

THE RHO CHI SOCIETY—1922 TO 1932.*

BY GLENN L. JENKINS.

INTRODUCTION.

The first Greek-letter college organization was founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. This organization was an honorary one, Phi Beta Kappa, which now has over 58,000 living members in about 115 chapters despite its high standards of admission to membership. Phi Kappa Phi, its only rival in the field of general academic scholarship, was founded in 1897 at the University of Maine, and now has about 45 chapters. Sigma Xi, which is in the sciences what Phi Beta Kappa is in the general academic field, was founded at Cornell University in 1886, and now has over 50 chapters.

In addition to the honorary fraternity which recognizes high scholastic achievement in general fields, honor societies have sprung into being in specialized or professional fields. Thus, there are honor societies in agriculture, law, medicine, music, commerce, engineering, physics, chemistry, mathematics and many others pertaining to extra curricular activities such as in forensics, dramatics and student publications. Undoubtedly, our present honor societies represent a fraternity reform movement of far-reaching importance. Several decades ago, all fraternities required scholastic proficiency for admission. Then followed a period of decline in the academic significance of these groups. Wealth and athletic or social prestige became in many cases the criteria for admission. For a time, Phi Beta Kappa alone remained a true example of an honor society and it could not become professional.¹ To remedy this deficiency and supply the needs of new professional departments in our colleges and universities, present-day honor societies were formed. Their usefulness has been so great that each year has witnessed their growth in dignity and prestige.

Professional Greek-letter fraternal societies had existed in pharmacy for many years before the establishment of a pharmaceutical honor society. Thus Kappa Psi was founded as a medical and pharmaceutical fraternity at the Medical College of Virginia in 1879; Phi Delta Chi, chemical and pharmaceutical fraternity, was established at the University of Michigan in 1883; Lambda Kappa Sigma Sorority was organized at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy in 1913, and nationalized in 1918; and Kappa Epsilon Sorority was founded at the University of Minnesota, College of Pharmacy, in 1921. Numerous other local organizations, either fraternities, sororities or clubs were also in existence. A number of these professional fraternal organizations were not strictly pharmaceutical since they admitted medical and chemical students to membership and none of them served the purposes of an honor society.

ORIGIN OF THE RHO CHI SOCIETY.

Dean R. A. Lyman in his presidential address² in 1917, after emphasizing the need for an honor society in pharmacy, submitted the following recommendation: "I recommend that the committee on activities of students and alumni be directed

* Section on Historical Pharmacy, A. PH. A., Toronto meeting, 1932.

¹ Banta's Greek Exchange, 19 (1931), 220.

² "Proceedings of Am. Conf. of Pharm. Faculties" (1917), page 69.

to devise a plan for establishing an honorary scholarship fraternity in Pharmacy and report the same at the next annual meeting." This recommendation was adopted by the conference.¹ In the following year, the Committee on Student Activities and Alumni, with Dean Lyman as chairman, reported:² "That this Committee be instructed to proceed at once to the organization of an honorary pharmaceutical society in Conference schools. The society is to be non-secret, with the baccalaureate degree as the minimal requirement, and scholarship is to be the basis of election, membership open to both men and women and no race distinction. The constitution shall provide for honorary membership for persons who have rendered an exceptional service other than monetary to the cause of professional pharmacy. The name and details of organization to be left to the Committee." After considerable discussion,³ this report was accepted. Since the proposed organization limited membership to candidates for the baccalaureate degree and because of war-time conditions, no progress was made during the next two years.⁴

The committee on Activities of Students and Alumni of the American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties in 1921, under the chairmanship of Professor Zada M. Cooper, recommended:⁵ "That the Committee on Activities of Students and Alumni be authorized to organize an honorary pharmaceutical society, whose object will be to stimulate scholarship and research and to which scholarship shall be the basis of election. The constitution would provide for the election during a short period of years, of men and women who have rendered exceptional service to professional pharmacy irrespective of their degrees, these candidates to be recommended by local organizations but elected by the national body. Students registered for the Ph.C. degree would be eligible during the third year of the course until such time as twenty-five per cent of the colleges in the Conference shall be offering as their shortest course one of three years leading to the Ph.C. degree, when the B.S. degree shall become the minimum requirement. The society would be open to men and women and make no race distinction. After drafting a constitution and by-laws for the national organization, colleges interested would form local organizations along the proposed lines, the Committee in effect acting as national organization." This recommendation was adopted by the Conference after some discussion during which attention was called to the existence of a local honorary fraternity at the University of Michigan.

