

684

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" on the appropriate line or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name SIGMA SIGMA-DELTA CHI FRATERNITY HOUSE
other names/site number Sigma Sigma Fraternity House; Delta Chi Fraternity House

2. Location

street & number 405 Hayward Avenue N/A not for publication
city or town Ames N/A vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Story code 169 zip code 50010

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this (nomination request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property (meets does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant (nationally statewide locally). (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Babara A. Mitchell DSHPO April 24 2008
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property (meets does not meet) the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is :

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- Other, (Explain)

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Judith McCullard

7-10-08

Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
Name of Property

Story County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many lines as apply)
Category of Property (Check only one line)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/education related

SOCIAL/clubhouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT, NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
Name of Property

Story County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" on all the lines that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1924-1933

Significant Dates

1924

1933

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance - (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

9. Major Bibliography References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- previous determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Record
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historical Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository

Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
Name of Property

Story County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 15 | 44 6 05 0 | | 4 65 190 0 |

Zone Easting Northing

2 | | - - - - - | | - - - - - |

Zone Easting Northing

3 | | - - - - - | | - - - - - |

Zone Easting Northing

4 | | - - - - - | | - - - - - |

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William C. Page, Public Historian

organization Iowa House Building, L.L.C. date June 1, 2007

street & number 520 East Sheridan Ave. (Page) telephone 515-243-5740

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50313-5017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs - Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items - (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Iowa House Building, L.L.C.

street & number 119 Stanton Avenue, Post Office Box 1099 telephone 515-598-9400

city or town Ames state IA zip code 50014

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Site

The Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House is located on the southwest corner of Hayward Avenue and Knapp Street on the south side of the Fourth Ward in Ames, Iowa. The building was the first improvement on the site. The house sits on Lots 1 and 2 and is situated directly southwest of the intersection of the two streets. Originally, Lots 3 and 4 were included as part of this site. They remain unimproved except for a volleyball court and an unpaved parking lot. The latter runs along the western portion of all four lots with an approach drive on Knapp Street providing the access. Only Lots 1 and 2 are included in this nomination. The surrounding neighborhood is mostly residential, with single-family housing predominating. An athletic field owned by Iowa State University stands directly to the west of the fraternity property.

Building

The Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House is a large and massive, 2.5-story, brick edifice, completed in 1924. It features brick walls on a poured concrete foundation and a complex roof covered with asphalt shingles.

The footprint of the building possesses a rectangular-shaped main block with several projecting wings. The 2.5-story main block measures approximately 60 feet by 34 feet. A 1-story porte-cochere and 1-story front porch are attached on the northeast corner of the block. A 2.5-story wing projects from the south side of the main block.

The building features two primary façades with the façade facing Hayward Avenue the narrower of the two.

A contemporary account of the building's construction reports "the house will be constructed of multicolored Navajo brick." (*Iowa State Student*, June 1, 1923) The yellow, rust, red, and brown colors of this brick lend texture to the building's exterior walls.

The roof is a notable architectural element of the building. It consists of a hip roof intersected by lower gables. Each of these units is steeply pitched. The south gable end is clipped. A shed dormer window is located on the south slope of the hip roof. All of the eaves are wide and feature exposed rafters.

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

A porte-cochere is situated on the east end of the building's north elevation. Constructed of the same red brick as the building itself, this porte-cochere features a front parapetted gable roof, trimmed with cast concrete coping and an arched entrance set with a keystone, covering a vehicular drive, which runs east to west through it. Brick buttresses support the north elevation of the porte-cochere. Originally, vehicles approached the porte-cochere by a driveway from Hayward Avenue and looped to exit into Knapp Street (or vice versa). A door is situated on the north side of the fraternity house for passengers to enter it from the porte-cochere. Both of the driveways to the porte-cochere are now blocked. They are rather narrow in width, perhaps the reason the use of the porte-cochere fell from favor.

This porte-cochere is a unique feature among the many historic fraternity and sorority residences in Ames. While one or two of the post-World War II residences possess such an amenity, none of the pre-World War II edifices does.

A 1-story, unenclosed front porch is situated on the northeast corner of the building's east elevation adjacent to the porte-cochere. This red brick porch features a front parapetted gable roof, trimmed with cast concrete coping and an arched entrance set with a keystone. Brick buttresses support the front elevation of this porch.

The building's windows generally feature 8/8 and 8/1 double-hung sash. Ribbon windows are situated in the north, east, south, and west elevations.

In 1965, Bower & Bower Construction Company remodeled the building. This project, estimated to cost \$60,000, included the replacement of many original windows. Although the new windows were clad with vinyl, they were of wood fabrication and conformed to the double-hung and multi-pane configuration of the original sash.

Most of this remodeling affected the interior. The interior walls were furred out with sheet rock, likely to mask damage to the original plaster walls. The kitchen, which originally was located in the basement, was converted into living quarters, and a new kitchen was built on the first floor. A cold air dormitory was built in the attic. This construction required the installation of a narrow, spiral staircase from the third floor to the attic, the removal of a round window in the gable end of the front façade and its replacement with a louvered air vent, the removal of a window in the gable end of the west elevation and its replacement with a fire escape door, and the construction of a fire escape on the west elevation of the building.

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

Now, the first floor of the building includes two parlors, a dining room, and a kitchen. This floorplan is original to the building, except for the kitchen, as already discussed. A fireplace is situated in the front parlor. Its wood surrounds were removed during the 1965 remodeling. The second and third floors feature sleeping and study rooms arranged along a double-loaded corridor, which runs from the east to the west through the middle of the building. The attic features the cold air dormitory. When the kitchen was located in the basement, it included a dumb waiter to the dining room on the first floor, a feature removed during the 1965 remodeling. The Chapter Room, where the fraternity held business meetings and initiations, remains intact in the southeast corner of the basement.

Date of Construction

The construction of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House was completed in 1924. By March 1923, the fraternity had acquired the title to the land on which the house was constructed. The fraternity mortgaged this land to the Ames Building & Loan Association in June of 1923 and to Ben J. Cole in November of that year to finance the construction of the building. (Abstract of Title) At least a preliminary design of the building had been completed by the end of May 1923, based on a student newspaper report. (*The Iowa State Student*, June 1, 1923)

The 1924 edition of *The Bomb*, the Iowa State University yearbook, pictures the interior of the earlier Sigma Sigma residence during the 1923-1924 academic year. This is the interior of another, older building. The 1926 edition of *The Bomb* pictures the exterior of the new building at 405 Hayward Avenue. (*The Bomb* 1924 & 1926) *The Bomb* of 1925 pictures neither building.

These facts points to the completion of the fraternity house by the fall of 1924. Construction likely began in the spring of 1924. According to one 1924 newspaper account:

The average fraternity house is being occupied four months from the time construction is commenced. ("Seven Buildings Are Under Construction," *The Iowa State Student*, November 12, 1924)

Therefore, it is entirely feasible that the new Sigma Sigma building opened for occupancy at the beginning of the 1924-1925 academic year.

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

INTEGRITY AND PRESENT CONDITION

The integrity of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House is excellent. The building is located on its original site with its architectural design unimpaired except for the replacement windows and remodeled interior. The latter change affects only the interior of the building and are not visible from its exterior.

The building's original materials and workmanship remain intact and in excellent condition. No additions, accretions, or demolitions have occurred on the exterior of the building to impact negatively its integrity.

The property's feeling and association with its historic events remain high. Those individuals involved and associated with these events would immediately recognize the building today as their fraternal home. While it is true that most of the vehicular drive to the porte-cochere has been removed, the historic function of that architectural element remains visually intact.

The two lots to the south of the building, which Sigma Sigma included in its original purchase of land, might be developed in the future. Like the two lots included in this nomination, they too are zoned "RH" Residential High Density Zone. Setback and square footage requirements for new construction hinder the visual intrusion of the nominated property by new construction.

Residents in the surrounding neighborhood generally agree that the adaptive reuse of this fraternity house as a bed and breakfast is a good use for it and would ensure its preservation. Otherwise its fate is in question. Although the conversion of the buildings into an apartment house—another potential function—conforms to its "RH" zoning, such a proposal would be less desirable to the neighborhood. Because this site is desirable for redevelopment, the demolition of the fraternity house is even more likely, something the neighbors do not wish.

