



WILLIAM STUART ESDON  
(1920 - 1985)

Upon his return from service in Europe during World War I, Alexander Herbert Esdon took up a farm with Isabelle Cumming Stuart, his Scottish war bride. On March 29, 1920, this farm in the third concession of the Township of Lancaster, County Glengarry, welcomed the first of the family's three sons, William Stuart. Since that time, many of us have come to refer to this young Esdon as "Stu".

The family left the Bainsville area when Stu was the age of nine, then lived in Verdun, Quebec, until 1935. Their next and last new home was Cornwall, where Stu spent his high school years at Cornwall Collegiate and Vocational School. During these years, he met Margaret Isabelle Moore, his future wife.

But first, a quick trip to Ottawa in a borrowed delivery truck was made by Stu and a friend. They enlisted for service to the cause of World War II. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force air crew from June, 1941 to August of 1945, joining the Royal Air Force Coastal Command for active duty in West Africa and India.

Nineteen days after repatriation, he and his Cornwall girl were married. Early in 1946, they took up residence at Dawson College, St. Johns, Quebec. This former Air Force Station had been established by McGill University to house the influx of veterans returning to civilian life and eager to take advantage of the opportunity to continue their education. This led to Stuart's graduation from McGill University in the Civil Engineering Class of 1951.

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They returned to Cornwall, with Stu being accepted as a student under Articles to Leonard P. Stidwill. This position led to his commission as an Ontario Land Surveyor on February 3, 1954, as #847. While with Len, he was active in municipal drainage projects and legal surveys in the surrounding Counties of Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott and Russell.

In 1959, Marg, Stu, and their two sons moved to Napanee. He established a new practice in association with Ed. L. Dauphin and they served Lennox and Addington and Frontenac region.

The Town of Napanee had been without a resident surveyor for some time, and promptly welcomed Stu by calling on his services while the drafting table was still in the garage. With a grin, he recalled the birth of his practice as a lesson in feeling lonely. One of his first clients was in need of a survey in the Village of Shelby. Stu accepted the project and saw his client safely on his way out the driveway, then immediately consulted the atlas. "Where's Shelby?" he said.

In the following years, Stu was active in the community. He served as trustee on the High School Board during its development and expansion to a large district school. He also served on the Board of Stewards of his church, and was a member of Rotary.

In recent years, his leisure time was focused on his inland lake cottage. He thrived on the endless challenges of his weekend retreat, and vowed to sell the place should he run out of improvements to undertake. His concern for the lakes was expressed through his duties with the Cottagers' Association.

Stu held the respect of most who met him. To speak with him was often a bit of inspiration. The thoroughness of his considerations was enlightening, and would attract a person to return for another chat.

Stu passed away on August 23, 1985, and for those who knew him, it was too soon. He is survived by his father Herb of Cornwall, his Margaret, and two sons, Gregory and Graham, and twin grandsons, all of Napanee. His life, and his surveys, will long be remembered for what they were. He left this world in better shape than it was when he arrived.