

A STUDY OF OCCUPATIONS FOLLOWED BY
HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION GRADUATES FROM
OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

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By

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INTRODUCTION

The educational system, in a world struggling for peace, is trying to adjust its program in an effort to help bring about freedom from strife. It is an accepted fact that the world is in a period of transition, the effects of which present many educational problems. One of the most serious of these is the teacher shortage, which is acute in the field of home economics as well as in other educational fields. It is this particular problem that brought about this study of occupations followed by graduates from the educational field of home economics. It is assumed that since there is a teacher shortage, the women who trained to be teachers and leaders in home economics education are not following the occupation for which they trained.

During the war and in these post-war days, schools of all levels have found themselves short of trained teachers. The Committee on Education of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in its "News and Cues" bulletin of February 15, 1947, calls attention to the following facts approved by the Chamber's Board of Directors on January 24, 1947: There have been 350,000 teachers who quit the profession during the war years, and of the 850,000 remaining, there are 110,000 who are unqualified on the basis of state standards for certification.¹ These unqualified teachers have been issued temporary emergency certificates.

Harold E. Stassen in his speech concerning "The Scandalous Plight of American Schools" states that,

¹"The Crisis in Education," The American City, LXII (April, 1947), p. 5.

In 1940 there was an enrollment of prospective teachers in colleges throughout the country of 160,000, being about the right amount for the resupply of teachers in the country. The latest available figures for last year show a drop to 65,000.²

The issuance of large numbers of emergency certificates, together with a decline in enrollment of prospective teachers, indicates what is happening to the progress of education in this country. Letitia Walsh points out that the field of home economics alone cannot start to meet the demands for home economists today, because agencies are planning to expand already established services and to add new programs requiring professional home economists. She also states that,

We all know that the number of college students now specializing in home economics is not sufficient for replacement in existing programs, much less additional ones.³

This has been of great concern to the home economics education research committee of the American Vocational Association for some time. The critical nature of the shortage was brought out when proposals for peacetime teaching programs were compared with the actual supply of home economics teachers. In the national meeting of the American Vocational Association of February, 1946, it was decided by the committee to concentrate on this problem in an endeavor to find the major reason for this acute shortage of teachers and leaders in the field of home economics. They set as their goal making

²Harold E. Stassen, "The Scandalous Plight of American Schools," Parent's Magazine, XXII (February, 1947), p. 133.

³Letitia Walsh, "Home Economics as Professional Education," Journal of Home Economics, XXXVII (December, 1946), 621.

a nation-wide research study of "Factors Affecting the Supply of Home Economics Teachers". It is hoped that some information will be found that will help in determining the cause of the teacher shortage in the educational field since it is not only a local problem but one faced by all educational systems throughout the nation. Because of the great need of more research, such as the American Vocational Association has started, this study on occupations pursued by home economics education graduates of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College was made.

The purpose of the study was to locate the graduates for a period of twenty years, and to find what occupations they now follow. In addition, the study will make available an up-to-date record of all home economics education graduates for the years 1926 through 1945. This record may be used as an aid for further studies or as a reference by school officials and those who are interested in contacting and employing trained home economics people. It is also hoped that as a result of this study some light will be thrown on a few questions which are being asked, such as: What has happened to the home economics education graduates? What occupations are they following? Why are they not following the occupations for which they were trained?

With drastic drops in enrollment of prospective teachers and with trained people leaving the educational field, the purpose of education is likely to fall short of its goals. This it cannot afford to do because of the great challenge that is before education today. This challenge is to help the people of the world attain a lasting peace through understanding, which can be accomplished only

by doing away with ignorance and selfishness. Educators recognize the fact that education should be our next powerful tool for promoting understanding, and that it must be for all people throughout the world, regardless of age, race or creed. The challenge lies before the educational system of the world, especially the system of the United States, because of the position held as a leading nation in world affairs.

George S. Counts in his book Education and the Promise of America reminds this nation of its right and duty to take the lead in the challenge of education for the welfare of man in a world struggling for peace. He says, "We have in our heritage the source of a great education. We have had unsurpassed faith in the worth and power of learning."⁴ Since colonial times the American people have nurtured this faith, and, believing in democracy, have said that the survival of free institutions requires an educated people. Faith and action of the people have built a comprehensive system of public schools, which has influenced the educational thought and practice of the world.

Counts also states that although the system has never reached perfection, "Our secondary schools and colleges enroll more young people than the secondary schools and colleges of all the rest of the world."⁵ The educational ladder of this nation, which reaches from the kindergarten to the graduate and professional schools of the university, has allowed educational opportunities for more people

⁴George S. Counts, Education and the Promise of America, p. 17.

⁵Ibid.

than all other countries. With this background and democratic ideal of education it is only proper that the United States should lead in this challenge to gain world peace through education.

The era into which this civilization is fast moving has been given the appropriate title "Atomic Age". It is this age for which all people must be educated. President Truman emphasizes the importance of educating for this age in a statement made to the patrons, students, and teachers of American schools during the twenty-sixth observance of the 1946 American Education Week. He asked that they meet the educational challenge by visiting their schools and giving serious thought to the theme selected for this year's observance on "Education for the Atomic Age". His statement, which all citizens should consider, is as follows:

Atomic energy can contribute immeasurably to man's welfare, or it can destroy civilization as we know it. Whether its powers shall be harnessed for good or for evil the adult citizen of the United States will in large measure decide. It is the task of education to bring about a realization of the issues at stake and to achieve international cooperation and peaceful progress in the atomic age.⁶

A challenge to save a civilization entering into this new age is one that seems almost too large to be accepted by people who have gone through two world wars and a major depression in the last three decades. Due to the periods of chaos, it is one that must be accepted, however, even more faithfully than the challenge that saved our nation from destruction during the period of war and depression. This challenge can be accomplished with the power-

⁶Harry S. Truman, "President's Statement on American Education Week," National Education Association Journal, XXXV, p. 502.

ful tool of education, which proved itself to be so forceful during the last war. The enemies used it for destruction; the allies, for defense. The leaders of the United States, as well as international leaders, have recognized its power; therefore, the nation that sets the pace will to a large degree determine the way education will be used. If the United States can help determine that education be used for building world peace, then it has contributed to the progress of civilization. This may take a long period of time to gain the purpose, but when accomplished there will be a firm foundation on which to build a lasting peace.

