appearance in print may have occurred as late as 1926,⁴³ even as more libraries were removing his books from their shelves. By 1928, only the common invocation of Alger's name reminded people of his earlier popularity. As one commentator asked rhetorically that year, "Every one knows Alger—and yet, do they? To most people Alger is just a name."⁴⁴

The first biography of Alger, published in 1928, also serviced this popular impression of Alger as a successful ideologue. The author assigned the task of writing it for a commercial press, Herbert R. Mayes, later director of the *Saturday Review* and editor of *Good Housekeeping*, portrayed his subject as the victim of a tyrannical father who forbade his son's marriage to a childhood sweetheart and bullied him into the Unitarian ministry. As a result of his tragic adolescence, according to Mayes, Alger became neurotically obsessed with success. That the work would not be recognized as potboiling histrionics seems hardly possible today, yet not until 1972 did Mayes finally admit publicly that his biography had been a hoax. "Not merely was my Alger biography partly fictional, it was practically all fictional," he wrote. "Unfortunately—how unfortunately!—the book when it appeared was accepted pretty much as gospel. Why it was not recognized for what it was supposed to be baffled the publisher and me."⁴⁵ The best explanation for the uncritical acceptance of Mayes' fictionalized biography is that its representation of Alger as a success-worshipper was wholly compatible with the view of Alger popular during the prosperous 1920s. "Nobody bothered to do any digging," as Mayes later observed,⁴⁶ because his work seemed to satisfy the need for a usable past about Alger. Ironically, it is valuable as a source of information, not about Alger's life, but about Alger's utility as a symbol of success. The desperate achievement of his heroes, according to Mayes, was less a reward for faithful service and moral behavior than the psychological compensation of a writer who suffered with an inferiority com-

plex and sought emotional catharsis in his fiction. "All of Horatio Alger's heroes started poor and ended up well-to-do. All of them were in search of money," Mayes wrote.⁴⁷ Thirty years later, students of Alger were still psychoanalytically interpreting his stories on the basis of the Mayes biography. For example, Kenneth S. Lynn claimed that by "Sublimating a lifetime which Alger himself judged to be ignominiously unheroic, he created the 'Alger hero,' and thereby became one of the great mythmakers of the modern world."⁴⁸ Obviously, Mayes's admission of hoax undermines this too-tidy interpretation; still, it is significant that the seed which produced this hybrid Alger was planted during the boom years of the 1920s.

During this decade, too, Alger's name and supposed authority as a popular proponent of business success began to be invoked by some *literati* whose adolescence had coincided with the heyday of Alger's popularity early in the century. In 1923, Thomas Wolfe, still a struggling young playwright in New York, complained that "I feel like Horatio Alger's boy hero: alone in the cit-ee—which has no pit-ee. . . . Unfortunately I have not the money-making penchant which all of Horatio's boy-heroes seemed to have."⁴⁹ Wolfe's identification with the Alger hero of economic myth acquires even greater significance in light of his allusions to Alger as a success ideologue in *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929). In that autobiographical novel, he described his hero reading "through all the infinite monotony of the Algers—*Pluck and Luck*, *Sink or Swim*, *Grit*, *Jack's Ward*, *Jed the Poor-House Boy*—and dozens more. He gloated over the fat money-making of these books. . . . reckoning up the amount of income, if it were not given, or if it were, dividing the annual sum into monthly and weekly portions, and dreaming on its purchasing power. His desires were not modest—no fortune under \$250,000 satisfied him."⁵⁰ Wolfe's reminiscence vividly illustrates how easily the message of the original Alger books could be misappropriated, for Alger's heroes rarely won a reward so large as this.

Alger's symbolic status among writers of the 1920s is most apparent in the works of F. Scott Fitzgerald, whose satires of the Alger stories popular in his childhood became a vehicle for his condemnation of the crass materialism rampant in his adulthood.⁵¹ For example, in his little-known play *The Vegetable, or From President to Postman* (1922), the title of which burlesques such Alger titles as *From Canal Boy to President*, Fitzgerald parodied popular success literature in general and Alger's work in particular. The protagonist is an ironic Alger hero whose father, a doddering old fool named Horatio, is a caricature of Alger himself. Fitzgerald's failure with this play was one of execution, not intention, for in it he discovered the rich parodic vein profitably mined earlier by Crane and later by Nathanael West. Notably in *The Great Gatsby* (1925), he again paid curled-lip service to the popular image of success by satirizing Alger. While it has become a critical commonplace to observe that this novel "is a contemporary variation of an old American success pattern, the rags-to-riches story exalted by American legend,"⁵² the extent to which

Fitzgerald assimilated Alger specifically in it has not been fully appreciated. Rather than "an inverted Horatio Alger novel,"⁵³ it may be more accurately described as a sequel to an ironic Alger fable. Indeed, Fitzgerald probably parodied Alger's *Jed the Poor-House Boy* in chapter VI, in which he treated Gatsby's adolescent apprenticeship to a patron named Dan Cody. Like Alger's hero Jed Gilman, young James Gatz (who shares his initials) meets his patron aboard a luxurious yacht and is given a job and a new suit of clothes. Moreover, in both novels the hero changes his name "at the specific moment that witnessed the beginning of his career."⁵⁴ However, whereas Jed's patron is a neat and mannerly young gentleman, Dan Cody is a "pioneer debauchee." Whereas at the end of Alger's story the hero moves into his ancestral mansion and lives happily-ever-after on an annual bequest of \$25,000, Gatsby is cheated of his \$25,000 legacy and must survive by his wits. Fitzgerald's story is, in effect, a sequel to that ironic version of Alger. For yet another satire of Alger, his story "Forging Ahead" (1929), originally published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, Fitzgerald borrowed the title of an Alger novel about the rise of a poor but virtuous sixteen-year-old hero who is designated the heir of a rich uncle and thereby wins his way to Yale College. In Fitzgerald's parody, sixteen-year-old Basil Lee's plan to attend Yale is threatened when his family suffers financial reverses. Rather than abandoning his dream, Basil resolves to work his way through school and immediately begins to read "half a dozen dusty volumes of Horatio Alger, unopened for years."⁵⁵ Through a friend he eventually finds employment in the shops of the Great Northern Railroad but learns his first morning there that, alas, life does not imitate Horatio Alger novels: "The president's little daughter had not come by, dragged by a runaway horse; not even a superintendent had walked through the yard and singled him out with an approving eye."⁵⁶ Instead, he is reprimanded for loafing and soon fired. As a last resort, he visits a cantankerous great-uncle who has feuded with the rest of the family for twenty years and is hired as an escort for his square-chinned cousin, but he soon loses even this sinecure. Despite his ill-success at holding a job, Basil triumphs at the end of the story when his mother sells family property for four hundred thousand dollars—a plot machination reminiscent of Alger. In all, these satires of the economic myth associated with Alger are another indication that by the 1920s he had acquired symbolic status.

IV

Alger ultimately was transformed from an economic mythmaker, a reputation he acquired during the prosperous 1920s, into a patriotic defender of the social and political *status quo* and erstwhile proponent of *laissez-faire* capitalism. During the Great Depression of the 1930s and the world war that followed, Alger's name became a shibboleth used to identify Americans who affirmed traditional verities and values. The characteristics which had come to be associated with the Alger hero—the potential greatness of the common man, rugged individualism,

economic triumph in a fabled land of opportunity—seemingly summarized the American way of life threatened by the Depression and preserved by the war. Significantly, whereas Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, in the original edition of *The Growth of the American Republic*, published in 1930, did not mention Alger at all, in the second and third editions of this standard history text, published in 1937 and 1942, they asserted that Alger probably had exerted greater influence on the American character than any other writer except perhaps Mark Twain.⁵⁷ Moreover, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, an index of articles published in popular magazines since 1892, finally catalogued its first article about Alger in 1932, the centenary of his birth—a telling symptom of his enshrinement as a culture hero after his sales popularity had waned. As one writer observed in the *New York Times* that year, “It is difficult for an adult to appraise the Alger books unless he has read them during his boyhood. If this is the case he is likely to be lost in a glamour of pleasant memories.”⁵⁸ Read or selectively remembered during the Depression and the war, the novels seemed to be neither moral tracts nor simple success stories, but popular political propaganda. As the national economy collapsed, Alger’s presumed celebration of the merits of free enterprise won popular acclaim. In 1932, on the hundredth anniversary of his birth, both the *New York Times* and the *Herald Tribune* editorially praised him for propagating a philosophy of self-help.⁵⁹ In 1934, a writer for the *Christian Science Monitor* assured his readers that despite hard times “the Alger pattern still persists.”⁶⁰ A popular biography of Frank Munsey published in 1935 celebrated that publishing entrepreneur as “an Alger hero.”⁶¹ Over the next few years, Alger enjoyed a steady crescendo of popular praise. In 1938, Frederick Lewis Allen repeated the by-then common opinion that Alger had “had a far-reaching influence upon the economic and social thought of America” and had helped “to determine the trend and tradition of American business life.”⁶² In 1939, on the fortieth anniversary of his death, Alger was eulogized in the *New York Times Magazine*: “His imprint on American life is still clear after forty years; the papers almost every week report the success of some ‘typical Alger hero’ of the present.”⁶³ The following year, Street and Smith published a comic-book version of Alger’s *Mark the Match Boy* and NBC radio broadcast a dramatization of his *From Farm Boy to Senator*. During this program, the governor of New York, Herbert Lehman, declared that as a boy he had been an Alger fan and that “I was particularly interested because he showed in his books that the United States was a country of great opportunity for all and he was always a steadfast advocate of the democratic principles on which our nation was created and which have made it great.” Rather than despair during the Depression, Lehman adjured his listeners to affirm that, as in Alger’s time, “Broad and unrestricted opportunities for success exist for those who have the vision, the equipment, the industry and the courage to seize them.”⁶⁴ A week later, the *New York Times* editorially commended Lehman for

