1939

Biography of a Home Economist

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Iowa State College

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Biography of a Home Economist

DOROTHY COOLEY THOMPSON, ’25, now “Mary Martensen” of the Chicago Herald American, came under the benign influence of the journalism department after her graduation.

In relating her post-graduate experience, she says, “I feel very proud of the fact that I was the first Iowa State graduate to be assistant bulletin editor under Mr. F. W. Beckman, head of the Journalism Department at that time.”

Mrs. Thompson’s professional debut in foods was made in 1928 in field work for General Foods Corporation, where she managed food shows and cooking schools.

In commenting on her Chicago newspaper work, Mrs. Thompson said when she started to write food copy for the Chicago Daily News in 1935, she had learned that chocolate eclairs and cucumber hollandaise weren’t especially important to most women, but that good pie crust and planning three meals out of a 4 pound roast were.

Mrs. Thompson recently joined the staff of the Chicago Herald American, where seven women under her supervision write copy for seven issues of the paper each week. She answers from 300 to 400 letters a day, takes care of countless telephone calls, gives a daily foods demonstration for women’s club groups, tests recipes, prepares special recipe leaflets and in other ways makes her department a service to readers. “It’s all part of my job,” she says.

In private life, her home hobby is cooking for her husband, Louis Thompson, ’27.

—Gaynold Carroll

Application Letters—

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suading the employer to suggest an interview. Tell where your credentials may be secured or give the names of references. Do not list references unless you have first secured permission. This is common courtesy, and the replies that are sent will be more helpful. Never ask an employer to answer by return mail.

The second method, the short letter attached to the application form, is more difficult to write, but it is preferred by many employers. It permits originality and conveys the personality of the writer more convincingly. Before attempting to write this kind of a letter, get all the information you can about the company, study the requirements of the job, and then match yourself to fit them.

After you have listed all of the qualifications you possess which you think are important for the particular job, try different ways of expressing yourself to show both your preparation for and your interest in the work.

The application form which accompanies the letter presents in tabulation your training, experience and the names and addresses of references. Here again, if you have not had actual experience, describe specific courses which may be considered the equivalent of experience. State in detail the part you have taken in campus activities and list any instances which prove your ability to work with others.

The Iowa Homemaker