



# THE HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY OFFICIAL PUBLICATION NEWSBOY



*Horatio Alger, Jr.*

1832 - 1899

A magazine devoted to the study of Horatio Alger, Jr.,  
his life, works, and influence on the culture of America.

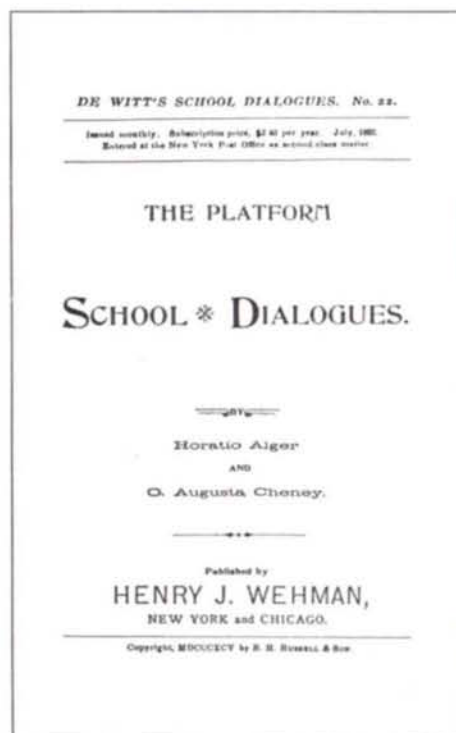
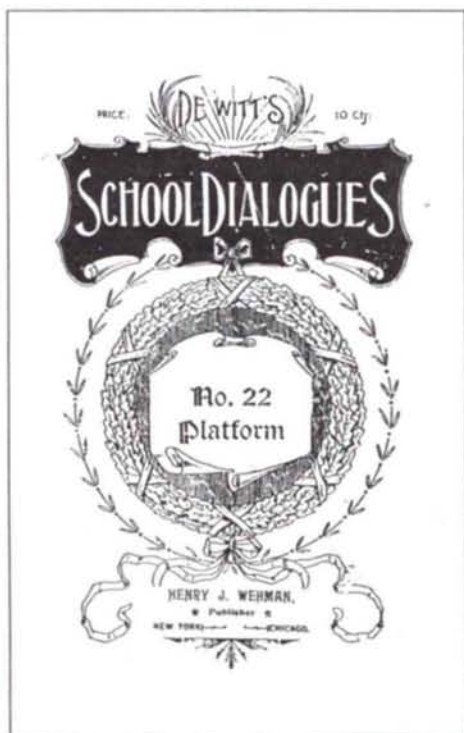
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MARCH-APRIL 1997

NUMBER 2

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## President's column

As you read this, another convention is just weeks away. We wait all year, and then — in a twinkling — it's convention time again. I hope to see you all in North Conway, N.H. on May 15-18.

By now many of you know that one of our most honored members, director emeritus and past president Bob Bennett, recently suffered a heart attack. Following treatment at New York Hospital/Cornell Medical Center, Bob is home. Please drop him and Luciana a note; I'm certain they will appreciate hearing from their many Partic'lar Friends. The address is Bob Bennett, 14 Tremont Ave., Congers, N.Y. 10920.

As you can see on Pages 6-7 of this issue, our **Horatio Alger Society home page** on the World Wide Web is now online for your use. Mike (PF-934) and Janice (PF-957) Morley deserve our sincere thanks for setting up our web site. It is absolutely excellent, with tremendous potential as we continue to add to its resources in the months ahead.

It occurs to me that for many of us, the language of computers and the Internet is a strange one. Even though I did this a few issues back, I thought I might devote a few minutes in this message to expand on a few terms that you will be hearing as the world of "cyber-Alger" continues to unfold:

**Internet:** A world-wide interconnection of computer systems. Started originally as a way for defense organizations to stay in touch, the Internet has evolved to include virtually every corner of the earth. Anyone with a computer and a communications device called a modem can access the Internet and communicate with anyone else who is so equipped.

**Modem:** An acronym for modulator-demodulator, a modem is used to connect a computer to a telephone line and perform the necessary translation so that electronic data can be transmitted and received by your computer.

**World Wide Web:** A relatively recent addition to the Internet, the World Wide Web (or WWW is it is often abbreviated), is a set of graphical programs located in the computers which comprise the Internet. The WWW has become the most popular part of the Internet. It allows denizens of the Internet to "publish" pages of text and graphics which provide very rich and valuable information sources. An amazing number of individuals, companies and organizations have published pages on the WWW, which allow other users to "log on" and

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## HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr. and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes — lads whose struggles epitomized the great American dream and flamed hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

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**Newsboy**, the official newsletter of the Horatio Alger Society, is published bi-monthly (six issues per year). Membership fee for any 12-month period is \$20, with single issues of **Newsboy** costing \$3.00. Please make all remittance payable to the Horatio Alger Society. Membership applications, renewals, changes of address and other correspondence should be sent to Executive Secretary Robert E. Kasper, 585 E. St. Andrews Drive, Media, PA 19063.