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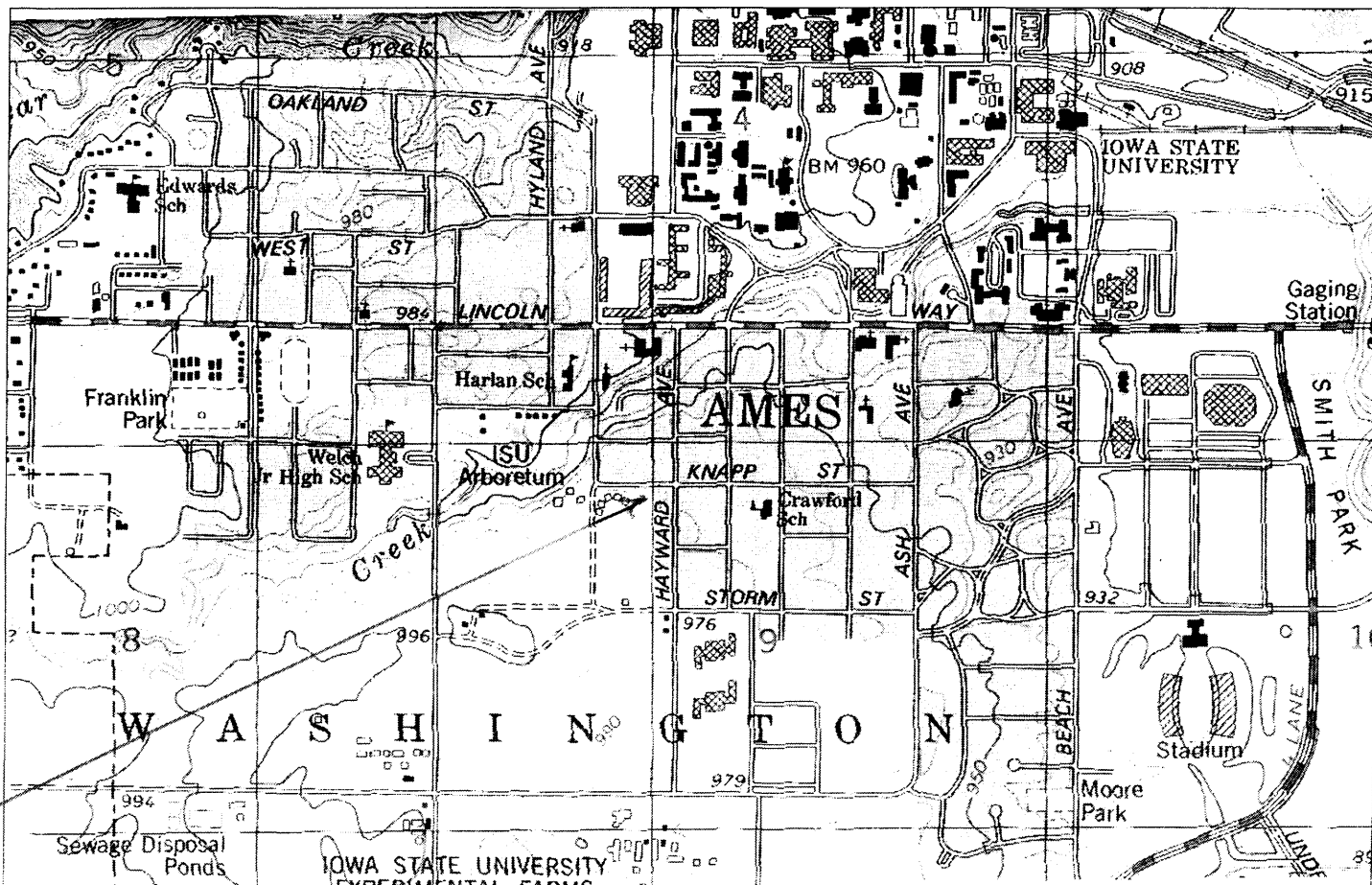
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

SITE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



Source: USGS Map, Ames West, Iowa, Quadrangle, 1975.

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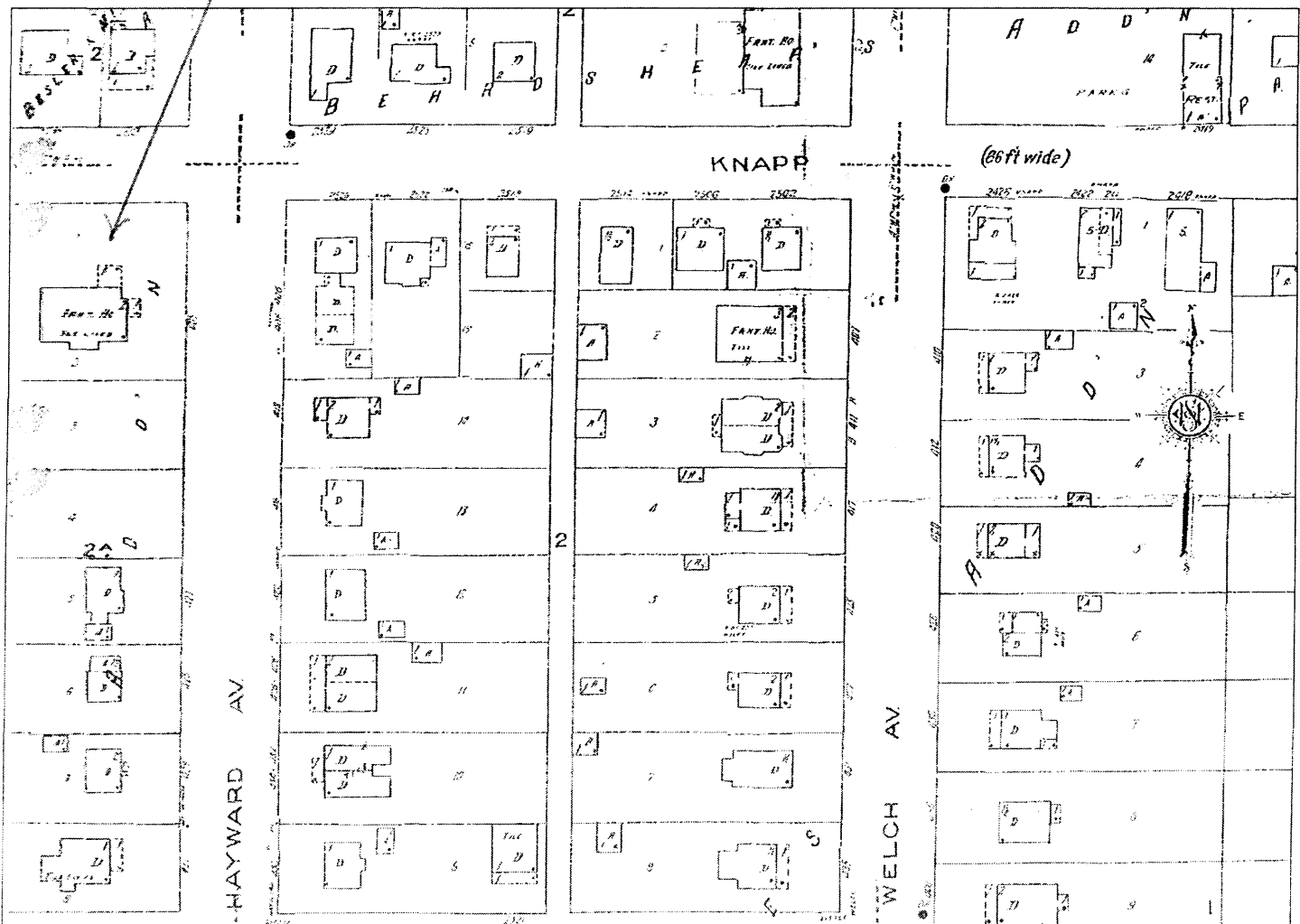
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

