

## Chapter VII

### The Founding of Sigma Chi

**T**HE SIGMA CHI Fraternity was founded at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, on June 28, 1855, by Thomas Cowan Bell, James Parks Caldwell, Daniel William Cooper, Isaac M. Jordan, William Lewis Lockwood, Benjamin Piatt Runkle, and Franklin Howard Scobey.<sup>1</sup>

The university was at that time at the height of its period of greatest influence prior to the twelve years' suspension of its activities following the year 1873. Holding the educational leadership of the state of Ohio, and the deserved favor of a much wider area, some two hundred students annually thronged its halls. The college-fraternity system had originated as Phi Beta Kappa at the College of William and Mary. As organized in its general, modern form at Union College in 1825 and later at Hamilton, it had found its first western field in Miami University. To the latter, in 1835, came Alpha Delta Phi, the fourth college fraternity in point of age, and the first to extend into the early West. At Miami, the system was destined to attain a noteworthy development. In this new and fertile soil, Beta Theta Pi had its origin in 1839. Phi Delta Theta was established in 1848. Indirectly an outgrowth of the Phi Delta Theta organization, the Kappa chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon was chartered on March 8, 1852.

This group, of Delta Kappa Epsilon, commands our attention. Its origin was emphasized as due to the spirit of individuality, of independence, and of self-assertion. "It was the spirit," said a subsequent leader of the chapter, and loyal alumnus,<sup>2</sup> "which prompted Joseph G. McNutt, then a beardless student, to accept the challenge of James G. Birney, the distinguished orator, to publicly discuss political measures, and to discuss them so well that the Town Hall rang with applause for one of the founders of Kappa." It was, indeed, an era in which discussions of the problems of free-

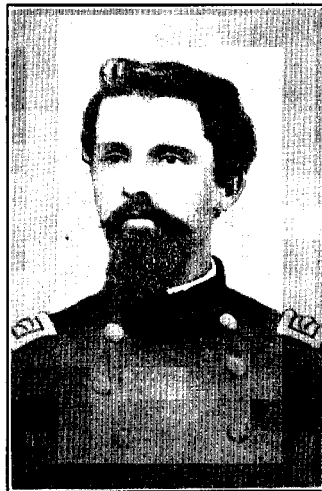
dom, and of rights, were uppermost in the political life of the times throughout the land. Some two years after the establishment of the Kappa, there developed in the chapter the crisis which led to the founding of Sigma Chi.

At the heart of the conflict which then divided Delta Kappa Epsilon at Miami was the very issue which had been held in the chapter as vital in its own establishment—that of individuality against organization. This time the occasion of chapter differences



WHITELAW REID

At the age of 23; picture by courtesy of *McClures Magazine*, Mr. S. S. McClure, President.



MINOR MILLIKIN

From a photograph of the early Civil War period; by courtesy of Dr. Mark Millikin, a nephew, Hamilton, Ohio.

pertained to certain college honors as related to college politics. Two years before, Delta Kappa Epsilon had urged the spirit of individuality as fundamental in the college brotherhood. It was—as Sigma Chi has always viewed the historic controversy in Kappa chapter—largely because the older leaders of Delta Kappa Epsilon abandoned this principle in the matters at issue that Sigma Chi came into existence.

Writers upon the history of the Fraternity have, however, failed to note the importance of the long interval between the controversy over the Society elections and the actual founding of Sigma

Chi. The election issue was in the fall of 1854; the founding of Sigma Chi dated from the end of June, 1855. During those months, the revolt against the organization and its methods developed into a *new fraternity* because of the congenial fellowship of its founders and their unswerving loyalty to certain high ideals. Of this, the testimony of the founders who survived into the recent years was clear. It was that a fine feeling of real comradeship, at first hardly defined among them, glowed and burned into the consciousness of



Photograph by J. C. N., August 9, 1913

#### SECOND ROOMING PLACE OF JORDAN AND RUNKLE

North side of High Street, and just east of alley between Poplar and Campus avenues; room was that nearest, at front. Here Jordan and Runkle were invited by Whitelaw Reid to become  $\Delta KE$ 's. Figure is that of Founder Benjamin P. Runkle, then in his seventy-seventh year.

an undying friendship as each began to think of a college brotherhood which might mean much for the spirit and service of life, rather than for organization matters and methods. Thus, the new fraternity was really born, not made. It was the expression of a sense of kinship in the pursuit of their chosen ideals. It found outward form in the new, fraternal endeavor, to be known by the name of Sigma Chi. It is best indicated within the Fraternity by the White Cross and the two mottoes of united purpose for which its mystic letters have stood as abiding symbols.<sup>3</sup>

At the outset of the college year 1854-55, Kappa chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon was an unusually strong and influential company of college men. The leader and presiding officer of the chapter was Whitelaw Reid, in later years editor of the *New York Tribune*, candidate for the vice-presidency of the nation, and its Ambassador to Great Britain.<sup>4</sup> The boy was father of the man. Under the keen and resourceful leadership of Reid, Delta Kappa Epsilon, though but two years of age, had received more offices, honors, and prizes during the brief period of the chapter's existence than all the other Greek-letter societies of the institution combined. The older members of the chapter seem to have made such trophies as these altogether overimportant as objectives of their fraternity life.<sup>5</sup> It was a somewhat younger group, six in number, who finally repudiated this conception of fraternity purpose and, with William L. Lockwood who became associated with them, raised the banner of a new fraternity.

The first of the future Sigma Chis to become a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon was Franklin H. Scobey. The son of a prominent physician at Hamilton, Ohio, he had entered Miami for the year 1853-54, and in the second term of that year was initiated into Kappa chapter. Scobey was an active spirit, given to the making of friends, and quickly gained a recognized place in the councils of the chapter. The remaining five  $\Delta KE$ 's who became founders of Sigma Chi entered Miami in the fall of 1854. It was largely through their acquaintance with Scobey and upon his recommendation that they became members of Kappa. Isaac M. Jordan and Benjamin P. Runkle were the first initiated. Runkle says:

We were green country boys whose fitness for a first-class fraternity would not in these times of wealth and style be considered for a moment. Whitelaw Reid was, however, prince and premier; he sized us up and discounted our possible future. Jordan took part in a debate in Erodolphian Hall and I read an essay. Both of us had been carefully trained in the Covenanter academy (Geneva Hall) and profited a little, perhaps, by the training: So we were taken into the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity.<sup>12</sup>

It was probably not long afterward that James P. Caldwell, Daniel W. Cooper, and Thomas C. Bell also became members.

As with all fraternity chapters of that day, the meetings of Kappa were held as convenience or fancy might direct. Often, they

were held in the room of Whitelaw Reid, or that of other members. In season, there were well-known trysting places in the great out-of-doors. One such was on the banks of "Four Mile." The latter was one of the creeks successively named by General Anthony Wayne on his first march northward from Fort Hamilton, as the "Two Mile," "Four Mile," "Seven Mile," and "Fourteen Mile." To Miami men, they did not mean "miles" so much as they did haunts for fishing, swimming, hunting, and chapter meetings. A long abiding memory of his associates was that of the youthful Reid, one night at "Four Mile," earnestly presenting a paper upon "The House of Hanover," while a fellow-"Deke" held a flickering torchlight by which the orator followed his manuscript.

When initiations were in order, the favorite resort of Kappa chapter was a small brick church of Baptist persuasion and colored membership, located three blocks west of the campus on an alley-way. The formality of obtaining permission for these meetings in the church was omitted. The alley-way permitted an unobserved approach from the campus neighborhood. Thus, late one night, Jordan and Runkle were conducted through the darkness by Whitelaw Reid. At the rear doorway of the little church, the future Congressman and General were permitted to remove their shoes "from off their feet." What followed within the silent portals of the



*Photograph by J. C. N.*

FIRST ROOMING PLACE OF JORDAN AND RUNKLE  
Forward corner room, second floor. See Plat of Oxford (5),  
chap. xvii. Building now razed.



*Photograph by J. C. N., May, 1919*

#### WHERE THE FOUNDERS BECAME ΔKE'S

The church building in which Jordan and Runkle, and others of the founders, were initiated into ΔKE; now long unused as a church. The modern Sigma Chis are, left to right: Russell T. Glazier, James F. Kneisley, and Howard E. Haustein, all then active in Alpha.

church has ever remained a secret—known perhaps, however, to modern members of Delta Kappa Epsilon, assuming that the ritualistic processes have remained unchanged.

The circumstance which rent in twain the victorious Kappa chapter was the election in the Erodolphian Literary Society of its orators and poet for the approaching Annual and Sessional Exhibitions of 1854-55. The former was the great event of the college year. The three literary societies held these celebrations, usually upon



THE HIGHWAY TO DEKEDOM

The alley-way looking eastward from old Baptist Church (in left foreground) toward the Miami campus

successive nights, just prior to the Christmas holidays. The event was also informally known as the Christmas Celebration. At the time under discussion, the Erodolphian was the largest and strongest of the societies. The program of the Annual Exhibition consisted of four orations, delivered by upper-classmen. Especially coveted was the closing oration which included the "Address to the Society." The Exhibition of December 18, 1854, was the thirty-first annual occasion of the kind in the Erodolphian Society. The Sessional Exhibition took place at the midyear, marking the advent of the second semester. The elections, however, were held in the fall, somewhat later than those for the Annual Exhibition. In the Sessional event, the elections for orators were open among all the classes,

and it required, in addition, the election of a poet. The occasion was likewise a prominent college affair, second in importance only to the Annual, or Christmas, celebration.<sup>6</sup>

The interest taken in these elections was intense. To be selected to represent the society at the Annual Exhibition was the highest and most coveted of all college honors. Because the Sessional Exhibition soon followed, the elections for both of these occasions



THE ERODELPHIAN HALL

Photograph of 1910. The Corinthian columns and entablature, the Powers bust of President Bishop (in niche between the columns), and the great bookcase, at left, are all as in the fifties.

