

Vol. 3 No. 06

December 1964

A newsletter

Organized 1962

(Non--profit)

Published monthly for the benefit of partic'lar friends of Horatio Alger, Jr. Edited and published by Forrest Campbell. Chm. Edward G. Levy, New Haven, Conn. Eastern Rep. Max Goldberg, Natick, Mass. Research, Gilbert Vestgard II, Park Ridge, Ill. Ragged Dick Fund Trustees, Kenneth Butler, Mendota, Ill. & Ralph Gardner, New York City, N.Y.

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THE MENDOTA AFFAIR, or meeting, may come to be known as a gathering of Partic'lar Friends of Horatio Alger, Jr. The success of this gathering depends upon your personal interest and enthusiasm. The date selected is of two days duration--May 21 and 22nd. Kenneth Butler, the general chairman of this gathering has--even at this early date--great plans to entertain you as well as to feed you and house you.

Details of the exact program including other items as yet unconcieved, will be furnished at a later date, but so far, the programming sounds like a gala event. Complete success of the event depends of course on your attendance. It is realized that the date chosen occurs during the school term. Your convenience has been considered, yet we have considered the usual family vacation plans which usually occur after the close of the school year.

Mr. Butler's many interests include a fleet of some 23 antique automobiles, and plans a parade with a member of the Society as a passenger in each car. An antique high wheeled buckin' bicycle rodeo event will be open to all members with honorable mention for the member who can remain seated the longest. No seat belts will be provided, and it is not equipped with a side-saddle. Bring your movie camera and record this hilarious event.

There will be a conducted tour of the VAYSIDE PRESS, courtesy of the President, Kenneth Butler. You will observe the process of printing by expert craftsmen as evidenced in your copy of Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era, and Alger Street, which was arranged and edited by Gilbert Vestgard, II (S-24).

Ralph Gardner has promised to be in attendance. If your copy of Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era has not yet been autographed by the author, bring it with you. There will be a discussion period for questions and answers. If you have duplicates in your Alger collection which you hope to sell or exchange, bring them along too. Bring any book or item which is not for sale, but which you wish to place on exhibition. Auctions will be taboo, but dickering will be permitted. This will be a wonderful opportunity to get acquainted with other fellow members.

The expression 'Partic'lar Friend' has been gleaned from the Ragged Dick stories. Ragged Dick used this expression of endearment when referring to his special friends; so I would like to adopt the expression for us to use when referring to Partic'lar Friends of Horatio Alger.

Partic'lar Friends of Horatio Alger will be heralded into town with an announcement in the Mendota Reporter (a weekly newspaper) in their Thursday, May 20th edition. This will be a souvenir item that you will want to take home with you. All Society members in attendance will receive a Bootblack paperweight souvenir, with the inscribed words HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY OF AMERICA, courtesy of Kenneth Butler.

Some Society members will be interviewed on Mendota's Radio Station WGLC (World's Greatest Little City), wave length 1090.

Kenneth will arrange for a cook-out -- (weather permitting) at a nearby lake, and our banquet is scheduled to be held at Leonard's Victorian Manor, who caters to private gatherings such as ours. The dining room is located in his own home, which is beautifully furnished and filled with attractive antiques. It is well recommended by Kenneth and Mendota citizens.

We shall have a business session at which time we shall try to chart the course for the future of our Society. It is hoped that a recipient for our RAGGED DICK AWARD will be named for your approval. It is hoped that you will be able to name my successor as editor of the newsletter, to take over upon my retirement, January 1966. It is hoped that we can come to an agreement upon sufficient membership dues to finance the expense of the newsletter and the annual Ragged Dick Award. It is hoped that we can authorize and establish two or more regional meetings each year, which would include an annual memorial service in Natick, Massachusetts.

You can see that your attendance is vitally necessary in Mendota especially to have a voice in planning the future of our Society. Please send a postal card today to Kenneth B. Butler, 1325 Burlington Road Mendota, Illinois 61342, announcing your intentions to attend and to take active participation in our affairs. Thank you.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS

A. Happy Kellejian, (S-105)  
3880 Greenwood Street, E-209  
San Diego, California 92110

Morris Olsen, (S-106)  
44 Hillsboro Road,  
Mattapan, Massachusetts 02126

William Loomis, (S-107)  
321 Golden Gate Avenue,  
Tacoma, Washington 98466

Happy's affiliation with us comes by way of George Setman. Due to the distance between us, I suppose Happy has not had sufficient time to supply us with more information regarding his interest in Horatio Alger, Jr.

