



The interior of the Erland Lee Homestead showing the famous walnut table on which the first Constitution of the Women's Institute was written.



The Erland Lee Homestead



Lord and Lady Tweedsmuir



"MRS. ADELAIDE HOODLESS"

Founder of the first Women's Institute in the World
at Stoney Creek, Ontario, February 19th, 1897.

Mrs. Hoodless was born on a farm near St. George,
Ontario in 1857 where a cairn was erected to her
memory by the Women's Institutes of Brant County.

Her love and sympathy were for the rural people; to
whom she dedicated her life; to help them raise the
standard of homemaking to the highest possible level.



THE OBJECTIVES OF THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

1. To help women acquire sound and approved practices for greater home efficiency.
2. To discover, stimulate and train leadership.
3. To develop a more abundant life in our rural communities and a deeper appreciation of the things near at hand.
4. To develop better, happier and more useful citizens.

OPENING ODE

(Tune - Auld Lang Syne.)

A goodly thing it is to meet
In Friendship's circle bright,
Where nothing stains the pleasure sweet
nor dims the radiant light.
No unkind word our lips shall pass,
No envy sour the mind,
But each shall seek the common weal,
The good of all mankind.



MARY STEWART COLLECT

Keep us O Lord from pettiness; let us be
large in thought, in word and deed;
Let us be done with fault finding and leave off self seeking;
May we put away all pretence and meet
each other face to face, without self pity and without prejudice;
May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous;
Teach us to put into action our better impulses
straightforward and unafraid;
Let us take time for all things; make us grow
calm, serene, gentle;
Grant that we may realize that it is the little things
that create differences; that in the
big things of life we are one
And may we strive to touch and know the
great human heart common to us all, and
O Lord God let us not forget to be kind.



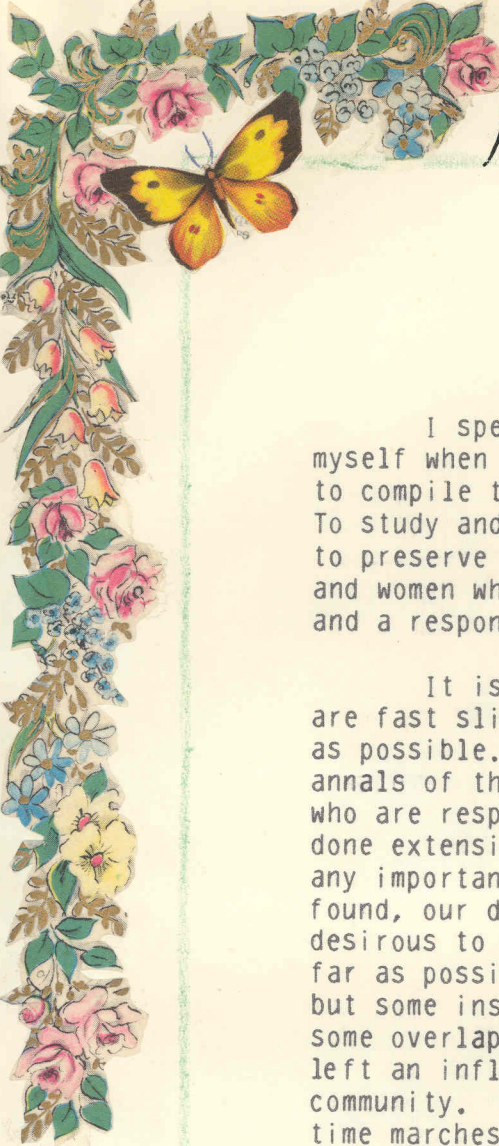
THE LORD'S PRAYER

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.





Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



An Appreciation and Thank you

I speak for my most efficient committee as well as myself when I say the happy privilege that is ours in attempting to compile this Tweedsmuir History makes us both proud and humble. To study and explore our Pioneer History is most fascinating; but to preserve the fine traditions and pay just tribute to the men and women who have been the builders of our heritage is an honour and a responsibility.

It is our desire to compile these priceless records, which are fast slipping from our reach with as much detail and accuracy as possible. Much of the information we have gleaned, from the annals of the past, has been a revelation even to those of us who are responsible for the compilation of this book. We have done extensive research to obtain knowledge and facts, and if any important events have been omitted, or if slight errors are found, our deepest apologies to those concerned. We are desirous to deal with each important subject individually, as far as possible, for reasons of simplicity as well as interest, but some instances tie in so closely with others there may be some overlapping. Some have come and gone but in passing have left an influence on the progress and development of our community. We have done our best to draw a true picture as time marches on and "we treasure the past but face the future".

We wish to express our deepest appreciation to those kind people - the Secretaries of our various organizations, churches, lodges and the many interested local citizens who have in any way assisted with data and information, and without whose splendid co-operation such an undertaking could never have been possible; and to those who have given pictures and clippings of historical value for the compilation of this Tweedsmuir History, and especially to the typist, Mrs. Gwyn (Marchant) Preston, for having given so generously of her spare time to type these many, many pages so attractively and legibly, we are eternally grateful.

Signed by the Historical Committee

Ala H. Marchant
Alice F. Cooper
Bettie E. Hapock



KEEP ME CONTENT
to do what is my duty -
Make me humble,
asking not for praise,
Awaken me to see the
world of beauty;
Teach me the peacefulness
of quiet ways.

H.B.S.



Officers conducting the Historical Research Meeting at the home of the convener, Mrs. C. Marchant, when arrangements were completed to commence our Tweedsmuir History Book - January, 1958.

