

# Newsboy

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Official publication of the HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY,  
a magazine devoted to the study of Horatio Alger, Jr.,  
his life, works, and influence on the culture of America.



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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
August 6, 1985

I am pleased to extend warmest greetings to the citizens of Great Barrington, Massachusetts as you celebrate the 90th anniversary of the dedication of the Newsboy Statue in your town.

Your celebration is a special event for all Americans. There is no more illustrative symbol of our great nation and its essential values than the famous sculpture in Newsboy Park. While much has changed in the details of everyday life over the years, the newspaper carrier remains a very important player in the workings of our society and culture. This role is vital to our free enterprise system, to the principle of freedom of the press and to the continued success and world leadership of American publishing. Those who relay the news are as critical as the persons who make it, report it or publish it.

The lone figure of the newspaper carrier has been a source of inspiration to artists, writers and the man on the street since the nineteenth century. The fact that Horatio Alger, perhaps the greatest exponent of Free Enterprise and the American way, was himself so often inspired to write of newsboys and their struggles is a great tribute to their significant impact on our way of life.

Nancy and I are pleased to join so many others in wishing you a happy event and in commending newspaper carriers everywhere.

Ronald Reagan

## HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

To further the philosophy of Horatio Alger, Jr., and to encourage the spirit of Strive and Succeed that for half a century guided Alger's undaunted heroes--lads whose struggles epitomized the Great American Dream and flamed hero ideals in countless millions of young Americans.

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## THE NEWSBOY REVISITED

by Brad Chase

"Wow, look at that!" I remember exclaiming to fellow HAS member Brad Alexander several years ago on one of our booking trips as we passed by a magnificent statue of a newsboy in a little park just outside Great Barrington, Massachusetts. As many of you might recall, I wrote up that experience in Newsboy. Well, I've just revisited that newsboy and thought you might be interested in how I helped him celebrate his 90th birthday.

My latest involvement was this past August 10th as a whole cadre of people assembled at the park to celebrate the fact that 90 years ago, Colonel William Lee Brown originally dedicated the statue to the people of the town in memory of the tireless newsboy that had served on Brown's paper in the New York City (New York Daily News) for so many years. It is the oldest and only statue in the world dedicated solely to the newsboy. The New York City tie between Horatio Alger, Brown, and the newsboy is obvious so I was invited to say a few words for the Society at this birthday celebration.

August 10th was a beautiful summer day as Ann and I rolled into Great Barrington under the morning sun. Gary Leveille, a member of the Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee and also a member of HAS, and I had met a few weeks earlier after he had asked me to speak at the ceremony. As Ann and I went through the town and found Route 23 where the statue is located, we had some feelings of trepidation. We really didn't know what to expect. It was 9:45 a.m., very early for the 11:00 a.m. festivities, but we wanted to survey the situation early to prepare ourselves for whatever lay ahead.

When we got to the park only two people were there. There were signs, however, that something was set to happen. A large flatbed trailer with stacked chairs was at one side of the park and  
(continued on page 7)

22—The Berkshire Eagle, Monday, August 12, 1985

# Festivities mark 90th birthday of newsboy statue

By Stephen Fay

GREAT BARRINGTON — What had been billed as an observance marking the 90th birthday of the newsboy statue evolved Saturday into a celebration of individual initiative and freedom of the press.

More than 150 people — neighbors, dignitaries, newsboys and newsgirls — convened at the newsboy monument on Maple Avenue for the ceremonies in honor of the world's oldest monument to the children who hawk or deliver newspapers.

"We tend to forget," said speaker David Rutstein, chairman of the local Historical Society, "that for so many decades and for so many Americans the first time we heard or read an important national or international news event was from a paper delivered to our home or purchased from a newsboy."

The statue of the nameless newsboy "honors the little guy out there trying to succeed," said Gary T. Leveille, chairman of the Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee that organized Saturday's events.

Among the speakers was Brad Chase of Enfield, Conn., a member

of the Horatio Alger Society which is dedicated to the principles of hard work and wholesome character that Alger glorified in his books about, among other people, high-minded newsboys. Chase said the monument to the newsboy is a monument to the ideal of "strive and succeed" and the virtues of punctuality and courtesy.

The newsboy monument — a life-size bronze of a boy standing atop a blue dolomite column placed above a water trough — was erected to honor the ragged, young workforce that helped make The New York Daily News a successful paper. Col. William Lee Brown, part owner of the News and part-time resident of Great Barrington, commissioned Utica, N.Y., sculptor David Richards to create the newsboy. Brown died of cancer in 1906.

"The newsboy statue and hundreds of other public monuments across the nation reflect the new spirit of national self-confidence America felt as it emerged as a world power at the turn of the century," said speaker Paul W. Ivory, chairman of the local Historical Commission and director of Chesterwood. "Americans were proud of their country and their accomplishments. Outdoor commemorative sculpture was one means to celebrate this feeling.

"The rededication of this statue," Ivory continued, "is an important recognition of its aesthetic and historical values to our community. Yet this ceremony should also make us mindful that the plight of our country's public monuments is not certain. Acid rain, vandalism, inadequate care, public apathy, air pollution and lack of funding are very serious problems that contribute to the gradual deterioration of these important cultural resources. Many outdoor bronzes are shadows of what they once were."

## Parade of news carriers

Saturday's ceremonies began with a parade of news carriers from nine newspapers in four states. Also in the parade were local Boy Scouts and Campfire girls and boys. Members of the Monument Mountain Regional High School band provided music for the parade and throughout the morning.

Besides Rutstein, Leveille, Chase and Ivory, the speakers were Joan Roger, who was master of ceremonies; state Sen. Peter C. Webber, R-Pittsfield; Bruce Garlow, aide to vacationing state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee; Selectman Edward T. Morehouse and Barrie Hughes, circulation director for the Watertown Daily Times and an original member of the preservation effort. Greetings from President Ronald Reagan and Gov. Michael S. Dukakis were read aloud and resolutions from the state House and Senate were presented to the committee.

