

## Founder Daniel William Cooper

The second of the Seven Founder's Monument to be erected by the Fraternity was dedicated at the Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburg, PA., on May 24, 1924, four years after his death, December 11, 1920.

We attribute self-control with his name and in creating the badge with Runkle, he said, "By our Ritual we must avoid the danger that may come by believing that one could conquer by just wearing an emblem to parade virtues that are not within the heart."

Regarding the badge, Brother Cooper at the 29th Grand Chapter, states, "Brothers, you wear the cross, that emblem to me above all things the most worthy of reverence and love. See to it that you never do ought to dishonor it. Let your character be as pure and white as the enamel of which it is composed. Let your every word and deed be as rich and golden as the gold that surrounds and ornaments it..."

In addition, he gives us heeded advice, "It has been my privilege here to be present at the initiation of a candidate into our Fraternity and listen to the beautiful, instructive, and inspiring works of our Ritual, bringing to the mind of the initiate on what is elevating and ennobling, teaching him to seek the highest degree of manhood capable of being attained. I trust that this grand ceremony will never be belittle or disgraced by any unbecoming 'stunts' or low, mean performances which endanger limb, life or morals. It is too good and splendid to be mingled with anything low or debasing, and I trust that everyone entering our Fraternity will feel it to be his duty and obligation to exemplify its teaching in his life...And, while there must, of necessity, be partitions or walls between the different fraternities and orders, they should not be so high that we hurt our elbows in shaking hands over them..."

### Background

A proposal to erect a fitting monument for Founder Runkle was approved at the 35th Grand Chapter but later expanded to include all the Founders. A couple years after the formation of the Founders' Monument Commission, Founder Runkle's monument was erected. Founder Cooper's monument was erected next due to, in 1922, a contribution of \$3,000 on the part of Cooper's family, his two sons and daughter, to the Founders' Monument Commission. The money was to be used to promote the erection of all seven monuments but then a sum of \$3000 was to be put in a trust for the Daniel W. Cooper Memorial Fund, the income of which will be given to a worthy Brother of Sigma Chi who might be directing his efforts in a course of study in preparation for the Christian ministry, preferably of the Presbyterian Church of which Brother Daniel William Cooper was such an honored member.

### Monument Construction and Cost

The completed monuments are made of one solid piece of granite weighing approximately eight tons produced from an approximate fourteen ton monolith and quarried with great care in order to avoid flaws. Since the size and design were to be identical we can assume each of the monuments' weights are similar. The monument is made from Dummerston granite from the Prssbrey-Leland Company.

The actual cost of the Cooper Monument was \$2962.00 which was \$300 more than Runkle's monument. The difference in the cost being due to the necessity of placing the Cooper Monument on a special base in order that it would make a proper showing in connection with other monuments in the Cooper Plot.

### Monument Symbols

The front of the Cooper Monument bears the Sigma Chi badge; the rear is the Cooper family coat-of-arms; one end is the Sigma Chi coat-of-arms or crest and the other end the ecclesiastical insignia (Chi Rho).

In a speech from Charles Townsend speech at Founder Bell's dedication:

"It is fitting that his monolith should have been carved from the everlasting granite of our Sierra as a symbol not only of the lofty ideals of Sigma Chi, but of the solid permanence of the Fraternity through the ages to come; its own encircling emblems typifying the chain of friendship which links our membership around the world."

### Dedication

Despite the inclement weather a large number journeyed to the cemetery to pay tribute to our revered Founder. Past Grand Consul Joseph T. Miller, Beta (Wooster) 1893, under whose administration the Sigma Chi Founders Monument Commission began its great work of properly marking the graves of our illustrious founder, presided at the dedication.

The program began with the singing of the hymn "Blest be the Tie that Binds." accompanied by an organ. Dr. Robert Meade, Tau (Roanoke) and Mu Mu (West Virginia) 1900 pronounced the invocation. Past Grand Consul Miller read a scripture reading followed by Dr. John Bowman, Alpha Eta (Iowa) 1899 on "Our Founder, Daniel William Cooper." He said:

"Brother Cooper was the first Consul of Alpha Chapter of Sigma Chi. When in June, 1855, the seven lads at Miami University raised the White Cross, Brother Cooper was the leader. The office of Consul seems to have been his by birthright. He was a quiet, far-seeing, uncompromising lad to whom the others turned impulsively for guidance. One of his classmates said that he could hardly think that Daniel was ever a boy. He was the dominating spirit, 'honored, loved, looked up to with perfect confidence.' To him, more than to any other, Sigma Chi owes its wonderful ideal of manhood."

