"Colonel" Irons was born March 10, 1891, on a farm in Hopkins County north of Sulphur Springs, Texas, His music education began at age 4 on the violin. At about 10, he played snare drum in a community band. But he soon traded instruments with a cornet player and thus began a career as a cornetist. His early instruction on cornet was by G. W. Blake, an English bandmaster.

During World War 1, Colonrl was assistant conductor and first cornetist of the Replacement Camp band at Waco, under Lieutenant S. G. Schertal. He also studied harmony and composition with Captain Patrick Conway, head of all music at Camp Mc Arthur and later head of the School of Music at Ithaca, N. Y.

After Colonel Irons' return to civilian life he studied violin with Walter Freid of Southern Methodist University and cornet with Guiseppe Cinquomonia of the Dallas Symphony. During the early 1930's he studied at the Chicago Conservatory of Music under Richard Stross and Noah Tarrentino. During this time as well as later, he studied cornet with Herbert L. Clarke.

In the early 1920's Colonel taught violin at Burleson College in Greenville,

Texas, as well as conducted the American Legion Municipal band.

He came to Arlington, Texas in June, 1925, where he took the "Lone Star Military Band" on a three month tour of the Redpath-Vawter-Chautauqua through seven Midwestern states. In September, 1925, Colonel Irons became the band director at North Texas Agricultural College (now University of Texas at Arlington). In 1942 he also became the Head of the Fine Arts Department. He remained in these two positions until his retirement in June, 1956.

Earl Irons attained the title "Colonel" when he was made Lt. Colonel on the

staff of Governor of Texas by Governor James V. Allred.

"Colonel" was presented with an honorary Doctor of Music degree in February, 1942, by the Zoellner Conservatory of Music, Hollywood, California. He became a member of the American Bandmasters Association in 1936, and from 1940 through 1948, he was a member of the ABA board of directors. He was elected Vice-President In February, 1950, and President in 1951. Colonel was made an honorary member of the Delta chapter Kappa Kappa Psi in 1938, and of the Delta Sigma chapter in 1954.

Colonel Irons conceived and founded the national honorary bandmasters

fraternity of Phi Beta Mu.

He became Director Emeritus of NTAC (UTA) bands in January, 1962.

Colonel Irons was composer of numerous published music for both bands and brass instruments. His most popular publication was an instruction book for cornet, "Twenty-seven Groups of Exercises."

In March 1965 the rehearsal hall of the UTA bands was dedicated to him in a special program with a concert of "All Irons" compositions. Today the UTA Fine Arts complex houses the Earl D. Irons Recital Hall.

In July, 1965, Colonel Irons was named Bandmaster of the Year by the Texas

Bandmasters Association.

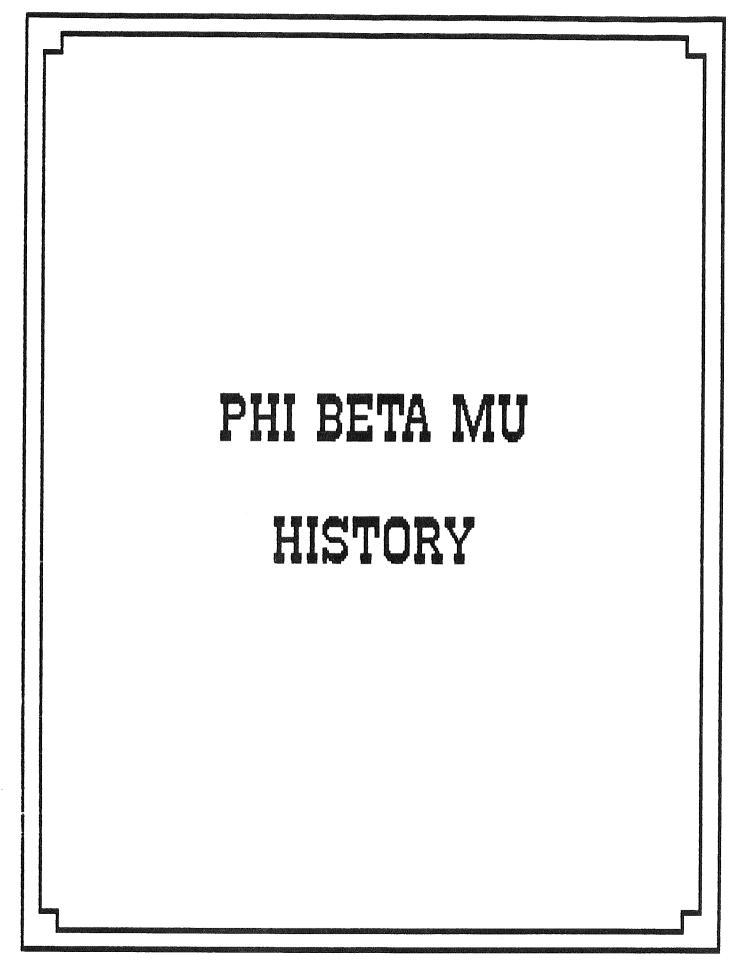
Colonel Irons was an adjudicator and clinician throughout the South and Southwest for many years. He judged and conducted at the Tri-State Music Festival for 32 consecutive years.

