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by Margaret Archibald

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# **Grubstake to Grocery Store: Supplying the Klondike, 1897–1907**

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## Abstract

This report examines the Yukon trade in provisions and general merchandise during and immediately after the Klondike gold-rush. At the peak of the rush, 1897–98, large American mercantile firms which were experienced in Yukon River trade competed along with other outfitters, wholesalers and distributors for a lasting slice of the Yukon trade. From this outfitting rush grew an enduring hinterland relationship between the Yukon and its primarily west-coast suppliers. Dawson's dependence on the outside world for supplies was total.

Bearing the necessary outfit, each goldseeker who arrived at Dawson in 1898 was a potential entrepreneur. When these tons of goods had been redistributed by the end of the season a recognizable merchant element had emerged. Over the next season supply lines for a more stable market were established and Dawson's merchant community became more specialized and sophisticated, at the same time showing an observable hierarchy and considerable civic spirit. In the long run, the large diversified commercial companies were in the best position to weather that period of rapid post-gold-rush economic reduction which markedly reduced Dawson's mercantile ranks.

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## **Introduction: The Entrepreneur**

This particular version of the Klondike story is devoted to the entrepreneur, the person who saw a gold strike not simply in terms of dust or nuggets, but rather envisaged the activity that gold would engender, imagined the placer boom town in its lively totality and foresaw the mining community in terms of its most blatant needs and its probable life-style.

The naive assumption that the Klondike gravel beds had nuggets enough to go around, that all comers were guaranteed to leave as millionaires, must have dominated many an overladen steamer working its way up the Inside Passage in the summer of 1897 and 1898. In the surviving sources which chronicle those voyages north, the question "Why?" is never asked, nor are individuals' expectations documented. Yet to every passenger the words "gold," "paystreak" and "lode" must have conjured up a personal vision of success, wealth, utopia or high adventure.

Perhaps it is unrealistic to separate the entrepreneur from this mass of goldseekers and to set him apart as a distinct specimen of the gold-rush. But such people evinced a frame of mind, a way of approaching the whole adventure, a response to the challenge which one can see as a quality common to many of the men and women who answered Klondike's call. What makes their story all the more worth telling is that the stage on which they played out their parts was so bleak, so inhospitable and unyielding, that what they built stands out sharply by comparison. Its virtues and flaws, its beginning and its end are all clearly visible. In less than a decade a legendary city was built and all but abandoned. The story's briefness means that the blurred edges and the subtleties of transition which exist in the history of other cities are, in Dawson's case, brought sharply into focus.

For this same reason, the social and economic underpinnings of the boom and bust legend are more obvious. Dawson must be one of the most thoroughly chronicled and photographed cities of its size in Canada. Much of this popularity, indeed, has served to perpetuate a Klondike mythology. There is to every war, disaster or mass human event something of a collective memory, a fund of stories and reminiscences which serve its veterans well, even those who might not have participated prominently in the event itself. Nevertheless, from the many-faceted depths of the Klondike story emerges a cast of unexpected heroes and villains. Who would have thought that disease took as great a toll of human life as the formidable Chilkoot? Or that the nugget-scooping gold miner would eventually become one of hundreds of thousands of discontented wage-earners? Similarly unexpected is the identity of Dawson's rich men, the ones who did find the paystreak. That paystreak was far more likely to have shown itself

in an office or over a counter or at the wharves than on a placer creek bed.

This version of the story focuses not only on the entrepreneur in Dawson during the rush, but on his predecessors – the traders along the Yukon River during the days of earlier and smaller rushes, and the west coast outfitters – as well. The mercantile experience of each becomes a fundamental element of the structure of the post-gold-rush trade. From the first came the concept of a grubstake and an understanding of the rigorous demands of the Yukon valley on trader and prospector alike. From the second came the vigorous spirit of enterprise and profit, as well as the essential contact between the boom town and the outside world for continued supplies and services.

The business methods and manipulation, the concepts of growth and success and the hierarchical bonds within the Dawson merchant community must also be examined. From these it becomes apparent how the entrepreneurial frame of mind helped to shape the contours of the city and to what extent the merchant community reflected Dawson's inevitable decline.

In order to give colour and relief to what would otherwise be a somewhat analytical approach to the Dawson mercantile community, it is necessary to examine its individual members more closely. After 1898 the community became exceedingly specialized. The grocery and provisions merchant was the nearest heir among those specialists to the river trader, and his range of stock was the closest approximation to the traditional outfit. Of the speciality trades, the grocer's trade in the basics of survival was (not surprisingly) covered most carefully by local newspapers. Similarly, material from diaries, personal reminiscences and interviews seems to indicate that the day-to-day commodities from the grocer or general merchant's stock still retain a place in the collective sourdough memory. In attempting to shift its focus from the structure of the merchant community to more practical matters of stocks, sales and appetites, this report hopefully reflects the concerns of both merchants and consumers.



### **The Artery: The Yukon River Trade Before 1896**

There is a certain peculiarity in the identities of those who came to exploit the Yukon River. On one hand were the companies, huge corporate concerns, whose deliberate policies of exploration, trade and mining were formulated in offices thousands of miles away. On the other hand were the individuals, the prospectors and traders who were just as deliberately spending their lives on the wilderness frontier, searching for the streak and continually pushing on. One tends to think of them as opposites, the corporate citizen and the adventurer. The irony is that the foundation of Yukon trade patterns was laid down by their harmonious relationship. The dichotomy of the mercantile character, corporate and individual, is part of a theme which carries on through the years of Yukon merchant activity.

Commercial activity along the Yukon River may be divided into three phases. To the first belong the separate spheres of trading and exploration by the Russian and British empires. The second period extends from the sale of Alaska to the United States in 1867 until roughly 1886. It includes the opening of extensive river commerce and the subsequent growth of the single most influential trading concern along the river, the Alaska Commercial Company of San Francisco. The transition from this to a third phase is marked by a diversification of trade and the change of the accepted medium of exchange from pelts to gold dust.

The period after 1886 is marked by the sudden influx of a new wave of gold prospectors and the overnight blossoming of gold-rush towns. The resulting mercantile operations focused on these settlements, which sprouted wherever gold-rich streams found their way to the Yukon River. Each of these boom towns acted as a pump, circulating trade goods needed for survival from the mainstream of trade into the surrounding placer operations, and then replenishing the mainstream with gold. This pattern was played out with increasing intensity as the persistent seekers scanned every possible stream in the network.

The town of Stewart was the first of the gold-boom communities; it sprang up at the confluence of the Stewart and Yukon rivers in 1886. The following year it was Forty Mile, just east of the boundary between Alaska and the Yukon Territory. After 1893, Circle City bloomed between the headwaters of Birch Creek and the Yukon River. In 1896 and 1897, all these towns were deserted for the greatest El Dorado of them all, Dawson. Even Dawson did not break the cycle of growth and contraction; Nome drew off Klondike miners in 1899 and the Tanana district (Fairbanks) did the same in 1903.

More than a century before gold was unearthed in the Yukon valley, two Siberian merchants, Shelekhov and Golokhov, started a fur-trading company.<sup>1</sup> By 1796, 20 years after its inception, the firm had overcome all competitors in the business of harvesting pelts on a permanent basis in the Aleutian Islands. In 1799, it obtained from Czar Paul I a 20-year charter as the Russian American Company. Within three years, trade in all phases of the enterprise, including shipbuilding, hardware manufacture and fresh provision supply, had become so brisk that the czar and two members of his family were encouraged to buy shares.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile the Hudson's Bay Company was engaging in a parallel fur trade on the outer rim of the Russian territory. These British traders ventured from an inland base into the Yukon valley, over the divide which separated it from their own Northwest Territories. In 1840 Robert Campbell, commissioned by the company, followed the Upper Liard River to the height of land, descended the Pelly River to its confluence with the Yukon and returned.<sup>3</sup> Eight years later he established Fort Selkirk at the mouth of the Pelly. In 1852 this fort was razed by incursive coastal Indians who found Campbell's post was upsetting their own interior trade monopoly,<sup>4</sup> and no further trading was done by the Hudson's Bay Company in the area. In the meantime, the company had penetrated the country by a second route, descending the Porcupine River from the Mackenzie Delta and Rat River. In 1847 another of the company's trader-explorers, A.H. Murray, built Fort Yukon where the river takes its great bend to the south at the Arctic Circle.<sup>5</sup> While the fort was undoubtedly on Russian territory, trade continued unimpeded, since business was not going well for the Russian company. Several Indian massacres, financial troubles and failures in gold prospecting caused the Russian American Company to lose first its control of territorial frontiers and eventually (in 1862) its royal contract.<sup>6</sup>

This period of exploration gave Europeans of two trading empires their first glimpse of the Yukon valley. Neither company had much to do with gold in the area. Robert Campbell knew that it existed near Fort Selkirk, but he could never spare time from his post duties to explore for it.<sup>7</sup> The Yukon waterway was not really exploited as a commercial artery until 30 years later, for until then the discovery of substantial deposits of gold did not outweigh the hazards of climate, unfriendly natives – who, naturally enough, had a trading system of their own to keep up – and possible rivalry from other encroaching trade empires.

