



A Brother's Story

Raymond E. Tuttle

Class of 1948



edited by Thomas M. Reilly '07



INTRODUCTION

It was from a very early age that I recall hearing about my father's (and mother's) Cornell experience, including his days after the war (WWII) at Alpha Delta Phi. For me, the stories created both attraction to the mystique and repulsion to the idea of following directly in my parents' footsteps (typical adolescent behavior). When the time came for college applications, I worked pretty hard at not going to Cornell, somewhat reinforced by a visit to 777 Stewart Ave. in the summer of '76. As this was "pre-paved driveway" days and off-season, the condition of the house and grounds was ... well ... atrocious. "Phew," I thought, "this is an easy decision." Well, not so much. I matriculated at Cornell in the fall of '77 and began rush by re-examining the Phi. What a difference!

The formal and business-like nature of the house at the time (jacket & tie were mandatory five-days a week) was so counter to my idea of a fraternity that Alpha Delt quickly became my first choice. Soon, my father and I were brothers! Now all the stories — heard again, of course — began to take on real meaning. One real example was in my senior year (1981) when I used to study inside the Goat House (with old reading lamps for light) and picture my father taking wheelbarrows of plaster that fell from the walls while it was closed during the Navy occupation of the house. Now 40 years later, we continue to share stories, and I am pleased to introduce his expanded thoughts from his years at Cornell and the Phi: 1941–1948.

—John Tuttle '81





A Brother's Story

Raymond E. Tuttle '48

I FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL AT SAUGERTIES, NEW YORK, ON the Hudson River, in June, 1941, and entered Cornell that September, courtesy of a New York State scholarship and a McMillan engineering scholarship. I was enrolled in the chemical engineering college, which was still meeting in Baker Hall of Chemistry—Olin Hall did not yet exist. Chemical engineering was a new degree, requiring 192 credit hours over five years (the arts college said we had to take all the chemistry as a chem major and the engineering college said we had to take all the engineering as a mechanical engineer).



On his birthday



High school graduation, 1941

I lived at the Cayuga Student Residence Association, a co-op at 630 Stewart Avenue, to limit my college expenses. CSRA had three desks per study, a basement cafeteria, and an unheated sleeping dorm in the attic. We all shared the chores. I was in the main-floor living room on December 7, 1941, when President Roosevelt came on the radio to tell of Pearl Harbor and then to declare war on Japan. Over the months after this, most of us volunteered for service. I tried to get into the Naval Air Corps but discovered I was partly color blind and ended up in the Army instead.

Cornell in wartime was different. Navy V-5 and V-12 programs trained many for active service. Dorms and fraternity houses (including Alpha Delt) became military dorms. Chem Es went on a three-term year, with me taking 18 hours of chemistry (lectures and many labs) in the summer of 1942 and 19 hours each term of the 1942–'43 academic year. We did make the most of summer organic chem labs; on Saturday morning, the noise level began to rise about 10:00 a.m., and the teacher would run around, removing what was left of the ethanol from the shelves. We also learned to set up organic synthesis experiments that required long “refluxing” and leave them in the care of one benchmate while the rest of us went swimming in Beebe Lake.

I was called to active duty in June 1943 at Camp Upton, an Army installation on Long Island in Yaphank, and I did basic in the field artillery (Cornell ROTC) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I went back to college at Rhode Island in electronic engineering for one term, then to the Signal Corps and overseas to England, France, and Germany. I then went by troop-ship through the Panama Canal to the South Pacific. I was still at sea south of Hawaii when the atom bombs were dropped and thereby avoided invading Japan. We landed in the Philippines and then went up to Japan as occupation troops. I went back to the US in February 1946, just in time for the spring term at Cornell.

The Cornell campus was overcrowded with existing students, returning veterans, and residual Navy V-12 programs. Housing was a big problem, and I was assigned a room in Sage Hall, which had been a women's dorm before the war. My roommate was a freshman, Dave Klauder, and therein began my life with Alpha Delta Phi. Dave was from Niagara Falls, which had a very strong Alpha Delta Phi alumni group, and Dave was rushed by $\Lambda\Delta\Phi$ on their recommendation. He pledged and then told them they ought to rush Ray Tuttle, his new roommate, a junior who had been on Cornell's tennis team pre-war and who would be helpful in raising $\Lambda\Delta\Phi$'s grade-point average. So they rushed me, and I pledged.

