

HARRISON HOUSE: 290 Vancouver Avenue (1937-2026)

Lot 71, Block 5, Newcastle Townsite, Section 1, Nanaimo District, Plan 584

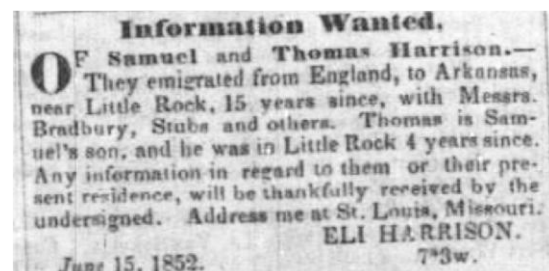
The story of 290 Vancouver (see picture) begins with Eli Harrison Sr who was born on Sept 3, 1825 at Hurdsfield, a township in Cheshire, England. He was the son of Samuel Harrison and his wife, believed to be a Mary Fern.¹ At the time, the town and its surrounding areas formed a major center of the British silk trade. Silk weaving in Hurdsfield was a core part of the local industrial economy, characterized by handloom and mill-based textile production. By the 1841 *England Census*, Eli is working as a silk weaver at just fifteen years old. In his later teens, according to local lore, he joined the army, but not liking the discipline bought himself out, went on a trip to India, then to Italy as an art student and learned mural painting. As a young man traveling through Italy, Eli Harrison Sr met and befriended the legendary Giuseppe Garibaldi during his darkest days of struggle, living alongside him in exile.



290 Vancouver 2009

Eli Sr returned to England and married Elizabeth Warburton on Nov 2 1847. Born on Nov 9 1832, Elizabeth was only 15 years of age and designated a minor when she married Eli who was 23. We don't know how they met. While Eli was born at Hurdsfield in Cheshire, Elizabeth was reputed to be born in Tarvin Parish, Cheshire West. These towns are about 30 miles apart and located just south of Liverpool, England. On the marriage record, Eli's father was Samuel Harrison, occupation labourer while Elizabeth's father was noted as Thomas Warburton, occupation plasterer.

Three years into the marriage, the couple embarked for America primarily to look for Eli's father, Samuel Harrison, who, more than fifteen years previously, had gone to visit his American relations who lived near Little Rock, Arkansas. Once there, Eli put an ad in the newspaper asking for any information on his father's presence to be forwarded to him. The search was fruitless and Eli presumed that his father had been killed or drowned. The couple decided to go west and, by 1852, they were in St Louis, Missouri where their son, Eli Harrison Jr, was born on Feb 22 1852. In 1853, attracted by the gold fields on the Pacific coast, the family joined the covered wagons in the long trek to California across unknown plains and over treacherous mountains ultimately reaching San Francisco on Jul 4 1853 with many adventures along the way. Apparently, in Salt Lake City, Brigham Young took a fancy to Elizabeth requiring the family to sneak out of the city under cover of darkness. On another occasion, a Sioux Chief was attracted to young Eli Jr and wanted to make the yellow-haired boy a "big chief".



While living in San Francisco, Eli again became a confidant of Garibaldi who was there in exile. When Garibaldi sailed for Italy to become an army officer in 1854, Eli saw him off by ship. He subsequently received several letters from Garibaldi, inviting him to live in Italy, promising him wealth and good position but Eli was looking northward attracted by the Cariboo gold rush. On Jun 18 1858, the family arrived in British Columbia on the steamship *Brother Jonathan* and settled in Victoria on Cadboro Bay Road.

¹ Some say Eli Sr was born in 1824 but there are two different entries for the baptism of Eli Harrison: Sept 21 1825; and Sept 23 1825 which makes Sep 3 1825 more likely.

Always a prominent mason, Eli Harrison Sr (pictured) was elected grand master for the province from 1878 to and including part of 1881. He was the first principal of the Columbia Royal Arch, chapter number 120 and was for some time special deputy of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, besides being an honorary member of several other masonic bodies. In 1878 he laid the foundation of the Masonic temple in Victoria, officiated at its dedication, and for many years was one of its trustees.



He was a respected pioneer member of the community and for a number of years was a justice of the peace. At the time of the union of the provinces he was chosen as one of the deputation to interview Lord Dufferin, then governor-general of Canada, with respect to the non-fulfillment of the terms of union. As a painter, he became quite skilled, both in design and execution of church murals and ceilings; and could always get high pay for very little effort in this specialty. In the *1890 Victoria Directory*, Eli Sr's business is described as: "*painter and paper hanger, and dealer in wall paper, paints, oils and glass, 108 Douglas, corner Pandora Avenue; residence at 43 Cadboro Bay Road.*"



The Harrison family now consisted of two boys and five girls. Mary Jane Augusta Harrison was born Oct 22 1855 in San Francisco while the others were all born in Victoria: Agnes Harrison on Dec 25 1860; Alfred Harrison April 16 1861; Elizabeth Ann Harrison Dec 7 1867; Alice Virginia Harrison August 8 1869; and Edith Mae Harrison October 6 1871. British Columbia became a part of Canada in 1871 and the first Canadian census to include British Columbia was in 1881. Still living at home, at that time, were William Alfred, 19, an articling law clerk; Elizabeth Ann 13; Alice

Virginia 12; and Edith May 9. Eli Sr's occupation in the *1881 Canada Census* was "painter-glazier. By the *1901 Canada Census*, only Eli Sr, age 76, and wife Elizabeth, age 69, were living by themselves in the family home (pictured). Eli's occupation was painter/ justice of the peace.

On Sept 19 1907, at the age of 84, Eli Harrison Sr died from "senile decay" in Victoria. He is buried in the Ross Bay Cemetery in Victoria where there is a family plot. Elizabeth Warburton died, at the age of 91, on Dec 24 1923 in Alameda California. Elizabeth was no doubt in California comforting her daughter, Elizabeth Ann who was going through a divorce from her husband, Dr Allen Francis Gillihan. The couple were married in Victoria, Aug 12 1897 and separated Jan 15 1915. Dr Gillihan complained that his wife was jealous of his women patients, would listen in on telephone calls or accuse him of associating with his women patients outside of professional services. The issue was before the California courts in February 1924.

CHILDREN OF ELI HARRISON SENIOR AND ELIZABETH WARBURTON

1. **Eli Harrison Junior 1852-1930 (see more info below)**
2. **Mary Jane Augusta Harrison** (Oct 22 1854- Jan 15 1936); m: Oct 29 1874, Donald McPhaden (1847-1918). Moved to New Westminster in 1882. First organist of St Paul's Reformed Episcopal Church and honorary member of Native Daughters of British Columbia. **Children:** Alice May McPhaden 1876-1956; Charles Alexander McPhaden 1877-1965; Alfred Donald McPhaden 1880-

1950; Duncan Eli McPhaden 1882-1893; Lloyd Warburton McPhaden 1884-1893; Victor Augusta McPhaden 1886-1985; Cyril John McPhaden 1889-1893; Laura Agnes McPhaden 1896-1987.

