

# The Beaver Sig

ALPHA THETA OF SIGMA CHI

VOL. 1

BOSTON, MASS., MAY, 1941

NO. 1

## ACTIVE ALUMNI NEWS TO REPLACE OLD YEARLY MAGAZINE

After much thought and deliberation on the part of several members of the active chapter, it was decided that the publication of our yearly magazine would be abandoned and in its place a combination chapter-alumni news would be published four times a year. Its purpose is to stimulate interest between the active chapter and the alumni, and to let the brothers of graduated classes know what their classmates are doing. In order that it be a success, everyone must help, and the way to help is to send news—any and every kind of news that would be of interest to the present or past members of Alpha Theta. In this issue, only one column has been devoted to our graduated brothers, for the simple reason that little is known of their activities. In short, Brother Sigs, write and tell us what you are doing! Please address all such correspondence to Associate Editor Robert Meissner, 532 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

## HOUSE GRADES HIGH

Ever since the Alpha Theta chapter was founded it has had a reputation for high scholastic standing. The present active members are doing their part to uphold this record. Even though the Sigma Chis are well represented in all phases of extra-curricular activity, the chapter rating is sixth highest out of 23.

The house average of 3.379 is 0.147 above the general average. The only individual class whose ratings are averaged is the freshman. As officially published by the Dean's Office, the freshman class had an average of 3.49. This is 0.29 above the general freshman average, and placed the Sigma Chi freshmen second among the fraternities scholastically for the past first term.

## OUR WORTHY "C"



## ALPHA THETA ELECTS BRANSON SMITH CONSUL

Men who have sufficient fortitude and ambition to conceive and execute a worth-while plan, a plan with both distance and direction—these are the men we want as chapter officers. We believe that the officers of Alpha Theta fill the bill.

As he should be, our most outstanding new officer is Charles Branson Smith, '42, the worthy consul. He has successfully acted in the capacity of rushing chairman, assistant house manager, and house manager. The results of his term as chairman of rushing activities in his sophomore year testify to the sterling quality of his work, and as house manager he exhibited real ability in the field of practical administration. Caught in the current flying craze, Brother Smith spends considerable spare time, and most of his spare cash, fifteen hundred feet above the ground associating with the crows. At the Institute he is majoring in Aeronautical Engineering.

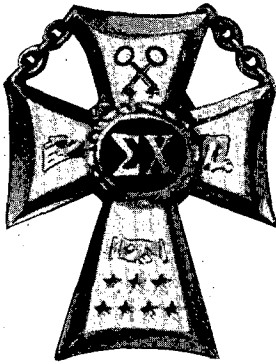
## SUMMER ACTIVITY NECESSARY FOR GOOD RUSHING

Rushees Should Be Visited  
Before They Arrive in  
Boston

Included in this issue of The Beaver Sig is a convenient reply card which we hope you will use in making your early rushing recommendations to the chapter. Save this card for future use if you don't know of any prospects now.

One of the most vital functions of the fraternity is rushing, yet at Tech the job is completed only a week after school has started. In many cases the boys are bid only two or three days after their first meeting with the fraternity. This is a necessary situation which can be improved upon only by contacting as many freshmen as possible during the summer. The boys in the chapter try to do this, but little can be accomplished unless we know of some likely prospects early in the summer, for by the time the freshman lists are out it is too late to do much more rushing than any other house on the campus might do. Then, when every other fraternity is hounding the boys, rushing is much less effective. Our chief source of information in regard to entering freshmen is through our alumni, and this year we especially need their co-operation, as it is quite possible that with conditions as uncertain as they are, a much lower percentage of the freshmen will consider joining a fraternity.

Therefore, we ask all of you graduates of Alpha Theta, and any other Sigs who know of a boy entering Tech, to let us know about it. Any such information should be addressed to the rushing chairman, Howard P. McJunkin, 1611 Virginia St., Charleston, West Virginia. With your co-operation we will do our best to make this rushing season a successful one.



