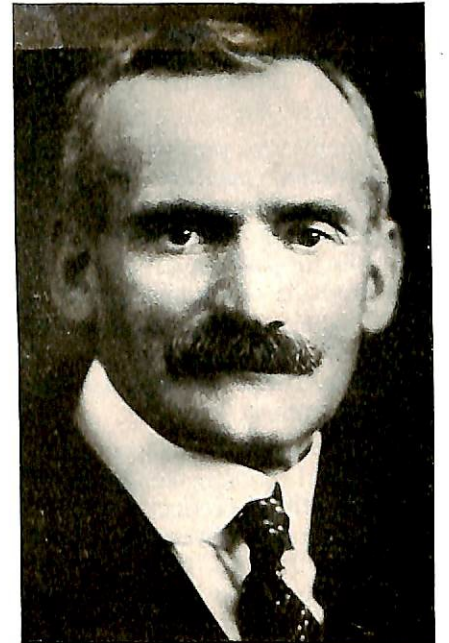


Erland Lee (Museum) Home

THE FAMILY AND THE HOME



Erland Lee

Nestled among the stately pines on Ridge Road is the beautiful white frame house which was the home of the Lee family for six generations.

James Lee, of British soldier lineage, built a log cabin on this site when he, his wife Hannah, and his family arrived with the United Empire Loyalists from Maryland in 1792. He brought some furnishings and flowering plants with him and several of these can still be found on the premises. He cut virgin pine on the property and built some of the furniture, one specific piece in the pioneer kitchen being a seven foot china cupboard, made with wooden pegs instead of nails. James Lee was accidentally killed by an axe flying from its handle at the raising of the first frame house built in Saltfleet Township. They had five sons and three daughters.

John, eldest son of James Lee, and Mary Lee were presented with the Crown Deed on their wedding day in 1801. It was John who built the back part of the frame house the same year. This part forms the nucleus of the apartment at the back of the present house. John Lee served with the fifth Lincoln Regiment in the war of 1812. John and Mary had eleven children. He died in 1875.

Abram, youngest son of John Lee, planned the present home at the top of the mountain on "Edgemont Farm" in 1860 and the front part was built to the "old house" in 1873. The present white board and batten house is of Gothic architecture. It has green shutters, two bay windows and hand-carved maple verge boards running along the gables. These were made by a fourteen-year-old apprentice, named Moore. His original pattern resembles a paper chain of maple leaves, and the job took him a whole summer to complete. Abram had married Jemima Pew in 1855. Erland was one of their three children.

Erland (now fourth generation) inherited the family farm. He was born May 3, 1864 and died June 29, 1926. Erland married Janet Robertson Chisholm (born Jan. 4, 1862, died 1940) They had five children- Marjorie, Hilda, Gordon, Frank and Alice.

Erland became a school teacher. In 1885 he received a Certificate in Agriculture given by the Agriculture and Arts Association of Ontario. He was a charter member of the Farmers' Institute and secretary for nineteen years, Saltfleet Agricultural Society secretary-treasurer for a number of years, and Saltfleet Township clerk for nearly 20 years.

Erland was a prominent, public-spirited, broad minded farmer and followed his ancestors in mixed farming with purebred Jersey cattle, fancy dairy butter, maple syrup and fruit.

Mrs Janet Lee was a teacher in Hamilton. She and Erland were married in 1889.

In 1896 Erland heard Mrs Adelaide Hoodless of Hamilton speak at the Farmers' Experimental Union, held at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph. He felt there was a need for a women's organization

Erland Lee and his wife Janet encouraged women in the area to attend a meeting at Stoney Creek, on February 19th, 1897 where Mrs. Hoodless was the guest speaker. At that meeting the first Women's Institute, was organized. Mrs Lee became one of the directors of the Stoney Creek Women's Institute.

On June 15th 1972, the Erland Lee home was purchased by F.W.I.O. as a memorial to Women's Institute beginnings..... and on the 75th Birthday of the first Women's Institute in the world.