The era of river-based enterprise may well have dawned in 1867, when the United States acquired both Alaska and the defunct Russian American Company, the first by purchase, the second by transfer. These two dramatic exchanges were announced

within hours of each other. Together they radically altered the commercial shape of the ice-bound territory. The first step toward shifting the machinery of the Bering trade to the Yukon valley came with the purchase of the Russian American Company's assets for \$350,000 by Hutchison, Kohl and Company, a group of merchants based in San Francisco.<sup>8</sup> At first the company maintained its primary interest in whaling, but soon afterward, when it was incorporated as the Alaska Commercial Company (the AC Company) its interests grew to include fishing, canning and Yukon River transportation and trade as major activities.<sup>9</sup>

Potential competition posed no immediate threat. The Pioneer Company, composed of American and French-Canadian merchants, established a trading station some 12 miles below the fork of the Tanana and Yukon rivers in 1868, but it lasted only one season.<sup>10</sup> Those of its traders who wanted to continue their Yukon ventures did so by turning over their services to the AC Company.

In turning their sights away – though by no means totally – from the Bering Sea to the Yukon River, the American firm was determined to make its grip on the interior more effective than that of the Russians. In considering the 2,000-mile valley as a means of access to a potential economic colony, the company was far more sensitive to the nearby commercial presence of the British than its predecessor had been. After all, the heart and headwaters of the river itself lay indisputably within British reach. In 1869, the Hudson's Bay Company received its first and only warning from this ambitious young company. It was ordered to abandon Fort Yukon, which for 22 years had sat, illegal and unharrassed, first on Russian and then on American territory.<sup>11</sup>

The monopoly was secured beyond a reasonable doubt, and as if to prove and proclaim the fact, in the year of its ultimatum to the Hudson's Bay Company, the AC Company's first steamer, *Yukon*, puffed its way from Saint Michael on the Bering Sea upriver of the abandoned Fort Yukon. There it deposited a veteran trader, one Moïse Mercier, to carry on the exchange of trade goods for pelts. There was a significant series of arrivals at the post in 1872–73; Arthur Harper, LeRoy Napoleon (known as Jack) McQuesten and Al Mayo, all of them seasoned prospectors, came into contact with Mercier and the company.<sup>12</sup> It was the Québécois Mercier who convinced these men to enter the employ of the AC Company, as he had. He must have made the company seem attractive, for they followed his advice and sent back to Saint Michael for supplies. They prepared to support their personal exploration and prospecting by trading for the company.<sup>13</sup> By 1875 all three were on the company payroll and were stationed at Fort Reliance, about six miles south on the Yu-

kon from Dawson's present site.<sup>14</sup> They were destined to be among the valley's best-known inhabitants.

During these years the company established similar agreements with many independent prospectors. They were placed on the books for a yearly receipt of goods at a given post on the river. These goods they received at prices 25 per cent above San Francisco wholesale prices and could sell as they saw fit.<sup>15</sup> With this kind of backing, McQuesten and Harper formed a partnership in 1875 which was to last 17 years.<sup>16</sup> They were joined in 1882 by an upstate New Yorker, Joseph Ladue, who was persuaded (as they had been) to support his profession of prospecting by trading for the AC Company.

These fur traders were not alone in their search for "good colours" along the gravels of the Yukon and its tributaries. While the Russians had failed to unearth gold, and the Hudson's Bay traders had been indifferent to it, these prospector-traders were part of a new breed which was picking its precarious way over the Pacific mountain ridge in search of the mineral which was traditionally found in its shadow. Many were veterans (as was Joseph Ladue) of a long search which led from strike to strike across the continent in search of the mother lode.<sup>17</sup> For many, the pursuit had followed a trail along the continent's northwestern backbone, from California in 1849 and Cariboo in 1860 along the Stikine to the Cassiar in 1867.<sup>18</sup>

The fact that the wayward lode might meander even further north must have occurred to many. It was a matter of braving the combined hostility of terrain, climate and mistrustful natives. The Hudson's Bay Company had entered the territory from the Mackenzie River, the AC Company from the Yukon's mouth. To the exploring prospector already interested in the northern mountainous interior of British Columbia, one of the closest alternatives was access to the river's southern headwaters from the coast. The route offered an immediate – but by no means easy – entry to the gold-bearing territory through two possible passes, later known as the legendary Chilkoot and White passes. These led inland from the Lynn Canal on the Alaska Panhandle across the coastal range to the edge of Bennett Lake, and eventually to the Yukon River itself.

The pass north of Dyea, the Chilkoot, was probably first explored by a white man in 1875 when an American, George Holt, entered the Yukon district by that route. This scaling of the Chilkoot by a goldseeker boded well, for Holt was able to report ample deposits of coarse gold on the other side.<sup>19</sup> In this way began the trickle of searchers who would systematically comb the Yukon River basin, stubbornly making their way up each of its potential tributaries. The Lewes, the Big Salmon, the Pelly and even-

tually the Stewart rivers were explored with a determination which was maintained as long as each stream was productive. Until 1886 the Stewart River was the most rewarding find. In that same year, however, Franklin and Madison made a promising strike in the Forty Mile district, and miners rushed from Stewart to the new diggings with the predictable fickleness of good gold prospectors.<sup>20</sup>

Obviously the basis of trade shifted significantly under the impact of gold and goldseekers. Fur was still a staple product of the hinterland, but gold was superseding it as an economic base wherever it was discovered, especially since the larger quantities yielded by the newly discovered gravel beds could support whole communities rather than isolated knots of prospecting partners. George Dawson, the Canadian government geologist who conducted a survey of the territory in 1887, estimated that the Stewart River alone had produced over \$100,000 in gold.<sup>21</sup> He estimated the district's total white population to be 250 that year<sup>22</sup> – an insignificant number in the Yukon's vastness.

The rising population of miner-consumers was served by the same basic shipping and distribution mechanism which had served the AC Company's fur traders. Steamers from San Francisco transshipped goods at Saint Michael to the company's fleet of river sternwheelers (consisting of the *Yukon*, the *St. Michael* and the *New Racket* by 1883)<sup>23</sup> which held together the chain of supply points along the river. The process of supplying goods, however, had its problems. In essence what the company had to cope with was a series of localized population explosions which yearly upset estimates with needs that outstripped actual supplies. The problem was intensified when a discovery was made too late in the season for sufficient supplies to be ordered before shipping ended for the year. Such was the situation at the Stewart River in 1886. Although the company had anticipated early in the year the heavy demands which would likely be made that coming winter and had accordingly sent in extra provisions,<sup>24</sup> it had miscalculated the number of determined miners who were willing to endure a Yukon winter. It was weeks after the ice had choked the water route that Harper, the local agent, realized his plight. Supplies were short and the community would be landlocked for another six months. Harper's appeal for more supplies was relayed over the Chilkoot pass where it managed to reach a southbound steamer harboured in the port of Dyea.<sup>25</sup> The Post's supplies were (fortunately) replenished.

The growth of gold-mining communities remoulded the inner workings of the trade. The most radical changes involved the use of gold dust as currency and the exercise of extensive credit. Basically, an ounce of gold rather than a pelt became the cur-

rency unit and the medium of exchange at an accepted value of \$17.<sup>26</sup> With nothing but gold dust to barter, and with most of his capital invested in the initial purchase of the necessarily large survival outfit the miner saw few coins or bills. The dust which was used as currency was traditionally carried in a buckskin "poke" or bag which was offered to the merchant to be weighed before purchases were made. Most customers had their own sets of scales, in addition to those kept on hand by the storekeepers. "So adept does one become in a short time," declared one miner, "that it takes but little longer to make change than with coin."<sup>27</sup>

One of the most significant features of the trade along the gold-producing creeks was the credit which was often extended to a placer miner each season. In the form of winter rations, it tided him over the unprofitable season until gravel panning was again possible, and the gold from the large spring "cleanup" could be used to buy more supplies. This liberal seasonal credit or "grubstake" system, an economic necessity, was based on a principle which underlay a whole morality in those isolated northern settlements. Trust and honesty between individuals were imperative in a country which would have no mercy for anyone abandoned by the community. There had to be a strong and accepted ethic as a basis for sheer survival.

The storekeeper's role was a responsible one in such an interdependent community. In his calculations of a good credit risk he would have to be an excellent judge of character. To those he grubstaked, he served as partner, benefactor, banker (a position of confidence) and agent between the miner and the assay office in San Francisco.<sup>28</sup> His experience both in prospecting and exploring could provide invaluable advice and, no doubt, sought-after companionship during the interminable winter.

The responsibility of the trader to his clients demanded probity. If he cheated them, he was inviting disaster in the form of speculation in limited quantities of supplies. The parent company staunchly upheld such responsibility as a principle.