FIRE INSURANCE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



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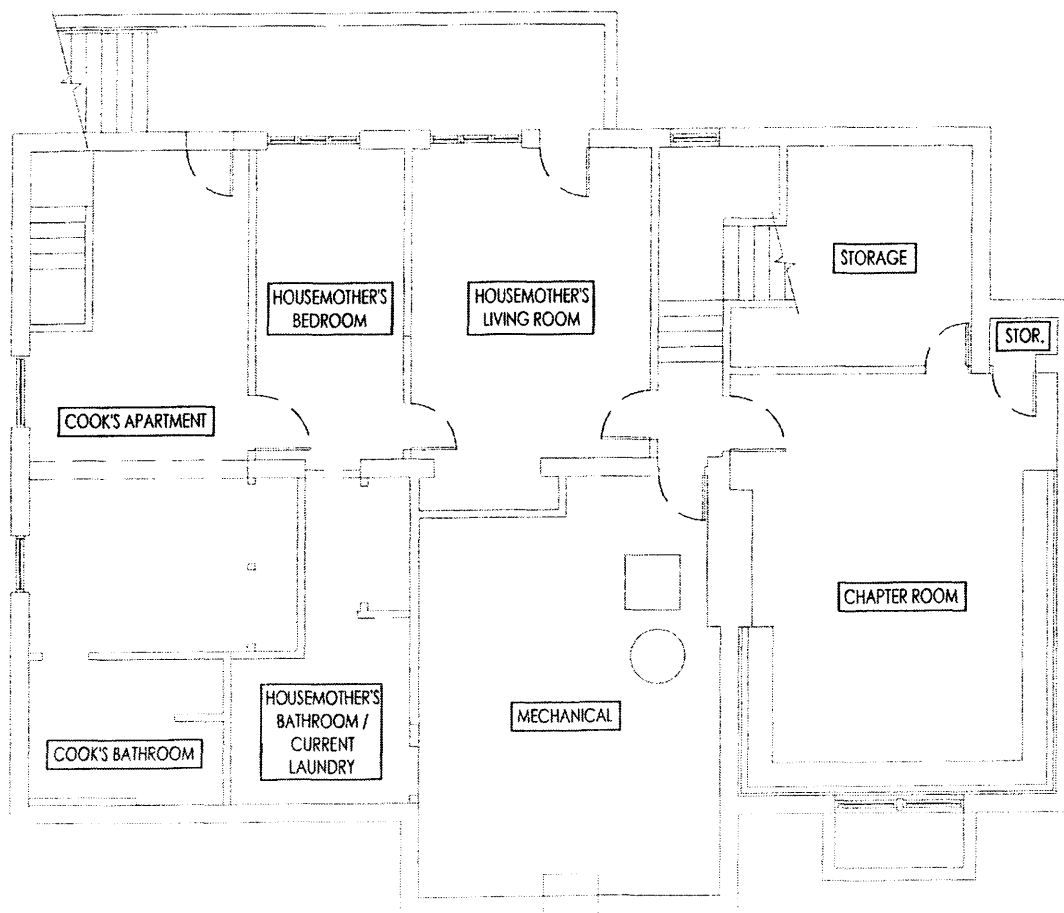
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN



Source: Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., 2007.

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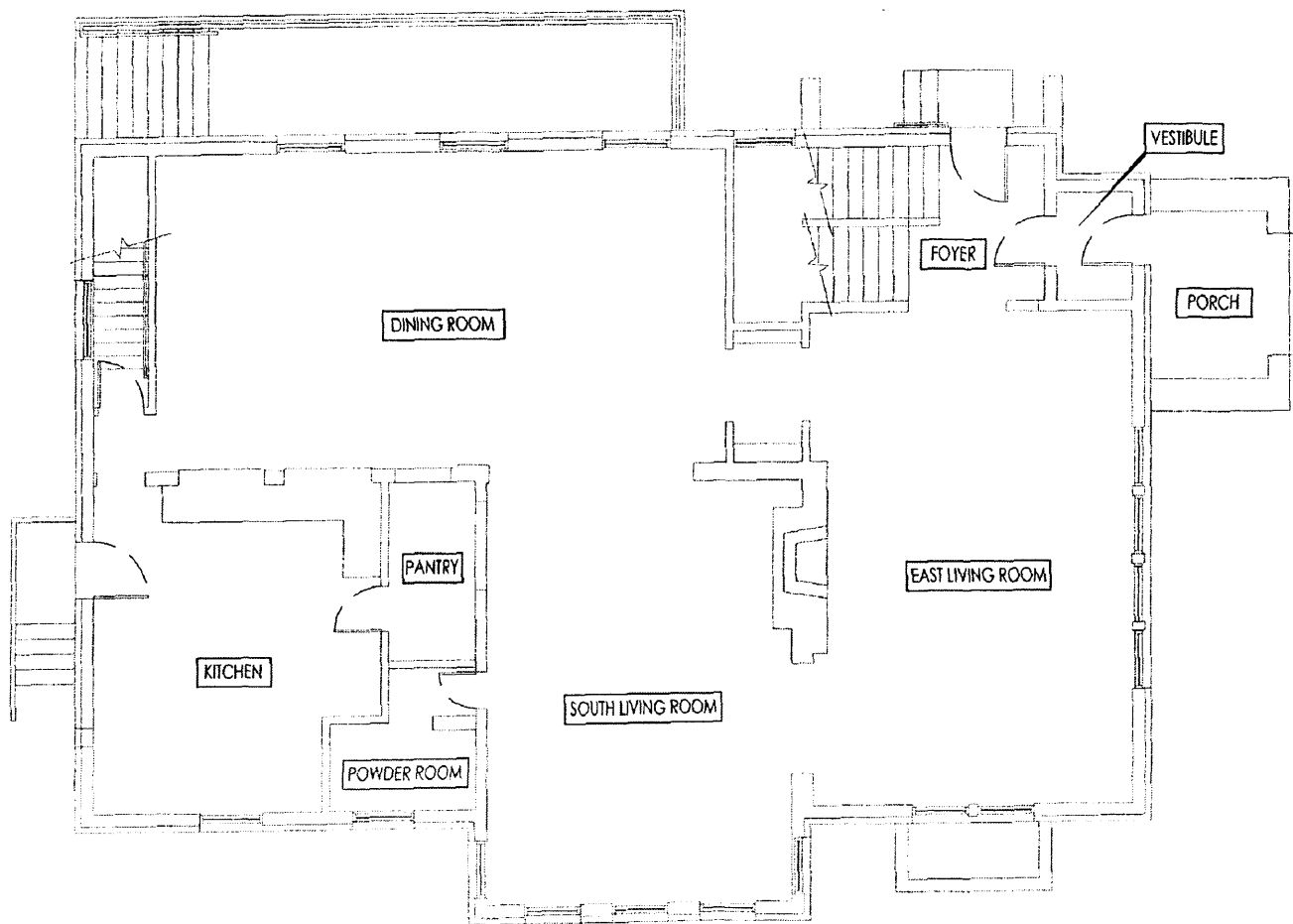
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



This drawing does not picture the porte-cochere on the north elevation.

Source: Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., 2007.

