

South Muskoka District Women's Institute float in the Muskoka Cavalcade of Colour last fall. Marking the 65th Anniversary of the founding of the Women's Institute the float carried such relics of sixty-five years ago as a gramophone with horn, a box stove, a coal oil lamp and lantern and clothing of the period.



A Saga of Block Printing

By Eva Skene

(Readers please check for style with Hiawatha.—Ed.)

In the summer came a letter
 Out to all the Branches written
 From the city to the eastward,
 From the city far to eastward,
 From the Great Spadina, 20,
 From the wigwam of the chieftains.
 In the fall time we will send you
 One great wise-one from Toronto,
 One much learned in skills of carving,
 One to teach you skills of printing,
 All the skills of cut and colour,
 All the craft of block and scalpel.
 When the time came, from the eastward
 A great silver bird came winging
 Bearing west a master carver,
 Bearing north and west a carver,
 Bearing to Kenora's vast land
 One to teach us, one to lead us.
 Leslie was the name they called her,
 Paleface of the raw potatoes,
 Paleface of the carbon paper
 And the stamp pads, paints and rollers,
 Gum erasers, cotton, hammers,
 Turpentine, extenders, glasses.
 From each branch stole out two learners
 To the Ag. Rep's. office wigwam,
 Grouped around Miss Leslie's feet there
 Catching every word of wisdom,
 Every eye on paleface fastened,
 Every ear to paleface listening.
 Every word must be remembered,
 Every act in mind be planted,
 Not a thing may be forgotten,
 Not a detail overlooked here
 For the tribes wait in the branches,
 Wait for learners to return there.
 Then Miss Leslie spread her magic,
 Turned the learners into leaders,

Sent them back to teach their branches.
 Back they came to phone their members,
 Set the time and place of meetings,
 Pass out books and give instruction.
 Through the time of great snows lying,
 Through the time of great winds howling,
 Through the time of ice and cold there
 Nothing stopped the braves from coming.
 In the dark of night they trekked there.
 Frozen tires did not deter them,
 Nor the icing of a gasline
 Though the motors howled in protest
 And the husbands likewise howling,
 Nothing kept them from the meetings,
 Nothing kept them from block-printing.
 So they toiled through all that winter
 Drawing, cutting, rolling, pounding,
 Printing roses, dogs and kittens,
 Printing deer and moose and lilies
 Curtains, runners, mats they printed
 Aprons, tea cloths, dish towels, nighties.
 Nought escaped the rash of blocking,
 Even children slightly tinted—
 Nought was sacred from the block here.
 Husbands hid their clothes in horror,
 Hid their clothes in shaking horror.
 Oh! the shame of some day finding
 Printed poodle on a shirt-tail.
 Thank-you to the Home Ec. Service
 Thank-you to Miss Paleface Leslie.
 You have brightened up the Northland,
 Brightened up this great white Northland;
 Now the braves who took block-printing
 Have the brightest, gayest clotheslines
 In the whole Kenora District.

*(Written following an extension project
 in Block Printing.)*