*Our object is to simply avoid any possible suffering which the large increase in population, insufficiently provided with articles of food, might occasion . . . .*

*In this connection we deem it particularly necessary to say to you, that traders in the employ of the Company, or such others as draw their supplies from the stores of the Company, doing business relations with such parties must cease, as the Company cannot permit itself to be made an instrument of oppression towards anyone that they may come in contact with.*<sup>29</sup>

Individual agents, as well as company policy, were responsible for upholding a code of justice and honesty. When Harper's post

was so short of goods during the winter of 1886, it was a credit to that man's integrity that the remaining supplies were evenly divided per capita for each miner to retrieve, whether or not he had the gold dust for payment.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps the man who made the most indelible impression on the collective memory of the pioneer prospectors along the Yukon River was Jack McQuesten. He and his partners Harper and Mayo moved from the boom town of Forty Mile in 1888 to a location farther north, where McQuesten was sure that outfitting prospectors on the nearby Birch Creek would pay off.<sup>31</sup> His gold-seeker's intuition was correct, and, in 1893, the year of the Birch Creek bonanza, he constructed his imposing two-storey log store on a site which would become the Yukon River's newest boom town, Circle City.<sup>32</sup> The most remarkable feature of this operation was the unlimited credit which he extended. While it was customary to extend credit to a man whom someone would guarantee, McQuesten's books were said to contain the names of anywhere from half to all of Circle City's population at one time or another.<sup>33</sup> It was also said that the unbelievable sum of \$100,000 extended to miners in the season of 1894 was completely repaid in the following year.<sup>34</sup> As long as the local creeks were brimming with gold, and the San Francisco offices were willing to fill his enormous orders, McQuesten remained the merchant prince of Circle City. As one correspondent put it, "as in the case of that other great monopolist, the Hudson's Bay Company, a nominal indebtedness did not imply an actual loss, only so much less profit."<sup>35</sup>

The river trading post served the community in a variety of ways. Take, for example, the case of Circle City. The town was built in American territory, but far away from any official control. McQuesten's store served in such public capacities as library, bank, post office and courthouse. The latter two functions were symbolized by the presence of both the American flag and a yardarm (in case of hangings) on the store's frame. Along with whatever notices, official or otherwise, posted at the time, McQuesten's store wall displayed the following threat, directed to the most thoroughly despised offenders under the northern code:

#### NOTICE

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

*At a general meeting of miners held in Circle City it was the unanimous Verdict that all thieving and stealing shall be punished by WHIPPING AT THE POST AND BANISHMENT FROM THE COUNTRY, the severity of the whipping and the guilt of the accused to be determined by the Jury*

*SO ALL THIEVES BEWARE!*<sup>36</sup>

Circle City managed its own justice. Forty Mile, however, was in Canadian territory, and it was the first gold-rush community to have its autonomy supplanted by the law and order laid down by the North-West Mounted Police. The way was paved for the first detachment by the incorruptible Inspector Constantine, who established the first post across the mouth of the Forty Mile River from the townsite in 1895. The illegal whiskey trade, which was allegedly another of the peripheral services offered by McQuesten and Company, managed to continue unchecked at Circle City. After 1895, however, those company traders working in Canadian territory had to restrain such elements of their extensive operations.<sup>37</sup>

As for the prices charged by the AC Company's traders, one may quote William Ogilvie's report from his Yukon survey in 1887. Ogilvie puts it succinctly: "their prices for goods in 1887 were not exorbitant, yet there must have been a fair profit."<sup>38</sup> The price of flour, the cheapest and most common staple, declined considerably over this period (from \$17.50 for 100 pounds in 1873 to \$12.00 in 1897)<sup>39</sup> while the prices of other staple articles, such as bacon, sugar and tea, remained relatively steady, declining only slightly over the same period. Of course shortages tended to make staple prices shoot up far beyond the average. Constantine reports paying \$80 for 100 pounds of flour during the 1896 winter of rationing at Forty Mile.<sup>40</sup>

Basically, the Yukon River market, before the large-scale migration to the area, was a steady one. The staples in demand were little different from those which would in time be sold to the Klondike goldseekers. The prospector wanted less ammunition and more hardware, but the contents of provisions outfits were similar. What everyone needed was *flour, sugar, tea, coffee, rice, beans, bacon, rolled oats, evaporated fruits, dehydrated vegetables, lard, macaroni, baking powder, dried salmon, tobacco, evaporated and condensed milk, syrup, matches, kerosene, traps, stores, tents, moccasins, shoe pacs, moosehide mittens, heavy wool socks, underwear, shirts and heavy outer clothing.*<sup>41</sup>

The stability of the price structure was largely due to the fact that the AC Company's monopoly along the river was complete. Indeed, some of the company's agents did break their semi-partnership with the firm, becoming wholesale customers instead; however, the terms of purchase between these commission merchants and the supply company were similar to earlier ones in that the traders remained relatively independent.<sup>42</sup> When Harper and Joseph Ladue formed A. Harper and Company, "dealers in Miners' and Prospectors' outfits, traders in fine furs" at Sixty Mile

Post,<sup>43</sup> there is no evidence that their company competed with its parent firm.

The monopoly was finally cracked in 1892 with the founding of the North American Transportation and Trading Company (the NAT&T Company) by J.J. Healy and Portus B. Weare.<sup>44</sup> Healy had been an independent trader and packer along the Chilkoot trail when news of the Forty Mile strike reached him in 1887.<sup>45</sup> Convinced that this was his chance to increase his stakes in Yukon trade and wrest control of the river commerce from the AC Company, he persuaded an American business acquaintance, Portus B. Weare, of the soundness of his grand scheme to extract a fortune from the new strike. Backed by money from the Chicago Cudahy meat firm, Healy and Weare launched their first river steamer, the *Portus B. Weare*, in 1892.<sup>46</sup> By the following year their post, wharf, living quarters and storehouse were constructed at Fort Cudahy, across the river from the AC Company's post at Forty Mile.

And so, in 1896, the year of the discovery of gold on what was to become Bonanza Creek, the Yukon River had been successfully opened up from both ends to admit newcomers to the territory, and both of the large trading companies seemed to be in a position to deal with a strike of any size.

With the addition of Dawson storehouses and warehouses to its string, the AC Company had no fewer than 22 working posts along the river.<sup>47</sup> As important as this was the fact that its traders, in their dealings with the company and with their fellow prospectors, had laid a groundwork of personal and commercial qualities which was essential to gold-rush merchants, both to their operations and to our understanding of them. The trust and brotherliness, the cheerful companionship amid an engulfing isolation, the unquestioning partnership, the honest flexibility of management in times of acute shortage, all were characteristics of the good river trader and points of reference for the Yukon supply trade ever after. Few of these qualities survived the gold-rush and its aftermath wholly intact. The new realities of a highly complex system of supply and distribution called for men of a different temperament. As the story unfolds, the effects of the boom town economy on the character and structure of the river trade will be shown.

Another fundamental part of the Klondike system was the concept of a survival kit or outfit. Both trading companies had become experienced suppliers of such yearly rations, and believed themselves expert at delivering to apparently forsaken depots goods which prospectors were accustomed to at home.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, many brands were familiar to the northern prospector, but the eating habits which resulted from the outfit and its limitations

were unlike anything known to an inhabitant of settled North America.

In 1896, the astonishing discovery of nuggets (as opposed to dust) in the Klondike valley triggered a rush among those miners already in the Yukon valley which was of a magnitude until then unknown. Nevertheless, the rush was clearly confined to those fortunate enough that fall of 1896 to be "inside" (an apt northern term distinguishing the whole area north of the Coastal Range from the rest of North America – that is, "outside"). However, once the Bonanza kings, as the wealthiest of these first Klondikers were known, landed on the docks of San Francisco and Seattle in July 1897, it was obvious that the Yukon goldfields would not stay in the hands of several hundred veteran goldseekers for long. The Klondike shouted out to the whole world. It was also obvious that at that moment neither of the major companies in the north had the wherewithal to outfit the hordes which could be expected to descend on the Yukon valley. Suppliers in cities across the continent were only too glad to make this fact known and to attract part of the Klondike trade to their own shelves and warehouses. "You will need them and you cannot get them up there. . . . At Lowest Prices and Satisfaction Guaranteed"<sup>49</sup> was a common invitation to buy one's Klondike outfit locally.

At this point in the story, then, a new breed of Klondike trader demands one's attention. Like the thousands they served, the Klondike outfitters did not necessarily manifest or repudiate the classic qualities of the Alaska and Yukon trader. Honest and shifty, experienced and ignorant were in the business together. For many, the outfitting experience was in itself a mere flash in the pan. For others, the experience of 1897–98 led to a long and fruitful commercial relationship with the Yukon hinterland.

## The Great Outfitting Rush, 1897–98

*When the soldiers from the east were drafted – or at least  
When they volunteered to Klondike fôr to go,  
They had to take their stuff, so that they would take enough,  
In a most evaporated form you know.*

*So whether it was meat, or molasses for a treat,  
Or whether it was whisky, eggs, or corn,  
So that it would safely pack on a mule's uncertain back,  
'Twas in the most compressed and concentrated form.*

*We'd evaporated flap-jacks, evaporated tin-tack,  
Evaporated peaches and evaporated prunes,  
Evaporated rice, beans, whisky, beer and ice-creams,  
Evaporated flutes that played evaporated tunes. . . .*

*We'd evaporated taters; O, they're the chest inflators!  
Evaporated pork from an evaporated sow,  
Evaporated eggs, crystallized and concentrated,  
Even to the milk of an evaporated cow.*

*Private Green,  
Royal Canadian Dragoons<sup>1</sup>*

One tends to think of the impact of the Klondike gold-rush in terms of a sudden discovery of the Yukon by the world at large, and of the development of that territory at the hands of the thousands who flowed north to the goldfields. Even realizing that over \$100 million worth of gold was taken from those creeks in the first 10 years after the strike on Bonanza Creek, it is difficult to calculate the impact of the widespread economic boom triggered by the rush. Where did the money go?

