

THE HORATIO ALGER



"World's only publication devoted to Horatio Alger"

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Newsboy

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PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

I NOTE WITH INCREASING pleasure the apparent increase in the number of personal visits and correspondence that is taking place among members. This is what we had hoped, from the beginning -- that the Horatio Alger Society could become a "launching pad" where men and women with avid common interests would seek each other out for mutual help and for discussion on the topic we are all interested in. May I add that the annual convention is another most rewarding arena for increasing friendships and for added inspiration. To say nothing of added titles in the collection.

EARLIER IN THE YEAR I wrote of the need, as I see it, for some kind of a guide book of values of Alger books. I mentioned that the number of titles, the varied states of physical condition, and the many publishers with different editions within publishers ... all adds to the complexity of such an undertaking.

Paul Fisher, of Binghamton, New York, has done something, by way of a beginning, on the variance of designs and editions even by one publisher. He experimented with some Xerox copies of spine and cover designs, in order to set up a code of identifications so members will know just what design another member is talking about. We are most interested, and are pursuing this further with Paul Fisher. It surely is something that is needed, though expense will dictate the physical form such a guide book could take.

At press time a most interesting letter, also, from our new member, Norman G. Peterson, of Big Rapids, Michigan. He picks up my earlier comments on a guidebook. He, being an avid coin collector, also, views a guide for Algers as a guide of relative values. His proposal is to cut down the size of the project to something attainable by grouping the various publishers (and their edition designs) into groupings. Thus, Superior, Whitman, Saalfield, N.Y. Book, most Donohue editions could all be lumped as #4, for example. His proposed chart would show five states of condition, and four
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or more publisher groupings. Values would then be stated for each.

This of course fails to take into account the rarity of the book. You would doubtless pay more for a rare "Ned Newton", even if only in fair condition, than for a mint condition "Brave and Bold". But here is a formula that might be developed into something useful, thanks to Norman's thinking.

MEMBER PETERSON also, due to his interest in the chemistry of retoning coins, feels "it is too bad we can't store our books in a freezer". He thinks there is a chemistry of old books. The cheaper editions contain more sulphuric acids and deteriorate more quickly in the air, as we all know, sadly. Thus it may be that in addition to keeping our goodies covered with plastic bags, as does Jack Row with his phenomenal collection, we may store them in steel containers that are fed a supply of "X" gas in order to preserve them.

THE POSSIBILITY of a "100 Club" within H.A.S. has been suggested by Jack Row, the idea having originated with Irene Gurman. All members who have reached or passed 100 titles in their collecting, would automatically become a member of this "club within a club", and receive a lapel button. We're for encouraging the building of collections, and the idea sounds good. Until we grow larger the funds of the Society are insufficient to finance. But none the less we are checking with button-makers as to possible cost.

ENTHUSIASTIC HELP is building on our query of last month on the possibility of building a travelling Alger exhibit for libraries. We have framed up a list of illustrations, informative posters, and other display possibilities. We have made a tentative list of about 18 book items that would be ideal as a focal point. Already, proffered help on books has come from Ed Levy, Jack Row, Forrest Campbell. Who else wants to contribute a book or two? Just name the title and edition, but don't send the book until advised. We are just in the planning stage. Books should be bright and clean,
(continued on page 3)

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

- PF 001 Mr. Max Friedman T-077
135 North Lauderdale Drive,
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
- PF-128 Mr. Harland H. Eastman T-080
14 West Howell Avenue,
Alexandria, Virginia 22301
- PF-162 Mrs. Phyllis Heisig T-002
150-23 25th Avenue,
Whitestone Station,
Flushing, L.I. New York 11357
- PF-034 Mrs. Blanche G. Lloyd (*)
471 1/2 North Grant Street,
West Lafayette, Indiana 47906

(*) There is a typographical error in Mrs. Lloyd's street address as listed in our new membership directory. Please correct.