were a matter of discussion and laudable ambition from the outset of the college year. Of the twelve members of Delta Kappa Epsilon, the "Sigma Chi six" were all Sophomores. The chapter had caucused informally upon the approaching elections, but without the younger group understanding at the time that they were supposed to be formally bound by the discussions of the meeting. There was a prompt agreement of all upon the talented Reid for orator, but in the selection of a poet the gathering was evidently lacking in a unanimous inspiration. The issue of loyalty to the chapter and its discussions doubtless developed before election time, with conscience rather than caucus governing the sentiments of the younger set. In the Erodelfian elections, Caldwell, Jordan, Scobey, and Runkle supported as Poet the rival of the candidate of their elders in Delta Kappa Epsilon.<sup>7</sup> The rival candidate was elected by a close vote. And, lo! peace forthwith departed from the councils of Kappa.<sup>8</sup>

Sigma Chi knows well her own representatives among the twelve men of this historic situation. The opposing six included besides Reid, of the class of '56, the following: Omar Newman, '55, after-

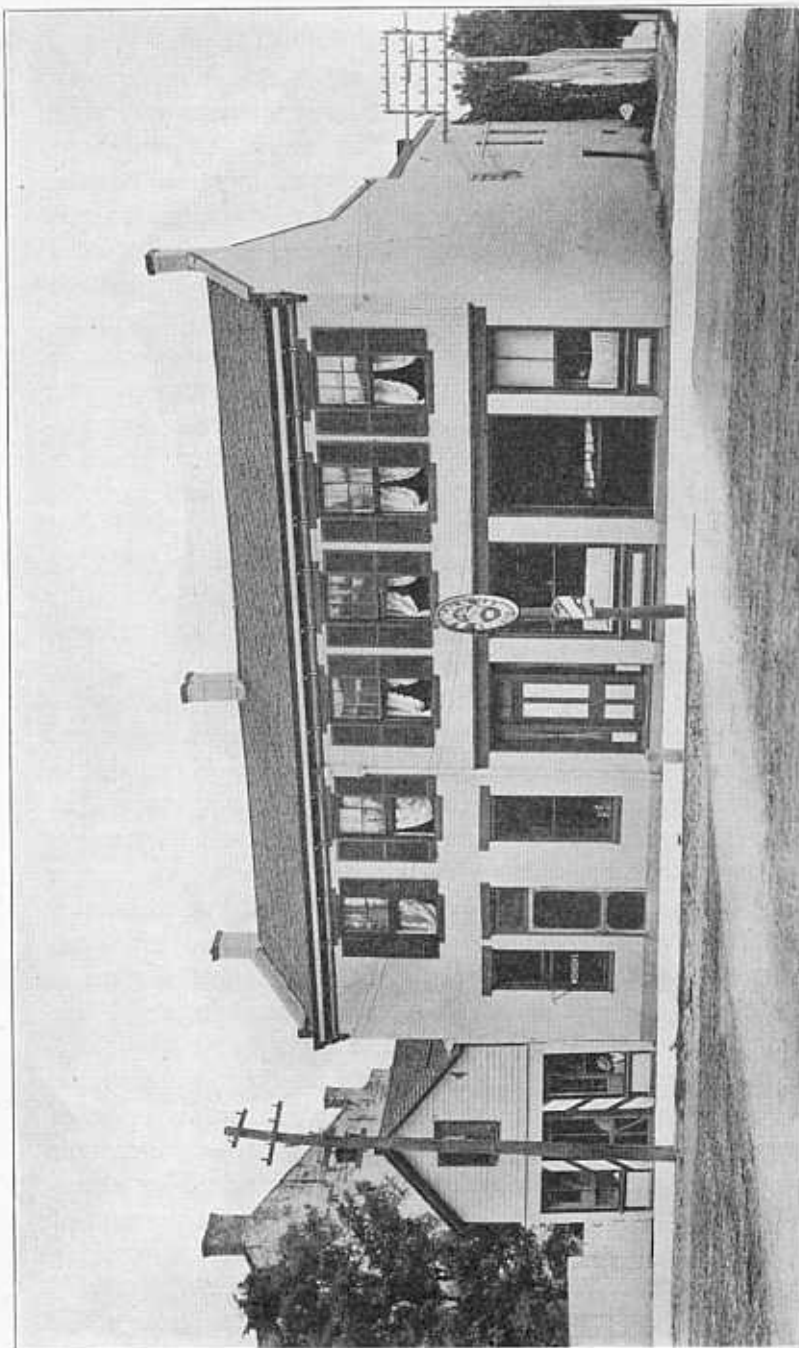
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ward lawyer and capitalist, who died at Topeka, Kansas, 1901; John C. Hutchison, '56, clergyman and teacher, for twenty years vice-president of Monmouth College, Monmouth, Illinois; James Carter Beard, '58, the artist and illustrator; Walter Newman, '58, lawyer, and member of the staff of War Governor Oliver P. Morton, Indiana, died in the military service, January 1, 1864; and Joseph Millikin, '59, author and professor at Miami and Ohio State University, died in 1882. Omar Newman was the member whose doubtful ability in the realm of poesy has made so much college fraternity history. It is not written that he ever wooed the poetic muse with a success which would bring confusion to his youthful critics of early Sigma Chi. It is of noteworthy record, however, that his name abides as one of the eminent and honored alumni of "Old Miami."

They were Seniors and Juniors, with one Sophomore,<sup>9</sup> and the traditional prerogative of upper classmen was cherished then as now. Whitelaw Reid, especially, was deeply offended at the course pursued by the younger members of the chapter whose affairs he had heretofore guided with such signal success.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the development of matters was very gradual. There were several weeks of parley and meetings, or attempts at meetings, with a widening of the breach, but it was not until the ensuing spring that the idea of forming a new fraternity crystallized into final purpose. The theory of the six members who continued as the Kappa chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon was that the six who afterward founded Sigma Chi were in the status of "rebellion," and were to be dealt with accordingly. Certain influential alumni were called upon to come to Oxford to deal authoritatively with the recalcitrants. This procedure led, quite unexpectedly, to the crisis.

February came, of 1855, and a fraternity-meeting night was near. It was the season of meetings held at the restaurants or other quarters suited for a feast. Prior meetings of the entire chapter had been held, or attempted, which were characterized by widening differences of opinion as to what were the requirements of loyalty in Delta Kappa Epsilon. Matters were obviously nearing the breaking-point. On this particular occasion, the six "rebels" had by mutual understanding assumed the relation of hosts of the



*From a photograph taken in the period of the twenties; the oldest known picture of building*

#### WHERE DEKE MET DEKE—THE RINGOLD (BILLINGS) BAKERY-RESTAURANT

Place of the supper-meeting and crisis of matters in Kappa of ΔΚΕ. Photograph furnished by Mrs. Marie Mounypeny of Oxford, widow of George B. Mounypeny, Gamma '88, and daughter of the late Bernhard Ringold, for forty years proprietor of the Bakery-Restaurant. Previously for a like time the place had been operated by several successive owners, and in the pre-Civil War period by one Billings.

occasion. The meeting was arranged to take place in two adjoining rooms of the upper floor of a village bakery-restaurant on High Street, near the "Square." The larger, front room overlooked the street; the second room opened from it by double doors, having its windows toward the rear. In the latter room the feasts were served. Entrance was by stairway from High Street. The hosts of the hour were on hand early. Some fine spirit had led them to prepare a very sumptuous repast for the trying occasion in prospect. In order that there might be no "delicate questions of precedence" the entire six had seated themselves together about the end of the table farthest from the entrance. In somewhat excited anticipation they awaited developments.<sup>11</sup>

There is a tradition that the older men entered as a body, constituting a "stated meeting." They did not, however, actually so appear, although it was understood that they were all somewhere near at hand. Instead, there was heard a heavy stamping up the stairway. Then there strode into the front room and stood together in the double doorway, facing the seated six, the stern figures of Whitelaw Reid and Minor Millikin. The latter was a young alumnus residing in the neighboring city of Hamilton, who had come to assist the loyal six in bringing the rebels to terms. Much more might be said of the remarkably interesting personality of Millikin than this incident can reveal, and of his high place in memories of "Old Miami."<sup>12</sup> In the present connection it is to be borne in mind that, while deeply sincere in character and ever straightforward of purpose, only one side of the controversy had been made known to him.

Reid as the "Pater Primus," or presiding officer of Kappa chapter, ceremoniously introduced his companion to the surprised six, indicating an authoritative character of what was about to be said to them.<sup>13</sup> The words of Millikin, being thus introduced, were always remembered, substantially in form and vividly as to manner, by his hearers. "My name is Minor Millikin," he began. "I come from Hamilton. I am a man of few words." The speech which followed, in the same vein, was of a character to stir the resentment of the college boys to whom it was made. With frank denunciation it adjudicated all the issues in dispute adversely to the six culprits

before him. It then unfolded a plan by which justice could be satisfied with the formal expulsion of certain leaders in the rebellion, after which the remaining members would continue in felicity as a chapter.

The factor not reckoned with in this ingenuous scheme was the loyal devotion of these six companions to one another, and of each to the justice of their cause from the beginning. Warm words followed. The feast was forgotten. The boys had risen to their feet and tense looks bespoke the deepening feeling. The remaining five of the Reid group, ignoring whatever plan there may have been that they should remain in the background, had found their way into the excited situation. It was at this moment that "Ben" Runkle, as he was ever known by his associates, stepped forward a pace from their midst and with much of the man of after-years revealing itself in the earnest, soldierly bearing of the boy, removed his ΔKE badge from his coat. Tossing it upon the table before them all, he exclaimed, "I did not join this Fraternity to be anybody's tool; and that, sir," addressing himself directly to Millikin, "is my answer!" He left the room, followed by his five colleagues, and descended into the peaceful streets of old Oxford.