“rallying to the defense of Horatio Alger, and confessing without shame that he was ‘an Alger fan when a boy.’ It was Alger’s comforting thesis that virtue and industry are always rewarded. . . . Hard times come and go, but America is not going to shut up shop. We expect the country to prosper.”⁶⁵ Symbolically, Lehman had prescribed Alger as a home-remedy for the economic ills afflicting the nation, reassuring a patient with a strong constitution of her eventual complete recovery.

With the advent of world war, Alger’s symbolic importance was enhanced. Hardly a month after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Alger’s birthday was celebrated by the Children’s Aid Society of New York—an annual event by this time, after the date had been ignored for decades—and the ceremony was reported and editorially praised in the *New York Times*.⁶⁶ In the popular motion picture *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (1942), a wartime biography of the patriotic playwright George M. Cohan, the protagonist describes his life to President Franklin Roosevelt as a Horatio Alger story.⁶⁷ In 1943, the *Atlantic Monthly*, a magazine which had not even reviewed an Alger book during the author’s life, featured an article about Alger’s contemporary influence entitled “They Made Me What I Am Today.” Its author suggested that because “the generation that grew up . . . before the last war” had, as boys, been inspired by Alger, their “faith in *laissez-faire*, in the best of all possible worlds, in the inevitability of rags to riches” served the nation well in the prosecution of the new war.⁶⁸ In 1944, Stewart Holbrook discussed Alger’s influence in still more grandiose terms:

With “Ragged Dick” Alger founded a new school of American literature, the Work and Win, Upward and Onward story; and no matter that today he is unread, Alger was a man of destiny. At exactly the right moment he put into simple words and a standard plot the hopes and beliefs of a nation, and by the sheer power of reiteration caused them to congeal into a national character, the Horatio Alger hero. . . . For the next half century and more nearly everyone in the U.S. believed that every bootblack was a potential capitalist with plug hat and gold-headed cane.⁶⁹

As a wartime patriotic gesture in 1945, a publisher reissued four Alger novels that had been out-of-print for a generation.⁷⁰ Copies of this volume still were available for purchase in 1970, however, so it would seem that Alger’s books were hardly more popular in- than out-of-print. Still, the impression that Alger was enjoying a revival and that his novels remained influential was indelible. Among the periodicals which reviewed the omnibus favorably were the *New Yorker*, *Time*, the *New York Times*, *Commonweal*, *New Republic*, and *Saturday Review*; and the title of the review written by William Rose Benet for the latter magazine, “A Monument to Free Enterprise,” suggests the slant adopted by all.

After the war, as the rest of the country demobilized, Alger retained his appointive political office. In 1947, the *New York Times* again praised him on its editorial pages, contending that only disillusioned historians “who wrote, or may still be writing, in strong disapproval of America as

a whole" dared to criticize Alger and his legendary success story,⁷¹ and *Advertising Age* called for a new Alger to inspire contemporary American youth with the self-reliance of their fathers and to counteract "government interference" in business.⁷² Meanwhile, Holbrook suggested that the original Alger had "put free and untrammelled competition on the side of the angels. . . . Though the 1870s and the eighties and nineties saw dismal and widespread poverty in the United States, and though anarchists and socialists fomented strikes and riots, the Red Dawn never came up over the horizon. Too many Americans held the vision of Upward and Onward."⁷³ No longer perceived as merely moral fables, Alger's novels seemed more like tools of social control wielded by an entrenched ruling class. Basking in popular esteem like a decorated war hero, he lent his name and reputation to the Horatio Alger Awards, a merchandising vehicle for political and economic orthodoxy also inaugurated in 1947. Sponsored by the American Schools and Colleges Association, Inc., which had become "concerned about the trend among young people towards the mind-poisoning belief that equal opportunity was a thing of the past," the Alger Awards Committee decided to select annually "living individuals who by their own efforts had pulled themselves up by their bootstraps in the American tradition."⁷⁴ Past winners include Dwight Eisenhower, Ronald Reagan, Billy Graham, W. Clement Stone, and Ray Kroc. Clearly, during this final phase of Alger's transformation into a maker of American myth his books were no longer considered as simple literary documents, but were evaluated according to the social and political ends they seemed to serve. Alger was viewed in a new light which distorted his original moral intention.

Richard Wright, the American novelist, shared this popular perspective on Alger for, in 1945, soon after leaving the Communist Party, he argued in print that the juvenile writer had been "perhaps American capitalism's greatest and most effective propagandist."⁷⁵ Still, the most notorious invocation of Alger as a capitalist myth-maker in the literature of this period appeared in Nathanael West's caustic parody, *A Cool Million* (1934). Shortly before his death in 1940, West would write in an unproduced screenplay of *A Cool Million* that "Only fools laugh at Horatio Alger, and his poor boys who make good. The wise man who thinks twice about that sterling author will realize that Alger is to America what Homer was to the Greeks."⁷⁶ In his novel, he turned this American Homer on his head and satirized the facile optimism of Americans in their collective epic-dream. His absurd hero, Lemuel Pitkin, who is exploited throughout the work by an ironic patron, ex-President Nathan "Shagpoke" Whipple, loses his money, teeth, right eye, left thumb, a leg, his scalp, and finally his life in a *tour de force* of misadventures. In the grotesque *tableau* that ends the novel, Whipple eulogizes the martyred all-American boy and inaugurates the fascist millenium. Unfortunately, the novel has been generally unappreciated or disregarded since its publication. Its style has been the special object of condemnation. Ironically, however, the complaint that its prose "is as flat as the Alger

series itself"⁷⁷ may underscore the extent to which West succeeded in mocking the writer he considered a type of American Homer, "the Bulfinch of American fable and the Marx of the American Revolution."⁷⁸ Selecting a style designed to serve his thematic purpose, West constructed his work from altered and rearranged fragments of at least six Alger books. In all, over a fifth of his finished novel is vintage Alger only slightly revised.⁷⁹ Whereas Alger had written in *Tom Temple's Career*, for example, "Tom beheld a stout young fellow, about two years older than himself, with a face in which the animal seemed to predominate," West wrote, "Lem beheld a stout fellow about three years older than himself, with a face in which the animal seemed to predominate."⁸⁰ This systematic plagiarism went unrecognized until recently because, much as Mayes had assimilated the popular image of Alger as a success-worshipper in his biography, West assimilated the image of Alger as a political ideologue in his parody. Significantly, however, West invented all polemical passages that appear in his novel, for he found no political manifesto in the actual Alger stories from which he copied. He had to reinvent Alger to serve his literary purpose and to appeal to the readers of his generation.

* * *

Recent invocations of the Alger myth, as in the annual ceremonies of the Alger Awards Committee, Garry Wills's *Nixon Agonistes* (1970), and John Seelye's novel *Dirty Tricks, or Nick Noxin's Natural Nobility* (1974), indicate that Alger's reputation crystallized with his institutionalization in 1947 and that his utility as a political symbol has remained essentially unchanged since the Depression. Each succeeding generation between the Civil War and World War II, however, discovered its own usable past in Alger by reinventing him according to the spirit and values of the particular moment. The transformations which his reputation underwent—from didactic writer for boys, to Progressive moralist, economic mythmaker, and finally political ideologue—seem to have been dictated less by the content of his books than by the cultural context in which the books were read or remembered. Unlike other juvenile writers, Alger's thematic concerns were peculiarly adaptable to popular contemporary concerns long after his death. An economic and political symbol of success today more by accident of birth than by deliberate design, "it was not until 1947 that anyone got around to exploiting him into an organized symbol."⁸¹ More than ever, Alger had become, with the features of his mutation complete, the victim of mistaken identity.

