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THE PROGRESS OF HOME ECONOMICS SINCE THE FOUNDING OF WINTHROP COLLEGE

By J. Strom Thurmond

Madam Chairman, Ladies and Gentleman:

It is a great pleasure to me to be at Winthrop College on this auspicious occasion, and I deem it an honor to have a small part on the splendid program arranged by the Home Economics Department. Having served as trustee of this excellent institution for two years, and ever holding an abiding interest in its progress and welfare, I am proud to return here again.

The Subject assigned me, "The Progress of Home Economics since the Founding of Winthrop College", is an extremely broad subject and covers so many different phases of Home Economics that one might elaborate on it at great length and then hardly get well into the subject: However, only the progress of Home Economics teaching at Winthrop College and in the Public Schools of the State will be considered in this treatise. Some of the denominational colleges in South Carolina have done creditable work in Home Economics, but Winthrop College is the officially designated teacher-training institution for Home Economics in this State, and therefore the progress at no other college will be considered here.

Teaching, extension and research are the three arms of many professional subjects and services. Home Economics teaching, and extension work in the subject, have been offered at Winthrop for many years, but research in Home Economics was not added until 1926. Miss Lonny L. Landrum is State Agent for home demonstration work, and Miss Ida Moser and Miss Mary E. Fraser are Research specialists in Home Economics. Extension work with girls and women was first started in South Carolina (Aiken County). One of the newest phases of Home Economics in the State is the work done by the Farm Security Administration under Miss Margaret McArt as director. The departments of Extension, Research and Farm Security, all of which operate under different federal laws, are doing magnificent work, but only the teaching phase of
Home Economics will be considered on this occasion.

Home Economics teaching is classed as a vocational subject, and the program of vocational education in the United States has developed in conformity with the provisions of the Smith-Hughes Act, approved February 23, 1917, as a cooperative enterprise between the States and the Federal Government. Congress recognized the need for further development of vocational education, and from time to time passed acts supplementary to the Smith-Hughes Act aforesaid. The first supplementary act was popularly known as the George-Reed Act, approved February 5, 1929. It authorized, on an increasing scale for a period of four years, appropriations for Agricultural and Home Economics education in addition to those made available by the said Smith-Hughes Act, and extended to the territories the benefits of federal aid for vocational education.

Shortly before the expiration of the George-Reed Act, Congress passed the George-Elkley Act, approved May 21, 1934, authorizing the appropriation of funds for a period of three years, sufficient not only to replace those that had been available under the George-Reed Act until its expiration but also to provide for increased aid for trade and industrial education. Then came the George-Deen Act, approved June 8, 1936, which authorized, on a permanent basis, increased appropriations to the States and territories for vocational education in the fields already aided, and, in addition, authorized appropriations for use in the field of the distributive occupations. So we see that vocational education, which includes Home Economics teaching in the colleges and high schools, is now on a permanent basis.

Since the founding of Winthrop College by that noble educator, Dr. David Bancroft Johnson, in 1896, in the City of Columbia, Home Economics subjects have been offered at this institution, although the name Home Economics was not adopted until a later date. In 1898 the college was transferred from the City of Columbia to Rock Hill, and the first catalogue was issued
the next year, 1896, and it listed the following courses in the
Domestic Science Department:

1. A Cooking school
2. A school for sewing, dressmaking and millinery.
3. Housekeeping.

The total college enrollment at that time was 335 students.
171 studied dressmaking and sewing, and Miss Lucy Dallet from
Drexel Institute was the teacher. 62 students studied cooking
and Miss Laura C. Hutchinson taught them. 3 certificates for
"Proficient in Dressmaking" were granted that year.

In 1897 a special nine months course in dressmaking was
offered. Cooking and sewing were classed as industrial studies,
and students selected their industrial studies, under the
president's direction, and with the approval, of the President. Horticulture,
Floriculture and Dairying were added to the curriculum that year.

In 1899 there were three teachers in the Domestic Science
Department, two of sewing and one of cooking. In 1901 the
Sewing and Dressmaking Department was changed to the Department
of Domestic Arts, and in 1902 cooking was changed to the
Department of Domestic Science.

Prior to 1904 more students had been instructed in sewing
than in cooking, but that year there were more students of
cooking than of sewing.

It is interesting to note that until 1906 only one day's
vacation was given at Christmas, but that year ten days were
allowed.

Since the General Assembly had now passed a law requiring
cooking as a regular course in the high schools of the State,
there was a big increase in 1907 in the number of students in
that course and also in the dressmaking and millinery courses...
It was not until 1919 that a practice home was provided for the
first time, in which all seniors in the college were required
for life in turn.
to live in turn for a brief period. It was not until 1911 that a degree was offered in this department, and that year a B. S. degree was offered in Household Arts, which embraced cooking and sewing; and the same degree was offered for Domestic Art alone, which was sewing; and also for Domestic Science alone, which was cooking. Prior to 1911 Domestic Art and Domestic Science were taught in the main building, but Tillman Hall was built that year and in 1912 it was used for the first time by the department. The seniors now entered the practice house in groups of eight and stayed eight days. They took charge of bees, poultry and gardens, in addition to household tasks. Prior to 1914 all freshmen studied sewing and all sophomores studied cooking the entire year.

