

Annie Web Blanton



Annie Webb Blanton and her twin sister Fannie were born August 19, 1870, in Houston, Texas. She had two other sisters and three brothers. "Annie began her formal education in a private school and had completed two years at Houston High School when her mother died." Her family then moved to LaGrange, Texas, where she completed high school. Her twin sister had died at the age of twelve. After graduation, she taught at a one-room county school in Pine Springs. When her father died a year later, she moved the family to Austin and taught in the elementary schools, and later at Austin High School, attending classes at the University of Texas evenings and vacations. "For five years she was enrolled as a Special Student without credit for the courses before she was permitted to enter the junior year as a regular candidate for a degree. She began her college training in 1890 and was graduated in 1899 with the degree of Bachelor of Literature." In 1901, Dr. Blanton began teaching English at North Texas State Normal School in Denton, where she taught for seventeen years.

In 1916, Annie Webb Blanton was the first woman to be elected president of the Texas State Teachers Association. While in office she was able to establish a fund for financing campaigns for securing more support for public schools. Her success as president led teachers to encourage her in a bid for State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Her candidacy was sponsored by the Texas State Women Suffrage Association. In 1918, supported by the State Department of Education and numerous civic organizations, educators and legislators, she was the first woman elected to a public office in Texas. After four years in that office she ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Congress.

Dr. Blanton obtained a Master's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and worked as an Adjunct Professor of School Administration for three years before going to Cornell University to pursue a doctorate in rural education and rural sociology. She returned to the University of Texas in 1927, and in 1933 was promoted to Professor of Rural Education -- the third woman to receive this rank at the university.

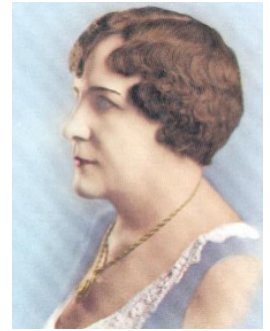
Annie Webb Blanton's wide circle of acquaintances, her organizational and leadership abilities, and her unflagging zeal led to the swift growth and expansion of Delta Kappa Gamma after that first initiation on May 11, 1929. Although the other Founders assisted her with expansion in Texas, Dr. Blanton did much of the work organizing other states. By 1941, Delta Kappa Gamma had expanded into 35 states and 80 chapters.

In late 1941, Dr. Blanton went to live with her niece Dorothy Thatcher, who lived about six miles from Austin. Between that time and 1945, Dr. Blanton suffered from arthritis and numerous short illnesses that interfered with her teaching and her work with Delta Kappa Gamma. In the spring of 1945, Dr. Blanton became ill with an intestinal influenza that was complicated by a heart condition, and it was not until mid-May that she was able to resume her Delta Kappa Gamma duties. Although advised by her doctors not to travel, she made plans to attend a National Executive Board meeting in Denver, scheduled for August 27 and 28. In late summer, her health became worse and did not respond to medical treatment.

On October 2, 1945, Annie Webb Blanton passed away. She is buried in her family plot in Oakwood Cemetery in Austin, in the shadow of huge live oaks.

Mamie Sue Bastian

"When Mamie Sue Bastian entered a room, laughter came in, too; for she was the epitome of buoyant living, of the humorous remark, of infectious optimism. A stranger might not know whether it was her expressive brown eyes, her regal bearing or her beautiful face which attracted; but he realized instinctively that in Miss Bastian he had a friend."



Born in 1875 in Houston, Texas, Mamie Sue Bastian received her education in the city's public schools, graduating from the Houston Normal and High School in 1894. She attended college during summer terms and traveled extensively throughout the United States and Canada. She taught in the Houston Schools from 1895 to 1922. She became a supervisor for a year and was principal of Bowie Elementary from 1924 to 1925. She was principal of Crockett Elementary from 1926 to 1940.

"Early in her career she became interested in accelerating improvement of teaching and teachers through organizations." She served on the Executive Committee of the Texas State Teachers Association in 1919 and organized and served as president of the Houston Teachers Association. She also formed the the Houston Principals Association. In addition to Delta Kappa Gamma, Miss Bastian was active in the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the National Education Association. She served one term as vice president of the Texas State Textbook Board.

