



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 XXXVII

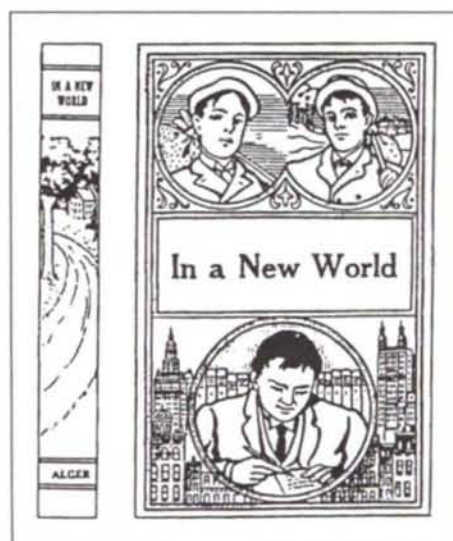
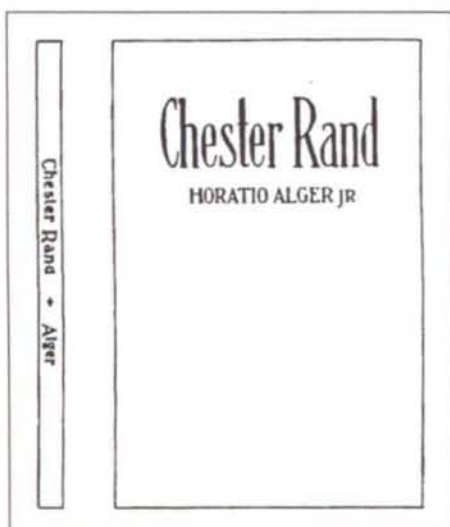
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1999

NUMBER 6

DR. DUKE

A STORY BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.

-- See Page 3



The Werner connection

or. Tracing the roots of seven Alger publishers

-- See Page 9

LITERARY PENSIONS

By Horatio Alger, Jr.

-- See Page 15

President's column

This column, prepared in the waning days of the 20th century, will be read early in the new millennium. I hope that Y2K has been kind to everyone, that you have sufficient light to read this column in your easy chair, and that all of the transportation systems are fully operational, allowing everyone to attend our next annual conference at West Chester, Pa., in early May.

My recent experiences selling Alger items on the nation's largest electronic auction, eBay, and participation in the several large auctions at the centennial convention in DeKalb, have made me more aware than ever that the pricing of books is complex, erratic, and occasionally downright anti-gravitational.

I recently took a sample of Horatio Alger books from the Advanced Book Exchange, or, as some of you may know it more familiarly, ABE. I was especially interested in upper-end Alger books, and therefore limited my request to those items which were selling for \$100 or more. In this way, I was certain to get nearly all of the first editions available.

This list included 46 books which matched the \$100 criterion. Of the 46 books, 30, as expected, were first editions. There were a number of vastly overpriced non-first editions and six titles which were indicated as first editions which were not. One of the more common mistakes is labeling a Henry T. Coates book as a first edition, when the first edition is a Porter and Coates.

To assist in determining the accuracy or fairness of pricing, I made comparisons of ABE pricing with the recent pricing guide distributed by Ed Mattson in conjunction with the revised edition of Bob Bennett's Alger bibliography. Although one can quibble with any particular title, I find the Mattson list, developed by an experienced bookseller, to be on the mark for the vast majority of titles.

In making this comparison, I found considerable variation in pricing, with 12 books appearing within the Mattson price range, and 18 books exceeding the Mattson range. Perhaps not surprisingly, the conclusion is that many book dealers are selling at very high prices and that fewer than half of the first-edition books priced at over \$100 are within the broad Mattson ranges.

One can only speculate about whether some, most, or all of these books actually sell for the listed price, or if there is some accommodation.

From experience, I can testify that some accommoda-

(Continued on Page 8)

HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

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

OFFICERS

ARTHUR P. YOUNG	PRESIDENT
CAROL NACKENOFF	VICE-PRESIDENT
CHRISTINE DeHAAN	TREASURER
ROBERT E. KASPER	EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
MICHAEL MORLEY	(2000) DIRECTOR
LAWRENCE R. RICE	(2000) DIRECTOR
PETER C. WALTHER	(2000) DIRECTOR
ANGELO SYLVESTER	(2001) DIRECTOR
THOMAS B. DAVIS	(2001) DIRECTOR
ROBERT L. KERSCH	(2001) DIRECTOR
DOUGLAS E. FLEMING	(2002) DIRECTOR
RALPH J. CARLSON	(2002) DIRECTOR
MARC C. WILLIAMS	(2002) DIRECTOR
LEO "BOB" BENNETT	EMERITUS
RALPH D. GARDNER	EMERITUS

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); republished by MAD Book Co., 1999
- 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).
- Horatio Alger Books Published by The New York Book 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.

DR. DUKE

A CHRISTMAS STORY

By Horatio Alger, Jr.

CHAPTER 1

It was a cold frosty evening towards the close of December when a young man, with a face deeply bronzed by exposure to a torrid sun, stepped from the cars upon the platform of the little station at Camberton. The village lay half a mile back at the foot of a hill, concealed from view by a belt of forest. Beyond the railroad were broad open fields covered with hard crusted snow that caught a crimson glow from the rays of the setting sun, affording a vivid contrast to the black trunks of trees that stood near by like grim sentinels on guard.

The traveler looked about him thoughtfully for a moment.

"Goin' up to the village, sir?" asked a short man in an overcoat of rough frieze, stamping the snow from his boots.

"Yes," said the young man. "Is that your carriage?"

He pointed to a black covered wagon, originally intended for wheels, but now provided with runners.

"Yes sir. Jump in."

There was no difficulty about securing a seat. There were but two other passengers, a woman and a young child, who took over the back seat. Our traveler shared the front seat with the driver.

"Goin' to Squire Elmore's?" asked John.

"No; what made you think so?"

"I heard the Squire's folks was expectin' their nephew up from York, and I thought you might be he."

"No, I am not related to Squire Elmore."

"Where are you goin' then?"

"I shall stop at the tavern. I suppose there is one?"

"Yes, and a good one, too."

"Does Buck still keep it?"

"Yes, he does. You know him, maybe," said the driver curiously.

"I have heard of him," was the evasive reply.

The horse, for there was but one, was meantime jogging along at a slow pace, which appeared to content the driver, who was sparing of the whip.

"Who lives there?" asked the traveler, pointing to a two-story house of plain exterior on the right hand side of the road.

"Dr. Duke," was the reply. "Poor man, It'll be a sad Christmas for him."

"Why so?" asked the traveler quickly.

"Because he's going to lose the old house he's lived in for forty years."

"Why should he lose it?"

"Because Squire Elmore's got a heavy mortgage on it, and he's made up his mind to take possession as soon as Christmas is over."

"But how came there to be a mortgage on it? I thought — at least I should imagine that the doctor's practice would have kept him from any need of mortgaging his house."

"Well, so it would if he hadn't been unfortunate."

"In what way?"

"He lent his name to a friend of his to get him into business, and the man failed, and the doctor lost two thousand dollars that way. Then again his eyesight failed all at once, and he became so near blind that he couldn't practice much. So he's been obliged to live mostly on the money he raised on the mortgage for the last three or four years."

"Dr. Duke blind?" exclaimed the young man in a tone in which surprise and pain were blended.

"Well, not quite. He can see folks if they are close to him. But he don't venture out much."

"Do you know," asked the traveler after a little pause. "What is the amount of the mortgage?"

"It's nineteen hundred dollars, I believe. You see there's the house, and about six acres of land. It'll about break the old man's heart to leave the house and the orchard. That has been his pride. About the nicest apples anywhere round have been raised in Dr. Duke's orchard."

"Where is he going when he gives up the house?"

"I don't know where he can go. He's used up about all his money, and I'm afraid if some of his friends don't step forward he'll have to go to the poorhouse."

(Continued on Page 5)

Editor's note: This story was published in the little-known magazine Public Spirit (Vol. II, December 1867). It was discovered by Gary Scharnhorst, who kindly sent it to Newsboy in order to share it with the Horatio Alger Society. Also discovered by Mr. Scharnhorst in a later issue of the same publication (Vol. III, July 1868) was Alger's essay titled "Literary Pen-sions," which is reprinted beginning on Page 9.

Editor's notebook

Keeping eBay safe for all of us

Attention, eBay shoppers — Big Brother is watching!

In our last issue, we reprinted an article from the **Chicago Tribune** on eBay and other on-line auction services and how they have revolutionized the way we, as collectors, go about finding that one elusive object — or book, in the case of H.A.S. members.

