



THE HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

NEWSBOY



Horatio Alger, Jr.

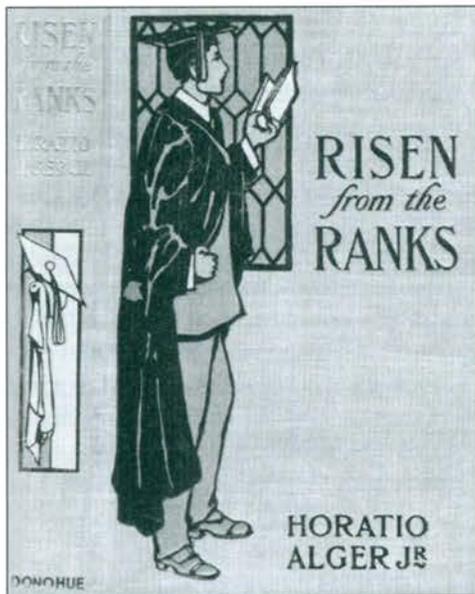
1832 - 1899

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

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NUMBER 4

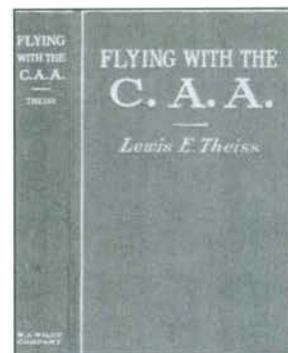


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President's column

New member Scott Galley (Ontario, Canada) thanked us for our "absolutely DELIGHTFUL gift" in the welcome box we sent, and added: "So thoughtful and generous of you and the Society. Really, I can't get over it. So kind. And signed and personalized! Honestly, it means a lot to me ... I am so glad that I joined the Society. Count on a lifetime member." [We included a signed copy of Scharnhorst and Bales' *Lost Life of Horatio Alger* that Jack contributed.] This is another indication that the membership committee is doing an excellent job of making new folks feel good about joining the Horatio Alger Society.

I'd also like to offer a big thanks to webmaster Bob Huber, who, despite the fact that he is working at his local Boy Scout camp all summer, has been fielding questions from several people about the value and possible disposition of Alger books (mostly reprint copies), or when a particular Alger short story was actually written. Bob has generously provided these individuals with thorough and careful responses, which I have seen.

Beauty is, as the saying goes, in the eye of the beholder. Our *Newsboy* editor told me he hates the Greek revival Ohio State Capitol dome pictured in this issue, and he thinks the architect [actually, there were several] should have been fired! I stumbled across this photo of two newsboys in front of the Capitol while participating in a superb Policy History conference in Columbus on June 7-9. Aren't you glad that we find

(Continued on Page 6)



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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Changes of address and other correspondence should be sent to **Horatio Alger Society, 1004 School St., Shelbyville, IN 46176.**

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

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 those free "Alger for sale" ads to the editor at the above address, where you can also send "Letters to the Editor" by regular mail or by e-mail to hasnewsboy@aol.com.

Editor's notebook

How I found my first Alger book!

Most of us have our favorite story of how we found a special book. Most of the stories are the result of pure luck (we're not talking Internet here). One mid-June Saturday morning at least 25 years ago I left the Printer's Row Book Fair in Chicago empty-handed and discouraged. It's an hour-plus drive to downtown Chicago from where I lived in the suburbs.

Anyway, I had just walked onto Polk Street at the bottom end of the show, on Dearborn, and I noticed a woman was just setting up her table display on Polk. There, just begging "take me home," was a fine first-edition copy of *Sam Steele's Adventures in Panama* (Reilly & Britton, 1907), by "Capt. Hugh Fitzgerald," a pseudonym of L. Frank Baum, a Chicago author.

The two-volume **Sam Steele Series**, later incorporated as the first two volumes in the **Boy Fortune Hunters Series**, with the Baum *nom de plume* changed to "Floyd Akers," are extremely scarce, with only one printing. I paid less than \$10 for a book worth at that time at least 40 times that number.

But this story (set in the late 1970s) is about an Alger — in fact, my very first Alger — and I wasn't even an Alger collector! I bought it because the cover was like new and pretty. Best of all, I paid one buck for it! The dealer's price was written in pencil at \$7.50, then progressively reduced to \$5.00, \$3.50 and finally, to \$1.00. And most intriguing of all, the dealer also had originally stated in pencil "1st edition," then crossing that out as well. At the time, I wouldn't have recognized an Alger first edition if it slapped me in the face. It would be several years before I joined the Horatio Alger Society.

At that time, my collecting interests were centered on Tom Swift and a couple other Stratemeyer Syndicate

Series (Don Study and The Radio Boys), plus the books of Leo Edwards. That's an easy way to waste gas driving around back roads to some hard-to-reach barn.

The Rodgers Book Barn answers that description. It's on a dirt road in eastern New York State, in the county (Columbia) where I grew up. While on summer vacation (probably 1978 or 1979), I arrived there late one afternoon and found a beautiful little barn (more like a large shed), with a prominent sign reading "Book Barn." Upon entering I found the children's books in a tiny room on the second floor.

However, there were lots of nice books but mostly picture books for pre-teens. Not a series book in sight, not even a Nancy Drew or Hardy Boys!

While walking out, I glanced into a little alcove under the staircase on the first floor, and there it was: *Risen from the Ranks*, by Horatio Alger, Jr. The publisher was M.A. Donohue, a familiar name but one with no books in my collection, which was almost exclusively Grosset & Dunlap. The book was beautiful and, as I said, like new, showing a young lad in graduation robe standing in front of a stained-glass window. The condition being so nice, I gave the shop owner my hard-earned one-dollar bill.

Now, we shift to this month while preparing this issue of **Newsboy**. One of the cover images sent by Scott Chase was so badly water-spotted that it looked like the target of a snowball fight. But the cover design looked familiar, so I reached for my Alger shelf and grabbed that Donohue title from so many years ago. Not only did the cover

match Chase's copy, but the title, *Risen from the Ranks*, matched as well. I decided to use it with Chase's article, and it is shown as Figure 4, at right, and also on Page 1.

I remember watching a movie while homebound during the first month of the pandemic, and one of the characters used the phrase "just a big coincidence" and the other character replied "I don't believe in coincidences. These days, I believe in miracles."

Why did I still have a one-dollar Alger reprint after so many years? It must have been a miracle, I guess. I didn't know its significance until reading Scott Chase's article, and I hope you enjoy reading it as well.



