



**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.

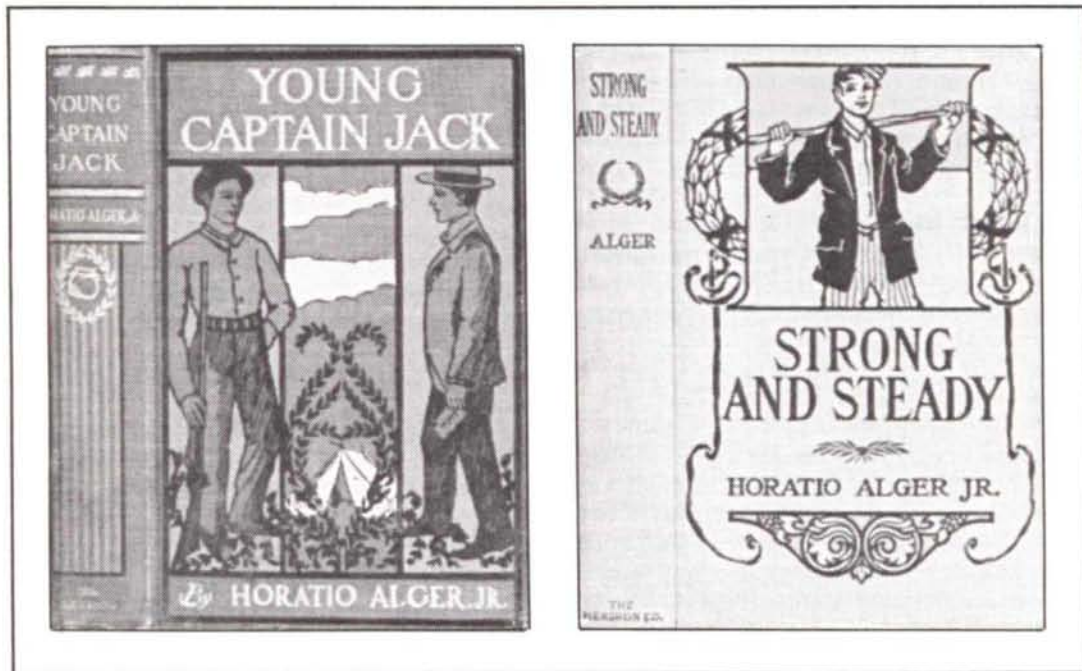
VOLUME XXX

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1992

NUMBER 1

## Mershon and Stitt Alger printings

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## A Texas welcome!

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Convention time is coming very soon. Have you made your reservations? If you have, we'll see you in Waco, Texas, April 23, 24 and 25. If you haven't made your reservations, don't wait much longer...you may miss all the fun! Make your plans now to go to Waco and join in the fellowship.

This year's Alger convention will be both interesting and enjoyable. In addition to a lot of books (several collections will be auctioned), our co-hosts, Robert Collmer and John Cadick, have planned a most interesting program and entertainment. Everyone is looking forward to a partic'lar good time!

A convention provides an opportunity to talk to others about the same interests -- what to collect, and how to collect. You can find out about collectibles that are new to you and it provides an excellent opportunity to replace your tattered and damaged books with better copies at reasonable cost. The fellowship is wonderful; you will meet people from all over the United States and enjoy sharing their experiences, especially in book collecting. A convention registration form is enclosed in this issue of *Newsboy*.

John Cadick (PF-858) has an article in this issue outlining the programs he and Bob have planned, as well as a general introduction to Waco and Baylor University (whose Browning Library will be the site of several convention activities), along with area sights to see.

There is an interesting letter from Carl Bromer (published in this issue) about his son Josh, who showed a great interest in Horatio Alger's books after visiting us in Chillicothe in late December. This makes me realize the importance of building up the next generation of H.A.S. members. Let us remember to share the ideals and standards of Horatio Alger at every opportunity with our children, grandchildren, neighborhood youths, etc. Share or lend an Alger book to our "little partic'lar friends"...maybe even sponsor their membership in the Horatio Alger Society.

That's all for now -- and members, please let the officers and/or directors know what you would like from the Society. How can our group effort help you get more enjoyment out of collecting? I hope to see a lot of you at Waco. The rest of you can still participate through correspondence to me, to each other and through the "Letters to the Editor" section of *Newsboy*.

Your partic'lar friend,  
Will Wright (PF-639)  
16826 U.S. 50, Chillicothe, Ohio 45601

## HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

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

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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 \$20, with single issues of *Newsboy* costing \$3.00. Please make all remittance payable to the Horatio Alger Society. Membership applications, renewals, changes of address and other correspondence should be sent to Executive Secretary Carl T. Hartmann, 4907 Allison Drive, Lansing, MI 48910.

*Newsboy* is listed in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography.

### BOOKS RECOMMENDED BY H.A.S.

- "Horatio Alger, Jr., A Comprehensive Bibliography," by Bob Bennett.
- "Horatio Alger or, The American Hero Era," by Ralph D. Gardner.
- "Publication Formats of the 59 Stories by Horatio Alger, Jr. as Reprinted by the John C. Winston Co." Compiled by Bob Sawyer (PF-455) and Jim Thorp (PF-574).
- "Horatio Alger Books Published by A.L. Burt," by Bradford S. Chase (PF-412).
- "The Lost Life of Horatio Alger, Jr.," by Gary Scharnhorst with Jack Bales (PF-258).

*Newsboy* ad rates: Full page, \$32.00; one-half page, \$17.00; one-quarter page, \$9.00; per column inch (1 inch deep by approx. 3 1/2 inches wide), \$2.00. Send ads, with check payable to Horatio Alger Society, to Carl T. Hartmann, 4907 Allison Drive, Lansing, MI 48910. The above rates apply to all want ads plus 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 such ads to Carl T. Hartmann or directly to editor William R. Gowen (PF-706) at 923 South Lake St., Apt. 6, Mundelein, IL 60060.

# A Texas welcome!

by JOHN CADICK (PF-858)

(y'all -- noun...yawl. contraction of "you all" def: 1. All of you. 2. Large group. 3. Southern version of you guys or youse guys. NOTE: y'all is a one syllable word.)

**WELCOME TO TEXAS – Y'ALL!!!** On April 23, 24 and 25, book collectors will converge on Waco, Texas for three days of merriment, reminiscing and lying...er-r-r...exaggerating about books, book, books.

The campus of Baylor University will be opened to the members and guests of the Horatio Alger Society as we convene for our annual meeting. Due to scheduling conflicts at Baylor, the convention had to be moved up a week from its usual time. In spite of this, the meeting promises to be one of the best ever. Here are a few of the exciting activities being planned by your convention hosts:

\* A distinguished (or is it extinguished?) panel of experts will discuss the state of juvenile book collecting. Each panel member will make a 5- to 10-minute presentation in his or her specialty area. Topics such as book availability, pricing, condition and location will be included. Questions, answers and general discussion will follow the panel presentations. A six-member panel is currently planned with Gil O'Gara (PF-627) and Bart Nyberg (PF-879) sharing their thoughts on general boys' series, Bill Gowen (PF-706) on Stratemeyer and the Syndicate, Jerry Friedland (PF-376) on Alger, Kathleen Chamberlain on general girls' series and Ed LeBlanc (PF-015) on dime novels.

\* A special room will be set aside in Baylor's Browning Library (see below) for those interested in buying, selling and trading books. As usual, tables will be available to display your wares.

\* There will be **three** big auctions this year. In addition to the annual H.A.S. fund-raiser and silent auction, we will be auctioning **two** members' collections (see special insert in this issue of *Newsboy*). Almost 200 titles, including many first editions, will be offered to the highest bidder. This is truly the year to expand your collection.

\* The Armstrong Browning Library houses the world's largest collection of material relating to Robert Browning and his poetry. It includes letters and manuscripts written by or to Browning, all of the first and many successive editions of his poetry, secondary works and materials, his poetry set to music, portraits and memorabilia.

The library also includes major collections of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, John Ruskin, Charles Dickens



**Baylor University will host many of the 1992 convention activities.**

and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Many of this year's convention functions will be held in the library and a special tour of the library facilities has been arranged for H.A.S. members and convention guests.

\* Several interesting and fun attractions are available in Waco. For example:

### The Dr. Pepper Museum

According to legend...in the late 1800s, a love-smitten young man was looking for a way to impress his beloved's father. The father happened to own a drugstore. The young man proceeded to develop a formula for a new soft drink...thus was born Dr. Pepper. Whether this story is true or not is not known (at least by me). However, Dr. Pepper is headquartered in Waco and the firm has a fascinating museum that is certainly worth a few hours of your time while you're in town.

