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ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD
HOME ECONOMICS BRANCH

SOME FACTS ABOUT ADELAIDE HOODLESS AND ERLAND LEE

Adelaide Hunter Hoodless was born on February 27, 1857 at what is now the Adelaide Hoodless Homestead, at St. George, Ontario. She attended school in St. George. On September 15, 1881 she married John Hoodless, of Hamilton. Mr. Hoodless manufactured and sold furniture, so Mrs. Hoodless's home from the time of her marriage on was in a large, comfortable house called "Eastwood" in Hamilton.

There were four children in the Hoodless home: Edna Clarkson, who married a Mr. Bostwick; Joseph Bernard; Muriel Adelaide; and John Harold, who died at the age of eighteen months.

Mrs. Hoodless died on February 28, 1910 while making a speech in Toronto.

Soon after her marriage, Mrs. Hoodless became interested in the Hamilton Young Women's Christian Association and through it started classes for teaching Household Science for girls. She was active in helping to found the National Council of Women, the Victorian Order of Nurses, and the Lillian Massey School for Home Economics at the University of Toronto. She persuaded Sir William Macdonald, a millionaire tobacco manufacturer from Montreal, to give money for the erection of Macdonald Institute at Guelph University.

In 1897, Mrs. Hoodless was invited by Mr. Erland Lee, secretary of the South Wentworth Farmer's Institute, to speak at a Ladies' Night meeting of the Farmer's Institute at Stoney Creek. In the course of her address, Mrs. Hoodless suggested that it would be wonderful for women to have an organization through which they could study things pertaining to homemaking. Mr. Lee was interested in this idea and a meeting was arranged for February 19, 1897. At this meeting, the First Women's Institute was organized.

Mrs. Hoodless was brilliant speaker and travelled widely, promoting the teaching of Home Economics, not only in Canada but in the United States and Great Britain.

Mr. Erland Lee was born May 3, 1864 and died June 29, 1926. He lived all of his life on the farm now known as the Lee Homestead, about two miles east of Stoney Creek.

Mr. Lee attended the Lee school which had been built on the Lee farm, the Waterdown High School, and the Hamilton Collegiate Institute. He made a living by farming and was particularly interested in a special line of Jersey cattle, fancy dairy butter, maple syrup and fruit.

He was secretary-treasurer for Saltfleet Agricultural Society for twelve years and Clerk and Treasurer of Saltfleet Township for many years. As secretary of the Farmer's Institute of South Wentworth County, he attended a meeting of the Experimental Union at the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph. Here Mr. Lee heard Mrs. Hoodless of Hamilton address an almost entirely male audience. He was so impressed by Mrs. Hoodless and her plea for the teaching of Household Science to girls in schools that he invited her to speak at the Ladies' Night of the Farmer's Institute at Stoney Creek.

Erland Lee married Janet Chisholm, a school teacher from Hamilton, and they had five children - Marjorie, Hilda, Gordon, Frank, and Alice.