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February 1963

A Newsletter

5868 PILGRIM KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

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Published monthly for the benefit of our Subscribers, Readers, Collectors and Dealers of books written by Horatio Alger, Jr. Prepared and distributed at the expense of Forrest Campbell, Editor and the support of paid subscribers. Upon request, the newsletter will be sent to our new friends, three months free. A Non-profit Organization.

It has been a severe winter here in Michigan and from what I read in the news, you have all been subjected and exposed to all kinds of unusual weather to some degree. It has been a good winter to curl up by the fireplace with a cheerful wood fire burning and with a good Alger book in one hand and a bowl of pop corn in the other. Although the winter has been severe, there has been no power failures and occasionally in the evening whendarkness falls, we bring out the bayberry candles and the kerosene lamps and light them just for the atmosphere of fond memories of the past. We have eaten down-town in restaurants where the lights were burning low just for the atmosphere, and of course you can't read the prices so well either. Later, we usually discover in the well-lighted cashier area, that the lower the lights, the higher the prices. Why not try this low-light atmosphere in your own home. If you have been complimenting your wife's cooking with: "Just like down-town" let me suggest a change: "You can't get anything like this down-town." I believe that what I miss the most about our modern winters are the horse drawn sleighs and bells. The sound of a string of bells attached to the harness, now only a memory, was as welcome to our ears then, as the good humor man is today to our children. The sleighbells of a generation or two ago have been replaced with the harsh clatter of tire-chains with their broken links which beat out a clanging rhythm against the fenders in the cold frosty winter air. However it is only winter here on the ground. We think of January as winter because we can see the snow and feel the cold; But it's like June instead of January if you will try looking up into the bright clear blue sky. Try standing in a snow-bank on a bright sunny day and look-up until you see see nothing but the clear blue sky. Its June! The only difference, you are there, with your feet buried in the snow! When you feel blue. Try looking up! above and beyond your world of care, and its memory shall melt away as does the annual winter snow!

I meant only to make a short introduction and here I have used up too much of my allotted space.... I have just read of the passing of our beloved poet, Robert Frost, so I hereby dedicate the above reminiscent thoughts to his memory.

I believe my Readers to be intelligent people, capable of forming their own opinions and it is my policy to respect your individual rights. I will endeavor to keep the editorial comments on a non-partisan and non-sectarian basis. I do not care to become a commercial enterprise and accept paid advertising. Since we are a mixed group, Collectors and Dealers, I do not intend to play one against the other by publicly suggesting book prices. However, I see nothing wrong in book-trades and exchanges where equal value and condition has been established. In my humble opinion, Alger book prices are subject to the law of supply and demand; and of course the condition of the book and the Publisher must be considered. There is little demand for the cheaper volumes and a greater demand for the better quality editions. I am not a collector of first editions, nor do I claim to be an authority. I am told that if you have a book of the right Publisher and of the right vintage, then you are getting warm, but please don't be misled by a common copyright date. This fact is what confuses too many uninformed people. Books should always be complete and in good condition. I have a few basket-cases myself. What can you do with them?

The newsletter is mailed to 59 Subscribers and one Honorary member, representing 23 states and the District of Columbia. More subscribers are expected from time to time. Since each subscriber is a potential market for your book purchases, sales or exchanges, you should remember where they can be reached. Beginning with the new year, January 1, 1963, each new subscriber shall be identified with a consecutive number and names and addresses will be published. In order that new subscribers may be kept informed, the names and addresses of all subscribers shall be published. They will be spread over the course of a year and equally divided.

No. 56 Mr. Paul J. Schmidt, Sr.
1447 South Main Street, Akron, 1, Ohio

No. 57 Mrs. Ruth E. Seese
4520 Highland Ave., Bethesda 14, Md.

No. 58 Mr. Paul B. Ray
421 South Main St., Plainwell, Mich.

No. 59 Mr. James D. Burns
153 Chestnut St., Nashua, N.H.

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE NEWSBOY - Keep this list. These names will not be repeated again this year: BY STATES

Mrs. Lorne J. (Shirley) Conlon
6491 Glenroy St., Dan Diego 20, Cal.

