

*University Archives
G.R. Little Library
Elizabeth City State University*

Kermit E. White
(1917-1997)
Papers, 19-19

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Provenance: Gift of White Family

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Biographical Note:

Kermit Earle White was born in New York, New York on July 15, 1917, the first son of Walter T. White, Sr. and Esther W. White. He received his early education in the public schools of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, graduating from P.W. Moore High School in 1933. He then attended Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C. and graduated in 1937 with a Bachelor of Science Degree that prepared him to begin his professional career as a high school teacher in Beaufort County [NC] and Craven County [NC].



In 1941 he married Loretta Bagwell. His professional career was interrupted while he served honorably in the U.S. Army QM Corps as a First Sergeant from 1942 to 1946, after which time he enrolled in Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1950 he received the D.D.S. Degree and served two years in the U.S. Army Dental Corps with the rank of Captain. In 1952 the family returned to Elizabeth City. The couple had a son, Kermit Easton, and the same year Dr. White opened his own office where he practiced as a dental surgeon until his retirement in 1984.

Dr. White, an active community leader, was a member of the Human Relations Council, Citizens Advisory Committee, Board of Education - Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools, Chairman, 1976-1979; District N.C. School Board Association, President, 1994; Board of Trustees, Elizabeth City State University, Vice-chairman and Chairman. The K.E. White Graduate and Continuing Education Center at Elizabeth City State University was named in his honor and in 1996 he was honored with a resolution designating him as a Trustee Emeritus of ECSU. Dr. White was also a dedicated member of Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church, where he served as a member of the Board of Trustees and a was a former president of that body.

In 2008, Robert Kelly-Goss wrote in a profile of White in the Elizabeth City Daily Advance:

“During the tumultuous days of the late 1960s and early 1970s, White was concerned with the divide between the black and white communities. As a member of the [Elizabeth City] Human Relations Council, White spoke to the Kiwanis Club about the divide and the need for education and frank discussion that could mend the continuing schism between the two communities. ‘Differences of opinion are bound to exist. Discussing them can only help. Containing them cannot’, White told the Kiwanis Club”.

Dr. White was a Fellow, American Academy of General Dentistry, held membership in the Eastern North Carolina Medical, Dental and Pharmaceutical Society, the Kappa Sigma Pi Honorary Dental Society, Omicron Kappa Epsilon National Honorary Dental Society, American Endodontic Society, Old North State Dental Society, North Carolina Dental Society, Meharry Mid-Century Dental Association, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Kiwanis International, NAACP, and Sigma Pi Phi Grand Boulé.

Dr. Kermit E. White died on December 23, 1997.



Scope and Content Note: The collection consists of memorabilia and ephemera related to Kermit E. White's professional life, beginning with his years at Shaw University and including a number of professional honors and awards he earned later in his career.

Timeline:

- 1917 Born in New York City
- 1933 Graduated from P.W. Moore High School in Elizabeth, City NC
- 1937 Graduated from Shaw University. Began teaching high school
- 1941 Married Loretta Bagwell
- 1942 Enlisted in U.S. Army, serving until 1946
- 1946 Enrolled in Meharry Dental School
- 1950 Received DDS; served in U.S. Army Dental Corps at the rank of Captain
- 1952 Returned to Elizabeth City to open dental office
- 1984 Retired from dental practice
- 1996 Appointed Trustee Emeritus at Elizabeth City State University
- 1997 Died on December 23

Collection Inventory:

- Shaw University Class of 1937 Reunion Program **Box One**
- K.E. White's Chemistry Notes, Shaw University
- From These Roots **Author: Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc**
- Title: FROM THESE ROOTS. Kermit White Collection. Property of Loretta B. White (wife)
- History and Traditions of the sorority
- Plaques

- Shaw University Journal 1933-1937 (Graduation programs) **Box Two**
- K.E. White Dental License
- K.E. White speech on Human relations (no date)
- Kappa Sigma Pi Membership Certificate
- Trustee Appointment at ECSU news article
- ECSU President's Club Certificate
- Academy of General Dentistry Award newspaper clipping (no date)
- EC-Pasquotank Schools Certificate of Merit 1984
- North Carolina Joint Council on Health and Citizenship Meritorious Service Award (no date)
- K.E. White Funeral Service program 12-27-1997

- The collection also includes a fragment of a Greensboro News and Record Article 9-20-1992 about a nineteenth century NC state legislator George H. White

- Plaques

Box Three

- Plaques

Box Four

Photos removed and relocated in Vertical Files – Wa

- Portraits of Kermit White and Loretta White
- K.E. White at G.R. Little Library dedication, 12-8-1978
- Spellman Family Group Circa 1916