

1937

A Handful of Flour

Marie Larson
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Larson, Marie (1937) "A Handful of Flour," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 17 : No. 4 , Article 2.
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol17/iss4/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.



A Handful of Flour

By Marie Larson

"WITH electricity at her service, woman's brain will change and achieve new capabilities," Thomas Edison predicted 25 years ago. But it was not the introduction of electricity alone that revolutionized household routine.

Less than 15 years ago the housewife used the kitchen teacup as a baking measure. It was not until then that manufacturers offered a list of tested and approved measuring cups and spoons.

Commercial food canning did not appear until early in the twentieth century. As for all innovations some frowned upon it because they claimed it would make mother's cooking a lost art and the home not what it used to be.

The sealed package belongs to the same era as canning. The public immediately and enthusiastically accepted them and the unsealed packages sold at a great disadvantage compared with those that were sealed.

More extensive knowledge of nutrition changed our eating habits. Before the close of the last century, thirteen courses had definitely become a thing of the past; the trend was toward simpler meals, simpler entertaining.

No more must women be advised "to wear a mop cap that completely covers the head" as a protection against dust while cleaning. Marvelous new cleaning devices have entirely eliminated such a precaution.

Only within the last 20 years has the convenient modern electric iron been available. The history of the evolution of ironing from the use of flat stones and wooden mallets of primitive times up to the electric ironers of the last century is long and absorbing.

Articles on laundering in the 80's recommended black pepper and ox gall for "setting" fugitive colors in cottons and linens. Today we expect manufacturers to give us fast colors and, in addition, to pre-shrink our ready-made garments.

As Edison predicted, women did take advantage of increased leisure and they have developed new capabilities which increased their efficiency as homemakers.

Business heads have realized that the woman in the home has as her responsibility 80 percent of the household purchasing and they have sensed the importance of making a direct appeal to her. A large percent of home economists in business are married.

Home Economics has exerted a tremendous influence in restaurants and cafeterias. They have made great strides in the past five years in modernizing their business in every possible way. This trend is due to new eating habits of the people formed through home economics departments of magazines, newspapers and utility companies. These have shown owners need for complete revision of menus giving special attention to simpler, well-balanced, home cooked foods, with vegetables and salads occupying a prominent place.

Innovations have also been made by owners of restaurants and tea rooms for creating pleasant atmosphere in the kitchen and dining rooms and infinite care is being exercised in the selection, preparation, and serving of the food.

Advertisers, who formerly considered home economists as unreasonable and unreasoning enemies to their advertising copy, have now united with them to gain a fair deal for both business and the consumer. The President of the National Home Economics Association was recently invited to tell the Association of National Advertisers what home economists think business can do to remove consumer's suspicion. Now increasing numbers of journalistically trained home economists are employed in the advertising department of various business firms.

All progressive editors are aware of the fact that the choice of newspapers and magazines is invariably the respon-

sibility of the women. They make a direct appeal to them through their household departments.

Home Economics was early accepted as an integral part of the nation's social service program. It is the home economist who advises workers and clients regarding food allowances, budgeting of food incomes and food preparation.

Home economists have also found for themselves a definite place in the nation's recent recovery program. They are employed in federal work for rural electrification as carried on by both the Tennessee Valley Authority and the more recent Rural Electrification Administration.

Research and participation in government projects showed the great need and opportunity for home economists in the Federal Housing Administration. They constitute the group best fitted to see housing and housing costs in relation to other standards and costs of family living.

Under the recent Social Security Act are provisions for the extension and improvement of material and child services in rural areas and regions of severe economic stress. This opens a new field for the home economist. It is she also who budgets standards for aid to dependent children and standards for care of children in foster homes and institutions.

A household training course for young women on relief was given them under the W. P. A. to equip them to hold jobs in private employment. Home economics educators were on the teaching staff.

Yes, woman has been liberated from the drudgery of the past, and it is inevitable that science will continue to add to the efficiency of accomplishing her menial tasks.