"It is not surprising that Dr. Blanton selected her enterprising friend to share in establishing The Delta Kappa Gamma Society in 1929. Nor is it surprising that within five months Mamie Bastian had founded Gamma Chapter in Houston. As the first president, she directed Gamma's development for nearly four years. With this background she arose to presidency of Alpha State, organizing thirteen chapters during her successful term (1930-34). From 1929 to 1933, she had been national first vice-president; the following three years, the national recording secretary; in 1936 she was elected as the third national president. She is credited with founding thirteen chapters in Texas and with helping to establish six state organizations....

"Mamie Sue chaired several national committees: National Scholarship Fund (1936-38), National Permanent Fund (1936-1938), and Initiation (1932-1933). She was a member of a number of national committees including the one on Constitution (1929-30 and 1933-36), Membership (1930-36), Nominations (1930-33), Retirement Fund for Teachers (1930-31), Program (1934-40) and Headquarters Building (1940-43).

"It was Miss Bastian who initiated the idea of the Birthday Luncheon, who encouraged lively Delta Kappa Gamma songs to add color to drab lives of teachers. Because Mamie dearly loved to sing, she always inspired others to join in the fun when she directed."

Mamie Sue Bastian died on February 20, 1946, and was laid to rest in the Glenwood Cemetery of Houston.

Ruby Cole

"Miss [Ruby] Cole began her college work at Sam Houston Institute in Huntsville, Texas. Her sophomore year she attended Washington College, but she completed her course at the Southwest Texas State Normal College. In later years she did graduate study at the College of the Incarnate Word and at Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio."



"Ruby Cole was already recognized for her work in school and civic affairs when she was invited to become a Founder of Delta Kappa Gamma. In San Antonio she commanded respect from women's clubs, from business men and the Chamber of Commerce. With these alert citizens she had worked to improve the community that it might be more appealing to tourists as well as to those who called it home."

"Because of her identification with both professional and lay people, Miss Cole's influence in San Antonio and throughout Texas was considerable. As a member of the Teacher's Retirement Committee of TSTA and as chairman of the legislative committee of elementary principals, she worked energetically for better schools and for teacher welfare.... This understanding person, who radiated cheer, courage and good will, was selected by Dr. Annie Webb Blanton to interest women educators of San Antonio in Delta Kappa Gamma. Miss Cole and Mamie Bastian of Houston vied with each other for the honor of first founding a chapter in her home community. Miss Cole succeeded, for she organized Beta on July 6, 1929, less than two months after the national Society had been established. She served as Beta's president from October 1930 to September 1931 and as national second vice-president from 1929 to 1933. Later she organized Upsilon Chapter in Texas."

Ruby Cole was active in Delta Kappa Gamma's national committees. She served as chairman of the Nominations Committee (1930-1931) and was a member of the Constitution Committee (1929-1930), Nominations Committee (1929-1930), Membership Committee (1930-1931), Retirement Fund for Teachers (1930-1931 and 1936-1940), Initiation Committee (1932-1935) and Legislation Committee (1936-1938).

"Although Miss Cole's health was impaired at times by a slight heart condition, her passing came as a distinct shock to her family and friends. On November 20, 1940, she suffered a heart attack and was taken to the Santa Rosa Hospital where she died the following morning. 'She went as most of us would pray that we might depart,' wrote Dr. Blanton, 'without long suffering -- straight from the school room in which her work was done.'"

Mabel Youree Grizzard

"Mabel Youree Grizzard (accent on the first syllable) is a native of Ellis County, Texas, the daughter of Walton Henry Grizzard and Hattie Youree Grizzard. Her ancestors came to Texas from Alabama and Tennessee, playing a conspicuous part in early American history.



"As a child, Mabel attended private schools before graduating with honors from the Waxahachie public schools. Then she completed work for a diploma from the North Texas State Normal School in Denton, where she was a pupil of Dr. Annie Webb Blanton. In later years, Miss Grizzard studied at Peabody College in Nashville, Tennessee, and at the University of Denver. Seeking to learn the best educational methods extant, she spent many summers in research and study; she observed practices in the leading university demonstration schools of the nation."

