



# 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 LVI

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2018

NUMBER 5

**Success Assured** from the Start.

*Owing to the enormous demand, necessitating the printing of extra* *large editions, publication day had to be postponed.*

**NOW READY**  **FOR DELIVERY.**

**JAMES A. GARFIELD,**  
AT THE AGE OF 36.  
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**FROM**  
**CANAL BOY TO PRESIDENT,**  
OR,  
THE BOYHOOD AND MANHOOD  
OF  
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**J. R. Anderson & Co., Publishers,**  
No. 17 MURRAY STREET, NEW YORK

## Horatio Alger's *From Canal Boy to President*

From his pen to readers in a matter of weeks through creative marketing



The DeWolfe, Fiske & Co. reprint edition of Horatio Alger's *From Canal Boy to President* replicated the cover design of the first edition, published by John R. Anderson of New York in 1881.

-- See Page 5

## Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar

*Wilderness writer and adventure provider*

-- See Page 7

## President's column

Good morning from Houston.

Well, thanks and I am glad you asked. My trip to Wisconsin was very pleasant. For those who are not Facebook friends (all but Bob x2, Barry and James/Kim) I was pleased to visit with some family and friends in Milwaukee. We took in a Packers' game as well as a Brewers' contest. It was only 50 degrees in Green Bay, reminding me that winter with the cold and snow will not be arriving in Houston anytime soon. Had some great brats and for the first time in 45 years some fried smelts.

I also took in a used book store on Milwaukee's south side. They had one Alger Loring first edition priced at 20 bucks. I figured nobody would want a *Timothy Crump* so I left it there. I did buy three books from the Leila Books Series published by Woolworth, Ainsworth. See my bibliography for more about this publisher and series. What struck me was how inexpensively priced everything was.

Not long ago I had a question about a book. I found the name of an expert collector in some old correspondence and thought I would seek him out. Unfortunately, after a fair bit of hunting around it turned out he had died a few years ago. That got me to thinking about a conversation I had with Jack Dizerback in the 1990s. Jack was visiting some family members here in Houston and came by the house to talk and look at my collection. After walking around my libraries he commented that with all of these books it is a shame that I did not do some bibliographical research. That got me to thinking and set me on a course of action that led to my modest continuing bibliographical output.

That brings me to the two-fold point of this column. First, we have many members who have expertise in various areas. Some of them, Brad Chase and Bill Gowen come to mind, have had prolific bibliographic output. Bill's work is readily available online: unfortunately, Brad's is not. Although all of us expect to be here forever, it is an unfortunate fact that will not be the case. You are "healthy until you are sick, you are alive until you are dead." What a shame that a lifetime of study can go to the grave. Denis Rogers' work on Ellis is an example. Some is in the **Dime Novel Round-Up**, but much is not and remains as loose pages on some of our shelves.

And a great place to house your research would be at the Alger site. Little by little, a collector/researcher can build a quality site about an author/publisher, etc. they collect and study. Not meaning to put anyone on

(Continued on Page 3)

## 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.*

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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, 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](http://www.horatioalgersociety.net).

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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](mailto:hasnewsboy@aol.com)

## President's column

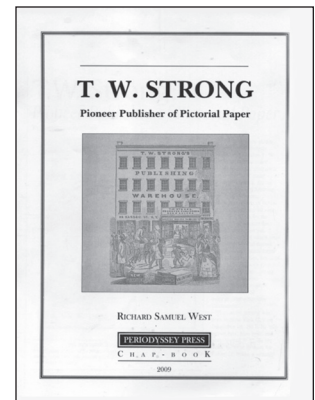
(Continued from Page 2)

the spot but a "Kirk Munroe" page would be a great addition. Experts in Optic and Ellis as well as later authors like Barbour, etc. (you know who you are!!) could also put up their research with pictures, etc. This would also position our organization as we strive to reorganize as the Society as the go to place for this genre.

The other thought I had was about making our new Society's website a place where information about reference materials (books about books) could be available. Of course, a lot is on the internet, but so much more is not. My personal story about reference materials goes back to the late 1990s when I was working on my 19th century bibliography. I really needed to look at the **National Union Catalogue** from time to time but no libraries in the area had this set. There are 752 oversized books (14" x 10½") which purport to list by author all the books published in the United States until 1956. Actually, it is far from complete but still pretty good. So I found a book store that actually had a set, bought it and awaited its arrival. About three weeks later three large pallets of giant green books were sitting in my garage. They have been invaluable, but now you can find the whole set online.

What I propose is designing a section on the Society's site that would list bibliographical materials. This can include online and non-available online materials. For the online material, URLs would be included. There are so many great websites out there. Ranging from 19th century contemporaneous journals to wonderful founts of information on books/authors of our genre, such as Didi Johnson's [www.readseries.com](http://www.readseries.com) site.

The non-available online books and materials can also



be listed. A lot of these monographs are readily available (examples above), like Kilgour's *Estes & Lauriat* book, but many are not, like the Henty Society's monograph on Scribner and Welford first editions. I know that there are some items that are really rare (but not valuable) that I get questions about from time to time. We could categorize and put together a list of these books/papers, etc. If the person who owns one is so inclined, his/her name could be listed as a "go to" source for the information within the item.

These thoughts and others are just a way to help make the Society site a destination for members and potential members in our effort to stave off our eventual demise and perhaps breathe new life into our group. By the way, we still need a new group name. Thoughts?

Have a great Thanksgiving holiday!

Your Partic'lar Friend,  
Cary. Sternick (PF-933)  
26 Chestnut Hill Ct.  
The Woodlands, TX 77380  
(713) 444-3181  
Email: [css3@mac.com](mailto:css3@mac.com)

## Editor's notebook

As we edge ever closer to the holiday season (Halloween is upon us and Thanksgiving is around the corner), here's an update on our 2019 convention, which will take place June 6-9, 2019, in Shelbyville, Indiana. Convention host Bob Sipes has selected a hotel (newly opened since our last Shelbyville convention in 2007), and he is in the process of negotiating special rates for guests as well as our meeting room. He hopes to have full information in the November-December issue, since a few of us like to get our reservations in very early!

Again, a reminder that both our 2019 and 2020 conventions are scheduled for June instead of the traditional early May dates. Please alter any possible personal plans so you can join us. Bob's first preview article will appear in the next *Newsboy*, and his main preview will be published in the January-February issue, along with the convention registration form and events schedule.

**Unusual Tom Swifts:** I have been collecting Tom Swift books longer than I care to admit (I was a pre-teen), and recently have discovered the two unusual items shown on Page 16. The top image is that of the familiar "Keds edition," a 6½ by 9½ inch pulp paperback reprint offered in 1932 to buyers of Keds sneakers, published by Lancaster, Lord & Co. of New York, by arrangement with Grosset & Dunlap.

An ad in the book states "You can buy Keds for as  
(Continued on Page 16)

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*Owing to the enormous demand, necessitating the printing of extra*

**NOW READY**



JAMES A. GARFIELD,  
AT THE AGE OF 16.

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**from the Start.**

*large editions, publication day had to be postponed.*

**FOR DELIVERY.**

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*N.B.*—As all will admit that the late President's career from the most humble station in life to the most exalted in the gift of this mighty Republic, affords the best example for the young, and the highest standard of a man the world has yet produced, and as Mr. ALGER has made this work a veritable labor of love, it is believed that it will outsell any biography ever published.

A chance like this for making money seldom offers. The people are ready for the book, and now is your opportunity. This book is written by one of the most popular biographical writers in the country, which is a sufficient guarantee for its excellence. Strike at once, and secure the full benefit of the present excitement. We give no exclusive territory; each agent is at liberty to sell wherever it is to the best advantage to himself.

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No. 17 MURRAY STREET, NEW YORK.

