

Cynthia Deberley Tucker Coleman Memorial Series
Number One

THE
FLAT HAT CLUB
AND THE
PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY

SOME NEW LIGHT
ON THEIR HISTORY

EDITED BY
GEORGE P. COLEMAN

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(Letter from THOMAS MCAULEY to THOMAS JEFFERSON.)

UNION COLLEGE }
New York State } *19th May 1819*

MOST EXCELLENT SIR

The Brethren of the New York Alpha of the Phi Beta Kappa Society have directed me to request of Your Excellency the communication of any information you may be in possession of, in relation to the Introduction of said Society into this country, as it has been told to the Society, that you first brought the charter from Oxford or Elsewhere to William & Mary College in 1776 or thereabouts, as it is natural for the children to enquire into the pedigree &c of their parents we Trust Sir you will pardon the Liberty we take, in thus approaching their reputed patron with the Language of enquiry— permit me to say that there are now 4 Alphas, that of Mass — Con — New Haven & New York—

Connecticut has . .	627 members
Mass.	489
N. H.	421
N. Y.	<u>155</u>
	1692

We trust the Society has a very healthfull influence on the minds of youth—and will be falu-

tary to the community — We will thankfully receive any communication on this subject —

And while I am before you Sir permit me to enquire whether in your philosophic recreations you have observed that Electricity passed along a wire of one or more miles in length becomes a deep orange colour, is diminished in its apparent Volume, But Exceedingly increased in its intensity and influence on the nervous system? in my course of Experiment last season I am fully satisfied of these facts, but am yet unable to account for them and would most willingly be instructed.

I am Sir with the profoundest respect for your many public & private virtues & Elevated Standing in the republic of letters,

Your very Humble

Servant THOMAS MCAULEY,

Cor. Sec. of New York A. A

His Excellency THOMAS JEFFERSON —