"Brother Cooper was born in Knox County, Ohio, in 1830. He was educated in the district schools until he went to Miami. At Miami he held to the single purpose of service through the ministry. After graduation Brother Cooper entered the Western Theological Seminary in this city. He was ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1859; and from that year he served for 33 years with conspicuous success as a minister in Ohio."

Brother Cooper was married in 1859 at Pittsburgh to Miss Jane Skinner daughter of George Skinner. His wife and three children preceded him by some years to the grave here where they rest. The last years of his life were spent at the home of his son Brother James G. Cooper, at Marion, Ohio."

"Brother Cooper was the oldest of the seven founders of Sigma Chi. He was the last of the seven, in 1920, to go."

This address was followed with the hymn, "In the Cross of Christ I Glory."

Next was the Honorable Stephen T. Mather, Alpha Beta (California-Berkeley) 1887, Director of the National Parks, Past Grand Consul, and Chairman of the Sigma Chi Founders Monument Commission, presenting the monument to the Fraternity. His words were:

"...I think we started a piece of work which is going to mean a great deal to the generations that are to follow, leaving something tangible as a memory to those seven wonderful men that made our fraternity what it is today."

"Of course, as regards not only this particular monument but also the Runkle monument as well, we must thank the Cooper family themselves for having come forward so splendidly and fur-

nished funds that enabled the present accomplishment. The work they have done and encouragement they have given is responsible for the start we have made in really building these monuments.”

“I want just to say a word too in regard to Brother Cooper. I cannot help thinking what a noble inspiration he was when with us fifteen years ago in the 29th Grand Chapter. I can yet see that noble figure on the campus of the University of Chicago when he gave us one of those inspiring speeches of his.”

The monument was then unveiled by Miss Sarah Jean Cooper, the daughter of Founder Cooper. During the unveiling, wreaths from the Fraternity were placed at the base of the monument.

The Honorable Harry S. New, Rho (Butler) 1877, Postmaster General of the United States and Grand Consul of the Fraternity, accepted the monument in behalf of the Fraternity. His speech follows:

“Brother Miller, Brother Mather, Fellow Sigs, Fellow Friends, on behalf of the Sigma Chi Fraternity I accept as a sacred trust this monument to our worthy Founder.”

“Sixty nine years ago seven young men at Miami University founded a fraternity, the cornerstone of which was love and helpful fellowship. By general consent Daniel William Cooper was recognized by the other six as their mentor and guide. They looked to him for wise counsel and for inspiration, and were never disappointed. Due in large part to his fixedness of purpose and his devotion to an ideal, the fraternity thus founded improved and prospered with the years. There came added chapters, and membership in this brotherhood multiplied until it extended into all the States. The white cross of Sigma Chi, symbol of purity, became the sign manual of an army of thousands, and army of peace and good will, whose goal was to be reached only by following the line of good conduct.”

“There can be no finer aspiration than to do those things which will make for the benefit of human kind, and this was the thought that actuated these young men when they brought our beloved fraternity into being in June 1855. They took themselves and their project seriously, and the robust strength and acknowledged character which was to be later attained by Sigma Chi has amply justified the pains to which they went to give it impetus and insure its progress.”

“Brother Cooper’s interest in the fraternity never waned during the sixty five years he lived as one amongst its most honored members. His presence at its convention and national gatherings was always to be relied upon when circumstances permitted. He lived his long life in a manner consistent with the precepts upon which the fraternity was founded and in a manner to bring to it honor and approval. Even his youthful contemporaries, because of his steadfastness, bestowed upon him the name of “old Dan,” by which title he was affectionately known to the younger members of the fraternity to the very time of his death. His walk among men was of so dignified and impressive a character that it was said that he “looked the shadow of St. Peter passing by.” One of the seven associate founders, the late General Benjamin P. Runkle, wrote this of him:

And brave Dan Cooper, the man of God  
Who walked in the ways that the prophets trod,  
Upright and manly, fearless and true,  
A Christian gentleman through and through,  
A comrade in joy, a friend in distress,  
A preacher of God and his righteousness.  
As Olaf, the King, held high his sword,  
So brave “Old Dan” counts the gain and the loss  
And holds heart and soul by the great White Cross.”

