



Deke's Sad End

I FIND IT IRONIC AND PERHAPS prophetic that ΔKE was chosen as the graphic to accompany Ross Nova's piece on fraternity rush in the Winter issue ["Rush Takes Its Time"]. Ironical because the Deke house has been a West Wheelock Street parking lot for many years and prophetic because perhaps those fratern-

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ities that still exist may follow suit.

I recall when our house was demolished and my strong feeling that either the College or the town of Hanover orchestrated the whole sad process and gained from it. As pledges we had to memorize all the plaques on and in the house. My recollection is that the house was Hanover's oldest, the home of Captain Aaron Storrs. When the fraternity finally decided to close, the solution to what to do with the house was, we thought, neatly solved: The property would be given to the town, which would renovate it and adapt it for use as a children's library. With Howe Library next door, this seemed a natural and happy solution. But for some reason the town decided instead to build a new library elsewhere; the old Howe Library was sold and the Deke house came down to provide parking. I understand that the records and memorabilia of the fraternity went to the College archives. The word went out through

the grapevine and some of us Dekes were lucky to salvage from the secret Goat Hall one of the heavy oak chairs, the arms of which were festooned with an engraved nameplate of brothers long gone. Soon after, the house was opened to any and all and apparently it was stripped bare of all usable building materials. The last step in the ignoble end of Hanover's oldest building was its demolition.

Let's hope this process isn't repeated in the future, either physically or symbolically.

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