Mr. Vernon Cowles
102 Russell St., Hamden, Conn.

Mr. Edward Levy, (Pleasant Hill)
Woodbridge, New Haven 15, Conn.

Mrs. C.A. (Irma) Scofield
P.O. Box 457 Ridgefield, Conn.

Mr. Jack Stoeffel
2511 Carter St., Wilmington, Del.

Mr. Ernest P. Sanford
736 Aspen St., N.W. Washington, D.C.

Continued next month

We are indebted to Prof. John Cavelti, subscriber, for permission to use and read his article "Portrait of the Newsboy" which was concluded in last month's issue. I found his remarks very interesting and found his description of the typical Alger hero and other characters to be authentic and the article bears much evidence that the professor was familiar with his subject. I am sure that there is one consolation, that he found his research work highly entertaining. Thank you, Professor, for a job well done!

A common expression, often heard, but which should be discounted is: "I read them all when I was a boy, They are all alike. When you read one, you have read them all." We don't really take such remarks, literally. I could not make that statement. I am still reading and have a long way to go. Granted that some stories have been published twice, using different titles and granted that the patterns are often quite similar, I still enjoy each new story that I begin, perhaps with one exception, those that were completed and some times I suspect written entirely by another person and I submit one example: "JERRY, THE BACKWOODS BOY" In this story, I was highly disappointed.

It would be interesting to know if our Hero, Horatio, had a favorite name for his Heroes; It may be a toss-up between Ben and Tom. In addition to the many titles where the name Ben, is used, there are others, I know. But then I have not read all of his books. Does anyone care to comment on this subject? Next month, if space is available I should like to give a book review on the book that made our Hero famous. "RAGGED DICK".

Please remember that although I am writing the story, "THE YOUNG POSTMASTER", it is intended to be an Alger-type story and I am attempting to capture his style, and although I am writing it, I do not claim sole ownership. The story (if it ever amounts to anything) is the property of

the subscribers of the Newsboy, who are on record up to the time of completion of the story. In chapter three, I will introduce the stranger who remained unidentified in the first chapter. I want you to take an active part in the preparation of this story (show me that you are interested) and suggest names for the characters. This stranger may turn out to be a villain or an angel in disguise; So you have two choices.

I have been curious, if New York City still had newsboys on the streets and I have solicited the following article from Ralph Gardner, subscriber from New York City.

EXCLUSIVE FOR THE NEWSBOY - RALPH GARDNER

New York: Horatio Alger's aggressive newsboys -- if they still existed -- would be in dire straits, what with the current strike of seven daily newspapers in New York City. Despite several hastily produced "temporary" dailies, New Yorkers today generally are depending upon broadcast media for their news reports. But daily papers or none, the "Extra" -- shouting newsboys is virtually as obsolete on New York City streets as double-decker buses and organ grinders' monkeys. When the journals are available, city dwellers prefer to have morning editions delivered to their apartment doors, so they can scan the headlines over breakfast. Others pick up a copy of their favorite daily at corner newsstands -- many of them operated by disabled veterans of World War I -- or at chain operated subway stands. But the strike soon will end, and in New York's outlying suburban areas, a small army of ambitious boys will resume delivering newspapers from house-to-house, generally about 7:00 o'clock in the morning. But more often than not, they do this for pin-money and to augment their allowance, rather than because of the necessity of contributing to their family's income or helping to pay off the mortgage on the old homestead. The experience provided by this early business training will, nevertheless, stand them in good stead in years to come. When the strike ends, these sturdy lads will be back on the job, and their customers will be mighty pleased. Until then, however, the boys can enjoy an extra hour of sleep before getting up to go to school.

In these few remarks, Ralph has captured the spirit of the big city. I can remember of course, from our one and only visit, But I can relive those few but entrancing moments of excitement. I can sense the hustle local people who know just where they are going. I can sense the leisure gait of the visiting sight-seer as he drinks in the wondrous views which are foreign to his sight. I can sense the roar of the never-ending, never-stopping surface traffic. I can sense the familiar odor of the subway, with its endless caverns, the smell of overheated motors, hot lubricating oils, but I just cannot visualize New York City without its Horatio Alger type newsboys and more currently, the New Yorkers without their folded tabloid as they stand in the overcrowded subway trains.