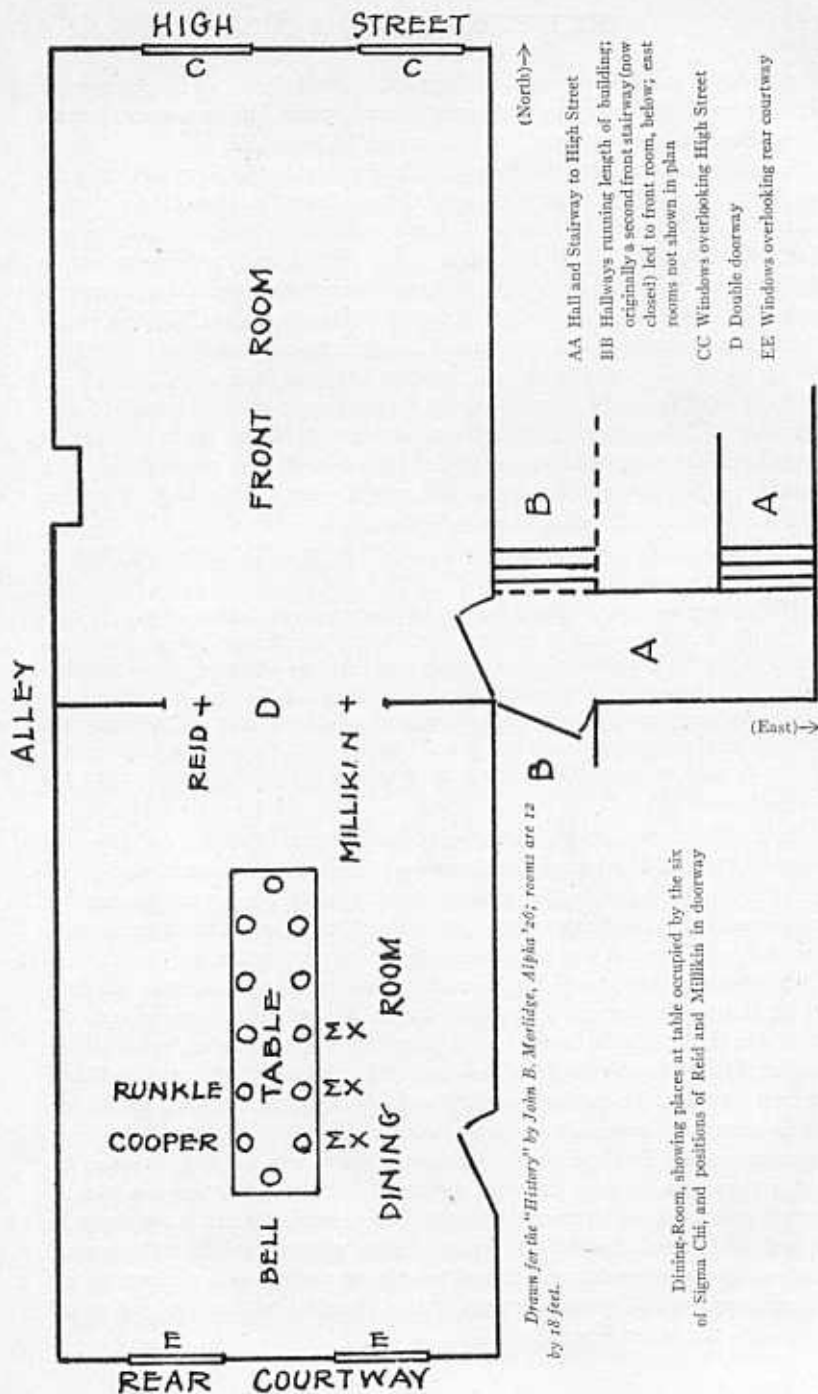
Sigma Chi was on the way to her founding.

### Chapter VII—Notes and Comments

1. See Vol. III, the Isaac M. Jordan Memorial Volume, biographical sketch, for statement as to the uniform use of the middle initial, "M," in his name—not in full; *idem* for change from the form, Isaac A. Jordan, found in many of the early records. Some records of Lockwood, of his boyhood years, have the spelling of his middle name as "Louis." All later records have the spelling "Lewis," as known in Sigma Chi.

The date of June 20 given in the first published historical record of the Fraternity, the *Catalogue and History*, of 1890 (p. xxii), and in *Sigma Chi Quarterly* articles, etc., subsequently, is erroneous. The date of June 28 was authenticated in the transliteration of the original (cipher) Constitution-Ritual of January-February, 1855, after the discovery of that document in 1895 (see Vol. I, chap. x, *ad loc*). It reads, "The origin of this Fraternity shall be dated on the 28th of June, 1855." See Vol. I, chap. viii, for the facts which governed in the assignment of this date, and the uniform adoption of the foregoing section in subsequent revisions of the Constitution.

2. Judge Samuel F. Hunt, Miami '64, Cincinnati, Ohio, writing in 1885. Cf. Vol. I, chap. v, *ad loc*. and Note 14.



Drawn for the "History" by John B. Mortimer, Alpha '26; rooms are 12 by 18 feet.

Dining-Room, showing places at table occupied by the six of Sigma Chi, and positions of Reid and Millikin in doorway

3. The ideals of the founders, for Sigma Chi, are fully stated in chapter viii, following. Cf., also, various addresses of the founders upon Grand Chapter and reunion occasions, as found in Volumes V, VI, and VII.

A single record, words of Benjamin P. Runkle of the founders, may be given here: "Sigma Chi was not the offspring of chance, or the creature of mere boyish fancy . . . it was founded to supply the social and intellectual wants of its members. . . . This Fraternity had an ideal, and, striving to attain this ideal, has achieved success." The expressions are from a response to a Toast, "To the Members of Old Alpha, the Pioneers of the White Cross," given at the Greenwood Lake reunion of the Gamma chapter, Delaware, Ohio, June 24, 1879. Cf. Vol. I, chap. viii, and Vol. III, chap. viii, *ad loc.*

4. "Their [the early membership of Kappa] most useful immediate successor was Whitelaw Reid. His letters written at the time are still available to show how manfully and discreetly he guided Kappa in the highway of a prosperous career, honorable to the fraternity."—DR. ANDREW C. KEMPER, ΔKE, Miami '57. Cf. Vol. I, chap. v, Note 14.

5. Of this, Judge Samuel F. Hunt, ΔKE, Miami '64, states (cf. Vol. I, chap. v, Note 14):

The literary societies of Miami University always occupied much of the attention of the students. They were of marked excellence. The libraries afforded unusual advantages, while questions of the day were discussed with an ability of a more extended forum. . . . It was not an unusual occurrence to find the halls thronged with visitors to hear questions discussed by the respective leaders. They accordingly became the center of a large circumference of thought and influence, and the honors of the Societies were the coveted prizes of the ambitious student. This ambition characterized the earlier days of Kappa.

Judge Hunt then refers to a jocular description of these ambitions of Kappa by General Runkle, in the Greenwood Lake address (see Note 8), and adds: "It can well be claimed that the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity received more honors from the literary societies during the latter years of her history than all the other secret organizations in the university combined."

6. Previous historians of the Fraternity have regularly conceived the difficulty in Kappa chapter as relating only to the Annual, or Christmas, celebration of the Erodolphian Society, of December, 1856. Researches made on behalf of this *History* by Wallace P. Roudebush, Alpha '11, secretary at Miami University, compel the conclusion that the elections for the Sessional Exhibition were also involved, especially as to the selection of a Poet. The original book of minutes of the Erodolphian Society for 1854-55 was carefully studied by Brother Roudebush. The elections for the Sessional Exhibition are therein shown to have been held November 10, 1854, a few weeks later than the choosing of the four Annual Exhibition orators. The minutes of the "Sessional" elections also indicate stirring factional conditions, and the occasion was otherwise consistent with the main factors of the situation as recalled by General Runkle and the other Founders.

Minutes

1854

Nov 10<sup>th</sup> 6 1/2 P.M.

Parole met, prayer to order by the President and adjourned with prayer by the Prm.

Roll called, and a letter read as follows, Messrs. Board Coleman, Tappan, Hall, Lane Manning, Manning, Mearns, and I did expression 1<sup>st</sup> Protestant Episcopians, Rev. Samuel Smith 1<sup>st</sup> Vesp. Board and Executive 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The District being called all judiciously they respectively stated subject that Mr. Dill, from Manning 2<sup>nd</sup>, Coleman, Rev. Elliot Gordon, Samuel Vesp. Smith 1<sup>st</sup>, Manning, Christian 2<sup>nd</sup>, Protestant 1<sup>st</sup> who were absent. After a brief address the President gave his decision in favor of the Executive. The Executive was then read, and a motion chosen for 2 week debate, viz: Should Executive and Pastoral be subject to the people.

Our Motion Society entered into the election of officers to bring in regular time for their election which election resulted in the choice of the following persons, Mrs. Dill President, Ch. Mearns, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice, Hutchison Secretary, & Mearns, Clergy.

This being the last election of the Session, an election of Districtal Speakers was held, and resulted in the choice of Taylor 1<sup>st</sup> & J. Fullerton and H. Berry, Speakers, and Wm. Berry - Past -

A committee of arrangements was, on motion, appointed for the exhibition, which committee consisted of Berry 1<sup>st</sup>, Hall, Royal, Vesp 1<sup>st</sup> and Berry 2<sup>nd</sup>. The minutes of the great Convention between the Executive and Executive Society were read and adopted, as on page 46. On Motion Society adjourned after calling the roll.

Wm. Berry Secy. J. Fullerton Hutchison  
Denton Post. Rev. H. Berry

MINUTES OF ERODELPHIAN SOCIETY—NOVEMBER 10, 1854

Facsimile from "Book of Minutes," by courtesy of Library of Miami University; cut is slightly more than half the size of original page. Shows the election of "Sessional Speakers," including Poet. Subsequent minutes show evident factional differences, and readjustments, as to these same elections.

These conclusions of Brother Roudebush have been fully confirmed by examination of various collections of the printed programs of the Exhibitions at Miami for the entire period of old Alpha's history. The more important programs in question have also been secured for the permanent historical archives of the Fraternity, and are reproduced in various chapters of this volume.

The later recollections and writings of Founder Runkle, which have largely governed our previous written history, evidently held more especially in mind the Annual Exhibition and the influence of Whitelaw Reid therein. The problem is solved upon the basis that the Kappa chapter caucus urged a unified policy, and chapter candidates, for both the approaching celebrations, the elections coming within a few weeks of each other.

7. Runkle and Jordan joined the Erodolphian Literary Society on the night of September 8, 1854, and Caldwell at about that time. Scobey was already a member. Cooper and Bell, of the six, were not members of the Erodolphian, but of the Eccritean Society. Their relation to the "rebellion" was that of subsequent unqualified indorsement of the action of the four.

William L. Lockwood had entered college that fall, but did not at first join any college organization. Later in the year, however, on May 4, 1855, he became a member of Erodolphian. It may here be noted that the close of that college year, just before the Commencement of 1855, brought an exciting upheaval in the affairs of that Society which resulted in the transfer of fifteen members, including the founders of Sigma Chi and several other future members of the Alpha chapter, to the Miami Union Literary Society.