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

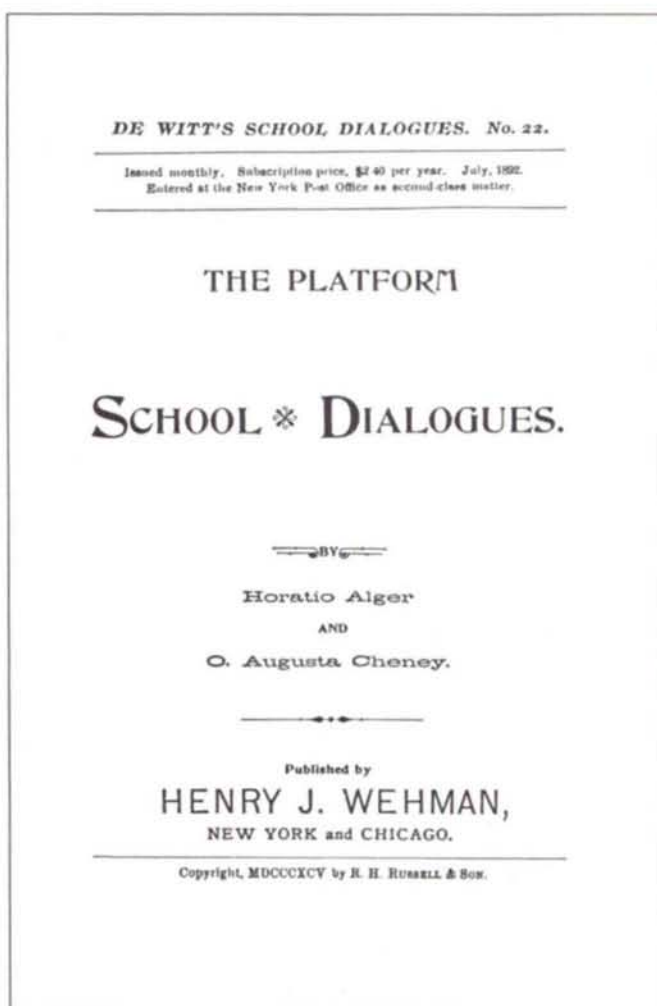
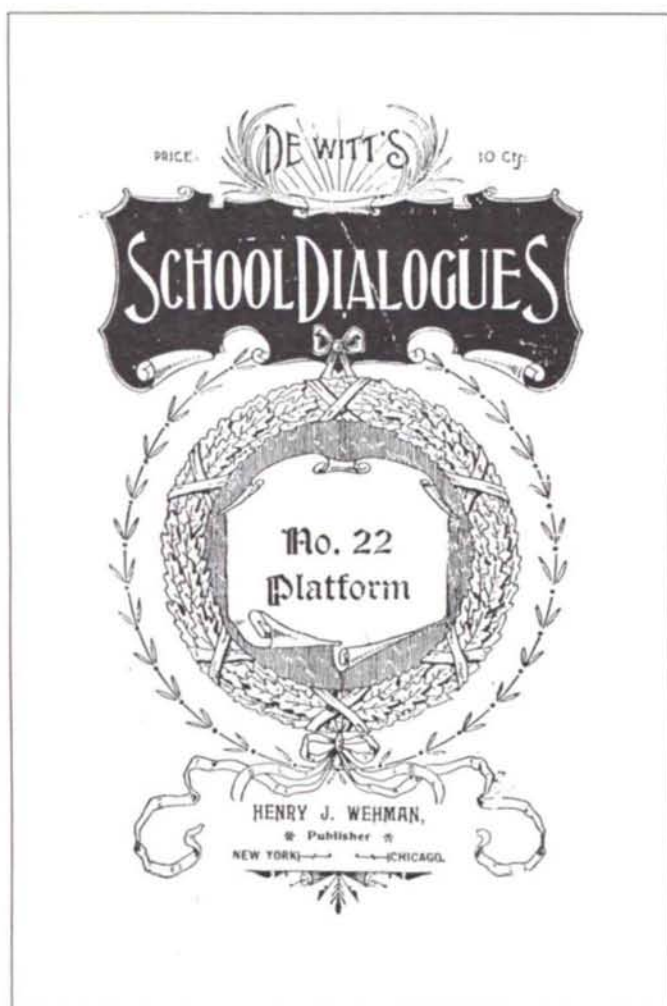
### BOOKS RECOMMENDED BY H.A.S.

- Horatio Alger, Jr., A Comprehensive Bibliography*, by Bob Bennett (PF-265).
- Horatio Alger or, The American Hero Era*, by Ralph D. Gardner (PF-053).
- The Fictional Republic: Horatio Alger and American Political Discourse*, by Carol Nackenoff (PF-921).
- Publication Formats of the 59 Stories by Horatio Alger, Jr. as Reprinted by the John C. Winston Co.*, by Bob Sawyer (PF-455) and Jim Thorp (PF-574).
- Horatio Alger Books Published by A.L. Burt*, by Bradford S. Chase (PF-412).
- Horatio Alger Books Published by M.A. Donohue & Co.*, by Bradford S. Chase (PF-412).
- Horatio Alger Books Published by Whitman Publishing Co.*, by Bradford S. Chase (PF-412).
- The Lost Life of Horatio Alger, Jr.*, by Gary Scharnhorst with Jack Bales (PF-258).

**Newsboy** ad rates: Full page, \$32.00; one-half page, \$17.00; one-quarter page, \$9.00; per column inch (1 inch deep by approx. 3 1/2 inches wide), \$2.00. Send ads, with check payable to Horatio Alger Society, P.O. Box 70321, Richmond, VA 23255.

The above rates apply to all want ads, along with ads offering non-Alger books for sale. However, it is the policy of the Horatio Alger Society to promote the exchange of Alger books and related Alger materials by providing space **free of charge** to our members for the **sale only** of such material. Send such ads or "Letters to the Editor" to **Newsboy** editor William R. Gowen (PF-706) at 23726 N. Overhill Dr., Lake Zurich, IL 60047.





The front cover and title page of *The Platform School Dialogues*, by Horatio Alger and O. Augusta Cheney.

## A new Alger title is discovered

By Arthur P. Young (PF-941)

Several months ago I was examining the lengthy list of Horatio Alger titles which are represented in the OCLC on-line catalog, a resource which now has 35 million titles, when I encountered a thoroughly unfamiliar title — *The Platform School Dialogues*, by Horatio Alger and O. Augusta Cheney. My first thought was that Alger's name might have appeared in one or more of the dialogues, and that someone long ago mistakenly credited Alger with title page status as an author.

There was only one approach to resolving the true nature of the publication, and that led to securing the item on interlibrary loan from the sole holding library in the nation. Fortunately, the item was in the library's general collection and was delivered to my home library within 10 days.

Receipt of the book immediately confirmed its authenticity as a new Alger title. It is a paperback book,

published in 1895 by Henry J. Wehman of New York, as *De Witt's School Dialogues No. 22*. The book is 94 pages in length and contains 11 additional pages of advertisements. There are no other apparent Alger or Cheney titles listed in the advertisements. The book ads contain titles such as "Skating and Games on the Ice," "Chemical Wonders for Home Exhibition," "Prescott's Standard Recitations" and "De Witt's American Chess Annual," a wide array of educational and how-to-do-it titles.

Experienced Alger collectors will recognize that O. Augusta Cheney was Horatio Alger's sister and his co-author of the 1875 A.K. Loring publication, *Seeking His Fortune*, a very rare title. *The Platform School Dialogues* reprints the first six dialogues that are found in the original *Seeking His Fortune*. These dialogues are "Seeking His Fortune," "One Week an Editor," "Keeping Genteel Boarders," "Mrs. Skinflint's Bargains," "Mrs.

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## Editor's notebook

Believe it or not, you still have time to sign up for the 1997 convention, which is just a couple of weeks away. In case you misplaced it, another copy of the pink registration form is enclosed. Hurry and mail it to our host, **Angelo Sylvester, at P.O. Box 53, Tamworth, N.H. 03886**, because he's in the final planning stages. If you need information on the Mt. Washington Valley Motor Lodge in North Conway, it's all on Page 5. The fastest way to reserve a room is to call the hotel directly and give a credit card number.

This convention promises to be one of the best ever, in the heart of Horatio Alger's native New England. This is an area I visit at least once each year because my family came from New England, and it is one of the most beautiful in the country. I wish we could have had our convention in October, during "leaf season," when the Mt. Washington Valley scenery is its most dramatic.

What about book-hunting in New England? Though not as fertile an area as it was 20 or 30 years ago (what part of the country is today?), it remains one of the best regions in which to hunt down those much-needed volumes to add to your collection. That's because more books were originally sold in the New York-New England area than anywhere else, which should mean that more copies are found in used-book stores today.

