

**HAND-BOOK OF THE  
BETA CHAPTER OF  
MAINE, COLBY COLLEGE**

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Hand-book of the Beta Chapter of Maine, Colby College by Phi Beta Kappa

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**PHI BETA KAPPA**

**HAND-BOOK OF THE  
BETA CHAPTER OF  
MAINE, COLBY COLLEGE**



Colby university, Waterville, Maine.

PHI BETA KAPPA society.

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HAND - BOOK

OF THE

BETA CHAPTER OF MAINE

COLBY COLLEGE

PREPARED BY

J. WILLIAM BLACK, Ph.D., Secretary

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WATERVILLE, MAINE

1901

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BETA OF MAINE.

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*Members of the Executive Committee, in addition to the above.*

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Φιλοσοφία Βίου Κυβερνήτη.  
1776—1901.



## THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY.

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The Phi Beta Kappa Society was founded December 5, 1776, at William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Virginia. It was a social and literary society, and John Heath was its first president. The Society continued its career until 1781 when, owing to the British occupation of the Peninsula in that year, its activity was suspended. It was revived in 1849 and continued until 1861, when, at the outbreak of the Civil War, the records of the Society were transferred for safe-keeping to the Virginia Historical Society. In 1895, when the original chapter was again revived, they were given back to the old College of William and Mary. Bushrod Washington, John Marshall, Madison, Mason and Lee are illustrious names found upon the roll of the half hundred members of the original chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa.

Following their desire to extend the organization and to unite the educated men of the country, other chapters were started. Elisha Parmale, one of the original members of the Phi Beta Kappa at Williamsburg, was authorized to establish chapters at Yale and Harvard. In November, 1780, the Yale chapter was instituted, and in 1781, the Harvard chapter was organized. These were to be known respectively as the Alphas of Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay. Six years later (1787) the Alpha of New Hampshire was established at Dartmouth College.

The Phi Beta Kappa was originally a secret society, but in 1831 the oath of secrecy was abandoned. It rapidly became an organization devoted to scholarly affairs and a brotherhood of scholars. This has been its chief distinction for more than half a century and the rolls of the Society are to-day made up of the graduates of high standing—the honor men—of the American colleges represented in the fraternity.

Phi Beta Kappa has been the occasion of many notable gatherings of American scholars, and many noteworthy contributions to American literature. Such men as Emerson, Holmes, Longfellow, Story, Kent, Webster, Choate, Sumner, Wendell Phillips, and a host of others equally illustrious, have graced the Harvard, Yale,

and Dartmouth Phi Beta Kappa days, and have placed the ideals of American scholarship upon the highest plane.

A new era began in the history of the Phi Beta Kappa in 1881, when the Harvard chapter, anxious to promote a close union and a wider sphere of recognition for the Society of Scholars, proposed a convention of delegates from all the existing chapters. This Convention met in Cambridge, Mass., June 30, 1881, and the results of its labors were the creation of a permanent representative body, known as the National Council of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and the adoption of a Constitution for the government of the United Chapters (1882), as the national organization was henceforth to be known.

The First National Council met at Saratoga, September 5, 1883, and thirteen chapters were represented. Since that date six triennial congresses of the United Chapters have been held at Saratoga, in the month of September, the last on Sept. 7, 1898. At these sessions matters of vital interest to the United Chapters are considered and applications for the establishment of new chapters are acted upon.

In 1889, a model constitution and a form of charter for new chapters were adopted and "the *superior* limit of membership" in each chapter was fixed at one-fourth of each graduating class.

The constitution of the United Chapters, the "model constitution" for new chapters, and the charter of the Beta Chapter of Maine are given below.

In 1900, a Phi Beta Kappa Hand-book and General Address Catalogue of the United Chapters was published. The book was compiled by the former secretary of the United Chapters, Rev. E. B. Parsons, D.D., Williamstown, Mass., and it contains besides the addresses and personal data of the Phi Beta Kappa members of the United States, historical and descriptive information concerning the Society and its administration, and facts about the customs, procedure, statistics, and emblems of the organization.\*

The total number of members of the Phi Beta Kappa is seventeen thousand five hundred, about sixteen thousand having taken the B. A. degree.

The watchword of the Society is the Greek (Homeric) phrase:

"Φιλοσοφία Βίου Κυβερνήτης."

\*Any one desiring a copy of the Phi Beta Kappa Hand-book should communicate with the Secretary of the United Chapters, Rev. Oscar McM. Voorhees, Three Bridges, N. J.

The emblem is a gold key. While the inscriptions upon the key are not uniform, it is usual to find inscribed on one side the letters S. P. (*Societas Philosophiae*), together with the name, college and class of the owner; on the other side  $\Phi. B. K.$ , the initials of the Society's watchword; either seven or nine stars, indicating the seven or nine original chapters, and the date of the organization of the first one in Virginia, Dec. 5, 1776.