

Memorial

To Mrs. Hoodless

At the Annual Convention of Women's Institutes of Ontario, held in Convocation Hall, Toronto University, on November 16th and 17th, 1910, Mrs. C. E. Horning, District President of South Wentworth, in a short address, spoke of a memorial to the late Mrs. Hoodless, the founder of this vast work, which stands for Home and Country. Mrs. Horning presented the subject, as follows:

"We feel that at this Convention it is most fitting to bring before this very large body of representatives of Women's Institutes of Ontario the matter of a memorial to the late Mrs. Hoodless. The lesson of patriotism repeats itself in the history of the little village of Stoney Creek, where the Battlefield commemorates the heroism of Laura Secord, and to that same village is given the honor of starting the Women's Institute. As we note this vast assembly of women, gathered here to represent the work of uplifting and bettering the conditions that surround our rural life; as we see the faces of so many intelligent women, we think of the words of the poet who said, 'Dying, let us leave behind us footprints on the sands of Time, footprints that perhaps another, seeing, may take heart again.' For surely we have footprints multiplied as we remember that it was Mrs. Hoodless who organized the first Women's Institute at Stoney Creek, February 25th, 1897, and who, to the last hour of her life, was doing something to raise the standard of women. Think of that first organization and compare it with the 600 organizations of 16,000 members reached to-day under the able leadership of our Superintendent Mr. Putnam, and we feel truly that every woman will join with us in voting to place a memorial in McDonald Institute to the one who first suggested and organized the first Women's Institute."

I submit the following report:

In June, 1910, at the Annual Meeting of the South Wentworth Women's Institute, a Committee was appointed, consisting of Mrs. F. M. Carpenter, Mrs. Erland Lee, Mrs. J. H. McNeilly, Mrs. E. D. Smith, Miss M. Nash, together with the District President and Secretary, to formulate a plan whereby a sum of money might be raised to procure a memorial of the late Mrs. John Hoodless, of Hamilton, who at a meeting of the Farmers' Institute, on the 9th of February, 1897, suggested and urged that a Women's Institute be formed. On her proposal it was decided to have a meeting the following week to discuss the matter. At that meeting Mrs. Hoodless so ably showed the benefits likely to be derived from such meetings of women that the first Women's Institute in Canada was formed and officers elected that day, Mrs. Hoodless becoming Honorary President. A committee was formed to frame a constitution and by-laws for the Institute, which were presented and adopted at the next meeting, the membership for that year being eighty-six.

Mrs. Hoodless gave her personal attention and greatly aided in making it a success during the intervening years between its formation and affiliation with the Farmers' Institute. Also, until her death, she took a deep interest in the welfare of the same.

The Committee consider that the most appropriate thing to do, that is within their power, is to ask the Women's Institute of Ontario, at the Annual Meeting in November, 1910, to vote a request that each Women's Institute in Ontario will contribute a sum to make a fund with which to purchase an oil portrait of Mrs. Hoodless, to be hung up in the MacDonald Institute, Guelph, recording on it the fact that she was the founder of Women's Institutes in Canada.

MRS. F. M. CARPENTER.

MRS. ERLAND LEE.

MRS. J. H. McNEILLY.

MISS M. NASH.

MRS. E. D. SMITH.

MRS. C. E. HORNING, THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT OF S. WENTWORTH.

MISS CLARA M. WALKER, DISTRICT SECRETARY.

The resolution was adopted at the Convention that each branch should collect from its members whatever sum each one should be willing to give. This matter is to be attended to at the earliest convenience of each branch.