

## THE ERLAND LEE HOME

Nestled among stately pines, on the proposed extension of the scenic drive from Niagara along the escarpment overlooking Stoney Creek and Hamilton, with the blue of Lake Ontario beyond, is the beautiful white frame house which was the home of the Lee family for six generations. "Edgemont" is located on Ridge Road near Tapleystown, and about two miles from King St. East in Stoney Creek via the New Mountain Road.

James Lee, of British soldier lineage, built a log cabin on this site when he 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 in the home and on the lawns. There was antique glass, classic racing prints, and other treasures, while outside are yellow roses, a lovely snowball bush, tiger lilies, myrtle, and sweet Mary. He cut virgin pine on the property and built some of the furniture, one specific piece being a seven-foot china cabinet 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.

The Crown Deed was presented to John and Mary Lee on their wedding day in 1801. It was John who built the back part of the frame house in the same year. It too was built of the virgin pine lumber hewn from trees cut on the property. John Lee served with the Fifth Lincoln Regiment in the War of 1812.

Abram, son of John Lee, planned the present home at the top of Lee Mountain, on "Edgemont Farm", in 1860 and the front part was built in 1873. Abram tore down the original back part. This present white home is of Gothic architecture with the boards placed upright and the joins covered with battens. It has green shutters and handcarved verge boards. The neatly clipped cedar hedges, the large trees and trimmed lawns enhance the beauty of this vintage home. Abram's treasured diaries reveal interesting information of the progress of the locality.

Mr. Moore, as a fourteen-year-old carpenter apprentice, hand carved, from the home-grown lumber, the verge boards running along the gables and front porch. His original pattern resembles a paper chain of maple leaves. It took him all one summer to do the intricate and artistic carving which is admired by all viewers of the house.

Erland, grandson of John Lee, and Janet Chisolm Lee, with their five children were the fourth generation to occupy the Homestead. When the Farmers' Institute of South Wentworth was formed in 1882, he was one of the charter members, and during the years served as Secretary-Treasurer and President. The Farmers' Institutes were formed for the purpose of disseminating information in regard to Agriculture and for the development of local talent. Mr. Lee was a prominent, public-spirited, broadminded farmer of Saltfleet Township and followed mixed farming on the hundred acre property.

It was through the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Erland Lee that the first Women's Institute was formed, and it was on the walnut dining table in this home that the original Constitution of the organization was penned by Mrs. Lee. It is significant that this dining room table, around which the committee sat to form the Constitution remains a treasured piece of furniture in the home.

Frank, younger son of Erland, and Mrs. Lee with their two daughters carried on the tradition of the homestead. In due time much of the property was sold for residences, and at the present time there is 2.9 acres besides a five-room house and a storage barn.