

# THOMAS LAIRD KENNEDY

Thomas Laird Kennedy was born on August 15, 1878 on a farm near the Dundas and Tomken (named after him) intersection in Cooksville/Dixie. He was educated locally and at the University of Toronto.

During the First World War he served with distinction and later attained the rank of colonel in the militia. Most of his life he was a fruit grower, concerned with farming and rural affairs and was highly respected by his fellow farmers. In 1919, when he was in his early forties, he was elected to the provincial parliament as Conservative member for Peel. He retained this seat, with the exception of one term, until his retirement in 1958. Although he often said he wanted to be out of politics, he held a genuine desire to serve and did so in various capacities for about 54 years for the people of Peel. Kennedy served as Minister of Agriculture from 1930-1934 and from 1943 until 1952.



In 1948 in recognition of his long public service, he became interim Premier of Ontario when the incumbent, George Alexander Drew died, and Kennedy remained in office until 1949 when Leslie Miskampbell Frost became leader of the party. Kennedy's service and his great personal popularity earned him the affectionate title of "Old Man Ontario." He died on February 13, 1959.

On Friday October 4, 1974 in a ceremony sponsored by the Mississauga Historical Society (now Mississauga South Historical Society), the Archaeological and Historical Sites Board of the Province of Ontario erected a commemorative plaque honouring T. L. Kennedy, on land that was once part of the Kennedy farm.