



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.

VOLUME XXX

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1998

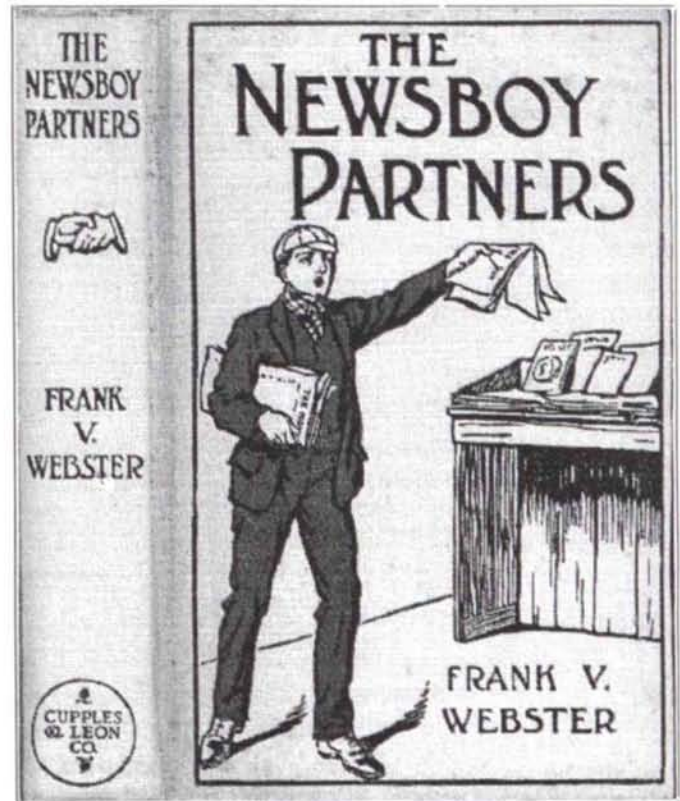
NUMBER 6

Happy New Year!

The Webster Series

*A Stratemeyer Syndicate series
in the tradition of Horatio Alger*

-- See Page 13



Alger at the Comics — Part 2

-- See Page 3

President's column

A guest column by our Vice President

It is my privilege to write a Vice President's Column for this issue of *Newsboy*. While this has been a stressful semester for me at work, things have been terrific on the collecting front. I finally own a first edition of *Nothing to Do* and, thanks to the work of David Collier (PF-943) and Gil Westgard (PF-024), I have a handsome copy of *Seeking His Fortune*, the final two titles that have eluded me.

This season brings news that Mary Ann Ditch (PF-861) has opened her new bookstore in Omaha, currently named Adventures in Bookselling, fulfilling a lifelong dream of hers. The 4,000 square foot shop has about 10,000 used books listed on ABE and about 9,000 on Bibliofind. She sells about half her books through the Internet (her address is maditch@aol.com).

Mary Ann reports the shop is paying the bills, and she can finally report she is thrilled to get up in the morning to go to work (the insurance company for which she worked closed its Omaha office). She enjoys the live customers and the books people bring to her doorstep.

President Carl Hartmann has asked Jerry Friedland to chair the H.A.S. nominating committee, and has asked Sam Huang and John Juvinal to serve as well. We will need three new directors at the convention next May. If you have any suggestions for the nominating committee, this is a good time to pass them along.

I was deeply saddened by the death of Hank Gravbelle in September. He was a remarkable collector and a warm Partic'lar Friend who faced his illness and prognosis with strength and great courage. I am extremely pleased that Elaine has decided to join the Society, and we look forward to seeing her in DeKalb. As some of you know, Hank's Alger collection will be auctioned in DeKalb. It consists of about 500 books, including 40 first editions, many dust-jacketed volumes, and quality reprints. Sounds like another reason you should come to DeKalb!

Speaking of DeKalb, remember to mark your calendars for May 13-16, 1999, when Sam Huang and Arthur Young are our hosts at Northern Illinois University. The tentative agenda includes a book restoration workshop, a talk by J. Randolph Cox (editor of *Dime Novel Round-Up*) titled "The Life and Times of Nick Carter," an Alger talk by Arthur Young, another by Brad Chase on the New York Book Company Algiers, along with visits to the H.A.S. Repository, video presentations, viewing of the young people's H.A.S. convention poster competition,

(Continued on Page 4)

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

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 70361, 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 ads or "Letters to the Editor" to *Newsboy* editor William R. Gowen (PF-706) at 23726 N. Overhill Dr., Lake Zurich, IL 60047.

Alger at the Comics

Part 2

By Arthur P. Young (PF-941)

This miniseries concludes with a Horatio Alger story which appears in *Shadow Comics*, Volume 1, Number 6, August 1940. The title of this appearance is "Robert Coverdale's Pluck and Luck," a variant title of "Robert Coverdale's Struggle."

The eight-page tale, reproduced in this issue starting on Page 5, is accompanied by the following additional stories: "The Shadow," "The Three Musketeers," "Gadget Man," "Avenger," "Nick Carter," "Carrie Cashin," "Iron Monroe" and "Bill Barnes."

Like other *Shadow Comics* of the period, the cover is a striking rendition of the Shadow, and the comics are drawn with vivid colors. The original story, which appeared in Street & Smith's *New Medal Library* series (#555) in 1910 as *Robert Coverdale's Struggle; or, On the Wave of Success*, now has a modern setting with contemporary dress, automobiles, furnishings and clothing. The amount of dialog per comic frame is considerable, and the story line is facilitated by the use of non-dialog transitions at strategic points.

The *Shadow Comics* version of *Robert Coverdale's Struggle* very closely parallels the original story. Our young hero, Robert Coverdale, lives with his aunt and uncle, Jane and John Trafton. Robert Coverdale is a



resourceful and kind lad who was brought up in a deprived setting with a loving aunt and alcoholic uncle. When Robert acquires a few dollars from a good deed, his conniving uncle tricks him into taking a boat ride out to an island where he could pry the money from his nephew. Robert manages to escape, but nearly drowns before being rescued by a Gilbert Huet, who not only saved his life, but, in typical Alger fashion, becomes Robert's new benefactor.

John Trafton decides to pursue his nephew again, especially in light of his determination that Huet is a wealthy man. Mistaken for a watchman, John Trafton is murdered. Huet then engages Robert to help him recover his little son, who was kidnapped 10 years earlier. Robert travels to the Badger Farm in Ohio, where he finds Huet's kidnapped son and returns him to his father. Huet is so grateful that he adopts Robert Coverdale in the final frame of the story.

"Robert Coverdale's Pluck and Luck" incorporates many familiar Alger themes: deprived childhood, resourceful characters, triumph of justice of villainy, the guiding hand of a caring and often-wealthy friend and the inevitable happy ending. On the debit side, there are more than a few improbable plot twists, together with a fair amount of terse and uninspired dialog. Ironically, these attributes make it easier to condense the story for comic book format.

Convention alert!

Now is the time to mark your calendars for May 13-16, 1999 — that's when "Dash to DeKalb," the centennial Horatio Alger Society convention, will be held at Northern Illinois University. Our hosts, Samuel T. Huang (PF-963) and Art Young (PF-941) have assembled a fascinating agenda, which will be published in the next issue of *Newsboy* (January-February 1999).

A few advance items of interest: the registration fee of \$65 per person will cover one of the most comprehensive and fun-filled schedules of events ever, the fee including a buffet lunch on Friday, dinner that night at a nearby

country club, the annual H.A.S. banquet on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday.

Rooms at the University Guest Room Hotel are \$44.40 (tax included) per night, multiple-occupancy. If you're anxious to reserve your room at an early date, call the hotel directly at (815) 753-1444. The hotel will also honor the above H.A.S. convention rate if you decide to arrive a few days early or stay a few additional days.

