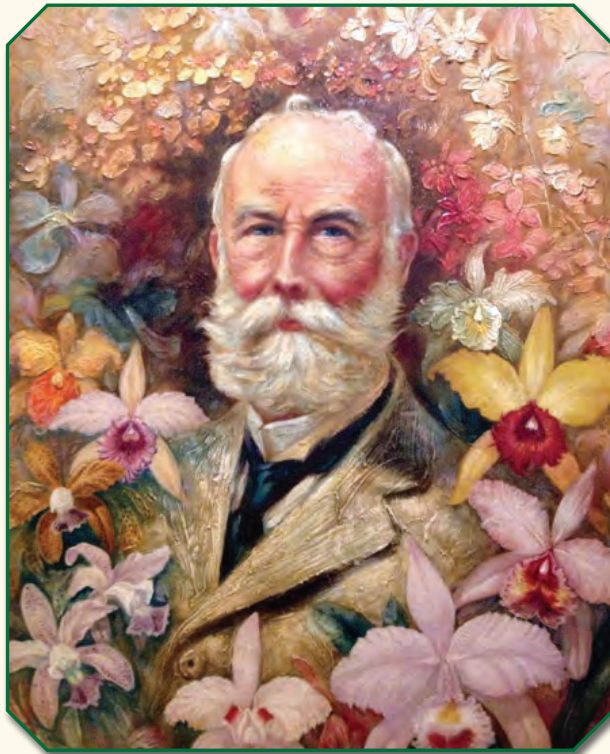


A Brother's Story

Theodore Luqueer Mead

Class of 1877



by Thomas M. Reilly '07



Theodore G. Mead

COVER PORTRAIT: This lively portrait of Mead was painted in 1932 by Sam Stoltz, an artist and self-trained architect whose quirky “Spanish Florida” homes can still be seen in Windermere, College Park, Winter Park, and on scattered sites throughout central Florida.



A Brother's Story

Theodore Luqueer Mead 1877

FOR THIS EDITION OF *A BROTHER'S STORY*, WE FIND ourselves going back. Way back. All the way back to the earliest days of Alpha Delta Phi at Cornell, to the Class of 1877 and a young man from Fishkill, New York, who would go on to become a veritable, albeit long-lost, legend of our beloved chapter.

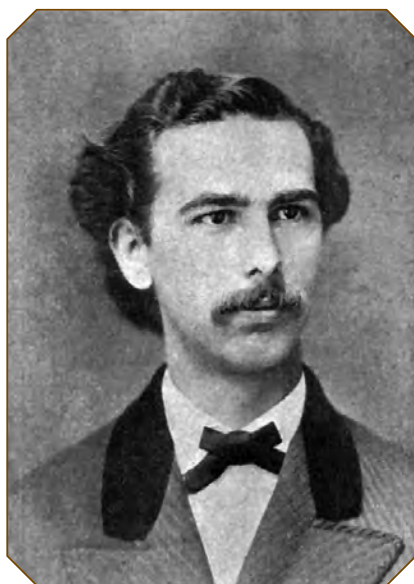
Theodore Luqueer Mead was born in 1852, about seventy-five miles north of Manhattan in the Hudson Valley. When the time came for college, Mead decided to pursue a degree in civil engineering and enrolled in Cornell University in 1873. The fledgling university had matriculated its first students only six years earlier, and the first Greek organizations had been chartered soon thereafter (Alpha Delta Phi being the fourth such group established). It was this decision by Mead to attend Cornell and ultimately to join Alpha Delt that would change both the course of his life and the history of the fraternity. Writing his autobiography later in life, Mead said of his Ithaca days, "My initiation into Alpha Delta Phi seemed to me the most wonderful and the happiest thing that had ever come to me, the very ideal of brotherhood and fraternal love." Teddy Mead, as he was affectionately known to his brothers, was the most loved and well-respected brother of the Cornell Chapter for the next six decades.

