

Ode to Madeline Deighton

T'uy't'tanat-Cease Wyss [A Skwxwu7mesh Slanay]

Gassy Jack had a love
 For Coast Salish Ladies
 His first wife
A native gal from New Westminster
[The Q'ayq'ay't people]
She moved to Vancouver
 with Jack
 by canoe they paddled the Stau:Lo [the Fraser River]
 to edge of the Salish Sea
Slightly north round the bend,
 to a place known as Luq'luq'i
 Her cousin did paddle them to
 The shores of the village of Kum'kum'a'lay
In the early days of Vancouver
 at the edge of Luq'luq'i
 “the Grove of beautiful maple trees”
became a drinking dive
Kum'kum'a'lay, a village of many good folk
 Pushed farther North,
 and South and East and West
Making way for a new port
 A new city being born
 No place for native villages
 Nor for the beautiful maple trees either
 Who gave of their beauty
 To inspire the name to which these shores
Were known
 for time Immemorial

have been accused of being
 Illiterate themselves
 Unable to say English words
 Simply because

Their first words were spoken in their
 Indigenous Languages
 Madeline Deighton

At the age of 15 years
 Left Gassy Jack
 She stood up for her Culture
 Her People
 Her Spirit

A man who owned the streets of a small city
 Sold booze to the patrons of his saloons
 A man respected by many
 And undermined by a few
 She chose to walk away from that life
 The boozing
 The wild parties
 The lack of respect by the newcomers
 Towards her People
 The lack of Rights by her People
 To know and
 Understand what she did then
 It is phenomenal

Madeline
 was 12 years old when she was wed
 To Jack
 Through an arranged marriage by her Aunt
 By the time she was 15 years old
 She had left Gassy Jack Deighton
 By Vancouver historical records she was
 A Woman Disinherited
 By Skwxwu7mesh records
 She was a Powerful Woman

She left him
because all the boozing and the
Wild lifestyle of her husband
Which was, by her view
The very element that
would destroy
Her people
And her Culture.
Young Madeline knew
Then
what our people know today
That our Culture
and our Spirituality
Can neither be
Bought Nor Sold