One of the most revered brothers in Theta Delta Chi is American poet Robert Frost. With 4 Pulitzer prizes to his name, he may be the most accomplished Theta Delt ever, and certainly our most accomplished in the Arts. But what is the story behind Robert Frost's Theta Delt experience? Admittedly, there is not much to be known, since his time at Dartmouth lasted less than a semester.

After arriving at Dartmouth's campus in September 1892, he made fast friends with a fellow named Preston Shirley. At the time, it was typical for the upper classmen to play pranks and trick on the younger, more naive freshmen. To combat this, Frost and Shirley turned Shirley's room into a fort, and would take turns on guard. Soon though the hazing ceased, and the two friends were invited to join a fraternity, Theta Delta Chi. Frost, a man of modest means, was unable to afford the initiation fee at the time, so a wealthier brother paid it for him. If only this charitable brother knew what he had contributed to the Old Lady!

Those who have read Frost's poetry know his affec-

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**The Gift Outright**

The land was ours before we were the land's.
She was our land more than a hundred years
Before we were her people.
She was ours in Massachusetts, in Virginia,
But we were England's, still Colonials,
Possessing what we still were unpossessed by,
Possessed by what we now no more possessed.
Something we were withholding made us weak
Until we found out that it was ourselves
We were withholding from our land of living,
And forthwith found salvation in surrender.
Such as we were we gave ourselves outright
(The deed of gift was many deeds of war)
To the land vaguely realizing westward,
But still unstoried, artless, unenhanced,
Such as she was, such as she will become.

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ONE DAILY PAPER covering the inaugural of President Kennedy ran its correspondent's quip that Robert Frost, O4 '96, brought a "titter" from the crowd when he was at the podium. Frost muttered that the sun bothered him as he tried to read some verses as a prelude to the inaugural poem, "The Gift Outright."

But the 86-year-old New Englander brought applause in far greater measure, despite the biting cold, when he put aside those verses, intended as a show of gratitude to the incoming President for having "brought poetry into the affairs of statesmen," and let his voice speak with the confidence that comes with unfailing memory.

The 16-line poem was not written specially for this inaugural. Frost composed it in 1942, about the American Revolutionary era, moved by the world war in which we were then engaged. In it, Frost points to the sacrifices that were necessary before the American people really came into their own as masters of their land. Frost agreed to render the poem at the inauguration because he deemed it fitting in the era of international tensions in which we live, and we print it—together with the unread introduction—as a tribute to the selection of America's "Poet Laureate" for the august occasion.

Brother Frost was the guest of the President and Mrs. Kennedy at the White House two days after the inauguration.
tion for nature. After his initiation, Frost would take long walks in the forest contemplating his purpose in life, and admiring the beauty of the New Hampshire countryside. His brethren, who were perplexed by his long walks in the forest, sarcastically asked him what he did on these walks. Annoyed, Frost snapped back, “I gnaw bark”.

Eventually, Frost grew tired of college life. He did not like the notion of “earning marks” and thought it was silly to grade one’s desire to learn. He also yearned for his high school sweetheart Elinor White (whom he would later marry). Soon he would have the escape route he was looking for. His mother, a schoolteacher, wrote him of the trouble she was having controlling her class. Rob quickly seized it as an opportunity to leave Dartmouth, and went home to assume control of his mother’s unruly class.

So ends the story of Frost’s active life in TDX. We do know he must not have hated the fraternity, as we know of at least one time later in life when he visited Phi at Lafayette for a dinner in his honor. Many of his biographers also remember him speaking fondly of his time at Dartmouth, except with regard to the classes. In the end, while we do not know much about his actions within the fraternity, we do know he is a Theta Delt.

The Verses That Didn’t Get Read

Summoning artists to participate
In the august occasions of the state
Seems something for us all to celebrate.
This day is for my cause a day of days,
And his be poetry’s old-fashioned praise.
Who was the first to think of such a thing.

This tribute verse to be his own I bring
Is about the new order of the ages
That in the Latin of the founding sages
God nodded his approval of as good.
So much those sages knew and understood
(The mighty four of them were Washington,
John Adams, Jefferson, and Madison),
So much they saw as consecrated seers
They must have seen how in two hundred years
They would bring down the world about our ears
By the example of our declaration.
It made the last tribe want to be a nation.

New order of the ages, did they say?
The newest thing in which they led the way
Is in our very papers of the day.

Colonial had been the thing to be
As long as the great issue was to see
Which country’d be the one to dominate
By character, by tongue, and native trait
What Christopher Columbus first had found.
The French, the Spanish, and the Dutch were
disrowned.
They all were counted out; the deeds were done;
Elizabeth the first and England won.
Of what had been for centuries the trend
This turned out the beginning of the end.

My verse purports to be the guiding chart
To the o’erturning it was ours to start
And in it have no unimportant part.
The turbulence we’re in the middle of
Is something we can hardly help but love.
Some poor fool has been saying in his heart
Glory is out of date in life and art.
Our venture in revolution and outlawry
Has justified itself in freedom’s story
Right down to now in glory upon glory.
I sometimes think that all we ask is glory.