Mead went on to become a renown naturalist, botanist, horticulturalist, and entomologist. His early work on butterflies was greatly admired by future Cornell professor and lepidopterist Vladimir Nabokov, and in later life, it was Mead's horticultural ingenuity and work cross-breeding



*A extremely rare example of *Cattleya meadii*, the only orchid actually named for Mead, can be found in the greenhouse at Mead Botanical Garden. It blooms during the fall of each year.*

orchids that brought him fame. He made his home in Oviedo, Florida, where he was a professor at Rollins College until his death in 1936. Thanks to the archivists at Rollins, we have recently gained access to a trove of Mead's personal correspondence, papers, and photographs that, in-part, document the first fifty years of Alpha Delta Phi at Cornell. The collection (copies of which are now contained within our archives in Kroch Library) provides an unprecedented glimpse into 19th century fraternity life and the history of the Cornell Chapter through the incredible legacy of one brother. Most of the quotes and descriptions that follow come directly from the primary source material in the Mead archive and have never before been published.



Theodore Mead at age 22, 1874.

The first thing to note about Teddy Mead is that he didn't become a member of Alpha Delta Phi until his senior year. When he first arrived in Ithaca, he lived in a rented room downtown, nearby to several fellow undergrads who were members of Delta Upsilon. They offered Mead a bid in the spring of his freshman year, which he accepted, and he spent much of his time in their rented quarters on 12 Quarry Street when he was not studying civil engineering under Prof. Estevan A. Fuertes. Sadly, tragedy struck early in Mead's college career. His

older brother, a mechanic and inventor with whom Teddy was quite close, was accidentally killed in the family home in Manhattan while working on his latest invention, exploding bullets. Mead and his parents were devastated, but perhaps, it was through this terrible experience that his compassion for all life, especially his friends, was born.

During his junior year in 1876, the Delta Upsilon brothers rented a house of their own, but it would prove to be a less than harmonious living arrangement for Teddy. The in-fighting among the brothers, driven by a dispute over the "character" of future recruits, ultimately resulted in Mead angrily submitting his resignation in February of his senior year, due to some "chicanery" on the part of his DU brothers, who had apparently nullified Mead's vote on the



Cornell Alpha Delta Phi brothers in 1878 (left to right): (back row) Frederick Catlin '82, Oscar Taylor '81, Edward House '81, Walter Fox '80, Harold Gifford '79, Franklin Jones '73, Edward Howland '79, Robert Morris '80, James Skinner '81, Frank Washburn '83; (middle row) Henry Stambaugh '81, Delano Smith '83, William Edwards '79, Robert Parmelee '81, Charles Manniere '80, William Howard '83; (front row) Frank Luckey '82, Quentin Booth '81, Henry Cushing '82, Charles Saunders '81, Winfield Shiras '82, Theodore Mead '77.

matter. Two months later, he was initiated into Alpha Delta Phi and wrote to a friend, “I now belong to the society which I should have joined when a freshman.” He would be with us for the rest of his life.

Mead completed his civil-engineering degree and graduated in 1877, but he was in no hurry to depart from Ithaca, and already sensing his true passions lay in a different field, he remained at Cornell to work as an assistant to a botany professor through 1881. It was during this period that he was instrumental in overseeing the financing and construction of the first Alpha Delta Phi chapter house at 503 East Buffalo Street. The building, which stands to this day, is believed to be the first fraternity chapter house ever built expressly designed for the needs of fraternity men. Never before had any Greek organization constructed a house of its own to provide room and board for undergraduates, as well as being their “lodge” for formal ceremonies and secret rituals.

At that time, most of the fraternities at Cornell rented rooms above local businesses in downtown Ithaca to use as fraternal lodges. After an initial stint on Tioga Street, the Alpha Delts moved their lodge to the Wilgus Block, next to the opera house. But as Delta Upsilon and other fraternities began renting houses farther up East Hill to be closer to



Alpha Delt brothers in June 1879.

campus, the Alpha Delts, noting the boost in recruitment this provided, decided their best move was to forgo the pains of renting and simply construct a chapter house of their own from the ground up. In December 1877, undergraduate president (and Teddy Mead's roommate) Henry Gifford wrote to the alumni with an impassioned case: "The Cornell Chapter of Alpha Delta Phi has decided that it can no longer safely put off building a chapter house... We have taken in first-class men this year, but we already begin to feel the advantage which some of the societies possess in their chapter houses, and in spite of their relatively somewhat inferior men, if the matter were deferred another year it is quite possible that Alpha Delta Phi might have to permanently take a secondary rank among the societies at Cornell, which we do not propose to allow so long as we have the strength to exist at all."

