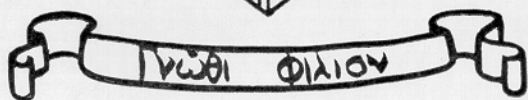
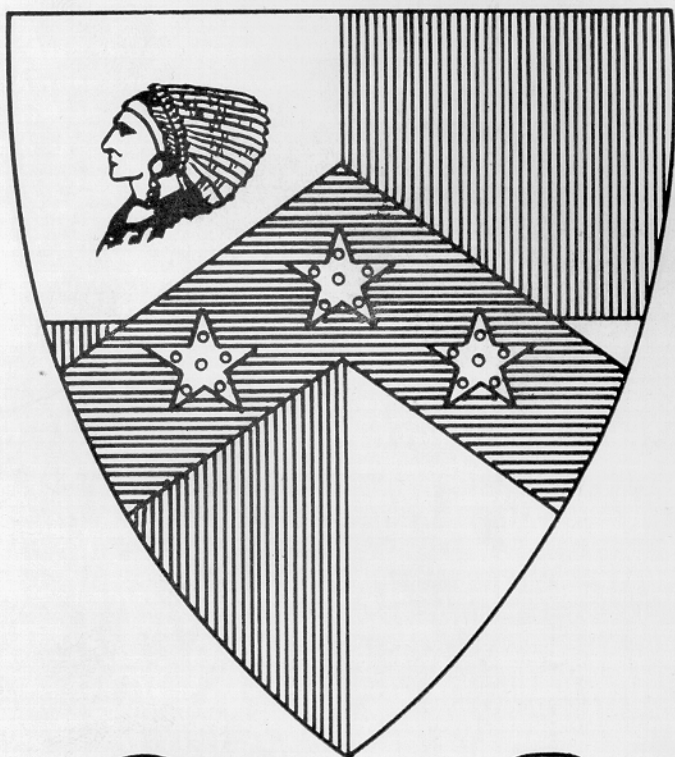
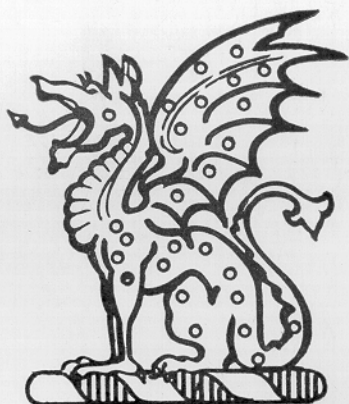


RECEIVED

OCT 30 1957
BETA THETA PI
FRATERNITY
OXFORD, OHIO



Oklahoma

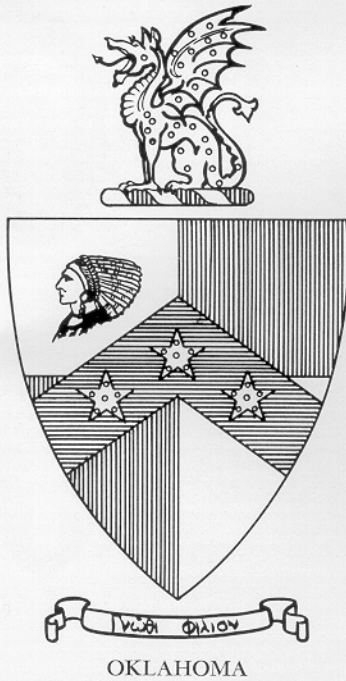
50 YEARS OF GAMMA PHI OF BETA THETA PI

1907-1957

BETA THETA PI

This "50 Years of Gamma Phi
... 1907-1957" represents a
gift from general fraternity assistant
archivist Bob Berry, Vanderbilt and
Tennessee district chief. Extra copies
from Oxford files.