This is to be a discussion of one segment of the total bonanza; that is, of the share of the wealth which was staked from the beginning by suppliers and outfitters across the continent, specifically by those on the west coast. They went nowhere near the goldfields nor, in all probability, did they want to. The combined factors of short supplies and exorbitant prices necessitated the purchase of at least a year's supplies before one entered that forbidding country. On this basis, many a harbour wholesale dealer made his fortune.

Examination of the workings of this lucrative supply trade serves to introduce the types of commodities which were initially shipped or carried to Dawson. Once recognized, certain types of goods and specific brands can be traced through many years of

the Dawson retail trade. Some, like Borden's "Eagle Brand" milk, were North American favourites even before the rush. Others, like Lamont's crystallized eggs and Agen's tinned butter, while not specifically developed for the north, were popular for their suitability for such Yukon conditions as temperature extremes and extensive periods in transit and storage.

A look at the geographical and economic structure of the general outfitting trade brings to the fore those cities whose locations and existing mechanisms for supplying the frontier served them well in the business of outfitting the northbound hordes of gold-seekers. Of these cities Seattle is a fine example, especially since its active Chamber of Commerce lost no time in mounting a highly effective publicity campaign in order to promote its superior facilities. Nor did it suffer from the prevailing misconception that the new goldfields were in American territory. Here was one group whose optimistic belief in the permanency of Klondike wealth proved accurate, for its members realized that once secured, a profitable segment of the outfitting trade was the thin edge of the wedge. By the 1890s distributors knew enough of the techniques of marketing brand-name goods to realize that those brands which established themselves early in a newly opened community could lead to a market as permanent as the community itself.

The largest proportion of goods sold in the outfitting centres was not, in the early stages of the rush, directly intended for any Yukon merchant's shelves, although it seems probable that large quantities of goods were purchased with resale in mind. No matter what his or her intended activities at the goldfields might be, every Klondike-bound fortune hunter would need an outfit – a year's supply of everything that one person or party would need to survive. The idea was hardly new to the North American frontier, for 19th-century gold strikes in California, British Columbia and the Canadian northwest as well as activities in logging, fur trading and exploring, had given rise to equipped and knowledgeable groups of traders. It was their business to outfit a man with due consideration to quality of goods, durability in extreme climatic conditions, compactness and weight. All this was based on the general estimate of 1,800 pounds of goods (or its equivalent) per person per year.

To fulfill the most basic requirements of food and shelter, an outfit consisted of provisions, dry goods, tools and gear for transportation and shelter. Faced with a collection of outfit lists from Seattle, Vancouver, Edmonton and Chicago, one is surprised by the lack of regional variation in the staples offered. While there is certainly no "regulation" outfit for the Klondike, it is possible to ascertain more or less what the average goldseeker would have

carried north: about 1,000 pounds of food, soap, candles and other groceries; basic cooking equipment; tools for boat- or cabin-building; mining equipment; heavy clothing and boots, and a sleeping bag.<sup>2</sup>

Of the many published guides which included outfit lists, very few offered the tenderfoot Klondiker any sort of manual which might give him proper advice on nutrition and on the efficient use of this necessarily compact outfit. There were four which did: William Ogilvie's excellent *Klondike Official Guide*, which was just that; A. E. Ironmonger Sola's *Klondike: Truth and Facts of the New E1 Dorada*; the Chicago *Records* book for goldseekers, and E. Jerome Dyer's *The Routes and Mineral Resources of North Western Canada*, published for the London Chamber of Mines. A second source of instructive information, and of course a less reliable one, was the advertisement which appeared in some guides, including Ogilvie's, the Alaska Commercial Company's and Charles Lugin's *Yukon Gold Fields*, published by the *Victoria Colonist*.

The foodstuffs were unquestionably the most important element of any outfit, though they were unfortunately the bulkiest and heaviest as well. Although experienced firms packed outfits in portable units not larger than 50 pounds (see Appendix L), the fact remained that a single man could be expected to use up 500 pounds of flour and other grains in a year. Other heavy items were the 150 pounds of bacon, 100 pounds of beans and anywhere from 25 to 100 pounds of sugar.<sup>3</sup> The heaviest individual elements of the edibles were the fruits and vegetables. By virtue of their weight and perishability, they were frequently excluded from outfits, an omission which had calamitous results. Scurvy was the traditional enemy of the badly supplied miner in the north.

The food industry – packing, processing and preserving – went through a period of experimentation which was characteristic of the 19th century. One wonders if the throng of outfitted goldseekers would have been a possibility had the Klondike's resources been discovered a century earlier. Indeed the two processes most relied on in providing a grocery outfit for the Klondike were new to the 19th century. Foods were first successfully canned during the Napoleonic Wars, and condensation received its impetus from the American Civil War. By 1897 both methods had been taken over by efficient, mass-producing industries.

The first patent for a "tin cannister" was registered in England in 1810: "an iron can coated with tin and the cover soldered on."<sup>4</sup> Even then, spoilage was associated with the process, because (it was believed) of the food's coming into contact with tainted air; therefore early canning processes involved the cooking of food

already sealed in cans. By 1860, Louis Pasteur had made known his theory of sealing tins hermetically.<sup>5</sup> The contents of any tin can of food were greeted with understandable suspicion in Pasteur's day, for the process was still experimental, crudely done and generally unreliable. It was another 30 years before research was directly allied with the food industry. By that time, the canning industry had sprung up, packing the harvest of market garden and orchard alike into two- and three-pound tins. (The standard Canadian two-pound tin can was 3-1/2 inches in diameter and 4-1/2 inches high.)<sup>6</sup> By 1905 there were almost 50 canneries in Ontario.<sup>7</sup>

Meats and their preservation were also subject to experimentation in search of improvements. Canning, as a method of preserving small quantities of meat without the benefit of salt or cold storage, was ideally suited to expeditions and long voyages. Captain Sir Edward Parry carried canned meats and vegetables with him in the Arctic in 1824.<sup>8</sup>

One of the major disadvantages associated with packing tinned products on expeditions was their weight. Gail Borden, an inquiring American schoolteacher and surveyor, became interested in the dual problems of bulky and perishable foods. His experiments were directed toward obtaining from a food its concentrated extract. One of the first practical results of his work was his meat biscuit, a concentrated mixture of wheat flour and beef. "Dry, inodorous, flat and brittle,"<sup>9</sup> the meat biscuit was perfectly suited to an expeditionary outfit. Coinciding as it did with the California gold-rush of 1849, Borden's discovery sold briskly. Basically his biscuit was not unlike the traditional pemmican.

If Borden's name is even slightly connected with the California gold-rush, then his subsequent discovery ought to have earned his status as an honorary sourdough in the Klondike. For most of the men at the goldfields or on the trail, Borden's "Eagle Brand" was synonymous with condensed milk. This process, discovered by Borden in 1856, condensed the milk by heating it in airtight vacuum pans.<sup>10</sup> The liquid so produced was virtually imperishable. From the invention evolved a company, producing Eagle Brand milk and "Peerless" evaporated cream (see Fig. 1). Its foremost Canadian competitor, at least in terms of the Klondike market, seems to have been the Truro Condensed Milk and Canning Company (Figs. 2 and 3). "Reindeer" was their leading brand:

*The quantity of gold dust stored in Reindeer Milk tins this season will be enormous. But it will not equal in richness the original contents, for Reindeer Brand assays 1000 fine every time.*<sup>11</sup>

1 Borden's best-known products, 1903.  
(Canadian Grocer, Vol. 17, No. 45  
[Nov. 1903], p. 11.)

2 Condensed milk, 1904. (Canadian Gro-  
cer, Vol. 18 [Dec. 1904], p. 5)

3 "Reindeer" trademark, 1919.  
(Department of Consumer and Corpo-  
rate Affairs, Trade Marks Registry.)

THE CANADIAN GROCER

# Borden's Brands of CONDENSED Milk and EVAPORATED CREAM at Canadian Prices



We beg to announce that we have established a branch factory at Ingersoll, Ont., and that we are now prepared to fill all orders for the Canadian trade promptly, and at considerably reduced prices, owing to the establishment of the Canadian Branch. Our Eagle Brand Condensed Milk, Gold Seal Brand Condensed Milk and Peerless Brand Evaporated Cream, unsweetened, can be obtained through our local representatives.



## BORDEN'S CONDENSED MILK CO.

Originators of Condensed Milk. Established 1857.

Selling representatives in Canada: F. W. Hudson & Co., Toronto. W. H. Dunn, Montreal. Erb & Rankin, Halifax. W. S. Clawson & Co., St. John, N.B. Scott, Bathgate & Co., Winnipeg, also Shallcross, Macaulay & Co., Victoria and Vancouver, B.C.

3



December 23, 1904

THE CANADIAN GROCER

# It Does You Good

to sell goods that have proved themselves to be unequalled for  
quality and strength like



## Jersey Cream AND Reindeer Brand



**Condensed Milk.** These reliable brands not only give perfect  
satisfaction but build up your reputation for handling goods that are right.