In his juvenile novels, to be sure, Alger influenced a generation of young readers early in this century. As one familiar only with his modern reputation as an apologist for industrial capitalism might expect, many of these readers, such as Benjamin Fairless of U.S. Steel and James A. Farley of Coca-Cola,⁸² became real-life counterparts to the mythic Alger heroes. But to consider Alger simply as an apologist for business is to distort grossly his basic

humanitarian impulse. As one familiar only with his modern reputation might *not* expect, many well-known American writers on the political left, including not only Dreiser and Wright, but Jack London and Upton Sinclair,⁸³ read Alger's books as youngsters and were not stirred to embrace capitalism as adults. As John Cawelti has concluded, "Judging from the prominence of his themes, there is as much evidence that Alger was an important influence on future reformers as a popular model for incipient robber barons."⁸⁴ Alger himself hardly could have imagined that he would be so long remembered, much less celebrated as an American mythologizer of success a half-century after his death. As he wrote to a friend in 1897, "If I could come back 50 years from now probably I should feel bewildered in reading the *New York Tribune* of 1947."⁸⁵ He wrote this with a soothsayer's foresight, for one of the items in the news that year which undoubtedly would have perplexed him beyond his wildest flights of fancy publicized the inauguration of the annual Horatio Alger Awards. After fifty years, Alger could not have recognized his progeny.

Notes

- ¹E. S. Martin, "This Busy World," *Harper's Weekly*, 5 Aug. 1899, p. 761.
²Frank Luther Mott, *Golden Multitudes* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), pp. 309, 321, 322.
³Alger to Mr. Elderkin, 2 Aug. 1844. Used by permission of Yale University.
⁴*Who's Who in America 1899-1900* (Chicago: Marquis, 1899), p. 10. In a letter owned by the Huntington Library dated 25 Mar. 1897, Alger mentioned receiving the form to be completed and returned to the editor of this volume.
⁵Alger to R. A. Alger, 2 May 1888. Used by permission of the University of Michigan.
⁶Everett T. Tomlinson, "The Perpetual 'Best-Sellers,'" *World's Work*, 20 (June 1910), 13045.
⁷Mott, p. 159.
⁸Arthur M. Jordan, *Children's Interests in Reading* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1926), *passim*.
⁹"The Cynical Youngest Generation," *Nation*, 17 Feb. 1932, p. 186.
¹⁰"A Forgotten Boy's Classic," *Literary Digest*, 30 Jan. 1932, p. 20; Winifred King Rugg, "A Library Exile," *Christian Science Monitor*, 19 Nov. 1934, p. 7, col. 1.
¹¹"Horatio Alger is an Unknown to 92% of Boys and Girls in Seven Clubs in City," *New York Times*, 13 Jan. 1947, p. 23, col. 2-3.
¹²"Horatio Alger: Failure," *Horizon*, 12 (Summer 1970), p. 65.
¹³"Holy Horatio," *Time*, 13 Aug. 1945, p. 98.
¹⁴Alger, "Writing Stories for Boys," *Writer*, 9 (Feb. 1896), 36.
¹⁵See, for example, "Literature," *Putnam's*, NS 2 (July 1868), 120; and "Children's Holiday Books," *Nation*, 3 Dec. 1874, p. 368.
¹⁶"Children's Books of the Year," *North American Review*, 102 (Jan. 1866), 242.
¹⁷"Editor's Literary Record," *Harper's Monthly*, 43 (Aug. 1871), 459.
¹⁸"Horatio Alger, Jr.," *Golden Argosy*, 17 Oct. 1885, p. 364.
¹⁹"The Last of the Children's Books," *Nation*, 30 Dec. 1869, p. 587.
²⁰"Books for Boys and Girls," *St. Nicholas*, 2 (Jan. 1875), 190.
²¹Quoted in *Library Journal*, 2 (1878), 299.
²²*Eight Cousins* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1973), p. 187. See also Thomas Beer, *The Mauve Decade* (New York: Knopf, 1926), p. 24.
²³Robert Falk, *The Victorian Mode in American Fiction, 1865-1885* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1965), p. 132. See also Scharnhorst, "Howell's *The Minister's Charge*: A Satire of Alger's Country-Boy Myth," forthcoming in *Mark Twain Journal*.
²⁴R. W. Stallman, *Stephen Crane: A Biography* (New York: Braziller, 1968), p. 209; Eric Solomon, *Stephen Crane: From Parody to Realism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 50.
²⁵*The Independent*, 20 Oct. 1898, p. 1128.
²⁶"Writers of Juvenile Fiction," *Bookman*, 14 (Dec. 1901), 352.
²⁷"Found: A Hero," *New York Times Saturday Review of Books*, 8 Dec. 1906, p. 846.
²⁸*Public Libraries*, 16 (1911), 454.
²⁹Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), p. 8.
³⁰*The Myth of American Success* (New York: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 49, 59-60.
³¹Alger to Stratemeyer, 26 Oct. 1898. Quoted by permission of the Stratemeyer Syndicate.

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³³John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 224.
³⁴Roderick Nash, *The Nervous Generation* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970), p. 138.
³⁵*Dawn* (New York: Liveright, 1931), pp. 122, 125.
³⁶Scharnhorst, "A Possible Source for *Sister Carrie*," *Dreiser Newsletter*, 9 (Spring 1978), 1-4.
³⁷"Words, Words, Words," *New Yorker*, 30 May 1931, p. 66.
³⁸"Emerging Greatness," *Seven Arts*, Nov. 1916; rpt. in Walter Rideout, ed., *Sherwood Anderson: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974), pp. 14, 15.
³⁹"Windy McPherson's Son: the Storyteller's Story," in *Windy McPherson's Son*, by Sherwood Anderson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. x, xiii.
⁴⁰Mark Schorer, *Sinclair Lewis* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), p. 225.
⁴¹"Alger," *Time*, 7 May 1928, p. 47.
⁴²Halsey Raines, "Horatio Alger Created 119 Synthetic Heroes," *New York Times Book Review*, 22 April 1928, p. 2.
⁴³"Frank A. Munsey as a Horatio Alger Hero," *Literary Digest*, 9 Jan. 1926, p. 48.
⁴⁴Milton Byron, "New Biography," *Outlook*, 11 April 1928, p. 598.
⁴⁵Herbert R. Mayes to William Henderson, 3 July 1972. Quoted by permission of the Horatio Alger Society. Excerpts of this letter appear in "A Few Words about Horatio Alger, Jr.," *Publishers' Weekly*, 23 April 1973, p. 33.
⁴⁶"Holy Horatio!" *Time*, 10 June 1974, p. 18.
⁴⁷*Alger: A Biography Without a Hero* (New York: Macy-Masius, 1928), p. 220.
⁴⁸*The Dream of Success* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1955), p. 6.
⁴⁹Elizabeth Nowell, ed., *The Letters of Thomas Wolfe* (New York: Scribner's, 1956), p. 53.
⁵⁰*Look Homeward, Angel* (New York: Scribner's, 1929), p. 85.
⁵¹Scharnhorst, "Scribbling Upward: Fitzgerald's Debt of Honor to Horatio Alger," *Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual* (1978), 162-169.
⁵²Edwin Fussell, "Fitzgerald's Brave New World," *ELH*, 19 (Dec. 1952), rpt. in Arthur Mizener, ed., *F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 48.
⁵³Richard Lehan, "The Nowhere Hero," in David Madden, ed., *American Dreams, American Nightmares* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970), p. 110.
⁵⁴*The Great Gatsby* (New York: Scribner's, 1953), p. 98.
⁵⁵Jackson R. Bryer and John Kuehl, eds., *The Basil and Josephine Stories*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald (New York: Scribner's, 1973), pp. 145-164.
⁵⁶*Ibid.*
⁵⁷*The Growth of the American Republic*, 2nd and 3rd eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937 and 1942), pp. 287-288.
⁵⁸David Ferris Kirby, "The Author of the Alger Books for Boys," *New York Times Magazine*, 10 Jan. 1932, p. 5.
⁵⁹"The Newsboys' Hero," *New York Times*, 13 Jan. 1932, p. 22, col. 4.
⁶⁰Rugg, p. 7, col. 2.
⁶¹George Britt, *Forty Years—Forty Millions* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1935), pp. 56 and *passim*.
⁶²"Horatio Alger, Jr.," *Saturday Review of Literature*, 17 Sept. 1938, pp. 3, 17. This article was reprinted in *Reader's Digest*.
⁶³L. H. Robbin, "Alger: No Alger Hero," *New York Times Magazine*, 16 July 1939, p. 11.
⁶⁴"Lehman Speaks as Old Alger Fan in Acclaiming Our Opportunities," *New York Times*, 30 Mar. 1940, p. 9, col. 2.
⁶⁵"An Alger Fan," *New York Times*, 6 April 1940, p. 16, col. 3.
⁶⁶"Alger's Birthday Marked," *New York Times*, 14 Jan. 1942, p. 12, col. 4.
⁶⁷*Yankee Doodle Dandy*, with James Cagney, Warner Bros., 1942.
⁶⁸Newman Levy, "They Made Me What I Am Today," *Atlantic Monthly*, 172 (Nov. 1943), 117.
⁶⁹"Horatio Alger, Jr., and Ragged Dick," *New York Times Book Review*, 2 July 1944, p. 9.
⁷⁰*Struggling Upward and Other Works* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1945). The other works were *Ragged Dick*, *Phil the Fiddler*, and *Jed the Poor-House Boy*.
⁷¹"Topics of the Times," *New York Times*, 16 Jan. 1947, p. 24, col. 4.
⁷²John G. Cawelti, *Apostles of the Self-Made Man* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 102.
⁷³*Lost Men of American History* (New York: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 228, 238.
⁷⁴*Opportunity Still Knocks*, Jubilee ed. (New York: Horatio Alger Awards Committee, 1971), p. 3.
⁷⁵"Alger Revisited, or My Stars! Did We Read That Stuff?" *PM*, 16 Sept. 1945, magazine section, p. 13.
⁷⁶Quoted in Jay Martin, *Nathanael West: The Art of His Life* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970), p. 219.
⁷⁷David G. Galloway, "A Picaresque Apprenticeship: Nathanael West's *The Dream Life of Balso Snell* and *A Cool Million*," in Jay Martin, ed., *Nathanael West: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 47.
⁷⁸Quoted in Martin, *Nathanael West: The Art of His Life*, p. 218.