Fred Patrick

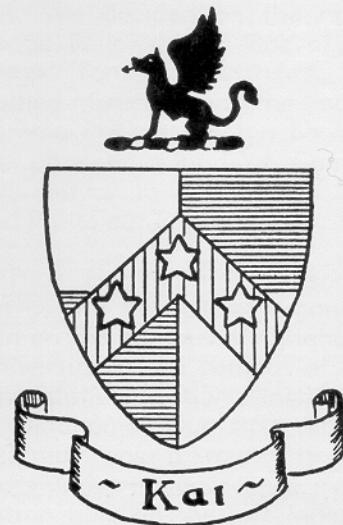


OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF THE BETA THETA PI CORPORATION OF OKLAHOMA

Edwin T. Fleming	President	Enid, Okla.
W. E. Tankersley	Vice-President	Oklahoma City, Okla.
Francis R. Welsh	Secretary-Treasurer	Oklahoma City, Okla.
John F. Sharp	Director	Oklahoma City, Okla.
Samuel T. Coleman	Director	Tulsa, Oklahoma
J. Randolph Montgomery	Director	Lawton, Okla.
George H. Stroud	Director	Guthrie, Okla.
Hal Muldrow, Jr.	Director	Norman, Okla.
Walter D. Hanson	Director	Oklahoma City, Okla.
Everett E. Berry	Director	Stillwater, Okla.
Paul G. Pugh	Director	Oklahoma City, Okla.
Harry H. Diamond	Director	Holdenville, Okla.
Vernon E. Cook	Director	Oklahoma City, Okla.
H. Dale Cook	Director	Oklahoma City, Okla.
Robert S. Frantz	Director	Enid, Okla.

THE 50th ANNIVERSARY REUNION COMMITTEE

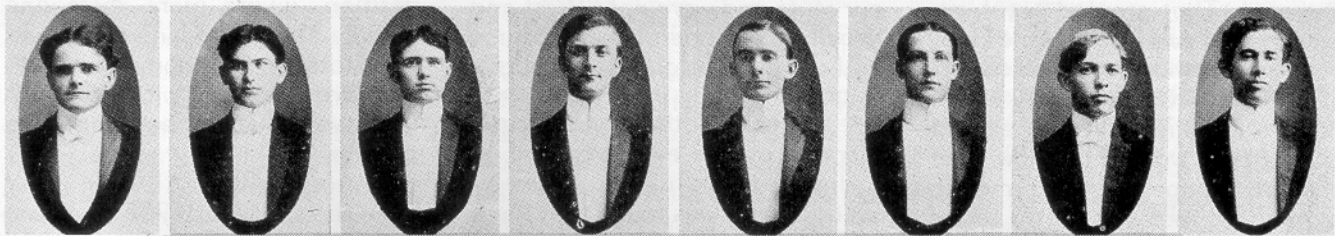
Ed Fleming, '12, *Chairman*
 F. R. Welsh, '20, *Secretary*
 W. C. Kite, '15, *Member*
 Lee B. Thompson, '25, *Alternate*
 Earl Tankersley, '21, *Member*
 Fisher Muldrow, '22, *Member*
 Paul A. Andres, '50, *Publicity*
 Wm. F. Finney, *Publicity*
 Vernon E. Cook, '25, *Reservations*
 Lee B. Thompson, '25, *Banquet*



BETA LOYALTY

“Again, the Beta is distinguished from all other kinds of fraternity men whatsoever by just a little warmer and stronger, just a little tenderer and more enduring fraternity feeling than any of them can attain to. For it was always so, I do not in the least know how it happened, nor why it persisted after it happened, but a long time ago there came into Beta Theta Pi a fraternity spirit that was, and is, and apparently will continue to be, unique.”

WILLIS O. ROBB



A Petition
TO
Beta Theta Pi Fraternity

IN CONVENTION ASSEMBLED
AT
NIAGARA, 1907



The Gamma Phi Group Presented Itself to the National Fraternity in Borrowed Dress Suits in 1905-06

In the beginning . . .