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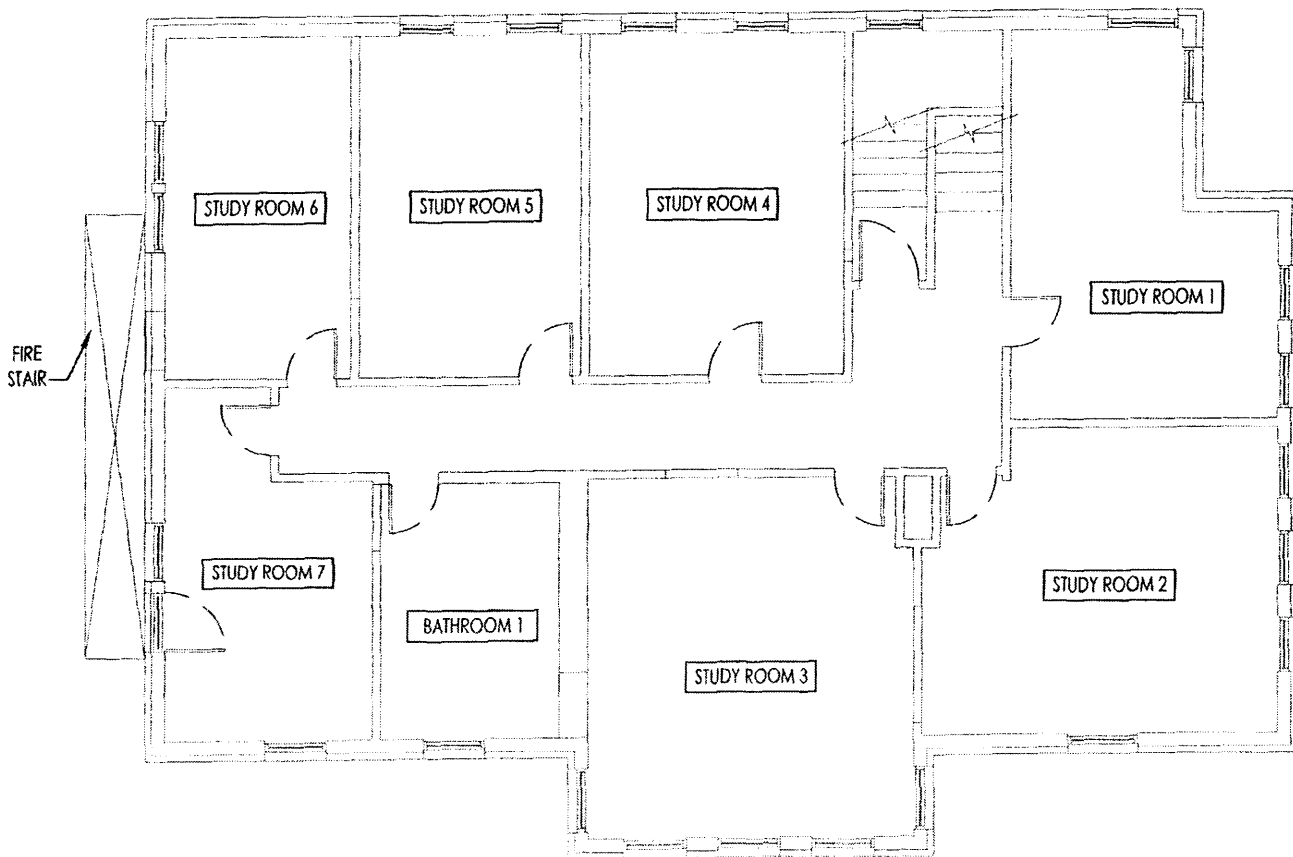
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN



Source: Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., 2007.



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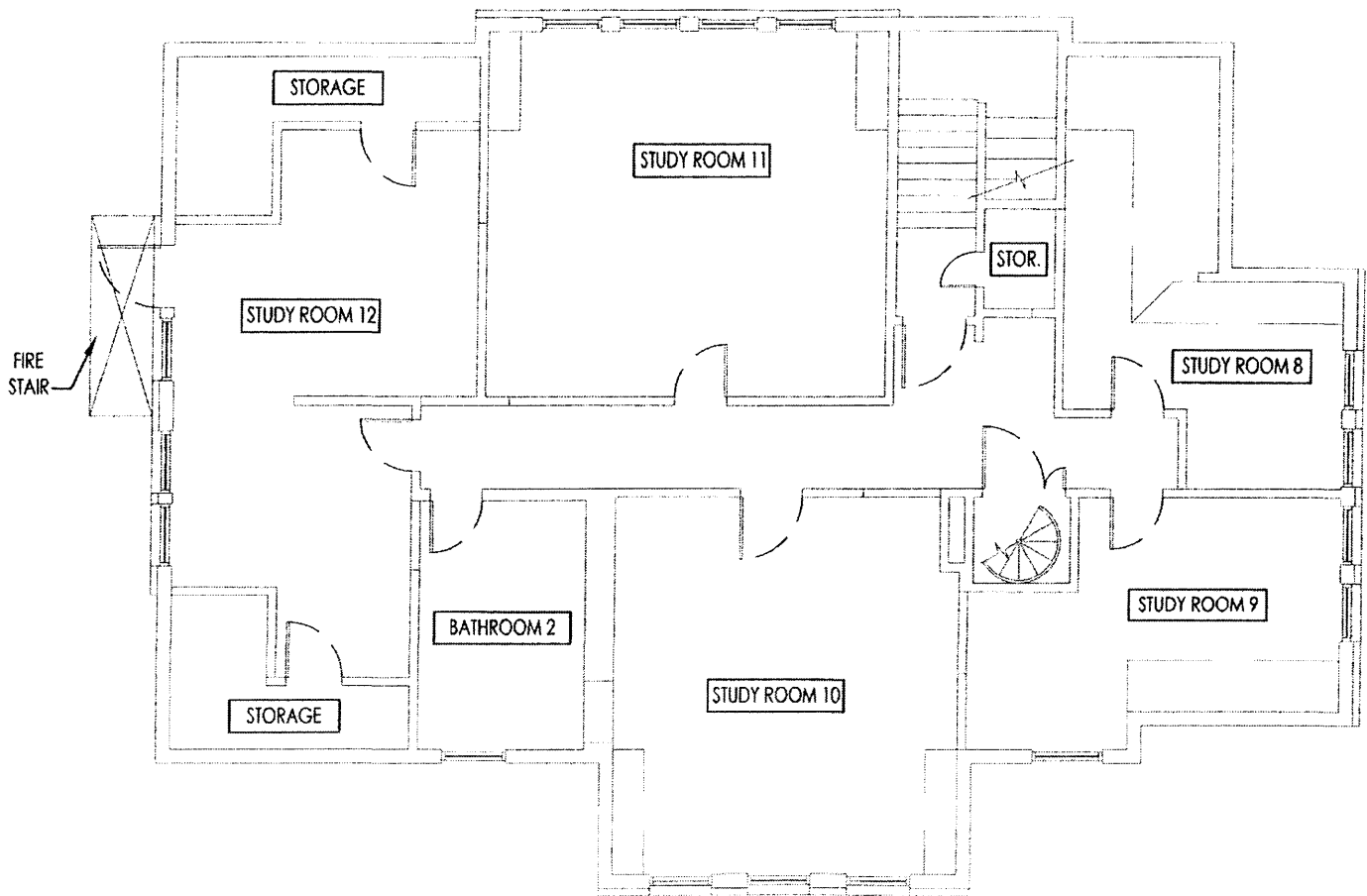
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

THIRD FLOOR PLAN



Source: Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C., 2007.

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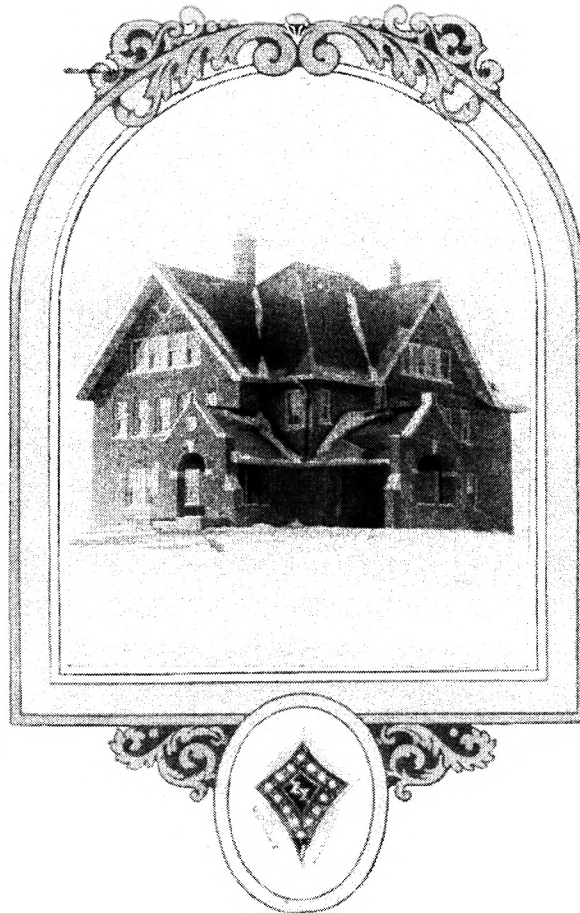
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

SIGMA SIGMA FRATERNITY HOUSE

WINTER 1925 OR 1926



Looking to the southwest, this historic photograph pictures the fraternity house within a year or two of its construction. It shows the building's eclectic styling, including wide eaves, exposed rafters, and shaped vergeboards pointing to the Craftsman influence; the Tudor Revival influence seen in the building's steeply pitched roofs and brick buttresses supporting the porte-cochere and front porch; and certain classical-influenced details, such as the keystones in the front porch and porte-cochere.