¹⁰For a more detailed description of West's plagiarisms, see Douglas Shepard, "Nathanael West Rewrites Horatio Alger, Jr.," *Satire Newsletter*, 3 (Fall 1965), 13-28; and Scharnhorst, "Good Fortune in America" (Ph.D. diss., Purdue University, 1978), app. D.

¹¹*Tom Temple's Career* (Racine: Whitman, n.d.), pp. 50-52; *A Cool Million* (New York: Avon, 1973), pp. 15-17.

¹²Richard Huber, *The American Idea of Success* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), p. 43.

¹³*Opportunity Still Knocks, passim.*

¹⁴Jack London, *John Barleycorn* (New York: Century, 1913), p. 133; Up-ton Sinclair, *Autobiography* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962), p. 9.

¹⁵Cawelti, *Apostles of the Self-Made Man*, p. 117.

¹⁶Alger to Irving Blake, 12 May 1897. Quoted by permission of the Henry E. Huntington Library.

* * *

REMARKS OF ROBERT E. WILLIMAN
AT CEREMONY HONORING MAX GOLDBERG

Strive and Succeed! The World's
Temptations Flee; Be Brave and Bold!
And Strong and Steady Be! Shift for
Yourself, and Prosper Then You Must;
Win Fame and Fortune, While You Try
and Trust!

Horatio Alger frequently autographed volumes with this verse, constructed principally of titles from several of his many books. It expresses the philosophy his characters so vividly brought to life in story after story, his books not only describing their roads to success, but also pointing out the pathways to achievement that were to inspire generations of readers.

The U.S. Postal Service is pleased to issue the Horatio Alger Commemorative stamp to mark the 150th anniversary of his birth and to recognize the enduring influence of his works. (This was from the official first day ceremony program).

For several years the Horatio Alger Society lobbied for the Alger stamp. Its proposal was twice rejected by the Postal Service. In the Alger spirit of "Strive and Succeed" it was resubmitted to be considered again. Late last year it was approved, but too late for stamps to be printed in time for Alger's January birthday. Among the many problems requiring difficult decisions was the proper site for its issuance.

Three locations were considered: First was Massachusetts, birthplace of the author. New York City, the setting

of the stories for which the author gained prominence, and his home while he was writing them was also considered. Finally, the location of the annual convention of the Horatio Alger Society was chosen. A convention site is determined by a member of the Society who is willing to take on the formidable task of hosting the convention. Our 1982 host, Bill Russell, lives close to Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, which has a convention center which was suitable. The Postal Service chose the latter location in recognition of the work of the members in promoting the issuance of the stamp, a real struggle done in the true Alger spirit.

Our purpose today is to honor a man who for many years has researched and studied Horatio Alger, the man and his works. Dr. Max Goldberg, a former President of the Society and a member of its Board of Directors, has selflessly shared the results of his work with Alger biographers and other students of Alger. He has become widely known as the chief defender of Horatio Alger. The word is out. If you say anything uncomplimentary about Alger, Max is going to take you on (eloquently).

When I called Max to tell him that the stamp would be issued at the convention, he said, and I quote, "I'll be there if I have to crawl." Well, Max's doctor had other ideas and he was forbidden even crawling as a mode of transportation to the convention. I requested that I be allowed to hold this ceremony today. The Postal Service enthusiastically granted the permission as Max had been an invaluable consultant to them prior to the issuance of the stamp. As Chairman of the Commemorative Stamp Committee, I wanted to recognize Max as a personal source of information and inspiration in my role of the past three years.

We have in our midst several members of the Society who have come here today to assist me in honoring Max. Most notably, Brad Chase, President of the Horatio Alger Society during the period of our efforts to obtain the stamp. He is accompanied by the wife of deceased



Horatio Alger Commemorative Stamp April 30

A commemorative stamp honoring American Author, Horatio Alger, will be issued by the postal service on April 30th.

Dr. Max Goldberg of Worcester Street, Natick, an Alger historian, has worked diligently to secure the issuance of this stamp.

The postmaster general of the United States is sending a special representative, Mr. Robert E. Williman, chairman of the Alger Society stamp committee, to Natick to present Dr. Goldberg with an Alger souvenir stamp

album to thank him for his efforts.

This presentation ceremony for Dr. Goldberg will take place on May 7, 1982 at

1:00 P.M. At the Natick Post Office.

Author Alger lived in Natick for some time, and is buried in Glenwood Cemetery.

Reprinted by permission
Natick Bulletin,
 Natick, Mass.
 April 14, 1982

Photo shows Max Goldberg, Past President of the Horatio Alger Society, at ceremony in his honor at Natick, Massachusetts.

member, the distinguished Dick Seddon, for whom the Alger Society has named its most coveted award.

I would like to thank the city of Natick for its hospitality and present an official set of the first day covers.

As a token of my appreciation of his efforts in planning this event, I would like to present a set of covers to Mr. Thomas Kent, Postmaster of Natick.

In sincere appreciation of his help and inspiration and as a token of my personal regard, I would like Max to have the new Alger postcard with the first day cancel, as well as a program from the first day ceremony. I must report, however, that it has been defaced. It has the autographs of all of the individuals who took part in the ceremony.

Now on behalf of the Horatio Alger Society, I would like to present the official set of first day covers to Max as well as a recording of the entire first day ceremony.

It is my honor to represent the Postmaster General of the United States and present a special album to Max. This is the same album that was presented to the participants in the ceremony, with one exception. It is inscribed in gold, "Dr. Max Goldberg." Thank you.

[Editor's note: The following is a transcription of parts of the tape recording given me by Bob Williman. Postmaster Kent is speaking]:

Although personally I would prefer to have the first day issue ceremony here in Natick, I am very happy that we have the opportunity to finally thank Max for all his efforts on behalf of the Alger Society. For today we are not only remembering Horatio Alger, we are here to honor and thank a friend, a Natick-ite, a historian, and a true Alger boy, Dr. Max Goldberg. I like to think that Natick has two Horatio Algers, and one of them is Max Goldberg. Dr. Max knows more about Horatio Alger

than Horatio Alger did. What Carl Sandburg is to Abraham Lincoln, I am sure you will agree, Dr. Max is to Horatio Alger. For a long time, Dr. Max strove to have the Horatio Alger stamp issued. He strove and succeeded. I promise you that the Postal Service does not take that long to deliver a letter--only to issue a stamp. And I assure you that one of Mr. Alger's book, entitled Slow and Sure, is not about the Post Office.

After getting to know Max these last few months, I can assure you that the saying is true that behind every great man is a great lady, and Mrs. Goldberg, we thank you for all you have done behind the scenes throughout the year (applause). For many years, Max has been introducing Horatio Alger to us. Extolling the virtues of Alger's writings and lavishing praise upon them. Now that he is white haired and a little tired from his labors we take this time today to say, "Thanks, Max--you're a fine man, we salute you."

