

Sharp Residence: 261 Vancouver Avenue

Built in 1923, the one-storey Sharp Residence is a very good example of a Late Craftsman-style bungalow and a rare example of brick residential construction. Long and low in form, the Sharp Residence has many typical Late Craftsman features, including an open front verandah and triangular eave brackets. The building is also notable for its brick construction, as brick was rarely used for residential buildings in Nanaimo. Other character-defining elements are the rough-cast brick checkerboard pattern in the gable ends, the casement and double-hung wooden-sash windows, bell cast roof, and wide bargeboards.



This house was apparently originally built in 1923 for a Hannah Lowe but it is not known if she ever lived here. It was acquired the following year by a Hazel G Fawcett but it seems that neither she nor her husband ever resided in Nanaimo. As we shall see, it turns out that Hannah Lowe was actually the mother of Hazel G Fawcett.

Who lived here?

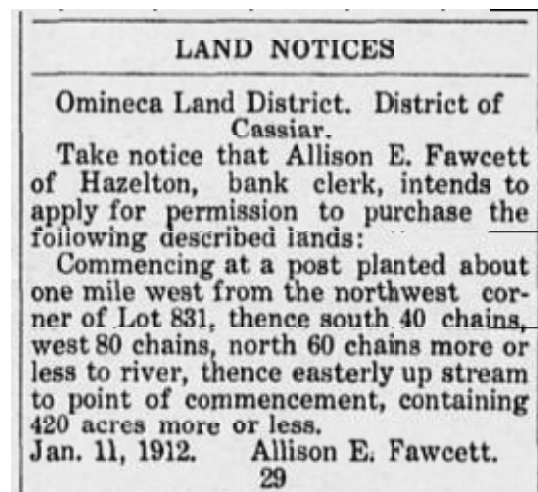
1. **Allison Ernest Fawcett and Hazel Greta Moore 1924?**
2. **Frank M Sharp and Marjorie Susannah Hawnt 1925-1927**
3. **Robert M Plumpton and Margaret Jolley 1934-1955**
4. **Margaret Jolley Plumpton & Frederick Rock 1955-1972+**

1. ALLISON EARNEST FAWCETT & HAZEL GRETA MOORE 1924?

Allison Ernest Fawcett was born Nov 10 1889 at Wawanesa, MB, son of Robert Bennett Fawcett (1852-1934) a farmer and Mary Munro (1856-1944). Father Robert Fawcett was born in Drayton, Ontario north of Kitchener and his mother in Clinton, Ontario some 100 km to the west. They had married on Dec 23 1885 in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba.

In the *1901 Canada Census*, Allison Fawcett is 11 years old living with his father, Robert, 48 born Sep 4 1852; mother Mary, 44 born May 20 1856; and brothers: Earl, 14 born Mar 2 1887; Robert W, 10 born Jan 19 1891; and Wilmer age 7 born Jul 9 1893. In the *1906 Canada Census*, Allison Fawcett is now 16 and the family is still living in Wawanesa south of Brandon, Manitoba.

In the *1911 Canada Census*, the parents of Allison Fawcett are still in Wawanesa, Manitoba but Allison is nowhere to be found. He shows up on Jan 11 1912, as a bank clerk intending to purchase land in Hazelton BC.



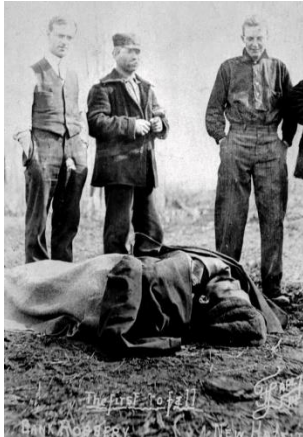
The only bank in Hazelton at the time was the Union Bank. Known originally as the Union Bank of Lower Canada when it was founded in Quebec City in 1865, the name "Lower" was dropped in 1886. Its headquarters were relocated to Winnipeg in 1912 and it operated a network of branches across the prairies. One of the towns where there was a branch of the bank was Wawanesa, Manitoba the birthplace of Allison Fawcett and possibly where his career in banking got started.



