

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

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224 Washington Street  
Fredericksburg, VA 22405



*Horatio Alger, Jr.*

1832 - 1899



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth B. Butler

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*New York, May 16, 1894*

*I hereby appoint Amos P. Cheney  
of Natick, Mass. to act as my  
attorney to sign for me the  
transfer of my five shares in the  
stock of the Henry Wilson Coop-  
erative Bank, of Natick, Mass.  
located Bank -*

*Witness -  
John M Downie*

*Horatio Alger, Jr.*

Horatio Alger held stock in a cooperative store in Natick, Mass., and in this note--from the collection of D. James Ryberg--he appoints his brother-in-law, Amos Cheney, to act as his attorney to sign for him the transfer of his shares. John M. Downie, the witness, was a 15-year-old orphan in 1884 when Alger informally adopted him. He enrolled in a commercial school at 18, was apprenticed to a photographer at 19, and in 1895, as Alger proudly wrote in 1898, he "passed the civil service examination and became one of Theodore Roosevelt's reform police." John Downie was one of three boys whom Alger adopted during the 1880s and early 1890s.

## HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

## LETTERS

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 heroic ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

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Newsboy, the official organ of the Horatio Alger Society, is published bi-monthly (six issues per year). Membership fee for any twelve month period is \$15.00, with single issues costing \$3.00. Please make all remittances payable to the Horatio Alger Society. Membership applications, renewals, changes of address, and other correspondence should be sent to the Society's Secretary, Carl T. Hartmann, 4907 Allison Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48910.

Newsboy is indexed in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography.

The Society recognizes Bob Bennett's Horatio Alger, Jr.: A Comprehensive Bibliography, as the most current, definitive authority on Alger's works.

Newsboy ad rates: 1 page, \$32.00; one half page, \$17.00; one-fourth page, \$9.00; per column (1" x 3-3/4"), \$2.00. Send ads, with check payable to the Horatio Alger Society, to Bob Sawyer, 204 Mill St., Gahanna, Ohio 43230.

Letters to the Editor are welcome, but may be edited or condensed due to space limitations.

(Editor's note: After the Dick Seddon auction, some of the newer members wrote and asked me, "Just who was this Dick Seddon that you all seem to regard so highly?" I wrote them back, telling them all about Dick, and just recently, while cleaning out my files, I came across a cache of letters that Dick sent me. One of them immediately caught my eye--the last one that Dick ever wrote me, written just a few weeks before he died. I print it here so that some of our newer members will have a better understanding of this unique individual).

-----  
Jan. 10, 1980

Dear Jack,

You can't tell how pleased I was that you tried to reach me last night. To think that someone was thinking of me even if I was not in a very good condition to communicate. My problems are adding up and some days get too much for me but Mary and my entire family are taking such good care of me that I feel like the luckiest guy on earth. As you know, I will soon be 76 years old (in April) and I have lived a nice full life doing many of the things I've wanted to. My own folks are all gone, most of my former business associates are either gone or drifted apart. This leaves the Horatio Alger Society and a few members of the Society of American Magicians as my contemporaries, and there is a strong pull to identify with them. I can honestly say that I never knew a finer bunch of people, nor enjoyed myself so much when I was with them. I regard each one as my friend and am only too pleased to perform some small service for them.

As for you, Jack, you are one of my special friends. I hope we can once

more take a day or two along the bay on the coast of Maine and enjoy a lobster stew among the boats. But if we never do we'll have had it once and it was worth it. I hope I am not getting maudlin but so many of my friends are ill and out of it that it gets lonely some days.

Remember me to your lovely mother and drop me a line when and if you think of it. I have a few letters to write this morning, but wanted to be sure and thank you. See you at Brad's in May, I hope.

Sincerely,  
Dick

\* \* \*

#### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

PF-024 Gilbert K. Westgard II  
1001 S. W. 5th Court  
Boynton Beach, FLA 33435

PF-627 Gilbert O'Gara  
811 Boulder Ave.  
Des Moines, Iowa 50315

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MORE ON ALGER BOOKS  
PUBLISHED BY A.L. BURT  
by Brad Chase

I've had many interesting reactions from collectors of old children's stories to my recent book on Algers produced by Albert L. Burt. Several Alger collectors have told me that they have reexamined their collections to see what Burt Algers they owned and how those books related to the chronology and publishing pattern of Burt as shown in my book. Some people have indicated that they have reorganized and rearranged their Burt Algers in their collections on the basis of the eight series and 47 Burt formats I identified, and have adjusted their collecting patterns accordingly. These reactions give me a feeling of tremendous satisfaction and make much of the publishing effort worthwhile.

I received reactions also concerning book content. Several people sent me additional information gathered from

their own collections about Burt Algers primarily identifying titles I hadn't been able to confirm that were produced as part of a specific format. Other comments relating to the format drawings, charts and title listings were complimentary and much appreciated, making the many hours we spent in preparing them worth the effort. Some people shared with me their frustrations with the scarcity of information around on publishing patterns which occurred over eighty years ago. Others raised some questions about a few of my conclusions but provided no definitive information which would change those conclusions.

The most exciting thing to happen was the discovery by Dale Thomas of a Burt format that I was not aware of and therefore had not included in my book. Dale brought the new discovery to our Nashua convention and subsequently lent it to me so I could trace the format and analyze the contents. Essentially, it is a hardcover edition of Joe's Luck in dark brown cloth,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  by  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches in size and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. The pictorial cover has black line drawings and blindstamped lettering. There is gold lettering on the spine.

The front cover shows a placid lake scene, a sailboat on the water with rocks and trees on the shore. An insert circle shows a boy riding a galloping horse. The predominant feature on the cover is the title and the author's name which are blindstamped and set within a jet black border. The back cover is plain brown cloth. The spine shows the title and the last name of the author in gold lettering. The center of the spine has a circle showing the head of a boy wearing a fez. Horizontal black lines are below the circle and extend to the bottom where the words "A. L. Burt" appear under blades of grass.