NEW MEMBERS REPORTED

- PF-184 Mr. Norman G. Peterson T-028
R3
Big Rapids, Michigan 49307
- PF-185 Mrs. Darlene Spinella T-000
1334 North Water Street,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
- PF-186 Mr. Jack Barker T-all
8260 Jett Ferry Road,
Dunwoody, Georgia 30043

B O O K M A R T

- PF-006 (Kenneth B. Butler) offers:
G154ALB
- PF-128 (Harland H. Eastman) offers: (and price range is 75¢ - \$2)
- G 4VSP, F 26JCW, G 28TPC, G 33ALB
F 45ALB, F 63JCW, G 70ALB, G 76ALB
E 98MAD, EL4OTPC, P148NYB, P168NYB
G178JCV, F187ALB, P188NYB, G190ALB

Editor's note: Code WSP : World Syndicate Pub. Co., TPC : Trade Pub. Co. Coding for other publishers may be found on pages 361-63 of Gardner's book.

Ralph Anderson, PF-144, is publisher of Collectors News, a monthly publication devoted entirely to collectors. Advertising accepted. Subscription \$3. We recommend it. Try it for your "wants" and "don't wants."

ERROR ABOVE

A thousand pardons. I neglected to include a change of address, above. Please Note.....

- PF-137 Mr. Leo F. Moore T-122
16412 Gentry Lane,
Huntington Beach, Calif. 92647

PLEASE CORRECT MEMBERSHIP ROSTER, NOW!

Norman comes to us indirectly, by way of Carl Hartmann, though Norman had not heard of us until supplied with an unused membership application from a book dealer in Howard City, Michigan. Teaches chemistry at Ferris State College. Born 1923, married, with five children, wife's name is June. He buys and sells coins, and is interested in writing for us, an article about the coins mentioned in the Alger stories. He and his two oldest daughters are avid readers of Alger. Norman has added two titles since his application. Read Gardner's book from the Big Rapids Public Library. Currently reading The Young Postmaster.

Norman has been giving some serious thought on "pricing" of Alger books. He suggests they be graded in units, each having a value of 50¢, for example, fair, 1; good, 2; very good, 4; and mint, 10. He realizes of course, that consideration must be made for reprints, first editions, quality, publisher, and rarity. But he is interested, and working on it.

Darlene comes to us by way of a gift membership from her friend Bette Robinson, PF-156. Darlene accompanied Bette as a guest at our "Milwaukee Event." Darlene is employed at the Wilson Sport Shoe Co., is musically inclined and provides a home for her young niece.

Jack comes to us indirectly by way of Ralph Gardner, who provided us with a "lead" on Jack's publicity regarding his defensive stand on Alger in the Atlanta Journal. Actually, we sought out Jack with an unsolicited application form. Jack is the Atlanta District Branch Mgr. of the Taylor Instrument Co. Currently he claims to have all titles except Seeking His Fortune, which implies that he has Timothy Crump, in some form. Jack provides us with a lead on a prospective member from Dade City, Florida. Jack further states: "I am indeed interested in the man (Alger) and his works, and look forward to participation in the Society."

NEITHER RAIN, NOR SNOW...

It couldn't happen to us, I said, as I read the prediction of a general heavy snow-fall. Snow is for the kids and their sleds, etc. Yuk! So, I went to bed, secure behind rattling windows, and under an extra blanket. This morning (3rd) I awoke to find the gusts of wind had deposited drifts of snow in my driveway, which causes all sorts of complications. But the mail must "go through" said my boss, reminding me of my oath. I have observed that patrons no longer use the front door (where the mail box is located) as a place of entrance and exit, but use the garage entrance, instead. It's our senior citizens who take pride in a clean walk after a storm; but others say, with tongue in cheek, surely, a little snow, "shall not stay these courriers from their appointed rounds." (PF-000)

PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS: (continued)

but not necessarily rare titles or valuable first editions.

Your Partic'lar Friend, ---Ken Butler

EDITORIAL FRUPTIONS

My grateful thanks for your birthday cards. My wife surprised me with a custom-made gray flannel sports jacket, with our Society emblem attached to the breast pocket. Of course I'll wear it proudly, and with an up-turned nose, at Des Moines next May.