The Rodgers Book Barn is still open for business in eastern New York. Rodgers Book Barn website

Donohue's *Onward Series* – The Alger formats defined



Fig. 2 — Alger *Way to Success Series* (Donohue Rower format edition).

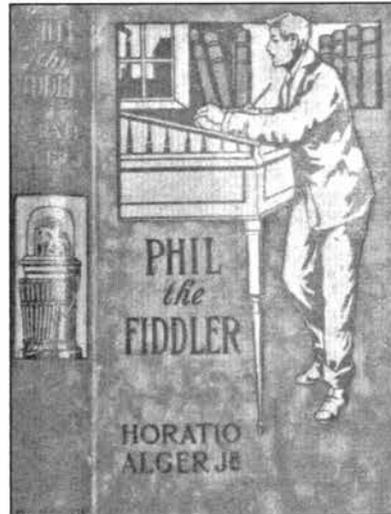


Fig. 3 — Alger *Tattered Tom Series* (Donohue Accountant format edition).



Fig. 4 — Alger *Luck and Pluck Series* (Donohue Graduate format edition).

(Continued from Page 3)

Strive and Succeed, Strong and Steady, Try and Trust; **Tattered Tom Series** – *Julius the Street Boy, Paul the Peddler, Phil the Fiddler, Sam's Chance, Slow and Sure, The Young Outlaw*; **Way to Success Series** – *Bob Burton, Facing the World, In a New World, Luke Walton, The Store Boy, Struggling Upward*.

A brief discussion about the method used should be helpful. Comparing the features of the *Onward Series* books detailed in the Donohue ad, three colors and gold, stamped instead of an applique' and printed and bound with quality paper and cloth, all but three formats defined in the Donohue reference book can be ruled out. These formats are, as named in the reference book, Format 4 – Rower Format, Format 6 – Accountant Format, and Format 9 – Graduate Format.

Then comparing the list of titles “found to date” in the Donohue reference book for each of these three formats to the titles in the Donohue ad for the three Alger *Onward Series*, the formats can be assigned to each series. This comparison shows that Format 4 (Rower) is the **Way to Success Series**, Format 6 (Accountant) is the **Tattered Tom Series**, and Format 9 (Graduate) is the **Luck and Pluck Series**. An example each of these formats is shown in Figures 2, 3, and 4, respectively.

What makes assigning the formats to the three Alger Series somewhat challenging, is four of the *Onward* titles appear in two formats. *Luke Walton* and *The Store Boy* both appear in Formats 4 & 6, and *Bound to Rise* and *Phil the Fiddler* both appear in Formats 6 & 9. However, the other *Onward* titles only appear in the defined formats so the stated format assignments are likely correct.

It should be noted that although there are only six

titles in each of the three Alger *Onward Series*, there are 10 or more titles in each of the three Donohue formats. The three *Onward Series* are subsets of the three formats defined in the Donohue reference book. It is unknown why Donohue selected the six particular titles for each of the *Onward Series*.

Although not all six titles for each of the three Alger *Onward Series* were found when the Donohue reference book was published, 16 of 18 titles are given in the book. One additional title, *Luke Walton* (Way to Success), was found at Northern Illinois University. The one “missing” title that has not yet been found, *Julius, the Street Boy* in the *Tattered Tom Onward Series*, will likely turn up at some point.

Although my *Onward Series* copies are quite worn, these books are nice looking with gold lettering on the spine and colorful front cover designs. They are higher quality and any of Alger's six-book sets would be a nice addition to any collection.

I want to thank the staff at the Rare Books and Special Collections Department at Northern Illinois University for locating and scanning the one *Onward Series* title. Thanks also to editor Bill Gowen, who provided the excellent cover image of the Donohue edition of *Risen from the Ranks*. I also want to thank my dad, Brad Chase, for writing his Donohue reference book, which provided the groundwork for this article. Lastly, I want to thank my wife, Lisa, for editing yet another Alger article. Thank you all.

NOTES

1. Chase, Bradford S. *Horatio Alger Books Published by M. A. Donohue & Co.* Enfield, CT: Sandpiper Publishing, 1994.
2. Alger, Horatio, Jr. *Young Explorer*. Chicago: M. A. Donohue & Co., ca. 1910.

President's column

(Continued from Page 2)

beauty in well-preserved books, which are reasonably compact and easy enough to display? Many proud finds by Horatio Alger Society members are within financial reach of ordinary mortals (not like some Bruce Lisman pre-1900 American literary collection items Christies auctioned in June).

I know a few of you collect bigger and bulkier items, too. But not, as far as I know, vintage John Deere lawn and garden tractors! I was stunned to read (**The Wall Street Journal**, 6/30/23) that there are folks who comb the country looking for, restoring, displaying, and going to conventions featuring vintage John Deere tractors! Do some people drive their prized vehicles there (like the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, which I once stumbled upon in South Dakota)?

This year, the biannual collector's show, the John Deere Classic Green Reunion, took place in Lebanon, Tennessee. One collector owns 78 lawn-and-garden tractors, 11 full-size ones, plus 23 snowmobiles. I know Bob Petitto can identify with the highly skilled people who make parts for these "beauties" when parts are no longer available. How does one even display these prized possessions (even though there are some miniatures)? One of their Facebook groups has 25,000 members; maybe we can learn some of their secrets. Says one John Deere group member: "The thrill of the hunt can be addictive" — duh, yeah. I'd love to hear from H.A.S. members who think they collect the *weirdest* things — and I already know about the moustache cups and old advertising signs — you know who you are!

Finally, several of you reacted to news shortly after July 4th (**Business Insider**, **New York Times**) that Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas benefited greatly from connections he made through the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans. Since this has been front page news, you may be fielding inquiries from friends and acquaintances (I got one from outside the H.A.S. recently.) Let me help set the record straight on a few matters.

The Horatio Alger Society is not affiliated with the Horatio Alger Association, and we have divergent mission statements. One of the Association's chief missions is to induct as lifetime members "contemporary role models whose experiences exemplify that opportunities for a successful life are available to all individuals who are dedicated to the principles of integrity, hard work, perseverance, and compassion for others." As we do on a *much* smaller scale, the H.A.A. offers college scholarships to students who have faced

Mission statement of the Horatio Alger Society

A. To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr. and to encourage the spirit of "Strive and Succeed" that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes. "Strive and Succeed" is the concept that success is earned and character is developed by following principles of honesty, integrity, hard work, industry, and good sportsmanship.

B. To maintain a program of scholarships for promising young people who emulate the ideals of Horatio Alger, Jr.

C. To foster scholarly research devoted to Horatio Alger, Jr. and similar authors, and of the influence of their works on American culture, through face-to-face dialogue and electronic media exchange.

