



THE HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

NEWSBOY



Horatio Alger, Jr.

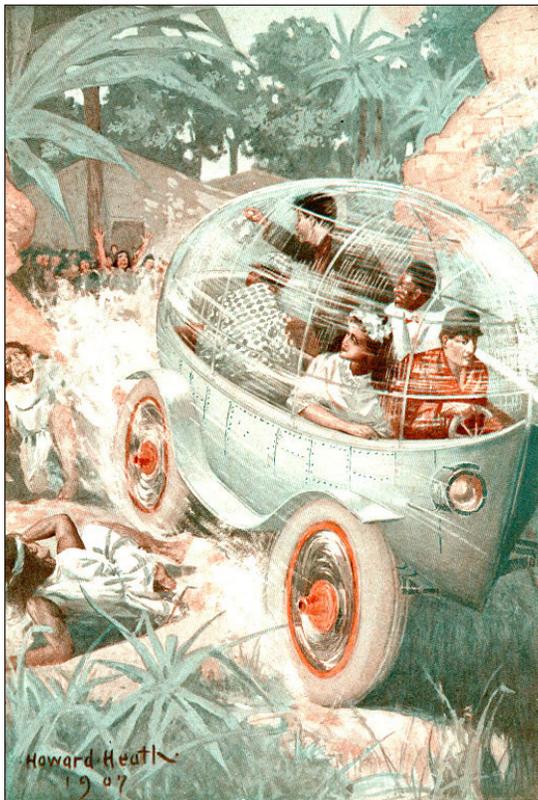
1832 – 1899

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

VOLUME XLV

MARCH-APRIL 2007

NUMBER 2



L. Frank Baum's boys' series books



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President's column

The 2007 convention is upon us. Thanks to Bob and Wendy's organizational efforts, the customary scrambling to prepare for the book auctions (creating lots, entering them on the computer, etc.) will be greatly decreased this year.

This advance preparation allows us to spend more time socializing and relaxing, and sets a precedent that I hope will continue at future conventions.

As of mid-April, we had more than 30 registered attendees. I won't be surprised if we wind up with 50-plus attendees for this year's convention.

John Juvinall will be attending his 30th consecutive convention. This is a remarkable achievement, reflecting both perseverance and luck — how many of us could go 30 years without encountering some obstacle preventing us from attending a convention? I spoke with John recently, and he was reminiscing to me about the time he flew to an H.A.S. convention (round trip) for \$50!

The Society's official home page has moved from www.ihot.com/~has, to www.thehoratioalgersociety.org.

You will be able to access the new site location from the old URL through redirection, but you will want to update your bookmarks. Updated convention information as well as an electronic registration form are available on the new Web site.

Access to the H.A.S. archive page now requires a username and a password. The username is "member" and the password is "newsboy." Since our new Web site has up-to-date Web hosting tools, including enhanced security, we can now consider putting our membership roster on the site, something I had been reluctant to propose until now.

The other day, Janice put the question to me of what an H.A.S. convention attendee gets in return for his or her registration fee (in this case, \$85). This discussion resulted in Janice writing a short article for the Web site convention page — "What do you get for your registration fee?" Please have a look at this article by clicking on the following:

www.thehoratioalgersociety.org/reg_return.html (which is a link on the convention page) and let us know if we missed anything.

Regarding your travel to the 2007 convention: If you're driving and looking for a good lunch/dinner recommendation before arriving in Shelbyville, Janice

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HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr. and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes — youngsters whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and inspired hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans for generations to come.

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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 \$25 (\$20 for seniors), with single issues of **Newsboy** \$4.00. Please make 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. You are invited to visit the Horatio Alger Society's official Internet site at www.thehoratioalgersociety.org

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. E-mail: hasnewsboy@aol.com

Final 2007 convention preview

'Seeking Fortune in Shelbyville'

By Bob Sipes (PF-1067)

The 43rd annual Horatio Alger Society convention, "Seeking Fortune in Shelbyville," is almost here, and Wendy and I are looking forward to seeing everyone and having a great time. We have received many registrations, including a few new people and some who we have not seen in a while. A few regular attendees and many other H.A.S. member registrations are lacking and we hope to hear from you soon.

I am sure some of you are trying to decide how to travel from the Indianapolis airport to Shelbyville. There are no hotel shuttles; however, there is taxi service via ShelbyvilleKustom Cab for \$60.

If a few of you want to wait at the airport and ride to Shelbyville together and share the cost, I can help arrange this.

Also, Wendy or I may make one airport trip Thursday afternoon, if there is a need. We could also make a trip back to the airport Sunday morning. This would again necessitate a wait at the airport for a group to arrive. I will be sending out an e-mail shortly to determine the necessary arrangements.

There are many fine books in the collections we have to auction this year, and I am hearing rumors that there will be other fine books brought by attendees for the auction. To manage the time spent on auction, it has been decided that a portion of the Hartmann collection will be held until next year unless our volunteer auctioneers work at a frantic pace. There will be plenty of books for everyone and still time for sightseeing.

I had dinner with Dick Wolfsie last week, and he is looking forward to meeting you and speaking at the banquet. We had a great time discussing books, authors, politics, and many other topics. He is not knowledgeable regarding Horatio Alger and other boys' series authors; however, he became very interested during

our discussion regarding Alger, Stratemeyer, and other contemporary authors. I am sure you will find him entertaining and interesting.

The **Strive and Succeed Award** recipient has been selected and is worthy of the award. Hollie Evans has dealt with many family issues and has risen above them to excel academically as an honor student and receive admission to IUPUI for the fall semester. I have been invited to the Shelbyville High School Awards presenta-



An example of the classic architecture found in historic Shelbyville, Indiana, site of the 2007 H.A.S. convention.

Photo by Bob Sipes

tion Wednesday, May 9th and will present Hollie Evans as the award recipient. This is very important to the school, students, and community many other local societies will be presenting their award winners. I will do my best representing the Horatio Alger Society.

Hotel reservations should be made as soon as possible to the Lees Inn in Shelbyville. The hotel phone number is (317) 392-2299. Please tell the hotel that you are with the Horatio Alger Society to ensure that you receive the special convention rate of \$58. This rate will apply for your entire stay, including preceding and following dates.

Wendy and I are looking forward to seeing all of you seek your fortune in Shelbyville on May 17-20!

Convention quick facts

When: May 17-20, 2007

Where: Lees Inn, Shelbyville, Indiana

Hotel location: 111 Lee Blvd. — at I-74 Exit 116

Hotel reservations: (317) 392-2299

On the Web: www.thehoratioalgersociety.org

Editor's notebook

The convention is just a few days away, but I thought it important to share some of the emotions former Newsboy editor Jack Bales (PF-258) experienced in mid-April when he heard about the shootings at Virginia Tech University. Jack's son, Patrick, is a sophomore at Virginia Tech, and he lives in the same dormitory where the initial shootings occurred. Jack was asked for his impressions on the tragedy by a Fredericksburg journalist, Elizabeth Nowrouz, who was working on a "local reaction" story. Here is his reply.

My comment? This could happen to any of us.

Elizabeth,

I was out of Simpson Library on Monday morning when my cell phone rang at about 10:20. My son, Patrick, a sophomore at Virginia Tech, asked me, "Dad, have you heard the news?" I replied, "What news"? and he told me about the first shooting at the school. He lives on the second floor of West Ambler Johnston dormitory, and he said that someone was shot on the fourth floor.

I was away from my computer, and I immediately called the library asking if CNN had picked up the story. Nothing was yet on the news, but by the time I got back to my office, I already had e-mails from family members asking about it and news stories on the Web. I told my family that Patrick was okay, but that his dormitory was "locked down," and that I would follow news stories both from him and from the Web.

I went to lunch at the Faculty and Staff dining room, as I always do, and my friends and I talked about the incident. I had no idea that the killing had escalated until I got back from lunch and checked CNN. Patrick sent me several e-mails during the day, and of course I followed the story on the news. I was in something of a state of shock that afternoon. I was grateful that he was not injured, but I was horrified at the senseless carnage and felt an overwhelming sense of sadness and grief for the families and friends of those who were killed. Blacksburg is a relatively small town, isolated there near the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the students on the campus have a tight bond. It did not surprise me that subsequent vigils and convocations drew thousands of students and Hokie alumni.

It was rather difficult to concentrate on work that day, as my thoughts kept returning to my son, to the campus, and to the students and staff of Virginia Tech. We all hear that we should not take good fortune for granted, but until something like this happens, we all probably do. It all makes one so aware of the fragility of our own existence, of human life.

I continue to be overwhelmed by the show of concern from family, friends, and my colleagues here at Mary Washington. I've received dozens and dozens of e-mails and phone calls wanting to know if my son was okay. A former Simpson Library

President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

and I recommend The Beef House in Covington, Indiana. If you are traveling to Shelbyville from points west (especially Interstate 74), The Beef House is located just east of the Illinois state line at 6501 North State Route 63; Covington, IN 47932, just off Interstate 74. The phone is (765) 793-3947 and the URL www.beefhouserolls.com.

You select your steak as you enter the restaurant, specifying your personal grilling preference. Settle back in the comfortable dining room and enjoy the large salad bar and the homemade dinner rolls with homemade strawberry jam (or apple butter) while your steak is prepared. Janice's sister recommended this restaurant to us when we visited Indiana prior to the "Dash to DeKalb II" convention in 2004, and we were so impressed that we're planning to stop there again before we arrive. So, we've renamed OUR trip "Seeking Cholesterol Near Shelbyville."

On a personal note, I am saddened to report that former H.A.S. President Bob Routhier's mother passed away in January. Bob and Jeanette will be at the convention, and I hope our fellowship and support will be of some comfort to them.

Janice, Holly, and myself look forward to seeing you very soon in Shelbyville.

Your Partic'lar Friend,
Michael Morley
1891 Colt Lane
Gardnerville, NV 89410
Phone: (775) 265-3063
E-mail: mmorley@carsonvalleybooks.com

student aide e-mailed me from North Carolina. Even one of my brothers, who is in the thick of things in Fallujah, Iraq, heard about the shootings and contacted me.

And I received so many emails, phone calls, and personal visits from my friends here on campus. In my nearly 30 years here as a reference librarian, I have come to value the good, solid people here at Mary Washington — and I include students as well as faculty and staff. My office door is always open, and during the last few days I'd look up and there would be a colleague checking up on me. I'd walk over to Seacobeck for lunch and friends would stop by and chat for awhile "Are you okay?" they would ask me. "How's Patrick holding up?"

