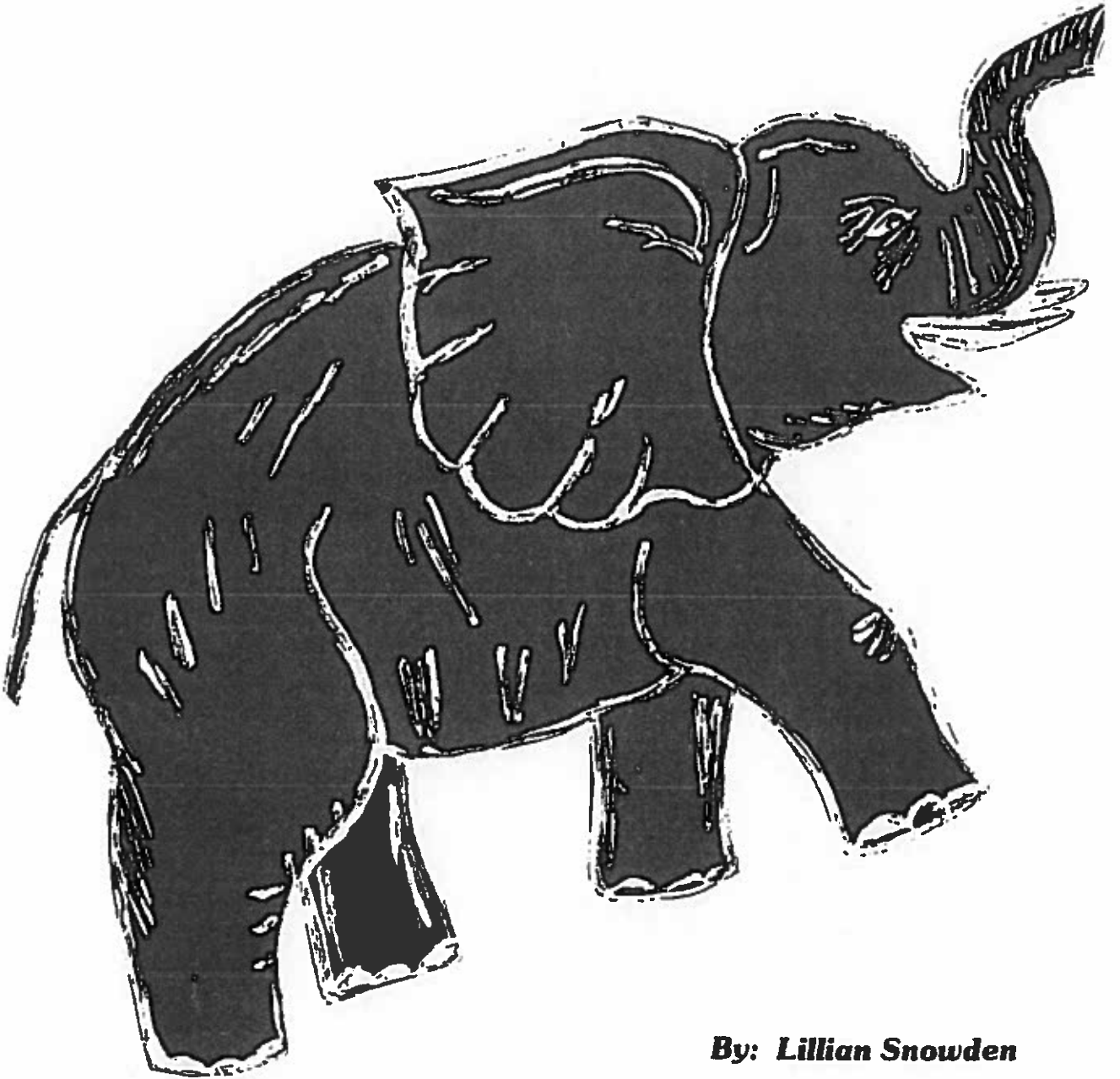


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**A COLLECTION OF LOVE —
ELEPHANTS**