I've concluded that this format is the first hardcover edition of Joe's Luck; it was produced in hardcover just

after the first edition paperback and is part of The Boys' Home Library Series. The 162 William Street address means that it was published prior to Burt moving to Beekman Street in 1888, probably in 1887, just after the paperback first edition was produced that same year. I've called it Format 3A, The Horse and Rider Format. I feel the Joe's Luck title was the only one produced in this format as Burt was experimenting at that time with different formats to cover parts of his expanding lines of children's books. As we know, he finally settled in 1889 on the popular Fez Format which he used to illustrate both the Boys Home Series and the Alger Series for Boys through 1900.

Of interest also is that I found this new format edition of Joe's Luck is shorter than the later Burt editions of the same story, by 25 pages. This initial edition does not have three chapters (XL, XLI, and XLII) plus three short stories that the later editions of Joe's Luck contain.

So the exciting discovery of this one new format was significant and adds new light to the evolving knowledge about publishing patterns of early children's books. There may well be other Burt Alger formats yet to be discovered. However, I feel from the reactions I've received to the information in my book from Alger collectors who have relooked at their Burt Algers, new formats are unlikely to be found. I hesitate to draw a definitive conclusion from this but the evidence seems strong now that between 1887 and 1920, Albert L. Burt periodically produced Alger books in 48 different formats with each containing from 1 to 70 Alger titles all set within 8 series. Hopefully this information which shows the scope of Burt Alger formats will make collecting Alger books more interesting and challenging, particularly in collecting those produced by A. L. Burt and the A. L. Burt Company.

\* \* \*

Don't forget the next Alger convention --hosted by Gil Westgard in Florida.

#### NOTES FROM RALPH by Ralph D. Gardner

An HAS member who recalls the following article thought it might be of interest to others who didn't read it when it first appeared. It was originally published in the Dime Novel Roundup back in January 1972. It is reprinted here with the kind permission of DNR Editor Eddie LeBlanc.

It's about the pro-and-con of keeping folks informed on the current values of Horatio Alger's books and other Alger material. Some criticism of providing these prices continues to this date. But, in my opinion, my reasons for supplying this information are as valid--and valuable--today as they were more than a dozen years ago. Editor Jack Bales and I will welcome the views --whether you agree or disagree--of Newsboy readers.

#### IN DEFENSE OF LISTING CURRENT ALGER VALUES by Ralph D. Gardner

With my earlier book and now my updated new edition, Road to Success; The Bibliography of the Works of Horatio Alger, I seem to have stirred up some controversy by letting my readers know the current values of Alger's books. Two recent Dime Novel Roundup authors have either stated or implied that to list cash values in a bibliography is either unnecessary or undesirable.

Since I have tremendous respect for the opinions of these contributors (although in this case I don't agree with them), and since I consider the Dime Novel Roundup and Newsboy family of readers to be a panel of experts who prefer to examine both views, I appreciate this opportunity to make what were my own decisions on this subject perfectly clear.

Prior to listing the values of Alger first editions, reprints, peripheral writings, autographs, etc., I discussed

my idea with my publisher, Ken Butler, of Wayside Press. I wanted his opinion, not because I had a single reservation about the wisdom of revealing these dollars and cents facts, but rather because--to my knowledge--there was no precedent; no bibliographer had thus far supplied this added information.

I explained to Mr. Butler--who is also a veteran book collector--that, as many of my readers might know little about the Alger market, I wished to present a book to benefit all echelons of collectors, booksellers, librarians, etc. He agreed with my proposal that I should provide all available data on the subject.

At the outset, there are points that may require this clarification:

I neither set prices for which Horatio Alger's books are bought and sold, nor did I create them from arbitrary estimates. In almost every instance I recorded figures for which items were catalogued or for which they had been individually quoted to myself or other collectors by dealers, or the bids for which they were sold at auction. When more than single current prices were available, highs and lows were included. Rare exceptions to this procedure were the very few editions that have never, so far as I could ascertain, been catalogued, offered by dealers or sold at auction, in which case I stated thus, adding either that there is no price-measuring device for the given volume or indicating what was plainly noted as my own estimate of what it might bring in the event it should appear on the market.

Those who read my bibliography know that I caution:

"It is most necessary to point out, at the start, that these are prices asked by dealers and/or others who are familiar with the Alger trade. These definitely are NOT prices paid at thrift shops or country auctions. . . Nor are these the prices paid by the

thousands of bookscouts or "pickers"--the Alger collector's best friends--who regularly attend the barn sales in their vicinity.

"These, rather, are the prices that knowledgeable, reputable booksellers have asked for their merchandise. . . . At best, the prices indicated can only serve as a guide. Just as it was pointed out that a valuable first edition can sometimes be bought for a small fraction of its retail sales value--and, indeed, almost every Alger collector enjoys retelling how he bought a rare-as-hens-teeth first edition for a dime--so is it likely that he would occasionally pay far more for a book than its value (and better judgement) dictate."

My readers also know I expressed my opinion that the prices certain books sold for were in excess of what thirty-five years [1] of collecting suggests they should more properly be. For instance, under my listing of Do and Dare, while recording that "On May 18, 1971, a first edition of Do and Dare, inscribed: 'William D. Conover--from his friend Horatio Alger Jr.' was auctioned at Parke-Bernet Galleries for \$120.00, a record for this time," I state: "Value of first edition is \$22.50." [2] (I readily acknowledge that an author's inscription adds to a book's worth, and I carefully cover just how much more it is worth in my section on Alger's autograph material).