Ralph Gardner has suggested (and urged) that we list all birthdays in the newsletter, one issue in advance. What do you suggest? If in favor, send your information to me. You may omit the year if you wish. P.S. Ralph's is April 16th.

The little "goblins" were at our door last night. I answered the door occasionally, with sawdust in my hair (resembling "Pig-Pen" from the "Peanuts comic strip"). Parents are starting them out much younger, now-a-days.

This morning as I walked my mail-route through the first snow flakes of the season, I saw much evidence that some little goblin must have had a hole in his bag. There was also much evidence of many shattered "Great Pumpkins."

But this month we change from goblins to "gobblers" and I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving!

The trend to "boycott" super markets is spreading. I am not in sympathy. After all, they are in a highly competitive field. But my heart goes out to the retired people who are forced to live upon a fixed income. And also to the relatives of the many firemen killed in the tragic fire in New York City recently.

Empty lots are beginning to be stocked with fresh cut Christmas trees here. And Christmas advertising is beginning to appear in the mail.

This Veterans Day, send a letter to a Veteran--somewhere.

MICHIGAN! BEAT IOWA!

Although the sound of the "pigskin" is now being heard in the land, this challenge is directed at Michigan Society members. Iowa will beat us in membership if we don't watch out!

Have you noticed road construction jobs are scheduled to be completed about election time? Makes the incumbents look good!

The new commemorative postage stamp
(continued at top of page)

which adorns the current mailing, is the result of the Sioux City (Iowa) high-schooler's vigorous campaign.

Discovering a cache of out-of-print chapter 14, I now have six complete sets of The Young Postmaster, for sale at one dollar each. Only one set per member.

A NEW PUBLICATION

The first edition (volume one, number one) of a new bi-monthly publication, "Book Worm" is now off the press.

Some of you may recall a feature article in TBA entitled "Help Wanted" written by J. Bryant. The editor and publisher of this new publication is none other than J. Bryant, except that she is now married, and is now known as Jacqueline Steele.

The cover format of the first edition shows the cover of an old rare book, which is illustrated with a newsboy hawking an "Extra" edition. The big news is of course the "just out" first edition of "Book Worm."

It's size is approx 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 with 16 pp. The content is general chit chat of general interest to book lovers, in which she explains her ambitions and intentions for her publication. Also included, which may become a monthly feature is a list of 115 books for sale from her (estimated) stock of 30,000 books.

I like her publication and I recommend it. Just send one dollar for a year's subscription to Book Worm, Box 76, Rockport, Maine 04856.

I've just turned over a new leaf--on the calendar, that is. Can't mark my calendar yet, for the Des Moines Session, until we get a new calendar. Order your Society emblem now, so you'll be able to display it at Des Moines. Only a limited supply, I understand; and we probably won't re-order.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A letter from Bette Robinson reveals that she and her friend Darlene (new member, PF-185) travelled to Nashville recently. Mrs. Rohima Walter, PF-160 included an interesting list of books for sale with her letter. She states, after she reads the newsletter, she passes it on to prospective friends. If anyone prefers to save their newsletters, I would be glad to send sample copies to your friends who may be interested.

Dr. & Mrs. Wild paid us a surprise visit recently, and while they were here, we received a long distance call from Phyllis Heisig, all the way from Long Island. Jack & Beth Row expect to visit Michigan during the Christmas Holidays.

We thrive on your letters. Excerpts make the newsletter more interesting. Remember, there will not be a January Issue! (more Editorial Fruptions on page five)

PARTICULAR FRIENDS PAGE (comments from
sent about) --

GEORGE L. SETMAN III, PF-007

Your tribute to George in the October Newsboy was greatly appreciated. Thank you. As you might well imagine, I am over my head in so many things. I am happy to have shared George's many worthwhile interests. I shall continue some, but some I must drop, including the Pressed and Cut Glass Collectors Club.

Our son, David Mc Laughlin, has transferred to Moravian College so that he can help me with the museum. We re-opened October 1st, and will close as usual for the winter, on November 15th.