8. General Runkle in the Greenwood Lake address, 1879 (see Note 3), gave this description of affairs:

Well, we held a caucus, and all went well and smoothly as far as the election of an orator. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, for had we not the silvertongued Whitelaw Reid, inexhaustible as to his words and eloquent as to his ideas? But when it came to imposing a poet on a long-suffering University the rebellion broke out, and not without cause, for the chief qualification our candidate for Society poet could boast was his utter inability to write anything that resembled poetry in the least degree whatever. And the rebellion waxed fierce and hot. Six of us entered the University Hall and voted against the caucus candidate. This was the unpardonable sin; but as there were just six loyal subjects of King Caucus and six rebels, they could not expel us; and so they did the next best thing, ran away with the charter, records and seals, and the rebels started the Sigma Chi.

The statement, obviously, is written with a degree of pleasantry and reveals the uncertain recollections of twenty-five years. Long afterward, writing for the *Delta Kappa Epsilon Quarterly*, February, 1913, following the death of Whitelaw Reid, the General indicates a much less deliberate intention, in the actual vote of the four, of opposing the wishes of the older members of the chapter. But under subsequent challenge their right of independent action was steadfastly maintained (see Note 11).



9. The college classification at the time was modified later by absences from sessions, etc. Walter Newman was the brother of Omar Newman. Joseph Millikin was the brother of Minor Millikin, the leader of Kappa who had been graduated in the June preceding. James Carter Beard and Walter Newman were each in attendance at Miami for several years but without graduation.

10. The standard biography of Whitelaw Reid, by Royal Cortissoos, two volumes, Scribner's, 1921, briefly traces the years at Miami. The biographer refers to Professor Alfred H. Upham's volume, *Old Miami*, and says of Reid:

He was an active man in his fraternity—a ΔKE—and it is noted that his hobby in its councils was "compact organization." In storm or calm he insisted, always, on "strict obedience to King Caucus." It was part of his nature. He liked to know what he was about, to proceed regularly, to know where he—and others—stood, and to make all things shipshape. There were no loose ends about his college career.

11. The time of this event may safely be placed as during February, 1855. There are varying traditions as to the place of the meeting. Conferences of the author with Benjamin P. Runkle and Daniel W. Cooper on the ground in August, 1913, and records definitely identify it as the "Ringold (Billings) Bakery," directly across High Street, south, from the Brown and McGaw Drugstore building ("Birthplace of Sigma Chi"). The bakery was thus at the southeast corner of the Square, and east of the alley-way. The "supper-rooms" were those at the westward, front and rear. Just west of the alley-way was the small, frame "Ringwood Restaurant," likewise known for its pies, cakes, cider, and student conclaves.



Photograph by J.C.N.

#### A CORNER OF ERODELPHIAN HALL

The approach to the platform; the Powers Bust of President Bishop upon pedestal.

12. Minor Millikin had finished his course at Miami with the class of 1854, entering Harvard that fall for his law studies. The parental home was near Hamilton, Ohio, and his present visit to Miami was probably during a return home between Harvard sessions. "The Adonis of his class, the athlete of the institution, gentleman"—there was no more influential character about the Miami campus. Of him, his friend Whitelaw Reid wrote (*Ohio in the War*, 1869): "There was about him an individuality so intense and so striking, that



THE VILLAGE PARK AT OXFORD

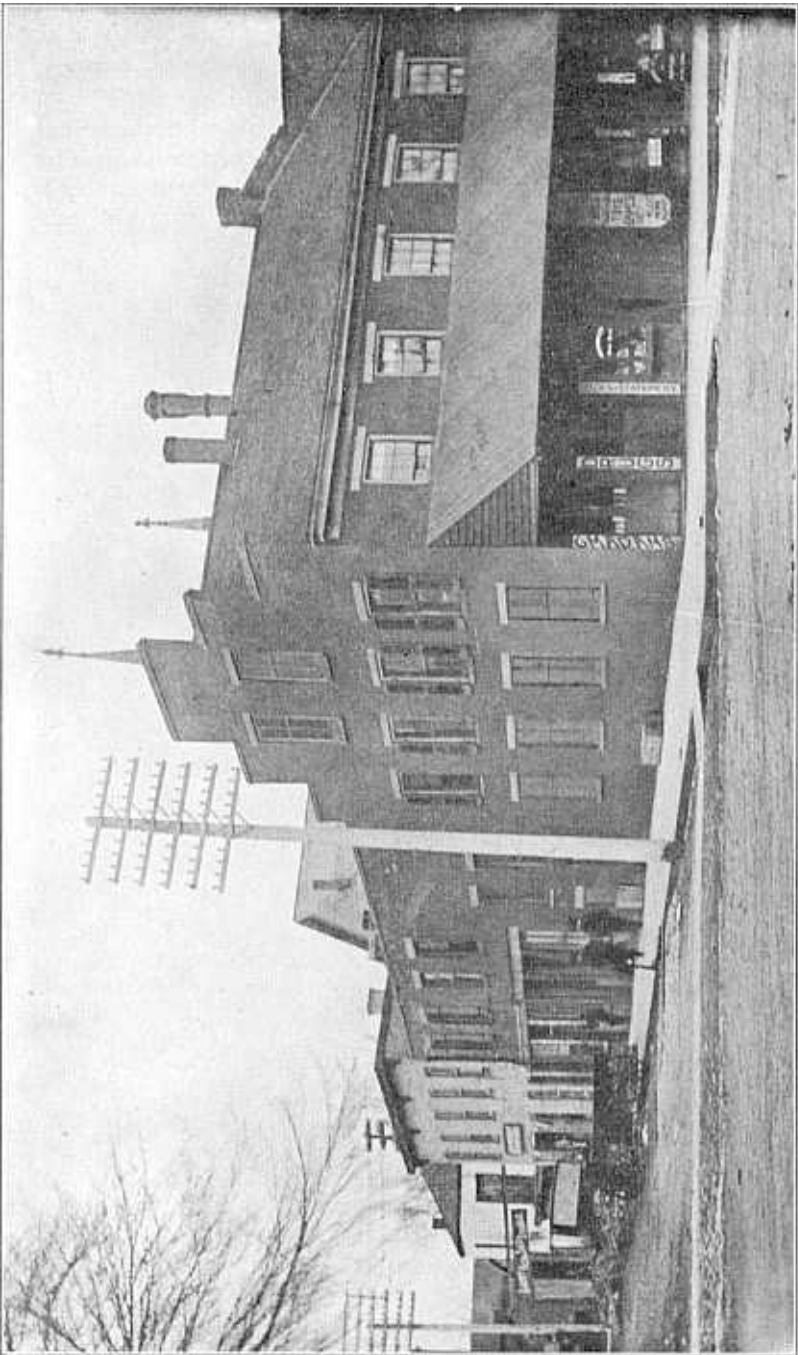
The Park, or Public Square, is on the north side of High Street where crossed by Main. The Square is thus overlooked from the East and South by the Crystal Palace, birthplace of Sigma Chi, and the Ringold Bakery-Restaurant. See related chapters and plats, this volume.

wherever he was placed, he was the center of attention." The heroic manner of his death at the head of his regiment at the battle of Stone River, added to recollections at Miami of his interesting, almost dramatic, character, long served to surround his name with a halo of romance in the annals of the college. Cf. Vol. II, chap. ii, "The Death of Minor Millikin."

13. Founder Runkle refers to this episode in an article upon the life and character of Whitelaw Reid, written for the *ΔKE Quarterly* of February, 1913, following the death of Mr. Reid on December 16, 1912: "Mr. Reid had not at that time the grand confidence in himself that afterwards made him fit to stand

before lords and kings. . . . The plan [of bringing in Millikin] was Whitelaw Reid's one mistake in diplomacy; he never made another of the kind."

The entire article of General Runkle throws bright lights upon the exciting events of the period, but is to be noted, in respects, as recalling these events after an interval of nearly sixty years. In this *History* the writing has been held in careful comparison with all other available records, the whole giving with satisfactory accuracy the current of events as herein established.



*From photograph of about the year 1900. Building still stands at southeast corner of Public Square, new thirteenth covered, wooden awning removed, etc.*

### THE BIRTHPLACE OF SIGMA CHI

For many years a drug, book, and stationery store location of Orford—in the fifties, the "Brown and McCaw" Store. The two rear windows on the second floor mark the room of Runkle and Caldwell at the close of the college year 1854-55. In this room councils were frequent, the badge designed, and plans completed for the Announcement of the new Fraternity on June 28, 1855.

## Chapter VIII

### The Founding of Sigma Chi—*Continued*

THE FINAL meeting of the twelve members of Kappa chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon occurred in the room of Whitelaw Reid in the "Old Southeast" building, a number of days after the events last narrated.<sup>1</sup> After a futile effort led by Reid for the expulsion of the troublesome members, with "six against six" on all vital issues, the meeting broke up in disorder. The Reid party was in possession of the charter and archives of the chapter, and had the recognition of Millikin and other alumni.<sup>2</sup> In all further parley and negotiations they held that they were the "regular" members, and that the younger group were in unworthy rebellion. As stated by an honored writer of Delta Kappa Epsilon:

It is among the traditions of Kappa chapter that Minor Millikin, with that impetuosity which made him afterwards charge within the Confederate lines, and Whitelaw Reid, with that vigor which marked his editorials in the *Tribune* in the last campaign [1884], contended for the honor of the Fraternity, and insisted without compromise or concession, that where faith was pledged loyalty should follow. They declared with emphasis that in any contest with the enemy the Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity—like Nelson at Trafalgar—had a right to expect that every man would do his duty.<sup>3</sup>

The reference is doubtless to the memorable night of the supper, and reflects the continuing viewpoint of the older leaders of Kappa.

