

# Notes

RG 10 Census, Yale to Coquitlam 08397  
Indian Census 1879  
Yale tribes through Coquitlam; Indian Names, number of dependents. population etc.

Katzie Tribe –  
Pitt River Village on Pitt River, 30 December, 1878.  
Population – 7 Total: 7 Adults. No Youth, No Children.  
5 Males and 2 Females.  
Livestock – (none listed)  
Farm implements – (none listed)  
Names  
Tsa mem.kwah (Chief) M 1 F 1  
Slum.ook M 1  
Ta.lay.ye.a M 1  
Skwul.skay.nim Charlie M 1  
Stul.lah M 1 F 1

Pitt River Village at the south end of the Stave Lake is hardly populated in the winter of 1878. Slum.ook may be Slumach. A brother's name recorded as Smum-qua (Aunt Mandy interview) and S'Mamqua (Jason Allard interview) can't be reconciled with the names of those living in the this village, or the names listed for "Ko.kwit.lam Villages" or the "Katzie Village."

"The Gold Mine Murders of Nine British Columbia Women," Liberty, July 1956.

Molly Tynan and her ilk were the brain children of the prolific fiction writer C.V. Tench who published in such periodicals as *Boys own Paper*, *Range Riders*, *Daredevil Detective Stories*, *Western Action*, *Sky Blazers*, *Ranch Romances*, *True West Magazine* to mention but a few.

His version of the Slumach story ("The Gold Mine Murders of Nine British Columbia Women") appeared in the Canadian edition of *Liberty* of July 1956. The article is illustrated with photographs of the some of the victims as well as a photo of a BC Constable Eric Grainger, who, posing as a gold prospector solved the case, and not to the forget a photo of the slayer of the nine women, John Slumach, who was hanged for his crimes in New Westminster's provincial jail. "Raw gold by the handful" says one caption and the following one "All his girlfriends drowned" all the elements are there: gold, an unknown source, murder and hanging but this time (perhaps for the first time) women are introduced! The names of some of the girls are Tillie Malcolm, Susan Jesner, Mary Warne and that of his last victim, Molly Tynan, whose body was brought up in a net conveniently with a hunting knife still "embedded in her heart." The knife was identified by Slumach's fingerprints found on the handle. New Westminster police must have been extremely advanced since Scotland Yard only started fingerprinting that same year.

## Slumach in 1879 survey?

## Murdered women

In reinterpretations of this fictional story the knife was recognized as Slumach's by his wife.

# Notes

“The Daily Province” of 3 April 1906, “Buried Treasure at Pitt Lake.”

Quote: “that it would appear that some man by the name of Frazier secured information that an old man, who has ere this been gathered to his rest [I love that expression], had some valuable placer grounds in the Pitt Lake country. He had recovered \$8,000 in gold nuggets and these he had hidden under a rock, He had then passed away, but had left directions where the treasure and the placer ground had to be found.”

That news came to the knowledge of others who set out to find the gold “ahead of another party which was stamped-ing to the treasure ground.” Of course nothing was found. They had all a hard time though: “...the party had a very rough trip as the weather was rainy, and sleeping out did not remind one of the dreams between Dutch feathers.”

The Slumach legend seems not born yet in 1906 and the old man in the story could well refer to Jackson.

“The Daily Columbian” September and November 1890 and January 1891

“The reliability of the press as a source of information is immediately put in question by the account of the murder in the *Daily Columbian*’s first report in September 1890, a version repeated in November with the conviction and again in January 1891 after the hanging of Slumach.”

