

Growth of Women's Institutes.

Mrs. A. Hoodless had lost a baby and she felt that as a young mother she should have had a chance to learn how to take care of babies. She started a campaign to have household science taught to girls in public schools. Grown women could not be benefited that way, so an organization of women was needed. Mrs. Hoodless talked to one hundred and one women at Stoney Creek in Saltfleet township about this. As a result, February 19, 1897, the first Women's Institute was organized. Their objectives, better homes and better community life, are still with us and we have to keep adapting them to meet the needs of the changing times.

They asked the Government for courses in Food and Cooking, Dress-making and Nursing. In 1912 they got their courses. They were the beginning of the Extension Services Courses that we have to-day.

Labour-savers were their next concern. Now, we have our electrically-run machines.

They had to learn how to make simple repairs at home, and how to take care of the business side of homemaking.

A leader's training school was needed. A first resolution was that bakers wrap bread before delivering it. To be told that unadulterated alcohol was nine parts of their favorite tonic was a shock.

The health of children was always a great interest of the Women's Institute. They were largely responsible for Medical Inspection in rural schools. Music in the schools was gained by Institutes also. Baby Clinics and Dental Clinics have been sponsored by the W.I. and also Immunization of children. Now, there is the crusade to help the retarded and the handicapped get schooling; Institute members often stir up people to get to T.B. clinics. They do something for health by promoting group Hospital Insurance.

In Agriculture, they worked for the culling of poultry.

They even took on the cleaning up of cemeteries, also, roadside weeds. Conservation has been one of their studies, too. Farm business and correspondence is often the woman's work in farming.

We need to tell our leaders what we want in Extension Services.

We are a group trying to improve our education and improve schools-to have a teacher speak at a W.I. meeting, say, on the new curriculum is a help.

Institutes have given help to Libraries.

Mothers' allowances were urged by Women's Institutes.

Getting votes for women in 1917 gave women a voice for women's needs. The first and second world wars really made citizenship a subject of concern. Citizenship and Education is one of our standing committees.

Sewing and knitting is done for the Red Cross--a tractor was given to Greece, sewing machines given to Korea, and home equipment to Ceylon.

These gifts show Institute interest in the women of the world and we have an organization "Associated Country Women of the World".

So we have our Branch, District, Area, Provincial, Federated and World Groupings of Women's Institute Women.

Our motto, "For Home and Country", is proven by what Women's Institutes do for women in need, and we hope our future Institute members will come from the girls now being so capably trained in the 4H Clubs.