The people who are interested and concerned about the issue of the day are asking the question, "How can we use education to save a civilization?" Hutchins made this very clear when he gave the following statement:

Civilization can be saved only by a moral, intellectual, and spiritual revolution to match the scientific, technological, and economic revolution in which we are now living. If American education can contribute to a moral, intellectual, and spiritual revolution, then it offers a real hope of salvation to suffering humanity everywhere. If it cannot or will not contribute to this revolution, then it is irrelevant, and its fate is immaterial.⁷

Far-sighted leaders of educational organizations have already started plans for such a world-wide revolution. Such organization titles are now appearing every day as, "United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization," "World Organization of the Teaching Profession," and "International Association for Childhood Education." The general purpose of these organizations is to se-

⁷Robert M. Hutchins, "The Issues in Education," The Reference Shelf, XIX (1946), p. 265.

cure cooperation within the teaching profession, as well as between the general public and the schools throughout the world, and to set up a world-wide educational program that will do away with discrimination and allow for world security. If individuals would become more interested in world security instead of material security for themselves, and not fear the leadership of educational leaders, but work and study with them, the issue of today would soon be on its way out.

This brings to the educational field its first major problem, which is to get the people to see that only through world security can there be self-security. To solve this problem there must be trained teachers and leaders to promote education. As mentioned before, education is powerful, but it is only as powerful as it is used by the minds of men. Since man has the ability to use his mind, he should be taught to use it for building a civilization instead of destroying it. This is recognized by the author of the UNESCO, for in the preamble of the UNESCO constitution the philosophy is stated that "The government of the states parties to this constitution on behalf of their peoples declare that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed."⁸

The challenge before education today is surely showing up the weak points of the system. It has become a problem of concern to many, and is being put before the public as the educational crisis of our time. If this nation is to do its part in putting

⁸
"The Defenses of Peace," Document Relating to UNESCO, The UNESCO, Part I, The Department of State, p. 13.

education into effect for world peace it will have to strengthen its own weak points. "To fail to utilize this power for creative good is the greatest folly an individual, a community, a state, or a nation can commit."⁹ Some agencies, such as moving pictures, radio, and the press are helping in getting the causes of the crisis before the public. There are also many outstanding lecturers speaking throughout the nation on the crisis and the solution. Their talks carry the theme of education as the solution to the world issues of today.

The general opinion seems to be that the principal weaknesses fall into the following categories: first, the lack of cooperation within the many fields of education; second, the thumbs-down attitude of the general public toward the teaching profession; third, the lack of trained personnel in the educational system.

"Differences in philosophies of education and in their interpretation account for differences in practices."¹⁰ These differences seem to be the main reason for the lack of cooperation of educators. They have interpreted the purpose of education in the light of needs as they see them, and have disagreed with, or disregarded the viewpoints of, others. This has caused much conflict in the educational system. It has permitted much duplication of subject matter and confusion in the minds of students as they plan for advanced study. Some educators stress general education, others specialized education, while others are pointing out that

⁹"Education - a Mighty Force! Its Role in Our Future," The National Education Association of the United States (1946), p. 2.

¹⁰Ivol Spafford, Fundamentals in Teaching Home Economics, p. 13.

a combination of these is the correct way of fitting man for living in the society of today and tomorrow. The general trend today seems to be a combination, which would make for a well-rounded individual. As Spafford states,

The primary purpose of education in a democratic society should be to provide conditions for and to promote the continuous growth of the individual in all areas of living with a view to achieving and maintaining the democratic way of life.¹¹

It seems that until the leaders in the educational system manage to get their interpretations and methods on a common level, there will always be conflict that will retard progress. Harding makes the following statement about this situation:

The war has given American education a great historic opportunity. We shall kick it out the window unless we redefine the purposes of our colleges and universities so soundly and so clearly that the nation will understand, approve and zealously support them. For a century education has been the chief religion of the American people but today discontent and criticism abound. Catastrophe lies ahead unless we return to the fundamental purpose of educating our students, first as citizens and second as vocational specialists.¹²

Plato says that "The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life." That being true, it would indicate that educators must cooperate if the future depends on how a man's education is started. Cooperation is necessary because educators are working with the minds of men, and this is the determining factor that makes our future society. It should be realized that this ability to learn and think on the part of man

¹¹Spafford, op. cit.

¹²Harold F. Harding, "New Directions for Higher Learning," The Reference Shelf, XIX, p. 234.

is the greatest possession any man, nation or world could have for learning to live together. Spafford says that "Real education humanizes man. It does so, however, not by moulding them into unthinking acceptance of preestablished patterns, but by stimulating them to a continuous reconstruction of their outlook on life."¹³

Due to the attitude of the public toward the teaching profession, and the attractiveness of other occupations, many people have left or decided against the teaching profession. This is to be expected when many non-professional and non-skilled occupations pay higher salaries than do the professional ones. In an editorial entitled "The Crisis in Education, published in The New Republic for October 1946¹⁴ these facts were given: The average salaries of teachers in 1944 and 1945 were at least five hundred dollars less than the earnings in industry. The average annual earnings of the industrial workers increased 50% between 1940 and 1945 while salaries for teachers rose only 11%. Many have received the impression from these facts that for financial reasons only the teachers have left the educational field, but there are also other reasons that are just as influential as low salaries. Some of these reasons fall into the following categories: (1) Overcrowded classrooms caused by increased enrollment and teacher shortage; (2) Long hours due to extra-curricular activities; and (3) The lack of proper and sufficient equipment.

¹³Spafford, op. cit.

¹⁴"The Crisis in Education," The New Republic, CXV (October, 1946), p. 434.

The profession cannot afford to lose or fail to gain personnel for two reasons: First, as already mentioned, it will take trained teachers and leaders to build a world peace; second, because of the great demand for trained personnel that will be needed in the teaching profession to train others for the many occupations that are opening due to the expansion of business. Home economics has an important contribution to make to the general education of the people of the world. Hullfish says, "It is time that we gave thought to the problems of civilization, placing our special interests in the perspective of larger purposes."¹⁵

To do this, the field of home economics must do some thinking about its own needs if it is to contribute to the era by furnishing more trained teachers and leaders in the educational as well as in specialized fields. In order to do this, there must be an increase in enrollments of home economics students in the colleges. There must be an improved educational opportunity for students preparing for home economics professions and the development of a more responsible spirit in the graduates for the prepared occupation.

¹⁵Gordon Hullfish, "The Job Ahead in General Education," Journal of Home Economics (November, 1946), p. 573.

THE PROBLEM AND THE PROCEDURE

In the introduction of this study, it was brought out that the problem of the teacher shortage is of vital concern in all fields of education, not excluding home economics.