### The Brooklyn Bridge's Older Brother

Also in the late 1800s, the Brazos River was a major obstacle to the movement of cattle. South Texas cattle ranchers had to cross the Brazos to get their herds to the stockyards of Fort Worth and points north. John Augustus Roebling was commissioned to build a bridge across the Brazos at Waco. Roebling used this small effort as a test site for many of the methods he subsequently employed in the construction of the famous

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## A Texas welcome!

(Continued from Page 3)

Brooklyn Bridge. The bridge in Waco still exists and is now used as a foot bridge for a pleasant stroll across the Brazos.

### The Texas Ranger Museum

Waco is also home of the Texas Ranger Museum, which includes an acclaimed collection of firearms, American Indian artifacts and memorabilia of the state's original law enforcement agency.

Dallas is about 90 minutes north of Waco by freeway, and Austin (home of the University of Texas) is about 90 minutes south on the same freeway (Interstate 35). Both of those cities have surprisingly good book and antique stores. The entire afternoon on Saturday has been left open for the convenience of you book searchers.

NOTE: As many of you know, the Society has a number of super-aggressive searchers for book bargains (you know -- and we know -- who you are!). Your convention hosts are not going to list all the names and addresses of local bookstores so some of the less-aggressive members (and later arrivals) can also find some books during the convention weekend.

### A Few Facts about Waco

Waco, Texas is a friendly city of 100,000 located in the east-central part of Texas. The terrain is rolling (not flat...North Dakota is flat) and the climate is warm and southern (sub-tropical). Late April is typically warm and wet in this part of Texas, so pack your bags accordingly. The area was first inhabited by the Waco Indians and was known for its abundance of fresh water and fertile soil. Waco is one of the oldest cities in Texas and boasts many museums, horse shows, art exhibits and numerous concerts and theatrical performances.

### Baylor University

Baylor is a private, liberal arts college with approximately 10,000 students pursuing undergraduate and/or advanced degrees. It offers more than 125 fields of study, interdisciplinary programs and 35 degree plans. At almost 150 years old, the university is one of the most respected in the United States.

In addition to all this, you will find Texas to be one of the **friendliest** places that you have ever visited. Come and join us. Be a part of the fun in 1992. Whether you leave with a newly acquired first edition, a rare Hardy Boys find or refreshed friendships, your visit to the 1992 convention will be a memorable one.

A registration form is enclosed in this issue of **Newsboy**. A map of the Baylor campus is on Page 15.

For more information feel free to contact your hosts, Robert Collmer, 2801 Wooded Acres, Waco, Texas 76710, (817) 772-1897; or John Cadick, P.O. Box 475578, Garland Texas 75047, (214) 303-0449.

## MEMBERSHIP

### New members:

David H. Couch, Esq. (PF-892)  
P.O. Box 1704  
Medford, OR 97501

David is an attorney who at present has 71 Alger titles. His other collecting interests include Fitzhugh and Optic, along with campaign buttons; additional hobbies are wood-working and aquatic sports. He learned about H.A.S. through Hank Gravbelle (PF-584).

Dolores A. Warner (PF-893)  
2280 U.S. 50 W.  
Albany, OH 45710

Dolores is an office manager whose other hobbies include keyboard music. She was sponsored by Nell Wright (PF-876).

Ruth W. Miller (PF-894)  
4365 Belmar Terrace  
Vienna, OH 44473

Ruth, one of the society's most active spouses for years, joining husband Paul F. Miller (PF-351) at numerous annual conventions, finally has a PF number of her own. Ruth's other hobbies include music and volunteer work.

### Change of address:

Deidre A. Johnson (PF-596)  
3014 Valley Drive  
West Chester, PA 19382

Robert D. Eastlack (PF-557)  
8508 Calypso Lane  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879-1518

Lucille Mone (PF-431)  
P.O. Box 77 (Old listing is Box 177)  
Spencer, S.D. 57374

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

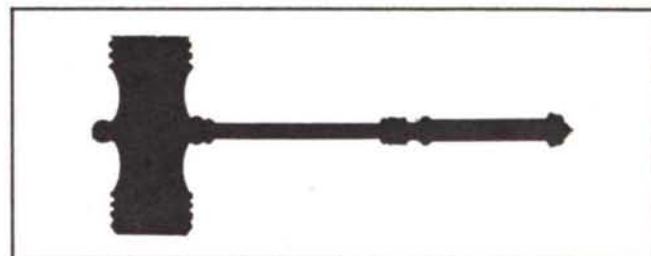
Dear Bill:

I presume that Carl Hartmann informed you that Mary Ellen Thomas, widow of Dale E. Thomas, passed away on Jan. 20. Local newspaper obit is enclosed.

Ruth and I started to Cleveland for the funeral on Friday morning but ran into a terrific Great Lakes snowstorm (after going about 30 miles) and returned back home.

In talking with the daughters by phone later in the day, they confirmed that the storm had made travel from the funeral home to the cemetery (about 1 to 2 miles) difficult.

Sincerely,  
Paul F. Miller (PF-351)  
4365 Belmar Terrace  
Vienna, Ohio 44473



## Mail bidding -- how it works

In this issue (as well as the previous issue) you will find a list of books from several Alger collections that will be auctioned at the April 23-25 convention in Waco, Texas. This list has raised a few procedural questions from H.A.S. members who wish to submit mail bids because they won't be in Waco to bid in person.

The Society uses a method for handling mail bidding similar to most auction houses, a system that has worked well in the past. This is how it works:

- \* You decide the maximum you wish to bid on an item and then fill out a bid slip (enclosed in this issue of Newsboy), being sure to clearly mark the maximum bid along with your full name and address. A separate bid slip must be used for each book.

- \* You must mail your bids to Executive Secretary Carl Hartmann by April 8. He will sort and organize all bids, keeping "alive" the highest mail bid for each book and throwing out those that are lower.

- \* When auction time comes around on Friday, April 24, Hartmann will be the high mail bidder's representative at the auction and he will participate in the auction throughout the natural course of the bidding until (1) the "live" bidding goes past the mail bidder's maximum; or (2) no one in the room exceeds the mail bid, which means the book is yours. Incidentally, all mail bidders' names will be kept confidential.

- \* Carl will attempt to obtain the book as cheaply as he can for the mail bidder. For example, let's say you submit the high mail bid of \$200 for a Loring first edition of "Rough and Ready." At the auction, the bidding proceeds in \$10 increments from \$100 up through \$150 (with Carl participating as your stand-in). The bidding then tops out with Carl's bid of \$160 and the book is hammered down at that price. The book is yours for that price, even though you had bid higher. Conversely, if the book goes for \$400 at the live auction, you're out of luck as soon as the bidding passes your \$200 maximum. The secret to making mail bids is knowing how high to go without being shut out by those in attendance.

- \* The "estimated values" on the enclosed auction list are for your general guidance in setting bids. Often, books go for much higher than the estimated value and many times the item goes for a lot less. The driving force, of course, is supply and demand.

Dear Carl:

Following is a list of the books that I mentioned to you on the phone. Any help that you can give me in disposing of them would be greatly appreciated.

- \* Six books, 9"x11" -- hardbound, brown, gold imprinted: *Newsboys* 1969-70; 1971-73; 1973-75; 1975-77; 1977-79; 1979-81.

- \* Three books, 9"x14" -- hardbound, brown, gold imprinted: *Newsboys* 1962-63; 1964-65; 1966-68.

Jack has had these at conventions. He had them bound by a professional who was very good, and they are very nicely done.

- \* "Alger Street: The Poetry of Horatio Alger, Jr." Edited and arranged by Gilbert K. Westgard II (hard cover).

- \* "Horatio Alger or, The American Hero Era," by Ralph D. Gardner (hard cover first ed.).

- \* "Road to Success: The Bibliography of the Works of Horatio Alger," by Ralph D. Gardner (paperback).

- \* "Silas Snobden's Office Boy," A new novel by Horatio Alger, Jr., a 1973 publication arranged by Ralph D. Gardner with foreword (and autographed) by Gardner.

- \* "Ragged Dick" (Winston reprint with inscription date Xmas 1909).

Sincerely,  
Beth Row  
4445 Vieux Carre  
Tampa, FL 33613

**Editor's note:** These books are from the collection of former H.A.S. president Jack W. Row (PF-101), who died in November. They will be auctioned, along with the other books listed in the insert included in this issue, at this spring's

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Continued from Page 5)

convention in Waco, Texas. Anybody desiring to submit mail bids for the above items can do so on the coupons enclosed in this issue. Please indicate that they are from Jack Row's collection. Remember, all mail bids must be submitted by April 8 to Executive Secretary Carl T. Hartmann.

Dear Bill:

Enclosed are some photocopies of 19th-century materials relating to newsboys and street waifs.

