

Tom Peet Cross, fraternity brother of William Crawford Wauchope, who served as best man at his wedding.



(Photo courtesy of: University of Chicago Photographic Archive, [apf digital item number, e.g., apf12345], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library).

Tom Peete Cross was born 1879, in Nansemond County, Virginia to Thomas Hardy Cross and Eleanor Elizabeth Wright. His father was a planter. He had one younger brother, Hardy Cross, who would go on to achieve fame in the field of structural engineering for his development of the moment distribution method. He and his brother both did their preparatory education at Norfolk Academy. Cross was married to Elizabeth Weathers Cross. He had two daughters, Ellen Elizabeth Cross and Evelyn Douglas Cross. The former married music scholar Storm Bull in 1939. At the end of his career, Cross retired to a farm in Aylett, Virginia, where he lived until his death. Late in life, he suffered a heart attack, and his poor health kept him from being able to climb stairs, but he still continued his work on his Motif-Index. After his death, his wife moved to Boulder, Colorado, where she lived with Bull and her daughter until her own death in 1957. They are both buried in the St. David's Episcopal Church Cemetery, King William County, Virginia.

Cross did his undergraduate education at Hampden-Sydney College, receiving his B.A. in 1899. He was admitted to the Kappa Alpha Fraternity, along with his friend, William C. Wauchope. He went on to Harvard University to pursue an M.A. (1906) and Ph.D. (1909). After receiving his Ph.D., he spent a year studying in Dublin, Ireland, then returned to the United States in 1910 to take up a position as an instructor at Harvard. In 1911 he became the head of the English department at Sweet Briar College. Following that, he spent his next year at the University of North Carolina, and in 1913 became the chair of the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Chicago. His alma mater Hampden-Sydney College awarded him an honorary doctorate of literature in 1927. He was

also member of the Modern Language Association and the American Council of the Irish Texts Society. He retired in 1945.