The exact reason for the shortage is not known, but educators have voiced several opinions as to the cause, which are revealed in recent educational literature. Since there is a teacher shortage in the home economics field, it is assumed that the graduates of this educational department are not following the profession for which they were trained. The reasons could be the following: (1) The graduates, with no intention of teaching, want only a general background in all areas of home economics, which they could get from the department of home economics education. (2) With this background they are prepared for homemaking and also have an occupational security if needed that specialized fields do not offer. (3) Attitudes and working conditions have not been favorable for holding them in the teaching profession. (4) Lack of professional recognition may have caused many to leave. (5) Some graduates prefer not to accept the responsibility. Since the graduates of the home economics education department had received training which prepared them for teachers and leaders, it was decided that they would be the logical group to contact in this study. It was felt that information received from them would give a more accurate and vivid picture of the teacher shortage problem that now exists in the field of home economics; therefore, to determine what occupations were followed by these trained people, the graduates

from the Department of Home Economics Education of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College were used.

A twenty-year period, 1926 through 1945, was decided upon in order to procure a broad perception of the study. Since the contacts would have to be made by mail a questionnaire, (Exhibit 1)¹ limited to one page, was prepared.

A careful study was made so that all information needed could be put on one page. The information requested was divided into three phases: (1) personal; (2) training and study; (3) occupations and reasons. The first eight questions were in relation to personal information such as change of name, marital status, dependents and addresses. The next group, nine through twelve, pertained to college training and advanced study done since graduation. The remaining questions had to do with the occupations followed and reason for remaining in or leaving the teaching profession.

The original questionnaire was checked by graduates, who were on the campus, such as faculty members and graduate students in the Division of Home Economics. Their criticism and suggestions were used in setting up the questionnaire in its final form.

As an aid to stimulating cooperation and quick response, a letter (Exhibit 2) signed by the Head of the Home Economics Education Department and a self-addressed, stamped envelope were enclosed with the questionnaires.

Having decided on the group to be contacted and the method to be used, the next problem was to obtain the names and addresses

¹Exhibits will be found in the Appendix.

of the graduates. For an accurate list of names of all home economics education graduates the commencement exercises for the twenty-year period were used. This list, which was obtained from the office of the Dean of Home Economics, was alphabetized by the year, and it was soon found that this order of names could not be used in the search for addresses; therefore, the names were recorded on cards and alphabetized in a systematic file. This made a working file that was used to check against the card files and list of graduates of different offices. There were several problems encountered as the search for addresses was started. First, there was no one office on the campus that had an up-to-date record of graduates. Second, it was soon found that some offices had information that others did not. Third, change of names, due to marriage, caused much cross-indexing in the files. This process was very time-consuming because of the many cards and lists that had to be gone through, and the several offices that had to be contacted to obtain information about the 606 graduates who, the commencement exercises revealed, had graduated in the twenty-year period. The most complete and accurate record on the campus was found in the office of the Former Students Association. Other records were found in the office of the Dean of Home Economics. Several other offices had information about the graduates while they were in college, but no current information. Since the Agricultural Extension Office employs home economics graduates as county home demonstration agents, supervisors, and specialists, their office was contacted for a list of its employees. A list was also obtained from the State Vocational Home Economics Education

Office of the vocational home economics teachers and supervisors. Miscellaneous reports of some came from college staff members and friends of the graduates.

As adequate addresses were found the letters were addressed for mailing, at which time the cards were numbered and filed in a new section. This kept an accurate count of the letters as they were mailed since they went out in groups as addresses were found. As the questionnaires returned, the cards were pulled and refiled in a third section, at which time a case number was given to the questionnaire and card. This made possible an exact count of the number of questionnaires received as they came in and also a quick method for locating an individual case either from the card index of the tabulation sheet. When all returns were in and cards refiled, the result was a file in three sections: Section One, cards of graduates with inadequate addresses; Section Two, cards of graduates that did not reply; and Section Three, cards of graduates who returned the questionnaire. Because of the many letters sent out, and the immediate tabulation of questionnaires as they were received this file in sections was devised as a scheme to prevent confusion and to keep a record of letters mailed and returned. When the last letters were mailed the file showed that of the 606 graduates, four were deceased and 198 addresses were inadequate for mailing, thus leaving a total of 404 letters mailed. When tabulation was closed the returns of the 404 letters mailed were as follows: 255 replies and forty-three returned unclaimed, of which one was stamped deceased, leaving 106 not replying at all. A record of the unclaimed letters was made on the cards and eventually filed

in the inadequate section. Information taken from the 255 questionnaires that were returned by the home economics education graduates revealed information that has made this an interesting study.

FINDINGS

The survey has revealed some interesting facts about the 255 home economics education graduates that were used in this study. These facts are discussed in the following pages with such findings as these appearing: (1) Number of graduates graduating each year of the twenty-year period; (2) Addresses and loss of trained personnel by permanent out-of-state addresses; (3) Marital status of graduates and its effect on the occupations followed; (4) Number of dependents of graduates; (5) A comparison of occupations prepared for to those now followed; (6) Types and numbers of certificates obtained as compared to those using them; (7) Number of years taught and number of graduates teaching these years; (8) List of reasons for remaining in or leaving the teaching profession.

The tables and charts used as illustrations show the exact number of statements made by the graduates to questions and remarks. Because of this, the totals do not always figure the exact number of 255 graduates, or 100%. All percentages are figured on the basis of 255 graduates; where there is overlapping of statements, these differences have been explained in the discussion.

The survey reveals an interesting picture as to the increase and decrease in the number of graduates for the twenty-year period. Figure 1 shows that there is a steady increase in the number graduating in the years 1926, 1927, and 1928. Year 1929, however, shows a drop of fourteen graduates, which is eight less than the year 1926, the first year of the study. In the next nine years the graduates held a steady number, with a variation of only sixteen

