



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 LIV

JULY-AUGUST 2016

NUMBER 4



Tweaking an interest in Alger

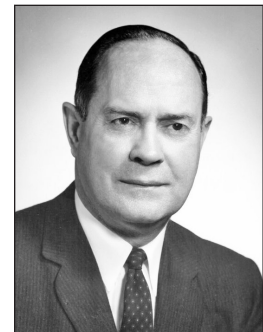
-- See Page 3

More 2016 convention photos!

-- Pages 10-11

*The Bob Wakefield Series
by Blaine and Dupont Miller*

-- See Page 12



Harold Blaine Miller

President's column

Not long ago, an H.A.S. friend referred me to an item at a Facebook site called "Collecting Vintage Children's Series Books." Our past president, treasurer, and upcoming convention host Barry Schoenborn sagely described this site as "a group with passion" and reported that at least eight of our members have joined. I think I've determined why this online group is successful and hope we can draw on its example.

It struck me that its success stems from the breadth of its scope: there are many of us out there who have a wide range of collecting interests but which all fall within the general realm of American juvenile literature of previous eras. This emphasis on breadth also explains the rise of engagement with the overall popular culture.

But if we limit our present focus to American juvenile literature of previous eras, we will find a host of folks whose interests often intersect with ours. We've seen this trend within our own membership. Many of us collect works of many other writers in the American juvenile field. Recall the offerings at our recent book sales and you will remember seeing volumes from a large number of different series by different authors.

One recent posting that turned up when I went to the Facebook site concerned Thornton W. Burgess. This rang a bell with me, as Burgess is one of those writers I've often intended to focus on when I finally get the time. During a long life (1874-1965) Burgess wrote about nature and primarily animals for children in more than 170 books and 15,000 daily newspaper stories.

He personified his animal characters, making up names like Reddy Fox and Jimmy Skunk as well as borrowing Beatrix Potter's already hugely well-known Peter Rabbit. Today, these kinds of stories are criticized as presenting a cozy view of nature and imputing human concepts of behavior to species that better depend on their own instincts for survival. Thus, I don't expect that "animal rights" people would regard Burgess very fondly despite his outstanding credentials as a conservationist.

And yet ... my reading Burgess's books definitely helped give me a love of nature and wildlife that I cherish. As was likely what happened to many other young readers, I moved past the "little human" personalities Burgess imparted to his characters toward an appreciation of the need for conservation of wild and natural places as well as the sheer joy of walking through a local meadow

(Continued on Page 7)

HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr. and to encourage the spirit of Strive & Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes. Our members conduct research and provide scholarship on the life of Horatio Alger, Jr., his works and influence on the culture of America. The Horatio Alger Society embraces collectors and enthusiasts of all juvenile literature, including boys' and girls' series books, pulps and dime novels.

OFFICERS

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| RICHARD B. HOFFMAN | PRESIDENT |
| CARY STERNICK | VICE-PRESIDENT |
| BARRY SCHOENBORN | TREASURER |
| ROBERT G. SIPES | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR |

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| MARLENA E. BREMSETH | (2017) DIRECTOR |
| JAMES KING | (2017) DIRECTOR |
| JOSEPH STRANG | (2017) DIRECTOR |
| ARTHUR W. SMITTER | (2018) DIRECTOR |
| JACK BALES | (2018) DIRECTOR |
| VACANT | (2018) DIRECTOR |
| ROBERT D. EASTLACK | (2019) DIRECTOR |
| CAROL NACKENOFF | (2019) DIRECTOR |
| ROBERT PETITTO | (2019) DIRECTOR |
| LEO "BOB" BENNETT (1932-2004) | EMERITUS |
| RALPH D. GARDNER (1923-2005) | EMERITUS |

PAST PRESIDENTS

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| KENNETH B. BUTLER | ROBERT E. KASPER |
| JACK ROW | MARY ANN DITCH |
| DR. MAX GOLDBERG | JOHN CADICK |
| STEVE PRESS | CARL T. HARTMANN |
| JUDSON S. BERRY | ARTHUR P. YOUNG |
| LEO "BOB" BENNETT | CAROL NACKENOFF |
| JERRY B. FRIEDLAND | ROBERT G. HUBER |
| BRADFORD S. CHASE | ROBERT R. ROUTHIER |
| ROBERT E. SAWYER | MICHAEL MORLEY |
| EUGENE H. HAFNER | LAWRENCE R. RICE |
| D. JAMES RYBERG | ROBERT G. SIPES |
| GEORGE W. OWENS | BARRY SCHOENBORN |
| WILLIAM R. WRIGHT | JEFF LOONEY |

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, 1004 School St., Shelbyville, IN 46176**.

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.horatioalgersociety.net.

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, 1004 School St., Shelbyville, IN 46176.

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 advertisements 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

Tweaking an interest in Alger

By Brad Chase (PF-412)

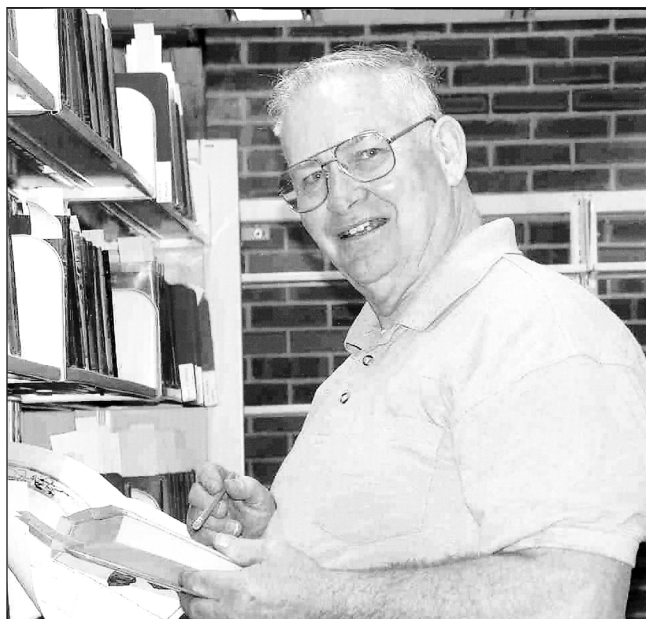
I continue to be amazed at the number of different types of Alger collections one can assemble. When I'm away from my Alger books for a while, I often return with fresh eyes finding new things that might be fun to do. As a result, my overall Alger collection is now home to a host of different yet interesting related Alger items. Most of us collect titles and different formats routinely, as well as a few short stories, different publisher covers, first editions, dust jackets and so on. My particular weakness is that frequently I discover a variation to one of my regular Alger interests that pushes me to excitedly look for new things I'd previously passed on or left for someone else to collect.