[Comments by Max Goldberg]:

I am deeply honored and overwhelmed at the honor that has been bestowed upon me by the Postmaster General of the United States, Mr. William Bolger. However, I am cognizant of the principal role that our Natick Postmaster, Mr. Thomas Kent, has played in preparing the details for this meeting.

Mr. Robert William, Chairman of the Horatio Alger Society Stamp Committee, had personally planned to bring part of the program to Natick when he learned that health problems precluded my traveling to Willow Grove, Pennsylvania for the originally scheduled exercises in that area. Postmaster Kent then arranged these exercises for today. . . . Thank you very much.

In conclusion, I would like to share some observations regarding Horatio Alger, Jr. in whose honor this stamp has been issued. In his books he showed how determination, study, thrift and hard work shall lead to success. He didn't predict being a millionaire, but



Robert E. Williman, Max Goldberg and Natick, Massachusetts Postmaster Thomas F. Kent in the Natick Post Office.

at least something over mediocrity. True, many of such stories had luck for an ingredient. However, life has shown us in every day experience that luck does play an important part in our lives. There is a Hindu proverb which states that luck is one half of success.

What Alger instilled in his contact with the boys in his books were hope and confidence. Hope that they would break the status quo of their lives, and confidence that they can be just as successful as anyone else.

Of course, time changes, and so do traditions, but the fundamental structure of study, determination and hard work is the same formula for success today. . . .

* * *

HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Horatio Alger Society had its inception between 1961 and 1964 and was incorporated in Mendota, Illinois, May 22, 1965, and

WHEREAS, the Historian of the Horatio Alger Society indicates that the Society had previously absorbed into its embryo membership the Horatio Alger Club of Quakertown, Pennsylvania, and

WHEREAS, this year, 1982, is the first occasion that the annual Convention of the Horatio Alger Society has been held in Pennsylvania, and

WHEREAS, the Creed of the Horatio Alger Society is partially implemented by much of the membership through the collecting of Mr. Alger's books as well as the collecting of periodicals containing

serializations, short stories and poems authored by Mr. Alger, and

WHEREAS, three men from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have (prior to, and through much of the life of the Horatio Alger Society, contributed greatly through their uncopyrighted published articles on the printed works of Horatio Alger, Jr., as well as their individually shared information through letters and conversation) made the lot of the Alger collector a far easier road to travel, and

WHEREAS, all good works of whatever kind—which leads to the implementation of our creed—should be recognized and honored by our Society; and, this gathering is a most appropriate time and place for a plaudit, now

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Horatio Alger Society meeting in annual session in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, May 1, 1982 (without deference to, nor detracting from, other contributors and their contributions, from other States and Commonwealths), pay tribute to the late Morton S. Enslin and to Rev. Donald L. Steinhauer and Stanley A. Pachon as the greatest Keystone State Founts-of-Knowledge on Horatio Alger, Jr. writings, who resided in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania during the Twentieth Century, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that living honorees Rev. Donald L. Steinhauer, R. R. #1, Nescopeck, PA 18635 and Stanley A. Pachon, 520 E. Fifth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015 be furnished copies of this Resolution noting that Stanley A. Pachon has been a continuous member of the Horatio Alger Society since 1964, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that nothing in this Resolution shall be construed as precedent setting, insofar as using the annual gathering to add further plaudits to Horatio Alger Society members who, in the past, have been recipients of annual By-Laws mandated awards bestowed at our annual conventions.

Adopted this first day of May, 1982



(Editor's note: The following material is from Frank Capra's The Name Above the Title, and was sent in by Gilbert K. Westgard II. In a letter dated April 5, 1982, Gil writes: "Did you see the 90 minute program about Frank Capra on Sunday, April 4, where he received the tenth Annual Life Achievement Award from The American Film Institute? It was really a good program. The "Close Up" section in the April 3-9 TV Guide called his life "a real-life Horatio Alger success story.")

It all began with a letter. A letter from America—when I was a big-eyed child of five. It was the first letter Papa, my forty-seven-year-old peasant father, Salvatore Capra, had received from anywhere. In Papa's old cracked house of stone and mortar, clinging by its toenails to the rocks in the village of Bisacquino, Sicily, the local priest read the letter to a houseful of gaping relatives: Papa, Mama, six ragged children; Papa's four brothers and their families; and all of Mama's kinfolk.

I remember clearly my traumatic shock on learning that not one of my peasant clan could read. I knew people were different—some poor, some rich, some kind, some mean. I knew these things because the children of the poor are born with their eyes and ears open, and know most things before they can walk. And now I knew that peasants were poor and had to work like beasts because they were ignorant. That thought must

have burned itself into my child's mind; I never forgot it, never lost my resentment against it. My later mania for education had its genesis in that letter.

The prime challenge an ignorant peasant family faces in a foreign land is to keep alive. Never mind sending kids to school. Get the moola, the hard jingling cash in the pockets, the only now defense against the old wolf.

Within a month Papa, Mama, and all the rest of the family found jobs: in brickyards, olive-oil plants, dress shops, candy stores—all except me. I went to school, the Castelar Street school.

To my family I was a maverick. I was jeered at, scorned, and even beaten. But I wouldn't leave school. That meant not only paying for my own education, but putting some change in the family kitty as well. Oh, I loved my family and respected their thrift. But how could they know what I knew, that sure I was born a peasant, but I'd be damned if I was going to die one.

Pop McCarey's Fight Pavilion, at Alameda and Main, had been a popular spot for the fight bugs around 1910. Fight nights, I was one of many kids who hustled papers to the straw hat crowds that filled Pop's huge, unpainted, sawdust-floored barn. Pop not only put on good fights, he put on unique shows that rocked the rafters.

One piece of showmanship Pop McCarey served up to the toffs was the Newsboys' Shoe Contest. This was good for ten minutes of continuous laughter. About thirty bona fide newsboys of all sizes and colors stood on the ring's apron outside the ropes. If your voice hadn't changed you were eligible. Each was paid fifty cents before the contest. At the first bell each boy took off his shoes and threw them into the center of the ring. Two attendants mixed the shoes up in a pile. The little old shoes were so beat up and worn they all looked alike. The idea was this: The first boy to find his own shoes, put them on, and

tie them would win five dollars.

The second bell rang. Thirty ragged kids scrambled through the ropes, dove into the shoes. The crowd jumped to its feet. Pandemonium broke out. Cheers for the smaller kids, boos for the big ones. It was like throwing thirty strange cats into a cage. The final goal was the find your shoes and put them on. But the immediate goal was to keep anyone else from beating you to it. The moment any kid looked like he found his two shoes, others knocked him down, jerked away his shoes, and threw them out into the crowd. The crowd threw them right back. Shoes flew in all directions. If some wise kid tried to sneak out of the ropes to put his shoes on, ringsiders pushed him back into the ring. It was a bedlam of screaming and laughing. Finally, when too many noses got bloody, the bell clanged loudly. Pop McCarey walked into the ring, found a small kid who had drawn cheers, and whether his shoes were tied or not Pop lifted his arm in victory and gave him a five-dollar gold piece. If the crowd cheered long enough for some other kid, Pop would call it a tie and pay off both. Now nickels and dimes showered into the ring. Attendants gathered them up to give to the boys later. When the kids left the ring (to eat all the free hot dogs they could eat), the cheers shook the building. As you can imagine, many a ragged urchin walked off with a gold piece, wearing two left shoes. . . .

. . . The alley kids I grew up with had really been midget adults—tough, smart, worldly. The fist had been the law, a bloody nose the closing argument. Survival was not predicated on "Wash back of your ears, Mickey," or, "Eat your spinach, Mary." Survival, to us, had meant not being caught alone at night by the Dogtown Dagos or the Ann Street Aztecs. As newkids, it had meant fighting for the possession of better corners—from the outskirts of town to Fifth and Broadway, L. A.'s Metropolitan Opera House for those who sang "Extra! Extra!"

The nine-block area surrounding Fifth and Broadway—with its thirty-six prize corners—had been the big time for the paper hustlers; their own Times Square. Corner by corner you fought your way out of the residential rim toward the business hub, where papers sold fast. When you thought you could "take" the man ahead of you with your fists, you challenged him. If you won, you were one corner closer to the big time. If you lost, you still had a continuous fight on your hands with the kid behind you in this pecking order of bloody noses. At the age of six I started hawking papers around the industrial areas of Main and Alameda. When I quit, ten years later, I had made Third and Broadway, just one block away from the magic square of the big time.