L. Mrs. F. Baguley - Secretary

R. Mrs. Cecil Watson - President



Tweedsmuir History Committee in charge of the program.

Left to Right: Mrs. C. Marchant, Mrs. G. Shoults, Mrs. E. Cooper, Mrs. R. Hiscocks
Mrs. W. Aitchison (Hostess) in the centre.

Mrs. E. Cooper and Mrs. R. Hiscocks ready to receive the members at this historic meeting.



THE INSTITUTE STORY

"At a Wentworth farmers' meeting
Held in Guelph - - at O.A.C.
Erland Lee was there - - and listened
to a woman make a plea.
To reform our education
for this system will not do;
Teach our girls domestic science
And the art of sewing too.
So impressed with Mrs. Hoodless
Was the public spirited Lee,
He invited her to Saltfleet
'Twas an opportunity.
On the nineteenth of February
With the mercury dipping low
One hundred faithful women
Faced the bitter cold and snow,
With the cloak around their bonnets
For the winter wind was bleak,
They hitched Dobbin to the cutter
And set out for Stoney Creek.
What a memorable occasion
As an acorn seed took root,
For those pioneer women
Were the Mother Institute.
They promoted other branches
(So my story does unfold),
And for Guelph and Queen Victoria
They chose the Blue and Gold.
Home and Country was their motto,
Adelaide Hoodless did advise,
And a little oak kept growing
Till it grew to quite a size!
Branches spread across the province,
Then they reached from sea to sea,
To form two Federations
of F.W.I.O and F.W.I.C. -
To the States the torch was carried,
Then to countries overseas - -
England, Scotland, Wales and Holland,
Belgium, France and Germany.
On and on through other nations
Rural women joined the throng,
of the A.C.W.W.
To which each of us belong.
It is our seventy-fifth birthday
And I think my story's told.
Let us wear our colours proudly
The Royal blue and gold."



History of Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario
Prepared and given at Historical Research Meeting - June 1972
by Olla H. Marchant

I would like to introduce my few remarks by drawing your attention to this lovely new book published by the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario this year to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the Women's Institute of Ontario. I understand it is to be the gift of our Branch to our Public Library, for which I am very proud and when placed on the shelf there I trust it will be borrowed and read by every member of our Branch. The last such book was published in 1948 in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary and was called "50 years of Achievement". Both books should be read by every member of the W.I. to appreciate the magnitude of the work that has been accomplished - not only in Ontario, in which the movement found its origin, but far and wide across the world.

The first W.I. in the world was organized in Saltfleet Township, Wentworth County, on February 19, 1897, in the Village of Stoney Creek - one of Ontario's most famous spots for many historical reasons, and where yearly, thousands of tourists visit, attracted by the stately monument which was erected in 1913 to commemorate one hundred years of peace between Canada and the United States following the war of 1812-14. Since having been the scene of a struggle for the preservation of Canadian life, it was fitting to have also been the birthplace of the founding of the W.I. whose purpose has always been the promotion of a better way of life for all people.

Of course you all know the story of the actual beginning - how Erland Lee, a public spirited young farmer, became the President of the Farmers Institute and while attending a meeting in the O.A.C. at Guelph, heard a stirring address by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless of Hamilton on the need of having Domestic Science taught in the schools. She had lost her eldest child at the age of 18 months through ignorance about impure milk. She was so concerned for the health of other children, she decided she would do all in her power to bring within the reach of all mothers the education necessary to prevent similar tragedies. Mr. Lee was so impressed he determined to assist her in her effort to educate and unite the people through the organization of a women's group to raise the standard of homemaking and so after several meetings - each more enthusiastic than the one before - the first Women's Institute was formed.

The first membership fee was .25¢, so that no one would be barred admittance. In order to carry out the objects of the organization to the fullest possible advantage, six divisions were made: Domestic Economy, Architecture, which covered sanitation and ventilation, Health, Floriculture & Horticulture, Music and Art, and Education & Legislation.

It is interesting to note that although our standing Committees of today are revised and re-revised, many times bear a significant resemblance to those instituted at the beginning. Those early leaders were most sincere in their efforts to live up to their Constitution and to improve themselves so that they might serve better their Home and Country. The movement grew under the leadership of Mrs. Hoodless who travelled widely campaigning to promote the teaching of Household Science in Schools and establishing a course in some universities. She worked tirelessly and on the eve of her 52nd birthday, while speaking at a meeting in Massey Hall, she collapsed and died on February 20, 1910.

The Adelaide Hunter Homestead has been marked as an historic site bearing a plaque inscribed "Birthplace of Adelaide Hunter Hoodless" founder of the Womens' Institute. This was not to be the end but an incentive to the women of Ontario to carry on the work and Organization so wonderfully founded and expanded to encircle the globe - many marvellous women have followed Mrs. Hoodless and the work goes on in her name to meet the ever changing demands in an ever changing world.

A particular source of pride are the Tweedsmuir Histories, a project undertaken by request of Lady Tweedsmuir on her departure from Canada. These books have been recognized by the Ontario Department of Education as authentic sources for students of Pioneer History. The beginning of Garden Clubs, Girls Four H. Clubs, Homemaking Clubs, Inter-County Days, Judging competitions and National Contests are evidence that the work not only is surviving but is progressing and enlarging to meet the needs of change.

Do read these books and you will be proud to be a member of an Organization that has not only stood the passing of time but, has contributed so much to the betterment of Home and Country.