Obviously, this affinity for developing different side Alger collections is not unique with me, to say the least. For example, for years one of my good Alger friends acquired different publisher editions of just ONE Alger title (*Phil, The Fiddler*). Eventually he accumulated a cluster of distinctive "Phils" and displayed them on one long shelf in his book room. It's a very impressive presentation with different formats of that title carrying distinctively different colors and cover pictorials on Alger books of varying sizes.

At one point he even took apart a couple of old battered Donohue "Phil" copies and pasted the entire text, in order, on a nearby wall. I could actually stand in one place and read the entire story starting with the first page of Chapter I in the upper left hand corner of the wall and ending on the last page of Chapter 26 at the lower right. What an absolute delight! I certainly have applauded his ingenuity and fully appreciate his zest for finding new ways of having fun with Alger.

Another friend has collected all the Alger titles of the Standing Boy format produced by the John C. Winston Company of Philadelphia, along with examples of Alger books offered by many of the hard-to-find or unusual Alger publishers. Also, I remember that years ago late Partic'lar Friend Paul Miller of our Society was renowned for collecting Alger stories that appeared in paper form like paperbacks or stories appearing in many of the older magazines. I don't recall seeing many Alger hard covers in Paul's collection, and certainly such was not his main interest.

Another collector was known for obtaining as many copies as he could find, duplicates (in many different colors and all) of Alger's biography of James A. Garfield titled *From Canal Boy To President*. Between you and



Brad Chase at the Horatio Alger repository library at Northern Illinois University, the new home to several of his extensive Alger publisher collections.

me, I think his intention was to capture the market for that specific title, but I'm not sure. He really seemed to enjoy this passion and that's what matters most in my way of thinking! All of these friends sure have had a whale of a time collecting their specialties over the years while, at the same time, maintaining a changing and fresh interest in building their substantial and unique Alger collections.

There is no doubt in my mind that this tweaking of one's basic collection not only makes Alger collecting more interesting, but increases the thirst and challenge of collecting as well. Each time I enter a used bookstore or explore what is newly offered on the internet, my heart beats just a little bit faster anticipating what I might find that will fit nicely with whatever new (or old!) Alger interest I've developed.

For example, a year or so ago I changed my relatively passive interest in collecting different Alger dust jackets produced by every Alger publisher to those offered by just one publisher: M.A. Donohue & Company. (This guy must be crazy, I hear you mumbling. Why in the world would anyone purposely and seriously collect Donohue Alger books?) Well, to me, the kick of finding something new is real and rewarding. I absolutely love

(Continued on Page 5)

Editor's notebook

I took special interest in David Kirk Vaughan's article in this issue concerning the Bob Wakefield Series by Harold Blaine Miller because of Miller's service in the U.S. Navy as a public relations officer during World War II, including his assignment as head of the Navy's Office of Public Information from June 1945 until his retirement from military service in late 1946.

I served for three years as a public affairs officer in the Navy during the Vietnam War period, including a one-year assignment with the Naval Support Activity in Da Nang in 1968-69, along with 17 years as a Navy Reserve public affairs specialist. While in Vietnam, I was a media escort officer for print, radio or television correspondents traveling aboard Navy ships and riverine boats in the I Corps (northern provinces) of Vietnam. Department of Defense policy mandated all members of the media traveling "in country" be accompanied by a military officer of the appropriate service branch.

It is unlikely that I (or my fellow public affairs officers) would have had that assignment if not for the foundation laid by "Min" Miller (as he preferred to be called) and his colleagues during World War II. Early in the war, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz realized the importance of having a public information specialist on his Pacific Fleet staff in Hawaii, and he chose Miller for the job. Soon, the Navy Office of Public Relations was established in Washington, D.C. In June 1945, it was renamed the Office of Public Information, and at age 42, Miller was promoted to Rear Admiral and named Director [See story on Page 16].

The work of Miller and his wartime colleagues led to the further refinement of the office in subsequent years, with the Navy naming 40 specialists in 1947 to become the first "selected" Public Affairs Officers with the designator code of 1650. The office was renamed the Navy Office of Information in 1950, and from then until 1971, a regular line officer (designator code 1100) held the title of Chief of Information. In 1971, Rear Admiral William Thompson became the first 1650 designee to hold the office.

Same series, new title: On this page are shown covers for one of A.L. Burt's "sixty cent" series produced in the 1913-15 period. It is by "Harry Gordon," a *nom de plume* for Alfred B. Tozer (1847-1916), who was editor of the **Chicago Ledger** and who also wrote several other series books under pseudonyms.

A very interesting aspect of this eight-volume series is



that it had two formal titles: **The Six River Motor Boys Series** for the first six books published in 1913, and **The River Motor Boat Boys Series** for final two titles (plus reprints of the first six) in 1914-1915. The books each feature a prominent river in the title, as follows: Amazon, Columbia, Colorado, Mississippi, St. Lawrence and Ohio (all 1913); Yukon (1914) and Rio Grande (1915).

Why was the series title changed from "Six River Motor Boys" to "River Motor Boat Boys?" One possibility is confusion by potential readers with the Stratemeyer Syndicate's **Motor Boys Series**. Adding the word "Boat" acted as both a clarification and descriptive detail to the books' waterborne adventures. It's just another example of what makes our hobby so fascinating.

MEMBERSHIP

Change of address

Gerald B. Friedland (PF-376)
11269 Piping Rock Drive
Boynton Beach, FL 33437
(561) 734-1299

Tweaking an interest in Alger

(Continued from Page 3)

it and, by the way, it has recently upped my interest in participating on eBay and in the convention auctions as well!

At the Horatio Alger Society convention about a year ago, I scoffed up four Donohue jackets I didn't have that now sit proudly with their siblings on one of my shelves. They are now part of an almost completed set of Alger Donohues (one format), all having wrappers as originally issued, and of course each has a different title. It certainly was exciting for me to slide these new gems snugly next to those I had already owned; one more to find and the entire 12-book format will be complete in jacket.

I am comforted now that this Donohue set, when completed, will represent the first accumulation of those Donohue books since they were originally published together in wrappers almost 90 years ago. Just think, they are a set again most likely for the first time in almost a century; they sit on my shelf, under my ownership as part of my Alger collection. I did it and that makes it really special. That, my friend, is collecting at its best!

At some point along the way I also got into collecting newsboy figurines and statuettes and am now amazed to find that I have about 50 of them. They all depict (what I like to believe is) our friend Dan, the newsboy, hawking newspapers. Incidentally, I may display this figurine collection at some point fairly soon in several glass cases at our local library, just to let people in my town know somebody local is interested in paperboys. This display will, of course, also carry a brief note (in large sized print) highlighting my interest in collecting books by Horatio Alger, Jr.

Maybe this will cause someone to go digging through their old books that lie forgotten (and unwanted) in his or her attic that once belonged to a close relative. Perhaps then these attic searchers will give me a call and I will make a bee-line to their home and possibly come up with a real Alger gem or two. As always (besides making proper payment, of course!) I will point out to them that they should be proud of themselves for this reuse of such old artifacts (like their Alger books) is the ultimate in our modern-day recycling efforts!

