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## Omicron Nu Activities

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## Omicron Nu Activities

### Founder on Campus

A great inspiration to Gamma active and alumnae chapters of Omicron Nu is the presence on the campus of Miss Maude Gilchrist, founder of Omicron Nu. Miss Gilchrist is now living at Birch Hall. Her official capacities are supply chaperone for the girls' dormitories and houses, and assistant in the Botany Department.

With her ancestral and educational background, no one is more fitted than she to be the founder of an honorary scholastic society. She was born at California, Pennsylvania, where her father was a teacher in the Southwestern State Normal School. He was then called to the presidency of the State Normal School at Fairmont, Virginia, his daughter attending the Model Training School there. From Virginia the family came to Cedar Falls, Iowa, where Mr. Gilchrist helped to build and organize Iowa State Teachers' College, known then as the State Normal School, and became its first president.

Miss Gilchrist attended college at Cedar Falls, receiving her Bachelor of Science degree there, and a year later, at the age of eighteen, her second degree. She then became a student at Wellesley.

Her first college teaching was done in the Department of Science at the State Normal College in Iowa while her father was still president. She returned to Wellesley to teach and spent her summers in advanced study or at her home in Iowa. In 1897 she went to Europe, where she spent a year in study at the famous university at Göttingen and two summers of travel in England and on the continent, following which she was preceptress in Illinois College at Jacksonville, Illinois.

Her next advance was to the office of Dean of the Home Economics Division at East Lansing, Michigan, where is located the oldest of land grant colleges, Michigan State College, which opened in 1857. At the time Miss Gilchrist went there, the Home Economics Division was new, as girls had been enrolled in the college only five years. They usually elected agriculture or engineering, until a special women's course was provided for those who might care to come. The experiment was watched with much interest by the state board and also by the faculty, some members of which doubted the advisability of organizing a separate "woman's department". Dr. Kedzie, a fine, gray-haired gentleman from Oberlin, who at first said that it wouldn't do at all, admitted it had really been a success and was the thing for the college to do. The department proved to be something the people of Michigan, especially the young women, wanted. The new women's building which they had thought sufficient for several years, was filled to capacity two years after being opened, and they had to get houses in the village

for the overflow. Much of the credit for this progressive step was due to William James Beal, Professor of Botany for forty years, a man of great character and influence and one who held several emeritus positions.

It was here that Omicron Nu thru the insight and persistence of Miss Gilchrist had its birth. There were Alpha Zeta for the students of agriculture, and Tau Beta Pi for students of engineering, but no honorary for the girls in home economics. It was found that Michigan State College was not eligible for either Sigma Xi or Phi Beta Kappa. With the permission of the faculty, eight or ten girls of high ranking, and some faculty members were called together and became charter members of Alpha Chapter of Omicron Nu. This was in 1910. Inquiries came from other institutions with the result that Beta Chapter was organized at New York College for Teachers at Albany in 1912, and Gamma Chapter at Iowa State College in 1913. Other colleges followed until now there are twenty-three active chapters and four alumnae chapters.

In 1913 Miss Gilchrist returned to Wellesley to spend a year as Associate Professor of Botany. Since that time her work has been in Iowa with the Red Cross, Liberty Loan drives, Women's Club work, Daughters of American Revolution, Y. W. C. A., American Association of University Women, and other worthy organizations where she has shown remarkable administrative ability. She came to the college campus last year to fill a temporary vacancy as chaperone, and saw fit to remain with us.

From her storehouse of knowledge and experience, Miss Gilchrist is giving such a wealth of inspiration and help, not only to Omicron Nu but to every one with whom she comes in contact. Miss Gilchrist represents a high ideal worthy to be the goal of any young woman on the campus.

### Hold Fall Initiation

Omicron Nu fall initiation was held Tuesday, December seventh, at five o'clock in the Seminar Room of Home Economics Hall. Seven new members were taken in at that time. There were four seniors: Marie Graham, Lois Jane Munn, Mary Wilson, and Luella Wright; and three juniors: Mildred Boxwell, Frances Jones, and Jane Rhoads.

A banquet was served to thirty-five members, active and alumnae, immediately after the initiation ceremony in the Institutional Tea Room. Helen Swinney, the president, presided as toast-mistress, and toasts were given by Miss Brandt, Miss Orrine Johnson, and Estella Sill.

Ruth Pohlman McKee has a fine young son. She and Wallace are living in Chicago, so we don't see her often.

### Alumnae Column

Would you still have time for club work, parent-teacher meetings, church work, or boys and girls club work if you were a busy homemaker with children and husband to care for? Our most active alumnae homemakers here in Ames certainly practice home economics to the full. You will be interested in hearing about some of those we manage to keep in Ames. Many of these names will be familiar to you.

Mary Montgomery Pride.  
Florence Brown Quist.  
Lois Rath Maney.  
Elizabeth Ingersoll Aitkin.  
Amy Middleton Goss.  
Ethel McKinley Bliss.  
Mary Davidson Budge.  
Georgetta Witter Waters.  
Mabel Bentley McDonald.

Last year Elizabeth Aitkin taught foods in the Home Economics Division in time spared from caring for her two year old son. Lois Rath Maney is trying to take good care of her young son and herself as well. Florence Brown Quist with her lively youngsters manages to keep busy. Then Mrs. Bliss has a house full besides being most active and interested in Parent-Teachers work. Mrs. Budge works in clubs and church when time from her son and busy doctor husband permits.

Mrs. Georgetta Waters, at one time Head of Home Economics, is active in state club work and is a staunch supporter of Home Economics at all times.

Amy Goss and Mabel McDonald, also with busy households, are helping in church and club work.

Dorothy Proctor, who graduated in Home Economics in '22, and received the degree Master of Science in '24, will take Miss Ida Anders place on the Vocational Education faculty of Iowa State College, after January first. She will supervise student teaching in the Senior High School at Ames.

Dorothy has been an Instructor in Foods, and Head of the Home Economics Department of Stephens Junior College, at Columbia, Missouri, for the past two years.

A letter from Ellen Dahl who is teaching in Moravia is of interest to us. She writes, "I noted the page for Omicron Nu in the last Homemaker. It is good to read about one's old friends and Iowa State. I have had my first banquet—for the football boys. We served about fifty in Mrs. Goeldner's home. My basketball girls cooked and served. I hope they had as much fun in the dining room as we had in the kitchen.

"Best Wishes for the New Year."  
Sincerely,  
Ellen B. Dahl.