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## ENGINEERS DANCE TO KEEP TRIM

Realizing that our social life is oftentimes as important as our school work, this year we "Sigs" have had an unusually full dance schedule.

This year's social activities began early in the fall with the rushing tea-dance. Dates for the various rushees were "imported" from Wellesley, Simmons and other nearby girls' schools. After an afternoon of dancing at the house, many of the brothers and rushees and dates adjourned to the Totem Pole Ballroom, where the dancing continued through the evening.

Tuxes and tails were first dusted off for the Pledge Dance the last part of October. This dance is an annual one, given in honor of the newly pledged freshmen. Music was supplied by Jack Ford's orchestra.

### PROSPECTING IS GOOD

Our first open dance of the year made history at Thanksgiving time, when the chapter moved the scene of the action to Danvers Corners, about 20 miles outside of Boston. Here, in an old barn, we had our Prospecting Party, wherein all of the chapter and their guests were dressed as miners, prospectors, or what have you. As the dance was informal, there was less restraint than at a formal dance, to the very great enjoyment of everyone attending.

The beginning of our Christmas vacation was celebrated by a Christmas Party. Brother "Santa Claus" Dunlap passed out gifts to all the brothers and their dates. Several days before the dance, names were drawn from a hat, so all of the brothers received a package of some description. After Santa took his leave, the Victrola was turned on full blast and there was dancing for the remainder of the afternoon.

As is true on many of the campuses throughout the country, the Miami Triad was the year's biggest and best dance. It was held at the Somerset Hotel, and Ray Keating's orchestra gave forth with sweet music.

## PROBATION PERIOD REPLACES HELL WEEK

Last year, pledge training for the first time in Alpha Theta's history did not make use of the paddle. However, when the question of a "Hell Week" arose, the chapter was still in favor of following tradition, so a half-hearted attempt at a "Hell Week" without paddles was attempted.

Again this year, paddles were not used in pledge training, and the cooperation received was evidence of the merit of the system. However, this year the chapter's attitude was such as to allow a complete abolition of any vestiges of the old-fashioned "Hell Week." Instead, what is known as probation week was instituted. As soon as the pledges returned from their mid-year vacations, ready to start the new term, they were informed of their obligations in connection with probation week. No paddles were in evidence. Silence was maintained among the pledges at all times, except when they were in the room set aside for their occupancy during the silence period. The attitude of the chapter was a serious one and suggested nothing of the horseplay connected with former "Hell Weeks." The pledges were required to pass an examination covering their pledge studies of the previous term. They were also required to write a paper on some serious thought-provoking subject appropriate to their completion of pledging and initiation.

When their initiation took place, the attitude of the pledge class was one of complete seriousness and reverence toward the ceremonies that they were acquainted with for the first time. The new probation week had proved a success, for without exception, the new members grasped the significance and beauty of the initiation ceremonies conferred upon them.

## THREE MEN PLEDGE

It is not unusual that the number of residents in the house should diminish after mid-years, for some members choose to live out, and occasionally one or two are forced to leave school. Thus with the beginning of the new term in February of this year it became advisable to take advantage of the chance to get some good pledges. An unofficial rushing period was started shortly after the start of the Spring term. As a result, Alpha Theta is now fortunate in having three new pledges. Two of them, William Ritchie of New York City and Richard Foster Perrine of Princeton, N. J., have moved into the house. The third new pledge, Wallace James Manson, lives in Melrose, Mass. They are all examples of the fine type of person that Sigma Chi and Alpha Theta are capable of attracting.

## OPEN LETTER FROM THE CONSUL

### Alpha Theta and the Future

The end of a school year seems to be the appropriate time to stop and review the accomplishments, and failures, of the past year, while at the same time critically examining the possibilities of the future.

In this regard, as your chapter's 59th year draws to a close, we submit in this issue of our new publication a report on the chapter's progress; our successes, our failures, and our hopes.

I have been given the precarious job of throwing some light on our very uncertain future.

