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## Iowa State Celebrates 90 Years of Progress

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*The present Home Economics Building was built under the supervision of Anna Richardson*

Iowa State Celebrates

# 90 Years of Progress

*Pres. Charles E. Friley has announced that Iowa State will observe on March 22 the 90th anniversary of its founding. Nancy Baker reviews the growth of courses for women at the college since the first day in 1869*

**H**OMEMAKING lectures on cooking, home furnishing, care of the sick and sewing made up the first courses in science with practice for women. From this start came today's Division of Home Economics.

Visions of a new education became a reality on March 22, 1858, when a bill was passed "providing the establishment of a state agricultural college and farm, which would be connected with the active agricultural interests of the state."

When the doors of the college opened on March 17, 1869, 36 women bravely enrolled for a course in General Science. President A. S. Welch, in an address made on the opening day, emphasized that the college would promote two educational reforms—the withdrawal of the ancient classics from the place of honor which they had held and the liberal substitution of natural sciences. The other was the free admission of young women, on equal terms with young men, to all privileges which the institution could bestow.

Iowa law and the Board of Trustees insisted that every student perform 2 to 3 hours of manual labor each day. Two women were placed under the supervision of a matron who arranged work in the dining room, kitchen, laundry and bakery. This practical experience paved the way for the 4-year "ladies course" which developed in 1871.

## *Mrs. Welch Supervises*

Women had been attending Iowa State for 5 years when, in 1872, Mrs. Mary Beaumont Welch, wife of the first president, was asked by the Board of Trustees to take charge of a course in domestic economy.

Mrs. Welch began a series of lectures for juniors in two basement rooms of Old Main. This was the first course in home economics at any land-grant college in the country and was a part of the Division of Science as Related to Industries.

Mrs. Welch pioneered in the practical utility of extension work and received among other invitations,

one to conduct a six-course lesson in cookery for a class of 60 Des Moines women. In 1881 the Department of Domestic Economy moved to two small basement rooms in South Hall, a brick building which stood south of the Campanile.

Under Mrs. Emma P. Ewing's administration the 2-year domestic economy course was replaced by a 4-year course and a graduate program was adopted. The department took possession of all of South Hall. Cooking classes moved into Old Main kitchen, where meal planning and institution management classes were conducted.

## *Becomes Separate Division*

Home economics became a separate division in 1913 with Catherine MacKay as acting dean. In 1914, her official title became Dean MacKay. The 1919-1920 catalog carried a footnote to the effect that Iowa State had been approved by the state and federal boards for the training of vocational teachers in home economics. The first practice home management house opened in downtown Ames.

The first issue of the Iowa Homemaker appeared in Edna Wall's 1921-1922 term. The college schedule was revised to run on the quarter system rather than on a semester basis.

In the fall of 1944 Dr. P. Mabel Nelson became the fourth dean of home economics. A member of the faculty since 1923, she was head of the Department of Foods and Nutrition.

To date 6,489 bachelor of science degrees, 763 advanced degrees, and 23 doctor's degrees have been awarded. Students may major in Applied Art, Child Development, Foods and Nutrition, Home Economics Education, Home Management, Household Equipment, Institution Management, Technical Journalism and Textiles and Clothing. The division sponsors a radio homemaking program, placement program, winter short courses, and works cooperatively with the extension service.