

Life at Oxford

The start of my twentieth year at Oxford seemed like a good moment to share some of my feelings of wonder and irritation at the bizarre qualities of the institution. The following drawings are out of copyright – they were extracted from an ancient compendium of Boys Own Paper adventures.

Fr. Saul N. Braindrane (SJ).

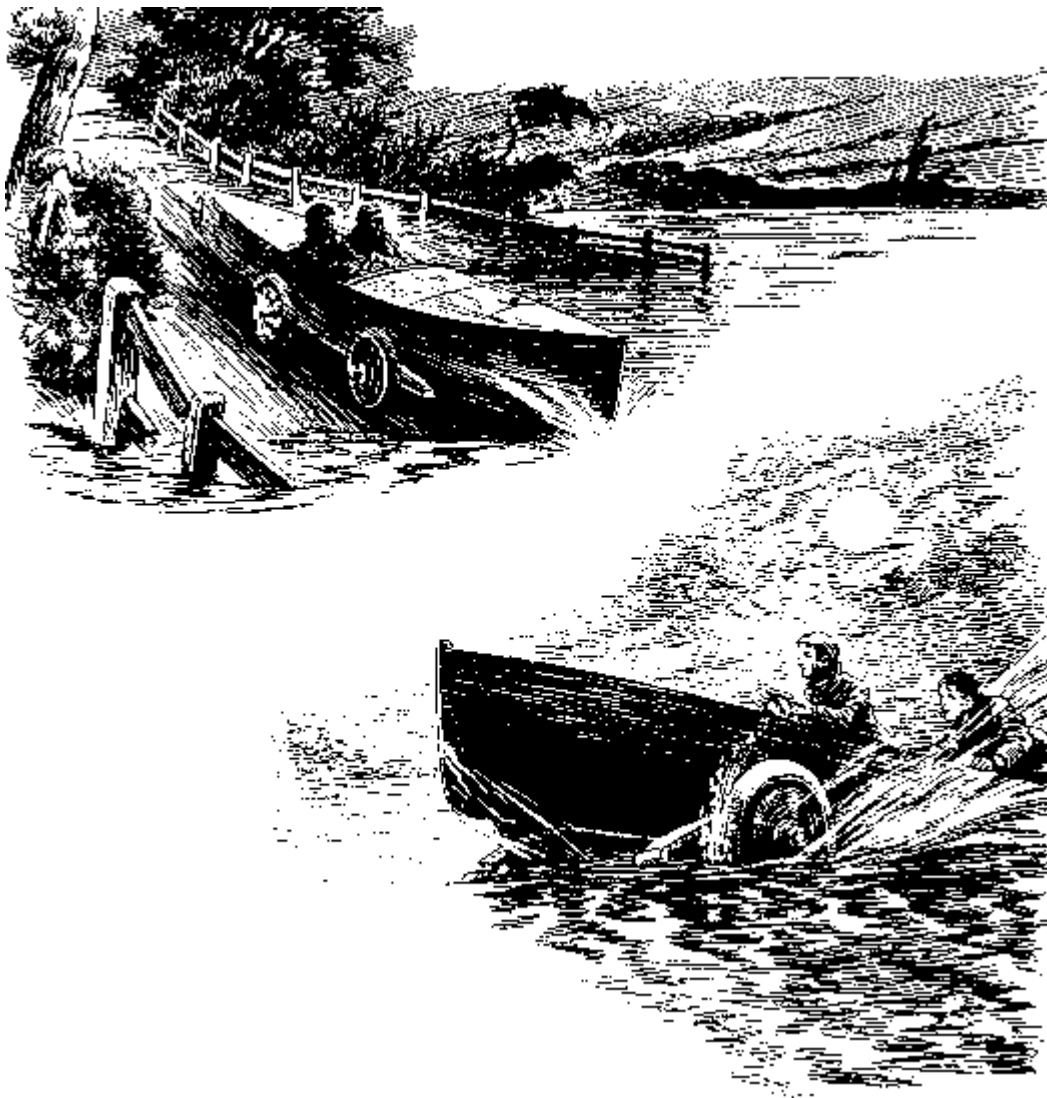
The Interview



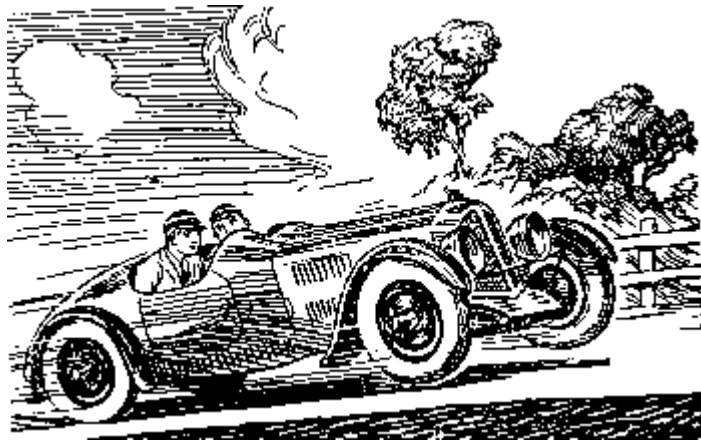
We take active steps to recruit undergraduates from even the most unlikely schools.



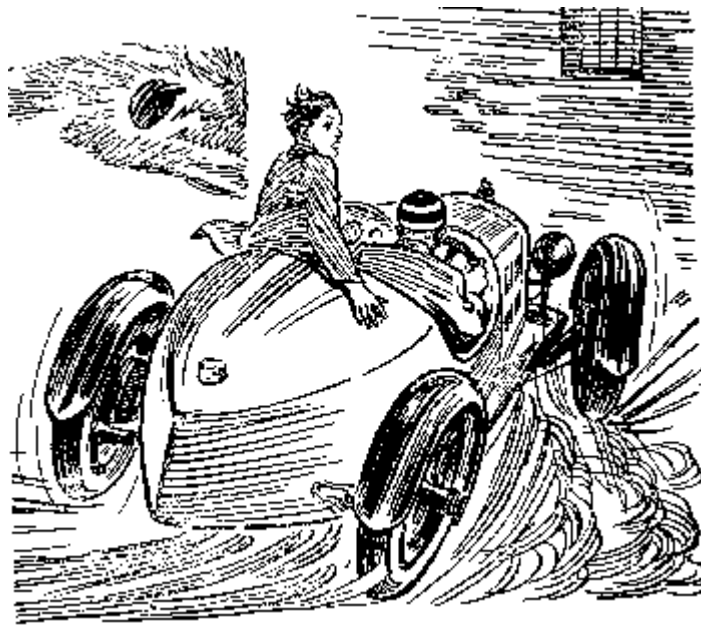
