



MEMORIES OF STEVE REEVES

BY GEORGE MILLER

In the summer of 1951, I went on vacation with my parents from Burlington, Iowa, to California. I had been working out with weights since 1948 and went to Bert Goodrich's Gym in Hollywood for a workout. I had a box camera with me and had a trainer take a picture of me with Bert. As I was in the locker room getting ready to leave, Steve Reeves came in and stripped down to step on the scale and check his weight. I was in a state of euphoria to be in his presence but managed to carry on a conversation with him. He weighed in at 194 pounds and explained that he was slimming down for the movies. He said he had weighed 214 pounds the year before when he won Mr. Universe, defeating Reg Park. I asked him to pose with me for a picture and he agreed. We went down the steps to the back of the gym with the trainer for the picture.

In the fall of 1951, as a freshman at Burlington Junior College, we had an assembly speaker from *Listen* magazine, a publication of the Iowa Temperance League. They also published *The Margin*, a junior issue of the Iowa Temperance League with the byline, "Champions Believe In Clean Living." The speaker, Bob Roach, editor of *The Margin*, referred to Steve Reeves as a living champion. At the end of the assembly, I proudly showed him the pic-

ture of Steve and I. He asked to borrow it for the next issue of *The Margin*, and I readily agreed. It was published in *The Margin* in November 1951.

Forty-five years later and residing in Oakton, Virginia, I heard at Olympus Gym that the A.A.U. Mr. America Contest was to be held at Fairfax High School on September 14, 1996 and Steve Reeves would be present. I had followed his career and anxiously looked forward to seeing him in person again.

I had him autograph copies of the picture from 1951 and bought an autographed copy of his book *The Classic Physique*. He had the same pleasant mild-mannered demeanor that I remembered from 1951. He was presented with some awards which he humbly accepted and he stated his opposition to the use of steroids by today's bodybuilders.

It is unfortunate that Steve did not live a longer life based upon his clean life style. The standards that he set for physical symmetry are a welcome relief from today's bodybuilders with bloated muscles and abdomens and with extreme vascularity. Steve had smooth, yet well-defined muscles with a slight vascularity that blended perfectly on a perfect frame. His photos and standards will survive long after today's current stars have faded.



This shot was taken by one of the leading lensmen working the physique field, Russ Warner.