George had had massive heart damage two years ago, so I dropped everything to go along with him on Scouting, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Church work, and so on. This period of adjustment is difficult, for I am pretty tired, but intend to keep the museum together. I shall weigh the offers I've had about it, for a long time before I make any decisions.

Thank you for still sending the Newsboy. I too, enjoy it... Sincerely, Marge

STEVE PRESS, PF-164

...Have you thought any more about the gallons of coffee that HORATIO had his boys drink...? I'll bet if someone researched it -- the amount would be fantastic! Undoubtedly if we checked in history, we would find that the knowledge of the ill-effects of caffeine was then unknown. And I doubt if very much fresh milk made its way to the Bowery in those days!

Isn't the membership tile fine! I'm really pleased with it. As I mentioned in a note to Ken Butler -- it sure is a conversation starter:

"You belong to the HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY?"

"Yes, ever hear of him?"

"Sure, I've heard of him, Who is he?"

.....Your Partic'lar Friend, Steve

DON SHINNER, PF-169

Don sends me an excerpt from a newspaper clipping regarding commemorative postage stamps. It seems a certain congressman from Texas remarks as follows:

"The year 1948 marked the 100th anniversary of the first angora goats ever to set foot on North American soil. A few were brought in from Turkey as a result of a special arrangement with the Sultan.

I thought it would be appropriate to have a commemorative stamp struck off to do honor to the anniversary.

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Accordingly, I introduced a bill, and referred it to the House Committee on Post Offices and Civil Services. A month or two after the bill was introduced, I saw the Committee Chairman in the hall and told him I had a little stamp bill in the Committee which I would like for him to get some action on.

Before I could tell him what it was, he told me that because so many such bills were being introduced by congressman, the Postmaster General had requested him to defer action on all of them."

"Why, you know," he added, "some crazy gump even introduced a bill to commemorate a goat!"

..... Don

MARY LEWIS CHAPMAN, PF-179

Mary is editor of "Literary Sketches." The current October issue includes an exciting, and interesting expose on Rudyard Kipling, and an article on early New York City newspapers, touching on the lives of James Gordon Bennett, and Horace Greeley. Her November issue will feature an article on Horatio Alger. Mary's style of writing is refreshing, as well as interesting. Send one dollar for a year's subscription, today.

EDDIE LEBLANC, PF-015

Eddie is owner, editor, and publisher of "Dime Novel Round-Up" a monthly publication devoted to old-time novel and story paper collectors. I note with pleasure that his publication has increased in size this month, and that he enjoys a steady growth in subscribers. I note the names of two of our Society members listed as new subscribers. I shall renew my subscription today.

MAX FRIEDMAN, PF-001

Max sends me a newspaper clipping pertaining to City Hall in New York City, which is mentioned in many of the Alger stories. It seems that the current Mayor has discontinued the practice of extending "keys to the city" to honored guests, but does present honored guests with a print of an 1825 engraving of City Hall.

The practice of extending "keys to the city" to honored guests originated in Europe years ago when cities were walled in and gates had to be opened to permit entry and exit.

PAUL FISHER, PF-148

Paul's interest in the many spine and cover designs of a given publisher, as mentioned in Presidential Ponderings this month, has also prepared a special notebook to catalog his own collection. It is arranged as a cross-index record. He has allowed several columns for cover designs, and several lines for different spine designs. An "X" where column and line cross indicates a particular combination of cover and spine design.

EDITORIAL ERUPTIONS

OPEN DURING ALTERATIONS

Those of you who have had the opportunity of viewing my editorial room on the second floor of our home, will recall the hodge-podge arrangement of books, and the complete dis-order of files, records and supplies. After viewing Jack Row's well-kept, and orderly bookroom, I became dissatisfied with mine and couldn't live with it any longer.

A carpenter was engaged and instructed to build storage cabinets along one entire wall, with book shelves built in above, to the ceiling. In order that the carpenter might work, it was necessary to remove everything to the basement except my desk and typewriter. The job is almost completed. After application of some paint, stain, and varnish, I'll be able to move everything back upstairs again. In the mean time, business as usual. The newsletter must be kept on schedule.