Hazelton, situated where the Bulkley River joins the Skeena River, was one of the most important sites in the interior of northern BC from 1870-1913. The gold rush, the arrival of the telegraph, and the ability for steam boats to journey upriver increased the outside interest in the region. The Union Bank branch was initiated in 1911 principally on behalf of its clients, Foley, Welch and Stewart, who were building the western section of the railway to Prince Rupert. The branch was a one-storey cabin constructed of 50- and 25-foot logs with staff quarters located at the rear of the building. Staff thought the risk of robbery would be low due to the remote location, which would make escape difficult.



It's not known how long Allison Fawcett stayed in Hazelton but in November 1913, the bank was robbed by gunmen and a young bank teller, Jock McQueen, was mortally wounded. The bandits got away with \$16,000, a great deal of money in those days.



As if that wasn't enough, a second robbery occurred on Apr 7 1914 probably by the same gang. At 10:30 in the morning seven men walked up the street towards the bank, all of them were wearing long coats, but so many people were out and about that these men went unnoticed. Six of them entered the bank while the seventh stayed in front and pulled a rifle out from underneath his coat and began firing shots up the street while people dashed for cover. Inside the bank, the other six had also drawn rifles and were demanding money from the teller. This time, the community fought back: they got their own guns and fired at the guard in front of the bank. When his accomplices came out, two of them were shot dead. The others were captured and sentenced to twenty years at the provincial penitentiary in New Westminster.

By the *1916 Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta*, Allison Fawcett, bank clerk age 25, was back home in Manitoba living with his parents, Robert 64, and Mary 59, in Wawanesa. On Jul 5 1916, Allison signed his attestation papers to enroll for duty in WW1. He enlisted in the 76 Battery Canadian Field Artillery (CFA); served in the 4th Brigade CFA in France and England; and was demobilized on May 29 1919 in Toronto with plans to return to Wawanesa.

Then, on Oct 7 1919, in Edmonton, Allison married Hazel Greta Moore. We don't know why or how he ended up in Edmonton but that city was another location of a branch of the Union Bank. The first

Edmonton branch had opened in 1900 and a new home was built for the branch in 1910 which today is the last remaining bank building of the pre-1914 era left on Jasper Avenue.

Hazel "Greata" Moore was born in Victoria County, Ontario on Mar 5 1892, the daughter of John Moore (1852-1899) and Hannah Wilson (Jun 7 1867 – Feb 11 1936). Hannah Wilson Moore had emigrated to Canada from Ireland in 1881 with her parents Joseph Wilson and Hannah Grey. Hannah Wilson and John Moore had married on Dec 29 1890 when Hannah was 25 and John was 39. His parents were William Moore and Catherine Moore.

In the *1891 Canada Census*, John Moore, 39 is a wagonmaker and he and wife, Hannah, were living in Somerville Township, Victoria County, Ontario which is now the city of Kawartha Lakes. Also living with them is a lodger, James Wilson, aged 81 who was probably a relative of Hannah's. Hazel would be born the next year.

When Hazel was only 7 years old, her father, John Moore, died on April 19 1899 of "exhaustion of dementia" in an asylum in Mimico Ontario. On Nov 20 1900, widow Hannah Wilson Moore married William Lowe (May 8 1875 – Jul 25 1945), a brickmaker. At the time of the marriage, she was living in Bowmanville and William was living in Port Hope, Ontario.

In the *1901 Canada Census*, Hazel Moore, age 9, is noted as the stepdaughter of William Lowe, age 25. Hannah Wilson Moore Lowe was 34 years. They are living in Durham East, sub-district Hope, Ontario.

In the *1911 Canada Census*, the family has moved into Oshawa. William Lowe is 37 and still working as a brickmaker; Hannah Lowe is 43; and Hazel (Moore) Lowe is 18.

By the *1916 Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta*, the Lowe family has moved to Edmonton, Alberta. Hazel Moore Lowe is now 21 years old. It's here that Hazel meets and marries Allison Fawcett in 1919. We lose track of the couple over the next couple of years and finally find them in Vancouver in the *1922 Henderson's Greater Vancouver Directory* living at 1635 W 14th and Allison is now working as an insurance agent. Allison's parents have also moved from Manitoba to Vancouver and are living at 1050 East 12th in Vancouver. In the *1923 Wrigley's British Columbia Directory for Vancouver*, Allison E Fawcett is now in sales at Canada Life. Hazel's parents also moved to Vancouver about this same time as her mother Hannah Wilson Moore Lowe's obituary on Feb 11 1936 notes that Hannah and her husband, William Lowes, had resided in British Columbia for fifteen years.¹