Unfortunately, many out-of-area collectors and dealers have been sweeping through the Northeast with more and more diligence in recent years, cutting the supply of books drastically. Yet, if you know where to look, you can still discover a "find."

I remember a story from our last New England convention, "Nostalgia in Nashua," hosted by Mary Jane and Jim Thorp in 1984. Several members entered the shop of a notoriously nasty dealer, who said "Horatio Alger? You won't steal any bargains here. I know what those books are worth!" Whereupon one Partic'lar Friend found a pristine Hurst miniature of *Bertha's Christmas Vision* for just a few bucks. The dealer had talked a good game but his knowledge of Alger was minimal, so a bargain was had that day.

All the New England states' used-booksellers associations publish free brochures, which list days and hours of each shop. Good hunting!

This past month has been a busy one for conferences of interest to us collectors. One of our newest members,

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## A new Alger title

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Grundy's Tyranny" and "Aunt Hannah's Valentine." Alger, in a slightly reworded preface than found in the original edition, indicates that only the first dialogue belonged to him, and that as far as the remainder are concerned, "... my part has been really that of an editor."

The six dialogues are printed directly from the original Loring plates. An inspection of the pages indicates the pagination and text position are identical in this reprinting with the original publication. *The Platform School Dialogues*, in fact, represents the second printing of the *Seeking His Fortune* volume, the first reprinting being that issued by Ward & Drummond (New York, 1882). For the sake of bibliographic completeness, it should be noted that the first printing of *Seeking His Fortune* dialogue by Alger appeared in **Student and Schoolmate**, March/April 1866.

More research is warranted about the circumstances of publication, but we can say at this time that *The Platform School Dialogues* is a new Alger title and may be properly classified as an abbreviated reprint edition. One can speculate that since the first six dialogues were reprinted, perhaps the remaining 16 dialogues may have appeared in other Henry J. Wehman publications, or possibly issued by still another publisher. R.H. Russell, a New York publisher and the copyright owner of this title, might be a contender.

These dialogues by Alger and his sister seem to have enjoyed a more protracted readership than perhaps first believed with the issuance of the 1875 original and the equally rare 1882 reprint.

The discovery of a new Alger title was both exciting and instructive — exciting because every new title in an author's canon is a moment for celebration, and instructive because we have learned, once again, that the canon is rarely complete and that still another heretofore unknown title and contribution may be out there awaiting its Diogenes.

## WANTED

Complete copies of the following issues of **Boys' Life**: November 1930, February 1931, March 1931

Bart J. Nyberg (PF-879)  
20W450 Rutgers Dr.  
Downers Grove, IL 60516  
Tel: 1-630-910-0542



## 1997 H.A.S. convention update

*Do and Dare* in New Hampshire

By Angelo Sylvester (PF-928)

We are eagerly looking forward to hosting "Do and Dare in New Hampshire" on May 15-18 in North Conway.

We hope to make this a memorable experience in recapturing the nostalgia of Alger heroes. Many of those found in his novels fled from a very poor rustic New England to the glitter of olde New York town with its promises of fame and fortune only for those willing to "Do and Dare." Aside from the brisk tourist trade, currently nourished by well-to-do from Boston and Canada, little has changed in our part of New England. Farms still barely survive on a below-poverty level and opportunities for young teen-agers are virtually nil. The lure of the skyscrapers, megabucks and fabled illusion of the big city are a reality that relates to what Alger youngsters felt they must do to survive.

Nevertheless, the natural beauty and simplistic way of life in these picturesque towns that surround our convention site are alive. One can easily fantasize life in Alger's 1860s "tobacco road" small towns and agricultural acreage devoid of crime, TV violence and computer games, and find that things are still pretty much the same. The wealthy town squires as found in the colonial 1770s are visible today, representing less than one-half percent of the poverty-stricken townfolk. Hopefully, you will appreciate why the few people who remain here from an ever-shrinking population (due to emigration to greener pastures) subsist by adopting Horatio Alger's themes of hard work, honesty and respect for their fellow neighbor.

Now, on to the convention itself. Within the first four weeks after the mailing of registration forms in the last issue of *Newsboy*, more than three dozen early registrations have come in, and the Mt. Washington Valley Motor Lodge received its 25th room reservation on April 15. All things hopefully point to a record attendance.

Here are some last-minute items of information:

■ Included at no extra cost in Friday's dinner at the Parkside Restaurant are choice of soup or salad, a cracker & cheese appetizer plate, unlimited coffee and tea, plus a fancy dessert.

■ There will be live entertainment during Friday's lunch at my house. During intermission, tapes of music from the 1920s to WWII, plus vintage classic rock, will be played. Also, the proceeds from the sale of any Alger books at my house Friday afternoon will include a 15 percent commission to the Society.

■ There will also be live entertainment at Friday's

**What your \$50 convention registration fee will include:**

- \* Entree for Thursday night Italian dinner
- \* Friday lunch at the Sylvesters' home
- \* Friday night dinner and entertainment
- \* Saturday night H.A.S. banquet and entertainment
- \* Sunday morning continental breakfast
- \* Hospitality room (snack foods, coffee, soft drinks)
- \* Meeting room, for auction, book sale, etc.
- \* Convention souvenir package

dinner by local small-town musicians.

■ Hours for the Thursday "welcome dinner" at Mario's Italian Restaurant have been expanded to 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. for the convenience of members, who are free to go individually or in small groups any time during this time. As noted on the registration form, the meal includes only the entree, along with complimentary bread and butter, coffee, tea or soft drinks.

■ After Saturday's banquet at the Eastern Slope Inn, there will be a host of live entertainment available in nearby restaurants and clubs. For those wishing to stay, dancing is welcome without having to pay the Eastern Slope Inn's customary \$5 cover charge.

■ For those staying over Sunday or Monday, the gardens of historic Portsmouth are breathtakingly lovely in mid-May, and in Portland, lobsters abound, and they're cheap, too. Just see me anytime during the convention if you want to make one of these trips and need directions or transportation.

I will be in Arizona through the end of April and will return to Tamworth, N.H. on May 1. My phone number there is (603) 323-7193 if you have any questions.

In case you misplaced your pink convention registration form, another copy is enclosed.

**Hotel registration information**

If you haven't made your hotel reservation, you can call the Mt. Washington Valley Motor Lodge right away at 1-800-634-2383. They will type your reservation directly into their computer. Be sure to have your credit card number handy. The special room rates for our convention are: \$38 single (1 queen bed, 1-2 people); \$42 double (two double beds, 1-2 people); \$47 triple (two double beds, 3 people); \$52 quad (two double beds, 4 people). Please add 8 percent tax.



# Welcome to the H.A.S. home page!

By Mike Morley (PF-934)

The Horatio Alger Society web site (a reproduction of our cover page is at right) has officially been open to the public since March 23, 1997, when Janice and I registered our URL (*Note: URL stands for "Uniform Resource Locator," and is an address for a document on the web*) with the major internet search engines.

