



DELTA  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

## Delta Chapter

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Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
57 Second Street  
Troy, New York

In the early part of the year of 1907 a small group of men, between whom a strong feeling of friendship had arisen, decided to band together with the ultimate aim of petitioning a national fraternity. Among the members of the group some of the more prominent were E. R. Scrafford, W. J. Higginson, Jr., J. K. Rhodes, H. C. Probst and F. W. Ladue. Scrafford and Ladue soon left college, this leaving only four men to complete the task that six had started out to do. The following May it was decided to petition Theta Chi, then a small and rather restricted fraternity for a charter. To this end, a petition was drawn up, signed and forwarded to the Grand Chapter of Theta Chi by the following men: W. J. Higginson Jr., P. J. Mitchell, M. A. Murray, E. S. Overbaugh, G. A. Partenfelder, H. C. Probst, and J. K. Rhodes. In September of that year the petition was granted, and on the twenty-fifth of the same month the Delta Chapter of Theta Chi Fraternity was established at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the installation ceremonies having taken place at the Rensselaer Inn.

On October 26, 1907, the new chapter rented a three-story house and became actively as well as nominally a chapter of Theta Chi. The first man to be initiated was Judson G. Tallmadge, '10. Since that time each class has contributed its full quota.

The early days of the chapter were very trying ones indeed. The life of the chapter was threatened not only by the numerous and burdensome expenses that it met with but also by the trouble that it encountered in trying to get new men for a new fraternity. However, both these difficulties were finally overcome and, with the much needed new blood, the chapter began to prosper and grow. Indeed only a few years after its founding it found itself able to finance the buying of a new house just off the campus. In the Fall of 1912 there

came to Delta a man, Joseph Franklin, who became their housekeeper and who has been with them in that capacity ever since. This man has taken an unusual amount of interest in the welfare of the chapter and as a result of such has effected a great deal of good for the Fraternity.

From the house on Eighth Street, acquired in 1907, the chapter moved to 68 Second Street and from there to their present home, 57 Second Street, across the street from the latter. Both of the last two houses were rented and it was in regards to the one at 57 that the chapter met with and overcame, what was perhaps, the most severe of all its trials. The house had been rented with the provision that Delta was to have first bid on it, should it be put up for sale. However, the owner did not stand by his promise and ad made all arrangements to sell the house to another organization, thus leaving Theta Chi practically in the street. The members could not stand by and see their home go without a struggle so out went a hurry call to the alumni who set out to raise the necessary money to save the house. The alumni and friends of the fraternity in Troy responded nobly and by the following day enough money had been secured in the form of loans, bonds and mortgages to outbid the other organization and buy the house.

Since that time most of the money has been paid back, in addition a lot, on the campus, has been bought and completely paid for, and the chapter has continued to grow until it is now one of the strongest fraternities "on the hill." In a few years they contemplate building a new home on this lot.

Ever since the founding of the chapter, it has had among its members its share of outstanding men. In 1919 one of the members attained the honor of holding one of the highest offices "on the hill." That year Stanley Burns was elected President of the Student Union. In 1925 Townsend Tinker was elected to the same position, and the following year Henry Fuller Stearns was elected Grand Marshal, the highest honor the student body can bestow. Immediately following this, James M. Robbins was elected Grand Marshal unanimously, establishing a precedent, in the number of votes received, new to the Rensselaer campus.

Delta has numbered among its members many varsity players many of whom have been elected captains of their various sports. In 1926 there were in the chapter seventeen letter men, including the Grand Marshal, a manager, and two captains. Again, in 1927, there were seventeen letter men, including the Grand Marshal for the next year, three members of Phalanx, the senior honor society, four captains, two captain elects, one manager and one manager elect.

Among Delta's alumni, who were prominent while attending the Institute the name of George V. Catuna, National President of the Fraternity from 1917 to 1924, stands out, as those who know him would naturally surmise. The height of his success came when he was elected Editor-in-Chief of the Polytechnic, the school newspaper. Another man quite prominent during his undergraduate days was Earl D. Rhodes, the present Alumnus Advisor. While "on the hill" he was one of the most active men of the school. He was a member of the swimming team for three years, managed basketball and track and served on many class committees. His later efforts as Alumnus Adviser have done much to help the chapter reach its present state of perfection.

Delta has always played an important role in the Interfraternity affairs of the Institute. Of the records and results of former years no definite facts are available except that the chapter has always been among the leaders in this respect. When the Barker Trophy was first donated in 1924 Theta Chi made a game fight to obtain possession of it but they failed by three points. In 1926, however, they were more successful and won it.

The above citations should not be interpreted to mean that the chapter cares only for athletics. Scholarship is as much if not more in demand than athletic ability. They attempt to select men that can graduate in four years regardless of whether they possess any athletic ability or not. Fortunately, however, the two often go together. In the class of 1930 the chapter concentrated on men that were good scholastically. Six of these men, whom they did not know were even athletically inclined succeeded in winning their varsity letters in their freshman year, an unusual feat at Rensselaer.

Since its installation, twenty years ago, Delta has initiated 245 members. The presidents of the chapter, since its founding, are:

1908 William John Higginson, Jr.	1918 Malcom Butement
1909 William John Higginson, Jr.	1919 Justin Lewis Smith
1910 Simon Oley Cutler	1920 James A. Crump
1911 Raymond Kenyon Twiner	1921 James A. Crump
1912 George Van de Bise Catuna	1922 Roy Potter Warren
1913 Cecil Clement Finch	1923 Henry New Hazard
1914 Deorge Gernen Lahr	1924 Norman Raymond Brown
1915 Theodore Mason Snyder	1925 Henry Fuller Stearns
1916 Thomas Holmes Thorn	1926 James Willett Hazard
1917 Leonard Van Houten	1927 Arthur Jackson Stewart

Delta's contributions to the national fraternities are George V. Catuna, member of the Grand Chapter since 1915, and National President from 1917-26, and Alvin McCraig, member of the Grand Chapter 1917-18.

### Statistics

Chapter publication and frequency: Delta Dial. Twice yearly.

Average size of chapter: Thirty-five to forty.

Both members and pledges may room in the chapter house.

Part of members take meals in the chapter house.

Owens its home, value \$33,000

### Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute was organized in 1826 at Troy, New York, and is non-co-educational. The student body during the school year of 1926-27 numbered approximately 1200 men. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is an endowed institution and ranks well up among the better engineering schools of the country. Sixteen national

social fraternities have chapters at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute of which Theta Chi was the ninth to be established.

Troy, the home of the University, is a city of 75,000 people, located on a connecting line of the New York Central Railroad. It is less than ten miles from Albany, the capital of the State, and is easily reached from the latter named city.