By: Lillian Snowden

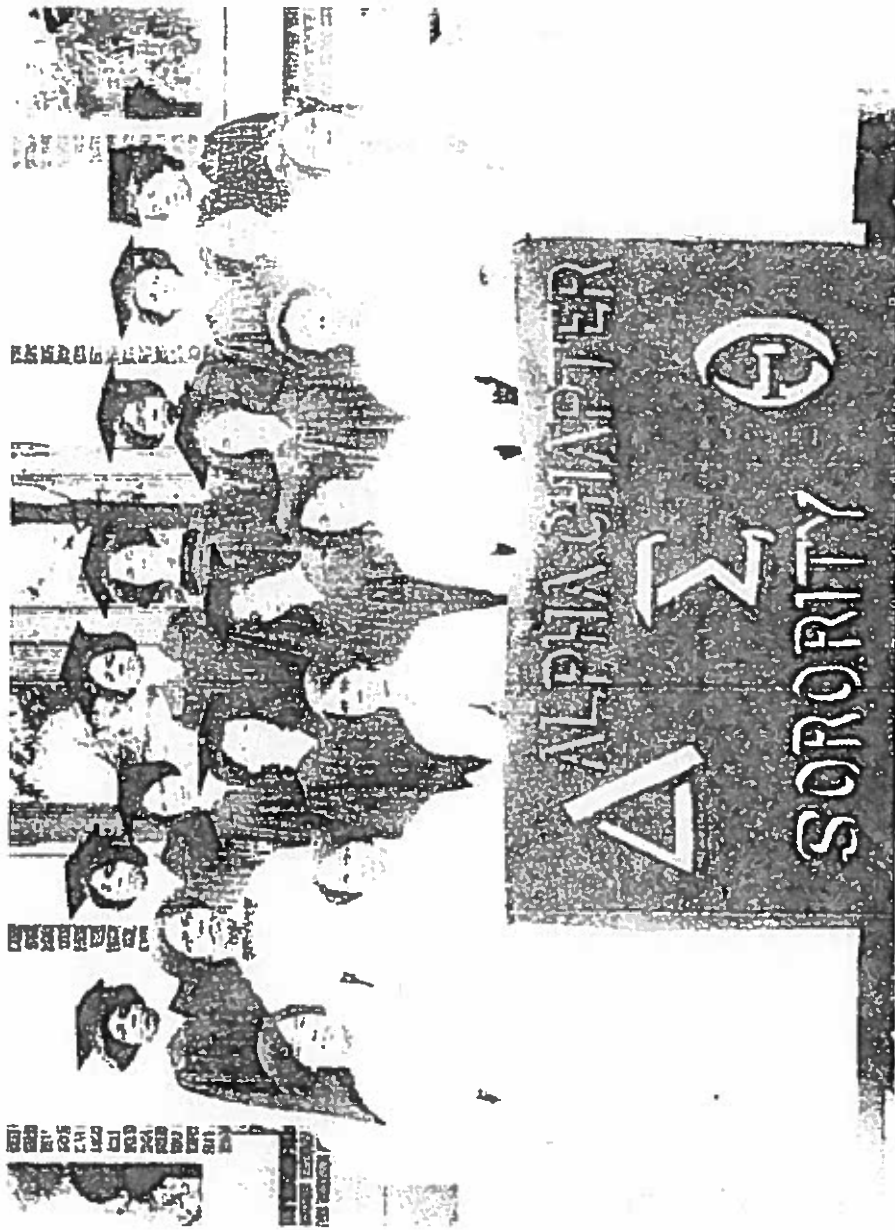
**A COLLECTION
OF
LOVE**

In Memory of

Soror Florence Letcher Toms

The content of this book was researched and collected by SOROR LILLIAN R. SNOWDEN, who authorizes any soror full use of its content. Particularly, those sorors who are instrumental in introducing new sorors into the fold of our great sisterhood, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., 1981.

*This book is in memory of Soror Florence Letcher Toms,
who shared her love with the world and left all Deltas a symbol of this great love —
THE ELEPHANT.*



Presented to National Headquarters - January 1968
by Founder Soror Naomi Sewell Richardson

(Left to Right)-Bottom row: Winona Cargile Alexander, Madree Penn White, Wertle Blackwell Weaver, Vashd Turley Murphy, Ethel Cuff Black, Frederica Chase Dodd; Middle row: Pauline Oberdorfer Minor, Edna Brown Coleman, Edith Motta Young, Marguerite Young Alexander, Naomi Sewell Richardson; Top row: Myra Davis Hemmings, Marnie Reddy Rose, Bertha Pitts Campbell, Florence Letcher Toms, Olive Jones, Jessie McGuire Dent, Jimmie Bugg Middleton, Ethel Carr Watson. (Not Pictured) Oescola McCarthy Adams, Zephyr Chiscom Carter, Eliza P. Shippen.