Under my listing of Nothing to Do, I state: "Although offered for as much as \$145.00 . . . proper range would be \$80.00-\$85.00." [3] Collectors who have recently been lucky enough to latch on to this toughie can confirm this.

Critics have with only partial accuracy quoted as the "Gardner price" a top figure I listed, without explaining that a more realistic lower tag was also supplied for the given item. They might have provided my complete statement so those who have not read my books will be fully and more correctly

advised. And they should recall that, while recording loftier amounts brought by "glamor issues," I also name--in three separate categories--all editions which fetch more modest sums (with the group of most commonly-found Algers listed as "Valued at \$3.00 or less").

It is logical to book-buyer and book-seller alike that prices are set by only one standard: supply and demand. The dealer naturally needs fair profits for his wares but--whatever he asks--he can get only what customers are willing to pay!

In a way, it seems that prices of books we want are always too high. I recall my visit to the ancient book store that was once located between 11th and 12th Streets on the west side of Sixth Avenue, in New York, presided over by an elderly lady (at least she seemed elderly to me during the 1930's). Entering her shop and asking if she had any Algers, she showed me a sparkling row of them priced at one dollar apiece. Up to that time I'd never paid more than a quarter for an Alger so, without even examining them, I left. How many times since both that little lady and her shop disappeared sometime during World War II have I regretted not grabbing every book on the shelf! But, while regretting, I'm perhaps unconsciously thinking of her Algers as so low-priced by current, not contemporary, standards.

Similarly, I recall--one day in the mid-1940's--being offered a splendid specimen, the first Alger first edition I'd ever seen, in the Rare Books Department at Scribner's (then directed by the eminent David Randall). The price, \$15.00, being too steep for me, I passed it up. Second thoughts gnawed for weeks, after which, deciding I must be mad to consider spending so much for a title I already possessed in a later--though respectable--edition, I made up my mind to buy the book. By the time I returned it was sold. And all the years since I've wished I could get that volume at that price!

Prices of Algers--as with so many other categories of desirable paper Americana--are unquestionably higher today than they were when many of us embarked upon our hobbies. Collectors of other authors or subjects, stamp collectors, autograph collectors--to say nothing of housewives--will agree that most things now cost more than they once did. Most of us yearn to pursue our hobbies at yesteryear's prices. But such a wish is just unrealistic.

While writing these lines, I refer to many, many letters received from readers--collectors, booksellers and librarians--over the years since my first Alger bibliography was issued in 1964. There were a few--really very few--from those (generally collectors) who disagreed with my decision to report book values. These disagreed with the principle; none with the accuracy of the values. I got the distinct impression that at least some of my critics wished to guard an Alger knowledge and acumen possessed by relatively few. Granted, it was a sophistication that probably took them years of trial and error to acquire. Now this knowledge was available to everyone. I must confess my continuing belief that to make every facet of my own collecting experience available to all who seek it was proper and, in the long run, beneficial to all who buy or sell Algers.

On the other hand, there were dozens of letters from:

Persons who "had Algers packed away in the attic," who had no personal collecting interest in them (sadly, a number commented that, thinking they were worthless, they had already discarded some) but now realizing that they could turn these books into cash, had brought them down and were offering them for sale.

Booksellers who previously considered stocking (let alone mailing offers or cataloguing) Algers to be unprofitable were now actively acquiring them

whenever possible and--as promised by me--they found eager buyers.

Collectors unable to find nostalgically remembered Algers and meeting only with discouragement and disappointment when seeking them, now found it easier to locate and purchase these treasures of their youth.

Country bookscouts who, formerly passing up Algers dumped into rummage sale bins or knocked down for a quarter a lot at rural auctions because they weren't aware of any demand for them, now grab all they can get and solicit Alger want lists.

Today's soaring Alger market--that is, today's Alger prices--was not created by any individual. Rather, it simply reflects two obvious factors: the ever-growing rarity of Alger's works and the probability that, until relatively recently, his writings were vastly undervalued.

#### NOTES

1. Now fifty years!
2. Seddon Sale price (not autographed), \$105. In my opinion, publishing Seddon sale prices provides a needed update of Alger values.
3. Seddon Sale price, \$300.

[Editor's note: Ralph's Alger biography-bibliography, Horatio Alger; or, The American Hero Era, published by Wayside Press, 1964, is now out of print. So is the reissue published by Arco Publishing in 1978. Ralph's new book, Alger's Struggling Upward, for which he has written the Introduction, will be published by Dover in November].

\* \* \*

#### MORE ON ALGER PRICES

by Jack Bales

The controversy over listing Alger prices--which can definitely differ from their values--has resulted in a number of letters sent to your editor. In two letters, Gil O'Gara, editor of Yellowback Library, commented on the issue. In one he wrote: "Frankly, if a

book is priced at what I consider 'too high,' I just don't purchase it. Plenty of cheapies left, if you know where to look." In a letter just received, Gil notes that "I think too much fuss is made over auction 'prices,' but I guess that's because I like auctions and I simply find the listings of high bids interesting, but not particularly indicative of value." THIS is what I consider particularly germane to the issue--prices received at auction in no way reflect a book's value!! If a person pays \$100 for a beat-up old Donohue at an auction, that certainly does not mean the "value" is \$100----only that he considers it worth \$100!

Ahhhh, but the nice books are out there. I advise collectors to cultivate the friendship of a professional book dealer. My twin brother used to work near a dealer, and gradually I got to know him. The man now works in Chicago, and he regularly saves items for me. I located one of the very earliest editions--with dust jacket--of the first Hardy Boys book through him, and just last week I secured an absolutely mint Grosset and Dunlap copy of From Farm to Fortune. The price--a mere \$7.00. Sure, he could have probably got a higher price, but as Morris Olsen will tell you, dealers like to QUICKLY get rid of their books, and they like having a steady customer (hence, the low price).