Oxford's new transport policy makes getting to the College quite arduous.



But some parents will remember the old Marston Ferry route ...



... and other candidates have their own transport.



The turn into the Provost's Yard is still the best test of a rich kid's abilities.



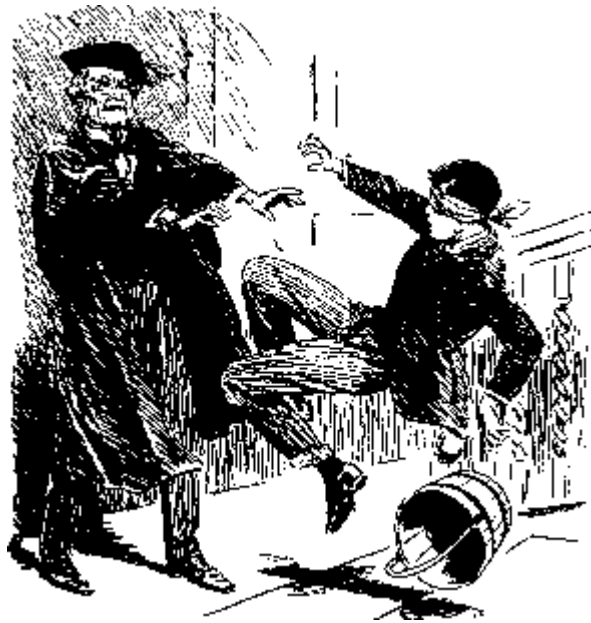
Finding your interviewer's room can be pretty tough!



Even with the help of one of the retired dons.



Beware of asking directions: the town wags love to direct unwary candidates to the Christnose Crypt.



Mr. Clemens's interviewing techniques are a bit intimidating: there's "Blindfold Bucket Balancing" ...