SOROR FLORENCE LETCHER TOMS

Founder



Soror Toms, a native Washingtonian, was the youngest child of Henry and Rosetta Letcher. She was raised in an environment where life was focused on home and family. This lifestyle afforded her the love and warmth needed for her ultimate goal — "helping the less fortunate."

Soror Toms attended schools in the Washington, D.C. area and upon completing high school requirements, received her diploma June 19, 1909. This was quite an accomplishment during the early Nineteen Hundreds. Therefore, it was not unusual when the President of the United States, The Honorable William Howard Taft presented the class of 1909 with their high school diplomas. However, Soror Toms not only received her diploma from the President but a scholarship to Howard University as well.

Founder Toms went on to attend Howard University, School of Liberal Arts. While there she, along with 21 other innovative, energetic and inspiring young women, dreamed of forming an organization catering to the spirit of the times. This organization of sisters would demonstrate sisterly love in their thrust to aid the less fortunate. Their dream ultimately materialized with all the love, zest and energy possessed by the 22. Their organization became a thriving entity of their time and took the name of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Soror Toms continued through the years to demonstrate her love and sincere concerns for the less fortunate. These concerns were not only shown in her daily life but in other ways as well. In her response to the First Man In Space:

"The success of the orbital shot convinced me that there is a tremendous amount of power in the world for good and evil. It is my sincere hope that now that man is gradually gaining control of that power, that he will gain control of his spirit and use the power for the GOOD OF MANKIND. This is my fervent prayer, and I hope that the opening of space is the beginning of its fulfillment."

(The Delta — March 1962)

SOROR FLORENCE LETCHER TOMS

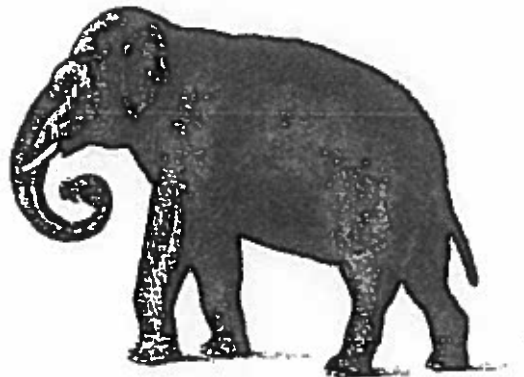
"A Collection of Love"

Our beloved Founder, Soror Florence Letcher Toms, collected ELEPHANTS over a span of 50 years. The collection of elephants did not become apparent to Soror Toms until sometime later in life. Initially she acquired the elephants as gifts from those closest to her heart, in recognition of a significant event. Of course as the events increased so did the growth of her apparent collection, as family and friends showered her with love. One can conclude that the elephant was symbolic of the love for her and her love for the world. In addition, the elephant symbolized perseverance, mobility, wisdom, and resoluteness as demonstrated by his distinct statue.