The most recent adventure in tweaking my Alger interest spurred me to re-enter the world of first-day Alger stamp covers. I've had a dormant interest in the Alger commemorative stamp over the years, having



Miniature newsboy figurines are suggested by Brad Chase as an enjoyable collecting sideline for his fellow Horatio Alger Society members.

initially participated in the first-day ceremony for the 20-cent Alger commemorative stamp at Willow Grove, Pennsylvania in 1982. At the suggestion of editor Bill Gowen during the 2012 H.A.S. convention in DeKalb, Illinois, I wrote a 30th anniversary retrospective on how the Horatio Alger Society was one of the major catalysts for the Alger stamp's creation. That article appeared in the July-August 2012 *Newsboy*.

Recently, my interest in the stamp was reignited while randomly sifting through some stray Alger items sitting on a back bookshelf. There, I found a fairly sizeable packet of different first-day Alger stamp envelopes that I had accumulated over the years thinking that sometime I might do something with them. I went through each one and found there were well over two dozen that differed from each other, plus many duplicates. They all celebrated Alger's 150th birthday and all seemed to be valid first day of issue covers. Many had a bust image of Alger or other illustrations and/or wording on the front of the envelope.

This caused me to wonder just how many different first-day issue covers of the Alger stamp had actually (and originally) been developed? I thought it might be fun to find out. (Here I go again, pursuing a new Alger related interest and likely another major collecting tweak!)

After spending some time on the Internet, I had copied images of about 50 different first day of issue Alger covers. These, added to the actual stamped envelopes I had found on my shelf, filled a notebook that I labeled "Alger Stamp Covers." Now, to be precise here, I should differentiate here between a first day of issue cover and its component cachet to prevent confusion in terminology. As defined in a *Newsboy* article, a first day of issue

(Continued on Page 6)

Tweaking an interest in Alger

(Continued from Page 5)

cover (envelope or card) is made up of two items: a cachet (illustrated or printed information) and a cancelled stamp showing the first day a stamp is good as postage (Williman, Page 5, of the article cited below).

Recall that in the late 1970s and early 1980s articles appeared in *Newsboy* and elsewhere promoting the desirability of having a commemorative stamp that would recognize and honor Horatio Alger and his writing accomplishments. As we know, this happened, and it resulted in the first day issue of the Alger commemorative stamp becoming a reality on April 30, 1982. Its introduction was a big feather in our Society's cap, as it was the official sponsor for the U.S. Postal Service, along with the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans.

The first day of issue ceremony (held during our annual convention, by the way) and all the surrounding brouhaha in Pennsylvania were fully chronicled here in *Newsboy* at the time and revisited in my 2012 article noted above.

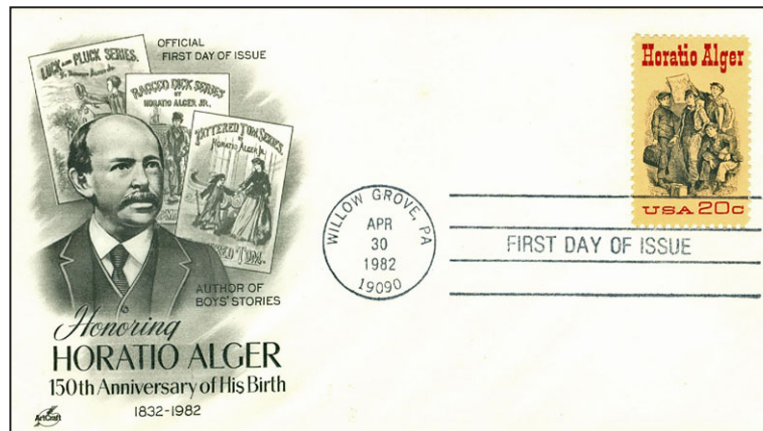
A couple of years following the ceremony, the May-June 1984 *Newsboy* carried three articles in which former editor Jack Bales, his twin brother Dick and H.A.S. member and noted stamp collector Bob Williman of Bowie, Maryland, discussed and showed the results of their extensive efforts to find first day of issue covers of the Alger stamp. (*Newsboy*, Volume XXII, May-June 1984, Numbers 11 & 12).

Jack, Dick and Bob had contacted as many relevant stamp companies as they could find to determine the commemorative Alger stamp production activity of each. That inquiry, plus the results from a broad advertising campaign, provided the background for an extensive *Newsboy* bibliographical article ("Horatio Alger First Day Covers — A Summing Up" *Newsboy*, May-June 1984) that described and showed 78 Alger first day of

issue covers. A recent email from Jack to me updated this figure, indicating that he and Dick ultimately located 132 first-day Alger covers.

I understand that the binder containing these covers now resides at the Horatio Alger repository at Northern Illinois University. You can be sure that my trip schedule in the next few years will include a visit to NIU to add to my evolving Alger stamp compendium of first-day covers. A review of these *Newsboy* articles was enlightening and instructive as a bibliography of the accumulated covers and their component cachets known to that point. Adding them to what I had initially found, gave me a total of 90 different covers. That means I have a lot more commemorative stamp examples to find.

There obviously was a whole world out there in



One of more than 130 known first day of issue covers for the 1982 Horatio Alger commemorative stamp.

1982 that created different cover cachets for first day of issue Alger stamps, including several illustrated covers that carried the official endorsement of the Horatio Alger Society and Horatio Alger Association of Famous Americans. At least two postal cards were also issued commemorating Alger's 150th birthday. I searched for a central source that might provide a formal

bibliography of all the first day of issue Horatio Alger products that had ever been produced. One may exist, but I didn't find it.

The Bales-Williman 1984 articles and Jack's subsequent work in putting together the first day of issue binder now housed at NIU, seem to be the most complete accounting so far. I intend to keep looking for new examples of Alger stamp covers on the internet, at NIU (when I get there) and elsewhere, to complete my notebook as part of this latest tweaking effort of mine.

To be sure, newsboy statuettes, Donohue dust jackets and commemorative stamps are just a few of my recent and evolving Alger collecting interests. And I know it is inevitable that one day soon I will be rushing off in a different discovery direction pursuing yet another Alger-related interest in order to tweak additional parts of my collection. I'm confident, however, that such an effort will make my heart beat a little bit faster as I then wallow in uncovering new and exciting things in my ever expanding world of Horatio Alger, Jr.

San Diego set to host 2017 PCA conference

By James D. Keeline (PF-898)

The Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association national conference will be returning to San Diego, California, April 12-15, 2017, the Wednesday through Saturday before Easter. We have a section devoted to dime novels, series books, and related literature, for which I serve as Area Chair. Each year, we usually have 12 to 18 presentations, each 15-20 minutes in length and often with computer slides.

Many of the articles appearing in **Newsboy**, the **Dime Novel Round-Up** and **Yellowback Library** over the years were first presented at these conferences. The same can be said of pieces in the anthology collections such as those by Jack Dizer (PF-511).

