

TWEEDSMUIR HISTORY

Compiled by

KINGSMILL-MAPLETON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

1946 to 1951

VOLUME 1 ORIGINAL

TWEEDSMUIR HISTORY

Compiled by

THE KINGSMILL - MAPLETON

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

During

1946 to 1951.

Typed in 1952 by  
Mrs. R.L. Sweet and  
Mrs. Hugh Duncan.

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Volume - 1

I N D E X - 1946-1951

TWEEDSMUIR HISTORY

(Compiled by Kingsmill-Mapleton Branch of the Women's Institute)

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MRS. ADELAIDE HOODLESS  
FOUNDER OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES.

Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, in a day and age, when women's place was held to be in the home and not on the public platform, had been aroused by a personal tragedy, to the great need for home making. Mrs. Hoodless' little son had died at the age of eighteen months, due to her own lack of knowledge of food and nutrition.

Out of this tragedy in her life, came her determination to save the children of other mothers from a similar fate, a determination to carry the light to rural women and to dedicate her life to the task.

At a Farmers' Institute Convention, held at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, Mrs. Hoodless was asked to speak and made her first plea for the education of rural women in the basic principles of home making. She spoke of the home as the foundation of the nation and made a plea for the establishment of home economic classes and household science classes in rural schools and for an education that would fit women for their task as home builders of the nation and mothers of the future.

Her message made a deep impression on Mr. Erland Lee of Stoney Creek and upon his arrival home from the convention, Mr. Lee arranged for a meeting of the women in his home community, to hear Mrs. Hoodless' ideas for the formation of an organization of rural women.

ESSEX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMORIAL TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Thirty five women were expected to attend this meeting; but there were a hundred and one, besides Mr. Lee, when the gathering assembled in Squires's Hall at Stoney Creek. After hearing Mrs. Hoodless' stirring address, an election of officers took place and the first Women's Institute in the world came into being that February 19th, 1897.

The torch, taken up by Mrs. Hoodless, was soon passed on. Government support was soon obtained for the organization and by the turn of the century, interested organizers were carrying the Institute purpose to rural communities, in all sections of Ontario.

On January 3rd, 1902, a branch was organized in Aylmer, Elgin County. Mrs. J.C. Dance, Kingsmill and Mrs. Denzil Finch, Mapleton attended the meetings, travelling with horse and buggies, the distance of six miles. As they became interested in the Institute movement, they felt the need for such an organization in their local community. The idea was shared by others and later became a reality, when on February 9th, 1907, a branch was organized at Mapleton.

HISTORY  
of  
KINGSMILL - MAPLETON BRANCH  
of the  
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE  
Compiled  
by  
Florence (Finch) Ms. Gregor  
1951



Home of Mr. and Mrs. John Brodie, south of Mapleton, where the Kingsmill-Mapleton Women's Institute was first organized on February 9th, 1907.



On February 9th, 1907, a branch of the Women's Institute was organized at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Brodie, south of Mapleton. It was first known as the Mapleton Women's Institute, but owing to its rapid growth and the extension of the territory, the name became changed, in 1912, to 'Kingsmill-Mapleton' Women's Institute.

Mrs. Isaac Pritchard of Aylmer was the Government speaker. In the early days, the sick were cared for in the homes, so as a special feature on this program, Mrs. Pritchard demonstrated the proper way of changing a patient's bed. At the same hour as this inaugural meeting, the men folk were enjoying a Farmer's Institute meeting in the school house.

After organization the problem was how to get members to attend the meetings. This problem was solved only by visiting the homes and urging the women to bring their home problems to the meetings, where they could be discussed, as the motto of the Women's Institute is - 'For Home and Country'.

When the women became interested and realized the need for this organization, they became wonderful workers. Interesting and helpful programs were given, including improved methods of raising poultry, exchanging recipes,

demonstrations on dressmaking, home nursing etc.

Attending that organization meeting were :- Mrs. Denzil Finch, Mrs. David White, Mrs. John Brodie, Mrs. J.C. Dance, Lillian Dance, Mrs. Ansel Bray, Maud Bray, Mrs. Culver Finch, Florence Finch and Leota Cloes, teacher of the Mapleton School. At the time of the writing of this history, of those present at the inaugural meeting, only Mrs. Florence (Finch) Mc. Gregor is living.

