



Tales from the Vault - Did you know?

There have been numerous attempts to write down our names over the years, and some have been more successful than others. Even while going through our own records I notice shifts in the names that others have used to describe us throughout time. Some of you may know more about these details, while others know less. So, to share some of what I've learned, this week's *Tales from the Vault* will focus on our name and how we have been represented.

Liḡwíłdaḡw / Yaculta

Many have tried to say or represent our name in writing over time. Several of which were attempts by foreign tongues trying to pronounce our name. Spellings, such as "Laich-kwil-tach" and "Legwildok," are phonetic attempts to write down our name as it sounds. Others, such as "Yaculta," could have been because of the way Salish speakers pronounced our name. In the journals of the first Europeans in our territories we are often called "Euclataw," indicating it may have been a Salish group describing us to them.

Today, we are proudly known as Liḡwíłdaḡw ("Lee-gwilth-daxw"), which in Liḡwála means "unkillable thing."

Liḡwála / Kwak'wala

For a long time, there was some confusion about what the language we speak is called. It is now generally agreed that the language we speak is called Liḡwála, and it is a separate dialect from Kwak'wala. Both belong to a larger language group that itself does not have a name, although many non- Liḡwíłdaḡw people will refer to the overall language as Kwak'wala.

Linguists today include both dialects within a larger group that they call the Wakashan languages.

Kwakwaka'wakw / Kwakiutl

Certain misnomers can be traced back to anthropologists like Franz Boas, who worked with the Kwakiutl people of Fort Rupert. He applied the name Kwakiutl to all of us who spoke dialects of the unnamed language noted above, including Liḡwála. Other phonetic spellings include Kwaquilt and "Qwakiool." This means that for a period of time we were mostly recorded as "the southernmost tribe of Kwakiutl."

"Kwakiutl" eventually shifted to Kwakwaka'wakw, which actually means "people who speak Kwak'wala."