

Sorority Girls and Their Life at the University of Nebraska



MISS
CECILE
COBB,
Delta
Gamma



MISS HELEN STEINER,
Alpha Omicron Pi



MISS RUTH
HALLER, Alpha Phi



MISS JEAN
MCGAHLY, Pi Beta Phi



MISS KATHERINE WILLIS
Alpha Phi



MISS IVO HUNTINGTON
Chi Omega



MISS RITA THOMAS
Delta Delta Delta



MISS RUTH CULL
Chi Omega



INTERIOR OF DELTA DELTA DELTA HOUSE



MISS BEATRICE
MOFFETT
Pi Beta Phi



MISS MARION
WHITMORE
Alpha Chi Omega



MISS BRETA BILLS
Delta Gamma

men are to be developed by the sorority during the first two years of college life of the members if the sorority is to retain its prestige and standing. Here as elsewhere we find a survival of the fittest and through the influence of their alumni sororities are gradually coming to recognize this. The high school co-ed coming to the University of Nebraska, expecting to affiliate with one of the Greek letter organizations, and thus insure herself of four years of pleasure, will realize her mistake even before the final initiation vows are taken.

A miniature boarding school for girls might accurately describe life within the chapter house were it not for the co-educational features of the state university. The dining room presents an animated scene during each meal and it is here that real fraternal spirit is shown. It is here that the happenings of the school receive due attention and discussion. Perhaps it is somebody's dress which furnishes a theme—some incident in the class room—some campus stir or some university event. Be that as it may, before the meal is concluded that particular topic has been thoroughly dissected by from twenty to thirty feminine minds.

She registers for from fourteen to sixteen hours of college work, an average course, and generally receives excellent grades in the majority of her studies. There is a larger percentage of sorority girls who win Phi Beta Kappa honors than fraternity men. The majority of girls are conscientious in their preparation and regular in their attendance at classes. She is generally a better student than the nonfraternity girl.

Arising early in the morning, the sorority girl is much prompter than her Greek relative, the fraternity man. Breakfast over, the morning classes are attended. Luncheon at noon finds the bunch fully prepared to discourse on the experiences of the morning—then it is off to college again for the afternoon. Evening finds the co-ed tired from her day's labor, ready for the quiet hour alone among the fraternal members where the thousand little confidences are given and received.

Social Side Full of Real Pleasure.

Sometimes the girls gather around the piano, there to renew their fraternity fervor with the songs and traditions of their fraters. Or perhaps dancing will furnish diversion, until the hour makes it urgent that studies be resumed. The evening at the library or the sorority house passes uneventfully—sometimes the girls are invited to participate in a spread given by one of their number in her room away from the watchful eye of the chaperons. But these are rare. Five days in the week pass with scarcely no variation in this routine.

At the end of the week the social side of the university organizations comes into evidence and throughout the school year Friday and Saturday nights are always marked by social activities. Earlier sorority life as regards social activities varies greatly from that of recent years, although the present tendency is decided towards simplicity in the giving of annual parties. Charter members of the organizations probably recall with as much pleasure the parties where two-piece orchestras furnished the music, the hall knew no decorations and the dance programs bore

little resemblance to the engraved or embossed leather souvenirs of recent years. As for lunch, that came after the completion of the dance, boys and girls going to the cafe and there lining up at the counter to enjoy the delicacies of a piece of pie and a cup of coffee, sometimes a sandwich if the boys were feeling particularly prosperous. Formal parties have not served to retain the genuine university spirit developed at these times, the "old grad" claims.

Two Great Events On Card.

Two events are looked forward to with anticipation by the sorority girl—the annual party and the annual banquet. Oftentimes they come on successive nights. The excitement preceding the annual party can only be equaled by that before the annual banquet. All of the arrangements are in charge of the party committee and the rest of the girls are supposed to be "surprised." Some way the music never sounded quite so good—the programs are "cuter," and the fees never tasted better. Mary is looking just charming and Will is perfectly groomed. Wasn't the grand march fine? "Miss B—k is a senior in the Ponca high—she is certainly a splendid girl." These and a thousand similar remarks illustrate the "post-mortem" which always must follow the dance.

To a freshman in a sorority the banquet is the greatest event of the year. It is then that she meets with the alumni and learns of the traditions of the fraternity. The tables are beautifully decorated, the place cards the results of careful thought, the decorations selected only after the most careful discussion and the menu after an equally heartrending debate.

In some of the sororities the girls can hardly wait until the more substantial feature of the banquet is over with and, following the annual custom, those members who have fallen victims to a college engagement make their announcements. Of course the girls laugh and cry at the same time—showing the happy girl with their best wishes and express their surprise despite the fact that the particular couple has furnished the theme for the "frat house jolly" for the entire semester. Then the older girls testify as to how glad they are to be back with the active bunch, which they know is much better than when they were in school. They talk along in a jovial strain, exhort-

ing the active bunch to ever maintain the glory of the sorority. Finally the toastmaster is compelled to close the banquet, the girls repair to the frat house, sing some more songs, exchange more confidences and the banquet is again threshed out in detail.

Glad Greeting for Brothers.