Our URL is: [HTTP://www.ihot.com/~has/](http://www.ihot.com/~has/)

We invite all H.A.S. members with internet access to have a look; please send all suggestions and comments to [has@ihot.com](mailto:has@ihot.com), which is the E-mail address associated with the H.A.S. web site.

The current contents of the web site are fairly simple: a section about the Horatio Alger Society, a list of the books about Alger and his work that the H.A.S. recom-

mends to the public, an on-line bibliography, and a section still under construction that describes the life and work of Alger through pictures of Alger, the places he lived, and covers of his books and dust jackets. There are also links to the Horatio Alger Association home page, to Bill Roach's fine Alger Resources home page, and to many other pages on the web that have Alger-related information. By the time of the convention, we also plan to have an additional section that will offer selected articles from *Newsboy*.

We plan to have a presentation about the web site at the convention. President John Cadick is bringing his laptop computer which will allow us to see our home page live and in person. Janice and I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

## President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

learn about them.

**Home Page:** This is a graphical publication stored on the World Wide Web. A home page (or "web site") is similar to an electronic version of the cover and contents of a magazine. A home page contains all the information that the author wishes to convey to readers.

**E-mail:** Electronic mail, or E-mail, is a modern version of letter writing. Before access to electronic networks such as the Internet, written communications were accomplished by typing or writing words on a piece of paper. The paper was then put into a stamped, addressed envelope and mailed, delivered to its destination by the post office. This time-honored process, still in use today, takes anywhere from one to 10 days by first-class postage, depending upon distance the letter is to go. The telegraph was an early method of electronic mail transmission, but the printed telegram still had to be hand-delivered to its final destination.

E-mail is similar except that no paper or envelopes are required. The letter is typed and stored electronically inside the computer. When you are ready to send it, you connect to an electronic network (such as the Internet) and send it via a modem to your friend's computer. Your friend receives it when he or she logs on and calls up the letter on the computer screen. The whole process may take only a few seconds.

**Browser:** This is the software program mounted on your computer used to access and obtain information from the World Wide Web. The two most popular

browsers are Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer.

**Internet Service Provider:** An Internet Service Provider (ISP) is a company that allows users to connect to the Internet. Because of the nature of the Internet, direct connection is rather expensive, much like placing a long-distance phone call. ISPs allow many users to connect and thus reduce each individual's cost. Some of the most well-known ISPs are **America Online**, **Compuserve** and **Spry-net**.

There are also many local and regional Internet Service Providers that have come online, offering fast response time and very competitive prices. Expect to pay anywhere between \$10 and \$25 per month for Internet access from a national or local provider.

So what do you need to join the fun, send E-mail and log onto the Horatio Alger Society home page? A computer equipped with a browser program, a modem, and an account with an Internet Service Provider. If you are interested in joining the fun, contact a friend who is already active and ask for help, or go to your local library, many of which are equipped with computers with Internet access.

Also, you can visit the computer section of any large bookstore like Borders, Barnes & Noble or Crown, and you will find numerous "hands-on" books on how to use the Internet and World Wide Web.

Your Partic'lar friend,  
John Cadick  
P.O. Box 495678  
Garland, TX 75049-5578  
E-mail: [j.cadick@ieee.org](mailto:j.cadick@ieee.org)

## Welcome to the Horatio Alger Society



*Carte de visite of Alger about 1858, a bonus to subscribers in Student and Schoolmate.*

**Our purpose:** To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr. and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half of a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes - lads whose struggles epitomized the great American dream and inspired hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

The Horatio Alger Society (HAS) was founded in 1961 by Forrest Campbell and Kenneth B. Butler. The HAS was incorporated at Mendota, Illinois in 1965 as a non-profit organization.

- [Find out more about the Horatio Alger Society](#)
- [Books recommended by the Horatio Alger Society](#)
- [Bibliography of the works of Horatio Alger, Jr.](#)
- [Find out more about Horatio Alger, Jr. on the Web](#)
- [Alger's books: bindings, illustrations, and dust jackets](#)



*Last Update: 03/08/97*

*Web Author: Janice and Michael Morley*

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# Horatio Alger Society repository library news

By Samuel T. Huang  
Rare Books and Special Collections  
Northern Illinois University Libraries

A lot has been taking place at the H.A.S. Repository over the past few months. We have completed the face-lift and expansion of our facilities. Not only do we have more space to house the Alger and Stratemeyer collections, but the natural light we now receive really adds a special essence to the area.

I want to personally thank Mr. Robert Routhier (PF-889) for his recent donation of 110 Alger books to the repository. On behalf of Northern Illinois University, I wish to thank Bob for his generous support.

We have also received donations for the Horatio Alger Society Repository Endowment from the following individuals:

Mary Ann Ditch (PF-861), Milton Ehlert (PF-702), Beverly A. Krenek (PF-968), James J. Lowe (PF-668), M.R. Royar (PF-300), Jeanette and Robert Routhier (PF-889), John B. Schnell, and Carl E. Wulff (PF-900).

We have been asked about the procedures for making donations to the endowment. It's very simple. Checks should be made payable to *Northern Illinois University*, with a notation that they are intended for the Horatio

Alger Society Repository Endowment. Please mail your check to:

Northern Illinois University Foundation  
Lowden Hall  
DeKalb, IL 60115

In order for us to reach our \$10,000 goal for the full establishment of the Horatio Alger Society endowment by the year 1999, the repository is seeking additional contributions.

If you decide to give, check with the personnel office of your employer to see if your company offers a "matching gifts" program which, in effect, doubles the donation to the repository. Your support is greatly appreciated. All donations are tax-deductible.

The Stratemeyer collection to which I refer earlier in this article is the first-edition collection of the late Arthur Sherman (PF-910), which we acquired last fall. This is one of our most significant acquisitions in recent years, which ideally complements our growing Alger collection. The Sherman collection includes approximately 275 volumes, including first editions and variations. We will have a more detailed report on this collection in a future issue of *Newsboy*.

## MEMBERSHIP

### New members

Douglas Van Kampen (PF-571)  
9811 West Litchfield Road  
Litchfield, MI 49252  
(517) 542-3513

Doug first joined the Horatio Alger Society in 1979, at which time he had around 60 Alger titles in his collection. Even though he subsequently left the Society, his collection continued to grow until he now has about 250 Algers. "I thought it would be fun to catch up on any changes and perhaps make a find or two of some titles that I don't have," he says. Welcome back!

### Change of address

Clyde E. Willis (PF-119)  
P.O. Box 1424  
Westerville, OH 43086-1424  
(New post office box number and ZIP code).