Mrs. Denzil Finch was elected the first president of the society with Leota Cloes, secretary. The meetings were to be held the first Thursday of each month. This society is unique in the fact that down through the years, no president has served more than one year, in that capacity. From 1907 to 1951, the presidents are as follows :-

Mrs. Denzil Finch, Mrs. David White, Mrs. J.C. Dance, Miss Mary King, Mrs. Lewis Mc. Kenny, Mrs. James Moore (Sr), Mrs. J.M. Cline, Mrs. Charles King, Mrs. David Caughell, Mrs. John Bray, Mrs. Mahlon Bray, Mrs. Roy Charlton, Mrs. James Drake, Mrs. Arthur Moore, Mrs. Bruce Brown, Mrs. Roy Mc. Gregor, Mrs. Carlton Dance, Mrs. Skene Smith, Mrs. John Evert, Mrs. William Orris, Mrs. Hiram Peer, Mrs. Neil Curtis, Mrs. Walter Kunz, Mrs. John Smith, Mrs. James Moore (Jr) Mrs. W.H. Legg, Mrs. Sam Legg, Mrs. Elmer Mossey, Mrs. J.C. Jenkins, Mrs. Claude Hoover, Mrs. Wesley Phillips, Mrs. Charles Cline, Mrs. Bruce Roher, Mrs. Ross Evert, Mrs. Robert Cline, Mrs. Wilfred Herbert, Mrs. Ivan Warren, Mrs. John Donald, Mrs. Henry Legg, Mrs. Wilfred Faulds, Mrs. Ralph Stover, Mrs. Russell Armes, Mrs. Francis Cline, Mrs. Harry Carter.

The early history of the Kingsmill-Mapleton Institute is a history of the surrounding community. To read the minutes, is to see pass in review, the dear ones who have now passed on, who gave so freely of their time and labour. It is to see the children and grandchildren of those pioneers in the movement, grown to womanhood and shouldering the responsibilities of carrying on the



work. The letters of appreciation, read meeting after meeting, tell a story of tragedies, sickness, deaths or the moving away of some loyal member. They also tell of joys, as well - births, marriage, recoveries from illness and accidents. It has often been because of the ceaseless labour and never failing interest of every member, supported by the ever willing husbands and men folk, that the Institute has, not only survived, but has gone steadily ahead, doing finer and better things each year.

From 1907 to 1951 the secretaries have been :-

Miss Leota Cloes, Mrs. John Brodie, Mrs. Charles Brooks, Essie Hoover (1913)  
 Mary Parks (1914), Florence Finch (1915), Annie Gent (1916), Florence Finch  
 (1917), Mabel Bray (1918), Mrs. Carlton Dance (1919), Mrs. Mahlon Bray (1920-23)  
 Mrs. Orman Derrough (1924-25), Mrs. Mabel (Bray) Smith (1926), Myrtle Paddon  
 (1927-29), Gertrude <sup>Evert</sup> (1930), Mrs. John Evert (1931-33), Alta Holmes (1934-35)  
 Alta (Holmes) Dobbie (1936-37), Mrs. Robert Abell (1938-40), Mrs. J. C. Jenkins  
 (1941-42), Mrs. Ralph Stover (1943-45), Mrs. Bert Foster (1946-48),  
 Mrs. Alvin Willsey (1949-51).

In November 1932, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Evert, the twenty-fifth anniversary was observed. This was an outstanding event, with the first two presidents, Mrs. Denzil Finch and Mrs. David White present to review the early history of the society. Since the records prior to 1914 are not available, this was valuable information.

The first twenty-five years history of the Institute fell into three main divisions - (a) Before World War #I (1907-14), (b) During the war (1914-18), (c) After the war (1919-1932).

Before the war, good work was done, good meetings were held, concerts and plays presented, flowers and food sent to the sick, quilts, clothing and fuel provided for the needy.

During the war

During the war, whenever a letter was received from Mr. George O. Putnam, (Superintendent for Ontario for 1904 - 1934) asking the Institute to do what they could toward the war fund and for supplies for soldiers, our women were ready to do their bit. The stirring patriotism and valiant courage of the women never lagged through all those trying years. They arose to the occasion then, as women of all countries and ages have done, in time of war. The organization of the Institute, combined with the Red Cross gave them an avenue, through which to function systematically.

By January 1915, they were giving recipes for eggless, milkless, butterless cakes. They were having special meetings in order to make up boxes of clothing for overseas.

Every possible method was used to raise funds for war work - concerts, food sales, contributions, Red Cross buttons were sold to members, sewing and knitting was done in earnest, many pairs of socks were sent to the boys overseas, together with Christmas boxes, consisting of cake, cookies and smokes. The British Red Cross canvass was made in the neighbourhood and \$ 75.00 was raised in one day. The Institute undertook to support a Belgium family and also a prisoner of war.

A gift of \$ 68.92 from the Mapleton Literary Society was used for patriotic work. In September 1917, the members desired to go on record that they would accede to the wishes of the government, regarding the conservation of food, even before these demands had been made fully known.