**This History of the Beginnings of
Gamma Phi Chapter of Beta Theta Pi at the University
of Oklahoma Has Been Written by Tom B. Matthews
Number One on the Gamma Phi Roll**

The beginning, or the first meeting, of Gamma Phi chapter of Beta Theta Pi in the spring of 1903 was not thought of as a fraternity or secret organization but just a group of five men quickly gotten together. The occasion was to eat bananas. A fast Santa Fe freight train had been wrecked in Norman and in the wreck was a carload of bananas. The railroad officials sent word to the University that the bunches of bananas could be had at a very low rate. Five men, Roy Kingkade, Tom B. Matthews, Bob Severin, A. Maxwell Alden and Jay T. Conway, accepted the proposition and tried to eat the bunch at one sitting. Each one paid his five cents to-

ward the cost of the bunch, twenty five cents. We met in a vacant, one story, frame house across the street, and about the middle of the block, from the McFarlin Memorial Church in Norman.

We had such a good time eating the fruit that Tom B. Matthews suggested that we organize and make it something permanent and constructive. It was then suggested that it be made a secret organization or a fraternity. None of us knew what a fraternity did but we knew that it was some kind of secret organization and that other universities had such organizations on their campus. There was nothing of the kind and never

had been, either local or national, on the Oklahoma University campus. We decided on the name "Good Fellowship." One of the group, Tom B. Matthews, had studied Greek and the name Gamma Phi was chosen because the phonetic sound of Gamma was similar to our English "G" and Phi to our English "F."

Thus Gamma Phi blossomed out as the first secret organization on the campus of Oklahoma University or the campus of any other state educational institution in Oklahoma. Our first pin, or insignia, was a round headed brass paper fastener worn in the button hole on the left lapel of

the coat. That created great excitement as every one on the campus (and at that time that meant every one in the University which had an enrollment not to exceed 550 or 600) wanted to know what the brass paper fastener meant. When told that that was a secret more excitement was created.

Very soon after selecting a name we began to think of affiliating with a national fraternity. We did not even know the names of any national fraternities but found that Professor Humphreys of the English faculty was a fraternity man. He immediately wanted us to petition his fraternity, Alpha Tau Omega. We were quite enthusiastic about that, being assured that we would be granted a charter in a short time but we decided to investigate further before doing anything. As the news of the organization spread other faculty members approached us to consider their national organizations. One to contact us was Dr. Bynum, professor of German, who was a Kappa Sigma. About this time we learned that Dr. David R. Boyd, at that time president of the University, and Professor J. S. Buchanan (Uncle Buck), professor of and head of the department of history, and dean of undergraduates, were members of Beta Theta Pi. They told us of Beta ideals and Beta standing in the fraternity world and sold us unrelentingly on Beta Theta Pi. We decided then to have Beta or nothing. Little did we know the long hard pull we would have to achieve that goal and become Betas.

The next spring, 1904, we petitioned Beta Theta Pi. We felt that the fraternity at large, especially in the East, would think of Oklahoma as the "Wild and Woolly" west with Indians and Cowboys with six shooters and we wished to create a different impression. We had, to us at that time, the bright idea of having our pictures taken in dress suits to show that we had really arrived, that we were ultra, that we knew

our stuff and were not "Wild and Woolly." No one of us of course had a dress suit, and it is doubtful if any one of us had more than one suit of any other style or kind. None of us had ever even had on a dress suit or tuxedo. Upon investigation it was found that there were no dress suits in any of the stores in Norman either for rent or sale and only two on the campus. One of these belonged to Dean J. S. Buchanan, dean of undergraduates, and the other to Dean Frederick Holmberg, dean of the fine arts department. Luckily one was rather large and the other of medium size. We borrowed these two suits and had individual pictures taken, each one using one or the other of these two coats.

In the spring of 1904 another local group was organized and in a short time was granted a charter in Kappa Alpha. While this was discouraging to Gamma Phi it did not lessen our determination to continue to try for Beta.

The petition that Gamma Phi sent to the Beta convention the spring or summer of 1904 with the tuxedo group picture was a very crude three or four page typewritten affair. This petition gave some facts and figures about the University and the state of Oklahoma but we depended mostly on the picture of the fine looking men in dress suits and the facts we gave about ourselves. Little did we know how elaborate the petitions were that Beta had been accustomed to receiving. We had no recommendations from any of the neighboring chapters and our first petition was turned down. We were of course disappointed.

