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Introducing The Artist

The Iowa Homemaker

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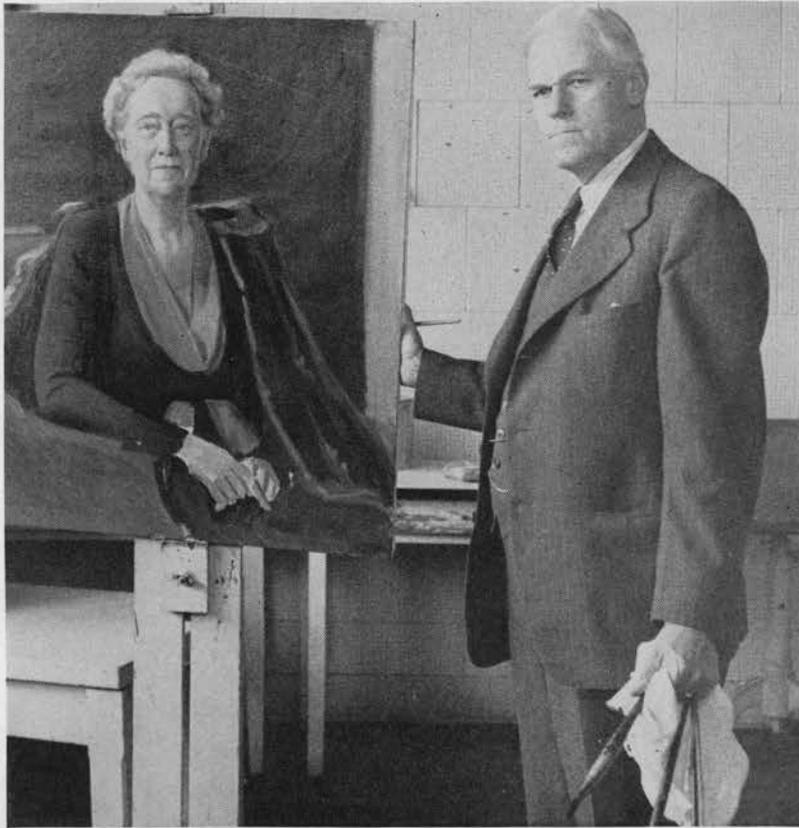


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Introducing The Artist

NO STRANGER to Iowa State is the artist who in October completed the portrait of Dean Genevieve Fisher. Frank I. Johnson, of Rockford, Ill., found his first Iowa State subject in the late Dr. Raymond A. Pearson, former president of the college.

Painting began as a hobby for this native Midwesterner, a furniture designer by profession; yet it is a hobby which he has turned to good account now that mass production and standardization have reduced the demand for original designers in the furniture industry. His portraits hang in the halls of the University of Chicago; Stephens College, Columbia, Mo.; Aurora College, Aurora, Ill., and various high schools throughout the nation.

Mr. Johnson began to paint at the age of 8; he never had to "learn" to draw. At 17 he completed his first portrait from life, a little watercolor of his mother. His family has remained a favorite subject; a portrait of his wife took second prize at the Chicago Galleries' exhibit in 1941. Both his wife and daughter have been painted often, although the latter has made a poor model, he reports, for she doesn't like to sit still.

As a young man Mr. Johnson planned to be an artist, but a reception at the Art Institute in Chicago altered his choice of a career. There he met the great and near-great among the artists of the time and was dismayed to find them, in his opinion, "a bunch of freaks."

Reluctant to be classed with men who wore pointed Van Dyke beards, long hair like Buffalo Bill's or hair

parted in the middle and combed over the ears, Mr. Johnson became a furniture designer. Later he studied at the Art Institute, yet until recently painting served only as a hobby.

An active participant in Chicago exhibitions, Mr. Johnson took second prize at the Swedish Club there in 1941, in addition to his Chicago Galleries award later that year.

As an artist, Mr. Johnson is a traditionalist and considers a good likeness essential to the best portrait painting. Among modern artists he admires the work of John Singer Sargent, Anders Zorn, Sorolla, Louis Betts and John Johansen. Zorn especially wins the Illinois artist's praises for the vibrant reality of his portraits. Mr. Johnson uses paint liberally and works rapidly; the prize-winning portrait of his wife was completed in three sittings of 1½ hours each.

The artist's only daughter also was distracted from a career in art. After attending a junior college, she studied costume design at the Academy of Fine Arts, Chicago, but marriage put a temporary end to her professional ambitions. Mr. Johnson attended Beloit College, Beloit, Wis.

Mr. Johnson's versatility is displayed in other fields than painting. Both vocal and instrumental music claim much of his spare time and his friends have branded him a bookworm. His profession is reflected in his collection of books about furniture, which is recognized as one of the finest private libraries on the subject in the United States.



Adding to the beauty of the campus, this pool, in front of the Home Economics Building, was dedicated during Veishea in 1942; the figures were done by Christian Peterson, sculptor in residence at Iowa State

HOME economics education for women at Iowa State began in 1872 when Mrs. Mary B. Welch, wife of the president of the college, inaugurated a program known as Domestic Economy.

Mrs. Welch sought subject matter for the new course by attending a school of cookery in New York, N. Y. Not satisfied with this, she attended the South Kensington Cookery School in London, Eng., where she found young women being trained for service in wealthy homes. In a letter concerning her experiences there she says, "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?"

The founder of the home economics movement at Iowa State was a real pioneer. Her course consisted of housekeeping lectures to juniors, held in two small rooms in Old Main, the first building on the campus. There were no laboratories. The women enrolled in the courses received practical experience by serving 2½ hours daily in college buildings. The work of each student was rotated to include experience in the dining room, kitchen, bakery and laundry.

In 1884 the department was moved to two small dark basement rooms in South Hall, southeast of the present site of the campanile. By the next year the entire building was used by the rapidly expanding department. Mrs. Ewing, the teacher in charge, was allowed \$400 to furnish it. Two years later a kitchen in Old Main was provided for the use of cooking classes. This room was 12 feet by 15 feet with one window. It was probably the first laboratory of its kind equipped by any college.

A background of chemistry was soon found to be invaluable for the subjects included in the new curriculum and a course in domestic chemistry was added to the work in foods. Meal planning and institution management had their beginnings here, too, for fresh-



Students in a textiles class utilize the excellent clothing laboratories which developed from the first sewing room in North Hall

man women prepared the noon meal for one table in the dining hall where students and faculty ate. Physics and other basic sciences also were added to afford a technical background.

At the turn of the century widespread interest in giving home economics training to high school girls,