## Let us know!

Moving? New phone number? If so, please let us know immediately all changes in your address. Please note that the Horatio Alger Society has a new official address:

Horatio Alger Society  
P.O. Box 70361  
Richmond, VA 23255

Please send your changes to the above address. They will then be forwarded to the editor for publication in *Newsboy*.



# Horatio Alger and the American Union

## Part V

by Peter C. Walther (PF-548)

"The Humpbacked Contributor" is an unusual love story which would initially appear to be ill-fated for our erstwhile Romeo but ends quite happily for him and his "Juliet."

Alger casts his tale in the nature of a practical joke, a rather cruel one, it seems to me. Although we can comfortably predict the outcome, we are swept along by the author's engaging style and his way with describing country scenes, even though his pen does not carry the conviction of a Whittier or a Hawthorne.

Of special interest are the scenes drawn of an editor's office of a weekly literary paper. Who knows? Maybe Alger was drawing upon his own experience and limning editor Robert Fitts and his **American Union** operation. This fascinating topic is treated more in depth in J.T. Trowbridge's "Martin Merrivale," to which you are earnestly referred. However we may regard this love story by Horatio Alger, we must be thankful that it has indeed come down to us.

These early sketches certainly show the author in a whole new dress, don't they?

## The Humpbacked Contributor

By Carl Cantab

### CHAPTER I

William Potter was not one of those who think ladies have no business to cultivate literature. Although he had no special liking for the character of a professed blue, he bellowed that the cultivation of literary talent, when it is not carried so far as to exclude everything else, lends an additional grace to the female character.

"When I marry," he would frequently say, "I shall not select a woman who is a good cook and nothing else, nor, on the other hand, one who has an abundance of book knowledge, but is unacquainted with the practical details of every day life. I want something more than either. My choice will rest on one, if I am fortunate enough to discover such a person, who knows how to combine with these qualifications without either entrenching the legitimate province of the other."

Such was the resolution which Mr. Potter had formed, and such the rule by which he professed that he should be guided in the choice of a wife.

As might be expected from his literary taste, he

was a subscriber to several literary papers and magazines. In several of these he observed poems of great beauty and simplicity, signed Juliet. These at first he admired casually, but by and by he began to take a more than ordinary interest in these passing productions, and to note with curiosity the gradual improvement in style and expression, and the freer utterance of thought which they manifested. He began even to feel a personal interest in the unknown Juliet, and to long for her acquaintance. Every week or month, he glanced over the well-filled columns of the paper or magazine, to see if he could discover anything over the well-known signature.

Gradually his longings ripened into a purpose.

"I must see this Juliet," he said to himself. "I must become acquainted with her, and if on acquaintance she fulfills the expectations I have formed of her, she shall become Mrs. Potter, if my persuasions can avail anything."

He accordingly made a call at one of the newspaper offices to which "Juliet" was in the habit of sending contributions. The editor was at first unwilling to reveal her real name, alleging that she wished to remain unknown. This only strengthened William's desire to learn it, for said he to himself, "she is modest, and that is an excellent quality in a woman."

He finally prevailed on the editor to forward to Juliet's address a letter which he should write, and let her decide whether to notice it or not as she chose.

He went home and soon returned with the following letter, of which I am glad for the reader's sake that I have secured a copy.

**DEAR JULIET:** — I would that I were able to address you by your real name, but of that I am still in

(Continued on Page 10)

**Editor's note:** this is the fifth in our ongoing series of the short stories written by Horatio Alger, Jr. for the Boston **American Union** in the early 1850s. Alger (usually under his "Carl Cantab" pen name) wrote nine known stories for this publication, of which seven have been located to date. "The Humpbacked Contributor," published in the **American Union** on Dec. 17, 1853, was first reprinted by **Newsboy** in the issue of November-December 1983.



# The Humpbacked Contributor

(Continued from Page 9)

ignorance. Pardon the presumption of a stranger in addressing you thus unceremoniously. I can only plead in extenuation that I do not consider you a stranger. I have for months been in the habit of reading the beautiful poems which you have contributed to the periodicals of the day; I have felt that in them I saw the reflex of your mind and heart, and I could not view you as a stranger.

I have a favor to ask — let me trust not in vain. Will you confide to me your real name, and allow me the pleasure of a personal acquaintance. Without pressing my request further, I leave it to you to decide upon it, begging you to believe that it is dictated by a sincere admiration for your talents.

With deepest respect,  
William Potter.

It is high time that we introduce the as yet unknown "Juliet" to the reader's notice. We hasten to do so in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER II

"Can it be possible? Is this  
The fair divinity that has for months  
Possessed my waking moments,  
Woven itself into my dreams  
And filled me with its presence?  
No! no! it is all a dream,  
Evoked by fruitful fancy."

ANON.

The postman's knock was heard at the door of Dr. Richmond's residence in the village of Plainville, situated within 50 miles of New York.

"A letter for Mary, and in a gentleman's hand," said little Effie, who went to the door. "Which of your beaux is it from?"

May Richmond hastily took the letter from the hands of her sister. I need not say it was the identical one which the reader has had the pleasure of perusing, a few lines above. She blushed deeply — did you ever notice how much a blush becomes a beautiful girl of eighteen, and then, after a moment's pause, with a smiling face handed it to her father.

He looked over it and at the end laughed heartily.

"What are you going to do about it?" he asked.

"I hardly know," said she.

"I'll tell you what," said little Effie, who had been

poring over the letter, "tell him to come, and then you can dress yourself up like an old woman, and see how he will be astonished."

"I believe I *will* do something of the kind," said May mischievously. "It will be a good joke."

"And," continued Effie, "you will have to change your name then, for May would never do for an old woman."

"I believe I will call myself Betsey," said May, laughing.

The next mail carried to Mr. Potter a letter signed Betsey Richmond, granting the permission he had requested, and appointing a day when she would be willing to receive him. She wrote in conclusion, "I certainly should not have granted you request had I not discovered, or felt from the tone of your letter, an evidence of refinement and sincerity that speaks to the innermost mind, and not to the outwardly visible evidence of the person."

When the letter arrived, William Potter was overjoyed to find his expectations had not been in vain, though he rather stumbled at the plebeian name Betsey. "But of course she is not to blame for that," he argued.

He went to the tailor's and had a new suit made in anticipation of the appointed day, for though not a vain man, he was blind to the advantages of dress to one who was desirous of making a favorable first impression.

A week must elapse before the time arrived. He was in a fever of impatience for it to pass away. At length it did pass, and he placed himself in the cars having secured a ticket to Plainville.

He inquired at the hotel for the residence of Dr. Richmond. He was directed to a pretty Gothic cottage with a pleasant yard in front shaded by fruit trees bearing abundantly. It was quite a beautiful home, a fit casket, thought he, for such a jewel.

He was ushered into the parlor, and in a few minutes a female form made her appearance. But alas, for his anticipations! The unknown Juliet had a hump between her shoulders, and her hair was of that color which is the special aversion of both sexes — flaring red.