At this stage of our efforts the representatives of some of the other fraternities tried hard to get us to abandon Beta and assured us that we would be accepted in their group which no doubt would have been the case.

Each year we kept petitioning with a better and more elaborate

petition, giving more facts and figures about the University and the state of Oklahoma but with no more Dress suit pictures. Each year we failed to be granted a charter.

In the spring of 1905, A. Maxwell Alden, a former Gamma Phi, organized a local group which in a short time was installed as a chapter of Kappa Sigma. This seemed to justify the representation above referred to that we could quickly gain a national charter in some other fraternity. Again we re-affirmed our intention to continue to try for Beta Theta Pi. At this time some of the local Gamma Phi men were approached and asked to "jump" Gamma Phi and join one of the nationals then on the campus. None of the Gamma Phi group however would listen to the call as they were all sold on continuing to try for Beta until success was achieved.

In the summer of 1906 we sent Dean J. S. Buchanan and Roy Kingkade, an active Gamma Phi, to the Beta convention at Estes Park, Colorado. Again we were turned down even with the active support of some of the Kansas Betas, especially Fred W. Green, of Guthrie, Oklahoma, who had been a student at Oklahoma University and knew most of the active Gamma Phi men.

In the spring of 1907 we paid the expenses of an active Beta from Texas University and one from Kansas University to come to Norman and look us over. The man who came from Texas University was Dick Wall whom Tom B. Matthews had known in preparatory school in Tennessee but that had no effect. He made an adverse report and Texas turned us down. The Kansas chapter gave their endorsement. At that time we were renting an old two story frame house on the corner of Apache and Webster streets in Norman belonging to a Mrs. Worthington who kept the house for us and boarded the boys who roomed there. The house was not

an imposing structure and may have had something to do with the Texas report.

At the 68th convention of Beta Theta Pi at Niagara Falls, New York, in 1907 we were granted a charter and allowed to keep our local name of Gamma Phi. All through the years of petitioning Mr. E. R. Perry, Northwestern '00 was our staunch supporter. He was a wonderful orator and a very forceful speaker. At the Niagara Falls convention his plea for Gamma Phi took the men by storm and it was due to his address and to his unceasing efforts on behalf of Gamma Phi through the years that we were granted a charter at that time as one of the family of Beta Theta Pi. In recognition of Mr. Perry's interest he was commissioned to install the chapter. Unfortunately, he was called to Washington, D. C., on business ten days before the installation date and when it became evident that it would be impossible for him to be present, E. R. Adams, Kansas '04, another great friend of Gamma Phi all during the years of petitioning, was commissioned installing officer in Mr. Perry's stead.

During the fall of 1906 and the year 1907 quite an anti-fraternity movement developed on Oklahoma University campus. Some of the outstanding men of the institution were the leaders of this feeling and at one time was a very evident factor in student politics and other University affairs. During this time some of these leaders opposing fraternities were invited to join Beta and other groups. They refused but to some of us who knew them well admitted that they would like to join us but said that they had been so active against fraternities that they didn't have the face to join and meet the men whom they had influenced against secret organizations. It is interesting to know that some of the most influential men against fraternities afterward joined national groups.

The installation of Gamma Phi

into Beta Theta Pi took place on the evening of October 18th, 1907, in the Masonic lodge hall at Norman which at that time was upstairs over one of the stores on Main street in downtown Norman. During the afternoon the petitioners underwent a thorough examination in Beta history by an examining committee under the leadership of Charles Ferguson, Westminster, '09. The candidates were then turned over to the active men present from Kansas University chapter from seven until eight o'clock to be "worked over" so that they might pass through every ordeal of a Beta initiation.

The members of Gamma Phi who were initiated are: Chester E. Dutton, Jay T. Conway, Earle Warren Ratcliff, Owen Ellsworth Acton, James Leman Waller, Newell Dulin Menifee, Earl Briggs Johnston, John Vernon Walling, Robert Peyton Calvert, Frank Ray Rollow, William Alexander Thompson, John Guy Hardie, Frederick Randolph Williams, Earl E. Sneed, W. King Larimore, Tom B. Matthews, A. Martin Kingkade, J. LeRoy Kingkade, John Wallace Perry, Clarence Dunn Storm, John C. Darling, Gilbert Garrand Caudill, Sardis Roy Hadsell and Carlton Weaver.