Then in the *1924 Wrigley Henderson Amalgamated BC Directory*, we find Allison E Fawcett in Victoria working as a clerk at Prior & Co. and residing at the YMCA. This is at the same time as Hazel G Fawcett is negotiating to purchase the house in Nanaimo at 261 Vancouver. E.G. Prior and Co was a hardware store owned by Edward Gawler Prior (1852-1920) originally from Yorkshire. He worked as a mining engineer in England until 1873, when he moved to Nanaimo to become an assistant manager of the Vancouver Coal Mining & Land Company Limited. He opened his own hardware business in 1880, and had many branches throughout British Columbia. Prior served as the 15th Premier of British Columbia (1902 to 1903), 11th Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia (1919-1920), Member of Parliament for Victoria (1888-1901), and Member of the Legislative Assembly for Victoria (1886-1888). The Prior Building is a massive three-storey commercial block with a beveled corner, located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Johnson and Government Streets in downtown Victoria.

¹ BC Registration Number: 1936-09-510679: Feb 11 1936 New Westminster: Hannah Lowes

But why was Allison working for a hardware store in Victoria while his wife was negotiating to buy a house in Nanaimo which had apparently been constructed by her mother? There had been a Union Bank in Nanaimo at least since 1912. By 1920, the branch had closed but the bank was in discussions about a merger with the Royal Bank of Canada which eventually took place in 1925. Perhaps Allison Fawcett was expecting to get a position with the newly merged bank in Nanaimo. Or maybe Allison thought he would get the job as manager of the Union Bank in Victoria since the current manager, Harry Rowley, who had been in the position since 1915, died on Jun 17 1923. In either case, neither happened: F. A. Hanna who had been the RBC manager in Nanaimo from 1918-1920 was brought back into the position in 1924 and followed by a F. A. McCarthy, the new RBC/ Union Bank manager in 1925. And, in Victoria, the new manager of the Victoria RBC/ Union Bank in 1924 Bank was a Philip Vibert.

Union Bank of Canada
Established 1865
Head Office, Winnipeg

PAID-UP CAPITAL \$ 5,000,000
 TOTAL ASSETS, OVER \$85,000,000

Branches in British Columbia

Enderby	Telkwa
Glacier	Vancouver
Hazelton	" City Heights
Lillooet	" Cordova Street
Nanaimo	" Fairview
New Hazelton	" Granville & Robson
New Westminster	" Streets
Prince George	" Heights
Prince Rupert	" Main Street
Smithers	" Mount Pleasant
Squamish	Vanderhoof
	Vernon
	Victoria

LONDON, ENG., OFFICE
 6 Princes Street, E.C.
 West End Branch: Haymarket, S.W.

Managers of the above branches will be pleased to answer enquiries regarding British Columbia. The London Offices transact every kind of banking business with Canada.

Superintendent of British Columbia Branches
 P. VIBERT, VANCOUVER

At this point, Allison and Hazel Fawcett retreated to Vancouver where their daughter, Thelda M Fawcett was born on Oct 6 1925. They would never live in Nanaimo. Allison was an accountant with F&F Ltd (Frederick and Frank) Henderson wholesale shoes in 1927; a clerk at Spencers from 1937 to 1945 and then at Eaton's by 1949 and into the 1950s. Hazel Greta Moore Fawcett died on April 30 1957. Allison married again to Elsie Florence Martin (1908-1988) on Nov 22 1958 in Vancouver; and he died on Nov 28 1985 also in Vancouver.

2. FRANK MALPAS SHARP AND MARJORIE SUSANNA HAWNT 1925-1927

Frank Malpas Sharp was born May 1 1889 at Douglas on the Isle of Man the son of Joseph Sharp (1854-1925) and Sarah Malpas (1848-1928). His father Joseph Sharp, baptized in Bowden, Cheshire, England on Jul 31 1853, was a former Mayor and Justice of the Peace in Douglas, the capital of the Isle of Man a self- governing possession of the crown. Joseph Sharp and Sarah Malpas had married in 1871 at Stockport near Manchester in Cheshire County.



In the 1891 Isle of Man Census, father Joseph Sharp is coal merchant, age 37, with eight children of whom, Frank Malpas Sharp was the youngest at 1 year old. In the 1901 Isle of Man Census, the family is still living in Douglas and Frank is now 11 years old. In the 1911 England Census, Joseph Sharp, retired ship owner and coal merchant, 57 and his wife,

Sarah Sharp, 58 are boarding in Stockport, Cheshire with Joseph's sister, Mary Ann Sharp Moseley. There is no sign of son, Frank Malpas Sharp because he left for Canada in 1911 although there is no record of his departure or arrival.