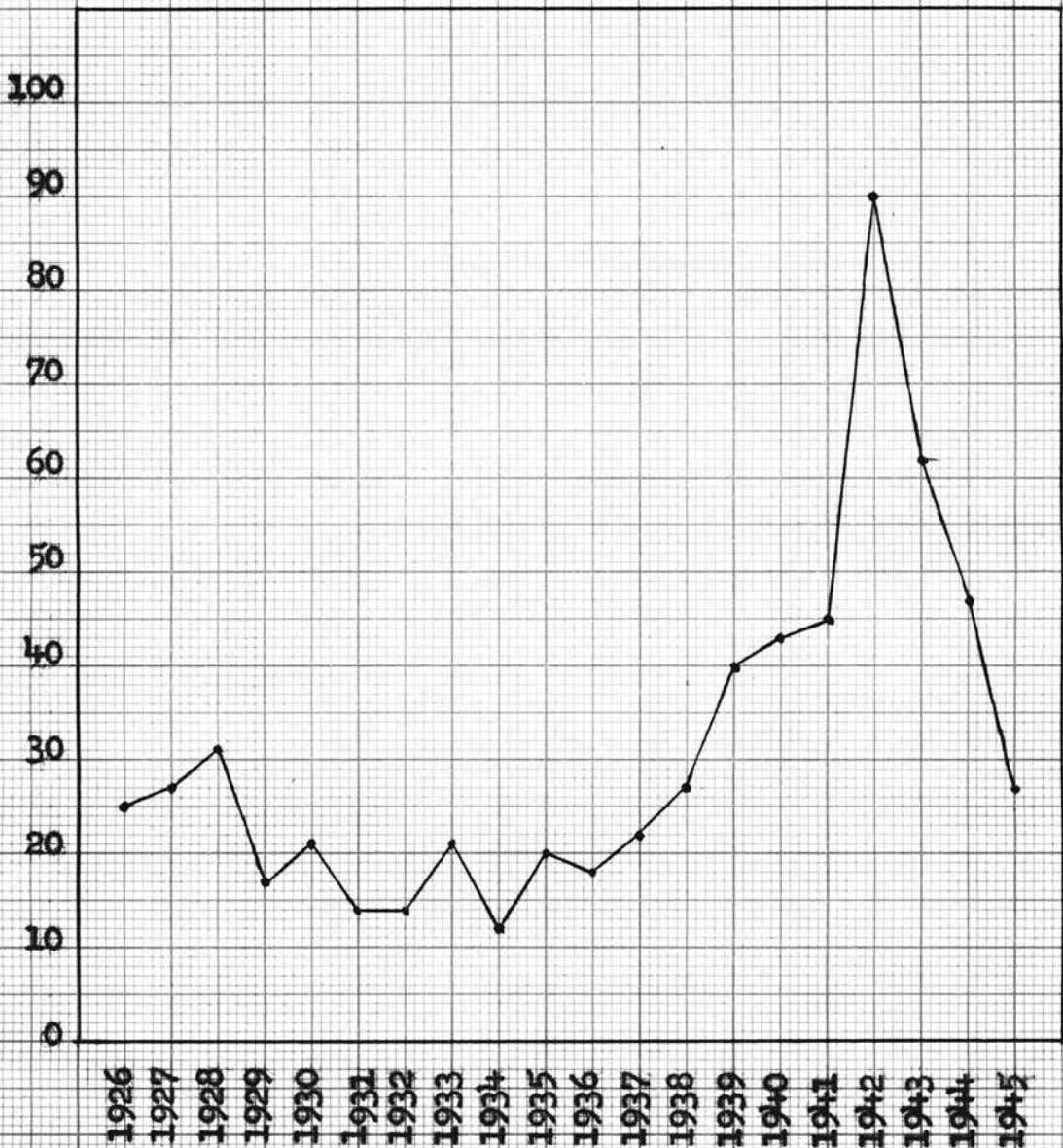


Figure 1. Number of Women Graduating Each Year for the Twenty-Year Period

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for the highest and lowest years. The lowest number graduating was in 1934, the worst of the drought years, with 1931 and 1932 following, which were the worst of the depression years. In 1936 a period of increase started and continued until 1942, which is the highest number ever to be graduated from the Home Economics Education Department in the Division of Home Economics. The next three years, 1943, 1944, and 1945 show a drastic drop each year, until the number graduating was as low as the late thirties and lower than 1928, the year before the country entered into the period of depression and drought.

It is felt that information received from the questionnaire is reliable, because the graduates were very prompt in replying and seemed sincere in the remarks and answers they made to the questions asked.

The graduates indicated that most of them still claim Oklahoma as their permanent address, since 213 or 84% gave permanent state addresses, as Figure 2 shows. Fifty-three or 20% of the graduates are now out of the state. Eleven of the 53 graduates who gave out-of-state addresses as their present address are out of the state only temporarily, since the same number also gave a state address as their permanent address. This means that 42 or 16% of the graduates had left the state permanently.

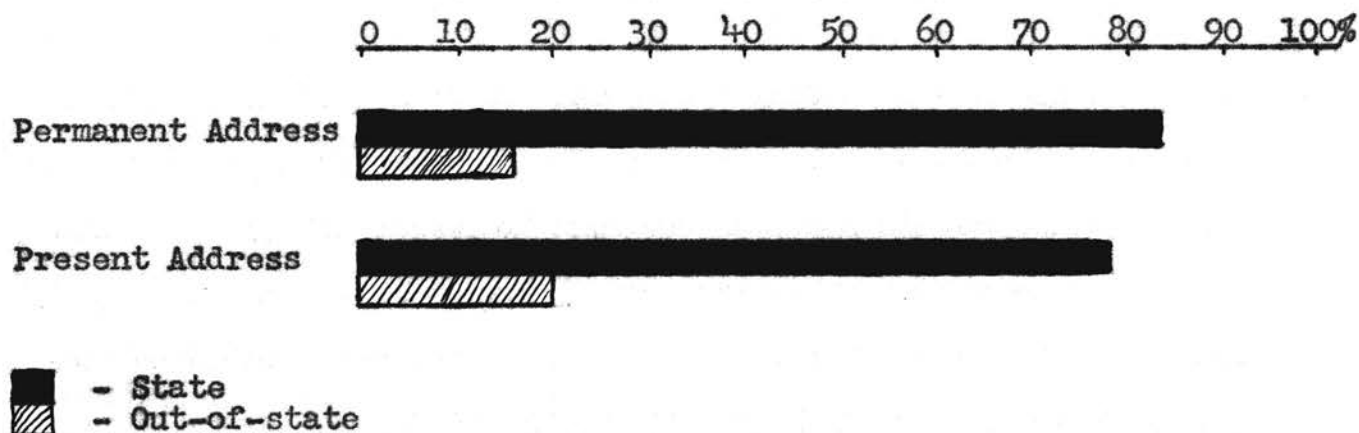


Figure 2. Percentage of 255 Home Economics Education Graduates with State and Out-of-State Addresses

The information received from Part 8 of the questionnaire (Exhibit 1) reveals that the experiences of the graduates are about average. The experiences other than travel were the results of their occupations, listed as teaching, substitute teaching, club work, and Red Cross work. Six stated that they had served as Wac's and Wave's in the military services. Eighty-nine graduates have traveled within the United States, fourteen stating that they have been over the borders of Canada and New Mexico. Nineteen said that their travel was done while in the service or while following their husbands who were in the service.