. . . Mayor Sam Yorty and the councilmen of Los Angeles declared May 12, 1962, as "Frank Capra Day," in honor of a newskid who got his first nosebleeds in their fair city's alleys.

Through the grammar school years I sold papers—mornings, evenings, and Sundays. I gave every penny to Mama. Then came the pow-wow about high school. It was a continuous argument. Papa was on my side but he was out-yelled. "That's enough already," the others argued. "He can read and write now. Time he goes to work like the rest of us. Who's gonna support him?"

Papa finally put his foot down. "If Frankie no ask for money—he go to high school."

Studies came so easy for me I finished high school in three and a half years, and for a purpose: to work six months to earn some money I could keep. Nobody knew it yet, but I had determined to go to college.

At college, I still managed to pay my own way and contribute several hundred dollars a year to my family. Yet, scholastically I was always among the first three in my classes. Books, books, books—I read them all, from science to history to poetry.

. . . I'll have to admit that we book collectors are a tight-knit, snooty lot. We feel superior to the average book lover because we delve into the history of books—the vagaries of the printer, the gambles of the publisher. And, above all, we know that a great book is probably the most precious gift man can leave to posterity. And, say we book collectors, a good way to become privy to the author himself is to collect his first editions. For in tracking down first printings, one often opens the dossier on the writer: his botched beginnings, shattered hopes, dark dreams, frustrations, endurances; what drove him to write the book; what made the book a collector's item.

You probably have read Milton's Paradise Lost, and loved it. But wouldn't you love it more if you knew that the first edition of this classic—with the title page reading: Paradise Lost by JOHN MILTON—was a complete failure? And that when the disgruntled publisher grudgingly printed a second edition, he lower-cased the author's name to John Milton? And that when the second edition moved as slowly as the first, the name on the third edition was further diminished to J. Milton—and to just J. M. on the fourth edition? But then the book began to sell. On the fifth edition the initials expanded back to John Milton, and by the sixth printing the author's name was restored to the upper-case glory of the first edition: JOHN MILTON.

If you yawn, and ask why that bit of trivia should make you love Paradise Lost more than you do, well, now—that's what makes us book collectors so snooty—nobody understands us.

. . . At Caltech I zeroed in on the Freshman Scholarship Prize. I had to win it. In my freshman year, I was fortunate enough to wangle a job as one of the five waiters at the campus dorm which housed sixty-five students. Our pay was room and board. I would have had to quit had not the good officials of Caltech loaned me the tuition fees for my last three college years, so

that—out of my sundry jobs—I could send Mama ninety simoleons a month while finishing school.

By this time I had become somewhat of a hero to my family. My older brothers and sisters, now married, had found out that in America illiterates run so far, then hit a brick wall. Now I became the family hope for fame and success. When in June, 1918, I got my degree in chemical engineering, they threw me a wing-ding of a party and drank toasts to the big bank president in the family. Having been born to worship money, they naturally thought the highest reward for education was to make you the boss of where they kept the money.

Up to that time, in spite of being constantly on the run between classes and jobs, life had been one great big ball for me. Conquering adversities was so simple I began to think of myself as another Horatio Alger, the success kid, my own rags-to-riches hero.

From: The Name Above the Title
An Autobiography
 Copyright 1971 by Frank
 Capra
 (used by permission)

(Editor's note: Arsenic and Old Lace, It's a Wonderful Life, Lost Horizon, Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, and many other unforgettable films he produced have made the name of Frank Capra familiar to millions. His autobiography, The Name Above the Title, tells of his struggle for success in the best Alger tradition. Like Phil, the Fiddler, he arrived in this country from Italy with little besides a gritty determination to succeed. These excerpts from his autobiography depict that struggle of his early years, gives us an unusual picture of Los Angeles newsboys, and a personal view of Frank Capra as a book collector. If you have enjoyed these passages selected by Gil Westgard, read the original book. It's a fascinating volume that tells of a life lived in the best Alger tradition. There are still Alger heroes to-day, and Frank Capra is one of them).

PRESIDENTIAL CHIT CHAT
 by Bob Sawyer, PF-455

I recently received a letter from Forrest Campbell, one of our co-founders, inviting me to become a member of "THE OVER 70 GROUP OF HAS". I was honored and wrote back immediately to accept and furnish him with my birthdate and other required data. There is a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction after you have attained the magic age of 70. You have lived well beyond the average of life's expectancy, and your chest expands a bit when some kind soul expresses disbelief that you could really be that ancient. Forrest issues a quarterly bulletin to the "over 70 gang"—I almost said, "the over-the-hill gang"!!!—with various news items and proposals. I'm pleased as punch to be invited.

Speaking of anniversaries, birthdays, and memorable dates—do you know that twenty years ago this past July, Forrest Campbell put out Volume I, #1 of the Newsboy? Yes, we're twenty years old!! As our current editor, Jack Bales, pointed out in his editorial of the last issue—"This is no small feat in a literary era when most 'little magazines' die within thirty-six months." A newsletter or other small publication is always a problem for a non-profit organization because the difficult and thankless task of editing, printing, publishing, and mailing all usually falls upon the shoulders of one person. We in HAS have truly been fortunate. Forrest started Newsboy in July of 1962 at his own expense, and continued as editor for seven full years. Few will argue that without him and Newsboy in the formative years, there would be no HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY today. Starting with a mimeograph letter on 8½" x 14" sheets, Newsboy has developed and grown into the first rate, polished, printed product of today. The thirty-two page, Volume XX, #s 1 & 2, the beginning of our twenty-first year, was the result of a great deal of work by Jack, and is a perfect example of how fine a piece of work it is. We should be proud, and if you liked it as well as

I did, drop Jack a line and tell him so.

I have gone over the Newsboys of the past years and noted the tenure of our various editors. I think we owe them all a vote of thanks for providing the fine organ representing HAS. It would be impossible to estimate the hours they have collectively spent to make this possible—all on a volunteer basis at no cost to the Society.

July 1962 through June 1969—Forrest Campbell, PF-000.

August and September 1969—Irene Gurman, PF-OA1. Irene also served as Associate Editor for several years while Forrest was Editor.

October 1969 through May 1972—Carl Hartmann, PF-102.

June and July 1972—Jack Bales, PF-258 (as Guest Editor).

September 1972 through May 1973—Carl Hartmann.

June—July 1973 & August 1973—Jack Bales (as Guest Editor).

September—October 1973 through December 1973—Carl Hartmann.

January—February 1974—Jack Bales (as Guest Editor).

March—April 1974 through August 1974—Carl Hartmann. At this time Carl announced that Jack Bales, our present Editor, would take over. So this issue will complete eight full years that Jack has served as our editor.

SPECIAL BOUQUETS TO HIM AND ALL OF HIS PREDECESSORS.

While passing out editorial bouquets, I might mention that probably the most helpful and prolific contributor to Newsboy over the years has been Gilbert K. Westgard II, PF-024. Gil, a tireless Alger researcher, has provided many interesting and informative articles for

HAS members.

After being editor on and off for several years, our hard working Secretary did not divorce himself entirely from the Newsboy. He still handles the mailing of each issue with the competent help of his wife, Jean. He also keeps a file of back issues and upon request will furnish them at \$1.00 per issue to our members. Carl is running into a storage problem and asks if some good member would take the "back issue" problem off of his hands. ANY VOLUNTEERS? If interested, please contact Carl.