The three letters quoted are most apropos for the month of February. First and foremost, the principals are patriots in in public office, and second, all are familiar with Horatio Alger.

One of the finest books Alger wrote is "The Backwoods Boy; or How a Young Rail-Splitter Became President. Being The Boyhood and Manhood of Abraham Lincoln." The preface carries the date..... July 4, 1883. Published in the "Illustrious American Series by Anderson & Allen.

* * * * *

We have a letter from a father of 4 boys, the oldest 16 (Alger hero age).

He is Lt. Harry P. Jenkins for 16 years with the Kalamazoo Police Dept., formerly with the Youth Bureau who took an interest in the NEWSBOY and was enthused about having his article appear. It follows:

"I would suggest that prevention of juvenile delinquency started with the birth of Cain, 4006 B.C. Whatever preventive measures were employed evidently failed, because Cain murdered his own brother.

"Hesiod, the Greek Poet said: 'I see no hope for the future of our people if they are to be dependent upon the frivolous youth of today; for certainly all youth are reckless beyond comparison and opinionated much beyond their years. When I was a boy, we were taught to be discreet and respectful toward our elders, but the present youth are exceeding wise and impatient of restraint'. (This comment was made c.1000 BC)

"Better preventive programs, organized activity designed to occupy otherwise idle hours, have increased since the early 1930's. Such programs do much for the juvenile who finds it difficult to make emotional adjustments. The hardcore delinquent, or youthful criminal is not attracted to this type of program. They are bad because they want to be bad.

"Hardcore delinquents and youthful criminals comprise only about 3% of our juvenile population. The 97% are not delinquent. Being a juvenile is not a thing to be ashamed of.

"Youth of today have two basic needs: 1) An example to follow. This includes a respect for the rights of others, for the laws of

the land, and for those who are charged with their enforcement, 2) A challenge for which to aspire. This includes a positive goal in life, pride in a job well done, a sense of responsibility, and respect for the rights and property of others".

* * * * *

Member George I. Setman sent us the following acknowledgement:

"The Secretary of Commerce
Washington 25, D.C.
May 16, 1962

Lt. Col. George I. Setman, III
Secretary Horatio Alger Club
364 Milford Square Road
Quakertown, Pennsylvania

Dear Colonel Setman:

Thank you for sending me an honorary membership card in the Horatio Alger Club. I am pleased that you think my self-made efforts as a businessman and a public official are consonant with the "strive and succeed" principles of your organization.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) Luther H. Hodges"

* * * * *

Gilbert Westgard, II has an interesting note to the NEWSBOY. We quote in part from his letter of January 18, 1963:

"Dear Forrest;

In the last elections I was a worker for the Republican Party. At this time I became acquainted with Senator Everett M. Dirksen. At one of our meetings, I asked the Senator if he ever read any of the Alger books. He answered that he thought that he had read every one of them. I then asked him if he could remember any one in particular. He said that he remembered one called "Stick To Your Bush", which told of how a boy and his friends went to pick berries. The boy's friends picked first from one bush and then from another, while he stuck to his bush. At the end of the day he had more berries than any of his friends. I would like to find out which Alger book this story comes from, and I thought that you might mention this item in the next issue of the "Newsboy" to see if anybody knows the title of the book that this story comes from. I would then like to send a copy of the book to the

(Westgard - cont'd.)

Senator.

"I am enjoying your story of 'The Young Postmaster'. The use that you have made of the name Algerton in the postmark at the beginning of the story looks very good. I would like to see this story in a hardbound edition. It is a story that deserves to be published and sold in bookstores".

(Ed. Note: If anyone knows about the story, "Stick To Your Bush"--mentioned above, we would be happy to hear about it and enlighten our readers.)