Sometimes there just isn't enough Alger material to fill-out six pages, so, this column was designed after reading Harlan Miller's book --he sent me a autographed copy-- entitled "There's a Man in the House," as a catch-all for unclassified material.

THE "PANEL"

When I was a boy, and lived on a farm in southern Illinois; Saturday's were reserved to go to town, and do the weekly shopping. Dad would hitch up the horses to the common tight-bed grain wagon, as most everyone did, because of the nature of the supplies to be brought home, and we would make a day of it. It didn't take dad as long to buy a new horse-collar for "old Nell" and get a plow share sharpened, as it did mother to sell her eggs, buy some dress material etc., so, dad usually had time to spare.

It was the same with the other men from neighboring farms, so, while waiting for their respective wives, they would congregate on the park benches on the courthouse lawn, or sometimes on those low retaining walls on the corner of the courthouse lawn. Here, they would swap yarns, express opinions, and in general, exchange gossip. Occasionally, a villager, a politician, or an insurance salesman would join them, and sometimes, even a vagrant.

This is the forerunner of the modern day "panel." The farmer with his horses and wagon are no longer there, but the vagrant remains. You will find them in your town, even if it is a fair sized city. It is perhaps unkind to group them all as vagrants, for, upon a second look you will recognize a retired person with time on his hands, perhaps a handicapped

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person who has been rejected at the employment office, and, yes, an occasional ne'er-do-well.

From this group, consists the present-day "panel." They are accepted as law-abiding citizens. Individually, and in confidence, some might be identified as "informers." Collectively, they are a veritable "information bureau." They can supply news that has not yet reached the newspapers. They know the problems of the community; they can give you the answers, but seldom does anyone stop to inquire.

"Birds of a feather" they have no qualms about their associates. As you pass by, you may be inclined to ignore them and look the other way. They are not "pan-handlers." They will not molest you. You may not recognize any one of the group--if you had looked them over, but the chances are they recognized you--if you pass that way often.

Recently I was surprised when I recognized one of the panel. It was a former acquaintance of some 35 years ago. I acknowledged my recognition, courteously. In a private conversation with him, I was amazed at the scope of information available from such sources.

On my next opportunity, I'm going to get the "panel's" expert opinion on this man, Horatio Alger.

THE "ILLITERATE"

I read in the papers that a member of the faculty of Duke University abhors the illiteracy of the American Public. He went on to say, to make his point, "some of our newsmen are among the nation's worst offenders." He sure knows how to hurt a guy. Well, his statement about newsmen may be true, though I wouldn't hold it against them. What we read in the papers as the finished product is not necessarily their original text. It could be errors in typesetting, and overlooked by proof readers.

A scholar of linguistics can tell fairly accurately from your vocabulary, and the variations of your pronunciation whether you are from the east, the deep south, or from southern Illinois, etc. Pray tell, just where shall we find the highest degree of perfection?

Some educators stress the advice to "be yourself" and "do not try to be what you are not." Others will advise "when in Rome, do as the Romans do." Only a few have attained the high degree of a "Rhodes Scholar" and only a few can use the "King's English" correctly. So, if we make mistakes; consider the source.

Horatio Alger was a Harvard graduate with high honors. He had the knowledge enabling him to converse with the "Elite," yet he had the knack of speaking the language the street boys could understand.

(Double ought-nothing)

THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

CIBITER DICTA ABOUT THE PRAIRIE REGION

Just a reminder -- "DES MOINES SESSION" starts with registration, display preparation and set up of exhibits -- and social hour, etc., Thursday afternoon and evening, May 18th. Friday and Saturday will cover the various activities of the "SESSION", and a 7:00 A.M. farewell breakfast Sunday the 21st will be the finishing touch. Mark your calendars now -- arrange for time off from your job -- reserve a baby sitter -- and start stuffing your piggy banks for the needed funds.