I am very grateful for their concern and feel lucky to be here. I can't see working anywhere else.

Sincerely,
Jack Bales, Reference Librarian
University of Mary Washington

Final 2007 convention preview

Indiana's historic covered bridges

By William R. Gowen (PF-706)

I had never seen a covered bridge in person until the early 1960s, when on a Boy Scouts canoe trip in southern Vermont, we paddled under the bridge crossing the West River in West Dummerston, close to where the West empties into the Connecticut River. It was an impressive sight — a very long span, which I later found out was built in 1872.

I subsequently made several picture-taking trips into southern and central Vermont, seeking out these treasures of an earlier era.

Today, Vermont's many historic covered bridges rank behind only maple syrup and Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream as the state's popular culture attractions (although covered bridge fanatics rank their passion at the head of the list).

I grew up in up-state New York, less than an hour from Bennington, Vermont, and I was amazed how that state preserved its covered bridges, while New Yorkers apparently could care less. By the 1960s, most of New York's covered spans had been lost to the ravages of floods, vandalism and progress. Single-lane bridges had no place on upgraded state and county highways that had to accommodate more traffic, including trucks and school buses, which were too heavy for the bridges.

Vermont, meanwhile, became a leader in covered bridge preservation, with its heritage described in several excellent books, as well as an active Web site, www.vermontbridges.com.

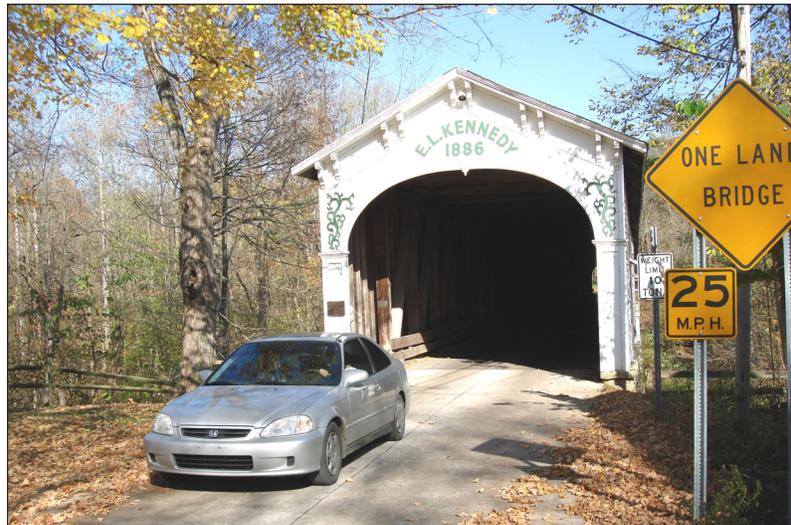
But covered bridges have just as much history in the Midwest, with Indiana and Iowa leading the way.

With the Horatio Alger Society convention in Shelbyville a matter of days away, I decided to give a glance at how things stand in the Hoosier state (really, how many covered bridges stand). As with Vermont's similar group, the Indiana Covered Bridge Society has a

mission is to raise awareness of the need to preserve these artifacts for future generations. The society is located at 725 Sanders St., Indianapolis, IN 46203.

Here is a historical overview, excerpted from the March 1998 issue of the *Indiana History Bulletin*. The Hoosier state saw its first covered bridge built in 1835 in Henry County, in the east-central part of the state. It is estimated that Indiana had between 400 and 500 bridges out of an estimated 10,000 built nationwide between 1805 and 1885, in a study by the Society of American Civil Engineers.

In the 1930s some 200 timber-built, wooden bridges remained in Indiana, most of them in the southern half of the state. By 1998, the last time a state survey was published, the count had dropped to just 93. The reasons were the usual combination of highway improvements, floods, vandalism (usually fire) and decisions by local officials not to pour tax money into preserv-



The village of Moscow is home of one of the two longest covered bridges in Indiana, with a span of 334 feet.

Photo by Bill Gowen

ing these vintage structures from the 19th century.

For example, in 1930, Shelby County had five surviving covered bridges. By 1998, there were none.

But take heart, Partic'lar Friends! In adjacent Rush County, less than a half-hour's drive from the H.A.S. convention hotel, there are a number of historically significant bridges — well worth a sight-seeing trip.

The most well-known bridge is located in the tiny hamlet of Moscow. Built in 1886 by E.L. Kennedy, one of the Kennedy family of Hoosier bridge-builders, this bridge has for 21 years been the focal point of organized covered-bridge preservation throughout the state.

In 1986, the village of Moscow wanted to celebrate the bridge's centennial with a modest festival, including an antique sale, farmers market and a parade of vintage automobiles.

But coincidentally at the same time, the Rush County

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Indiana's historic covered bridges

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commissioners had decided to tear down four of the county's six bridges, leaving only the two structures existing in the Moscow area.

The festival committee was very concerned, and a group of citizens soon founded Rush County Heritage, Inc., its goal the preservation of all bridges in the area. A petition netted 7,500 signatures, and the campaign's nationwide publicity eventually caused the commissioners to relent and keep all six bridges.

The Rush County initiative has been copied throughout the United States. Many Indiana covered bridges, along with key examples in Vermont and other states, are now officially preserved, with state historical markers erected on site.

The Moscow Covered Bridge Festival, held usually the third weekend of June, has grown over the years, attracting a large number of antique dealers from Indiana and nearby states.

According to festival co-organizer Larry Stout, E.L. Kennedy, one of the sons of bridge pioneer A.M. Kennedy, built 58 bridges in Indiana. The 334-foot-long Moscow bridge is his finest surviving example, using the classic "burr arch truss" construction method.

"When it was dedicated in 1886, it has been said that someone rode a one-wheel bicycle across it — on top of the bridge," Stout told *AntiqueWeek* during last year's festival. "So, we do have excitement out here in Moscow, and this festival proves it."

Having visited Moscow last fall to take the photo of the bridge accompanying this article, I almost drove through the tiny town without stopping — it is that unobtrusive. It is basically a group of homes, with a firehouse and small school — no shopping district to speak of. Its major claim to fame is the well-preserved covered bridge, along with the festival that brings the sleepy hamlet to life each June.

If you want to visit the E.L. Kennedy covered bridge while at the convention, I'll give you directions to the site. Figure on spending one hour total — 25 minutes each way from the Lees Inn and 10 minutes at the bridge to take photos.

MEMBERSHIP

New member

Joseph H. Greenwood (PF-1099)
919 East Oak St.
Greenville, MI 48838
(516) 225-2304

Joseph, who is retired, enjoys Alger books for the pleasure of reading them. His other major hobby is amateur radio. He learned about the Horatio Alger Society through e-mail from former President Bob Routhier.

David A. Moulton (PF-541)
P.O. Box 95
Basye, VA 22810
(540) 856-3447
E-mail: rollo@shentel.net

David is reinstating his membership after about five years. Welcome back!

New e-mail addresses

Eugene Bartlett (PF-790)
E-mail: barbgene777@hotmail.com

Kathleen Chamberlain (PF-874)
E-mail: kathleenchamberlain@yahoo.com
or kchamberlain@ehc.edu

Important reminder

Please send all address changes — including new e-mail addresses and telephone numbers — to **Horatio Alger Society, P.O. Box 70361, Richmond, VA 23255.**

See you at 'Seeking Fortune in Shelbyville'

For details, see Page 3

L. Frank Baum's boys' series books

By H. Alan Pickrell (PF-965)

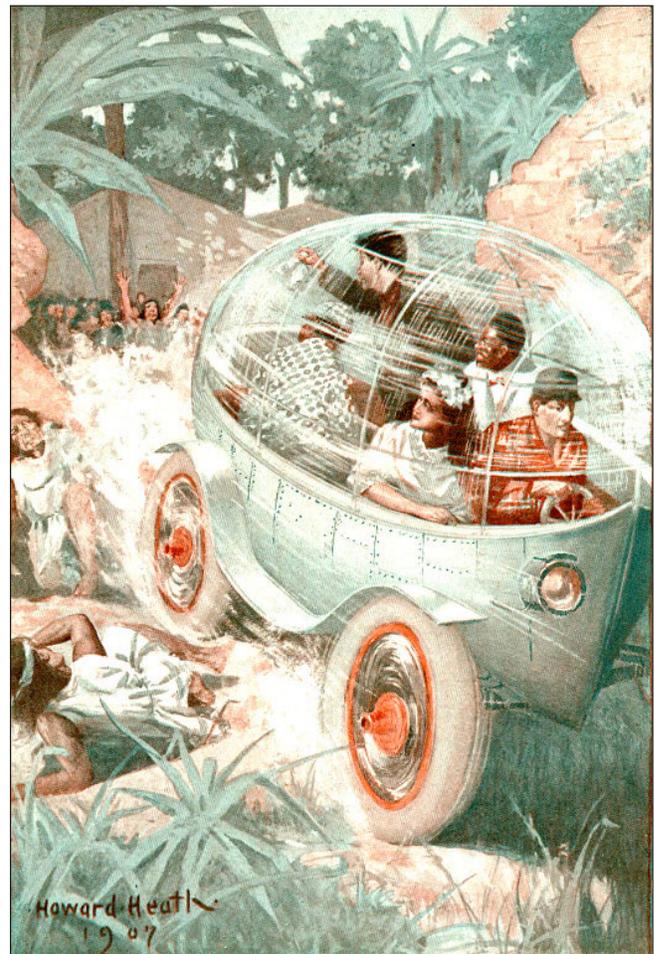
Soon after the Chicago publishing firm of Reilly & Britton formulated in 1904, its management realized that financial security lay in what was about to become an generalized explosion of series books for juvenile readers (Riley 118). Having recently obtained the works of L. Frank Baum, creator of the nation's favorite fairyland (Oz), the company was anxious to continue publishing his future works, which would be to the advantage of both the author and the newly formed publishers.

Since Baum was in constant need of money, in 1906 Reilly and Britton agreed to make Baum their only juvenile series author (117). In return, Baum committed himself to a grueling schedule of composition that gave Reilly & Britton their nationally known author plus other of his works written in *nom de plumes*. Baum gained a publisher that accepted everything he wrote and allayed his need to secure a publisher for every new book he created. So, as a result of a need for money that seemed to be ever increasing due to his improvident nature, Baum became an "all-purpose series writer (Moore 69)."

Baum agreed to write a major new fairy tale every year (usually Oz), and also agreed to write a teenaged girls' series, a boys' series, a nursery series, and some adult novels. As might be imagined, these met with varying degrees of success. In fact, his Aunt Jane's Nieces series and the Mary Louise books for teen-aged girls rivaled Oz in popularity. Baum, however, while it might not be immediately apparent, was a somewhat derivative author, and his works, though immensely creative and imaginative, frequently use the work of other authors as a springboard to "jump start" some of his other works.

