

**MABELLE LEE
McCLINTICK
KENNEDY
1887-1981**



**COMMUNITY
AND
POLITICAL
SERVICE**

When a young girl came from Missouri to Oklahoma Territory in 1891 with her family in two covered wagons, her grandmother was sure the family would be killed by outlaws or scalped by Indians along the way. However, little Mabelle said it was “a picnic all the way, as they bought produce from farmers as they travelled and camped by fresh streams. I was sorry when it was over.”

Mabelle Lee McClintick was born in September 1887 in Novelty, Missouri. She was christened after her aunts, May and Belle, but when she started school, she couldn't make the 'y' correctly. Her mother told her a child should have a voice in how she is named. “From now on, you are Mabelle.”

They disliked the wind and blowing sand of Enid, so they resettled in Ralston in Osage County. Mabelle eventually returned to Missouri to attend Oaklawn Girls' Boarding School. On a trip home from Oakland College, she met Edmund Kennedy, a young Kansas City banker, who had come to Oklahoma for a visit.

They married in 1908 and moved to Pawhuska where Edmund bought the National Bank of Commerce in 1909. She raised five children before he died in 1936, leaving her with the bank and five ranches in Osage County.

After his tragic death, Mabelle was determined to continue what her husband had started, and decided to take classes in banking and ranch management to learn business methods. She received a banking degree in 1937, and graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1938.

She soon became mayor of Pawhuska, starting her political career. She was also a delegate to four national Democratic conventions and served as Democratic committeewoman from Oklahoma. Mabelle met President Harry Truman at one of the political conventions and joined his “Whistle Stop” campaign when he was running for re-election in 1948 after serving out Franklin Roosevelt's unexpired term.

She later served on Truman's inaugural committee and was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in 1951, the second woman to hold such a position. He later appointed her to the Goodwill Commission to Brazil, a position that carried the rank of Ambassador.

The woman who became known as “the grand dame of Oklahoma politics”, Mabelle was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 1965. She was deeply touched when a 32-mile stretch of U. S. 60 was named “Mabelle Kennedy Highway” in 1975, the first in Oklahoma to be named for a woman. The opening of the new highway climaxed a 23-year fight to improve the road between Ponca City and Pawhuska.

In 1980, Mabelle received the fourth annual Pioneer Woman Award from Governor George Nigh. “She was highly deserving and a natural recipient because of her true pioneer heritage and lifelong civic involvement.” Mabelle died in January 1981 at age 93 in Pawhuska.

Through her service in many political and governmental roles, Mabelle Kennedy motivated and encouraged many people of her time and was a true example that hard work pays off.