Most likely, we will have our presentations on Wednesday, April 12, 2017, the first day of the conference. For those presenters who arrive early enough, my wife, Kim, and I will invite them to our home for dinner, tours of our collections, and perhaps an opportunity to

shop among our inventory of series books.

San Diego is a great place to visit and we have a track record for very nice weather. The group which presents and listens is very friendly. Presentations may be academic in nature or more general. Often, it works to focus on specific events or series or an author, so that it can be presented well in a mere 15-20 minutes. Most presenters have longer versions that they publish in the magazines or elsewhere.

I have been attending the PCA/ACA conference annually since 1992 and presenting nearly every year. I've made many good friends over the years and think you will, too, if you care to join us.

Paper proposals must be made this summer, with a deadline of October 1, at <https://conference.pcaaca.org>

If you have questions about the conference in general or possible presentation topics, please contact me at 5707 Spartan Drive, San Diego, CA 92115, or by email at james@keeline.com

President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

or the towering grandeur of a national park.

Unlike Alger, Burgess's books were regarded as "respectable" enough to be available at our excellent public libraries. So, much to my parents' pleasure, I could satisfy my craving for his books without the need to purchase them. This, however, caused plenty of dismay when I lost track of the many borrowed books and overdue notices began arriving. But Burgess in his own way (and his being born in 1874) sounds like a kind of Alger hero: "Like many enterprising youths of his time and place, Burgess left his hometown at age 18, he for Boston and then Springfield, Mass., where he soon rose from office boy to editor and reporter at the Phelps Publishing Company, then owner of *Good Housekeeping*," reported a **New York Times** writer who visited a museum established by Burgess's hometown, Sandwich, Mass.

As with the reforms in child welfare that some of Alger's work (such as *Phil, the Fiddler*) promoted, Burgess also encouraged his readers to "join in the movement to protect endangered wildlife and the environment. For example, his stories of *The Adventures of Mrs. Quack*, including 'Mrs. Quack and the Terrible, Terrible Guns,' helped to bring about passage of the first Migratory Waterfowl Act in 1916."

There's a pertinent lesson we can draw from what hap-

pened after Burgess's death. Although the Nature Center the Sandwich citizens established in his memory is still operating, the museum at Burgess's house was forced to close sometime after 1990, when it was featured in **The New York Times'** travel section. Burgess had shown himself to be quite adaptable, appearing on a regular radio program from 1925 onward. But eventually the newspapers that carried his columns stopped running old ones after his death. (The newspapers often didn't last much longer — I read his stories in the old **New York World-Telegram & Sun**.)

My conclusion is that there wasn't enough sustained interest in one specialized author of juveniles to support the museum's continued operation. This example provides plenty of reasons, then, for us to broaden our own scope for the Horatio Alger Society. Our members have wider collecting interests within the American juvenile field; our book sales have stirred more interest as more of the sellers have featured the works of many other authors — especially series authors — in the juvenile realm. Now we need to get the word out to those who frequent the sites devoted to American juvenile literature.

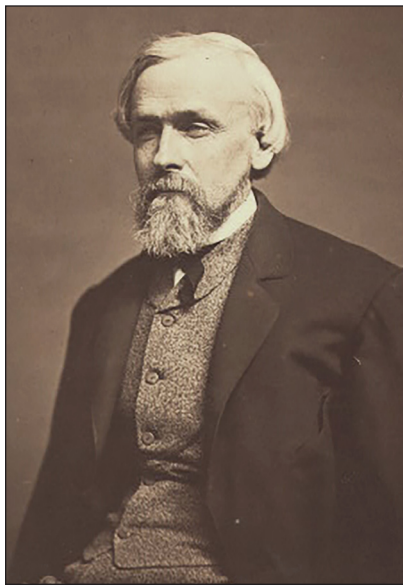
Your Partic'lar Friend,
Richard Hoffman (PF-570)
2925 28th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
Phone: (202) 667-6481
Email: derhoff@yahoo.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bill:

The January-February 1977 issue of *Newsboy* (Vol. 15, No. 6-7) has the reference by Gary Scharnhorst about this 1866 Alger letter at New York Public Library that mentioned a biographical dictionary and included the Alger poems in his hand that were published in *Harper's Weekly*. In that issue, most of Gary's emphasis is on the poem discoveries (including "Carving a Name") and not the biographical dictionary, which is interesting on its own account. [Ed.: The letter, without the appended poems, is reproduced on Page 9].

Alger's correspondent, Evert Augustus Duyckinck (1816-1878), was the editor of the *Supplement to the Cyclopaedia of American Literature* (Charles Scribner and Company, 1866). It was an early biographical dictionary.

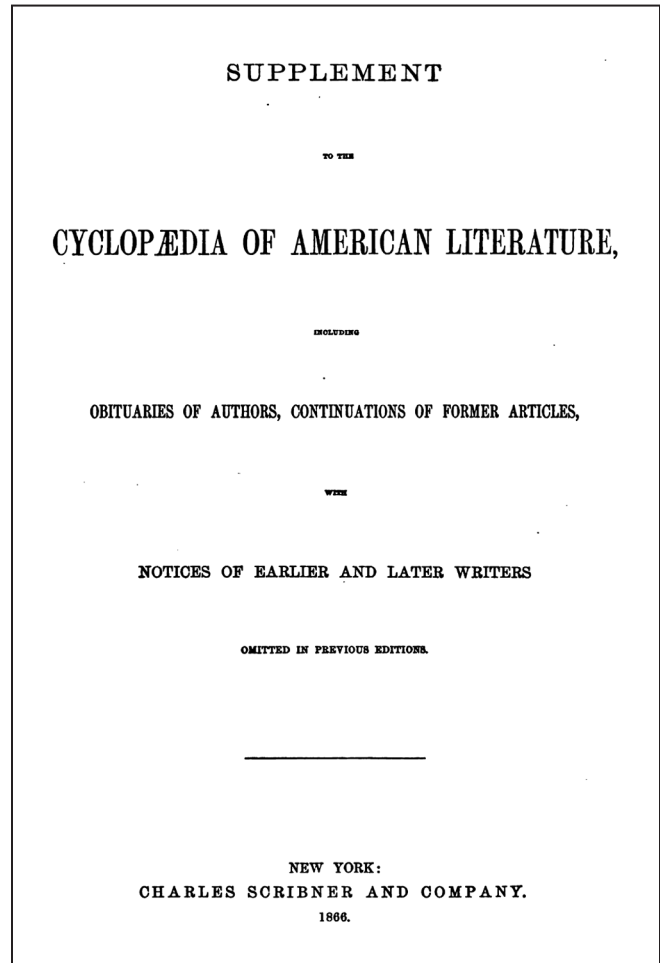


Evert A. Duyckinck (1816-1878)

Prior to this, he and his brother, George Long Duyckinck (1823-1863), had purchased one of the early U.S. literary magazines, *Literary World*, in 1853. In so doing, they had communication with many writers of note in the mid-19th Century. This also led to them writing the original *Cyclopaedia of American Literature* in 1855. The 1866 supplement was seen as an update to add to the existing entries and new authors (including Horatio Alger) who came to Evert's attention. [The biographical entry on Horatio Alger is shown on Page 9].