Newspaper carriers participating in Saturday's events represented The Berkshire Eagle, the Watertown Daily Times, the Springfield Newspapers, the Holyoke Transcript Telegram, the Hartford (Conn.) Courant, The New Haven (Conn.) Register and Journal, the Waterbury (Conn.) Republican and American, the Woonsocket (R.I.) Call and the Amsterdam (N.Y.) Recorder.

*Berkshire Eagle*

## Barrington's newsboy to be honored at 90

GREAT BARRINGTON — The newsboy statue on Maple Avenue will be the guest of honor at festivities planned Saturday morning at 11 in honor of its 90th birthday.

The bronze statue was donated to the town in 1895 as a horse trough, drinking fountain and monument to the humble newsboy. It was sculpted by David Richards, a contemporary of Daniel Chester French.

Col. William Lee Brown, then part-owner and circulation manager of the New York Daily News, donated the monument to the town. Brown, who spent summers in Great Barrington before retiring here, owned the little park at the intersection of Maple Avenue and Silver Street, which he donated, along with the statue and much of the surrounding land.

Among those invited to the 90th birthday celebration are newspaper carriers, town officials, state legislators and members of the Horatio

Alger Society — a national organization dedicated to hard work as the path to success.

State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, has presented the Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee, a small group of mostly local people, with a state House of Representatives resolution acknowledging the committee's work.

"The statue stands as a tribute to hardworking newspaper carriers everywhere, and it has been this committee that has helped it survive," said Hodgkins.

A balloon launch, the dedication of a bronze plaque that outlines the history of the statue and the renaming of Silver Street Extension to Newsboy Monument Lane will be among the events of the day.

The ceremonies will roughly follow the same agenda as the original dedication in 1895, said Gary Leveille, founder of the Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee.

*Berkshire Eagle  
Aug 6, 1985*

## Notes and Footnotes

IN ADDITION to William Lee Brown, responsible for Great Barrington's newsboy statue, some credit for appreciation of the role of the newspaperboy in journalism must also go to writer Horatio Alger, whose stories of success achieved by struggling young people preceded placement of the statue in 1895, which is being celebrated Friday with a program to commemorate its 90th birthday. As publisher of the first *New York Daily News*, Brown had a summer home in Great Barrington, which accounts for the statue's location.

Alger adopted the theme of "pluck and luck" for his stories whose popularity survived long after their 19th-century beginnings. His first such novel was published in 1867 and his young "hero" already had risen from struggling newsboy to become a "self-employed" shoeshine boy with his own equipment — a shoeshine box. Alger had named him "Ragged Dick." Dick's explanation for moving from hawking newspapers to shining shoes: "They didn't always put news enough in the papers, and people wouldn't buy 'em as fast as I wanted 'em to." Well, the anonymous newsboy being honored this week seems to have the same problem as "Ragged Dick." For 90 years, he's been holding out the same paper, still unsold.

\* \* \* \*

# Newsboy statue praised in salute

By DAVID A. VALLETTE

**GREAT BARRINGTON** — Paperboys and girls from nine newspapers in four states gathered at the world's oldest monument to newsboys here Saturday in celebration of the bronze statue's 90th birthday and the completion of its restoration.

Emulating sculptor David Richards' Newsboy hawking a one-cent copy of the original New York Daily News, the youngsters handed out 90 copies of a special edition of the Watertown, N.Y., Daily Times with front page stories about the statue. They also pulled from their carrier bags copies of their own newspapers which were placed into a time capsule.

□ □ □

Organized by the Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee, the event provided an opportunity to reflect on the role and image of newsboys, whose enterprise Colonel William Lee Brown wished to honor when he commissioned Richards to do the work and presented the statue in 1895 to Great Barrington, his leisure home away from the pressures of managing the Daily News.

"It honors the little guy out there striving to succeed," Gary Leveille, a member of the preservation committee whose home is in view of the statue, said of the Newsboy.

"It pays tribute to one of our great freedoms: freedom of the press," Selectman Edward Morehouse commented.

"A monument to newsboys everywhere," committee member Richard Fitzgerald called it.

And Paul Ivory, chairman of the Great Barrington Historical Committee, said it "reflects the feeling of self-confidence-Americans felt at the turn of the century."

The event also drew one of the 300 worldwide members of the Horatio Alger Society, Brad Chase, who said the statue and the newsboy tradition represent the ethic propounded by Alger in the stories he wrote: that if you work hard and are honest, you will succeed.

On hand also were two great-grandsons of the sculptor, Robert and Paul Hugg of Yonkers, N.Y., the only descendants which the committee's research could identify.

The prime mover behind the committee and the efforts to preserve and pay homage to the statue

was Barrie Hughes, circulation director of the Watertown newspaper, who first learned of the statue's existence and its aging condition in 1970.

Cashing in an insurance policy, he commissioned sculptors John and Elinor Lovegrove of Seymore, Conn., to create miniatures of the Newsboy to sell to raise restoration funds, and also solicited donations to come up with \$1,600 for the project.

In 1973, the refurbished statue was rededicated, and now, with its locale renamed Newsboy Park and its fountains reactivated, the Newsboy is ready for another century of hawking his newspaper, with his "weather-battered face streaked with the tears of time," as Leveille put it.

Richards died just two years after the original dedication. Brown died in 1906 after a long bout with cancer and after losing controlling interest of the Daily News. Ironically, the Daily News (no relation to the current New York Daily News) went bankrupt and ceased publication just hours after Brown's death.

Brown had had a varied and illustrious career. Born in Sheldon, Vt., in 1840, he taught school in Ohio and Mississippi, served with a volunteer Ohio regiment in the Civil War, amassed a post-war fortune through mining ventures in Montana, then returned to Ohio to get a law degree and pursue politics.

□ □ □

Brown purchased the Youngstown Vindicator in Ohio in 1875, then sold it five years later to become business manager of the Daily News, eventually becoming part owner. He also served two terms as a state senator in New York's 5th district, beginning in 1889, and in 1899 was elected president of the New York Press Club.