* * *

ALGER'S POEMS IN THE
BOSTON CHRISTIAN REGISTER

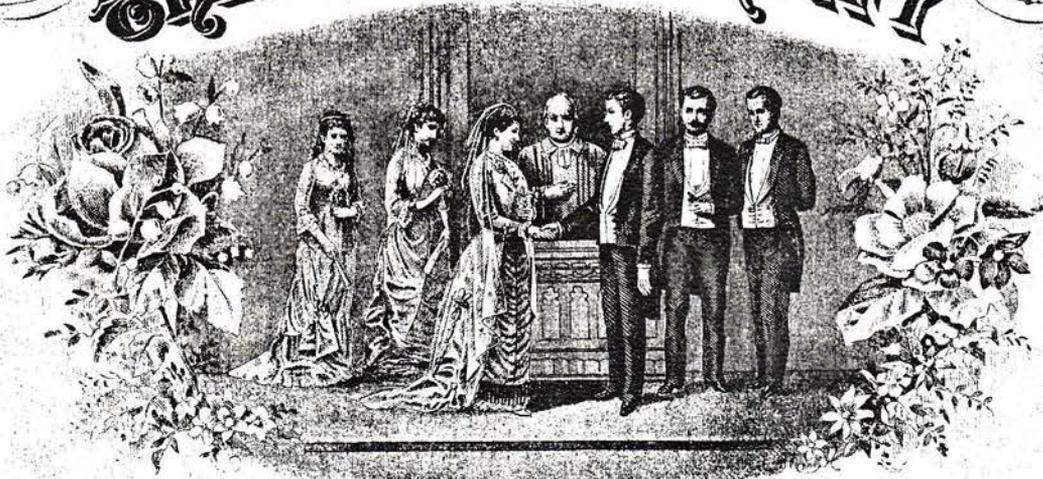
by Jack Bales, Gary Scharnhorst,
and Bob Bennett

Over a period of ten years, Horatio Alger, Jr., contributed poetry to the weekly paper of Boston Unitarianism, the Christian Register. In all, seven of his poems appeared there—all of them also published either earlier or later and thus already known. However, there is a new poem title among the seven—Alger contributed the final twenty-six line stanza of Nothing to Do to the Register under the title "Something to Do." For the record, the poems are as follows:

1. "Our Gabrielle," 26 March 1853, p. 52. Original publication.
2. "The First Tree Planted by an Ornamental Tree Society," 24 June 1854, p. 100. Original publication.
3. "Something to Do," 12 September 1857, p. 148.
4. "Mrs. Browning's Grave at Florence," 2 November 1861, p. 176.
5. "One Year Ago," 17 May 1862, p. 76. Original publication.
6. "Last Words," 5 September 1863, p. 144.
7. "King Cotton," 5 March 1864, p. 40.

WHAT THEREFORE GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN PUT ASUNDER.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY



That *on the first day of Nov 18.73 William Illger*
and *Minnie L. Meyer*

WERE UNITED BY ME IN

HOLY MATRIMONY

At *the House of her Grand-parents* on the *First* day of
November in the year of our Lord 18*73*

In Presence of *Friends and Relatives*

Signed *Horatio Alger, Pastor of the Unitarian,*
Church, So. Natick Mass

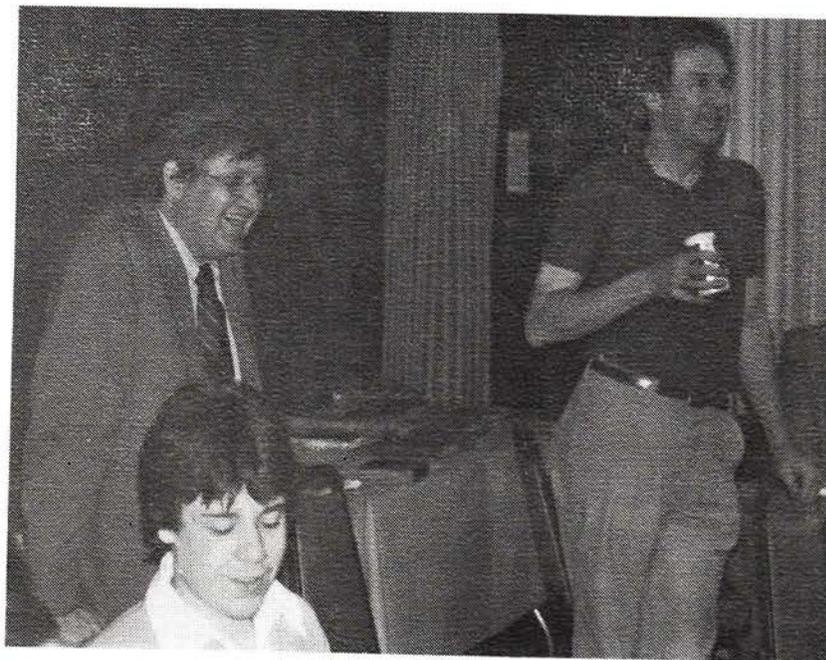
THEREFORE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER AND
SHALL CLEAVE UNTO HIS WIFE AND THEY SHALL BE ONE FLESH.
GEN. 11. 24.



[Opposite page]-- Quoting from a letter by Clarence A. Illgen, Box 221, Falmouth, Mass. 02540: "My father and mother were married by Horatio Alger, Sr. in 1873 at Natick, Mass. I'm 86 years old and I'd like to know more about the Horatio Alger Society. I have the original marriage certificate signed by him. Also, while visiting my daughter in Lake Tahoe we visited an old mining town in California, Columbia, and found his signature in the old court house there."

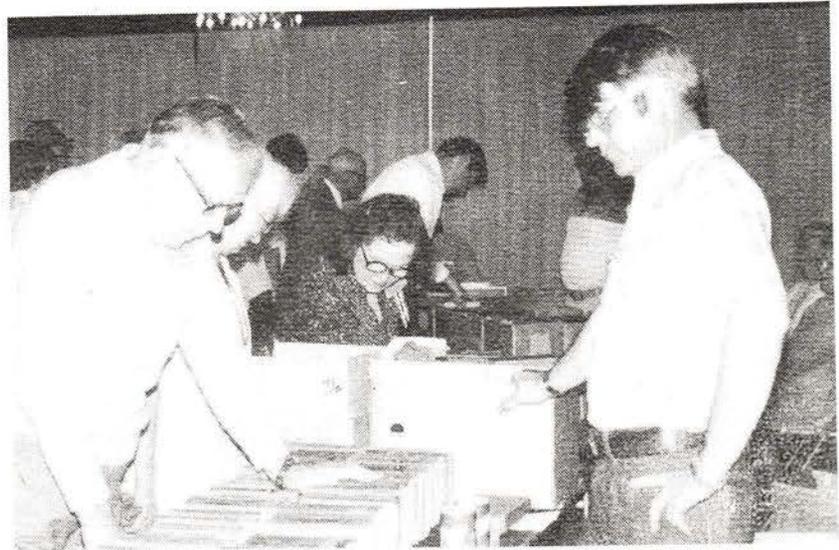
[Left]-- Helen Gray, Director of the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, gives an address at the Alger Stamp First Day Ceremony at the HAS Convention.

[Below]-- Taking a break from the Convention banquet activities are Jerry Friedland and Bob Bennett (with drink in hand) and one of Brad Alexander's boys.





Horatio Alger Society members, guests and visitors go through many tables laden with books at the annual book sale.



ALGER'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
YANKEE BLADE IN THE 1850s

by Gary Scharnhorst

That several of Horatio Alger, Jr.'s short stories were reprinted in the Yankee Blade late in his career is hardly news. However, his contributions to that magazine early in his career have not been identified to date. In the Class Book of his Harvard Class, in about 1859, he noted that he had been "Contributing Editor to one Boston weekly for 2 years nearly and to another for 9 mos." before entering the Divinity School at Cambridge in 1857. In an interview with the Boston Daily Advertiser published on April 10, 1896, and reprinted in the January-February 1981 Newsboy, moreover, Alger specified the titles of these magazines: ". . . he did considerable work for the Yankee Blade, of which Prof. William Matthews, now of Chicago University, was then editor. Mr. Moulton, husband of Louise Chandler Moulton, was editor of the True Flag, and Mr. Alger was identified with this paper during Mr. Moulton's management." Though some of Alger's contributions to True Flag have been identified, all of those in the Yankee Blade have remained unknown until now. Alger published at least thirteen stories and sketches and one poem in this magazine between 24 September 1853 and 10 March 1855 under the "Carl Cantab" pseudonym. Complete bibliographical data are as follows:

1. "Selling an Antiquary. A New Way to Raise the Wind," 24 September 1853, p. 2.
2. "An Elopement in High Life. A Reminiscence," 20 November 1853, p. 2.
3. "Some More of Them 'Ere Beans," 31 December 1853, p. 2.
4. "Having His Hair Dyed," 14 January 1854, p. 2.
5. "Large Stories," 28 January 1854, p. 2.

6. "The Veiled Lady," 11 March 1854, p. 2.
7. "Determined to Trade," 25 March 1854, p. 2.
8. "The First of April" /poem/, 1 April 1854, p. 2.
9. "Aunt Abigail's Visit to Boston," 6 May 1854, p. 2.
10. "Catching a Schoolmaster Asleep," 3 June 1854, p. 2.
11. "Not Married Yet," 10 June 1854, p. 2.
12. "Seeing a Ghost," 24 June 1854, p. 2.
13. "Hiring a Housemaid; or Mrs. Perkins's Experience," 7 October 1854, p. 2.
14. "A Mutual Surprise; or All is Not Gold that Glitters," 10 March 1855, p. 2.

Unfortunately, even this list is probably incomplete. It is based on the run of the Yankee Blade housed in the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, which, though the most complete holdings extant, contains only about one-half of the total issues for the period I investigated.

The editor of Newsboy will occasionally reprint some of the items cited above over the next several months.