In 1916 the name of the Domestic Science Department was changed to the Household Science Department, and in addition to the cooking courses, courses in house planning, home nursing, methods of teaching and dietetics were included. Domestic Art was very little changed in title. The Theory of Teaching and Textiles were additional courses. A third department was added in 1918 called the Home Demonstration Department, this possibly being the result of the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. Cooking was no longer a required subject, but sewing was still required of all freshmen. Courses in Home Management, Child Care, Practice Teaching and Methods of Teaching were all listed under Household Science as Home Economics.

For the first time there was established in 1922 a Department of Home Economics under one head with seven teachers. The Home Demonstration course had apparently been dropped entirely. The courses were called Foods and Clothing instead of Cooking and Sewing, and there were 21 courses listed under Home Economics Department, and only Home Economics seniors lived in it, and they in groups for a period of four weeks. From 1922 until 1934 there were few changes in the courses offered by the department, but there have been quite a number of changes since then. In 1934 the Nursing School was added. Methods of Student Teaching were
changed to the system now followed. In 1939 Institutional Management was added to the curriculum, and also the Home Economics Department entered its new building that year.

In 1920 there was only one graduate in Home Economics and one in Home Demonstration. In 1925 there were 25 graduates in Home Economics; in 1930, 35 graduates; in 1935, 61 graduates; and the number is steadily increasing as the years pass. There are enrolled this year in the Home Economics Department 510 students, which is almost a college in itself.

In the new Home Economics Building every activity of an expanding and developing Home Economics program is adequately provided for. It has well arranged suites of rooms that are designed to provide facilities for teacher-training and for instruction in foods and nutrition, clothing and textiles, consumer education, home management and child care, institutional management, marketing, interior decorating, social efficiency and graceful living, and certain arts and crafts. Different rooms of this building present a variety of floor and wall finishes, lighting fixtures, and modern equipment for use in homes of varying incomes, which in itself is an education for the students. Home-like atmosphere and the expression of beauty characterize the interior of this lovely building. The building itself should teach home making.

On the ground floor of the building are located the offices and laboratories of the Home Demonstration Extension Department and the Home Economics Research Department. Adjoining the Home Economics Building, and connected to it by a covered passageway, is the Nusery School, which is an essential phase of instruction in the department. It embodies the most acceptable modern ideas in both design and equipment, and is functionally planned for the activities it houses. The entire Home Economics plant cost $350,000 and is superior to any to be found South of the Potomac or East of the Mississippi.
The legislation providing for the same was enacted at the 1937 session of the General Assembly of this State, and the long hard struggle to pass the necessary act for the erection of these buildings is amply justified in the increased facilities with which this department of Winthrop is now provided.

The present Director of the Home Economics Department, Miss Sarah E. Cragwall, deserves much commendation for her untiring efforts in behalf of this department, and for the splendid piece of work she has done. She was a teacher in the department and left to become assistant State Supervisor of Home Economics, then returned as head of the department. She possesses charm, culture and refinement, and is the ideal person to preside over the department that has made such rapid progress under her guidance. There are 10 persons on the teaching staff of the department, all of whom are competent and well trained, holding degrees from outstanding colleges and universities, several having Doctor's Degrees from Columbia University, Chicago University and other fine institutions.

The Smith-Hughes Act, heretofore referred to, authorized an appropriation for teacher-training in Home Economics along with other subjects. Realizing that an effective program of teacher-training should serve both prospective teachers and teachers -in-service, and that the teacher-training institution should maintain contact with the field, so as to have first hand knowledge of existing conditions, check on the effectiveness of the teacher-training program by observing the teaching work of their graduates, and may extend the teacher-training program to teachers already in service, Miss Frances V. Williams was appointed in 1933 as Itinerant Teacher Trainer in this State. She is capable, energetic and progressive, and is performing well this important phase of the work.