When he gained courage to look at her face, he found that despite the red hair it was really very pretty. But what face can counterbalance two such drawbacks as a hump and red hair?

Mr. Potter was much taken aback that he made his salutation very awkwardly, and it was with great difficulty that he spoke a few words of salutation and acknowledgment of the kindness which had granted him this favor.

"I am very much indebted to you for your kind



permission to visit you, and I must beg you to pardon whatever of presumption or boldness you may have seen in my request."

He cast his eyes on the floor, that he might be relieved from the sight of the hump and red hair.

It was a very pleasant and sweet voice which assured him in reply that he was quite forgiven for any presumption of which he might have been guilty.

William looked up half in doubt whether the voice actually proceeded him from the hump-backed Betsey, but there was no other in the room.

Soon the conversation branched off upon other topics, chiefly connected with literature and books, on which May expressed herself readily and with apparent fullness of information.

An hour passed in this manner, when Mr. Potter arose to go.

May pressed him to remain to dinner, assuring him that her parents would welcome him. He accepted the invitation, feeling a curiosity to see the rest of the family, and reseated himself.

"You will excuse me for a little while," apologized May, smiling; as we have but one domestic, my services will be called for in the kitchen."

When he was left to himself, Mr. Potter began to reflect.

"She is certainly a charming companion," he thought, "so full of vivacity and information — but that odious hump and such fiery red hair. Still, she has a pretty face, especially when she smiles. She is such a woman as I wished for a wife. There are but two impediments, but such impediments!"

At the dinner-table Mr. Potter was introduced to the remainder of the family, viz: Mr. and Mrs. Richmond and little Effie. The latter could hardly restrain herself from laughing outright when she looked at her sister's red wig, and had occasion to ask,

"Please pass the salt, sister *Betsey!*"

Nevertheless the dinner-party was a very pleasant one. The doctor was a man of intelligence, and May shone with unusual brilliancy.

Mr. Potter, professing his intention to spend a week in town, was invited to call frequently.

He availed himself of this invitation. At each visit he became more and more charmed with May. Gradually the physical disadvantages which at first struck him so disagreeably softened down. They no longer seemed so formidable as at first. The red hair he came soon to regard as only "rather a strong shade of auburn," and read with interest that in Greece it is considered a mark of female beauty.

The fact was William Potter was fast falling in love.

The week soon expired, but it was not long before he made his appearance in Plainville once more. He was again obliged to spend a week at the village hotel, "for the benefit of his health," he said.

These visits increased in frequency till some six months had passed since the date of his first acquaintance with the unknown contributor.

One evening he made a declaration of love to May Richmond.

She looked incredulous, and inquired,

"Is it possible, Mr. Potter, that you would be willing to marry a woman with a humpback and red hair?"

"I will not scruple to say," he replied, "that there was a time when these would have been impediments to my love. But, since I have known you, I have had such an opportunity of viewing the grace and propriety with which you demean yourself on all occasions — the fullness of information and charming conversational powers which you possess — that I no longer consider them of any weight in the matter."

"Frankly, then, as you have done, I will confess that I too have been pleased with you, and that I accept your proposal in the spirit in which it is offered."

So saying, and before William could express his thanks, May left the room, and directly afterwards returned divested of the hump and the red wig.

Mr. Potter rose in amazement.

"I see," said May, "you wish for an explanation. Know then, that in the first place, my name is May, not Betsey, and that my red hair and hump were not the creation of Nature but of a less skilful artificer. Will you pardon me the deception?"

"Pardon you, my dearest May," was the reply of the delighted lover, as he folded her —

But our story ends here.

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#### *Previous installments in this series:*

##### **Old Simon, the Miser**

(Vol XXXII, No. 6; November-December 1994)

##### **Aunt Dorothy's Visit!**

(Vol. XXXIII, No. 2; March-April 1995)

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## The Library and the Librarian

A selection of Articles from the Boston  
Evening Transcript and other  
Sources

By  
Edmund Lester Pearson

### *The Librarian's Series*

Edited by  
John Cotton Dana and Henry W. Kent  
Number two

Published by  
The Elm Tree Press Woodstock Vermont  
1910

At right is an excerpt from "An Amateur's Notions of Boys' Books" by Edmund Lester Pearson, included in *The Library and the Librarian*, above.

## Horatio Alger banned, 1910

By George W. May (PF-121)

An article, "An Amateur's Notions of Boys' Books," in a 1910 book *The Library and the Librarian*, by Edmund Lester Pearson, discussed the status of boys' books among libraries and librarians. Banned, censored, condemned, prohibited, removed from many library shelves were books by Horatio Alger, Jr., Oliver Optic, Mayne Reid, G.A. Henty, Harry Castlemon and other writers, but particularly questioned was the exclusion of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* from Libraries — real boys versus Henty's wooden heroes and Alger's repetitious themes and plots. Mark Twain was the cynosure of the librarians.

**Editor's note:** For a comprehensive discussion of the "boys' books vs. the librarians" controversy, refer to John T. Dizer's *Tom Swift & Co.: Boys' Boys* by Stratemeyer and Others (McFarland, 1982), with specific reference to the chapters titled "Boys' Books and the American Dream" and "Fortune and the Syndicate."

### AN AMATEUR'S NOTIONS OF BOYS' BOOKS 69

that Mayne Reid's statements about the wild lands that his books describe have never been found in any important degree inaccurate.

Do boys read Jules Verne now? There has been more or less talk about his being supplanted by Mr. H. G. Wells, but I cannot believe that boys would prefer the Englishman. I used to think Captain Nemo the most magnificent of mysterious heroes. Jules Verne had a gallery of wooden characters, but their adventures were passing fine. I was very proud of a note which I once received from him, in reply to one which I addressed to him in the French of Stratford-atte-Bowe. The books of Horatio Alger and his school do not, I believe, meet the approval of the modern children's librarian. I cannot shed any tears over his loss, for only one of his was familiar to me. I should be sorry to see Harry Castlemon packed off, however, and it does not seem that the librarians who banish Alger and Optic have a very strong position. There are not many to take their places. Mr. Trowbridge is still in favor, as he certainly should be, with his two excellent stories,—"Cudjo's Cave" and "The Three Scouts."

The chief appeal that is made for the works of the late Mr. Henty is that certain things can be got "out of" them. What I got out of the few I tried to read was weariness of the flesh. With their everlasting prefaces beginning "My Dear Lads" and their stereotyped heroes, they covered a period from the dawn of time down to yesterday afternoon, and they blazed a trail of earnest mediocrity. Lowell says of Cooper's Indians that they are only Natty Bumppo daubed over with red. Mr. Henty's heroes are one youth with a variety of costumes that might make the German Emperor envious.