Just as this **Newsboy** was going to press, we came across another article on eBay, this one from the **Washington Post**, by David Streitfield. It focuses on an issue raised in the previous article, but discussed only briefly: How do we avoid being ripped off by some unscrupulous seller?

Of course, eBay, by far the dominant Internet auction site (7.7 million users, and growing daily) combats fraud with its Feedback section, a sort of "community watch" program, in which buyers and sellers are encouraged to post comments on the site concerning their experiences. If a seller receives a negative feedback reaching a certain level, he's off the site permanently. But as the **Chicago Tribune** article stated, some sellers create multiple e-mail addresses to stay ahead of "the law."

And who is the law? None other than Rob Chesnut, a former federal prosecutor in Alexandria, Va., who, along with his wife, fellow lawyer Angela Malacari, head up eBay's Fraud Prevention Department. Angela, like Rob, comes from government service, formerly an agent with the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

"Rob was the lone sheriff initially," Angela told the **Washington Post**. "But that's ridiculous — you need an entire department."

Of course, book collectors are among the most honorable hobbyists. In all my years of collecting, I have never been ripped off by a dealer or fellow collector. Yes, there are instances I've heard about from fellow collectors, but they have been relatively few. We, as members of the Horatio Alger Society, should be thankful we belong to such an honorable hobby.

In fact, Rob Chesnut and Angela Malacari note that considering the unbelievable amount of e-commerce on eBay (some 350,000 new items are posted for auction each day), the amount of rip-offs are relatively few.

Still, they report that dozens of auctions are stopped daily for various reasons.

The most famous case was the man attempting to auction a kidney earlier this year over eBay. Selling human organs for profit over the Internet is strictly

prohibited, for obvious reasons.

Then there was the case of the allegedly lovelorn young man from Florida trying to lose his virginity by offering his services over eBay earlier this fall. He was tracked down and charged with prostitution.

The main cases of fraud involve selling an item that isn't as advertised. In the field of Alger collecting, someone *could* attempt to sell a book as a first edition when it, in fact, is a reprint. I don't think any Partic'lar Friend would fall for that, particularly if you have your Bennett or Gardner bibliography handy and know the first-edition points. Also during the auction process, the prospective bidder can make inquiries to the seller for more specific information about an item.

In the **Washington Post** article, Chesnut relates an experience concerning sports memorabilia, by far one of the leading categories of fake items being offered over the Internet. In fact, the current issue of **eBay Magazine** addresses this issue, listing Michael Jordan memorabilia (with forged signatures) among the most prominent fake items being bought and sold.

In the case mentioned in the article, a baseball purporting to have been signed by the late New York Yankees catcher Thurman Munson was offered for bids. Chesnut realized it was fake when he saw the ball also was imprinted with the signature of American League president Bobby Brown. The problem? Brown became president of the AL in 1984, while Munson died in a private plane crash in 1979.

Chesnut recognized the man selling the item by his eBay "handle," and noticed he was also bidding on this and others of his own items to jack up the prices.

Chesnut immediately e-mailed the perpetrator with his standard message:

"We can't tolerate forged or fraudulent items. I'm going to suspend your account."

With a simple click of a mouse, the offender was electronically deleted from the site.

Other recent items banned for sale by Chesnut and his staff have included bear claws, material from Cuba (such as illegally imported cigars), stuffed migratory birds, police badges, shares of stock, Native American masks, bottles of wine, drug paraphernalia, TV cable/satellite descramblers, fireworks and grave-stones, among other items. Many fall under safety concerns; others are simply illegal to be sold in most states.

"We all need rules to live by, and the Internet's no different," Chesnut says. "We're posting new rules all the time."

On a typical day in early December, 3.36 million items were registered for sale in 2,568 categories. As members of the Horatio Alger Society know, used and rare books

(Continued on Page 19)

DR. DUKE

A CHRISTMAS STORY

(Continued from Page 3)

"Never!" exclaimed the young man emphatically.

"Maybe you know him?" said the driver keenly.

"Without knowing him I am willing to contribute fifty dollars towards keeping him from such humiliation. Surely there ought to be some of his friends in the village who would give as much as a stranger."

"Well, it's mostly every one for himself," said the driver. "I wouldn't mind givin' somethin' myself, for he saved my little girl's life when she was sick of scarlet fever last winter, but folks is pretty selfish generally, and don't care much for what happens to other people."

By this time they had reached the tavern. It was one of those old-fashioned structures broad on the ground, with a long piazza in front, and rising to the height of two stories only. The traveler jumped out of the wagon, carpet bag in hand, and entered through the open door.

"I wonder who he is?" thought the driver. "There's somethin' about his face that seems familiar, but I can't tell where I've met him, or whether I've ever seen him before. Seems to take a great interest in Dr. Duke, thought he says he's a stranger. Taint everybody that would give fifth dollars for a man who was no kith nor kin to him."

Meanwhile our traveler called for a room, where he made a hasty toilet, and then went down to supper.

There were eight or ten persons at the table, most of whom directed curious glances at the newcomer, but none appeared to know him. He seemed indifferent to their inspection, eating his supper quietly, and answering courteously but briefly all remarks addressed to him. After supper he took out a cigar, and sauntering into the public room, sat down by the stove and listened to the conversation going on around him.

There was half a dozen men present who were gossiping about various subjects.

At length, one said, "What's Squire Elmore going to do with Dr. Duke's house?"

"I hear that he is going to put a nephew of his into it."

"What nephew?"

"Ben Willis; you remember him, don't you? Used to be round here as a boy some ten years since."

"Where is he now?"

"In Claremont. He's got a wife, I hear. He'll like the doctor's place. He hasn't forgotten how the apples taste in the old man's orchard."

"No, I guess not. He hooked many an apple when he was a boy, and used to come here and see his uncle. Who'd ever have thought that the time would come when he would be the master of the old place, and the doctor be turned out to die, in the poorhouse most likely."

"It's a shame. The doctor is a good old man."

"So he is, but he's been unfortunate."

"How long is it since his son James ran away from home?"

"Ten years, isn't it?"

"No, eleven. I know, because my girl, Dora, was an infant then, and now she's going on for twelve."

"Well, it's a great pity, but I suppose it can't be helped."

"Not unless somebody is found to pay the money."

"That isn't likely."

"Squire Elmore is rather hard on the old man."

"Yes, he ought not to be, though. If it hadn't been for the doctor, most likely the Squire would have died when he was so sick four years ago."

"That won't weigh with him, now he's well."

"No; he's a little too fond of money."

CHAPTER II

Dr. Duke and his wife sat in their plain sitting-room, dimly lighted by a common tallow candle.

The doctor was leaning back in an easy chair, his feet resting on the fender. His hair was white as driven snow, and gave his massive head a grand appearance. His sightless eyes did not permit him to read. The expression of his face was sad, yet patient. He was not one to complain of the sorrow that had come upon him, though he felt it keenly.

His wife was sewing by the light of the candle. Fit helpmate she seemed to the fine old man, as she sat there, her usual look of cheerful serenity clouded by the thought present to each that the morrow would be the last Christmas Day they would be permitted to keep in the old house that had sheltered them ever since, in the first flush of their married happiness, they set out together on the dusty turnpike of life.

"It seems hard, Margery," said the doctor at length with a faint sigh.

She did not need to ask what. She knew the sorrow that was in her husband's heart.

"Yes, George, but there is one thing we must not

(Continued on Page 6)

DR. DUKE

A CHRISTMAS STORY

(Continued from Page 5)

forget. For forty years we have been permitted to enjoy the shelter of this beloved roof. That at least can not be taken from us."

"But to be turned out in our old age!"

"We have but few years before us now, and I have faith that God's mercy which has followed us thus far will still be continued to us."

"We must go to the alms-house, Margery."

"Let us be thankful, George, that we have even that refuge to look to. Our friends may be touched, but after all there are others better than we who have been reduced to the same alternative."

"Perhaps you are right. In time I may learn resignation, but it is not that easy Margery —"

Rat, tat, tat, sounded the old-fashioned knocker with a loud noise that echoed through the house.

Mrs. Duke arose and taking the flickering candle went to the door.

She did not recognize her visitor. It was the stranger who had that night arrived at the tavern.

"Won't you come in, sir?" she said hesitatingly.

"Thank you," he said. "I should like to see your husband and yourself a few minutes."

He was ushered into the sitting-room. There was an expression of strong emotion on his face when his eyes rested on the old doctor sitting patiently in his chair.

"A gentleman who has called to see you, George," explained his wife.

"I am glad to see you, sir" said the doctor, unconsciously using the old expression. "I should be rather, if I were not blind, as you see," he added, correcting himself. "Will you be seated?"

"thank you," was the reply, spoken in a low voice.

The visitor turned towards the old lady, and looked earnestly at her, and the tears rose to his eyes, though she did not observe them.