The Alpha Delt house had just been turned back to the fraternity by the Navy, and it filled up quickly with occupants, both current brothers and pledges! We also took in all the returning Kappa Alpha brothers, because the Navy still had not turned their house back to them, so for a time, it was not at all a typical fraternity house restricted to initiated members only.

There was also another major change, either in the spring or fall of 1946. Pre-war, the fraternity house had been set up for 22 occupants in 11 two-member suites, each consisting of a study and a bedroom. After the war, the need for more income and the ability to pledge and initiate more members led to the conversion of most of the suites to three members. In addition, the ground-floor alumni suite, which was occupied only by



visiting alumni in pre-war days, was converted to a three-man, two-room suite, plus a one-man suite and a bathroom for the four occupants. The total house occupancy went up into the high 30s.

My initial room as a pledge in 1946 was off the balcony on the second floor, over the alumni suite. My roommate was Edwin “Larry” Brashears, already an initiated Alpha Delt (as an aside, Larry was the son of an executive and part-owner of The Drake Hotel in Chicago). He was in the hotel school, had acquired a girlfriend, had, at some point, decided he did not need any more education to get a good job with his dad at The Drake, and did not come back to get his degree.

Fraternity life and the initiation ritual was somewhat different just after the war compared to what it had been or what it reverted back to a few years later. The returning WWII veterans would not stand for some of “this foolishness,” and those actives who had never gone to war both respected the veterans and even were afraid to pull some of the pranks of the past. Nobody was going to “tub” a veteran if he did not want to be “tubbed”, and we did not want to be. As I remember it, the mental challenges were the same as ever and constituted most of the routine, interspersed with good-guy/bad-guy visits and the usual ending. I guess I will never forget some of the

full names I was required to memorize (or heard in later initiations): Vernon Edelyn Whitaker, Peter Kip Clough, James Knox Sliger, William Cathcart Arthur, and (wow) even Charles Moulton Gould Wilder.

The biggest pledge activity during the pre-initiation period was our cleaning of the Goat House. During the several-year occupancy by the Navy V-12, it was sealed off entirely, and the heat was shut off. The brothers found it in terrible shape, with most of the ceiling and wall plaster having fallen down on the benches and other furniture; the remaining plaster was hanging on the ceiling and walls, ready to fall on someone. We pledges accepted the task of stripping the remaining plaster off the ceiling and walls and removing it all from the area. To do this, we placed a single plank continuously down the sloping stairs. We would then load up a wheelbarrow with the fallen plaster, get the wheelbarrow wheel placed on the plank, run down the steps on each side of the plank, and eventually emerge into daylight to dump the plaster down the back bank of the parking lot. We then repeated the process with another load. As you can imagine, being pulled by a loaded wheelbarrow precariously placed on a single plank blocking part of the steps was no simple feat and led to a big mess if/when you lost control! We got the Goat House back into service for fraternity meetings but looking strikingly different than it did before the war.

Returning to Cornell in the fall of 1946, after a summer working for Standard Oil of Ohio, I occupied the former alumni suite with two others. My roommates were Jim Sliger and Bob Englebert. Don Knowlton occupied the single room on the hall across from the bathroom. Don was studying electrical engineering, Bob was in civil engineering, and I was in chemical engineering. I was still on a tight budget, even with the scholarships and the GI Bill, so the chapter very generously gave me the job of house manager and my room rent free. My main duties were to collect the monthly checks from the members living in the house, all under the guidance of Jim Rice, the alumnus mainstay in the stability of the Cornell chapter for many years. I was also the “official” contact with our houseman, Reggie, and our cook, Rose Reber. Reggie seemed to have been there forever, and I think Rose was somewhat new. With the monthly check collection, I remember only one monthly argument. It was with a brother whose father refused to pay except in arrears, after the month was over, but we asked for and needed the money in advance to pay the operating bills.