Remember, complete information, including convention registration form and agenda, will be enclosed with the January-February *Newsboy*!

For more information, you can access the convention schedule on the H.A.S. Repository Internet site at:

<http://libws66.lib.niu.edu/71999s.htm>

Editor's notebook

I hope you have enjoyed the holiday season. This issue should be in your hands just as the calendar page turns from 1998 to 1999.

A few quick items of business:

Seeking His Fortune: The enclosed flyer (which you should also have received with the September-October *Newsboy*, states that the special discount offer of \$52 for this book in the cloth edition is valid until Dec. 31, 1998. But since it is already near that date as you read this, Gilbert K. Westgard II (PF-024) and David Collier (PF-943), who have produced this special edition, have graciously extended their offer until January 31, 1999. I have a copy of the book, which I will review in the next issue. Be assured that Gil and Dave have done a wonderful job with this project and you should be very proud to add *Seeking His Fortune* in your collection.

Attention, eBay shoppers: A growing number of Partic'lar Friends are buying and/or selling books on the Internet auction service **eBay**, which by this fall had a staggering 1.2 million registered users and around a million items for sale on an average day. While the vast majority of participants have had no problems, there have been reported instances of abuse by sellers (in other words, *fraud*).

To read more about this, go to your library and ask for the Dec. 21 issue of *Newsweek*. On page 72 you will find an article titled "Risky Business," which describes the **eBay** phenomenon in general and covers the pros and cons of this extremely popular web site, over which just about everything imaginable is offered at auction.

The same *caveats* apply to any of the several auction Internet sites currently active. The main thing is to use common sense when using these services.

Sammy Sosa: In a good case of timing, the very week the September-October *Newsboy* was mailed with my story about Sosa's Ragged Dick-like climb from shoeshine boy in the Dominican Republic to Chicago Cubs star with 66 home runs in 1998, Sosa was a near-unanimous winner of National League MVP over his friendly rival, the St. Louis Cardinals' Mark McGwire. Incidentally, Sosa and McGwire have just been named co-winners of the Sportsman of the Year award by *Sports Illustrated* and co-winners of a similar honor by *The Sporting News*.

Next issue: January-February is our annual Convention preview issue, with a full rundown on "Dash to DeKalb," including agenda and registration form.

H.A.S. Repository news

The Northern Illinois University Libraries would like to thank the following individuals who have made contributions to the H.A.S. Repository Endowment Fund:

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard A. Biberdorf

Mr. William Gowen

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kersch

Ms. Carol Nackenoff

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Young

If you want to make a tax-deductible contribution to the endowment, checks should be payable to *Northern Illinois University*, with a notation that they are intended for the Horatio Alger Society Repository Endowment. Mail to:

Northern Illinois University Foundation
Lowden Hall, Room 204
DeKalb, IL 60115

President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

and a very special keynote speaker that I will let them tell you about themselves! You know you want to be there! I anticipate a large crowd for this wonderful centennial event at the home of the Horatio Alger Society Repository.

A full convention preview, along with registration form, will be included in the January-February *Newsboy*.

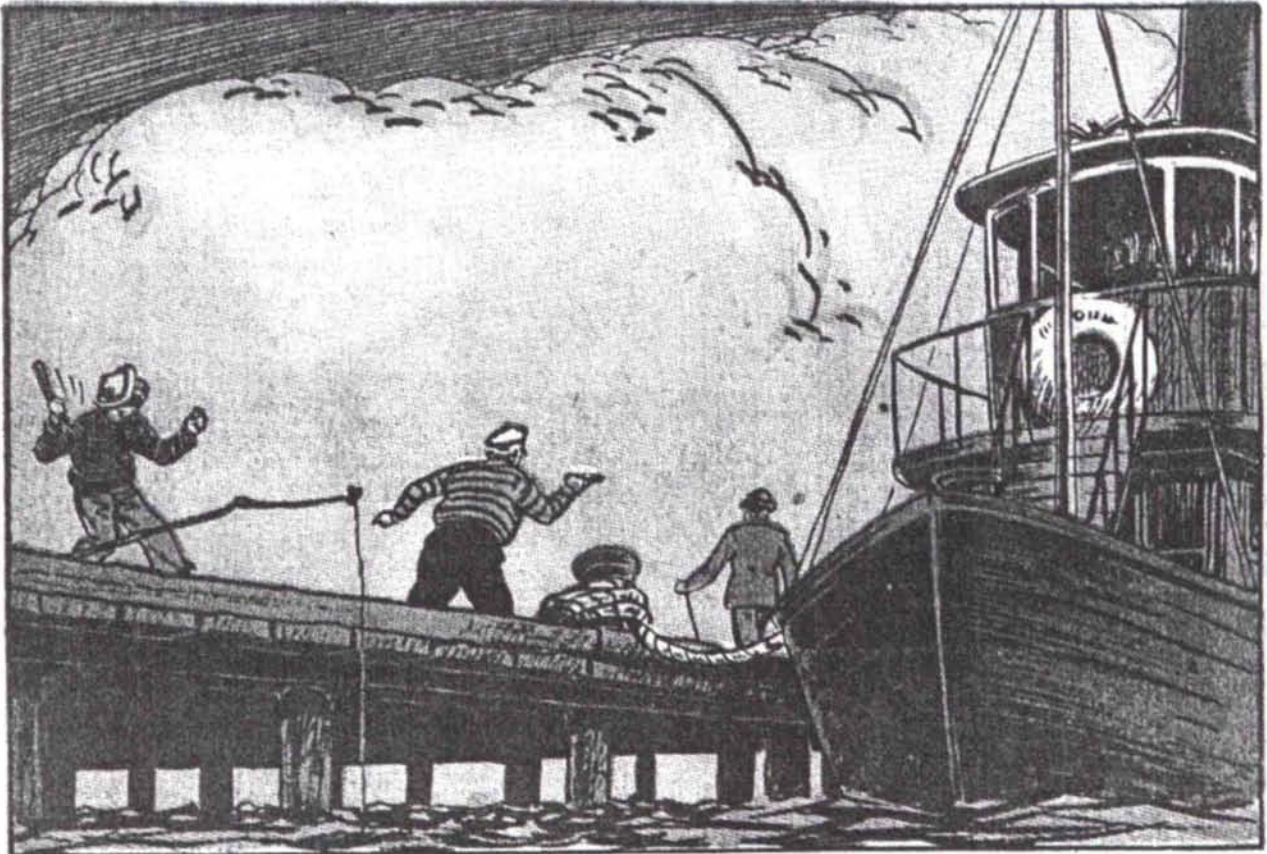
Looking ahead to 2000, Tom Davis (PF-976) and I are working together on plans for a mid-Atlantic conference. It is lots of fun working with Tom, and we are looking forward to this project. You can count on a convention either on the Jersey Shore (Cape May) or, somewhat more likely at this point, in the Brandywine River region, rich in Revolutionary War history and full of antique stores. More details soon.

On a final note, the fast-approaching centennial of Alger's death offers a rich opportunity to publicize the Society and familiarize (or re-familiarize) Americans with Horatio Alger and his works. I think it would be wonderful if every member who can pick up a pen would do so. Think about working up a centennial piece for your local newspaper, a local monthly publication, or a regional glossy. There are probably lots of places you can think of that a short (or long) notice about the centennial, the resonance of the Alger story, the collectors and the Society could be placed. A chance for publicity like this doesn't come along every day. Be creative! I hope to do my part.

Wishing you all the best for 1999.