"You do not know me, Dr. Duke," he said at length, but I have come from one whom you know well — your son James.

"James!" What do you know of him? Is he alive?"

Dr. Duke and his wife spoke together, and awaited the answer with anxiety.

"Yes, he is well. He sends his love, and hopes you have forgiven him for all the trouble he has caused you."

"He was forgiven long ago. Where is he?"

"It was in Australia I met him."

"And he is there now?"

"He was there six months ago."

"How does he look?" asked the mother. "It is almost twelve years since he went away — a long, weary time."

"He has changed much, probably: I do not think you would know him."

"I should know him," said Mrs. Duke. "A mother cannot be deceived."

"Are you sure of that?" said the stranger in a peculiar tone.

The old lady looked up quickly. She took the candle, and walked up to the speaker, and gazed eagerly in his face.

"Yes, mother," he said, smiling. "I am James, come home to spend Christmas with you. Am I welcome?"

A flood of happy tears, and the joyful old lady was clasped in the strong arms of her son.

"Now father, it is your turn," and James bent over and kissed his father's cheek, clasping his hands in a strong grasp.

"Welcome, welcome, my son," said the old man. "You are welcome to your father's home, as long as he has one."

"By the way, father, what is this I hear about your losing the old homestead? is it true?"

"Too true, James. I lost some money by standing surety for your uncle, and for the last four years my blindness has interfered with my professional duties.

"Who holds the mortgage?"

"Squire Elmore."

"For what amount?"

"With interest, about two thousand dollars."

"Surely the old place is worth more than that?"

"It is well worth three, but the Squire is a hard man at a bargain. He will force a sale, and real estate is low now. There will not be much left. He wants it for his nephew, I believe."

"His nephew shall never have it, father."

"But we cannot help it."

"I can help it. I have not been away from home ten years for nothing, father. When will this mortgage fall due?"

"We have orders to vacate the house day after tomorrow. We will eat one more Christmas dinner in the old house."

"Aye, and more than one, if it please God. Set your mind at rest about this mortgage, father. I will pay it."

"Will you not cripple yourself, James?"

"I could pay it ten times over and yet have something left. But let Squire Elmore still think you in his power. To avoid suspicion I will go back to the tavern tonight."

"But you will dine with us tomorrow, James" said his mother.

"Yes, mother. Have you money to buy what is needful?"

"I have ten dollars, James. I intended to be very economical with it, but now I will not spare it."

"That is right, mother."

So Christmas Day came and went, and it was not even known that any one ate dinner with the doctor's family.

The day succeeding, Squire Elmore, accompanied by his nephew, knocked at the front door with an air of authority.

"We must fix up the house for you, Ben," he said, while they were waiting admission. "A couple of bay windows, one in each front room, will modernize the house, and much improve it."

"Yes, uncle, it is altogether too old fashioned now."

The door was opened, and Mrs. Duke admitted them.

"Walk in, gentlemen," she said.

"I am sorry to come on so painful an errand, Mrs. Duke," said the Squire. "Doctor, how do you do? This is my nephew, Mr. Willis — little Ben, you know. I believe he used to make free with your apples. He little thought that he would be the owner of the orchard."

"No, I suppose not," said the doctor, calmly.

"I am sorry you have been unfortunate, Doctor," said the young man. "I don't hardly feel right in turning you out. But up and down, you know. That is the way of the world."

"Yes, I suppose so."

"How soon can you go, Doctor?" asked the Squire. "You don't seem to have done anything about moving."

"No, Squire Elmore, I hoped an arrangement might be made so that I could stay a little longer."

"I am sorry, Doctor, but it is impossible. You had notice some weeks since. My nephew wants to move in at once."

"May I now stay till New year's Day?"

"Sorry to refuse, but it can't make much difference to you, while it would seriously inconvenience us."

"I suppose I must go to the alms-house."

"You will be well taken care of there."

"How would you like to go there, Squire Elmore?"

"You are joking, Doctor," said the squire haughtily. "That is different, of course."

"I shall not move out," said the doctor firmly, "till I get ready."

"Then I shall turn you out," said the Squire angrily.

"Not if I pay the mortgage."

"That you cannot do."

"Will you tell me the amount?"

"With interest it amounts to nineteen hundred and fifty-seven dollars."

"James!"

A strong man in whose bronzed face there was still a resemblance to the doctor's massive features walked quietly into the room.

"this is my son," said Dr. Duke proudly. "He will pay the mortgage, and then I suppose you will not insist on my leaving the house."

"Your son!" echoed the Squire, his astonishment equaling his dismay.

"Yes, Squire Elmore," said the young man. "I have come home in time to rescue my father from your tender mercies. The house that has sheltered him for forty years shall shelter him to the end of his days, please God! There is your money, sir. Please count it."

"It is correct, said the Squire, crestfallen. "I am glad you have prospered so well, Mr. Duke."

"Thank you sir. Good day!"

Squire Elmore saw that his presence was not desired, and beat a retreat, followed by his nephew.

"Now father and mother," said James, taking a hand of each, "It shall be my aim to make your latter days comfortable. Henceforth we will live together, happy in each other's affection, and if God wills, we will pass many a merry Christmas yet beneath the roof of the old homestead!"

"God be thankful for his abounding mercies!" said Dr. Duke, lifting his sightless eyes to Heaven, and his wife and son breathed a fervent Amen.

Visit the official Horatio Alger

Society Internet site at:

www.ihot.com/~has/

How much would you pay for these Algers?

By William R. Gowen (PF-706)

Are books for sale on the Internet always as advertised? That question is rhetorical. Of course they aren't — and not just because the seller is trying to put something over on the buyer. All of us who have collected Algers or other desirable old series books run into this situation again and again. Most of the time it is simply a lack of knowledge on the part of the seller.

I decided to use President Arthur Young's column, which is completed on this page, as a departure point, and look in more detail at several of the 46 Alger books priced at \$100 and up which he notes as being recently offered for sale over Advanced Book Exchange (ABE). You will see that there is definitely a case of *caveat emptor* at work here. For example:

Alger, Horatio, Jr. *Luke Walton or, the Chicago News-boy*. Porter & Coates 1889 Philadelphia. VG to near fine 1st edition HB from the Way to Succeed Series. This copy in tan cloth with red, black and gilt pictorial and titles. Very bright w/ light smudge on spine, minor rubs and 2 soft corners. Endpapers are 2 different pictures, with young fisherman on front and readers in window seat in back. Both in rich color. There are four (4) full-page drawings including frontispiece. This is a most attractive copy. U.S. \$150.00.

Editor's comment: This is not a first edition; even if it were, \$150 is a little high an asking price (Mattson's price guide lists the high range of its value at \$100).

Alger, Horatio, Jr. *Luke Walton*. Henry T. Coates 1889 1st edition. U.S. \$150.00.

Editor's comment: Another copy of the same title, and obviously not a first edition, which is the Porter & Coates "apples" (fruit and leaves) edition. Again, a true first edition is pushing the envelope at \$150.

Alger, Horatio. *Ragged Dick; or, Street Life in New York with the Boot-Blacks*. Boston: Loring, Publisher, 319 Washington

Street (1868). First edition, very early issue, in the original green blindstamped binding with gilt stamped spine. Engraved title shows Dick by himself. One page of ads, but listing projected titles III, IV, V and VI, under the "Ragged Dick Series." Three plates. Yellow endpapers. 296 pp., complete. Book is very slightly cocked, there are a few slight nicks to the spine ends, there is a small outline on the front free endpaper recto and pastedown opposite from an old cutout of a little girl; otherwise a nicely intact and altogether sound copy. U.S. \$765.00.

Editor's comment: While close, this is not a first edition as described by either Gardner or Bennett. A true first edition lists the book advertisements under the "Ragged Dick Series" as the present title, plus "II. Fame and Fortune; or the Progress of Richard Hunter. (In December.)" In summary, *should* you pay \$765 for a non-first edition of this title? I know I wouldn't.

Alger, Horatio, Jr. *Abraham Lincoln, The Backwoods Boy, or How a Young Railsplitter Became President*. New York. John R. Anderson & Henry S. Allen. 1883 Cloth. Very Good/N/A. 1st Ed. 1st issue. 8vo. A few B&W illustrations. Decorative cover. Very scarce book. U.S. \$900.00.

Editor's comment: Yes, this is a first edition, but not as scarce as the seller says, and it's not worth \$900. (Mattson's price guide lists its value as up to \$175).

Alger, Horatio, Jr. *Jed, the Poorhouse Boy*. John C. Winston, 1899. U.S. \$175.00.

Editor's comment: Although not billed as a first edition (which is by Henry T. Coates), no Winston reprint is worth \$175. The Mattson price guide lists the high-range value of the Coates first edition at \$125.

