

Nobleton Women's Institute

In March, 1908, ladies from Laskay and Nobleton joined together to form a branch of the Women's Institute with meetings held in alternate villages. Because of the distance to drive, by horse and buggy, the Laskay group left Nobleton to form their own society.

The first minutes recorded, of the Nobleton branch, are those of May 14, 1908. The first president was Mrs. Putnam and the first secretary-treasurer Mrs. A.D. Campbell. The meetings were held in the homes of the members. The patterns of these meetings show that hymns were sung to both open and close meetings, and prayers used throughout. There were seventeen members present at this meeting. As the agenda for the meetings became fixed, the song "The Maple Leaf Forever" was used a great deal.

The first annual meeting of the Nobleton branch was held July 2, 1908 in Nobleton. The main topic for this meeting was "Poultry Keeping" and "Mistakes Made in the Dairy".

Some very helpful hints have been gleaned from reading the minute book, such items as- a brown bag dampened with kerosene to remove dust; charcoal iron for hot days; oil cloth aprons; a screened cupboard for keeping butter in; camphor is good for restoring vigor to plants- a few drops in a quart of warm water is an ideal solution; camphor gum mixed with seeds will keep mice from destroying the seeds; a weak solution of common mustard and water used to saturate the soil around rhubarb will rid the ground of worms that attack the rhubarb.

Care and feeding fowl was a prime topic- it is noted the best time to feed whole grain is in the morning. Dust fowl after removing them from their pens, thoroughly clean pen to get rid of lice. One lady stated coal oil was the only way she could rid of lice.

Topics discussed always dealt with the every day lady- a preservation of cut flowers; making cool summer drinks; use of paraffin wax; how and why to be healthy; how to make buttonholes; how to quilt; methods of laying carpets; making the most of winter relaxation; history of the Union Jack; testing cream and how to determine if it is ripe enough for churning; how to can fruit and vegetables; how to make jelly; what a mother and daughter should know and remember. Demonstrations frequently took place- salad dressing was brought for tasting and comments requested.

In June 1909, the trustees of the Methodist Church permitted the Institute to use the basement of the church for a meeting place. This arrangement could continue as long as a fire was not required.

On July 8, 1909, the decision was made to name a program committee to set up a program for six months. The cost of the first set of programs was \$1.25. The first delegate to attend a Women's Institute convention, held in Guelph, was Miss K. McMurchy in December, 1909.

The June, 1910 meeting saw the recommendation made that the Nobleton Music Hall be remodelled as it was in a "disgraceful" condition. This was held over for further discussion. At the January 12, 1911 meeting, the decision was made to wait until the men became interested.

It is interesting to note that at the annual meeting of May, 1910, the Treasurer's report shows a balance of \$4.35 on hand.