By the fall of 1946, most servicemen were back on campus. We had quite a group of $\Lambda\Delta\Phi$ married vets, a few even with children. Cornell had built “Vetsburg” on the ag campus, which was a group of Quonset-hut apartments for returning married vets to live in. On each Wednesday evening, we had an expanded dinner, where the married families could join us downstairs in the dining room. Dinner was preceded with a cocktail

hour in the library. It was very well attended by all, and my memory is of everyone standing around with their beers or martinis (or what have you), toddlers wandering around among us, and the occasional squeal when a too-full drink got spilled on one of the toddlers.

I think that fuel supplies must have been still tight then, because we set the main hall thermostat to take the temperature of whole house down every night to maybe 55 degrees. That worked a little while, but there were



Ray Takes Off

Ray takes off

complaints as well. Then the complaints stopped, and it took me a little while to figure out that someone was coming down later in the evening and cracking open the window closest to the thermostat so it got below 55 there quickly while the whole upstairs got warm and comfortable! Very creative, but we had to stop it!

As to social life with the opposite sex, pre-war Alpha Delts were not allowed to date co-eds. That must have meant you either abstained until house-party time, went up to Wells College for your dates, or, perish the thought, dated a “townie” or Ithaca College girl. After the war, that custom also faded away, probably because the veterans had enough abstinence overseas in the service. Pre-war as an independent, I had a pretty steady girl from Delta Gamma. Post-war, everyone I had known had graduated, so I dated around and eventually went rather steadily with a girl from Alpha Omicron Pi. We had a few who still went up to Wells College, but there was only *one* (!) automobile in our large parking lot, and I remember it as being something like a cross between a jeep and a truck. I think it was called the “green machine” and belonged to Thomas Wells (to be mentioned again later).

Dating co-eds had its limitations. The women’s dorms and sorority houses all required the co-eds to be back in their rooms every weekday night by 8:00 or 9:00 p.m., and I believe on Saturday it was 11:30 p.m. The university was still *in loco parentis* in those days (which I guess means Cornell was your parent at this location). Co-eds could “sign out” when their parents were visiting or for an approved house party on campus.

A date frequently meant going down town to Zinck’s, to the Dutch Kitchen in the basement of the Hotel Ithaca, a bar on Stewart Ave, or to one of several other bars in Collegetown. The back end of Zinck’s had the shields of the “big six” fraternities around the top of the walls above the molding, and Alpha Delta Phi’s was one of them. The Dutch Kitchen was famous for its wooden tables, completely covered with carved signatures of students and (mostly) former students. On trips down there, I marveled how people in these two crowded bars would get the urge to go to the other bar at the same time, and the crowds would pass each other on the main street between them!

At a later date, I was shocked to go back to Ithaca and find that Zinck’s had moved to a new location a block away. I was more shocked to go inside and see a television over the bar! It had totally lost the atmosphere I remembered. This was not the bar of “Give My Regards to Davy.”

At Alpha Delt, the arrangement for a house party was to completely block the second-floor hall about half way down and to give the back half of the house to the visiting dates. Two adult couples were required to be present as chaperones (a happy task that Peg and I performed several times after we were married).

Regularly, we had beer parties in the basement bar, but there was little or no hard liquor, except during house parties. We drank beer from a keg, the tapping of which was a skill we all learned. I think it was mostly the local Stegmaier's, which was not a particularly good beer, but it was local and cheaper. Singing was a big pastime, and knowing the words to all the songs was important to your standing with your brothers and your date.

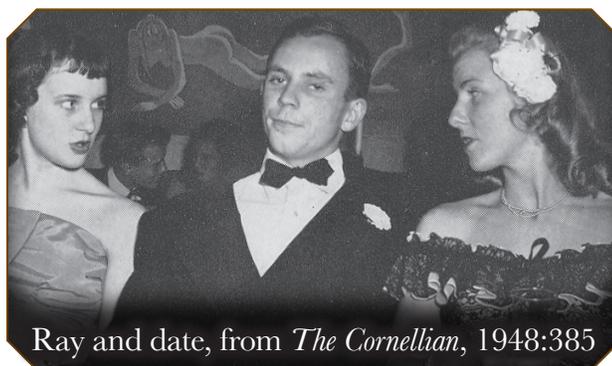
One event I will never forget occurred during the spring of 1946, when we were sharing the house with Kappa Alpha. At a Saturday night beer party downstairs, the president of KA was sitting on a stool at the bar, surrounded by co-eds who were listening, I suppose, to his war stories. Suddenly, he grabbed an ice pick from behind the bar and drove it into his lower leg! There were shrieks and shocked-looks from the co-eds. Then he pulled out the ice pick, pulled up his pant leg, and showed a wooden leg that he had acquired as a result of war injuries!