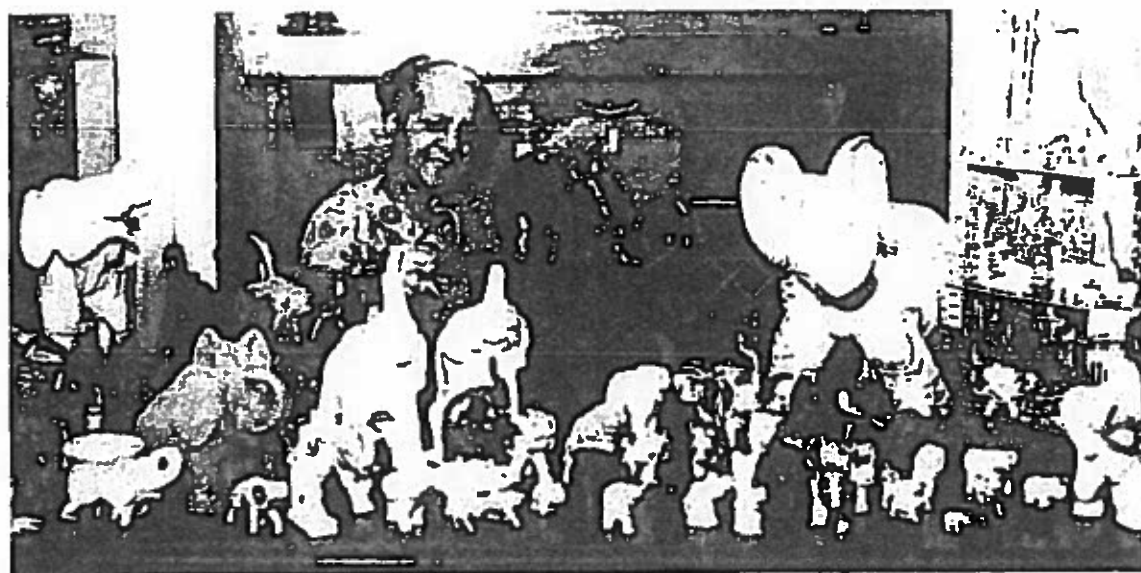
It was coincidental that most of the elephants' posture were identical, such as the "right foot forward, raised trunk, and the elephants stationed facing the door." Soror Toms was not superstitious and did not believe that the elephants brought some great or good fortune. However, her love for them grew as their own special meaning became more apparent.

Each member of her "Collection of Love" had its own special meaning and history. In addition to ranging in length from a half inch to almost two feet, standing from a quarter inch to 1 ½ feet and weighing from less than an ounce to almost 40 pounds, they were different in color, make and style. Some of the elephants were items of utility and items of decoration: such as candy dishes, ash trays, bookends, flower pots and vases.

Soror Toms had no vices, she did not play cards, nor drink or smoke, but she did collect elephants; therefore, her only vice was one of fond memories and love — "Her Collection of Love — Elephants."



SOROR FLORENCE LETCHER TOMS
and



“HER COLLECTION OF LOVE — ELEPHANTS”

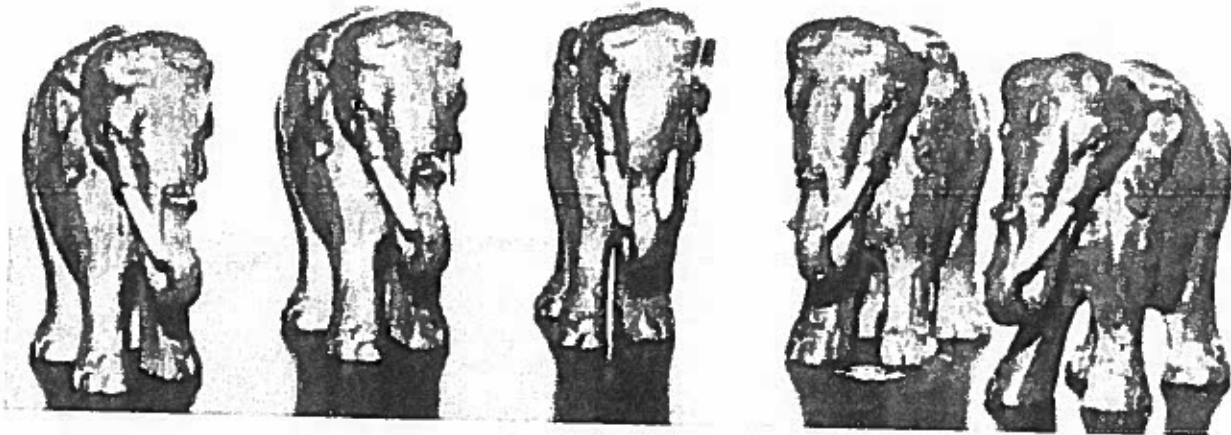
Over 200 ELEPHANTS!