The first is a cartoon sequence of "The Adventures of a Newsboy" from **Ballou's Dollar Monthly Magazine**, December 1869, printed on the rear wrapper (which was usually discarded when the individual issues were bound). Incidentally, this issue has an excellent installment of Alger's "Luck and Pluck."

The second is a reduced page and an enlarged detail of the newsboy figure from "Boston Street Characters." This appeared in **Ballou's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion**, Vol. VIII, No. 4 of Jan. 27, 1855.

Thirdly, a cover of Albert W. Aiken's "The Two Detectives; or, The Fortunes of a Bowery Girl," from **Beadle's Half-Dime Pocket Library**, Feb. 13, 1884. This is a reprint of a Beadle's **Saturday Journal** serial of June 1871 (originally "The Detective's Ward"). It also appeared in **Beadle's Half-Dime Library** as Number 11 in 1877 and as Number 1108 in October, 1900. The "Bowery Girl" of the story is a crossing-sweeper like Alger's "Tattered Tom." The original serialization saw print before Loring's edition of the Alger tale. The bootblack in the illustration, nicknamed "Shrimpy," is a major character. The story is notable as being the first of many detective novels published by Beadle and Adams.

Best of luck as editor. I hope you can use this material.

Sincerely,  
E.M. Sanchez-Saavedra  
(PF-788)  
3517 Moss Side Avenue  
Richmond, Va. 23222

**Editor's note:** The "Boston Street Characters" engraving described above is reproduced on Page 16.

To the Editor:

December 27, 1991 was a special day. Josh, my 11-year-old son, and I had planned a trip to Chillicothe, Ohio to visit Will Wright, the President of the Horatio Alger Society, and a man we have come to know as a friend.

I am a new member of the Society and have really been excited about meeting people who share my love for Horatio Alger books. You can't actually call me a

serious "collector" even though I am now up to 70 titles...you can call me a serious "reader." I love to read Alger's books.

Josh and I really enjoyed touring Will's library and especially, his Alger collection. We've never seen so many Alger books in one place. There must have been a billion or two (well, maybe not that many, but still, enough to get our chins to hit the floor).

We learned more about Alger books in two hours than all the time since reading Ralph Gardner's book.

One interesting thing resulted from our trip. I have always felt that it would be great if my sons shared my love for Horatio Alger books. Collecting and reading would be an exciting hobby to have in common. As we were leaving Will's home, I wasn't sure how Josh felt about "all those old books," but I quickly found out. As soon as we arrived home, he said to Pam, my wife, "Mom, do you think it would be possible for us to go to Waco for the Horatio Alger convention next year?" ...

Looks like I might just have the hobby buddy I'm looking for!

Sincerely,  
Carl B. Bromer (PF-878)  
2141 Edelweiss Court  
Dayton, Ohio 45459

Dear Mr. Hartmann:

I misplaced Bernie Biberdorf's letter with your address and that is why it has taken me so long to send you this donation because I just found the address.

As Erma Bombeck said in one of her columns, "Losing things can drive anyone nuts," and said she... "I figured out once that I spend half of my waking hours looking for things. It's a mission. At any given moment, I am involved in hunt-and-search for glasses, car keys, recipes, checkbook or telephone numbers."

This happens to me also with the addition of losing letters, stamps and even articles of clothing. My husband says it can be blamed on the fact that I am getting older.

I received a nice card from Ralph Gardner from New York. I would like to answer it and will, if you will kindly send me his address. Mr. Gardner told me about a former H.A.S. president, Judson Berry, who lived in Sioux Falls where a convention was held.

I met Mr. Berry in Sioux Falls at his book store and bought some of my Alger books from him. Later, he moved to Howard, S.D., which is north of Spencer and I visited him there before he died. I did not attend the Sioux Falls convention owing to the fact that I was at that time living in Omaha, Nebraska.

We have a new post office in Spencer and they

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# Mershon and Stitt Alger printings

By John T. Dizer, Jr. (PF-511)

*No study of American publishing gives the Mershon Company more than a passing notice. I have seen no Publisher Trade List Annuals with Mershon listings, although I have been told recently that they may exist.*

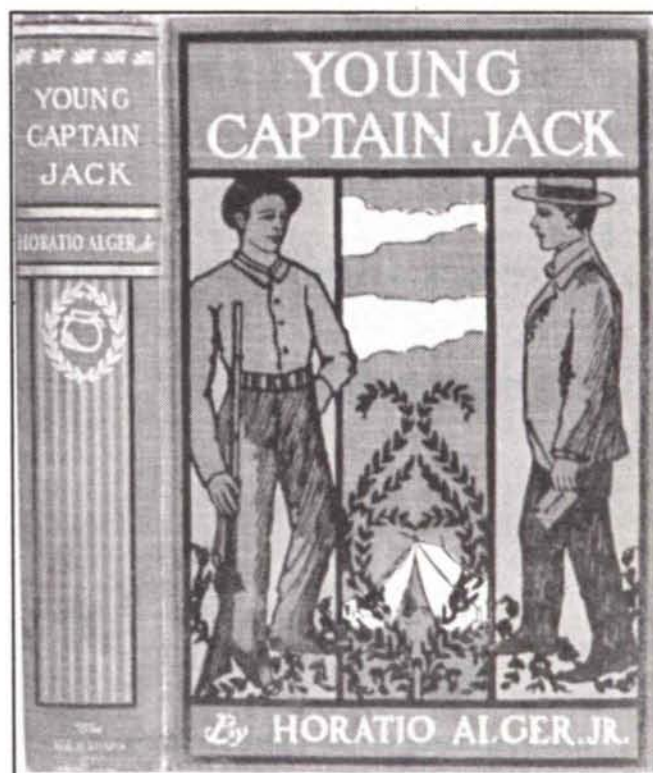
*What information we have comes mainly from old copies of "Publishers Weekly," from the research of Denis Rogers and a few others, from the rare Mershon dust jackets with book listings and, of course, from the actual Mershon books. We can draw inferences and make deductions and hope our literary detective work is correct; but to date, at least, we cannot be sure.*

*So when I was asked to discuss the Mershon Alger printings I had several reservations. Responding to my first concern, i.e., "Is anyone really interested?" editor Bill Gowen responded, "Newsboy needs articles of this type." To my second concern, "I'm not sure of all of my facts," I was told, "Ask the HAS members and other readers of Newsboy for help. It will also show if they read the stuff."*

*So this is what I know and don't know about Alger books published by the William Mershon Company and its related firms. If some of it sounds familiar, it should, since I am drawing on material I have used in earlier articles. I should also mention that I sent an earlier version of this article, together with a questionnaire, to 21 "Partic'lar Friends" and received valuable help from Brad Chase, Bob Bennett and Arthur Sherman, in particular.*

We should probably develop a time line for Mershon and explain that we are really talking about two companies, The Mershon Company Press and The Mershon Company. The Mershon Press printed books and The Mershon Company published books. William L. Mershon's The Mershon Press was active in the 1890s, printing books for many publishers. In 1893 The Cassell Publishing Company, an American branch of the British firm Cassell & Co., went bankrupt. William Mershon, its principal creditor, reorganized it and continued publishing its titles. On the copyright page of Edward S. Ellis books published by Cassell Publishing Company, as examples, you find "The Mershon Company Press, Rahway, N.J."

According to the late Denis Rogers, in 1898 Cassell & Co. re-opened an American branch, which led to the prospect of two different Cassell Companies in New York City. Apparently, there was a lawsuit over this and in about 1898, Mershon changed the name of his publishing company (The Cassell Publishing Company) to The Mershon Company. I have been able to check all of Denis' sources except the story of the lawsuit. Denis was



Early Mershon Stratemeyer completion from 1901.

not only a close friend but also a top researcher. I think, however, that Mershon was publishing under his own name in 1897 since last summer I found a Mershon G.A. Henty reprint inscribed "December 25, 1897." I also found an Ellis with a Cassell binding but with a Mershon title page, which seems to date from either 1897 or 1898. William Mershon had taken over titles from The Merriam Company, which went bankrupt in 1895, and other publishers, and we definitely know (from inscriptions) that he published juveniles (including Ellis and Henty) under The Mershon Company name in 1898.

The Mershon publishing action really started in 1899 when the company copyrighted a number of titles and started publishing in earnest under its own name. You can tell an early Mershon book from its title page, which will always say at the bottom, New York/The Mershon Company/Publishers. This title page is found in the Stratemeyer Alger's "Out for Business" and "Falling in With Fortune" (both copyrighted 1900) and "Young Captain Jack" and "Nelson the Newsboy" (both 1901). I call this title page Mershon Type M (illustration #1). We must keep in mind that Mershon Press printed books for many publishers, including A.L. Burt (New York) and

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## OUT FOR BUSINESS

OR

ROBERT FROST'S STRANGE CAREER

BY

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

AUTHOR OF "FALLING IN WITH FORTUNE," "LUCK OR PLUCK,"  
"THE YOUNG BOATMAN," "ONLY AN IRISH BOY,"  
"YOUNG MIKE," ETC.