The newspapers participating in Saturday's celebration, along with the Watertown Daily Times, included from Massachusetts the Springfield Newspapers, the Holyoke Transcript Telegram and the Berkshire Eagle; from Connecticut, the Hartford Courant, New Haven Register and Journal and Waterbury Republican and American; from Rhode Island, the Call of Woonsocket; and also from New York, the Amsterdam Recorder.

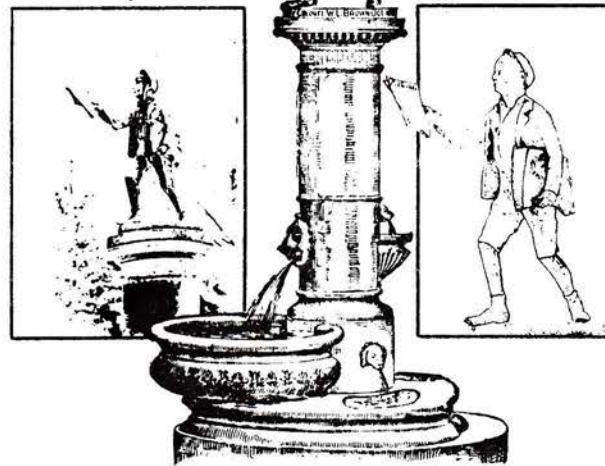
## 90<sup>TH</sup> "BIRTHDAY" CELEBRATION

### GREAT BARRINGTON NEWSBOY STATUE

SATURDAY  
AUGUST 10,  
1985  
11 A.M.

1895-1985

Newsboy Park,  
Route 23, West



# WSB Boy Statue Celebration (1895-1985)

Saturday, August 10, 1985

1986

Welcome to the 90th Birthday Celebration of the Great Barrington Newsboy Statue! This unique newspaper carrier monument is the oldest of its kind in the world and serves as a tribute to hardworking newspaper carriers everywhere. The Newsboy was given to the town of Great Barrington in October 1895 by Colonel William Lee Brown, a neighborhood resident and part owner of the original New York Daily News (no relation to the paper of today.) A great animal lover, Brown had separate fountains installed to provide refreshment for thirsty horses, dogs, cats (and even one for people!)

The Newsboy was created by highly respected sculptor David Richards of Utica, NY and New York City. Responsible for designing many other well-known statues around the country, the Newsboy was one of Richards' last works.

One other statue of a newsboy survives in the United States. It was created in 1920 and stands in a park in Los Angeles, Calif. A newsboy fountain created about 1898 in Detroit, Michigan no longer exists.

Striving to succeed, our bronze Newsboy stands as a proud symbol of "opportunity at its very beginnings." Thank you for joining us as we wish the Great Barrington Newsboy a happy 90th birthday!

## NEWSBOY STATUE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Gary Leveille David Moulthrop  
Barrie Hughes Charles Markham  
Audrey Leveille  
Richard Fitzgerald

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

- 10 AM ..... Newspaper Carrier Registration
- 11 AM ..... March of Carriers, Boy Scouts and Campfire Girls  
"Pledge of Allegiance"  
"Star Spangled Banner"  
Launching of balloons
- 11:15 ..... Greetings from Master of Ceremonies Joan Roger, WSBS Radio.  
Invocation and Greetings, Rev. Virgil Brallier  
Welcome from:  
State Senator Peter Webber  
G.B. Selectman, Ed Morehouse  
G.B. Historical Committee Chairman Paul Ivory  
G.B. Historical Society President David Rutstein  
Horatio Alger Society Representative Brad Chase  
Reading of other greetings by David Moulthrop
- Reading of Col. Brown's speech and general remarks by Gary Leveille  
Historical plaque donation from Newboy Committee to selectmen  
by Charles Markham.
- Introduction by Barrie Hughes of:  
John & Elinor Lovegrove, sculptors of lion's head and devil's head  
restoration in 1973.
- Introduction by Barrie Hughes of:  
Newspapers and carriers.
- 12 noon ..... Closing Remarks

The Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee would like to thank the following for their help and support with celebration preparations and for their assistance in locating information on the Newsboy Statue, Col. William Brown, Mr. David Richards and their respective descendants.

Richard Happel  
\*Hartford Courant  
Arnold Hayes  
Gordon & Clare Height  
Rep. Chris Hodgkins  
Holyoke Transcript-Telegram  
Horatio Alger Society  
\*Barrie Hughes family

Paul Ivory  
Tom J  
Jerry Jones family  
JLS Landscaping

Rita Kastal  
Christine Kelsey  
Peter Kennedy  
Robert Killard  
L. Kline Equipment  
Terry Koldys  
Kwik Print

Roz LaFontana  
Betty LeGeyt  
\*Gary Leveille  
\*Tom & Edith Leveille  
Herbert Littlejohn  
Los Angeles Times  
John & Elinor Lovegrove  
Richard Louison  
John Lucey

Hazel Mack  
Sue Maher & Printype Staff  
Mahoning Valley Historical Society  
Mallory Plumbing  
\*Edwin Markham & family  
Mason Library Staff  
Helen McCandless  
Bill & Helen McCord  
Mark Miller  
R.G. Mitchell Landscaping  
Edward Morehouse  
\*Virginia Moskowitz  
\*Donald Moulthrop & family  
James Mullany  
Don Murray

\*New Haven Register  
(Jackson Newspapers)  
New York City Surrogate's Court  
New York Historical Society  
New York Municipal Archives  
New York Public Library  
New York State Library, Albany  
New York Vital Statistics Div.  
Norwalk CT Town Clerk's Office

Onelda NY Historical Society Director

Frank Packlick  
\*Norma (Twiss) Paget  
\*Ernestine Stenner  
Robert & Lila Parrish  
James Parrish  
Peekskill Star (NY)  
\*Pitney Bowes  
Pollak's & Pollak's East  
Dorothy Putnam

Recorder (Amsterdam NY newspaper)  
Joan Roger  
B. Holly Rose  
David Rutstein  
Ryan's Florists

St. James Episcopal Church  
Joe & Jean Savoy  
Shopper's Guide  
The Snap Shop  
Springfield Morning Record  
S. Berkshire Chamber of Commerce  
Jeff Stevens and members of the  
Monument Mountain Band  
Milton Stevens

