Yesterday's News

From the pages of the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin* and *Harvard Magazine*

1911 The *Bulletin* notes that *A Lawyer's Recollections,* by George Torrey, A.B. 1859, LL.B. 1861, reveals that in his day the only requirement for an LL.B. was that the candidate enter his name as a student at the Law School and pay his term fees.

1916 Newly planted elms in the College Yard are restoring greenness to a "blinding wilderness," observes a *Bulletin* editorialist, applauding a decision to "check an increasing disturbance of the academic peace" by closing certain roads in the Yard against "the menace and noisiness of the automobile."

1936 Dedication exercises for the Old Yard's restored College pump are held, 35 years after it was blown up by a secret undergraduate society, the Med. Fac. Senior College alumnus Henry Munroe Rogers '62 takes the first drink.

1946 Phi Beta Kappa poet W.H. Auden describes a university in which undergraduates with "nerves that never flinched at slaughter/Are shot to pieces by the shorter/Poems of Donne" and "Professors back from secret missions/

Resume their proper eruditions,/Though some regret it."

1976 The Adams House Raft Race draws more than 25 entries from Harvard, Radcliffe, and Cambridge public schools to the Charles. The Collegium Musicum's craft finishes first, its crew singing as they paddle. (Many contestants sink early.)

1991 Under a consent decree, all eight Ivy League colleges agree to abandon shared guidelines for undergraduate financial aid, given a Justice Department contention that such cooperation violates antitrust laws.

2001 A 21-day "living-wage" sit-in at Massachusetts Hall, apparently the longest such protest in Harvard history to that date, ends on May 8, after negotiations in which the University agrees to freeze further outsourcing of jobs and accelerate a contract renegotiation with the union for its custodial workers.

agnostic. The course also asks students to answer questions about the global impact of computing. The decision to focus on the big ideas of computer science in the new course was informed by research suggesting that K-12 students were intimidated by computer science and had narrow ideas about what the field is and what kind of people can succeed in it, said Lien Diaz, the director of the College Board's entire AP program. The new curriculum aims to convey "the excitement that's built around what you can do with programming," Diaz explained, and to draw in more women and minority students, who are underrepresented in computer science. "I believe that is what David Malan tries to do," she said. The College Board expects to endorse CS50's curriculum, as well as curricula developed by other universities and private companies, all as teaching options for AP CS Principles.

But CS50's AP curriculum is hardly watered down. The course teaches C, an old and notoriously opaque programming language, while some of the other introductory curricula opt for high-level languages that are easier to use, but teach students less about how computer processes work. Kathleen O'Shaughnessey, a teacher at the private Hopkins School in New Haven, believes CS50's combination of rigorous material and encouraging pedagogy helps students understand computer-science principles with more depth than other curricula. "What Malan's curriculum seems to do so well is create problems that reveal easy-to-miss details of computer science without totally alienating the less comfortable students," she said. "It feels much more empowering than how my own C education at Yale went." Diaz agreed that CS50's curriculum involves more serious programming than other curricula developed for AP CS Principles.

Recruiting qualified teachers continues to be a barrier to implementing K-12 computer-science education on a mass scale. Computer-science professionals considering second careers have little incentive to consider teaching unless they have an intrinsic interest in the field: said Yakes,
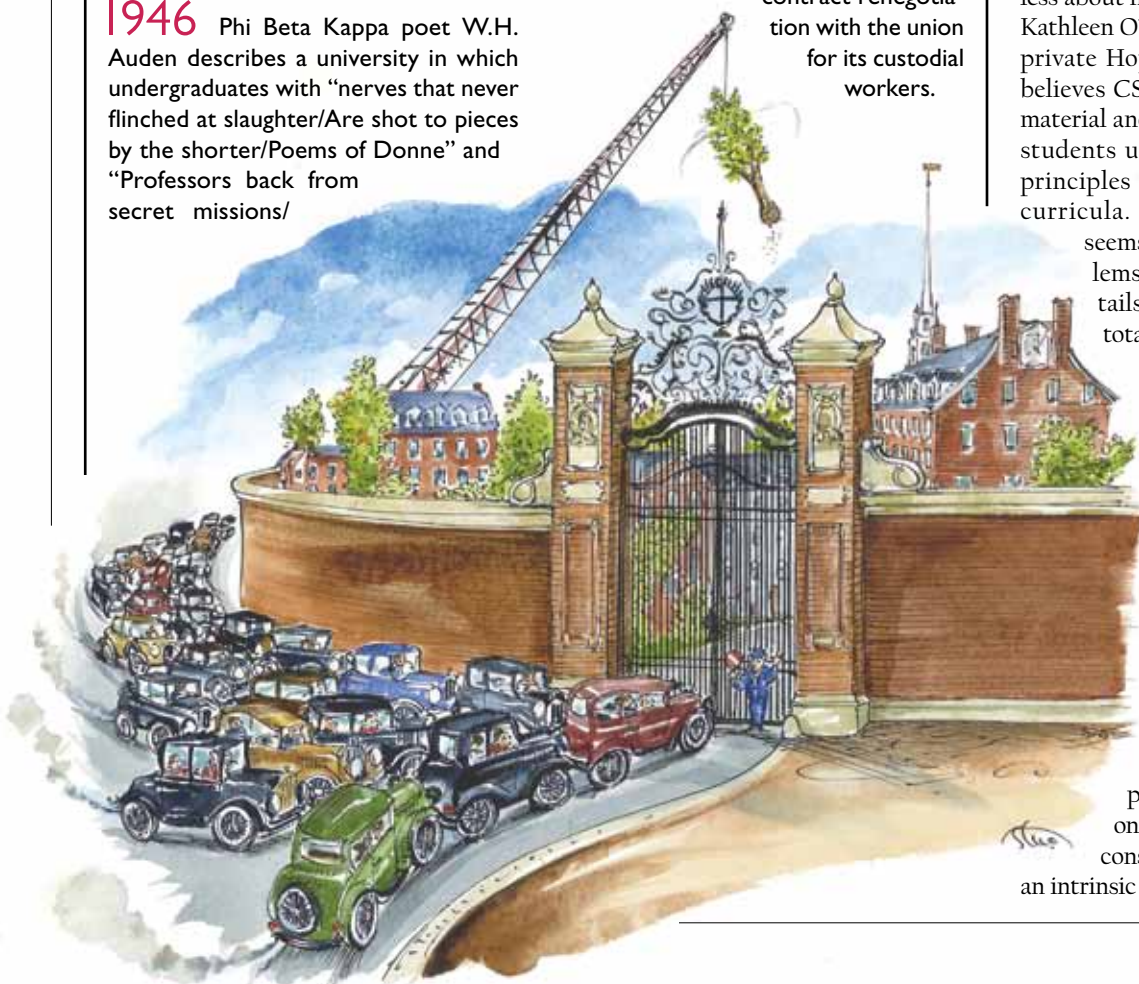

Illustration by Mark Steele