### CHAPTER IS PREPARED

Needless to say the war is the great question mark. During the past year the fraternities at Tech have been sitting on pins while the Institute unofficially vacillated back and forth over the question of going on a three-year basis. It now seems certain that no such action will be taken, unless of course our country becomes an active belligerent. In any event, your chapter has no intention of being caught unprepared. During the past winter we have conducted an easygoing but steady rushing period, which has resulted in the addition of a number of excellent pledges. The two lower classes have thus been consciously stacked to the point where they represent over 70 percent of the resident chapter. Any sudden decision to graduate either of the two upper classes would thus have only a minimum effect on the chapter. We hope to maintain substantially this ratio as long as the uncertainty exists.

### AN EYE ON THE FUTURE

Perhaps a still more menacing possibility exists in the proposed lowering of the draft age limit, as it does not seem likely that engineering students, except possibly those in the senior class, would be granted any form of deferment. If such action is taken the chapter might well be faced with the possibility of losing men from all classes with no predictable regularity and thus with no hope of preparatory planning. Again, however, it is hoped that the chapter can be maintained sufficiently large and

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## SENIORS TACKLE ARMY, INDUSTRY

The time of year has again rolled around when the seniors are continually being asked, "Have you a job yet?" Until that time comes, this question is a rather touchy one, possibly because of our fears of being an "old maid" or more probably because of the great importance of this next step forward. The success or failure of our future may depend on it.

### JOBS PLENTIFUL

The class of '41 is both fortunate and unfortunate. Fortunate because the vacancies and potential jobs are many. The wage scale is above average. We are in a period of transformation and we are getting out of school at a time when we can be a vital part of that transformation. But we are unfortunate to be thrown into very chaotic conditions; our chances of shouldering a gun are also above average. If only our training as engineers can be used to make this a transformation for the better rather than having to fight to preserve our liberties.

### EENIE, MEENIE, MEINIE —

When July 4th is upon us, Bill Baldwin will either have a commission in the army or will be in Brackenridge, Pa., working with the Allegheny Ludlum Co. Charles Britt and Geoffrey Roberts will join Professor Fernstrom's crew of engineers at the North Carolina Shipbuilding Co. in Wilmington, Del., shortly after school closes. These boys will be kept busy, but the pay is good. Charles Peck is growing fonder of the Institute all the time. and is staying around for a year or two as an assistant to Professor Wilbur of the Civil Engineering Department. Charles will go to school part time and will have his Master's degree in about two years. George Boettner will continue to dabble in glass at the Corning Glass Works. Chuck Hall has ventured into a course in city planning, and will be around the Institute for a couple more years. Likewise, Jim Pickard, who is in the co-operative option of course VI, keeps his same address for another year. At this writing John Symons is still a hold-out. John would like to get located out near the cowboys and Indians, but I doubt if monstro (his car) will run that far west anymore, so John may have to be content to work around here with the rest of us.

## MANY IMPROVEMENTS ENHANCE HOUSE

The most recent house improvement that found its way into print is the game room, which was discussed in the last chapter publication. Brothers familiar with the house in the spring of '39 could now, with reasonably close inspection, discern several additions and innovations. It seems that the best way to report these is to go on a little tour of the house. Starting down in the game room, which is very modern looking with a new coat of paint on the floor, we find the hall leading to the stairs has been panelled to match the game room. There remains but to do something with the stairway and the basement will be an integral, as well as useful, part of the house. While in the basement we might stop in to see the new cement floor in the furnace room, and to look over a new work bench for hobbyists.

### SIGMA CHI SPOONS

On the first floor we hear tales of new silver presented by the class of '40. The spoons, etc., are engraved with a Sigma Chi, and no longer does the visiting brother wonder if he perhaps isn't being served by the Pullman Co. In the music room we notice how bright and shiny the floors appear. Last summer the first and second floors were sanded and varnished with a special preparation guaranteed to last.

The library has taken on added attractiveness by grace of a fine new rug presented to the chapter by the trustees. We all hope next fall will find the library fitted out in a new coat of wallpaper.