Alger, Horatio, Jr. *Grand'ther Baldwin's Thanksgiving. With Other Ballads and Poems*. Boston: Loring, 1875 First Edition. Publisher's cloth, an exceptionally fine and bright copy. A remarkably important association copy, inscribed by the author, "J.T. Trowbridge from his friend Horatio Alger, Jr., Aug. 1882." Alger was, by far, nineteenth-century America's pre-eminent author of boy's books. Trowbridge, poet and editor, wrote the tremendously popular books *Cudjo's Cave* and *Jack Hazard*. U.S. \$6,500.00.

Editor's comment: This is the Alger first edition for the collector who has everything — plus a lot of money.

President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

tion is achievable, and can further testify that for a number of dealers, the set price is non-negotiable.

Book pricing is certainly complex, somewhat idiosyncratic, and on the high side for book dealers selling on the Internet. Parenthetically, Internet auctions have become even more polarized, with a very few items going for unpredictably high prices, and many others

selling for lower prices than those books being sold by booksellers. It would be interesting to compare identical books from book dealers with the various auctions to determine similarities and divergencies.

In the interim, may the best book for the least price make its way to your shelves.

Your Partic'lar Friend,
Arthur P. Young (PF-941)
912 Borden Ave.
Sycamore, IL 60178-3200
E-mail: ayoung@niu.edu

The Werner connection

or, Tracing the roots of seven Alger publishers

By Bradford S. Chase (PF-412)

Paul E. Werner was a late 19th and early 20th Century printing and publishing mogul located in Akron, Ohio. I'll bet you a cookie (as my Mother used to say) that he never dreamed, when he established the Werner Printing and Lithographing Company in 1886, that he'd be viewed as the father and grandfather of seven companies that published reprint works by Horatio Alger, Jr. He probably knew of Alger as they were contemporaries in the book business. In fact, just after 1910, eleven years after Alger's death, Werner likely fathered at least one set of Alger reprints himself when he owned The New Werner Company.

My next book on Alger book formats will feature 12 of the smaller Alger reprint publishing companies. Since in each of my four previous books only one publishing company was the subject, handling twelve companies with 43 formats in one book has become a considerable challenge. While doing research on all the format products of the twelve publishers, I have been struck by the similarity of formats (some are actually identical) produced by companies with different names, sometimes located in different cities.

Publishing companies, sized to fit their market

One must appreciate that publishing companies producing *Algers* and other children's books at the turn of this Century varied in size and activity.

For example, the M.A. Donohue Company was a large all-purpose printing and publishing house in Chicago producing *Algers* between the early 1900s and 1930. The New York Book Company, which produced *Algers* and other juveniles from 1908 through World War I, was likely a one- or two-room operation located in a building in New York City and was a publishing-

only subsidiary of a larger publishing and printing firm. The Whitman Publishing Co., which produced *Algers* from 1921 through 1933, was established originally in 1907 by Mr. E. A. Wadewitz in Racine, Wis. At that time it was known as the West Side Printing Co. Over the

years it grew from a small printer in a cellar on State Street into a huge multi-million dollar worldwide publishing conglomerate that operates today as the Western Publishing Company, Inc.

Likewise, the 12 companies I am now studying also vary in size from very small single-purpose publishers located in one or two rooms to multi-purpose printers, publishers, lithographers and binders like The Werner Printing and Lithographing Company of Akron, Ohio. Over the years Werner grew and diminished in its publishing and printing activities occasionally spinning off different functions which became new companies, or dissolving functions entirely as it adjusted to ever changing business conditions.

What I have found so far is that seven of the 12 Alger reprint publishing companies that I am studying can trace their roots to Paul E. Werner. This article ex-



Paul E. Werner

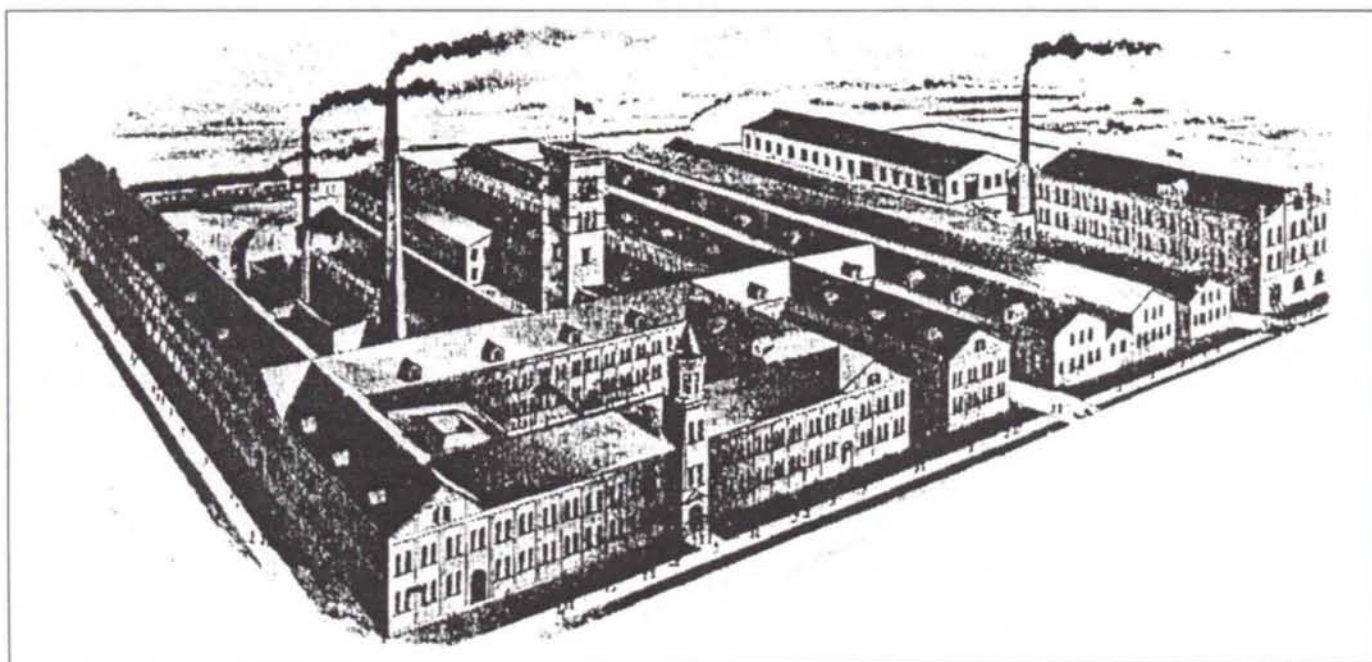
plores the Werner/Alger publishing lineage and the associated Alger formats.

Paul E. Werner, entrepreneur

Paul E. Werner was born in Wurtemberg, Germany, in 1850 and came to this country in 1867 as a boy of 17. He worked as a clerk for several years and in 1874 purchased a small Akron newspaper, *The Germania*.

In 1878, he founded the *Sunday Gazette* and then added the daily and weekly *Tribunes* to his growing business. He soon realized that the newspaper publishing business in a town the size of Akron was very limited and disposed of it in 1884. Werner then concentrated his

(Continued on Page 10)



The Werner Company printing complex in Akron, Ohio, around the turn of the century.

The Werner connection

(Continued from Page 9)

effort on printing, binding and lithography activities, incorporating as The Werner Printing and Lithographing Company in 1886.

The Saalfeld Publishing Company spins off

In 1892 Werner consolidated with the R. S. Peale Book Publishing Company of Chicago and a portion of the Bedford Clarke Co. and enlarged the business considerably. Among the books published were the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, beautifully illustrated art books, travel books, dictionaries and school textbooks. The depression of 1893 caused serious financial problems for Mr. Werner's business and he sold the book publishing department to its manager at that time, Arthur J. Saalfeld. Mr. Saalfeld formed the Saalfeld Publishing Company, which Alger collectors will recognize as a publisher of reprint Alger books in the 1921 through 1928 era. (See Format No. 1).

In 1894, the Werner Printing and Lithographing Company was reorganized as The Werner Company. In a few years, that company was soon on the wrong end of a suit filed by the *Encyclopædia Britannica* Company Limited, of London, claiming Werner had "pirated" its encyclopedia. Werner lost the case and reportedly had to pay more than a million dollars in damages.

A second setback for The Werner Company came in the 1906-1908 period, when it found itself in a battle with the printers' union during which there was a conviction of a loyal worker for the fatal shooting of a union organizer. These business reverses began to

weaken the company substantially.

Bankruptcy produces The New Werner Company

Mr. Werner's company grew during the early years to form a huge complex of buildings in Akron which carried out all aspects of large-scale book manufacturing, including printing, publishing, lithographing and binding. The business was located on a large tract of land located at the corner of Perkins and Union Streets.