Of course, I recall that when I first started collecting Algers, I went into the Economy Book Store (now defunct) in Chicago and inquired as to why these crumbling old Donahues were \$6.00 each. I was told that they were "first editions." Soon after that I found a mint copy of Ralph's book for \$5.00--with dust jacket--and started doing my homework. Without his guidelines I would not have been able to acquire any Alger knowledge at all.

Naturally, I prefer the other kind of "book stories"--such as how my brother got a rare title for me at a library book sale for thirty-five cents!!



# FROM THE EDITOR'S SCRAP BOOK



Dick Bales sent copies of the May-June 1984 Newsboy--the one about the different Alger stamp first day covers--to both the American Philatelic Society and the American Philatelic Research Library. The APS writes that "this was an excellent piece and I'm sure it will convert a number of people to the joys of stamp and first day cover collecting. As the magazine contains an excellent bibliography of cachets, I have passed it on to our Library for filing in their first day cover information archives." The APRL had similar comments. Dick also reports that the Washington Stamp Exchange gave the value of the Alger first day cover program as \$17.50. We all received copies of the program when we attended the first day ceremony. As always, however, errors creep in--the Exchange noted that Alger "was born in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania."

Brad Chase reports that he went to an auction in the Amherst/Northampton area and found a whole bunch of Lorings, Porter and Coates, and other books. "I figured, wow, I really found something this time and it's all for me. Then, who is standing beside me but Morris. Gads, there goes my exclusive. We chatted some and then Gil Kapelman taps me on the shoulder. 'Hi, just happened to be in the area,' he says. As the bidding on the Algers proceeded I found there were two other avid collectors and several bookdealers plus some reserved bids. So...I went from euphoria to despair in about fifteen minutes and haven't done much since." (I know how it is, Brad. I went to an auction once and got nothing--someone else topped my bids each time)!

Dave Soibelman sent me a number of newspaper clippings that mentioned

Alger. A biography of Benjamin N. Berger called Thank You, America says that the book is "a Jewish Horatio Alger story with a twist." A full page ad in the New York Times Book Review trumpeted a biography of John De Lorean this way: "He was Horatio Alger, Henry Ford, John Wayne and Martin Luther King."

Bill Russell writes the following: "I just picked up a book titled The Story of American Heroism." I've enclosed a photostat of the title page and copyright on the back. I was wondering if you had any idea what the Alger tie-in is. At the bottom it has "'Butler and Alger' written out. The Butler part I've pretty much figured out. He is General Benjamin Butler of Civil War fame. He was also a lawyer and into politics. In 1892, A. M. Thayer book publishers of Boston published his autobiography. General Butler died in 1893, so maybe his family wanted to have this other book published, and enlisted Alger to do some of the editing. This is just speculation on my part, but maybe you know something about it." [I have found nothing yet. Anybody else?]

Rohima Walter reports that Gil Westgard dropped by for a visit. "We had a nice visit and gave him a couple books. He told us to be sure and come to the convention he's hosting in Florida in May." Hope to see you there, Rohima!

Louis Bodnar tells me that "my manuscript entitled 'Street Cleaning; or, My Business is Picking Up' is now in print, in the August 1984 issue of the monthly Good Old Days Magazine. In the July issue I read Gil O'Gara's poem, 'Grandma's Habit.'" [Ed. note: Gil is an HAS member].



Facts on File Publications has recently issued Who Lived Where: A Biographical Guide to Homes and Museums. Alger's home in Marlborough, his church at Brewster, and his home in Natick are all mentioned in the volume, as well as his connection with various localities in New York City.

Jack Dizer sent me a nice review of his book, Tom Swift & Company, that appeared in American Notes and Queries. The review states in part: "Although the major emphasis is on Edward Stratemeyer and Tom Swift, this is basically an introduction to a genre spurned by public libraries."

Gary Scharnhorst sent the following from the April 6, 1893 issue of Life.

Tattered Tom: "Well, I'm dummed!"

Ragged Robert: "Wot's ther matter? Ain't them soup tickets good?"

Tattered Tom: "I wisht I'd paid more attention to the studies when I was young. Here I've tramped forty blocks to a soup house an' th' woman inside says them tickets calls fer soap."

Kenneth Anderson reports that he is feeling better after suffering a heart attack in March. "I am getting stronger now thanks to God and doctors and nurses." Our prayers are with you, Kenneth.

The April 1976 issue of Readers Digest contains an article called "Facts We Know That Are Not So." One part reads: "A 'Horatio Alger story' is a standard expression, especially among press agents, to describe a person who has risen from rags to riches. This is not true. Not one person in a Horatio Alger book ever got to be a millionaire. Alger heroes were boot-blacks and newsboys. They persevered with great virtue. They paid off mortgages, and achieved respectability. But in monetary terms their successes were not spectacular--with perhaps a raise of \$5 per week."

Evelyn Grebel writes that "I came

across the name Horatio Alger in the July issue of Opera News. I never expected to see it there." The article referred to the practice of having girls rise to stardom singing 'naturally' without formal training, as America's love of the "Horatio Alger mystique."

Harry Lane sent in a fascinating clipping from the September 2, 1984 issue of the Mobile, Alabama Press Register, entitled "Newspaper Carriers Recall Depression Years." One carrier noted that "you always had to be at the job. You went out sick and in the rain. Sometimes I delivered papers while I was sick, then went home to bed and missed school." Another carrier observed that "street sales work was particularly tough. At times delivery trucks were turned over and bundles of newspapers would be set on fire. Paper boys would stake out their territory and trespassing was cause for a fight."