### NO NEED FOR NICKELS

There are several other general improvements that the chapter now enjoys. The old pay phone has disappeared and the entire phone situation changed so that the fellows may now call from the third floor, with no need to journey to the far reaches of the basement to make that Wellesley call. Freshmen who bring their electric clocks to Tech will be spared disappointment in the future, thanks to the recent change from direct to alternating current. The chapter no longer need fear the radio-converter catching fire before Triad Dances, and to old-timers the appearance of AC on Beacon Street means that Boston has taken another step toward civilization.

All in all, the old house seems to always look a little better every time we return to it; and many ideas for further improvements are in the air.

## NEWS FROM ALPHA THETA ALUMNI

**Joseph C. Jefferds, '40**—Just completed a month's training at Ordnance school in Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md., and has again been transferred to Fort Knox with Mechanized Cavalry Division. He's been in the army since January and prior to that time was in Bethlehem Steel's sales loop training course.

**Winfield H. James, '40**, is still working in N.Y.C. for "The News." Missed being called up as a Reserve officer because his heart had developed a murmur. No complaints heard from him on that score.

**William W. Merrill, '40**, recently married in New Jersey. Made a quick trip from Burbank, Calif., where he works. Last news of work was that he was going great guns in a liaison capacity between shop and design of the Lockheed Aircraft Corp.

**Franklin E. Penn, '40**, will graduate from five-year mechanical engineering course June 10. E. I. duPont de Nemours & Co. will have the pleasure of employing him in their Industrial Engineering division. We note with interest that Penn won the Balfour Award for this Province in 1940.

**Richard D. Gerges, '40**, will wind up five years of work at the Institute this June, and is going to work for Organic Chemicals Division of United Carbon and Carbide in Charleston, W. Va.

**William R. Stern, '40**, is going to work for Barrett Chemical Co. in Philadelphia, the concern which employs Dick Gerges' father. He has just completed a "bang-up" graduate thesis.

**John G. Leschen '40**, is in for another year. Jack is going on for a Doctor's degree in Metallurgy. He has been spending his winter week-ends in the ski country.

**Geoffrey D. Roberts, '40**, is still at the Institute and gets his degree in June. He plans to go to work for ex-Professor K. D. Fernstrom on the Government's new shipyard in Wilmington, N. C.

**Harold G. Elrod, '40**, likewise will graduate in June. Hasn't decided who he will work for as yet.

**Paul F. Kietel, '40**, is working in Long Beach, California, for Union Oil. Still argues about Germany, but he is glad he is in the U. S.

**Samuel P. Card, '40**, went to work for Pratt & Whitney last June and got along fine. Found a better job with Glenn L. Martin Co. late in January and is reported doing very well.

**Edward Colson, '40**, now has his nose buried in the Geology laboratory, and is planning to stay at Tech until he gets his Doctor's degree.

## SIGS DO WELL IN BEAVER SPORTS

### Take Second Place in Football

Rarely beaten and never severely so, the house athletes have shown an undaunted fighting spirit all year, and, backed by wonderful support from the rest of the chapter, they have proved themselves proficiently versatile.

Under the inspiring leadership of "Mac" McJunkin, our energetic and enthusiastic athletic chairman, the touch football team coasted into the round robin with successive victories over Alpha Tau Omega, 14-12, Phi Mu Delta, 12-0, Phi Beta Epsilon, 7-0, and Theta Delta Chi, 6-0. After running through the highly favored Chi Phis, who were previously undefeated in two years of play, in the first round robin game, we had to suspend play until the snow melted this Spring, only to be caught napping for the first time all season, when the wearied Phi Gams scored on a desperate last-minute sleeper, and went on to win, 7-6. This was a heartbreaker for the boys to lose, and unfortunately we had to settle for second place.

### NOSED OUT IN VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball proved to be our weak sport, for after beating Theta Delta Chi and gaining a forfeit from Sigma Alpha Epsilon, we were shaded by the Senior House just before reaching the round robin.

The basketball team was composed of a bunch of experienced boys who worked very well together. Our first game was a "no contest" affair with Theta Delta Chi, and the second was another breather with Phi Sigma Kappa. With the round robin in sight the boys lost their eyes, and the Dekes managed to take out a hard-fought win and once again fate caught us.