“A COLLECTION OF LOVE”

Some of the elephants which comprised the Collection:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <i>* Two silvery colored mounted on a base of pure onyx</i> | <i>Graduation Gift, Master Degree, from a Close Friend in 1942</i> |
| <i>* One from Milan, Italy, with missing pure Ivory Tusks</i> | <i>Her Nephew</i> |
| <i>* “Bridge of Luck” — Five small white elephants, graduated in size and mounted crossing a bridge</i> | <i>Her Colleague — Upon her Promotion to teaching</i> |
| <i>* One smooth brown Mahogany Pachyderm from Africa</i> | <i>A Bishop from her Church</i> |
| <i>* “The Guards” — Five elephants in 1945 as mementos of the Yalta Conference. Soror toms named them Roosevelt, Stalin, Churchill, Malen-named them Roosevelt, Stalin, Churchill, Malenkou and Eden</i> | <i>Five Teachers from the Slater Langston School</i> |
| <i>* Two fuzzy gray elephants</i> | <i>From Massachusetts</i> |
| <i>* Two Ceramic, molded by hand</i> | <i>Her Nephew</i> |
| <i>* Wooden elephants resembling a puzzle, could be taken apart and put back together.</i> | <i>A Niece</i> |
| <i>* A Metal elephant given in memory of a deceased friend</i> | <i>Family of a friend</i> |
| <i>* One heavy Brass, Two huge glass, one black and one white elephants</i> | <i>A gift to herself, upon the request of her husband, Attorney Charles Toms</i> |

THE GUARDS



ROOSEVELT — PERSEVERANCE

CHURCHILL — RESOLUTE

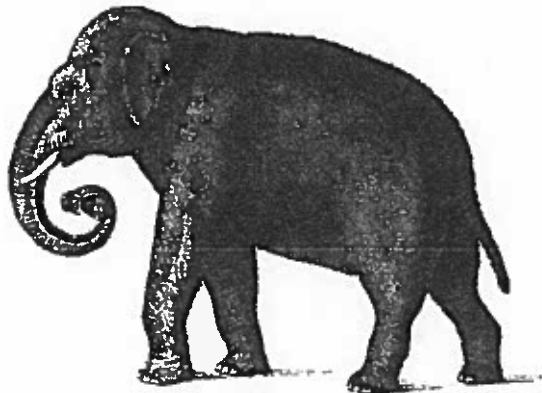
STALIN — MOBILITY

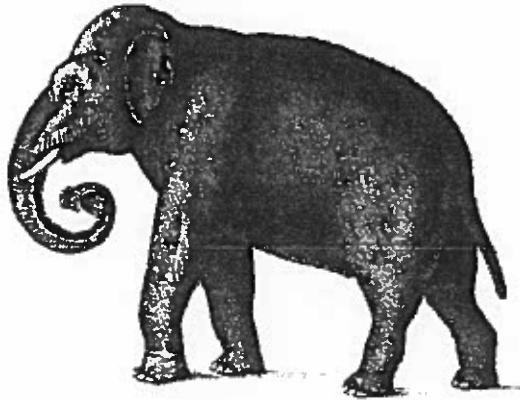
MALENKOV — WISDOM

EDEN — DIPLOMACY

KNOW YOUR ELEPHANTS

The Elephant is the biggest of all living land animals in the world. There are two surviving types of elephants, the African elephant and its slightly smaller Indian cousin. Long ago during the Ice Age, elephants of that period were the Mammoth and the Woolly elephants of Siberia and North America. Great size and heavy weight were typical characteristics of the Ice Age elephants. Elephants as we see them today were first seen in Egypt and used by the Egyptians for hauling and transportation.