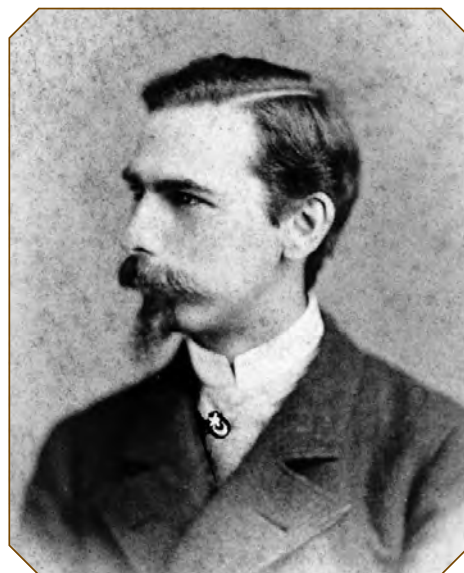
Within the letter was enclosed a subscription slip for a "building fund," soliciting donations toward the project. Gifford continued: "we are making a great effort to raise the needed money, and while doing



Alpha Delt house at 503 Buffalo Street.

what we can ourselves, confidently look forth to our members who have left college. The amount to be raised is so small that you may be sure that your money will count. The subscriptions thus far average about sixty dollars each. If you cannot give a large sum, please give what you can, and rest assured that it will be appreciated. It is our intention to keep a chapter record album with, if possible, the portraits and, at least, the autographs of those who contribute to this fund, with a record of the amount given by each, so that the memory of the founders of the chapter house may be kept in the minds of those who come after us to share its benefits.” According to Mead, the brothers were showing a mere \$1,000 on their balance sheet, with the proposed building estimated to cost \$14,000.

Subscriptions were issued in the form of ten-year notes, with annual \$10 payments made to the undergraduate treasurer and a 6% interest incurred when past due. However, the alumni weren’t the only ones pitching in. Teddy Mead convinced his parents to loan the brothers \$500 for the building project, albeit with a few strings attached. Teddy’s mother, concerned for her son’s “spiritual welfare,” said he could have the money only if he would agree to “attend one



Teddy Mead at age 27, 1879.

Orthodox Evangelical church service every Sunday for a year.” On the back of the envelope, his dissenting father added, “Don’t you do it, Ted! Charge \$10 a time and stop when you get sick of it.” So thankful were the brothers that they credited the Meads’ loan with compound interest and repaid them a sum of \$1,000 twenty years later.

Ultimately having raised \$12,000 for the project, the contracts for the site and building were drawn up and guaranteed by an alumni brother, and local Ithaca architect William Henry Miller was hired to design and build the nation’s first “frat house.” The brothers of 1877 could not have made a more fitting choice. In 1872, Miller had become the first person to graduate from the Cornell architecture school, and he was close friends with university president Andrew Dickson White. Over the course of his career, he would go on to build over seventy buildings in Ithaca, including McGraw Tower, Uris Library, Risley Hall, the A.D. White House,

and eight other fraternity houses on campus. Henry Gifford provides the earliest description Miller's plan for their future home: "The chapter house is to be constructed of red brick, with black brick and Ohio stone trimmings, a slate roof, and finished with hard wood, and is to be situated on the corner of Buffalo and Spring streets," a location the undergrads considered, "the most advantageous site for the purpose in Ithaca."

The original idea to build their own chapter house can be credited to Brother William Ely Bramhall 1877, who stood by his plan "even when every other member was opposed to it," according to the 1882 Alpha Delta Phi catalogue. However, it ultimately took Teddy Mead to make his idea a reality. "Even Brother Bramhall could not accomplish definite results 'til after the winter initiation of 1877, when Brother T. L. Mead became a member. Brother Mead aided the scheme so energetically that, by the spring of 1878, plans were drafted, and at midnight on the 10th of June, 1878, the chapter assembled on the spot where the house now stands." That night, the brothers performed a groundbreaking ceremony and "a feeling of confidence in the success of the plan took possession of all the members." Seven months later, sixteen Alpha Delts moved in to their new home.