Morris heard of us by way of Carl Hartmann, (S-102). Carl had an advertisement in a monthly publication. Morris answered the ad, heard of us, and without further ado, sent in his request for the newsletter. Nothing further to report from Morris at this time.

William heard of us through Ralph Gardner and immediately called me on the phone from Tacoma. It was early evening (in Tacoma) but I had already retired (in Kalamazoo), but that's all right, Bill, I'll talk Alger anywhere, anytime, and anyhow, it was his dime. Bill was born in St. Paul (1911), lived there until 1960 working in the Architectural Services Dept. of Weyehaeuar (lumber?) Co., got transferred to Tacoma. Bill and his wife, Audrey, are actively interested in music and Civic Opera productions. Bill's hobby interest began with coins, switched to old cars, then became interested in Alger. He already has several good duplicates, and wants to hear from those who have books for sale or exchange.

I have several prospective subscribers, whose inquiries came too late in the month to be processed, from Hoboken, N.J. Framingham, Mass. Marion, Ind. and Towaco, N.J.

Max Goldberg, (S-08) Eastern Rep., hastens to inform me that I erred in my description of Alger's pocket-watch which he exhibited at Brandeis recently. It is a silver watch. So many of Alger's heroes owned gold watches, I am disappointed to learn that Horatio never owned a gold watch.

Two subscribers, sending in contributions of \$2.00 & \$5.00 asked that their money be used in any way where needed. Their money was used to defray some of the expense of the recent Memorial Service in South Natick.

For the membership roster scheduled to begin in January, will subscribers (S-01) through (S-10) please send in the total number of titles in your collection for publication purposes.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RAGGED LICK FUND

Previous balance reported:		\$112.16
Contributions:	Item #45	2.00
	Item #46	5.00
	Item #47	5.00
	Item #48	1.84
	Item #49	2.00
	Item #50	3.00
	Item #51	2.00
	Item #52	2.00
	Item #53	2.00
		<u>24.84</u>
New Balance:		\$137.00

It is suggested that \$100.00 from this fund be granted each year to a recipient of our choice.

## BOOKS FOR REVERE

The following books have been donated to the Revere Public Library by Kenneth B. Butler, (S-06)

Donation No.	Title
24	Brave and Bold
25	Paul Prescott's Charge
26	Phil The Fiddler
27	Strive and Succeed

Mr. Butler has had a 'Thank you' reply and we quote in part: "The people of Revere are showing a greater interest in their native son since we have shown our display of Alger books." The letter is signed by their new Librarian, Mrs. Violet E. Owlser. The Revere Library did not have a single Alger book on their shelves when we visited there in June of 1962. Our project was suggested by Mrs. Jenny Breedveld, Feature Writer for the Revere Journal, and also identified as (S-43). Mrs. Breedveld currently suggests "How about a journalism scholarship for the recipient of our RAGGED LICK AWARD?" I think Horatio would like that!

If you have an Alger book to donate to the Revere Library, avoid duplication, check with me first for clearance, then mail direct in the name of our Society.

RECENT VISITORS - Mr. & Mrs. Alvin Rezelman, (S-55). REPORTED SICKNESS - Mother of Miss Martha Harris, (S-05), and husband of Mrs. Margaret Smeltzer, (S-28) NEW PUBLICATIONS - Case of the Precocious Ghost, by Robert Johnson, (S-80). ACTIVITIES - reported by George Setman, (S-07), Main Library in Philadelphia exhibits 77 Alger books. The affair was written up by Henry Darling for the Evening Bulletin; he quotes Mayes for his material and of course takes a dim view of our hero.

If you want to do something for our Society as well as your own community, inform your local Librarian about HORATIO ALGER, OR THE AMERICAN HERO ERA (WAYSIDE PRESS) and ALGER STREET (J.S. CANNER & CO.)

Your newsletter subscription will be cheerfully extended for another year, upon request. No response means a loss of interest. If I have heard from you within the last six months--you are safe, otherwise, this is your last newsletter.

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT By Horatio Alger Jr.  
(continued from the November Issue)

"Where does your mother live, my little fellow?" asked Mr. Dinsmoor.