The librarian could not always be blamed for Alger's exclusion. Public opinion — the moralist, the pastor or Sunday school teacher, mayhap — exerted pressure in many instances. Although in such cases the boys could not withdraw their Alger and Hentys from the library, the books were voraciously read through purchase, gift, loan or trade, like the other dime novels of the era. Those books were not banned in my rural school of the 1900-1920 era, for I read them there. It may be that the furor centered in the larger school systems and libraries of the nation.

It must be admitted that Alger, Castlemon, Henty, *et. al.* were in eclipse through the 1920s and '30s or longer, but the dormancy definitely began to end with the Horatio Alger Society's inception in 1961. Jerome Bruner (Harvard University) has said that the playwrights destroyed the remnants of the Horatio Alger myth with the image of Arthur Miller's salesman. Maybe they have in the economic sector, but Alger lives on in the hearts of us oldsters and — who knows? — he may return as a moral force and signal a return to the older ethos.



## BOOK REVIEWS

*Pioneers, Passionate Ladies and Private Eyes; Dime Novels, Series Books and Paperbacks.* Co-edited by Larry E. Sullivan, Ph. D., and Lydia Cushman Schurman, Ph. D. ISBN: 0-7890-0016-4. New York and London, 1997: The Haworth Press, Inc., 306 pages, hardcover. Price, \$39.95, but for a 20 percent discount if ordered now (\$31.96). To order, write Haworth Press, Inc., 10 Alice St., Binghamton, N.Y. 13904-1580. FAX: 1-800-895-0582 (include check or credit card information). Call 1-800-429-6784 weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. eastern time to place order and to obtain information on shipping charges.

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### Reviewed by William R. Gowen (PF-706)

Today we have become a generation of watchers, not readers, which does not bode well for the future literacy of not only the United States but of the world at large.

But there was a time, starting in the decades following the Civil War and carrying through World War II nearly a century later, that America — and, in particular, its young people — read voraciously, not only in school but during leisure time.

This was because reading became more accessible with the introduction of inexpensive dime novels, story papers, paperback books and hard-cover juvenile series books. Where have they gone today? What was it that made dime novels, series books and the like so appealing to young people (and yes, adults)?

Where best to turn then today's leading authorities in the field? *Pioneers, Passionate Ladies and Private Eyes; Dime Novels, Series Books and Paperbacks*, offers us an excellent opportunity to do just that.

In this excellent overview of an era long past, we are treated to a collection of chapters by such luminaries as the world's leading dime novel expert, Edward T. LeBlanc (editor of *Dime Novel Round-Up* from the early 1950s to mid-1990s); John T. Dizer, Ph. D., one of the leading scholars of Edward Stratemeyer, the Stratemeyer Syndicate and exponent of the thesis that boys' books foster the great American dream in all of us. Dizer offers a splendid overview of five of the most important authors of early dime novels and series books: Edward S. Ellis, Harrie Irving Hancock, Gilbert Patten, W. Bert Foster, and, of course, Stratemeyer.

There's also J. Randolph Cox, current editor of *Dime Novel Round-Up* and the world's top authority on Nick Carter, with a discourse on the dime novels' best-known detective.

Other authorities in their fields abound: M. Paul Holsinger, Professor of History at Illinois State University and chair of the Popular Culture Association's

## Pioneers, Passionate Ladies, and Private Eyes

Dime Novels, Series Books, and Paperbacks



Larry E. Sullivan, PhD  
Lydia Cushman Schurman, PhD  
Editors

World War II area of interest; and David K. Vaughan, Assistant Dean for Research and Associate Professor of Technical Communication of the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. Holsinger discusses World War II as depicted in series books and Vaughan discusses and gives examples from the golden age of aviation series books (1927-1932).

Getting slightly away from mainstream series books, Deidre A. Johnson (West Chester University) gives an illuminating look at the parallels between "John L." and "Gentleman Jack" as found in the *New York Five Cent Library* and how contemporary events (the real lives of prize fighters John L. Sullivan and "Gentleman Jim" Corbett) helped to influence dime novels during their heyday.

Another interesting example found in the book is a dime novel detective story based on the famous Lizzie Borden murder trial, in a case study by Kathleen Chamberlain (Emory & Henry College).

Additional major names in the fields of literary research and library science also contribute mightily to this volume, including: Madeleine B. Stern, H. Alan

(Continued on Page 14)



## BOOK REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 13)

Pickrell, Leona Rostenberg, Jean Carwile Masteller, E.M. Sanchez-Saavedra, Nancy Tillman Romalov, Alison Scott, Clark Evans and Angela J. Farkas.

Drawn from the symposium of the same title sponsored and hosted in June 1995 by the Library of Congress, *Pioneers, Passionate Ladies and Private Eyes: Dime Novels, Series Books and Paperbacks* is a "must read" for researchers and fans alike.

*A Collector's Guide to Hardcover Boys' Series Books*, by E. Christian Mattson and Thomas B. Davis. Newark, Delaware, 1997: MAD Book Company; second printing. \$54.95 plus \$3.75 shipping and handling. Available from Mattson Enterprises, E. (Ed) Christian Mattson, Antiquarian Bookseller, Four Turtlerock Court, Baltimore, MD 21234. Tel.: 1-410-668-4730; FAX: 1-410-882-9137.

**Reviewed by Arthur P. Young (PF-941)**

Another edition of *A Collector's Guide to Hardcover Boys' Series Books* has arrived, and there is every reason

to applaud the efforts of the primary editors and contributors in making the volume even more valuable to the book collector. More than 900 changes are incorporated in this new edition, including the identification of additional series and more detailed bibliographic descriptions and information about dust jackets.

The *Guide* is now packed with information on 754 different series, encompassing 5,032 books, 547 authors, 536 artists, 184 publishers and 116 subjects.

The format has changed from a spiral-bound volume to a book printed on high-quality paper with clear and readable type and a tough high-gloss, trade paperback cover which opens and lies flat, all 578 pages.

There is new commentary on Altemus series books, a complete listing of Whitman "2300" series books, information on non-series books written by various popular series-book authors, a new list of "phantom" titles, and expanded list of hard-to-find series books as identified by several top collectors.

This second edition further enhances the *Guide*, already the standard for series book collectors and the entire collecting community.

Good hunting to everyone!

## Editor's notebook

(Continued from Page 4)

Karen Plunkett-Powell (PF-982), on April 12 hosted "Books-by-the-Sea" in New Jersey. Among the special guests were Harriet Stratemeyer Adams' daughter, Camilla Adams Witman, and Harriet's grandson, Karl Harr, who offered a rare showing of a 25-minute television documentary of the Stratemeyer family titled "The Secret of Nancy Drew." Karen is preparing a feature article on this for *Newsboy*. "Books-by-the-Sea" drew more than 150 persons to Sea Bright, N.J., so it was a wonderful day for book collectors and scholars.

The annual joint conference of the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association took place March 26-29 at the Marriott River Center Hotel in San Antonio, Texas, with our traditionally large contingent of Partic'lar Friends on hand.