He died on May 19, 1967.

His widow, Lena, still resides in Arlington.

Colonel Irons' influence is indicated throughout the minutes of the Texas Music Educators Association and its predecessors beginning In 1920. Those who knew him will be eternally grateful for the privilege. His ever-present cigar, his proficienty on the golf course, and his quick wit endeared him to all. Colonel Irons was one of the great pioneers of American Music Education.

Elected to the Hall of Fame in February, 1975.



PHI BETA MU

International Bandmaster's Fraternity

HISTORY

Phi Beta Mu was established as a result of the respect and appreciation which our Founder, Colonel Earl D. Irons, had for his professional associates. Col. Irons was Bandmaster and Chairman of Fine Arts at the University of Texas at Arlington, then known as North Texas Agricultural College. He envisioned an organization that would honor outstanding band directors whose dedication and devotion to their profession were paramount, but whose admirable traits and services were not necessarily known nationally. Col. Irons sought to honor deserving individuals on a state level similar to the manner in which he and Honorary Life President, D. O. Wiley, had been honored by the American Bandmasters Association in 1936.

During the summer of 1937, Col. Irons was performing as a guest conductor and cornet teacher at the Texas Tech Summer Band Camp. During this time, he had discussions about his plan for this special organization with Dr. D. O. Wiley, Director of the Tech Band Camp. These two men decided that the time was right to start such an organization, and "Prof" Wiley assembled a group of prominent band directors at the camp for a meeting with Col. Irons.

Among those Texas directors present at this early meeting were: Carl Cochran of Marlin, Russell Shrader of Sweetwater, George Rucker of Bowie, Sanford Eskridge of Wink, H. A. Anderson of Lubbock, and Clyde Rowe, who later taught in Borger. Cochran, Shrader, and Rucker were especially interested in creating the framework for the organization.

A number of meetings were held in the University's Textile Building during that summer. The final decision to organize was reached during a watermelon feast in Professor Wiley's backyard. At this time it was decided that the organization should be structured to be a national bandmaster's fraternity with the details to be worked out during the ensuing year.

Col. Irons received advice and help from Dr. Cothburn O'Neal in working out details of the organizational structure. Dr. O'Neal was a former student of Irons' in 1925 and was on the faculty of North Texas Agricultural College, serving as an English professor. Together they selected Phi Beta Mu, with the subtitle of National Bandmaster's Fraternity, as the name of the organization. Phi Beta Mu was interpreted to mean, "Life, Love, and Music." The colors chosen to represent the Fraternity were blue and white.

The original member recognition pin was the five lines and spaces of the staff in a vertical position, closed at each end, with the Greek letters for Phi Beta Mu inset across the center, thus:

Col. Irons and Dr. O'Neal, with the ideas gleaned from the earlier meetings at Texas Tech, wrote a proposed Constitution and Oath which were approved in the summer of 1938. The charter members of Phi Beta Mu were:

Col. Earl D. Irons, Founder
Carl Cochran
Sanford Eskridge
Tirey Lee
Clyde Rowe
George Rucker
Russell Shrader
Dr. D. O. Wiley

The first official meeting was held at the Rice Hotel in Houston, Texas, in February, 1939. The first initiates were R. C. Davidson, Jack H. Mahan and Lyle Skinner. Dr. Cothburn O'Neal was the first individual to be made an Honorary Member in recognition of his work with Col. Irons in setting up the Fraternity Constitution and Oath.

Dr. Milburn Carey was initiated in 1942 as a member of Alpha Chapter. In 1944, Carey chartered Beta Chapter in Enid, Oklahoma; and in 1946, Harold L. Walters invited Dr. Carey to charter Gamma Chapter in Indiana. Mr. Walters was an Honorary Member of Beta Chapter at that time.