3. **Agnes Jessie Harrison** (Dec 25 1860- Jan 11 1943); m Jul 11 1878 Job Davenport Batchelor (1852-1920) of Honolulu. **Children:** Job Harrison Batchelor (1880-1916); Frank Augustus Batchelor (1881-1957); George Davenport Batchelor (1885-1885); Gertrude A Batchelor (1887-1887).
4. **Elizabeth Ann Harrison** (1867-1961); m Aug 12 1897 Dr Allen Francis Gillihan (1872-1939) of Berkely, California. They were seeking a divorce in 1924. **Children:** Elizabeth Alynnette Gillihan 1906-1963; Francis Harrison Gillihan 1908-1987.
5. **Alfred William Harrison** (Apr 16 1861- Jun 16 1938). Does not appear to have married. He did article as a law clerk when young. Alfred was recorded as living in Portland, Oregon at the time of his father's death in 1907. In *1911 Canada Census*, he was living with his mother; and his occupation was real estate salesman.
6. **Alice Virginie Harrison** (Aug 8 1869- Jul 26 1944); m Apr 17 1901 Francis Henry "Frank" Wollaston (1859-1910). She passed away at her residence 1534 Hampshire Road, Victoria. **Children:** Cecil Francis Wollaston (1903-1993), Vancouver; Catherine Mae Wollaston (1902-1985); and Nancy Virginia Wollaston of Victoria born 1908. Alice is buried in the family plot at Ross Bay Cemetery. She was for many years on the teaching staff of Monterey School in Oak Bay.
7. **Edith Mae Harrison** (Oct 6 1871- Mar 10 1959); m Mar 4 1893: Major Robert Ford Verrinder MD, DDS (1864-1944). Occupation: dentist. **Children:** Warburton Harrison Ford Verrinder, California (1902-1990); Margeurite Virginie Ford Verrinder Dennis, California (1895-1970); Gwendoline Mae F Verrinder Leigh, Mission BC (1900-1999); Edith Regina Verrinder Cowan, Vancouver (1897-1964). At the time of Dr Verrinder's death in 1944, he and his wife, Edith Mae, were estranged. Edith died in Vancouver.

ENTER ELI HARRISON JUNIOR & EUNICE M.L. SEABROOK

Eli Harrison Jr was the eldest son of Ei Harrison Sr and Elizabeth Warburton. Born in Missouri, he made the trek with his parents across the span of America when only 2 years old. No doubt his father's experience as a Justice of the Peace influenced Eli Jr in his career objectives. He was well educated, along with others who became leading figures in the life of the British Columbia Colony, at the Collegiate School for Boys, an historic private school in Victoria established in 1861. There he acquired the foundational academic education that prepared him to become a prominent pioneer judge. In the 1870s, before formal university law schools existed in the province, Eli Harrison Jr. would have studied in Victoria by reading law under a senior practicing barrister, supplemented by private studies. At the time, many famous lawyers were practising at the San Francisco Bar and, attracted by the opportunities to study there, Eli went back to San Francisco to complete his legal education.

On returning to Victoria, he was called to the bar of British Columbia in 1873. A friend in the government learning of the young lawyer's training in San Francisco, offered him his first government post, that of Acting Registrar of Titles in 1875. In 1876 and 1878, he acted as Law Clerk in the Legislative Assembly. He was solicitor in the Attorney-General's department in 1878 and in 1883 was elected a bencher of the Law Society. In 1884 he was appointed magistrate for the entire Province of British Columbia and elevated to the Bench as a County Court Judge for life. His first county was Cariboo and Lillooet a territory covering thousands of square miles and where he spent a long time on the road. In 1889, he was transferred as County Court judge to Nanaimo and appointed local judge of Supreme Court with full powers in that jurisdiction. Harrison also supervised the building of Nanaimo's stone court house designed by Francis Mawson Rattenbury.

During the 1890s, both men were prominent figures shaping Nanaimo's transition from a rough mining town into a major civic centre. Rattenbury provided the institutional grandeur through his architecture, while Judge Harrison provided the legal framework and stability from the bench. As the primary judicial authority in Nanaimo, Judge Eli Harrison provided direct input on the necessary layout for the new stone courthouse. He required a facility that could handle the rapidly growing caseload of the Vancouver Island coal boom.

Eli initially never lived in Nanaimo, preferring to commute by train, on weekends, to his acre of old oaks in Victoria. Because commuting up and down the Island by 1890s train standards every single day was impossible, Harrison needed a substantial local base. In 1892, he commissioned the Late Victorian Eclectic home at 546 Prideaux Street (pictured) in Nanaimo's upscale "Nob Hill" neighbourhood. The house was designed by architect, Cornelius John Soule and distinctively situated on a high rocky outcropping making



it a highly visible landmark in the neighbourhood. Over the last century, the building has served as a private mansion, a women's hospital, an English-style boys' residential school, and temporary housing for soldiers' wives during World War II.

During his many years on the bench, Judge Harrison (pictured) earned a wide reputation as a fair-minded, painstaking and able judge, and some of his cases were selected for publication in the law reports of the day. His opinions and career are favorably cited in Canadian and English publications, both legal and lay. In the twenty-five years he held office as a judge, Harrison also acted on a number of Royal Commissions. He was often requested to aid in the revisions of the laws of the Province or the adaptations of the English statutes to this country, repeatedly receiving letters of commendation and appreciation from the government.



Judge Harrison was, like his father, a prominent member of the Masonic craft, and had reached the thirty-second degree. He was a charter member of British Columbia Lodge and the youngest mason initiated in this jurisdiction. In 1912 he compiled and annotated the first Masonic Code of British Columbia, a highly regarded and widely-used work. At the time of his passing he was still representative of the Grand Lodge of England, having held the office since his appointment in July 29, 1886.

EUNICE MARY LOUISE SEABROOK: wife of Judge Eli Harrison Jr

Eli Jr's wife, Eunice Mary Louise Seabrook, was born in London, Ontario on Jun 15 1860, the daughter of Roads Seabrook (1838-1921) and Louise Annette Holloway (1842-1911). Roads' father, Joseph Seabrook Esquire (1797-1857), had emigrated the family to Canada from Buckinghamshire, England in 1835.

In 1864, attracted by the Cariboo gold rush, Roads moved his family to British Columbia, settling in New Westminster. Four years later they moved to Victoria where Roads joined the Pioneer Line shipping firm of R.P. Rithet². In 1883, the company morphed into the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company, the largest shipping interest on the west coast. Contracts for mail service were quite lucrative for the shipping

² Robert Paterson Rithet (1844-1919) was the ultimate entrepreneur in late 19th century British Columbia. He had a hand in any kind of business: sealing, shipping, sugar refining; cattle raising; flour mills; salmon canning etc.

companies and the CPN, at one time, had a monopoly on mail services along the coast. One of its steamships was the *R.P. Rithet* a 177 feet-long wooden sternwheel steamer built in 1882 at Victoria. It was equipped with all the plush and gilt magnificence of the day: spacious staterooms; elaborate and ornate carvings in the saloons; and brilliantly lighted throughout with electricity. However, the prosperity of these transportation ventures, like the gold rush, was short-lived. In 1901, the CPN company became part of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The R.P. Rithet & Company Ltd also had an interest in acting as a ship provisioner for North Pacific sealing schooners. In 1892, the *SS Coquitlam* was seized by United States Revenue officials for illegally unloading and transferring cargo (fur seal skins and supplies) from a Canadian sealing schooner in US waters without a proper permit. US officials contended that under the 1867 Alaska purchase, the entire Bering Sea had been part of the purchase and was a “closed sea”. The Canadians triumphed in international court by arguing that the Bering Sea was international waters; that it had never been Russia’s to give away; and that the US had no jurisdiction there. The Americans were charged \$48,000 in damages.