Gilbert has added another title "Tom Turner's legacy" to his collection making a total of 89 volumes and 5 magazine stories. Having read "Darkness and Daylight in New York" by Helen Campbell, 1892, he was intrigued by the mention of the Newsboys Lodging House, for so many years the abode and study of local color for the Alger stories.

Most of Alger's book titles have a familiar ring when we hear the name. Below is a sampling of a number of his short-story titles:

Mr. Morrison's Investment
The Lottery Ticket
Old Simon's Victory
Nicholas Elwin's Tragedy
Secret of Success
John Grover's Lesson
Mrs. Gordon's Lot
The Refractory Scholar
The Miser Outwitted
A Duke Disguised
Small Savings
The Lucky Meeting; or Lionel Graham's Fortune
Milly's Oranges
Job Plymton's Ghost
Thomas Mordant's Investment
Ruth Henderson's Pride
A Hasty Match
Alice's Fortune; A French Story
Dock Thieves; or Thomas Harland's Adventure
Adam Holcomb's Will
Double Elopement
The Three Games at Chess
Mrs. Cordner's Reformation
Poem: John Maynard
Aunt Jane's Ear-trumpet
The Browns: or Boarding In The Country
Margaret's Test, or Charity Its Own Reward
Poem: A Child's Prayer
" A Cottage By the Sea
The Veiled Mirror; or Pictures of the New Year (1854)
The Christmas Gift
A Woman's Stratagem
(Cont'd at right...)

Max Goldberg, proprietor of the Pink Spinning Wheel, has taken to his bed with the flu. We do hope he is better. He wished this to appear in the January issue but due to illness, we publish it now.

Death of Little Alice

By Horatio Alger

Shed no tears for Little Alice,
She has drained life's bitter chalice;
Never more shall we behold her,
Never to our bosoms fold her;
For the voice of God hath spoken,
And the golden bowl is broken.

Yet we may not feel forsaken,
He that giveth life has taken;
In His keeping let us leave her,
Nothing now can harm or grieve her;
Far beyond the reach of malice
Is the fairy form of Alice.

In the summer, strewn with roses
Be the spot where she reposes;
Let the quiet ivy, creeping,
Mark the grave where she lies sleeping,
In the greenest of our valleys,
Where reposes gentle Alice.

She has only gone before us,
May she not still hover o'er us,
Keep our wayward feet from sliding,
In the path of right still guiding--
Till in heaven's all radiant palace
We behold our angel Alice.

From: Gleason's Pictorial
March 26, 1853

Three new members from three different states appear in February:

Paul J. Schmidt, Sr., 1447 S. Main St., Akron 1, Ohio.....Mrs. Ruth E. Seese, 4520 Highland Ave., Bethesda, Maryland.....and Paul B. Ray, 421 So. Main St., Plainwell, Mich. He has some Algers for sale, anyone wishing to contact, stamp, for reply.

Alger Short-story titles:

The Counterfeit Half Dollar
How Johnny Bought a Sewing Machine
The Worst Boy In School
Sam's Adventure
George Conant's Terrible Adventure
Mrs. Fenton's Mystery
Cousin John
The Brother's Return
How Pat Paid the Rent
(I.G. Collection)

CHAPTER II AN EVENING AT HOME



"Good evening, my boy; are you one of the Churchill children?" inquired the Squire.

"Yes, I am," replied Carey, "I am Carey and this is my sister Ethel and my brother Michael."

"Good evening, children," responded the Squire, "I believe I have heard my son mention you, my boy."

"Yes," said Carey, "Flint may have mentioned me, as we are classmates and see each other at school."

"Flint?" questioned the Squire, "Could you be referring to my son, Mortimer?"

"Excuse me, Sir," Carey added hastily, "I am sorry, but your son prefers that we address him so."

"I was not aware that my son would tolerate a nickname," said the Squire, "I have never heard anyone use it in my presence before."

"I am sorry Sir," replied Carey, "I did not mean to be disrespectful."

"Very well, my boy," said the Squire, as if accepting an apology, "I must extend my sympathy to you children, you are to be pitied. I should like also, to offer my sympathy to your mother, will you call her, my child?" nodding to Carey.