campus at Hamilton, adjacent to the college library. It is of stone, with Mansard roof of slate. It was designed by W. H. Hamilton, of Utica. At Williams the "Alpha Delta Phi House" is of stone, two stories, with Mansard roof and turrets. Within are parlors, dormitories and a lodge; the cabinet work is in hard woods, and the furnishing is elegant in design. The building, without, presents a novel and picturesque outline and pleasing colors. It was designed by the well known architect, Professor Russell Sturgis Jr., of New York, a member of the Manhattan Chapter. The grounds are well located and ample. The Dartmouth Chapter for many years has owned a substantial brick chapter house. The lower floor is devoted to reception rooms and dormitories. The higher stories above, with blank windows, contains ante-rooms and a capacious lodge, said to be, in its decoration and appointments, second to none in the fraternity. The chapter at Amherst College owns two distinct buildings. The first is a brick chapter hall, with dormitories for four men. The second, "The Alpha Delta Phi House," is a four-story double brick building, situated on the main street, near the college—one of the most substantial and attractive buildings of the town. Here a majority of the chapter reside—a home accommodating twenty to twenty-five members. There are also reception and reading rooms for the entertainment of friends. The lodge at Kenyon is a windowless structure of wood, brick lined. It stands in a grove not far from the college. The Chapter House at Cornell was erected during 1878, and formally occupied in January of this year. The site is second to none in Ithaca, overlooking the lake and commanding extended views on three sides. The building is of pressed brick, varied with colored tiles, in modern English style, with steep roof and central dome. The latter surmounts the lodge, and when lighted at night produces an impressive and beautiful effect. Connecting with the main floor is a broad roofed piazza, a half octagon in shape, which adds to the picturesqueness of the building. The interior is finished in hard wood, with panelled wainscot and floorings, antique mantels and recessed window seats. Eighteen members reside in the building. At Wesleyan University, the Middletown Chapter has a fund subscribed and will build at an early date. The chapters at Brown University, Trinity and University of Michigan have similar projects in view. The graduates in New York have a fund and may lease a house in the fall for a fraternity club. Old college graduates and the parents of students will ask what influence the new method of chapter life has upon the scholarship and morals of the society. The possession of lodges and chap-

Alpha Delt house as portrayed in The Daily Graphic, May 1879.



Buffalo Street chapter house, 1889.

By Thanksgiving of that year it was still a work in progress as Teddy Mead reported to his parents: “The house is going on fast. The plastering is finished and the men are at work [on] the woodwork, all the radiators are in the house, and we expect the steam up in a week or ten days.” The beau-

tiful new chapter house had multiple parlors, a library, a kitchen, several “water closets,” and various studies and bedrooms. The entire third floor served as the official “Lodge,” where initiation ceremonies were held and other fraternity business conducted, an adjoining ante-room housed a pump organ for musical accompaniment.

Life in the new chapter house seemed to suit the brotherhood just fine, but there were certain rules. A letter penned to the apprehensive father of a prospective pledge assured him that “no alcoholic or malt beverages are allowed anywhere in the house.” He was also informed that the house itself was “owned by a corporation consisting of graduate members resident in the vicinity, and the undergraduates have no legal complication with it whatever. The society dues are the same for all whether they room in the house or not; those choosing to room in the house pay a reasonable rent as similar rooms commanded elsewhere in town and nothing more. Those not rooming in the house have of course the benefit of the lodge rooms, parlors, and reading room as much as the others.” The rent was a weekly sum of \$2.50.

Over the years, improvements continued to be made at 503 East Buffalo Street, including the installation of a memorial library and a reception room with a new fireplace, wallpapering, and upholstering. The year 1885 saw the installation of the latest technological craze: a telephone. In reporting this news to then-alumnus Teddy Mead, undergraduate brother Charles Baker 1886 wrote that another recent alumnus had “given us a telephone and also a pew in the Presbyterian Church, so that what we can’t learn in the one we ought to be sitting in the other.”

There were some setbacks as well. It is noted in the annals of the



Edith Edwards Mead, 1895.

fraternity catalogue that, on January 24, 1891, “a fire broke out” in the third floor of the Lodge, and though the brothers saved the house from total destruction, the Lodge itself was “badly burned.” However, in true Alpha Delt fashion: “Through prompt action on the part of the brothers, no records were lost, and the Lodge was speedily rebuilt, with better appointments than it had formerly possessed.”

