

MRS. ADELAIDE HOODLESS
July 27, 1886 to February 26, 1910

Founder of the first Women's Institute in the world at
Stoney Creek, February 19, 1897

The Farmer's Institute and the Women's Institute had their origin in Wentworth County. Some years before the Women's Institute had its beginning, a Farmer's Institute was organized, mainly through the efforts and influence of Mr. J. H. Smith, at that time Inspector of Public Schools, ably assisted by Mr. Erland Lee, a prominent broad-minded and public-spirited young farmer living in the vicinity of Stoney Creek. Mr. Lee was for some years Secretary of the Farmer's Institute, and later became its president.

In the autumn of 1896, Mr. Lee attended a meeting of the Experimental Union, held at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph. While there, he heard a stirring address by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless of Hamilton, on the value and need of having domestic science and sewing taught in the public schools. During the speech to a mostly male audience, she told them they were more concerned about the health of their animals than about the health of their children and that they fed their pigs and cattle more scientifically than they fed their families.

The vital interest taken by Mrs. Hoodless in this subject was occasioned by a sad experience in her early married life. She had lost her eldest child, a young son eighteen months old. When the doctor told her this death could have been prevented, that it was the result of using impure milk, she felt she was to blame. She had the conviction that she ought to have known better. She therefore decided that she would do all in her power to help others, that she would endeavour to bring within the reach of all women the education necessary to prevent similar tragedies.

Mrs. Hoodless believed the educational system in force in