"If I may be permitted," replied Carey, "I will convey your sympathy to mother; she is not feeling at all well and could you call again at another time, Squire Campbell?"

"Ahem, my child" responded the Squire, "it is raining and I have sent my carriage and driver home with instructions to return in half an hour; Will you announce my presence to your mother, certainly she will not turn me out into the rain."

"Excuse me for being so thoughtless, Squire Campbell," said Carey, "you are welcome to the shelter of our modest home until your carriage returns; Please set down, while I announce your presence to my mother," added Carey, offering a chair.

"Thank you, my child," said the Squire, stiffly.

"Mother," said Carey, as he entered the kitchen and closed the door, "He insists upon seeing you tonight. He says he has sent his carriage home for half an hour."

"He will not talk to you?"

"No, he thinks of me as a child."

"What shall I do, Carey?"

"Perhaps you must make an appearance, but mother, I will speak for you when I can."

"Very well, Carey, my son, I must arrange my hair, I will be out in a moment."

"Mother will see you in a moment," said Carey to the Squire, "May I take your coat and hat?"

"Thank you, my boy," said the Squire, "I must tell my son that I have met one of his playmates."

Carey could have added that Flint had always chosen his company and Carey was seldom included except when forced to extend an invitation to join in group activities; but he remained silent in this respect, instead he added "We have just

had some tea, Squire Campbell, won't you have a cup?"

"Well, it is a nasty night and since it is my birthday, it might add to the festive occasion."

"Congratulations, Squire Campbell," exclaimed Carey, "I hope you have had a pleasant day."

"Well, my son Mortimer and I didn't actually do any celebrating at my age of fifty seven, however Mortimer did extend his greetings to me this morning at the table."

"It was thoughtful of him to remember," replied Carey.

"Well, I must admit, I may have hinted, you see his mother used to remind him, it is a coincidence that he has no mother and now you poor children have no father."

"Yes Sir," responded Carey, "I am sure that Fl— excuse me, Mortimer has missed his mother very much."

"He needs a mother's care too, and I am sure you children will need— Good evening Mrs. Churchill, the children have just poured me a cup of tea—"

"Good evening, Squire Campbell, I am sorry to have kept you waiting, but because of the death of my husband—"

"I have come to extend to you and your children, my sympathy and offer to you the benefit of adult advice which I am sure you will feel the need of, now that—"

"My son is handling the situation quite well, thank you, Squire Campbell," replied Mrs. Churchill.

"Your son? Why they are only children, my dear Mrs. Churchill—"

"My son Carey has become a man today, Squire Campbell,"

"But you will have no income now; you will be thrown upon the mercy of the townspeople!"

"We are truly thankful for our friends who have responded in this, this — hour of need," replied Mrs. Churchill.

"What my mother is trying to tell you, Squire Campbell, is that we do not intend to impose upon our good friends—"

"But you are only a boy," cut in the Squire, "Your father—"

"My father was a good father, he confided in me and taught me many things!"

"Are you aware that your father," continued the Squire, "left an unpaid balance of — ahem — several hundred dollars on your mortgaged home and a payment will be due in a few days?"

"The unpaid balance," responded Carey, "is three hundred dollars and the next payment of one hundred dollars is not due until November 15th."

"Is that so?" sneered the Squire, "I don't have my records with me unfortunately, but Mrs. Churchill, since you will have no income, won't it be difficult for you to meet this payment? I was about to offer—"

"I see no reason why we should not be entitled to the income of my father, since I intend to perform the duties of my father," cut in Carey.

"Impossible!" responded the Squire.

"Mrs. Churchill, your boy is but a child and I should not be expected to discuss business matters with him. I was about to offer--"

"What is your offer, Squire Campbell," asked Mrs. Churchill.