I came across an interesting book--Mythmakers of the American Dream: The Nostalgic Vision in Popular Culture, by Wiley Lee Umphlett, Bucknell University Press, 1983. The volume focuses on fiction, comic strip art, movies, television, and old time series books. Of course, Alger, Frank Merriwell, the Hardy Boys, and others play important roles in this intriguing volume.

I received a nice letter from Judy Barton recently. She wrote that she "was so pleased that so many people wanted Dad's books [Dick Seddon's], not just for their collection, but because they were Dad's. I also enjoyed seeing so many people that meant so much to him."

Ralph Gardner wrote and enclosed a letter he received from a young man--a determined swimmer and diver--who was inspired by Alger's books. He said that "his stories have changed my life. My eyes have opened and are focused on what I am doing and also on what I am to do. . . . Horatio Alger was truly an inspiration in my life."

TEACHER AND PUPIL  
by Horatio Alger, Jr.

[Editor's note: This Alger short story originally appeared in Ballou's Dollar Monthly Magazine (December 1855) and the August 6, 1870 issue of Gleason's Literary Companion. Alger's name is incorrectly listed as "Horatio Folger" in both publications).

As reported in previous issues of Newsboy, Gary Scharnhorst discovered literally dozens of new Alger stories, all of which have never been reprinted and which do not exist except in the obscure publication in which they first appeared. Subsequent Newsboys will contain these works].

Many years ago, in what is now one of the most thriving manufacturing villages of New England, stood a small school house, but, small as it was, it was all-sufficient for the accommodation of the scholars of the little hamlet. Malcolm Wallace was the tutor, and an excellent one he was. Strict and severe, but never unjust nor revengeful. Of a firm, unyielding will, but never led away by anger or passion. He was of Scotch descent, as his name would indicate, and he possessed in an ample degree the hardy, honest characteristics of his ancestors.

One bright summer's afternoon, Malcolm Wallace sat in his desk, and for a long while after the school had been called to order he remained upon his high stool with a thoughtful, troubled countenance.

"Edward Lee!" he at length pronounced, firmly, but yet reluctantly, "come hither."

A bright-eyed, golden haired boy, of some twelve or fourteen years, answered the summons. He was a proud-looking lad, and his dark, gray eyes flashed as he met the master's stern look, but there was a quiver of the nether lip, and a blanch-spot upon the cheek, which told of a fluttering heart.

"Edward," the master spoke, "yesterday thou toldst me that thy mother kept thee at home. Thou rememberest?"

The boy hung his head, but made no reply.

"I saw thy mother this noon, Edward, and she told me she had never kept thee from school. Thou hast broken two most needful rules. That thou didst play the truant is not so bad as the falsehood thou toldst to me. Give me thy hand."

The boy extended his hand, and Malcolm Wallace took his heavy ferule and prepared for the punishment. The first blow descended quick and strong, but the boy neither cried out nor shrunk. Straight and bold he stood, his dark eyes flashing, and his lip now firm as iron. The punishment was inflicted, and the boy took his seat. For a while the master was stern and thoughtful, for he thought the boy all stubbornness; but soon he saw Edward's head droop, and as he slowly walked down the opposite aisle he saw the boy was weeping, for he could see the tears roll down between his fingers and drop upon the floor. The tutor's features relaxed in a moment, and with a lighter step he returned to his desk.

That evening, when the scholars were dismissed, Malcolm Wallace bade Edward remain, and after all others were gone the boy was called up. His look was defiant, and his small hands were clenched.

"Edward Lee," commenced the tutor, slowly and feelingly, "I have detained thee for thy good, so listen to me as thy friend. O, Edward, it pained me most bitterly to punish thee this afternoon, but thou knowest I could not help it, and yet I can most plainly see that wert thou to depart now thy heart would be hardened towards me, and for thy own evil. Edward, I would not that it should be thus. God has given thee a noble heart, and it pains me to see noxious weeds growing up there. Edward, thy mother wept when she knew thou hadst spoken a falsehood."

For the first time the boy's lip trembled, and his eye lost its fire. Malcolm proceeded:

"Now look forward, Edward, to the time when thou shalt be a man, and

reflect upon the character thou wouldst sustain. Think of thy widowed mother, and reflect upon the pride she may feel in her noble son. O, how sad, how mournful, the fate of him whose word is not to be trusted. Error is the shadow of earth which rests upon all, but falsehood is a sin which the wicked alone embrace. I love thee, Edward, and I shall be happy if thou art happy; and full well thou knowest where happiness is to be found. Never--O, never make me punish you again. Go home now, and as you go think upon what I have said; and ere you sleep I hope you may have solemnly given your heart to truth and honesty for life. Edward, thou canst make thy mother very happy if thou wilt but assure her that she may ever have confidence in her son. Remember--thou art all God has spared to her now on earth to cherish and to love. I do not think thou wilt ever again cause her to weep. There--now go--and God be with and bless you to the end."

A moment the boy gazed into Malcolm's face, and then he bowed his head and wept. He saw all, and he knew all. He knew that of late he had spoken falsely many times, but the truth was upon him now. He could not speak, for his heart was too full. But that night he told his mother all, and upon her bosom he pledged his soul to truth forevermore.

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The village school was closed, and Malcolm Wallace moved away. Time passed on, and new scholars grew up to fill the little school-house. Men came to the hamlet, and upon the broad stream which flowed near by they discovered a noble opportunity for turning the rushing waters into a power for the use of man. Large mills went up, and ere long the simple hamlet grew to a great village, and the hum of business was heard, and the habitations of man arose upon the spot where birds and beasts were wont to repose in the forest shade. The little school-house was sold to a shoe-maker, and a great academy was raised upon the spot where it had stood.