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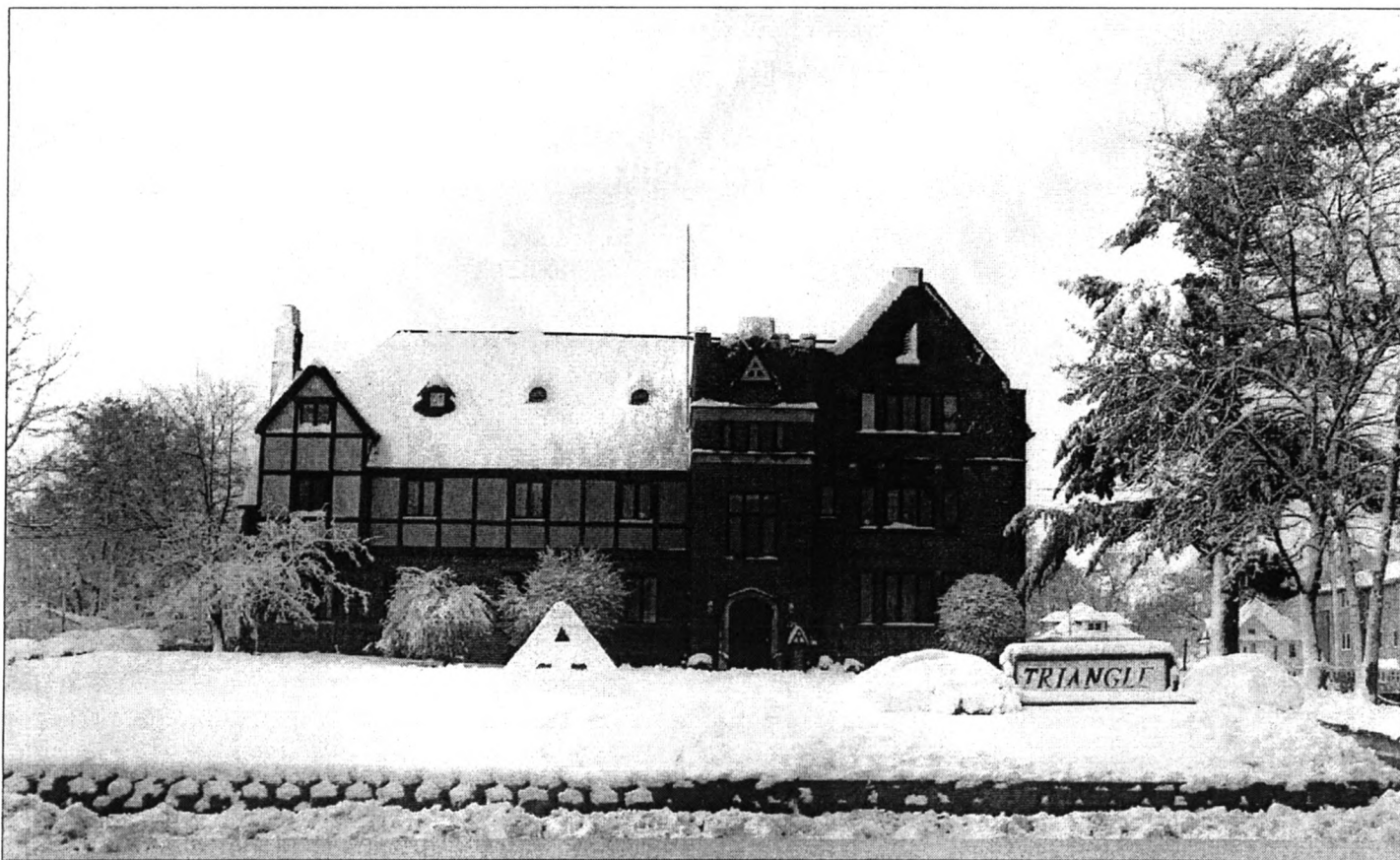
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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

FORMER SIGMA CHI FRATERNITY HOUSE

125 North Hyland Avenue



The former Sigma Chi Fraternity House (now Triangle Fraternity House) stands as a representative example of the outstanding Tudor Revival-influenced designs employed by Greek letter organizations in Ames for their residences. Completed circa 1922, this design contrasts with that of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House and provides a foil to the latter's eclectic design.

Source: <www.stuorg.iastate.edu/triangle/houseinfo.htm>, 2006.

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

Completed in 1924, the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House is National Register eligible under Criterion C. The building is an imposing example of a fraternity house in Ames, Iowa, whose design shows the eclectic influence of Craftsman, Tudor Revival, and classical styling. The front porch and porte-cochere cleverly translate the function of the building as a home into an architectural statement. Open and outstretched like arms, they beckon and convey a sense of welcome and hospitality to residents and houseguests alike.

The Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House is National Register eligible, locally, under Criterion A, because of its organizational history. Sigma Sigma's quest for national status is representative of a phenomenon shared by many local Greek organizations at Iowa State during the early 20th century. Sigma Sigma affiliated with the national Delta Chi fraternity in 1933.

The period of significance and a significant date, under Criterion C, is 1924, the year the building was completed and first occupied. The period of significance, under Criterion A, is 1924-1933, the time when Sigma Sigma sought to become a national fraternity. The year 1933 is a significant date because the fraternity achieved that goal then.

The property contains one resource for this nomination, the fraternity house itself, which is contributing and classified as a building.

ARCHITECTURE

The Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House is significant, under National Register Criterion C, because of its architectural design. The building incorporates eclectic styling, including Craftsman, Tudor Revival, and classical influences. The complex roof system, wide eaves with exposed rafters and shaped vergeboards, and ribbon windows bespeak the Craftsman influence. The Tudor Revival influence is pronounced and includes the employment of parapets on the front façades of the porte-cochere and front porch and the use of brick buttresses to support these architectural elements. The building's decorative brickwork calls further attention to its Tudor Revival influence and includes soldier courses as lintels for the building's fenestration, a combination of Flemish bond and American bond for the exterior walls, and a combination of soldier and header brick courses situated between the second and attic floors. The use of Romanesque arches above the front entrance and porte-cochere and the cast concrete keystones, which embellish them, point to the influence of Classical Revival styling on the design.

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

Architectural Context

Contemporary viewers recognized the eclectic quality of this building's design. As the student newspaper at Iowa State College reported, the roof of the new Sigma Sigma building stood out as distinctive among six other Greek residences under construction in 1923:

The Sigma Sigma fraternity is building another Old English type of house. . . The roof varies from the strict Old English type in that it is leses [less, ed.] steep. (*Iowa State Student*, June 1, 1923)

Tudor Revival (or "Old English") styling became popular for Greek residences in Ames at-the-turn-of-the-20th century. The following thumbnail sketch places the new Sigma Sigma building within its architectural milieu.

The first of the Greek houses in Ames resembled watered-down versions of large, frame, Colonial Revival single-family dwellings. Almost all of these turn of the 20th century residences have vanished. During the first decade of the new century, several examples of Greek residences influenced by Georgian Revival and Classical Revival followed. The Theta Delta Chi Fraternity House at 217 Ash Avenue is a fine example of the former. Its exuberant front porch with its Ionic columns shows the influence of this styling to good advantage. The Phi Delta Theta Fraternity House at 325 Welch Avenue is a good example of the latter. Architect Norman Vorse of Des Moines designed this building in 1915.