In May 1918, it was decided to accept the conditions of the Red Cross, in establishing a canning centre, for the preservation of surplus fruits, vegetables and fowl. Mr. Brodie kindly loaned the butter room of his factory, for this project. Donations of money and produce came from Middlemarch, Sparta, Luton, Salem, Lyons, Rodney, Belmont and Harrietsville Institute branches.

and the surrounding district.

Celia E. Bluet of London was supervisor. Together with the untiring efforts of the committee and helpers, the contribution of the canning centre for overseas, was :- 6313 cans or 18,939 pounds of canned fruit, vegetables, chicken, etc., which was valued at \$ 4081.60.

Garden parties were held to increase the funds. The first was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Ashton, Kingsmill, August 11th, 1916 which netted \$ 53.26.

The second one was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Bray, Mapleton, August 21st 1917, with a balance of \$ 115.53. Then two monster garden parties on the farm of Bardley Finch, were held in 1918 and 1919 with receipts of \$ 723.94 and \$ 1,027.24 and expenses of \$ 272.74 and \$ 443.41 respectively.

With this money, the Institute was enabled to make a contribution to the Memorial Hospital, St. Thomas, the Children's Aid Society, St. Thomas, and other relief work and worthy causes. Another garden party was held in a corner field of the Walter Kunz farm, in July, 1924, when \$ 165.00 was realized. In August, in the corner field of the Abell farm at Crossley-Hunter, another garden party was held, when \$ 363.36 was realized. The interesting feature of the program for this event was a ladies' choral group, trained by Carman Learn especially for the occasion.

The third period of this history began when people were beginning to adjust themselves to peace again, and looking to the organization for self improvement, charity, education and community welfare. Donations of games, pictures and victrolas were made to the three schools (Kingsmill, Mapleton and Crossley-Hunter) in the district. Oratorical contests were held and prizes given for school fairs. In 1935, a donation of \$ 30.00 for music to be taught in the schools, was made.

Another worthwhile work, undertaken by the Institute was the improving and

beautifying of the Mapleton cemetery. In 1921-22 and 23, Decoration Day was held. In 1927, the women of the Institute were invited by the cemetery board to join them in a 'bee' at the Mapleton Cemetery to help beautify the place. A generous donation was granted by the society and a new fence was erected. Paint was purchased for the fence and gate and the women did the painting themselves.

In October the same year, a Garden Day was held, when shrubs and plants, collected from the home gardens were planted in the cemetery. The women looked after the care and upkeep of these flower beds until a caretaker could be obtained. In July a donation of \$50.00 was given to the cemetery board and since then, the Disciple Church and the Mapleton Cemetery Boards have each received a donation of \$ 5.00<sup>annually</sup> toward the upkeep of the two cemeteries.

In 1914, a critic was appointed, hoping to improve the conduction of the meetings. Miss Eljiva Moore and Miss Maud Bray acted in this capacity.

In 1916, the first 'Grandmother's ' program was held at the November meeting.



A Grandmothers' meeting, held at the home of Mrs. S.L.Parks, in 1932.

Left to right :-  
Mrs. J. Leslie, Mrs. J. Chute, Mrs. D.O. White, Mrs. J. Legg, Mrs. C. Butterworth, Mrs. E. Holmes, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S. Garton, Mrs. S.L. Parks, Mrs. M. Taylor.

Those taking part were :- Mrs. J.C. Dance, Mrs. David White, Mrs. Denzil Finch, Mrs. Sam Garton, Mrs. Ancel Bray, Mrs. John R. Charlton, Mrs. Albert Hoover and Mrs. Archibald. Grandmothers meetings have continued through the years and are



Front row, seated :Mrs Hiram Peer, Mrs.C.Butterworth,  
Mrs.Thurman Legg, Mrs.Walter Kunz.

Back row : Mrs.J.Leslie, Mrs.Roy Legg, Mrs.W.H.Legg,  
Mrs.Lorne Grandy, Mrs.Roy Mc.Gregor, Mrs.Arthur Moore.





The Speakers Platform for the Open Air  
Sunday Service of the Kingsmill Mapleton  
Womens Institute held in the grounds of  
the Crossley Hunter School. 1942.

(8C)

A Class at Crossley Hunter.



front Row - Jane Taylor, Jean Meikle, Lula Ashton, Jennie Betterly,  
Will Holmes      Back Row - George Jenkins, Beatrice Ashton, Lily  
Betterley, Grace Appleford, Jean Appleford, Glen Taylor.



The Crossley Hunter School before 1912. (1911)

*A New School Built 1911.*

one of the highlights of the years program.