Much of the credit for the success of the occasion was due to District Chief Gurdon G. Black of St. Louis, Missouri, who came to Norman 24 hours before the initiation and gave valuable aid. Praise was also due Prof. J. H. Felgar, dean of the Engineering School of Oklahoma University, for his work and assistance. The parts in the initiation were taken by: E. R. Adams, Kansas, '04; R. U. Barker, Indiana, '01; J. W. Woodford, Kansas, '05; F. B. Burford, Virginia, '06; Prof. J. S. Buchanan, Cumberland, '85; J. W. Ratcliff, Central, '06; W. W. Hyams, North Carolina, '00 and Prof. Felgar, Kansas, '01.

After the initiation ceremonies many congratulatory letters and telegrams were read from other Beta chapters and from prominent alumni. The Gamma Phi boys then treated the group to a

spread. The balance of the evening was devoted to the singing of Beta songs except for the interruptions of Judge Tisdell who very often wanted to know "Who was Pater Knox."

On the afternoon of the next day, Saturday, all attended the annual Kansas-Oklahoma football game played in Norman in tallyhos, the guests of Gamma Phi. The stars of the game were right half Acton of O. U. and right half Forter of K. U., both Betas. After the game the group took the train to Oklahoma City to attend a banquet given by the Oklahoma City alumni association.

Judge Clark J. Tisdell acted as toastmaster and after indulging in some of his usual wit gave a wonderful talk on the Beta spirit and what Beta had meant to him in the past and what he expected it to mean to him in the future. The speakers and their subjects were as follows:

The Relation of the New Chapter to the University—President David R. Boyd.

The Relation of the New Chapter to the Alumni—Dr. E. F. Davis.

What the National Fraternity Expects of the New Chapter—Charles Ferguson.

What District Twelve Expects of the New Chapter—Gurdon G. Black.

The New Chapter—Tom B. Matthews.

Chapter Life—F. B. Burford.

As it was then late other speakers were limited to five minutes each. When ten men from ten chapters representing ten different states had told of the wonders of Beta, the Oklahoma Alumni Association of Beta Theta Pi was organized. The officers elected were: Judge Clark J. Tisdell, president; secretary, E. R. Perry.

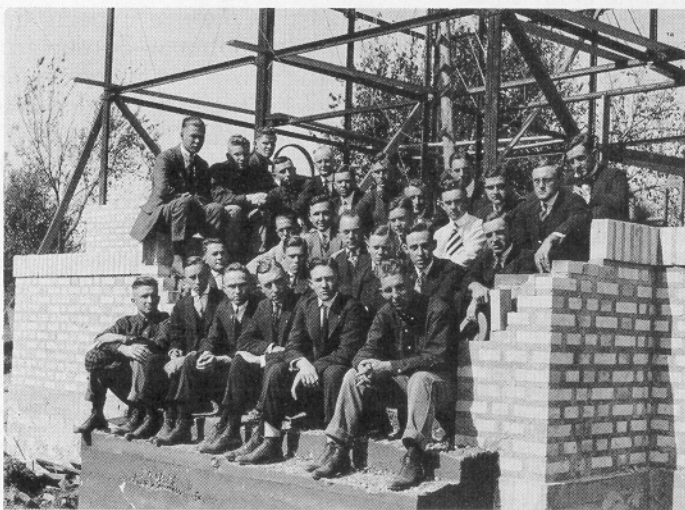
At 3:00 A. M. sixty Betas, old and new, joined hands around the banquet tables in the mystic circle and as many an eye grew dim with sweet recollections of other days all sang the Beta Doxology.

Wooglin's Homes . . .