Picture is of some members of Frank Sharp's family taken about 1915: parents Joseph Sharp and Sarah Malpas Sharp in middle row along with brother Alexander Sharp (back left) and sister Harriet Sharp Kennish (right front) and their families.

At the age of 24, Frank married Marjorie Susanna Hawnt, 25, on Jun 19 1913 in Vancouver. She was also from the Isle of Man, born there on Jan 9 1888, daughter of

Edmund Hawnt (1846-1923) and Louise Anne Martin (1857-1947) although her baptism was ten months later on Nov 27 1889 in Coventry, Warwickshire. Marjorie's father was a confectioner and in the *1911 Isle of Man Census*, Marjorie, age 23, is working for her father "assisting in the business." Two years later, sometime before her June 1913 marriage, Marjorie arrived in Canada.



Picture taken about 1912 is of Edmund Hawnt with wife Louisa Ann and daughters left to right Phyllis, Dorothy Louisa aka Dolly, Norah Emily, Nancy, Marjorie, son Edmund Martin is absent.

Frank and Majorie's son, Douglas Raymond Sharp was born Jul 5 1918 in Vancouver and their daughter, Frances Marjorie (Bunty) Sharp was born Oct 5 1920 also in Vancouver. In the *1921 Canada Census*, Frank Sharp, engineer, and wife Marjorie are living in an apartment at 1457 Lonsdale in North Vancouver with their children, Douglas Raymond Sharp, 2; and Frances Marjorie Sharp, 8 months old. **By 1926, Frank Sharp and his family had relocated to Nanaimo and were living at 261 Vancouver Avenue. They became the first known resident owners.**

The Mayor of Nanaimo from 1925 to 1926 was Victor Harrison (1884-1971) who also lived in Newcastle /Townsite at 215 Newcastle Avenue. In 1923 Harrison had outlined his thoughts on municipal government in an election bid for alderman. He wanted a businesslike approach to civic affairs and an efficient system of maintaining the roads. He questioned which government should maintain the trunk roads passing through the city, and he wanted a better waterworks system. Roads and water were always points of aggravation with Nanaimo taxpayers but maybe that's what attracted Frank Sharp to the city engineer position.

At that time, Harrison seems to have been a one term wonder. Frederick A Busby (1870-1938) was mayor just before Harrison from 1920 to 1924 and was elected after

Harrison from 1927-1929. Perhaps Frank Sharp felt that the change in leadership might affect his position and so decided to leave town. By 1929, the Sharps were gone from Nanaimo and back to the Isle of Man but not without leaving a little bit of an impact.



Frank was one of the featured players in a production of "Captain Racket" a three-act comedy sponsored by the Nanaimo Rotary Club playing at the Dominion Theatre on Feb 23 1926. This house at 220 Bastion Street had opened as the Dominion Theatre on Dec 15 1914. It was renamed the Capitol Theatre on Nov 23 1927. The Capitol Theatre closed Jun 17



1972 and the building was demolished by 1973 and replaced by the nearby Famous Players Fiesta Twin Theatres on 91 Chapel Street, which opened on Oct 26 1972 with two auditoriums seating 740 and featuring the “The French Connection” and “What’s Up Doc?” Unfortunately, the Fiesta Theatre went through openings and closings like water. It closed on Mar 1 1992 and was reopened again on Feb 5 1993 by Landmark Celebrity Cinemas as the Bay Theatre. That closed on Jun 8, 2000 and was reopened again on May 11, 2001. The theatre closed the final time on Jan 25 2002 and was demolished in August 2013.

In the *Nanaimo Free Press* of Nov 19 1927, it was noted that there would be an auction sale at the residence of Mrs. Frank Sharp, 261 Vancouver. Everything was being auctioned off: Clarendon Piano; Brussels carpet 9x9; Majestic Malleable Steel Range; crockery; glassware; chiffonier; wringer; refrigerator; and Ladies Bicycle in good order. Her husband had already left Nanaimo and on Aug 6 1927, had arrived at Liverpool, England, aboard the *Albertic* having left Canada from Montreal. Frank, age 38, was heading for 10 West View in Douglas, Isle of Man. The Sharps left Nanaimo as quickly as they had come.