COMPLETED BY

ARTHUR M. WINFIELD

AUTHOR OF "THE ROVER BOYS AT SCHOOL," "THE ROVER BOYS  
ON THE OCEAN," "THE ROVER BOYS IN THE JUNGLE,"  
"THE ROVER BOYS OUT WEST," ETC.NEW YORK  
THE MERSHON COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS

Ex. 1: Type M title page (1897 - early 1902).

## THE STORE BOY

OR

THE FORTUNES OF BEN BARCLAY

BY

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

AUTHOR OF "ADRIAT IN NEW YORK," "FROM CANAL BOY TO  
PRESIDENT," "RED NEWTON," "ADVENTURES OF A  
TELEGRAPH BOY," "MARK STANTON," "SHEP  
TRASH BOY," ETC.THE MERSHON COMPANY  
RAHWAY, N. J. NEW YORK

Ex. 2: Type R title page (1902-05 and 1906).

## Mershon and Stitt Alger printings

(Continued from Page 7)

George M. Hill and Thompson & Thomas (both of Chicago). The Mershon Press also printed The Wanamaker Young People's Library for the John Wanamaker Department Store of Philadelphia. An examination of the same titles nominally published by Hill, Thompson & Thomas, Wanamaker and The Mershon Company, shows that the stories' texts are identical and all used the original Mershon plates. We find the same situation with regard to Horatio Alger in later Trade Publishing Co. reprints.

In early 1902, apparently, Mershon changed all title pages to read The Mershon Company/Rahway, N.J. (space) New York.

I call this title page Mershon Type R (see illustration #2). It was used by Mershon until William Stitt took over the company in 1905 and it was used again when Mershon regained control in early 1906.

According to Publishers Weekly No. 1722 of January 28, 1905, the Stitt Publishing Company was formed in January of that year with William M. Stitt, Jr., Joseph Scammell and W.L. Mershon as principals. Things did not work out and in Publishers Weekly No. 1776 of February 10, 1906 it was announced that the Stitt Publishing Company was to be "wound up." William L. Mershon again took over the company and apparently at some point in early 1906 changed the name on the title page and spine of his books from Stitt back to Mershon. This continued until about October 1906. It was announced in Publishers Weekly No. 1811 of October 13, 1906 that Mershon had sold his publishing business to The Chatterton-Peck Company.

This seems straightforward and it may be, but there are several unanswered questions including:

\* Why was the late-1906 Stratemeyer/Alger "Randy of the River" deposited for copyright by Stitt when the company had been wound up in the spring?

\* How is it possible for one of my 1906 Mershons to have an inscription date of November 1905, supposedly before Mershon had taken back the business?

\* How could Mershon have copyrighted titles in 1907 when he sold the business in 1906?

\* Why were both Stitt and Mershon named in the famous 1907 lawsuit between Edward Stratemeyer and Chatterton-Peck that paved the way for Stratemeyer to switch his books to other publishers, notably Grosset & Dunlap and Cupples & Leon?

But back to the Mershon Alger printings. Let's look at the Mershon 1899-1905 period first. The most interesting point to make here is that during this period of Mershon's most prolific production, very few Alger titles were printed by the firm. Outside of the earlier Stratemeyer/Algers I have only "The Store Boy, or, The Fortunes of

Ben Barclay." The cover is of two boys in front of a tent, shooting at deer in the background. This cover is a common design of Mershons of the 1902-1904 period, although it does appear in 1901 as well. A series of eight Stratemeyer "singles" copyrighted in 1900 under such pseudonyms as Louis Charles, Roy Rockwood, Allen Chapman and Mark Marline also was reprinted in this format.

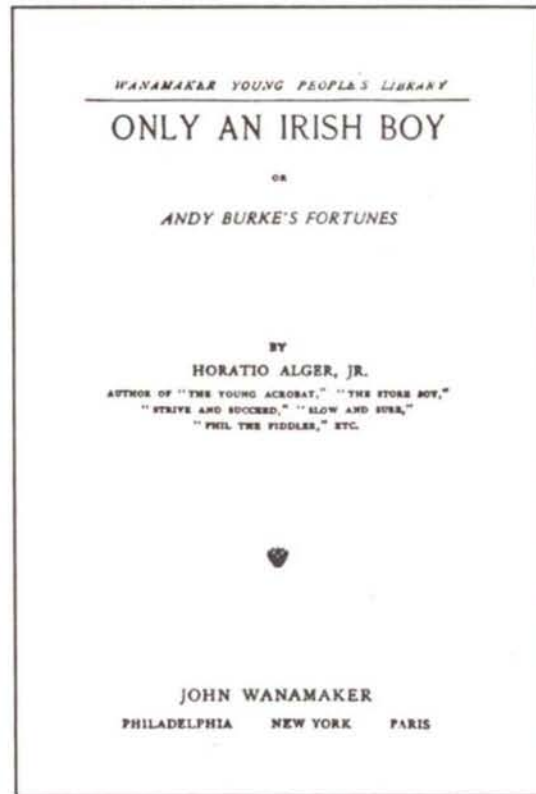
Since "The Store Boy" edition described above contains an ad for Stratemeyer's "With Boone on the Frontier," which has a July 1, 1903 introduction and which was copyrighted in 1903, it is certain that the book was printed no earlier than the summer of 1903. Since the next book in the Frontier Series, "Pioneer Boys of the Great Northwest" (which has a June 20, 1904 introduction) is not included in the ad, this seems to place the above Alger with a mid-1903 to mid-1904 date. As additional proof the ads in "The Store Boy" list the first four of the Alger Rise in Life Series "completed by Arthur M. Winfield" but do not include "Lost at Sea" nor "Jerry, the Backwoods Boy," both published in late 1904.

"The Store Boy" was first published by Porter & Coates in 1887 and just why and how Mershon picked this title to reprint is a question. Another question is what other Alger titles (not counting the Stratemeyer completions) did Mershon print before 1905 with Mershon Type M or Type R title pages or, specifically, without the black border found on the title pages of the later Stitt, etc. Algers?

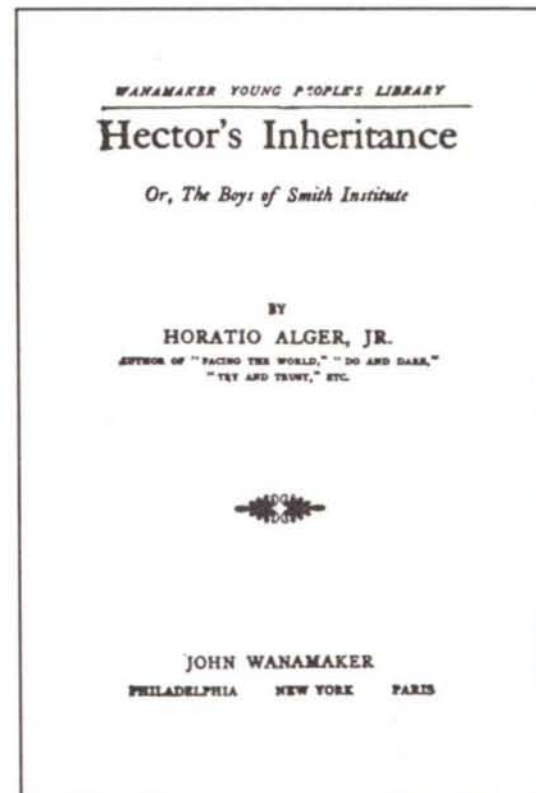
Bob Bennett sent me photocopies of "The Cash Boy" and "Strong and Steady," both of which are Type R and appear to date from 1903-04. So far, I have found no Type M (early Mershon) Algers and only three known Type R (later Mershon to 1905) published by Mershon in the most active years of the company. I suspect there may be a few more extant Alger titles from the 1903-04 period, but not many.