During World War II, while most of the members were serving in the armed forces, the credentials and minutes of early meetings were lost. When the Fraternity was reactivated, the members recognition pin was changed to the bass drum with the baton and the Greek letters for Phi Beta Mu crossed over the drum.

With the existence of three chapters for several years (Alpha, Texas; Beta, Oklahoma; and Gamma, Indiana), the need became apparent for a fully operative national structure. In 1954, L. H. Buckner, Immediate Past-President of Alpha Chapter; Alfred Riley, President of Alpha Chapter; and Jack H. Mahan, Secretary-Treasurer of Alpha Chapter, met in Dallas to create the national organization. The meeting took place in Mr. Mahan's home. It was decided that there should be a President, Vice-President, and Executive Secretary, with six national board members. The standard recognition pin designated for each national officer was:

President - regular pin with 10 red stones Vice-President - regular pin with 10 blue stones Executive Secretary - regular pin with 10 green stones Chapter Past-President - regular pin with 10 pearls

It was decided that the interim national officers would be Alfred M. Riley, President; L. H. Buckner, Vice-President; and Jack H. Mahan, Executive Secretary. In 1955, a national election was held and Milburn E. Carey was elected President, and Raymond F. Dvorak was elected Vice-President. Jack H. Mahan was appointed Executive Secretary by the newly elected Board of Directors at the recommendation of President Carey.

Further refinement of the national organization and the Constitution was worked out by Mahan and R. C. "Chief" Davidson of Plainview at a meeting held during the Tri-State Band Festival at Enid, Oklahoma in 1957. After this, the Fraternity began to grow to include additional states. Mississippi was slated to be installed as the fourth chapter and was assigned Delta, but the installation was unavoidably delayed. Louisiana became the fourth chapter to be installed but was assigned the name Epsilon, since Delta had already been allotted to Mississippi.

The Fraternity became an international organization in 1975 with the installation of the following chapters:

Graz, Austria - 1975 Alberta, Canada - 1976 Japan - 1978

The National Officers who have served to date are:

National President

Alfred Riley, Interim President - 1954-1956 Dr. Milburn Carey - 1955-1977 Dr. Charles Minelli - 1977-1982 Jack White - 1982 -

National Vice-President

Raymond Dvorak - 1956-1981 Jerry Bordner - 1982 -

National Executive Secretary

Jack H. Mahan - 1954-1974 William Postlethwaite - 1974-1977 Richard C. Crain - 1977 -

Brothers Harold L. Walters and Karl L. King collaborated in writing Men of Music March, published by Rubank, and dedicated it to Phi Beta Mu. Col. Earl D. Irons wrote <u>Hail to the Fraternity</u>, published by Volkwein Brothers, and dedicated it to Phi Beta Mu.

Since the early records of the Fraternity had been lost during World War II, the early history has been reconstructed through the taped reflections of Charter Member D. O. Wiley and conversations with Honorary Life President Milburn Carey and Honorary Life Secretary Jack Mahan. Dr. Wiley credited Brother Mahan with much of the growth of the Fraternity. Dr. Milburn Carey, Honorary Life President, chartered all of the chapters with the exception of the six chapters that Mahan chartered.

All of the Brotherhood owes a great debt to Milburn Carey and Jack Mahan for their many contributions to Phi Beta Mu.