The marital status of the graduates has been a determining factor as to the occupations that many of them have followed. As can be seen in Figure 3, marriage is first with 170 or 66% of the 255 graduates. This means that 66% were married before the spring of 1947, leaving 71 or 28% stating that they were single at the time the study was made. Five of the 28% who stated that they were single, indicated that they were leaving the teaching profession because of plans to marry in the near future. The total number

of those having been married, which includes widows and divorcees, is 184 or 72%. Of this number, 9 or .05% are widowed, and 5 or .03% divorced. Of the total 255 graduates, the percentage of widows was less than 4% and divorcees slightly less than 2%, as shown in Figure 3.

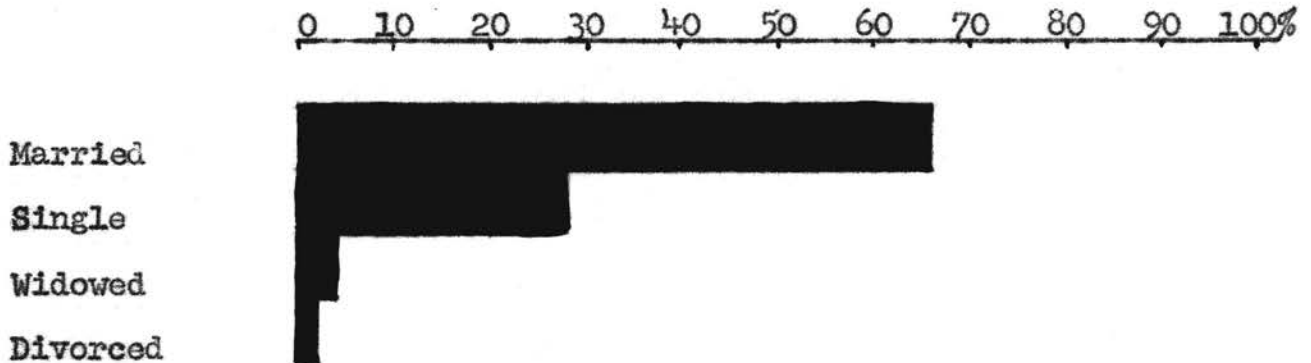


Figure 3. Percentage of Marital Status of 255 Home Economics Education Graduates

This study shows that dependents are given by many graduates as their reason for not following the profession for which they were trained. Dependents, in this study, mean children, parents, or any other individuals who depend upon the graduate for personal care or financial aid. Figure 4 shows that 134 or 52% of the 255 graduates have no dependents, with 121 or 48% having dependents. Thirteen or 5% stated that they had dependents other than children, but six or 2.3% of these also had children as well. This means that 114 or 44% have children only and seven or 2.7% have other dependents only.

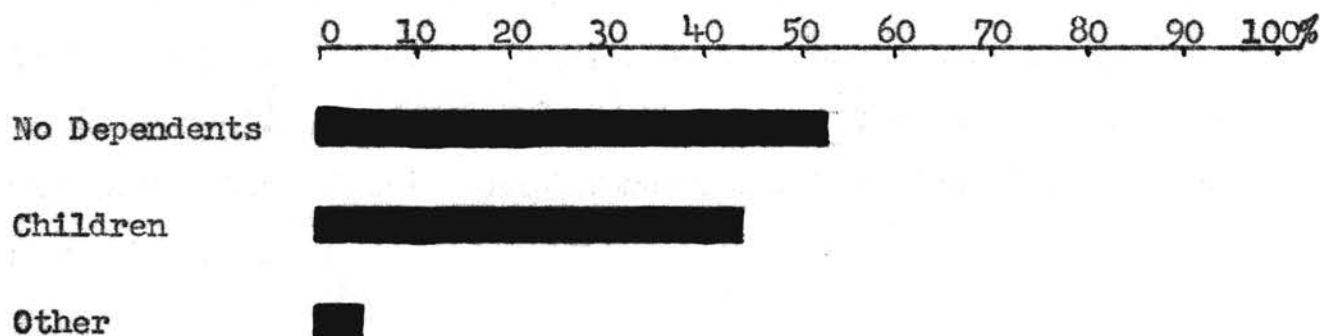


Figure 4. Percentage of Dependents for 255 Graduates

The children per married graduate run low, with sixty-four having only one child, thirty-five two children, eleven have three children. Of the remaining, two have four children, one has five, and one has six. This makes a total of 35 or 19% of the graduates having the average size family of two children.¹ With 114 stating that they have children, 70 or 27% of the married graduates, including widows and divorcees, have no children. The total number of children for all graduates is 186. This makes an average of 1.05 children per married graduate, including widows and divorcees.

The most prepared-for occupations in the home economics department fall into three general phases: home demonstration, teaching of home economics, and homemaking. The graduates were asked to check which of these they prepared for while in college. All of them stated that they prepared for an occupation, with 187 stating that they prepared for only one, 58 stated they prepared for two, and 10 stated that they prepared for all three of the oc-

¹Henry Steele Commager, "The Changing American Family," Senior Scholastic, L (May, 1947), p. 7.

cupations mentioned. This made a total of 333 occupations for which they had prepared. The largest number, which is 249 or 97% of the graduates, checked teaching as the occupation for which they prepared. When this number is compared with the 75 or 29% now following the teaching profession, there is a drastic loss in the field as Figures 5 and 6 show. This loss in the teaching field would indicate that the graduates are engaged in other occupations. As Figure 6 shows, the majority have married and accepted homemaking as their full-time or part-time occupation. One hundred fourteen or 45% state that they are full-time homemakers, and twelve state they are part-time homemakers because they hold positions outside the home. This is not completely a true picture, because this leaves 58 of the 184 married graduates, including widows and divorcees, who hold jobs outside their homes, who did not state that they were homemakers. Forty-three of the 58 stated that they were teachers, leaving 15 engaged in other occupations outside the home. The graduates now employed in demonstration occupations, which include home economists working for government and commercial agencies and Agricultural Extension Service, total 34, or 13%.