Miss Grizzard taught in three schools over the years: Bristol School in Ellis County, the State Orphans Home in Corsicana and at a large elementary school in Waxahachie where she served first as a teacher and then as principal for approximately forty years. She was granted a leave of absence for two years during that time to become an elementary supervisor of rural schools in Texas. She also served as an assistant to the State Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Blanton, during the summers.

Miss Grizzard was active in several educational associations. She served on the Executive Board of the North Texas Division of Elementary Principals and was president of the Ellis County unit of Texas State Teachers Association. She was active with the National Principals Association of NEA and the National Society for the Study of Education. Her elementary school PTA presented her with a life membership in the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

"Both Mabel and Eva Frances Grizzard were invited to assist with founding The Delta Kappa Gamma Society. Illness in the home prevented Eva Frances from accepting, but Mabel attended the initial meeting in Austin. She assisted Dr. Annie Webb Blanton in founding Alpha Alpha Chapter (Ellis County) on May 23, 1931, in Waxahachie."

Miss Grizzard was chairman of the Committee on Progress of Delta Kappa Gamma (1930-1931) and the Necrology Committee (1934-1935). She served as a member of Nominations Committee (1931-1934), Initiation (1932-1935), National Achievement Award (1933-1934), Progress of Delta Kappa Gamma (1936-1938) and Necrology (1954-1956).

Mabel Youree Grizzard died on July 12, 1968, and was buried in the Hillcrest Burial Park in Waxahachie

Anna Hiss

"Anna Hiss came to Austin from Baltimore, Maryland, where she had received her early education in the Bryn Mawr School. She attended Hollins College in Virginia (1912-1913) before enrolling in Sargent School (now Boston University) where she studied physical education for three years. In later years she continued her education at Teachers College, Columbia University, receiving a B.S. degree in 1936. During the summers she studied at the University of Colorado, University of Wisconsin, Mills College, Leland Stanford University and Columbia University.



"Apparently there was never any doubt in the mind of Anna Hiss as to the choice of her career. Having served as an instructor on the campus of the University of Texas during several summer sessions, she also knew that she liked living in Austin. In 1918 she accepted a full-time position as a member of the University faculty and quickly advanced from instructor to associate professor, to associate director, to director and then to full professor in 1941.... She was instrumental in the establishment of the professional degree for physical education and the program for the preparation of teachers in the physical education field."

"In selecting Founders for The Delta Kappa Gamma Society, Dr. Blanton sought a broad cross section of the teaching profession. The inclusion of Anna Hiss augmented the diversity of educational interests represented. As much time as Anna could spare from her classroom and administrative work, she gave to Delta Kappa Gamma. Heartily in accord with its purposes and ideals, this Founder accepted chapter and national responsibilities."

Anna Hiss was committed to Delta Kappa Gamma and served in a wide range of committees, including Equal Opportunity for Women Teachers (1930-1931), Nominations (1931-1934), Initiation (1932-1933), Constitution (1936-1938), Publications (1936-1939), Membership (1937-1940), and World and Community Service (1954-1956). Miss Hiss was chairman of the national committee instrumental in the choice and purchase of the lot for the Headquarters in Austin.

On January 29, 1972, Anna Hiss died in Baltimore, Maryland, where she had lived since retiring in 1957.

Ray Holden King

Ray King's interest in learning and in seeking the worthwhile things in life had their origin in childhood and the stimulation of a happy home. Miss King was the third child born to Joseph and Anna King in Pilot Point, Texas. A much beloved aunt insisted on calling her Ray, and her parents added the aunt's name, Holden. She had two sisters and a brother, who died in infancy.



After she graduated from Pilot Point High School, Ray King entered North Texas State Normal School in Denton, where her sister Sue was a senior. In order that the girls might live at home while they attended school, the family moved to Denton. It was at the Normal School that Miss King met Annie Webb Blanton and formed a lasting friendship with her. Miss King spent many of her summers studying at the University of Colorado, Texas Christian University and the University of California in Berkeley, where she earned her B.A. degree. She received recognition for her scholarly attainments by being elected to Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Kappa Alpha, a woman's honorary society in history. For the next four summers she studied to obtain her M.A. degree at Teachers College of Columbia University in New York City.

