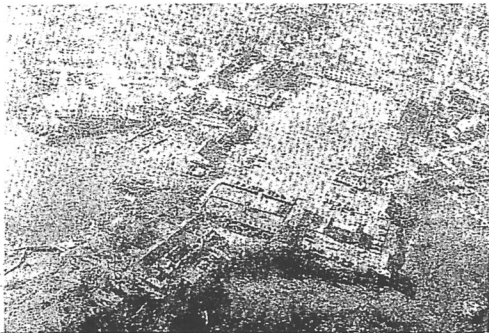


ESQUIMALT AND THE SOLDIER



Aerial View of Work Point Barracks - Esquimalt Municipality

Originally built by "C" Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery, from 1888-1892 (they left in 1894), these buildings have quartered many units of the British and Canadian Forces over the past 80 years. After "C" Battery left to return to England, the offices and quarters were occupied by a succession of officers and men of the Artillery, Engineers, Infantry, Signals, with detachments of logistic services to care for their needs. 3 BN. PPCLI are the present residents.

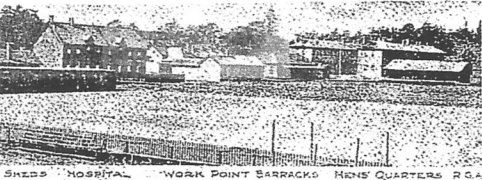
It is fact that shortly after the first visit by survey ships of the Spanish Navy in Esquimalt waters in the late 18th Century, the British Navy arrived on the scene and stayed until 1910 when the Royal Canadian Navy was created to take its place for the protection of Western Canadian waters.

Now in this day's parlance these were men of the "sea element", but please remember that in many ships they also had "sea-going soldiers", namely Marines, as part of their ship's company. These warriors were frequently used as the "shore-party" to uphold the sovereignty of the Crown in disputes with the Indians along our B.C. Coast. Their input in the protection of the new Colony of Vancouver Island progressed to the provision of gunners of the Royal Marine Artillery to man a system of coastal defence to protect both Esquimalt and Victoria harbours and to supplement local sea power against possible invasion.

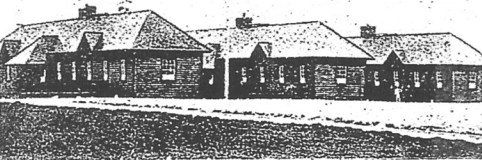
Arms were first installed at Fort Victoria by the Hudson Bay Company in 1843.

The first military use of this area developed around 1846 when the Royal Navy visited and surveyed Esquimalt Harbour at the time of the Oregon Boundary Dispute.

In 1854 three "Crimean" huts were erected by the HBC at the request of the British Admiral Pacific Station, to house expected wounded from a planned return battle with the Russians at Petropavloske, which although it did not materialize as a battle and there were no wounded to be cared for in these three huts, it was the beginning of the Royal Navy



SHEDS HOSPITAL WORK POINT BARRACKS HENS QUARTERS R.G.A.



Gun Sheds, Hospital and Living Quarters

Top The gun sheds are gone but the Hospital Building is still in use for Company offices of the 3 PPCLI in residence. The two-storey brick living quarters for the single men are still being used for the same purpose.

Bottom The huts of the former Royal Engineers. The one on the left is still in use but the remainder were used as barrack huts until some time after World War 2 until torn down to become today's parking lot.

"ashore", and by 1865 the Royal Naval Yard Esquimalt was officially established.

In 1858 The Royal Engineers came to our shores to assist in the developing of this "outpost of Empire" from then on by carrying out such duties as surveying the official 49th. Parallel in B.C., carving the Cariboo highway out of hills and valleys, building sturdy wooden barracks for the military ashore, and by 1864 a hospital and a light house had been constructed by these fighting Sappers.

The Russo-Turkish War of 1878 caused sufficient worry to the Dominion Government, that guns were borrowed from the Royal Navy to man shore batteries in the Victoria-Esquimalt area. These coastal fortifications were at Finlayson Point, Victoria Point, Macaulay Point and Brother's Island (which is the island just seaward of the Main Gate of Dockyard today).

Manned by volunteers - mostly retired Royal Marines, who were familiar with the naval pieces - the Macaulay battery was authorized and named the Victoria Battery of Garrison Artillery. The first gun was fired on 27 July, 1878.

By 1883 the Macaulay Point defences became a battery of the B.C. Provisional Regiment of Garrison Artillery; forerunner to the present day 5th (BC) Field Battery, Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery. This makes this Victoria militia unit the oldest "west of the Lakehead".

No further development, leave planning, was done until 1887, when the Minister of Militia, Sir A. Carson, designated Work Point as a permanent Military base. The close proximity to the Macaulay defence probably helped to influence this choice.