Seabrook remained a central figure in Victoria’s booming maritime economy. He maintained his high-ranking role as the vice-president of R.P. Rithet & Company, Limited. As a highly successful merchant, he integrated deeply into British Columbia’s political and legal elite. Capitalizing on his experience defending British shipping rights, he also became one of the key incorporators and directors of the Victoria Sealing Company, cementing his influence over the regional fur trade.

Roads Seabrooke lived out the remainder of his long life in Victoria, watching the city transform from a rough gold-rush hub into a modern Pacific metropolis. He passed away on August 7, 1921, at the age of 83 and is buried alongside many of his contemporary West Coast pioneers in Victoria’s historic Ross Bay Cemetery.



Meanwhile Eunice Seabrook (pictured) was completing her education at Mrs. Fellows’ Finishing School in Victoria. In her memoirs, written from 1860 to 1906, Eunice gives intimate glimpses into daily life in Victoria, Nanaimo and New Westminster offering the earliest accounts of the province by a woman.³ With verve and humour she describes everyday life in early Victoria and Vancouver (what was then called “Granville”). As a young woman, she travelled across the Strait in the tugboat *Etta White* to Vancouver to make music, take part in theatricals and witness a Native ceremonial dance. She and her friends participated in the first bathing beauty contest which Eunice won and

was awarded a gold prize worth about \$50.

In Victoria, the social activities of the girls who had finished at Mrs. Fellows’ academy were regarded much more seriously than those in Vancouver. Society was highly conventional, as befitted an older and rather conservative place. Masonic and Naval balls were most fashionable at that time so it was no coincidence that Eunice and Eli Jr met at a Masonic Ball. In fact, their meeting was probably highly likely orchestrated by their social circles, family backgrounds, and shared communities.

Eli Jr was a young lawyer in his twenties who was becoming known as a Crown Prosecutor. Early in their relationship, they went horseback riding; some months later they were engaged and they married on Nov 24 1880.

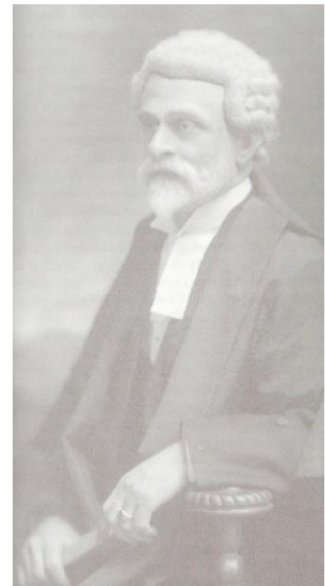
³ The Judge’s Wife: Memoirs of a British Columbia Pioneer by Eunice M.L. Harrison

For her wedding, Eunice received a unique present from her maternal great grandmother, Eunice Bagster, in England. Mrs. Bagster, nearing 100 years of age, and a well known philanthropist was making a lace cambric handkerchief and opera bag for her great granddaughter when Queen Victoria came to visit her. The Queen offered to provide some Royal household silk for the opera bag. A family heirloom, the bag is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁴

Continuing on with her memoirs after their marriage, Eunice Harrison describes the interests of a well-educated woman of her time who was fascinated by the growth of British Columbia. She knew many of the important people in the colony and province, including the Douglas family, and speaks freely about everyday events in British Columbia, such as famous murders, rides on "*the unfinished transcontinental*" and her meetings with First Nations people. She also includes descriptions of her husband's many hazardous trips over the Brigade Trail into the interior of the province to dispense frontier justice. She even owned a third share in one of her father's sealing schooners until an international treaty for the preservation and protection of fur seals closed down all operations. In the *1901 Canada Census*, the Harrison family is living in Victoria: Eli Jr is 49; Eunice 38; Paul 18; Eunice 17; Victor 15; Bernice 9; Hershal 4; and Claude 3.

In the final section of her memoir, Eunice describes her visit to San Francisco where she was caught in the earthquake of 1906 and the subsequent fire that destroyed much of the city. With a daughter and son at her side, Harrison walked the length of the city to the dockyards, avoiding the burning buildings and the mobs of people, taking advantage of the chaos to board the ship that would take her out of the flames and back to Canada. She closed the book at that point because the title of the memoir was that of a British Columbia pioneer and from this point forward, the times could hardly be called "pioneer".

Eli Harrison Jr (pictured) died of pneumonia possibly as a result of influenza on Feb 7 1930 in Victoria at the age of 78. He had been on the Judge's official retired list for some years and was survived by his widow and their six children. All four of his sons had become members of the bar. On Jan 25 1950, another link with early Victoria days was broken by the death of Eunice Mary Louise Harrison, at the age of 90, in Duncan, British Columbia the home of her son Hershell. As recorded in the *1931 Canada Census*, she had been living with her son and his family since becoming a widow.



NEXT GENERATION OF HARRISONS

One of the reasons that the Harrisons never took up permanent residence in the Cariboo and Lillooet or Nanaimo counties was because of the children's schooling and future careers. In Victoria, there were so many more opportunities. Like their father, the four boys attended the private boarding academies of the Collegiate School and Corrig College. The latter was a boarding and day school in Victoria which prepared boys for commerce, the law, medical, military or naval services and the universities. In its hey-day, it catered to residents not just

⁴ An opera bag is a small, elegant evening handbag traditionally meant for formal events like the opera or theater. It's designed to hold just the essentials like a lipstick, keys, and cards.

of British Columbia, but the rest of the world.⁵ The two daughters, like their mother, attended Angela College, a prominent girls boarding and finishing school. It closed in 1903 due to the rising popularity of free public education.

Eli Harrison Jr and his wife, Eunice, had four sons, all of whom entered the legal profession. Paul Phillipps was a practicing barrister up-island in Courtenay. Victor was a barrister in Nanaimo who became Mayor of the city. Claude served as the city prosecutor for Victoria; and Herschel was a barrister, legal scholar and prolific law writer who lived between Duncan and Nanaimo.

CHILDREN OF ELI HARRISON JR AND EUNICE MARY LOUISA SEABROOK

1. **Eunice Agatha Bagster Harrison** (pictured) (Sep 29 1881- Mar 18 1975) m Oct 20 1904 John Colborne Coote (Dec 30 1880 - Jul 7 1964); occupation: gentleman, land owner, real estate agent; descendant from distinguished Irish ancestors; lived in Toronto then Vancouver at time of *1931 Canada Census*. **Children:** Marion Eunice Colbourne Coote b Aug 12 1906; social worker; m June 29 1949 Squadron Leader, John Eric Vivian Colclough Hamilton. Marion was murdered on Dec 2 1975 strangled to death by her cousin, Elouise Roads Harrison Wilson, a Victoria-based lawyer. Elouise was charged with manslaughter, convicted by a jury and spent 10 years in jail before being eligible for parole in 1987.
2. **Paul Phillipps Harrison (1882-1950)** (see more information below): it would be Paul Phillipps Harrison who would live at 290 Vancouver Ave, Nanaimo.
3. **Victor Birch Harrison** (pictured) (Nov 29 1884-Jul 25 1971). Victor Harrison was the second of the four sons of Judge Eli Harrison to enter the legal profession and was called to the bar in 1908. He started his legal career in Ladysmith with the law firm of Drake, Jackson and Helmcken. In 1909, he was named Magistrate. He later moved to Nanaimo and opened his first office in the Eagles Hall. One of Victor's most famous cases was that of Brother XII (Edward Arthur Wilson, 1878–1934) who was an English-born mystic and leader of a bizarre, 1920s occult cult based at Cedar-by-the-Sea. In 1933, Harrison brought action on behalf of a Boston woman for recovery of \$25,000 against the Brother XII Aquarian Foundation which led to charges against cult leader Brother XII himself. In 1925-1926, Victor was elected to his first term as Mayor of Nanaimo. He served again from 1938-1944. He was nominated as the Conservative candidate for the B.C. Legislature in 1920 and again in 1940, but was defeated both times.



