

Inga Allison joined the Home Economics department at Fort Collins' Colorado Agricultural College in 1908, at a time when several faculty members were starting to study the unique effects of high altitude on both crop growth and food preparation.

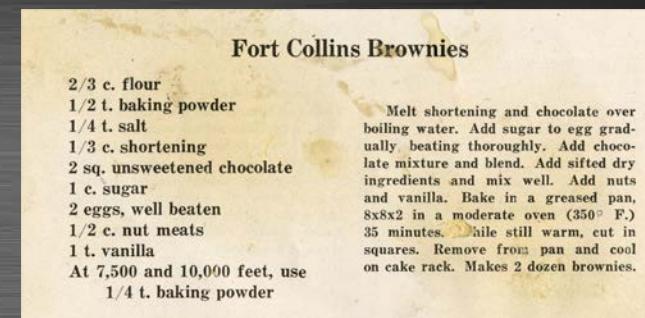
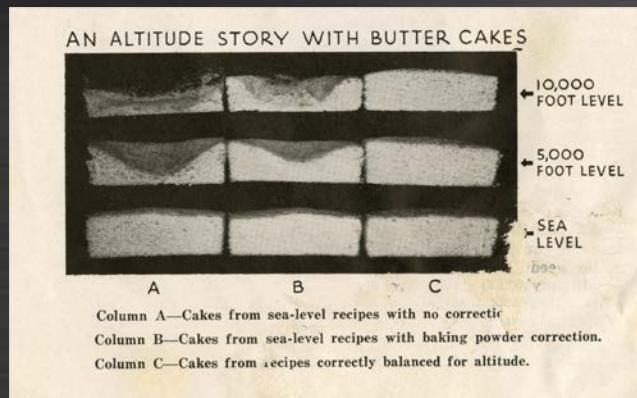
Inga Allison (1876 - 1962)



Here are a few pictures of the CAC campus – in 1908, when Allison joined the faculty, and in 1927, where you can see the Oval, and the new Chemistry building.

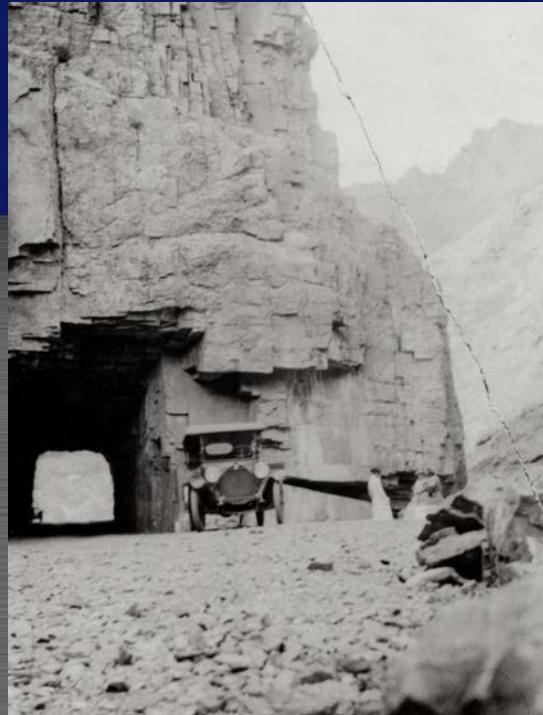


No laboratory facilities existed for the home economics department, but that didn't stop Inga from conducting active research in food preparation and preservation. She borrowed and modified equipment from the chemistry and physics departments, and conducted experiments in cooking at altitude in challenging conditions — baking, for example, in a rough Estes Park shanty located on Fall River Road, almost 12,000 ft above sea level.



Here are a few shots of Fall River Road, and the approach to Estes Park, all taken between 1920 and 1930.

Next time you successfully bake a pan of brownies in Fort Collins that doesn't develop a sinkhole in the middle, it will probably be because you took into account some of the science developed by Dr. Allison.



Allison entered academia via research and natural sciences – what she called “the science door” – and emphasized a scientific approach to what had been previously been pigeonholed as “disciplines for future wives to study.” She later became the head of the Home Economics Department, and expanded the course of women's education to include extension and welfare work, dietetics, institutional management, laboratory research work, child development, and teaching. Here’s a shot of Guggenheim Hall of Household Arts, which later housed the Home Economics Department.



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