For example, the Aunt Jane's Nieces Series, written as "Edith Van Dyne," owes a good bit to the work of Louisa May Alcott, while his adult novels, written as Schuyler Stanton, tend to be hodge-podges flavored with H. Rider Haggard visits Graustark by way of Zenda. Most obviously, perhaps, within the Oz books, the characters of Ozma and Glinda are both derived from Haggard's character of Ayesha in his novel *She*.

This article was presented as a paper at the 36th annual conference of the Popular Culture Association in Atlanta, Georgia, on April 15, 2006.



THE ESCAPE.

Sam Steele's Adventures in Panama. Frontispiece

Baum could scarcely have chosen a better model than Haggard, if indeed he made a conscious choice to model upon that author. At one time, Haggard was said to be the most popular and prolific novelist in the world, having produced more than 90 published works of his own and like Baum, was driven by a need for money to support his ever more lavish life style.

Baum was afflicted with a heart condition, and as a child, was kept in quiet and relative inactivity. As a result he became an avid reader. He read widely and was familiar with both great and popular literature. He could scarcely have failed to notice the works of Haggard that were eagerly awaited in the United States, and some of Baum's own derivational writings seemed to be performing very well in the U.S. marketplace.

The Aunt Jane's Nieces Series was successful from the get-go and a real money-maker. Its successor, the Mary Louise series (named for Baum's favorite sister), performed well enough that Reilly & Lee hired Emma
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L. Frank Baum's boys' series books

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Speed Sampson to continue writing the series as "Edith Van Dyne" after Baum died.

Another big success for Baum was *The Twinkle Tales*, a nursery series he wrote as "Laura Bancroft." So, all in all, Reilly and Britton (and later, Reilly & Lee) could be very well satisfied with their bargain. In effect, they pinned their entire hopes on Baum's performance. In fact, by the 1950s, the only stock in the Reilly & Lee stable was the Oz books and the works of Edgar A. Guest.

In 1906, the first volume of Baum's boys' series appeared. Titled *Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea*, the book was credited to the fictitious "Capt. Hugh Fitzgerald." Shortly before that and through the 1920s, many authors took or used military ranks or honorary titles with pseudonyms. Such appropriations of titles made the books' audiences feel as though the author was "in charge," experienced, and ready for action. In this case, since the Sam Steele adventures are on a sailing ship, the designation of "Captain" implies someone who has been responsible for a ship, its crew, and its cargo. In fact, it adds a bit verisimilitude to the story.

Justin Schiller described that first volume as being bound in red cloth, stamped in gold, with an applique picture label on the front. In addition, there were five illustrations by Howard Heath (200). There were also, two printings of the volume (Jones and Jones 34).

Volume No. 2 of the series appeared the next year. Obviously, the concept of using a "breeder set" of books to attract an audience had not occurred to Reilly & Britton. Later, that idea would prove so successful for the Stratemeyer Syndicate that it would become nearly standard practice across the entire publishing universe.

Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea is, for the most part, well written and its derivations, of which there are many, are unusually subtle for Baum, with one notable and extremely obvious instance of borrowing. First, the plot is loosely based on *Treasure Island* (Maxine 3) and includes life on board ship, pirates, mutineers, and a fabulous island of treasure. (Haggard, it is frequently said, wrote his first major success, *King Solomon's Mines* in an effort to recreate the success of *Treasure Island* and acquire some badly needed income.)

Secondly, the characters in the novel seem to be suggested by a number of sources: Sam is a *David Copperfield* sort of hero, and Mrs. Ranck and Uncle Naboth Perkins are also thoroughly Dickensian and reminiscent of Miss Murdstone and Mr. Omert, the jolly undertaker in that same book. Nux and Bryonia, the South Seas Islanders, remind readers of Melville's

Queequeg, Daggon, and Tashtigo. Finally, the story is told in the first person with Sam as narrator, in much the same fashion of *David Copperfield* or *Jim Hawkins*.

The issue of the notable and extremely obvious derivative incident arises within the plot of the book. In Rider Haggard's *She*, the path to the flame of life runs up the side of an enormous mountain. At the peak of the mountain is a balanced boulder. By running a plank from one side of the gulf to the balanced rock, the characters gain their passage to the cave of the flame. On returning from the cave, an accident overbalances the boulder so that it falls and seals the mouth of the cave for eternity.

There is great danger here, not only from the heights and the rocking rock, but from a gale force wind that threatens to sweep away all before it.

In this story, Sam follows some mutineers to the heights of the island. At its peak, they use a balancing stone to let themselves down from one peak onto a small mesa, emulating Haggard's balancing stone. To account for the wind, Baum creates a huge storm that sweeps the island. Lightning strikes and dislodges the boulder that then fills the mouth of the cave in which the mutineers have taken refuge, thereby sealing them inside for eternity.

David Maxine, in a brief introduction to *Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea*, called "Sam I Am," says of the reprint that is included in *Oz Story Magazine*, that it is perhaps one of the best of Baum's pseudonymous writings (3). It is certainly a departure for Baum, as the novel is written in an unusual fashion for him and has a kind of immediacy not found in his other works. In fact, this type of adventure genre is new to Baum, although there are elements of it in his two *Flying Girl* volumes and also in the two *Daring Twins* books. Both of those short series ran only to two volumes each.

In 1907, *Sam Steele's Adventures in Panama* appeared. Howard Heath once again provided 5 illustrations. This volume was bound in green cloth and stamped in gold, light blue, white, red, and dark green (Schiller, 200). There was only one printing of this title (Jones and Jones 34). After this volume, the series was discontinued, in a way. Baum seems to have devoted more of his energies



L. Frank Baum in 1911.

to the Aunt Janes Nieces series that he began at the same time and that had made an instant impression. Sam Steele (named after a Chicago reporter) didn't strike the same success as the Rover Boys or Frank Merriwell (Greene 17), so it may have been that Baum lost interest in it. David L. Greene, Baum's bibliographer, and David Maxine, editor of *Oz Story Magazine* and reprinter of the final two books in the series, feel that the reason that the books were discontinued was a lack of financial success (Greene 17, Maxine 3).

Be that as it may, someone, somewhere believed in their potential, for in 1908 they returned with a new title, a new author and a new third volume.

In their new incarnation, they became The Boy Fortune Hunters Series by Floyd Akers. (David Greene thinks the name was derived from the word "faker [16].") Still, the books comprise a mystery within themselves. They appeared exactly as they had been as Sam Steele books. There were no revisions or rewrites except for a final paragraph that invited readers to look for the other titles in the series.

Why did anyone believe that the books would sell simply by changing the names of the series and the authors? As it stands, there seems to be something almost dishonest about giving the audience to understand that these are new books, but retaining the same old text inside.

The new titles were *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Alaska*, *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Panama*, and the new volume was *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Egypt*. In 1906, Baum and his wife took an extended vacation in Egypt and Europe, their first and only trip abroad. Baum made such extensive use of that trip in his book, *Aunt Jane's Nieces Abroad*, that in modern times he could have used it as a tax write-off. And, he also used it in an adult novel published anonymously, *The Last Egyptian*, as well as *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Egypt*, as well as in Maud's edited letters called *In Other Lands than Ours*.

First printings of the first three volumes of the series are bound in dark brown cloth stamped in black and white, with white lettering on the front cover (Schiller 202). Later printings and volumes are lighter brown cloth stamped with orange, black, and light green. While all of Baum's books are somewhat rare, the Sam Steele Series and Boy Fortune Hunters Series seem to be among the rarest.

The new series title of "Boy Fortune Hunters" was probably intended to be a bit snappier and a bit more descriptive, and it was making it clear that this series was for BOYS!, not adults.

Unfortunately, with the second volume of the series, the books became somewhat repetitive and much of a muchness. And there was a bit of incongruity in that there was only one boy fortune hunter (singular) as

opposed to the plural promised in the title. And, somehow, maybe as a result of the balancing rock in the first book, the resulting novels quickly became weaker Haggard type plots: a series of jingoistic lost race novels in which the same things happen over and over again. There is frequently a beautiful young female ruler who is nearly white in appearance, and one of the men falls in love with her. The natives to the area are hostile and want to kill the strangers, who have come to take away their treasures, but the female ruler saves them somehow, and there is a last minute escape in which some kind of fortuitous natural disaster figures. Baum seems to be retelling *King Solomon's Mines* and *She* over and over again.

In fact, Nux and Bryonia, the South Sea islanders, are two of the more admirable characters in the books because they aren't seeking to cheat native residents out of their treasures, or not for themselves, anyway. They want to make Sam and his friends happy, so they cooperate with anything Sam suggests. Even though Sam claims they are his friends, he thoughtlessly denigrates them and devalues them. Of course, they are very dark-skinned but do not have Negroid features, so even though they are dark, they do have a kind of presence and stature among the rest of the crew. And, as Sam notes, they can withstand hardships better than the whites on board.

As well, in dealing with the natives of other lands and cultures, the Steele party, plainly imitating the tactics of Peter Stuyvesant, stocks up cheap trinkets to trade for gold, silver, or precious stones. Most of the time, however, they simply end up stealing the riches, which the natives have tried to protect from the invaders. Baum certainly shared the ideals of most of the explorers of new lands and exploited the residents for all they were worth in his novels.

The second volume of the series adds a bit of a Jules Verne/H. G. Wells touch. Sam agrees to captain a vessel of doubtful condition through the Panama Canal to reach the West Coast. Along on the voyage goes inventor Duncan Moit and his wonderful automobile/boat powered by compressed air that is generated by a powerful explosive, also developed by Moit. In addition, the metal chassis of the vehicle, while extremely lightweight, is impervious to injury, as are the tires. It is by virtue of this wonderful machine that can travel over land or water that adventure comes calling.

When Sam and the crew discover a canoe containing the body of a white man and his journal, they also discover that the man had come to collect diamonds that are so plentiful in that area that they can be picked up on top of the ground. The Indians who populate the area are descendants of the ancient Aztecs and hate white

(Continued on Page 10)

L. Frank Baum's boys' series books

(Continued from Page 9)

men because of the cruelty shown their ancestors by the Spaniards who discovered them centuries before; consequently, any white man who enters the area is automatically condemned to die.