Tahiti Restaurant  
Marie Tassone  
\*S. Blair Thomas  
\*Gertrude Thompson  
Sue Turner

Susan Vadas

\*Watertown Daily Times (NY)  
\*Ken & Charlotte Weeks  
Robert Windman  
Willie Wilks  
Senator Peter Webber  
Wheeler & Taylor  
Wheeler Group Inc.  
WSBS Radio

E.D. Young Electrical Contractors (NY)  
Youngstown Public Library (Ohio)  
Youngstown Vindicator  
Ann Przelomski, Editor

Typography by Printype, Bristol, CT

Great Barrington Savings Bank  
Canaan Stationers  
\*Littlejohn Manor  
\*David Moulthrop  
Peter Brown  
Great Barrington Post Office  
Steven Arnold Financial Planner  
Charlotte Bedient  
\*Thomas B. Fitzpatrick  
Monument Mountain Regional  
High School  
Southern Berkshire Regional  
School District

\*Friends Of The Newsboy

\*Contributions to the Newsboy Statue Preservation Fund

Waterbury Sunday Republican, August 11, 1985

# Paperboy paeon dedicated again

By THOMAS CLARK  
GREAT BARRINGTON, Mass. — Frequently overlooked, sometimes neglected, but always patient, the newsboy's outstretched arm beckons people to come and buy just one paper. Cast in bronze, this newsboy statue has stood for 90 years.

The statue, an 1895 gift to Great Barrington, received its due Saturday with a 90th birthday celebration and rededication ceremony.

"If he could talk, what do you think he would say? He would say, 'Somebody please buy my paper, my arm is killing me,'" said Gary Leveille, a member of the Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee.

In hour-long festivities, dignitaries and newsboys paid their tributes to the statue. A proclamation from the Massachusetts Legislature attested to the newsboy's worth, a letter from President Reagan praised him, and the eager participation of fellow newsboys assured his timeliness.

The newsboys, selected for the honor by nine papers in four states, including The Republican and The American, marched to the statue and delivered papers at the foot of the attending dignitaries. The papers are to be put in a time capsule at the base of the statue. Great Barrington First Selectman Edward Morehouse and Horatio Alger Society representative Brad Chase hailed the newsboy as a hard-working symbol of youth struggling to succeed.

In his letter, Reagan called the

newsboy "a source of inspiration to writers and artists."

"Many of our nation's most distinguished and most productive individuals began their careers of service as newspaper carriers," said Massachusetts Gov. Michael S. Dukakis in a letter read at the ceremony.

One ex-newsboy took a special delight in the proceedings. Robert Windman, 76, sat smiling in his chair. Windman said later that he hawked copies of the New York Journal for 2 cents each when he was 9.

The newsboy statue was given to the town by Col. William Lee Brown, a resident of Great Barrington and part-owner of the New York Daily News. The statue was one of the last works of sculptor David Richards, who created statues throughout the country. According to the Newsboy Statue Preservation Committee, the only other existing newsboy statue is in Los Angeles. That statue dates from 1920. An 1898 statue in Detroit, Mich. no longer exists.

The bronze statue stands in Newsboy Park on Route 23 West, just outside the center of Great Barrington. The small park is at the side of the highway in a lush rural setting. The statue itself rests on a polished granite pedestal and has several fountains at its base. The newsboy is attired in typical 19th-century knickers and cap, and holds out his paper while grasping a leather case.

The series of fountains at different levels were placed to refresh horses, dogs and people. The water spouts from the head of a lion and an angry cat.

According to Leveille, nobody knows who served as the model for the statue.

"All that is known is that the newsboy sold papers on the streets of New York," he said. The papers sold for a penny apiece at the time.

"Needless to say, this statue of a newsboy who is now nameless reminds us of many who we do know," the Rev. Virgil Brallier said during the dedication.

A New York newspaper even printed an extra for Saturday's event. The Aug. 10 special edition of the Watertown Daily Times featured front-page stories on the statue and its history. It was a circulation director of the Daily Times who waged a successful campaign to restore the statue in the '70s. The fountains at the base of the statue had been vandalized and had deteriorated over the years. Barrie Hughes, the circulation director, helped raise the funds to begin the restoration. The work was completed in 1973.



