

255 Stewart Avenue: 1900 & 1931

This property is prominently located at the corner of Stewart Avenue and Mt Benson Street. The low stone and concrete wall and cut stone gateposts that front onto Stewart Avenue were part of an earlier Queen Anne style mansion centred in the middle of this block and built in 1900.



The current residence at 255 Stewart Avenue was built in 1931 and is an excellent example of the English Cottage Style that was very popular in Nanaimo during the interwar period.

Design features representative of this style include the asymmetric floor plans and rolled eave roof treatments, designed to simulate the appearance of thatch. Other notable design features include jerkin-headed and steeply pitched gable roofs and early use of rough stucco siding.

The building is surrounded by mature, sympathetic landscaping which features a row of Copper Beech trees located on the adjoining Mt. Benson Street right-of-way.

Who lived at 255 Stewart?

1. **William Sloan and Flora McGregor Glaholm and Catherine McDougall 1900-1933**
2. **James Jarvis Scales and Williamina (Minnie) Melville 1934-1942**
3. **Stanley Victor William Isaacson and Florence Elizabeth Kilburn 1945-1974**

1. WILLIAM SLOAN & FLORA MCGREGOR GLAHOLM & CATHERINE FISKE MCDUGALL 1900-1933

William Sloan (1867-1928) was born in Wingham, Ontario on Sept 10 1867 the son of Robert John Sloan (1838-1919) and Elizabeth Laidlaw McMichael (1842-1914). In the *1871 Canada Census*, William was 3 years old and living in Hullett Township, Huron North, Ontario with his mother, Elizabeth Sloan and siblings Elisabeth, age 8 and Margaret, age 1 year. His father, Dr Robert John Sloan, was attending medical school at Michigan University at the time of the census. In the *1881 Canada Census*, William, age 13 and his father, mother and sister Elizabeth were living in Seaforth, Huron Centre.

Sometime after 1881, his father took a position in Shanghai, China and young William joined him after his graduation from the Seaforth high school. William remained in China for two years, working as a clerk in the Customs department. In 1887, at the age of 20, he came to British Columbia ending up in Nanaimo where he entered the dry goods business with a Walter C Scott from PEI under the firm name of Sloan and Scott.

Walter Charles Scott was born in Charlottetown, Jan 6 1862, the son of Robert Scott (1829-1908), a carriage builder, and Annie Elizabeth Snelgrove (1832-1898). Walter graduated from Prince of Wales College in PEI and in the *1881 Canada Census*, he was living at home in Charlottetown and working as a clerk. He came to BC in 1888 and married Lucy Jones on Feb 23 1898. He died in Vancouver as manager of the Avenue Theatre on Jul 17 1928 at the age of 65.

In the *1891 Canada Census*, at the age of 23, William Sloan was rooming with Walter Scott in the Albert/Dunsmuir/Wallace Street area not too far away from the Glaholm family on Albert Street. On Oct 24 1891, he married Flora McGregor Glaholm (1871-1915) in Nanaimo. She was the daughter of Thomas Watson

Glaholm (1845-1899), a prosperous Nanaimo merchant and Margaret McGregor (1854-1942). Thomas Glaholm was from England and had initially worked in the mines before becoming a teamster.

Then, in 1879, he became partner in A.R. Johnston & Co., another Townsite resident. Flora's mother had the distinction of being the first white child born in Nanaimo so their family was steeped in community history. By 1894, William Sloan and Walter Scott were operating their dry goods business at 49 Commercial Street while William and Flora were living on Robarts Street. They had a son, Gordon McGregor Sloan, born on May 16 1898 in Nanaimo. The advertisement is from the Nanaimo Free Press of Dec 13 1895.



In 1896, gold was discovered in the Klondike River area of the Yukon and by September 1897, over 20,000 men had headed to the gold fields among them William Sloan who is said to have made the second largest fortune of the gold rush at Eldorado Creek.