# Horatio Alger's *From Canal Boy to President*

From his pen to readers in a matter of weeks through creative marketing

By Robert E. Kasper (PF-327)

**Success Assured from the Start. Now Ready for Delivery.**

So reads the book agent's instructions from publisher John R. Anderson's handbill for selling copies of Horatio Alger's *From Canal Boy to President; or, The Boyhood and Manhood of James A. Garfield* (see facing page).

Alger set a record in writing this book, completing it in two weeks and delivering his manuscript to Anderson in early October 1881.<sup>1</sup>

This presidential biography of Garfield was a rare deviation from Alger's usual juvenile fiction, although he authored two other biographies, that of Daniel Webster (*From Farm Boy to Senator*) in 1882, and Abraham Lincoln (*Abraham Lincoln, the Backwoods Boy*) in 1883.

Little is known about the Anderson Company. It started issuing books in the late 1870s, incorporated in 1879 and merged with Henry S. Allen in 1882 to form the publisher Anderson & Allen. During the early 1880s, the publisher also sold books as the Anderson School-Book Company. In 1885, Anderson made arrangements with the DeWolfe, Fiske & Company to publish and reprint all of its books including *From Canal Boy to President* and *Abraham Lincoln, the Backwoods Boy* (see Page 1 for an image of the former).<sup>2</sup> DeWolfe, Fiske & Company also reissued *From Farm Boy to Senator*, which was originally published by J. S. Ogilvie & Company.

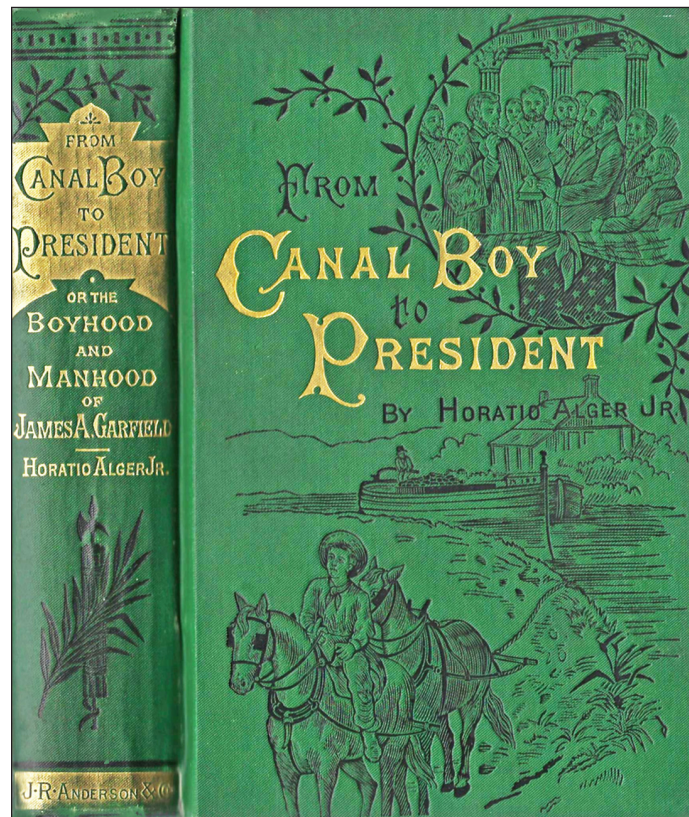
After Alger delivered the manuscript, the publication date was delayed at least once, ostensibly "owing to the enormous demand, necessitating the printing of extra large editions, publication day had to be postponed" according to the handbill. But, in all likelihood, the delay was probably caused by the usual time required to

typeset, print and bind copies of the book and to deliver to book retailers, stationers and book agents.

Door-to-door selling was a well-established method of distributing books during the latter part of the 19th century when most Americans, especially those living in rural areas, did not have access to libraries or book retailers. The Anderson handbill is the first recorded example of an Alger book being sold this way. Almost

all of Mark Twain's major works were sold via subscription by book agents (or canvassers) through his publisher, American Publishing Company of Hartford, Connecticut.<sup>3</sup>

The terms to the prospective agents were straightforward: simply send one dollar to the publisher and they "will mail them, post-paid, the complete work." Adding further "no prospectus book is needed ... for then the subscriber can see just what the book is." In this case, a prospectus book would be analogous to a salesman copy or dummy copy. The prospectus could be in the format of the actual book showing the binding, available cloth



colors and a few sample pages (or chapters) from the original publication. Illustrations and plates, if any, were often included. Examples of spines and covers for deluxe bindings or leather-bound editions might be pasted inside, and the rear of the prospectus would contain blank subscription forms to record purchaser's names and addresses. As noted in the handbill, no prospectus book was provided for this title, perhaps due to time constraints.

The retail price of *From Canal Boy to President* was set at \$1.25 with the book agent being charged 75 cents by

(Continued on Page 6)

# Horatio Alger's *From Canal Boy to President*

(Continued from Page 5)

the publisher, thereby generating a gross profit of 50 cents for each book sold. As an added premium, "we will send one copy of the book, without charge, with every 10 books ordered." Agents were expected to pay their own expenses, including transportation and room and board, and if a customer moved or died, to cover the loss.

*From Canal Boy to President* was the first book about Garfield's life to appear after his death on September 19, 1881. Alger estimated that twenty thousand copies were sold within a few months of publication.<sup>4</sup>

Although sales figures for Alger's books are tantalizingly difficult to establish, sales of *From Canal Boy to President* may have been exceeded only by Alger's bona fide best-seller, *Ragged Dick: or, Street Life in New York*, published by A. K. Loring in 1868.

Perhaps John R. Anderson's book agents had some small part in this.

## NOTES

1. Ralph D. Gardner, *Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era*. (Mendota, Illinois: The Wayside Press, 1964), p. 422.

2. From notes for future posting on Cary Sternick's website, [www.henryaltemus.com](http://www.henryaltemus.com)

3. Carol Nackenoff, *The Fictional Republic, Horatio Alger and American Public Discourse*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 189.

4. Gary Scharnhorst with Jack Bales, *The Lost Life of Horatio Alger, Jr.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 121.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bill:

In mid-july, I sent an email to several H.A.S. members asking for information concerning a current research project, which received limited response. Maybe offering this letter to the general membership will help fill in some gaps:

"When you can spare some time, please check your shelves for books published by The Century Company from 1924 to 1927, inclusive. I have a theory that prior to 1924, Century used the corresponding title page/copyright page dating system. In 1928, Century began stating 'First Edition' on the copyright page. For the years above, however, I have no books with a title page date, and I have about 20 from those years. My theory is that the company stopped the title page dating four years prior to stating the first editions.

"If you have any books from 1924 through '27 that do have title page dates, please let me know the author, title and date. No hurry on this; it's just one of my whims, but I'm curious to see if this was the case."

Shortly after sending this email, Jeff Looney (PF-903) emailed that he had a copy of Barbour's *Barry Locke, Halfback* (1925), signed by the author, which helps quite a bit, as it makes sense that Barbour would have used one of his author's copies as a gift. Jeff also extended his search to 1928; I have checked my copies and find that I have a couple of stated firsts from July and August of 1928, indicating a mid-year change, as he suggested.

Other authors in my collection that fall into this

search bracket are Joseph B. Ames, Kenneth Payson Kempton, Samuel Scoville and Walter S. Story. If any of you turn up additional information, drop me a line anytime. And thanks again.