A problem for Sigma Chi historians has been the long interim between the original trouble in Kappa chapter, in the fall of 1854, and the founding of the Fraternity as consummated on June 28, 1855. This perplexity is cleared up by correspondence, recently made available for reference, of members of the Kappa chapter with certain of its alumni and with the parent-chapter of ΔKE at Yale.<sup>4</sup> Both of the groups at Miami evidently were long reluctant to sever fraternal relations. There are several letters from Omar Newman, '55, of the Reid party, to Henry M. Woodruff, an alumnus of the Kappa who, like Millikin, had graduated with the Miami

class of 1854. The home of Woodruff was at New Albany, Indiana, but during the year 1854-55 he was teaching at Lexington, Kentucky. His interest in his old chapter at Oxford was very deep. In its associations he had been particularly fond of Scobey. At the opening of college that fall he had urged Scobey's fitness for the place in Kappa which had been held by Millikin.

A letter from Newman to Woodruff, written February 28, 1855, tells of the recent visit of Minor Millikin. With great anxiety for the future of Kappa, the letter relates the unhappy results of that visit, and the seemingly final division of the chapter, six to six. The lad, Newman, was not wholly lacking in poetic imagination, despite the failure of the rebellious six in the Erodelphian election to recognize his gifts. For, he concludes: "I am afraid that we have got our chapter on its last legs, and will look back to its grave as one killed by its own sons . . . as we shall stand as weeping tombstones over it."

The case of the older men was presented to the Yale chapter by Reid and Minor Millikin. "White" (Reid), says Newman, "wrote our letter to Yale, the one I wrote the boys not liking. . . . Minor wrote a letter to Yale accompanying ours." Scobey wrote the Yale men of the stand taken by him and his associates, assuming this responsibility as the senior initiate among them in membership in the Oxford chapter.

The correspondence with Yale continued into the month of April, 1855. That of the Reid party regards Runkle and Scobey as the moving spirits among the "recalcitrants," and expresses a fear as to the effect of their letters to the Phi chapter, at Yale. The parent-chapter evidently first urged a compromise of the differences, with the unique suggestions that one "six" or the other might continue as the "regular" Kappa chapter with the other six as the "honorary" members. To this suggestion the "loyal" six made the interesting response: "We should be unwilling to become honorary members of them, and they would object to being honorary members of us." There is evidence that the counsel of Millikin, as the champion of the "regulars," finally prevailed with the Yale chapter. The findings of the latter, as ultimately issued, completely sustained the Reid contingent in a pronouncement

Oxford Sep 14 1857

Dear Henry

Your note recd in due time  
and I hope protected by I fully concur in the  
opinion  
in diff  
in your  
matter  
It was  
Sincere  
that par  
advice.  
hope in  
future



Henry M. Woodruff, A.D.  
New-Haven  
Connecticut

other. As to that word hale which I mentioned  
in connection with the requirements necessary  
for being a A you should have understood  
it to mean - good manner, a good writer.  
Disclaimer, everything simon pure and I  
blame you for not doing so. While we  
are on this subject, there was a A from  
Winton College at this place last Monday  
he says that they have 20 members, and more  
we initiate Jim Pearce his coming  
We all likely to go with Taylor, Wm. P. Lee  
and one or two others

Letter and envelope, about two-thirds size of originals. See reverse page

LETTER OF FRANKLIN H. SCOBEE AS A ΔKE

To Henry M. Woodruff, Miami '54, ΔKE. Letter contributed for this History by the Hon. Bert S. Bartlow, Miami '04, ΔKE, late of Hamilton, Ohio. The letter "Δ" was the familiar designation for ΔKE.

City to filling Minor corner. I do not  
think myself competent for such an office.  
Joe was here last week as I told you. I  
he said that Minor was still at Cambridge  
Studying Law. And while on this subject

I believe I have fine for all the news papers  
there was a fine at college corner in which 14  
houses were concerned

R. D.

Yours in AKE  
W. C. Kerby

You are very profitably employed among nothing. I suppose  
you have your hands full

Wm. M. Woodruff  
FHS

Original letter is upon a light-blue stationery, unruled, 4 pages, 7 1/2 x 10 inches

LAST PAGE (4) OF SCOBEE-WOODRUFF LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 14, 1854

Opening and closing lines of page are shown, separated by the white line. The personal reference is to Minor Millikin, '54, and to the brother of the latter, "Joe" Millikin, Miami '59, and in later years, Professor of Greek at Miami and at Ohio State University.



which was known among the early Sigma Chis as "the Bull of Excommunication." Whereupon, the unconquerable six proceeded to consummate the plan already taking form among them, of organizing a new American college fraternity:

The six now associated with themselves William Lewis Lockwood, thus attaining the mystical number of seven and freeing their movement from its original relationships in Delta Kappa Epsilon. The enlistment of Lockwood was most important for early Sigma Chi. Reared in a home of culture and privilege in New York City, he had selected Miami, in the new West, for his college years. The developing fraternal conceptions of the group were influenced in considerable degree by the presence of a new recruit who had known little of the mother-organization or its differences. Especially were they influenced by the acquisition of such a personality as that of Lockwood. He was a youth of fine enthusiasm, energetic in every form of college activity, and possessed an element of romance in his nature which drew him into the founding of Sigma Chi with a remarkable degree of devotion. The Fraternity has no finer heritage from those first years than that of the life and chivalrous character of "Will" Lockwood, as he was known to his fellows. It is in keeping with his character that he shares with Runkle the honor of fixing upon the White Cross as the abiding badge Sigma Chi.

The plans of the seven rapidly crystallized into permanent form. A room on the second floor of a substantial brick building at the southeast corner of the Public Square, and on the north side of High Street, is regarded as the "Birthplace of Sigma Chi." This historic relation of the place resulted from the fact that, during the later months of the college year 1854-55, Runkle roomed there with Caldwell. Theirs was the "second room, back," overlooking a narrow side street and the Square, westward. The adjoining front room was above the street corner, thus overlooking both the side street and High Street in front of the building. It was occupied by James Carter Beard, one of the Delta Kappa Epsilon six with whom all of the members of the new fraternity continued upon the friendliest terms. Lockwood, whose own boarding place was some distance eastward on High Street, spent much time in the room of Beard, and in that of Runkle and Caldwell. Related to the founders

in a similarly intimate way was Cyrus E. Dickey, '57, who occupied the front room across a narrow hall, to the east of Beard's quarters. He became an initiate of Sigma Chi soon after the formal beginning of chapter work in the following autumn.<sup>5</sup>

The building was rather an imposing one in those days. Located but a short distance from the principal campus entrance, it was a popular rooming place for Miami students. A number of years before, members of Beta Theta Pi had occupied most of the rooms. In the fifties the boys called it the "Crystal Palace," after the famous London structure and its replica, of 1853, in New York City. Here, in the room of Runkle and Caldwell, were held many of the meetings of the earlier, organization days of Sigma Chi. In this room, Lockwood and Runkle worked out the design for the badge. The work was done upon a convenient drawing-table borrowed from Beard, and usually placed at the southerly window, nearest High Street, for a favorable light. The badge thus conceived was the White Cross, precisely as we still have it except for the letters " $\Sigma\Phi$ " in the black center where now is " $\Sigma\chi$ ." The older Sigma Phi, of Union College, 1827, had extended into a few other eastern colleges, but seems to have been unknown to the founders of Sigma Chi at Miami. It was early in the next year, 1856, that the theft of the archives led to the change to the permanent name, Sigma Chi.

Something should here be said of the inspirations underlying the selection of the White Cross as the badge of the Fraternity. The founders had but little knowledge of rituals or ritual-making except that which they had gathered from their membership in Delta Kappa Epsilon. The Constitution-Ritual first adopted accordingly followed in considerable degree the plan of these forms in the older society. The selection of the Cross was a complete exception. The badges known at Miami were those of the shield type, of Alpha Delta Phi, Beta Theta Pi, and Phi Delta Theta, and of the diamond shape, of Delta Kappa Epsilon. In later years, surviving founders have referred to the careful thought and study of fraternal symbolism which preceded their own choice. In that choice was embodied a boyish reverence of quest for what was highest and holiest in human aspiration. In Runkle, as with several of the other founders, was the old Covenanter lineage, while in Lockwood was the high

reverence for the Cross as an emblem in the ancient church in which he was reared. Back of the selection of the badge of Sigma Chi was the training of homes dedicated to the Cross and its mission.

A real difficulty in the selection, as some of the founders have told us, was the sense of their own unworthiness of their beautiful emblem. Yet they knew that the way to worthiness was in taking the best as an ideal. They caught the truth of Browning, that "a man's reach should exceed his grasp." There is a testimony of Runkle that the selection of the White Cross "grew from admiration of its meaning." Its adoption as an emblem was made the subject of some earnest discussions. In the historical archives of the Fraternity is the record of a warning uttered at the time by the mature and thoughtful Daniel W. Cooper, "Old Dan," as the others affectionately knew him. It was a warning still to be regarded by every wearer of the White Cross—namely the danger of the idea that they



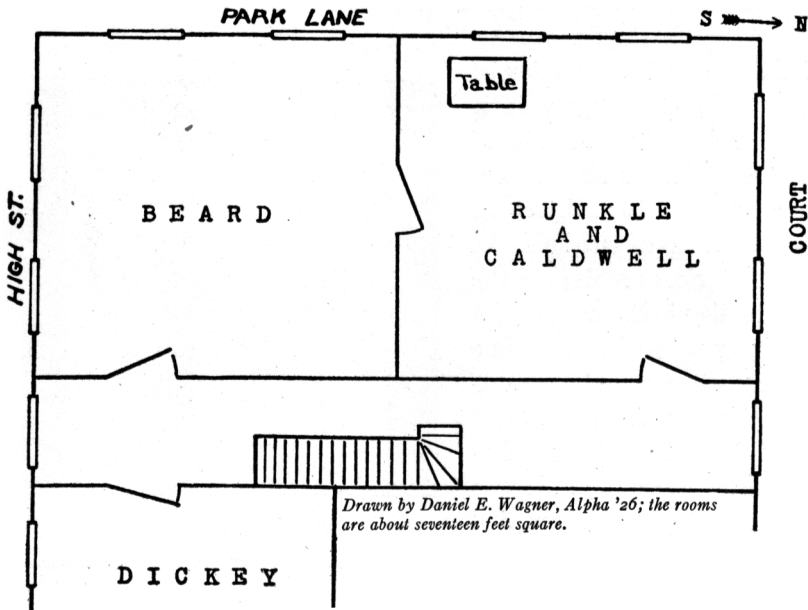
THE FIRST BADGE OF SIGMA CHI

The badge of Founder Daniel W. Cooper, now known as the "Grand Consul's Badge," and worn by that officer during his official term.

could conquer by any sign, alone. Then and always, the victory of the Cross must be by the spirit rather than by any emblem, however exalted. Until the meanings of the White Cross have taken possession within the life, it is futile to wear it as an outward sign. With this understanding, the Cross was made the imperishable badge of Sigma Chi, and Daniel W. Cooper, who so fully personified its worth, was made the official head of the chapter.