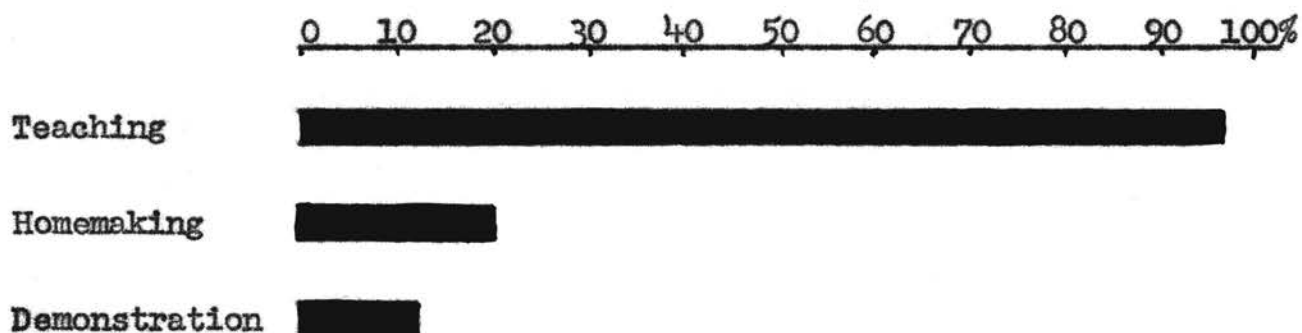


Figure 5. Percentage of Occupations Prepared for in College by 255 Graduates

This made a gain of only two persons for the demonstration field, since only 32 prepared for this work. The graduates who are now in the Agricultural Extension Service number 27 or 10%, but only eight or 3% of these accepted this work as their first occupation and remained in the field. The other graduates held other positions before going into the work. Most of the graduates try following only one career at a time, for of the 255 graduates only 9 stated that they were doing more than one. In every case except one the combination was with homemaking, the others being administrative work and teaching.

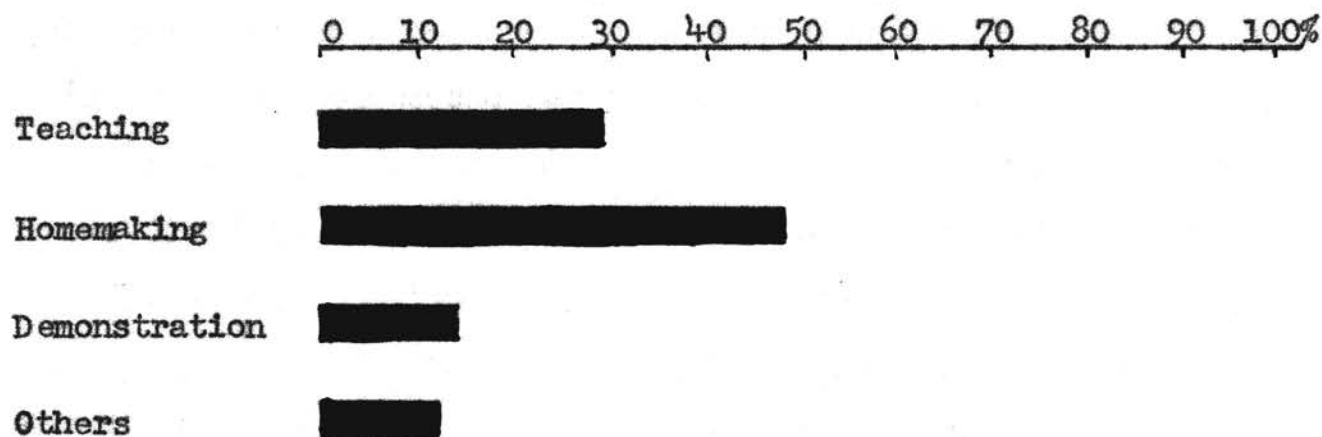


Figure 6. Percentage of Occupations now Followed by 255 Graduates

The list of occupations followed since graduation as seen in Table I is interesting as far as getting a picture of the many changes made in occupations by the 255 graduates. It is not complete enough from which to draw conclusions, and many of the jobs were held for short periods of time during the war years. If a division should be made between home economics occupation, including homemaking, and other occupations, it would be found that

only about nine per cent have left the field of home economics entirely, even if the teaching field in home economics has suffered most.

TABLE I

OCCUPATIONS FOLLOWED BY 255 HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION GRADUATES

Occupations	Present	Since Graduation
Homemaking:		
Full-time homemakers	114	184
Part-time homemakers	12	
Teaching:		
Home Economics	62	210
Other	13	56
Demonstrations:		
Agricultural Extension	27	59
Home Economists	7	14
Secretarial	12	29
Social Welfare	6	11
Administrators	2	2
Supervisors	2	4
Business	2	15
Technicians (Assistants)	2	15
Nutritionist	2	4
Guidance	1	5
Military Service	—	6
Total	264	

Teaching certificates were received by 244 or 96% of the 255 graduates. Two hundred twenty-six or 89% were vocational certificates, nine or 3% were general, and nine or 3% were other than home economics teaching certificates as shown in Figure 7.

Of the 249 graduates who stated that they prepared for teaching, 235 received a certificate to teach home economics, nine received certificates in other fields, leaving only eleven or 4% of the 255 graduates not receiving certificates. A total of 68 of the 255 graduates taught less than one year or did not teach at all.

Of this number there were 18 who taught less than one year and 58 who have never taught home economics. Fifty-six graduates have taught in both general and vocational programs, with 75 having taught only vocational home economics, leaving 55 teaching in the general home economics programs. This means that 46 of the graduates holding vocational certificates are teaching in general programs because there were but nine or 3% who stated that they held only general certificates. There was only one graduate who had done all her teaching in the college.

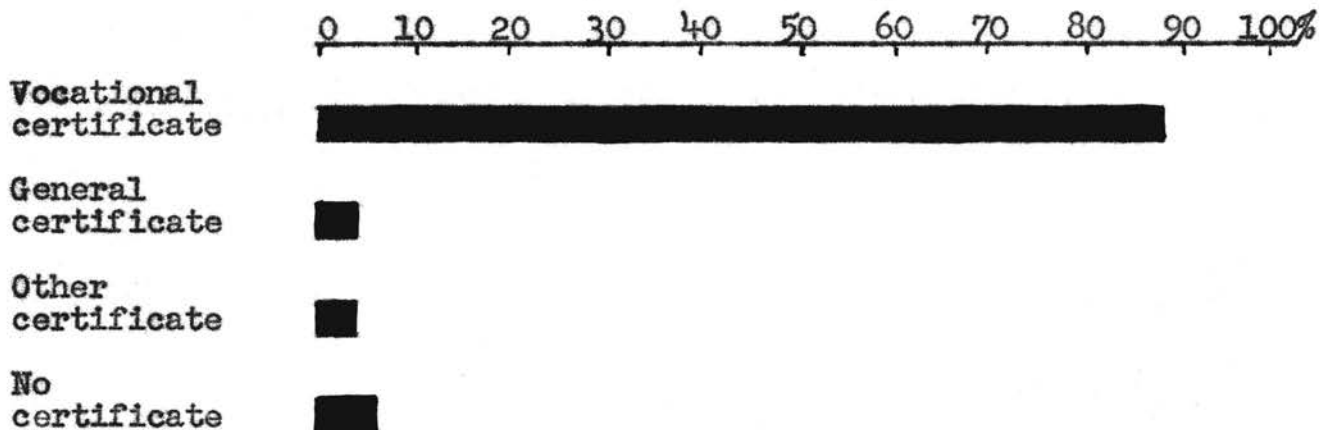


Figure 7. Percentage of certificates received by home economics education graduates

The number of years that one program might hold a teacher over a longer period of time does not vary much, as Table II indicates.