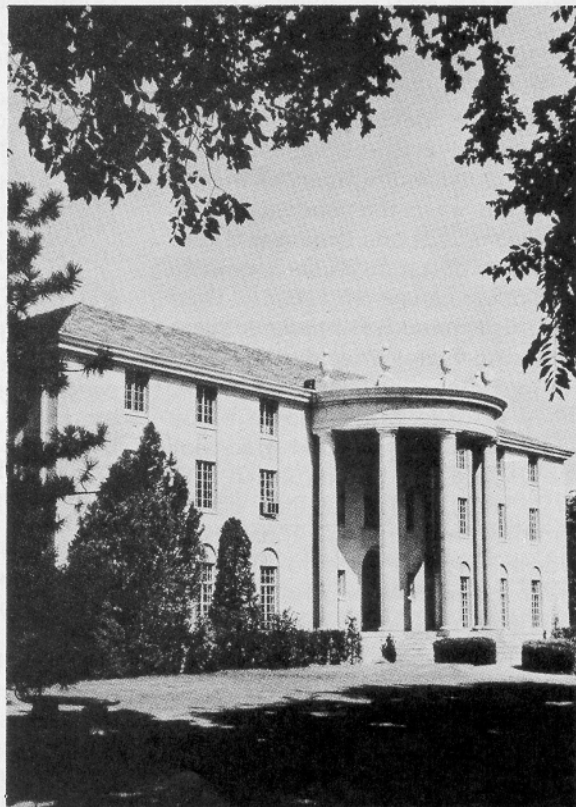
past and present



Beta's First Home was at 737 Asp in Norman. The Chapter lived here from 1909 to 1915.



Beta's Second Home was at 701 DeBarr. It was completed in 1915.



Present Home at 800 Chataouqua was completed in 1928.

Sons

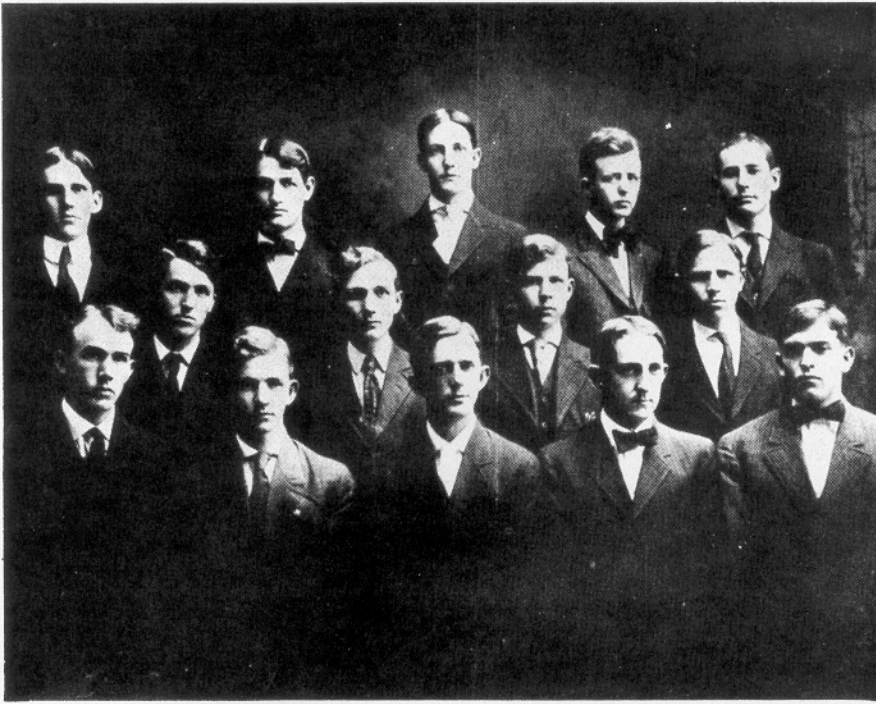
of the

Stars



EDITOR'S NOTE:

The following is a list of every member of Gamma Phi Chapter of Beta Theta Pi by roll number, the biographies were compiled and edited by David Burr and other members of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association Office. Many members failed to provide us with biographical information. We regret, therefore, that we could not include more than their last known address. Captions on several of the photographs were unobtainable also. So, in spite of these flaws, we are proud to present the following Sons of the Stars Section to the Sons of the Stars in-Kai—