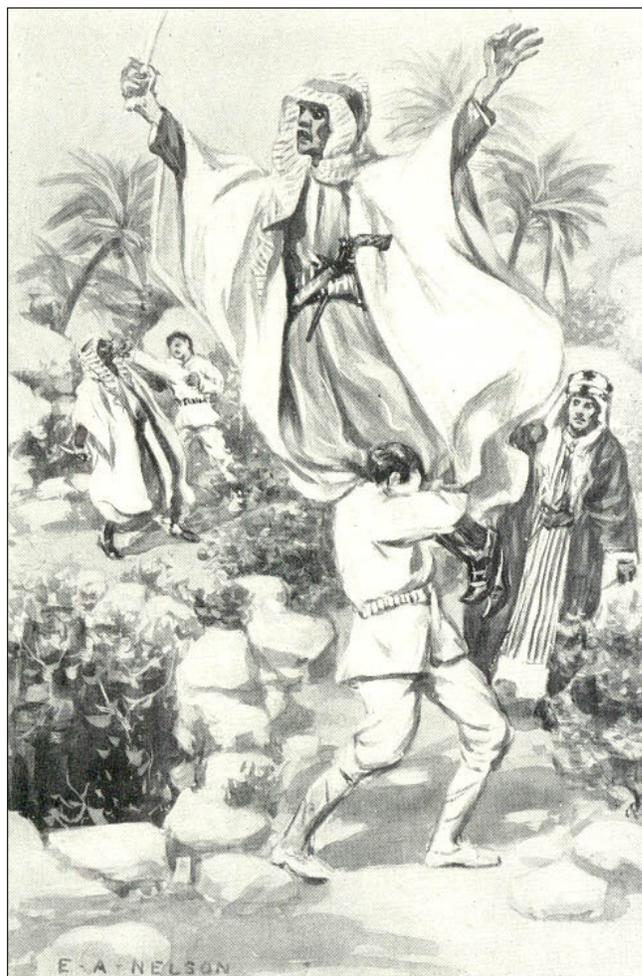
However, with the aid of Nux and Bry, Sam and Moit collect the treasure and overcome the tyrannical ruler. Moit loses his heart to Ilalah, the beautiful young heir to the throne, and Ilalah returns his love. Having lost his machine, his blueprints and formulas in a horrific explosion, Moit decides to remain with Ilalah and her people as her consort. He banishes Sam and his friends after warning them never to return, but gives them a bag of diamonds to take along with them.

Baum has made it clear from the first introduction of Moit that he is none too tightly wrapped. By the end of the book, he has passed from eccentric into a mild madness. Also, Baum has made it clear that the lovely maiden Ilalah is very fair and has such regular features that she could easily be white, so that should end any vehement objection to Moit remaining among the savages.

If Baum borrowed freely from Rider Haggard previously, in Volume 3, *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Egypt*, he borrows just as freely from his own wife. On January 27, 1906, the Baums sailed on the *Princess Irene* (the same boat that carried Aunt Jane's Nieces and Uncle John to Europe in *Aunt Jane's Nieces Abroad*) for a tour of Egypt and Europe. Maud Baum memorialized the trip in a series of letters that L. Frank later edited and had printed in a private edition for family members. In a foreword by L. Frank, he assures us that the writing is Maud's own (Baum 6). My own wife, however, who is a fervent reader of guidebooks and travel brochures, also assures me that the information and some of the wording seems to have come from those same sources. Indeed, some of the smaller details about digs and sites probably did derive from freshening up the memory about such things in source books.

Nevertheless, much of what Maud wrote found its way into Baum's books for the next little while. In the introduction to the reissue of *Other Lands Than Ours*, Edith and Warren Hollister have well documented how Maud's letters contributed to *Aunt Jane's Nieces Abroad*.

They have not, however, provided as careful a documentation of *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Egypt*. One of Maud's major impressions of Egypt was that of dirt ... everywhere: dirty people, clothes, streets, houses. Her description of their arrival in Cairo is of being surrounded by howling, shrieking maniacs dressed in clothes of all colors in which "dirt color" prevailed (27). Over and over again, Sam describes Egyptian characters



THE FIGHT AT THE SCORPION PIT.

The Boy Fortune Hunters in Egypt. Page 216.

as wearing dirty clothes and filthy robes. Most of the houses in villages and towns seem to be made of mud, according to both Maud and Sam. Both books detail drinking coffee while sitting at a sidewalk table, and both mention visiting the bazaars and haggling over business. Maud says that in the bazaars, "we buy many (things) that we do not care for and can never use (40)." Sam says that he and his compatriots buy many useless and gaudy items in the bazaars to create good will with the merchants (Akers, *Egypt* 123).

Finally, Maud mentions that priests hid the treasures of Karnak from Cambyses during the attack of the Persians. The major plot of this novel revolves around recovering the treasure of Karnak, secreted from Cambyses.

It is in this volume, moreover, that the boy fortune hunter becomes plural with the addition of Joe Herring and Archie Ackley, who join Sam in adventures for the rest of the series. All of the boys are very different in appearance and in personality, as well as background

and breeding. Along the lines of the obsessive/compulsive character of Moit in the previous volume, Professor Peter Pericles VanDorn, who holds the secret of the treasure, is introduced in this one. This character, however, is murderous by nature, and urges murderous actions on friends and enemies alike.

In addition, Baum based the character of the vicious Abdul Hashim on the infamous Araby Pasha, whom Baum met at an Egyptian wedding and gives us a number of villains in this story.

Baum struggles with a typical Haggard plot. A royal, but savage, female befriends the heroes and saves their lives. They lose a portion of the treasure, but manage to hold onto enough to make them rich. The mystery of Joe's parentage is solved. One feature of Haggard's "jungle" books, was often a fight depicted between two wild animals, in a kind of Roman circus display. Unfortunately, Baum chooses to do the same thing in this novel, and chooses to depict a "mad" camel being stomped to death by three sane ones. Somehow, it just isn't the same as a lion and a crocodile fighting to the death.

One of the major concepts which sets this book apart from other boys' series is the fact that Sam and his friends kill other human beings. Of course, the killing is always in self-defense, but they do kill, and sometimes seem not only willing, but eager, to do so. Also, Sam's moral logic seems to be a bit deranged at times. It is all right for him to steal the treasure from Egypt because it is Egyptian – and the ruler of Egypt is a Turk – not an Egyptian. Plus, the vast majority of Egypt's population is Arab – so it wouldn't be stealing from Egypt at all. Also, he is an American, and as such is superior to all of the other factions in Egypt anyway.

The 1909 volume in the series finds the boys in China, where they have rescued a badly injured young nobleman and his bodyguard from a shipwreck. Knowing that he is dying, the young nobleman asks the boys to pretend to return his body to his kingdom and to raid the treasures of his ancestral tombs while they are there. He even gives them instructions on where to find the secret entrance to the tombs.

Constantly on guard against the villainous Mai-Lo, the boys are somewhat distracted by Nor Ghai, Mai Mou, and Ko-Tua, residents of the royal harem. The boys are able to discover the tombs and plan a trip to harvest the treasures. However, Mai-Lo is suspicious and keeps a close watch on the entrance that is guarded by Fo-Chu, the king of the apes. Fo-Chu is used frequently to carry out executions. Because he once killed an old emperor, it is believed that the soul of the emperor resides within him. When Mai-Lo tries to evade the ritual suicide that is required of him, he meets his destiny at the hands of Fo-Chu in the ancestral tombs.

A goodly number of Baum's own spiritualistic leanings make themselves known in this volume, especially in discussions of death and the transmigration of the soul, as well as destiny. Coincidentally, Rider Haggard was a well-known Spiritualist of his day. While we know that Baum read Haggard, we don't know that Haggard read Baum; however, in *Allan and the Holy Flower* (1916), Haggard uses the character of an ancient gorilla in almost exactly the same way that Baum uses the old ape, Fo-Chu, and explains the transmigration of the soul in almost the exact same way that Baum does. And, once again, the boy fortune hunters are rewarded with the treasure, although they are never able to secure it all. They only take enough to make them rich.

The penultimate book in the series is *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Yucatan* (1910) and introduces the survivors of the lost continent of Atlantis. Sam and his friends meet Paul Allerton, who with Chaka, his faithful friend, wishes to make an expedition to the hidden land of Tcha, home to the last survivors of Atlantis, even though it is known that they are hostile to strangers. To arrive quickly and avoid other hostile Indians, the party wears gas inflated flying suits made of an impervious material. Each suit is equipped with its own gas-producing pouch. For weapons, each member of the expedition is provided with an "electrite," which would be the modern equivalent of a stun gun. Once again, Baum exercises the Jules Verne aspect of his writing.

Naturally, the ruler of this people is a beautiful and charming young woman named Ama. Like Haggard's Ayesha and Baum's Glinda, she is hidden away in a secret spot and surrounded by female attendants. But, not even she can prevent the execution of the party. At the last minute, a terrific earthquake preceding an immense volcanic eruption takes place and allows the party and Ama to escape wearing the flying suits after filling their pockets with rubies. Knowing Baum's always pressing need for money, there is little doubt that these novels were some kind of wish fulfillment for the usually financially strapped author.

David Maxine, who edited the reprint of this title, suggests in his introduction that Tcha is very much like Oz (6-9). It is a secret land, a matriarchy, a rich country, and a Utopia where money is not used. Also, it is beautiful in the extreme until its devastation by the earthquake and eruption.

The final volume, *The Boy Fortune Hunters in the South Seas* (1911) has also been reprinted. In this book, Sam and his friends add "opportunistic" to jingoistic and exploitive as adjectives to describe both themselves and their expeditions. They are shipwrecked in the South Seas while gun running weapons for a Columbian

(Continued on Page 12)

L. Frank Baum's boys' series books

(Continued from Page 11)

revolution. Sam justifies his decision to do so by reasoning that the revolution has nothing to do with him or the United States. Neither he nor his crew will participate; they will only transport the weapons and leave them. One of the weapons purchased by the Columbian moneyman and his son is a bi-plane. After the ship is wrecked in a mighty storm, Sam and his party use the plane to reconnoiter.

It seems that Sam and party have been beached on the Island of the Pearl People ... an uncharted South Seas island in the vicinity of Nux and Bry's home island. The People of the Pearl are extremely hostile, and Sam is captured by them and condemned to death by drowning.

Sadly, Attero, the young ruler of the island, and Sam truly like one another, but in order to rescue Sam, and finally Sam's friend, Joe, Attero must be killed. However, as a consolation for the death of his friend, Sam retains a string of pearls given him by Attero that has been valued by Tiffany's for \$40,000. In addition, Joe manages to fill his loincloth with pearls prior to making his escape, so there were pearls aplenty for everyone.