Your Partic'lar Friend,
Carol Nackenoff (PF-921)
222 Vassar Ave.
Swarthmore, PA 19081
E-mail: cnacken1@swarthmore.edu

ROBERT COVERDALE'S PLUCK AND LUCK BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.



SHADOW COMICS



PLUCK AND LUCK

ROBERT HAS TOLD AUNT JANE OF HIS EXPERIENCE WITH MR. TUDOR - AND WHILE SHE IS PREPARING THEIR FIRST REAL MEAL IN MONTHS

AUNT JANE, I THINK THIS IS AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY TO HIDE THIS MONEY FROM UNCLE JOHN!
YES, ROBERT, AND NAIL THE PLANK BACK IN PLACE AFTERWARD - AS A PRECAUTION AGAINST ANY SUSPICION!



HUMPH! A CELEBRATION! DON'T WORRY, WHERE'D Y' GET THE MONEY FOR THAT? JOHN! NONE OF IT CAME FROM YOUR POCKETS, REST ASSURED!



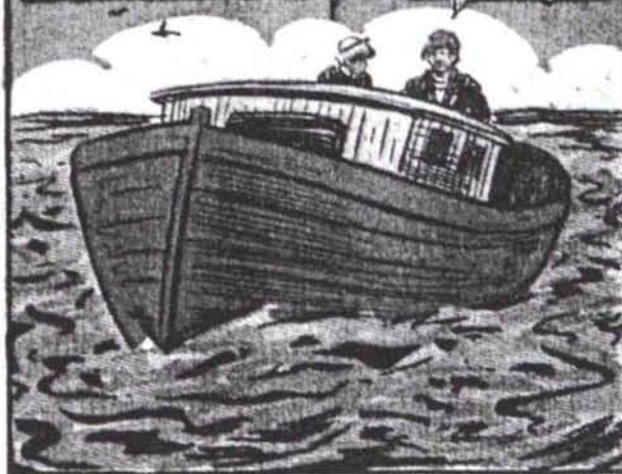
NO, I CAN'T JOIN YA, ROBERT! I'VE GOT A BIG JOB T'DO OVER ON EGG ISLAND! IT'LL MEAN BIG MONEY! BUT I NEED YOUR HELP - IMMEDIATELY!
JOHN! Y-O-U- A J-O-B!?



CERTAINLY, UNCLE JOHN! I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP! I'LL FINISH EATING WHEN I RETURN, AUNT JANE!

I'M ALL EXCITED ABOUT YOUR NEW JOB, UNCLE JOHN! PLEASE TELL ME ABOUT IT!

NO! YOU'LL SEE - WHEN WE GET THERE!



THE SIX MILE BOAT TRIP TO EGG ISLAND IS COMPLETED - AND -

WELL! HERE WE ARE, UNCLE JOHN! WHERE'S YOUR JOB?
RIGHT HERE! IT'S T'MAKE YOU TELL ME WHERE Y'HID THAT ROLL OF BILLS Y'FLASHED IN SANDS' STORE!



- AN' YOU'LL TALK WHEN I GET THROUGH WITCHA !! I'M LEAVIN' Y' HERE 'TIL T'MORRER T'THINK IT OVER! AN' WHEN I GET BACK HERE - YOU'LL GET MORE 'N Y' 'JUS' GOT - 'TIL Y'DO - TELL ME WHERE THAT DOUGH IS, THAT MONEY IS FOR - FOOD! I'LL NEVER TELL YOU WHERE IT IS!



SHADOW COMICS



POOR AUNT JANE'LL BE WORRIED ABOUT ME! WELL I'M NOT STAYING HERE! I'LL REST AWHILE - THEN SWIM BACK!

AS SOON AS THE REST AND RECUPERATION WERE DEEMED SUFFICIENT - ROBERT PLUNGED IN FOR THE SIX MILE SWIM - HALF THE DISTANCE IS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED - WHEN SUDDENLY -



I-I- GOT A CRAMP! I C-CAN'T MOVE! HELP! HELP!



WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE AM I? WHO ARE YOU, SIR? YOU WERE ABOUT TO DROWN OUT THERE THREE MILES OFF SHORE! LUCKY FOR YOU, MY BOY, I JUST HAPPENED TO BE THERE - ON MY RETURN FROM TOWN! MY NAME IS GILBERT HUET - I LIVE HERE ALONE ON THIS ISLAND!



OH! THANK YOU, MR. HUET, FOR SAVING MY LIFE! I'M VERY POOR, SIR, AND DON'T KNOW HOW I'LL EVER REPAY YOU! BUT RIGHT NOW - I MUST GET BACK TO MY AUNT! SHE'LL BE WORRIED - AND - JUST FORGET ABOUT REPAYING ME, SON, AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR AUNT - I'LL TAKE YOU BACK JUST AS SOON AS YOU'VE RESTED A BIT!



I'VE RESTED ENOUGH, SIR! YOU SEE - I'M ALSO WORRIED ABOUT MY UNCLE JOHN MISTREATING MY AUNT - AS HE DID ME - IN HIS SEARCH FOR MY FEW DOLLARS! I- WELL! WELL! SO YOU'VE GOT A MEAN RELATIVE TOO! WE'VE GOT SOMETHING IN COMMON, MY BOY!



I LIKE YOU, SON! WE OUGHT TO GET BETTER ACQUAINTED! HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK FOR ME? Y-YOU M-MEAN A R-REAL JOB!? OH! THAT WOULD BE WONDERFUL, SIR!

PLUCK AND LUCK

UNABLE TO FIND ROBERT'S MONEY ANYWHERE ON THE PREMISES UNCLE JOHN STARTS FOR THE HOUSE TO SEARCH INSIDE. WHILE PASSING A WINDOW—



ROBERT! HOW'D HE GET BACK FROM THE ISLAND!?

ROBERT—BROUGHT BACK BY MR. HUET. AS PROMISED—CONTINUES WITH HIS STORY



— AND I WILL GET FIVE DOLLARS A WEEK—WORKING ONLY ON TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS WITH HIM ON HIS PRIVATE ISLAND, AUNT JANE—

MR. HUET IS VERY KIND— ROBERT—AND VERY WEALTHY! I'VE READ OF HIM OFTEN—

ON LEARNING OF HUET'S WEALTH—AND SECLUSION—UNCLE JOHN IS SOON ON THE LONELY ISLAND—BUT STRANGELY HE ISN'T ALONE IN THE DISHONORABLE INTENTION—

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER WITH THE BRAT'S SMALL CHANGE!? WHY'N'T I THINK OF THIS PLACE BEFORE? DIS JOINT OUGHTA BE A CINCH T' CRACK—



UNCLE JOHN IS MISTAKEN FOR A WATCHMAN—



A FEW HOURS LATER JOHN TRAFTON! WHY! THIS MUST BE ROBERT'S UNCLE!



IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE FUNERAL—FOUR DAYS LATER—

PLEASE DON'T WORRY, MRS. TRAFTON! YOU AND ROBERT ARE WELCOME TO MY PLACE AS LONG AS YOU LIKE TO STAY!

THANK YOU, MR. HUET! YOU ARE SO KIND!

THANK YOU, SIR!



SHADOW COMICS



— AND IT'S REALLY A RELIEF TO FIND SOMEONE IN WHOM I CAN CONFIDE! YOU SEE - I - TOO - HAVE SUFFERED A TRAGEDY - TEN YEARS AGO - MY LITTLE SON - KIDNAPPED!

I REMEMBER READING OF THAT TERRIBLE DEED, MR. HUET, AND HAVE THOUGHT OF IT OFTEN!

HE MAY STILL BE ALIVE, SIR!