In 1909, The Werner Company failed. Amazingly, however, it was purchased back one year later by Mr. Werner and some associates. They called the new firm The New Werner Company, which struggled along for four years; then, it too went bankrupt. It was under this last company imprint that Werner directly published reprint Alger books. (See Format No. 2).

The MacLellan-N-Y-Publishers tie to Werner

A third publisher having a Werner tie which published reprint Alger was the MacLellan-N-Y-Publishers company, which has a Jan. 6, 1911 incorporation date in New York and a 147 Fourth Ave., New York address. In other MacLellan Alger copies I found a North Union and Perkins Street address in Akron.

In New York, the business was likely a hole-in-the-wall operation as it had the same address as another small, single-purpose Alger publisher, The New York Book Company. But since some MacLellan Alger copies also have the same address as The New Werner Company (Perkins and Union Streets, Akron) I'd guess that MacLellan dealt in both publishing and wholesaling of books with an office for both functions located somewhere in the New Werner building complex, as well as New York City.

I'd also bet a cookie (thanks again to Mother!) that MacLellan was very small and specialized in bringing together a copyright holder and a printer/binder with the book market, both wholesale and retail.

One of the Alger formats produced by Werner and MacLellan separately between 1910 and 1914 has identical cover and spine characteristics. (See Format No. 2). The cover is four and three-quarter inches by seven and one-quarter inch in size and one-half to three-quarters of an inch thick, depending upon the length of the story. For this format, MacLellan has both gold and black lettering on the cover and spine, while New Werner copies have just the black lettering.

I'd guess, after my inspection of the same Alger titles for this format and using inscription dates, that MacLellan produced Algers first in the 1910 through the 1912 time frame. Subsequent printings of the same format was done by The New Werner Company. New Werner produced only one Alger format, whereas MacLellan produced at least five other Alger formats, including double title and soft cover volumes.

In Roy B. Van Devier's July 1956 **Dime Novel Round-Up** article, "The Old Werner Publishing Company," he references a letter exchange he had with Mr. Denis R. Rogers, the eminent authority of Edward S. Ellis formats. Both Van Devier and Rogers refer to copies of *The Boy Hunters of Kentucky* by Ellis which are identical formats but have two different publisher imprints: one by the New Werner Company and the other by MacLellan-N-Y-Publishers company.

Neither Van Devier nor Rogers could find any information about the MacLellan N-Y-Publishers company, however. I have searched for incorporation papers in both New York and Ohio and examined a variety of other basic reference sources and find no record or even mention of the MacLellan-N-Y-Publishers company. However, it was clear to Rogers and Van Devier then as it is to me today that the formats produced by the two companies reflect a direct and close relationship.

The Superior Printing Company — a new name

In 1914, the lithographic division of the New Werner Company was sold and the name of the remaining printing and publishing divisions was changed to the Superior Printing Company. This is the fourth company that later on published Alger books. (See Format No. 3).

Superior produced two Alger formats about 1916, one for hard-cover books and the other for paperbacks. The hard cover format is shown here. The covers are four and three-quarters by seven and one-quarter inches in size and seven-eighths of an inch thick. They come in tan, light and dark blue and brown cloth and have scenes on both the cover and spine which duplicate earlier spine and cover designs of Algers published by the A. L. Burt Company. This Superior cover was also used previously by MacLellan

to cover one of its double-title volumes providing further evidence of close MacLellan/Werner ties.

Just after Superior was formed, Paul Werner left and organized a rubber manufacturing company in Kansas. So ends Mr. Werner's direct involvement in spinning off companies that produced Alger books.

The Saalfeld, Goldsmith and World Syndicate tie

The Werner linkage of the next three companies is similar to the MacLellan-N-Y-Publishers/New Werner Company relationship in the sharing of identical formats. The Werner tie is through the Saalfeld Publishing Company, which I have found to have a total of six different Alger formats. One of the six formats is the key link here between the Saalfeld, Goldsmith and World Syndicate companies. (See Format No. 1).

The format is plain with no illustrations of any type on the spine or cover. Only the Alger title is on the cover in black ink and the title and the name ALGER in black is on the spine. The cover has a black border around the edge and is four and seven-eighths by seven and five-eighths inches in size and about one inch thick. I've found this in blue, red, brown, gray, tan and red colored cloth. The paper is of poor quality and there is one poorly drawn illustration as the frontispiece. The other five Saalfeld formats are all different in that they are smaller and thinner in size and have appliques on the front covers.

This plain Saalfeld format, Black Border, was found identically published by two other companies that produced reprint Algers: The Goldsmith Publishing Company and The World Syndicate Publishing Company. (See also Format No 1).

In fact, it is impossible to pick up an Alger Black Border format and tell from the cover which of the three publishers produced it. What the business relationship was between the Saalfeld, Goldsmith and World Syndicate companies is still unknown. What is known, however, is that the original plates used to produce the Saalfeld Algers, were also used by Goldsmith and World Syndicate as evidenced by examining book characteristics such as text imperfections.

Also, none of Algers produced by these three publishers has page numbers, quite unusual for an Alger by any publisher. In addition, all three companies produced the same Alger titles; and the inside pages are identical except, of course, for certain portions of the title pages.

The World Publishing Company linkage

The last company that can be related to the Werner/Alger lineage is The World Publishing Company. This company only produced one Alger format and it is identical to one of the six World Syndicate Alger formats. (See Format No 4).

The covers of this format are four and seven-eighths by seven and five-eighths inches and five-eighths inch

(Continued on Page 12)

The Werner connection

(Continued from Page 11)

thick. The title is in silver on the cover as is the border at the outside edge. The spine shows the title in the middle in silver. The binding cloth for the whole format is only found in red and blue colors.

From the outside, these two covers are indistinguishable by company. This shows a direct tie between the World and World Syndicate Publishing Companies. In fact, research shows that in 1940, The World Publishing Company succeeded the World Syndicate Publishing Company as a business entity. Inscription dates found lend further credence to this tie.

Other linkages

It is worth mentioning, too, that one other of the Goldsmith Alger formats (small shelf of books design at the top of a plain cover) was also produced by the World Syndicate Publishing Company. The inside pages of these formats are also identical except for the title pages. This is further evidence that a strong tie existed between these two companies.

Supporting this lineage concept between these seven companies with Werner roots, are the dates these companies produced Algers. For example, we noted above that The New Werner Company and The MacLellan-N-Y-Company had identical formats. It is not surprising that both companies produced Algers in the 1910 to 1915 time frame, according to inscription dates. The Superior Company produced Algers from 1915 through 1920, having both paperback and hard-cover formats and producing 69 Alger titles.

Saalfeld started producing Algers about 1922 for a few years. From about 1925 the printing plates for the Black Border formats were apparently passed on to Goldsmith, which issued the same format and titles from 1926 through 1929, and then on to World Syndicate Publishing Company, which issued the same 12 titles in the same format from 1930 through 1935. The World Publishing Company, which succeeded World Syndicate in 1940, then published one of World Syndicate's formats from 1940 through at least 1942, according to my inscription dates.

The impact of choosing which books to publish

Paul E. Werner had an impact on how many and what we Alger enthusiasts collect today, even though he never would have dreamed that to be the case, particularly over one hundred years after he first started his printing activities.

But the story goes much further than the collecting of Algers. Products resulting from the Alger/Werner lineage of these seven companies were mostly inexpensive versions containing condensed texts that were produced by the millions. They were specifically made for the

mass market and probably distributed widely through the five-and-dime and other ubiquitous retail outlets frequently visited by young readers of the day.

Alger's stories surely inspired thousands upon thousands of youngsters during the first three decades of this century to strive, rise, be honest and work hard.

Those principles must have helped young readers immensely later as men and women who faced a devastating depression in a positive and constructive way and had to endure the rigors of World War II. Their successes speak for themselves. It is that generation that television newscaster Tom Brokaw refers to in his 1998 bestseller as "The Greatest Generation."

To that end, of course, we have Horatio Alger, Jr. to thank for providing the basic message in story form. But we also have Paul Werner and subsequent related Alger reprint publishers to thank as well. It was they who made the decisions about the actual books the youth of the day would read.