Sincerely,  
Bart J. Nyberg (PF-879)  
4657 Mason St.  
Omaha, NE 68106  
Email: [lewarcher@aol.com](mailto:lewarcher@aol.com)

*Editor's note: Century was one of those publishers which used varying ways of identifying particular editions or printings (or not specifying editions at all). Policies often changed when publishers changed ownership or management. For example, when Century merged with D. Appleton & Co. on May 31, 1933, to form D. Appleton-Century Co., books by the new firm carried over Appleton's designation of particular printings by a number in parentheses located at the foot of the last page of text, a practice Appleton initiated in 1902. This system was also continued for a number of years following the formation of D. Appleton-Century-Crofts in 1948.*

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Richmond Adams (PF-1144)

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# Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar

## *Wilderness writer and adventure provider*

by William B. Krohn

**Introduction:** On Oct. 13, 2012, Dr. William B. Krohn, retired wildlife scientist and Professor Emeritus at the University of Maine at Orono, presented the annual Hall Memorial Lecture at the Bethel, Maine, Historical Society. His subject was the life of Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar, emphasizing Farrar's contributions to the birth and growth of tourism in western Maine. The following article is based on that lecture.

The critical importance of tourism to Bethel's economy, and to western Maine generally, is today often taken for granted. We should not, however, forget that the growth of the tourism industry took many decades and the creative labors of numerous, dedicated individuals. The names of those associated with the initial development of the tourist industry in western Maine are mostly forgotten, with the notable exception of Miss Cornelia T. Crosby (see *Fly Rod Crosby — The Woman Who Marketed Maine* by Julia A. Hunter and Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. [2000]). In addition to *Fly Rod Crosby*, there is at least one other individual we should add to the list of those writers consulted when studying the history of tourism in western Maine. That person is Capt. Charles Alden John Farrar.

Today, Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar is unknown to most people, and even when his name is recognized, he is seen at best as only a shadowy figure. Maine historian David C. Smith, in a 1968 essay about fictitious juvenile novels set in the Maine woods, compared Farrar to Charles A. Stephens of Norway, Maine. Dr. Smith wrote that "Less is known of his life than of Stephens', although he was apparently a long-time guide, woodsman, and hunter in the Rangeley Lakes region." Smith went on to say of Farrar's juvenile books that "The stories are sometimes little more than guidebooks..." University of Maine professor Edward V. Thompson, in his 2003 book titled *Important Maine Maps, Books, Prints, and Ephemera*, considered Charles A. J. Farrar "The most prolific 19th century writer about the northern Maine woods ... Yet, we have been able to learn almost nothing about his

*This article was first published in The Courier, History Journal of the Bethel [Maine] Historical Society, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2012). It is reprinted with permission.*



**Capt. Charles Alden John Farrar (1842-1893) at work at his desk in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. This illustration is the only known likeness of Farrar and is the frontispiece from his last book, *Through the Wilds*.**

life ... He presumably often traveled and vacationed in Maine, but we have no documentary evidence of this, nor do we know why he had such a great interest in writing about the Maine woods."

Apparently Dr. Thompson had not read *The Richardson Lakes — Jewels in The Rangeley Chain* that was printed in 1995 and authored by Herbert P. Shirrefs. This book, published by the Bethel Historical Society, is a compendium of facts about Farrar and his life in the lower Rangeley Lakes. This book did not, however, attempt to describe Farrar's life and work, nor to put into perspective Farrar's many accomplishments. It's the purpose of this article to present an overview of Farrar's life, document his major accomplishments, and briefly discuss the significance of his works.

Farrar's father, John A. Farrar, was a Boston house painter, and his mother, Laura A. Emerson, was from Edgecomb, Maine. Farrar's Massachusetts death certificate states that Charles was born in Boston. Other documents, however, give Maine as his birthplace (but do not identify a town). Because of these conflicting documents, the birthplace of Charles A. J. Farrar — at least for now — is uncertain.

Farrar's first few years were spent in Boston. Even

*(Continued on Page 8)*

<b>THE WISCASSET HERALD.</b>		
DEVOTED TO HOME INTERESTS AND LOCAL NEWS.		
VOL. I.	WISCASSET, ME., FRIDAY, JULY 22, 1859.	No. 2.
<p>THE WISCASSET HERALD, IS PUBLISHED <b>EVERY FRIDAY MORNING.</b></p> <p>THOMAS' BUILDING, (SECOND STORY), Cor. of Main and Middle Streets, Wiscasset, Me.</p> <p>C. A. J. FARRAR, Proprietor and Publisher.</p> <p>TERMS—25 CENTS for three months; (invariably in advance.) Single copies, Two CENTS.</p> <p>Every description of CARD AND JOB PRINTING, done at the "Herald Printing Office."</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>For the Herald.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A Traveller's Story.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BY WALTER GRAHAM.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(CONTINUED.)</p> <p>I was suspicious—I always am of strangers—and I had half resolved to remount my steed</p>	<p>As I did not feel much like talking, especially to a deaf person, I sat still and watched the old woman get supper.</p> <p>Just as it was ready in came my host with my saddle-bags. I told him to put them on the floor and asked him if he had taken care of my horse properly.</p> <p>He said that he had, and after he had taken off his jacket and hat, asked me to sit down to supper.</p> <p>By this time it had begun to rain, and it poured down as if the fountains of heaven were opened. While we were eating supper he asked me my name, where I was from last, where going to, and many other questions.</p> <p>As soon as we got through supper, I looked at my watch, and found it was most nine o'clock, and as I was greatly fatigued, I asked my host</p>	<p>350,000 men doing death's business with all the murderous implements of modern warfare. Our boasted civilization comes to this—rivers dyed with human blood; stacks of corpses piled upon the plain; shouts of triumph and groans of despair, men mutilated for life; misery, mourning and desolation. Verily, the old prophesy comes true, and the 'birth of freedom' takes place in a bath of blood.'</p> <p>THE MEMORY OF A MOTHER.— When temptation appears, and we are almost persuaded to do wrong, how often a mother's words of warning will be recalled to mind, and the snare broken. Yes, the memory of a good mother has saved many a poor mortal from going astray. Long grass may be growing over the hallowed spot where all her earthly remains repose.— The dying leaves of autumn may be whirled</p>

Farrar was only 17 years old when he started this newspaper for young adults. While the paper survived only some four months, it provided Farrar with valuable experience in writing, editing, printing, marketing and distributing a written product — skills he was to continue to sharpen and utilize throughout his adult life.

Special Collections, Raymond H. Fogler Library, University of Maine at Orono.

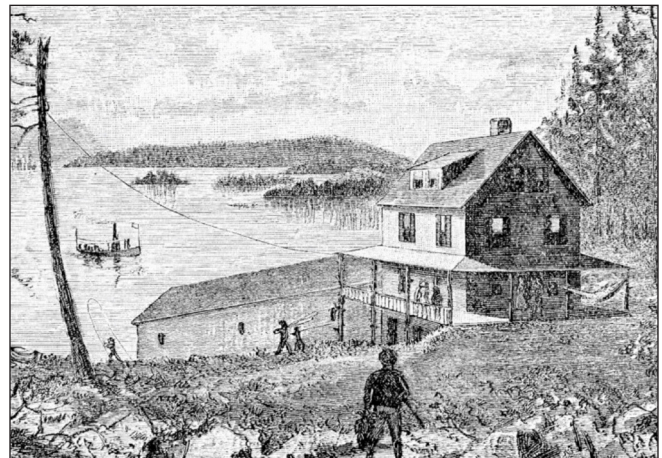
## Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar

(Continued from Page 7)

at a young age he was active, outgoing, and talkative. John Farrar noted Charles' precocious nature, and with relatives on his father's side named Shakespoke, Farrar was nick-named "Billy Shakespoke" by his father. Farrar embraced this nick-name and used it as his acting name and in the title of the only non-woods book he wrote, *Amateur and Professional Stage Life; or, The Adventures of Billy Shakespoke Before and After the Curtain* (1882). Essentially a mini-autobiography, the book contains important information about Farrar's life.

