



ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

Mr. F. W. Hodson, first superintendent of the Farmers' Institutes in Ontario reported in 1895-6: "In addition to the meetings noted of Farmers' Institutes, Miss Bessie Livingston and Miss Mary E. Miller, teachers in the Ottawa School of Cookery, were employed to visit meetings in twenty counties of Ontario. Questions on domestic economy were discussed. These were the first meetings held in Ontario under the auspices of the Farmers' Institutes, or under any branch of the Agricultural Department, where trained teachers were employed to deliver addresses. The venture was a pronounced success and its continuance promises good results."

This interest was not recognized in organized form until February 19, 1897, when the first Women's Institute was established in Saltfleet Township, Wentworth County, with the object of providing a means for farm and village women to meet regularly to discuss problems and acquire information concerning their responsibilities as homemakers and citizens. The charter members of this first organization were encouraged and assisted by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless of Hamilton and Mr. Erland Lee. The branch is now known as the Stoney Creek Women's Institute.