1. **THOMAS B. MATTHEWS**, 1412 South Utica, Tulsa, is Division Superintendent of stock room and mail service for Amerada Petroleum. He began his business career in Norman where he was a partner in the firm of McDaniel & Matthews from 1907 to 1909. From 1909 to 1917 he was plantation manager for Minute Tapioca Co. in Puerto Rico. He lettered in track, basketball and football at O.U. and was captain of the track team in 1904. He was president of the 1906 Class, in fact, at one time or another held nearly every office in every organization at the University. He helped organize Gamma Phi locally, served as its first president and is No. 1 on the Gamma Phi chapter roll. He received his B. A. in 1906. His family include his wife, the former Belle Vickery, and a son, Tom V., who lives in Tulsa. Activities since graduation include membership in the Methodist church and Rotary, and a term (1921-22) as president of the O. U. Alumni Association.

2. **A. MARTIN KINGKADE**, Hotel Kingkade, Oklahoma City, is president and general manager of the Kingkade Hotel Company. His family includes a daughter, Mrs. Donald F. Cockrell, Kansas City, Kansas. His wife is deceased. His college activities included membership on the tennis team. A charter member of Gamma Phi, he is No. 2 on the chapter roll. Civic and fraternal organizations include membership in Masonic orders and India Temple Shrine, Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, and he was one of the organizers of the Oklahoma City Kiwanis Club.

3. **JOHN L. KINGKADE**, 1945 South Broadway, Wichita, Kansas, is retired. He had been in the real estate and investment securities business before retirement. He's No. 3 on chapter rolls.

4. **JOHN WALLACE PERRY**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

5. **CLARENCE DUNN STORM**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

6. **JOHN C. DARLING**, Box 1064, Durango, Colorado, is a physician. His family includes his wife, Rae Sarjent Darling, and two daughters. He received B. A. in 1906 and M. S. in 1908, both from O. U., and earned M. D. from Northwestern in 1912. At the University he participated in track and field and was a charter member of Gamma Phi. He's No. 6 on membership roll. He served as head of department of physical education and track coach at O. U. before establishing a medical practice in Colorado in 1914. A Mason, he's held a number of offices in medical associations and is listed in Who's Who.

7. **EBEN E. GRIDLEY**, R.F.D. 1, Orange, Massachusetts and Box 1294, Sarasota, Florida, is retired. He formerly was treasurer and later president of the Minute Tapioca Co. His family includes his wife, Susan King Gridley, and a son and daughter. He received a Ph.C. degree in 1904 from O.U. and later earned B.A. from Kansas Wesleyan University, and a Ph.B. from the University of Chicago. Civic and fraternal orders include Kiwanis and Masonic and Shrine orders. He's No. 7 on Gamma Phi rolls and is a charter member.

8. **GILBERT GARRARD CAUDILL**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

9. **JAY THOMAS CONWAY**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

10. **SARDIS ROY HADSELL**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

11. **ROBERT RICHARD SEVERIN**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

12. **CARL H. MILAM**, Box 305 Barrington, Illinois, is retired. A long-time librarian, he closed his career by serving as director of the United Nations libraries. His family includes two daughters. His wife died in 1956. He earned a B. A. degree from O.U. in 1907 and was a charter member of Gamma Phi. He's No. 12 on the chapter roll. His distinctions since graduation include two honorary degrees, and a listing in Who's Who since 1912. He also has been knighted by the King of Sweden, and has received "a few other such recognitions which would have come to anyone in my position."

13. **CHESTER EVERETT DUTTON**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

14. **OWEN ELLSWORTH ACTON**, charter member of Gamma Phi, last known address is Box 663, Guthrie, Oklahoma.

15. **EARLE W. RADCLIFF**, 1941 La Salle Ave., Los Angeles 18, California, is city editor of the Citizen-News, Hollywood. His family includes a son. His wife is deceased. He earned a B. A. degree in 1909 and M. A. in 1912, both from O. U. In college he was a versatile athlete, taking part in track, baseball, tennis, basketball and football. He was also editor of the *Empire* and the *Mistletoe*. He was a charter member and served Gamma Phi as chapter president 1907-08 and was first delegate to the national convention held at Niagara Falls in 1908. He's No. 15 on chapter rolls. After graduation, he took a series of newspaper positions, culminating in his present position.