Among the first to engage in the

manufacturing interest was Edward Lee. His mother owned a tract of land close by the falls of the river, and it was necessary to cut a canal through it, and also to build upon it. So Edward, now a man, entered into the business, and he was soon among the first men in the thriving place. And among all the business men of that town, Edward Lee stood pre-eminent for his unswerving integrity and pureness of character. Even the boys had been told by their hopeful parents to try and imitate that man.

And so the years passed on, and Edward Lee became wealthy and influential, and finally he accepted the office of representative to the State legislature. He had often been urged to accept the trust, but until now his business had prevented; but now a matter of more than usual importance was to come before the legislature for final adjustment, and he consented to go. When the legislature had organized, Mr. Lee was placed upon the committee on jails and prisons, and also upon other important commissions.

One day the committee visited the prison where poor debtors were confined.

"Ah," said Edward Lee to one of his companions, as they walked on, leaving the others with the jailer, "this is a system of things that needs correcting. How many of these poor men may be in here only from malice--men who have been overtaken by misfortune, and who have done nothing absolutely wrong."

"True, true," returned the other. "And yet it is difficult to discriminate in these matters. It would be almost impossible to make a law which could punish the dishonest and at the same time save the unfortunate."

"I think you mistake," said Lee, modestly. "The absolutely dishonest may be reached by other statutes; but simple debt is not a crime. This is one of those misfortunes to which all business is subject. Society is very apt to take its tone from the laws by which it is governed, and so long as a poor debtor can be cast into prison because, simply, he is unable to pay, just so long there will be a tendency

to recklessness in business, for the seller knows that he holds a terrible power over the buyer. But let this law be done away with--or, at least be essentially modified--and then society will begin to look more to the native honesty of its members. In short, I am often pained to find how many of our statutes make misfortune a crime, and, practically, make wealth a shield, behind which all sorts of unfairness, and even crime, may be perpetrated. Is it not so?"

"It is, sir. Truly, truly."

The conversation was here stopped by the arrival of the jailer, and at length, as they stopped before a cell at the extreme end of one of the narrow corridors, that functionary said:

"Here, gentlemen, is the hardest case we have," pointing to the cell. "There is an old man in there who has been confined for over four years, and the circumstances are peculiar."

"Let us hear them," said Mr. Lee.

"Well, you see--this way a little, gentlemen, so that he may not hear. You see he settled down in S-----, and engaged as teacher of Greek, Hebrew and Latin in the academy there. He was an old man then. He had a few hundred dollars in money which he was persuaded to invest in the concern; and he did it without knowing that the establishment was already deeply in debt. In the adjoining town of M----- there was another school of like character, and this one at S----- was looked upon as a dangerous rival. So an enmity sprang up, and not long afterwards the latter school was discontinued. There were a number of outstanding notes, and one of the leaders of the M----- academy bought them up, meaning, when he did so, to use the power thus gained in breaking down the establishment; but before he could do so the academy gave up operations of its own accord, and most of those who had been engaged in it left for parts unknown. The man who had bought up the notes was exasperated beyond measure when he found how things had turned, and in his wrath he came down on the poor old man who is now confined here. That old man's name was upon three of

the notes--they were signed by the three professors jointly and severally --and he swore the poor man should either pay the notes, or lie in prison until they were paid. Perhaps he hoped that one or both of the missing professors might come forward and pay up under such circumstances; but they never will, and the iron-hearted creditor will keep his oath."

"Have neither of those professors been found?" asked Lee.

"No, sir. But they've been heard from. They've got no money; and they say if the creditor can get his pay by keeping this man in prison he is welcome!"

"And this prisoner's name?"

"Wallace--Malcolm Wallace!"

"Let me see him."

"He likes not to see strangers."

"But I knew him once. Let me go in alone."

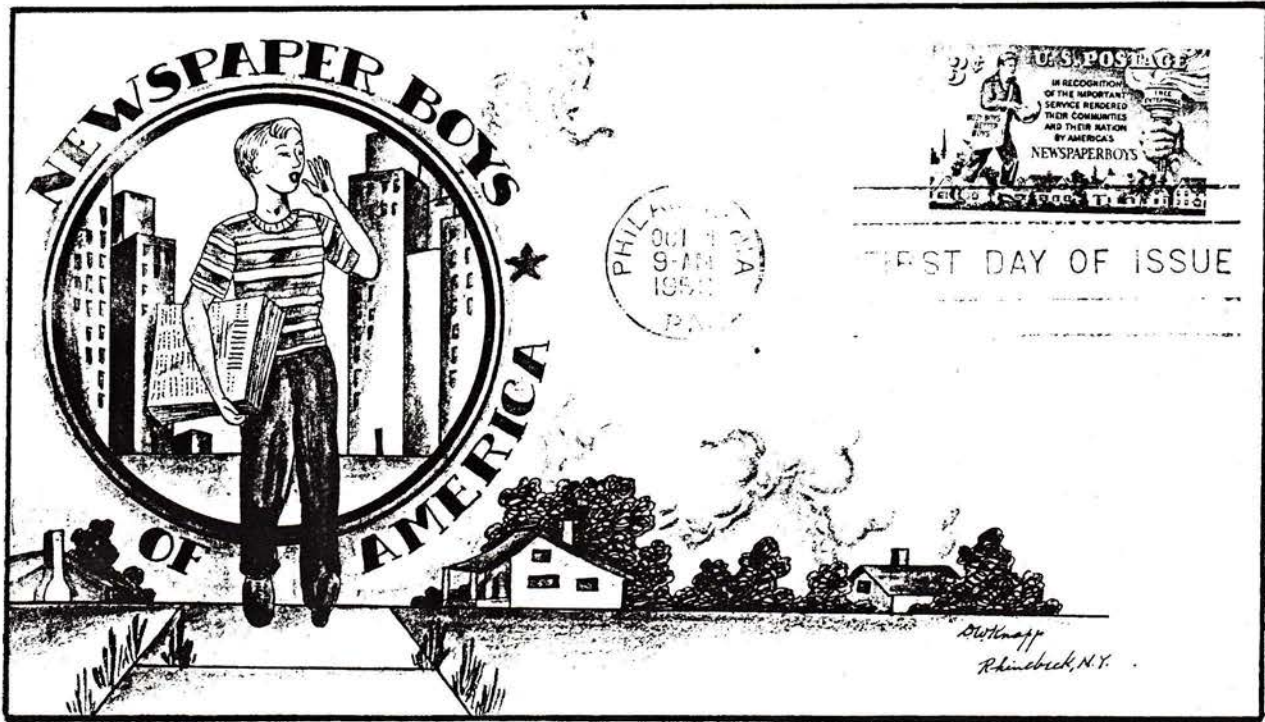
The jailer unbarred the heavy door, and Edward Lee entered the cell. It was a small, close room, with walls of stone, and furnished with a low bed, a table, a chair, and a small private book-case. Upon the chair sat an old man, over whose ears and shoulders the hair flowed in snowy whiteness, and whose brow was deeply furrowed by age and sorrow. He was sadly changed, but yet Edward recognized at a glance his stern, yet kind-hearted old tutor. His feelings were deeply worked upon, but he betrayed them not.

