

in every way. Then came a day when it was acknowledged that Domestic Economy, as it was then called, had won a place for itself, had come to stay and deserved more room and better quarters, so it was promoted to South Hall. Then the College dinners had to be abandoned, but numerous orders for bread, pastry and salads continued to be filled.

One of, indeed the chief, of rewards for the strenuous work of those early years, has been the numerous letters from married graduates expressing gratitude for the instruction given. One, in particular, from a graduate and post-graduate, a remarkably intellectual woman, pleased me much. The writer said she felt, when required to go into the class in her Senior year, that the time was going to be wasted, but that now, being a housekeeper, she realized that no year's work had been more profitable than the year in Domestic Economy. One enthusiastic girl declared, after a successful lesson in desserts, that when she was married she was going to live on cream-puffs and lemon jelly, but when she actually had a home of her own, wrote that she had come to the conclusion that, after all, bread and butter and properly broiled beef steak were better for a steady diet, and that her husband was glad she knew how to prepare both in first class style.

It rejoices me to know that from these primitive beginnings, a fully equipped and well manned department was developed. I offer my congratulations to all concerned in the opening of the new building, and wish for the Department a most useful and prosperous career.--(June 1912, Alumnus.)

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The Early Days of Domestic Science at I. S. C.

By Mary B. Welch. 1891-1923

When a Department of Domestic Economy was first decided upon by the Board of Trustees, it became necessary to find a teacher to take charge of it. There were no schools of the kind proposed anywhere, no text-books, no trained teachers. So the Board was fairly forced to begin the experiment with such management as could be secured at home. Someone suggested my name and a committee was sent to offer me the position. With fear and trembling I finally decided to try, after telling the committee frankly that I was without experience in that sort of teaching, that there were no established precedents to guide me and no classified courses for me to follow.

Then began a search for teachers or a school where instruction could be had. We learned that Miss Juliet Corson had opened a School of Cookery in New York, and thither I took my way the winter previous to the opening of the course at Ames. The following winter vacation found me at the South Kensington School of Cookery in London, but in neither place could be secured any systematic, progressive course of study or any breadth of outlook. Many amusing incidents of that London experience might be told. The only object of the school there was to train cooks for service. It was incomprehensible to the English mind that a woman, apparently a lady, whose husband was, as my letters of introduction proved, at the head of an important institution of learning, should be anxious either to learn or to teach cooking. The question was often asked me what family I was engaged to work for when I received my certificate. But, after all, what did that matter? At the end of three months' genuine drudgery, a certificate was conferred, which ought to have been framed and hung in the College Museum.

The work at the College began in two small basement rooms adjoining the dining room of the old Main Building. The plan was to make the work as practical as possible, which was fortunate for the teacher who had few pet theories but much actual experience in housekeeping. General Geddes, the college steward, was persuaded to measure out material for a dinner for one table in the dining room each day, the exact quality, and, as nearly as possible the exact quantity used in the College Kitchen, the class to prepare and serve it under the instruction of the teacher. It was an ambitious way to begin, but it interested the class, gave them a definite purpose in their work and more than pleased the students who dined at the table selected. The cooking was done on a Charter Oak stove. No gas or electric appliances, or aluminum utensils were then available. This was the Freshman class course. Bread, salads, desert, cake, etc., were taught in the more advanced classes. Orders were secured from the Faculty families for bread and cake, and the classes, on occasion, prepared refreshments for special gatherings as they were ordered. The College family was much smaller then than now, so these things were feasible. Everyone was interested in the new experiment and willing to help