



## **Luella Chapman, Alpha**



In the spring of 1928, the National Council of Alpha Sigma Tau was not very optimistic. Besides remaining busy with the details connected with the nationalization that had occurred in 1925, the Council was suddenly confronted with the task of choosing a new National President. The first president, Grace Erb, had found it necessary to resign because of her many duties as principal of an elementary school as well as an illness in her family. To take care of the resignation of the

President, Edith Mansell called a National Council meeting on May 19, 1928, at the home of Ada A. Norton in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

The first and unanimous choice of the Council was Luella Chapman. She had attended the first National Convention, and everyone remembered her as being especially lovely and very much interested in Alpha Sigma Tau.

Luella expressed her willingness to accept the office of National President until the next Convention, which would be in Buffalo in August 1929. There she was elected to serve again for two years and likewise re-elected at the Denver Convention in 1931. Luella was unable to attend the Convention in Cleveland in 1934, and much to the regret of her Sisters, she sent in her resignation at that time.

Luella was a member of the faculty of the Buffalo State Normal School and was initiated as an adviser to Sigma Chapter in 1925 when the local sorority became a chapter of Alpha Sigma Tau. As a member of the English Department, she was responsible for instruction of prospective teachers in Methods of Teaching Penmanship (Palmer Method). At that time, this was required by the State Education Department for certification of all elementary teachers.

During the six years that Luella was National President, she was also an advisor to Sigma Chapter at Buffalo State Teachers College. She devoted her evenings, weekends, and

vacations to Sorority work. She installed the Rho Chapter at Durant and Nu Chapter at Greeley, besides visiting many other chapters when she had the opportunity. The Xi Chapter at Gunnison, Omicron at Athens, and Pi in St. Louis were also added while she was President. She presided at two National Conventions (Denver, 1931, and Buffalo, 1929) as well as National Council Meetings in Buffalo (1928 and 1929) and Detroit (1931 and 1933).

Despite the fact that her time was limited, Luella did much to develop national consciousness, to strengthen our purposes, and to make Alpha Sigma Tau better known among the other groups of the Association of Education Sororities.

In a tribute written in the June 1938 edition of *The Anchor*, Carrie Washburne Staehle, third National President, recalled: "*There was hardly a letter written by her which did not contain one of these phrases: 'It is your sorority, girls,' 'Let's be constitutional,' [or] 'Let's be national-minded.'*"

Luella's goals for Alpha Sigma Tau may be summarized by this quotation from one of her letters:

*"Our responsibility does not end with our own chapter. Each one of us is a part of a large national organization to which we are obligated. We are responsible to graduate members, especially the founders of our chapters, for maintaining the standards and traditions established by them. Our colleges grant us a favor by permitting us to organize under their protection. Appreciate this favor."*

Luella continued advising until 1937. She retired from teaching in 1939 and returned to her home state of Iowa. For several years, she resided in Cedar Rapids and then moved to her hometown of Maquoketa. She died in Maquoketa on October 2, 1949, at the age of 74. She always enjoyed receiving the Sigma newsletter and *The Anchor*. Her last letter to Lucille McGlynn, Sigma Alumnae Representative who wrote the newsletter, expressed her continuing pleasure in Alpha Sigma Tau.

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*Positions held:* Sigma Faculty Adviser (1925 - 1937); National President (May 1928 - August 1934); Association of Educational Sororities Delegate (January 1933 - August 1934)

*Honors received:* Ada A. Norton Alumnae Award Recipient (1949)