"I am one of the committee appointed by our legislature to visit this place," said Edward, as the old man looked uneasily up.

"Ah," returned Malcolm, in a tone so deep and hollow that the visitor was startled. "Then go and tell them you found an old man dying here! dying because he cannot pay that which he never owed. Tell them--But pass on, sir."

Malcolm Wallace bowed his head, and when he looked up again he was alone.

"That man had a kind look," he murmured to himself. "Perhaps he might have helped me. His look was very kind. But who should care for an old man like



HAS member Dick Bales sent this in--one of the most valuable of the popular 1952 Newspaper Boy first day covers. Completely hand painted by D. W. Knapp, the current value is about \$200.

me?"

The day wore on, and the night came and passed, and on the next morning the keeper came as was his wont.

"Malcolm Wallace," he said, "you are free."

"Free? Free?" the old man uttered, seeming to doubt the evidence of his own senses.

"Yes--free."

"And has Mr. H----- relented?"

"No. Your debt is paid."

"Ha--then B-----, or F-----, has returned?"

"No. A friend has paid it all."

"A friend? What mean you?"

"That is all I know. A man visited you yesterday."

"Yes--yes. O, he had a kind, a very kind look.

"Well, he has paid the full amount--fifteen hundred dollars--and you are free."

"Free--Free!" the poor man murmured, clasping his hands over his eyes, and sinking back into his seat. "Alas, but I am now homeless! 'Twere better I had died here!"

"Perhaps not. But at any rate, you shall see your deliverer first. He has left word for you to be sent to him. Come, follow me."

Malcolm Wallace arose and followed his conductor out. At the office he stopped, and here a warm cloak, and other necessary articles of clothing were furnished him, and ere long he found himself within a closely-covered stage-body, said body being now on runners, for the snow lay hard and frozen upon the ground. Nearly all day he travelled in the stage, only stopping at noon to take dinner, and just as the sun was sinking to rest, he was set down in front of a splendid dwelling which stood in a thickly settled village. He had just time to observe that near at hand were a pile of large factories, when a servant came and led him up the walk into the house. He was ushered into a large parlor, where a cheerful fire burned in the polished grate, and there he was bid to sit down.

More like one in a dream than like a waking man did Malcolm Wallace hold

out his cold hands to the fire, and more than once did he actually shut his eyes, shake himself, and then look about him again, to see if he should not, after all, awake and find himself in his own dark cell. But it must be real. He was thus pondering when he heard a door open, and on looking up he saw his visitor of the day before. He started to his feet and put forth his hands.

"Are you--sir--my preserver?" he gasped, at broken intervals.

"I have taken thee from a debtor's prison, Malcolm Wallace, and I mean that henceforth thou shalt find a home here with me."

"You--you. But how is it, kind sir? I--I--O, what angel hath God sent to me now?"

"Do you not know me, Malcolm Wallace?"

"No, sir. And yet thy face is familiar."

"Do you know what town you are in?"

"No, sir."

"You are in M-----."

The old man started.

"Do you remember, some thirty years ago, a naughty boy whom you punished, and with whom you afterwards kindly counselled and advised?"

"Edward Lee?"

"Yes."

"And you--"

"Was once that boy--now a man--rich, honored and respected. Ay, Malcolm Wallace, I am known of all men now as one in whose honor and integrity they may safely confide. But I have never for one day lost sight of that time when you and I were alone in that little school-house, with only God to overhear us. You changed the whole current of my feelings then, and from that hour my soul has not lost sight of the noble goal you pointed out to me. I have grown rich--you have grown poor. The capital of soul upon which my interest of true manhood has accumulated you settled upon me. Now let me pay the debt. If you would prove your gratitude, accept without a thought of opposition the home and the love I now offer."

The old man had sank down into his

chair during the latter part of this speech, and before he could reply, a third person was in the room--a white-haired, but hale old woman.

"Malcolm Wallace," she said, extending her hands, "what jolly rare old companions we shall be."

If Malcolm had held a thought of opposition before, he did so no longer, for the greeting of that noble, old lady had a music for his soul from which he had no desire to break away. The first whelming flood of gratitude had passed, and as his heart began to struggle up from beneath the load, it felt so light and joyous, that he clasped his hands and wept like a child.

So the old tutor found a home such as he had never before even dreamed of since he left the paternal roof in the age that had passed away.