What is reported in the press is quite different from what is recorded at the inquisitions and the trial. If, as reported in the newspaper story, there were “several other Indians” around when Bee was murdered, they all would have been called to witness. In truth there was only one witness to the murder, a man called Seymour, from Harrison and it is on his pronouncement that Slumach was convicted. This Seymour lived in a fishing camp at Lillooet (now Allouette) Slough together with Louis Bee, their wives and an unnamed old man. On that fateful day, Bee and Seymour set out to find bait for their sturgeon line. They heard a shot and went to see who was shooting and what the shooter was hunting. Sitting in their canoe alongside the shore they encountered Slumach who was standing on the bank with a single-barrelled muzzle loader in his hand. Some words were spoken, Slumach fired, and Bee’s dead body dropped overboard into the river. Slumach went to his own canoe and started reloading his gun. Seymour fled over land, recovered his canoe later, and reported the murder to the Indian Agent Peter McTiernan at New Westminster that same night.”

**No mention of Slumach in 1906 Pitt Lake prospector story.**

**Newspaper articles of the day are in conflict with testimonies from the witness.**

# Notes

Who was the real Slumach? Was he indeed the “bloodthirsty old villain” of the newspaper reports? In her interviews, Aunt Mandy stressed that her parents (Peter and Katherine Pierre) said that Slumach was a kind old man, closer to eighty than to sixty and that he was a crippled and harmless old widower who lived in a shack at the bottom end of Pitt Lake, on the abandoned Silver Creek Indian Reserve.

Why did this kind, elderly man shoot Bee? Louis Bee was described as “in the habit of blustering at and threatening everyone with whom he came in contact.” Slumach also told Jason Allard “that the young man who he killed had tantalized him on every occasion.” It was said, that there was “bad blood between Slumach and Bee.” Bee’s words that day may have been the last straw, enough to enrage Slumach to the point that he shot and killed him with his old front loader.

Was Slumach a serial killer? There were rumours in the press at the time of his conviction that this was not the first time that Slumach had killed, but as Aunt Mandy said: “It all started with all the lies they said about him. He was this and that you know, a cruel old man and all that.” Indian Agent McTiernan believed Slumach, who denied that he had killed anyone other than Louis Bee. The buzz may have related to a number of unsolved murders in the area for which Slumach’s hanging was meant to be a deterrent, aside from as punishment of his own misfortune.

With the hanging of this old man, the press’s interest in Slumach died. What else was there to report? Slumach only was rumoured to be involved with other murders, and at that time there was nothing about gold in his story. British Columbia, between the Fraser and Klondike gold rushes, was a world full of prospectors, fortune seekers and speculators, and even gossip about gold would have triggered a stampede to the Pitt Lake area. That would have been duly recorded by the press—but it did not happen.

---

Indian agent Patrick McTiernan played an important part in the Slumach tragedy as intermediary between the First Nation people and the authorities. Unfortunately the records of the Indian Agent became a victim of the 1898 New Westminster fire and none of Tiernan’s writings about Slumach seem to have survived. Slumach’s conviction and death were not mentioned in Tiernan’s annual report.

To do: search the correspondence of the Indian Superintendent of that time, A.W. Vowell.

---

**“It all started with all the lies they said about him. He was this and that you know, a cruel old man and all that.”**

**The Great Fire of New Westminster - September 10, 1898**

# Notes

“The Sunday Province.”  
8 August 1926

In August of 1926, the *The Sunday Province* published an interview with Jason Allard about Slumach. Jason Allard “who knows everything there is to be known about Fraser Valley Indians” knew Slumach “the desperado” by repute and he claimed to have been one of Slumach’s jailers.

Allard believed that Slumach and his brother were born in Nanaimo, although their father came from the Pitt Lake and Pitt River area. Living up the Nanaimo River Slumach murdered any stragglers coming his way for the only reason that he “liked to be monarch of all he surveyed.” Caught in the act of killing “an Indian” he escaped by playing dead in his canoe and with his brother moved to Pitt Lake and there, living like hermits, murdering “everyone that ventured into their territory.” “One can picture the wild terror of being hunted by this long-haired strange creature.” That went on until Slumach was caught and sentenced to die for killing Louis Bee.

