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WOMEN'S INSTITUTES CELEBRATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Great Gathering of 12,000 Institute Members Assembled at Guelph, Pay Tribute to Pioneers of 1897

Blessed by perfect weather, and successful beyond the fondest dreams of those, who for months had laboured in its organization, the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Women's Institutes of Ontario, held at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, on June 18th, was the greatest gathering of members of any one women's organization ever assembled in the Dominion of Canada. It was an occasion calling for the generous use of superlatives. Advance estimates of attendance never went higher than 6,000; actually, close to 12,000 members of Women's Institutes flocked to Guelph, to crowd the campus, create problems for the O.A.C. staff in feeding them, and to jam all the parking space with busses and cars. In all, some 185 chartered busses brought delegates to Guelph, and three special trains were pressed into service. The commissariat department of the O.A.C. worked wonders, because after preparing tea-hour bags of sandwiches and urns of coffee for some 5,000 people, they had to go into action and raise the count to 9,500. And thanks to the efforts of W. D. Tolton, O.A.C. Director of Public Relations, and his staff, they did so excellent a job of it that they earned the praise of all who were present.

The celebration had an international as well as a national flavour. Delegates were present from all over Ontario, from most of the Provinces of the Dominion, from the United States, Great Britain and New Zealand. The Canadian delegates from outside Ontario who attended were as follows: Prince Edward Island, Mrs. Julian Herring; Nova Scotia, Mrs. Elton Smith; Quebec, Mrs. W. C. Smallman and Mrs. Cameron Dow, Past President, F.W.I.C.; Alberta, Mrs. E. E. Morton and Mrs. A. B. McGarman; Manitoba, Mrs. R. Palmer, and British Columbia, Mrs. S. E. Gummow. Mrs. G. L. Brown and Mrs. W. G. Fenton from Michigan; Lady Worsley-Taylor from England and Miss Amy Kane, from New Zealand, added the international touch to the gathering.

AFTERNOON PROGRAMME

The scene as the 12,000 women assembled on the College campus for the celebration programme was bright and colourful. The blue-covered souvenir programmes in the majority of cases served as sun-shades, and added colour to the tints of the gowns of the women and the green of the grass and beautiful trees. During the noon lunch hour, hundreds of parties settled down on the campus to eat lunch in picnic style, and to wait for the opening of the proceedings at 1.30 p.m., when Mrs. Hugh Summers of Fonthill, President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario, presided over the afternoon of celebration.

After the opening speech by Mrs. Summers, in which she expressed the pride of all Institute members in the celebration of 50 years of useful service, Mrs. John McCulloch of Brampton, F.W.I.O. Secretary, read a message of greeting from the Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada. Mayor Gordon L. Rife of Guelph officially welcomed the guests to the Royal City.

Hon. Thomas L. Kennedy, Minister of Agriculture, brought greetings from his department. "This is a sight those sitting on this platform will never forget," said Mr. Kennedy. "Many of the amenities of life which have been introduced into our farming community are a direct result of the persistent efforts of the clear-thinking women who, down through the years, have given leadership to the Women's Institute movement. Better schools, better health services, better community facilities, have been developed because there were Women's Institutes to see the need for them and work unceasingly for them. W. R. Reek, President of the O.A.C., gave a warm message of welcome to the delegates.

Anna P. Lewis, Director of the W.'s I. Branch and Home Economics Service, said that in the fifty years of Women's Institute history, the service had improved but the original aims had not changed. She declared that when the country women of the world work together for the common good, they could determine the course of world progress and history.

"We honour the work of the pioneers, but we cannot stand still," was the message of Mrs. Cameron Dow, Past President, F.W.I.C. "We must move forward. As the home is, so is the nation. We must strengthen our home life. We are glad to have our Canadian citizenship—but we want to know how to do more for our country, if necessary to be a thorn in the flesh of our government, as for example urging the immediate implementation of the Archambault report on penal reform."

FROM OTHER PROVINCES

Then the Provinces were heard, with Mrs. S. E. Gummow speaking for British Columbia, Mrs. E. E. Morton for Alberta, Mrs. R. Palmer for Manitoba, Mrs. W. C. Smallman for Quebec, Mrs. Elton Smith for Nova Scotia and Mrs. Julian Herring for Prince Edward Island, Mrs. Morton, in her brief speech, said, "Canada, especially in the West, is a melting-pot of nationalities, and I hope the Women's Institute can be a melting-pot of democracy. I hope through this organization we can break down barriers between the East and the West, both learning to give up a bit, and not to be bitter when we have to give it up." Mrs. McCulloch read messages from New Brunswick and Saskatchewan, which were not represented.

Bringing a message from the Mother Institute at Stoney Creek, Mrs. W. E. Walker, one of its past presidents, and also past president of the F.W.I.O. and the F.W.I.C., paid tribute to the pioneers. "The women of the first Institute at Stoney Creek," she said, "were women of rare ability, culture and charm. In fifty years the Institutes have accomplished a great deal, and much of this is due to the solid framework laid by the founders. Their objectives were so good that they appealed to the women of all countries.

