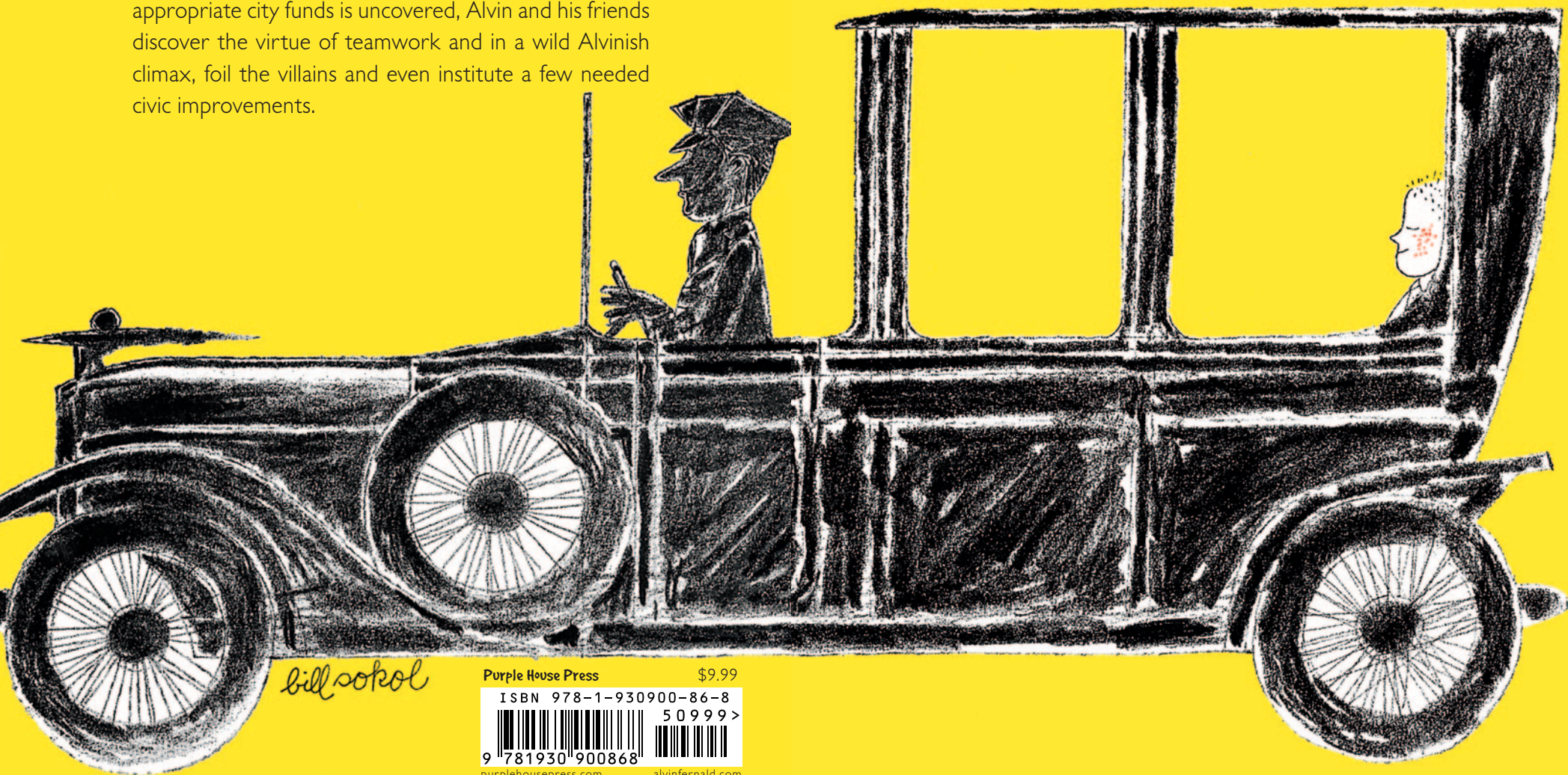


Alvin Fernald, possessor of the Magnificent Brain, strikes again, this time causing citywide repercussions with his one-day administration as Mayor of Riverton.

Author Clifford B. Hicks, who has written about Alvin's zany antics in *The Marvelous Inventions of Alvin Fernald*, *Alvin's Secret Code*, *Alvin Fernald Superweasel* and *Alvin Fernald's Incredible Buried Treasure*, now teams our hero with Speedy Glomitz, the only kid who has ever offered Alvin any competition in the brain department. With Speedy's help, Alvin wins the opportunity to become Mayor for a day. When the full-time Mayor's scheme to appropriate city funds is uncovered, Alvin and his friends discover the virtue of teamwork and in a wild Alvinish climax, foil the villains and even institute a few needed civic improvements.