Victor had a long association with the Native Sons and served as Chief Factor and Grand Factor in 1923-1924 and in 1925. Organized in 1899, the Native Sons of British Columbia was a middle-class, historical-preservationist fraternal organization for white males. The terms Chief Factor and Grand Factor were internal leadership titles borrowed from the historical Hudson's Bay Company to designate officers heading local chapters. As a member of the Native Sons, Harrison was instrumental in the creation of Petroglyph Provincial Park in Nanaimo and involved in preserving the Nanaimo Bastion. Victor became legal advisor for Thomas Kitchen, a person who had large land and mortgage holdings. In 1891, Mr. Kitchen had an option to purchase the land where the

⁵ Corrig College in Victoria was founded in 1886 by the Reverend C.J. Brenton, an Anglican cleric from the Maritimes who named it after an earlier school he had headed or a personal association, though the exact definitive etymology of the word "Corrig" in his choice remains a piece of 19th-century private school naming lore not explicitly recorded in surviving founding documents

Bastion stood in the present-day location of the Dorchester parking lot and all he wanted was an agreement from those using the old fort to pay \$1.00 ground rent per year. This was refused so Mr. Kitchen ordered them to move the Bastion and it subsequently landed on Front Street.

Victor Harrison retired in the 1950s living for decades at 215 Newcastle Avenue until his death on July 25 1971. He did not marry and his house passed to his niece, Eloise Roads Harrison Wilson.

4. **Claude Lionel Harrison** (pictured) (Sep 20 1886- Mar 12 1986) was born in Victoria, the fourth child of Judge Eli Harrison and wife, Eunice. Like his brothers, he was educated at Corrig College and Collegiate Institute. Harrison's legal career began as clerk to Justice H. B. Robertson of the British Columbia Appeal Court and he worked his way up to City Prosecutor for Victoria. This brought him into constant contact with the public and his actions often caused him to be described as harsh. This undoubtedly led to his strong desire for privacy once away from the spotlight of court and city matter.

After forty years as prosecuting attorney for the City of Victoria, Claude Harrison retired at the age of sixty-four but decided to run for Mayor in 1951. In a column for the *Times Colonist* newspaper it was predicted if elected, "... he [Harrison] will be one of the most original, colourful and vigorous mayors Victoria has ever had."

His platform was straight forward and simple: The Dominion, he said, had promised Vancouver Island a steamship service when they joined confederation, but this never materialized. Harrison pushed for the establishment of the Swartz Bay-Mainland Ferry which eventually became a reality in 1962. Harrison's campaign also promoted a better coastal road on Vancouver Island and he was all for opening council, committee and police commission meetings to the press and public. He wanted the public to have the opportunity to personally question the mayor on issues of the day.

After being voted in, Harrison's inaugural address at his first council meeting on Jan 7 1952, was the longest on record, covering a huge list of city concerns. Later that month the *Times Colonist* described the Mayor as "... a noted conservationist, steeped in nature lore and Vancouver Island's history, [who]



CLAUDE L. HARRISON



wants good, wide walks in the area and permanent tags on each plant and shrub." During his two terms as Mayor, from 1952 to 1955, Harrison wore a "brilliant blue cape ... casually flung around his shoulders revealing crimson lining ... [and] a police badge on his suspenders." This cape (pictured) was merely a flamboyant appendage during his time as mayor and was used only for effect. A strange contradiction considering

Harrison was a man who sought privacy and preferred to be away from the limelight.

Claude married Mary Isabella Edith Moore on Nov 14 1911 at Victoria. He was 25 and she was 23, born Dec 7 1888 in Saskatchewan the daughter of Arthur Alexander Moore and Edith May Nelson (1868-1934). They do not appear to have had any children.

Claude Harrison and his wife were enthusiastic members of the Vancouver Island section of the Alpine Club of Canada and hiked and climbed on the Forbidden Plateau in the late 1920's and 1930's. In 1928 he and a number of others made the first ascent of Castle (Castlecrag) Mountain. He also led a club trip out to Shields Lake near Sooke with Lindley Crease where Harrison donated land to the club and a cabin was built and used for many years by ACC members. He was Chairman of the section for eight years from 1934 to 1941. In 1938, the society petitioned the Provincial Government to set aside as a public park, 250 square miles of territory on the west coast of Vancouver Island which was the beginning of the West Coast Trail.

Claude was considered an eccentric and in his home on the Malahat he had a room equipped in such a way that by pushing a few buttons, it could be transformed into a replica of an old Yukon bar-room. Harrison passed away in Victoria on March 12, 1986, at the age of ninety-nine, a few months before

his one hundredth birthday. In keeping with his strong beliefs about guarding his privacy, Harrison made provisions for all his personal papers to be destroyed upon his death. Mary Isabella Harrison died May 31 1986.

5. **Bernice Seabrook Mae Harrison** (Sep 10 1888 – Oct 26 1984); educated at All Hallows School, Yale BC; m Aug 21 1912 Lieut. Colonel Charles Anderson Forsythe (Apr 1880-); born Glasgow, Scotland; he was selected as accountant by London directors of the British Columbia Electric Railway Co Ltd. situated in Victoria BC. Arrived in Victoria Jun 5 1909; in 1912, resigned from BC Electric to start own practice. They moved to Seattle WA May 20 1918; and divorced before 1931 *US Census*. On Nov 14 1936, Bernice declared intention to become US naturalized citizen. Bernice died Oct 26 1984 at King WA. **Children:** Gordon Hamilton Harrison Forsythe b Jul 16 1913 who m May 14 1938 Violet Davis in Seattle, WA; he died Oct 12 1981; and Patricia Bernice Forsythe b Apr 30 1920; died Jan 25 1993 in Seattle WA.
6. **Herschel Roads Harrison** (pictured with wife) (Feb 13 1896- Sep 28 1978); m at Seattle WA, Dec 31 1928, Valine Kenmonth Henry (May 4 1906- Mar 17 1994) born Pullman WA. Both died at Duncan BC while living on a farm at Cobble Hill. Herschel was educated at Collegiate School and Corrig College 1905-1913 in Victoria. Matriculated BC Law School 1914-1918; also studied law in USA., LL.B 1920. Admitted member of the State Bar of California 1921 and engaged in general law practice. Legal counsel for Anglo-US Club, CA 1922-1936. Resumed citizenship in BC and was admitted to BC Bar 1939. Author of over 300 articles in the Canadian Bar Review, Bench & Bar, The Law, The Lawyer, and The Fortnightly Law Journal. **Children:** Trudene Elouise Harrison (Oct 28 1929 - Dec 7 2014), m Phillip Henry Wilson (1912-1979) in Nanaimo; Marilyn Benjamin Harrison (1931-2003) m Oct 1952 Graham Charles Rutter (1925-1998), Chilliwack; and Victor Delamar Harrison (Mar 21 1932-2017). It would be Elouise Harrison who, in 1975, would be accused of killing her cousin, Marion Eunice Coote.