They settled in Birmingham England where Frank continued working as a public works civil engineer. Frank Malpas Sharp died, age 87 on Jan 26 1977 at 1 The Hawthorns Linden Road in Bognor Regis, a seaside resort town in West Sussex about 30 miles west of Brighton. Marjorie Hawnt Sharp died Apr 25 1968, also at Bognor Regis.

NO INFORMATION ABOUT RESIDENTS FROM 1927 TO 1934

3. ROBERT M PLUMPTON and MARGARET ANNE JOLLEY 1934-1955

Fast forward to 1934, and the Robert M Plumpton family has moved into 261 Vancouver. Robert Maxwell Plumpton was born in Oct 1884 in Kingston, Surrey, England, the son of John Plumpton (1844-Nov 15 1931) and Eliza A Bardsley (1850-Sep 24 1916) who had married in 1871 in Hampstead, London.

In the *1901 England Census*, Robert’s father owned his own business possibly in accounting and Robert, age 16, was working as a clerk in Lloyd’s Bank. Robert had at least 3 brothers and sisters, two of whom, Henry Neville Plumpton and John D Plumpton went off to Australia. Robert left for Canada in 1909 but does not appear in the *1911 Canada Census*.



On Dec 4 1914, Robert married Margaret Anne Jolley in Vancouver BC. She was born in 1893 in Wigan, Lancashire, the daughter of Frederick Joseph Jolley (1867 – Jun 12 1933) a mining surveyor and Mary Ellen Spencer (1871-Mar 30 1961). Margaret Anne was still living at Wigan with her parents at the time of the *1911 England Census* but on Jul 27 1912 left England aboard the *Teutonic*. She was in the company of 28 other young women between the ages of 14 and 30 bound for Quebec as “servants”. They had possibly all been gathered up by the Salvation Army one of Canada’s leading immigration agencies, accredited and financially-sponsored by the federal government.

The demand for domestic servants in Canada was high in the early 20th century. The 1907 edition of the Salvation Army's *New Settler* described what it called the Canadian "servant girl problem", claiming that women who came to Canada would find "not only the demand for their services great, but that the privileges given them in most families are abundant while the good and the willing cannot only command the best wages, but the high esteem, nay often the love of her employer". More Canadian-born women were choosing to work in factories, shops, and offices, leaving a gap in the supply of domestics that was filled by British women.²

So immense were the Salvation Army immigration services that, between 1905 and 1907, the organization chartered fourteen ocean liners, with a thousand immigrants each, on an alcohol-free trip across the Atlantic. In addition, hundreds of 'conducted parties' of between 30 to 300 brought the total by 1914 (before the outbreak of the First World War curtailed immigration) to approximately 50,700 settlers.³

The Salvation Army was a preferred emigration agency for several reasons, not the least of them being that it was a religious organization with tee-total values. Each emigrant was therefore assured (though not all wanted to be) of a publicly prayed-for send-off, with brass band accompaniment, and with spiritual counselling and religious services on board ship. In a more practical way (and perhaps a greater incentive) the Army could, in addition to the bonuses paid by the Canadian government, draw on public financial support and its own reserves to assist those who could not afford passage (which amounted to more than a third of those who chose its services). But most reassuring, as many observers pointed out, was the Army's vast network of officers and workers throughout the world ready to welcome and look after every single settler. They were met by the Army's immigration officials at Quebec or Halifax, and then escorted as far as Toronto, but positions already having been secured for most of them, they were often seen to their final destinations. Picture is of a party of unknown female domestics bound for Canada.



Although it is impossible to prove that some women came to Canada to meet a mate and marry, 15.5 per cent of this group of domestics did marry within the first two years of settlement in Canada. In fact, it was commonly assumed, that these women were not being sent to Canada merely to decrease the surplus of young females in Great Britain, and relieve the burden of the local housewife but to become Canadian housewives themselves. Immigration was to be the means of ensuring that the colonies remained essentially British.

By the *1921 Canada Census*, Robert, 35 and Margaret, 28, are living at 615 Comox Road in Nanaimo. Robert is a bookkeeper working for the Nanaimo Printing Co at 14 Wharf Street. They also had a son, Ronald Derek Plumpton born in 1920. The family continued to live at 615 Comox Road until 1932 but **by 1934, the family had moved to 261 Vancouver**. Unfortunately, on Feb 19 1938, Robert Maxwell Plumpton died, at the age of 53, after been ill for ten days. He left an estate in England valued at £5695 17s 10d.