D. To serve as a comprehensive source for information about Horatio Alger, Jr. and his works, through social media, a website, and a newsletter.

E. To support institutions that maintain collections of the works of Horatio Alger, Jr. and similar authors.

F. To embrace collectors and enthusiasts of all juvenile literature, including boys' and girls' series books, pulps, and dime novels.

G. To provide an estate service for disposal of private collections devoted to Horatio Alger, Jr. and similar authors.

and overcome great adversity. The Association mentors scholarship recipients and seeks to educate youth about the "limitless possibilities that are available through the American free enterprise system ..." The purpose of the H.A.S. — beyond what is printed in each issue of **Newsboy** — is found in Article II of our Constitution. Our full mission statement was last published in **Newsboy** in the November-December 2016 issue; that was quite a while ago, so we are reprinting it here.

The two organizations have worked together beneficially on various projects. One example is the fruitful collaboration to get the 20-cent Horatio Alger stamp issued. Helen M. Gray, then the executive director of the Association, Brad Chase (PF-412) and Bob Williman (PF-569) were key players in finally making this happen in 1982. Brad's 30-year retrospective article on the Alger stamp was published in the July-August 2012 **Newsboy**.

Another example is found in the contributions Brad Chase and Jack Bales made to updating the Horatio Alger biography for the Association when the executive director reached out for help in the run-up to its 75th

July 4th and 'The Fredericksburg Fourth'

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much more. It is hard to beat July 4 in a relatively small town, but other days aren't bad either. Every once in a while, I meander around the city streets, checking out the old shops and seeing what new ones have opened. While strolling down crowded aisles, there's always the possibility of unearthing a valuable "find" or two. My favorite, purchased at a downtown antique mall some 30 years ago, is a sturdy coffee table with a top that lifts up to form a desk. It was on sale for 50 percent off, and over the years I — and even my children — found it invaluable as we worked on assorted activities.

I also picked up, many years ago, an old-fashioned solid wood four-by-six-inch card drawer, in which I keep hundreds (thousands?) of note cards for my various research and writing projects.

Are treasures still available? You bet! For months, Rob Kasper has been looking for a new barrister bookcase, and he recently found one in the same antique mall where I discovered my coffee table.

H.A.S. members and guests at this past May's convention got to see a lot of the city during our "trolley tour" of Fredericksburg, which for me was a



The barrister bookcase that Rob Kasper found in downtown Fredericksburg, now filled with some of his many Alger books. Photo by Rob Kasper

real highlight. One, it was a gorgeous day — perfect for such an event — and two, our driver was personable, affable, and the ideal person to lead such a tour. (As I mentioned in the convention **Newsboy** issue, he even let me interject a few things here and there as we drove around the city.)

The Horatio Alger Society convention will be returning to Fredericksburg next year for the fourth time in a row, from Thursday, May 2 to Sunday, May 5, 2024. I have arranged for a personalized tour of the Civil War hospital, Chatham Manor, for our Saturday afternoon activity, and I will provide a write-up about the mansion in an upcoming issue of **Newsboy**.

Chatham is probably my favorite historical locale in town, and whenever I stop by I think of poet Walt Whitman, Clara Barton, and the others who assisted army surgeons taking care of thousands of wounded soldiers from both sides following the 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg. The house overlooks the Rappahannock River, and the rolling grounds make it a perfect spot for walking and personal reflection.

I look forward to seeing you at "The Fredericksburg Fourth," here in Fredericksburg, Virginia, next May!

anniversary. The Association made a generous \$5,000 donation to the H.A.S. in thanks for that help.

If you have friends who read the recent news and who confuse the two organizations, I would not be surprised.

On August 10th, ProPublica investigative reporter Justin Elliott, interviewed on Erin Burnett's CNN "OutFront" show for his work on gifts to Justice Thomas, accidentally linked him to the "Horatio Alger Society." I asked Elliott if he would make an online correction, and he did so on Facebook on August 15th.

You might tell your friends that annual H.A.S. awards are plaques, not medals, and that anyone can be a member of the H.A.S. Our awards (alas) are not given out in the SCOTUS courtroom, although this has been the case for the H.A.A. Distinguished American award recipients following Thomas's award in 2010. Those

of you who have a copy of our membership directory (yes, I hear a new one is coming) will notice that we do not count among our current or late members the likes of Hank Aaron, Roger Ailes, Buzz Aldrin, Maya Angelou or Gene Autry (just a few of the As from the Association's inductee/membership list).

While the Horatio Alger Society doesn't have a lot of highflyers, and no member has seen fit to give me an 1877 Loring *The New Schoolma'am* or equivalent, we do have a lot of fun when we get together each spring.

Your Partic'lar Friend,
Carol Nackenoff (PF-921)
302 S. Chester Road
Swarthmore, PA 19081
Email: cnacken1@swarthmore.edu

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TEN YEARS AMONG THE NEWSBOYS.



FOUND DEAD IN THE STREET.

[Published by Permission of W. F. Shaw. Words and Music by Prof. Thos. P. Westendorf.]

DEDICATED TO COL. ALEXANDER HOGELAND.

How cold was the night, and how sad was the plight,
Of the poor little newsboy that wandered the street!
No shelter, no bed for his weary head,
Uncared for he tramps through the snow and sleet.
The proud pass him by, they heed not his sigh,
Nor care though the tears freeze upon his young cheek;
Their lives are not sad, then why should this lad
Delay them in finding the pleasure they seek?

TEN YEARS AMONG THE NEWSBOYS.

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CHORUS.

Out in the street, his poor bare feet
Trudging along in the snow and the sleet;
O Father, in love look down from above
On the poor little newsboy alone in the street.

Still colder the blast, and the snow falling fast,
Benumbed the bare feet of the half-frozen child,
His hands are so cold, his papers unsold,
And the heart in his bosom is throbbing so wild.
Once more hear him cry, "My papers, who'll buy?"
"Oh! is there not some one that cares though I die?"
A shivering chill, and then all is still,
While softly the snow-flakes come down from the sky.

The morning's bright glow falls soft on the snow,
As it covers, in pity, the poor little form;
See the old tattered coat drawn so close to his throat,
How it sparkles with jewels that fell in the storm!
But he's dead; oh! he's dead, his spirit has fled.
And far up in heaven the angels will greet,
With welcome of love to the pleasures above,
The poor little newsboy that died in the street.

SECOND CHORUS.