A local pharmaceutical organization had been established at the University of Michigan, College of Pharmacy, on May 4, 1908, by J. C. Bannow, H. M. Bonvy, F. R. Corwin, G. B. Fink, W. M. Fox, F. W. Hendershot, D. H. Meloche, J. J. Riley, N. I. Taylor, K. W. Tracey and C. A. Hauser. The local group chose the name of the "Aristolochite Society." By 1912, it had become recognized as one of the so-called campus honor societies. Membership in this group was restricted to students in the three- and four-year courses in 1915. A second chapter of the Aristolochite Society was organized at the Oregon Agricultural College in 1919. Professor Cooper conferred with the officers of the Aristolochite Society with the

¹ "Proceedings of Am. Conf. of Pharm. Faculties" (1917), page 143.

² *Ibid.* (1918), page 105.

³ *Ibid.* (1918), page 107.

⁴ *Ibid.* (1920), page 99.

⁵ *Ibid.* (1921), page 45.

result that steps were taken at once to make the Society national. Accordingly, on June 3, 1922, the parent Aristolochite Society ceased to exist and a charter was granted by the State of Michigan to Alpha Chapter of Rho Chi. The Greek letters, Rho Chi, were selected as emblematic of the prescription sign, and the colors attached to the seal of membership were chosen because they are indicative of the royalty of blue and the truth and loyalty of white. This organization was approved by the American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties by the adoption of the following recommendation:¹ “. . . that the Conference express its approval of this society as *the* honorary pharmaceutical society of America, and support its extension into other Conference schools.”

As a result of these efforts, Rho Chi was established as a non-secret national honorary pharmaceutical society open to men and women and to students irrespective of race or creed.

THE OBJECTIVES OF RHO CHI.

The fundamental objective of Rho Chi has always been to promote the advancement of the pharmaceutical sciences through the encouragement and recognition of intellectual scholarship. To attain this end, high standards of scholarship have been demanded for election to membership with the view that scholarly attainment indicates the capacity of the individual for outstanding achievement in pharmacy. Experience has shown that the reward of election to membership, symbolized by the key, supplies a scholarship incentive unequalled by any other reward such as prizes, medals and scholarships. All chapters do maintain prizes and other awards as a further stimulus to scholarship on the part of undergraduate students. The Society also seeks to promote scholarly fellowship in pharmacy by bringing undergraduate and graduate students and faculty members together in fraternal and helpful comradeship. Regular meetings are held in some chapters where papers are read by students and faculty which emphasize the professional aspect of pharmacy and point the way to much instructive study on the part of the students. Of all the uses attributable to honor societies in our colleges, this is undoubtedly the greatest; that they make their members more professional, more ethical and more serviceable to the world in which they live. Thus the Society seeks to encourage its members to render greater service to pharmacy. Finally, the Society as a national organization has sought to encourage and promote true pharmaceutical research. To foster this purpose, a sum of money was directed to be set aside by the Executive Council at the Miami meeting in 1931 as the beginning of a cumulative research fund.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY.

The constitution adopted when Rho Chi became a national organization was revised and printed in 1925. It provided for active, alumni and honorary members. Students eligible for active membership were required to have completed sixty credit hours of scholastic work, have shown proficiency in the science of pharmacy and allied sciences, and to be recommended by the dean of the college faculty. The government of the Society was vested in an executive council composed of the National Officers and one Council Member from each chapter. The growth of the

¹ "Proceedings of Am. Conf. of Pharm. Faculties" (1922), page 45.

Society soon brought about the need for further revision. At the Baltimore meeting in 1930, the new officers were instructed to appoint a committee to revise the constitution and submit the proposed revision to the convention of the Society in May 1930. A committee, consisting of Dr. Loyd Harris (chairman), Miss Ina Griffith, Prof. Zada M. Cooper, Mr. Ralph Clark and Dr. Bernard V. Christensen, was appointed by the president. The revised constitution was adopted at the annual convention held in Miami in 1931. It provided for many changes to take account of the expansion of Rho Chi and the development of longer courses of instruction in the colleges. The credit requirements for eligibility to membership were increased to seventy-five hours, the government of the Society was vested in an Executive Council of seven members and provision was made for the regular election of officers.