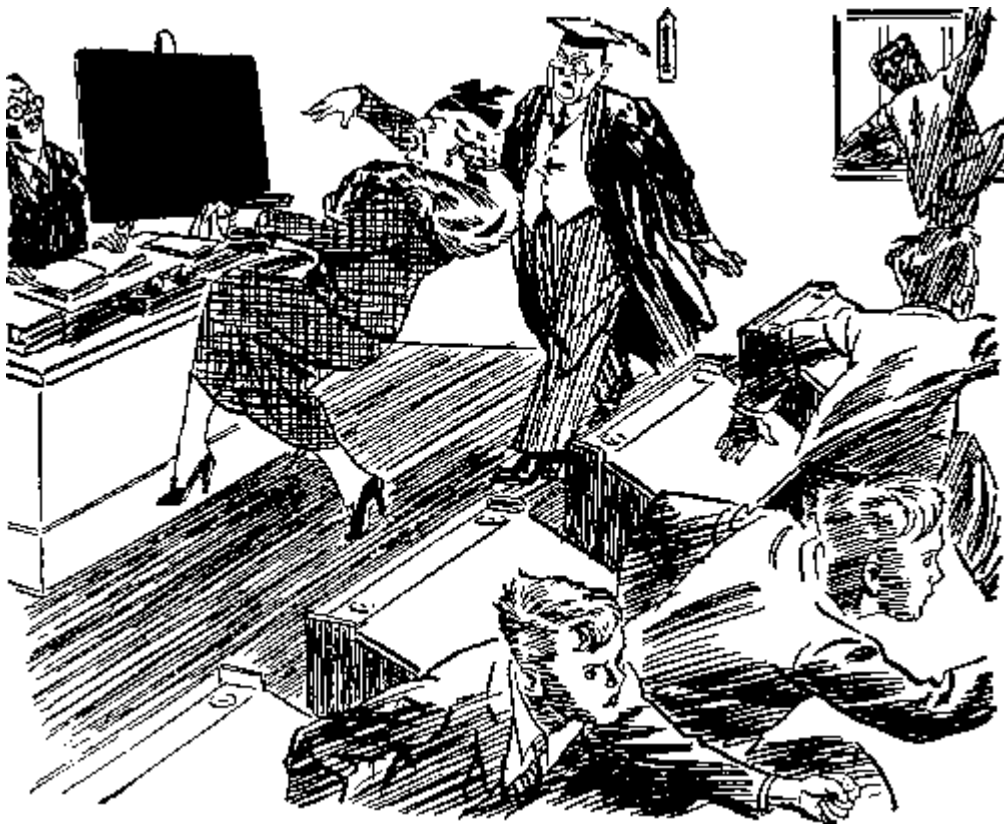
... and "Ordeal by Cat".



The Music Tutor's auditions are truly terrifying!



and everybody has to take Hat-Swallowing test – which is traditionally administered by the Domestic Staff.



Do remember that getting your mum to dance in front of the Tutor for Admissions is a high-risk tactic.