The Vocational Home Economics program has held only 24 more teachers than the general program for the first four years of teaching by the graduates. The vocational program lost half of its teachers in the third year. But the greatest loss came in the fourth year. The general home economics program lost over half in the third year with the greatest loss also in that year. Therefore,

TABLE II

YEARS OF TEACHING HOME ECONOMICS AS STATED
BY HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION GRADUATES

Years Taught	Number of Graduates Making Statements		
	Voc. H.E.	General H.E.	College H.E.
0			
1	40	36	
2	29	26	1
3	21	13	1
4	15	8	1
5	3	8	
6	4	3	1
7	3	5	
8	3	1	
9	4	2	
10	1	3	1
11	3	1	
12	1		
13			
14			
15		2	
16			
17			1
18		1	
19		1	
20		1	
21		1	
22			
23		1	
Total	129	111	6

the vocational program holds more teachers for only one year longer than the general program. The general program has more teachers teaching a longer period of time, as is shown in Table II. A very small percentage has entered college teaching, this being six graduates or 2.3%.

Information received from the questionnaires shows that thirty-six or 14% of the graduates have received their master's degrees. Nineteen of these graduates received bachelor of science degrees before the year of 1926, meaning that only 17 have completed both their bachelor's and master's degrees within the twenty-year period. Nineteen of the graduates used in this study received only a master's degree in this period. Four graduates stated that they held degrees other than B.S. or M.S. in home economics. Other advance study has been done by 106 graduates through short courses, correspondence, and summer school.

In order to find if the graduates seemed to be satisfied with their present occupation, they were asked if they desired a change in occupation. As Figure 8 shows, 50 or one-fifth of them stated that they did desire a change, 149 or 58% stated that they did not, while 56 or 22% made no statement.

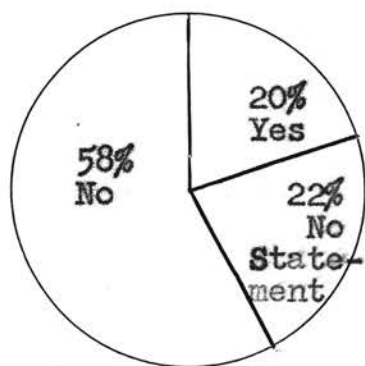


Figure 8. Percentage of Graduates Desiring or Not Desiring a Change



Figure 9. Percentage of Graduates Wanting Information

TABLE III

REASONS GIVEN BY GRADUATES FOR REMAINING IN, LEAVING,
OR RE-ENTERING THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Reasons for:	Remaining	Leaving	Re-entering
Marriage and homemaking		115	
Enjoy working with young people	78		13
Other occupational preference		38	
Poor salary		36	
Help in teacher shortage emergency	4		16
Prepared for teaching	12		1
Poor teaching conditions		12	
Long hours		12	
Financial	8	6	5
Unsettled		6	
Did not enjoy teaching		4	
Good salary	3		
Personal security (part of community)	3		
Good teaching conditions			3
Increase in salary			2
Further study		3	
Summer vacations	2		
Inadequate training		1	
Totals	110	233	40

According to Figure 9 it is evident that a majority of the graduates like to keep informed as to happenings in home economics and opportunities in its field. One hundred thirty-four or 53% stated that they would like information about opportunities in their field, while 54 or 21% did not wish such information, and 67 or 26% made no statement.

The graduates were asked to state their reasons for remaining in, for leaving, and for returning to the teaching profession. There was a good response to these questions, with only 38 making no statement. Table III shows that most teachers stay because they enjoy working with young people. Only four commented that they left because they did not enjoy teaching, and 13 re-entered because they enjoyed teaching. Thirteen remarked that they are teaching because it is the occupation for which they are prepared. Eleven said that financial security was the reason for remaining, while 42 gave this as their reason for leaving, and five for re-entering the teaching field. Twenty, of which sixteen have re-entered, are teaching to help in the teacher shortage emergency. Marriage and homemaking has taken the largest number from the field, with 115 stating that it is their reason for leaving. Sixty-one of the 115 stated that care of the family was their reason for withdrawing. Thirty-eight graduates gave as their reason for leaving, other occupational preference. School problems, such as teaching conditions, relationships with school people, and patrons, and long hours were mentioned but the percentage was low, being about 10%. Therefore, Table III indicates that most teachers remain in the teaching profession because they enjoy the work, and more leave because of marriage.

CONCLUSIONS

A review of the recent literature, as indicated in the introduction of this study, implies that there is a serious educational crisis, which is partly due to a teacher shortage. The great demand made on the education department of the Division of Home Economics for trained teachers has caused concern in the department as to what has happened to the trained personnel who have graduated. Since teacher training is the principal purpose of the Home Economics Education Department, the graduates receiving degrees should be prepared primarily for teaching. This demand for teachers and the concern about the graduates by the home economics educational staff brought about the need for this study.

The study shows that the Home Economics Education Department of the Division of Home Economics of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College has graduated 606 women who have received training as teachers and leaders in the field of home economics in the period of twenty-years, 1926 through 1945.

A questionnaire was made and mailed to 404 graduates for whom adequate addresses were obtained. Two hundred and fifty-five returned the questionnaires, and the information from these was used for the study.

The findings of the study show that 249 of the 255 graduates prepared for teaching. Of this number 235 received certificates to teach home economics, and nine received certificates for teaching in other fields in secondary schools. Of the 235 receiving home economics teaching certificates, 226 were vocational certi-

ificates and nine were general certificates. When the number of graduates receiving certificates is compared with the number that are now using them, the findings show that only 75 or 29% are following the profession for which they were trained. Of the number now teaching, 62 are teaching home economics and 13 are teaching in other fields.

The study shows that marriage and homemaking take a large percentage of the graduates. One hundred and eighty-four stated that they have married, of which 9 or 4% are widowed and 5 or 2% are divorced, leaving 170 or 66% now married.

Of the 184 graduates 58 hold occupations outside the home and 43 of these are teaching. With this number of married graduates holding positions outside the home the study would indicate that the percentage of this group might be smaller than the recognized belief that large numbers of married women are accepting careers outside the home.