The author of this nomination has noted:

A major change occurred in Greek letter architecture following World War I. New Greek residences reflected the nation's booming economy. Students could afford better accommodations and former Greek brothers and sisters financially supported the Greek movement and new construction. Architectural designs reflected Period Revival influences and eclectic designs of all stripes, including French Eclectic, Mediterranean Revival, and Tudor Revival. High quality building materials became ubiquitous, including stone, brick, terra cotta, wrought iron, colored glass, choice woods, and slate. Some buildings, reflecting Prairie School and Craftsman tastes, also appeared. Architecture became a status symbol among many Greek organizations, and the engendered competition stimulated good design. (Page 2007: F249)

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

In spite of these many options, most Greeks at Iowa State chose Tudor Revival styling for new construction during the 1920s. Construction of these buildings waned during the Great Depression; and, when new construction resumed in the later 1930s, a different set of designs became popular.

Returning to the Sigma Sigma building, it will be seen that the *Iowa State Student* reporter was correct. The building does differ, and in multiple ways, from other examples of Tudor Revival-styled Greek residences in Ames. Consider the former Sigma Chi Fraternity House (now Triangle Fraternity House). Located at 125 Hyland Avenue and built circa 1922, this large, imposing, 2.5- and 3-story, brick structure stands as a representative example of the “strict Old English type” as built for Greeks at Iowa State in the early 20th century. This building features a gable front and wing footprint, a configuration which lends a long and linear look to the street façade of the building. A steeply pitched roof covers it. Extensive half-timbering clads its exterior. Stone quoins on the corners, a projecting front entrance surmounted by a crenellated parapet, a Tudor arch above the front door, and an outside wall chimney on the south elevation further enrich the design. This building’s sprawling street façade resembles a rambling English manor house. (See Continuation Sheet 7-13.)

Compare this with the Sigma Sigma house. The difference in massing is immediately apparent. The Sigma Sigma house looks like a fortress. Its block-like footprint solidly masses the building. Its hip roof and intersecting gables visually anchor the monolith to the ground—no skyward thrust of the Sigma Chi roof here. The Sigma Sigma building eschews the use of half-timbering, a chief hallmark of Tudor Revival styling and so evident in the Sigma Chi building. The Tudor arch is also in absence at Sigma Sigma, replaced by Romanesque arches prominently situated above the entrance porch and porte-cochere. The visual strength conveyed by these Romanesque arches lends further weight to the overall design of the Sigma Sigma building.

Still, the influence of Tudor Revival styling on the Sigma Sigma building remains pronounced, particularly in its brickwork, as noted above.

Other examples of Tudor Revival-influenced fraternity houses in Ames include those listed on the following page.

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Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House, Story County, Iowa.

TUDOR REVIVAL-INFLUENCED FRATERNITY HOUSES

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Phi Kappa Theta	2110 Lincoln Way	Pronounced half-timbering
Sigma Phi Epsilon	228 Gray Avenue	Oriel window & half-timbering in front gable
Sigma Pi	2112 Lincoln Way	Gable-front & wing, pronounced use of stone & half-timbering
Theta Xi	315 Welch Avenue	Tudor arches, oriel window
Sigma Chi (presently Triangle)	125 North Hyland Avenue	Gable-front & wing, extensive half-timbering
Alpha Tau Omega	2122 Lincoln Way	Modern adaptation of style, extensive half-timbering

All but one of these buildings feature half-timbering. The exception, Theta Xi, opts for extensive brick detailing instead. The lack of half-timbering at Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi distinguishes it from these other buildings and allows the influence of Craftsman styling on its design to come to the fore.

Other Notable Features

The design of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House seeks to convey a feeling of home to its residents and their guests. The building's steeply pitched roof and red brick walls distinguish it from the severity of classically-inspired, stone buildings then fashionable on the Iowa State campus. These architectural elements help signal this chapter house as a haven for rest, relaxation, and study.

The placement of the front porch and the porte-cochere provide additional notes of welcome. Situated at the principal approach to the building from the campus, they enjoy visual prominence and appear as outstretched arms beckoning the viewer to enter. At the same time, the front porch and porte-cochere are designed in harmony with the rest of the building. Each is a nearly mirror image of the other, so neither seeks visual dominance, while the steep pitches of their roofs establish a rhythm with that of the main block.

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This porte-cochere is the only extant structure of its kind at an historic fraternity or sorority house in West Ames. It calls attention to the growing popularity of the automobile as a mode of transportation during the third decade of the 20th century and the elegance the Sigma Sigma fraternity sought to confer on its social occasions. Although another historic fraternity house in the neighborhood featured a "protecocher," as the college newspaper described it at the time (*Iowa State Student*, June 1, 1923), this feature at the Delta Upsilon property (117 Ash Avenue) is a vehicular pass-through under several upper stories.

The attic of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House features distinctive sleeping accommodations. Situated in a tight and confined space directly beneath the rafters of the building, these quarters are without heat of any kind except the body-warmth of its occupants. This kind of sleeping accommodation is known as a "cold air" dormitory. The Delta Chi cold air is particularly significant because of its extremely tight quarters. These sleeping accommodations date from the remodeling of the building in 1965. Several dozen bunk beds, surplus from the U.S. Army, are situated within an exceedingly confined space. A narrow, spiral staircase accesses the cold air dormitory from the third floor. Prior to this time, fraternity brothers slept in rooms on the second and third floors of the building. The conversion of this attic space into a cold air dormitory calls attention to the continued preference for such sleeping accommodations into the second half of the 20th century among some fraternities at Iowa State. Further analysis into the significance of this architectural feature is recommended to determine if it should be included as an historically significant feature of the building. It was constructed in 1965, a date stands only a few years beyond the National Register's 50-year rule, and the exclusion of the cold air dormitory as historically significant might be unjustified.

The design of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House seeks to blend in with its residential surroundings. Although the scale of the neighborhood's single-family dwellings is considerably smaller than that of the massive fraternity house, the use of gable roofs to cover all of these residences establishes a rhythm, which helps visually unite the neighborhood. The main roof of the fraternity house possesses another device to this end. Its south slope—the slope nearest its neighbor dwellings—features a battered gable and shed roof dormer. The downward thrust of these two planes reduces on the south elevation of the building the feeling of verticality, which the steep gable ends so prominently lend to the other elevations. This softening of the vertical line on the south helps lessen the visual disparity between the height of the fraternity house and those of its neighbors.

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SOCIAL HISTORY

The evolution of Sigma Sigma and its partner Delta Chi calls attention to the complex organizational history of fraternities at Iowa State during the first half of the 20th century. Fraternities emerged in the United States during the 19th century and proliferated during the early 20th century as social and professional associations for men and women in colleges and universities. Like many local fraternities at Iowa State—organizations established independently and without national affiliations—Sigma Sigma sought to affiliate with a national fraternity. In 1933, Sigma Sigma achieved this goal. It merged with Delta Chi, an existing chapter of the Delta Chi national fraternity. The existing Delta Chi chapter relocated from its former quarters to the Sigma Sigma residence at 405 Hayward Avenue, and the Sigma Sigma name disappeared.

Sigma Sigma Fraternity

Sigma Sigma was founded as a local fraternity at Iowa State College in the first decade of the 20th century. The actual year of its organization remains uncertain. One source says 1907. (*ISC Student*, November 1, 1909, p. 4) Another says 1908. (*The Bomb* 1910) Yet another dates the founding to 1914. (Miller: 74, 77)

Such uncertainty notwithstanding, the fraternity continued to attract new pledges. In 1918, the fraternity's membership numbered 16. (*The Bomb*, 1918) By the spring of 1923, Sigma Sigma boasted 26 members, ranked ninth in membership among Iowa State's Greek organizations, and boasted a grade point average of 85.85%. At this same time there were a total of 49 fraternities and sororities in Ames. (*The Iowa State Student*, September 22, 1924)

Like so many other fraternities at Iowa State during the 1920s, Sigma Sigma sought to become a national fraternity. *The Sigmalite*, the fraternity's newsletter, urged its brothers

To keep Nationalization, which is the ultimate goal of all good locals, in view at all times.
(*The Sigmalite*, Fall 1926, Vol. 6, No. 1)

Statistics show that other local fraternities at Iowa State shared this goal. In 1922, Greek organizations at Iowa State included 21 national fraternities and 14 local fraternities. Two years later, the number of national fraternities had increased to 26 while the number of local fraternities

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had decreased to 12. (*The Bomb* 1922: 178; *The Bomb* 1924: 262) A student-drawn cartoon from Iowa State's 1923 yearbook calls attention to the quest for national status. (See Continuation Sheet 8-27.) The brother of a local fraternity kneels before the open door of a birdcage and tries to entice a bird, captioned "Nat'l Chapter," into the cage. The cartoon indicates that the quest for national affiliation could be difficult and elusive.