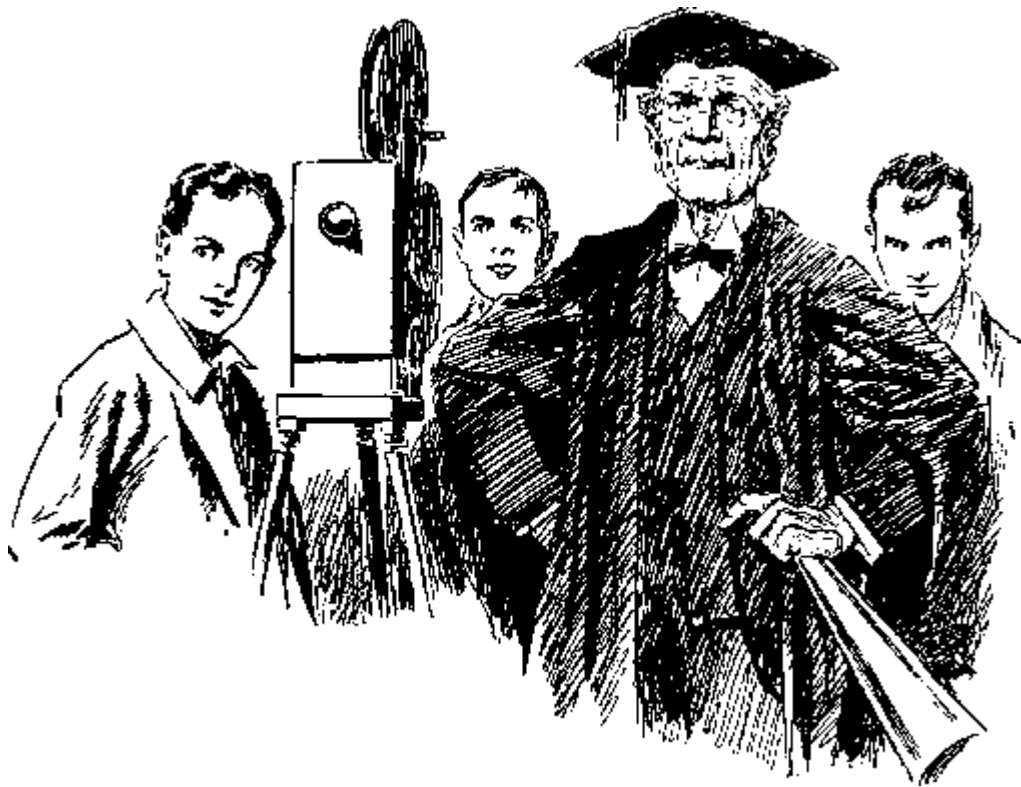
Once you're there



The toffs always enjoy welcoming the comprehensive school types at the start of term.



We're equipped with all the very latest visual aids.



and Mr. Clemens frequently uses the very latest multimedia techniques.



He likes to nip out to a rave – it keeps him in touch with the youth.



But his notorious “tea and cakes” talks frighten the students.



Teaching rhythms occasionally get disrupted by a visit from the Institute for the Advancement of Research Assessment Exercises.



Living in a shared set can be trying at times



and one of the mathematics tutors is notoriously pedantic.



But the famous deaf seals of Worcester are always ready to help with music practice.



Chemistry students aren't too popular in the JCR ...



... but this is understandable.



We've made the Examination process much more straightforward than it used to be.

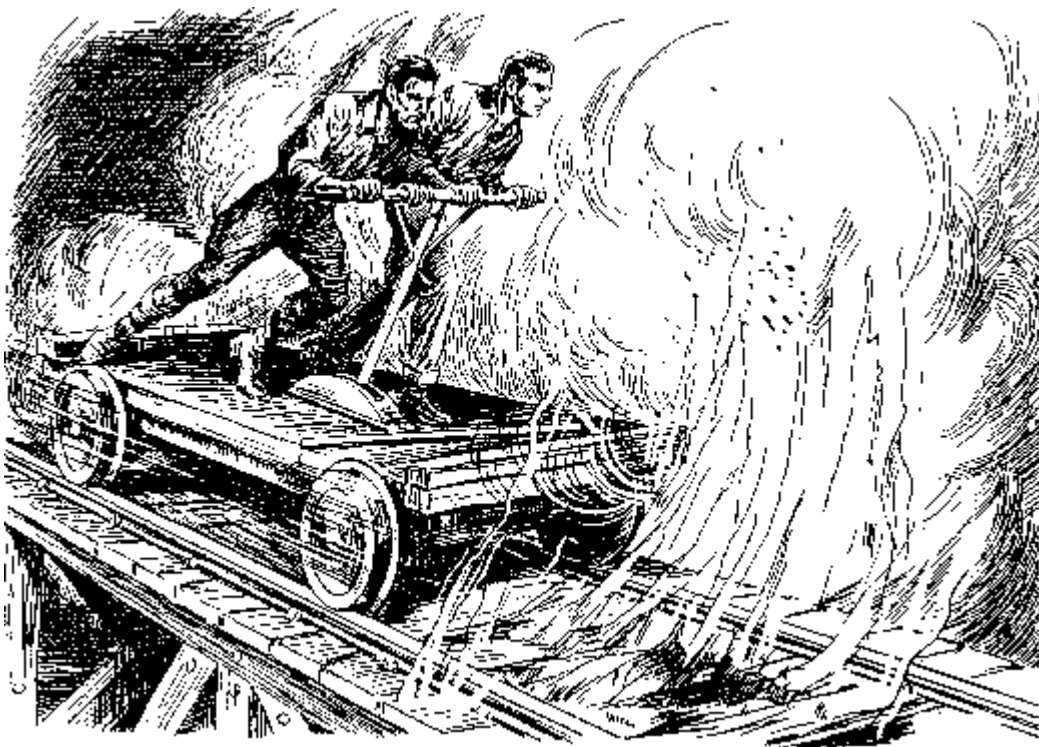


But the Dons *still* love to tell tales of adventurous marking.

Going Down



Some students' parents collect them at the end of the term.



But others have to put up with the vagaries of public transport.