Jason Allard told the interviewer that, “when Slumach was first captured, he behaved just as any wild creature would do.” Jason remembered that the long-haired Slumach “had wonderfully large eyes which reminded of the eyes of a grey lynx. Later in the article we read that Slumach “...was not given to talk and never boasted about the number of scalps he had taken.” In the eyes of many in those days, Slumach was the savage Indian personified. On the other hand Jason Allard, described Slumach as a “most charming personality, with the manners of a French dancing master.., [who] continued to exhibit the same good manners” during his time in jail.

Slumach’s name, according to Allard, was actually Slough Mough, which means rain and he also suggested that Slumach’s brother’s name was S’mamqua or “ceremonial undertaker,” a name Allard thought very appropriate because this brother “always chose the graveyard to do his courting.” The surname Bee of the victim, “half-breed Kanaka” Louis Bee, is interpreted by Allard as Poll-al-ee.

About the “secret of a great gold mine” the reporter adds: “Had Mr. Allard only known that his prisoner knew of its existence, he might have become a very wealthy man, for the murderer, with his fine manners, would undoubtedly have told him where it was.”

---

The notion that Slumach killed at least one more man before Louis Bee is raised in the 1890 newspaper reports. The “Colonist” (January 1891) even suggest that he had killed 10 men “before the whites settled on the mainland of B.C.”

---

## Jason Allard interview

Don Waite referred to Allard’s role as an interpreter rather than as a jailer.

## Bee not Slumach’s only victim?

# Notes

“The Daily Columbian”  
14 November 1890

Katzie Ethnographic Notes,  
Wayne Suttles, 1955, p. 28

The *Daily Columbian* report on the Assizes of November 14, 1890, mentions that the defending counsel asked for Slumach’s case to be adjourned on the grounds that two important witnesses for the defense, Florence Reid and Moody could not be “obtained” in time for the trial.

It has been suggested that this “Moody” would have been an illegitimate offspring of Colonel Richard Clement Moody, but Colonel Moody left British Columbia in 1863 and George Moody, thought to be the witness, was born in 1875, son a Native women and Sewell Prescott Moody, the first large-scale lumber exporter of lumber in BC. Although both witnesses Florence Reid and (George) Moody were present at Slumach’s trial, they were not called by the defending council.

Simon Pierre, who in his interviews with Wayne Suttles, referred to George Moody as “white.” Simon was a son of Old Pierre, who supported Slumach in his time of imprisonment and who shared his experiences with his daughter Amanda.

Florence (Brouseau) Reid (1849-1899) married Abraham Reid, who died about 1873.

---

Bee was described “as in the habit of blustering at and threatening everyone with whom he came in contact,” and it was said, that there was “bad blood between Slumach and Bee.” A few words by Bee that day may have been the last straw and it was enough to enrage Slumach to the point that he shot and killed Bee with his old front loader.

There were rumours in the press at the time of his conviction that this was not the first time that Slumach had killed, but Indian Agent McTiernan believed Slumach when he denied that he had killed anyone other than Louis Bee in his life. The buzz may have related to a number of unsolved murders in the area for which Slumach’s hanging was meant to be a deterrent.

With the hanging of this old man the press’s interest in Slumach died. What was there to report? Slumach was only rumoured to be involved with other murders and there was not a nothing about gold. British Columbia between the Fraser gold rush and the Klondike, was is a world full of prospectors, fortune seekers and speculators and even gossip about gold would have triggered a stampede to the Pitt Lake area, duly recorded by the press—but it did not happen.

---

## Witnesses Moody and Florence Reid

## Why did Slumach shoot Bee?

Aunt Mandy Charnley reported that according to what her father, Old Pierre had told her, “Bee came at Slumach with an axe.” Aunt Mandy’s remarks about an axe-wielding Bee and Slumach acting in self-defence do not match testimony at the trial, that suggest that the murder was triggered by a few words by Bee.

An axe-wielding Bee would have suffered a frontal shot, and not one “at the shoulder, going down through the heart and lung”, which was described by Doctor Walker, who performed the autopsy on Bee’s body. The results of the autopsy are consistent with witness Charlie Seymour’s testimony that Bee was sitting down in the canoe when Slumach, standing on the shore, shot him.