I mentioned earlier that Mershon printed the Wanamaker Young People's Library and apparently also printed the same titles concurrently under the Mershon name. All of the early Wanamaker title pages seem to be Mershon title pages, doctored for the Wanamaker series. I would suggest, then, that any Wanamaker Algers were also published by Mershon with a Mershon title page and binding. I have an early former Wanamaker with a dust jacket (ca. 1901) which has a list of titles but no Algers are listed. I have one later format Wanamaker Alger which is a reprint of "Only an Irish Boy" (see illustration #3). The title page is very similar to "The Store Boy" even down to the Mershon tulip logo. Judging by that logo, the book could date from as early as 1903-04 and could possibly be a compan-

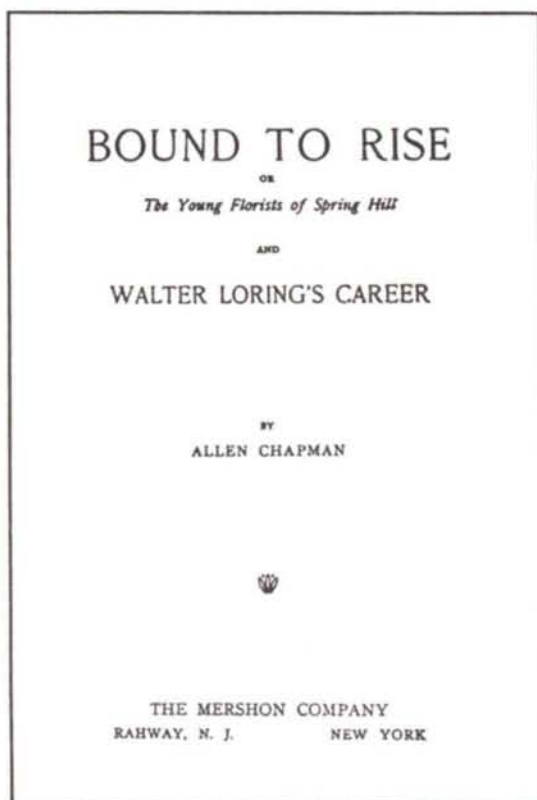
(Continued on Page 10)



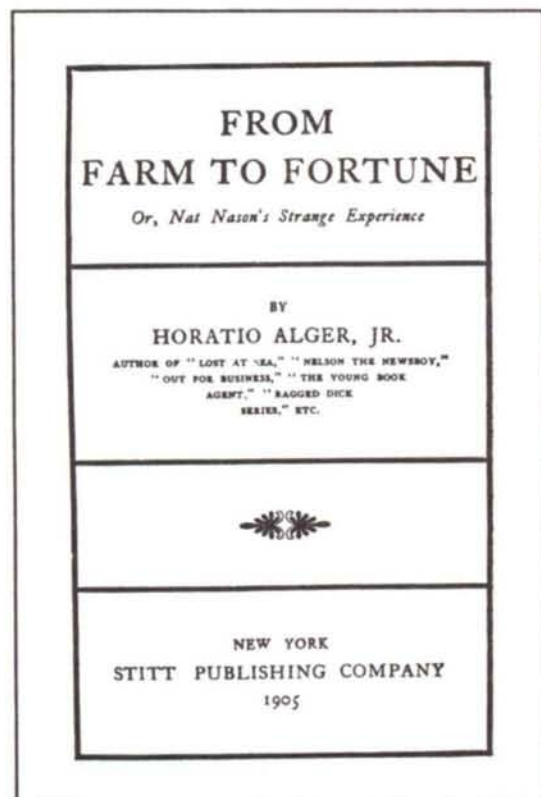
Ex. 3: Wanamaker (1903-04, Mershon logo).



Ex. 4: Wanamaker (after 1905, Stitt logo).



Ex. 5: Mershon Type R title page (1903).



Ex. 6: Stitt title page, black border (1905).

## Mershon and Stitt Alger printings

(Continued from page 9)

ion title to the three Mershon Type R titles mentioned above. Bennett has confirmed a Wanamaker printing of "The Young Outlaw" in a similar format. This could bring the number of suspected 1903-04 Mershon Alger titles to five. We have no proof as yet, however, other than inferences from the Mershon logo, that any Wanamaker Algers were printed before 1905. The Stitt/Mershon combine continued to print the Wanamaker series in 1905 and later but, as noted below, the Stitt logo was added to its new Alger titles (see illustration #4, from the Bob Williman collection).

In order to resolve the pre-1905 Mershon and Wanamaker Alger question, I need help from Alger collectors with (a) a large early Mershon Alger collection; (b) a large Wanamaker collection; or (c) Mershon or Wanamaker dust jackets with book lists intact.

Edward Stratemeyer, of course, beginning in 1899 had numerous titles published by Mershon and its successors, including nine of the 11 Alger completions (the other two were published by Cupples and Leon). In addition to the six mentioned above, "The Young Book Agent" and "From Farm to Fortune" were published by Stitt in 1905, and "Randy of the River" was copyrighted in 1906 by Stitt. Ralph D. Gardner (PF-053) notes in his Alger bibliography that that the title "was deposited for copyright October 25, 1906 by Stitt Publishing Company. However, by the time the bound volume was received, on November 16, the firm had become Chatterton-Peck."

I think we can safely say that, outside of the Stratemeyer completions, Mershon did relatively little with Alger until after Stitt took over the company in 1905. Mershon had printed "Bound to Rise" in 1900 (see illustration #5) but this book was written by "Allen Chapman" (an Edward Stratemeyer pseudonym) and had no connection with Alger's story of the same name. It does give us additional evidence, though (shown below), as to when the big Alger push was made by the company.

I believe that Stitt, trying to expand its appeal to boys, initiated a large offering of Alger reprint titles in 1905. There is good evidence in support of this, as follows:

Every Alger title of Stitt, 1906 Mershon and Chatterton-Peck that I am aware of (with the exception of the Stratemeyer completions and the three titles mentioned above), has a title page with a black border divided into (usually) four panels. This black border was introduced by Stitt and is never seen in any Mershons prior to 1906 as far as I know. In addition, the title page included a new logo which apparently appears only on those title pages with the black border (see illustration #6). The border was used almost exclusively on new Stitt titles. Stitt did

not use the border on new titles of continuing series such as *The Rover Boys* (illustration #7) and did not use the black border on reprints of earlier Mershon titles, since it would have involved changing the title page.

I have found one exception to this, which is typical of problems with Mershon research. Alger's "Strong and Steady" (probably reissued by Mershon in 1903 or 1904, see illustration 8) as reprinted by Chatterton-Peck, has the Stitt type title page with Stitt logo and the black border (illustration #9). Stitt also (and this is important to note when checking Wanamaker Algiers), did not use the black border but apparently did use the Stitt logo for its 1905 and later Wanamaker Algiers.

Copies exist of Algiers with Stitt title pages and Mershon covers as well as Algiers with Mershon title pages and Chatterton-Peck covers, all of which show that Mershon printed a lot of Alger titles but not until 1906 when he took the company back from Stitt. All of these later Algiers have a black border on the title page (see illustration #10).

In corroboration, I have a Mershon dust jacket which lists many Algiers, but also several non-Alger titles copyrighted by Stitt. So it seems certain that Mershon was actively printing Alger titles almost entirely in 1906 after he had taken back the company from Stitt.

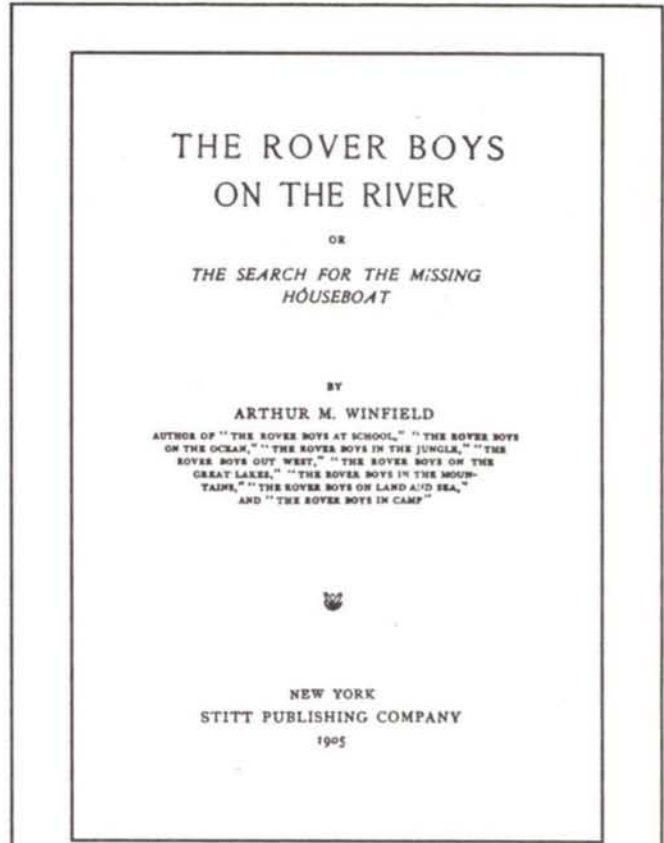
It is also worth noting that in 1905 William Stitt changed the title of the Chapman (Stratemeyer) "Bound to Rise" to "Boys of Spring Hill" apparently when he introduced Alger's own "Bound to Rise" as part of its reprint series, the change obviously made to prevent confusion between two different stories bearing the same title.