### A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

**W. G. A. LAMBE & CO.,** Agents





HAS STOOD  
THE TEST

THE  
BEST

IS NONE  
TOO GOOD  
FOR THE KLON-  
DIKE BE SURE  
TO GET J.B. AGEN'S  
FANCY CREAMERY  
BUTTER FULL  
WEIGHT AND GUAR-  
ANTEED TO KEEP.  
J. B. AGEN,  
SEATTLE AND  
TACOMA,  
WASHINGTON,  
U.S.A.

OVER 2,000,000 POUNDS  
SOLD LAST YEAR.

**J.B. AGEN'S**

**CREAMERY  
BUTTER**

HAS STOOD PUT UP ONLY BY THE TEST  
**J.B. AGEN.**  
SEATTLE AND TACOMA, WASHINGTON.

THIS CAN CONTAINS

**CREAMERY  
BUTTER**

PUT UP ONLY BY  
**J.B. AGEN.**  
SEATTLE AND TACOMA, WASH.

PACK OF 1903

**J.B. Agen.**

MANUFACTURER AND DEALER IN

**FANCY  
CREAMERY  
BUTTER,  
CHEESE AND EGGS.**

SEATTLE AND TACOMA.  
WASHINGTON, U.S.A.

TO OPEN CAN  
BREAK LOOSE KEY  
ATTACHED TO BOTTOM OF CAN  
AND INSERT POINT OF STRIP  
WINDING TO RIGHT WILL  
LOOSEN ENTIRE BOTTOM.  
Guaranteed to Open

Other dairy products underwent similar adaptation for use on expeditions. Vacuum-packed tinned butter never lost the early popularity it had gained in Dawson. Packed so that it did not touch the tin (presumably by using paper liners) this butter was reputed to withstand the most extreme climatic conditions. J.B. Agens of Seattle and Tacoma held a long-lasting monopoly in canned butter at the goldfields (Fig. 4).

Whole eggs were useless in an outfit for obvious reasons. To this problem the crystallized or powdered egg was the answer. Lamont's crystallized eggs captured the Dawson market by advertising, "No breaking. No Bad Eggs. No shells. No waste."<sup>12</sup> Lamont had reduced the equivalent of two dozen eggs to an eight-ounce can; to reconstitute one whole egg one needed only to add 1-1/4 tablespoons of baking powder and 2 tablespoons water or milk.

The process of concentration was not limited to dairy products. Meat, fruit and vegetables could be reduced to a fraction of their original weight, thereby both lightening the load and preserving the food. Bovril was by far the best-known company engaged in reducing meats and, to a lesser extent, vegetables. "Our object is to supply the maximum amount of nourishment in the minimum of bulk."<sup>13</sup> With vast experience behind it, having outfitted prospectors, explorers, surveyors and troops in the far reaches of the empire, the company was up to this latest challenge. Numerous combinations of beef, bacon, cocoa and vegetables in various reduced "cartridge" rations were available (Fig. 5).

Along with "Maggi" and "Vimbo's Fluid Beef," Bovril won itself a permanent niche, not just in the well-packed outfit but behind the counters of Dawson as well (Fig. 6). Libby, McNeill and Libby of Chicago were prolific canners of beef in all its forms, as well as of roast mutton, ham, tongue and soup (Figs. 7, 8). For the Klondike, however, beef extracts had the advantage over canned products. William Ogilvie, with the authority of a veteran surveyor in the territory, personally advised against taking meats in tinned form.<sup>14</sup>

Evaporated, or simply dried, fruits and vegetables were perfectly suited to the Klondike situation. No outfit was complete without about 100 pounds of fruits and vegetables in this form. Advertisements of the period lead one to believe that there was not a fruit known to man which was not evaporated and packed for sale to the Klondike-bound. Potatoes, sliced and dried, were especially popular. "Lubeck" was a brand of dried potatoes which sold consistently in Dawson, but it is not known whether it was produced initially for the outfit trade or not.

From the point of view of a world accustomed to frozen foods and chemical additives, the number of processes in use at the end of the century to reduce and preserve foods – all in the name of lightness and durability – is surprising. The prospector's diet was not simply canned; it was evaporated, concentrated, dessicated, compressed, liquified, crystallized and granulated. His beef and sugar (not to mention his lemons, limes, celery and milk) might come in tablets; his coffee and tea in lozenges, his cocoa in cakes. One extremist managed to put together an outfit made up exclusively of such drastically reduced foods as these which, when complete, weighed a mere 69-1/2 pounds.<sup>15</sup> In describing this quintessence of gastronomic delight, the author of the publication reported with a remarkable evenness of tone: "Almost everything comes in a powder or a paste, and needs nothing but boiling water and an appetite to make a meal."<sup>16</sup> It is easy to imagine the monotony of food in the cabins and on the trail. No doubt the least concentrated and most appetizing goods were consumed first. For the last months in the season, the remaining evaporated delicacies must have exhibited a dreary sameness.

Whether the contents were whole, canned or dried, the trend toward the use of brand-name food products was a significant one. In an age of abundance and expansion in the food processing and packing industry, adulteration had become an established practice. Since there was still little effective legislation enforcing inspection and other controls in either the United States or Canada,<sup>17</sup> those brands which guaranteed the purity of their products in their advertising gained respectability in the market. The AC Company, in its promotional Klondike pamphlet, included testimonials from no less an authority than Jack McQuesten for brands considered trustworthy over the years. His support of Eagle Brand milk is indicative of the general trust put in known varieties.

*There is nothing more precious, perhaps, to a miner in the Arctic than a can of good condensed milk or cream. This is so well known in Alaska that the Miners there will buy nothing but the "Eagle" brand, but it is the ignorant miner – and only the ignorant miner – that is fitting out in San Francisco or Seattle who ever allows any other brand to be foisted on him, and he will find out when he reaches Alaska, where the temperature is 80° below zero sometimes, that his cheap, inferior milk is no good.*<sup>18</sup>

A similar endorsement was given to "Royal" baking powder, the only kind (according to the AC Company) which would withstand climatic conditions "harsher against baking powder than against anything else." Other brands singled out for commendation were "Germea" breakfast cereal (highly concentrated and nutritive, quick-cooking and a preventative of scurvy), Sperry's

5 Bovril's cartridge rations, 1898.  
 (William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide. Canada's Great Gold Fields, the Yukon . . . with Regulations Governing Placer Mining* [Toronto: Hunter, Rose, 1898], p. xvi)

6 Vimbo's fluid beef, as advertised for the Klondike, 1898. (William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide. Canada's Great Gold Fields, the Yukon . . . with Regulations Governing Placer Mining* [Toronto: Hunter, Rose, 1898], p. x)


**CONCENTRATED FOODS**  
 PREPARED BY  
**BOVRIL LIMITED**

These Goods are Indispensable in a **KLONDIKE EXPLORER'S OUTFIT**.  
 They are all Health Preserving and Strength Producing Foods, the best in existence for men who require great physical endurance.

**BOVRIL IN TINS**  
 Is simply Pure Beef in its most concentrated form, and ready for immediate use.

**CARTRIDGE RATIONS**  
 Packed in Tins, with Rounded Ends, and Opener Attached.

<p><b>BLUE.</b></p> <p>Length - - - - 7 in.          Gross Weight - - 14<math>\frac{1}{4}</math> oz.          Net - - - - 11 oz.</p>	<p><b>RED.</b></p> <p>Length - - - - 5<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> in.          Gross Weight - - 11 oz.          Net - - - - 8 oz.</p>
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As supplied for the use of the Troops in the late Ashanti and Benin Expeditions. Also to the Independent State of the Congo, etc., etc.

**BLUE OR RED RATION**  
 Containing in one compartment same as in the Cartridge Ration, and a Concentrated Cocoa preparation in another compartment.


<p><b>RED.</b></p> <p>Length - - - - 4<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> in.          Gross Weight - - 10 oz.          Net - - - - 6 oz.</p>	<p><b>BLUE.</b></p> <p>Length - - - - 5<math>\frac{1}{4}</math> in.          Gross Weight - - 12 oz.          Net - - - - 8 oz.</p>
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As supplied for the use of the Troops in the Ashanti and Benin Expeditions.

**BACON RATION**

Made from Pure Irish Bacon, weighing tin and all, 9 ozs.



Equal to 16 ozs. of the best Cured Bacon.

In addition to the above specialties the Company manufacture the following other foods:

**DRIED VEGETABLES - - DRIED POTATOES**  
**DRIED ONIONS - DRIED TURNIPS, Etc.**  
 With all their Original Flavor Retained, and packed in Self-opening Tins.

**JOHNSTON'S FLUID BEEF** in Tins, and the Effectual Preventative to Scoury.

**Lime Juice Nodules**  
 In the packaging of these goods the minimum in bulk and weight has been secured, and they are therefore the most convenient of all food supplies for **Prospectors, Explorers or Surveyors**


---

THEY ARE MANUFACTURED ONLY BY **BOVRIL LIMITED**

**30 Farringdon Street**  
**LONDON, ENGLAND**

**27 St. Peter Street**  
**MONTREAL, CANADA**

# Vimbo's



**FLUID**

---

**BEEF**

---

(Ox-Strength in a Tea Cup)

## Klondike Expeditions Need That

The ideal package for this purpose is our **16 oz. Tin with Penny-lever Top**, which can be opened and closed without injury to the tin or contents.

**The most convenient and economical package; makes 60 cups of Fluid Beef.**

## Best

### For Strength and Flavor

Vimbo's Fluid Beef is prepared in Edinburgh, Scotland, and is guaranteed to be of prime quality.