“Brother Cooper lived to be the last of the seven who brought Sigma Chi into being and passed to his reward December 11, 1920.”

“In acknowledgment of what he was, in gratitude for what he did, the member of Sigma Chi do honor to themselves and to his memory by dedication to it this appropriate memorial.”

Next followed perhaps the most impressive feature of the ceremony. During the singing of the hymn “With Sacred Circle Broken,” all formed in a line and placed a white rose on the monument. Then a prayer of dedication was pronounced.

Following the dedication a banquet was given at the Shannopin Country Club, bringing to a close one of the most inspiring days ever participated in by Sigma Chi in Pittsburgh.

### *The College Days and beyond*

Runkle said about Cooper, “Bell and Cooper for some reason, hidden in their secret souls, were closely knit together. They entered the Delta Kappa Epsilon together and side by side, left that order to become founders of Sigma Chi. They were members of the same literary society. In thought and sympathy and in the deep foundations of their being they were much the same sort of men, though in outward expression of the inward character they differed widely. They were distinct varieties of the same good fruit.”

### *Sigma Chi*

“Daniel W. Cooper was literally an Abou Ben Adam among his brothers - one that loved his fellow-men, and did them naught but good. To him more than to any other man is due the birth and early growth of the kindly and generous spirit of Sigma Chi. It is hard to account for his dominant spirit, and his influence in that little band. He was, and is, a man of God, honest, upright, and pure. In his intercourse with the rest of us he was as gentle and considerate as a woman. He never reproved; he never lectured. By common consent he was the head of the chapter. And no one thought of displacing him. His quarters were the resort of each one of us when in trouble, and there we found sympathy and convincing, because unselfish advice. Different from every one of us, he walked among us honored, loved, looked-up-to with perfect confidence. He taught us that the cross was holy and not to be looked on as common. He seemed to have in mind the words, “What God hath made clean call thou not common,” and he was wont to say “If you will go where you ought not to go, leave off the badge,” and this we did. In the fact that the first case of discipline in the chapter was for intoxication at a banquet may be seen his quiet but all-sufficient influence. Many an hour did I pass in his room, and every minute was a benediction. Brother Cooper, in these days, though rich in spirit was poor in worldly goods, and his life and work contain a priceless lesson for such of us as think that the end of life is the attainment of material riches and worldly power.”

At the 50th Anniversary, Cooper stated, “Among the many delightful memories of those far-off days is that of seven young men, one in heart and purpose - seven, symbol of completeness, if not perfection - who met and founded the Sigma Chi Fraternity, feeble as it was young, and seemingly hopeless and helpless. Looking upon our Fraternity as it then was and as it now is, I am filled with wonder and amazement, and can only exclaim; Is it possible that this growth and advancement has been made in the short space of fifty years?...We return today, rich, not in flocks and herds, but in the inconceivably higher, better riches of enlightened, earnest manhood and brotherhood.”

Furthermore, Brother Cooper charges us by saying, “But while we rejoice in the spirit and power, which have accomplished all this, and can accomplish vastly more in the future, permit me a word of warning. It is easy for that which is strong to become weak; for that which is ascending,

to lose its balance and fall to grovel in the dust; and just in proportion as it was strong and noble and exalted, if it falls, will it become weak and worthless and perish...Be it yours, then, my brothers, in laboring for the advancement of all that the Sigma Chi Fraternity stands for, to do all in the right spirit and from the right motives, so that you may hand down our Fraternity to this who come after you with its strength undiminished, its beauty untarnished; and may it continue to advance in all that is good and true, until time itself shall be no more!"

And finally, he sees the fraternity's future by stating, "The founders of this Fraternity will soon all live only in memory, but I am truly thankful that the Fraternity itself, founded on high and unchanging principles, will still live on in increasing strength and prosperity under the watchful care of its loving and faithful members."

All honor to his name...