To summarize, it appears that any Mershon-Stitt Alger title page with a black border was published after 1905, although it should be noted that the two Stratemeyer completions copyrighted by Stitt in 1905 ("The Young Book Agent" and "From Farm to Fortune") both have black borders on their title pages but that "Randy of the River," which has a 1906 Stitt copyright but was actually published by Chatterton-Peck, does not.

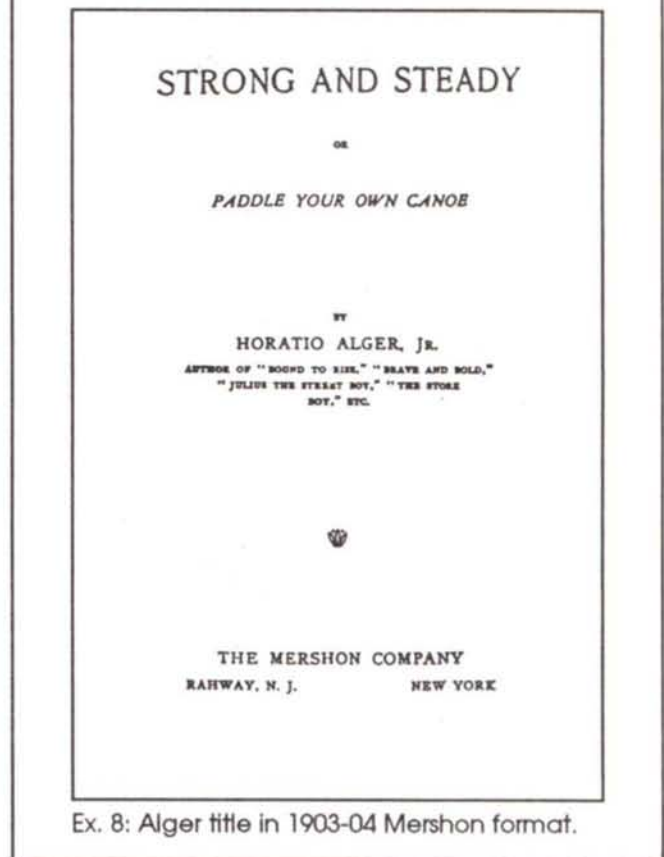
While we are discussing the black border introduced by Stitt, it may be interesting to look at the accompanying title page from a Trade Publishing Company Alger reprint (see illustration #11). It is identical with the Stitt/1906 Mershon title page, including the black border and the Stitt logo with only the name of the publisher changed. It appears that Trade Publishing was either a subsidiary of Mershon or that it was a small publishing house for whom Mershon was printing Alger titles under contract.

The last question I wish to address is, what Alger titles were actually published by Stitt, Mershon, Trade Publishing and Chatterton-Peck?

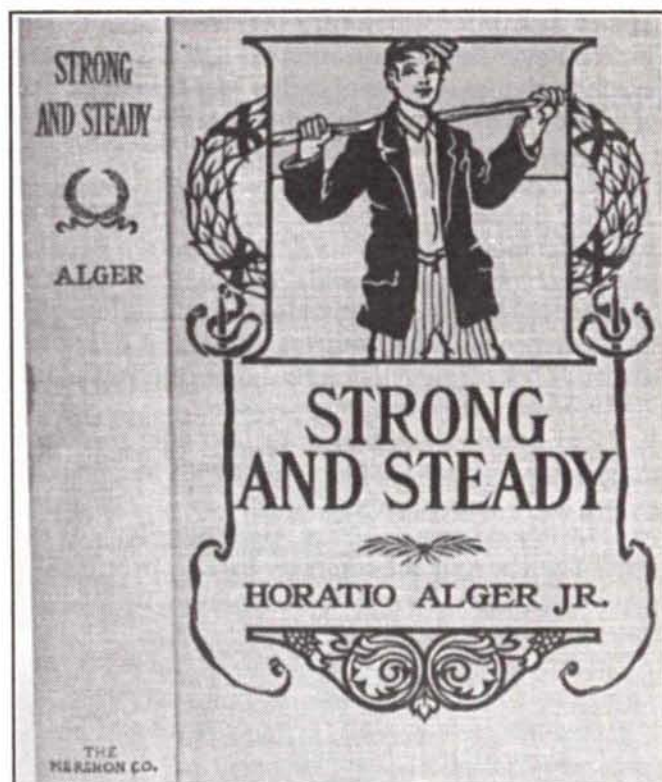
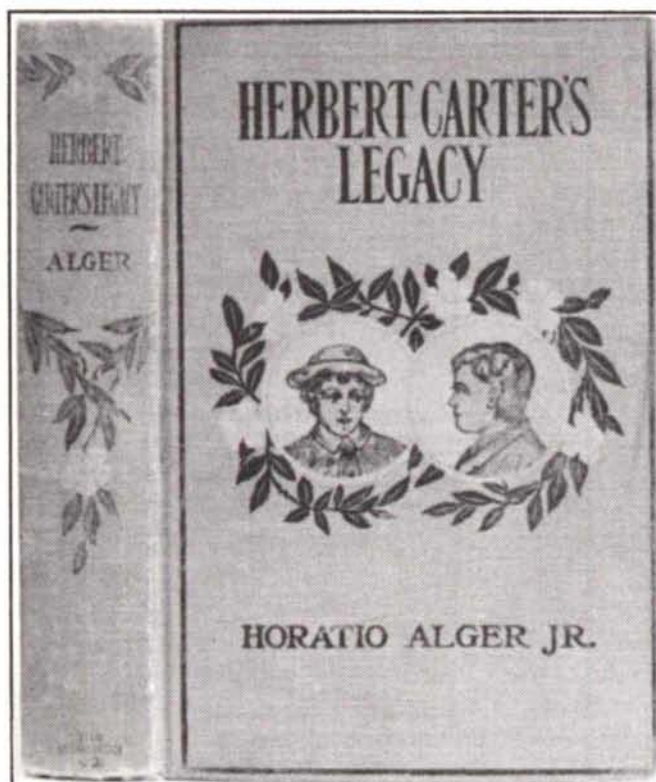
(Continued on Page 12)



Ex. 7: Stitt title page: new title, continuing series.



Ex. 8: Alger title in 1903-04 Mershon format.



"Herbert Carter's Legacy" and "Strong and Steady" as examples of Mershon-after-Stitt cover designs.

(Continued from Page 11)

Bob Bennett, in his Alger bibliography, lists 15 Stitt, 15 Trade Publishing, 9 Wanamaker, 35 Mershon and 29 Chatterton-Peck titles. I believe Bob listed only the titles which had been personally confirmed by other collectors or himself, and I know the list is conservative. I have four Trade Publishing titles which are not listed by Bennett and the same is true of titles by the other above publishers. I would question the inclusion of "Randy of the River" under the Mershon listing since it apparently was published by Chatterton-Peck (with a Stitt copy-right).

An inspection of the four lists shows a general duplication which we should expect, since all the publishers used the same plates. The only real question I have is whether Stitt first issued all the Algers later published by Mershon, or whether Mershon himself added Alger titles in 1906 using the Stitt black border and Stitt logo on the title page. I tend to believe that Stitt first issued these titles but have no real evidence either way.

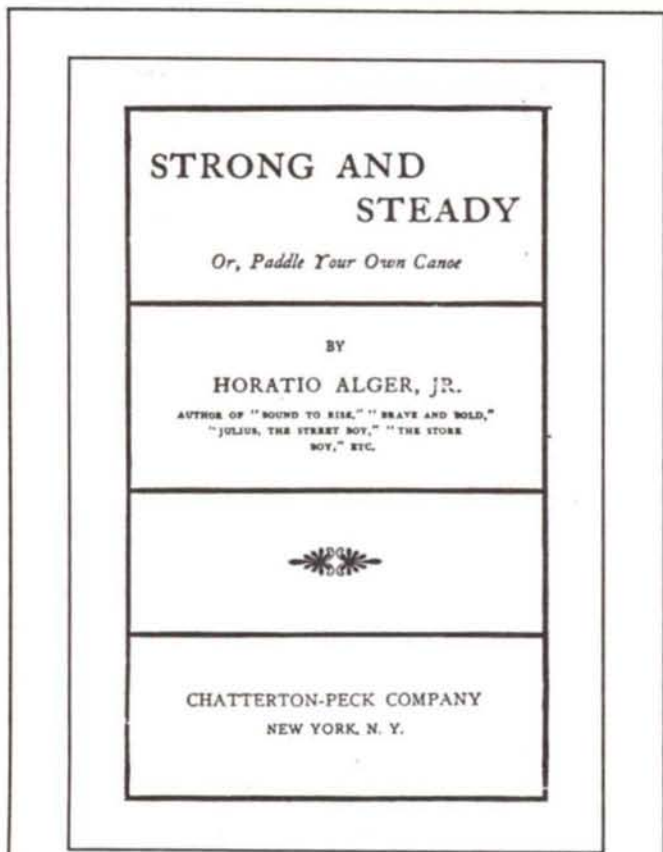
My 1906 Mershon dust jacket (see titles listed below) lists 30 of Alger's own books plus eight Stratemeyer completions for a total of 38 titles. I think we can assume these titles were all actually printed. If my assumptions are correct, Stitt would have printed 38 as well, while Chatterton-Peck would have printed 39. As far as Trade Publishing is concerned, other collectors and myself have sighted 19 titles, all identical with the late (after

Stitt) Mershons. None of these, however, are Stratemeyer completions. I would guess that the Mershon Press printed at least 30 titles for Trade Publishing and possibly the eight Stratemeyer completions published up to that time as well. Since only 10 Wanamaker Algers have so far been seen, the evidence is too limited to guess as to how many titles appeared in the Wanamaker imprint.