Paralleling the great progress of Home Economics
at Winthrop College is the tremendous growth of Home Economics in the high schools of South Carolina. The Smith Hughes Act, providing for the first federal grant for promotion of Home Economics was passed in 1917 as stated heretofore, and General Assembly of South Carolina accepted the terms of the act and provided its share of matching funds in 1913. In 1920 a State Supervisor of Home Economics was added to the staff of the State Department of Education to organize and promote a program in this State has made great strides under her supervision. When she began work in 1920 there were only 11 white Home Economics departments in the State with an enrollment of 317 pupils; 3 colored departments with an enrollment of 253 pupils. The same year, 3 white Home Economics teachers organized 7 evening classes with an enrollment of 106 adult students; 2 colored teachers organized 4 evening classes, enrolling 41 adults. The public schools offering the subject were devoting a 40 to 45 minute period to what was called cooking and sewing, once or twice a week. From this small starting point the work was promoted, and as time passed, schools began to realize the value of such a program, which later included many other activities that entered into a functioning home making program. The first decade showed much progress in getting programs established that would reach the objectives set up. Since the high school enrollment was larger in the 8th and 9th grades, a two year program was planned for the first two years of the high school period so as to reach many girls before they dropped out. By 1930 the number of white schools offering Home Economics increased to 162 and the enrollment to 7,700; and the number of colored schools to 74 with an enrollment of 5,000. The home activity program reached approximately 2,800 homes and evening classes enrolled 1,247 white adults and 300 colored adults. The program continued to
broaden, and at that time included not only cooking and sewing but also the understanding of living and making a contribution to the family, the assisting with children, learning personal improvement, making the home more comfortable and understanding the problems and needs of the whole family.

Home Economics continued to become more popular as time passed, and by 1940 the number of white day schools offering the course had increased to 247, instructed by 302 teachers, with an enrollment of 21,000 girls receiving instruction daily. 120 of these schools, with large enrollments of rural girls, continue work through the summer months. In the colored day schools, the departments increased to 122, instructed by 137 teachers, with an enrollment of approximately 7,500 girls. The home activity program was increased and reached 30, 600 homes for whites and 7,500 homes for colored. In addition there were evening classes conducted for youth living in the resident centers of the N. Y. A., and approximately 1,500 of these were contacted.

The summer program offers opportunity for home participation in helping girls and women grow more food, conserve the food for winter use, and for improvement of the home. By coordination, the teachers of Agriculture and Home Economics, through community participation, have made possible canneries on school canny had to its credit approximately 10,000 cans of vegetables and fruits. This indicates a shift from efforts of the individual family, working along and alone, to a group basis of providing facilities which make possible, the attainment of a goal and greater enjoyment of living. During the summer Home Economics teachers have sponsored camps, financed and promoted by the Home Economics girls through the Junior Homemakers activities, and these teacher have also aided in providing other forms of recreation.

A worthy goal in Home Economics would be to reach, or place within reach of, all of the girls and their homes a program that will help the family better provide sufficient
food and clothing, adequate shelter, and in addition one that will help all ages, of all interests, for all times, enjoy a useful life of health and happiness.

Those interested in Home Economics in this State are proud that Dr. Shelton Phelps, President of Winthrop College, and Honorable James H. Hope, State Superintendent of Education in South Carolina, are in key positions to promote this work, since both of these able and progressive educators are intensely interested in Home Economics.

The future for Home Economics is bright. When Home Economics was first introduced into the public schools it was done as an experiment and very little money was spent for equipment. Some room in the basement, poorly lighted, poorly ventilated and poorly equipped, was selected for the teaching of this course. Probably no course in the school has undergone greater changes. The modern school of today has Home Economics on the top floor, with bright sunny rooms and a number of them. Instead of a department it is now an apartment, usually consisting of a living room and a dining room, or the two combined, a kitchen and bath, so that the girls may learn by doing, working together in groups. One group may be cooking, one sewing, one redecorating a room another studying child care and possibly still another studying consumer education or budgeting. Considering the rapid progress Home Economics has made, and its importance to human welfare and happiness, we are lead to believe that the future of this course is most promising, and that there is much in store for those who pursue it. Home Economics is not a subject to learned in school and forgotten out of school, but is on that will function in the lives of the students.

Who among us has not seen a friend whose appearance would result in his failure to secure a position? Whose table manners
would deprive him of a valued opportunity? Who has not seen stout people under nourished? Houses that are not homes? Incomes devoted to wants rather than to needs? Man's helplessness for lack of first aid? These all too common problems can be easily solved. Home Economics holds the key.

It is probable that in the near future Home Economics will be a required rather than elective course of study. It is also probable that Home Economics instruction will begin in lower Grade levels than at present, since so many pupils drop out of school prior to reaching the grades in which it is now taught. Probably no course better prepares our youth to make suitable adjustment to the changing economic and social order of the future. Probably no course instills in students more independence of thought and action. Probably no course better prepares women for increased earning power. Probably no course more impressively inculcates in youth the spirit of cooperation and attainment of goals by group action. Probably no course will play a more important role in the defense of our country, in time of peace or in time of war. Probably no course more effectively instills in our youth the love of home life and the value of a good home. Probably no course better trains on to enjoy a fuller, richer life. Probably no course promotes to a greater extent health and happiness. By pursuing Home Economics, the girls of today will be better citizens of tomorrow.

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