

## 1919 Nursing Memories



My mother, Martha Bowser Beatty, remembered arriving in Minneapolis in 1917, walking around the U of M campus and being overwhelmed by its size. She had been a school teacher in small Wisconsin town and learned of the School for Nurses at the University of Minnesota, the first nursing program on a university campus. The United States had entered World War I and women were encouraged to become nurses to assist in the military or civilian life.

**Nursing Friends**



**Martha Bowser,**  
graduation day



**Pearl Iverson,**  
Minnehaha Falls

As a student nurse, she and her classmates lived together in "the nurses home" (a precursor to nurses' dormitories.) Her roommate was Pearl McIver, who later became Chief of the U.S. Public Health Nursing. They posed in photos showing them having fun and pretending to study while "off duty." The students worked long hours, but did get away to explore Minnehaha Falls on a Sunday afternoon.



### Off Duty fun



**Martha Bowser Beatty in front of Elliot Hospital**



**Nursing Class of 1919**

Mother spoke of the Great Flu epidemic of 1918 and the vital role that nurses played in caring for patients. Many patients died within 24 hours of being admitted to Elliott Memorial Hospital with high fevers and delirium. Very little could be offered them other than good nursing care to relieve their suffering. She was a wonderful bedside nurse and the skills she learned as a student were helpful her entire life. When we were children, she would sponge our fevers when sick; give us plenty of fluids; apply camphor to our chests; and open the windows for fresh air, as she once had done for very sick flu patients.



**Feeding a pediatric patient outdoors**



**Louise Powell**

Having been a school teacher, I think she enjoyed Pediatrics the most. The children were often brought out in the sunshine and fresh air as part of their care and to limit their exposure to other illnesses in the ward.

Miss Louise Powell was the Director of the School of Nursing in 1919 when mother graduated and I later lived in Powell Hall as a student nurse (Class of '54). My sister Barbara Beatty McKie (Class of '48) was in the Cadet Nursing Corps during World War II and lived in Harrington Hall while training at Minneapolis General Hospital.

When nurses tell stories about their experience as nursing students, I think the most common theme is remembering the camaraderie while living and working together and the close friendships that were made. It is a life-long bond that connects us all.

Virginia Beatty Clifford