When Farrar was around seven years old the family moved to Wiscasset, Maine (west of Edgecomb), and it was there he learned to read and write. When only 17 years old, he became the proprietor and publisher of *The Wiscasset Herald*. This weekly newspaper was designed for teenagers and young adults, and sold for 25 cents for a three-month subscription. Farrar's junior editor was Joseph Wood, age 16. Wood went on to become a prominent figure in the newspaper industry. For Farrar, although the paper survived from July to October 1859, this was the start of his printing and writing career where he undoubtedly learned many valuable lessons.

In 1860, Farrar lived with Samuel Emerson, his uncle, in Charlestown, Massachusetts. Samuel was a master printer and employed Farrar as a journeyman printer, giving Charles the opportunity to sharpen his printing skills. Farrar moved on from his uncle, and during 1872 edited and printed the *Boston Independent*. In 1873, he started publication of the *West Roxbury Gazette*, and three years later Farrar and Walter B. Johnson became partners in a Boston job printing company (see



Capt. Charles A.J. Farrar's business strategy was to control as many assets as possible in the Rangeley Lakes, by way of Maine's Lower Route through Bethel and Upton, and by the Middle Route through Andover. To capitalize on the traffic through these two points of access, he owned and operated the Lakeview Cottage (above) on the South Arm of Lower Richardson Lake, as well as the Lakeside Hotel, near Upton.

Illustration from Farrar's *Androscoggin Lakes Guidebook*

illustration of advertisement on Page 10).

In August 1865, the 23-year-old Farrar married Rose Austin from Buckfield, Maine. Because many Farrars lived in Buckfield at the time, it's likely that Charles met his wife-to-be while visiting Maine relatives. The couple was married in Boston and soon set up house-keeping in Jamaica Plain, southwest of downtown Boston. At the time, Jamaica Plain was a productive agricultural area growing food crops that were sold in Boston. The town had a railroad, offering Farrar a means to more easily distribute the products of his Jamaica Publishing



Company, as well as to facilitate his travels north.

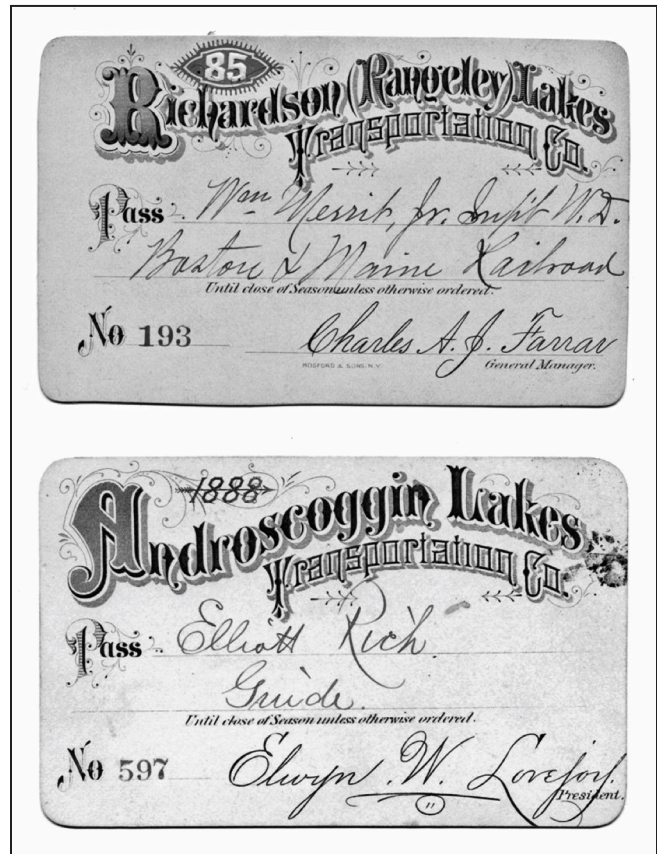
Farrar initially vacationed in northern New Hampshire, but in 1867 took his first vacation trip to the Rangeley Lakes. This region was to hold a life-long fascination for Farrar as he described some 23 years later at age 46: "I first visited it [the Rangeley Lakes region] when I was a young man, several years before I was at all interested in business, and some of the happiest hours of my life have been passed at the lakes, and I love the country. Those romantic sheets of water, whose ripples kiss the base of the grand old mountains by which they are surrounded, will ever hold a loving place in the warmest corners of my heart, and they will be visited by thousands for their pure air and fine scenery ..."

In 1872, while traveling over the Rangeley Lakes, Farrar met Fred C. Barker. At the time, Barker was camping at the old Richardson Farm on the Richardson Lakes. According to Barker, Farrar asked him to go into a partnership and form a transportation company to facilitate travel and tourism on, and around, the Rangeley Lakes. Barker declined, fearing that Farrar's plan to borrow money to build a transportation company was too risky. Years later, Barker went on to develop his own system of steamboats and three hotels on Mooselookmeguntic Lake.

Barker's lack of support notwithstanding, in 1876 Farrar commenced commercial steamboat runs on Upper and Lower Richardson lakes, west of Mooselookmeguntic Lake. A year later, the Maine Legislature granted Farrar and associates exclusive rights to operate on the Richardson Lakes, and in 1881 the Richardson-Rangeley Lakes Transportation Company (R-RLTC) was incorporated under Maine law. A second law was passed in 1882 granting Farrar and associates exclusive commercial use of the Richardson Lakes until 1888.

In 1885, the R-RLTC was dissolved, being replaced by the Androscoggin Lakes Transportation Company (ALTC). In all, Farrar and his investors had exclusive rights for commercial transportation on the Upper and Lower Richardson lakes for more than a decade — 1877 to 1888.

Farrar's business plan was simple: concentrate and capitalize on the flow of people and goods into the lower Rangeley Lakes, specifically the Richardson Lakes, Lake Umbagog, the Rapid River which connected the two lakes, and the Magalloway River which flows into Lake Umbagog. Farrar's legislated monopoly on commercial transportation over the Richardson Lakes (common during this period) provided him the certainty needed to attract investors. With adequate capital in-hand, he and his investors could move people and goods on land with horses, carriages, and wagons; and on water with a fleet of steamboats operating on the Richardson



Cards used for free passage on the Richardson-Rangeley Lakes Transportation Company (top example) which existed from 1881 to 1885, and the Androscoggin Lakes Transportation Company (bottom), operating from 1885 to 1890. Note that the upper pass is signed *Charles A. J. Farrar* (as General Manager), one of the few surviving examples of his handwriting.

Lakes as well as Lake Umbagog and the lower Magalloway River. Additionally, they provided housing for the travelers in the lower Rangeley Lakes, leaving the upper Rangeley Lakes to others (e.g., Barker on Mooselookmeguntic Lake).

During this period there were three major routes to access the Rangeley chain of lakes: (1) the Upper Route via the town of Rangeley and Rangeley Lake, (2) the Middle Route via Andover and the South Arm of Lower Richardson Lake, and (3) the Lower Route via Bethel to Upton and Lake Umbagog. Farrar and associates built Lakeview Cottage on the South Arm to control the Middle Route, and owned and operated Lakeside Hotel above the southwest end of Lake Umbagog to control access to the Lower Route. Later, Farrar leased the Middle Dam Camp, thus controlling the waterway that linked Lower Richardson Lake and

(Continued on Page 10)

## Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar

(Continued from Page 9)

Lake Umbagog. Most of Barker's clients, in contrast, came via the Upper Route.

While Farrar had a clear business strategy in mind, he still faced the practical issue of how to attract an adequate supply of customers to pay for his extensive infrastructure. To solve this problem, Farrar relied on his literary and printing skills. In 1876, he wrote a factual guidebook to the Rangeley Lakes: *Farrar's Illustrated Guide Book to Rangeley, Richardson, Kennebago, Umbagog, and Parmarchenee Lakes, the Head-waters of the Connecticut, Dixville Notch, and Andover, ME., and Vicinity*. This book described the services available to travelers that were located along the three major routes to access the Rangeleys.