Teddy Mead lived at 503 East Buffalo Street until the end of 1881. He worked in botanical research, took graduate courses, and lived happily in his beloved chapter house. He even

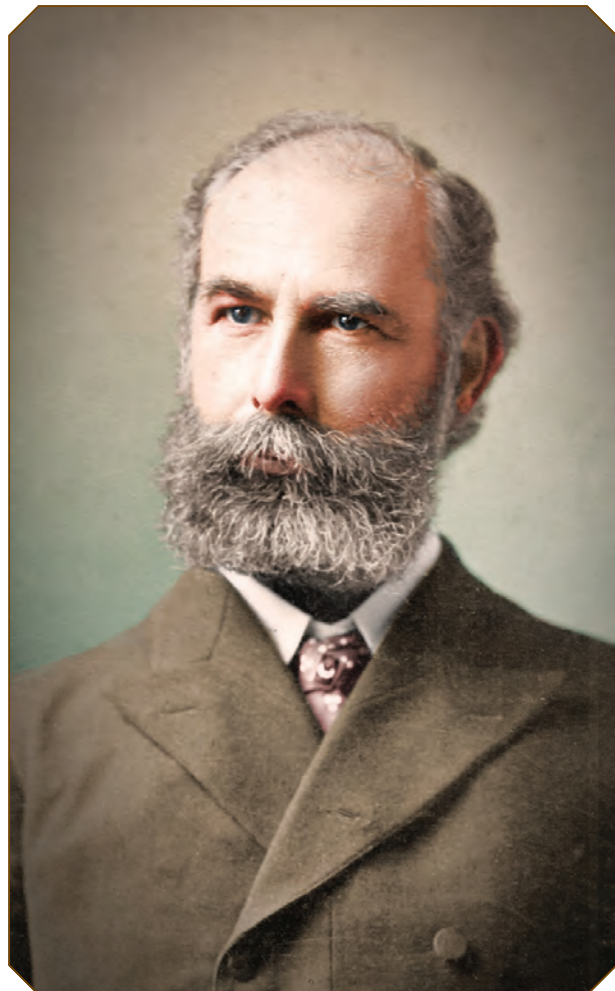
helped to install special stained glass windows, ordered from Philadelphia in his final year in Ithaca. A brief, yet incomplete, stint at Columbia Law School of less than a year divided up his days at Cornell, but even while in Manhattan, he socialized regularly with the Columbia Chapter of Alpha Delta Phi, as well as with the nearby Manhattan Chapter at City College of New York and various other alumni groups in the city. In 1882, after his father purchased a ninety-acre estate in Florida to grow oranges, Teddy, who had recently married the young Edith Edwards, joined him and made it his home for the rest of his life.

Although he now lived quite far away from Cayuga’s waters, Mead was always near and dear in the thoughts of the Cornell Alpha Delts. The undergraduate brothers of the 1880s enjoyed life in their plush new home, and they regularly kept Mead appraised as to the state of things on Buffalo Street over the years. The following description of an initiation ceremony in the fall 1882 provides a wonderful (and strikingly familiar) example.

Undergraduate brother Nils Howard 1883 recalled the evening’s events in a letter to Mead: “It occurred Friday, Oct. 13, and was a great success. I had the boys practice the form before hand, so they knew their parts. The first man got to the house at 9 precisely—the hour appointed. Fifteen minutes later, the second man came. I allowed fifteen minutes to each man going thru, and the boys were very prompt in arriving. There was not a hitch or mistake or delay the whole evening ’till the time came

for the last man to come—10.30 p.m. We had to wait twenty minutes for him. It proved afterward that the delay was caused by the freshman, who had grown tired of waiting at the appointed place and so had gone home. But Jack Yawger pulled him out and brought him to the house. After a most excellent charge by the judge and the other ceremonies, we went to the parlor below, there a first-class supper was in waiting. Having satisfied the inner maw, we turned to the ‘feast of reason and the flow of soul,’ and had a very good time. Then the tables were run into the library, the parlor floors cleared, and the fun and revelry began. Songs, dances, etc. were plentiful. Someone said, ‘Well, boys, isn’t it about time we had “49 Blue-Bottles”?’ (3 a.m.). So the circle of chairs (backs in) was formed and this rousing old relic was given with great gusto.” Howard adds parenthetically that “49 Blue-Bottles,” an early version of the song “99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall,” “was introduced as an initiation chorus when I was a freshman, and it has been given down at every initiation and reunion ever since. No such gathering of the chapter would be complete without ‘49 Blue-Bottles.’” It seems the degree to which the undergraduate residents of Buffalo Street adhered to the ‘no malt beverages in the house’ rule can be reasonably deemed questionable at best.

