

The Last Newsboy

Not all of us grew up to be Irving Berlin.
There is not space to list the prisons we are in.

Pickpockets, hustlers, dealers, we became that news
We sold, if on the inside pages. Poor excuse

For urchin enterprise the vending that replaced.
A coin box is a generation gone to waste

And cannot give out change. Too often vandalized
To turn a profit, it becomes a recognized

Icon of inner city wreck, as in the past
We stood for rising expectations, if, at last

Our cry of "Extra!" covered the laments of lack.
The newsboy as the Chaplin Kid will not be back,

Having become decades ago the Dead End Kids
And then the Chaplin Tramp unfunny on the skids,

As now newspapers are. As AP, UP ebb,
Ex-buyer on my corner, see you on the web.