Two years later, he authored a similar book for Moosehead Lake: *Farrar's Illustrated Guide Book to Moosehead Lake and Vicinity, the Wilds of Northern Maine, and the Head-waters of the Kennebec, Penobscot, and St. John Rivers*. Between 1876 and 1892, the Rangeley Lakes Guide went through 12 editions, whereas the Moosehead Lake Guide went through 9 editions (1878 to 1889). By studying these guidebooks in chronological order, the reader can see what facilities were available to the regions' visitors, who owned and managed these facilities, how and when the facilities were improved, distances and travel times between locations, costs associated with the different services, and other information of use to the traveler.

The text and advertisements in Farrar's guidebooks are a useful source of primary historical information. Farrar's guidebooks are exceptionally well illustrated with woodcuts. To ensure accurate illustrations, on at least one occasion Farrar hired a photographer to accompany him into the wilds of Maine. Later, these photographs were turned into stereoviews (which Farrar called "stereoscopic views") and cabinet photographs. While somewhat difficult to find today, these photographs provide a visual record of life in western Maine during the later 1800s.

In addition to being exceptionally well illustrated, Farrar's guidebooks — as was customary for guidebooks to the Maine woods for this period — were often issued with detailed maps of the region covered in the guide. Farrar went even further with his maps (as did other guidebook authors), issuing stand-alone maps for the Rangeley Lakes, Moosehead Lake, and Dead River regions. One version of these maps had hard covers and was designed to be carried into the woods in a pocket as an easy-to-use reference.

FARRAR & JOHNSON,  
**Steam Job Printers.**

Every description of Book, Card and Job  
Printing, neatly and promptly done.  
ESTIMATES CHEERFULLY GIVEN!

**HOTEL PRINTING,**  
SUCH AS  
*Bill Heads, Letter Heads, Envelopes, Bills of  
Fare, Wine Cards, Checks, Labels, &c.,*  
Printed in a superior manner, and sent to any part of the country.  
VIEWS OF HOTELS Engraved in the highest style of the art, at  
reasonable prices. Estimates for Engraving furnished on call.

OUR SPECIALTY,  
**Railroad AND Show Printing**  
NUMBERED COUPON TICKETS,  
FOR  
**Railroads, Theatres and Concerts,**  
Executed in a superior manner, at satisfactory prices.  
ORDERS FILLED FOR  
**STATIONERY AND BLANK BOOKS.**  
*383 Washington Street,*  
TOP FLOOR OF WASHINGTON BUILDING,  
CHARLES A. J. FARRAR, }  
WALTER B. JOHNSON. } **BOSTON.**

In early adulthood, Farrar trained to become a printer. This advertisement was the first page from his first edition of the *Rangeley Lakes Guidebook*, published by Farrar & Johnson Printers of Boston. Farrar used his printer's skills to create and publish books, maps and photographs that promoted adventures in the Maine woods, especially in the Rangeley Lakes region.

In addition to fact-based guidebooks, and high quality maps and photographs, Farrar labored to capture the imagination of potential travelers by writing semi-factual and even fictional travel adventures. These books were aimed at the younger reader.

His two semi-guidebooks were based on real incidents in his life, with the liberal addition of details to enhance the narrative. The two titles under this category were *Camp Life in the Wilderness — A Tale of Richardson Lakes* (published in 1879, 1882, 1890, and 1892) and *From Lake to Lake, or A Trip Across Country* (published in 1887, 1889, and 1890). Like his guidebooks, these books can be found in both soft and hard covers.

Farrar's juvenile fiction was published by Lee &

Shepard in what was called the **Lake and Forest Series**. The four titles in the series were as follows: *Eastward Ho! or Adventures at Rangeley Lakes* (printed in 1880, 1884, 1887, and 1889); *Wild Woods Life; or, A Trip to Parmachenee* (1884, 1889, 1897, and 1902); *Down the West Branch; or, Camps and Tramps Around Katahdin* (1885, 1886, 1889, and 1898); and *Up the North Branch; A Summer's Outing* (1888, 1889, and 1897).

Farrar claimed that "This series of books is having a phenomenal sale, several editions of each volume having already been issued. The books are as great favorites with old people as with young, and have also met with a hearty reception from the gentle sex." Given the number of times the above titles were printed, and the length of time the titles were kept available to the public, it's obvious that Farrar's Lake and Forest books sold exceptionally well.

Farrar's life was not without incident. In August 1866, the Boston lawyer who was Farrar's major partner in the R-RLTC was arrested for embezzlement. Throughout the summer and fall this scandal appeared on the front pages of the major newspapers in Boston and New York City. While the story died out when the lawyer was sentenced to "serve four years and three months at hard labor, with one day's solitary confinement," the incident continued to weigh heavily on Farrar.

Not to be stopped by adversity, Farrar continued to improve his transportation company. In September 1892 he announced that he was supervising construction of his sixth steamboat. This steamboat was to be 75 feet long and 17 feet across; this would be Farrar's largest boat. Named the "Capt. Farrar," it had two steam engines and twin screws, and was designed to carry two hundred passengers. In Farrar's words, this steamer "Will be finished in the best style both inside

and out, and will be the largest and most comfortable boat in the whole [Rangeley] lake region and probably the fastest."

This same year, at age 50, Farrar launched yet another publishing project: **The Sportsman and Tourist**. This weekly ran from February 1891 until at least October 1892. With Farrar as editor and primary author, this

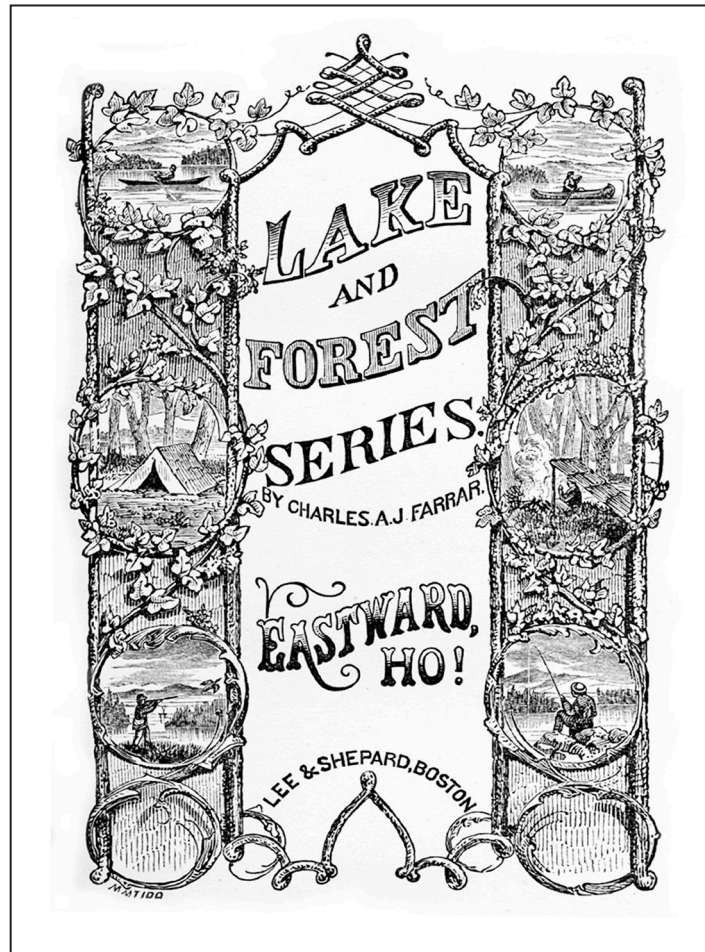
periodical carried mostly articles about travel in the Rangeley Lakes Region, but also had articles from other areas, ranging from Florida to New Brunswick, Canada. The same year that Farrar launched **The Sportsman and Tourist**, his last book was published: *Through the Wilds; A Record of Sport and Adventure in the Forests of New Hampshire and Maine* was issued by Estes and Lauriat in Boston. It cost him nearly \$10,000 to produce and contained 415 pages with more than 300 woodcuts and photographs. *Through the Wilds* was the capstone to Farrar's publishing career.

