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MRS. ADELAIDE HOODLESS

Life is made of so many little things; from time immemorial, peoples of all races and civilizations have devised methods and symbols for dividing their time, activities, and histories; In life itself, Shakespeare has given the world, the seven ages of man. In organizations, too, there are periods which become well defined by marked periods like quarter-century and half-century, in history.

To the Women's Institute of Ontario, the year 1947 marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of the inception of the Institute movement, the planting of the "little acorn" that was to become the mighty oak with branches spreading far and wide across the world.

The first Women's Institute in the world was organized in Saltfleet Township, Wentworth County, Ontario, Feb. 19th, 1897, in the village of Stoney Creek.

Stoney Creek in history, was the field on which was fought the decisive battle of the war 1812 - 1814, in which the American Forces were defeated on June 6th, 1813. A beautiful monument was erected and unveiled by Her Majesty Queen Mary by electric cable June 6, 1913, to commemorate 100 years of understanding and undisturbed peace between Canada and United States.

Just across the road from it is a small burying ground where the soldiers who fell in battle, Canadians & Americans sleep side by side. Here on June 26, 1926 an impressive ceremony was seen when a bronze tablet, the gift of the National Society of United States Daughters of 1812, was unveiled by the American Consul at Hamilton, and was the first of it's kind to be placed on other that American soil.....So, Stoney Creek -- having been the scene of a struggle for the preservation of Canadian life and living, was a fit setting for the outstanding historical event "The Founding of The Stoney Creek or Mother Institute".

Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless was born and raised on a farm at St. George, Ont., where in 1937 a cairn was erected to her memory by the Women's Institute of Brant County. Her love and interest was with the rural people, so she accepted the invitation of Mr. Lee to speak at a agricultural meeting, and she impressed the meeting of the necessity of women banding together after the loss of her infant son. The doctor told her this death could have been prevented, that it was the result of using impure milk, making her feel she was to blame. She felt that she would do all in her power to help others, she would endeavour to bring within the reach of all women, the education necessary to prevent similar tragedies.

In 1896 Mrs. Hoodless was instrumental in starting the First Classes in Home Economics. The real purpose or object of the first institute, was to raise the standard of homemaking. This is shown conclusively in the following statement recorded in the early minutes. "A nation cannot rise above the level of it's homes, therefore, we women must work and study to-gether to raise our homes to the highest level". There, in a nutshell, is the real purpose or object for which the Institute was organized. Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless was chosen Hon. President and while here memory is honoured and revered as the founder of Women's Institutes Movement, the conditions bringing about the foundation of the organization were made possible largely through the efforts of, and influence of Mr. Erland Lee, ably assisted by his capable young wife.