I CAN ONLY HOPE THAT YOU'RE RIGHT, ROBERT! BUT ALL EFFORTS TO LOCATE HIM - SO FAR - HAVE BEEN IN VAIN! HOWEVER - LATELY - I'VE BEEN SUSPECTING MY ONLY OTHER LIVING RELATIVE - A COUSIN - AND VERY RUTHLESS - TO BE BEHIND THE CRIME! HIS NAME IS CHARLES WALDO - AND - NEXT TO MY SON - IS LEGAL HEIR TO MY FORTUNE!

PERHAPS IF I COULD FOLLOW - AND - MR. WALDO - SIR - OR - WORK FOR HIM - OR -



ROBERT! YES, ROBERT! HE'S IN NEW YORK QUITE OFTEN - AND STOPS AT THE ASTOR! THAT'S AN EXCELLENT IDEA!

I'LL GIVE YOU HIS DESCRIPTION - AND I'LL START IMMEDIATELY - SIR!

MR. HUET'S IMMEDIATE ACTION WAS TO PURCHASE A NEW WARDROBE FOR ROBERT AND MAKE GENERAL FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VENTURE

ROBERT HAS JUST ARRIVED IN NEW YORK - AND -



I WANT TO GO TO THE ASTOR

YES, SIR! IT'S JUST A SHORT RIDE FROM HERE



SIGN HERE, SIR -

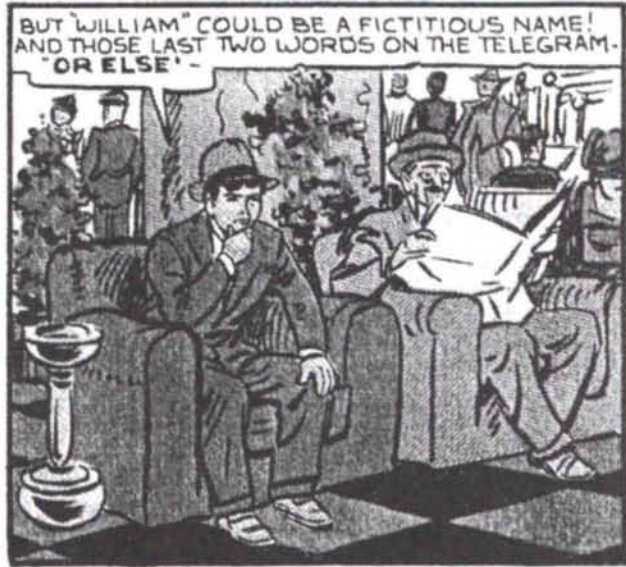
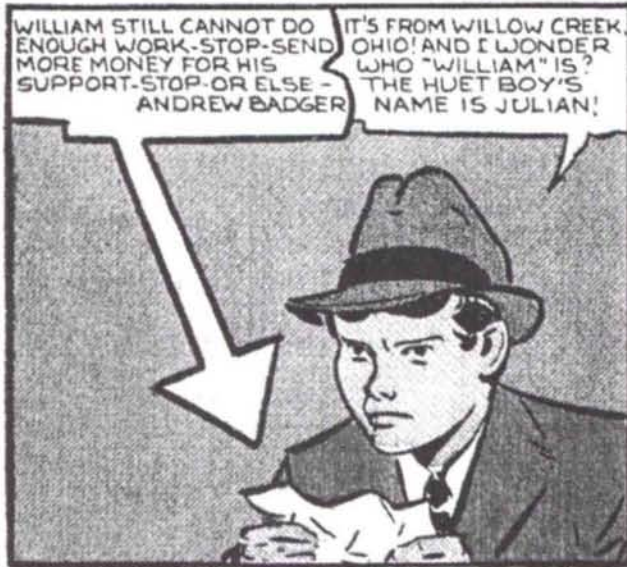
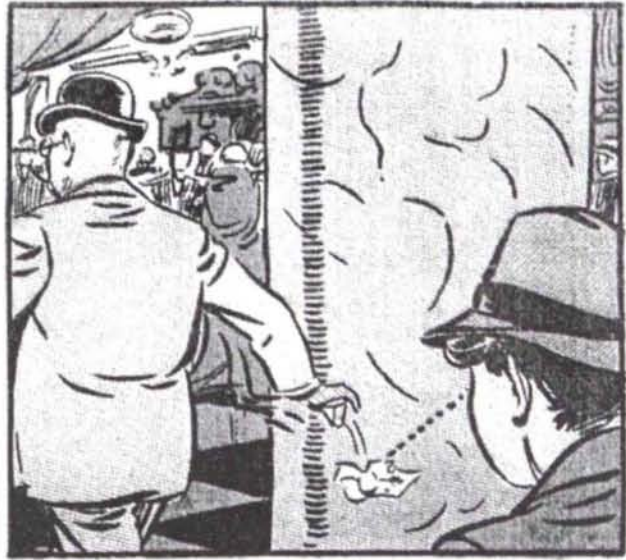
TELEGRAM FOR MR. CHARLES WALDO. MR. CHARLES WALDO -



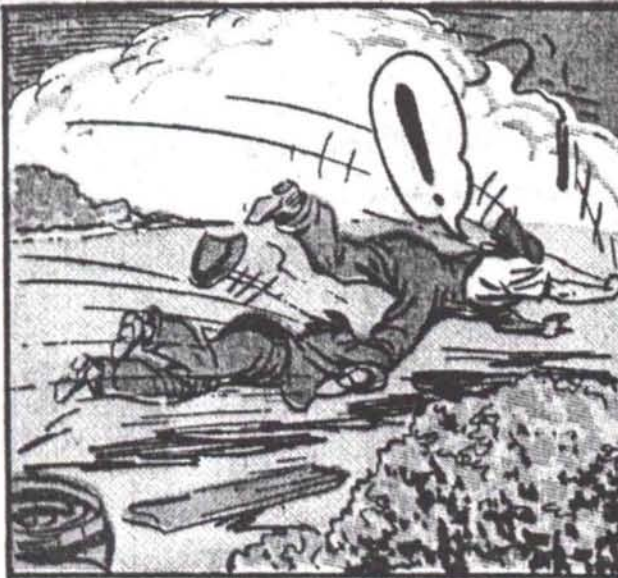
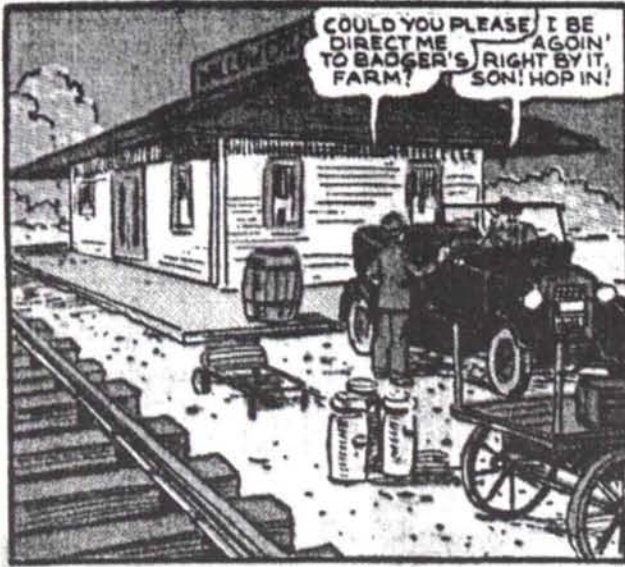
MR. CHARLES WALDO, MR. -

RIGHT HERE, BOY!

PLUCK AND LUCK



SHADOW COMICS



ROBERT MANAGES TO GET AWAY FROM BADGER AND CATCH UP TO WILLIAM BENSON A MILE DOWN THE ROAD.

-AND I'VE BEEN TREATED LIKE THIS FOR TEN YEARS! I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER! I'M RUNNING AWAY! OH! IF MY DEAR FATHER WERE ONLY ALIVE!