Out of the street, the snow and sleet,
Gone is his spirit the angels to meet;
No longer he'll roam without any home,
For the poor little newsboy, he's dead on the street.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bill:

Accepting the challenge from Eugene Bartlett (*Newsboy*, May-June 2023) for a song about a newsboy, I submit the song "Found Dead in the Street," with words and music by Prof. Thos. P. Westendorf and dedicated to Col. Alexander Hogeland, author of the book *Ten Years Among the Newsboys*, J. P. Morton and Company, 1883.

Sincerely,
Bill Stone (PF-1113)
2084 Grasmere Drive
Louisville, KY 40205
ston4100@bellsouth.net

Editor's note: The text of the song is reproduced here from Hogeland's book, pages 124-125. New reprint editions of *Ten Years Among the Newsboys* are available (softcover or hardcover) from www.amazon.com and www.abebooks.com.

Hi Bill,

I have been discovering some things in my collection as I move along with the catalogue. Here are three things of note:

The first is that Gilbert Patten's *Clif Stirling, Sophomore at Stormbridge* (David McKay, 1916) does exist with the gilt lettering on the spine (see Page 9). As far back as Harry Hudson, it was stated that the final title in that series was issued only with the spine lettering in white, but I have acquired a copy with gilt lettering. All other statements made in Hudson's bibliography and the Mattson and Davis guide are true; the gilt-lettered book does not have any internals and the binding cloth has a faint weave, unlike the other four. You may have acquired one along the line, but this is the first one I have seen.

Another interesting fact is my white-lettered copy of the book has a gift inscription from Xmas 1916, the year the book was issued. This leads me to think that there was likely only one printing with the gilt lettering, as by Xmas of the same year, the white-lettered copy was being sold.

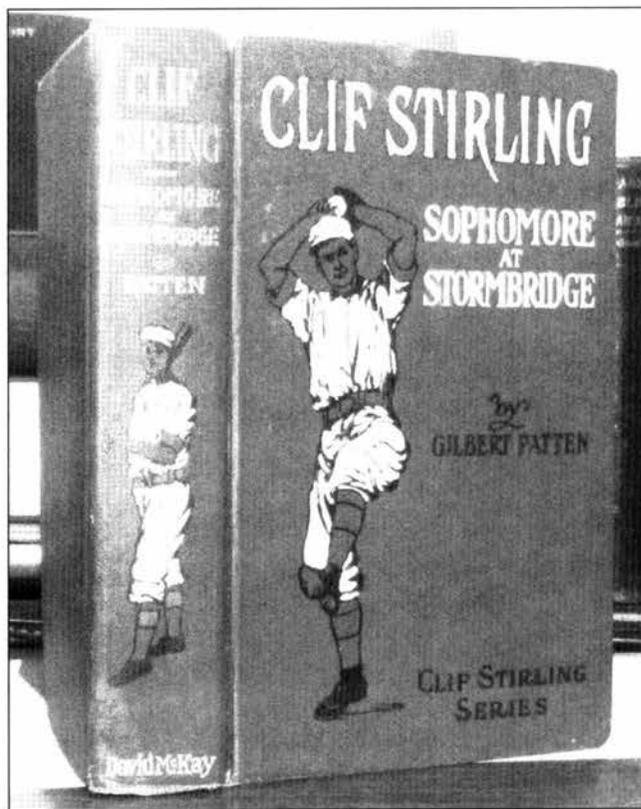
I also located a copy of W. Gordon Parker's *Rival Boy Sportsmen* (Lee & Shepard, 1900) in dust jacket, but the real find here is the advance review notice still laid in. This book, in the Deer Lodge Series, was issued in 1900, so it ties my oldest dust jacket, and the notice becomes the oldest one of those that I have. My two oldest notices are Lee & Shepard (for the above) and Lothrop, Lee & Shepard (*Raymond Benson at Krampton* — 1906). I have a couple of others prior to 1930, and another from 1960. They are not very common in juveniles, although my adult fiction collection has quite a few of them.

One interesting fact is that I had always believed they were just laid in copies of the first books off the press and were sent to media representatives who would give the book a review. There did not seem to be a specific number printed for this.

However, in 1922, Houghton Mifflin issued Everett Tomlinson's *The Mystery of the Ramapo Pass*. My copy has an advance notice bound in just prior to the text, which indicates that the publisher had selected the number of advance copies before the binding process began. A specific number of copies were bound, where in all other circumstances, a book could be taken from stock, a notice laid in, and then sent to a recipient who would give the book a review.

The third scan I found while checking on illustrator Will Crawford when I was entering the information for Patten's *Jud and Joe* (Crawford did the art). Crawford was evidently well known in the early part of the 20th century, making many political-oriented pieces of artwork that were published in various magazines. The one I am sending you is particularly relevant at this time, although the art was originally published with the title *Extinct* in 1912, pertaining to the 1912 presidential election. It seems very fitting now, and if you can, please spread it around. I have no social media connections, and I doubt you have many, but if you do, put it out there. It's all the GOP deserves. Just Google Will Crawford to see more.

One other piece of news. I managed to acquire another ALS (author's letter, signed) by Ralph Paine. He writes to a fan who had requested an autograph, a



Mr. Parshley, and mentions that he does quite a bit of maritime research for his books. It is dated April 1924, just a year before Paine's death. As to the recipient, no first name is given, but I located two possibles — Howard Morgan Parshley and William Wilson Parshley. Both were contemporaries and lived in New England. More on that if I can pin the addressee down.

Hope this is of some interest. Make a note in your Mattson and Davis guide on the *Clif Stirling, Sophomore at Stormbridge* spine lettering.

Yours,
Bart J. Nyberg (PF-879)
4657 Mason St.
Omaha, NE 68106
lewarcher@aol.com

Editor's note: My copy of *Clif Stirling, Sophomore at Stormbridge* has white spine lettering, although as with my other titles in this series, I would classify the color as ivory rather than pure white (a phone call confirmed that ivory matches your copy). This is interesting, because I am certain that Jack Dizer's early Street & Smith Patten titles in the **Boys' Own Library** had pure white lettering. My article on the **BOL** ("Alger and Beyond" (*Newsboy*, September-October 2013) gave evidence that solid-color spine lettering preceded gold lettering in the S&S editions in this series. Because McKay's *Clif Stirling Series* is not part of the **Boys' Own Library**, different rules may apply.