PHI BETA MU CHAPTERS

1938 - 1988

```
*Texas - - - - - - Alpha
*Oklahoma - - - -
                     Beta
*Indiana - - - - - Gamma
*Mississippi - - - - Delta
*Louisana - - - -
                     Epsilon
*Georgia - - - - - Zeta
*Tennessee - - - - Eta
*South Carolina - -
                    Theta
*Kansas - - - - -
                     Iota
*Colorado - - - -
                    Kappa
*Missouri - - - -
                    Lambda
*Ohio - - - - -
                    Miri
*Pennsylvania - - -
                    Niu
*Illinois - - - -
                    \timesi
*Arkansas - - - -
                    Omicron
*Wisconsin - - - - Pi
*Alabama - - - - - Rho
*South Dakota - - -
                    Sigma
*West Virginia - - - Tau
 California - - - -
                    Upsilon
*New Mexico - - -
                    Phi
 New York - - - -
                    Chi
*Kentucky - - - -
                    Psi
*Florida - - - - - Omega
New Jersey - - - -
                    Kappa Epsilon
 Arizona - - - - - Kappa Zeta
Michigan - - - -
                    Kappa Eta
*Minnesota - - - - Kappa Theta
Nevada - - - - -
                    Iota Lambda
*Connecticut - - - - Lambda Alpha
 Hawaii - - - - -
                    Lambda Beta
 Austria - - - - - Lambda Gamma
New Hampshire - - - Lambda Delta
 Rhode Island - - -
                    Lambda Epsilon
 Idaho - - - - - Lambda Vau
                                      Wolfgang Suppan,
 Oregon - - - - -
                    Lambda Zeta
                                        President of the Austrian
Washington - - - -
                    Lambda Eta
                                        Chapter of @BM established
*Wyoming - - - - - Lambda Theta
                                        in Graz, September 24,1977.
Ontario. Canada - - Lambda Iota
*Alberta, Canada - - Mu Alpha
 Japan - - - - - - Lambda Kappa
*Montana - - - - - Lambda Mu
                                      Nobukazu Nagaosa.
*North Carolina - - Lambda Nu
                                        President of the Japanese
*Urrainia - - - -
                    Alpha Chi
                                        Chapter chartered in 1984.
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PHI BETA MU - ALPHA CHAPTER

PAST PRESIDENTS

1939	Earl Irons/D.O. Wiley	1965	Bill Dean
1940	Earl Irons/D.O. Wiley	1966	Bill Dean
1941	Dick Walker	1967	Gene Smith
1942	Jack H. Mahan	1968	Don Lummus
1943	No Record	1969	Eldon Jansen
1944	No Record	1970	Wayne McDonald
1945	No Record	1971	Wayne McDonald
1946	Earl D. Irons	1972	Hal Spencer
1947	Jack H. Mahan	1973	Hal Spencer
1948	Jack H. Mahan	1974	Ralph Smith
1949	G.T. Gilligan	1975	Ralph Smith
1950	Nelson Patrick	1976	Richard Crain
1951	L.H. Buckner	1977	Richard Crain
1952	Alfred Riley	1978	Bob Gans
1953	Homer Anderson	1979	Bob Gans
1954	Don R. Hayes	1980	Fred Stockdale
1955	Ellis P. Wood	1981	Fred Stockdale
1956	Joe Haddon	1982	Durward Howard
1957	Robert L. Maddox	1983	Durward Howard
1958	R.C. Davidson	1984	Rodney Klett
1959	Fred R. Smith	1985	Rodney Klett
1960	Robert Fielder	1986	Bob Copeland
1961	G.T. Gilligan	1987	Bob Copeland
1962	J.W. King		
1963	J.R. McEntyre		
1964	Wm. F. Postlethwaite		

ALPHA CHAPTER

PAST PRESIDENTS



G. T. GILLIGAN.



ALFRED RILEY



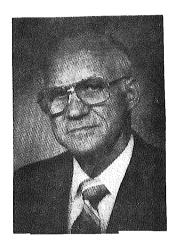
ROBERT MADDOX,



CHIEF DAVIDSON



J.W. KING,



J.R. McENTYRE



Bill Dean,



RALPH SMITH



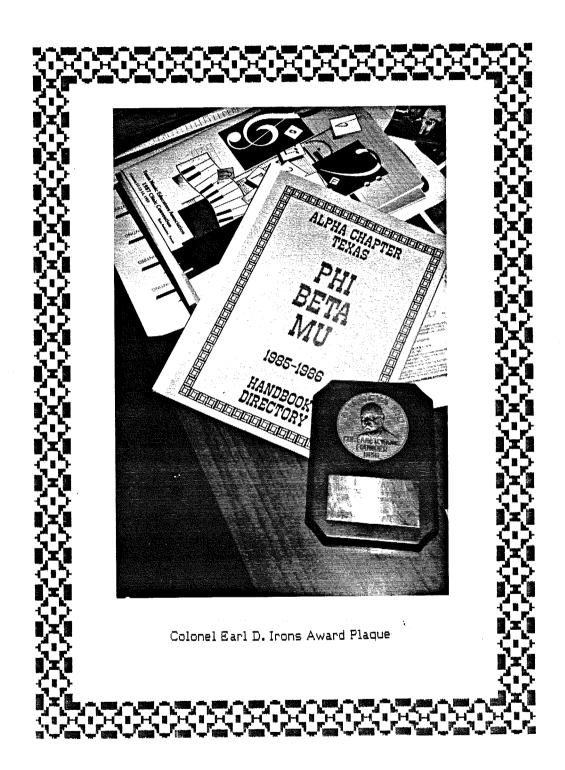
RICHARD CRAIN,

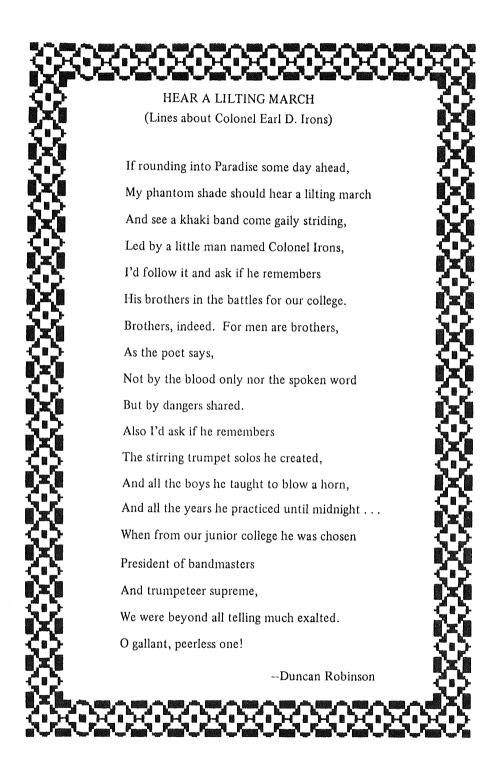


FRED STOCKDALE



COL. EARL D. IRONS