Not only was "Jimmie" Beard's table borrowed for the designing of the badge, but also the services of that talented youth himself. For Beard, who was afterward to attain wide fame as an artist, even then possessed marked skill in drawing. While remaining loyal to ΔKE in the division of the Kappa chapter, he quietly had

considerable sympathy for the attitude of the "rebels," and willingly assisted Lockwood and Runkle in perfecting their designs for the Cross and its emblems.<sup>6</sup> Seven badges of the original pattern were first ordered—these being for the seven founders. They were made by one Bradley, a goldsmith of Cincinnati. The new badges were first worn on Commencement day, Thursday, June 28, 1855, as an agreed



FLOOR PLAN OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE

The "Annual Circular" of Miami, for May, 1855, gives the "Crystal Palace" as the rooming place of Caldwell and Runkle at that time. It, however, assigns Beard to other quarters nearby. This confirms a notation of Runkle for this *History* (1913), that Beard was changing quarters at about the time the badge was designed.

method of public announcement of the founding of the new fraternity. This day was accordingly determined as the formal date for the origin of Sigma Chi. Herein is the significance of the phrasing of the original Constitution and its subsequent editions: *The origin of this Fraternity shall be dated on the twenty-eighth of June, 1855.*

The original seven badges were the only ones ever made having the temporary "ΣΦ" center. The one belonging to Daniel W.



*Fraternally*  
*Frank H. Seobey*

A picture of the Senior year, preserved by the Rev. Armour J. McFarland, D.D., late of Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania.

Cooper was preserved by him throughout his life. At his death on December 11, 1920, it passed into the permanent care of the Fraternity.<sup>7</sup>

#### THE ABIDING FOUNDATIONS

It is desirable at this point to consider more fully the ideals of the founders for the Sigma Chi Fraternity, and to record certain testimonies which reveal their high purposes in the great new undertaking. The working fraternal conceptions of the order have long been indicated by the words, Friendship, Justice, and Learning. These three keywords found their way formally into the ritualism as early as the assembling of the Third Grand Chapter, 1861, in the statement of the symbolism of the Grand Seal.<sup>8</sup> Even so, the Fraternity may hardly have realized how fully these words embody the historical processes of organization in 1855.

It is one of the founders, themselves, who has said, "Now these seven striplings who founded Sigma Chi, while they were enthusiastic, were no dreaming enthusiasts, but live, practical boys who loved life for what they found pleasant in life, and the world for the world's own sake."<sup>9</sup> Their departure from Delta Kappa Epsilon was, primarily, an expression of individuality and manly independence. In their new fraternity, they held the qualities of congenial tastes, good-fellowship, and genuine friendship to be indispensable. The element of thorough good-fellowship was regarded as a characteristic of all real fraternity endeavor, and the early members of Sigma Chi gave themselves to the good times of those college days with all the zest and joy of a live boyhood. Upon the earliest, and every, design of the badge were clasped hands. They sought true *Friendship*.

In matters of general college interest, the founders had refused in the former organization to be limited simply by the ties of their own chapter brotherhood. Their new association was surely not planned to prevent laudable mutual helpfulness. On the contrary it was designed in every worthy way to enhance such helpfulness. It was clear, however, in early Sigma Chi that chapter loyalty must not be claimed at the expense of the worthy, of any college organization.<sup>10</sup> The new fraternity stood for the "square deal" in all campus relations. It exalted *Justice*.

In the literary exercises of the chapter, literary training was regular and rigid. In the earliest Constitution were these provisions:

The exercises of this Fraternity at the regular meetings shall be as follows: At the first meeting, a poetical review, an original essay, and a poem; at the second meeting, a prose review, a fictitious narrative, and a biographical essay,—and so on alternately.

On each election night there shall be chosen two members, one to read a poem, the other to deliver an oration, at the succeeding election.

Similarly, the "Biennial Convention of all the chapters" was to be assembled "to promote the general interests of the Fraternity, and to hear an oration and a poem." The earnestness with which these requirements were met is evidenced by the old books of minutes and the copies of many a thoughtful literary production given at the old Alpha and Gamma chapter meetings, still preserved and highly valued in the archives of the Fraternity. Speaking thirty years afterward, the Hon. Isaac M. Jordan, of the founders, said:

We took great pride in our Fraternity, and added new members to it. We endeavored to make it the leading society of old Miami. We entered upon all our college duties with great zeal and earnestness, studied hard, tried to excel in every department of study, contended for every hall or college prize, and endeavored to make our Fraternity have a high and honorable standing."

Therefore the scroll was placed upon both badge and seal. The founders gave high place to *Learning*.

Transcending, however, these familiar and working ideals of the organization was the recognition of a supreme ideal. It was best spoken by their White Cross emblem—to be worn worthily through life, its gold untarnished and its purity unsoiled. In the literary exercises of the chapter the members of the new fraternity received encouragement, friendly criticism, and training in their laudable ambitions. Far more than for the prize immediately in view, however, did they receive incitement to noble endeavor for its own sake and throughout all of life. Clearly revealed in the organization and early affairs of Sigma Chi is the constant undercurrent of conviction among its members that their highest helpfulness to one another, in the relations of a fraternity, would be an all-pervasive mutual influence for good in things personal, intellectual,

and spiritual. Their mottoes for the Fraternity, as indicated by both the temporary name of "Sigma Phi" and the later, permanent, "Sigma Chi," may be read somewhat in the light of the circumstances attaching to the emergence of the six from Delta Kappa Epsilon. The third motto looked wholly forward. It was made prominent upon the Common Seal to "be impressed upon all epistolary communications," *In hoc signo vinces.*<sup>12</sup> The sign of sacrifice and service—THE CROSS!

The worthy and useful manhood which would eventuate from that boyish group is foreshadowed in their organization, their ideals and the high aspirations, personal and fraternal, evident in the origin of Sigma Chi. The Fraternity holds in enduring honor each of these men because of the life and character of each which has become its heritage: Thomas C. Bell, who became the educator and college president; James P. Caldwell, graduated at sixteen among the leading scholars of his class, a gallant soldier in the armies of the South, brilliant writer and able lawyer; Daniel W. Cooper, the noble and upright, known in college days as "Old Dan," who gave his life to preaching the gospel of that Christian Cross of which his Fraternity emblem was the unsullied symbol; Isaac M. Jordan, eminent lawyer, orator, and Congressman; William L. Lockwood, lad with the heart for chivalry, whose early death from the wounds received as he led his company in the storming of Fort Wagner was the first among the seven; Benjamin P. Runkle, gifted and versatile, manly and sturdy in college, who in the war became a major general; and Franklin H. Scobey, of sunny heart and generous nature, faithful soldier of the Republic, successful journalist, and man of affairs. These were the seven who "flung out to the gaze of the old Greek-letter societies the banner of the White Cross with a confidence that bordered on a belief in Destiny."<sup>13</sup>

The purpose to form a new national fraternity, and not one merely local, or temporary, is wholly clear by ample record and testimony. The real courage of that undertaking, in pioneer days, is best indicated by the fact that in 1855 eighteen general fraternities had entered the field since the Union College movement of the twenties, most if not all of which were known as well established. Of those then represented at Miami University, Alpha Delta Phi



had established sixteen chapters, Beta Theta Pi, twenty-three, Phi Delta Theta; eight, and Delta Kappa Epsilon, nineteen. Of so formidable a field, Sigma Chi wrote in her original Constitution: *This Fraternity shall consist of chapters which may be established in such places as the Fraternity may deem fit, a vote of three-fourths of the chapters being necessary to the granting of a chapter at any college or university.*<sup>14</sup>

The Hon. Walter L. Fisher, Chi '83, writing in the years of his close study and intimate knowledge of the Fraternity, historically, gave this as his conception of the origin of Sigma Chi.

The confidence of the founders of the Sigma Chi was based upon a belief that the principles which they professed and the ideal of fraternity which they sought was but imperfectly realized by the organizations by which they were surrounded. The establishment of Sigma Chi was a protest against artificiality and pretense, a plea for personal independence, and for congeniality and genuine friendship as the only natural basis of associations in a college brotherhood. It was a repudiation of the theory that would subordinate fraternity to strength of organization or of numbers, or to any form of undergraduate ambition. . . . It was established upon no narrow ideal of manhood, but upon the principle that true strength lies in a well rounded and symmetrical development of individual character.

Sigma Chi was not then known, and has not since been known as a distinctively literary or scholarly or athletic or political or social organization, but its laurels have been won equally in all these fields; and in them all, and through success in them all, the chief thing it has sought has been fraternity—the fraternity of mutual helpfulness and mutual pleasure. For this it has fostered good fellowship, aroused ambition, encouraged culture, broadened character, strengthened its powers of discipline and training, and perfected its governmental organization.<sup>15</sup>

The Hon. Isaac M. Jordan, of the founders, gave this statement of the early ideals:

In my judgment our Fraternity has grown to be what it is by adhering to the principle with which we started in the beginning, of admitting no man to membership in it who is not believed to be a man of good character, of fair ability, of ambitious purposes, and of congenial disposition. In a word, by the admission of none but gentlemen; and in no other way can such a society be continued. It is more important that we should have but few chapters and have them good ones, that we should have but few members and have them honorable ones, than to have many chapters or many members.