MEMBERSHIP

New member (*corrected address*)

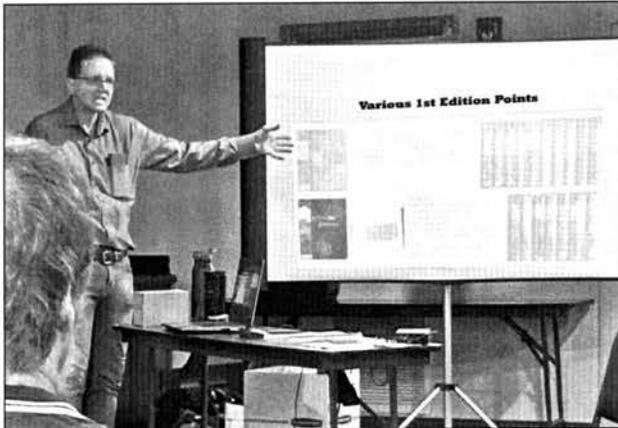
Scott Galley (PF-1157)

13633 Jane St.

Thamesville, ONTARIO NOP 2K0

CANADA

A glance back at the '23 convention



Bob Sipes leads a panel discussion titled "Alger Firsts, Reprints and More" during the Friday morning presentation session.

Photo by Jack Bales



Directors Keith Thompson and Bob Pettito chat in the hospitality room. Photo by Carol Nackenoff

New member Mark Muello is the winner of the special Virginia gift basket raffle created by Liane Houghtalin, left.

Photo by Bill Gowen



Bob Pettito and Jack Bales during Bales' Wednesday evening reception. Photo by Bill Gowen



Bob Sipes presents the Carl Hartmann Luck and Pluck Award to convention host Jack Bales.

Photo by Bill Gowen

Executive Director Bob Sipes receives the Richard Seddon Award from 2022 recipient Jack Bales.

Photo by Carol Nackenoff



The 'Cris' Criswell and 'Peewee' Dewire series by Lewis E. Theiss

By David K. Vaughan (PF-831)
(First of two parts)

Introduction: For over 20 years, Lewis Theiss helped to document the growth of aviation in America through his informative and entertaining books on that topic. He produced a steady stream of aviation books for younger readers from 1927 through 1946, all published by W. A. Wilde.

These can be segmented into separate series, with each group of books focusing on the central character, starting with the *Jimmy Donnelly* series (six titles, 1927 to 1932) and the "*Ginger*" Hale series (seven titles, 1933-1939). During World War II, Lewis Theiss developed yet another series, this time describing the wartime flying activities of two young American fliers, Henry "Peewee" Dewire and Colvin "Cris" Criswell. Readers may be confused in finding this series listed as part of the "*Ginger*" Hale Series in Mattson and Davis' *A Collectors Guide to Hardcover Boys' Series Books*, published in 1997. That listing reflects the state of research at the time [See **Editor's note** following this article].

* * *

The six titles in the *Colvin "Cris" Criswell and "Peewee" Dewire* Series, all focusing on flying activities directly related to American involvement in World War II, are:

- *Flying with the C.A.A.: How Two of Uncle Sam's Youngest Airmen Saved a Great Defense Plant from Sabotage* (1941).
- *Flying for Uncle Sam: A Story of Civilian Pilot Training* (1942).
- *Flying with the Coastal Patrol* (1943).
- *Overseas with the Air Transport Command* (1944).
- *Sky Road to Adventure* (1945).
- *Flying with the Air Sea Rescue Service* (1946).

These books track the increasing involvement of the two boys in the war effort of the United States as they complete their pilot training programs, fly for the Civil Air Patrol, and then fly as transport crewmembers for the Army Air Forces. As in all of the books in his aviation series, there is a continuity of characters, as Theiss occasionally brings in the central figure of his previous series, in this case Joseph "Ginger" Hale. As

FLYING WITH THE C. A. A.

*How Two of Uncle Sam's Youngest Airmen
Saved a Great Defense Plant
from Sabotage*

By
LEWIS E. THEISS



W. A. WILDE COMPANY
PUBLISHERS BOSTON

noted above, some readers state that these books are a continuation of Theiss' *Ginger Hale* books, published from 1932 through 1939, but they are a separate series; although *Ginger Hale* appears or is referred to in nearly all of these books, he is not the central character.

I have labeled this series the *Peewee Dewire-Colvin Criswell* series because they are the two central characters whose actions the books describe. Theiss created new characters for each generation of his aviation series books: *Jimmy Donnelly* in the 1920s, *Ginger Hale* in the 1930s, and *Peewee Dewire and Colvin Criswell* in the 1940s.

Flying with the C.A.A.

In his foreword to *Flying with the C.A.A.*, Theiss explains how he developed the characters and ideas for this series. Ed Critchley, Operations Manager for Pan American Airways (PanAm), with whom he had been in contact regarding his *Ginger Hale* series, suggested that he "take two of the lads from your flood mapping story [*Flood Mappers Aloft*, 1937] . . . and put them through the C.A.A. course" (4). The C.A.A. was the Civil Aeronautics Authority, which was established in 1938 (by 1940 it

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The 'Cris' Criswell and 'Peewee' Dewire series by Lewis E. Theiss

(Continued from Page 11)

had become the Civil Aeronautics Administration); the C.A.A. sponsored a program to teach young men how to fly. This program was instituted at the request of Air Force General Henry "Hap" Arnold, who foresaw the need to have as many trained fliers available as possible when the United States seemed destined to enter World War II. Although it was early in 1941 when Theiss was writing the story, the United States was officially neutral in the war in Europe, but Arnold realized that if America entered the war, there would be an immediate need for trained aviators. The program consisted of ground school and flight instruction. A complete course would run for approximately six months. Once the successful students had graduated, they would be eligible for assignment as pilots, typically in commercial air carriers or in the military air forces.

The two central figures of this series are C. C. "Cris" Criswell and Henry "Peewee" Dewire. Cris is six feet tall with dark coloration and Peewee is five feet tall with blond hair. Cris comes from a wealthy family, while Peewee comes from a working-class background. Cris is in his second year of college studies at Bucknell College in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, specializing in engineering, while Peewee is working at the local airfield.

Lewisburg was the home of Lewis Theiss, who had by this time become head of the journalism department at Bucknell College. Ginger Hale, the central figure of Theiss' previous series, appears at the beginning of the book as he tells these two former members of his Bald Eagle Patrol that world events are creating the need for more aviators, and he encourages them to pursue their aviation studies. Hovering around the edges of the story like a guiding spirit, Ginger encourages Cris to sign up for the flight training program that the United States has just instituted at many colleges, and he encourages Peewee to apply for the program as well, because the program will accept some applicants who are not in college if they have promising records. Due to his excellent college record, Cris qualifies immediately and is the first local student to take flying lessons. Peewee soon qualifies as well.

