

THE HORATIO ALGER



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Greetings Everyone! Let's get acquainted! Tho we are strangers, yet we are friends; for we have one thing in common; We both have an interest in Alger. How does one become interested in Alger? We no doubt differ in this respect; Here's how it was with me: I was born on an October day in 1905; Friday the 13th to be exact; The same as Horatio, tho not the same month, nor, of course, the same year. I was born in an Era rich with evidence of a famous and popular author. Only six years separated his world from mine. Can a person be forgotten in such a short period of time? Was Horatio forgotten? His books were still being published as late as 1910; In this same year, I migrated with my folks from my native state of Illinois to a Swiss Settlement in southern Wisconsin; Returning after a few altho enjoyable years to grow up in the shadow of the State House, where Lincoln, the Backwoods Boy, first began his political career. My childhood was rich with Alger. Our school books which were few, were handed down from an older brother along with his Alger books. We literally held a text book in one hand and an Alger in the other. We learned the three R's and how a boy could succeed in New York, at the same time; But there comes a time in the life of every boy when he must choose between his treasures at home and the treasures which lie ahead in some distant place. I didn't see any further need for my Alger books and they were left behind; Feren't yours? However, absence makes the heart grow fonder, especially after forty years when I once more seek the treasures of my youth, those Alger books! This is what makes me interested in Alger. I am now a postal employee; I carry the U.S. Mail. My family is raised; I have three grandchildren. "Who was Alger?" they ask, when admiring my library. Will their grandchildren ask the same question? It is up to us to preserve the memories as well as to check the thoughtless destruction of our dwindling stock of Alger books for our heirs. Why do we need a newsletter? What purpose will it serve? It can serve as a central point where information may be exchanged between you

I have just returned from a planned trip to the East Coast; to Revere, Massachusetts, formerly known as North Chelsea and it is found on the near north side of Boston. As I turned on to Broadway, the Main Street of Revere, I drove into a service station to refuel. I casually asked the Attendant about Horatio Alger, but he did not catch the name and asked me to repeat it. Maw—reese Sho—val—yer? He asked; (perhaps it was my Michigan accent) I could see that I was not getting anywhere and asked instead, for the Public Library. Upon locating the Library, I found that it would not be open until the afternoon. Discouraged and disgusted, I was about to leave Revere when I thought of the many miles that I had come for this purpose and I decided to make one last attempt. I was passing City Hall and I stopped; I was about to ask for the Chamber of Commerce when I thought of the local Press; I asked if there was a Local Paper and was informed that there was and was directed to it. I was received with much courtesy and interest, after the nature of my visit was announced. I learned that only last January, the Editorial Staff honored Horatio's birthday with an article about one of their favorite Sons. My audience was inspired with my interest which had brought me so many miles, and with the interest of all other Alger Fans over the nation. We traded and shared information for at least a half hour, and I was assured that in an early issue, if not the next edition, they would print another article regarding my visit and the national interest in Alger. After proudly displaying some of my prized books from my collection, I left with a large supply of Revere Journals under my arm and with directions on how to find 88 Beach Street, the birthplace of our hero. I learned to my disappointment that there was no street named after Horatio, nor Alger; however, there is a Fenno Street; Horatio's mother came from the Fenno Family. I found the street and the house, which is just off Broadway, and to add to my enjoyment, Mrs. Joseph (Anna) Callant, the present occupant was at home. I was invited in and had the pleasure of standing in the parlor

COLUMN NO. 1 CONTINUED

and I and other interested Alger Fans, and learn of their locations and their needs. During the time in which I have been interested in collecting books by Horatio Alger, I have found that he, who attempts to keep his hobby a secret, will lead a lonely life. I myself, in the past, felt I dared not reveal my hobby until I had my libray completed. Then I met another collector of Alger who was willing to share his interests and duplicate books with me and with others. This person being Kenneth B. Butler of 1325 Burlington Road, Mendota, Illinois. Since then, through association with other collectors, I have made many friends and my own library has grown accordingly. I have had the pleasure of encouraging others to share my interests and limited knowledge of our hobby. I want you to share with us, your experiences and comments. One of the newest of collectors, Jean Steiner, of R2 Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, has just uncovered an early edition of "Helen Ford" and is she ever happy about that! PLEASE WRITE SOMETHING FOR THE NEXT EDITION, OUT AUGUST 1ST.

END OF COLUMN NO. 1

COLUMN NO. 2 CONTINUED

of Horatio's boyhood home. I felt welcome and was even accepted by Columbia, the cat and household pet. Mrs. Gallant was very courteous, and willingly answered all my questions, and after taking movies of the house from the street, I felt that my trip was worth while after all. After spending the balance of the day in Boston, I then turned in the direction of South Natick, the final resting place of our hero which is in the Glenwood Cemetery, and in the extreme right hand corner from the center entrance. There is one monument about seven feet tall in the center of the plot with small stones marking the resting places of others in his married sister's family. As I stood there in the twilight hours of the summer evening, I strongly felt that we, who know Horatio only from his life's work, are basking in the twilight of his memories. I now felt that I had honored our hero according to my ability, having visited his place of beginning and ending. What went on in between, will be discussed and disputed for ages to come.

END OF COLUMN NO. 2

Editor's Note: I have corrected many errors that were in the original first edition and perhaps now, I have made some new ones, however the text remains the same. The original first edition was mailed to 75 people known to be interested in Horatio Alger. One major error in Column 2 that I must clear up is that I was not alone on the trip to the east. My wife was very much with me. So if you will kindly change the "I" to "We" and "My" to "Our" it will correct a great injustice to my wife who deserves due credit for relinquishing the time for personal plans, that I might fulfill my personal plans to pay my respects to the memories of our hero, Horatio Alger.

This souvenir edition prepared for free distribution at the lecture on Horatio Alger scheduled to be held in the Auditorium of the Kalamazoo Public Library on November 24, 1963. Arrangements made by Alexis Fraus, Curator of the Kalamazoo Public Museum.