16. **OLIVER LLOYD IRWIN**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

17. **JAMES L. WALLER, SR.**, 3225 South Detroit, Tulsa 5, is retired. Before retirement he had been a teacher of vocal music in Tulsa schools for 20 years. His family includes his wife and one son. Civic memberships have included Kiwanis and Rotary.

18. **CARLTON WEAVER**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

19. **REUBEN MCKITRICK**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

20. **EARL B. JOHNSTON**, 4109 N.W. 46th Street, Route 10, Box 911, Oklahoma City, is retired. Before retirement he was associated with Oklahoma Gas and Electric Co. for 34 years. His family included three sons, two of whom are still living. He is a charter member of Gamma Phi and is No. 20 on chapter rolls.

21. **NEWELL DULIN MENIFEE**, charter member of Gamma Phi—deceased.

22. **ROBERT CALVERT**, 222 Nelson Road, Scarsdale, New York, is a patent attorney specializing in chemical cases. His family includes his wife and two sons. He received a B.A. in 1909 and M.A. in 1910, both from O.U., and Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1914. His college activities included membership in Phi Beta Kappa, served as Class president of Upper Classmen Association. He was a charter member of Beta Theta Pi at O.U. and served his chapter as corresponding secretary and president. He's No. 22 on chapter rolls. After graduation from Columbia, he held teaching positions at a number of universities and was employed by industry for 35 years. He has achieved notable success as a patent attorney. The author of two books on technical subjects, he has been listed in Who's Who since 1940 and American Men of Science.

23. **VERNON WALLING**, Box 1380, Wichita, Kansas, is president of Walling Sash and Door Co. His family includes his wife and two sons and one daughter. Another son was killed in World War II. After attending the University of Oklahoma, he transferred to University of Wichita where he earned a B. A. degree in 1914. At O.U. he participated in football. He was a charter member of Beta Theta Pi and served as chapter treasurer. He's No. 23 on chapter rolls. Active in Wichita civic affairs, he has been a member of the Wichita Crime Commission, the Wichita Farm and Ranch Club and is a director of the Wichita Chamber of Commerce. He is a Mason and a Shriner.

24. **FRANK WRAY ROLLOW**, charter member of Gamma Phi, last known address is Kingkade Hotel, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

25. **WILLIAM ALEXANDER THOMPSON**—deceased.

26. **JOHN GUY HARDIE**—deceased.

27. **FREDERICK R. WILLIAMS**, 1443 Fairmont, Wichita, Kansas, is retired. Before retirement he was associated with United Sash and Door Co. for 29 years. His family includes his wife and two children. A member of the pledge class of 1907, he is No. 27 on chapter rolls. At O.U., he participated in band and orchestra.

28. **EARL EVART SNEED**—deceased.

29. **W. KING LARIMORE**, 1924 N.W. 20th, Oklahoma City 6, is retired. Before retirement, he was associated with the Prudential Insurance Company of America. His family includes his wife, two daughters and one son. He received a B.A. degree from O.U. in 1911. At the University, he was a member of Pe-et, Senate and served as business manager of the 1910 yearbook. He was a member of the 1907 pledge class and served the fraternity as corresponding secretary and as delegate to national convention in 1910. He's No. 29 on chapter rolls. Activities since graduation include membership in York and Scottish Rite Masonic bodies in which fraternal orders he has provided distinguished leadership.

30. **THOMAS MARCUM McCOMBS**—deceased.

31. **ORA O. DAWSON**—deceased.

32. **EDWIN T. FLEMING**, Winlan Apts., Enid, is the owner of the Ed Fleming Insurance Agency. His family includes his wife and two daughters. A member of the pledge class of 1908, Fleming served the fraternity as treasurer and vice president. He's No. 32 on chapter rolls. His O.U. career included participation on track, tennis and baseball teams. He was captain of the baseball team in