

**Psi I-Lewis**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: December 25, 1873
* Closure date: 1889
* Location: Oxford, Mississippi
* Region: 3

**History:**

*As recounted by Minnie Wohlleben Carter, Psi I-Lewis in the* ANCHORA:

In the famous old state of Mississippi, situated among its northern hills, is the little city of Oxford, the Athens of the state. Although the home of numerous schools for girls and the seat of the State University, it was the happy fate of a quiet select school for young women to be the proud mother of Delta Gamma. This school was founded way back in antebellum days and was first known as the Louis school. Its pupils were composed almost entirely of residents of the town, for the school building was so small it could accommodate only a few pupils from a distance.

In the year 1873, when it was under the management of Mrs. Hays, Mary Comfort, Eva Webb, and Anna Boyd came from Kosciusko, MS, to Oxford to attend Louis School. These young girls conceived the idea of forming a little secret club or rather society as it was then called, and on January 2, 1874, organized what was known as Delta Gamma Society. The letter H was worn as the badge, with the Greek letters ΔΓ on the cross piece. After getting into working order a few members were taken in during that session. For several years its growth was slow, but its members were always composed of the most intelligent pupils of the School.

When in 1876 the School changed management and Miss Lou Miller became its principal, it was known as Oxford Institute, Delta Gamma began to take on new life. Up to this time the club had been only a local organization and very modest in its pretentions, but the time had arrived for the development of its usefulness. Under the influence of Corinne Miller, sister of the principal, the corner-stone of Delta Gamma’s future greatness was laid. By the help of this intelligent woman, the first constitution of any importance was written, and the badge was changed from the letter H to an anchor with the Greek letters ΔΓ on the shield.

It was also in her fertile brain that the fraternity idea was first conceived. Several chapters were established in the seminaries of the South, destined, however, to be short-lived, because they were unable to endure the many difficulties which threatened fraternities in the South. Not at all discouraged, the attempt was made again, and the first chapter of any lasting success, and also the first established north of the Mason and Dixon line, was at Franklin, Indiana, in 1878. The granting of other charters followed, and Psi chapter began to feel that her avowed purpose of organizing a national fraternity was being fulfilled.

The first convention was held at the mother chapter in 1881 and was most pleasant and profitable. Psi chapter in her palmy days was ever in the lead of the social and intelligent life of the little university town, for good fraternity members are the best members of society everywhere.

The women of Psi chapter, with the help of the alumni of the University, erected a handsome memorial window, which was placed in the end of the hall of the new library building, then in course of construction. This window was dedicated to the “University Gres”—a company of students who left the University of Mississippi to don the grey uniform in that trying period of the early 1860s. It is a beautiful tribute to their valor, and one any Delta Gamma may be proud of.

In 1880, this fine old school changed hands for the last time. Mrs. Lancaster, a noted educator from Virginia, took charge. The school also changed its name to Warren Institute. Psi chapter seemed still to possess her old progressive spirit, but a decline had already begun. A new element had entered the school and also invaded the ranks of Delta Gamma. It seemed impossible for this new element to comprehend the old loyal spirit which had always made its former members as one. This was the beginning of the end. The end came all too soon, for it was in 1889 that Psi was known no more in the city which gave it birth. One of the causes, and by no means a minor one, was the decline of the school, which finally closed its doors never to be opened again to the happy sound of school life.