Nils Howard continues: “we then came to the ‘specialties’—a feature that had grown up in the last year or so. Any man who has a funny story, any caricature, character sketch, or anything of that nature is called upon to give it down. We had them from the boys...and two of the freshman are first-rate clog dancers. You can imagine that after the boys had been thru all these performances



Theodore Mead with fraternity pin at neck, 1903.



Alexander Shaler brass plaque from 777 Stewart Avenue.

that they were in rather undress uniform. Then we had a Virginia reel and songs etc. The last revelers did not retire 'till five or six o'clock, and two of the boys did not get to bed at all. We had a grand old time, and I enjoyed myself more that night than at any similar gathering."

Among those revelrous new initiates in the fall of 1882 was a lanky young man named Ezra Cornell 1886, a grandson of the university's esteemed founder. In another letter penned to Mead the following year, returning alumnus Harry Robie 1882 reports that, "Young Ezra Cornell is a very nice fellow, though I didn't see so much of him as he doesn't room at the house. The boys say he isn't very much of a student but as he is very tall he is immensely useful up in the lodge to turn off the gas." Ezra's younger brother, Franklin Cuthbert Cornell Jr. 1889, would also join the ranks of Alpha Delta Phi two years later.

Several other familiar and famous names appeared throughout Teddy Mead's correspondence: Ira Alexander Shaler 1884, whose tragic fate is forever emblazoned on a brass plaque in the Great Hall at 777 Stewart Avenue, joined in 1880. Electric industry pioneer Allan Christopher Balch 1889 (of Balch Hall fame) pledged in 1885. And the pledge class of 1896 brought both Hiram Murray Little 1900, in whose memory the famed Goat House was built, and future oil magnate Walter Clark Teagle 1899 into the fold. Perhaps the most remarkable member of this era was Edward Mandell House 1881, whom Teddy Mead described as "one of my good friends... a genial Texan, afterward known only to history as Colonel House, President Wilson's friend, who was the only one I know who could utilize energetic cuss words and make it sound as though he was pronouncing a benediction." Colonel House went on to be one of Woodrow Wilson's closest friends and advisors throughout his political career. The president dispatched House to France in 1918

to help draft what would become the Treaty of Versailles, bringing the First World War to its official close.

During his undergraduate years as a student in the civil-engineering department, Teddy Mead studied under its founding dean, Professor Estevan Antonio Fuertes (for whom Cornell's Fuertes Observatory is named). In those days, Mead crossed paths with another future Alpha Delt, his professor's young son, Louis Agassiz Fuertes 1897¹. Later in life, Teddy referred to Louis as "the bird artist, always one of the most valued of my friends and fraternity brothers." Young Louis was just a toddler during Mead's Cornell years and didn't matriculate until 1893, whereupon he swiftly joined Alpha Delta Phi, having known and admired Teddy Mead throughout his childhood.

However, not all of the historical figures that passed through the chapter house at 503 East Buffalo Street are quite so deserving of veneration. Mead's copy of the 1897 *Graduate Letter*, an early handwritten version of the alumni newsletter, reports that the brothers gave an "afternoon reception to the Hon. Justice Brown of the Supreme Court of the United States." Justice Henry Billings Brown had been a member of Alpha Delta Phi at Yale, where he graduated in the class of 1856. But coincidentally, Justice Brown had another direct connection to the Cornell chapter, having enlisted



Edward Mandell House in 1881.

the services of their architect, William Henry Miller, to build a home for him in Washington, DC, just two years earlier. Brown's visit to Cornell came less than a year after he authored the majority opinion in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which legitimized the doctrine of racial segregation known as "separate but equal"—an opinion he wrote in the house Miller built for him.²

¹ Brother Fuertes is widely known among Cornell Alpha DeltS for painting "The Great Horned Owl" and "The Duck Marsh," copies of which hang in the chapter house. The originals are on loan to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

² Should you ever need proof that, as Dr. King said, "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice," look no further than Justice Brown's home, now known as the Toutorsky Mansion, which is now the home of the embassy of the Republic of Congo.

Teddy Mead remained an engaged alumnus throughout his long life, he traveled to every Alpha Delta chapter in New York and New England, and he prided himself as having been “received everywhere with affectionate regard.” He had even started a national publication for Alpha Delta Phi across the country called *The Star and Crescent* (it was discontinued in 1885), which kept a record of new initiates and officer elections at all the various chapters and had a wide subscription base. Mead was instrumental in the design and production of the ornate brother’s badges of the 1800s.