"On ---- Street."

"O, that is not far off. I will myself show you the way, if you will remain a few minutes longer."

Mr. Dinsmoor rang the bell, and ordered a plate of cake and apples, as he conjectured they would not be unacceptable to his little visitor. Meanwhile Lizzie crept to her mother's side and whispered:

"Willie is poor, isn't he?"

"Yes. What makes you ask?"

"I thought he must be, because his clothes look so thin and patched. Don't you think he would like a Christmas present, mother?"

"Yes, my darling. Have you anything to give him?"

"I thought, mother, perhaps you would let me give him my five dollar gold-piece. I think that would be better than any playthings. May I give it?"

"Yes, my child, if you are really willing. But are you quite sure that you would not regret it afterwards?"

"Yes, mother," and Lizzie ran lightly to the little box where she kept her treasure, and brought it forth and placed it in Willie's hand.

"That is your Christmas present," said she, gaily.

Willie looked surprised.

"Do you mean it for me?" he asked, in a half-bewildered tone.

"Yes, if you like it."

"I thank you very much for your kindness," said Willie, earnestly, "and I will always remember it."

There was something in the boy's earnest tone which Lizzie felt was an ample recompense for the little sacrifice she had made. Mr. Dinsmoor fulfilled his promise, and walked with Willie as far as the street in which he lived, when, feeling sure that he could no longer mistake his way, he left him. Mr. Dinsmoor, whom we have introduced to our readers, was a prosperous merchant, and counted his wealth by hundreds of thousands. Fortunately his disposition was liberal, and he made the poor sharers with him in the gifts which fortune had so liberally showered upon him. Notwithstanding the good use which he made of his wealth, he was fated to experience reverses--resulting not from his own mismanagement, but from a general commercial panic which all at once involved in ruin many whose fortunes were large and whose credit was long established. In a word, Mr. Dinsmoor failed.

Eleven years had rolled by since the Christmas night on which our story opens. Lizzie had not belied the promise of her girlhood, but had developed into a radiantly beautiful girl. Already her hand had been sought in marriage, but as yet she had seen no one on whom she could look with that affection, without which

marriage would be a mockery. Charlie and Harry, too. Eleven years had changed them not a little. The boys of four and six had become fine manly youths of fifteen and seventeen. The eldest had entered college. Harry, however, who was by no means studious, had entered his father's counting-room. That was a sorrowful night on which Mr. Dinsmoor made known to his afflicted wife the bankruptcy which was inevitable. Still sadder, if possible, was the sale which it enforced of the house which they had so long occupied, the furniture which had become endeared to them by memory and association, and the harsh interruption which loss of fortune put to all their treasured schemes.

"My poor boy," said Mrs. Dinsmoor, sorrowfully, as she placed her hand caressingly on the brown locks of Charlie, the eldest of the two boys. "It will be a hard sacrifice for you to leave the studies to which you are so much attached, and enter a store, as you will be obliged to do."

"Ah, I had not thought of that," murmured Charlie. "It will indeed be a sacrifice, but, mother, I would not care for that if you could only be spared the trials to which you will be exposed from poverty."

"Thank you for your consideration, my child; but do not fear that I shall not accommodate myself to it. It is a heavy trial, but we must try to think that it will ultimately eventuate in our good."

At the auction of Mr. Dinsmoor's house and furniture, the whole property, without exception, was knocked off to a young man, who seemed apparently of twenty-two or three years of age. He was able to secure it at a price much beneath its real value, for times were hard and money scarce, so that he had but few competitors. Mr. Dinsmoor did not hear his name, and the pressure of sad thoughts prevented his making the inquiry.

Possession was to be given in one week. Meanwhile Mr. Dinsmoor sought out a small house in an obscure part of town, which in point of elegance and convenience formed a complete contrast to the one he had formerly occupied. He felt, however, that it would be all his scanty salary as a clerk (for he had secured a situation in that capacity) would enable him to afford.

Lizzie looked with a rueful face at the piano, as a dear friend, from whom she must henceforth be separated, it being quite too costly a piece of furniture to be retained in their reduced circumstances. Her proficiency in music, for which she had great taste, made her regret it doubly, since she might with it have added to the resources of the family by giving music lessons. On the last evening in which they were to remain in the old house, their sad thoughts were broken in upon by a ring at the bell.

