

# Gene Valentino

THE GREEN HORSE – The story behind the Sonnet – Update: 10/1/11  
(Evergreen – 415 words total of story + poem – 307 words for story only)

This is the story about ‘a sonnet for a horse’ in Waterbury, Connecticut written by a radio announcer in 1945 for a newspaper long-since gone. He’s gone, too – to California. Yet, however far a man grows-away from his roots, the more fond and memorable are some events of his past. Here’s one, a fond recollection during October, 1945, back home in Waterbury, Connecticut. I wrote a sonnet to vent displeasure for allowing the bronze life-size replica of a horse (atop the Carrie Welton fountain) to oxidize and turn green. I didn’t know it’s a natural consequence of exposure to the New England clime. In 1945 the Brass City of Waterbury was changing back to a peacetime-economy after serving the war-effort with its massive industrial capacity. Still at Chase Brass & Copper Company, I was also a part-time radio announcer - and also wrote a daily column for the (Waterbury Democrat) newspaper next door to the radio station. With the righteous indignation of a young upstart – barely out of my teens – I adapted my first political-satire to poetry in sonnet form. Bill Farrington was the newspaper editor who said, “keep plugging, Gene. One day you may be a network newsman or commentator like Fulton Lewis”. His words were prophetic – I became a newsman for two networks, and actually substituted often for “Fulton Lewis” in Washington. The bottom line: they scrubbed-down the horse after my poem was published, as they would have (and perhaps as they always did before the war) - my efforts notwithstanding. So, all for naught was this poem I wrought.

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THE GREEN HORSE – The Sonnet (108 words)  
“Gene Vallon: radio name & nome de plume” – circa: 1945  
Published Oct. 20, 1945 – Waterbury Democrat Newspaper (now gone)  
Edited Sept. 28, 2011

Stately and magnificent on a pedestal high,  
Aloof and oblivious to elements of nature,  
Stands a stallion in tribute – but obscure  
To the countless thousands who daily pass by.  
Inanimate in existence, but not without pride;  
Still marking time as in days of yore;  
With high hopes for over three-score  
That we’ll soon see the true color of his hide.

Flanked by the landmarks of an industrial city –  
Exchange Place, the Elton - even The Green,  
Behold this poor creature now doomed to iniquity,  
Conspicuously seen without splendor or sheen.  
But honestly, wouldn’t you also consider it a pity  
If yours was that horse with a coat of green?

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