After Long Career...

Arlington Music Man Retires

Col. Earl D. Irons, former head of the Fine Arts Department and band director at Arlington State College, retired February 1.

The Colonel, characterized by President E. H. Hereford as more

The Colonel, characterized by President E. H. Hereford as more distinguished in his field than any other faculty member, is an internationally-known composer of band music. He joined the faculty of the college in 1925 and has since risen to prominence as a director, judge, and composer. He is also renowned for his golfing achievements.

Born in Sulphur Springs, Texas, on March 10, 1891, Col. Jrons studied as a youth at the Chicago Conservatory of Music and was a pupil of such noted band teachers as Pat Conway and Herbert L. Clark. During World War I, Irons attended the U. S. Army Band School.

Before coming to ASC, he was a professional musician, playing with theatre orchestras. He had also directed bands at Sulphur Springs and Greenville.

Col. Irons was director of the Arlington State College band from 1925 through 1956. He was made head of the Fine Arts Department in 1941 but continued to direct the band.

He is the author of more than fifty overtures, marches, and novelty numbers, many of which have been published abroad. Among the famous marches from which he continues to draw royalties are "Elder Statesman," "America's Flying Legion," "Blue Bonnet," and "Dogwood Trail." His more noted overtures include such frequently—played compositions as "American Grandeur," "Early American," "Inspiration," and "Starlet." Others of Irons' compositions are for brass solos and brass ensembles.



EARL D. IRONS

He is also the author of three books dealing with playing the Frenchhorn, concert and trumpet, and cornet solos with piano accompaniment.

In 1951 in recognition of his ability as a director, he was elected president of the American Bandmaster Association. He is also one of the founders and an honorary life president of Phi Beta Mu, a national band fraternity.

His achievements in golf are also noteworthy. He has been city champion of Arlington many times and has won several Fort Worth tournament championships He once defeated Gus Moreland, Texas champion, in the annual Trans-Mississippi tourney

The colonel says he will continue

to live in Arlington with his wife, Lena, the former Lena Mae Johnson of Commerce, whom he married in 1918. They have a daughter, Mrs. W. C. Payne of Suiphur Springs; a grandson, Billy Brant Payne; and two great-grandchildren, Kathy and Brant Payne.

The colonel has no particular plans for the future except that he's going to keep busy doing things he likes to do. He'll play golf when he can and may make some of his own clothes, for he was a pretty good tailer when he was younger, he says.

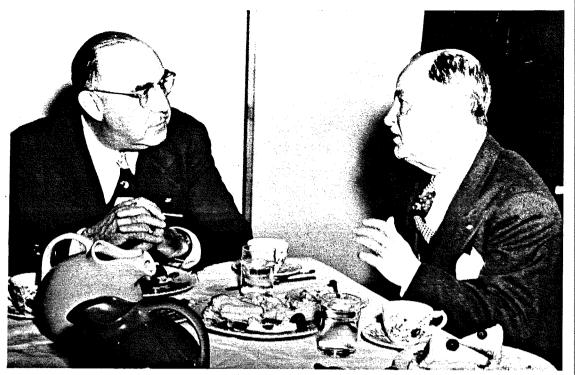
He is going to keep a desk in the Fine Arts Office so he can help young cornet players in the band and assist Jack Mahan, one of his former students, who is now the college band director.

He's also going to do more travelling than he used to do so that he can study music manuscripts and attend some of the big golf tournaments in Florida and California.

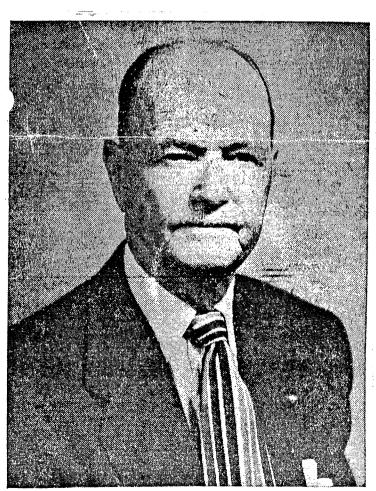
But, above all, he says, he is going to write the music he has always wanted to write but couldn't because the publishers wanted compositions that would sell. He's going to write symphonies which only the finest bands will be able to play, and he's going to enjoy composing them whether anyone ever buys his work or not.

