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The Evolution of Home Economics at Iowa State IV. Activities: Social and Otherwise

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I MIGHT write volumes on the social life of the home economics students in the past, indeed I probably shall, so let us not tarry on the outskirts of this delightful territory. Let us start our exploration immediately and unearth the startling and the interesting, for there are both.

I mean to begin with that well known social function, the Junior Trot. We have, all of us, speculated at more or less length on the appropriateness, the where and the why of the trot. Perhaps you have concluded as I did, that its success as an actual trot rests wholly on the type of dancing at the time and that the students might take on the outskirts there are both.

The name Junior Trot is a college tradition and the function originally, if you will believe me, had nothing whatever to do with dancing. Indeed the trot of 1888 was held on the last full Saturday as one of the special functions of that year's graduation.

It might not come amiss to mention in this connection that the school year up until 1890 began in February and graduation exercises occurred in November at the close of the year's work. The reason for this was twofold. First, the agricultural students had no laboratories excepting the open fields and it was necessary to work when these laboratories were well stocked with material in the shape of growing crops. Also most of the students were self-supporting and since the winter months offered the highest salaries to those who wished to teach, these three months were reserved for vacation in order that the students might take advantage of the higher salaries and the many demands for teachers.

And now to return to the Junior Trot, as was. It was a day of celebration and of general upheaval where rules were concerned. For instance, ordinarily students did not go off the campus without special permission. This ban was lifted for the Junior Trot and in the words of the first country-town editor, "A good time was had by all." Couples jointly or independently jaunted off, some to Ames, some to the woods, some—well, the author was so fortunate as to discover one who admitted that they, (oh saving word) walked to Ontario one Junior Trot day, which was then but a country store and a house or two, purchased a bag of cocks' toes and returned home in triumph over their unaccompanied freedom.

Now it is evening, we shall say about 7:30 o'clock. Those who explored the woods have returned, likewise those who went to Ontario, all the girls having allowed enough margin of time to put on a fresh "neck ribbon" or the new challis dress. The boys began to come at Old Main for their—tut! tut! Who said "dates"—engagements if you please.

Oh, I see, you are puzzling over that "boys arrived at Old Main." I told you once that the boys and girls all lived at Old Main? Well, so they did, but when a gentleman called for a lady in those days he came out the back door of Old Main and went around to the front steps, where the lady in particular, on the look out, went to meet him. The boys at this time were not allowed to go in the front entrance. On returning from the "engagement" they parted, as reluctantly as now, we suppose, at the front steps and he went calmly around to the rear door and up stairs to his room.

Well, the engagements are arriving and walking boldly in at the front door and more than likely whisking up the girls stairway even as now. The rules really were upset you see. When the proper challis dress appears, as punctually as they usually do, The Junior Trot had really begun.

Perhaps I should have told you that the affair was given by the Juniors to the seniors. Junior girls asked senior men, junior men asked senior girls, and all junior men not fortunate enough to go early and avoid the rush had back, then as now, on freshmen and sophomores for even then the supply of girls did not begin to meet the demand.

Now for the Trot. The young people start out in mass, couple by couple, and the Junior Trot wends its way to the Kappa Sigma house. Who said "What for?" Why, that was the home of President Chamberlain in 1888. He meets the merry mob, gives an appropriate little speech and then invites them in to refreshments. Sometimes he has popcorn and apples, but whatever the refreshments are, the trot does not leave until they are entirely exhausted—true sons of Iowa State!

Then a "right about face," the trot is off again to another home and so they continue until every entertaining faculty member has been visited.

"You see at last the why and wherefor of the trot. Except for this exercise in between, not even a home economics student could have survived the many feasts. Another interesting evolution in the social life of home economics students is that of the "Prep-Soph," which, like the Junior Trot, has evolved, or devolved as you will, into a dancing party. You would be surprised could you have witnessed the first "Prep-Soph," indeed you might have dismayed unless you were Irish.

For you see the Prep-Soph was in the beginning a fight, a real fight with a bonfire of clothes and doughnuts, sometimes it is pop corn and apples, but whatever the refreshments are, the trot does not leave until they are entirely exhausted—true sons of Iowa State!

You see it was this way. Every year the sophomores picked on the freshmen and the freshmen did not like it. They were as peculiar then as now, you see. During the course of the first few weeks the freshmen had ample time to bring themselves into the lime-light thru lack of fight, thru excess of it or thru other distinguishing and individual characteristics. It was not long until those there were, or were not.

Then the sophomores, the miserable rascals, got together with cunning, skill and deviltry and those most artistically inclined produced a cartoon, a scandalous insulting instrument in which every freshman was depicted with all his glaring defects, physical, mental and spiritual hopelessly exposed and intentionally exaggerated!

This was not all. The sophomores framed the scurrilous document and hung

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Baskets Which Will Lead Long Useful Lives

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tensively. These are drawn on the chart. A sandwich tray is simple to make but yet allows for the principles of procedure for many structures. A long end of the reed is soaked until it is very easily bent. Dry reed is brittle, partially soaked it splits and cracks. A sponge is necessary to keep it damp at all times. The long end taken is shaved to a point and flattened on one side for the start. If the basket is to be round then the starter of reed is pressed tightly into a circle.

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