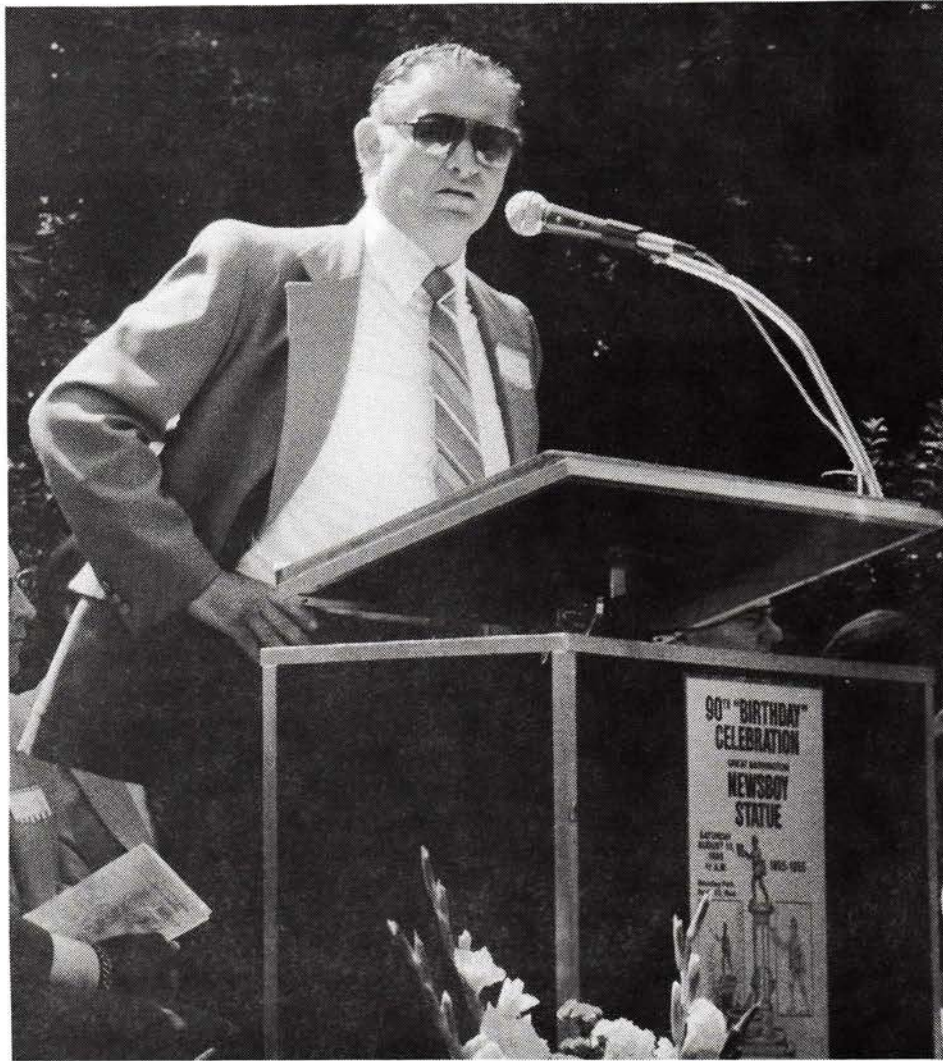
THOMAS CLARK photo

Five Republican and American newsboys attended rededication ceremonies Saturday for the world's oldest newsboy statue in Great Barrington, Mass. They are, from left, Ed Boulanger, Jason Gandolfo, Ralph Grillo, Billy Hughson and Mario Longo.

The rededication ceremony also touched on the controversy in this state over the presence of newspaper boxes, which residents are seeking to control. One box in Lenox, Mass. was

tarred and feathered.

"I doubt there will ever be a monument to a mechanical box," said Joan Roger, the master of ceremonies.



Former Horatio Alger Society President Brad Chase Speaking During the Newsboy Celebration.

signs about the occasion including parking directions were spotted in various locations. Obviously people would be arriving shortly so we went into town to eat breakfast and returned about a half hour later. At that time, there was an entirely different scene.

The increase in activity was absolutely amazing. The mad hustle and bustle of arriving celebrants was everywhere; police were directing traffic and cars were parking in a field adjacent to the newsboy park area. Newscarrriers were arriving in cars and vans and then lining up at a desk located next to a

tree to register their attendance. I found out later that papers from four states had sent carriers to this event. The old, young and middle-aged were gathering to be witness to this birthday celebration so we parked our car and joined the throng as it moved busily towards newsboy park.

We checked in with Gary and then ran plum into HAS members Bill McCord and Bill Gowan whom we hadn't seen in many, many moons. As more people gathered it was obvious that word of the celebration had been passed around well in Great Barrington and the surrounding



communities. Right on the dot of 11:00 a.m., order was called and people took their places. Several of us who were to speak made our way onto the trailer platform which now had two neat rows of chairs lined up, a podium and a full P. A. speaking system. The newscarriers paraded from the parking lot area to the park and clustered in a group to one side of the platform. A small band, instruments glistening in the late morning sun, located itself under a tree to the right front of the platform. All the while, the newsboy statue stood tall and firm as it has for 90 years at the center of the park in full view of everyone.

Attention was called, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Boy Scouts and the Star Spangled Banner was played. There was an invocation and welcome remarks and letters read from local, state,

and national political leaders. In fact, a letter was read from President Reagan in which he mentioned Horatio Alger, Jr. in relation to the free enterprise system, newsboys, etc.! [Editor's note: see page 1]. Barry Hughes, long-time newsboy enthusiast and HAS member, spoke as did Gary Leveille, local historians, the Mayor of Great Barrington and several other notables. It was obvious that the newsboy statue is a beloved local landmark of that community.

I gave a brief greeting from HAS and discussed Alger's newsboy characters and stories and explained how they reflected the principles of hard work, honesty, etc. I said I felt the statue was a permanent symbol of those principles for all of us to follow today. At a strategic point in the





ceremony, a plaque was dedicated and set in the ground at the base of the statue. Then on signal all the newscarrriers set ballons free which drifted lazily into the sky, testimony that a celebration had indeed occurred. The newscarrriers were then introduced individually. As their names were read, each approached the platform and left a copy of his own newspaper on a pile which would later be set in a time capsule.

Then the ceremony was over. We all agreed that we had participated in something special. Bill Gowan, Bill McCord, Ann and I then talked Alger for several minutes. We then met Louise Kent-Boyd, an HAS member from Toronto, Canada, who had come specifically to attend the ceremony that day. We found out that she had just finished Volume I of a two-volume set about the history of the newsboy. She was a delightful  
(concluded on page 16)

## BEG MITES IN PAWNSHOPS

The Chicago Tribune  
January 27, 1897

Destitute People Pledge Trifles  
For Their Lives.

Plead With The Money-Lenders To Take Even  
The Garments From Their Backs That They  
May Be Enabled With The Pittance To  
Provide For Helpless And Suffering Dear  
Ones—Piteous Scenes In The Tenement  
House Districts.

Destitute men and women thronging the pawnshops and begging the proprietors to take the clothes from their backs that they might get food and fuel to keep their children from starving and freezing, and children bringing the coats and cloaks of their parents to pawn while the elders sat freezing at home was the pitiful drama that was enacted yesterday all day long in the musty and ill-lighted pawnshops that abound in the poverty-stricken sections of the city.

Their clothing was all that most of the destitute people had left. The second-hand stores long since got their furniture, and even their beds have been sold to buy food, while the children sleep on the floor. What little jewelry they possessed went days ago, when the cold first came, and yesterday their ragged and worn cloaks, overcoats, and mittens went in the same way for money to buy food and fuel. All day yesterday the little shops that are close together along South Halsted and South Clark streets and the narrow, tenement-lined streets that cross these were thronged. Every one of them had its tables and shelves piled high with threadbare garments, seemingly worthless to all but the owner except as old rags.