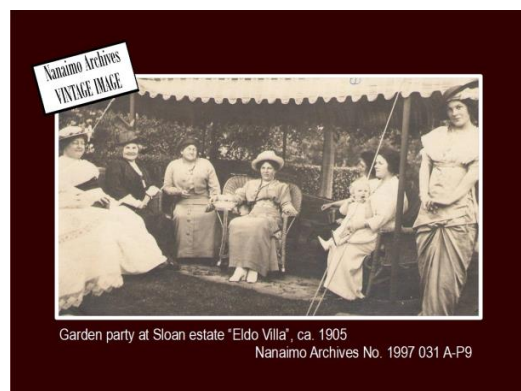
When he returned to Nanaimo on Jul 18 1897 with \$85,000 in his pocket, Sloan purchased Block 5 on Stewart Avenue between Mount Benson and Bryden and built an elaborate late-Victorian grand mansion designed by William Evans Blackmore (1841-1904) of Vancouver, which he named 'Eldo Villa'. The Sloan house and gardens were the height of sophistication in Nanaimo at the turn of the 20th century.



William Blackmore was a well-known architect in Vancouver and, given his wealth, Sloan was probably not an unknown commodity so the house construction made the Vancouver social notes: "W. Blackmore, architect of Vancouver, has been

in Nanaimo for a couple of days in connection with Wm. Sloane's residence on Newcastle town-site. The stone basement is completed with the upper construction in course of erection. With favorable weather the roof will be on inside of three weeks. M. S. Hose, also of Vancouver, has the contract for the plumbing and heating of this fine residence. He accompanied Mr. Blackmore. They returned to Vancouver to-day."¹

In the 1900-1901 Henderson BC Gazetteer and Directory, William Sloan is listed as "retired" at his home in Newcastle Townsite. That didn't last long as in 1900, Sloan displayed an interest in politics and ran as a federal Liberal candidate for Vancouver district but was defeated. Four years later he received the nomination for Comox-Atlin and was elected by acclamation serving under Sir Wilfred Laurier. Sloan's House of Commons questions included inquiring as to when the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway to Prince Rupert would start construction; what was the government going to do about American companies encroaching on the halibut industry in the Hecate Straits; and what was happening with the British naval base at Esquimalt.



¹ Vancouver Province, Nov 11 1898

In the election of 1908, Sloan was once more acclaimed as member for the district but resigned on Jan 21 1909 at Laurier's suggestion to provide a seat for William Templeman owner of the *Victoria Daily Times*. Templeman, who had already been appointed to the Senate in 1897, must have been some kind of major asset to Sir Wilfrid since it wasn't the first time that a seat had been opened up for him. The public reason given was that Mr. Templeman had been the Minister of Mines in the previous government and that *"a very general desire has been expressed in British Columbia, by Liberals and Conservatives alike, that I should remain in office to carry on the work of the mines department, particularly in the interests of the province."*² It was also noted that Mr. Templeman was suffering from a painful attack of lumbago, but was otherwise in the best of health as he and William Sloan headed to Comox to campaign for the by-election. What was not said, in local papers, was that William Sloan would take Templeman's seat in the Senate. As reported in the *Quebec Chronicle*: *"For that's the deal. The transaction is a fairly good one for William Sloan, ex MP. It turns his five years' franchise into a life tenure. Freed from worry about his old age, he will probably live to be eighty-two years old now. He has thirty-eight years to go. He will draw in that time \$95,000 and travelling expenses – quite a competent fortune. Yes, William Sloan knew what he was doing."*³

Prior to 1911, Sloan had brought his mother and sister to live in British Columbia as in the *1911 Canada Census*, Elizabeth Sloan and daughter Elizabeth were living in Victoria. Elizabeth Sloan noted that she was a widow in the census form but it may have been a euphemism for separation or divorce as Dr Robert John Sloan was apparently still living in Shanghai where he died on Jun 5 1919 of dropsy at the age of 81. He was noted to be an "allopath" a term used for modern or mainstream medicine. Sloan's mother died on Aug 13 1914 in Victoria at the age of 73. His sister, Elizabeth Sloan, had died May 22 1913 also in Victoria at the age of 50.

On Aug 29, 1915, William's wife Flora Glaholm died at the family residence and a large funeral followed with many honours paid to a "worthy woman". The attendance present testified to: *"the esteem in which the deceased lady was held, and so numerous were the floral tributes, coming from all points of the province, including the cities of Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster, Courtenay and Prince Rupert, that an extra carriage was required to convey them to the cemetery."*⁴

Contrary to the opinion of journalists, Sloan did not become a Senator. Instead, he was induced by the provincial Liberals to enter the BC General Election on Sep 14 1916 and he topped the poll in Nanaimo as part of a Liberal sweep. Premier Harlan Carey Brewster immediately selected him as minister of mines, a portfolio which he also held under the next two administrations. Premier Brewster added to his responsibilities the commissioner-ship of fisheries and after the 1924 election he was also Provincial Secretary, and Clerk of the Executive Council. One of his duties as Provincial Secretary was the supervision of reform schools for boys. As provincial secretary he was an early and constant advocate of old-age pensions; of improvement in health conditions and hospital facilities; and of psychopathic institutions.