As an undergraduate, Mead had prepared the first-ever annual report of the Cornell Chapter, and after graduating, he compiled and produced some of the first official reports and catalogues for the international fraternity. In 1887, he received an invitation to attend the 55th annual convention of Alpha Delta Phi at Harvard, where, among the esteemed fraternal alumni scheduled to deliver remarks, another “Teddy” made an appearance: Theodore Roosevelt, who at that time had yet to hold any elected office.

After his move to Florida, the brothers up at the Cornell chapter always knew whom to thank when they received regular deliveries of fresh Florida oranges at their doorstep on Buffalo Street. In 1884, recording secretary Charles H. Baker 1886 couldn’t seem to thank him enough: “Dear Brother, Your large and luscious box of oranges was duly received



Dorothy as Greek Muse with AΔΦ bronze vase, given as a wedding present, 1890.

and in fine order. Such a prize has never fallen to the lot of the brothers before, and I think the feast we had in consequence will be long remembered by us all, especially when we think where the oranges came from. The oranges were simply superb and delicious, such as I think I have never seen in Chicago, and I personally cannot thank you too much for your kind remembrance of us; but we as a chapter adopted the following resolution at our last meeting: Resolved: that a note of thanks be sent to brother ‘Teddy’ Mead for the presentation to the chapter of the large box of Florida oranges.”

Not all of their correspondences were light-hearted, however. When Mead's only child, a four-year-old daughter named Dorothy, died of scarlet fever in 1892, the Alpha Delts were quick to send their heartfelt condolences. Throughout his papers and letters, it is clear that Mead was an ever-present figure in the chapter house, even after he left Ithaca. Gracious letters sent to him from the undergraduates span decades. He is often referred to as their "patron saint," and the chapter house he helped build was known as "the temple."



Theo with Amaryllis.

The house at 503 East Buffalo Street that Teddy Mead helped build housed the Alpha Delts for over twenty-five years. Yet as early as 1890, there were rumblings of the need for change. After the construction of the Stewart Avenue bridge, Cornell began leasing land on the other side of Cascadilla Creek to fraternities in hopes that it would help assuage their notable lack of student housing. This left the Alpha Delts of the 1890s somewhat isolated, and they once again found themselves unable to offer the same level of convenience to prospective freshmen candidates looking for a shorter walk to class.

The 1893 edition of the *Graduate Letter* gives an early hint at this dissatisfaction. "Financially, the chapter is gradually getting into good shape. This matter is coming to be one of great importance as the question of a new house is continually brought up. Several fine houses have been built by other fraternities here within the past few years, and it will not be long before we will have to join the march of civilization toward the campus, as everything is heading in that direction." Four years later, the issue of relocation remained "in a state of innocuous desuetude," according to Brother Newell Lyon 1897. Lyon reports that the payments on the original ten-year notes issued to build the Buffalo Street house were \$1,500 past due that year, and the chapter was \$3,200 in debt. But three years later, things had taken

a marked turn. The *Graduate Letter* of 1900 reports, “With reference to the new house questions, which for the past eighteen months has been of the utmost interest to the chapter, we are pleased to state that the next month or two should see the satisfactory settlement of the site question. The graduate committee has practically completed a careful and thorough report on the necessity of a new chapter house, and on the advantages and disadvantages of the available sites. Their work has so far progressed that, at present, there remain but two sites from which to choose. The final decision is expected during the latter part of April. The architects among the graduates have already been called upon for suggestions regarding the house.” A few months later, the alumni received an invitation to the annual Alpha Delt reunion, where the question of a new house would “soon be decided . . . as this decision will materially affect the interests of Alpha Delta Phi at Cornell for the next twenty-five or fifty years.”

The reunion of 1900 was the true genesis of their future home at 777 Stewart Avenue. Held on June 20, just one month after the death of Hiram Murray Little during his senior year from complications of pneumonia, the reunion “resolved into a business session of the corporation and was not adjourned until six o’clock next morning. During all that time, a most careful and conservative discussion of the entire house project was carried on. It was unanimously and enthusiastically resolved that the chapter should assume the contract entered into by brothers White and McVoy³ for the purchase from the McGraw estate of a splendid site adjacent to the university buildings and commanding a fine view of the lake, valley, and distant hills. The necessary legal steps have since been taken to vest the title of this property in the chapter. The much discussed site question was thus settled once and for all time, and as all agreed, in a way worth of the ideals of the chapter.”