After one year's teaching experience in Gordon, Texas, and another in Mineral Wells, she moved with her family to Fort Worth. In Fort Worth Ray King first taught fifth and sixth grades, then began teaching history to junior high school students. When Central High School was enlarged, she taught history there and eventually was named chairman of the history department, a position she held until her retirement in 1954.

The day that The Delta Kappa Gamma Society held its first initiation ceremony, the Founders elected Ray King treasurer. Her duties involved looking after the expenditures and receipts for both Alpha State Organization and the national Society. She also enthusiastically assisted with the expansion of the Society. She and her sister Sue established Delta Chapter in Fort Worth on October 29, 1929, and Beta Phi Chapter in Tarrant County, Texas, in February 1936. Miss King advanced the program of work by participating in national committees, including the Permanent Fund (1930-1933), Auditing (1931-1934), Achievement Award (1932-1935), Initiation (1930-1933), Legislation (1936-1938) and Equal Opportunities for Women Teachers (1938-1942). During the 1954-1956 biennium she represented the Founders on the Administrative Board.

Miss King loved to travel and toured throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico. She found personal joy in meeting new people and learning new information to enliven her history classes. She also enriched her life with her hobbies of needlepoint, hooking rugs and cooking. She was active in professional and civic organizations such as the American Association of University Women, the Retired Teachers Association, the Women's Club, the Fort Worth Civic Music Association and the Symphony Orchestra.

Ray King passed away on January 24, 1979, in Fort Worth. Members of the Society's Fiftieth Anniversary Committee were meeting in Dallas at the time of Miss King's death and were able to attend the services.

Sue King

"The name Sue King has been held in loving memory by many Delta Kappa Gammas since May 4, 1930. On that day she left family and friends for the life beyond, but behind her remains a record of scholarship, of leadership and service in the Society she helped to establish."



Sue King was born in Pilot Point, Texas, the sister of Ray and Ombra King. While a student at North Texas State Normal School in Denton, Sue was distinguished for her proficiency in languages and history. On campus, Sue and Ray enjoyed clubs, lectures, concerts and other attractions. Sue and Annie Webb Blanton came to know, admire and respect one another, and their friendship deepened and continued through the years.

"Sue King's ambition to teach was allied with initiative and independence. Not content to depend entirely on her family to finance her education, she interrupted her study with intervals of teaching. Sue valued the experiences in the classroom and the practical guidance from principals and co-workers as much as the remuneration she obtained. In the public schools of Duncanville and Commerce, Texas, she was confirming the wisdom of her choice of a career. Teaching brought her the joys and satisfactions which she sought in life."

After graduation, Miss King taught Latin in the high schools in Denton and Mineral Wells. Later she taught history in Fort Worth. Her pupils found her inspiring. During vacation periods she read widely for her own pleasure as well as to select supplementary materials for the school library. "Shortly after she became head of the history department at Jennings Avenue Junior High School in Fort Worth, Miss King began summer work at the University of California in Berkeley. Sue's enjoyment was more than doubled when her sister Ray shared in experiences there." Sue and Ray both took a year's leave to complete their degrees, and both were inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Kappa Alpha when they graduated with highest honors in history. Sue also attended Teacher's College of Columbia University, but her illness prevented her from completing her Master's degree.

In 1928, Sue King took a year's leave of absence from teaching to regain her health. "Her friends rejoiced in her return to her position in September 1929, for she seemed enthusiastic and energetic. Then, suddenly, on May 4, 1930, she died."

"Dr. Blanton recognized in Sue King the kind of teacher that she hoped to interest in Delta Kappa Gamma. Sue sensed that some of the joys of being a Founder by assisting her sister Ray with forming Delta Chapter. She loved associations with members of Alpha State."

Helen Koch

Helen Koch was born on August 26, 1895, and grew up in Blue Island, Illinois. She became interested in music at an early age and began studying piano when she was eight years old. She spent many hours over the next fourteen years practicing and developing her skills. She was an honor student in school and took part in extra-curricular activities and clubs. After she graduated high school, she attended the University of Chicago where she majored in psychology and minored in German, as well as continued her music training. She received her Bachelor of Philosophy degree in 1918 and her Doctor of Philosophy in 1921, both from the University of Chicago.