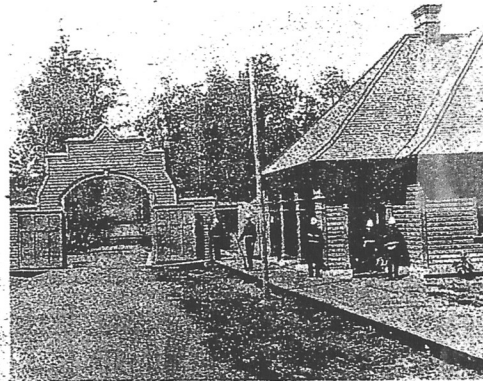
Long before Confederation - when Vancouver Island was a Crown Colony - Work Point had been named for the Honorable John Work by officers of the HBC, and adopted by Captain Henry Kellett of HMS Herald on the first survey of Victoria Harbour in 1846. Mr. Work was an early pioneer, Chief Factor with the HBC, and on retirement became a Member of the Legislative Council of the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island.

Establishment of Work Point Barracks

On 11 November, 1887, "C" Battery of the Royal Canadian Artillery, consisting of 100 NCO's and gunners, arrived from Quebec. Their arrival marked the first time a unit of regular troops had crossed the continent over the recently constructed Canadian Pacific Railway line.

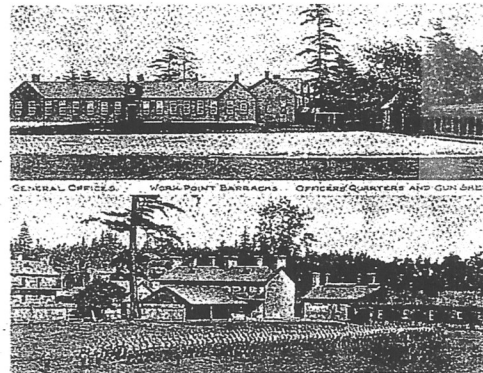
As part of the recreational training program of that era, officers, non-commissioned officers and gunners of the battery were put to the tedious task of clearing the primeval forest at Work Point before any buildings

could be erected. By the spring of 1888 construction had started. By 1891 the camp was completed and "C" Battery became its first occupants. There they remained until the autumn of 1893 when they returned East. However, during the 6-year period many members of the garrison left the army and embarked upon civilian careers throughout the province. The battery strength had fallen to 53 all ranks.



The Guard House at Work Point Barracks around 1900

The white Wolsley helmet and blue uniform with the red stripe down the outside of the trousers was the dress of the Royal Garrison Artillery which were British troops in those days. The ornate gate is gone but the guard house remains basically the same today.



General Offices, Officers' Quarters and Gun Sheds

Top The Battalion Headquarters of the 3rd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry now occupy the central long building. The end view of a building to its right was, and still is, the Officers' Quarters, albeit modified considerably since 1890. The low gun sheds on the right were torn down years ago and the site is now occupied by the Supply Depot.

Bottom: Here you see the Garrison Artillery of the day (circa 1900) on parade in front of the rows of married quarters which were still in use during World War II, but were torn down shortly afterwards to be replaced by the modern ones you see today.

In April 1894, a detachment of Royal Marine Artillery replaced "C" Battery, manned the garrison and forts until 1899, and in turn were replaced by other Companies of the RGA in 1903, and in 1906, 350 officers and men of the Imperial Garrison departed for England. Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, accompanied by small detachments of Royal Army Service Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps, Army Ordnance and Army Pay Corps, bade farewell to Victoria.

It must be remembered that during this time of growth for the local armed forces the ubiquitous sapper of the Royal Engineers made his mark on B.C. History. From 1858 when officers and men of the Royal Engineers came to Esquimalt, set up solid wooden accommodation on the north side of Esquimalt Harbour where "Naden" is today, until they too left in 1906, they had been involved in carving the Cariboo Road out of the B.C. wilderness; setting up the boundary of the 49th. parallel in B.C., constructing new forts in the Esquimalt area after demolishing the old earth and wood batteries; and not the least, a goodly number of new brick buildings throughout the area, many of them still in constant use in CFB Esquimalt as a tribute to their workmanship.

Following the War Canada maintained a very small permanent force at Work Point Barracks. These units were well below establishment strength and were composed of troops of the Canadian Artillery, Engineers, Signals, Service Corps, Pay Corps and Staff Clerks. Then in November, 1920, "B" Company of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry came in as the first infantry unit to garrison the Work Point camp. There they stayed until 1939 when off they went to war again leading the way as usual.

Since then the history of "land element" units of the Canadian Armed Forces who have lived amongst the civilians in the Municipality of the Township of Esquimalt is far too detailed to continue at this point. Sufficient to say Work Point is still in capable hands with the 3rd Battalion of the PPCLI as the senior formation, and ably serviced by most capable detachments of our logistic services.

So you see, although they were possibly fewer in numbers at times, the salute to the Armed Forces based in the Esquimalt area by the conferring of the Freedom of the Town to these deserving men and women, most certainly includes full recognition of the harmonious relationship enjoyed by the local citizens over these many years with "the soldiers" who served amongst them in their Municipality.

When the Imperial troops left in 1906, the garrison was turned over to units of the Royal Canadian Artillery, Royal Canadian Engineers, and the Royal School of Instruction.

In 1911 the Headquarters of Military District No. 11 was established at Work Point but there was no increase in unit strength until World War I, at which time the 5th (BC) Regiment of Garrison Artillery marched into the barracks and the coastal fortifications where they served until 1919 serving the guns and sending reinforcements overseas. Also during this period "L" Company of the Royal Canadian Regiment was formed

and trained re-inforcements until 1917.