It will pay you to write for quotations before laying in supplies.

---

**The Vimbo's Fluid Beef Co., Limited, of Edinburgh and London**

CANADIAN OFFICE:  
**HENRY WOODLEY, Manager. 53 St. Francois Xavier St., MONTREAL.**

7 Libby McNeill and Libby compressed meats, 1898. (Source Unknown.)

8 Corned Beef, advertised by the Alaska Commercial Company, 1898. (Alaska Commercial Company, To the Klondike Gold Fields, and Other Points of Interest in Alaska [San Francisco: 1898], n.p.)

**LIBBY McNEILL & LIBBY**  
**THE OLDEST PACKERS IN THE WORLD**  
**IN THE LINE OF COMPRESSED MEATS**

**LIBBY'S COMPRESSED MEATS** are prepared by the most advanced methods for preserving their natural delicious wholesomeness, and are perfectly packed and compressed in hermetically sealed cans.

**A CAN OF LIBBY'S BEEF** holds double the nutriment of an equal amount of uncooked fresh or salted meat.

**LIBBY'S COMPRESSED MEATS** have found ready sale throughout the civilized world where meats in the most compact form are required for transportation on expeditions in hot or cold climates or over mountains.

Libby's Beef Extract, Fluid Beef, Soups and Mince Meats are Perfect Productions. For sale by Grocers Everywhere.

Manufactured by **LIBBY, McNEILL & LIBBY, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.**

*This is the Beef we recommend.*

**Dodge, Sweeney & Co.,**  
 114-116 MARKET STREET,  
 SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

*Pacific Coast Agents.*

"Drifted Snow" flour (for its dryness) and Baker's cocoa and chocolate (withstanding extreme conditions, and also preventing scurvy) (Fig. 9).

William Ogilvie was an experienced and more impartial adviser. Less concerned with specific brands, he offered such general sound advice as the fact that good fatty bacon, oatmeal and good black tea ("the cup that cheers but not inebriates") should all be included in an outfit for their warming qualities. Good medium flour and ordinary brown beans were the most sensible investments in their kinds. Good quality granulated sugar was preferable to brown, which was more apt to freeze in winter.<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, the health of the miner was not the concern to outfitters that it might have been. While some guides included advertisements by wholesale druggists, only about a quarter of the lists collected for this report included a medicine kit – usually a \$4 or \$5 package. One advertisement for a "health regulator" struck at the grim but realistic truth that miners and suppliers, in their mutual haste to strike gold, ignored "Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Your future wealth depends upon your present health. Take care of it in your own interests."<sup>20</sup> One reporter for the *Chicago Record*, who had already made the overland trip, bemoaned the fact that so very little importance was attached to the medical chest. He suggested the following useful items: *liniment for sprains and cold on the lungs, tincture of iron to enrich the blood, extract of Jamaica ginger, laudanum, vaseline, carbolic ointment, salts, cough tablets, mustard and adhesive plaster, surgeon's lint, bandages, liver pills, powder for bleeding, absorbent cotton, surgeon's sponge, needles and silk, quinine capsules and toothache drops.*<sup>21</sup>

While scurvy from a poor, unvaried diet was indeed a grim possibility, those miners who listened to any expert advice were clearly aware of the dangers and packed preventatives accordingly. One encouraging feature of this gruesome disease was its amenability to treatment in all but its most advanced stages.<sup>22</sup> The well-known role of ascorbic acid in its prevention and cure was acknowledged in many outfits by the inclusion of lime juice or tablets of citrus fruit extract containing the acid. "Montserrat Lime Fruit Juice" and L. Rose and Company's lime juice were both reputable products. While most of the goldseekers were probably unaware of the fact, canned tomatoes also contained the necessary vitamin C.<sup>23</sup>

An additional worry for the miner was that not every company which put up medicine boxes with their supplies could be trusted to fulfill the task knowledgeably or honestly. Her discovery that certain drugs were missing from her medicine chest drove one Klondike-bound traveller to write angrily that "merchants seem to

think that when they outfit you for the Klondike they can put upon you all the stuff that no one else will take and that they will never hear from you again."<sup>24</sup> Given the suddenness of the Klondike phenomenon, the customers' general eagerness and their ignorance, both of their needs and of their suppliers, dishonesty must have been fairly common among the less scrupulous merchants in the trade. The number of reported grievances, even in private papers, is surprisingly low.

The food discussed above made up the basic provisions outfit taken by the wise miner. There were those, of course, whose tastes ran to such portable treats as cake and cookies, pickles, spices, cheese and jellies. Like the treasured tobacco supply, these delicacies were probably consumed before Dawson came into view.<sup>25</sup> Such luxuries did have an additional value; they could be used for purposes of barter along the trail. While the intelligent traveller knew that it was sheer folly to weight one's pack more than was absolutely necessary with these extra pots and jars, one with a certain enterprising spirit looked at the situation in a different light. He was almost sure to meet some fellow gold-seeker, desperate in his deprivation, who was willing to pay almost anything for a plug of "Old Chum" or a tin of "Log Cabin" maple syrup.

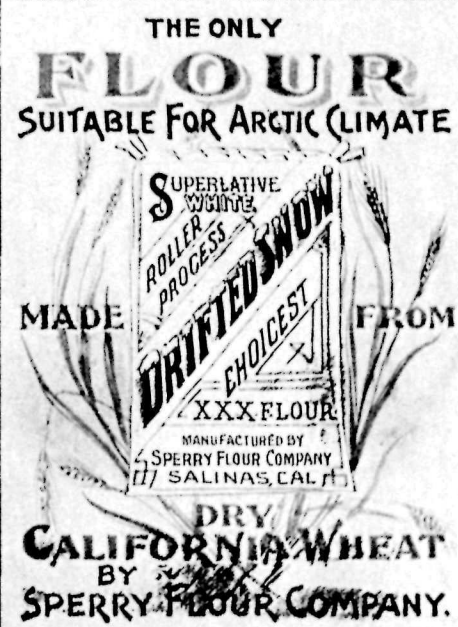
In the line of clothing, one comes across general types of garments offered by most outfitters rather than specific brand names. The most important items were heavy lined suits of mackinaw (a blanket-like wool, either grey or plaid), wool, tweed, serge, corduroy, khaki or waterproofed cotton duck. Under this went heavy sweaters, woollen socks and knit underwear. The most descriptive selection of Klondike clothing was offered by the T. Eaton Company in a special Klondike section of their fall and winter catalogue for 1898 (see Fig. 10). Items "B" and "C" are Shorey's "Patented Blizzard Resister Suits" and item "G" is the Klondike shirt made by the same company (Fig. 11). These articles were still being distributed through Eaton's long after the gold-rush had subsided.

Several companies offered everything from robes to parkas, pants, hats and mittens in fur. Few goldseekers, however, could afford fur robes and, because of the greater freedom of movement afforded by fabric clothing, the native skins (as they were called in the Yukon) were more attractive to those not actively engaged in mining.<sup>26</sup> Instead of fur robes, most buyers would be satisfied with several heavy blankets, available for less than \$10, along with an oilcloth cover. The sleeping bag was gaining popularity, as the Eaton's catalogue shows. Usually of oiled, rubbered or plain cotton, it was lined with eiderdown, fur, wool or felt and cost between \$10 and \$20 (Fig. 12).



L. N. MCQUESTEN, (The Father of Alaska) WRITES  
 "THE ROYAL BAKING POWDER IS THE ONLY POWDER THAT WILL ENDURE THE SEVERE CLIMATIC CHANGES OF THE ARCTIC REGION. A MINER WITH A CAN OF BAD BAKING POWDER IS ALMOST HELPLESS IN ALASKA. THEREFORE, WE HAVE USED NOTHING BUT ROYAL BAKING POWDER."

THE ONLY  
**FLOUR**  
 SUITABLE FOR ARCTIC CLIMATE



MADE FROM  
 CHOICEST  
 XXX FLOUR  
 MANUFACTURED BY  
 SPERRY FLOUR COMPANY  
 SALINAS, CALIF.

DRY  
**CALIFORNIA WHEAT**  
 BY  
**SPERRY FLOUR COMPANY.**

**GERMEA**  
 for Breakfast



1 lb. GERMEA MAKES 4 lbs. FOOD. GERMEA TAKES 3 MIN. TO COOK. GERMEA 95% NUTRIMENT.  
 1 lb. OATMEAL MAKES 2 lbs. FOOD. OATMEAL TAKES 50 MIN. TO COOK. OATMEAL 73% NUTRIMENT.

**GERMEA THE ONLY CEREAL USED IN ALASKA. A POSITIVE PREVENTIVE SCURVY**

Don't Take Chances with Poor Milk



**BORDEN'S**  
 PEERLESS BRAND  
 EVAPORATED  
**CREAM**

**BORDEN'S**  
 EAGLE BRAND  
 CONDENSED  
 MILK

UNSWEEETENED  
 DELICIOUS, RICH, WHOLESOME  
 ABSOLUTELY PURE MILK.  
**NEW YORK CONDENSED MILK CO.**



B.

