

## SOROR CAMILLE EVELLA KING (JONES) JEFFERS



Charter Member, Soror Camille Evella KING (Jones) Jeffers was born August 12, 1912, in Chicago, to Bertha G. Thompson & and Edward King of 6357 Langley Ave. Per the March 25, 1944, *Chicago Defender* she graduated from Hyde Park HS. She was one of 9 African-American UIUC freshmen March 13, 1932, the *Chicago Defender* cited for outstanding grades: a 4.5 GPA qualified her for initiation into Alpha Lambda Delta, Freshman scholastic honorary society. Page 399 of the 1932 *Illio*; lists her among those whose pictures are missing. Cook County Marriage Records show, Camille Evella King married Richard F. Jones of Chicago August 31, 1933. Page 604 of the June 15, 1934, minutes of the UIUC Board of Trustees, states she got a B.A. degree on June 11, 1934. The *Defender* noted in 1937, she also obtained

a certificate from the New York School of Social Work, (formerly, Columbia University School of Social Work). Both the USO and the Red Cross were reluctant to have African-American volunteers in their social facilities, even those serving colored troops. Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune interceded to ensure Negro USO and Red Cross volunteers were able to serve Negro troops. Soror King is the second from the left in the Black dress after lunching with Mrs. Bethune, WAC's, nurses, and others. Support organizations organized by Mrs. Bethune were named after prominent African-American women including Maude Bousfield, the AKA for whom the UIUC dormitory is named. In her book, ***Double Victory: How African-American Women Broke Race and Gender Barriers to Help Win World War II***, Author Cheryl Mullenbach states, "Camille King Jones of Chicago was always cheerful and endeared herself to the soldiers by participating in any club activities with a smile and a friendly word. Her attractive personality earned her recognition as the 'unofficial sweetheart of all the colored soldiers' who came to London;" Per the December 25, 1943, *Pittsburgh Courier*, Camille Jones volunteered at the Liberty Red Cross Club in London. The November 28, 1959, issue of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, Reporter Trezzvant W. Anderson, said,

"... seeing Miss Camille Jones ... brought the biggest thrill ... thousands of World War II GI's who idolized this mighty wonderful lady ... is now teaching at Clark College in Atlanta, ... you will remember her as the most popular of all the Negro Red Cross workers ... during World War II. She was the sweetheart of the GI's, ... and, fellas, she's looking just grand, like always."

Page 9 of the Clark College Bulletin 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Clark College Catalogue (1959-1960) confirms that Camille King Jeffers was an English Instructor that academic year; her credentials include B.A. University of Illinois; New York School of Social Work, 1937; and Student at Atlanta University in 1958.

New York marriage records show Camille K. Jones and Lance Jeffers obtained a marriage license on April 30, 1948. According to p. 225 of ***The Concise Oxford Companion to African American Literature*** (William L. Andrews, Frances Smith Foster, Trudier Harris), Jeffers was born in 1919 in Fremont, NB. He and Camille met in London and were married after he finished his Army stint. They had one son, Lance F. Jeffers, Jr. The two of them copyrighted two unpublished musical arrangements, "No Love Like Ours" and "On My Way." He died in 1985. Georgia Death Records and the U.S. Social Security Death Index confirm she died December 9, 1983, in Georgia.

Her book, ***Living Poor***, includes the following summary of her background:

Mrs. Camille Jeffers, Associate Professor in the School of Social Work at Atlanta University, received her bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois, a certificate from the New York School of Social Work, and her MSW degree from Atlanta University. She developed a special student field instruction unit in a public housing project for the U.S. Children's Bureau. Her background includes social work in public and private agencies in New York, work with the blind, aged, dependent, and delinquent children, the armed forces, merchant seamen, trade unionists, displaced persons, and minority groups. Her experience included service on the Intergroup Committee on New York Public Schools while she was employed by the Urban League of Greater New York.

In addition to ***Living Poor***, she wrote, ***Three Generations: Case Materials in Low Income Urban Living***, and ***Some Perspectives on Child-Rearing Practices Among Low Income Families***.