² Victoria Daily Times, Jan 29 1909

³ Quebec Chronicle, Feb 19 1909

⁴ Victoria Daily Times, Sep 4 1915

On Dec 11 1916, William found time to marry 28-year-old Catherine Fiske McDougall (1888-1968) in Vancouver. She was the daughter of Donald "Dan" McDougall (1850-1937) originally from PEI and Effie McLeod (1859-1941).

On Feb 20 1924, Justice W.A. Gallihier was appointed to investigate charges that the Pacific Great Eastern Railway had made certain payments to the Conservative and Liberal party funds to secure the good-will of those parties in the Legislature. Gifts of \$50,000 were specifically to have been made to William J. Bowser, Leader of the Opposition and William Sloan, Minister of Mines. In his report of Apr 22 1924, Judge Gallihier found that there was nothing in the evidence to warrant the imputation of anything dishonest in the carrying-out of the work by the Government.⁵

By 1928, William Sloan had been in failing health for many months. He and his wife made a sea voyage at the suggestion of his medical advisers leaving on a trip to Hawaii in December 1926. He had appeared to rally after his return on Feb 7 1927 but under the load of his many offices his health gradually declined and he was forced to absent himself, with the exception of three days, from the 1927 session of the legislature and early in 1928, he relinquished the portfolio of Provincial Secretary. Called by his political opponents "the master-mind of the government" and the "political general" of the cabinet, he was nevertheless the most popular man in the government.

Unfortunately, William Sloan did not live to be eighty-two, as predicted in 1909. He died on Mar 2 1928 in Victoria at the age of 61 a few hours following a stroke while attending a local theatre.⁶ He was still a member of the Provincial Legislative Assembly at the time.

Sloan's widow, Catherine, continued to live in the mansion at 255 Stewart until it was demolished in 1930. The stone fence and what used to be an iron gate serves as a tangible reminder of this imposing estate. Almost 50 years later, an article in the Nanaimo Daily News lamented the lost of such a residence:



*"There have been quite a number of lovely old houses in Nanaimo which have fallen to the wrecker's hammer. There is, however, one other house which is well worth mentioning and that is William Sloan's house on Stewart Avenue. Mr. Sloane was minister of mines many years ago and his house occupied a whole block. After it was pulled down eight houses were built on the site. I well remember driving along Stewart Avenue one lovely, spring morning and noticing a large flower bed filled with flaming red tulips, they looked lovely indeed. As I didn't know Mr. Sloan's first name, I phoned a friend for the information. She told me that his name was William and that as a young woman she had often been in the house and it was indeed a gracious home so well suited for entertaining. It had colored glass panels in the windows which cast multicolored reflections on the floor and it was most attractive. Now this house is also gone, never to be replaced, if for no other reason than that the cost of building such an ornate place would be prohibitive."*⁷

⁵ Province of BC: Report re the Pacific Great Eastern Railway by Hon. Mr. Justice Gallihier, Commissioner 1924 https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/oic/arc_oic/0220_1924

⁶ The Winnipeg Tribune, March 2 1928: Suffers stroke while attending theatre.

⁷ Nanaimo Daily News, Sunday, Dec 9 1979.

Catherine Sloan built the current house in 1931 as a replacement, but moved to Vancouver or Victoria in 1933 as she appears to disappear from the *Nanaimo City Directory* in 1934. She died on Dec 22 1968 while living at 1319 Newport Avenue in Victoria.

William and Flora's son, Gordon McGregor Sloan, served in the RAF from 1916-1919 and married Nancy Porter Nicol on Oct 16 1918 in England. He studied law and was called to the bar in 1921. In 1933, Gordon became a member of the provincial assembly and served in the province's cabinet and in the B.C. Court of Appeal from 1944-1957. He died on Jan 14 1959 at 60 following complications from a heart attack. The family resided in Victoria.

