

Toronto

18th Feb. 1875

My Dear Dr Dawson

I have to apologise for not soon acknowledging the interesting photos of the British Columbia Skull. If I had seen my way to a clear and definite reply to your first letter I should have answered more promptly, busy as I am.

You suggested its resemblance to Peruvian skulls. But one needs the actual skulls for any such comparison. They have plenty of them at Boston. Here we have not one. I do not think, however, that much is to be made out of any fancied Peruvian affinities.

The skull is naturally a

brachycephalic one; and I think of the true Northern Indian race. The fancied Peruvian character is no more than the analogy suggested by the results of artificial compression in both cases. The heavy splan under-jaw is thoroughly Indian; and the prognathous profile is consistent with the general barbarian type. The opening of the sutures is very noticeable, with such strongly defined evidence of protracted bandaging and compression; and the

frontal suture is rare,
though occasionally found.

I should incline to think
it a female skull. If
anything is known of the
contents of the grave, this
might help to correct, or
to confirm this. If it is
a female skull, of
course type, it would
account for certain
peculiarities. But the
great compression on the
occiput tends to obliterate
one characteristic cranial
index of sex.

I should incline to
think that in the ancient

Graves described in the
memorandum you enclosed,
that you have the sepulchres
of a tribe of north west
Indians of the predominant
brachycephalic type, among
whom the same practice
prevailed, as is still so
extensively followed among
the tribes in the same
region. No very great
importance can be attached
to the ignorance of the
present Indians about
graves which are probably
several centuries old. The
character of the cairns rather,
I think corresponds to some
more northerly Alaskan
tribes; but I write from

memory. The satisfactory
test would be to compare
the skull with others in
a large collection; as
at Philadelphia, or
Washington; or at Boston.

The impression I have
formed of the Peruvians
is that there are two
marked types; one of
them with the bones of
the face much more
strongly marked than
the other; but this
does not suggest to me
either type.

It was my full intention
to have written to Mrs
Selwyn on the subject.

I was much gratified
at the opportunity of
studying the photo.
I am sorry that I
can only make so
indefinite a reply in
return. But I have
written at once, to
catch the mail; in
response to your request.

Yours faithfully

Sam. Wilson

Dr Dawson

r. v. v.

Wilson
Bond Vol
8 Rule
Key 175