Sources

1. Van Devier, Roy B. "The Old Werner Publishing Company of Akron, Ohio". *Dime Novel Round-Up*, July 15, 1956, Vol. 24, No 7, Whole No. 286, Pages 49-51. My thanks to Randy Cox and Joe Slavin III for providing me copies of this article.
2. Grismer, Karl H. *Akron and Summit County*, The Summit County Historical Society, Akron, Ohio, 1950.
3. Beacon Job Department, *Fifty Years and Over*, Third Installment, with supplemental additions to 1898, Akron, Ohio, 1892.
4. *Publishers Weekly*, Vol. LXXIV, July-December 1908, page 891, picture of The Werner Company; plus Jan. 8, 1910, page 59 note that The Werner Co. was thrown into a receivership on petition of P.E. and Ed Werner as the principal stockholders; The Superior Savings and Trust Company was appointed Receiver.
5. Tebbel, John A. *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, Vol. II, New York and London, R. R. Bowker Co., 1975. Page 448.
6. "The History of Summit County and Representative Citizens," *Centennial History*, pages 158-161 and 811-812.
7. Westgard, Gilbert II, *Newsboy*, Vol. XXVI, January/February 1988, No. 4, "Eviscerated Editions", Page 113. Details how the Goldsmith, Saalfeld, World and World Syndicate companies shortened the texts of the Alger stories they published.
8. Brokaw, Tom. *The Greatest Generation*, Random House, New York, 1998.
9. Nineteen Alger collectors who without hesitation completed a questionnaire I sent them to survey their individual collections, providing information on the 12 publishers I am studying for my next book, seven of which are discussed in this article. Thank you for taking the time to help me.

MAKING
HIS
WAY
—
ALGER

MAKING
HIS WAY

Format No. 1: This is one of six Saalfeld Alger formats; Goldsmith and World Syndicate also published this same format.

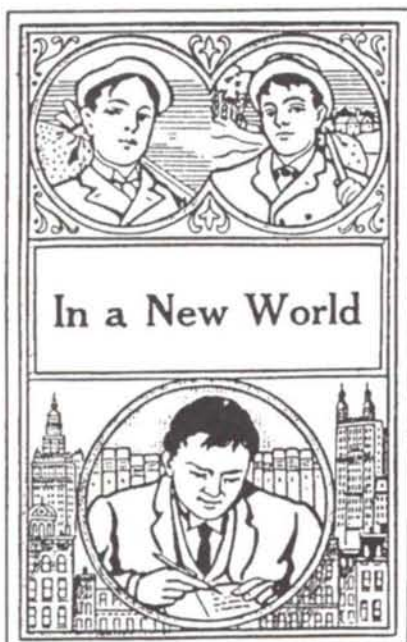
Chester Rand + Alger

Chester Rand

HORATIO ALGER JR

Format No. 2: This Alger new Werner format is identical to one of six formats published by MacLellan - N - Y - Publishers.

IN A NEW
WORLD



Format No. 3: Superior published this hard-cover (adapted from an A.L. Burt design), plus a set of paperback Algers.

BOB BURTON

BOB BURTON

Format No. 4: This Alger World format is identical to one of the six World Syndicate formats.

MEMBERSHIP

New members

Don Arnold (PF-1040)

P.O. Box 275

Milford, IN 46542

Don, who is retired, has 24 Alger titles in his collection. He also enjoys fishing and golf. He learned about the Horatio Alger Society from his daughter, Vickie Schmucker.

Strive and Succeed Award

Each year, the Horatio Alger Society honors a high school senior who, in the time-honored tradition of Horatio Alger heroes, has overcome personal obstacles in order to set his or her career path. The check, which is presented to the recipient during a ceremony at the annual H.A.S. convention, is intended to help defray college expenses.

The Horatio Alger Society appreciates the generosity of its members in donating to the H.A.S. **Strive and Succeed Award** fund. The below Partic'lar Friends made contributions within the past year, listed chronologically:

Bernie Biberdorf (PF-524)

Marc C. Williams (PF-958)

Ralph J. Carlson (PF-955)

Bradford S. Chase (PF-412)

Ivan McClymont (PF-722)

Fred C. Walker (PF-972)

Jim Thorp (PF-574)

Ruth W. Miller (PF-894)

Wally Parsons (PF-896)

Keith H. Thompson (PF-035)

Samuel T. Huang (PF-963)

Janice Morley (PF-957)

Michael Morley (PF-934)

Daniel M. Petersen (PF-200)

Robert L. George (PF-498)

E. M. Sanchez-Saavedra (PF-788)

Murray D. Levin (PF-851)

Dean C. Steele (PF-661)

James J. Lowe (PF-668)

Clyde E. Willis (PF-119)

Carl E. Wulff (PF-900)

Donald L. Cripe (PF-919)

Forest P. Porter (PF-834)

Paul A. Cripe (PF-633)

Earl Reed Silvers, Jr. (PF-1034)

Carol Nackenoff (PF-921)

William J. MacRitchie (PF-914)

Robert A. Jones (PF-904)

Van Daele L. Mabrito (PF-883)

Robert L. Kersch (PF-946)

Bill Roach (PF-978)

David H. Mills (PF-474)

Mary Ann Ditch (PF-861)

Peter A. Scollo (PF-222)

James P. Broderick (PF-912)

Edward T. LeBlanc (PF-015)

Arthur W. Smitter, Jr. (PF-952)

Edith J. Johnson (PF-385)

Ed Evans, Jr. (PF-1000)

Robert C. Lawless (PF-924)

Sherwood E. Moore (PF-732)

FOR SALE

A large Horatio Alger, Jr. collection containing many first editions, quality reprints, paperbacks, periodicals and reference books.

Write or e-mail for a complete list, as follows:

E-mail: r.kasper@worldnett.att.net

Regular mail: Robert E. Kasper, P.O. Box 70361, Richmond, VA 23255

LITERARY PENSIONS

By Horatio Alger, Jr.

Viewed in its business aspect, literature has in all ages presented a discouraging prospect to those who aspired to something more than the empty and unsubstantial honors of fame. It is pleasant, certainly, to win the world's applause; but then this will hardly compensate for a scanty board and privations attending a narrow income. the proportion of authors who have won an independence strictly by their literary efforts, or been enabled to live handsomely, is indeed very small. To estimate this proportion at one in a hundred would probably be above the mark. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name scores of really celebrated authors who have suffered the pinchings of relentless poverty, or at least have been only saved from it by some extraneous assistance derived from inheritance, private patronage or public office.

Despite the obscurity in which the life of Homer is veiled, it seems generally agreed that he was in humble circumstances, if not in actual poverty. When Horace, after the confiscation of his property at Venusia, came to Rome in the hopes of earning a livelihood by his pen, it was to the liberality of Mæcenas he was indebted for the ease in which the remainder of his life was passed. This enabled him to decline the post of private secretary to the Emperor, which Augustus, from nothing honorable to himself, is said to have made.

The same private patron Virgil was indebted for the larger part of his income. Virgil was indeed exceptionally fortunate. High in the favor of the imperial family, he was also not without substantial gifts from that source. For the celebrated passage in the sixth book of the *Æneid*, commencing with the line, "*O nate, ingentem luctum ne quaere tuorum*," in which he refers to the untimely death of Marcellus, the nephew and adopted son of Augustus, he is said to have received from Octavia, the afflicted mother, ten thousand sesterces per line. Reduced to our currency, this rates as \$390, being the largest remuneration probably received by any poet. It is hardly fair, however, to reckon this sum as the legitimate earnings of Virgil's pen. Sallust, the historian, lived in luxury, it is true; but it was on money accumulated by corrupt means, it

is charged, while he was prætor of Numidia.

The office of poet-laureate at the English Court has contributed by its salary to relieve more than one eminent man from the discomforts of poverty. The emolument attached to the office was but £100 and a tierce of wine till Southey's time; it was afterward raised to £127. Yet this small sum was probably by no means a trifle to those who received it. Dryden, for instance, who filled the office from 1670 to 1689, is said to have sold his translation of Virgil's *Æneid* at the rate of sixpence a line. He writes: "Why have I grown old in seeking so barren a reward as fame? The same parts and application which have made me a poet might have raised me to any honors of the gown, which are often given to men of as little learning and less honesty than myself."

At the rate of compensation above mentioned, the translation of the entire poem of ten thousand lines could have yielded him but twelve hundred dollars, which is certainly insignificant for the time and labor expended, to say nothing of the spirit and skill in which the task is executed. Yet this rises to magnificent proportions when compared with the sum realized by Milton for his immortal epic.

Southey, Dryden's successor in the office of laureate, writes, in 1819, to Scott: "Half my time I sell to the booksellers, and half is reserved for works which will never pay for the paper on which they are printed, but on which I rest my future fame."

Up to 1819 Wordsworth's entire literary receipts had not amounted to £140. His main income came from some private property he was fortunate enough to possess, and a government office — distributor of stamps for the County of Westmoreland — which he obtained through the influence of Lord Lonsdale. In 1842 he gave up on his office, and was made the recipient of a pension of £300, on which he was enabled to live in comfort. In 1847, at the age of sixty-three, Leigh Hunt received a pension of £200, which relieved him from pressing pecuniary embarrassments. The latter days of Tom Hood were cheered, and he was spared the necessity of an exertion which the feeble state of his health would have made difficult, if not impossible, by an allowance of £100, obtained through Sir Robert Peel. Dr. Thomas Dick, in spite of his immense industry, did not realize enough from his numerous works to yield him a comfortable support, and who would have died in destitution but for a small pension, granted in his old age. No English writers of a former day have received so much for their work as

(Continued on Page 16)

Editor's note: This essay by Alger was published in Public Spirit (Vol. III, July 1868). It was discovered and submitted to Newsboy by Gary Scharnhorst.

