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LIBRARY

Mechanic's Institute

Opened in 1893 at a time when the sons of the pioneers had established comfortable homes and there were more young people in the community than there are today. It filled an important place in the life of that generation. A love of good literature was early implanted in their minds and to this day the lines of Burns, Shakespeare and Tennyson are as familiar to them as the poems in their school readers. With many people, the older folks of Scotch descent, "The Cotter's Saturday Night", ranks with the pleasant memories of their own childhood homes.

This community owes a big debt to the late John Sharpe, later a professor in Queen's Theological College, who was stationed here as Presbyterian Minister at that time, and through whose efforts a Mechanic's Institute was opened in the manse. Eager for knowledge himself, he was anxious to have the young people study and enjoy the best in literature and through his careful selection of the first books purchased for the library, a collection was gathered together in this small library which was considered one of the best of its size in Ontario by the library inspectors.

To such institutions as this may be accorded a large part of the credit that such men as the late William A. Wilson, Trade Commissioner to England for Canada, Dr. Robert K. Patterson, Chief Radiologist at Ottawa Civic Hospital, Professor Albert Wilson, of the University of Saskatchewan, Rev. C.A. Ferguson, of Potsdam, N.Y., Dr. J.Y. Ferguson, of Toronto, a former medical missionary in Formosa, Dr. George A. Brown, of Chalmers United Church, Kingston, Dr. Peter M. Campbell, of Lethbridge, Alberta, and the late Rev. Matthew H. Wilson, former superintendent of missions for the United Church in Peace River and Norther Alberta, all went from this community to distinguish themselves in their chosen careers.

On February 21, 1893 a meeting was held in the Presbyterian Church, Admaston at which Rev. John Sharpe was appointed Secretary. He narrated the steps which had been taken previously toward establishing a Mechanic's Institute. The Institute had been registered in the registrar's office in Pembroke and a certified copy of the registrar's declaration had been filed in the Education Department, Toronto.

The following officers were appointed:

President, John McDonald. Secy.-Treas., Rev. J. Sharpe. Librarian, Mrs. John Sharpe. Directors, George H. Dunfield, Richard Wilson, Robert Reid, George Berlanguet, John P. Campbell, James Ferguson, Rev. John Sharpe.

The library was to be open Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and evenings and the books were to be kept in the manse. The Admaston Council gave a grant of \$25. and the government grant amounted to \$27.25 that year. Dues were 50¢ per family and 25¢ for a single membership and librarian was to receive \$8 a year for her services. From this small beginning the library increased until there were more than 1500 volumes on the shelves.