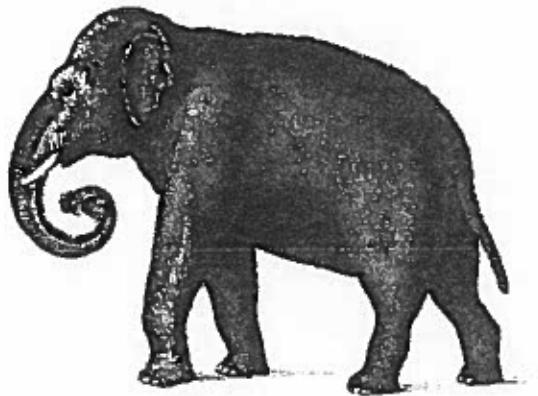


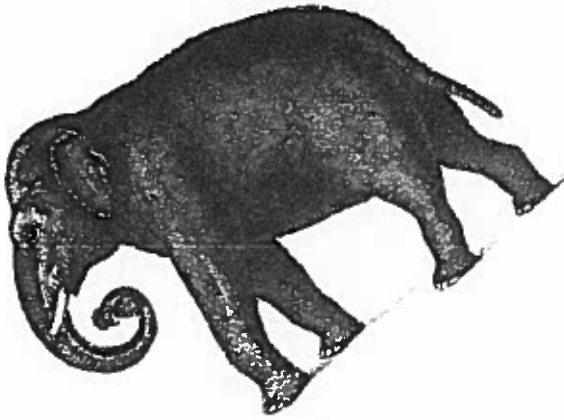
CHARACTERISTICS — INDIAN ELEPHANT

- * *When fully grown may weight four tons*
- * *Have small EARS*
- * *Their TUSKS are incisor teeth that have grown forward and outward*
- * *TUSKS of the female usually are not visible*
- * *Very domesticated*
- * *The Indian Elephants are usually seen in Asia and are used by the Asians for hauling and pack-transport*

CHARACTERISTICS — AFRICAN ELEPHANT

- * *When fully grown, may weigh six tons*
- * *Stands 10 feet high or more*
- * *Have large EARS*
- * *Their TUSKS are teeth grown forward and outward*
- * *Their TUSKS are longer than the Indian elephant*
- * *They usually are not domesticated*
- * *The African elephant was sometimes used by the Romans for War*





THE FOUR "W" OF ELEPHANTS

1. *WHO* was the first Delta to collect Elephants?

Florence Letcher Toms who, along with 21 other young women, founded Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. in 1913.

2. *WHY* do Deltas collection Elephants?

Deltas collect elephants because their beloved Founder, Soror Florence Letcher Toms collected them, after receiving so many elephants from family and friends who loved her and shared her love for all mankind. Thus the elephants became her symbol of love. The elephant is symbolic of the love shared by all Deltas and their ever thrust to help those who are less fortunate.

3. *WHY* did Soror Toms choose elephants in lieu of some other item of artform?

Soror Toms did not necessarily choose the elephants. It seems the elephants chose her. Initially, the elephants were gifts she received from loving friends and family members in recognition of some accomplishment she had made. It was their way of saying congratulations, good luck and love. Over a period of time Soror Toms had received so many elephants, she then had to consider them as a collection.

4. *WHERE* did the elephants come from?

Some experts say the elephants originated in Egypt.

5. *WHAT* are the different types of elephants?

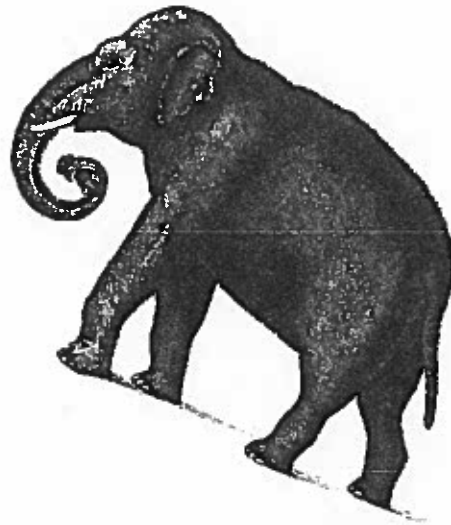
There are two surviving types of elephants, and they are the African and its cousin the Indian. However, other types did exist before and during the Ice Age: they were the Mammoth and the Woolly elephants of Siberia and North America. These two were not strong enough to survive the Ice Age; therefore, the entire species died out.

6. *SHOULD* a Delta buy her first elephant?

Delta experts tell me that it is bad luck to purchase your first elephant. Instead, another soror should gift you with the first. As the tale goes, when Deltas first started to collect elephants, sorors gave each other the first 22 elephants, symbolic of Delta's illustrious Founders. However, sorors of today usually receive their first as a gift and purchase others as they choose.

7. *SHOULD* the elephant have certain characteristics, such as the right foot forward, raised trunk, wide ears, etc.?

Not in particular. However, Soror Toms' elephants were very similar in posture, but it was just by coincidence that this happened. As the tale goes, the elephants should have the right foot forward, because this represents forward movement, drive and direction. The raised trunk demonstrates strength, i.e., durability, impregnability, firmness of will, character, and moral courage. As for the wide distinct ears, this is by choice, since the African elephant has larger ears than its Indian cousin.



ΔΣΘ

