

We know about the Founders college years, but what happened to them after they left Monmouth?

All Kappas are familiar with the story of our six Founders walking into chapel at Monmouth College on October 13, 1870, wearing small, golden keys. It was the beginning of a story that has endured for 134 years...a never-ending story. Little did those six young women know that the Fraternity they founded would grow to become a leader in the Greek world. These were women who came from many backgrounds, but who found in teaching others the same ethics and values, interests and desire to start something new. They drew on their Greek and Latin studies to develop the organization, used their meetings to practice writing and speaking skills and encouraged self-esteem in each other from their friendships. They were trendsetters, but they also liked to have fun, giggle and play jokes.

Minnie Stewart, the first president of Alpha Chapter and theoretically the Fraternity, studied in the scientific department and graduated in 1872. She became a teacher in the Monmouth public schools and later a principal in Eustis, Fla. She was married twice. No one knows what happened to Minnie's first husband, nor is it known when, where, or how he died. Copies of court papers show that Minnie divorced him on grounds of desertion a few years after their marriage. She then married Mr. Fields, an artist. Minnie had two children who died five months apart. She died in 1898 and is buried in Monmouth.

Anna Willits received both her B.A. and M.A. degrees from Monmouth College and married Henry H. Pattee, a wealthy businessman in Monmouth. She was a life-long resident of Monmouth, participated in community service and served on the Monmouth Board of Education. She died in Chicago in 1908 and is buried in Monmouth. Her granddaughter was initiated with her badge, which is now the only remaining Founder's badge and is on exhibit at Fraternity Headquarters.

Susan Walker, the other Founder buried in Monmouth, was considered by the Founders to be the beauty of the group. She was one of the first initiates (before October 12) and it was at her home that the initiation was held. She left school without a degree in 1872 and became the first alumna of the Fraternity. She married Rev. A.S. Vincent and died in 1897.

Two Founders are buried in north Florida and were related to each other. **Jennie Boyd**, Kappa's first Secretary and the oldest Founder, graduated from Monmouth in 1875 and taught school for years in Omaha, Kan. Jennie never married and considered her Kappa sister and sister-in-law, Louise Bennett Boyd, her "sister." Ill during her later years, Jennie died in 1927 while on a visit to her brother in Florida and was buried in Green Cove Springs.

Louise Bennett, the only Founder who lived to see Kappa grow through 77 years, graduated from Monmouth in 1872 and married Jennie's brother, Rev. Joseph Boyd. She was a busy pastor's wife, living from coast to coast, and had no children. They lived in Jacksonville, Fla. For several years, then retired to Penney Farms, Fla. Blind almost the last ten years of her life, Lou died in 1947 at age 94 and is buried next to Jennie in Green Cove Springs.

Louisa Stevenson, another early initiate and the youngest Kappa, graduated from Monmouth in 1874. Six months later, she married William Oliver Miller and had three sons and a daughter. They lived on a farm near Monmouth for five years, then in Tarkio, Mo. and finally in Kansas City for more than 40 years. Lou was one of the two living Founders who participated in the ceremonies which re-established Alpha Chapter at Monmouth College in 1934. Having a remarkable memory for details of the early years of Alpha Chapter, Lou was instrumental in providing information about the history of the Fraternity. After a long illness, she died in 1937 and is buried in Tarkio.

Our Founders would be proud and pleased to know that Kappa Kappa Gamma will celebrate 134 years of sisterhood on October 13, 2004, and would agree that the Fraternity experience goes beyond the college years. Together they shared in many years of Kappa friendships beyond their days at Monmouth College and found that Kappa is for a lifetime.

Researched by Susannah E. Howard, History Chairman 1992-1994.

Note: Page 22 of *History 2000 Kappa through the Years*, has a picture of the emblem featuring the Fraternity Coat-of-Arms and date of founding which is affixed to the gravestones of each of the six Founders. These may be purchased from Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity Headquarters in Columbus, Ohio, to be used for a paperweight or a Kappa's gravestone.