LITERARY PENSIONS

(Continued from Page 15)

Scott and Byron, but they were exceptional cases. Pope, Dryden and many others were indebted for a portion of the moderate success which attended their works to the patronage of noblemen, who were induced by fulsome dedications to take a certain number of copies.

It is humiliating to think that men of genius should feel it necessary to descend to such gross laudation of men who derive today their own hold upon the memory of posterity through their association with the works of men, who were, in every respect except their social position, immeasurably their superiors.

Mæcenas was a model patron, and required no sacrifice of dignity or self-respect in those whom he patronized. Witness the first epistle of Horace, in which the poet declares in manly terms that, if his independence were compromised by the patronage of his friend, he would at once say "Farewell to fortune and welcome poverty!" (Epist. I., 7).

Goëthe was not dependent upon his literary exertions for the means of living. While yet a young man he was appointed Geheimen Legation's Rath, or Privy Councilor of Legation, with a salary of 1,200 thalers. Schiller printed his "Robbers" on his own responsibility, no publisher being willing to undertake it. He was then surgeon of the ducal army of Wertemberg, and derived an income from that source. Toward the end of his life he was on the pension list of the Duke of Weimar.

That writers as a class are better compensated than formerly, is undoubtedly true. In France, Scribe, Dumas and Victor Hugo have received immense sums in the aggregate for their works. Dramatic composition, also in France, owing to favorable legislation, is very liberally compensated. In England, Tennyson receives munificent recompense for whatever he chooses to write. For a recent production, his "Spiteful Letter," he was very much overpaid. Even Tupper, the mild moralist and dealer in rhythmic platitudes, is enabled to live at ease on the profits of his verses. The leading novelists of England have fallen upon prosperous days, receiving thousands of pounds sterling sometimes for a single work. Periodical literature in England also offers to all classes of writers of merit, and to some of little merit, a profitable and inviting field. The essayist who contributes to the *Saturday Review*, and periodicals of a kindred character, received prices which may be considered fairly remunerative. Literature, in fact, has been elevated

to an independent calling which may be safely followed without the ominous prospect of an almshouse looming up at the end of the journey.

Of course, there are multitudes of books, even there, which yield little or no profit to the author — perhaps prove a positive loss to both publisher and author. But this must always be. Many of these books do not deserve to succeed. Some possibly possess real merit. But, generally speaking, it is safer to follow a literary career in England than in America. A work here is considered remarkably successful if yields the author a thousand dollars. There are few which pay even this moderate compensation.

It has been stated recently that, in spite of Hawthorne's high reputation, the aggregate sales of his books up to the present time have not exceeded fifty thousand dollars. At an average profit of fifteen cents to the author per volume, this would make his entire literary receipts only \$7,500. His "Life of Franklin Pierce," his poorest production, proved the most remunerative, procuring him the position of Consul to Liverpool, with an annual income exceeding probably the entire literary earnings of his life.

At a time when Percival had already received the warm recommendation of the *North American Review*, and held an acknowledged position as a poet, his entire income for a single year was less than a hundred dollars. Edgar A. Poe's life was a hand-to-hand struggle with poverty, realizing but a few dollars for some of his most brilliant productions.

Very few American authors, thus far, have ventured to make literature their sole source of income. Bryant has been a journalist all his life. Longfellow occupied for twenty years the post of Professor in Harvard College, and resigned, not because his literary income justified it, but because his wife's fortune enabled him to do so. Lowell still holds the professorship which Longfellow vacated. Sprague was cashier for a bank for the larger part of his life. Halleck, whose recent decease the friends of American literature cannot but mourn, was for twenty years in the employ of John Jacob Astor. Edwin P. Whipple, the essayist, had charge for a number of years of the Merchants' Exchange Reading Room, in Boston, and is now one of the editors of the *Boston Transcript*. Willis and Morris, as everyone knows, were mainly dependent upon the *Home Journal*, with which they were editorially connected. Pierpont was a preacher, and later a government employee at Washington.

The case of professional authors, counting out those who are connected with journalism, educa-

tion or one of the so-called learned professions, is reduced to a very small proportion of the whole number. Of the residue most are driven to the lecturer's annual round to eke out the small sums received from publishers. We regard Emerson, and with justice, as our greatest and most philosophical thinker. Yet, though his genius is freely acknowledged both in England and in America, it is hardly likely that the proceeds of his books would yield him a competent support. These instances, tending all one way, might be readily multiplied. Irving stands almost alone in the list of Americans who have adopted literature as a profession, and made it pay. Holland and Saxe, it is understood, are now well paid; but each was for years a journalist. Whittier's recent volumes, too, have proved pecuniarily successful; but it is doubtful whether his income is commensurate with his high position in American literature.

The truth is, that there is no distinctional literary profession in the United States. Circumstances thus far have forbidden it. Literature is an adjunct to other professions; an episode in the life of the preacher, the lawyer, the professor and the journalist. As long as it requires a very successful book to net the author a thousand dollars, the state of things must continue. It is a common subject of complaint that we have few or no novels that are worthy of the name. This is doubtless true. England produced ten good novels to our one, and probably the proportion is even more to our disadvantage.

Viewing a novel as a work of art, which should engross the best thoughts of its author, is so obvious that our writers are too busy to write one. They can only give their leisure hours to literary work, which should be made an uninterrupted task. If good novels would command from five to twenty thousand dollars each year, as in England, we should have them. The talent is not wanting, only the time. Other considerations also have their weight, but time is the chief one.

Our scientific and philosophical works are also, generally speaking, the product of minds overtaken in other ways. Agassiz is unable to devote his time to independent study and research, but is compelled to combine the duties of a college professor with those of a naturalist, and this, no doubt, must prove to some extent an interruption.

Our magazines and periodicals probably pay as remunerative prices as they can afford for contributions. At all events, they pay much more than formerly, and as a result their standard has been considerably elevated. In some cases a very high

compensation has been paid. Yet the highest prices paid by American publishers are to English writers. If, however, this secures a better class of literature, they cannot be blamed.

This, however, admits of a doubt. Mr. Bonner, of the *Ledger*, deserves the thanks of the literary fraternity for the generous sums which he has paid to American authors, and it is gratifying to know that he has found his account in it. But, as a general thing, even at present prices, a really good writer, always writing conscientiously, would make but a poor income.

Mr. Curtis, in the "Easy Chair" of *Harper's Magazine*, once estimated that a clever writer could write a dozen good magazine articles in a year, or one a month. Averaging fifty dollars each, this would yield him but six hundred dollars for an amount of intellectual labor which in other professions would receive ten times the compensation. His conclusion was that it was hardly worth while to enter upon such a career.

That the English magazines are enabled to pay much more liberally than our own, even when their circulation is inferior, is due to the fact that their value as advertising mediums is more generally recognized. A popular magazine in England derives a very large income from its advertisers, much more than enough probably to pay its contributors at high rates. When advertisers with us come to follow the example of their English brethren, our authors and essayists will profit by the change.

What can be done to elevate the character of our literature, and place our writers more nearly on an equality with those of other countries, and especially England?

One obvious method is to protect our authors by the passage of an international copyright law. This has been ably illustrated by Mr. Parton, in a late number of the *North American Review*, and as ably advocated by other literary periodicals. It is not my present intention to treat this subject. I wish rather to plead for a suitable recognition and encouragement of literature on the part of the Government.

In England, as we have seen, pensions have been granted to those who have won honorable distinction, or done valuable service to the State, by their literary efforts. Why may not this example be followed by our own Government? Suppose Congress should set apart one million of dollars, or appropriate public lands which would produce this sum, as a literary fund, the income to be distributed in pensions to distinguished living authors or their surviving families. Sixty thousand dollars, to

(Continued on Page 18)

LITERARY PENSIONS

(Continued from Page 17)

be given annually in this way would prove a solid and substantial encouragement to authors to devote themselves to works which would shed lustre upon the national name.

One of our most brilliant essayists is at present dying, in sickness and poverty, who, were such a fund in existence, would be comfortably provided for. If a million dollars be considered too large an amount to appropriate for a permanent fund, though insignificant compared with appropriations made without opposition to internal improvements, let a smaller sum be given in the first place. Only let us have a beginning. Recognizing the fact that, in America, authorship is placed at an advantage, compared with some other countries, is it not wise for Government to foster and encourage it in every way from patriotic motives?