IS 'WILLIAM BENSON' YOUR REAL NAME?



NO! BUT THEY'VE ALL BEEN CALLING ME THAT FOR YEARS- AND I DON'T KNOW WHY! EVEN COUSIN WALDO CALLS ME BY IT! I-

COUSIN WALDO! THEN YOUR REAL NAME MUST BE HUET! JULIAN HUET! AND IF SO - I'M HERE TO TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR FATHER- WHO IS VERY MUCH ALIVE!

A MONTH HAS PASSED - FATHER AND SON ARE EXTREMELY HAPPY - WALDO IS IN JAIL FOR KIDNAPPING - AND -

BUT WHY ARE YOU FIRING ME, SIR!? I'VE DONE NO WRONG!

I'M SORRY, ROBERT! BUT I MUST! MY SON INSISTS - INSISTS THAT I ADOPT YOU AS HIS BROTHER - AND AUNT JANE BACKS HIM UP!



THE NEXT ALGER BOY STORY IS A WONDERFUL ADVENTURE. DONT MISS IT!

The Webster Series

A Stratemeyer Syndicate series by 'Frank V. Webster' — in the spirit of the Alger completions

By James D. Keeline (PF-898)

It is well known in Alger and Stratemeyer circles that Edward Stratemeyer held the elder author in great esteem, and it is said that Stratemeyer read Alger's stories as a youth. Less than a year before his death, Alger made arrangements with Stratemeyer to become his literary executor.

In this role, Stratemeyer purchased partial manuscripts and old dramas with the intention of transforming them into new Alger stories. The books would be published under Alger's name and would include the phrase "completed by Arthur M. Winfield."

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

The 11 books in the *Rise in Life Series* are the product of this well-known collaboration. Stratemeyer purchased many of these from Alger's sister, Augusta O. Cheney.

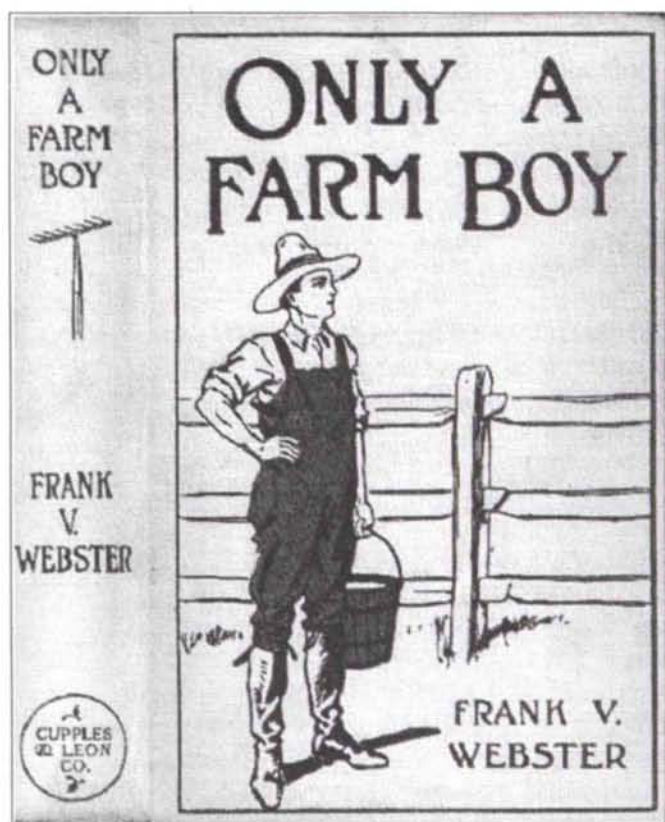
This was not the first time Stratemeyer would write an Alger-like story and many Alger collectors have recognized this through collecting Stratemeyer's personal writing. Another example of Alger-like stories comes from the Stratemeyer Literary Syndicate in the form of the *Webster Series*, published under the "Frank V. Webster" pseudonym, or house name.

Through documents at New York Public Library's Stratemeyer Syndicate Records Collection, we have learned that the advertising text on the dust jackets and in the post-text pages were written by Stratemeyer and reflect a new body of work not fully studied.

Many of the basic principles of the Stratemeyer Syndicate were learned during Stratemeyer's tenures as editor at Street & Smith and other story paper publishers. These include the outright purchase of stories from writers, allowing multiple reprints from a single investment, supplying house-owned pseudonyms for some stories, and expecting writers to complete stories from as little as a brief outline or title.

The earliest reference to the Stratemeyer Syndicate concept was in a letter from Stratemeyer to Alger's sister on November 22, 1900:

I have made up my mind to stick to juveniles, not only under my own name, but under my noms-de-



The Webster Series, which was launched by the Stratemeyer Syndicate in 1909, fulfilled Edward Stratemeyer's desire to continue Horatio Alger-style "rags to riches" stories following the publication of *Ben Logan's Triumph*, the last of the 11 Stratemeyer-Alger completions, by Cupples & Leon in 1908.

plume, and I am studying that market in all of its conditions and am also studying the wants of the publishers, with a view to supplying the latter not alone with stories of my own, but also the stories of others, written under my directions, on subjects which I feel will attract sales (Abel 249-250).

It is interesting to note that Henry Harrison Lewis (1863-1923), a friend of Stratemeyer and fellow Street & Smith writer and editor, ran the Lewis Literary Syndicate in 1900, according to his entry in *Who Was Who in America*.

It is not clear just what sort of publications the Lewis Syndicate produced. In the years prior to this, Lewis was listed as a correspondent for a newspaper; afterward he was listed as an "author and agent" in New York City Directories. It seems very possible that Lewis' activities

(Continued on Page 14)

The Webster Series

(Continued from Page 13)

may have inspired Stratemeyer to work along similar lines.

Stratemeyer made inquiries to the U.S. Copyright Office in November 1904 to ask how he could shield his relationship with his Syndicate titles. The respondent indicated in March 1905 that if he did not use his name anywhere on the copyright application and that it was filed with the publisher as the registrant, he could succeed in this (Abel 259).

The publisher contracts at NYPL reflect this new policy as Stratemeyer forbade his publishers to mention his name anywhere on the copyright application or in any form of advertisements for his Syndicate and pseudonymous books.

This issue for Stratemeyer likely came up as a result of Street & Smith ads in volumes of the **Boys' Own Library** where Stratemeyer was credited as the author of the "Arthur M. Winfield" and "Captain Ralph Bonehill" titles. This information had appeared in *Who's Who in America* and the *American Catalogue* previously, but this would have been the first time that his readers would be confronted with the connection.

Stratemeyer treated his pseudonyms as business assets and the releases with ghostwriters made mention of trademarking them (though I was not able to confirm this with the Patent and Trademark Office). In many ways, Stratemeyer tried to convey the notion that the pseudonyms were real people. For example, "May Hollis Barton" was described as:

"...a new writer for girls who is bound to win instant popularity. Her style is somewhat of a mixture of that of Louise M. Alcott and Mrs. L.T. Meade, but thoroughly up-to-date in plot and action."

(Cupples & Leon post-text ad, circa 1926)

In a similar manner, the **Make-Believe Stories** stated:

In this fascinating line of books Miss Hope has the various toys come to life when "nobody is looking" and she puts them through a series of adventures as interesting as can possibly be imagined. They will be hailed with joy by young folks four to eight years of age.

(Grosset & Dunlap dust jacket ad on first printing of a book from this series)

Perhaps the most complex persona established for one of the Syndicate pseudonyms was for "Frank V. Webster." An early version of *Airship Andy* had 11 pages of description in a conversational narrative format with a one-page introduction and one page for each of the 10 volumes in the 1909 breeder set.