Sigma Sigma shared in this quest. In 1923, the fraternity had toyed with the idea of becoming a chapter of Phi Kappa Pi, a newly organized national fraternity. Sigma Sigma sent a delegate to a conference held in New York City in 1923, to learn more about this organization, but took no action. ("Sigma Sigma Is Not Phi Kappa Pi Member," *The Iowa State Student*, December 7, 1923)

Plans for a new Sigma Sigma residence might have put these aspirations on hold. The brothers recognized that their growing numbers required a larger residence than their home to that point and that a new facility would attract more pledges. They formed the Sigma Sigma Building Corporation to serve as a legal body to hold title to real estate and, in 1924, completed the construction of their new residence at 405 Hayward Avenue. (The City of Ames changed the house number of this building to 401 Hayward Avenue circa 2003, but the U.S. Postal Service uses the 405 number.)

For the next ten years, the fraternity took no formal action on the matter. Then, on February 25, 1933, Sigma Sigma reached its goal, as avowed in *The Sigmalite*, and merged with Delta Chi, an existing chapter at Iowa State of that national fraternity. Although it was unusual at Iowa State for a local fraternity to nationalize in this fashion, Sigma Sigma's action calls attention to the convoluted evolution experienced by many fraternities in Ames throughout the first half of the 20th century. The immediate motivations for Sigma Sigma's affiliation with Delta Chi remain unclear, but the financial pressures of the then current Great Depression likely played a role for one or for both of the organizations.

Delta Chi Fraternity

Like Sigma Sigma, the evolution of Delta Chi calls attention to the complicated organizational history of fraternities at Iowa State.

Delta Chi traces its establishment to a predecessor organization, named Hau Ki, a local fraternity formed in Ames in 1917. The name the brothers chose for this fraternity was a spelling variation of "Hawkeye," a common nickname for the State of Iowa. As was typical of many local fraternities at Iowa State, Hau Ki sought to become a national fraternity. In 1923, Hau Ki successfully petitioned

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the national Delta Chi fraternity to become one of its chapters, a petition granted by charter on October 13, 1923. (Miller: 76) This was the twelfth charter granted by Delta Chi internationally. (Delta Chi Fraternity: 113)

Delta Chi originated as a local fraternity. Chartered on October 13, 1890, at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, the organization was founded as a professional law fraternity, although with the avowed intent of expanding nationally. Several other Eastern law schools subsequently chartered Delta Chi chapters, and, in 1897, the fraternity became international with the establishment of the Osgoode Hall Chapter in Toronto, Canada.

The turn of the 20th century witnessed a controversy among Delta Chi brothers over the appropriateness of dual memberships—brothers belonging to Delta Chi, as well as to another fraternity. This internal debate came to a head in 1909, when dual memberships were disallowed, causing a split among the organization's chapters.

Following World War I, more debate arose, this time focusing on whether the fraternity should remain a professional fraternity of law students or become a general fraternity. The 1919 Minneapolis Convention of the fraternity, the first since the war, debated the issue and voted 35 to 26 in favor of the pro-law advocates. Debate continued with little progress until 1921 when, at another convention, the organization struck a compromise. This compromise proved difficult to administer; and, in 1922, the fraternity's "XX" (a secret designation for its executive arm) submitted a constitutional change to its chapters for ratification "that would allow any white male student registered at a college or university where there was a chapter of Delta Chi to be eligible for membership." Ratification followed, and Delta Chi became a general fraternity. The "white clause" was removed at the 1954 Convention. (Delta Chi website)

Iowa has played an important role in the history of Delta Chi, particularly at the University of Iowa. The Delta Chi chapter there was chartered in 1912 at a time when the organization was a professional law fraternity. Professor O. I. Patton of the University of Iowa's School of Law held the position of Executive Secretary for the fraternity's national organization from 1929 until his retirement in 1951. Because of Patton's heavy involvement as its administrator, Iowa City, Iowa, became in 1929 the headquarters of Delta Chi, which continues to the present day. (*Ibid.*)

Returning to the local scene, Delta Chi at Iowa State was the second chapter established by the national fraternity after the new rules outlined above came into effect. Its charter followed a charter granted to the University of Kansas only a few months earlier in 1923. (*Cornerstone*: 113)

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Delta Chi remained an active fraternity at Iowa State for almost seven decades. Although membership declined during World War II, as could be expected, it rebounded during the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, when Greek letter organizations flourished at Iowa State. In 1975, fraternities numbered 34 and sororities numbered 15 at the institution. (Dailey:133) A gradual decline had already set in. Students became more socially independent than their predecessors and less willing to join associations of any kind. This had already occurred at other Greek institutions across the nation. Writing in 1972, one Sigma Beta brother at Michigan State University wrote:

By the middle Sixties, a change was becoming apparent. Interest in parties, the bars, homecoming floats and water carnivals began to wane, replaced by social activism sparked by anti-war sentiments. Anti-military establishment fascist capitalist-industrial complex movements made themselves felt. The New Left, the counter-culture, the movement had begun, and with its beginning a corresponding decline in interest in fraternities and other traditional forms of college life appeared.

Another factor that fall was the emergence of the "party guys" as the dominant group in the fraternity. So called because of their penchant for parties and good times, but little else that was constructive, they became. . . the rule rather than the exception in the chapter. The new pledges, accordingly, looked up to them as the best example of a Sigma Beta and followed their lead. (Westol: n.p.)

A substantial decline in new pledges occurred at the Iowa State chapter of Delta Chi in the 1990s. In 2001, Delta Chi became inactive as a result. Although this was a difficult decision, the fraternity brothers, who had exercised financial prudence since the founding of their organization, were unwilling to incur heavy debt to keep their chapter house on Hayward open without a sufficient number of residents to support it. The house stood vacant for almost one year, while the brothers debated what to do. Then, in 2006, Delta Chi made the decision to sell the property. Although the fraternity maintains its status as an inactive fraternity at Iowa State, its future is unclear. The present owner of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House intends to rehabilitate it and convert the building into a bed and breakfast.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House is of historical interest because it casts light on the development of the Fourth Ward in Ames, Iowa. During the early 20th century, Greek letter societies at Iowa State migrated from locations in the West Gate neighborhood of the Fourth Ward to

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locations on the ward's South Side. The construction of the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House in 1924 calls attention to this phenomenon. This migration resulted from a series of changes on the college campus and in transportation, and these changes profoundly altered existing social, economic, and residential patterns of living in the Fourth Ward.

Greek Societies Migrate to the South Side

As the student population at Iowa State increased during the late 19th century, a series of fires destroyed many of the college's dormitories and decreased on-campus student housing. (Page 2007: E20) This lack of accommodations stimulated students to join already existing "clubs," the term then used for fraternities and sororities, and to establish new ones to provide housing and promote social life.

With these new organizations

came the construction of students clubs, building commodious club houses and many using Greek names. These local clubs gradually became national Greek letter fraternities. Fraternity housing and social life became very important in the life of the College and by the end of the period under discussion (1912), the Bomb [the college yearbook, ed.] shows pictures of 16 national and local fraternities and five clubs housing men and two national and three local sororities. (Schilleter: 65)

At the turn of the 20th century, most clubhouses at Iowa State clustered in the West Gate area. The location's proximity to the college campus and its major buildings was convenient for students walking to class. The Ames & College streetcar line, which plied between the campus and downtown Ames, terminated at the West Gate Station and further stimulated residential construction there. A small commercial node also emerged at this point. During this period, the areas known today as Campustown and the South Side also experienced growth, but the lack of streetcar service handicapped their growth.

Between 1910 and 1920, West Ames boomed. Student enrollment at Iowa State during that period jumped from 1,562 to 3,584. The faculty and staff at the college increased as well. Between 1920 and 1930, the number of students increased to 4,318. The impact of these student increases needs to be understood within the context of the college's severely limited dormitory capacity at this time. Until 1927, virtually no on-campus housing existed for male students.