We belong to a society worthy of our highest regard and warmest affection. We are united in the strong and enduring bonds of friendship and esteem. Let

us each and all so do our duty and conduct ourselves that we bring no dishonor upon our society or upon each other. And we may have the high and proud satisfaction of knowing that our beautiful White Cross, at once the badge of our society and the emblem of purity, will never be worn over any breast which does not beat with pure, generous and noble emotions, and by no man who is not a man of honor.<sup>11</sup>

And other words, again those of General Runkle, bring this high conception of the founding to even more exalted levels of thought:

Four-and-twenty years have passed since these seven enthusiastic striplings raised aloft the Sigma Chi standard, emblazoned with the White Cross and the motto, honored and respected throughout the Christian world for ages, *In hoc signo vinces*; and whatever may be, or may have been their faults, or however far they may, at times, have strayed from the straight path, not one of them has ever lost faith in that symbol, or his veneration for the grand and beautiful teachings which that motto must ever bring to the minds of those who believe the doctrines, and reverence the character of Him who crimsoned, with his life's blood, a Roman cross nearly nineteen hundred years ago.<sup>16</sup>

Equally significant with these records is the definite manner in which the sterling purposes of the Fraternity were conveyed to its new chapters as they were founded, and took form in the life and spirit of all such as they became established. These same ideals were transmitted by Alpha, and by the Gamma after the death of Alpha, regularly to all of the new groups organized in the antebellum days, during the period of the war, and during the decade thereafter. This may be traced in the early personal visitation of chapters by members of those longer established, and in remarkable letters still preserved. Their letters show the rigid insistence among these "boys" of long ago upon a union which should be noble in character and would protect in the fraternal bond only such as were worthy.

Early in 1857, William L. Lockwood wrote to Alvarez H. Gibson, of the Eta at Oxford, Mississippi, upon the establishment of the latter chapter:

You will doubtless create quite a sensation when you first put on the "dear old Cross." In whatever part of the United States you may go, you will find no handsomer pins, and I trust and hope that those emblems of purity will be indices of the purity and nobleness of the hearts beneath them. We should endeavor so to raise ourselves, that to say of a man, "He is a 'Sigma Chi,'" shall be synonymous with, "He is a liberally educated, high-minded, pure and noble man."<sup>17</sup>

Again, Lockwood wrote to Alexander D. Lemon, of the Lambda, at Bloomington, Indiana, upon the institution of that chapter in the fall of 1858:

Of the purity and uprightness of our motives, I leave you to judge. In our meetings for the past three years I have spent some of my happiest moments, so happy, so pleasant, that the remembrance of them will always be vivid. . . . When you recruit your ranks, be certain to choose congenial, high-minded, talented fellows. Though you may be strong now, take all you can get who have the ring of the true metal.<sup>18</sup>

The same principles passed into the life of Iota when founded, at Jefferson College; from Iota into the Omicron, at Dickinson; and from Omicron to Psi, at the University of Virginia. It was Harry St. John Dixon, Psi '61, who wrote twenty years afterward concerning the spirit of that chapter in which he himself was such a noble influence:

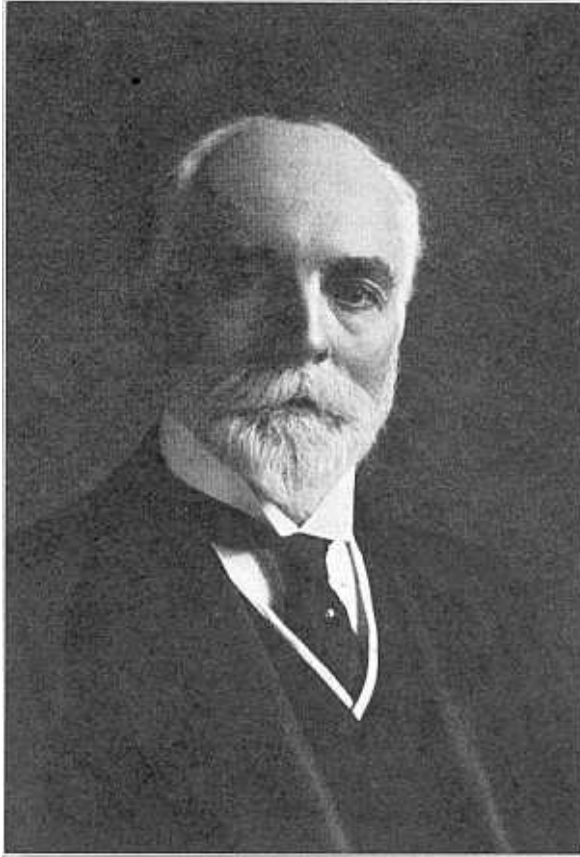
In that circle every sentiment of honor and manliness was cherished; every precept of good morals was inculcated. We did not wear our badges for boyish show, but because to us they were emblematic of the gentleman. They spoke to us then, as they speak to us yet, of those things that are noblest in human nature.<sup>19</sup>

Such was the spirit of the founders of the Sigma Chi Fraternity, and the spirit is above all matters of method and plan of organization. The organization was thorough in conception, ingenious in form, and of unusual worth as a means of government and in the high character of its symbolism. But we may well believe that not through all these, but through the inevitable appeal to youth everywhere of *that standard of manhood which is noblest and best* has the single chapter of 1855 grown to the list of a hundred, while the seven founders lead a roll of members which now numbers full twenty thousand names.

## Chapter VIII—Notes and Comments

1. Whitelaw Reid entered Miami University in the fall of 1853, as a Sophomore. He had the advantage of thorough preparation in the classics, etc., at the academy at Cedarville, Ohio, in his home county, of which his uncle, Dr. Hugh McMillan, was principal. Dr. McMillan was a trustee of Miami University.

Interesting recollections of the Miami years were contained in the *Quarterly* of  $\Delta$ KE, of February, 1913, following the death of Mr. Reid, written by John C. Hutchison, '56, and James Carter Beard, '58, both of the Reid party in the differences with Sigma Chi. Hutchison and Reid were neighbor boys,



THE HON. WHITELAW REID, MIAMI '56

From photograph furnished for this *History* by the family of Mr. Reid through Arthur J. McElhone, Epsilon '02.

and had become firm friends in the academy at Cedarville. They came to Miami together, and at first kept bachelor quarters with several other students. Hutchison says:

When ready for Oxford, Whitelaw's father took us over from Xenia in his covered wagon, perhaps the same in which he had journeyed from South Carolina. We had

arranged to "batch" together and our wagon was filled with bed and bedding, canned fruit and kitchen utensils and everything needed for the regular bachelor's quarters. . . . The next term we broke up our club, Whitelaw took the suite of rooms on the second floor of the old Southeast—northeast corner—and I the suite directly above, and we occupied these till the close of our college course.

Mr. Beard adds this note:

Reid lived in one of the two rattletrap brick buildings, called dormitories, back of the college itself and "batched," as we call it, cooked his own meals, and did his own housekeeping. If my memory serves me right there was a large hole in the partition of lath and plaster, separating his room from the next, through which the village tradesmen passed groceries and through which he received his supply of camphine (pure oil of turpentine, almost as dangerous as gunpowder) which at the time was used as coal oil now is, to be burned in lamps.

A warm friendship had quickly developed between Reid and Runkle, of the founders of Sigma Chi, prior to the division in ΔKE. "White," as he was frequently called in college, confided to Runkle his supreme youthful ambition to "become a great editor, manage a great daily paper, and devote his life to molding public opinion." His fellow-countrymen know how splendidly the boy of the old Ohio college accomplished his aim—as the successor of Horace Greeley at the head of the *New York Tribune*, as a writer and speaker of national distinction, and as Minister to France and Ambassador to Great Britain.

In 1892, when a candidate for the vice-presidency with President Benjamin Harrison, a candidate for re-election, ΦΔΘ and ΔKE of early Miami struck hands again, while the old Ohio college had the honor claiming as alumni both nominees of one of the great political parties of the nation.

Warm friends again, and associates in public affairs of the intervening years, General Runkle contributed, by invitation, "An Appreciation of Whitelaw Reid" among the memoirs in the ΔKE *Quarterly* of February, 1913:

To all Delta Kappa Epsilons, and Sigma Chis, and to all young men everywhere, his career is a splendid example of what a gifted man can accomplish—and all men are more or less gifted—when he fixes his mind on the distant goal which he longs to reach and never hesitates or falters however great the obstacles, and however constant the discouragements. This and future generations of Americans will honor the name and memory of Whitelaw Reid, and we who knew him as a friend will mourn his loss until we are called upon to pass through the Dark Valley to the Great Beyond.

2. The founding of Sigma Chi was discussed at length by an anonymous writer in the ΔKE *Quarterly* of April, 1891—an article reviewing the then recent *Catalogue and History* of Sigma Chi, of 1890 (see note 14). The writer states that the records and archives of Kappa were at first in the hands of one of the "recalcitrants." An alumnus who came to see if he could not aid matters obtained the records from this youth, and "put them in the hands of the Reid party."

3. Judge Samuel F. Hunt, Miami '64, Cincinnati, Ohio, writing in 1885. Cf. Vol. I, chap. v, Note 14.

4. We have these records through the courtesy of the late Hon. Bert S. Bartlow, ΔKE, Miami '93, Hamilton, Ohio. Mr. Bartlow was a leader and student of the history of Delta Kappa Epsilon, which he represented at the banquet of the Thirty-first Grand Chapter of Sigma Chi, Oxford, Ohio, August 8, 1913 (see Vol. VI, chap. xiii). From 1906 to 1913 Mr. Bartlow was Alumni and Field Secretary of Miami University, and was regarded as the best-informed authority upon the history of the institution and the records of its graduates. He was the author of the comprehensive *Alumni Catalogue* for the first century of Miami, as celebrated in 1909. He was also an authority on Ohio state history. He had served in the Ohio state senate, and was prominent in the political affairs of the state. His death on February 9, 1919, was greatly lamented in Miami circles.



BERT S. BARTLOW

of the schism in the Kappa chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon of 1854-55, which resulted in the founding of Sigma Chi. He entered into the studies of this *History* with a most helpful and fraternal interest. Numerous original letters of ΔKE at Miami of the period when Sigma Chi was founded were submitted by him for study and comparison but, with some exceptions, not for formal publication.

5. On October 17, 1855. Cf. Vol. I, chap. xviii, "The Chapter Roll of Alpha"; also Vol. II, chap. ii, *ad loc.*, for death of Dickey during Bank's Red River Expedition, April 13, 1864.

6. James Carter Beard, the noted magazine contributor and illustrator of high-class books and periodicals, died November 15, 1913. Long years after their student days at Miami, Whitelaw Reid sought to secure the services of Beard for an important position upon the *New York Tribune*. "I declined," Beard afterward stated, "as I was working for the *Century* and contributing to *Harper's* and other magazines, and did not care to give up my free-lance for an outfit in any regular service." At the time of the founding of Sigma Chi, Beard was a Sophomore, which may explain his friendly sympathies with the Sigma Chi men, all then of the same college class.