"Well - ahem - as I said," continued the Squire, "since you will have no income, I naturally would profit by your default when the mortgage payment comes due and I am willing to offer the living quarters over my stable, for you and your family, in exchange for your services as my housekeeper, and--"

"Thank you, Squire Campbell, for your generous offer," responded Carey, "and if we are reduced to the poverty you predict, we shall remember your offer-- now I believe I hear your carriage approaching!" "We bid you good night."

"But Mrs. Churchill," appealed the Squire, "surely you do not expect the village people to endorse-- you are not serious about the ability of this child."

"We shall await an endorsement from the Post Office Department in Washington," replied Carey, "Squire Campbell, I believe your carriage is waiting, here is your hat and coat, Sir, Good night."

"But Madam, I have not been permitted to finish-- You leave me no other alternative, but to--"

"We will consult with you in due time, Good night, Squire Campbell," said Carey.

Carey began closing the door before the Squire had cleared the opening and he had no alternative but to seek the shelter of his waiting carriage. The Squire was overcome with a feeling of defeat, a feeling he had not experienced for some time. Usually, in dealing with adults, his offers were accepted as final and no one had ever questioned the fairness of his proposals and now a mere child which he had attempted to ignore, presents himself as an obstacle which he had not planned on. The Squire had made no defense against this sort of an obstacle. To him a child was a child. To be seen and not heard. A child was not to be reckoned with. In his opinion, it was the responsibility of all parents to keep their children under control and educate them that the Squire was to be feared and obeyed. This policy, generally was enforced. To the children of Algerton, the Squire and his effect upon the village was as well known as penny candy. The gayety of groups of children in the streets was always reduced to a minimum upon the approach of the Squire and upon passing, the expressions upon their faces, although registering respect upon the surface, usually a bit of 'have to' tolerated respect showed through. After a safe distance had been covered, a familiar ditty could usually be heard which was meant to be complimentary and disrespectful. Such as: Squire! Squire! A man they say we should admire; To be like him, they do require! He tripped and fell into the mire, and spoiled the looks of his attire! As the distance between them widened, their volume increased with a variety of endings such as: "Fell in the fire" and "Then became a funeral pyre!"

The participation in such a highly entertaining pastime was usually ended after the intended victim was out of sight.

After Carey had succeeded in closing the door after the departure of the Squire, he quickly collected his thoughts as to how best he could console and comfort his mother and help her to rebuild the hopes of the future which had just been destroyed by the Squire.

"Now mother, I know the Squire has disturbed and upset you; It is possible that he may gain control of the post office, and now it is also probable, since I have defied his offer which is impossible, ridiculous and an insult. But he shall never profit from our poverty by taking us as his servants!"

"You handled the situation well, my son, I could never have faced the Squire with the courage and defiance of your words."

"We need not build our future plans on what the Squire has to offer, mother. We shall continue to trust in the Lord!"

During the visit of the Squire, Ethel and Michael, remained silent with fright and frozen to their chairs. They had never before been subjected to such a conference where their future was being foretold. Their hearts had been thumping. Their tongues had become thickened and now they were slowly returning to normal. The evening was yet young, but it had been a sad and trying day. They tried a bit of family small talk which was intended to divert their thoughts from the unpredictable future to a more light and happy atmosphere. But such depressing thoughts cannot easily be discarded; So after a few preparations for the day to come, it was decided that only through the medium of peaceful sleep could they rid themselves and clear their minds of the unhappy thoughts. To continue a custom established by his father, Carey picked up the family bible, selected a section at random and read to his little group, a complete chapter. Then bidding their mother, good night and pleasant dreams, the children lit two small lamps and climbed the stairs to their rooms. The patter of rain on the roof over their heads was distinctly heard as they blew out their lamps and climbed into bed.

The Squire was not destined to have such a peaceful night, for he had problems, which he himself attempted to solve and one solution depended upon the outcome of another. The major obstacle now was the courageous young Carey who was now in his way. To bring the little family to their knees, into submission, was his current problem. Little did he realize that the little family was already on their knees and asking for guidance.

A light was on when the Squire arrived at home and young Mortimer was anxiously awaiting his father at the door.

"There is a man in the drawing room, waiting to see you, father," said young Mortimer.

(to be continued next month)