This was not the first time that Bee and Slumach confronted each other and that axe-wielding may have been part of an earlier incident. Also the reported finding of Bee’s axe in Slumach’s cabin may have to do something with an earlier encounter.

---

Robert Rodvik was the researcher for movie director Mike Collier in the late 1970s. I asked Robert if he would be prepared to share his records with me. Here are two quotes from his responses:

As a matter of fact I have been, for all those years, in production of a historically researched project on the Slumach story. It has languished on the back burner over this time as I have been working on other material, however I am hoping to finish the story by the end of this year. Due to the amount of work I have already put into this project I do not think it would be beneficial to share this information at this time. When I do have the volume completed I would be happy to give you the publisher’s ISBN and trust that you will purchase a volume for your own archives. Should you care to share your own research with me I would be grateful. (1 March 2007):

My reasoning is as follows: I have spent hundreds of hours and around four thousand dollars on researching this project. I am positive that no one on this planet knows more about this subject than do I. At this point it would be foolish of me to share this information. However, once it is in publication I will have no problem with sharing the information. (3 March 2007)

---

**Verbal or physical confrontation?**

**Robert Rodvik to publish a book on Slumach by the end of this year.**

# Notes

I am reading in the first chapter of R.W. (Rob) Nicholson's book: *Lost Creek Mine—Historical Analysis of the Legendary Gold Deposit of Pitt Lake*: “Although official [trial transcripts and other relevant] documentation has not been located I was extremely fortunate in being able to examine the contents of a file that was a highly prized possession of an eccentric antiquities collector and Pitt Lake researcher.” I asked and Rob Nicholson kindly replied that he “met with the fellow who claimed the documents in his possession were original transcripts from Slumach's trial back in the late 1980's. I do not know if he is still in the area or even still alive but I will certainly check for you.”

On 3 November 1890, preliminary hearings of the Slumach case were held at the District (County) Court before Justice of the Peace Capt. Pittendrigh. According to the press, “several witnesses were examined and a mass of evidence taken down.” Probably these records were destroyed in the 1898 New Westminster fire but I hope that the manuscripts survived and will some day be found, even if I doubt that they would add substantially to our knowledge of the case.

My search for the original articles about the murder, the search, the arrest, and the conviction in the *Daily Columbian* was not successful. The microfilm for the period from June to December 1890 is missing—no one has the July to December *Columbian* on film. Bound originals (the only surviving ones known) are in the custody of the New Westminster Public Library. They are in a poor condition and the library believed that the volume should not be used at all until an arrangement could be made for filming. The experts have examined the print copy and determined it can be filmed. The libraries are now working on organizing the financing of the filming. Hopefully the missing months will soon be available. Until that time I will make use of the same articles published in the *Weekly Columbian*.

Re: C. V. Tench in “The Gold Mine Murders of Nine British Columbia Women,” *Liberty*, July 1956.

In the “Winnipeg Free Press” of 21 April 1962 someone with the name Edward R. Green—could that have been a pseudonym of C.V. Tench?—retold Tench's story using the same characters and names and many embellishments. The title of the article is: “A Curse Guards This Lost Gold Mine.”

**An anonymous and eccentric antiquities collector**

**District Court records missing.**

**Daily Columbian June – December 1890 missing.**

**Is Edward R. Green the same as C.V. Tench?**

# Notes

*The Vancouver  
Daily Province  
21 December 1951*

C. V. Tench in “The Gold Mine Murders of Nine British Columbia Women,” *Liberty*, July 1956, gave the women names and faces and a life, but the idea of Slumach as a repeat murderer of not only men but also of women, seems to have its origin in a 1951 interview with Chief August Jack Khatsalano (Khahtsahlano), then in his eighties, “the only Indian still living who knows the whole story.”

---

The Census 1881 does not show any names that could be interpreted as Slumach or Bee. Indian Agent McTiernan did the census for the Fraser Valley, including Katzie.

---

## **Killed Eight Squaws**

## **Census 1881**