# Alvin Fernald, Mayor for a Day

**Clifford B. Hicks**  
illustrated by **Bill Sokol**



bill sokol

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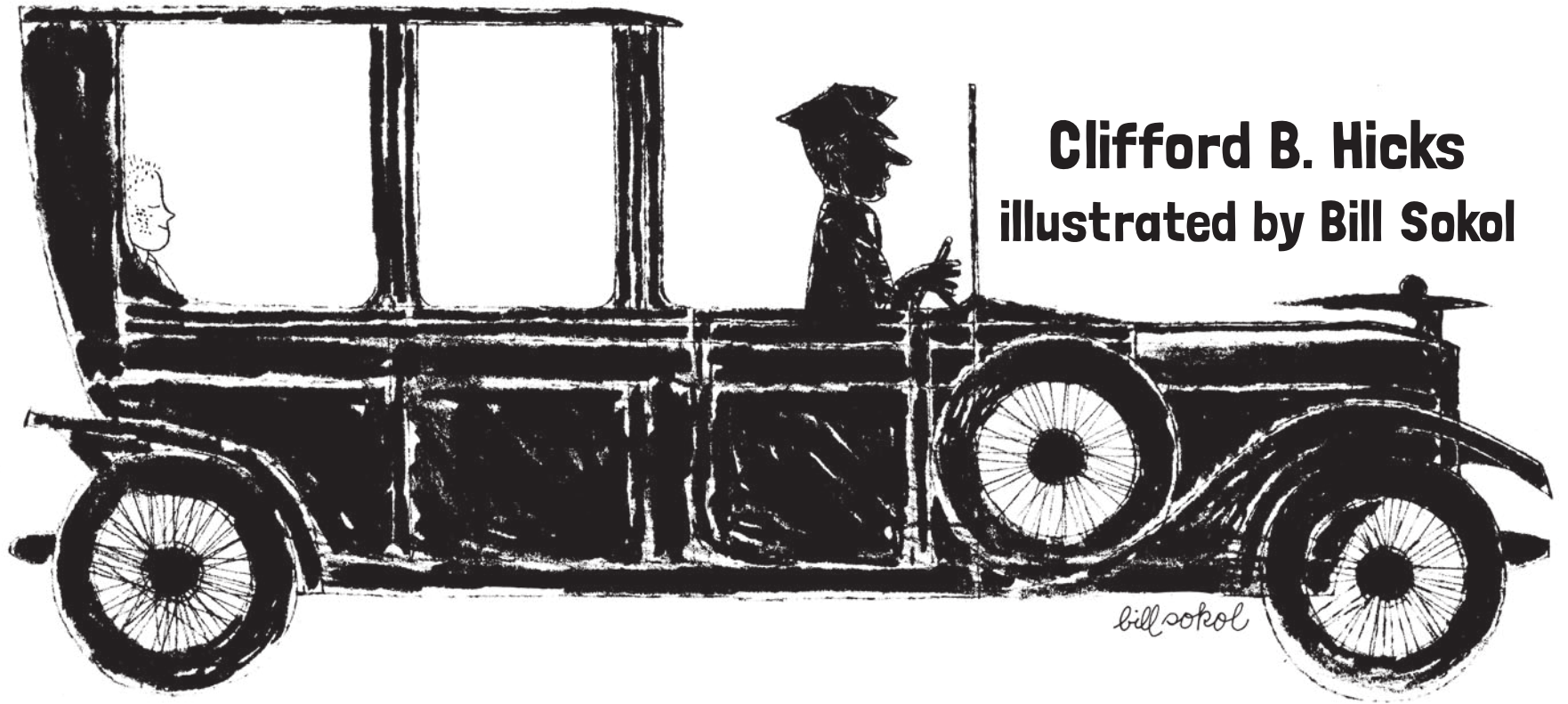
Alvin's Secret Code

Alvin Fernald's Incredible Buried Treasure

Alvin Fernald, Superweasel

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**Purple House Press**

Kentucky



FOR AL AND LOUISE—  
who have helped much more than they realize

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## CHAPTER 1

### If I Were Mayor—

MAYOR ALVIN FERNALD....

It had a nice ring to it, thought Alvin, like “President George Washington” or “General Robert E. Lee.” He might *really* run for Mayor of Riverton someday. It would be a wad of fun to ride around in the Mayor’s long black car, with a motorcycle out in front. He’d be tall and very distinguished, with gray hair, and he’d wave at everyone as he passed.

Mayor Alvin Fernald....

“Alvin!”

Miss Pinkney’s voice broke into his thoughts. Mentally, he leaped out of the long black car and back to his desk in the Fifth Grade, Room 3B, Roosevelt School. And the tall, distinguished-looking man became Alvin Fernald, slim and short for an eleven-year-old, freckles splattering his face, his short brown hair bristling in every direction like a worn-out toothbrush.