William and Catherine's son, William (Bill) McDougal Sloan was born Dec 5 1919 in Vancouver. He had a long and distinguished forestry career. In 1962, he became president of Pacific Logging Company Ltd a subsidiary of Canadian Pacific. He died on Aug 19 2010 in Victoria.

2. JAMES JARVIS SCALES & WILLIAMINA (MINNIE) MELVILLE 1934-1942

James Jarvis Scales was born Sep 17 1896 at Johnshaven, Aberdeenshire, Scotland a small coastal village on the North Sea the son of George Edward William Scales, a fisherman, and Janet Ann Jarvis.

He left school to work in a fish curing plant at age 14. In 1912, at age 16, he apprenticed at the Colville & Sons steel works in Motherwell just east of Glasgow. When war broke out Jim joined the army at Hamilton barracks, trained at Rippon, and found himself in France in 1916. He served with the Black Watch, the Gordon Highlanders, and the 51st Highland Division also known as the "Ladies from Hadies". Wounded in the arm at Vimy Ridge, he received the Military Medal for his part in the action, and was invalided back to England. In France again in 1918, Jim was more seriously wounded at Arras, this time he convalesced at an Edinburgh hospital. In 1919, after the war, his regiment was sent to Glasgow to quell a strike, and while there Jim contracted pleurisy and subsequently received his discharge with 100% pension disability.

Recovering his health, he married Williamina (Minnie) Melville on Sept 9 1922. She was born Apr 28 1884, also at Johnshaven, the daughter of fisherman James Sangster Melville (1862-1920) and Ann Ford Grieve (1861-1954). During the war, Minnie had been a Red Cross nurse with the Voluntary Aid Detachment first at the Whalley Military Hospital in Lancashire from Nov 4 1916 to Jun 26 1917; and then at Catterick Camp Military Hospital in North Yorkshire from Jan 15 1918 to April 6 1919. Pictures are of Minnie at Catterick sitting on the right and in front.



Jim was advised to get outdoors for his health, so in October 1922, with his bride Minnie, he emigrated to Canada and established a chicken farm on the soldier's settlement at Hilliers near Coombs on Vancouver Island. The BC Land Settlement and Development Act of 1917 provide the provincial government with the power to acquire potential agricultural land that could be brought into production by returning soldiers to assist them in being reabsorbed into the community without displacing the regular labour force. The program would be open to "any man who has served the Empire either under our own flag, that of the Mother-land, or any of the other Overseas Dominions."⁸ Settlers were also provided with \$500 to cover land



⁸ <file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/ebarsky,+1127-4696-1-CE.pdf>

improvement costs and a maximum \$1350 loan to purchase farm supplies. The project was doomed to failure: studies to determine the agricultural potential of the sites were never done; some sites were too far away from potential markets requiring substantial transportation costs; and changes were made to the financing of settlers without consultation leaving some of them without sufficient funds to support themselves. The government withdrew their active supervision of some areas and left the community to work out its own destiny. As a result, the venture proved unsuccessful and, after a couple of years, the couple returned to Scotland.



On Apr 27 1925 he and Minnie came back to Canada, this time to Nanaimo. They bought a corner grocery business and settled down for 14 successful years first at 802 Victoria Road and then at 236 Victoria Road sometimes with a partner, Joseph Verling Edward Carpenter (1866-1943). In 1914, Carpenter had commanded the Nanaimo Independent Company of Infantry, the city's first Militia Regiment.⁹

James and Minnie purchased the house at 255 Stewart in 1934.

At the outbreak of World War II, Jim joined the Canadian Legion War Services, trained at Gordon Head, and went to Port Alberni with the first troops when the military established a camp there, providing entertainment and programs for the troops. Minnie continued to run the business in Nanaimo until 1942 when they sold it as well as the house at 255 Stewart. In 1946 Jim left Port Alberni to return to Gordon Head to help rehabilitate prisoners of war returning from the Far East. A year later Jim and Minnie returned to Nanaimo and bought the Nanaimo News Stand business from Ernest Walter John (Ernie) Ilott but they did not return to the house at 255 Stewart.



Jim Scales first joined the Port Alberni Rotary Club in 1940 moving to Nanaimo in 1947 and was president of the Nanaimo club in 1954-55. Jim was also the organist and choirmaster at St Andrew's United Church and sang in the choir. As a result, he competed in many Upper Island Music Festivals as a baritone soloist and in quartets, where he won many awards for his Scottish folk songs. He honed his entertainment skills at Rotary by bringing many fine choirs and musical programs to the Rotary luncheon meetings.¹⁰ He was an

avid gardener and a member of the Nanaimo Golf Club and the Royal Canadian Legion.