What does the colonel think of the college he is retiring from?

Literal quotation: "I am lucky to have had a career in a first class school under such administrators as President E. H. Hereford and Dean E. E. Davis. They encouraged me to make outside contacts and develop myself. I could have been so unfortunate as to have had to serve under lesser men who would have chained me to a desk."



Frank Simon and Earl D. Irons



COL. EARL D. IRONS, former head of the Fine Arts department and band director until 1956, is another of the retiring professors at ASC. Col. Irons career in music includes being the composer of more than fifty overtures, marches, and novelty numbers, many of which have been published abroad.



Earl D.Irons, D.O. Wiley, John J. Haynie, Mark Hindsley, and Robert Maddox

The following publications of Col. Earl D. Irons are listed in the Southern Music Company Catalog (courtesy Brother Tom Rhodes):

Overtures:

American Grandeur Bella Donna Starlet Youthful Spirit Two Italian Minitures

Marches:

Hail To The Fraternity
Honors Of The Day March
Cadet Colonel
Dia Grande
Elder Statesman March
Highlander

Polka:

Big State Polka

March Dedicated to Phi Beta Mu

HAIL TO THE FRATERNITY MARCH, the last composition written by our fraternity founder, Col. Earl D. Irons during his 70's, is being published in honor of this great bandmaster, philosopher and humanitarian. The composition is so named because of his love for, and dedication to, the band directing profession and to Phi Beta Mu.

The widow of our founder, Mrs. Lena Irons, has arranged with the publisher for all royalties to be given to the Fraternity. It is hoped that the profits from this endeavor will support the Founder's Recognition Program. This program, established to honor Col. Irons, is now under study and will be presented in detail at the third annual national meeting of Phi Beta Mu to be held in conjunction with the 1968 Mid-West Clinic. Complete information will follow in a future column.

In the meantime, members are encouraged to support this worth-while fraternity project by regularly performing HAIL TO THE FRA-TERNITY MARCH by Earl D. Irons (published by Volkwein Bros. Inc.) and MEN OF MUSIC MARCH by Karl L. King and Harold L. Walters (published by Ru-

bank, Inc.). Both marches were written in recognition of Phi Beta Mu.

Dissertation on Col. Earl D. Irons Completed

Brother Gary Barrow, Assistant Professor of music at Arkansas Technological University in Russellville, Ark., has completed his dissertation entitled Col.

Earl. D. Irons, His role in the Development of Music Education in the Southwest to 1958.

The dissertation, based to a great degree on personal interviews with Irons' peers, features an extensive bibliography dealing with early 20th century bands. Three major aspects of Irons' career were examined: (1) Irons' involvement with professional music organizations, (2) his band contest and adjudication activities, and (3) his concept of brass pedagogy.

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of this dissertation on the life and teachings of our founder should contact University Microfilms, or write directly to Brother Gary Barrow, Assistant Professor of Music, Arkansas Technological University, Russellville, Ark. 72801.

Congratulations are certainly in order for Brother Barrow for this fine work.

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