It should be conceded, to the credit of the American government, that it has not been wholly wanting in appreciation of eminent literary ability. The appointment of such men as Washington Irving, Hawthorne, Everett, Motley and Bancroft to high diplomatic positions, not only gave us representatives abroad in whom we could feel a just pride, but was a gratifying tribute to American literature, which could not but raise it in the popular estimation. Nor can it be said that, in either of these instances, the public interests have suffered through the selection. All have been popular, and commanded the respect of the Government and people to whom they were accredited.

Let this wise and generous appreciation be continued, and be accompanied by the appropriation of a general fund for the encouragement of literature and art, and we may yet see a class of authors and artists who will compare favorably with those of any other country.

Now available: A new book on Alger formats

Horatio Alger Books

Published by The New York Book Company

BY BRADFORD S. CHASE (PF-412)

- * This, the fourth of a series by Chase about Alger publishers and formats, is an ideal guide for the collector to use in identifying New York Book Co. Alger formats.
- * 133 pages; paperback, published May 1999. It identifies and describes the 26 different New York Book Company Alger formats in detail, including when published, titles produced, descriptions and drawings of all cover formats. According to Chase, there are 752 different New York Book Co. Algers!
- * A historical overview of The New York Book Co. and its related firms in the printing and publishing business.
- * Includes a flip index to easily locate and identify each New York Book Co. Alger cover format.

Price: \$16.00 (includes mailing)

This new book, in paperback format, is now available along with Mr. Chase's *Horatio Alger Books Published by A.L. Burt*, (\$16), *Horatio Alger Books Published by M.A. Donohue & Co.* (\$13) and *Horatio Alger Books Published by Whitman*. (\$13). The set of four, all in similar paperback bindings, costs \$47. The books are also for sale individually. All prices include postage and handling.

Send your order to:

**Bradford S. Chase
6 Sandpiper Road
Enfield, CT 06082**

Editor's notebook

(Continued from Page 4)

are among the most popular categories, right up there with sports and movie collectibles.

Just where is eBay located? Founded by Pierre Omidyar in 1995, it occupies a nondescript building in an office park in San Jose, Calif. Most of the employees manage the site's high-powered computer file servers, which have been known to crash on occasion, leaving untold numbers of bidders frustrated as an auction's deadline approaches.

Chesnut was an eBay user, and one night when he was using the site late at night he came to realize the potential of seller abuse that could happen on such a site. He wondered if eBay needed any legal advice in this area.

He e-mailed his resume, and the very next day eBay called, granted him an interview and hired him.

Chesnut is quick to note he wasn't the first lawyer hired by eBay. After going the first two and one-half years without any lawyer on staff, eBay hired its first in early 1998, and a second was added later that year when the company stock went public. But neither lawyer had a law-enforcement background, as did Chesnut.

"Until I came aboard, user complaints about fraudulent behavior were handled by the eBay staff, but that mostly consisted of telling aggrieved customers to contact the police themselves," Chesnut says. "Now, our anti-fraud unit is proactive as well as reactive."

Chesnut emphasizes that eBay is not a very good place to commit consumer fraud — there's an electronic "paper trail" that can easily be traced.

Also, some thieves can just be plain stupid.

For example, a homeowner recently suffered a burglary, happened to check on eBay and, lo and behold, there were his possessions being put up for bids. Track-

ing the thief was a snap: just follow the "e-trail" right to his computer.

"Things go on in the real world, in a flea market or pawn shop, that no one notices," Chesnut says. "But at eBay, the eyes of the world are watching."

One of the reasons for eBay's runaway success is the level of integrity the site has been able to maintain. If any fellow book collectors out there have tried competing sites like AuctionUniverse.com or Amazon's nascent auction site, you'll notice the action is minuscule compared with eBay.

People want to bid where the action is.

But like a horse searching for water, bunco artists are continually attracted back to the eBay oasis. Chesnut and his "enforcers" will kick a person off today, and he's very likely to spring up within days with a new "handle" and e-mail address.

"At least when I was a prosecutor and the person went to jail, I didn't have to

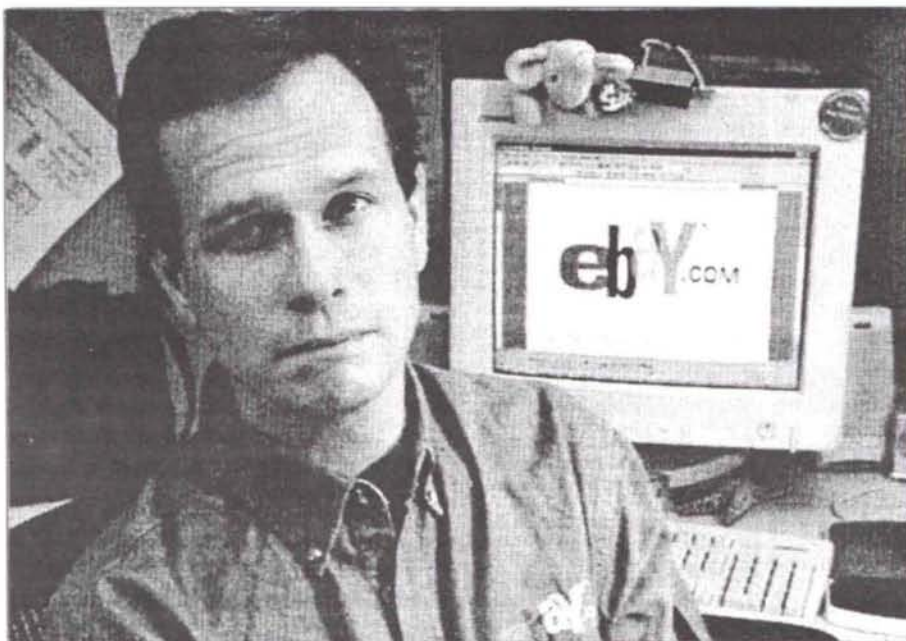
worry about him escaping and then having to track him down and put him back in again," Chesnut says. "But in this environment, once you've suspended someone, the job has just begun."

As I mentioned earlier, we are lucky to be book collectors, a field where it's very difficult to sell something that's not what it's purported to be.

I heartily endorse eBay as a means to help build a collection, and tales of fraud shouldn't scare anybody off. A few bad actors can't spoil the great adventures that await nearly eight million users. And don't forget, Rob Chesnut, Angela Malacari and eBay's legal enforcement staff are there to help keep our minds at ease.

Enjoy the experience — and good bidding!

Coming in January-February Newsboy: It's our annual convention preview issue, including a glance at things to see and do in the Pennsylvania/Delaware Brandywine Valley region, plus the official H.A.S. convention registration form and hotel information.



Former Eastern District of Virginia prosecutor Rob Chesnut heads eBay's fraud enforcement team. "We all need rules to live by, and the Internet's no different," he says. "We're posting new rules all the time."

ALGER COLLECTORS & DEALERS - L@@K Here

**A Collector's Guide to the
Published Works of Horatio Alger, Jr.**
by Bob Bennett - 1999 Edition

\$44.95

plus \$4.00 S & H
in US - 48
Alaska - Hawaii - Canada
or Foreign - Please Call

**with something brand new
YES!!! - 1999 PRICING GUIDE - \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$**

Includes:

Titles and Variant Titles by Publisher — Descriptive Bibliography
Serializations — Titles Issued by Publisher
Short Stories — Poetry — Published Articles
Travel Essays from Europe — Collector Source Guide
PLUS... Illustrations

Up-to-date bibliographic and first edition format information.

The book measures 8-1/2" x 11" x 3/4" thick
288 Pages - High Quality Paper - Clear and Readable Type - Tough Cover Stock
Opens and Lays Flat - Good Fidelity Illustrations

The pricing guide has been developed from information from reported private sales,
public and private auctions, book dealer resources, and the internet.
To our knowledge, no other pricing guide for Alger has ever been published.

SEE WHAT YOUR COLLECTION IS REALLY WORTH !!

L@@K AT WHAT OTHERS ARE PAYING FOR A BOOK

Quantities are limited - Bennett's last book sold out in 1980 - Order your copy NOW.
This new edition is much expanded and easier to use.

DEALER INQUIRIES INVITED - Discounts Available for Multiple Quantity Orders

**YES - We take Visa, Master Card, American Express
IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT FROM STOCK while supplies last**

Contact:

**MATTSON ENTERPRISES - The MAD Book Company
Mattson and Davis - Publishers**

E. (Ed) Christian Mattson - Antiquarian Bookseller - Four Turtlerock Court - Baltimore, MD 21234

Phone: (410) 668-4730

FAX: (410) 882-9137

email: emattson@qis.net