This period of Farrar's life was a time of both tragedy as well as triumph. In August 1891, his beloved wife died. She was only in her 52nd year. Through their years together the couple had grown close. The couple

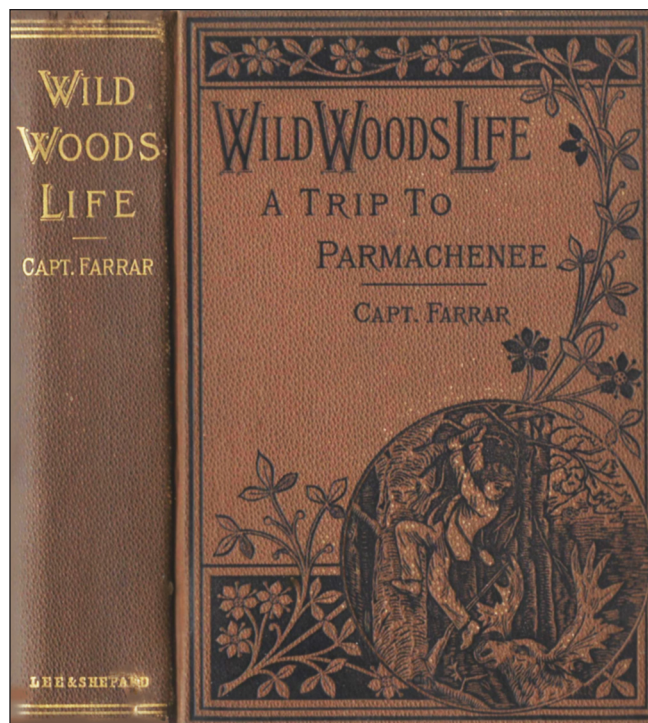
did not have any children, and she often traveled with her husband. Farrar dedicated *Up the North the Branch* to her (many of his books were dedicated to family and friends), writing, "To my wife, Rose Austin Farrar, whose faith and interest in my success have encouraged me to persevere against many difficulties in literary work."

In an obituary about his wife, Farrar wrote: "With malice toward none and charity for all, her life could not help being beautiful; and of her it could be truly said that all who knew her loved her. Very few people had a larger circle of friends, for, with her bright, sunny

(Continued on Page 12)



The decorative title page for the initial book in Farrar's **Lake and Forest Series** (Lee & Shepard, 1880-1888). The covers of the four books are reproduced on Pages 12-13.



## Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar

(Continued from Page 11)

disposition and kindly feelings towards all, it could not be otherwise." Of his own situation, Farrar goes on in the obituary to reveal that "Within ten years the editor has lost mother, brother, and wife, and is now alone, the last of his family; but in his loneliness he has the satisfaction of knowing that everything that a loving husband could do for a dear wife he did for Mrs. Farrar, and the kind words of sympathy and respect, and the touching letters from dear friends now away on their summer outings, are additional consolation in his hour of greatest sorrow."

In January 1893, one year and five months after his Rose's passing, Charles A. J. Farrar died at his Jamaica Plain home. He was 51 years old. Seven years after Farrar's death, the steamboat "Capt. Farrar" was hauled up on an island and burnt. So ended the lives of a prolific writer and his transportation company. But what of Farrar's legacy?

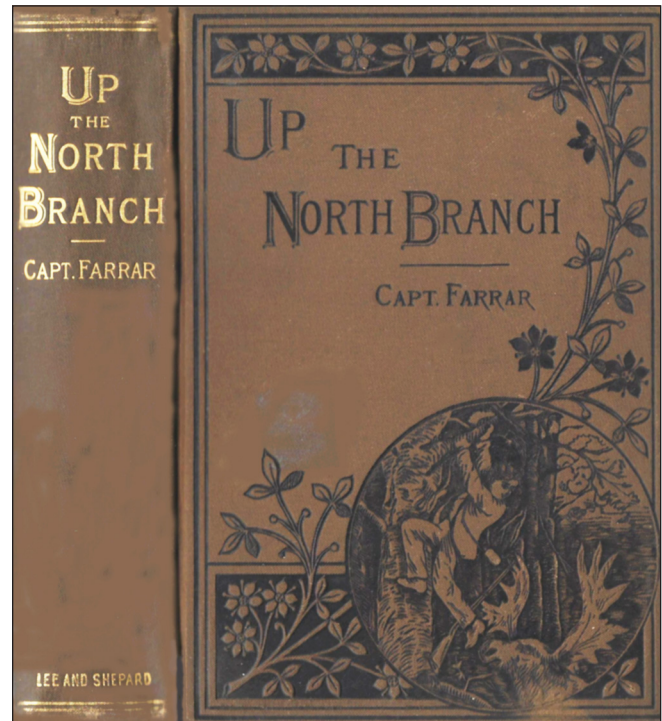
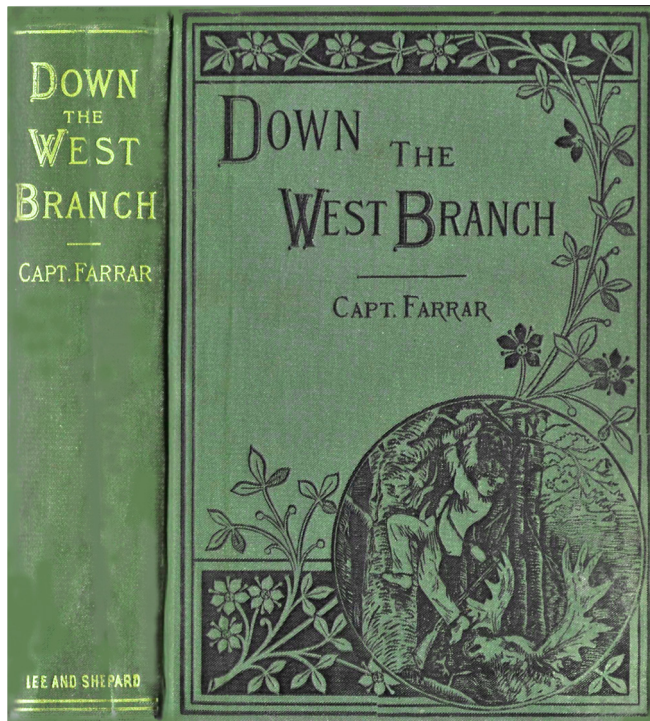
Fifteen years after Farrar's death, his long-time competitor in the hotel and transportation business, Capt. Fred C. Barker, wrote in the *Phillips Phonograph*, "He [Farrar] wrote up the region and interested the transportation companies in its possibilities and although in many respects he may not have been the man for the place and made many mistakes, no one played

harder luck ... He followed [after his wife's death] a little later after a few years of broken health, wasted energies, and an unsatisfactory and unprofitable business experience."

Other assessments of Farrar's accomplishments by his contemporaries were not as harsh as Barker's. For example, shortly after Farrar's death, Boston newspaper man William K. Moody wrote an obituary appearing in *Forest and Stream*, declaring that "Capt. Farrar has done more to make the Rangeley Lakes famous than any other man. ... The railway and hotel interests of Maine owe to Capt. Farrar a debt of gratitude, and yet in his lifetime the debt was hardly more than grudgingly acknowledged."