One major point of interest develops here. Sam's rescue is made possible because a Spanish girl, Lucia, is able to fly the bi-plane, and in that same year, Baum also wrote the first of the two Flying Girl novels. As "Edith Van Dyne," Baum introduced Orissa Kane, teen-aged bi-plane pilot, to an admiring public.

The Boy Fortune Hunters in the South Seas, the final adventure in the series, ends with the ship being refloated due to a fortuitous earthquake, if there be such a thing. However, the author was beginning to repeat himself in the area of natural disasters that benefit the heroes, and much of the heart seems to have gone out of the writing. After all, Sam and his partners were quite rich enough at the end of Volume 1, and somewhere along the line, all of this endless acquisitiveness began to seem suspiciously like old-fashioned greed.

While certain attitudes and wordings will undoubtedly be unpopular in today's society, Baum was reflecting widely held attitudes of his day and time. And, in spite of those attitudes, it is certainly worth the time and trouble to try to track down these books, either originals or reprints, and give them a read. It is a totally different side to Baum and a new and interesting experience to see that side.

H. Alan Pickrell, an authority on author L. Frank Baum and his books, has contributed numerous articles for *Newsboy*, most recently "A boy's life: Tom Huck, Jerry and Poppy," in September-October 2005.

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Collecting Baum's series books: What to look for

By William R. Gowen (PF-706)

I was just starting out as a serious collector of boys' series books in the early 1970s when a fellow collector wrote, saying "If you come across any 'Boy Fortune Hunters' books, grab them. They're scarce!"

It took me about two minutes to phone fellow collector Jack Dizer, who had over the previous months been educating this novice about Edward Stratemeyer and the Stratemeyer Syndicate, how such writers as Howard Garis and St. George Rathborne made careers out of writing books for boys (either for the Stratemeyer Syndicate or independently), and was introduced to authors such as Harry Castlemon, James Otis and Oliver Optic, and how many of these were actually pseudonyms. I also learned that the "Leo Edwards" books I read as a boy were actually authored by Edward Edson Lee.

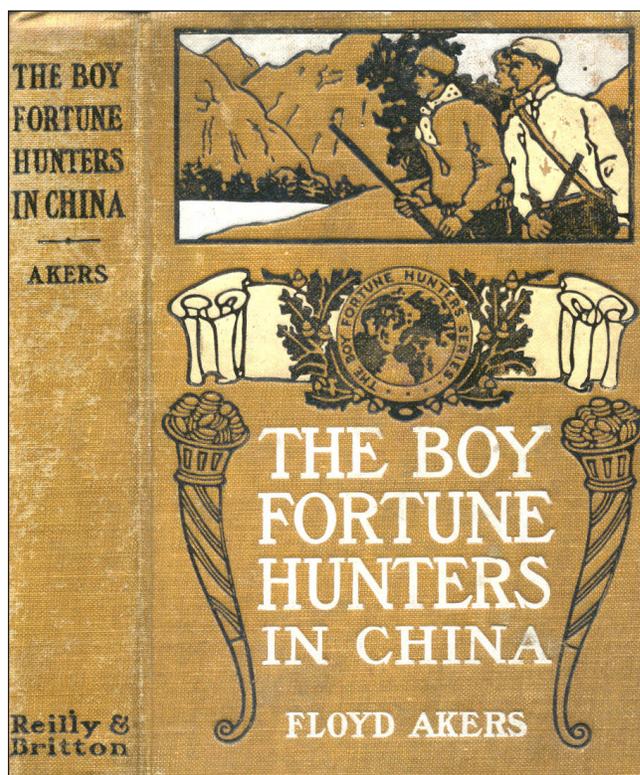
I asked Jack about the Boy Fortune Hunters series, and he immediately told me the name of the author on the covers of the books, "Floyd Akers," was really L(yman) Frank Baum, who had gained worldwide fame for his "Wizard of Oz" books.

He then told me that The Boy Fortune Hunters first appeared a couple years earlier as the Sam Steele Series, with Baum in that case assuming the *non de plume* of "Capt. Hugh Fitzgerald." Dizer was a member of the International Wizard of Oz Club (he read the Oz books as a youth and held a sizable collection, which he has since passed along to his grandchildren).

Soon, I was subscribing to Dime Novel Round-Up, followed by Yellowback Library in its start-up year of 1981, and then I joined the Horatio Alger Society in 1983. From then on, I met more and more experts in the field and had access to some of the finest printed resources on early 20th century series books and their 19th century dime novel and story paper predecessors.

Anyway, as the years went on I was able to read more about the Boy Fortune Hunters, and here and there was able to add four of the six titles to my collection. Eventually, I was able to acquire the two Sam Steele books as well, and more recently added Baum's very scarce two-volume The Flying Girl series.

So with the our publication of Alan Pickrell's extremely informative article about Baum's boys' series books in this issue, I decided to write a "sidebar" elaborating on the formats of these books in detail, adding information on the artists involved.



The fourth volume of L. Frank Baum's Boy Fortune Hunters Series, published in 1909.

I will close with some background on Reilly & Britton and its successor, Reilly & Lee, by far the main publishers used by Baum for his Oz and other fantasy books as well as his series books for boys and girls. I have a special interest in Reilly & Britton since I live in the Chicago area and this was a Chicago publishing house. Since Reilly & Britton produced only a handful of non-Baum youth series, I will also mention several of R&B's other most-highly collected boys' series.

Now, on to a detailed look at the formats of the books covered in Alan Pickrell's article. To avoid repetition in the following descriptions, in all cases the publisher is Reilly & Britton. Also, since this narrative wanders a bit, to avoid confusion I have included a list of all of Baum's boys' and girls' traditional series books at the end of this article.

The Sam Steele Series

1. *Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea* (1906, 271 pages). This was L. Frank Baum's first boys' series book. I like to call it the "little red book" for reasons described below pertaining to its reprint editions.

This book is standard series-book-size (5 by 7³/₈ inches). The book is bound in medium-red, ribbed cloth, with gold lettering. The front cover has "Sam Steele's Adventures" in large gold capital letters at the top, in two lines;

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Collecting Baum's series books

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"Capt. Hugh Fitzgerald" in one line at the bottom, in gold letters half the size of the title.

The spine, otherwise plain, shows "Sam Steele's Adventures," in three lines of gold capital letters at the top, with "Fitzgerald" in smaller letters below it, separated by a gold dash, and at the bottom of the spine, "The Reilly & / Britton Co." in two lines.

In the center of the front cover is a stylized color appliqué in tones of red and black depicting a sailing ship, in silhouette. The size of this paste-on element is 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches wide by 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches high.

The book's artist is Howard Heath, who provides five illustrations — a frontispiece and four internals, all of them color tinted in subdued tones on glossy paper, tipped in to the text block.

2. *Sam Steele's Adventures in Panama* (1907; 310 pages). For the second book of the series the size of the cover was increased to 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 8 inches, and the color was medium green, in smooth (non-ribbed) cloth. The front and spine lettering is in gold, with the exception of the author's name at the bottom of the front, which is in red. The arrangement of the lettering is similar to that of the first volume.

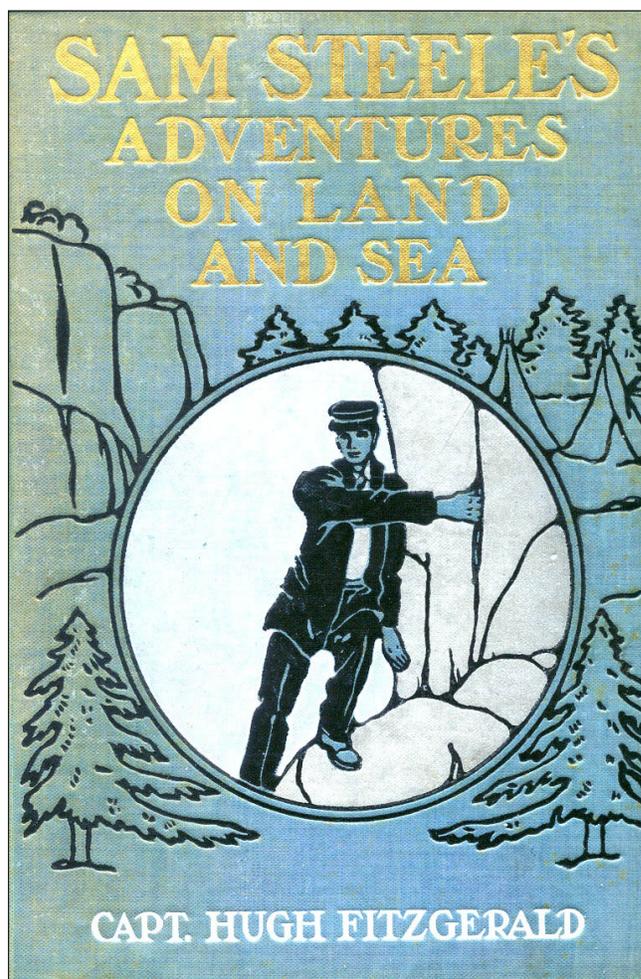
Dominating the front cover (Page 15) is a 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch circular illustration depicting a head-on view of a man (presumably Sam Steele) driving an open roadster equipped with a single large headlight. The man is dressed in white, the sky is light blue and the roadster in green with red highlights. Surrounding this circle are line drawings, in dark green, of palm trees and a single-funneled tramp steamer transiting the Panama Canal.

The artist is again Howard Heath, with five illustrations — a frontispiece and four internals, again in subdued color tints. The frontispiece for this book is so fascinating, depicting Duncan Moit's "convertible automobile," that I have chosen it as the lead illustration for Alan Pickrell's article.

Most likely in their attempt to market this as a series, the publishers in 1907 decided to reissue the first volume in a matching cover format (shown above) to Volume 2.

No longer a "little red book," the cover is now 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 8 inches, in medium-blue, smooth cloth. This time, instead of just "Sam Steele's Adventures" on the front cover, we have the full "Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea," in gold, with the author's name in smaller white letters. The spine retains the shorter version of the title, and all spine lettering is in gold, arranged top to bottom as in the 1906 the first edition.