Other early volumes have been seen with part of the

11 pages. Each book's description concludes with information that the books are available from Cupples & Leon and could be purchased from their local bookseller or from the publisher direct. These descriptions, which follow, open up some new possible avenues of research.

TO THE READER

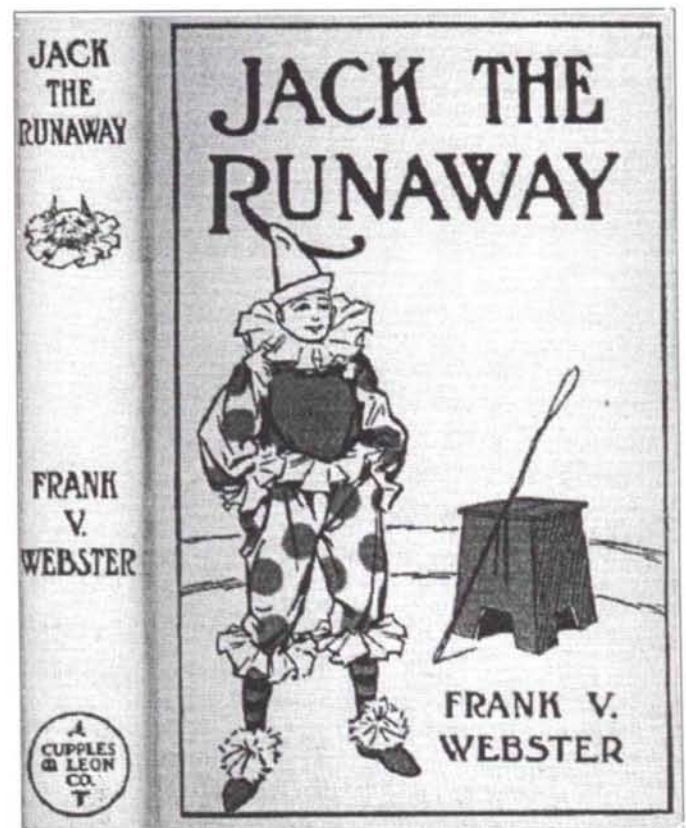
Now that you have finished reading this story, we desire to call your attention to all the other volumes in this remarkable series for boys.

We feel that we have made a distinct find in Mr. Frank V. Webster, who is under contract to write exclusively for the Cupples & Leon Company. Mr. Webster's style is very much like that of the late-lamented Mr. Alger, but his tales are all thoroughly up-to-date. This author, though still young, has been a great traveler, and therefore he knows exactly what he is writing about, be it a story of city or country life, a tale of the far west, or of the frozen north.

"How can you write such fine stories?" a boy once asked Mr. Webster.

"Oh, I guess it comes natural," answered the author. "I have been through so much and seen so much, it seems as if I could go on telling stories forever."

On the following pages we give the outlines of some of Mr. Webster's stories. Read them — they will interest you.



JACK THE RUNAWAY

Not long ago one of the largest circuses in the world showed in New York City. Of course it didn't put up any tents, for there is no room. It showed in a big building.

"I am going to write a story about that circus," said Mr. Webster. "It will be easy, too, for I am now writing about a lad who ran away from home — or rather, ran away from the old crabbed college professor with whom he lived. That boy loved animals, and loved to do acrobatic stunts, and I am going to have him join the 'Greatest Show on Earth.'"

Mr. Webster kept his promise, and the result is the book, "Jack the Runaway; or, On the Road with a Circus." It is a volume teeming with good things, telling how Jack simply had to run away, how he joined the circus and got acquainted with some of the performers and wild animal trainers, and how he even took the part of a clown.

"The best circus story I ever read," said an acrobat who happened to peruse the book. "Say, that writer must have traveled with some show sure! It's got the smell of the ring all right!"

This volume is issued by the Cupples & Leon Company, New York, and the price is forty cents—by mail or from any bookseller. If you want a complete catalogue of the very best books for boys, send to the Cupples & Leon Company.

THE BOY PILOT OF THE LAKES

"I once spent a whole summer knocking around the Great Lakes," said Mr. Webster, when speaking of his story, "The Boy Pilot of the Lakes; or, Nat Morton's Perils." I managed to get acquainted with half a dozen pilots, including one old man who had been at the wheel for over thirty years. They told me of many adventures they had had, and some of those appear in this book."

It is a strong, helpful tale, telling how Nat Morton worked his way upward in spite of many difficulties. There is a great storm scene, and a collision in the fog, and many other things to thrill and hold the reader. Nat was a regular water rat, and when he did an old pilot a service he was given a chance on one of the lake steamers. Another lad was jealous of Nat's luck, and he did all in his power to bring the boy pilot to grief. But Nat was on the alert, and showed what a fine manly youth he was by returning good for evil. "That's the kind of a boy I like to write about," said Mr. Webster. "A lad who is gritty and honest to the core. I hope every

boy will set Nat Morton up as his model in life."

We are certain all healthy boys will want this volume. It is well printed, well bound, and well illustrated, and the price is forty cents. Ask your bookseller for it, or send direct to the Cupples & Leon Company, New York.



TOM THE TELEPHONE BOY

"Now what in the world can such a message as that mean?"

That was the question that Tom, the telephone boy, asked himself one day. It was a curious message that came over the wires, and it meant a good deal, as the lad soon discovered. What the sending of that message led to is told in detail in Mr. Webster's story, "Tom, the Telephone Boy; or The Mystery of a Message." This is a tale of city life. Tom is the hero, and there is also a queer old fellow, Dr. Lemuel Spiderkins, who will make you roar. The telephone boy was the main support of his mother, and he had to work hard to keep a roof over the head of the family.

To the youth who wants to know what life in the big city really is this volume will prove of the greatest interest.

One day we asked Mr. Webster if such a lad as Tom really existed.

"I met Tom in Chicago," said Mr. Webster. "He is as bright as a button, and I know the boys like him just as much as I do."

Like all the other Frank V. Webster books issued by the Cupples & Leon Company, New York, this volume is bound in cloth, and is well illustrated. The price is forty cents. If at any time you want a catalogue of all the Books written by Mr. Webster, write to the Cupples & Leon Company, New York City, for it. It will come to you free.

THE NEWSBOY PARTNERS

"Say, what's the matter with you, anyhow?"

That was the question that Jimmy Small, a New York newsboy, asked when he first met Dick, in a dark alleyway, where Jimmy had gone to sleep because he didn't have the price of a bed at the lodging-house.

Dick was a well-dressed boy, and lay there with a nasty cut on his head. He couldn't tell how he had got into the alleyway or where he had come from. All he could remember was his first name — and as he was found in a box, Jimmy called him Dick Box.

The poor newsboy befriended Dick, and the two

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The Webster Series

(Continued from Page 15)

became partners. Dick could not remember his past, but he remembered how to read and write, and he taught Jimmy, and the two worked their way upward. Then one day something happened — something truly wonderful — and Dick — well, he didn't remain poor, unknown Dick Box for a great while longer.

This story, issued under the title of "The Newsboy Partners; or, Who Was Dick Box?" is a fascinating tale, told in Mr. Webster's best style. Splendidly illustrated, bound in cloth, price forty cents. Published by the Cupples & Leon Co., New York. Ask your bookseller to show you this volume.

BOB THE CASTAWAY

One day Mr. Webster came into our office and placed a manuscript on the desk of our editor.

"Did you ever take a sea voyage when you were a boy?" he asked as he dropped into a chair.

The editor said he had never had that pleasure.

"Well, I did — and I was wrecked, too," went on the author. "And I was sent to sea for the same reason that Bob Henderson had to go."

