

GEORGE ALEXANDER DREW
1894 - 1973

George Alexander Drew was born in Guelph on May 7, 1894, and was the first of five children of John J. Drew and Annie I. S. Gibbs. He attended Central Public School, as well as the GCVI and graduated 9th in his class in 1909. After high school, Drew attended Upper Canada College where he participated in the choir. He was also a member of the glee, debating, rugby and cross country clubs. After two years, he entered an arts program at the University of Toronto. In 1918, he was admitted to Osgoode Hall Law School where he completed an annual term.

During World War I, Drew dedicated several years to the Canadian Army, serving as a Lieutenant in the 4th brigade, Canadian Artillery. After being severely wounded, he returned to Guelph, was promoted to Captain, and commanded the 64th Depot Battery. In 1921, he became Provisional Major of Guelph's 16th Battery.

At the age of 30 in 1924, Drew was elected Guelph's youngest mayor. In 1926, after serving a single year term, he left Guelph to continue his political career. He was Master of the Supreme Court in 1929, and from 1931 to 1934 he was Chair of Ontario's Security Commissions. He became leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party in 1938, and led his party to victory in the provincial election in 1943. He resigned as Premier five years later, and became the leader of the federal Progressive Conservative Party. For the next eight years, Drew served as the Official Leader of the Opposition. In 1957 he was appointed Canadian Ambassador to London, England.

In 1936, Drew married Fiorenza Johnson, daughter of Edward Johnson, another famous graduate of the GCVI. They had one son and one daughter.

George Drew lived a long and productive life and died January 4, 1973.

Sophie Sibley
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