After 44 years of happy marriage Minnie passed away on Feb 11 1967, and Jim remarried on Oct 12 1968 to Jessie Christine Thomson Marshall, a widow and long-time family friend. Jim died Jan 20 1993, at the age of 96 years in Nanaimo. Jessie Scales died Apr 10 1994.



⁹ <https://militarymuseum.ca/museum/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/summer-2021.pdf>

¹⁰ https://www.clubrunner.ca/Data/5020/387/HTML/112182//members_to_remember.pdf

3. STANLEY VICTOR WILLIAM ISAACSON & FLORENCE ELIZABETH KILBURN 1944-1974

Stanley Isaacson was born in Hammersmith, London England in 1897 the son of Richard Harry Isaacson (1869-1952), an assistant accountant, and Amelia Annie Poulter (1871-1961) who married on Feb 1 1896 at St Cuthbert in Kensington, London. In the *1901 England Census*, when Stanley was 3 years old, the family was living in Hendon and father Richard was a bank clerk. By the *1911 England Census* when Stanley was 13 years, the family had moved to Wembley and Richard was still a bank clerk.

During WWI, Stanley served as a private with the Labour Corps of the Middlesex Royal Fusiliers rising to become an acting corporal. In 1917 and 1918, his fiancé, Florence Kilburn (bp Mar 7 1897-1988) wrote to him while he was with the British Expeditionary Forces in France. She was the daughter of Frederick Kilburn (1862-1935) an electrician and Sarah Ann Booker (1868-1933) who married on Mar 30 1889 in Hammersmith. In the *1911 England Census*, the family was living at "Danetree", 96 Dagmar Avenue also in Wembley.

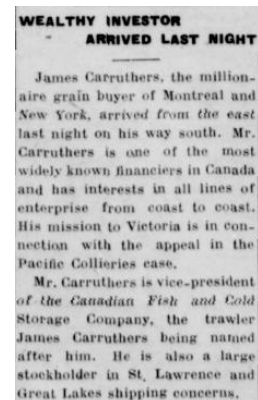
In 1980, the letters that Florence had written to Stanley during the war were discovered during an audit in a small locked suitcase by Jeff Coleman, a retired banker at the Midland Bank in Watford. The suitcase had been deposited by Florence but never reclaimed. Rather than have them destroyed, Coleman took them into his care to find a recipient. Initial attempts in the early 1980s failed, but ultimately a friend with a knack for genealogy applied her Internet information-gathering skills to come up with new leads pointing to Nanaimo in 2013. Stanley and Florence couldn't know that these letters would be discovered almost a century later and then reunited with their future granddaughter now living in San Diego.¹¹



Back from the war, Stanley and his parents were living at 22 Clifton Ave, Wembley, Middlesex and Stanley worked as an accountant like his father possibly at that Midland Bank. Then, in 1920, Stanley journeyed to Canada aboard the *Scandinavia* arriving at St John NB on Apr 9 1920 with \$500 in his pocket. According to his landing papers, he was headed to the Canadian Fish and Cold Storage Company at Seal Cove in Prince Rupert BC and his passage was paid by the merchant banking firm, Lazard Bros & Co of London. Stanley had actually been working for Lazard Brothers as a clerk since February 1920 and no doubt was sent on a finder's mission to review the books of the fishing company from the perspective of one of the owners. From a trip that his parents later made to Canada on June 22 1928, we find out that Stanley's father, Richard Isaacson, was also employed by Lazard Bros.



The Canadian Fish and Cold Storage Company was a British company formed in 1907 from the operations of the New England Fish Co and incorporated in BC in 1908. The company owned three steam trawlers named after each of the directors: George E Foster, President Andrew Kelly and Vice President James Carruthers. The latter was a millionaire



grain buyer of Montreal and New York, one of the most widely known financiers

¹¹ Nanaimo News Bulletin, Dec 24 2013: Descent found to claim war letters.

in Canada and a large stockholder in St Lawrence and Great Lakes shipping concerns. He actually visited the west coast in 1916.¹² Andrew Kelly was the president of Western Canada Flour Mills. The advantage of Prince Rupert to eastern fish markets was that it was linked by rail to the Great Lakes thereby significantly reducing shipping times and delivering a fresher product. The company had also received a subsidy of \$100,000 from the federal government.

