

Maj. Gen. Donald S. Dawson, USAF (Ret.) **Missouri '32**

Oxford Cup Roll N° 012

A prominent and popular Washington figure for five decades, General Donald S. Dawson received the Oxford Cup April 1, 1989, at a Beta reception at Tysons, Virginia, in connection with installation of the new George Mason chapter. Making the presentation on behalf of the Board of Trustees was General Treasurer Bruce M. Lloyd, *Brown '69, Pennsylvania '77*.

Best known as an administrative personnel aid to President Harry S. Truman, the former Air Force general has headed a Bethesda law firm bearing his name and is a former president of the University of Missouri Alumni Association. He also has been identified prominently with a number of veterans' activities and social organizations, particularly the Washington Army and Navy Club, established in 1891 and recently refurbished.

A track star and senior honor society president at Missouri, Dawson went to George Washington University law school, got his juris doctor degree in 1938, and for the next five years was assistant to Federal Loan Administrator Jesse H. Jones. He then entered the Army. He is said to have been the first Officer Candidate School graduate to become a general. He served in each war theatre in World War II, eventually retiring as a major general with decorations including the distinguished Service Medal. He became director of security and law enforcement for the U.S. Air Force and later national president of the Reserve Officers Association.

From 1947 to 1953, he was Special Executive Assistant to President Truman, responsible for all Presidential appointments and in charge of all management personnel activities of the Executive Branch. Eventually he became director of the Harry S. Truman Library Institute. The University of Missouri conferred its Faculty-Alumni Award upon him, plus an honorary degree. He had delivered a commencement address for the University.

In addition to being chairman of the board of trustees of the Reserve Officers Association and current president of the Army and Navy Club, Dawson is longtime executive vice president and currently chairman of the Washington P. T. Barnum tent of the Saints and Sinners Club.

He was president of the distinguished Washington Army and Navy Club following its four-year renovation, with rededication by President Ronald Reagan. Dawson is listed as the 77th president of the Military Town Club, founded in 1885 as the University Service Club but reincorporated under its present name in 1891. The clubhouse originally was dedicated in 1891 by President Benjamin Harrison, then rededicated by President William Howard Taft in 1912 when it moved across the street to its Farragut Square location. Rededication in 1989 by President Reagan thus was at least its third dedication ceremony.

Robert T. Howard, DePauw '37, Historian