The 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch circular illustration on this reissue depicts a man (again, likely Sam Steele) attempting to



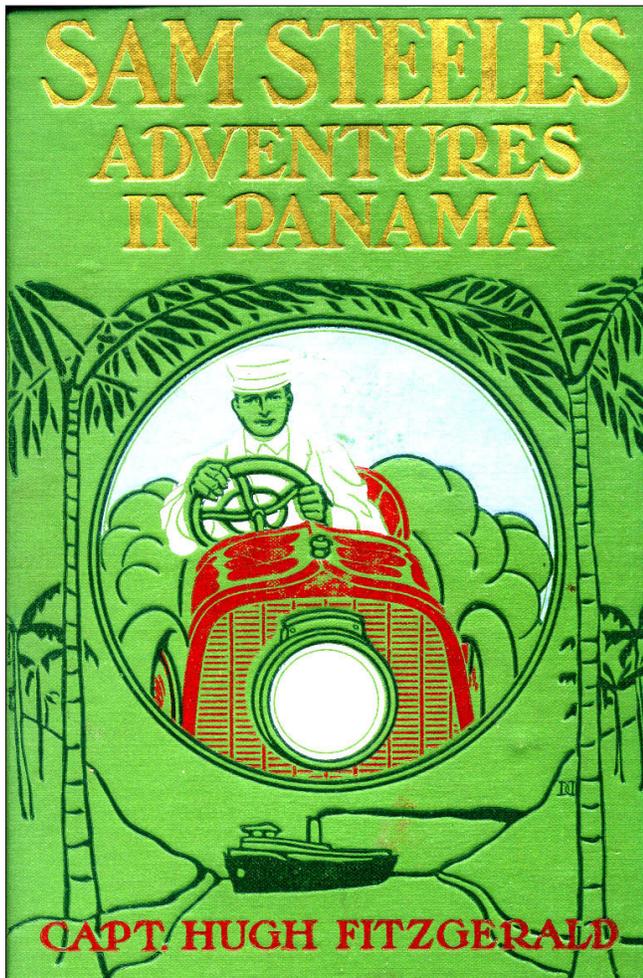
Sam Steele Series, Vol. 1 (1907 edition).

climb a rocky cliff. Surrounding this illustration are line drawings in dark blue, depicting a pine-forested mountain wilderness.

This book, as well as *Sam Steele's Adventures in Panama*, are extremely scarce. I have seen numerous copies of the 1906 "little red book" over the years, but only two copies of the 1907 reprint of Volume 1, the one I own and another at a book show many years ago, so overpriced that the seller took it back home with him. The only first-edition copy of Volume 2 observed is the one I own. Why are these two books so rare in these 1907 editions? We'll explain, below.

The Boy Fortune Hunters Series (1908-11)

1. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Alaska* (1908; 271 pages) is simply a retitled reissue of *Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea*. At this point, because Baum and his publishers decided to repackage the Sam Steele books to prime the pump for the new Boy Fortune Hunters Series, the pseudonym was changed to "Floyd Akers." Even though it is a reprint, the first format of this 1908 edition becomes a "first thus." This is why the 1907 Sam Steele



Sam Steele Series, Vol. 2 (1907 edition).

editions are so scarce, because they were on the market for less than a year, possibly only a single printing.

Pickrell, in his article, says “there seems to be something dishonest” about repackaging the exact same stories under different titles, but this is a somewhat common occurrence in the juvenile publishing field. For example, Edward Stratemeyer changed the Boys of Columbia High Series to the Frank Allen Series when he repackaged the books for their Garden City Publishing Co. reprints in the mid-1920s.

As we shall see, The Boy Fortune Hunters didn’t exactly set sales records. In fact, his two best-selling series (both for girls — Aunt Jane’s Nieces and Mary Louise), reportedly netted Baum annual royalties of about \$2,000 in the final years of his life, a pittance compared with what he earned from his Oz books.

The first-format cover for *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Alaska* is in medium-brown ribbed cloth, with title and author lettering on the front cover in white, and lettering on the spine in black. The front cover is illustrated, in black and white, with a top panel depicting a waist-up

view of three boys walking from right to left in the wilderness. In the center is a white, flowing banner, overprinted in black with an oak-branch wreath surrounding a one-inch, round global map, encircled by THE BOY FORTUNE HUNTERS SERIES in small letters. On either side of the main title panel is an upright horn-like cornucopia, filled with coins.

The spine is plain, with only the title, author and publisher, arranged top to bottom in the same manner as the Sam Steele books.

The illustrator remains Howard Heath, with his five color-tinted Sam Steele illustrations carried over from the original version of the story.

2. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Panama* (1908; 310 pages). This is a retitled edition of *Sam Steele’s Adventures in Panama*. The format is the same as Volume 1, and again, the five Howard Heath illustrations are carried over in this “first thus” edition.

3. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Egypt* (1908; 291 pages). Just a few weeks after the new series was launched with the two reprint titles, the first original Boy Fortune Hunters book rolled off the Reilly & Britton presses. The cover format was identical to the first two titles, but the illustrator changed, with Emile A. Nelson doing the honors. Nelson drew three illustrations, a frontispiece and two internals in black-and-white on glossy paper, tipped in.

4. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in China* (1909; 325 pages). The fourth volume retains the first-format cover design of medium-brown ribbed cloth, white lettering on front and black lettering on the spine. But there are signs the series is being “cheapened.” The book’s paper appears to be of lower quality, and there is only one illustration, a black-and-white frontispiece by Emile A. Nelson.

5. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Yucatan* (1910; 343 pages). It is now apparent the series has entered the phase in which sales (or lack thereof) are dictating a cheapening of the product. The deluxe cover in ribbed brown cloth is now gone, replaced by a basic smooth cloth in lighter tan. The front-cover illustration is the same, but it is now in red, green and black. Throughout the mid-teens and early 1920s, boys’ and girls’ books in general went away from gold and white inks in favor of black and other less-expensive colors. This may simply have been a case of Reilly & Britton following an industry trend.

The illustrator for *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Yucatan* is George A. Reiman, with a frontispiece only, on glossy paper.

At this time, the first four books in the series were reissued in this format. For Volumes 1 and 2, the cost-cutting process was evidenced by the removal of Howard Heath’s four internal illustrations, with only the frontispiece retained, in monochrome. For Volume 1, the inter-

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nal plate facing page 96 in the original printing has been switched to the frontispiece, its "Captured by the Gold Hunters" caption removed so the reader has no idea what the scene is all about.

For Volume 2, the iconic illustration showing the bubble-topped automobile is thankfully retained. Again, however, the original caption "The Escape" has been deleted.

6. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in the South Seas* (1911; 263 pages). The final volume of the series continued the less-expensive cloth and red-green-black inks. The illustrator was Emile A. Nelson, who provided just a frontispiece on glossy paper. Presumably, the reprint editions of the earlier five volumes remained in production. However, it should be noted that Volumes 5 and 6 are particularly scarce, probably because they only had one or two press runs.

Dust jackets for the Boy Fortune Hunters books are extremely scarce. I have none, so I will go from memory from brief observations at bookshows, auctions, etc. The jacket design (this was for the reprint edition) is on white, coated paper (somewhat off-white, maybe due to aging). The design copies the books' cover design as described above, in red, green and black. All lettering on front and spine is in red.

If anyone has information regarding jackets for the first-format, white-lettered Boy Fortune Hunters books or for the Sam Steele Series, let me know and I'll follow up with a description.

Baum's Girls' series books

Because our focus is on Baum's boys' books, I'll be brief in describing his girls' series books, which are listed in full at the end of this article.

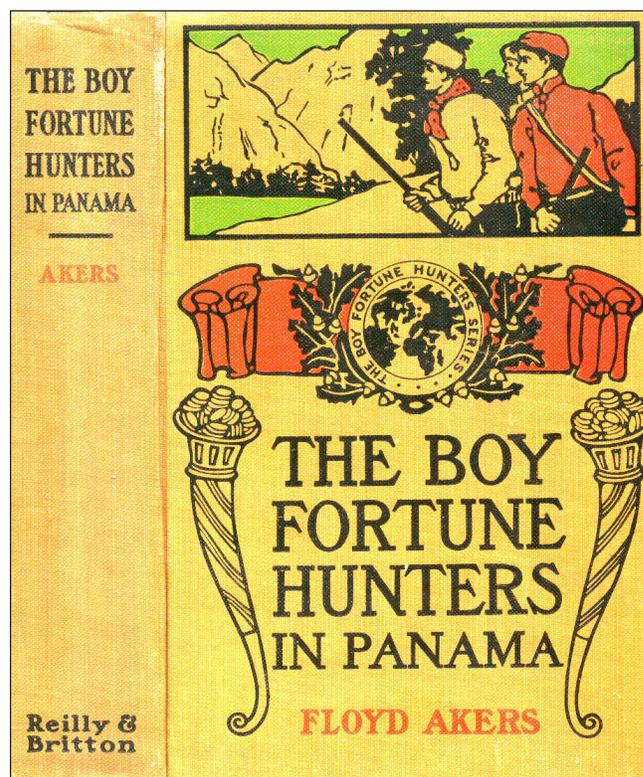
Aunt Jane's Nieces Series (1906-15)

This was Baum's most popular juvenile series, both in number of volumes and length of publication.

The books' covers featured a vertical, color oval appliqué showing the title characters. The appliqué was flanked by an arrangement of flowers, tied with a ribbon. The first two books, *Aunt Jane's Nieces* and *Aunt Jane's Nieces Abroad* (both 1906), came in green ribbed cloth with gold lettering. Subsequent volumes, and reprints of the first two titles, came in tan cloth with green lettering, retaining the appliqué and floral design.

As with the early boys' books, these early titles had multiple illustrations. Volume 1 had a frontispiece and five internals by Emile A. Nelson; the second title had a frontispiece and four internals by the same artist.

Starting in 1908, there was only a frontispiece. Nelson did the illustrations for the books published through



The later Reilly & Britton reprints of *The Boy Fortune Hunters Series* books used a cheaper lighter-brown cloth with cover illustration in red, green and black. This version had only a frontispiece illustration.

1912. The frontis for *Aunt Jane's Nieces on the Ranch* (1913) is unsigned, while James McPacken (1914) and Norman D. Hall (1915) did the concluding volumes.

Many series books coming out in the mid- to late teens incorporated World War I into their plots (see Tom Swift, Tom Slade, Boy Allies, Brighton Boys, etc., etc.). *Aunt Jane's Nieces* was no exception. *Aunt Jane's Nieces in the Red Cross* (1915) was revised and reissued in 1918 with four new chapters, which Baum added to the end of the story reflecting America's involvement in the war in Europe. The original frontispiece by Norman D. Hall was retained in this new edition.

Mary Louise Series (1916-19)

This series also sold well, shown by the publisher's decision to continue it after Baum's death in 1919. Emma Speed Sampson was the new author taking over the "Edith Van Dyne" pseudonym. Sampson's contributions are noted in the list at the end of this article.