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New residential construction sprang up throughout the Fourth Ward in response to these population increases. The South Side captured the lion's share. Changes on the college campus, transportation improvements, and the business enterprise of A. L. Champlin all contributed to the South Side's growth.

New construction on the Iowa State campus substantially contributed to this growth. Begun in 1904 and completed in 1907, Alumni Hall arose closer to Lincoln Way than any other city street. This building quickly became a gathering place for student social activities. The construction of new women's dormitory accommodations at 2131 Lincoln Way in 1915 further solidified the importance of the southern reaches of the campus for students. (Page 2003: E20)

By 1906, The Fort Dodge, Des Moines & Southern Railway (FtDDM&S) operated an interurban service from downtown Ames, via the Fourth Ward, to Des Moines and other points. Locally in Ames, this line served the college campus and community at points along Lincoln Way, Welch Avenue, and Stanton Avenue and provided an important incentive for residential development on the South Side.

In 1910, the City of Ames built a new bridge over College Creek at Welch Avenue and Lincoln Way (then known as Boone Street) to provide a more convenient access to the college campus from the south. The crossroads of Welch and Lincoln Way became a hub for vehicular and pedestrian traffic as a result. A commercial node, now known as "Campustown," but then popularly known as "Dogtown" and "Champlinville", emerged at this point. In 1916, the college built another entrance to the campus a little farther to the east along Lincoln Way, which further increased access to the campus.

A. L. Champlin, a local Ames merchant and entrepreneur, was largely responsible for the growth of Campustown. Champlin's College Store stocked groceries and provided a gathering place for students and nearby residents. Located on the southeast corner of Welch Avenue and Lincoln Way this store and Champlin's nearby livery stable further encouraged residential development. (*Ibid.*: E31-E32) By the 1920s, Campustown had become the premier commercial district in the Fourth Ward.

Residential land use accompanied this commercial expansion. At the turn of the 20th century, Welch Avenue had attracted some fraternity house construction. At that time, it terminated at Lincoln Way. With the opening of the new bridge to the college campus in 1910, Welch Avenue gained attraction for newly organized Greek institutions and for established ones wishing to relocate from their West Gate quarters.

America's entry into World War I curtailed most new construction in Ames, including Greek chapter houses. Still, Greeks in Ames continued to look to the day when they might build new residences. Following the end of the war in 1918, a new era in Greek life at Iowa State began. Student enrollments

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increased, many new Greek chapters organized, and a spate of new construction ensued. The upbuilding of Campustown, already begun before the war began and spearheaded by A. L. Champlin, increased the attraction of the South Side. Today, only one Greek residence in Ames is located north of Lincoln Way.

The construction of the Sigma Sigma Fraternity House in 1924 on Hayward Avenue calls attention to this new era. The large size of the building attests to the prosperity and confidence of the fraternity brothers.

The location of the new chapter house was atypical. Situated neither on Welch Avenue, Lynn Avenue, nor on Lincoln Way (the hitherto popular corridors for these institutions), the Sigma Sigma property stood isolated from its peers. The reason or reasons for this splendid isolation remains a mystery. The local student press made no mention of this anomaly, although it reported Greek news frequently and the unusual site must have raised questions among students.

Within a few months of Sigma Sigma's occupancy of its new building, the Ames City Council enacted a municipal zoning plan, which restricted the location of fraternity and sorority construction.

While the zoning plan will definitely restrict fraternity and boarding house building in the future, it is understood that less than five fraternity (*sic*) now own lots in the restricted districts, in which private homes alone will be allowed. ("Council to Take Final Action on City Zoning Plan," *Iowa State Student*, February 9, 1925)

This zoning plan excluded the construction of Greek chapter houses on land south of Knapp Street. The City of Ames has enforced these zoning regulations strictly. Of the "less than five" fraternities mentioned in the quote above, only two Greek residences stand today south of Knapp Street—Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi at 405 Hayward Avenue and Pi Kappa Phi at 407 Welch Avenue.

REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS AND METHODOLOGY

To date, the Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House has received minimal cultural resource survey attention. In 1992, William C. Page prepared an Iowa Site Inventory Form for the building and evaluated it as a contributing resource for an historic district. In 2006, the building was included in *Fourth Ward, Ames, Iowa, 1859-circa 1956*, a reconnaissance survey report prepared by Page for the City of Ames and Ames Historic Preservation Commission. This study concluded that the building was individually eligible for nomination to the National Register.

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POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The site's potential for archaeological significance is, as yet, unevaluated. Historical archaeological investigations appear to have limited potential for discovery, given the fact that the site remained uninhabited during the historical era prior to 1924. The potential for the site's pre-historic archaeological significance remains unassessed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND REGISTRATION

Although undoubtedly architect-designed, the name of the individual or firm responsible for the building remains unknown.

Further research and evaluation is recommended to discover, if possible, the reason or reasons for Sigma Sigma to locate their new chapter house so far from the college campus and other Greek organizations.

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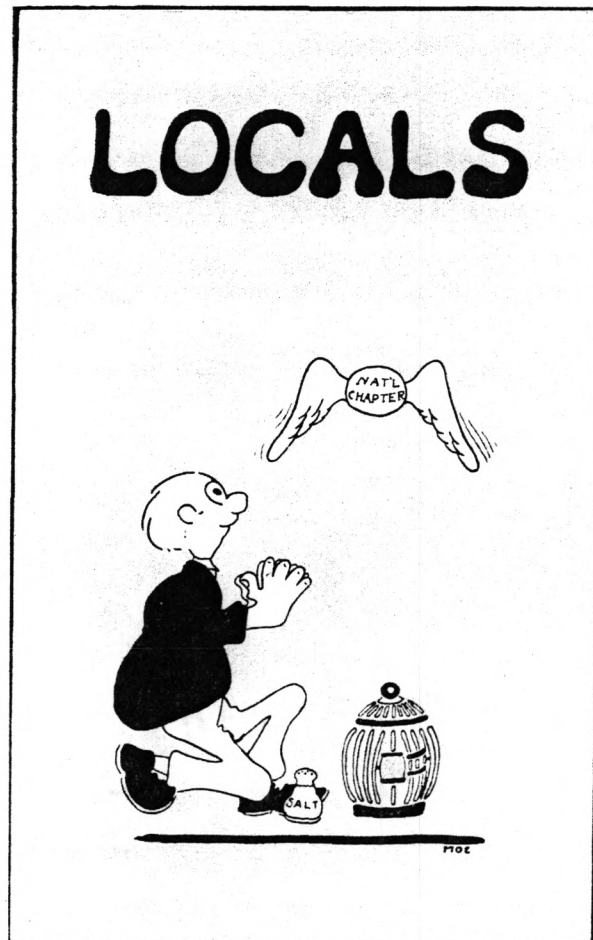
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LOCAL FRATERNITY < NATIONAL FRATERNITY



This student drawing calls attention to the quest of local fraternities like Sigma Sigma to become national. Signed simply as "Moe," it heads the chapter on local fraternities in Iowa State College's 1923 yearbook. The cartoon shows that these quests could be difficult and elusive.

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MAPS AND PLANS

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1920 Site not mapped.

1926 Building pictured as "Frat. H." at 405 Hayward Avenue.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1 and 2 in Lee's 2nd Addition to Ames, Iowa.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Contains all land historically associated with the fraternity house except Lots 3 and 4, which are unimproved and excluded because they do not directly relate to the architectural or historical significance of the property.

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Looking northwest
William C. Page, Photographer
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2. Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
405 Hayward Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
Looking southwest
William C. Page, Photographer
December 1, 2006
3. Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
405 Hayward Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
Looking southeast
William C. Page, Photographer
October 5, 2007
4. Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
405 Hayward Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
Looking northeast
William C. Page, Photographer
October 5, 2007
5. Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
405 Hayward Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
East living room looking south
William C. Page, Photographer
July 30, 2007
6. Sigma Sigma-Delta Chi Fraternity House
405 Hayward Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
Dining room looking west
William C. Page, Photographer
July 30, 2007

These photographs were printed on Hewlett-Packard Premium Plus Photo Paper with Vivera HP ink.