

An Alpha Thetan / Pi Kappa Alphan You Ought to Know

IVAN CHANDLER DRESSER '19

Logan M. Cheek '60

Ivan Dresser was born on December 3, 1896, Flandreau, South Dakota, the son of Rev. Elliott Lawrence Dresser and Genevieve Tyler. He was initiated into Alpha Theta in 1916. Alpha Theta became the Beta Theta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha in 1917.

Before becoming a track star at Cornell, Ivan Dresser was an outstanding cross-country runner. As a Cornell sophomore, he was the individual winner of the 1917 IC4A cross country race. He also won the IC4A two mile runs in 1918 and 1919. Dresser was Captain of the Cornell Cross Country team 1917 and 1918 and Captain of the Cornell Track and Field Team in 1919. He was named to the 1919 All-American Intercollegiate and 1919 National track teams, and was inducted into the Cornell Athletic Hall of Fame in 1985.

In addition to his track accomplishments, he was a member of the Cornell Glee Club, the Aleph Samach junior mens' honorary, and Sphinx Head, the senior mens' honorary, graduating in 1919 with a bachelor of arts degree.

After Cornell, he continued to compete, mainly in 3000 meter track. His personal lifetime bests for two miles was 9:22.4 in 1920, and for the 5000 meter, 15:41.8 also in 1920.



As a member of the United States' 1920 Summer Olympic Team at Antwerp, Belgium, Ivan won the Gold Medal in the 3000 meter team competition. A few days before the race, Dresser did not finish the 5,000 meter race, but joined Hal Brown, Mike Devaney, Arlie Schardt and Larry Shields in the 3,000 meter team event. Brown won the race, with Schardt third and, with three runners from each country to score, Dresser's sixth place assured the



United States of the Gold Medal.

In 1925, Ivan Dresser joined General Motors and rose to become one of their top executives. He successively held posts as sales manager in Belgium, managing director in Mexico, and manager of the European-South African Region. At his death, he was special assistant to the general manager of General Motors.



In 1955, King Baudouin of Belgium conferred on him the honor of Office of the Order of Leopold II.

Among his many civic commitments, he was a member of the board of governors of the New York City Symphony Orchestra and of the the New York Athletic Club.

Ivan died December 27, 1956 in New York City.

He was married to Dorothy Crooks Modrell in 1925. They had a son, Jeremy Tyler Dresser (1929-1970), and a daughter who is still living.