JAMES CARTER BEARD

Photograph of Civil War period, by courtesy of Mr. Daniel C. Beard, a brother, Flushing, Long Island, New York.

7. Cf. Vol. VII, biographical sketch of Founder Cooper, etc. The four additions to the chapter of the fall of 1855 were soon followed by the installation of the Gamma, and that by the theft of the archives and the change of name to Sigma Chi. Thereafter Lockwood made arrangements for badges with a New York City firm, on behalf of both Alpha and Gamma. Cf. Vol. I, chap. x, "Early Days," *ad loc.*

8. Cf. Vol. I, chap. xxiii, "The Third Grand Chapter," *ad loc.*

9. The words occur as part of the story of early Alpha at Miami, in the *Catalogue and History* of Sigma Chi, of 1890 (p. 5). Actually, they were first used by Benjamin P. Runkle in his response to the Toast "To the Members of Old Alpha, the Pioneers of the White Cross," delivered at a noteworthy celebration of the Gamma chapter at Delaware, Ohio, June 24, 1879. (Cf. Vol. III, chap. viii, *ad loc.*) The extended address was written out by General Runkle, and furnished the basis, largely, of the material in the historical volume of 1890 upon the founding of Sigma Chi.

10. The obligation of Sigma Chi to deal justly as among the members of all student organizations became known at other institutions. The writer has been furnished with the copy of a letter written a few years later by a member of a rival chapter of the Lambda, at Bloomington, Indiana. The letter refers specifically to this requirement of Sigma Chi. It was at the time when knowledge of rituals other than that of one's own fraternity was not uncommon, and the writer reveals a somewhat intimate knowledge of the then current ritual and mottoes of Sigma Chi.

11. From an address delivered before the Fifteenth Grand Chapter, Cincinnati, Ohio, August 27, 1884. Cf. Vol. III, chap. xix, "The Memorable Grand Chapter of 1884."

12. See Vol. VI, chap. xvii, "Constitutional and Ritualistic Sources in Sigma Chi," for the fact that originally there were a secret and a public Greek motto in Sigma Chi, and the third, Latin motto as upon the Common Seal; also the two seals, originally—the Grand Seal for charters, and the Common Seal, for correspondence.

13. The words of General Runkle, 1879. See Note 9.

14. In the eighties, when the fraternity magazines were young, and giving much attention to historical matters, the editor of the *Sigma Chi* was led to protest against a type of suggestion on the part of writers of  $\Delta KE$ , as to early Sigma Chi. Cf. The *Sigma Chi*, IV, No. V, 284. Such suggestions were to the effect that the founders of Sigma Chi lacked serious and permanent purpose in the organization of the new brotherhood. On the other hand, their social and convivial ideals were pictured as "making the meetings of the Kappa chapter jolly bouts at which the program of literary exercises was a feature prominent by its absence."

A leading article of the kind was one entitled "The Acorn from the Oak," contained in the  $\Delta KE$  *Quarterly* of April, 1891. It was a review of the recently issued *Catalogue and History* of Sigma Chi, of 1890, an anonymous article

which, indeed, failed to find much of merit in the thirty-five years of Sigma Chi growth and development. The general purport was indicated by the conclusion: "Whatever was originally good in Sigma Chi came out of  $\Delta$ KE. It was that merit that caused it to grow, and by no means anything that its founders proposed or achieved."

It would hardly be well to take note of these old discussions here, except as the formal *History* of the White Cross may be under due obligation to note all



#### THE DORMITORIES

From a photograph of the year 1902; Northeast Building at left, and Southeast Building at right

the facts of record, or of possible future misinterpretation. For any such contingency, certain factors of those founding days may here be noted:

(1) That two among the oldest and most thoughtful members of the Kappa chapter, Daniel W. Cooper and Thomas C. Bell, were *not* members of the Erodelphian Literary Society, and did not participate in the refusal to vote the Kappa chapter ticket. They took their stand with the four upon the merits of the situation as a whole, and joined in founding the new fraternity.

Daniel W. Cooper was in his twenty-fifth year, and was known in the Kappa chapter and throughout the college for his mature and thoughtful character, a highly respected student for the ministry. A Sophomore, he was honored by being chosen, in the very period of the founding of Sigma Chi, as the president of his literary society, the Eccritean. By common consent he became the first presiding officer of the new Fraternity. In his own noble personality, Dr. Cooper sufficiently refutes the type of discussion in reference.



(Continued from page 176) 1855  
Optimism Session

Pres. in the chair  
Soc. opened with prayer. Minutes of the last  
meeting read and after an amendment  
adopted, the motion Soc. crossed. Some were  
for & absent mark.

His vis. resignation sent in and received  
Jeddi petition presented, he was elected  
and initiated on 4 Dec.

Halls found for non-performance  
On motion Soc. entered into the election of Pres.  
to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation  
of the pres. elect—Mr. Glenn was duly elected  
He is then passed by Soc. granting S. H. Adams  
an order on Treasury for \$4 for services rendered  
He made out & carried bringing a total of \$5.50  
to each member to be handed in on 6 before  
Monday following.

The motion Soc. adjourned.

J. H. Parker

Sec. Soc.

C. Cooper

Pres.

3  
Evening Session      Apr. 27th 1855

Society met pursuant to adjournment  
met. Opened with prayer as usual.

Quere for debate: proposed. That the Mexican  
War was unjustifiable on the part of the U.S.  
Mr. Ordway moved from opening the debate on this  
with the ground to be no comparison of the Soc. with  
the experience to a the constitution.

President's decision in favor of the Aff.  
On motion Soc. resolved to change the title to  
performance of all distant divisions, in order to make  
it comply with the letter of the constitution.  
On motion Soc. adjourned.

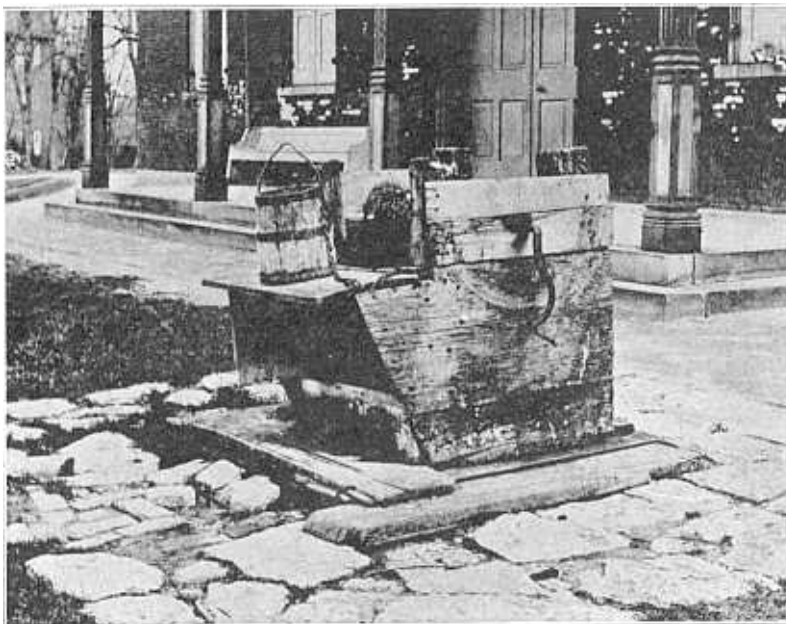
J. H. Parker Pres. Soc.

C. Cooper Sec.

#### COOPER AS PRESIDENT OF ECCRITEAN—APRIL, 1855

Facsimile of the old Record Book of Eccritean, by courtesy of Library of Miami University; cut is slightly more than half the size of original page. The records show the common practice of the societies of holding afternoon and evening sessions, the former usually for business, and the latter for literary work.

(2) The hard-working ambitions in the new group for their chapter meetings and college duties, generally, are matters of record, not only in the books of minutes, etc., but in the many literary productions still preserved, covering the meetings throughout the history of old Alpha. The places gained by members of the chapter upon the special programs of society halls and of the college still better attest the earnestness of the "Sigma Chi six" and Lockwood as students and literary workers. The printed programs of the literary and other occasions,



THE OLD WELL AT MIAMI

Located north of the Main Building, and for long years a campus center

as reproduced in part in this volume, attest the prominence of the founders in literary and scholastic work at Miami.

(3) As for what the founders proposed and achieved as to the growth of Sigma Chi, the determination to establish a new national fraternity was fundamental in the original Constitution. It is most interestingly attested by the records of the First Grand Chapter. It is fully confirmed by the steady extension which followed from the beginning.

A more generous summary of these differences of old was that of Judge Samuel F. Hunt, of Delta Kappa Epsilon (cf. Vol. I, chap. v, Note 14):

Both sides believed in liberty—neither advocated unbridled license. But as to where the line should be drawn, there they differed. ΔΚΕ and ΣΧ will agree that the older fraternity stood for the more compact organization, the greater deference by

the individual to the interest of his fellows and the repute and influence of his chapter. No argument can demonstrate which was right. But the career of each has been the natural result of her policy, and without questioning the satisfaction with herself which  $\Sigma X$  may have earned the right to feel,  $\Delta KE$  has found her convictions strengthened by the experience of years.

Or, as General Runkle put it when a quarter of a century had passed by (Note 9), "That old and honored society, Delta Kappa Epsilon, has no reason to be ashamed of its offspring, while Sigma Chi may well be proud of so renowned and illustrious an ancestor."

15. In the *Catalogue and History*, of 1890, p. xxii, of "Historical Sketch." During law-student and early professional years, Brother Fisher gave some ten years of noteworthy official service to Sigma Chi. Cf. related chapters in Vols. III and IV. His editorship of the historical volume of 1890 was in the period of larger controversial emphasis upon the matter and manner of the Miami fraternity foundings.

16. In the Greenwood Lake Address, Delaware, Ohio, 1879. See Note 9.

17. Cf. Vol. I, chap. xv, "Eta—Standard Bearer in the South."

18. Cf. Vol. I, chap. xx, "The Lambda," *ad loc.*

19. Cf. Vol. I, chap. xxii, "The Psi."