Home responsibilities are the major reasons given by married graduates for leaving the teaching profession. One hundred and fifteen or 45% stated marriage and child care as their reason for giving up teaching. Of the 255 graduates, 134 have no dependents, 35 have two children, 15 have more than two, with the largest number, 64, having only one child. The remaining 7 graduates had dependents other than children. The average number of children for the 184 graduates who have married is 1.05 children. This is lower than the average two children per family as recent statistics show. This number of graduates leaving the profession for which they trained and going into the home might indicate that the home economics graduates realize the importance of accepting

homemaking as a full-time occupation.

The study shows that 187 of the graduates teach for one year or longer, which leaves 68 not teaching at all or for less than one year. This number indicates that most of the graduates do use their certificates even if it is for only a short period of time. The findings indicate that the average length of time that a teacher stays in the field is three years. The study shows that the teacher in the vocational home economics program remains in the teaching field only one year longer than those in the general program. The vocational home economics program has held only 24 more teachers than the general program for the first four years of teaching by the graduates, after which there is a definite loss of teachers in both fields. The greatest loss in the vocational program was in the fourth year, but in the general program it was in the third year. After the fourth year there is a definite decline in number of graduates teaching for more than four years. The difference in the number of years that a teacher stays in the two fields might be due to federal legislation in the last two decades and to the increased interest and progress in the vocational field in the last decade.

This short period of time spent in teaching by so many teachers cannot altogether be accredited to the attractiveness of higher paying jobs in the case of these home economics graduates, as the educators lead the public to believe is the cause of teachers leaving the teaching profession. The study reveals that only 63 graduates are doing occupations other than homemaking and teaching, and of the 255 graduates only 38 stated that poor pay was

their reason for leaving the teaching profession. Of the number holding occupations other than home economics occupations is only a little more than 2%.

The study points out that a majority of the graduates teach for only a short period of time, and that a large per cent marry. This might indicate that the graduates wanted only the general background that they receive in the Home Economics Education Department. They desire the teaching certificate only for occupational security for a teaching position if needed.

The graduates seem not to lose interest in home economics as might be expected since so many have left the professional field. One hundred and thirty-four stated that they would like information about opportunities in the field. This interest is also brought out by the fact that some of the graduates have done advanced study. Of those who have done advanced study 36 have received Master of Science degrees. One hundred and six others have done further study since they received the Bachelor of Science degree.

The study indicates that the state has not lost a very large percentage of the home economics education graduates. Two hundred and thirteen gave Oklahoma as their permanent address, and 202 as their present address. This would indicate that 11 are out of the state temporarily and that 42 have left the state permanently.

The records of the college show that there have been 606 women graduated from the Home Economics Education Department in the period of twenty years, 1926 through 1945. The number graduating per year has varied in the two decades. This might be contributed directly or indirectly to such factors as the depression,

drought, war, and federal legislation. As shown in the study the lowest number to graduate in any year was in 1934, which is the worst of the drought years. The total number graduating in this year was twelve. The next two lowest years, with only 14 graduating each year, were 1931 and 1932, which were the worst of the depression years in the history of the nation. There was a sudden increase in the number of graduates in 1942, with 90 graduating. This sudden increase might be due to the fact that people were recovering financially from the major depression of the thirties. Also, the passage of the George Deen Act of 1936 could have caused increased interest in the vocational program of home economics. Beginning in 1942 there was a sudden decline in the number of graduates for the next three years. This decline was parallel to the war years, when the nation was calling men and women into the service and defense factories of the country.

Current literature reveals that there has been no relief due to this loss of prospective teachers because teachers are not re-entering the educational field, and there is no large enrollment of new students in the education departments.

In studying the situation it might be said that the colleges that train teachers, and the school administrators who employ them will have to make the teaching profession more attractive, more interesting, and more desirable. This might be done by increasing salaries, offering a plan for future security, making possible desirable teaching conditions, and promoting professional recognition. The college could offer a fuller orientation vocational guidance program which would assist in getting better teachers

into the profession by promoting interest and doing away with false ideas that exist about the profession.

In concluding, it is recommended that the college should work out a system for keeping a record of the graduates after they leave the campus. In the process of the study it was found that there is not an adequate record kept of the graduates in any one office. If the information obtained by individual offices could be sent into a central office, a more complete record could be available. The main purpose of the central office would be to keep the records and also keep the individual offices informed as to where the graduates are and what they are doing.

Then, it is recommended that each school keep in contact with their graduates. This would make a stronger tie between the graduate and the school, promoting more interest in the programs of the educational system, which has as its purpose to educate for lasting peace in a world struggling for peace.

Exhibit 1

OKLAHOMA A. & M. COLLEGE
 Division of Home Economics
 Home Economics Education Department

1946 - 1947

1. Name as student _____
2. Married Name _____
3. Marital Status: Married _____ Widowed _____ Divorced _____
4. Number of children _____ Other dependents _____
5. Permanent Address _____
6. Present Address _____
7. Will you keep us informed of changes of address or name _____
8. What interesting experiences have you had since graduation
 (such as travel, honors, military service, etc.)? _____

9. Degrees received: Degree _____ Date _____ Place _____

10. What further study have you done? _____
11. Did you prepare for: Home Demonstration work _____ Teaching
 Home Economics _____ Home Making _____
12. What type of teaching certificate did you receive? _____
13. What is your present occupation? _____
14. Positions held since graduation:

Type of WorkLocationDate

<u>Type of Work</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

15. How many years did you teach General Home Economics? _____
Vocational (Smith-Hughes) Home Economics? _____
16. Would you be interested in a change of employment? _____
17. Would you like to be informed of opportunities in your field? _____
18. What are your reasons for remaining in the teaching profession?

19. What are your reasons for leaving the teaching profession?

20. If you have re-entered the teaching profession, why? _____

Exhibit 2

OKLAHOMA A. & M. COLLEGE
Division of Home Economics
Home Economics Education Department
Stillwater, Oklahoma

February, 1947

Dear

The Home Economics Education Department of Oklahoma A. & M. College is cooperating in a national study which is being sponsored by the Home Economics Research Committee of the American Vocational Association in a determined effort to find which factors affect the supply of Home Economics teachers.

This Department is trying to locate its Home Economics Education graduates so as to obtain their cooperation which will be needed for a worthwhile report from this college and State. You as a graduate from this college could be of great help to us if you would fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us at once.

Very truly yours,

(signed) MILLIE PEARSON

Millie V. Pearson, Head
Home Economics Education Department
School of Home Economics

MVP:sfd

Enclosure

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