The question of a suitable ritual has always been a problem in Rho Chi. The problem was largely solved by Dr. F. A. Gilfillan, Mr. H. A. Masters and Mr. J. L. Porter of Beta Chapter who submitted a ritual form in 1924 that has been generally followed since that time. In May 1930, a committee, Dr. F. A. Gilfillan (chairman), Dean P. A. Dirstine and Mr. Justin Powers, was appointed by the president to draw up a revised ritual. This committee presented a long and a short ritual form which were acted on at the Miami Convention in 1931; the short form of ritual being adopted.

EXPANSION.

After the Rho Chi Society was founded as a national organization in 1922, a policy of conservative expansion was followed. Charters for the establishment of chapters have been granted to groups in schools which maintain high standards of pharmaceutical education. The growth of the Society is evidenced by the following chapter roll:

Year.	Chapter.	School.	Location.
1922	Alpha	University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, Michigan
		(Alpha of Aristolochite Society 1908 to 1922)	
1922	Beta	Oregon Agricultural College	Corvallis, Oregon
		(Beta of Aristolochite Society 1919 to 1922)	
1922	Gamma	University of Oklahoma	Norman, Oklahoma
1923	Delta	State University of Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa
1925	Epsilon	State College of Washington	Pullman, Washington
1925	Zeta	Alabama Polytechnic Institute	Auburn, Alabama
1925	Eta	University of Wisconsin	Madison, Wisconsin
1925	Theta	University of Southern California	Los Angeles, California
1928	Iota	University of Florida	Gainesville, Florida
1928	Kappa	North Dakota Agricultural College	Fargo, North Dakota
1929	Lambda	Medical College of Virginia	Richmond, Virginia
1929	Xi	University of North Carolina	Chapel Hill, North Carolina
1930	Mu	University of Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minnesota
1930	Omicron	University of Maryland	Baltimore, Maryland
1930	Nu	University of Texas	Austin, Texas
1931	Pi	North Pacific College	Portland, Oregon
1931	Rho	University of Washington	Seattle, Washington
1931	Sigma	Western Reserve University	Cleveland, Ohio
1931	Tau	South Dakota State College	Brookings, South Dakota

NATIONAL OFFICERS.

The officers who have served the Society were elected at irregular intervals until the Miami Convention of 1931. Since that time, all officers have been elected for two years.

President.

Hans W. Vahlteich—1922 to 1925.
Elmer J. Trout—1925 to 1930.
Glenn L. Jenkins—1930 to —

Vice-President.

G. Carl Trasker—1922 to 1926(?).
Frederick Hood—1926 to March 1930.
Clifford C. Glover—March 1930 to May 1930.
Franklin J. Bacon—1930 to 1931.
Earl R. Serles—1931 to 1932.
Franklin J. Bacon—1932 to —.

Secretary.

Elmer J. Trout—1922 to 1925.
Clifford C. Glover—1925 to 1930.
Miss Zada Cooper—1930 to 1932.
Lloyd E. Harris—1932 to —.

Treasurer.

Miss Helen Anderson—1922 to 1926.
Justin L. Powers—1926 to 1930.
Bernard V. Christensen—1930 to —.

RECOGNITION.

The high standards maintained for membership in Rho Chi have resulted in the general recognition of the Society in pharmacy as the equivalent of what Phi Beta Kappa is in the arts. During the academic year of 1930–1931 an effort was made to secure recognition for the Society in non-pharmaceutical circles with the result that Rho Chi is now accorded a place in the directory of Banta's Greek Exchange. A sketch of the development of the Society will be given a place in the next edition of "Baird's Manual."

CORRELATING THE ASSAYING OF DRUGS WITH MICROEX-AMINATION.*

BY HARRY TAUB.

Enthusiasm on the part of the student for the subject we are teaching is highly desirable not only because the student will do better work in that subject, but because enthusiasm is contagious and very apt to spread to other courses once the student has become infected in a particular subject. How to achieve this objective in those subjects which are not popular with the average student has been a problem that we have wrestled with for many years. Very few students "take" to pharmacognosy like the proverbial fish does to water. Chemical assaying, however, is regarded much more tolerantly and even liked by some students. Three years ago, due to a change in the schedule, it became possible to combine certain work of the chemical laboratory with a related part of the work of the pharmacognosy laboratory and the result of this experiment is the basis of this paper.

The work of the pharmacognosy laboratory in the junior year of the B.S. course consists of the identification of representative powdered drugs of the U. S. P. and N. F. and the determination of their purity, in so far as a microscopical examination can determine adulteration. In the chemistry laboratory certain of these drugs are assayed according to the official directions for alkaloidal content, or total

* Section on Education and Legislation, A. Ph. A., Toronto meeting.