When Mary's brother visits the frat house to see his little sister there is genuine excitement. Mary is the darling of the bunch, you know, and has spent countless hours extolling this particular brother to her "frat sisters." Brother is met at the door and ushered into the presence of twenty girls, where he becomes alarmed at the broadside of twenty pairs of eyes and is distinctly conscious that his hair is red, he has a plentiful supply of freckles and his hands and feet were always much too large. An eventful hour is on hand for the brother—he stumbles through the introductions. He grasps like a drowning man for straws, for threads of the conversation, and after a perspiring hour vaguely discovers that they are trying to be kind to him.

His experience is not much different from that of the poor rushee who must submit to the rigid inspection of critical girls. Her manners at the table, her dress and her conversation do not escape the watchful critics, and should she use the wrong fork she would have reason for humiliation all the rest of her life. If she is so unfortunate as to choose the wrong dress, like consequences are apt to follow her misjudgment.

During the last year radical revisions have been made in the rushing rules, the results of which are yet to be experienced next fall. In the opinion of many of the sorority girls the proposed rules will mean that the duties of each will become more arduous and that the way is being paved for sophomore pledging.

"Once a Greek always a Greek," certainly applies in relation to the girls, and it is rarely that a sorority member regrets her increased activities in her college course brought about through the influence of her sorority. Her loyalty and devotion is characteristic of that of a woman and in after years the fairest memories of her college experiences result from the house life of her sorority which time has woven into fraternity tradition.

LIVING in chapter houses, either owned or rented, in the vicinity of the campus of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln are ten families, composed exclusively of girls and representing the social aristocracy of the state's greatest educational institution. They are all big families—as families go—ranging in size from twenty to thirty-eight members. Each "sister" in each of these big families is a student in good standing in some department at the state university.

The members of these families do not look much alike insofar as the usual family resemblances are concerned. There are fair girls with golden hair and blue eyes, the popular brunette and perchance in most of them, although perhaps the girls themselves wouldn't like to be referred to as such, there are one or two auburn haired co-eds. There within the same chapter walls dwell the scholar and the socially ambitious—the upper classman and the bashful freshman. There is one common trait between the sisters of each of these families—the little jeweled sorority pin—viewed with tender awe by the freshmen and dearer still to the seniors whose college days are linked inseparably with the emblem of their fraternity.

The college poster description of a college girl doesn't fit the members of the sororities at Nebraska any more than the stage representation of the farmer fits the real tiller of the soil. Of course there are some "rah-rah" girls—some "good fellows"—among the members of the Greek letter society, but the majority of them don't differ much from those who don't wear the jeweled emblems. They run, in fact, the whole gamut of desirable femininity. Greekdom knows no distinctions differing from the outside world. Every phase of femininity finds expression in the ten sororities at the University of Nebraska, but in spite of the incongruity of temperament they are all sisters, bound together by their initiation vows and the common interests of their "fraternity."

Sororities Got In Early.

Twenty-seven years ago this month the University of Nebraska extended its first welcome to a co-ed fraternity. Since that date nine other national sororities have installed chapters at the Cornhusker college. Chronologically speaking, the advance of the Greeks at Nebraska may be divided into four periods. Kappa Kappa Gamma and Delta Gamma were installed almost at the same time.

These two societies served to utilize all of the

available sorority material until six years later, when Delta Delta Delta was founded at Nebraska. In the year following Pi Beta Phi was established and Kappa Alpha Theta in the following year completed the second period of the great Greek invasion.

Another term of six years divided the second and third periods, Chi Omega being installed at Nebraska in 1903. Alpha Omicron Pi was accepted in the mystic ring in 1903 and here ends the third invasion. The fourth period of sorority activity started with the installation of a chapter of Alpha Phi in 1907 and was followed by Alpha Chi Omega in 1907. Last winter Delta Zeta established a chapter at Nebraska and the Eastern Star Order of Achoth gained a foothold at the university, but the latter does not have representation in the Girls' Pan-Hellenic council. Rumors are afloat that still another sorority is planning to install a chapter at Nebraska, but it is impossible to verify the report.

Membership Is Not General.

Less than one-seventh of the co-eds of the University of Nebraska are members of the Greek letter organizations. Perhaps the greatest chasm between a sorority girl and a nonfraternity co-ed results from the financial demands on the members. Undoubtedly sorority life is far more expensive—and in some societies much higher than in others. "There is a certain tragedy," declared one of the members of the faculty most interested in the Girls' Pan-Hellenic organization, "in the elimination of large numbers of girls from the participation in the joys and benefits of sorority affiliations because of financial considerations." Yet an outsider has but once to make a close inspection of sorority life until the sad realization of an aristocracy forces itself upon him. What has been said of sororities applies with equal force to the fraternities, but the purpose of this article is not to criticize, but rather to depict sorority life as it exists at the state university.

Naturally a sorority's estimate of the influence of its members is an excellent barometer of the ideals of sorority girls, since it reflects the aims of the members. There is much reason for encouragement if such a measure is to be applied. The report of the chairman of the Girls' Pan-Hellenic congress shows that the members are carrying the scholarship ideal even higher than the nonfraternity co-eds. Only one visit to the chapter houses is required to convince the most skeptical that a fraternity is no place for a lazy person.

Sorority Girls Must Work Hard.

All of the latent capabilities of the under class