Dr. Koch began teaching psychology at the University of Texas in 1922. She became associated professionally with A. Caswell Ellis, chief of the department of the philosophy of education. In 1924, under his supervision, the National Committee of Mental Hygiene made a survey of the state in preparation for Child Guidance centers in Dallas and Houston. Because of the interest she had in Dr. Ellis' work, she had to make the difficult decision of taking a teaching job at Western Reserve University, where he was heading the adult education department, or to go to the University of Chicago. Her close family ties in Chicago helped her to decide on Chicago where she was an associate professor of psychology until 1942, when she became professor of child psychology.

"On the campus of the University of Texas, she gained a reputation for scholarship in the field of psychology. The idea of improving the profession appealed to Dr. Koch so she joined with the other Founders in giving impetus to the new organization and became active in Alpha Chapter. It was a loss to Texas, but Illinois' gain when Helen Koch returned to her native state. There, in March 1935, she became one of the founders of the Lambda State Organization and has been a member of Kappa Chapter in Chicago since its inception in March 1937.

"In Kappa Chapter she has served as committee chairman of Initiation, Program, Nomination and Necrology. On the national level Dr. Koch has been a member of the following committees: Publications (1931-1934), Progress of Delta Kappa Gamma (1936-1942), Scholarship, (1944-1950), Membership (1954-1956), and Research (1956-1958). She represented the Founders on the National Planning Committee 1946-1948." She represented the Founders on the Administrative Board from 1966 to 1970.

Dr. Koch died in Chicago, Illinois, on July 14, 1977.

Ruby Terrill Lomax

"Born and reared in Denton, Texas, Ruby Terrill received her secondary education in the North Texas Normal College headed by her cousin, M.B. Terrill. She earned an A.B. degree from the John B. Denton College in 1905 and a B.A. from the University of Texas in 1906." Miss Terrill taught Latin for nine years at Dallas High School. She received a Latin fellowship to the University of Texas Austin for the 1914-1915 school year. In 1918 she was offered a faculty position East Texas State Teachers College in Commerce teaching Latin and serving as dean of women.



at
at

During the years she taught in Dallas, Ruby Terrill spent four summers studying at the University of Chicago and two at Columbia University in New York. By June 1925 she had practically completed her work for a doctorate. From 1925-1937 she served as Dean of Women and Associate Professor of Classical Languages at the University of Texas. In 1934 she married renowned folklorist John Lomax.

Ruby Terrill Lomax was active in many campus, academic, social and community service organizations such as American Association of University Women, Phi Beta Kappa, Daughters of the American Revolution, YMCA and many others. "With her intellectual acumen, creativity and steadfastness of purpose, it was fortunate that Ruby Terrill (Lomax) could join with the other key persons in founding The Delta Kappa Gamma Society. Dr. Blanton relied heavily upon her advice, and, in the election of the first state-national officers, Ruby was made parliamentarian. In this capacity, she helped to guide the Society until 1933, when she became national first vice-president. From 1934 to 1936 she was keeper of the records for the national organization."

She also served on numerous national committees: Constitution (1929-1930), Membership (1933-1937), Initiation (1933-1934), Letters and Publications (1940-1942), Nominations (1941-1942), Awards (1946-1952), and Teacher Welfare and Morale (1954-1956). She represented the the Founders on the National Planning Committee from 1946-1950.

"Mrs. Lomax assisted with the expansion of the Society in Texas, installing Alpha Beta, Alpha Delta and Alpha Omega Chapters. On April 16, 1932, she accompanied Dr. Blanton to Oklahoma City for the founding of Gamma State Organization."

"On December 28, 1961, Mrs. Ruby Terrill Lomax died at the age of 75 in the Christian Home for the Aged in Houston, Texas. Services were conducted in the First Baptist Church with burial in the Grove Hill Memorial Park in Dallas."

Cora Merrimam Martin

"Cora Merriman was the youngest of eight children born to Theodore and Elizabeth Merriman of Chico, Texas. Soon after graduation from high school there, Cora married Francis Robert Martin. Their happy life together on a ranch at Martin's Prairie was cut short by his death the following year. Then it was that Mrs. Martin began preparation for a teaching career." She graduated from North Texas State Normal School in Denton in 1909 and began teaching.