The first part of the book describes their progress through the flight training program, which involves flight instruction in a Piper Cub, a popular and reliable two-place aircraft. Theiss provides a detailed description of their basic flight and meteorological training. Ginger persuades Cris' father to buy him his own aircraft, a



larger Piper Coupe aircraft, which provides side-by-side seating. This aircraft makes it possible for Cris and Peewee to fly together and not rely on training aircraft for their cross-country flights.

Theiss devotes a great deal of attention to the geographical features over which the boys fly, especially the mountainous Pennsylvania territory over which they flew in *Flood Mappers Aloft* (from the previous "Ginger" Hale Series). Theiss inserts a comment on the fact that little has been done by the state authorities in the four years since the Bald Eagle Patrol completed the aerial survey to erect dams to alleviate the flood problem; as they fly over the Pennsylvania mountains observing the many river valleys below after seeing dams that have been built in New York state, Peewee says that "it's high time we made some flood dams in *this* state." Referring to their flood-mapping activities four years earlier, he says, "We made the flood maps ourselves. If they can build such dams in New York State, why can't we do it in Pennsylvania?" (205).

Theiss also provides an occasion to comment on the sad living conditions of the Seneca Indians, with whom they interacted in *Flood Mappers Aloft* as the boys fly over the southern end of the New York Indian reservation:

[They] flew as slowly as they dared, directly along the circling river, so they could see the Indian lands at close range.

What they saw did not please them too well. In these Indian reservations they found neither the picturesque wigwams of aborigines, nor yet the attractive homes of modern Americans; for though the red men had gradually adopted many paleface customs, their houses were, all too often, little better than shacks, their agriculture a poor imitation of the white man's farming, their entire existence but a shabby copy of Anglo-Saxon domestic life. (225-26)

After Ginger Hale is assigned to La Guardia Field in New York City as a flight instructor, Cris and Peewee visit Ginger where they learn the basics of instrument flight by flying in a Link Trainer, a ground training device which simulates the sounds and movements of an aircraft as it executes take-offs, in-flight procedures, and landings, the pilot relying on instruments only. Ginger instructs them during the evenings, after his primary duties as an instructor are over.

In the second half of the book, the boys help to solve an espionage scheme in which German agents have persuaded a recent German immigrant working in a factory that makes magnetos to place incendiary devices in the boxes containing the magnetos. When he is caught, the German factory worker says he did not want to cooperate with the enemy agents, but he was concerned about the safety of many of his family members still living in Germany.

Flying for Uncle Sam

In the second volume in the series, Criswell (Theiss usually refers to him by his last name) and Peewee are continuing their civilian pilot training (C.P.T.) course work. There is a problem in that the flight instructor at Bucknell College who was approved to teach the first training course is not qualified to teach the second training course. The closest approved instructor is located at the airfield at Wilkes-Barre, 50 miles away.

When he learns about the problem, Ginger Hale angrily states that world events have worsened, that Germany has invaded several countries, that Italy and Japan have joined the Axis cause, and that the boys should not settle for any delays in their training. He encourages them to take an innovative approach to solving their training schedule problem, which they do by arranging to fly from Bucknell to Wilkes-Barre for flight training lessons early in the morning and then flying back to Bucknell for their ground school classes.

Harry Brown, the flight instructor, agrees to take Criswell on as a student and he assigns another instructor to provide flight instruction for Peewee. At the Wilkes-Barre Field, they see the training plane which they will be flying, a Fairchild PT-19. Criswell recognizes that these are U.S. Army trainers and that

"enrollment in a C.P.T. course is merely delayed enlistment in the Army Air Corps." (63)

In addition to their flight instruction, which includes aerobatics, they continue their interest in meteorology and learn about the dangerous effects of flying through a cold front. Peewee continues his interest in photography. On one flight together they observe an enraged bull in the process of attacking a farmer. They land on a nearby field and come to the assistance of the farmer, flying him to a nearby hospital for emergency care.

One of their instructional periods is devoted to the parachute, in which they learn how it should be used. Peewee unintentionally uses it when he undoes his safety belt to take a picture of the farmer's bull, and when the aircraft banks at too steep an angle, he falls out. Fortunately he deploys his parachute and lands safely but hurts his foot when he strikes the ground.

During his recovery period, when he is not able to fly, he and Criswell travel to La Guardia airfield, where Chris takes an examination to become an A&E (aircraft and engine maintenance) mechanic.

At La Guardia, Ginger informs them that an important passenger, a British flying ace, will be arriving on the next Pan American flight from Europe. Ginger suggests that Peewee photograph the British pilot. Peewee takes several pictures when the passengers deplane at the Pan Am facility at La Guardia. Unknowingly he captures the image of an individual whom the FBI later tells Peewee is an enemy agent.

At this point the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor occurs, and the mood of the nation changes from one of neutral hesitancy to one of war preparedness. Theiss provides a brief overview of the impact of the war on American life:

Like a giant awakening from deep slumber, the nation slowly pulled itself together and aroused itself uncertainly. Rubber importation from Java and Malaya ceased suddenly. Promptly the sale of tires was prohibited. No civilian could obtain one, except for service highly necessary to the public welfare. The sale of automobiles was stopped. Again and again the country was warned of a possible gasoline shortage in its eastern parts; and as the Axis powers at once started a vigorous campaign to destroy Atlantic tankers, sinking ship after ship, the situation was brought home to the public vividly. (260-61)

Criswell and Peewee take a tour of the Martin aircraft factory in Baltimore, where they see the B-26, a high-performance twin engine bomber, being built.

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The 'Cris' Criswell and 'Pewee' Dewire series by Lewis E. Theiss

(Continued from Page 13)

While they are in the plant, Peewee takes a picture of a painting of an aircraft on the wall of a Martin plant office. He later discovers that in the picture a briefcase can be seen with the markings of the briefcase the suspected enemy agent was carrying. Peewee contacts the FBI and they determine that an agent is working in the Martin plant.

By the end of the book, both Criswell and Peewee pass their C.P.T. courses successfully, Criswell learns that he has passed the A&E examination, and the enemy agent is caught. Criswell prepares himself to enter military service, but Peewee, who knows he is too short to be accepted as a military aviator, continues his career in photography, winning first prize in a photography exhibit.