We are fairly new at the "affair, event, and session" game, and have a lot to learn. They say that good judgement comes from experience; and that experience comes from bad judgement. We hope that adage doesn't apply to us, and that we can profit from the advice of others-- our "Partic'lar Friends."

At our last two meetings -- in Mendota and Milwaukee -- there has been some Alger selling and swapping -- more or less on a haphazard catch-as-you-can basis. What would you think of operating the way they do at coin meetings? That is, setting up "bourse" tables. We will reserve a time and place for this activity, and anyone who has books for sale or trade can display his wares on a large table where all can browse for a time. This would apply only to books for sale or trade and would probably eliminate confusion.

The "bourse table" idea would be for a specified time -- in one room, and would eliminate the need for attendees to stand guard in their respective rooms waiting for company. As far as displays and exhibits are concerned, they would still be set up in individual rooms. We'll try to give all attending the session a roster of attendees -- with notations after the names that have displays. Any other ideas? Remember, "there's no limit to what can be accomplished if you don't care who gets the credit."

FLASH -- Harlan Miller, PF-170, Des Moines, with yours truly as his tennis doubles partner, shattered his "Achilles" tendon during a hot game in Des Moines recently -- the new Racquet Club. Harlan had surgery and will have his leg in a cast for about six weeks. With the knowledge that "misery loves company", I tried to follow in his footsteps Monday, October 17th -- but only succeeded in tearing the calf muscle in my left leg. The doctor tells me that I'll be able to walk (gingerly) in two or three weeks.

REPORT: Phil The Fiddler books of 27 different varieties now lie on my bookshelves -- some are by the same publisher -- but all are different.

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My Alger books "in miniature" now comprise 17 titles. And I can attest to 139 Alger titles in all. (Editor's note: in his personal collection).

It has been said that "everyone is ignorant about something." One thing I was ignorant about was DIME NOVELS -- until Eddie LeBlanc, PF-015, enlightened me with a voluminous and prompt answer to my inquiry.

LaRue Marquesen (PF-172) and his wife Betty are people you will enjoy meeting at our "Des Moines Session." LaRue and Betty have lived in Iowa since 1952 -- moving here from South Dakota. PF-172 is General Manager of Geo. A. Hormel & Co., (meat packers) in Fort Dodge and serves on Hormel's board of directors at Austin, Minnesota. LaRue and Betty are avid "antique hounds" and have a fabulous collection of Wedgewood, rare glass and "objet d'art." Irene Gurman, PF-041, another Wedgewood savant, talked with the Marquesens about Josiah's fine products during a visit to Iowa this summer.

Our annual meetings are held for the purpose of discussing and learning about Alger and his writings -- and the "propagation of the faith" in his ideals, as well as the improvement of the Horatio Alger Society and its activities. Keep in mind, though, that all our Partic'lar Friends have other interests, too, ranging from stamp, coin and button collecting -- to antique automobiles. There's a veritable amalgam of occupations and interests represented in our "Society."

Enlarge your outlook on life by attending the Des Moines Session in 1967.

-30- Jack Row

(Editor's note: Since Jack hasn't mentioned it in his column, I suppose you are all anxious to learn how the Row's fared during the recent tornado in Iowa.

Reports came over the airwaves Friday, October 14th, that a tornado had touched down at Belmond, Iowa, doing considerable damage. I was concerned enough to call the Row home the following evening after reading the local newspaper account. Although the Row's (Jack & Beth) were not at home, I learned that except for some high wind and hail, they suffered no ill effects or damage from the storm.

Jack sent by return mail newspaper accounts from the Des Moines Register and Tribune. Belmond is only some fourteen miles from Clarion. According to the Register and Tribune, the storm that swept through Belmond, literally covered the entire state. A few people were killed and many were injured, plus considerable property damage. Belmond's population is about 2500. Only a small portion of the homes and buildings remain standing. We are thankful that the Row's were spared, but our hearts go out to the residents of Belmond. As far as I know, other Iowa Society members suffered no injuries or property loss.)