By-and-by the tutors at the academy began to wonder at the remarkable forwardness of Edward and Lucy Lee, and more than once young Edward whispered in his master's ear the solution of a problem over which he was puzzling. Ah, old Malcolm Wallace was at his old trade, and ere long Mr. Lee found that his mother was not the only one who had gained a genial companion, for his children clung to that old man with loving hearts, and day by day their minds were growing rich with gems of thought and genius drawn from his fund of knowledge and experience.

"Ah," said Mr. Lee, to his wife, as they sat one evening and heard Malcolm reading a solemn life-lesson to his attentive children, "when I did that generous deed which gave my old tutor a home, I little dreamed of the treasure I was gathering for our loved children."

The wife smiled gratefully. She felt it all.

\* \* \*

I just received a nice letter from HAS member Annie Lebeaux, who is very much interested in exploring Alger's New York City. She detailed to me some of the "Alger sites" she has discovered, and I will print her letter in the next issue of Newsboy.

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[Editor's note: The following two editorials are from the New York Times, with the first being from the January 14, 1942 issue (page 12) and the second from the January 15, 1942 paper (page 18). The second is particularly significant, for in it Alger is referred to as a "prose laureate"--an appellation which has been quoted since this date many times].

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ALGER'S BIRTHDAY MARKED

Author's Memory Honored at  
Luncheon in Newsboys Home

The Children's Aid Society Newsboys Home 244 William Street, held a special luncheon yesterday in celebration of the birthday 119 years ago of Horatio Alger, author of boys' stories. Mr. Alger lived for years at the home, where he obtained material for many of his stories.

A water color portrait of the author, painted at one of the society's six centers in New York City, was presented to the home. George Blum, director of the institution, gave the boys a short history of the home and of Mr. Alger.

The home is now used to provide shelter, medical care and food for homeless boys. They represent nearly every State in the union and some foreign countries. Even soldiers and sailors have spent the night there, while awaiting transfers or assignments.

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RAGGED DICK

Yesterday's papers told of a luncheon at the Children's Aid Society Newsboys Home in William Street to commemorate the 119th birthday of Horatio Alger, who wrote 119 books. Charles Loring Brace's Newsboys' Lodging House was very near to Alger's kindly heart. It was his home and club. There he took the Chinese foundling whom he adopted. The newsboys liked him. He followed their life closely. In 1867 "Ragged Dick" was published as a serial in Oliver Optic's "Student and Schoolmate."

Boys loved it.

Half a dozen other stories about newsboys succeeded. Alger is the prose laureate of that famous profession. At one time he supported himself by writing for the newspapers. We may call him something of a newspaper man, if we like, and we don't have to bother about the upturned noses of critics who sneer at his too virtuous books and his veneration for success. Is it desirable that boys should be taught to love failure? Alger himself was prodigal. The large sum that his books brought him he spent and scattered. He died poor. Some of his newsboys cheated him. Much he cared, this warmhearted and free-handed Pilgrim.

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RESEARCH BURIES ANOTHER ALGER MYTH  
by Jack Bales

Provocative as the above editorials are, they are--as most HAS members know--riddled with errors. Alger never lived in the Newsboys' Lodging House, for example, and he never adopted a "Chinese foundling." Moreover, if his 119th birthday was celebrated in 1942, that puts his natal date in 1823 (instead of 1832, the correct year)!

While researching at the Library of Congress for The Lost Life of Horatio Alger, Jr.--to be published this spring by Indiana University Press, I was able to document Alger's 1877 trip West. It seems to be generally taken for granted that when Alger completed his 1877 western trip, he returned home on a four-masted schooner around Cape Horn.

Gary Scharnhorst and I thought that this was ridiculous, and we both felt that Alger probably went home by the Union Pacific Railroad. His letters document somewhat his travels, and armed with this information, I spent many days going through newspapers of the time period, searching through hotel arrival notices, brief "local



Relaxing during the 1984 Alger Society Convention are, from left to right: Glenn Corcoran, Max Goldberg, Morris Olsen, and Bob Bennett.

I hope that additional pictures will be printed in subsequent issues of Newsboy.

interest" columns, etc. etc. Both Gary and I searched through literally thousands of reels of microfilm in our search, pinpointing the exact locations where Alger travelled.

But I particularly wanted to prove that he did NOT go home by schooner, and one day I finally found it--on page 4 of the June 22, 1877 issue of the Omaha Republican in the "Personal Mention" column. The last paragraph reads: "Horatio Alger, jr., the author of the 'Ragged Dick Series' and numerous other excellent and interesting juvenile books is in the city, stopping at Senator Hitchcock's. Mr. Alger is returning from a trip of several months through California, Oregon and British Columbia, where he has been gathering material for a new story, the scene of which is laid in those localities. . . ."

Somehow, a schooner just couldn't sail through Omaha! I was elated, to say the least, and had been able to find many other such brief notices in western papers which bore out our theory--and which now proved it fact--that Alger went home after his 1877 western trip via a railroad car!

COMMENTS ON COLLECTIBLES ILLUSTRATED  
by Jack Bales

A couple years ago Jerry Friedland gave me a charter subscription to the above magazine (Depot Square, Peterborough NH 03458. Cost is \$12.97 per year for six issues). For the most part, I like the periodical--I've renewed my subscription--and I know that many HAS members read it. I've enjoyed the articles--on many, many topics, such as boys' books (the premier issue), on John F. Kennedy memorabilia, on James Bond collectibles, Superman hobbyists, etc. etc.

I do have a complaint, however--the ubiquitous fixation that they have on money. ALL items have to have dollar signs attached to them! An example of typical greed occurred when a woman told of finding an old paper bag in a washstand that she bought for \$2.00 at an auction. "Gold! I thought. To our disgust, the hoard consisted of 50-cent pieces, quarters, dimes and nickels. It took us two hours to count them all. The grand total was \$250." Somehow, I couldn't understand her attitude!! Oh, well, I still find the articles fascinating.