Flying with the Coastal Patrol

In the third book in the series, Peewee and Criswell join the Civil Air Patrol and eventually become involved in coastline surveillance activities. When Criswell indicates he is not satisfied to be involved only in peacetime flying, even if it is in support of the war effort, his father suggests that he join the Civil Air Patrol (C.A.P.), where he can contribute more directly to the war effort. As his father explains, the Civil Air Patrol, which consists of qualified pilots flying their own aircraft, is "already accomplishing astonishing things by way of patrolling danger spots, watching for sabotage, and helping to defeat the submarine menace." (26)

At the time Theiss was writing the book, the organization known as the Civil Air Patrol was a recently established organization. It was officially established as a U. S. Government agency on 1 December 1941, six days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Although it consisted of civilians, it was (and still is) a quasi-military organization, organized along military lines, and its members wear military uniforms.

Each state developed its own C.A.P. Wing, with a wing commander and C.A.P. units located throughout the state. These units were assigned patrol duties, especially along the coasts and borders, and search-and-rescue missions for missing aircraft.

With the entry of the United States into the war, German submarines began to attack shipping along the east coast of the United States. The Civil Air patrol conducted anti-submarine patrols along the Atlantic coastline from March of 1942 through August of 1943. Aircraft assigned to anti-submarine patrols were fitted with bomb racks designed to hold 100-pound bombs

Aviation series by Lewis E. Theiss

Jimmy Donnelly Series

| Title | Publication Year |
|---|------------------|
| <i>Piloting the U.S. Air Mail; or, Flying for Uncle Sam</i> | 1927 |
| <i>The Search for the Lost Mail Plane</i> (no subtitle)..... | 1928 |
| <i>Trailing the Air Mail Bandit</i> (no subtitle) | 1929 |
| <i>The Flying Reporter</i> (no subtitle)..... | 1930 |
| <i>The Pursuit of the Flying Smugglers</i> (no subtitle)..... | 1931 |
| <i>Wings of the Coast Guard</i> (no subtitle) | 1932 |

Joseph "Ginger" Hale Series

| | |
|---|------|
| <i>Flying the U.S. Mail to South America; or, How Pan-American Airships Carry On in the Sun and Storm Above the Roiling Caribbean</i> | 1934 |
| <i>The Mail Pilot of the Caribbean; or, The Adventures of Ginger Hale above the Southern Seas</i> | 1935 |
| <i>The Flying Explorer; or, How a Mail Pilot Penetrated the Basin of the Amazon</i> | 1936 |
| <i>From Coast to Coast with the U.S. Air Mail</i> (no subtitle) .. | 1936 |
| <i>Flood Mappers Aloft; or, How Ginger Hale and the Scouts of the Bald Eagle Patrol Surveyed the Watershed of the Susquehanna</i> | 1937 |
| <i>Wings over the Pacific</i> (no subtitle)..... | 1938 |
| <i>Wings over the Andes</i> (no subtitle)..... | 1939 |

"Cris" Criswell and "Peewee" Dewire Series

| | |
|---|------|
| <i>Flying with the C.A.A.; or, How Two of Uncle Sam's Youngest Airmen Saved a Great Defense Plant from Sabotage</i> | 1941 |
| <i>Flying for Uncle Sam; or, A Story of Civilian Pilot Training</i> .. | 1942 |
| <i>Flying with the Coastal Patrol</i> (no subtitle) | 1943 |
| <i>Overseas with the Air Transport Command</i> (no subtitle) ... | 1944 |
| <i>Sky Road to Adventure</i> (no subtitle) | 1945 |
| <i>Flying with the Air-Sea Rescue Service</i> (no subtitle) | 1946 |

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Although these were generally thought to be inadequate for actually sinking a German submarine, a well-placed bomb on a submarine's conning tower might do some serious damage. But it would require great accuracy (or great good luck) to strike such a small target with such a small bomb while flying above a moving target.

Criswell's father agrees to write a letter of introduction for his son, and Criswell flies to the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, airport, where the commander of the state's C.A.P. wing welcomes him into the organization. The C.A.P. wing commander states that the organization has a need for photographers, and Criswell persuades Peewee Dewire to join as well. They fly to the nearest

C.A.P. unit, located at Lock Haven, the home of the Piper Aircraft Company, just as flood waters are rising. They assist in flying some of the Piper aircraft, intended for army pilots, to a nearby hillside emergency landing strip before the flood waters inundate the field. As they fly down one valley to assess flood damage, they see a family stranded by the flood and drop a food package.

Their next task is to prepare a set of maps designed to assist pilots flying smaller aircraft in finding their way through the Pennsylvania mountain valleys when weather conditions or other reasons prevent them from flying high enough to fly across the valleys. They then participate in a flying exercise at a remote location where they narrowly avoid an accident when another aircraft takes off at the same time they are cleared to take off.

Their next major activity is more typical of C.A.P. actions—searching for a missing aircraft. A small army plane has been reported missing, and the C.A.P. is

asked to locate it. Theiss explains the search pattern that would be employed (complete with diagram) — each of five aircraft flying in a pie-shaped segment of a large circle with the center of the circle placed at the most likely point of the crash. Criswell and Peewee spot the aircraft among the trees (a task difficult to do in a heavily forested area) and provide location information to the ground search crews.

They then land and join the ground search team which eventually locates the flyers. As a result of their efforts, they receive commendations not only from the Pennsylvania Wing Commander but from the Secretary of War as well. They also receive approval to join the C.A.P. units which are flying anti-submarine patrols along the east coast of the United States and are directed to join a unit located on the New Jersey coast.

In order to be fully prepared to fly these patrols, however, Criswell needs an aircraft larger than a Cub Coupe and his wealthy father agrees to buy him a new aircraft, a Fairchild Model 24. Like the Piper Cub and Piper Coupe, which were flown by C.A.P. units during the war, the Fairchild was used on C.A.P. anti-submarine flying patrols. The Fairchild Model 24 was a high-wing

aircraft with a more powerful engine than the Piper Coupe. Because it had a sturdier construction, it was capable of accommodating bomb shackles which could carry a 100-pound bomb. Before Criswell and Peewee can fly the coastal patrol, they receive the necessary training in patrol routes, communication procedures, and bomb-dropping.

On their first flight, they assist in the rescue of some torpedoed seamen in lifeboats who are exhausted from their survival efforts. They then fly a number of uneventful missions. Eventually they spot a German U-boat and assist in its destruction, helping to identify an enemy agent in the process as well.

For many years the C.A.P. was credited with destroying one German submarine and damaging, if not sinking, another in offshore actions in the Atlantic Ocean during World War II. Although recent research has indicated that no submarines were sunk as a direct result of C.A.P.

actions, C.A.P. aircraft were credited with assisting survivors of shipwrecks and spotting and reporting the presence of several submarines. However, as a writer of exciting stories for boys, Theiss was not bound by the limits of historical fact, and the story is one of the more exciting in the series. As a side note, Ginger Hale does not appear in this book.