² Canada is no dumping ground: public discourse and Salvation Army immigrant women and children 1900-1930 by Myra Rutherfordale. file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/admin,+hssh40n79_rutherfordale.pdf

³ http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/83/salvationarmy.shtml

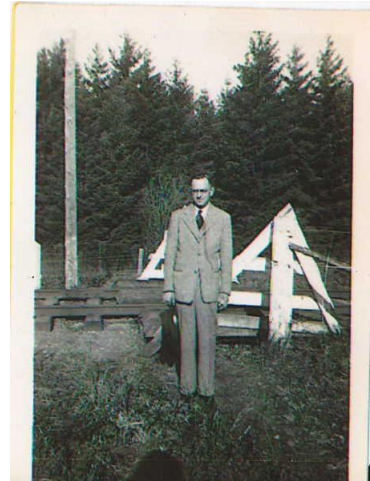
PLUMPTON Robert Maxwell of 261 Vancouver-road Nanaimo British Columbia **Canada** died 19 February 1938 Administration (with Will) (limited) **London** 29 August to Harold Grenville Kirton secretary Stanley Francis Fermor accountant attorneys of Margaret Ann Plumpton widow and the Royal Trust Company. Effects £5695 17s. 10d. in England.

Margaret Plumpton and son Ronald Derek Plumpton continued to live at 261 Vancouver Avenue until Derek married the 1939 Nanaimo May Queen, Mabel Mitchell, on Jun 22 1940 and moved to 55 4th street (now Rosehill Street) in Townsite. This marriage was dissolved on Jun 26 1950 and Derek returned to live with his mother in 1948. On Aug 15 1951, he married Wilma Ruby Eileen Sloan (1930-2009) and moved out while his mother continued to live at 261 Vancouver.

4. MARGARET JOLLEY PLUMPTON & FREDERICK ROCK 1955-1972+

On Sep 5 1955, Margaret Plumpton married her second husband, Frederick Rock. The ceremony was performed at the United Church Manse in Duncan with a dinner reception in the dining room of the Empress Hotel, Victoria, after which the couple left by boat for Seattle and thence south to California.

Frederick Rock was born in Manchester England on Apr 1 1905, son of Thomas Paul Rock (1870-1948) and Mary Ann Hopwood (1871-1914). The family arrived in Canada in 1912 from Lancashire and unfortunately, Frederick's mother, Mary Ann Hopwood, died soon after on May 13 1914. His father then married Clara Palmer (1874-1966) on Jun 1 1915 in Vancouver. In the *1921 Canada Census*, Fred was 16 and the family was living in Vancouver. Frederick's father, Thomas, was a car painter employed by the CPR for 34 years until 1933. Thomas also held membership in the Prince Arthur Masonic Lodge, Vancouver and the IOOF Lodge in Burnaby.



On Oct 25 1926, Frederick Rock married Fanny Emmeline Rachel Williams (1906-) in Nanaimo. She was the eldest daughter of butcher Llewelyn Williams (1876-1944) born in Wales and Louisa Helen Simmons (1882-1956) born in Streator, Illinois, who lived at 224 Milton Street. They had married on Jul 1 1902 in Nanaimo. In the *1921 Canada Census*, it was noted that Fanny, age 14, had been working in a shoe store. Frederick, a salesman, was noted as a resident of Vancouver, but formerly of Nanaimo.

By 1949, Fanny Williams Rock who was now working as a stenographer had gone back to live with her mother, Mrs Llewelyn Williams, at 224 Milton Street. The marriage between Frederick and Fanny was subsequently dissolved at Vancouver on Nov 23 1951. In the 1950s, Fanny Williams Rock would work at the Starlite Drive-in Theatre on Departure Bay Road. In the meantime, Fred Rock married widow Margaret Ann Jolley Plumpton.

The couple took up residence at 261 Vancouver. Frederick worked as a government assessor located in the Nanaimo Court House. He died on Mar 21 1972 at the age of 66. Margaret A Rock died Jan 18 1994, age 100, in Nanaimo. Son Derek Plumpton died Feb 16 1998, age 77, in Kelowna where he was the Manager of McCavin's Bakery.