The Duyckinck archive of letters and other papers were donated to the Lenox Library in 1890. This included some 15,000 early books. The Lenox Library later became part of the New York Public Library. The June-July 1982 issue of *Newsboy* (Vol. 20, No. 11-12) has the other references to Duyckinck in an article by Gilbert K. Westgard II about *Nothing to Wear* and how it came to be published. I have found no other references to this correspondent's name in the *Newsboy* issues available to me in PDF, so I think that the letter

has not been published for the readers of *Newsboy*. This is the transcription with a couple words I can't make out clearly:



Brewster, Mass. 23d Jany.

My dear sir,

I am very much obliged to you for introducing me to your Cyclopaedia, [o... th...] a copy of the new edition. I hope in course of time to be more worthy of such mention. The title of my last book (Loring, 1865) should be "Paul Prescott's Charge." — I bring out in the spring (Loring publisher) a novel under the title, "Helen Ford," and in the fall a new boy's book, not yet commenced.

I observe, by the way, some omissions, as for example J.T. Trowbridge (Paul Creyton) author of "Father Brighthopes," "Iron Thorpe," "Neighbor Jackwood," "Cudjo's Cave," "The Three Scouts," and several other successful books, and at present one of the editors of Our Young Folks.

Also William T. Adams (Oliver Optic), editor of The

(Continued on Page 10)

DUYSKINCK COLLECTION

Brewster, Mass. 23^d Febr.

My dear Sir,

I am very much obliged to you for introducing me into your Cyclopaedia, & I have a copy of the new edition. I hope in course of time to be more worthy of such mention - The title of my last book (Loring, 1865) should be "Paul Prescott's Charge." - I bring out in the Spring (Loring, publisher) a novel, under the title, "Helen Ford," and in the fall a new boy's book, not yet commenced. I observe, by the way, some omissions, as for example J. J. Throbridge (Paul Creyton) author of "Father

Brighthope," "Frankthorpe," "High-bur Oakwood," "Ludjo's Cabin," "The Three Scouts," and several other books, and at present one of the editors of our Young Folks -

Also William J. Adams (Alvion Optic) Editor of the Student & Schoolmate, and author of some twenty popular boys' books -

Also Gail Hamilton (miss Abigail Dodge) for whom Dickens and Field have published several books, among them "Sketches & Skirmishes" and "A New Atmosphere."

I know that you could never intend to include the every writer who has inflicted an obscure

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

The Rev. Horatio Alger, Jr., was born in that part of Chelsea, Mass., since incorporated as the town of North Chelsea, January 13, 1834, and graduated at Harvard College in 1852. From 1852 to 1857 he was occupied in teaching, or in writing for the Boston and New York press. In 1860, he completed a three years course at the Cambridge Theological School, defraying his expenses in the mean time by contributions to a variety of periodicals. He spent the greater part of the year succeeding his graduation at the Theological School, in a European tour. From 1861 to 1864, he was established at Cambridge as a private instructor. On the 8th of December, 1864, he was ordained over the Unitarian Church at Brewster, Mass.

His publications in book form are: *Bertha's Christmas Vision, an Autumn Sheaf* (Boston, Brown & Bazin, 1855); *Nothing to Do, a Tilt at our Best Society*, a Poem (Boston, James French & Co., 1857); *Frank's Campaign; or, What Boys can Do* (Boston, A. K. Loring, 1864); *Paul Preston's Charge* (1865).

He wrote verses before he entered college, was appointed to deliver one or two anniversary poems at college, and has since published a considerable number of his poems, which have appeared in *Harper's Weekly*, and other periodicals.

book ^{upon} the world, since that would swell your volumes to mammoth proportions, but these three and some others you doubtless intend to include -

Let me congratulate you on the successful launch of your two volumes - I can imagine the immense amount of labor necessarily expended upon them -

Truly & gratefully, Yrs.
Horatio Alger, Jr.

Evart A. Duyckinck, Esq.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Continued from Page 8)

Student and Schoolmate, and author of some twenty popular boys' books.

Also Gail Hamilton (Mary Abigail Dodge) for whom Ticknor and Fields have published several books, among them "Sketches and Skirmishes" and "A New Atmosphere."

I know that you could never intend to include every writer who has inflicted an obscure book upon the world, since that would swell your volumes to mammoth proportions, but these three and some others you doubtless intended to include.

Let me congratulate you on the successful launch of your two volumes. I can imagine the immense amount of labor necessary expended upon them.

Truly and gratefully yrs.

Horatio Alger, Jr.

Evert A. Duyckinck, Esq.

It is reasonable to guess that the forthcoming boys' book mentioned in the letter was *Ragged Dick*. The timing fits. Although Alger makes corrections for the spelling of his titles and authors who might be included in his listing, he does not correct the *Cyclopaedia's* noting of his birth year as 1834 instead of 1832, perhaps one of the earliest sources of this error which was perpetuated over the years.

- I was surprised and humbled to receive the **Newsboy Award** from the Horatio Alger Society for my three-part article on the 11 Stratemeyer-Alger completions. It is one of those topics that we all knew something about, but gathering the different resources helped to complete the picture and clear up some assumptions that have been made in the past. I think additional research is possible, especially if some of the known and unknown source stories and plays for the so-called "completions" can be discovered.

When I entered the series book community in 1988 at the time I began to manage *The Prince* and the *Pauper Collectible Children's Books* in San Diego, I had the chance to "meet" by articles, letters, and phone so many people who were unfailingly patient and helpful in sharing information about the history of series books. Guided by this example, I've always felt it important to share what I have learned with others.

Sincerely,
James D. Keeline (PF-898)
5707 Spartan Drive
San Diego, CA 92115
Email: james@keeline.com



Editor Bill Gowen announces the 2015 Newsboy Award, presented to James D. Keeline. Photo by Barry Schoenborn



Brad Chase receives the Richard Seddon Award from the previous year's recipient, Bill Gowen.

Photo by Barry Schoenborn

'Back home again in Indiana' flashback



Bob Huber, right, accepts the 2015 Carl Hartmann Luck and Pluck Award from Richard Hoffman.

Photo by Bill Gowen



James King and Keith Thompson relax in the Holiday Inn Express guests' lounge.

Photo by Bill Gowen



Rob Kasper and Bob Eastlack enjoy lunch in the hotel lounge prior to the annual H.A.S. auction.

Photo by Bill Gowen



Wendy Sipes (with daughter Sofia) receives the 2015 President's Award from outgoing president Jeff Looney.