Stanley must have been persuaded to continue to work with Lazard Bros and stay in Canada as on Jun 24 1921, his fiancée, Florence Elizabeth Kilburn, aged 24 years, arrived at Montreal on the ship *Melita*. Florence's destination was the "Bank of Nova Scotia Beds" at 302 St James Street in Montreal so it would seem that Stanley and the Lazard Brothers also had a connection with the Bank of Nova Scotia. In fact, they were the bankers for the Canadian Fish and Cold Storage Company.

Stanley and Florence were married on June 27 1921 at St John Evangelist Church in Montreal.¹³

In *Wrigley's British Columbia Directory of 1921*, Stanley and Florence are living at 6th Ave E in Prince Rupert and his employment is as a clerk in the comptroller's department of the Canadian Fish & Cold Storage Company. By 1922, they appear to have left Prince Rupert to settle in Montreal and on Jul 24 1923, their son, Richard Stanley Kilburn Isaacson, was baptized at St John Evangelist Church in Montreal. It would appear that the family most likely lived in Montreal for the next 22 years as son Richard was educated at Sedbergh a unique private boarding school for grades 7 to 12 on 650 acres north of Montebello, Quebec east of Montreal.



The Isaacson's address in Montreal was 108 Kindersley Avenue in Mount Royal named after Robert Molesworth, 1st Baron of Kindersley (1871-1954). Molesworth not only was chairman of the Hudson's Bay Company and president of the London branch of Lazard Brothers & Co but he was also a major shareholder in the Canadian Northern Railway which now owned Mount Royal.¹⁴ All these positions would come together to create Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd in Nanaimo the future employer of Stanley Isaacson. Stanley definitely had friends in high places with long tentacles. The photograph is of Robert Molesworth.

The roots of Lazard began in the 1840s with the emigration of five French brothers and several cousins to the US. Two of the brothers founded Lazard Frères & Co. in New Orleans as a dry goods merchant. By 1870, the company had expanded into banking and foreign exchange with offices in New York, Paris and London. Today, it is the world's leading financial advisory and asset management firm.

By June 9 1925, from the information on a USA entry card at Buffalo NY, Stanley had become a Canadian citizen. We also know that the family made additional trips back to England. On Jul 25 1926, Stanley arrived at Liverpool from Montreal heading for 43 Manor Drive, Wembley which was where his parents were living. Florence must have sailed to England separately as they, along with infant son Richard, all left

¹² The Daily News, Prince Rupert BC: Saturday, July 29 1916

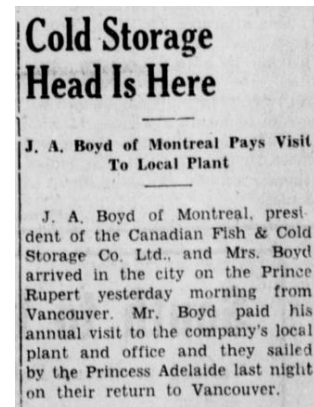
¹³ Montreal Gazette, Tue Jun 21 1921: The marriage of Miss Florence Elizabeth Kilburn, of London, England, to Mr. Stanley V. W. Isaacson of Montreal, will take place on Monday morning, June 27th, at half past eleven o'clock, at the Church of St. John the Evangelist.

¹⁴ https://www.ville.mont-royal.qc.ca/sites/default/files/documents/toponymie_en.pdf

England on Aug 27 1926 landing at Montreal on Sep 3 1926. Stanley was age 29 at the time and still in the employ of Lazard Brothers. On July 25 1928, on another visit to the USA, Stanley appears to be still living in Montreal.