The formats of the Mary Louise books were uniform, bound in light blue cloth. The first two volumes (1916) had "Mary Louise" in white letters (outlined in dark blue), with "in the country" from the second title all in dark blue. Subsequent volumes had dark blue lettering only.

The various illustrators (frontispiece only) were as

follows: for Volumes 1 and 2, J. Allen St. John; for Volume 3, Anna B. Mueller; for Volume 4, Alice Carsey; and for Volume 5, Joseph W. Wyckoff. These were the five titles in the series written by Baum.

The Flying Girl Series (1911-12)

This two-volume series has proven very elusive to collectors, probably because two specialist fields (L. Frank Baum and aviation) are competing with the general series-book collector.

The books were published in 1911-12, and since no follow-ups were forthcoming, it is likely that poor sales doomed the series, although at least one subsequent reprint edition took place.

The first format of *The Flying Girl* (232 pages) and *The Flying Girl and her Chum* (313 pages) is identical: medium red, ribbed cloth, 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ by 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches, with an illustrated panel on the upper half of the front cover depicting, for Volume 1, the book's heroine, Orissa Kane, flying solo in her pusher biplane. For Volume 2, she rides side by side with her friend, Sybil Cumberford.

These cover illustrations are in off-white and black, incorporating the red cloth color into the design (the girls' hats and flying outfits). The title lettering on the front is also off-white, as is all the spine lettering. The plain spine uses the same Reilly & Britton format as that for the boys' books. At the bottom of the front cover of both books, in black letters, is *By Edith Van Dyne / Author of "Aunt Jane's Nieces."*

The artist for both Flying Girls books was Joseph Pierre Nuyttens, who provided four sepia-toned illustrations on glossy paper: a frontispiece along with three internal plates.

Later printings of this series have been observed with black lettering, again following the trend of publishers of that period to drop gold and/or white lettering as a cost measure.

Daring Twins Series (1911-12)

This two-volume series has the distinction of being the only traditional juvenile series Baum authored under his own name. Its target audience consists of older teen-age readers, with advertisements (see Page 19)

targeting both girls and boys. Today, they are generally considered girls' books (would a boy be caught dead reading *Phoebe Daring?*).

The cover for Volume 1, *The Daring Twins* (317 pages), is dark blue cloth with a full-cover illustration (and overprinted title) on the front showing the titlesister and brother, walking left to right, in off-white, blue and gray. The illustrator is Pauline M. Batchelder, with a frontispiece and three internals on glossy paper.

Volume 2, *Phoebe Daring* (298 pages), comes in gray cloth, with a full-cover illustration showing Phoebe writing at a desk, in off-white, gray and orange, with title lettering in black. The illustrator is Joseph Pierre Nuyttens, with a frontispiece and three internal plates on glossy paper.

The Reilly & Britton Co.

This Chicago publisher came into existence on March 1, 1904, when two employees of the George M. Hill Co. (also in Chicago), wanted to form their own publishing firm.

They were Frank Kennicott Reilly and Sumner S. Britton. Reilly had served as George M. Hill's production manager and Britton was secretary and head salesman. Instead of starting out from scratch, the two men took over the former Madison Book Company of Chicago and made it the Reilly & Britton Co., the newest resident of the city's famous Printer's Row.

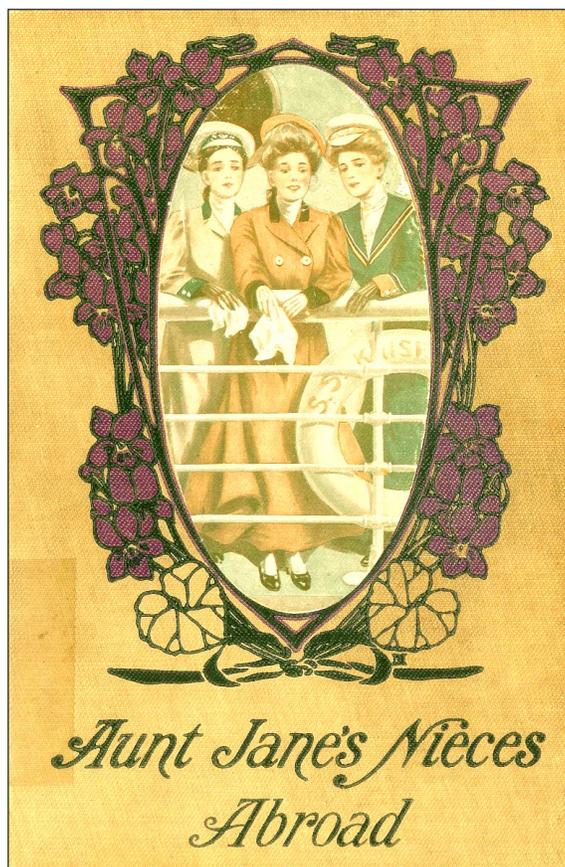
Britton was the new firm's president, while Reilly became secretary-treasurer.

Barely four months later, Reilly & Britton (likely because of George M. Hill's connection with L. Frank Baum) landed a

major contract when Baum's *Marvelous Land of Oz*, the first sequel to the famous *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (published in 1900 by Hill and illustrated by W.W. Denslow), was published by the firm as its initial offering. Artist John R. Neill also came aboard, illustrating the first of his many Oz and related books for Reilly & Britton and successor Reilly & Lee until his death in 1943.

In 1906, likely at the urging of the publisher because of the success of his Oz and other fantasy books, Baum's first juvenile adventure books were published: *Aunt*

(Continued on Page 18)



Aunt Jane's Nieces was Baum's most popular juvenile series, written as by "Edith Van Dyne."

Collecting Baum's series books

(Continued from Page 17)

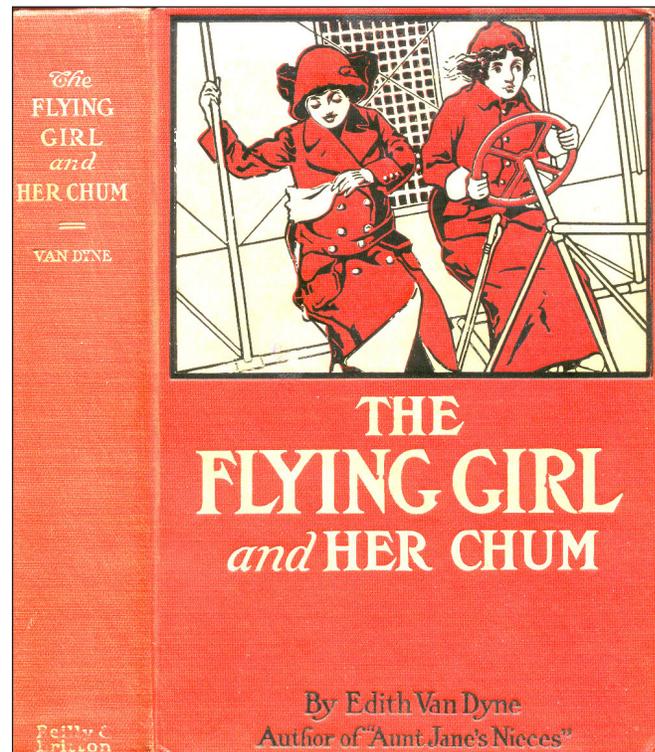
Jane's Nieces and *Aunt Jane's Nieces Abroad*; a stand-alone girls' book, *Annabel*; and for boys, *Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea*. These were all authored under pseudonyms, probably to keep the books distinct entities from the popular Oz franchise.

Despite the relative lack of sales of the series books, Baum's fantasy stories, Oz and non-Oz, for decades comprised the dominant business core for the Reilly & Britton Co. and its successor, Reilly & Lee.

Early on, other boys' series books joined the R&B lineup. These included *The Airship Boys Series* (1909-15) by H. L. Sayler; *The Aeroplane Boys Series* (1910-13) by "Ashton Lamar" (a Sayler pseudonym); *Boy Scouts of the Air Series* (1912-22), by "Gordon Stuart" (pseudonym for Sayler, George N. Madison and H. Bedford Jones); and the *Boys' Big Game Series* by "Elliott Whitney" (pseudonym for Sayler, George N. Madison, H. Bedford Jones and Evan R. Chesterman). All attractively produced, they are highly desired by collectors.

In 1916, Sumner N. Britton sold his interest in the company to William F. Lee. However, the corporate name remained Reilly & Britton until Jan. 11, 1919, when it officially became Reilly & Lee. This was just four months prior to Baum's death on May 6, 1919, one day following a stroke.

Reilly & Lee continued the Oz series under other authors, most prominently Ruth Plumly Thompson. The popularity of the Oz stories as reading material for young people (as well as prized collectibles for adults)

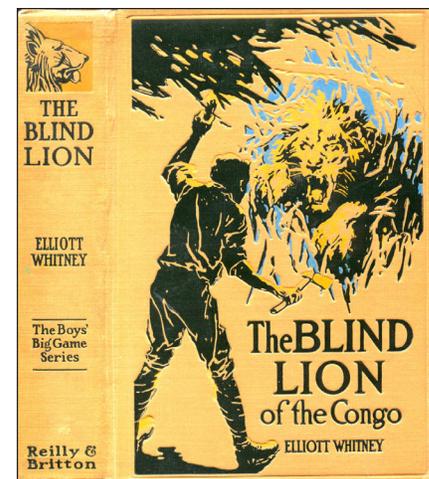
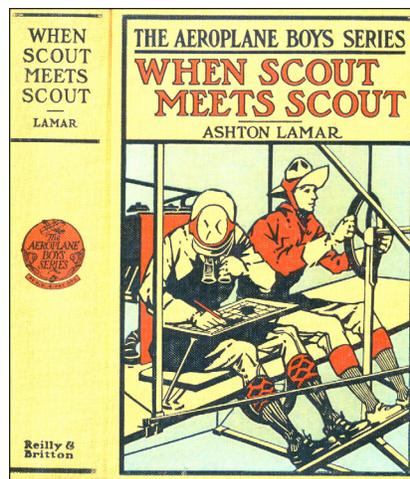
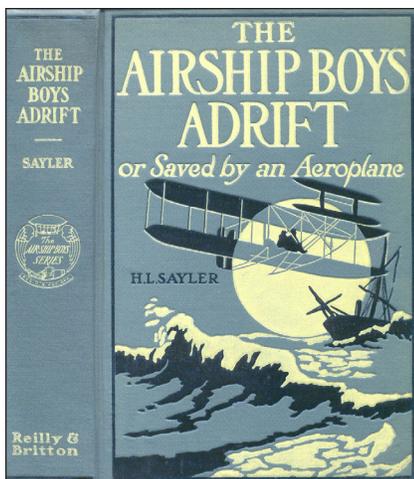


The two-volume *Flying Girl* series is prized by Baum collectors as well as aviation series specialists.

continues to this day. The series books, as we have discussed, are also collector's items, with some titles as elusive as rarer Alger first editions.