Presenters of papers who are also members of the Horatio Alger Society included Eddie LeBlanc, John T. Dizer, J. Randolph Cox, Deidre Johnson, Kathleen Chamberlain, Rocco Musemeche, Henri Achée, James Keeline, Alan Pickrell and your editor.

I attended several other presentations in such diverse areas as sports, films and World War II, and found that our *Dime Novels*, *Pulp*s and *Series Books* panels were the best-attended of the bunch. We all agreed that this was one of our most successful PCA/ACA meetings in

recent years. A full report (hopefully, with photos) is forthcoming in a future issue, and several of the presentations will wind up as articles in *Newsboy*, including pieces on Alger, Albertus T. Dudley and Percy Keese Fitzhugh's Pee-Wee Harris.

Speaking of Pee-Wee Harris, *Newsboy* will be offering a special treat in upcoming issues, with Rocco Musemeche's delightful PCA/ACA paper, "Miniatures on Diminutive Pee-Wee Harris," followed by the book-length story "Pee-Wee Harris: Warrior Bold." This story apparently was slated to become the 14th volume in the *Pee-Wee Harris Series* at the time Grosset & Dunlap discontinued the series in 1930. This story (with illustrations by Bert Salg) will appear over several issues beginning later this year. As far as we can determine, this will be the first time this story has appeared since it was published as a *Boys' Life* serial 66 years ago.

As you can see on Pages 6-7, our official Horatio Alger Society web site is on-line. What we have at the moment is pretty basic, so we plan to expand its resources in the months ahead, including articles from *Newsboy*, convention news and other items of interest to all H.A.S. members, or web-surfers who may become members.

**In this issue:** Arthur Young reveals a new Alger title on Page 3, and the fifth installment in our series of the Alger ("Carl Cantab") stories originally appearing in the Boston *American Union* is found on Page 9.

**Coming in May-June:** Our annual convention issue, with stories, auction results and a lot more!



# Taking another look at that old ball game

**Editor's note:** The following excerpt from Everett T. Tomlinson's *The Pennant* was submitted by J. Delbert Brandt (PF-494) in response to our article titled "Striking out: The Stratemeyer Syndicate and boys' sports books," appearing in the January-February issue of *Newsboy*.

## Triple Play

By Everett T. Tomlinson

Crack! The batter hit the ball with a force that sent it skipping between short-stop and third base, and the runner was safe at first, with the second safe hit the Benson players had secured. The following batter was given his base on balls, and the runner on first slowly made his way to second. Two on bases and none out! Had Dan's hand lost its cunning? "Steady Dan," called Walter, striving to speak encouragingly. The young pitcher, however, did not even glance in the direction of his short-stop. With increased deliberation he drew back his arm and sent it in a slow in-curve.

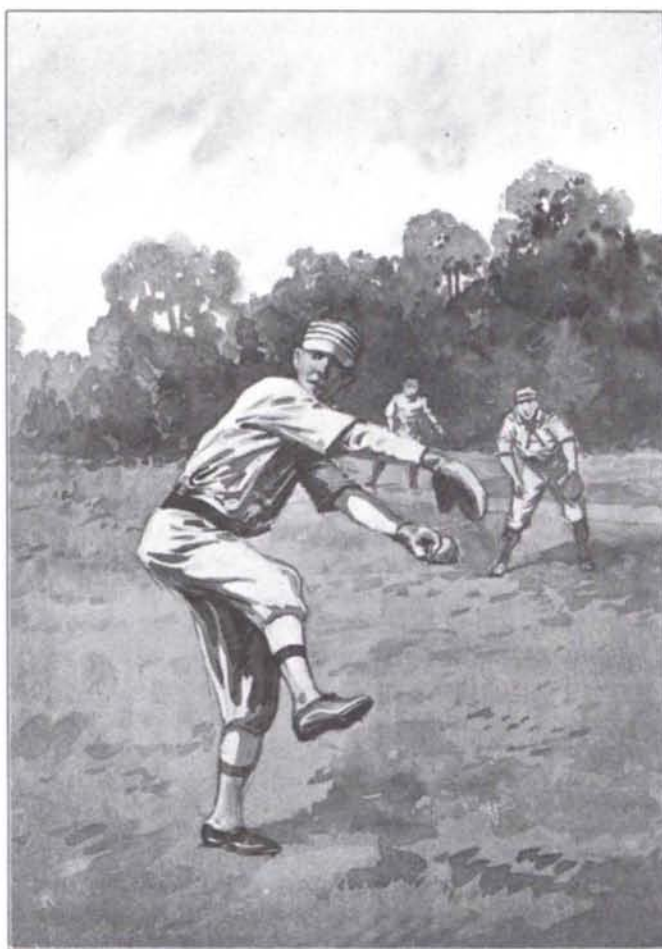
*Other authors...  
...other books*

Crack! Dan's heart sank an instant at the sound, and then he was aware that the ball was coming swiftly toward him. He put up his hands almost instinctively and, scarcely realizing what he was doing, caught the ball. Instantly swinging about he threw the ball to second and the player was out. "First! First! Throw it to first!" shouted Dan almost beside himself in the excitement. "Throw it! Throw it!" he yelled frantically, going through the motion of throwing the ball himself in his eagerness.

The second baseman, at the sharp call, wheeled and sent the ball with all his might to the first-baseman, who had advanced several feet from the base and was standing with outstretched hands awaiting the coming of the sphere. The Benson runner who, at the sound of the bat when it struck the ball, had heedlessly started at full speed for second, now was frantically endeavoring to regain first base. As the baseman caught the ball the runner dove head foremost, and the two came down in a heap about six feet from the coveted bag.

Dan was dimly aware of a mighty shout that went up from the excited spectators, but he instantly ran to the place where the two players were lying. The Rodman player had been struck in the pit of the stomach by the head of the Benson player and was gasping for breath, his face being colorless.

"Mark his feet, Dan," called Walter as he himself



The pitcher was tall and wiry and handled himself well.

*The Pennant*, Page 265

began to move the arms of the player much after the manner in which the handle of a pump is manipulated. There were expressions of anger to be seen on the faces of the people that instantly rushed upon the field, and for a moment there were signs of serious trouble. Fortunately the Rodman first-baseman quickly recovered and arose, although he stood for a brief time pale and trembling. With his recovery the threatening peril of a conflict was avoided and slowly the assembly began to depart from the field.

"Dan, that was a wonderful catch you made," said Walter quietly as he joined his friend.

"Was it?" laughed Dan, elated by the words of praise.

"Yes; though the best thing you did was when you sent the ball like a shot to second," said Walter.

"Nat Carey wasn't asleep. He got the ball to first in time to catch the runner. Nat played a good game to-day at second."

"That was the first time I ever saw a triple play."

"Is it?"

"Yes. It was great."

From *The Pennant*. Philadelphia, 1912: Griffith & Rowland Press

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