

sea for Christendom. With its women secluded even more than in the Ptolemaic and Byzantine epochs, Moslem Alexandria, now called al-Iskandariya, continued the tradition of pederasty.

Dynasties followed one another, the Shiite Fatimids (965–1171), the Sunnite Ayyubids (1171–1250), whose Saladin fought Richard I the Lionhearted, followed by the Mamluks, a group of unmarried, often castrated Slavic bodyguards known for pederasty, one of whose number was chosen Sultan from 1250 to 1519. Under the Mamluks Cairo completely outshone Alexandria, which declined to little more than a fishing village.

In 1881 the British established a protectorate over Egypt, Turkish sovereignty being purely nominal. Thereafter Alexandria became the center of a cosmopolitan blend of Eastern and Western civilization known as Levantine. With its languid sensuousness and sexual promiscuity, Alexandria, like other Levantine ports, attracted gay writers and expatriates in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The modern Greek poet Cavafy, the Russian writer Mikhail Kuzmin, Lawrence Durrell and others put the city permanently on the literary map of the world. In his lyric poems Constantine Cavafy (1863–1933) evoked the moods and memories of Hellenistic Alexandria at its zenith—as the capital of the cosmopolitan civilization his ancestors had created. E. M. Forster had a love affair with an Egyptian tram-conductor, Mohammed el-Adl, in 1917, during World War I. He also wrote a guide to the city, and introduced Cavafy's poems to English-speaking readers.

The resurgence of Arab and Egyptian nationalism spelled the death of the "colonial," Levantine Alexandria by forcing most of the permanent foreign residents to emigrate. Now the premier beach resort of Egyptians, the city abounds in summer with homosexual activity in spite of the revival of Moslem puritanism.

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William A. Percy

ALGER, HORATIO, JR. (1832–1899)

American novelist. The son of a clergyman, he sought to emulate his father's career in a church in Brewster, Massachusetts. In 1866, however, he abruptly left the ministry and went to New York City, where he devoted the rest of his life to grinding out an enormous number of books for boys, most of which have the same plot, the legendary "rags to riches" tale about a poor boy who makes good. The most famous of these books were *Ragged Dick* (1868) and *Tattered Tom* (1871). The total number of Alger books sold, both before and after his death, is estimated at being anywhere from one to four hundred million. Alger became known as the inspiration for many of the American boys who in real life went from poverty to wealth, and even today it is said in obituaries that a man's "life was like a Horatio Alger story."

Alger's status as a wholesome legend was ironically the cause of his eventually being found out. In *The American Idea of Success* (1971), Richard Huber told how he had discovered in the archives of the church in Brewster evidence that Alger had "been charged with gross immorality and a most heinous crime, a crime of no less magnitude than the abominable and revolting crime of unnatural familiarity with boys." Alger had gone to New York to escape the wrath of the parents of Brewster. This bombshell lay dormant until a journalist read Huber's book and broadcast the news across the United States.

Alger was included in Jonathan Katz' *Gay American History* (1976) and is now a standard member of everybody's list

of famous homosexuals. The story of Alger's life has been the subject of several biographies both before and after the Huber bombshell, and this is a story in itself. One early biography was a pack of lies in which Alger has relationships with various women, and other early biographies had also invented episodes here and there, and these false "facts" were repeated innocently by later biographers. Even in these early biographies, however, it was possible to read between the lines—or between the lies—to see that Alger was attracted to boys. He spent a lot of time around the Newsboys Lodging House in New York, a sort of hotel for homeless boys and a paradise for any pederast who could succeed, as Alger did, in winning the confidence of the owner and the young residents. The greatest love of Alger's life was a ten-year-old Chinese boy named Wing, who was later killed by a street-car. All of this information was reported by the early biographers, but nobody seemed to understand what it meant until Huber found the evidence.

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Stephen Wayne Foster

ALLSTON, WASHINGTON (1779–1843)

American artist. The slave-owning Allstons of South Carolina enjoyed a life of near baronial splendor. Traditionally families such as his have demonstrated their appreciation of art only through patronage, since artists, like all craftsmen, must work with their hands. Allston chose to deny his family's inculcated values when, having graduated from Harvard, he insisted on pursuing his muse.

In 1801 Allston sailed for England to study for several years at the Royal Academy with Benjamin West and Henry

Fuseli. They imbued the aspiring artist with the spirit of romantic classicism which was to become his stylistic hallmark. During his first European sojourn, Allston traveled extensively, settling by 1804 in Rome. There he first met Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Washington Irving. He insinuated himself into the circle of Rome's German colony, which centered around the Prussian consul, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and the habitués of the Caffè Greco. There he got to know Wilhelm's homosexual brother, Alexander von Humboldt, and such neoclassical sculptors as Thorvaldsen and Canova, together with the artists Asmus Jakob Carstens, Gottlieb Schick, and Joseph Anton Koch. Then in 1808 he left Rome precipitously, sailing for Boston, where he married Ann Channing, a socially prominent New Englander who had been affianced to Allston for nine years.

With his new wife, Allston traveled to England again in 1811. This time he secured the patronage of the influential Sir George Beaumont. His painting of "The Dead Man Revived" won a prize of two hundred guineas at the British Institution. In the *Annals of the Fine Arts* in 1816, he was listed as one of the principal history painters in England. The illness and death of his wife, in 1815, was the one ostensibly disturbing interlude of these very successful years. But a second time, giving his friends no warning, he decamped for America in 1818.

Back in Boston, Allston fixed his attentions on a Boston Brahmin spinster, Martha Dana, whom he married in 1830, after a courtship strung out over ten years. The course of his professional life matched that of his private life in its failure to find a focus and locate a goal. Enconced in a studio in the suburb of Cambridgeport, the artist manifested behavior we would now perceive as highly neurotic. He habitually abandoned major, multifigured canvases—by his own report of 1836, five in 18 months. Over the years, he managed to disappoint the Boston Hospital, the Pennsylvania