A more recent assessment of Farrar that appeared in *Angling Books of the Americas* (1975), authored by Henry P. Burns, was also positive: "All of Farrar's works are fascinating Americana, with detailed information about an almost untouched wilderness, not primitive, or savage, merely unused. The pages of advertising are historically informative and historically important. Full of angling, the books are important to the collector, but he must compete with the collector of all Americana. All Farrar works are scarce to very scarce."

Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar was an actor, author, editor, printer, and publisher. He was also a steamboat owner and operator — an entrepreneur and manager of a complex, integrated transportation business. As a person, Farrar was an attention getter, out-going, ambitious and



hard-working, meticulous, and always the optimistic romantic. He was at times unrealistic, a risk taker who both succeeded and failed.

Despite a relatively short life, Farrar was a prolific writer, producing a wide variety of printed works. Always the promoter, his fictional and semi-fictional books should be viewed skeptically by the historical reader, but with careful scrutiny Farrar's works provide many insights into 19th century life in western Maine. His guidebooks, periodicals, maps, and photographs — in contrast — provide a wealth of primary facts deserving serious study. But whether fact or fiction, the underlying theme in all of Farrar's works was simple: "Come to western Maine and experience the adventure of a lifetime." Not bluntly stated, but still present was his secondary message: "And I have the physical means to get you into the wilds of Maine and back out."

In conclusion, we should remember Charles A. J. Farrar as an early, effective, and innovative promoter of tourism in western Maine (and beyond). While Farrar's work was a little earlier than that of Fly Rod Crosby, and while focused on a different area (he on the lower Rangeley Lakes, she on the upper Rangeleys), the depth and breadth of the many documents he left behind both tell and show the story of what life was like in western Maine during the late 1800s. Because of a record of significant accomplishments, Charles A. J. Farrar is just as deserving of recognition as is Cornelia

T. Crosby, although by no means is Farrar the last of the early promoters of Maine tourism still to be rediscovered (e.g., consider George H. Haynes, author of *The Island Gems of Beautiful Casco Bay, Portland, Maine*, and *The State of Maine in 1893*).

\* \* \*

**About the author:** William B. Krohn, Ph. D., is an authority on the historical occurrence and changing distributions of various wildlife species in northern New England, especially Maine. His books have documented the lives and works of two early Maine naturalists: Manly Hardy from Brewer (this book is now out-of-print), and Joshua G. Rich, who spent his later years in Bethel (copies available through the Bethel Historical Society's museum shop). Dr. Krohn is also the senior author of *Early Maine Wildlife*, a reference book documenting historical data about three species of deer and four species of large predators (available through the University of Maine Press, Orono).

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**Editor's note:** The cover images for the four books in the *Lake and Forest Series* were provided by Robert E. Kasper (PF-327). The Horatio Alger Society wishes to thank Bethel Historical Society chief executive officer Randall Bennett for granting permission to reprint Dr. Krohn's article (with accompanying images) in *Newsboy*.

•An excerpt from one of Capt. Charles A. J. Farrar's best-known Maine travel guides follows on Page 14.

# Routes from Boston to the Lakes Region

Excerpt from Chapter III of Charles A. J. Farrar's 1881 *Illustrated Guide Book to Rangeley, Richardson, Kennebago, Umbagog, and Parmachenee Lakes*

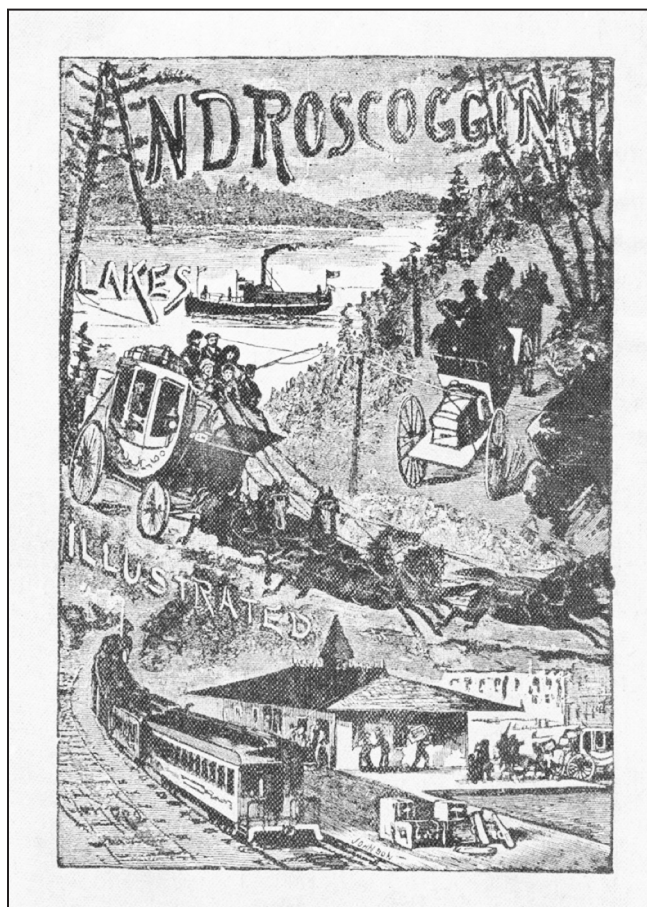
"The ride from Portland is very pleasant, and you pass through the towns of Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, Pownal, New Gloucester, Danville Junction, Mechanic Falls, Oxford, South Paris, Bryant's Pond, Locke's Mills, reaching Bethel, 70 miles from Portland, and 178 from Boston, at 5 o'clock. At the depot you are met by Mr. Barden's team, which takes you to the BETHEL HOUSE. This house is kept by J. F. BARDEN, and is one of the best hotels in the mountain region.. Situated on the summit of Bethel Hill, and most pleasantly located on the main street of the village, it commands one of the finest mountain views to be obtained in that section. The proprietor and his estimable lady, ever courteous and attentive to the wants of their guests, are favorites with the traveling public; its *cuisine* is excellent and worthy all praise, and the terms of the house are moderate. Persons *en route* to the lakes by way of Upton, stop here for supper, and those who are not pressed for time will find it to their advantage to spend the night at this house, and procure a private team in the morning, enabling them to drive through the celebrated Grafton Notch by daylight.

"Mr. J. S. Lane, proprietor of the stage line between Bethel and Upton, Lake Umbagog, meets both the morning and afternoon trains, and will take passengers through without delay on regular excursion tickets. The distance is 26 miles, local fare \$2.50, and running time five hours. Parties at Bethel on the morning train have the entire ride by daylight. Mr. Lane will also take passengers to Andover, or other surrounding towns, at reasonable prices.

"In driving out of Bethel, you will obtain two very handsome views of the valley of the Androscoggin River and surrounding mountains; the first from the railroad bridge, and the second from a place in the road near a public watering-trough. This is before you reach the river, and you should not miss it. Crossing the river, you pass Mayville and Swan's Corner, P. O., the stage rolling merrily along the pleasant road.

"You soon come to the Sunday River, a tributary of the Androscoggin, which is also crossed by means of a bridge, and a little farther on the Bear-River Bridge, passing the Bear-River tavern, which is six miles from the Bethel House, and enter the town of Newry, a small place of a few hundred inhabitants.

"Following up the Bear River you reach a hotel, standing on the right-hand side of the road, known as the POPLAR



This illustration was on hard-copy editions from the late 1880s of Farrar's *Illustrated Guide Book to Rangeley, Richardson, Kennebago, Umbagog, and Parmachenee Lakes*.

TAVERN, eleven miles from the Bethel House.

"The old 'Popple Tavern,' as it used to be called, is kept by Mr. Charles Bartlett, who has been the proprietor for the last twelve years. He has recently added a new story to the house, and enlarged and improved it in other respects, so that it now presents good inducements to tourists. It is in the vicinity of several excellent trout streams, and is very pleasantly located.