“Alvin, do you suppose you could rejoin the class long enough to answer my question?”

A couple of the girls giggled. Everyone in class was aware of Alvin’s daydreams.

“What question, Miss Pinkney?”

“I asked you whether you knew what form of city government we have here in Riverton.”

“Well...Uh...Well, we have a Mayor and we have, let’s see, we have the police and fire departments, and, uh, then there’s the men who pick up the garbage.”

There was another giggle from the back row of desks.

“Alvin, you were the one who suggested that we have political parties here in class, and elect our own Mayor. It’s a fine idea. But I expect you to pay attention, so you’ll learn *why* we have political parties, what city officials we have in Riverton, and what their duties are. Now, Theresa, what form of government do we have in our city?”

Theresa always knows the answers, thought Alvin. Somehow it irritated him.

“In Riverton we have a mayor-council form of government. Riverton is divided into areas, called wards. The voters in each ward elect a person to represent them on the city council. And all the voters in town elect a Mayor—the head of the city government.”

A Mayor, the head of the city government. Mayor Alvin Fernald...Actually, he *should* be Mayor—at least in class—because it had been his idea in the first place.

He’d made the suggestion a few minutes ago, when Miss Pinkney had told them to put away their math

books because it was time for social studies. “For the next three weeks,” she’d said, “we’ll be studying our local government. At the end of that time—you’d better make a note of this, class—I’ll expect each of you to hand in a five-page report telling how Riverton is governed.”

“Geeeeeeez!” The exclamation came from Shoie’s throat in a hoarse whisper. Shoie was Alvin’s best friend. He was known as the Mighty Athlete of Roosevelt School. He could run faster, throw a ball farther and stand on his head until his face got purpler than anyone else in school.

But Shoie could not write themes.

“That will be enough, Wilfred.” Shoie’s real name was Wilfred Shoemaker. “You will all write a theme on Riverton’s city government.”

“Miss Pinkney!” Alvin didn’t know what he was going to say, but as usual he felt he should help out his best friend.

“Yes, Alvin?”

“Couldn’t we—well—I mean—couldn’t we just sort of talk about what we would do if we were Mayor of Riverton, instead of writing it all down?”

“You mean, could you give a campaign speech for the office of Mayor?”

“Yeah. I mean, yes—I guess that’s what I mean.”

There was a moment of silence while Miss Pinkney thought this over. Finally she said, “What about that, class? Would the rest of you rather give campaign speeches, or write themes?”

Everyone voted for speeches except Worm Wormley, who stuttered. Alvin looked at him thoughtfully. Suddenly he had another inspiration.

“Miss Pinkney, couldn’t just a few of us give speeches, and the others help?”

“I think what you’re asking, Alvin, is whether you could form political parties.”

“Yeah, that’s what I mean. And couldn’t we see who *really* gets elected Mayor—at least right here in class?”

There was another pause. Alvin saw Miss Pinkney glance at Worm Wormley for just a split second, then look back at Alvin. He thought he saw a faint smile of understanding on her face. “I think that’s a fine suggestion, Alvin. But it’s going to take a lot of study.

“First, you’ll have to find out about the Riverton city government, so you’ll know how it’s governed, and what its problems are. Then you’ll divide yourself into groups—political parties—depending upon how you would solve those problems. Finally, you’ll nominate your candidates. Each candidate will give a campaign speech telling what he or she would do if elected Mayor. After that, we’ll have the election.”

“If I were Mayor, I’d—” began Alvin.

“You don’t know anything about being Mayor yet, Alvin. I suggest you do some studying. Starting tomorrow, I’ll set aside a half hour each day. As soon as you’ve formed your political parties, you can start working on your platforms. Does anyone know what a platform is?”

“I’ll b-b-b-b-bring the hammer and nails,” offered Worm.

“Not that kind of a platform,” said Miss Pinkney patiently. “A political platform is a written statement. It tells what the party thinks, as a group, about the government. It also tells what the party will do if its candidate is elected.” She paused, looking around the room. “There’ll be plenty of work for everyone. Some of you will be working on party platforms, some will be working behind the scenes for your candidates.”

As she spoke those words, Alvin happened to be looking at Speedy Glomitz. Speedy’s eyes were moving slowly up one row of students and down another. Those eyes were half-closed most of the time, like the eyes of a turtle. When Speedy’s eyes came to Alvin, they stopped. Alvin found himself staring straight into the turtle-eyes. Then he noticed that the tip of Speedy’s tongue had slipped slowly out of the corner of his mouth. Speedy chewed on it for a moment, as though trying to decide something. Alvin watched, almost hypnotized, as the tongue disappeared, and the corners of Speedy’s mouth turned up in a slow grin.

The incident made Alvin nervous. In fact, everything about Speedy Glomitz made Alvin nervous.