Back to Thomas Wells: he was in the school of architecture and in either the class of 1947 or 1948. He proposed to the fraternity that he decorate the walls of the two rooms in the basement, which were our bar and party area. We said OK, and he arrived with two co-eds from architecture or fine arts. Over weeks, they covered the walls with the "figures" of Abner Dean, a very popular cartoonist/artist at that time. For a time, it became the talk of the campus, and we got a big kick out of it. You can



Singing in the Alpha Delt bar, from *The Cornellian*, 1948:364

even see pictures of it in the background of a 1948 Cornell yearbook: a picture of a group singing at the usual table in the Alpha Delt bar (opposite and on page 364 of the yearbook; see inside back cover for full page) and then one of me between two



Ray and date, from *The Cornellian*, 1948:385

women (at right and on page 385 of yearbook), both with the paintings in the backgrounds. One of the two girls was my date—I believe the one on my right, but I confess I don't know for sure!

To digress a little, I married a Cornellian, class of 1948 as well. Her maiden name was Margaret Wilharm. She was an Alpha Phi, and I never dated her at Cornell. That we ended up married was a real series of incidents. One day in my fifth and final year, I got on the bus outside Olin Hall to go downtown. I recognized and sat down beside a girl I remembered from a course I was taking in industrial and labor relations (chem Es were required to take a liberal arts course in year five, and my choice was career oriented, not culture-oriented as the chem E school might have intended). Peg always sat near the front of the classroom next to the same boy, whom I assumed was her boyfriend but later learned was a Chi Psi brother of her boyfriend keeping an eye on her. We talked on the way downtown on the bus and learned the odd coincidence that my family and I lived in Cleveland and I had just taken a job in Pittsburgh after graduation, while she had lived all her life in Pittsburgh, but her dad's company had just moved to Cleveland, where she would go after graduation. So we parted with no plans to ever meet again.

Working in Pittsburgh, I used to go back to see my folks in Cleveland occasionally. On one trip, I joined my parents in grocery shopping, because next door was a sporting-goods shop, and I wanted to buy a new squash racquet. After shopping, I joined my parents in the grocery store, and there was a somewhat familiar face at the cheese counter: Peg Wilharm! She later told me she was with her parents only because they were going to shop for a new car, and she went along, hoping to persuade them not to buy another black Buick. I figured she was alone (dating-wise) in Cleveland with a boyfriend way back in New York, so I asked her out for a beer and supper. I soon learned that the boyfriend was no longer, and we dated in Cleveland and Pittsburgh, where she visited an uncle there to see me. I asked her back to an Alpha Delt house-party weekend and, late one night, drove out the east bank of Lake Cayuga to watch the sun come up (in the west?), and when it came up behind us,

I proposed, and she accepted. So Cornell and Alpha Delt had important roles to play, starting way back.

Alpha Delt also affected my post-college life in another unexpected way. Senior year was find-a-job time, and many of the companies came on campus to interview seniors and to make job offers. Dow, DuPont, Standard Oil of New Jersey (of Ohio, of Indiana, etc.), Gulf Oil, and many others visited Olin Hall to interview chem Es, and I was fortunate enough to get an offer from practically everyone I signed up for interviews with. Then, sometime



Ray and Peg on their wedding day

in this year, an Alpha Delt graduate from the 1929 era visited the house. His name was Joseph Pursglove, and he had been an active the year our old house burned down. He had played a part in building our present chapter house. You see, his family owned Pursglove Coal Company in West Virginia; hence, he had been able to help. He learned I was a graduating chem E and explained to me that Pursglove Coal had been acquired by Pittsburgh Consolidation Coal Company, which had a goal of becoming the technology leader in the coal industry and which had formed an R&D division that was going to develop a process to make gasoline from coal. Would I come to work for them? I had worked two summers for Standard Oil of Ohio, who hoped I would come back. Although I had several very good other offers, I was intrigued by the chance to “get in on the ground floor” with a company not already loaded with chemical engineers. This was an opportunity to develop a promising new technology and to work for a fellow Alpha Delt, since Mr. Pursglove was their VP of research and development. I accepted his offer and moved to Library, Pennsylvania, (outside of Pittsburgh) in June of 1948.