"Her first [teaching] experience was at Munday, Texas. Later she taught in Fort Worth and Paducah, Texas." Mrs. Martin received her B.A. in 1919 and her M.A. in 1922 from Teachers College at Columbia University in New York. "Following a year as primary supervisor at the Bloomsburg Normal School in Pennsylvania, she returned (1923) to the North Texas State Teachers College." She taught in the demonstration school on the campus and eventually was promoted to supervisor and finally teaching elementary education. Then in 1927 Mrs. Martin decided to move to the University of Texas so she could work on her doctorate while serving as assistant professor of elementary education. She received her Ph.D. in 1936.

While Mrs. Martin taught at the University of Texas, she lived in the Faculty Women's Club where she and Dr. Annie Webb Blanton frequently discussed plans for the founding of Delta Kappa Gamma. An active member and officer of a wide variety of academic and social organizations, Cora Martin played a key role in advising Dr. Blanton concerning the Constitution, initiation ritual and program of work. She also polished Dr. Blanton's lyric for the "Delta Kappa Gamma Song," fitting it to the tune of "Men of Harlech." When election of officers took place, Mrs. Martin was selected to be keeper of the records.

"As the years wore on, she was first vice-president of Alpha Chapter four years and state keeper of the records. On the national level she was committee chairman of Necrology (1930-1931), Initiation (1931-1932 and 1938-1939) and Figurines (1950-1952). Dr. Martin also served on the following committees: Membership (1930-1940), Insignia (1940-1941), Equal Rights Amendment (1941-1943) and Constitution (1952-1954). She represented the Founders on the National Planning Committee and on the Administrative Board." She is credited with the installation of Alpha Epsilon, Alpha Zeta, Alpha Eta and Beta Tau Chapters in Texas. She assisted with the organization of Alpha Sigma State Organization, Washington and helped Dr. Blanton install Gamma State Organization, Oklahoma.

Dr. Martin, who had been suffering from heart problems for several years, collapsed after returning home from the 1964 International Convention in San Francisco. She moved into the Stillwell Residence, a home for retired teachers in Waco, Texas. She died there on April 12, 1965, and was laid to rest in the Chico Cemetery near her husband and baby daughter.

Lalla McClatchy Odom

"The second oldest in a family of seven children, Lalla learned to share pleasures and responsibilities. Growing up in Fayette County, [Texas,] she knew Annie Webb Blanton as a school mate in La Grange. Ambitious and quick mind, Lalla obtained a B.A. degree by the age of seventeen. Not content with her training at Waco Female College and Baylor University, she enrolled in the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati."



of

Her diploma from the Conservatory led her to a position as a teacher of music and mathematics at Willie Halsell College in Vineta, Oklahoma. After she and William Edgar Odom married, they lived in several towns in Texas and Oklahoma before settling in Austin in 1917. There was a population boom in Austin at that time and Mrs. Odom was immediately hired to teach at Metz Elementary School. At the close of the school year she was notified that it was contrary to the policies of the Board of Education to issue contracts to married teachers. The superintendent supported her position but told her that she could only be a substitute teacher. Mrs. Odom refused to accept that position because of the discriminatory regulation. Weeks later the Board reversed its ruling. Mrs. Odom helped break down this barrier and became one of the first married woman teachers in Austin to receive a regular contract.

"This was the period when the junior high school, as a separate division of the public school, was being tried as an experiment. The Allen Junior High was the first of its type in Texas. And Mrs. Odom was named to head the department of mathematics there. To equip herself for her professional responsibilities, she continued her study, earning A.B. and A.M. degrees at the University of Texas. From time to time, she added graduate courses in education, government and English."

Mrs. Odom took an active part in city, state and national political affairs. She also was active in professional organizations such as the Classroom Teachers Association, Texas State Teachers Association and the National Education Association. "This was the type of personality Dr. Blanton believed could assist with the new Delta Kappa Gamma Society. To the group, Lalla brought the point of view of a junior high school teacher of mathematics and the desire to banish discrimination against women in the profession."