THE FIRST OF APRIL
by Carl Cantab

I was sitting in my chamber,
----- House, No. 20,
Enjoying what Italians call
The "dolce far niente."
The winds of March at length had piped
Their farewell blast and vanished,
And thoughts of wintry frosts and chills
Were now by April banished.

Just then I heard the post-boys' knock,
"Come in," I muttered lazily,
And cast a half-expectant glance

Through vapors floating hazily,
 "Well, boy, what brings't thou? Prithee
 tell,

Relieve me from my great suspense."
 "Why, here's a letter, sir," said he,
 "For bringing which I charge two
 cents."

A perfumed envelope of white
 Directed in a female hand!
 Aha! here lies some mystery
 I fain would understand,
 It cannot be some lady fair
 Has looked on me with favoring eyes,
 And knowing my great bashfulness,
 Has planned a sweet surprise.

The very thought my face suffused,
 Awhile the note in doubt I held,
 Then opened it. Alas, my dreams
 Were all too cruelly dispelled.
 I saw--now, while I write of it,
 My feelings I can scarcely school--
 These words in staring capitals,
 "I'VE MADE ONE APRIL FOOL!"

* * *
 COLLECTED IN COLUMBUS
 by
 "Horatio Alger, Jr."

Plans are going forward for our 19th
 annual convention to be held in Colum-
 bus, Ohio. As announced in the last
Newsboy, the dates are May 5th, 6th,
 7th, & 8th, 1983. The convention motel
 will be THE ROYAL MOTOR INN, 3232
 Olentangy River Drive. Our host will
 be HAS President Bob Sawyer.

Little did I think while I was writing
 all those stories, poems and articles
 that people would come from all over
 the USA just to talk about, trade, buy
 and sell copies of my books. It makes
 me almost as proud as it did last April
 when the Postal Service issued a stamp
 especially for me.

Carl Hartmann, the Secretary of our
 Society, tells me that the cost of the
Newsboy is not nearly covered by the
 small annual dues charged to our mem-
 bers. Carl says that the auction held
 each year at the convention raises
 enough to keep our heads above water.
 So I'm asking all the members at this

time to start thinking of items they can
 donate to the auction. Even if you
 can't make the convention (and please
 try), send along some interesting little
 item that Gardner and Bennett can auc-
 tion off. I heard from Toshio Ueno,
 PF-585, from Japan, the other day, and
 he says he is going to send something.
 May is his busiest time, so he regrets
 that he cannot make the convention.

In the next issue of Newsboy, Bob is
 going to start asking for registrations.
 He'll also give you an idea of the great
 time you'll have in Columbus, Ohio.

* * *
ALGER'S PHOTOGRAPH IN
STUDENT AND SCHOOLMATE

compiled by Gilbert K. Westgard II

(Editor's note: In a letter dated
 July 29, 1982, Gil Westgard writes:
 "From Student and Schoolmate I enclose
 all of the information that relates to
 Alger's photograph. I'd like to see you
 use it with the ad that offered the
 photo being used on the cover, and then
 the four paragraphs used with a minimum
 of added comment, other than the dates
 at which they appeared. In closing, I
 would only add that I believe the Alger
 photo which we have identified as 1872
 may be in reality the one mentioned in
Student and Schoolmate in 1869 and 1870.
 It's just an opinion, and I really
 can't prove it, but it seems logical."
 An Alger engraving was published in the
 August 5, 1872 New York Weekly, along
 with a biographical sketch of Alger,
 which was reprinted in the December
 1966 Newsboy).

From the November 1869 Student and
Schoolmate, p. 530: "We are now rapidly
 approaching the end of the present vol-
 ume, one number only being required to
 complete it. We look back with satis-
 faction upon our work, and forward with
 confidence, believing that our efforts
 to carry instruction as well as amuse-
 ment into the homes we visit, will as-
 sure the early renewal of subscriptions
 for the next year. As we had antici-
 pated, the offer we made of an excel-
 lent photograph likeness of Mr. Alger,

whose contributions to our pages have given so unqualified satisfaction, and made him a universal favorite, has induced many to forward their subscriptions at even this early date. A subscriber who had the opportunity to meet Mr. Alger during one of his visits here, writes us that the likeness is excellent, and he prizes it highly as representing one who has done so much for the New York newsboys."

From the February 1870 Student and Schoolmate, p. 100: "A few bills for the present year are still unpaid, and we shall continue to send Mr. Alger's photograph for all payments made before the first day of March, as well as to all new subscribers."

From the April 1870 Student and Schoolmate, p. 197: "Still more of the photographs have been returned to us, after having remained in the post office uncalled for during ten days after their receipt. It was our expectation, as we have before stated, to mail every copy before the tenth of January, but our artist assures us that the delay in furnishing them, was entirely beyond his control, one unexpected difficulty being the prevailing cloudy weather at the season when he had expected the most rapid progress in his work. Consequently we were not able even to mail to old subscribers, all previous to March first, without taking note of the large number of new subscribers who also had an equal title with those old friends who were prompt in this year's payment in advance. This leads us to remind those who have neglected their remittance, that payment has now been due several months, and they are earnestly requested to send the amount with as little delay as possible."

From the October 1870 Student and Schoolmate, p. 485: "A brief word in conclusion. Owing to the delay in forwarding Mr. Alger's picture, we presume, quite a number have been returned to us after remaining at post-office for ten days. Although it will cause us an extra postage, we will forward such on receiving directions just how to address

them to secure delivery. It was an oversight in the artist which prevented their production so rapidly as the demand, and we are anxious to do what we can to carry out our intentions, thus unexpectedly embarrassed."

(Editor's postscript: All of the above quotations were from the Schoolmate's "At Our Desk" column. On August 10, 1982, Gil Westgard wrote to me: "All of the material I sent you in regard to the Student and Schoolmate offer of a photograph of Alger concerns an actual PHOTOGRAPH, not a drawing or engraving. Note the mention of "prevailing cloudy weather" in the April 1870 issue. Photographs were produced by exposure of the paper in contact with the negative to the rays of the sun. Cloudy weather made longer exposures necessary. This would have no effect on a drawing or engraving. These were actual Carte De Visite pictures, and measured about 2½ x 4. Page 13 of Hoyt's biography shows one of these photographs (wrongly identified as 'Horatio's brother, James'), and the unpublished one in the Harvard Archives is a similar pose done at the same time. Probably several photographs were made to produce a group of negatives. These would be mounted together, and a group of several pictures (PHOTOGRAPHS) produced. At a later date the 1872 engraving was made from one of these posed photographs. So, while they both show a similar pose, there should be a distinct difference stressed between the 1869 offering of a PHOTOGRAPH, and the 1872 engraving that was printed in the New York Weekly.")

* * *

The Schenectady General Electric News published in its July 2, 1982 issue a long article concerning John Alger's participation in the Alger stamp ceremony last April at the HAS Convention. Horatio Alger, Jr. was John's great-grandfather's first cousin, and at the stamp ceremony, U.S. Postmaster General William Bolger presented John with an engraved album of Alger stamps. John's great-grandfather was the Rev. William Alger of Boston who was known throughout the United States.

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



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FORREST CAMPBELL HONORED

In a recent ceremony in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Forrest Campbell was presented with an engraved album of Alger stamps plus souvenir first day covers—all in recognition of the years he devoted to Horatio Alger and our Society.

Forrest was the first editor of *Newsboy* (now celebrating its twenty-first birthday!) as well as one of the Society's co-founders. As Bob Sawyer points out on page 32 of this issue: "Forrest started *Newsboy* in July of 1962 at his own expense, and continued as editor for seven full years. Few will argue that without him and *Newsboy* in the formative years, there would be no Horatio Alger Society today."

In a letter dated May 27, 1982, Forrest pointed out to your editor that Max Friedman, the first member of the Alger Society, has helped him considerably over the years: "Max did all of the planning for the presentation and arranged for the publicity, for which I am very thankful. Max has also been our first supporter, and he also assisted in putting on the Kalamazoo Occasion in 1969."

The *Kalamazoo Gazette* covered the honoring of Forrest in two articles. One of them, "Commemorative Issue Honors Horatio Alger; Society Founded Here," relates how Max and Forrest first became acquainted: "Friedman said during his years in the scrap business here, he developed a knack for saving books and other items. In the late '50s, he said Campbell came to the shop and asked to look through his books and papers.

"He was looking for Alger books," Friedman said, noting that they can command a price as high as \$300 at an auction."

Although no longer active in the Alger Society (and enjoying a much deserved "retirement" from Alger), Forrest is still interested in "Our Hero" and hopes to attend the Columbus Convention in 1983. Congratulations, Forrest!!!