"The scenery at this place begins to grow wilder. The mountains appear nearer and more rugged. The road follows the narrow valley of Bear River, which here represents a picturesque appearance, it being a rapid torrent, broken by numerous falls, and rushes along its rocky bed, as if impatient of restraint. After heavy rains it is often difficult for the stage to pass.

"To the right of Poplar Tavern is a pretty, round-topped peak known as Puzzle Mountain, of considerable height; it is easily ascended from the hotel, and commands an extensive view of the surrounding country. A short distance beyond the hotel, on the left-hand side of the road, on the brink of the Bear River, is something of a curiosity known as the Devil's Horseshoes. It is an impression of two horseshoes, perfect in

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bill,

I was most intrigued with your article on Norman Rockwell in the July-August *Newsboy*. Of course I was familiar with Rockwell and his contributions to the old *Saturday Evening Post*, but no way did I know of his interest in Alger and his connections to boys' books. Your bibliography is just excellent, too (and I appreciate your list of sources).

By the way, I have the original *Post* issue of September 4, 1948, as it features actual Chicago Cubs players on the cover. Rockwell's "The Dugout" shows a dejected Chicago Cubs batboy standing morosely in front of a jeering crowd and a forlorn group of ballplayers in the dugout. Cubs fan and Chicago native Scott Simon, host of National Public Radio's "Weekend Edition," wrote in his marvelous memoir, *Home and Away* (2000) that he has a print of "The Dugout" hanging in his office. He believes the "national image of the Cubs as cuddlesome incompetents" probably began with the publication of this issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*.

The Cubs were not exactly incompetents this season (they had the National League's best overall record for much of the summer), but their offense certainly sputtered during the last month. Although they made the postseason for the fourth year in a row, the Milwaukee Brewers emerged as champions of the league. In fact,

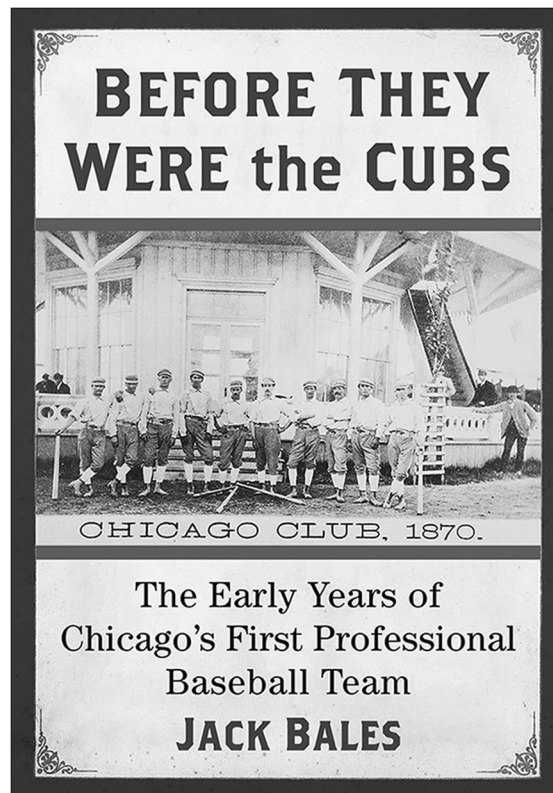
as I watched the Cubs in their final game against Milwaukee, I remembered your words of warning some months ago: "Watch out for the Brewers!"

The Cubs will be celebrating their 150th year in 2019 — soon after the publication of my book, *Before They Were the Cubs: The Early Years of Chicago's First Professional Baseball Team*, which is due out in January by McFarland, a leading publisher of baseball books and academic nonfiction. It took quite a few years of research and writing as I use — and cite — some 2,000 original sources.

I describe the club's planning stages of 1868; cover the decades when the ballplayers were variously called White Stockings, Colts, and Orphans; and relate how a sports writer first referred to the young players as Cubs in the March 27, 1902, issue of the *Chicago Daily News*. I have quite a few marvelous illustrations, too, including a heretofore unknown view of an old Chicago ballpark that I came across as I dutifully went through the *Chicago Evening Post* on microfilm, page by page. I spent hundreds of hours going through countless reels of microfilm, as many of the long-gone newspapers I needed were not available online.

Thanks, Bill, for a wonderful issue of *Newsboy*.

Cordially,  
Jack Bales (PF-258)  
422 Greenbrier Court  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
Email: jbales@umw.edu



form, worn deep into the solid ledge. They are immense in size, and one would cover the head of a flour-barrel. If the devil ever rode a horse with a foot sufficiently large to carry a shoe size of the impression in the ledge, the beast must have been as large as a mastodon.

"Proceeding onward, the dark-green peaks of Mount Saddleback [Baldplate], directly ahead, look down upon you in majestic splendor, and the loftier summit of Spreckled [Old Speck] Mountain towers far above you to the west. Directly opposite, and west of Saddleback Mountain, is a high, irregular queer-shaped mountain, known as Old Goose-Eye.

"Beyond Poplar Tavern quite a curiosity awaits you, known as "SCEW AUGER FALLS ... It is but a short distance from the road, on the left-hand side, and well worth a visit. An enormous granite ledge fills the whole bottom of the gorge; through this the stream has worn a large spiral channel. The Cañon, as one may appropriately term it, is about one hundred feet in length, and so narrow at some points that one can leap across it. Its greatest depth cannot be far from seventy feet, and the sides are as smooth as polished marble. Through the rock run veins of white quartz, mingled with other minerals."

## Editor's notebook

(Continued from Page 3)

low as 79 cents." Think of that when you see a pair of Michael Jordans or other celebrity-branded athletic shoes advertised for about \$200. Talk about inflation!

Anyway, this copy of *Tom Swift and his Motor Boat* was sold on eBay recently, and it includes a slip-off paper band with a message to buyers. This seller, in fact, had three copies, all sold as "buy it now" items a few weeks apart. The first went for \$19.99, the second for \$49.99 and the third for \$69.99. When they were all snatched up immediately, she obviously realized she had underpriced the books. When contacted by a fellow collector, she said she had no more copies for sale, unfortunately.

This example was possibly a promotional or remaindered copy, or maybe it was the way all copies of the Keds editions were offered. I missed out on these "buy it now" sales, and other collectors I have contacted say they had never seen this unusual edition before now.

The lower photo at right shows a 1931 printing of *Tom Swift and his Air Scout* with the top page edges colored red. I bought this book without knowledge of this special variant because the image in the eBay sale listing was a straight-on photo in which the page edges were not visible.

This is the so-called "gray tan" cloth binding, contemporary with the very scarce 1931 tan edition of *Tom Swift and his Giant Magnet*, since the advertisement in the back of both books lists the Tom Swift titles through *Giant Magnet*. Unlike the first-edition dust jacket issued for *Giant Magnet*, this one shows a somber Tom in a suit jacket on the spine, and the Don Sturdy ad on the back panel shows just seven titles and a map of the Sargasso Sea. Also, the volume number at the base of the dust jacket's spine is printed in blue ink instead of red. The *Giant Magnet* d/j shows the smiling, shirt-sleeved Tom on the spine, with an updated G&D Don Sturdy ad listing 11 titles along with two small wild animal images (a lion and a tiger). The dust jacket for the orange edition has just the lion image in order to accommodate an expanded title list to 12.

My guess is this was a transitional or (more likely) experimental edition since within a year, Grosset & Dunlap converted its Tom Swift binding to plain orange cloth with orange page tops and orange illustrated end papers, as part of the overall 1932 redesign of its series books. It's very scarce, since other Tom Swift collectors I know checked their copies and have none in this format. If you have one in your collection, please let me know!