Note: If you are interested in sampling L. Frank Baum's boys' or girls' series books, several titles are available on-line as e-texts or inexpensive reprints.

Other Reilly & Britton boys' series



Although L. Frank Baum's Oz and other books were the financial lifeblood for Reilly & Britton, here are three examples of other highly collected boys' series produced by the Chicago publisher.

Series books for young people by L. Frank Baum (1856-1919)

Boys' books

Sam Steele Series, by "Capt. Hugh Fitzgerald"

(2 volumes, 1906-07)

1. *Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea** Reilly & Britton 1906
2. *Sam Steele's Adventures in Panama* Reilly & Britton 1907

**Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea* was reissued by Reilly & Britton in 1907 in a slightly larger format, the cover redesigned in the style of the second volume. Howard Heath created five illustrations for both books, printed in muted colors from original paintings. These were carried over for the first two volumes of *The Boy Fortune Hunters Series*, although later issues retained only the frontispiece, in black-and-white. Other artists were used for the final four volumes.

The Boy Fortune Hunters Series, by "Floyd Akers"

(6 volumes, 1908-11)

1. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Alaska* Reilly & Britton 1908
Originally published as *Sam Steele's Adventures on Land and Sea* (above)
2. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Panama* Reilly & Britton 1908
Originally published as *Sam Steele's Adventures in Panama* (above)
3. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Egypt* Reilly & Britton 1908
4. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in China* Reilly & Britton 1909
5. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in Yucatan* Reilly & Britton 1910
6. *The Boy Fortune Hunters in the South Seas* Reilly & Britton 1911

Girls' books

Aunt Jane's Nieces Series, by "Edith Van Dyne"

(10 volumes, 1906-15)

1. *Aunt Jane's Nieces* Reilly & Britton 1906
2. *Aunt Jane's Nieces Abroad* Reilly & Britton 1906
3. *Aunt Jane's Nieces at Millville* Reilly & Britton 1908
4. *Aunt Jane's Nieces at Work* Reilly & Britton 1909
5. *Aunt Jane's Nieces in Society* Reilly & Britton 1910
6. *Aunt Jane's Nieces and Uncle John* Reilly & Britton 1911
7. *Aunt Jane's Nieces on Vacation* Reilly & Britton 1912
8. *Aunt Jane's Nieces on the Ranch* Reilly & Britton 1913
9. *Aunt Jane's Nieces out West* Reilly & Britton 1914
10. *Aunt Jane's Nieces in the Red Cross** Reilly & Britton 1915

*Recopyrighted in 1918 under the same title, with L. Frank Baum writing four new additional chapters reflecting the United States' participation in World War I.

The Flying Girl Series, by "Edith Van Dyne"

(2 volumes, 1911-12)

1. *The Flying Girl* Reilly & Britton 1911
2. *The Flying Girl and Her Chum* Reilly & Britton 1912

The Daring Twins Series, by L. Frank Baum

(2 volumes, 1911-12)

1. *The Daring Twins* Reilly & Britton 1911
2. *Phoebe Daring* Reilly & Britton 1912

Books for Older Children by L. Frank Baum

The Daring Twins Series

By L. FRANK BAUM

IN writing "The Daring Twins Series" Mr. Baum yielded to the hundreds of requests that have been made of him by youngsters, both boys and girls, who in their early childhood read and loved his famous "Oz" books, to write a story for young folk of the ages between twelve and eighteen.

A story of the real life of real boys and girls in a real family under real conditions



Two Titles:

The Daring Twins Phoebe Daring

While preparing these books Mr. Baum lived with his characters. They have every element of the drama of life as it begins within the lives of children. The two stories are a mixture of the sublime and the ridiculous; the foibles and fancies of childhood, interspersed with humor and pathos.

Price, \$1.00 each

Publishers The Reilly & Britton Co. Chicago

The Reilly & Britton Co. promoted Baum's Oz books and juvenile series heavily, including this advertisement for the author's rather obscure teen-age series, *The Daring Twins*.

Mary Louise Series, by "Edith Van Dyne"

(5 volumes, 1916-19)

1. *Mary Louise* Reilly & Britton 1916
2. *Mary Louise in the Country* Reilly & Britton 1916
3. *Mary Louise Solves a Mystery* Reilly & Britton 1917
4. *Mary Louise and the Liberty Girls* Reilly & Britton 1918
5. *Mary Louise Adopts a Soldier* Reilly & Lee 1919

Note: After L. Frank Baum's death in 1919, this series was continued by Reilly & Lee under the "Edith Van Dyne" pseudonym, with the following three titles authored by Emma Speed Sampson. Sampson then wrote two additional books for Reilly & Lee featuring the Josie O'Gorman character, *Josie O'Gorman* (1923) and *Josie O'Gorman and the Meddlesome Major* (1924).

6. *Mary Louise at Dorfield* Reilly & Lee 1920
7. *Mary Louise Stands a Test* Reilly & Lee 1921
8. *Mary Louise and Josie O'Gorman* Reilly & Lee 1922

VIDEO REVIEW

The Hardy Boys, from "The Mickey Mouse Club." Nineteen-part serial, "The Mystery of the Applegate Treasure," airing in 1956-57. Starring Tim Considine as Frank Hardy and Tommy Kirk as Joe Hardy. Two-DVD "Walt Disney Treasures" set, which includes the complete Oct. 1, 1956, "Mickey Mouse Club" episode that introduced *The Hardy Boys*. Additional bonus materials, hosted by film historian Leonard Maltin, include a recent interview with Considine and Kirk, along with a feature titled "From Dixon to Disney."

Suggested retail price: \$32.99, but significant discounts are available at various Internet sites, including www.amazon.com and www.deepdiscount.com.

Reviewed by William R. Gowen (PF-706)

Walt Disney and the Stratemeyer Syndicate proved ideal partners for this production, which aired on the popular after-school "Mickey Mouse Club" television series from Oct. 1, 1956, into the following spring.

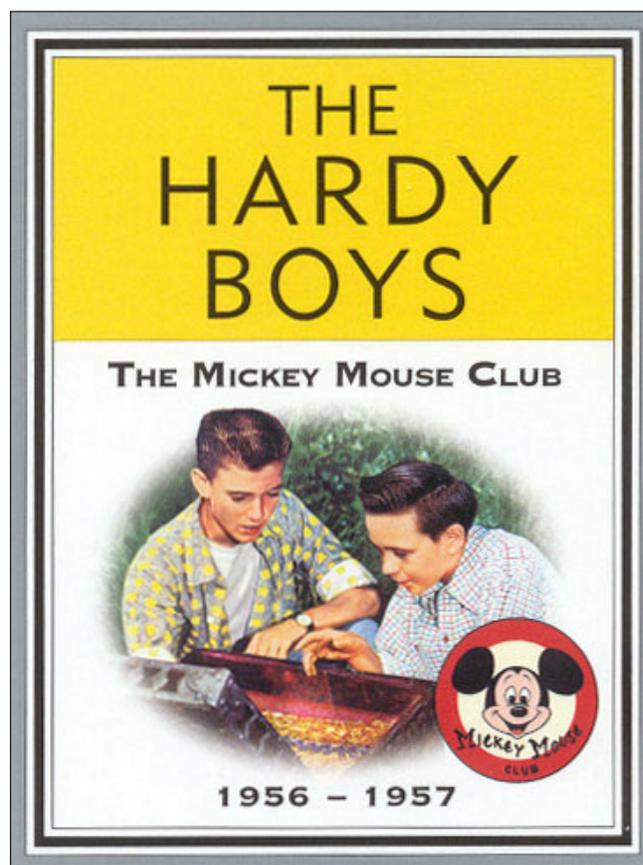
The serial, titled "The Mystery of the Applegate Treasure," is based on *The Tower Treasure*, the first book in the Hardy Boys Mystery Stories, published by Grosset & Dunlap in 1927. Harriet S. Adams, who succeeded her father, Edward Stratemeyer, as head of the Stratemeyer Syndicate following Edward's death in 1930, was not too enamored of Hollywood and what she regarded as its unwholesome influence on children.

But with Walt Disney's forays into television in the early 1950s and the opening of Disneyland, Harriet discovered a very un-Hollywoodish movie mogul, one who produced the kind of wholesome entertainment she admired.

"The Mickey Mouse Club" was a prime example, and when Disney went searching for a literary source from which to base a "Mickey Mouse Club" serial, The Hardy Boys Mystery Stories came to mind because of their positive reputation among young readers for nearly three decades.

A deal was soon struck, and the first foray of the Hardy Boys into television was born. The 1970s TV series, starring Shaun Cassidy and Parker Stevenson, is not comparable in quality to this first effort, filmed in glorious black-and-white on Stage 2 at Disney's Burbank, Calif., studio.

Considine had already been a hit with young viewers in Disney's "Spin and Marty," a western-based serial. He played Frank Hardy with a sense of coolness, the more analytical of the two young sleuths. Twelve years later, Considine became a popular trivia answer when he played the soldier slapped by George C. Scott in his Academy Award-winning title role in "Patton."



The role of Joe Hardy, the impulsive younger sibling, went to Tommy Kirk, who went on to star in the "Lassie" TV series. Kirk had to survive numerous screen tests, and in the bonus DVD interview (titled "The Hardy Boys Unmasked") he marvels at how he was able to emerge from such a competitive field of child actors.

What makes this serial so effective is the unforced sense of innocence that Considine and Kirk bring to their roles. Yes, this is a "whodunit" in which the viewer can easily figure out the identity of the bad guy way before the boys do, but the energy of the story never sags, even though the serial ran for many weeks.

Buena Vista Home Entertainment has done a marvelous job of editing together the episodes, smoothing out the "cliff-hanger" endings to make the film move along at a fast pace, with little repetition such as tiresome recaps of what has gone before.

Among the bonus materials is a very informative feature, "From Dixon to Disney," in which James D. Keeline (PF-898) joins another historian in discussing how the Stratemeyer Syndicate operated, background on original Hardy Boys author Leslie McFarlane, and how the story ended up being filmed by Disney.

For those of us who collect series books, it is fascinating to see two of our heroes come to life on the screen with such energy. This set is a real winner.