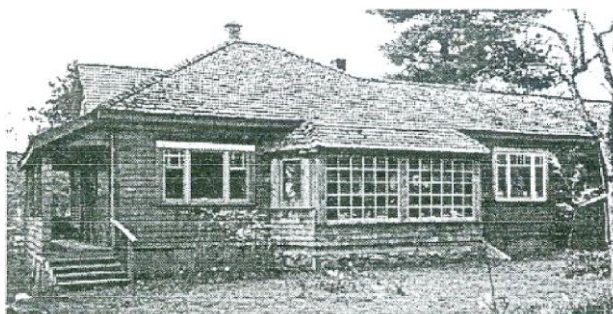


PAUL PHILLIPPS (PP) HARRISON

The second child of Eli Jr and Eunice Harrison, PP Harrison, (pictured below) was born in Victoria on Dec 1 1882. He attended the Victoria Boys' College and was well known as one of the prominent "old boys" of the city's early school days. He articulated with Eberts & Taylor, a highly prominent Victoria law firm. After his training, P. P. Harrison was called to the bar and started practicing law in Victoria. At the age of 21, he joined the rush to Dawson City where he established a law practice at Conrad in the Yukon Territory; and then Atlin, BC. In 1900 he arrived in Cumberland BC where he set up a law practice, later moving to Courtenay. Besides his practice he was solicitor to Canadian Collieries Ltd, Canadian Western Lumber Co., Ltd., and the Royal Bank of Canada.

On Mar 27 1907, he married Lillian Althea Wier. She was born in Halifax NS on Mar 15 1887, the daughter of John Joseph Wier (1856-1931) and Rosina Howden (1862-1932) who was born in Scotland. They had married in Halifax in 1883. Lillian came with her family to Cumberland in 1900. Her father was a highly visible civic figure in the early development of Cumberland. As early as 1906, J.J. Wier was formally appointed by British Columbia's Provincial Cabinet to serve on the Board of Commissioners of Police for the City of Cumberland. He served alongside local city aldermen to oversee early municipal law

enforcement during Cumberland's booming coal-mining era. He also worked as a salesman, then a publisher and was officially commissioned as a Notary Public in 1919.



In the *1911 Canada Census*, the Harrison family is living in Cumberland, Paul is 20; Lillian is 24 and there are now 2 children: Leland 3; and Claudia 2. They would be the parents of 4 sons and 5 daughters. They bought a house at 2792 Penrith Ave, a one-storey, hip-roofed craftsman bungalow with a shed-roofed verandah across the front façade and a gabled dormer above. A harbinger of things to come.

An auto enthusiast, Harrison was first secretary of the Cumberland-Courtenay Automobile Association in 1913. His second car was a 1912 "Chalmers 36" five passenger touring car. He was also a member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (BPOE).

As a practicing lawyer on Vancouver Island, Paul Phillips Harrison's most notable and historically significant legal cases centered on the intense labour and political unrest in Cumberland, B.C., during July 1918. He was a key legal figure following the controversial killing of Albert "Ginger" Goodwin, a prominent socialist labour activist and draft evader. Following the shooting of Ginger Goodwin by a Dominion Police constable in the hills near Cumberland, P.P. Harrison was retained to represent Goodwin's family, friends, and the local labour unions at the official coroner's inquest. On August 1, 1918, the coroner's jury ruled that the shooting of Ginger Goodwin was a "justifiable homicide."



He became mayor of Cumberland in 1918 and was responsible for closing all public meeting places during the Spanish Influenza epidemic.

In the *1921 Canada Census*, Paul and Lillian are living in Cumberland with their 7 children: Lealand 13; Claudia 12; Clinton 8; Muriel 7; Desley 3; D'arcy 2; and Annette 6 months. In 1922, Paul was appointed city prosecutor; and, in 1924, was elected Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Comox-Alberni riding running as an "Independent Liberal". He only served one term in the Legislature.

As an MLA for Comox, Harrison was appointed by the provincial government to lead a high-profile inquiry into the province's mental health infrastructure. Known as the "*Harrison Mental Commission*," he investigated the rise of institutionalized patients and submitted influential reports such as his 1927 paper "*Immigration and Its Effects on the Increase of Insanity*" which heavily shaped early provincial immigration and public health policies regarding mental healthcare.

In the *1931 Canada Census*, he and Lillian were still living in Cumberland with their now nine children: Leland Leonard Harrison (1907) 24; Claudia Bernice Harrison (1909) 22; Clinton Phillip Harrison (1913) 18; Muriel Phyllis Harrison (1915) 16; Desley Ivan Harrison (1916) 14; D'Arcy Wier Harrison (1918) 12; Annette Pauline Harrison (1920) 11; Olga Allen Harrison (1912) 9; and Phyllis Munn Coote Harrison (1926) 5. They appear to have had another child, Norma Lillian Harrison, in 1925, but she died young on Jan 22 1926.

Paul Phillipp Harrison was appointed King's Counsellor in 1936 and in 1939 was appointed County court Judge for Nanaimo where he would be stationed for 11 years. It was time to find a house in Nanaimo.

NEWCASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD: 290 Vancouver Avenue

In 1860, 500 acres on the north side of the Millstone River (pictured) were purchased by wealthy private investors, mine bosses, and entrepreneurs from Victoria who anticipated Nanaimo's coal boom. Forty-



seven 3 acre lots were subsequently sold at auction and the Newcastle neighbourhood was created eventually evolving into a premier residential suburb separated from industrial Nanaimo by the Millstone River. Access, initially, was by an old wooden bridge. The area remained a suburb within the 1875 city limits, but was still sparsely populated with homes scattered throughout the townsite. Two of the oldest homes still standing date to 1890 and 1898. By the early 20th century more residences were constructed and, as a result, there are many excellent examples of the Craftsman style in the neighbourhood.

Newcastle, Stewart and Vancouver Avenues were all initially named as such but until 1949 the streets were creatively called First (Dawes); Second (Bryden); Third (Mt Benson);

Fourth (Rosehill) and Fifth (Townsite). Terminal North was first Union Avenue N and then became Departure Bay Road before settling on Terminal.

In 1887, at the age of 20, a William Sloan (1867-1928), born in Wingham, Ontario 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. In 1894, William Sloan and Walter Scott were operating their dry goods business at 49 Commercial Street. 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 (pictured) 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 Sloan died on Mar 2 1928 following a stroke while attending a local theatre. Sloan's widow, Catherine, continued to live in the mansion at 255 Stewart until it was demolished in

1930 and the eight lots within Block 5 began to be sold including Lot 71 and part of Lot 72 of Block 5, the future home of 290 Vancouver.

The existing stone fence and what used to be an iron gate serve as a tangible reminder of this imposing estate. 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.

ENTER ELMER PEARCE BRADSHAW (1907-2000)

Elmer Pearce Bradshaw was born Jan 15 1907, the son of a mine foreman, George Bennett Bradshaw (1871-1940) from Derbyshire, England and Charlotte Mary Pearce (1876-1956) from Cornwall, England via New Zealand. Elmer Bradshaw was totally familiar with Newcastle townsite as he grew up in the neighbourhood: in the 1911, 1921, and 1931 *Canada Census*, the Bradshaw family is living at 125 Vancouver Avenue (near the corner of Dawes).

