

Calling All Curators

By Hester M. Walker

Many of the customers were surprised that peaches grew in Canada and even more surprised when they learned, at a tobacco exhibit which was part of the display, that Ontario also could grow fine tobacco. There is still an idea in the minds of some Britishers that Canada is the frozen north. The peaches were sold in ones and twos or in cartons of nine or twelve. As the Fair neared closing day, some of the peaches were becoming over-ripe, but the English girls wouldn't hear of discarding them—no indeed! They would sell them as bruised fruit at a lower price. And sell them they did—by the dozens!

At the cheese counters the girls would cut forty-pound blocks of old Canadian Cheddar into half-pound wedges with a glistening electric cutter and when business was rushing they might cut and sell three of these blocks in an hour. This in addition to the prepackaged cheese sold from its refrigerated show case.

The canned fruits and pie fillings always had people waiting to sample one or more of the varieties. The crowds increased every time Marilyn was on her raised demonstration platform making cherry—or blueberry or apple—pies and taking the finished products from the modern built-in oven which faced the crowds.

Counter coolers for tomato juice and apple juice were centres of attraction, especially on warm days, and had to be constantly refilled as the customers lined up to buy a sixpenny drink of one or the other.

Built-in electric burners at the counters were used to heat canned soups, beans and corn for sampling, but asparagus tips, straight from the can, disappeared as fast as they were opened.

The variety of pickles and relishes was quite an eye-opener and many an English homemaker would be spicing up her tea table with one or more of these tangy taste tempters.

It was a busy time but the girls worked in shifts and in their time off got to know the people and products at neighbouring exhibits which included those from Spain, Portugal, France, West Germany and the United States. The off-shift time was also fully used to see the sights of London, to ride the tubes and buses, sample the restaurants and stock up on gifts and souvenirs to bring home.

It was a wonderful experience. Maybe another group of girls will have such an opportunity if the Ontario Government continues with such projects. Because the feminine Canadian touch was appreciated—often one of the English girls would come to one of the Ontario girls with the plea—"Please come and talk to this lady, they're so disappointed when they find we're not Canadians".

AT LONG LAST we Curators for the Women's Institute have come into our own with a definite and specific duty — that of supervising the compiling of the Tweedsmuir Histories at Branch, District and Area levels. We are definitely separated from the Convener of Historical Research and Current Events who now has no jurisdiction over the Tweedsmuir History Book.

This is no small task, nor is it one to be taken lightly as an "afterthought". It does entail many, many hours of time, but it is so very worthwhile that it should be one of our main projects.

The Department of Education of Ontario is accepting our data in the Tweedsmuir Histories as fact and to be used in the teaching and research of local community history. Therefore, it is imperative that we do our best at all times.

A Manual has been prepared that answers most inquiries re the compiling of these manuscripts at each level and any Curator of a Branch Tweedsmuir Book can write Miss Helen McKercher's office, Home Economics Service, 20 Spadina Road, Toronto 4, for a free copy. Be sure to state your name, address, Branch and District.

The District and Area Manuals have been sent to all District and Area Secretaries, to be passed on to the District and Area Curators who will keep them for reference.

If your Branch, District or Area has not appointed a "Curator," please do so at the next meeting, executive, or convention.

Some Branches have written to see if this appointment is necessary. Possibly it is a small Branch, an urban Branch or a Branch of mostly elderly ladies where typists and assistants are difficult to get. I can surely sympathize with these Branches in their dilemma and in such cases I would suggest they work on a good scrapbook where they can keep the history of the community by pasting pictures and articles without the detail of the more elaborate Tweedsmuir History. Divide the scrapbook into sections, keeping all data relative to one subject separate from all other information. Our main objective is to record the history of the given community through the years in some form.

Let us before 1967 have Curators working on Tweedsmuir Histories in all sections of our Province and don't forget to report directly to the Curator at the level above you: Branch Curators report to District Curators; District Curators to Area Curators; and Area Curators to the Provincial Curator.