

#### 4.3: Sewer Tunnelling, June 5, 1912

Some of the immigrant workers mythologized by Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* paused and posed for Goss' camera. Arthur Goss, the newly appointed official photographer for the newly created City Works Department,<sup>12</sup> documented this tight little group under Barton Street in the West Annex, where they were building a storm overflow sewer to help drain the "open sewer" then flowing through nearby Willowvale Park.<sup>13</sup> Whether they were contract or City workers, the miners laboured away in damp, very constricted conditions, to drive a tunnel through almost impenetrable clay soil, using pick-axes and shovels. A white-collared supervisor in hip waders notes progress, as patchy timber-work provides indifferent safety supports. Excavators such as these made about 25-cents an hour or \$10 to \$12 per week during the construction season. Many also developed rheumatism and arthritis, "finding their bodies knotting up and useless at a time when honest pensions were rare and social security unknown."<sup>14</sup> The Works Department inspector made about \$23 per week.

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