Photo by Barry Schoenborn

The Bob Wakefield Series by Blaine and Dupont Miller

By David Kirk Vaughan (PF-832)

One of the best and most authentic series having to do with naval aviation is the Bob Wakefield Series. The books in this series were written by a husband and wife writing team, Blaine Miller, and his wife, Jean Dupont Miller. Blaine Miller was a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and a naval flying officer. His wife was a professional writer.

There were three titles, published by Dodd, Mead and Company from 1936 through 1940. The titles are *Bob Wakefield, Naval Aviator* (1936); *Bob Wakefield, Naval Inspector* (1937); and *Bob Wakefield's Flight Log* (1940). In general, these books are characterized by authentic naval flying procedures and equipment, fast-moving action, and a thorough knowledge of naval operations, due primarily to the extensive operational experience of the primary author, Harold Blaine Miller.

A native of Newton, Iowa, who grew up in Los Angeles, Miller graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in June 1924 and served on the battleship *USS California* for two years until he entered naval flight training at Pensacola, Florida. He completed his flight training in November 1926 and served as a flying officer with the battleship *USS West Virginia* and then the Navy's first aircraft carrier, the *USS Langley*.

From 1930 to 1932, Miller was a flight instructor at Pensacola. He then transferred to lighter-than-air aviation and was assigned to the airship *Akron* from 1933 through 1935, flying a variety of aircraft attached to duty with the *Akron*. He was on board the Navy's sister airship *Macon* when it was lost in a storm off the coast of California in 1935. He then flew with Scouting Squadron 9 and then was assigned to Patrol Squadron 16, which was attached to the seaplane tender *Thrush* and then the *Teal*, where he flew in the Alaskan area. In 1939 he was reassigned to Patrol Squadron 33, which was operating in the Central American and Caribbean areas. All of these locales are featured in the Bob Wakefield Series.

Prior to the start of World War II, Harold Blaine Miller served on board the aircraft carrier *USS Saratoga* and destroyer *USS Hulbert*. Miller (he preferred to be called "Min") had a wealth of flying and operational experience to draw from when he wrote his *Bob Wakefield*



The first of three titles in Blaine and Dupont Miller's Bob Wakefield Series published by Dodd, Mead.

stories. This authentic background is immediately evident in the stories, most of which were published in *Boy's Life* magazine in the 1930s. His knowledge of naval operations and flying procedures informs the stories, giving them the ring of authentic experience.

The first title in the series, *Bob Wakefield, Naval Aviator*, consists of ten stories that show the progress of Bob Wakefield from seaman to airman. Each story is prefaced by a page showing a set of orders describing Bob Wakefield's next assignment.

In the first story, Bob Wakefield unsuccessfully attempts to become a naval pilot at Pensacola. But instead of being successful in this effort, he is "washed out" of training after he puts his aircraft into an inverted spin and bails out. He is then assigned to duty as the skipper of the tug *Pelican*, whose job is to tow surface targets which other ships use for gunnery practice. When an observation aircraft attached to one of the ships is forced to land near the target area, Bob dives into the water and swims to the disabled aircraft, where he is

able to repair the aircraft and fly it to safety before the aircraft is sunk by shellfire, thus saving the lives of the two incapacitated crewmembers on the aircraft. For this feat he is rewarded by being allowed to re-enter flight training, and this time, having re-gained his self-confidence, he succeeds.

In fact, while Miller was an instructor at Pensacola, he received a navy commendation for aiding in the rescue of a pilot who had crashed his seaplane in the water. In the next story, Bob, now assigned to the *USS Constellation*, a fictional Navy aircraft carrier, guides his more experienced squadron-mates back to the carrier when they are separated from the ship by a storm. In this story, he meets Ajax, his aircraft mechanic, a reliable and stalwart enlisted man who often flies with Bob and shares his aerial adventures.

Wakefield is then assigned to the U.S. Navy's airship program at Lakehurst, New Jersey; he is assigned to fly an escort aircraft designed to hook onto the airship *Miami*. This episode is based on an actual practice, in which a small biplane, the Sparrowhawk, was able to hook onto an attachment mechanism on an airship to provide defensive capability.

First, Bob proves his ability to operate a free-floating balloon in bad weather and then flies important messages to the airship *Miami* at night. After the airship *Miami* is lost in a storm, he is reassigned to the cruiser *USS Denver*, whose crusty old commanding officer, Captain Ramrod Rumble, initially expresses his disapproval of aviators and aviation as not being a true part of the navy. [Ed. note: this mirrored the actual "brown shoe" (aviators) vs. "black shoe" (shipboard sailors) rivalry within the Navy at the time].

However, when Bob's flying skills help the ship win a gunnery contest, the skipper begins to appreciate the usefulness of aviators. In the climactic scene in the story, Bob shoots at an errant torpedo from his naval biplane to keep it from hitting one of the ships; Captain Rumble, who has agreed to fly with Bob to observe the torpedo's capabilities, is occupying the

back seat of the aircraft. Bob has one final chance to destroy the torpedo:

His fingers moved on the triggers. The spray of steel gushed forth.

Bob's bullets cause the torpedo to explode:

Then the seas opened! From a small spot in the green water a geyser started. Up, up came the white spray. It rose to the height of the [ship's] masts. Solid green water, Bob knew, formed the core of that eruption...

The plane shook as though it had struck a solid wall. Spray flew. Somewhere in the midst of it, Bob could hear the life being crushed from the plane. With throttle wide open he felt her losing speed. Nosing down, he looked back to see her flippers [ailerons] had been practically torn away. There was scarcely anything left of the rudder. (139-140)

The ship crashes into the ocean and tilts precariously up on its nose, and Bob and Captain Rumble dive into the water. Worried that Rumble will express even more severe disapproval of naval aviation after the crash landing, Bob is pleasantly surprised to hear the Captain say, as he is treading water:

"You know, Wakefield! ... This is like the Old Navy! Something to keep one's blood stirring. How soon do you think it'll take 'em to replace our plane?" (141).

In the remaining stories in the book, Bob continues to gain the support of Captain Rumble as he helps a fellow aviator gain his confidence in himself and assists Cuban officials deal with rebels.