Two and a half years later, we had successfully pilot-planted our process to make gasoline from coal, ran the economics, and discovered it would cost 30 cents per gallon to make gasoline from coal, while at that time, you could buy gas retail at the pump for 19 cents per gallon. Our R&D partner, Standard Oil Development, heaved a sigh of relief that coal was not going

to replace crude oil as the source of gasoline and terminated the program. The process was, however, used years later by South Africa when the world was embargoing their imports of gasoline in protest against apartheid.

Working in Pittsburgh after college, Peg and I got back to Alpha Delta Phi as house-party chaperones with great enjoyment. Later, due to moves farther away to central Illinois, Florida, Chicago, and California, and with a family that grew to three children, we were seldom interested or able to get back to Cornell. Then we moved to Weston, Massachusetts. Our children graduated from high school, and the opportunity for a second-generation Cornellian/Alpha Delta Phi appeared in the form of my youngest, John. He was vice president of his senior class and a member of its state-champion tennis team, and he had good enough grades to be accepted at almost all the schools he applied to. He also was determined to achieve admission on his own. He was suspicious that having a father as alumnus would play a role in being accepted at Cornell and, therefore, made Brown his first choice. Brown was the only one that did not invite him on campus, so he agreed to visit Cornell when I convinced him that being son of an alumnus would not play much of a role, and I certainly would not push it. The engineering campus proved pretty impressive, so I took him down to see Alpha Delta Phi. It was summer break, and unfortunately, the house was in terrible shape: trashy, dirty, and very unappealing. As we left, John said, "Do I have to join Alpha Delta Phi?" I said, "No, but give it a chance when they rush you, because you'll see a great house then." He did and did.

I was traveling overseas so much in those days that I don't even remember if I made it to his initiation. He switched for a year or so to the University of Colorado but returned to Cornell and Alpha Delta Phi and lived in the top floor suite, where he made life-long friends. He graduated from Cornell, went back out west to Colorado School of Mines and the University of Colorado, where he got his PhD. From my observations, John's ties to Cornell are overwhelmingly to Alpha Delta Phi and minimally to Cornell.

Both his and my relationships became active at Alpha Delta Phi when he brought his company to New York State. Somewhere along the line, I had become very disappointed with Cornell over the riots, the armed occupation of the Straight, the university administration caving-in to this whole movement, and the more and more liberal stance on the issues (typical of many campuses, I'm afraid). So my "draw" back to Ithaca was, in this order, for my son, Alpha Delta Phi, and the chem E school, which had been aloof of the rest of the campus, even back in my day. John and I made it back for several of my reunions, including my 60th and 65th, and his presence and the visits to $\Lambda\Delta\Phi$ made the trips very worthwhile. He has been much more active than I ever was, holding office in both the local alumni chapter and in the national leadership of the fraternity.

As individuals, the fraternity offers opportunities for leadership, encourages charity and athletics, and gives exposure to brothers with a wide variety of backgrounds and interests. Some become lifelong friends—Bob Englebert and Ned Turner were at my side when I married Peg and have stayed in touch until Bob died a year ago. I know John has continued a lifelong friendship with his roommate as well.

My modest financial support of Alpha Delta Phi is certainly partly supported by “if John thinks it is good, I’ll help,” but more of it is because of my belief that the right fraternity is a very significant part of a good education at Cornell, and Alpha Delta Phi is a “right” fraternity. We have behaved with substance and maturity on campus, being one of the few fraternities still owning their house and seldom causing the trouble that some other houses have with drunkenness or stupid and dangerous initiations. Being able to achieve this requires an atmosphere in the house itself that, when learned by the brothers, will be useful for the rest of their lives.



John and Ray: son and father and brothers in Alpha Delt



FRATERNITY LIFE - - -



Saturday night beer parties dear to our hearts . . . Drink, chug-a-lug . . . "Let's have a song—whatabout the Whiffenpoof?" Barbershop harmony from a

corner of the bar . . . Pledge formals take on an air of formality, but still we sing . . .



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