The Isaacsons remained in Mount Royal for the next fifteen years. In 1942, as part of the war effort, Stanley had become an adjutant and then chief of the Mount Royal CPC (Comité de protection civile). Based on English models, the Montreal police had established the committees in 1939 to prepare neighbourhoods for eventual air raids or acts of sabotage. During one demonstration, a “trapped” occupant of a school that had supposedly just been set on fire by invading airmen is seen jumping to safety.¹⁵

During his time in Montreal, Stanley pursued various positions as accountant, secretary and office manager most likely in close connection with clients of the Lazard Brothers. In the 1936-1937 *Lovell's Directory of Montreal*, he is still living at 108 Kindersley in Mount Royal and is now the office manager for a John A. Boyd. Mr. Boyd was a financial agent and solicitor with offices at #705-437 St James West in Montreal which just happened to be the Bank of Nova Scotia building. Boyd was also president of the Canadian Fish & Cold Storage Co. Ltd and had made an annual visit to the Prince Rupert plant on Jul 22 1938.¹⁶



We don't know who J.A. Boyd was or where he came from other than that he and his wife lived at 3418 Stanley Street in Montreal. It would seem that his business existed to provide investment and directorships to other companies or for land speculation. In 1944, he was vice-president of the Canadian Marconi Company which owned CFCF Montreal.

On Dec 1935 J. A. Boyd was appointed president of Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd to replace Frederick Perry the first agent of the Lazard Brothers installed in Montreal in 1912 and who died suddenly in Jan 1935. The first president of Canadian Collieries when it was formed in 1910 had been Sir William Mackenzie, founder of that ubiquitous railway company, Canadian Northern, later to be called the Canadian National Railway.

Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd: Officers 1942 and 1943

J. A. Boyd, President, Montreal, Que.

H. R. Plommer, Vice-President, Vancouver, B.C.

Patrick. S. Fagan, Secretary-Treasurer, Nanaimo, (Dunsmuir), Ltd. B.C.

H. Baird, Superintendent, Cumberland, B.C.

R. K. Smart, Assistant Superintendent, Nanaimo B.C.

In 1940, there were a number of varied enterprises listed with offices at #705 in that Bank of Nova Scotia building on St James Street West in Montreal in addition to J.A. Boyd. They seem primarily centred around house construction and Stanley appeared to work in some capacity with all of them. In 1937, for example, Stanley was listed as the Assistant Secretary to the French and Foreign Investors Corporation. In the 1942 *Montreal Directory*, Stanley, now 45 years old, was noted as “v-pres & sec Mt Royal Housing” and “pres Equity Constr”.

¹⁵ Montreal Gazette, Thursday Oct 31 1940: photograph of SV Isaacson demonstrating rescue of trapped occupant.

¹⁶ The Daily News: Northern and Central BC, Saturday, July 23 1938

- Boyd J. A.
- French & Foreign Investors Corp which was a stock interest of Lehman Bros and Lazard Bros
- Terminal Housing Co Ltd
- Rockland Housing Co Ltd
- Model City Housing Co Ltd
- Mount Royal Housing Co Ltd
- Landed Investments Ltd
- Mount Royal Homesites Ltd
- Pacific Investment Co Ltd was added in 1945

By 1943, the Isaacsons have left Montreal and Stanley now pops up in Nanaimo as Treasurer to the Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd and presumably an understudy to the current Secretary-Treasurer, Patrick Stephen Fagan (1884-1956). Stanley is 46 years old.

Canadian Collieries Officers 1944 and 1945

J. A. Boyd, President, Montreal, Que.;

H. R. Plommer, Vice-President, Nanaimo, B.C.;

P. S. Fagan, Secretary, Nanaimo, B.C.;

S. V. Isaacson, Treasurer, Nanaimo, B.C.;

R. K. Smart, General Superintendent, Nanaimo, B.C.;

H Baird then James A. Quinn, District Superintendent, Cumberland, B.C.

The family lived first at 340 Machleary and **moved into 255 Stewart Avenue with their son, Richard Stanley Isaacson in 1945.** Stanley became Secretary-Treasurer of Canadian Collieries when Patrick Stephen Fagan, after 52 years with the company, retired in 1948.¹⁷

Coal mining had been the single predominating influence in Nanaimo until the mid-1920s. By the end of the 1930s the community had suffered from out-migration as coal production declined and the economy began to diversify. Even with a huge wartime influx, the population recorded in the 1941 census was still below that of twenty years before. The Nanaimo mines were directed largely by absentee owners and since 1852 had progressively been sold to new owners with Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd eventually coming out on top.