## ARTICLES GO IN DRIBLETS.

Some of these people have been disposing of their belongings in daily driblets for the last week, receiving enough from each day's pledge to buy food and fuel for the next twenty-four hours. Women

who have earned money by washing and scrubbing sufficient to keep their children at least from absolute suffering during the last few months have found themselves unequal to the task of keeping the little ones warm during the last few bitter days and their pitiful belongings have had to go to make up the deficit.

Three days ago artisans, carpenters, machinists, and laborers began pawning their tools. Yesterday these same men appeared at the pawnshops and begged the proprietors to take their mittens or they sent their children with their coats—anything to keep them from starving and freezing, if but for a few hours. Farther than that they did not dare to think.

During the afternoon, in one of the small pawnshops in South Halsted Street, a few doors south of Taylor, an Irish scrubwoman, her hands bare and only a black rag tied over her head, stood pleading with the proprietor. Her hands were so numb that when she tried to take the old black plush cape from her shoulders she found herself unable to loosen it. From its appearance the garment had been worn for years. The woman had on thin shoes that were no protection against the cold. Yesterday was the eighth day she had appeared in the same pawnshop.

## DESERTED WITH FOUR CHILDREN.

The woman, who is known to the pawnbroker, has four small children. She has been deserted by her husband, but until a few days ago she was able to keep them warmed and fed by taking in washing. When the intense cold snap came she was unequal to the extra task.

Her first visit to the shop was for the purpose of pawning an old clock, on which she received \$1. The next day she pawned a ring. Her explanation to the proprietor was that her house was cold and her children could not be left to freeze. Day before yesterday the woman, reduced to the last extremity, obtained 50 cents in return for her mittens, a warm pair, which evidently some one had given her.

When the woman came in yesterday afternoon the proprietor wondered what she had left to pawn.

"We haven't any coal left," she said, when she had taken off her thin cape. "My four children can't freeze. How much can I get on this cloak?"

The proprietor looked the old garment over, while the woman stood warming herself by the stove. Then he gave her a dollar bill and she started out doors, with no protection but her thin dress, and disappeared in a coal office.

#### PAWNS HIS TROUSERS.

A few minutes before the woman entered the shop a man about 60 years old came in. He had no gloves and no overcoat, and his hands were as white as if the blood in them was frozen. He stood shivering inside the door for a few minutes before he was thawed out sufficiently to be able to speak. Then he dropped a parcel done up in newspaper on the counter.

The pawnbroker's wife opened the package. There was an old pair of worsted trousers, badly worn and full of rents. Where the cloth was whole it was almost smooth enough to serve as a mirror.

"I can't take those," said the proprietor. "They wouldn't bring me in 10 cents if they had to be sold."

"I haven't had anything to eat today," said the old man. "For God's sake give me a half-dollar and I'll redeem them when I get work again."

The proprietor and his wife looked at each other a minute and then the latter went behind the counter and took a half-dollar from the cash drawer.

"Here," she said. "See that you keep your promise."

#### FAMILY LIVES ON \$6 A WEEK.

The man shot out of the shop as if fearing the pawnbroker would change his

mind.

Farther up the street, near Van Buren Street, a fairly well dressed workingman entered a pawnshop just behind a reporter for The Tribune. The workingman called the pawnbroker into a corner and began to whisper to him as if loath to have his story overheard. After the two had talked together a minute the man unwrapped a large bundle done up in brown paper. It contained a suit of clothes, much worn, but evidently a "Sunday best."

The proprietor turned the clothes over, pointed out traces of several rents that had been carefully mended, and then handed the man three silver dollars, which he at first refused to take.

"They are worth more," he said.

Finally, when the pawnbroker refused to lend any more, he took the money and went out. Then the proprietor told the reporter the man's story.

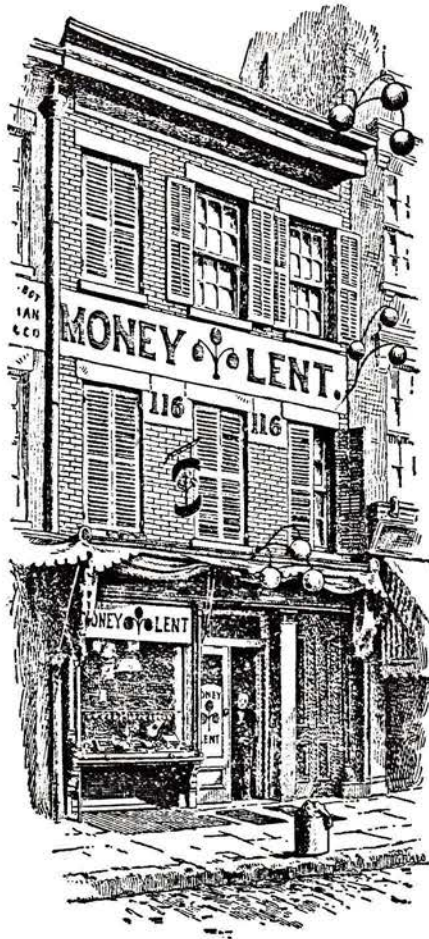
He is an employee of one of the largest manufacturing concerns in the city that is running at half time after a long shutdown. The company's pay day is next Monday, and there will be \$6 due him for his week's work on that day. That is all he will have for the support of a wife and five children for the next seven days. The \$3 which he received from the pawnbroker will have to buy the food and fuel for seven persons for five days.

#### HER FIRST EXPERIENCE.

In another shop a woman and a little boy came in together. Both were fairly well dressed and it was their first visit to the shop. The woman took a heavy gold seal ring from her finger and handed it to the pawnbroker, and in return was given 75 cents. When she went out she started straight across the street with her little boy to a Jewish meat market and in a few minutes came out with a parcel.

"I expect to have that woman here every day hereafter," said the pawnbroker, "that

is the way they begin."



Then the proprietor relented and gave the children a dollar for the tools. The pawnbroker, who knew the family and had given money to the children on pledges several times in the last few days, said the father of the family was out of work and was ashamed to come to the shop.