Men's Klondike mining coats, made of heavy black Mackinaw cloth, with 6-inch storm collar and capot to pull over the head, strap across the throat, 4 pockets, including 2 slash, knitted woollen cuff inside of sleeves, lined throughout with tweed, sizes 36 to 46 chest measure, as cut B, \$5.00.



C.

Men's mining coats for Klondike use, heavy Mackinaw, in black shade, with belt around the waist, slash pockets, knitted cuff in sleeve, lined throughout with tweed, high storm collar and capot, tab for throat, as cut C, sizes 36 to 46 chest measure, \$5.00 each.

Men's Klondike coats, made of brown waterproof duck, 6-inch corduroy storm collar, lined throughout with lamb skin fur, 3 flap pockets, tab to button across throat, patent hand-knit wool cuffs attached inside of sleeves, extra warm, sizes 36 to 46, as cut D, \$6.50 each.



D.

Men's Klondike black leather coats, with 6-inch corduroy storm collar, lined with fur (lamb skin), extra heavy and warm, 3 flap pockets, hand-knit wool cuffs inside of sleeves, ball and socket fasteners, buttoned close to throat, sizes 36 to 44 chest measure, as cut D, \$10.00.

Men's Klondike coats, black leather lined with lamb skin fur, with 6-inch fur storm collar, tab to button across throat, patent glove fastener buttons, hand-knit wool cuff attached inside of sleeves, sizes 36 to 44 chest measure, as cut D, \$12.00.

Men's California buckskin coats, for Klondike wear, with 8-inch storm collar of drab corduroy, double-breasted, ball and socket fasteners, 3 pockets with flaps, and lined throughout body with drab corduroy, wool cuff attached inside of sleeve, as cut A, sizes 36 to 44 chest measure, \$13.50.



E. and F.

Men's Klondike sleeping bag, outside covering of oiled waterproof, canvas lined, with 2-ply grey blanket, interlined with felt, envelope top snap fasteners, as cuts E and F, \$10.00 each.

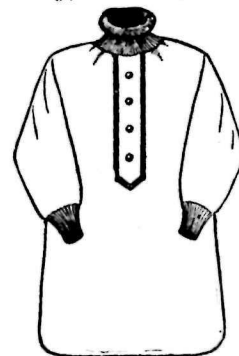
Men's brown duck waterproof Klondike sleeping bags, lined with 2-ply grey blanket, 36-inch opening in centre, with ball and socket fastenings, made in barrel shape, \$10.00 each

Men's sleeping bags, for use in the Klondike, gloss finished oiled canvas, wind and waterproof, lined with heavy blue nap cloth and felt interlinings, snap fastenings, envelope top, riveted corners, warm and comfortable, with roll straps, complete, as cuts E and F, \$12.50.

Men's Klondike sleeping bags, dull-finished oiled canvas, heavy brown Mackinaw linings, and felt interlinings, envelope top, with 6-inch ventilator down the centre, with waterproof covering, snap and buckle fastenings, with straps for packing, as cuts E and F, \$14 each.

Men's Klondike sleeping bags, outside covering gloss-finished canvas, boiled in oil, lined with fur robing, interlined with felt, 8-inch ventilator running down the centre, envelope top, snap fastenings, riveted corners, as cuts E and F, \$16.00 each.

Men's extra fine Klondike sleeping bags, wind and waterproof oiled canvas, interlined with fur robing, 8-inch checked flannel ventilator, riveted corners, straps for packing when not in use, snap fastenings, as cuts E and F, \$18.00 each.



G.

Men's heavy Klondike shirts, in Celtic woven greytweeds, combination sweater style, closed all round, with hand-knit roll collar and cuffs, warm and comfortable, as cut G, \$1.75 each.

Men's Klondike topshirts, knitted wool, dark navy blue, without opening in front, combination

sweater style, with 8-inch roll collar and roll cuffs, as cut G, \$1.50 each.

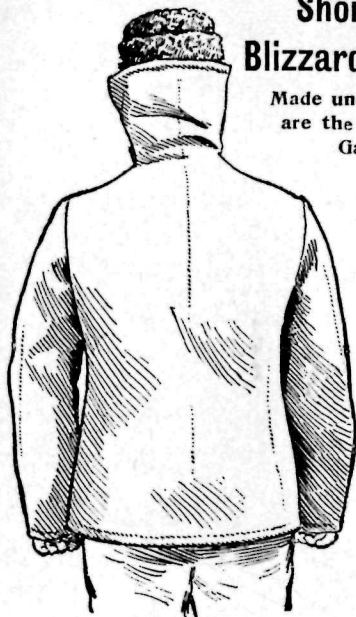
Men's combination Klondike sweater shirts, dark navy blue, knitted wool, with 8-inch cardinal roll collar and cuffs, no opening in front, as cut G, \$2.00 each.

Men's Klondike shirts, heavy blue and black Mackinaw, made in combination sweater style, with hand-knit roll collar and cuffs, no opening in front, as shown in cut G, \$2.00 each.

**If you don't like it, YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP IT. Money refunded every time if goods are not satisfactory.**

## Shorey's Patent Blizzard Resister Suits

Made under Patent No. 1062  
are the Most Comfortable  
Garments Sold.



## Shorey's Miners' Suit

Made in all Shades  
of Mackinaw,  
Warmly Lined,  
With or Without  
Capot,  
Also in Khaki Duck.



These Goods can be  
Purchased at  
Vancouver - - B. C.  
Victoria        "  
Kamloops       "  
Ashcroft        "  
Nanaimo        "  
Glenora         "



## Shorey's Arctic Suit

Made in all Shades  
of Heavy Mackinaw,  
With or Without  
Capot.



These Goods can  
be Purchased at  
Edmonton, N.W.T.  
Calgary        "  
Prince Albert  "  
Winnipeg       Man.  
and all Eastern  
Towns.

..See that Shorey's Guarantee Card is in the Pocket of Every Garment..



12 Advertising by association in the Ogilvie guide.  
(William Ogilvie, Klondike Official Guide. Canada's Great Gold Fields, the Yukon . . . with Regulations Governing Placer Mining [Toronto: Hunter, Rose, 1898], p. xxxviii.)

# Take the Best

Such is the advice given by MR. WM. OGILVIE  
in his report on Klondike Supplies.

Miners who follow the above advice will buy the

## - Canada Fibre Company -

LIMITED



## SLEEPING BAGS

For there is no doubt of its SUPERIORITY OVER  
ALL OTHERS.

The Bag is made of **Strong Waterproof Duck**, well **Pad-  
ded with Eiderdown**, and has **two interlinings of warm  
material**, besides a **Heavy Wool Kersey** sewn on as inside lining.  
Weight, 15 lbs. Size, 6 ft. 9 ins. It is not bulky and can be easily  
turned inside out.

All Government expeditions have been provided with Eiderdown  
Bags, and are at present using them. The one we now offer is an  
improvement on all others in use, and therefore is in great demand.

**Ask your Outfitter for our Bag and take no other  
and if you cannot get one from him write us direct.**

**None Genuine Without Our Name Inside.**

**CANADA FIBRE COMPANY, Limited**

MANUFACTURERS OF

**DOWN, COTTON AND WOOL COMFORTERS**

Office and Works—582 William Street

**MONTREAL P.Q.**

# The "Alaska Mining Boot"



Design Registered, May 20th, 1896.  
Made with Patent Leather Insole.  
Patented, July 29th, 1893.

**Specially constructed to stand the climate and wear of that country; made with Bath Rubber or Leather Outsoles.**  
**No prospector should leave without a pair of them.**

ALSO MANUFACTURERS OF  
CAMPING BLANKETS, AIR PILLOWS,  
RUBBER GLOVES AND MITTENS, Etc.

**The Canadian Rubber Co. of Montreal**  
MONTREAL  
TORONTO and WINNIPEG

## Klondike Outfits

**"TESLIN" Folding Stove** ❁ ❁

28 x 22 x 13 inches, folds into a package 28 x 22 x 4 inches.

**"DAWSON" Folding Stove** ❁ ❁

No. 20. — 20 x 12½ x 12½ inches, folded 20 x 12½ x 2¾ inches.

No. 24. — 24 x 12½ x 12 inches, folded 24 x 12½ x 2¾ inches.

❁ ❁ Five Lengths of Stove Pipe telescope into one. We make every variety of Tin Ware, Enamelled Ware, Steel Fry Pans, Gold Pans, Etc., Etc.

Catalogues can be obtained from our Warehouses at London, Toronto, Winnipeg, Montreal or Vancouver, and our goods from dealers in all parts of Canada.

The **McCLARY MANUFACTURING CO.,** Limited.

As for boots, the miner would have to be outfitted with two distinct types. Winter definitely called for "native boots" or mukluks, which could be purchased in the north.<sup>27</sup> For the spring mud along the creeks, rubber boots were essential. Several pairs of snag-proof, unlined hip-waders were advisable. This was one area of the clothing outfit where brand names did emerge. The AC Company stood behind the patented snag-proof and crack-proof "Gold Seal" products of the Goodyear Rubber Company of San Francisco. In Vancouver, "English K-boots" ("guaranteed absolutely waterproof, snagproof gum boots") were advertised,<sup>28</sup> while the Canadian Rubber Company of Montreal offered the "Alaska Mining Boot" (Fig. 13). Waterproof rawhide boots were popular; they were more suitable for the arduous trails than for the final muddy destination. George T. Slater and Sons of Montreal produced a boot for \$8 that remained a well-known brand in Dawson (Fig. 14).