Then we got very curious and read the story, which had for its title: "Bob the Castaway; or, The Wreck of the Eagle." We had to laugh when we read that yarn. Bob was such a fun-loving fellow, and he played such awful jokes. He tried to play a joke on an old sea captain at a church donation party, but, to the boy's horror, the minister got the benefit (?) of the fun. Then Bob's parents sent him to sea to cure him, and the boy was wrecked on an island in the Pacific, and had many thrilling adventures.

It's a true-to-life story, for it contains many pages out of Mr. Webster's own experiences. A very nervous passenger on the ship makes a lot of unconscious fun. There is a great hurricane, and an encounter with South Sea natives.

A fine volume, bound in cloth, and well illustrated, and the price is forty cents. Buy it from your bookseller, or send to the Cupples & Leon Company, New York, for it.

THE BOY FROM THE RANCH

Did you ever stop to think how strange life in a big city must appear to a boy who has never been anywhere but on the boundless plains?

"I simply had to write that story — I couldn't help it," said Mr. Webster, in telling us how "The Boy from the Ranch; or, Roy Bradner's City Experiences," came to be penned. "Some years ago I was on a ranch, and there I met a lad just like Roy, who told me of all the things that had happened to him when he went to Chicago for his uncle on business."

In this story of life on the plains and in New York, Roy is a clever lad who knows how to take his own part, no matter what happens. His father being sick, he is sent to the great metropolis to transact some business.

Everything is new and strange to him and he makes some queer mistakes which make very funny reading. He falls into the hands of a sharper who has been cheating Mr. Bradner out of the income of some valuable property. The sharper and his tools try to get the ranch boy out of the way. But — well, Roy turns the tables, and makes things mighty warm for the fellows.

A splendid volume, bound in cloth, and well illustrated. Published by the Cupples & Leon Company, at forty cents. Sent postpaid if you cannot get it from your bookseller.

THE YOUNG TREASURE HUNTER

Do you like stories of the frozen north? of great hardships amid ice and snow? and of thrilling encounters with wild beasts and with thieving Indians? If you do you will not want to miss Frank V. Webster's book entitled: "The Young Treasure Hunter; or, Fred Stanley's Trip to Alaska."

"The most interesting story of the Alaskan gold fields I ever read," one boy has written to us. "My father was one of the first men to go to Alaska, and he says the pictures of life there are true. I guess Mr. Webster must have been there himself."

This story tells of how a poor boy joined a party in search of a golden treasure, and of how, after the treasure was discovered, a bad man, aided by some Alaskan Indians, tried to get the wealth away. Fred proved himself a hero on more than one occasion, and we know all boys will like him for that. On one occasion the youth brings down a fine moose, and on another he had his chum suffer from snow blindness and become lost in the dazzling whiteness.

This book might easily have been issued at one dollar or one dollar and a half, but Mr. Webster insisted that the price be made the same as all his other volumes, namely, forty cents. Issued by the Cupples & Leon Company, New York, and for sale by booksellers everywhere.

ONLY A FARM BOY

To the lad who likes a story of country life, full of fun and excitement, we feel safe in recommending Mr. Webster's story, "Only a Farm Boy; or, Dan Hardy's Rise in Life." Dan was a poor boy, living with a miserly farmer who gave him no wages and treated him shamefully. One night the lad was sent on an errand to a distant village, and returning by moonlight, saw some men acting in a mysterious fashion in the woods. A robbery had been committed, and through a curious chain of circumstances, some thought poor Dan was guilty. But he had one friend who stood up for him — an old village

blacksmith — and between them they set to work to bring the guilty party to justice and clear Dan's name.

"He's guilty, an' I know it!" said the miserly farmer for whom Dan worked.

"He is innocent, and it is a shame for you to say otherwise," declared the old blacksmith.

"Well, time well tell," answered the old farmer, and then he wanted Dan to come back and work for him.

"I'll not come back," said the boy. And then there was a bitter quarrel.

This story makes a splendid volume, bound in cloth, and is finely illustrated. The price is forty cents, and it is published, like all the other Frank V. Webster books, exclusively by the Cupples & Leon Company, New York.

TWO BOY GOLD MINERS

One day Mr. Frank V. Webster came to our office and brought the manuscript of the story "Two Boy Gold Miners; or, Lost in the Mountains."

"Frank," the editor asked, "you have been round so much, tell me, have you ever gone gold mining?"

"Once — just once," was the author's answer. "Of course I have been in the gold fields a number of times. But I only went mining once. I was out exactly two weeks, nearly broke my back with digging, got about sixty dollars' worth of gold dust, got lost in a thunderstorm in the mountains, and had a whole lot of things happen." And then he laughed heartily at the recollection.

The story shows that it is written from experience. It is a splendid tale, showing how two boys, Jed and Will Crosby, left a farm in the middlewest to try their luck as miners. They had all sorts of difficulties to overcome, and had not a few encounters with wild animals and with bad men, and they found out that gold mining was by no means a "cinch," as one expressed it. And then when they got lost — well, that was something neither of them had calculated on. You will like these boys — you simply can't help it.

If you want the book you can buy it from any first-class bookseller for forty cents, or we will send it to you, post free, for the amount. The Cupples & Leon Company, New York.

THE YOUNG FIREMEN OF LAKEVILLE

"Fire! fire! fire!"

That is the cry that sometimes thrills us, ringing out during the day or in the silent hours of the night. And who is it whose heart does not jump within him when he sees the devouring flames leaping skyward, and sees the engines, horse-carts and long hook-and-ladder trucks dashing through the streets to put out the conflagration?

The life of the fireman is one of excitement and often of peril. This is Mr. Frank V. Webster fully realized when he wrote, "The Young Firemen of Lakeville; or,

Herbert Dare's Pluck." How the boys became dissatisfied with the old "bucket brigade" and organized a real fire company, and how they worked at more than one fire, is told with great fidelity to life. And then there is the secret of the old mansion, and that is worked up in Mr. Webster's best style.

"The mystery in this story is taken from life," Mr. Webster wrote us. "It surrounded an old man and a fortune worth nearly half a million dollars. A good-for-nothing grandson wanted to get it away from him."

Published, as are all the Frank V. Webster books by Cupples & Leon Company, New York. Bound in cloth, illustrated, and for sale everywhere at forty cents.

* * *

This 10-volume breeder set is the largest for any Syndicate series. Even more amazing is the fact that these 10 books were all written by Howard R. Garis (1873-1962) over a span of slightly more than four months. The first release was signed on 25 January 1909 and the last was on 8 May 1909.

Garis first started writing for Stratemeyer in 1905 for initial volumes in the **Motor Boys** and **Great Marvel Series** while he was still a reporter for the **Newark Evening News**. Stratemeyer tried to persuade Garis to write for him full time but since Garis had a young family and had only received two to four assignments each year, he was dubious that Stratemeyer could offer him enough work to be comparable to his newspaper wages.

By 15 Jan. 1908, however, Garis and Stratemeyer had reached an agreement that would have him write at least 10 manuscripts throughout 1908 (see **Newsboy**, Jan-Feb 1994, p. 13).

Building on this successful agreement, Garis' writing for 1909 was given a good head start with the 10 volumes for the **Webster Series** for which he was paid \$705.00. Stratemeyer would have to sell 35,250 copies of these books to reclaim his investment.

Eventually, of course, Stratemeyer and Garis became fast friends and Garis would go on to write more than 300 books for Stratemeyer, more than three times that of any other ghostwriter. Garis even assisted Stratemeyer's daughters, acting as office manager for a few years, during the critical transition period after their father's death in May 1930.