Sometimes yesterday when parents had garments to pawn which were so worn that they had small hopes of their being taken the children were sent with them in hopes that they might move the pawnbroker to advance the cash.

At one of the South Clark Street shops a woman who lives in the attic of an old wooden rookery, and supports her 3-year-old child by doing dishes, visited the shop with her baby's cloak. It was an old-fashioned knitted garment that had been dyed to a bright pink. The proprietor said he had seen the baby wearing it all winter.

The woman's story was like scores of others that were heard during the afternoon. There was no coal to keep her baby warm and the garment had to go till she could redeem it. While she was at the pawnshop, and afterwards at the coal office getting her fuel, the baby shivered in the attic.

In a pawnshop near Halsted and Bunker streets two children came in together, shivering with the cold. One of them carried an old-fashioned wood plane and the other an auger. When the proprietor opened the door for them they dropped the tools on the floor and ran to the stove, where they began warming their hands.

It was a shop where tools are not taken as pawns. The children offered no explanation and the proprietor looked at the tools.

"You will have to take them somewhere else," he said. Then the children began to cry.

"We ain't got anything to eat."



From Student-Life at Harvard  
By George Henry Tripp, A.B., 1867  
1876

(From the Collection of Gilbert K. Westgard II)

"Is that University Hall?"

"Yes, we go in at University Sixteen at eight o'clock, as you may perhaps know, to register names and present credentials. At nine, we go into Harvard Hall, —the brick building with the belfry,—and do our Greek papers."

Already there were more than a hundred assembled, and others were fast arriving. They were mostly young fellows sixteen or seventeen years old, with occasionally a face that might be five or even eight years older than the average. These candidates for admission, or "sub-freshmen," were very readily distinguished, even by an unpractised eye, from the undergraduates. They looked too nervous and unhappy to be anything but what they were. Some boys had their fathers with them, stimulating them to keep their courage up, and do their best. Here and there might be seen a college tutor, or perhaps an assistant professor, talking with the parent of some youth who had been reading with him for the examination. At a distance a knot of Sophomores had posted themselves on the green turf, and in right merry mood were criticising the new-comers, and making up their minds what sort of stuff the next Freshman class was to be made of. Freshmen themselves till within a week or even less, they need to behold a real, live new Freshman, to be fully assured that they can be called by that opprobrious epithet no longer. A word might be said about the beauty of the breezy elms, the cool, shady walks, the grass-plats so tempting with their fresh verdure, and the unique buildings: all these things shall be seen many and many a time by and by, when there will be leisure to admire all. Just now the anxiety and excitement of examination is too absorbing.

As the clock in the square struck eight, the bell rung on Harvard Hall. The group on the drive before University Hall, now doubled in size, broke up in a hurry. The young fellows crowded up the stone steps, through the northern doorway of the hall, and thronged into Number Sixteen. Not a very imposing room or a very pleasant one. The building had evidently been constructed for use and durability, rather than for beauty or comfort. At the east end of the room, was a platform surmounted by a heavy wooden table; behind the table, and covering the end wall of the room, was a large cloth curtain, rudely colored in representation of some plain or scene of ancient Greece. The walls were painted a dingy yellow; the floor was sanded and well worn; and from the front of the platform common yellow settees were arranged one above another, like the seats in a theatre. This was the young student's first glimpse of college life. Quite different the reality thus far from his romantic anticipation! But the work of registering names claims his attention.

Evidently there were a number who were impressed with the advantage of securing a choice of seats in Harvard Hall on this particular occasion; for long before nine the steps leading up to the door were packed with the same throng that had stood in front of University an hour before. As the hand on the church-dial crept round to the hour, the janitor came in his well-worn suit of gray, his large bunch of keys in hand, and a smile on his pleasant face, which seemed to say, "Oh, you need not be in so much of a hurry: you won't be so eager to go in here some of these days." Many a year has he unlocked the door for just such an impetuous company; has seen them come back at the beginning of each term, their faces grown more and more familiar, till, at Commencement, the college sent them forth with her blessing, and new-comers filled their places.

"This way, Wentworth,—there in the north-west corner: those are the safest seats," said Sam's new friend Walter Huntingdon in an excited half-whisper, as, the doors being opened, they were carried forward by the irresistible impulse from behind. With a rush and a scramble, they secured the coveted position,—the two end seats at a blue deal table facing the wall, and quite in the corner of the hall.

Harvard Hall! What a magnificent, impressive structure these words had called up to Sam's fancy a short space before! Harvard, the oldest, stateliest, and richest of American colleges, must needs centre all its glories in Harvard Hall. The exterior had not promised much; but even that promise was not fulfilled. Here was the same sanded floor under his feet. The blue deal tables and benches looked cheap enough; and the whitewashed walls and bare iron posts which supported the story above were utterly devoid of ornament. Many portraits there were: in fact, the walls were quite lined with them; but little time was afforded for their inspection, as a paper with printed questions and a blank-book were soon placed before each candidate; and while lynx-eyed tutors and proctors patrolled the aisles, to see that there was no communication between the candidates, every man went diligently to work, and wrote out the answers as best he might, one hour being allowed for each paper.

Sam had worked very faithfully for this examination, and came to it well prepared in translating English into Greek. After this last exercise of the morning, he and Huntingdon passed out of the hall, leaving quite a number of their fellow candidates still hard at work.

At the foot of the steps were a half-dozen or more grouped around a young man, evidently the oracle of the occasion, who was answering questions, and making explanations, with unerring accuracy. Sam, whose mind was still perplexed with several doubtful accents and forms, approached, and soon found himself engaged in a warm discussion with his new fellow-students. Huntingdon, standing apart, waited with manifest impatience and disgust for a few minutes: then stepping up, and passing his arm through Sam's, he quietly drew him away.

"Come: 'let the dead bury its dead.' It can make no difference now whether your accents were right or wrong, though I would wager any amount you have ninety percent correct. Let's improve these three hours by going into Parker's, and refreshing the inner man." As Sam seemed to hesitate, he added, "If you stay here, some truculent Soph. will capture you, and have a dinner at your expense."