This group  
attended the  
August meeting  
in 1910, at the  
home of Mrs. Roy  
Charlton.

At the right end of the back row, is Mrs. Denzil Finch, the first President (1907) The central figure, seated, is Mrs. John Brodie, at whose home, the Kingsmill-Mapleton Institute was organized in 1907. Mrs. Brodie was secretary in 1908.

Back row - left to right - Mrs. Roy Charlton, Mabel (Dance) Elves, Mrs. Charles King, Mrs. Paul Leathers, Mabel (White) Campbell, Mary King, Mrs. J. C. Dance, ..?.., Bertha King, Mrs. Frank Weaver, Maud Bray, ..?.., Mollie Legg, Mrs. John Evert (with baby), Mabel (Bray) Smith, Mrs. D. O. White, Clara (Silver) Baxter, Mrs. D. Finch,

Middle row :- Mrs. Wesley Brooks, Mrs. William Adams, Mrs. Silver, ...?... Mrs. John Brodie, Florence (Finch) Mc. Gregor, Velma Mc. Taggart,

Front row :- Mrs. J. Cline, Mrs. D. Britton, Mrs. Charles Brooks, Alma Silver, Stella (Mc. Taggart) Johnson, Myrtle Charlton, Mrs. Cecil Legg.

The two children are Clara Finch and Ervin Charlton.

In 1927 a cook book was published and an autograph quilt made, both of which realized splendid sums of money.



In 1930, an outdoor, Sunday service was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Moore, with Rev. Jesse Arnup D.D., Toronto, as guest speaker. This service was much enjoyed by the surrounding community and has been a yearly event since. 1930-31-32 and 36 services were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Moore, 1933 was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Holmes; 1934-35 was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Laidlaw; 1937-38-39-40-41-42-44-47 at the Crossley-Hunter school grounds; 1945-48 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Donald; 1946 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Stover; 1943-49-51 were in the Crossley-Hunter church and 1950 was in the Church of Christ, Mapleton.

An interesting feature, through the years, has been the demonstrations, contests and roll calls, with prizes twice a year, given to those answering the most roll calls during that period. Some of the early demonstrations were:- Salt yeast bread by Mrs. Solomon Parks in 1916; a demonstration of angel cake making by Mrs. Thomas Hammond of Aylmer. In 1931, Mrs. Archie Robb of St. Thomas, demonstrated sewing, showing how to make an inset pocket, cording, mitred corners on linen and taffeta silk flowers.

Bulb, seed and plant exchanges, with the idea of beautifying homes, have created interest in flowers and made gardening more interesting.

Improved health conditions have always been foremost in the Institute program. In August 1919, Mrs. Carlton Dance presented a paper on the 'Importance of Medical Inspection for Rural Schools', after which a discussion took place and a motion made to work on this project. In January 1921, a letter was received from the Department, stating that medical inspection of schools in East Elgin would begin. First Aid kits have been placed in the schools and many worth while addresses on health topics, given.

## II.

In 1938, a first aid and home nursing course was sponsored by the Institute and a class of eight received their certificates from the St. John's Ambulance Corps at St. Thomas:- Mrs. J. House, Mrs. Ralph Stover, Mrs. M. Ashford, Mrs. Earl Bailey, Mrs. Ross Evert, Miss Hazel Simpson, Miss Ruby Taylor. Mrs. C. Smith

Miss Bess McDermid was appointed Superintendent of Women's Institutes and served from 1934 to 1939. During her term of office, she devoted her energies to raising the standards of home making to the highest level. She looked upon home making as a science and upon Women's Institutes as a means of furthering adult education in everything that would assist women in the noble vocation of home making. The educational program of the Women's Institute was placed on co-operative basis, offering a definite outline of study in Home Economics, in all its phases.

Local Leader training schools were provided for members appointed to act as leaders and they in turn, to conduct local study groups. Kingsmill Mapleton Branch, always ready to improve their knowledge, took advantage of this opportunity and sent leaders to a training school at Aylmer. In 1936 - Mrs. Carlton Dance - 'Refinishing furniture', conducted by Miss Esther Slicker; Mrs. Roy Mc.Gregor - 'Buymanship' - conducted by Miss Edith Collins - fall of 1936. In 1938, Mrs. H.G. Taylor and Mrs. Sam Legg - 'Meat Cooking', conducted by Miss Gertrude Grey.

These courses created a new joy in home making and a keen desire for further knowledge. The girls also were provided for, with Junior Home Makers Clubs. The leaders of these were :-

Spring 1935 - Mrs. Clarence Garton - 'Sewing'.  
Fall 1935 - Mrs. W.H. Legg, with Mrs. R. McGregor, assistant 'Dressing up Home Grown Vegetables'.