(To be concluded in the September-October issue)

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Editor's note: The six titles in the Colvin "Cris" Criswell and "Peewee" Dewire Series are listed in full on Page 14, along with Lewis Theiss' other two related series for Wilde. Because of incomplete knowledge of Theiss' aviation series at the time Mattson and Davis' *A Collector's Guide to Hardcover Boys' Series Books* (1997) was published, it was (logically) listed there as part of the Joseph "Ginger" Hale series; worst of all, the fifth title, *Sky Road to Adventure*, was left out altogether!

Thanks to Kirk Vaughan, we now have a new and distinctive title for this series and a correct listing. Readers are directed to our review of Vaughan's new book, *Flying Adventurers*, on Page 16, the capstone of his many decades of original research.



The Fairchild Model 24. This aircraft was used extensively by the Civil Air Patrol during World War II. This photograph shows a Model 24 in C.A.P. markings. The aircraft plays a central role in Lewis E. Theiss' *Flying for the Coastal Patrol*. U.S. Air Force Photo

BOOK REVIEW

David Kirk Vaughan: *Flying Adventurers: Juvenile Aviation Series Books in America, 1909-1964*. 2023, McFarland & Co., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640. Softcover (7" x 10"), 331 pages. ISBN 978-1-4766-8878-7. \$49.95 plus \$5.99 shipping from www.mcfarlandpub.com. Major credit cards accepted. Also available from other online sellers such as www.amazon.com or www.bn.com.

By William R. Gowen (PF-706)

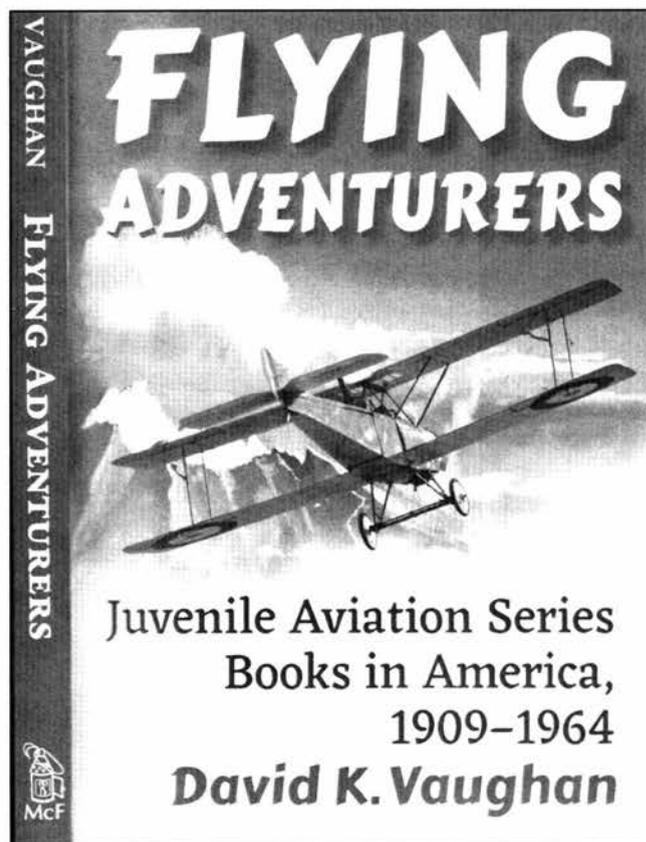
"Come Fly with Me!" sang Frank Sinatra — and that's exactly what David Kirk Vaughan asks his readers to do with this new book, a culmination of more than three decades of research and in articles for the major series-book collector publications, including *Newsboy*, *Dime Novel Round-Up* and *Yellowback Library*.

And the articles will still be coming, with L. Frank Baum's *Flying Girl Series* (Page 31-33 in this book) upcoming in *Yellowback Library*. Those familiar with Vaughan's articles, most of them several thousand words in length, should be alerted that his capsule reviews in *Flying Adventurers* are much shorter, so to make the book a very manageable 331 pages. Instead, he sticks to the real important stuff and organizes it by the major eras in the world of aviation, which in the populist view began with the Wright brothers' first powered flight in 1903.

The first series tackled is Harry L. Saylor's *Airship Boys Series*, which took flight in 1909, and Vaughan's chronology continues into the early years of the space age in 1964, covering nine major chapters. He calls then Part 1 — *Early Flight*; Part 2 — *World War I and After*; Part 3 — *The Golden Age: Exploration and Adventure*; Part 4 — *The Golden Age — Girls' Series*; Part 5 — *The Golden Age: Pilots as Professionals*; Part 6 — *The Golden Age: Military Flyers*; Part 7 — *World War II*; Part 8 — *Flight Stewardess Series*; and Part 9 — *Postwar and Space Age Period*.

Part 9 also includes *Appendix 1*, listing the individual titles in each series; *Appendix 2*, a list of real-world aircraft mentioned in the books; along with a bibliography and full index. There are 50 black-and-white images, including book or jacket covers, interior plates and several of the aircraft mentioned above. In the interest of openness, several of the images were contributed by this writer.

In each series review, Vaughan introduces us to our fictional flying heroes, gives background information on authorship, and follows the aforementioned era-defined coverage of nearly 70 series, along the way describing the aircraft utilized and general plot summaries. He calls this an "analytical approach," noting in the book's Introduction, "In this study I examine only those series books in which flying activities are the primary focus. I



do not consider those series in which flying activities are included as a peripheral activity or those series which cover a range of transportation modes, like automobiles or motorboats, of which flying activity may play one part."

The author then notes that the Stratemeyer Syndicate's very popular *Tom Swift Series*, in which about half the 38 original titles for Grosset & Dunlap (1910-1935) include some sort of flying activity, include 10 titles in which the title invention is an aircraft or directly related adjunct (*Tom Swift and his Ocean Airport*).

Speaking of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, what about the *Ted Scott Flying Stories* (Pages 76-83), at 20 volumes the longest series in Vaughan's study? He has reservations, noting "... subplots of non-flying events often worked against the success of the stories generally." This was likely tied to the Syndicate's contract author for the series, John W. Duffield, who Vaughan notes "... was not a pilot himself and therefore lacked direct knowledge of aircraft operation or personal experiences about the sensation of flight."

That description *does not* fit David Kirk Vaughan. An Air Force Academy graduate, he spent his U.S. Air Force career as a pilot, and following his flying duty served as a Professor at the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. This book offers evidence of a lifetime of experience.