Originally, the Hudson Bay Company had been given title to Vancouver Island in 1852. In 1862, it sold the Nanaimo coal rights to the Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company Limited which morphed into the New Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company Limited in 1889. This was then sold to the Western Fuel Company in 1902 which became the Western Fuel Corporation of Canada in 1924 and was ultimately bought by Canadian Collieries (Dunsmuir) Ltd in 1928. This company, originally called Canadian Northern, had been formed in 1910 to organize the coal property which James Dunsmuir, son of Robert, sold to



¹⁷ Nanaimo Daily News, Nov 19 1956: Funeral of Patrick Fagan

railway magnates William Mackenzie and Donald Mann owners of the previously mentioned Canadian Northern Railway for something under \$11 million.

Canadian Collieries continued to operate coal mines on Vancouver Island including the Wellington Mines near Nanaimo and the Comox Mines at Cumberland until 1960 when they found out that there was more money to be made in timber than in the coal mining business. Canadian Collieries was purchased by the American Plywood company less the Vancouver Island coal rights for which no one has found a further use for yet.

Canadian Collieries eventually got into the oil and coal business in Alberta and changed their name to Canadian Collieries Resources Ltd. Stanley called himself Vice-President of Finance of Canadian Collieries Resources Ltd in the *1963 Nanaimo Voters List*. It's not known how long Stanley continued to work for the firm. In 1963, he would have been 66 years old and perhaps retirement was an attractive option. The listing is from *Marquis Who's Who in Commerce & Industry - Canada*, Vol 14, p 653, 1965.

ISAACSON, Stanley Victor William, co. dir.; b. London, Eng., Apr. 20, 1897; s. Richard Harry and Anne Amelia (Poulter) I.; educated priv. tutors; m. Florence Elizabeth Kilburn, June 29, 1921; 1 son, Richard Stanley Kilburn. Vice pres. of finance, sec.-treas. Canadian Collieries Resources, Ltd., 1921—; dir. Wellington Colliery Ltd., 1942—, Alta. Western Wholesale Devel. Ltd., 1962—, Timberland Devel. Ltd., 1955—, Tidewater Devel. Ltd., 1962—, Mem. exec. com. province Council Boy Scouts Assn., 1950—. Served from priv. to capt., Imperial Army, 1918-19. Fellow Chartered Inst. of Secs.; mem. Inst. of Bankers (London), Canadian Legion, Conservative, Anglican, Clubs: Mount Royal Golf and Country; Terminal City; Nanaimo Yacht. Home: 255 Stewart Av., Nanaimo, B.C. Office: 566 Hornby St., Vancouver, B.C., Can.

Stanley and Florence Isaacson continued to live at 255 Stewart Avenue at least until 1974.¹⁸

Stanley died in Nanaimo on May 19 1985 at the age of 88 years, and Florence died in 1988. Florence's last known address was 118 Wakesiah Ave.

Son, Richard Stanley Kilburn Isaacson started work as a technician with the Fisheries Research Board of Canada at the Pacific Biological Station in 1942. In Aug 1948, he married Mary Floris Northcott and they embarked on a honeymoon trip amongst the southern islands on their yacht "Gypsy Lass".

Mary Floris Northcott Isaacson was born Feb 2 1925 in London to Beryl and James Northcott. When WW2 broke out, she enlisted in the British Army and served from June 1943-Dec 30, 1946. During the early stages of the war, she drove an ambulance while England was under attack. Mary immigrated by herself to Canada leaving England for Halifax on Dec 23 1946 probably not really intending to stay as her landing information stated that she would return to England. Instead, she must have made her way to Nanaimo where she met Richard. She received her Master's in Education from the University of Victoria in 1974 and taught elementary school.

When first married, they lived for a couple of years with Richard's parents at 255 Stewart but then built a panabode house on five acres at 2973 Hammond Bay Road near the Biological Station where they resided until 1989. The house was relocated to Quennell Lake and the land sold and subdivided into single family homes. Richard was an ardent yachtsman and he and Mary spent many years sailing "Gloaming" their dream boat, a 42-foot Mapleleaf. Richard was a charter member of Nanaimo Power Squadron, and held active membership in the Nanaimo Yacht Club, Toastmasters, Federal Civil Servants Association, Lions Club and even volunteered as driver for Meals on Wheels. Richard donated much of his father's records to the Nanaimo Community Archives in 1992.

Richard Stanley Isaacson died in Mar 1995. Mary died May 1 2015. Their daughter Patricia Boyd Clanton lives in San Diego and was the person who received the long-lost letters from her grandmother.

¹⁸ No more information available online post 1974