Mrs. Laura Rose Stephen, first government lecturer and organizer, sent out on Institute promotion work 47 years ago, and now in her 83rd year, spoke in a reminiscent mood,



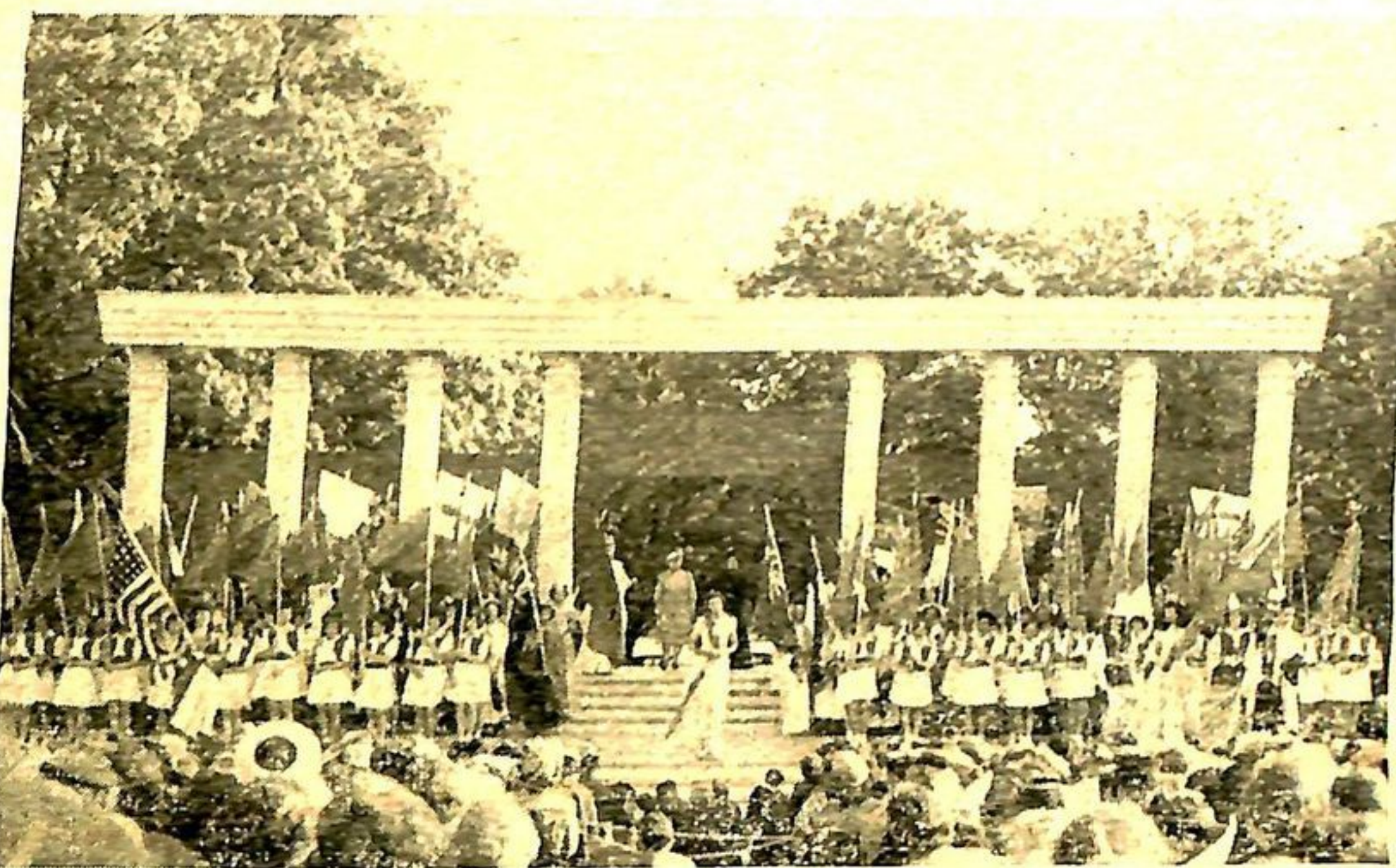
CROWD OF 12,000 VIEWS PAGEANT

With the beautiful administration building of the O.A.C. as a background, this photograph, taken from the platform, shows part of the crowd at the Women's Institute 50th Anniversary Celebration.



ANOTHER VIEW OF W.I. CELEBRATION CROWD

Above is another picture from the rear, showing the huge crowd which enjoyed the pageant of Women's Institute history.



THE GRAND FINALE OF THE PAGEANT

With representatives of the provinces, the nations of the world, and of youth massed on the stage for the final scene of the W.I. pageant, Miss Anna P. Lewis, as the spirit of the future, takes up the challenge that comes from the part.

and advised that leadership must be sound to build for the future. Chancellor G. Gilmour of McMaster University, brought greetings from the

Canadian Council of Churches. Mrs. Mrs. F. G. Miller of Hamilton, a past president of the Provincial Council (Continued on Page 2)

well on wind instruments.

Rev. L. E. Wilton, Tillsonbu

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