"The two longtime friends, Dr. Blanton and Mrs. Odom, installed Alpha Chapter (June 3, 1929) within a month of the founding of the national Society. With Ruby Cole, they obtained the national charter. They made frequent weekend trips to surrounding counties to enlist prospective members. Several chapters claim Lalla as their organizer."

"Mrs. Odom was Alpha's first president. During the years 1929-1933, she was corresponding secretary for the state-national organization and chairman of the Committee on Constitution (1931-1932). Other national committees on which she worked included: Legislation (1930-1931 and 1938-1940), Achievement Award (1932-1933 and 1936-1938), Pioneer Women (1942-1948 and 1952-1956), Editing the Constitution (1956-1958)." She represented the Founders on the National Planning Committee (1948-1952) and the Administrative Board (1958-1960).

"As the years passed, her eyesight gradually dimmed and her frail body weakened. She died on Monday, April 14, 1964, in her home.... Burial was in the Oakwood Cemetery in Austin."

Lela Lee Williams

Lela Lee Williams was born and raised in Wills Point, Texas. "Her father, Henry Nelson Williams, and grandfather, W. J. Davidson, were repeatedly elected school trustees, maintaining an interest in education until they died in 1899."



Miss Williams began her teaching career in the Wills Point elementary school after she received her teaching certificate from Sam Houston Normal Institute in Huntsville, Texas. During the summers she taught primary methods and speech in the normal schools and teachers institutes of East and North Texas. A shortage of funds in spring 1907 caused the Wills Point school to close, but Miss Williams received an offer from New Iberia Parish in Louisiana for a position as acting principal and primary teacher for the remainder of the year. As she was deciding whether to remain in Louisiana or to return to Wills Point, she received word from the Dallas Board of Education of her election to a position there. From September 1908 to her retirement in 1953, she remained with the Dallas school system.

Through the years Lela Lee Williams obtained a B.A. degree from North Texas State Normal College and an M.A. from the Colorado State Teachers College in Greeley. She did graduate work in primary methods and speech at the University of Chicago, the University of Colorado and Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City.

Lela Lee Williams' contributions to the profession included her activities in educational organizations. In 1917 she was elected the first president of the Dallas Grade Teachers Association. In 1919 she helped organize the Texas Grade Teachers Association and became its first president. "Miss Williams... led a movement for informing the public of the needs of children, of teachers and of Dallas in the way of educational improvement. The net result was a \$400 raise for teachers in the city system, a higher minimum pay and in increased monthly increment toward a higher maximum pay." In 1920 she was elected president of the Texas State Teachers Association - the first classroom teacher and the second woman to serve in that office. (Dr. Blanton was the first woman elected president in 1917.)

Because of her association with Dr. Blanton, who was State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Texas from 1918-1922, Lela Lee Williams was a natural choice to help found Delta Kappa Gamma. After the initiation, Miss Williams began planning to establish a chapter in Dallas. On October 26, 1929, Epsilon Chapter was installed. Lela Lee served as chapter president from 1933-1935 and remained a member of that chapter for forty-four years. At the national level, Miss Williams served as recording secretary (1929-1933), as chairman of the Committee on Retirement (1930-1936), the Membership Committee (1946-1948), the Figurines Committee (1949-1950), and the Personnel Committee (1954-1956), and as a member of eight other national and international committees through the years. She represented the Founders on the National Planning Committee from 1950-1952 and on the Administrative Board from 1960-1962.

Miss Williams passed away on February 18, 1971, near Dallas, Texas. Her funeral was attended by members of the Administrative Board, who happened to be meeting in Dallas at that time. At the graveside ceremony for Lela Lee Williams, Ruth Johnson, Epsilon Chapter, concluded her remarks saying, "Her thoughtfulness to the new member, to the visitor; her notes of encouragement to those in leadership, to those in illness, pain or joy, even to husbands when good things happened in their work--all bespeak the magnanimity of one who walked humbly, of one who kept the common touch when we would have so gladly made her royalty, of one who loved every person who came in contact with her and lifted them up to see their own potential of service. She touched our lives in a very meaningful way. To live in the hearts of others is not to die."