On Jun 8 1934, Elmer Pearce Bradshaw married Ethel Olgivie (1912-1980) and they moved immediately to 441 Vancouver Ave. In 1935, Elmer gained title to Lot 71, Block 5 in Newcastle and on May 3 of that year, obtained a building permit (#1604) from the City of Nanaimo to construct a residence on the lot which would become 290 Vancouver Ave (pictured next page). The contractor was to be an Arthur Wilson. It was to be a 1 storey, 6 room house with a cedar shingle roof; external walls of 2/4 paper and 1x6 cedar siding; and internal walls of 2/4 gyprock. Total cost: \$2500.00.

The properties lining Vancouver Avenue were highly prized by Nanaimo's professional and commercial elite. Perched near the waterfront, houses on this stretch were specifically designed to offer prominent, sweeping harbour views looking out toward Newcastle Island.

Arthur Wilson was an established contractor with ties to Industrial Timber Mills, Ltd which ensured that he, as a local builder, had direct, premium access to the best cuts from Vancouver Island's booming logging operations. Industrial Timber Mills Ltd. was a major historical lumber operation established on July 1, 1929, in Youbou on Cowichan Lake. Given the dates, the high-quality, old-growth timber used to build 290 Vancouver was, in all likelihood, sourced straight from the company's massive operations at Youbou. In 1946, Industrial Timber Mills was absorbed into the newly formed British Columbia Forest Products Limited (BCFP).

When Judge Paul Phillipps Harrison's home at 290 Vancouver Avenue was constructed in 1936, the inclusion of Gyproc wallboard (pictured) represented a cutting-edge, premium building choice for that era. Finding original Gyproc panels in a late-1930s home like 290 Vancouver Avenue tells a clear story about its construction quality. In 1936, residential drywall was still relatively new. Most standard homes were still being finished using wet lath-and-plaster. Utilizing G.L.A.'s premade Gyproc panels meant the home was built using modern, cleaner, and faster architectural techniques. For an elite professional with a massive family of nine children, installing early fireproof and sound-absorbent drywall provided critical safety and structural durability that wet plaster could not match.



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF MANITOBA

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT.

R 2599
2600

To the Building Inspector:-

I hereby apply under the provisions of the By-Law regulating the construction of Buildings for a permit to a house

in accordance with plans, sections and elevations submitted herewith on

Lot 71, Block V, Plan 584, with frontage at No.

304th Vancouver Street or Road.

Building to be used for Resident

No. of Storeys 1
No. of Rooms 6

How Lighted Electric
How ventilated
How heated stunace
Width of Tread 14" x 12"

Basement yes
1st Floor
2nd Floor
3rd Floor
4th Floor
5th Floor
Attic yes

Stairs yes
Height of Rise 6"
Roof covering to be of Cedar shingles
External Walls to be formed of 2 1/2" brick & 1/2" casing
Internal Walls to be formed of 2 1/2" brick & 1/2" casing
Means of Rainwater Drainage Storm drain

Means of Water Supply city No. of Services 1 Size 2 1/2" galv

Sanitary Appliances:- Water Closets yes Wash-basins yes Sinks yes
Baths yes Tubs yes

Water used for Building Purposes: yes

No. of Bricks laid 1500 Plastering, 1 coat work sq. yds.

Plastering, 2 coat work sq. yds. Earthwork laid sq. yds.

Concrete Work 1574 Cu. Yds. Stonework laid Cu. Yds.

Cost of Building, Alteration or Addition @ 2500.00

Name and Address of Architect

Name and Address of Contractor Arthur Nelson 330 Robson St

Name and Address of Owner Elmer Bradshaw Vancouver B.C.

Street frontage required Length of time required days.

Signature of Applicant

Elmer Bradshaw

Address Vancouver B.C.

DATE

MAY -3 1935

No. of Permit

1604

Approved:

"Gyproc" produced by Gypsum, Lime and Alabastine, Canada, Limited (G.L.A.) was Canada's pioneer brand of non-burning mass-market drywall. Introduced prominently in the late 1920s and 1930s, this specific interior product fundamentally changed Canadian home construction by replacing traditional, labor-intensive lath and wet plaster walls with prefabricated, fire-resistant sheets. The historical marketing of the product heavily pushed Gyproc as a "fireproof wallboard" because of the inherent chemical properties of its primary ingredient: **gypsum** (calcium sulfate dihydrate). Gypsum naturally contains roughly **21% water** locked at a molecular level into its crystalline matrix. When exposed to the extreme heat of a fire, a chemical process called *calcination* occurs. The core of the Gyproc board releases this locked water as a cloud of steam. This steam release actively absorbs thermal energy, keeping the opposite side of the wallboard cool and significantly slowing down the spread of house fires.

The G.L.A. company was formed in 1928 through a massive consolidation of early Canadian industrial mining operations. While headquartered in Ontario, G.L.A. bought out BC Gypsum and operated a major West Coast manufacturing facility on the Fraser River at Liverpool (near New Westminster). The wallboard produced at this West Coast plant became so dominant that the factory's rail siding was officially named "Gyproc" by the railway. The brand name was so popular that it turned into a genericized trademark; to this day, millions of Canadians and international builders still colloquially refer to standard drywall as "gyprock".

The choice to utilize the Gyproc panels demonstrated a keen practical interest in structural safety, soundproofing, and the evolving architectural shifts of the mid-20th century. As a judge and political figure in British Columbia, Harrison would be highly literate in the structural and professional boundaries of architecture. For instance, he presided over regional civil litigation and property disputes that legally defined the separation of design professions. Historical B.C. legal memoranda show him navigating cases involving the statutory definition of the practice of architecture versus the science of civil engineering, specifically regarding who had the legal right to "furnish plans or specifications to construct buildings". By 1936, 290 Vancouver was ready for occupancy and Elmer and his wife, Charlotte, moved into the property and lived there, according to the *City Directory for Nanaimo* until 1939. They may have decided to live in the house while finishing the interior.

As further proof that the Bradshaws occupied the house at this time, it was the scene of a theft on Oct 13 1938 when, according to the *Nanaimo Daily News*: *using a pass key in the kitchen door, thieves entered the home during the absence of Mr. and Mrs. Bradshaw. Two watches were stolen according to reports to the provincial police. Entrance was first attempted through the basement door where a key was broken off in the lock. The thefts were discovered about 11 pm.*⁶ The use of a "pass key" implies that there were others who had keys to the resident in addition to the Bradshaw's.

ENTER PAUL PHILLIPP HARRISON AND HIS FAMILY

By 1939, Paul Phillipp Harrison and his family had removed themselves from Cumberland and were needing to find a house in Nanaimo. Newcastle must have appealed to the Harrisons because of its ocean-view and exclusive enclave for Nanaimo's commercial and professional elite. Paul was also familiar with the area as his brother, Victor, had been living in the neighbourhood at 215 Newcastle Avenue since 1925. The 1939 *City of Nanaimo Directory*, records that PP Harrison was living "somewhere in Townsite", but no particular address is provided. In the same directory, Elmer Bradshaw and his wife, Ethel, are continuing to live at 290 Vancouver.

⁶ *Nanaimo Daily News*: Oct 14 1938

Finally, in the *1940 City of Nanaimo Directory*, the Harrison family has taken charge of 290 Vancouver. Paul Phillip Harrison, his wife Lillian and their nine children can now move in. All of their sons were employed but still living at home: Leland as an assistant surveyor; Desley and D'Arcy were clerks; and Clinton was with the provincial forestry department.

