

BC 10-5-1983

FORMER DRAKE TEACHER  
BURIED AT BROOKLYN

By Dix Hollobaugh  
Courtesy Des Moines Register

Mrs. John

Mary Frances Boyd of Des Moines, who introduced hundreds of students to foreign languages and hundreds of travelers to foreign lands, died Friday at age 98. She was born Mary Frances Jones, in Madison Township, the daughter of John W. Jones.

She taught romance languages at Drake University in Des Moines, starting as an undergraduate assistant in about 1908 and continuing until her retirement in the 1950s. She was a professor of Spanish and also taught Latin, French and German.

When most people would have been winding down a long career, Mrs. Boyd was starting a new one. Before she retired from Drake, she began organizing and leading foreign tours, drawing on her considerable language skills and lively interest in history, recalled Leland Johnson, retired dean of liberal arts at Drake.

Tours to Mexico, where she held a big celebration of her 65th birthday, and the Holy Land were among the most frequent destinations.

Boyd tours were a constant for 32 years. Although she could no longer accompany groups in the past few years, she was still arranging trips well into her 90s. Mary Frances was still traveling in her 80s, said Edna Bohlman of Des Moines, a longtime friend who had traveled with Mrs. Boyd.

Her husband, John Boyd was blind when they married in 1918 and she became his 'eyes' during his college and law school studies at Drake. They spent months studying European history before an extended trip abroad in 1930. John Boyd died in 1933 at the age of 43.

She was a teacher in the Des Moines schools for 10 years and a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Mus Sorority Red Cross, the American Association of University Professors and the First Christian Church.

Mrs. Boyd, a resident of Heather Manor in Des Moines, died there. Graveside services were at the IOOF Cemetery in Brooklyn.

She is survived by a sister, Mabel Iowa Robbins of Des Moines, who was a teacher at Lincoln High School, and several nieces and nephews.