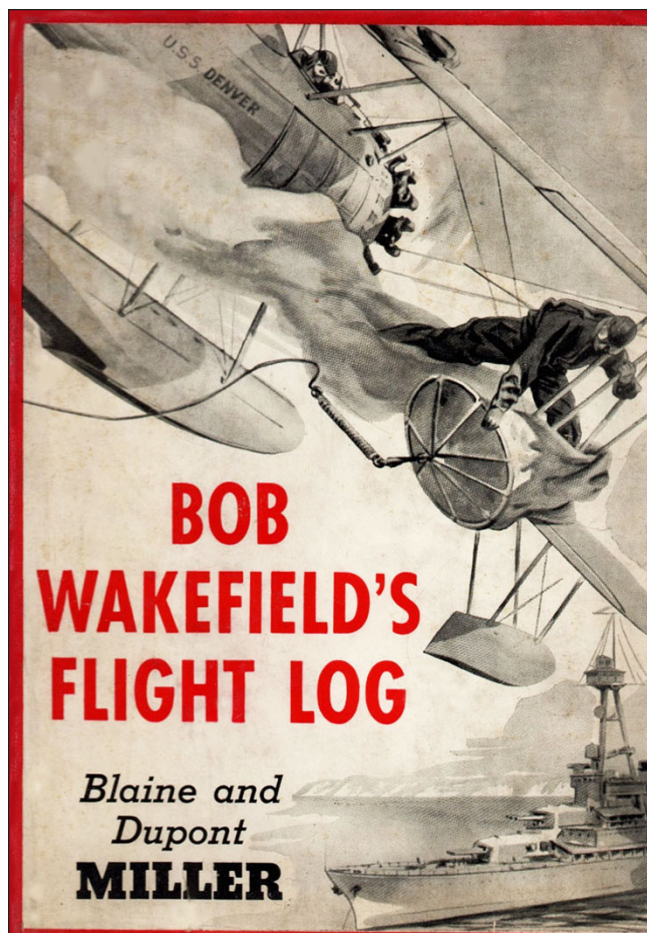
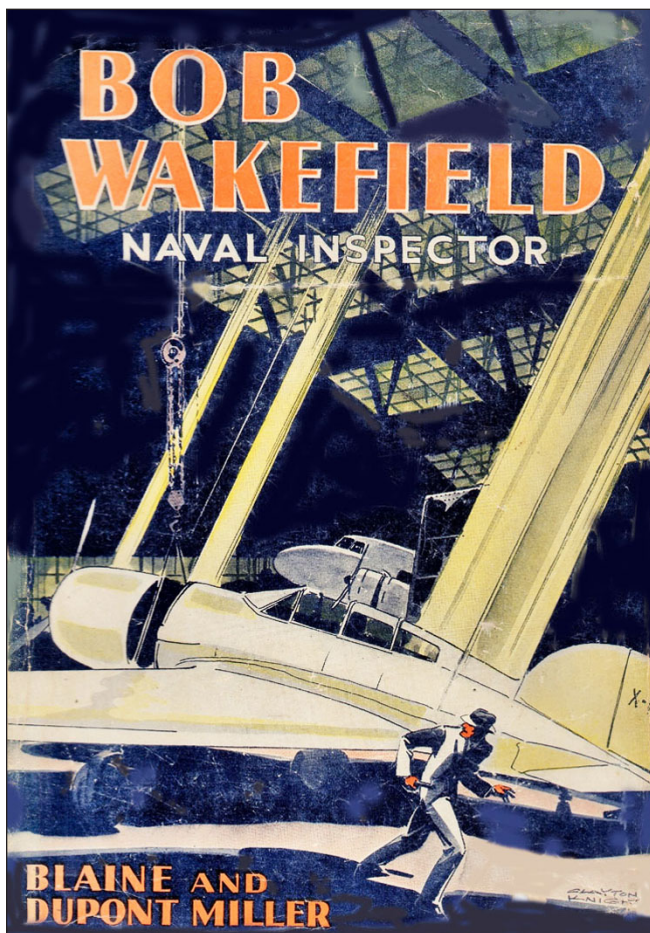
The second title, *Bob Wakefield, Naval Inspector*, is not a collection of individual stories, as was the case with *Bob Wakefield, Naval Aviator*. *Bob Wakefield, Naval Inspector* is a fully developed novel describing the efforts of an aircraft manufacturer to design and build an aircraft to meet U.S. Navy specifications. In the story, Bob serves as a Navy liaison pilot whose job is to monitor the progress of the aircraft's development and to fly it in a series of tests after it is built. Someone in the aircraft manufacturer's organization is intent on sabotaging their efforts, however, so there is an element of mystery as well as aviation technology in the novel.

It might have been more appropriate, as well as more factual and more appealing, if the book had been called *Bob Wakefield, Test Pilot*, for that title more accurately describes his activities in the story. The story is well

(Continued on Page 14)



Harold Blaine Miller (1903-1992)



Bob Wakefield Series

(Continued from Page 13)

constructed, blending elements of mystery and aviation. There are several exceptionally detailed accounts of aviation procedures in the story, each one of which is clearly explained. As a result of these enlightening and entertaining descriptions, the book reads like a primer of aircraft design and construction.

Some of the more interesting descriptions include: aspects of aircraft design (pages 62-64, 84-88), the use of models in wind tunnels (98), the purpose of "jigs," tools used to create metal parts (109), cockpit mockups and instrument location (113-114), and load factors (118). A good example of the way in which aeronautical design is described in an informative yet entertaining manner is shown when Bob first sees drawings of the proposed aircraft, which is referred to as the Model 339:

The first drawing brought an involuntary gasp of admiration from the Navy pilot, as he saw the outlines of the 339 for the first time. How he would like to

climb into a fighter like that some time!

Here was proof that man was learning more and more to emulate nature. Birds have no rough surfaces to hinder them in flight. Aviation engineers were trying to copy what Nature had perfected long before when she provided feathers for lifting surfaces and streamlining. There is no bird that does not tuck its landing gear close to its body, clear of the slipstream, so to speak. ... The contours which spread out before him on the various drawing sheets seemed to be the product of evolution, rather than any artificial construction. Every curve blended into the machine to disappear in to the straight line of some strength member. Once more was proven the old adage that an airplane which looks well performs well. (62-3)

The discussion of retractable landing gear in this passage was of more than casual interest in 1937, when the book was published, as aircraft designers were just beginning to develop the concept of landing gear that could be retracted into the body of the aircraft. Prior to this date, landing gear were designed to be fixed, non-retractable features of the aircraft which supported

the weight of the aircraft on the ground, and more importantly, to withstand the impact when the aircraft made contact with the ground when landing. Sturdy landing gear were especially important for naval aircraft, which had to land firmly on the short decks of aircraft carriers.

Two of the first operational aircraft to feature retractable landing gear were developed in 1930: the Lockheed Orion and the Boeing Monomail. Their streamlined designs were visually appealing, but the engines available at the time were not sufficiently powerful to provide significant thrust. Of the two designs, the Lockheed was the more successful, and the cover art for *Bob Wakefield, Naval Inspector*, drawn by Clayton Knight, shows an aircraft that looks remarkably like the Lockheed Orion. In the early 1930s, the Navy was flying the Grumman F2F, the first operational aircraft with retractable landing gear; but it was a biplane (two wings), not a monoplane (single wing) design. In 1936, Russian aircraft designer and former fighter pilot Alexander de Seversky developed the P-35, the first fighter aircraft with retractable landing gear. Reading this passage today, we might think that the discussion about retractable landing gear, commonplace in all aircraft today, is antique technology. But it is important to realize that when the book was written, Miller was envisioning cutting-edge technological developments in aviation.