Despite the need for change, there was still much nostalgia for the original chapter house. In the Cornell annals of the 1899 fraternity catalogue, the brothers reflected back on twenty years of life there. “It was the first and, for many years, the only house built distinctively for fraternity purposes, and though there are now many such in Ithaca, it

³ Martin McVoy Jr. 1892 enjoys a well-known legacy as a benefactor to Alpha Delt. The Martin McVoy Jr. Trust provides income distributions to offset student loans and work study. Currently, \$7,000–\$15,000 is awarded annually to Alpha Delta Phi brothers with demonstrated financial need.

have not forgotten how we piled into one of the rooms of the present Alpha Delt house, three in a room, you, Gifford, and myself, in order to make the income sufficient to help out. I presume it will not be necessary to have anything on that order this time.” Sure enough, during the reunion on June 18, 1902, the cornerstone for a new chapter house at 777 Stewart Avenue was laid.

Once construction on the new house was complete the following year, the brotherhood moved across campus, settled in their new home, and the decision was made to sell their old home on East Buffalo. Their buyers were the brothers of Delta Chi, which was, at that time, a “professional society” open only to law students. Delta Chi renovated the house and moved in by 1903. They would use it as their chapter house for ten years, until August 1913, when the Buffalo Street house changed hands yet again; Delta Chi sold it to the brothers of Alpha Psi, a now-defunct fraternity open only to veterinary students.



Upon purchasing the house, Alpha Psi also renovated the building and moved in for the fall semester of 1913. They too spent nearly ten years living there, in keeping with its history and purpose as a fraternity lodge. It wasn't un-

til 1922 that the house eventually transitioned out of Greek life. Alpha Psi sold it to the Ithaca Conservatory of Music, the school that would soon evolve into Ithaca College. The conservatory purchased the house for \$27,000 and, in an ironic twist of fate, converted it into, of all things, a women's dormitory. The school itself was located just a few blocks further down Buffalo Street, and the old chapter house, now dubbed "Newman Hall," could house up to thirty female students, which it continued to do even after the school became Ithaca College in 1932. Social events and open houses were held by the women of Newman Hall, and male student workers staffed the kitchen during mealtimes, producing more than a few romances. Newman Hall remained a part of Ithaca College until the school moved to its current location in the 1960s. Ithaca College sold the Buffalo Street chapter house in 1962 to private owners, and it stands to this day as a multi-unit residential home.

Theodore Luqueer Mead made his final trip to Cornell in 1926 at the age of seventy-four for the annual initiation ceremony in the



The original Alpha Delt chapter house comes full circle and ends up as a women's dormitory.

Goat House that had been dedicated to the memory of Mead's old friend, Hiram Murray Little. Of this experience, Mead wrote, "The boys invited me to give the 'charge' to the initiates and added that it was customary to provide transportation both ways, in this case, 3,000 miles to Ithaca and return. Of course I accepted the invitation, and the boys actually said 'it was worth it.' They presented me with the latest badge of the fraternity and in it claimed me for not only my own class

of '77 but adopted me into the class of 1926 as well." He was so touched by the camaraderie he shared with this much younger generation that he wrote, "I haven't any words to express my love and devotion to these splendid brothers and our blessed fraternity." It seems Teddy Mead is the only brother in our history to have been initiated twice and in two different centuries no less.

Ten years later, in 1936, Teddy Mead died in Florida from a stroke at the age of eighty-four, and sadly, over the years, his legacy has been somewhat lost to us at the Cornell Chapter of Alpha Delta Phi. It is with great joy and satisfaction that we are able to welcome him home once again by restoring our shared understanding of his exemplary dedication and singular contributions.

* In addition to the papers and correspondence provided to us from Rollins College, the author relied on the recently published biography, *Orchids and Butterflies: The Life and Times of Theodore Mead* by Paul Butler.





The House Corporation Board of Directors expresses gratitude to
Howie Schaffer '90 for his leadership in creating this publication.



Design and printing of this book is made possible
by a grant from the Cornell Star and Crescent Foundation.

Printed 2019