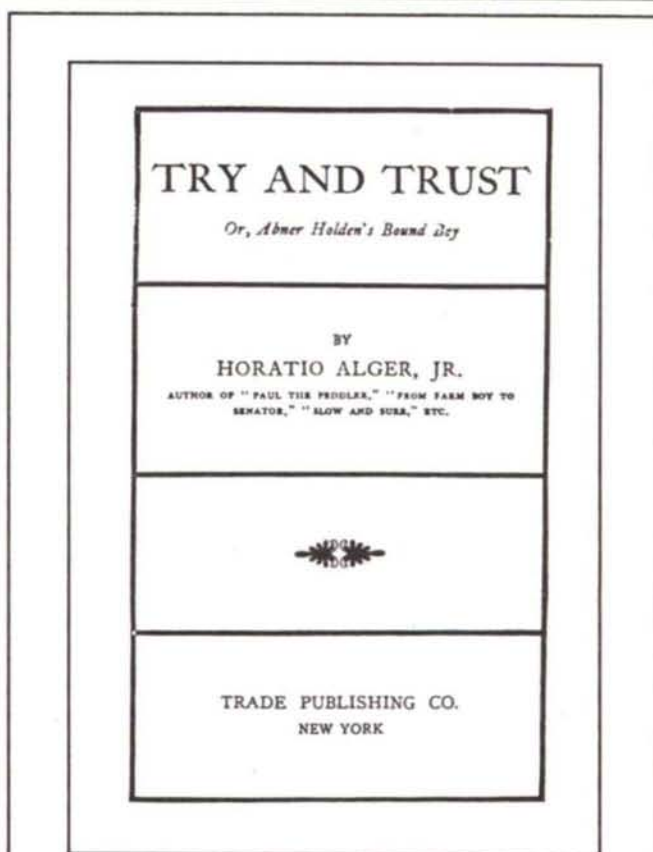
So this is the current state of my Mershon research. I will welcome any corrections and additional information, and hope you fellow H.A.S. members will write me at 10332 Ridgecrest Rd., Utica, N.Y. 13502.

The Horatio Alger, Jr. titles listed on the 1906 Mershon dust jacket:

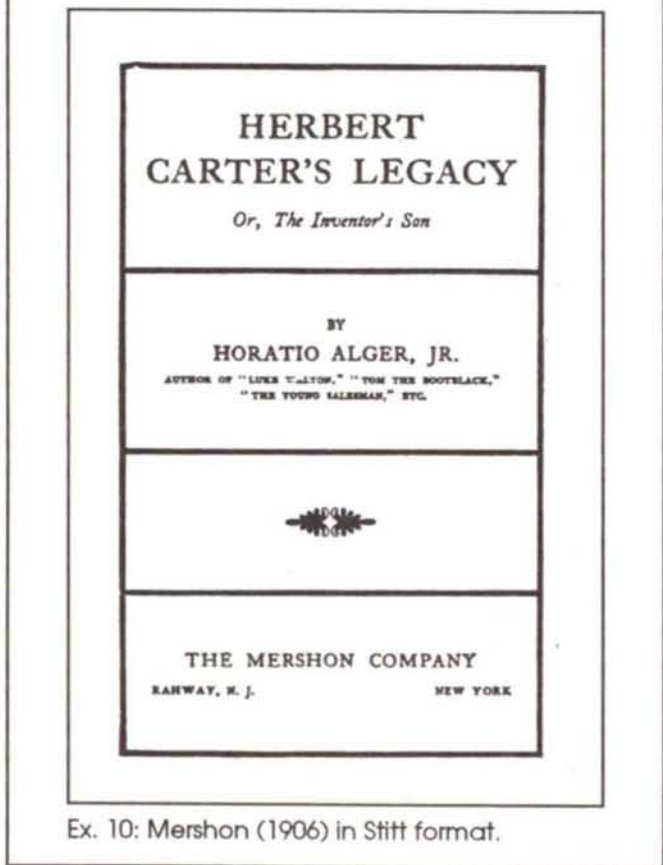
- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Adrift in New York       | 20. Risen from the Ranks     |
| 2. Andy Grant's Pluck       | 21. Sam's Chance             |
| 3. Bound to Rise            | 22. Shifting for Himself     |
| 4. Brave and Bold           | 23. The Store Boy            |
| 5. The Cash Boy             | 24. Strive and Succeed       |
| 6. Chester Rand             | 25. Strong and Steady        |
| 7. Do and Dare              | 26. Tom the Bootblack        |
| 8. Driven From Home         | 27. Try and Trust            |
| 9. Facing the World         | 28. The Young Acrobat        |
| 10. Hector's Inheritance    | 29. The Young Outlaw         |
| 11. Herbert Carter's Legacy | 30. Young Salesman           |
| 12. In a New World          | 31. The Young Book Agent     |
| 13. Jack's Ward             | 32. From Farm to Fortune     |
| 14. Julius the Street Boy   | 33. Lost at Sea              |
| 15. Luke Walton             | 34. Jerry, the Backwoods Boy |
| 16. Only an Irish Boy       | 35. Nelson, the Newsboy      |
| 17. Paul the Peddler        | 36. Young Captain Jack       |
| 18. Phil the Fiddler        | 37. Out for Business         |
| 19. Ralph Raymond's Heir    | 38. Falling in With Fortune  |



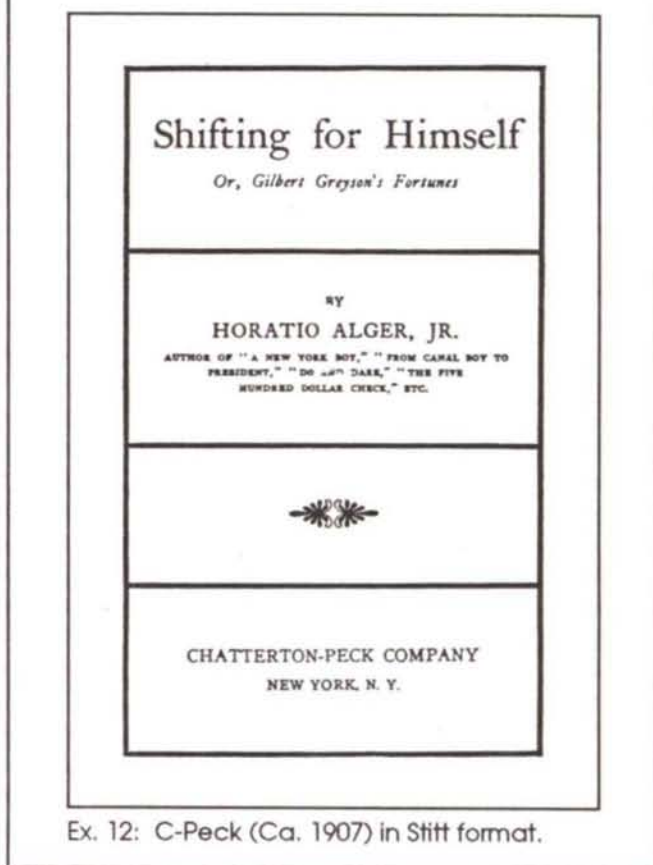
Ex. 9: C-Peck (ca. 1907) in Stitt Format.



Ex. 11: Trade Publishing in Stitt format.



Ex. 10: Mershon (1906) in Stitt format.



Ex. 12: C-Peck (Ca. 1907) in Stitt format.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Continued from Page 6)

changed our box number from P.O. Box 177 to P.O. Box 77. Please change it on your mailing list.

Sincerely,  
Lucille Mone (PF-431)  
P.O. Box 77  
Spencer, S.D. 57374

Dear Carl:

Hello! I've enclosed a few items for you, namely, my dues for 1992 as well as a sale list which I hope can be published in *Newsboy*. I've also enclosed an article I clipped from the Grand Rapids Press (early in 1990, I think). Perhaps other readers may find it interesting as well. Sorry it's so late! I've been meaning to send it for months, but oh well. I'm not clear on whether this building is still in existence, but if it is, might be a nice place to visit on some future convention.