Paul Phillipps Harrison served the Nanaimo region primarily as a prominent jurist, acting as the Junior Judge and later the County Court Judge for the County of Nanaimo, as well as a Local Judge of the Supreme Court of British Columbia during the 1940s. Most of Harrison's career on the bench consisted of handling localized civil disputes, minor criminal offenses, and property matters under the County Court of Nanaimo. Because County Courts historically handled standard regional litigation rather than precedent-setting constitutional challenges, his day-to-day rulings did not typically generate "landmark" Supreme Court case law. Instead, his legacy remains tied to his aggressive advocacy as a labour lawyer and local public servant

Like his father, Paul was deeply involved in local Masonic Lodge networks. Historic membership records for Cumberland Lodge No. 26 from the 1930s explicitly list Paul P. Harrison among its active local members. He does not appear on any formal annual membership rolls in Nanaimo, but a Master Mason in good standing with any recognized lodge has the right to visit other lodges freely and visitors are often only noted in daily lodge minute books. For elite men of that era, attending lodge events, traveling for regional meetings, and organizing high-profile community banquets served as both a social hub and a primary form of recreational networking.

The Harrison family apparently shared a sharp, collective passion for regional history and collecting. While his brother Victor was famously fascinated by Vancouver Island antiquities, such as studying the indigenous Hepburn Stone petroglyph discovered in 1926, Paul engaged in the same elite circles of amateur archaeology and historical preservation that were highly popular among the island's upper-class intellectuals.

Paul had grown up in the historic Harrison House at 546 Prideaux Street built by his father in the late Victorian eclectic style while a judge in Nanaimo. Before Judge Harrison passed away in 1930, the property had already transitioned through a succession of other prominent Nanaimo figures and, at one time was briefly converted into a ladies' maternity hospital, and eventually even functioned as a boys' school. Currently it has been subdivided into eight apartments. Paul did not inherit or maintain the home into his adulthood but he might have been influenced by the design and finishings and would perhaps want to include the same level of detail in his own house.

Paul Phillipps Harrison managed a very large family. Raising nine children with his wife, Lillian Althea Weir, meant that his domestic life probably occupied the vast majority of his time outside the courtroom. Lillian did her part socially. As the Mayor's wife in Cumberland, for example, she was a regular patroness of local arts and entertainment, which served as major fundraisers for community infrastructure.

At the end of the 1940's Paul was in poor health. He died, in the Nanaimo Hospital, on Oct 22 1950 at the age of 67 with death due to lung carcinoma. He is buried in the family plot at Nanaimo Cemetery. Lillian, Paul's widow continued to live in the house until she died on Oct 26 1966 at the age of 79.

CHILDREN OF PAUL PHILLIPP HARRISON & LILLIAN ALTHEA WEIR

1. **Leland Lionel Harrison** (1907-1969). He was born on Oct 14 1907 at Victoria. When his parents moved to Nanaimo, he went to Vancouver in 1945 and in 1949 to Britannia Beach where copper had been discovered in 1888. He was employed by Anaconda Mines, as an engineer. During WW2 , he served with the Pacific Coast Rangers. He died at Squamish on Sep 4 1969. Does not appear to have married.
2. **Claudia Bernice Harrison** (1909-2002). She was born Dec 1909; m Jun 8 1931 at Cedar BC to Alexander Joseph MacIntyre (1904-1961). He died Oct 19 1961. She died Nov 23 2002 in Surrey BC. **Children:** Barry Alexander McIntyre (1936-2019)
3. **Clinton Phillipps Harrison (1913-1968)** see more information below.
4. **Muriel Phyllis Harrison** (1915-1988). She was born Feb 15 1915; m Aug 9 1935 David James Shand. **Children:** David H Shand; and Lawrence S Shand. She died Feb 17 1988 at Qualicum Beach, age 73.
5. **Desley Ivan Harrison** (1916-1975). He was born Sep 1 1916 at Cumberland where he received his early education; moved to Nanaimo in 1939. He was a veteran of WW 2 and was discharged in 1945 when he took up residence in Vancouver and retired to Union Bay in 1970. He does not appear to have married. Died Jan 22 1975 at Union Bay BC.
6. **D'Arcy Weir Harrison (1918-2005)**. See more information below.
7. **Annette Pauline Harrison** (1920-1975). She m Oct 29 1939 Gordon Lawrence Merriott Hamilton-Horne (1917-1971); occupation, clerk. She died May 17 1975 of cancer of the lungs. **Children:** Lyle Alfred Hamilton-Horne (1940-1986).
8. **Olga Althea Harrison** (1921-2008) occupation: stenographer; m Jun 24 1942 Cyril Young (1922- 2003); occupation: wireless operator. Cy was born in Winnipeg. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force as a Sergeant in WW2. He was a well known columnist and feature writer for Vancouver newspapers and various publications in Canada and England. He established HB Publishers Ltd which produced "*The Highballer*" a popular forestry magazine. He also published three books of poetry. He died Jul 7 2003, age 87. Olga died May 20 2008. They lived in Nanaimo. Olga was a co-guardian with Eloise Harrison Wilson of their cousin, Marion Hamilton. **Children:** Cherry Lillian Young MacPherson 1943-2007 plus 3 others.
9. **Norma Lillian Harrison** 1925-1926 (died young)
10. **Phyllis Marion Coote Harrison** 1926-1968. She was born Jan 29 1926; she died Feb 2 1968 in Coquitlam. She does not appear to have married.

THE SECOND HARRISON GENERATION TAKES OVER:

Living with Lillian Harrison, at the time of her death, was her second eldest son Clinton Phillipps Harrison, born Apr 28 1913. He was, for many years, the manager of Ira Becker & Sons which was a historical power equipment and chain saw distributor in Nanaimo. It originated from a business founded by Dick Becker and was later run by his son, Ira.⁷ Clinton continued to live in the house until his death at age 54 on Jan 27 1968 of bronchial carcinoma. Clinton Harrison never married.

After Clinton's death, the house at 290 Vancouver was immediately taken over by his brother, D'Arcy Wier Harrison and his wife Estella. D'Arcy was born Oct 3 1918 in Cumberland, Vancouver Island the sixth child of Paul and Lillian Harrison. In the *1931 Canada Census*, D'Arcy, age 12, was attending public school in Cumberland. During WW2 he was a gunner.

⁷ Patents for a chain saw were first taken out in 1918 by James Shand of Nanaimo, father of Dave and grandfather of Ira.

He married Estella Mae Brankston on Jul 10 1943. She was the daughter of William “Pop” Brankston (Feb 18 1887-May 15 1977), a coal miner according to the *1940 Voter List* who was born in County Durham, England; and Katherine Scott (May 20 1885-Apr 18 1921) born in County Northumberland, England. She was the daughter of George Scott, born in England. It was in the middle of WW2 so after the ceremony, the bride remained at the home of her parents while D’Arcy presumably returned to the war.

In the *1949 Voters list*, the Harrisons were living in Union Bay. By the *1953 Voter List*, they were back living with Estella’s parents at 341 Machleary, Nanaimo. Just before the death of his brother in 1968, the Harrisons lived at 307 Finlayson Street, Nanaimo.

Then, according to the *1968 Voter List*, D’Arcy, wife Estella and daughter, Norma were now living at 290 Vancouver. D’Arcy was working for the city; Estella was working as a clerk; and Norma, was also employed as an office clerk. The family would remain living at 290 Vancouver for the next fifteen years.

D’Arcy died Dec 24 2005 at Langley BC. He is buried in the Nanaimo Municipal Cemetery. The inscription on his gravestone is: *“Free To Soar At Last”*. Estella Harrison died May 29 2007. The inscription on her gravestone: *“She was the music of our lives”*.

