

In 1977, while digging a ditch to repair a clogged water line near his Chilliwack bible camp, a minister discovered a leather jacket, sweater, shirt and a single bone lying in the bush near the camp. The police were called to investigate. The ground search that followed in the next few days recovered other bones including a skull. These were all forwarded to the Crime Laboratory in Vancouver for examination, and with the assistance of an anthropologist from Simon Fraser University, the investigators were told they were of human origin. The skull had three holes in it, which the examiners felt had been caused by blows to the head with a heavy object immediately before or after death. Subsequent investigation failed to identify the victim and the investigation came to a halt a year or so later when no further leads surfaced.

The most serious crime included in the suspect's confessions, was the murder of his friend. Since the murder was committed in 1975 and the remains discovered in 1977, nothing of value surfaced to assist in the identification of the victim. The suspect had done a good job removing anything that would help to accomplish this. The victim's background aided the suspect's concealment of the crime as well. He had been adopted by his grandparents at birth and they were both dead. His natural mother, having given up her illegitimate child at birth, had lost interest and track of him. He was on parole at the time of his death, and when he failed to meet the reporting requirements, a warrant was issued for his arrest. No one made an effort to execute the warrant, nor did anyone initiate an investigation into his abrupt disappearance. The arrest warrant remained outstanding for approximately two years, until his full sentence had expired and it was withdrawn.

After some difficulty associating a real individual to the victim as described by the suspect, the Chilliwack investigators had to satisfy themselves, and later a court of law, that the remains located in 1977 were in fact those of the suspect's 1975 murder victim. On the second day of interviews, the suspect was shown two photographic line-ups. One contained a photograph of the victim sporting a beard and the other without. The suspect identified the victim in the second line-up as his murder victim. Such an identification satisfied the prosecutor and he laid a murder charge against the suspect. However, in preparation for the trial, the investigators sought further assistance from the anthropologist who had examined the remains upon their initial discovery in 1977. The anthropologist was given past police photographs and prison medical records of the victim to aid him in his deliberations. He was later able to testify that his examination had found enough similar characteristics in these two sources to provide an 80% certainty that the remains were the victim's. His thoroughness so impressed the court, that at the conclusion of the murder trial and prior to the judge's address, the defence made the identification of the victim a non-issue for the jury's consideration.

The driver of the pick-up truck, who stopped to offer the suspect assistance shortly after he had committed the murder, was located. He still lived in the same house. More importantly, the female passenger, his daughter, was also located. She recalled the incident and furthermore, that as they drove away, she had noticed what appeared to be a person lying on the shoulder of the road on the far side of the suspect's car. She had mentioned this observation to her father at the time, but they both concluded that it was probably the motorist's intoxicated friend.