Thanks again!

Yours,  
Chris DeHaan (PF-773)  
3870 9th St.  
Wayland, MI 49348

**Editor's note:** The column, written by Tom Rademacher, is reproduced below. Also, Chris's sales list appeared in the last issue of *Newsboy*.

## He still recalls days at Newsboy School

Around the turn of the century, when Grand Rapids was a two-newspaper town, newsboys were a hard-working lot who understood the power of the penny. And arguably, they were a somewhat pampered lot.

The reason was tied, in part, to the competition: If the Grand Rapids Evening News (forerunner to The Press) could be a better buddy to roaming waifs than the old Grand Rapids Eagle, it'd have an exclusive market on the "manpower" necessary to hawk papers from street corners.

The Eagle might have had better printing equipment (it did) or been quicker on deadline (it was), but both advantages meant nothing if the Evening News had already corralled every available young man to sell its own penny issues.

One longtime Press circulation manager used to entice newsboys with bushel baskets of popcorn balls purchased from "Taffy John," who operated a candy store on Monroe Avenue NW.

Newsboys were wooed in other ways, too. It wasn't

that unusual for the town's papers to sponsor boxing matches, running races, picnics, dances, even train rides to Spring Lake. Sunday afternoons, hundreds of boys would gather in the Press building Assembly Hall auditorium for "Happy Hour," not as we know it today. But to enjoy music and drama presentations. There was even a Newsboy band, sponsored by the Evening News.

The old Press building on Fulton Street also boasted an indoor pool, and James W. Cole remembers that. But he has even fonder, sentimental memories of days spent in a desk-lined room inside that building on Fulton.

Cole is 83 now (ed. note: in 1990) and next month celebrates a 60th wedding anniversary with wife Viola, but he has little trouble remembering classes he attended at the old Newsboy School, located on the top floor of the Fulton address.

"C. Louise Mosher was our instructor," Cole recalled, "and I remember she walked with a little limp, but she was the best teacher anyone could ever have. You also had to behave," said Cole, beginning to laugh, "because she had a big ruler."

The school provided lessons for up to 28 fifth-through-eighth grade boys. And all students came from poor or disadvantaged homes, according to Cole, whose mother struggled to raise three boys along with her job as a chamber maid at the old Cody Hotel.

The aim of the Newsboy School, says Cole, was to provide young boys with an education, but also some way to earn money toward family expenses. Or, from another perspective, it gave the newspaper a sales force from which it could draw at any time during the day, an important element when Extras would roll without warning.

Cole says the school ran from early morning until midday, but recessed about 11 a.m. so the boys could peddle regular noontime editions. Then it was back to the books.

Cole worked the intersection of Wealthy Street and Division Avenue, and remembers at least two headlines from his youth. One announced the sinking of the ocean liner *Lusitania* by a German submarine off the Irish coast in 1915. Nearly 1,200 died. Cole was a boy of 9.

The other headline was bannered across the top of Page 1. "PEACE" it screamed, in announcing -- prematurely, it turned out -- the end of World War I.

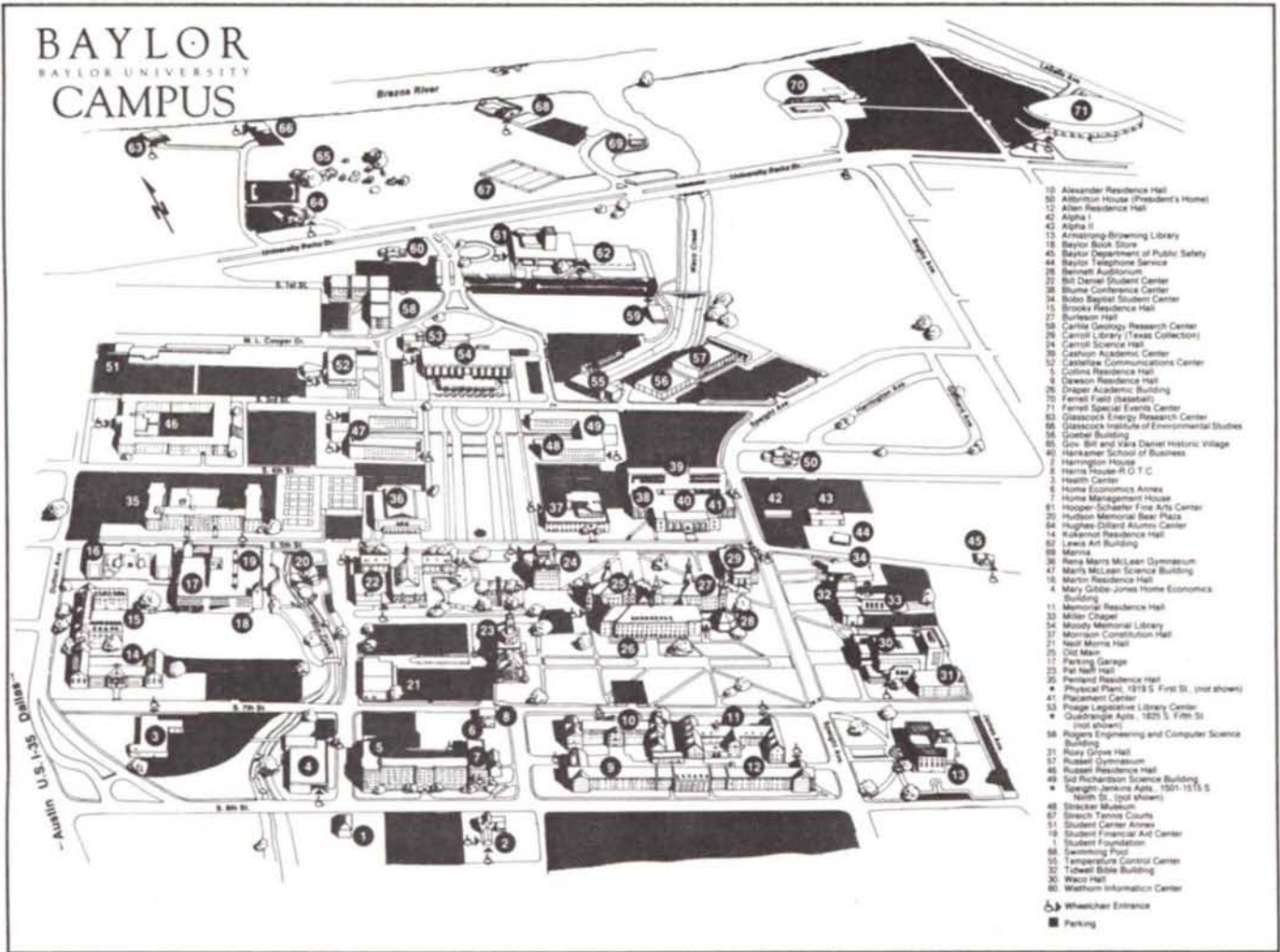
When he wasn't reveling in history through newspapers, Cole studied reading, writing, geography and more at the Newsboy School. He'd transferred there after finishing fourth grade at Division Avenue elementary.

It was 1920 when he graduated at the age of 14, receiving his diploma from "Mr. Edmund Booth himself," says Cole, referring to "Ted" Booth Sr., former editor of the Press and an officer with Booth Newspapers.

Cole went on to work 18 years at the now-defunct Grand Rapids Brass Co., then 28 years at Applied Arts Corp., 365 Lane Ave. SW. He's been retired 20 years.

I recently declined the opportunity to write about a son reunited years later with a mother who had given him up for adoption. "I don't do reunion stories," I said.

I couldn't have been serious.



# BOOK MART

J. Delbert Brandt (PF-494)  
701 Dukes Road  
Vineland, N.J. 08360 — (609) 691-4272

The following Horatio Alger books are for sale. Please allow \$1.50 to cover mailing and handling for one book. No mailing or handling charge if bought as an entire package.

Title	Publisher	Condition	Price
1. Tom Thatcher's Fortune	A.L. Burt, 1888	Good	\$20
2. Walter Sherwood's Probation (Attractive front cover of young man in riding apparel with horse.)	Hurst (reprint)	Fair	\$10
3. Bound to Rise (Empire edition in red plain cover.)	N.Y. Publishing Co.	Good-VG	\$10
4. In a New World	A.L. Burt (reprint)	Very good	\$15
5. Sink or Swim	A.L. Burt (reprint)	Very good	\$15
6. Bob Burton (All three have campfire covers.)	A.L. Burt (reprint)	Very good	\$10

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION.

