

COUSINS COTTAGE – ‘EDMEREL’

Edward Lancelot (Ed) Cousins was born in Toronto in 1883. He was the only living son of Edward John Cousins and Rebecca Douglas nee Wiggins. He attended St. Andrews College and was an honours graduate of the University of Toronto with a bachelor of arts and science in 1907 and civil engineering in 1922. Ed was a consulting engineer and general manager for the Toronto Harbour Commissioners. On his father's death in 1938 he assumed the presidency of Wilson & Cousins*.



His early engineering experience was with the Grand Trunk Railway, then for a time at City Hall where he was assistant city engineer, and also prepared plans for a rapid transit subway system from 1910 until 1912.

In World War I Ed Cousins served with the Imperial Munitions Board. In World War II he was appointed wartime administrator with headquarters in Halifax with fully authority to control and supervise all Canadian Atlantic ports except those of the navy, army and air force and the RCMP. He was made a member of the Order of the British Empire and in the Dominion Day Honour List of 1946 made Commander, Civil Division, Order of the British Empire. Marine Terminal 35 in Toronto built in the early 1960s is named the E.L. Cousins Docks in his honour.

Ed Cousins married Gertrude Merele Farrell in 1910 in Toronto. Their only son Douglas Farrell was born in 1915. Like his father he attended St. Andrew's College and in 1940 joined the Queen's Own Rifles and served overseas, transferring to the 48th Highlanders in June of 1943. He was severely wounded in Italy and was invalided home early in 1944. Douglas married Bobbe Phillips in 1942 and died childless in 1953.



Work began on the cottage "Edmerel" in 1942 and the grounds, including a Victory Garden, were completed in 1944. A paragraph in the *Brighton Ensign* of July 20, 1944 states "Messrs. J.M. Wilson & E.L. Cousins continue to make additional improvements to the grounds surrounding their palatial country residences on the lake shore."

Merele Cousins died suddenly at the cottage in the summer of 1954. Edward Cousins died in 1961, leaving a second wife Marjorie Score (of whom no details are yet known). The Cousins family is buried in Park Lawn Cemetery, Toronto.

The cottage is currently used during the summer for the Nature Centre, and in November for Christmas at Presqu'île.

**The owners of Stonehedge and Edmerel were life long friends. Their fathers Thomas D. Wilson and Edward John Cousins had founded the company of Wilson & Cousins in Toronto 1881. They manufactured soda water machinery and bottlers' supplies, besides being brass finishers and machinists. At the time they were the only manufacturers of water meters in Canada. [The company, despite being sold, going bankrupt, etc. is still in business under the same name making interior fire protection equipment.]*

Researched by Joan Selwood for The Friends of Presqu'île and Ontario Parks.