But in spite of the fascinating manner in which the invitation was extended, and the uninviting aspect of the hot and dusty square, Sam held back. "I guess I won't go, thank you;" and as Huntingdon, waving his hand, ran off after a passing horse-car, he said half to himself, half to the retreating figure, "I dare say I can get something to eat here somewhere."

"Ahem! Eat? To be sure. Hotel accommodations unsurpassed, only a few steps farther on. Just my dinner-hour too; and if I know myself, and I believe I do intimately, I never refuse an invitation to feed." The speaker, a trim, dapper-looking little fellow, a Junior, with a brown face and close cropped hair, to Sam's infinite surprise, took his arm, and sauntered on with indescribable nonchalance.

If Sam's first and natural impulse was to knock the impudent fellow down, his abundant good-nature soon got the better of it, and in a few minutes the twain were seated as comfortably as may be at Kent's, the best refectory that the Cambridge of those days afforded, and, from the tempting variety which the bill of fare presented, concluded to take some beefsteak and fried potatoes, with a bottle of ale for the Junior.

Later, as they arose from the repast, Sam's new friend said, "Come around to

my room, and make yourself comfortable till three o'clock. My name is Haskill. You can rest off, and see what a college room is like;" and they made off to the cool room in Stoughton Hall, Sam thinking that the money paid for his new friend's entertainment was not so badly invested, after all.

The first exercise of the afternoon was the paper on ancient history and geography; simple enough as a whole, but there was one question the answer to which Sam was utterly unable to recollect.

The bell rang at four, and he went into the hall to do the geometry paper with a heavy heart; and, when the day closed, he felt that the afternoon's work had been a total failure. That night he spent alone. At the oral examination the next day, being Tuesday, as he was well prepared, and had recovered in a measure from his despondency, he did do something splendid, and had hopes that, after all, some lucky chance might carry him through.

Five o'clock of this Tuesday afternoon saw a hundred and fifty or sixty anxious young fellows assembled in a large room in University, known as the Old Chapel, waiting to learn their fate, while to and fro hurried the overtaken college officials, not yet ready to report in full. This room was decidedly more comfortable than any of the college apartments the young man had seen as yet. The settees were comfortably cushioned; and the hall was at least passable in point of architectural beauty. While all were bearing the delay attendant on making out the papers, with the best grace possible, a gentleman, tall, thin, with grayish hair and beard, spectacles on nose, and speaking with a curious nasal drawl, ejaculating every third or fourth word with a funny little snort and a twist of the head, announced from a desk that, if any two wished to take a room together, there were still several rooms to be had.

Sam concluded that if he wished to secure a room in the college buildings, he must needs do so now. He was making his way to the desk, when Huntingdon accosted him with, "Suppose we take a room together."

"Nothing could please me better," replied Sam.

Rooms were available in both Stoughton Hall and College House. After a brief discussion they decided on the latter location, though it was out of the yard.

The record was made, and that really very important matter was settled. The papers were then ready; the doors connecting the Old Chapel with the President's room, and that with the regent's, were thrown open; and a tutor whom Sam remembered called, one by one, though not in alphabetical order, the names of the candidates, in his sharp, precise manner. They were to receive their papers, pass down the stairs, and go away quietly. Go away quietly! and that after a man had passed a successful examination on four or five years' work! Many a glad huzza in the entry below, and even on the stairs, attested the joy which the happy fellow felt, at being well over with it all.

At last came the name "Wentworth;" and with beating heart Sam passed into the President's room, received with a bow a kindly smile, a "Mr. Wentworth," and a glance from eyes that evidently intended to know him when they saw him again, some folded papers; thence on through the regent's room and down the stairs, hardly daring to learn his fate.

An examination of the papers showed he had successfully passed everything but ancient history, for which he received a condition.

The scene around the southern doorway of University Hall was lively indeed. It was in vain that the crowd was told to disperse, or that the janitor, himself as

well pleased as anyone, exhorted them to leave the premises. The steps and plat of ground in front were thronged with glad faces. Everyone seemed to have been successful, and glad friends were warm in their congratulations. "Hurrah!" shouted one small fellow, half tumbling down the steps, hat and umbrella in one hand, and his papers in the other. "Good for me! only four conditions! I'd have sold out my chance pretty cheap an hour ago;" and he was welcomed with outstretched hands into a noisy group with cries of "Good for you, Charley!" Indeed, it cannot but be a glad company; for when is one happier than after he has passed his freshman examination with clean papers, and looks forward to the weeks which are to follow, weeks of unalloyed enjoyment, with perfect freedom from all care? At last he has reached the goal toward which he has been so long striving; at last he is one of those mysterious beings, a college student.

\*                                 \*                                 \*

("Newsboy Statue"--continued from page 9)

woman whose knowledge about the newsboy absolutely amazed us. We all talked Alger and newsboys well past noon.

Then it was over and we all left Newsboy Park. We had indeed carried out a formal recognition of the newsboy--that indomitable independent businessman who by his trade learns the fundamental principle that good, honest work may well lead to success. We all felt very good about what we had done that morning and I think secretly pledged to do it again, perhaps in ten years when the little guy hawking papers on top of a polished granite column in that Great Barrington, Massachusetts park will be 100 years old. I'll plan to revisit him again at that time and will keep you posted.

\*                                 \*                                 \*

[Editor's note: Many thanks to Brad Chase for writing such a fine article about the Newsboy Statue. And, my grateful appreciation to HAS member Gary Leveille for sending me the photos and clippings which so enhance this issue of Newsboy.]

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Harvard University is celebrating its 350th anniversary this year, and Gilbert K. Westgard II has compiled some material on what Harvard was like in Alger's day. Some of that is in this issue--note logo that Gil supplied on page 1--and other information will be in subsequent issues.

Also, Gil has a great deal of material on the homeless of great cities, and some of that he has supplied for this issue. Again, as I have stated before, Gil has always helped me when it comes to filling the pages of Newsboy, and when I officially retire at the end of the current volume (June-July issue), I hope that my replacement will be just as ably aided.



HARVARD COLLEGE IN 1849