At this writing the softball team is burning up the league, having recently jumped all over a Delta Psi pitcher for nineteen runs. Bobby Breck, Sig pitcher, is in rare form, and it will be no surprise at all if we breeze through the tournament from here on in.

The thing which is most encouraging to the chapter is not that our teams have been victorious, but that these teams will continue to be victorious at least for the next two or three years, for they are almost completely composed of energetic freshmen and sophomores. The spirit is high, the support reassuring, and the material super, which all goes to promise a bright outlook for future fraternity athletics.

## SIGMA CHI COVERS ACTIVITIES FRONT

### Next Year's Juniors Hold Key Positions

It is true that Karl T. Compton is still president of the Institute, but the fellows in the chapter are doing their part in running things. This year we had two outstanding seniors. Charlie Peck was editor-in-chief of Technique, and James Pickard was president of Tau Beta Pi.

### JUNIORS ARE ATHLETES

The Junior Class has been doing a fine job for the house too. Pete Sibley has distinguished himself as captain of the Lacrosse team, and played outstanding football at end last fall. Another regular on the football and Lacrosse teams is Jack Finger, who also had time to coach the freshman field day team. Jacques Shaw played varsity squash most of the season, won the Junior Varsity tournament, and is also a member of the tennis team. Ralph Garrett was a consistent high scorer on the rifle squad.

Some of the Junior positions for next year have not been appointed at this writing, but it looks as though things will turn out very well.

Allan Kirkpatrick has been appointed manager of the T.C.A. publications, and Charlie Gates is next year's publicity manager for T.E.N. Howard McJunkin was elected advertising manager of Technique, and Robert Meissner, managing editor of the same publication. Jack Gardner will be made either manager or track or cross country later this spring, and Frank Briber's chances of an appointment to the M.I.T.A.A. are quite good.

In athletics we have Newton and Gates playing sophomore squash, McJunkin a varsity track man, and Gates, Bollinger and Meissner varsity Lacrosse.

### FROSH GETTING STARTED

The freshmen have been doing their part in upholding the house in campus extra-curricular activities. Bill Clark had an undefeated season on the frosh wrestling team, Court Reeves played basketball, Dick Perrine ran the frosh mile, and Bill Scott made a fine showing in both gym and rifle. Dixon Ward, Stephen Knight, Bob Breck, Bill Schlegle and Bill Clark have all been appointed to the sophomore Technique staff.

## C. F. PECK EDITS 1941 TECHNIQUE

### Takes Position with Institute

The chapter's tradition of entering into all phases of school activity was well upheld this year, with emphasis on publications. Outstanding man in publications was Charles Peck, editor-in-chief of Technique, the school year-book.

Technique is the most important of the Institute student publications and is one of the outstanding college year-books. A position on its three-man senior board is a real achievement. Charlie reached his key position on the senior board after three years on the freshman, sophomore and junior staffs, where he held positions of assistant treasurer and biographies editor.

Charles is an excellent example of how leadership in extra-curricular activities need not interfere with school work. In spite of all the work necessary in getting out the book, he did so well in his studies in Civil Engineering that he will be back with us again next year as an assistant in Structures.

## OPEN LETTER FROM THE CONSUL

(Continued from page 2)

strong that such losses will not force closing of the house and disbanding of the chapter.

Aside from the all-overshadowing national problems, Alpha Theta's future looks good. Scholastically the chapter has for the past two years been consistently among the top third of the fraternities and there seems no reason to expect anything but improvement in the future. In activities, with outstanding exceptions, the chapter is, on the whole, weak. The problem will reach a head next year, but should improve from there on as a result of the vigorous pressure which is to be put on the coming freshman class. In interfraternity athletics the chapter has done very well, largely due to the efforts of the coming sophomore class, which of course means even brighter things to come.

On the whole I think I can report in all sincerity that the chapter is in excellent shape; and surely that is the best insurance for the future.