CHILDREN: (NOT CONFIRMED)

1. **Pauline C Harrison** m Robert A Pagett Sep 21 1963
2. **Norma Estelle Harrison**⁸ (Oct 30 1945-Jan 26 2025); m 1969 Brian Thomas Cannon Children: Brian Corey Cannon; b 1970
3. **Sandra Leigh Harrison**⁹ (Sep 30 1947- Apr 30 2018) m Loren Hermann Berg (Mar 3 1952-Jun 16 2011). Gravestone inscription: *“Forever Fishing in the Dark”*.
4. **Maureen Harrison** m Rob Sanderson; dog breeder in Merritt BC?
5. **Phillip Harrison** m Helen about 1980 when the family was living at 290 Vancouver. Still lives in Nanaimo.

NEXT UP: PHANTOM PRESS

In 1983, 290 Vancouver Avenue was purchased by Linda Irene Hildebrand. Linda was born on Apr 7 1957 in Morden, Manitoba in the Pembina Valley near the US border. Linda’s parents were Bernhard P “Ben” Hildebrand (1918-1980) and Tina Penner (1928-2016) also from Morden. They had married on Jun 10 1950.

Linda’s mother, Tina Penner Hildebrand was the sixth of twelve children of Peter R Penner (1900-1964) and Agatha Wiebe (1902-1986) who had married on Mar 17 1920 (pictured).

The Penners were Mennonites descended from one of three brothers, Peter, Johann and Bernhard, born between 1792 and 1804 who lived in the Russian Bergthal Colony in the 1830s. Their descendants migrated to America in the 1870’s some going to Minnesota and many coming to Manitoba. A large number settled in the Pembina Valley about 100 km



Wedding photo of Peter and Agatha Penner, 1920

⁸ <https://www.merritthermal.com/obituary/norma-estelle-cannon/>

⁹ <https://nanaimobulletin.com/2018/04/30/sandra-leigh-harrison-sandi-berg/>

south-west of Winnipeg including Tina Hildebrand's great grandparents, Peter Penner (1850-1924) and Margaretha Wiebe (1854-1945).¹⁰ The Hildebrand's were also Mennonites.

In the 16th century, the Mennonites were known as Anabaptists who believed that baptism should follow upon a confession of faith and be taken by adults rather than administered to infants. They also held a view of brotherly love which prevented them from bearing arms. In the 1530's, severe persecution, specifically of the Dutch and German followers of Menno Simons, known as Mennonites, caused them to seek a more tolerant atmosphere which, at the time, prevailed in and around present-day Gdansk and northern Poland.

In 1788, a large contingent of these Mennonites, at the invitation of Empress Catherine II, then settled in the Chortitza Colony in southwest Russia now part of Ukraine. As their population expanded, the Bergthal Colony, also in Ukraine, grew out of Chortitza. By the 1860s the Bergthal Colony made serious efforts to establish a new settlement for their growing number of landless families, but without success. The Mennonites began to look for alternate settlement opportunities offered by Canada and the United States. The first two ships bringing immigrant families from the Bergthal Colony to Canada docked in Quebec City at the end of July 1874.

Among the passengers on the *S.S Peruvian* were Peter and Margaretha (Wiebe) Penner. Their oldest child was David Penner (Nov 9 1875 – Dec 30 1843) married on Oct 27 1896 to Susanna Rempel (Oct 26 1878-Mar 30 1954). They had a son, Peter R Penner (Jan 10 1900 – Aug 22 1964) who married Agatha Wiebe (Jun 25 1902-Jun 2 1986) on Mar 17 1920. Peter and Agatha were Tina Penner Hildebrand's parents and Linda Hildebrand's grandparents.

Tina was born in Morden on Oct 3 1928. She married Bernhard (Ben) Hildebrand on Jun 10 1950. He was born Nov 23 1918 and passed away Dec 4 1980. Their six children were all born in Morden.

CHILDREN OF TINA PENNER AND BEN HILDEBRAND

1. **Ruth Agatha Hildebrand** was born May 14 1951. She m Sep 1 1968 Ed Enns born February 2 1940. They lived in Lethbridge.
2. **Margaret Roselie Hildebrand** was born Jul 16 1952; m Jun 18 1972 Frank Reimer, born Jun 25 1947. They lived in Winkler.
3. **Susan Dianne Hildebrand** born May 5 1954; m Mar 10 1979 to Rudolph Medina b Nov 3 1954 in Manila, Philippines. They lived in Winnipeg
4. **Linda Irene Hildebrand** born Apr 7 1957: see more info below
5. **Ronald Isaac Hildebrand** was born Apr 9 1958; m Jul 4 1981 Brenda Penner born May 17 1962. They lived in Altona, Manitoba.
6. **Randall Peter Hildebrand** born Apr 21 1959. He had been a printer in Victoria BC

Linda first married Terry Henry Wiebe on Sept 5 1976. He was born Mar 16 1956 also in Morden. At some point, they moved to Victoria where Linda was active in layout and design. They also separated and/or divorced. By 1983, Linda had left Victoria and purchased 290 Vancouver Ave in Nanaimo.

Linda's 2nd husband or partner, David Thomas Cory, was born on May 13 1952 in Medicine Hat, the son of Tom Cory and Yvonne Fuller. David Cory's great grandfather, Thomas Augustus Cory (1863-1941) had

¹⁰ Family Search: Three hundred years: Peter Penner (1850-1924) & Margaretha Wiebe (1854-1945)

emigrated with his parents to Canada from Devon, England in 1870 and had gradually made his way across Canada eventually dying in Vancouver in 1941.

Linda and David Cory operated Phantom Press from their home at 290 Vancouver. Linda was also employed by Vancouver Island University as their Lead Graphic Designer in the University Relations department.

Phantom Press was a small independent local press/publisher best known for historical and regional marine-life and cetacean research publications, such as early technical reports on British Columbia's killer whale populations.¹¹ It played a critical role in launching the careers of local authors and establishing early Vancouver Island pop-culture and wildlife literature. The press is also famously intertwined with the birth of Orca Book Publishers, which grew to become one of the largest independent children's publishers in Canada. Before founding Orca, Bob Tyrrell used Phantom Press to print his very first regional guidebooks, such as *Island Pubbing: A Guide to Pubs on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands* (1984) which he famously sold directly out of the trunk of his car up and down Vancouver Island.



Unfortunately, David Cory died on Feb 16 1995 at just 42. Linda (pictured) continued to run the business and live at 290 Vancouver Ave until she was struck by a vehicle on New Year's Eve, 2015 and died. Her mother, Tina Hildebrand, was the executor of Linda's estate.¹²

Tina died Mar 8 2016. She was survived by 3 daughters, 2 sons and their families. She was predeceased by her husband Bernhard and daughter Linda.

... FINALLY, KAREN KUWICA AND MICHAEL DE CHAMPLAIN

On April 6 2017, the house at 290 Vancouver Ave was purchased by Karen Kuwica and Michael de Champlain. A new chapter began.



290 Vancouver circa 1950

¹¹ ***Killer Whales: A study of their identification, genealogy, and natural history in British Columbia and Washington State (1990)*** by Michael A. Bigg, Graeme M. Ellis, John K. B. Ford, and Kenneth C. Balcomb

¹² *Where the Cottonwoods Grow*, is a 2025 documentary produced by a Dale Hildebrand about the 1874 journey of Mennonites to North America.