"Can they not even leave us to enjoy the last evening in quiet?" said Charles, half petulantly.

Alger short story continued from page -3-

Immediately afterwards there entered a young man, in whom Mr. Dinsmoor recognized the purchaser of the house.

"I need not bid you welcome," said he, smiling faintly, "since you have a better right here now than myself. Had I been told three months since that this would be, I would not have believed it, but we cannot always foresee. I shall be prepared to leave tomorrow."

"I shall be better satisfied if you will remain," said the young man, bowing.

"How do you mean?"

"Simply that as this house and furniture are now mine to do with as I like, I choose to restore you the latter, and offer you the use of the former, rent-free, as long as you choose to occupy it."

"Who then are you," asked Mr. Dinsmoor, in increasing surprise, "who can be so kind to utter strangers with no claim upon you?"

"You are mistaken. You have a claim upon me. Shall I tell you what it is? Eleven years ago to-morrow, for to-morrow is Christmas day, a poor boy who had known none of the luxuries and but a few of the comforts of life, stood in this street. His mind was ill at ease, for he had lost his way. But as he walked on, he beheld a blaze of light issuing from a window, from your window, and aroused by curiosity he looked in. Around a Christmas tree brilliant with light, a happy group were assembled. As he stood gazing in, he heard the front door open, and a gentleman came out and kindly invited him to enter. He did so, and the words of kindness and the Christmas gift with which he departed have not yet left his remembrance. Seven years passed, and the boy's fortune changed. An uncle, long supposed to be dead, found him out, and when he actually died, left him the heir of a large amount of wealth. Need I say that I am that boy, and my name is Willie Grant?"

The reader's imagination can easily supply the rest. Provided with capital by his young friend, Mr. Dinsmoor again embarked in business, and this time nothing occurred to check his prosperity. Charlie did not leave college, nor did Lizzie lose her piano. She gained a husband, however, and had no reason to regret the train of events which issued from her CHRISTMAS GIFT.

(Reproduced from The People's Literary Companion, June 1902, Vol. 34 No. 11)

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The story in the opposite column is an attempt by me to capture the style of our hero, Horatio Alger, Jr., in the short story field. I hope you like it.

This will enable me to start from the beginning of another Alger short story in January with A SNOWBALL FIGHT, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

BEST WISHES FOR A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

(An Horatio Alger-type story written for the NEWSBOY by Forrest Campbell)

It was the Friday before Christmas and big white, wet flakes of snow were falling quietly outside the window of Annie's home, where she was busily engaged stringing popcorn into a chain for the tree which she hoped her father would bring her. Her mother had died less than a year ago. She remembered her last Christmas with her mother and father. It had been such a happy one. She had missed her mother so terribly much, and so had her father, who had taken to drink to drive the sad memory from his tormented mind. Drink had given him some comfort, but had become an ever-increasing habit, which he had not the will to throw off.

Of late, he had been spending most of his time with his foot upon the rail--and too much of his money. Annie had suffered from want of nourishing food, and warm clothing because of her father's condition, but she had not complained, for she loved her father, and prayed often that her father would be restored to her as he used to be.

Without funds, her father had stooped to beg an acquaintance to buy him a drink. His request had been denied and shamefully he returned home seeking shelter and nourishment in the form of food. His unsteady step was recognized by Annie who met him at the door.

"Did you bring home some food for our supper, father, dear?" she asked.

"I have no money, Annie," he replied, shamefully; he couldn't tell her why.

On the next day when Annie's father was handed his pay envelope, he asked his employer for a raise.

"How is it that you need a raise, Fred," he inquired.

"I haven't been able to provide properly for my little Annie; I love my little girl; I'd do anything for her."

"Do you love her enough to stop drinking, Fred?" he asked, frankly.

Fred hung his head in shameful admission of his guilt. No one had expressed the real truth to him in this manner before. His employer continued, "You do not deserve a raise, Fred. The quality of your work has declined." His employer took back the pay envelope, removed five dollars, and sealed it. "When you improve the quality of your work, I'll give you a raise. Until then, take your sealed pay envelope home to Annie; and with this five dollars, buy her a Christmas present."

The challenge was just what Fred needed. An instant change came over him. He resolved then and there to improve the quality of his work and was determined that Annie's welfare and happiness would be of first importance. It was indeed a happy Christmas again for Annie and her father.

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE CAMPBELLS