The narrative also provides details about specific materials and components used in the aircraft, including a discussion of the benefits of metal over wood (137), the function and design of rivets (140, 177), the use of steel (141), and concern for corrosion (143). The book provides an excellent statement of the theme of the book: "Everyone had come to accept the airplane, but few realized what had gone into the design, the laborious hours over a cramped drawing board, the exacting details of testing" (103). The year 1937 was a productive year for Blaine Miller, for in addition to *Bob Wakefield, Naval Inspector*, Miller also published *Navy Wings*, a history of naval aviation; it was revised in 1942.

The third title in the series, *Bob Wakefield's Flight Log*, returns to the format of the first title; the book is a collection of 11 stories, most of which were originally published in **Boy's Life**. Each story is prefaced by a brief entry in Bob Wakefield's flight log, signed by Wakefield's commanding officer, Ramrod Rumble, on the *USS Denver*, a seaplane tender. In the first five stories, Bob flies with his enlisted aircraft maintenance specialist, Ajax, in the cold northern waters of the Aleutian Sea. In the first story, Bob Wakefield pilots his seaplane in bad weather from Anchorage, Alaska,

to an Alaskan coastal community to help an Alaskan stopowner to deliver Christmas presents to the members of the community. In the second story he and his flying companion Ajax help to discourage illegal seal hunting in the Aleutians. In the third story Bob assists with gathering weather information in very cold weather; in this story Miller provides a vivid description of the steps necessary to prepare an aircraft engine for starting in winter weather:

The crew were placing a huge can of congealed lubricating oil on a makeshift griddle. Under it was a flaming blowtorch which was to heat the oil back to its original liquid state. In this climate, it was necessary to drain all the oil from an airplane immediately after a flight. Otherwise, it would be impossible to turn the engine over the following day because of the almost solid engine oil. And, even if the engine did turn over under its own power, it would burn out its bearings before the oil would become sufficiently fluid to flow freely. (57-58)

Details like these give the stories a sense of authenticity that can be supplied only by a writer who has personally experienced the rugged conditions of flying seaplanes in cold weather. The setting for the next two stories remains in the cold north waters off the coast of Alaska, as Bob and Ajax help the crew of the *Denver* win a gunnery contest and Bob helps a flight surgeon provide medical assistance to the men at a coastal radio station.

In the last six stories, we can easily sense the developing threat of growing wartime tensions as naval operations increasingly are associated with spying and espionage activity. In these stories, Captain Rumble and the crew of the *Denver* leave the cold northern waters and sail into the warmer waters of the South Pacific. They are initially involved in helping to secure navigation and maintenance facilities for an American airline, named the American Pacific Airways, clearly an alternate fictional name for Pan American Airways, which was just beginning operations across the Pacific and the Atlantic in large flying boats. Even before the start of World War II and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, there was increasing evidence of Japanese intelligence activity in the South Pacific.

In the first of the last six stories, Bob helps to discover an agent interested in stealing some new radio equipment, and in the next story he and his enlisted flying companion Ajax prevent unfriendly agents from taking control of an island used to re-supply flying boats in the South Pacific. In the eighth story, Bob and

(Continued on Page 16)

'Min' Miller a true U.S. Navy pioneer



Rear Admiral Blaine "Min" Miller headed the U.S. Navy's newly created Office of Public Information in 1945-46.

In addition to his co-authorship (with his wife) of the Bob Wakefield series of aviation stories for boys, Harold Blaine Miller had a distinguished Navy career prior to, during and immediately following World War II.

"Min" Miller, as he preferred to be called by his fellow U.S. Navy officers, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy as an Ensign in 1924 and began his career as a regular line officer aboard the battleship *USS California* before entering Navy flight training at Pensacola, Florida. During World War II, he had several varied assignments before joining Admiral Chester Nimitz's Pacific Fleet staff as a public relations specialist.

Miller was named director of the Navy's Office of Public Information in June 1945 and promoted to Rear Admiral, at age 42 becoming the youngest officer in the Navy to hold that rank at the time.

Miller immediately took the "do not enter" sign off his door. "It will be our policy while I am here to tell you just what the hell is going on," he said. "If national security is involved, we will tell you, and try to explain why. My office has three doors, and all of them will be open all day."

Miller thus was a pioneer in Navy public affairs, which has grown from its original 40 professional information specialists in 1947 to today's 300 Public Affairs Officers serving under the Navy Chief of Information.

Bob Wakefield Series

(Continued from Page 15)

Ajax successfully prevent a mystery ship from shooting down an American Pacific Airways aircraft flying toward New Zealand.

In the final three stories in the book, the *Denver* is based in the Hawaiian Islands; in the first of the last three stories, Ajax departs the *Denver* because he has been selected to attend navy flight school; he is replaced by a new man, McQueen, who soon demonstrates his skill and courage when he dislodges a hung bomb on the aircraft during a bombing competition. As he observes a military exercise involving firing at targets towed by ships, Bob and a visiting army pilot observe one balloon rising suddenly with its crew suspended in a basket underneath. The balloon soon passes 19,000 feet and the crew is in danger of dying from lack of oxygen, but Bob is able to shoot at and disable the gas control mechanism and the balloon descends safely. In the final story, Bob escorts a navy cameraman, who films a rescue operation and Bob's effort to drop bombs to divert a lava flow from an active volcano in the Hawaiian Islands.

Although no additional Bob Wakefield stories appeared after World War II started, in the three Bob Wakefield Series book titles, Blaine and Dupont Miller provide accurate and exciting accounts of the life of a young aviator in the open-cockpit glory years of naval

aviation in the 1930s. The stories of Bob Wakefield flying with his stalwart enlisted mechanic, Ajax, as they fulfill the flying requirements entrusted to them by the Captain of the *USS Denver*, Ramrod Rumble, make the challenges of flying in the nascent pre-World War II naval aviation program vivid, believable, and appealing.

During World War II, Blaine "Min" Miller was assigned to the Training Division of the U.S. Navy in Washington, D.C., where he was head of the Training Literature Section. He then was assigned to the U.S. Embassy in London. In 1945 he was assigned to the Pacific Fleet, where he was Public Relations Officer on the staff of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

From early 1945 until his retirement from the Navy in late 1946, Miller, promoted to rear admiral, served as Director of the Office of Public Relations in Washington, D.C. [Ed.: see story, above]. After retirement, he held senior civilian positions with Trans World Airways and Pan American World Airways, and he served as vice president of Hofstra University for six years before retiring in 1974. Miller died on May 15, 1992 in Overland Park, Kansas, at the age of 89.

David Kirk Vaughan, Ph. D., a former U.S. Air Force pilot and author of several aviation-related books, is emeritus professor at the Air Force Institute of Technology in Dayton, Ohio. This is his fifth article for Newsboy covering juvenile-oriented military aviation series.