Stratemeyer reached an agreement with Cupples & Leon to publish the **Webster Series** on 28 Dec 1908, shortly after he turned in the last of his two Alger completions published by the same firm: *Ben Logan's Triumph*. With Alger's dramas and partial manuscripts essentially exhausted, he likely pitched the **Webster Series** to Cupples & Leon as something to interest the Alger audience.

The agreement stipulated that the books would sell

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The Webster Series

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for "no more than 35 cents," with a 21-cent wholesale price and a royalty to Stratemeyer of 2 cents per copy. An advertisement in *The Musket Boys Under Washington*, itself a \$1.00/volume series, mentioned the 35-cent price. However, by the time of the ads for the breeder set, above, the price was 40 cents. It is not clear whether any books were sold with a 35-cent suggested retail.

For the remainder of 1909 and for the next several years, Garis was busy writing books in other series for Stratemeyer, who turned to other writers for the **Webster Series**. The volumes in the series and their ghostwriters are listed below:

The Webster Series

1. Only a Farm Boy	Garis	1909
2. Tom the Telephone Boy	Garis	1909
3. The Boy from the Ranch	Garis	1909
4. The Young Treasure Hunter	Garis	1909
5. Bob the Castaway	Garis	1909
6. The Young Firemen of Lakeville	Garis	1909
7. The Newsboy Partners	Garis	1909
8. The Boy Pilot of the Lakes	Garis	1909
9. Two Boy Gold Miners	Garis	1909
10. Jack the Runaway	Garis	1909
11. Comrades of the Saddle	Lincoln	1910
12. The Boys of Bellwood School	Cobb	1910
13. Bob Chester's Grit	Lincoln	1911
14. Airship Andy	Cobb	1911
15. The High School Rivals	Lincoln	1911
16. Darry the Life Saver	Rathborne	1911
17. Dick the Bank Boy	Rathborne	1911
18. Ben Hardy's Flying Machine	Cobb	1911
19. The Boys of the Wireless	Cobb	1912
20. Harry Watson's High School Days	Lincoln	1912
21. The Boy Scouts of Lenox	Rathborne	1915
22. Tom Taylor at West Point	Garis	1915
23. Cowboy Dave	Garis	1915
24. Two Boys of the Battleship	Garis	1915
25. Jack of the Pony Express	Garis	1915

Very little is known about **J.W. Lincoln**, except that he lived in Cleveland, Ohio, and wrote these four books for the Stratemeyer Syndicate between March 1910 and April 1911. One possibility is John Willard Lincoln (1875-?), who wrote *The Young Homesteaders* (W.A. Wilde, 1913, a Boston publisher).

Weldon J. Cobb (1850-1922), a former dime novelist, newspaper reporter and real estate agent, was one of the Syndicate's first ghostwriters, working on the **Deep Sea Series** as by "Roy Rockwood," **Ralph of the Railroad Series** and **Boys of Business Series** as by "Allen

Chapman," beginning in 1905. These latter two series are rise-in-life career stories.

Cobb wrote a series of dime novels about the railroad but the Ralph stories were based on Stratemeyer's outlines. Cobb appreciated Stratemeyer's outline approach, according to a letter cited in the Abel dissertation. According to the Axelrad Notebooks at Yale, Cobb suggested a "Wireless Boys" series in 1911. Stratemeyer did not act upon this idea until it was raised again by John W. Duffield in 1922, which led to the **Radio Boys Series**, most of which were written by Duffield, according to the NYPL Stratemeyer Syndicate Records Collection.

(**Harry**) **St. George Rathborne** (1854-1938) was one of the many writers whom Stratemeyer met during his time at Street & Smith. Many of his tales for Stratemeyer featured an out-doors theme.

In addition to *The Boy Scouts of Lenox*, Rathborne wrote the early volumes in the **Banner Boy Scouts Series** as for the Syndicate under the pseudonym "George A. Warren," and a number of Boy Scout stories for various publishers, including those by "Archibald Lee Fletcher" for M. A. Donohue, by "Herbert L. Carter" for A.L. Burt, by "Capt. Alan Douglas" (**Hickory Ridge Boy Scouts**) for New York Book Company, and by "Oliver Lee Clifton" (**Campfire Boys Series**) for Barse & Hopkins.

Darry the Life Saver in this series seems similar in theme to the first volume in the Syndicate's **Uncle Sam's Service series**, *Bob Spencer, Life Saver* (Sully & Kleinteich, 1914), which Rathborne also wrote.

Howard R. Garis returned to write the remaining four volumes of the series in 1915.

This is an interesting series, not too hard to find without dust jacket, and deserving of more attention among Alger fans. Thanks to the business records for the Stratemeyer Syndicate held by New York Public Library and my recent trip there, we now know who wrote each volume.

REFERENCES

Abel, Trudi. *A Man of Letters, A Man of Business: Edward Stratemeyer and the Adolescent Reader*. (Ph.D. dissertation in History, Rutgers, 1993).

Stratemeyer Syndicate Records Collection. Folders 65, 68. New York Public Library. Manuscripts Division.



St. George Rathborne

MEMBERSHIP

New members

George Hicks (PF-1021)

13 Everett St.

Easthampton, MA 01027 (413) 527-3953

George is a professional upholsterer who, along with his spouse Nancy, collects series books. Their collection currently numbers around 2,500 titles. He has a general interest in Alger and learned about the Horatio Alger Society from Jim Towey (PF-975).

Russell A. Trufant (PF-219)

5374 S.W. 34 St.

Davie, FL 33314 (954) 791-3328

Russell, a former member, has decided to rejoin the Society. Retired, his other hobbies include clocks and radios. He currently has 60 Alger in his collection. Welcome back!

John T. Fogarty (PF-1022)

R.R. #1, Box 61A

Sunbury, PA 17801 (717) 286-7446

Jeff Escue (PF-1023)

164 Larchmont Lane

Bloomington, IL 60108-1412 (630) 307-6415

Jeff, a securities trader, is new to Alger collecting with five titles at this time, and is interested in first editions. His series book collecting interests also include Rick Brant, Three Investigators and Ken Holt, while his other hobbies include surfing. He learned about the Society from Bart Nyberg (PF-879).

Change of address

Jonathan Friedland (PF-641)

3170 N. Sheridan Rd., Apt. 908

Chicago, IL 60657 (773) 529-1007

WANTED

In the past year, I have read every Alger book that I own (100 different titles — some were recent reprints — one was an electronic copy from the Internet! I would like to read as many of the remainder of Alger's books as I can. I am not looking for 1st editions. I just enjoy reading Horatio Alger. I'll pay a reasonable price for any edition in any condition.

Here are the titles I am looking for:

Tattered Tom

The Young Circus Rider

Ned Newton

A New York Boy

Frank Hunter's Peril

Tom Brace

Tom Turner's Legacy

The Young Book Agent

Randy of the River

Ben Logan's Triumph

Abraham Lincoln, The Backwoods Boy

From Farm Boy to Senator

Dan the Detective

Mark Stanton

Victor Vane

Frank and Fearless

Bernard Brook's Adventures

Jerry, the Backwoods Boy

From Farm to Fortune

In Search of Treasure

I am also looking for copies of *Joe*, *the Hotel Boy* and *Robert Coverdale's Struggle*.

Please contact:

Ed Evans (PF-1000)

979 Hamlin Center Road

Hamlin, NY 14464

E-mail: readyeddy@earthlink.net

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Arthur P. Young's Review in *Newsboy*: "The compilers deserve the respect and appreciation of the collecting community for this extraordinary contribution to the bibliographic control of boys series literature."

Chuck Jacobs (a lifelong collector): "What a wonderful book. I learned more in one hour than in my previous 20 years of collecting. Well done."

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