Completing the clothing outfit were heavy wool socks, called arctic socks or often "German wool socks," underclothing (Jaeger flannel was common), mosquito netting and snow goggles. Depending on the season in which one started north, one of the last two items would be essential to one's travelling comfort. Again, the brand names made popular by the strike remained so in Dawson stores.

The hardware list in the outfits sold by McDougall and Secord was much like the one recommended by Ogilvie himself.<sup>29</sup> In addition to the tools and utensils which must have been familiar to all woodsmen and explorers, certain items were particularly adapted to the life and survival of the Klondike miner. The gold pan and scales were obvious inclusions, as were pick and shovel. In the hands of a resourceful miner, the pan could be used both as wash basin and bread pan.

A more significant addition was the collapsible camp stove. Often called the Yukon stove or Klondike camp stove, this article was considered to be a unique northern adaptation. Its origin was claimed by the city of Seattle.<sup>30</sup> Its worth can be attributed to its collapsibility. The sides of the box-like stove folded, and the pipe telescoped into four or five pieces (Fig. 15). It could be carried easily, although it was, after all, made of sheet-iron. (One model was advertised as weighing a mere 17 pounds.)<sup>31</sup> It was a compact piece of work, about 9 inches by 12 inches by 24 inches, and its design was such that "even on the coldest days it could keep a properly chinked and roofed cabin uncomfortably warm."<sup>32</sup> Often the tank of the stove was divided between fire box and oven. While the box-shaped model might have from two to five lids, there was a half-barrel and a cylindrical shape as well which served only as heater and oven. Since it was both abso-

lutely necessary as well as relatively simple to construct, this article was soon manufactured right in Dawson.<sup>33</sup>

Another peculiarity of the Klondike outfit, intended for those miners crossing the passes, was the inclusion of tools and materials (other than lumber) necessary to build a craft to descend from the head of Bennett Lake to Dawson City. These included a whipsaw, crosscut saw, pitch, oakum, caulking iron, hammer and nails, jack plane, chisel, brace and bits, knife and rope. For those who wished to avoid the delay of having to build a boat, portable sectional canoes were sold.<sup>34</sup>

The problems encountered by the miner who discovered too late that his outfit contained useless quantities of goods have already been mentioned. In the case of an excess of hardware or food, the packs were either jettisoned or traded off, depending on the relative demand for the product.<sup>35</sup> In this way booths stocked with the leavings of disheartened goldseekers became a familiar feature along the Trail of '98. For those who ran them, this was often the first step to a lifetime's work of merchandizing in the north.

The sudden demand for nearly a ton of supplies for each of tens of thousands of adventurers was an unexpected shot in the arm for the food supply industry across the continent. The news of the Klondike gold finds which had arrived in July of 1897 with the first nugget-laden ships, *Excelsior* and *Portland*, must have excited astute wholesale dealers along the steamship routes. It opened the possibility not only of profiting from the outfitting trade, but of eventually earning a share of the market at the gold-fields for as long as the capricious paystreak would support one.

Of the west coast cities in competition for the outfitting trade – San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, Tacoma, Victoria and Vancouver – all had some experience in the business. San Francisco, of course, had the edge on the rest of them, being the supply depot and port for the pioneer AC Company. During the previous 20 years, however, Seattle had begun to catch up; her productive hinterland had been greatly expanded by the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway at her back doorstep in 1885.<sup>36</sup> By the early 1890s she had gained a secure monopoly of the trade to Juneau, the commercial centre for the hard-rock gold mining operations conducted on the Alaskan panhandle since 1880,<sup>37</sup> and in 1897 had been an outfitting base for some of the first Klondikers over the passes.<sup>38</sup> The feather in Seattle's cap, and an event which launched her into serious competition with San Francisco, was the decision of the newly formed NAT&T Company to use Seattle as its Pacific coast entrepôt.<sup>39</sup>

## The "Slater Mining Boot"

for Prospectors, Miners, Explorers, Hunters.  
Weight 24 ozs., wears like wire.

Made of Rawhide, mineral tanned to resist water, never hardens nor cracks.

Laced clear to 15 in. top, with waterproof bellows tongue, waterproof Horsehide Sole, cone hob nailed. Extra strong Good-year Welt.

Takes place of rubbers for all wear.

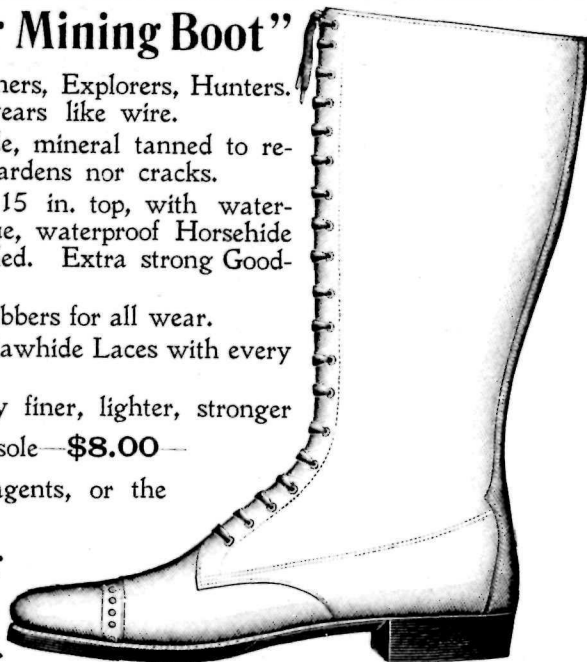
Two pairs of Rawhide Laces with every pair of boots.

Money can't buy finer, lighter, stronger Boots. Stamped on sole—**\$8.00**—

Sold by Slater agents, or the makers,

**Geo. T. Slater  
& Sons**

MONTREAL, Can.



## KLONDIKE--YUKON.

"TELFORD SYNDICATE."

This Company is under the personal management of Mr. E. M. Telford, whose two years' experience in Dawson City makes him particularly adapted to prospect and mine in this country. Mr. Telford, with party fully equipped, leaves for the Klondike early in March. No stock will be offered to the public till claims have been acquired and reported on. Intending investors will do well to keep the "Telford Syndicate" in mind, as no party starts under more promising conditions.

Further particulars apply

**GEO. PARKER,**  
Sec.-Treas. Telford Syndicate,  
TORONTO, - CANADA.

LONDON BROKERS:  
**SCRUTTON & SON,**  
OR, Old Broad St., LONDON, E. C., ENGLAND.  
AND **P. B. MARSHALL,**  
2 Birchen Lane, LONDON, E. C., ENGLAND.

## IF YOU GO



There are certain of our specialties you must have. We are headquarters for Klondike Groceries, and have some prospectors supplies that cannot be had elsewhere.

.....Evaporated Vegetables, in packages, 1 doz. assorted packages in each sealed tin. Vegetable Soups. Bouillon in Capsules. Pea Soup in Casings. Evaporated Carrots, Potatoes, Cabbage, Celery, Onions, Apples, Prunes, and Apricots, at closest wholesale prices.

We have two Klondike Lists. List No. 1 includes bare necessities; List No. 2 has a few convenient additions. If you intend to make the trip, arrange with us for your grocery supplies.

**The Grange Wholesale Supply Co., Limited,** 126 King Street East,  
.. TORONTO. ..

15 One version of the collapsible Yukon stove. (*Alaska Commercial Company, To the Klondike Gold Fields, and Other Points of Interest in Alaska* [San Francisco: 1898], n.p.)

BEING SAFE, SIMPLE, COMPACT, PORTABLE, ECONOMICAL, DURABLE, EFFICIENT AND CLEAN, THEY ARE THE BEST STOVES FOR KLONDIKE.

"PRIMUS" BRAZIER'S TORCHES use ordinary coal oil, give 2,600 degrees heat, and will thaw better than any fire known. A number already in use at Klondike. Send for special circular.

## Klondike Camp Stoves.

Ten styles and sizes of sheet-iron Camp Stoves for use in tents, log cabins, or in the open air. Furnished to fold flat, if desired, for easy transportation on sleds or pack animals, or arranged for the oven to receive the utensils.

We have supplied the Alaska miners for many years. Let us fit you out before you go.

## Steel Ranges

for large camps, cooking utensils for camp and cabin. Gold pans, etc.



**HOLBROOK, MERRILL & STETSON,**

**MARKET AND BEALE STS., SAN FRANCISCO.**

The Canadian ports of Victoria and Vancouver had both earned admirable reputations as wholesale supply and outfitting centres. With 50 years of experience under their belts in servicing the Cariboo, Cassiar and Kootenay gold-rushes, they were recommended by William Ogilvie in his *Klondike Official Guide* for the outstanding usefulness of their goods.<sup>40</sup>

Also experienced, but in a less favourable location, were the northwest centres of Edmonton, Calgary and Prince Albert. Undaunted, these towns publicized the overland route (via the Mackenzie watershed).<sup>41</sup> While Edmonton merchants did indeed manage to profit from the gold-rush,<sup>42</sup> they could hardly continue shipping goods along the impossible and tortuous wilderness route which they had once urged the goldseekers to follow.

The spoils, in terms of continuing trade with the Yukon, were divided, therefore, among those cities on the Pacific water routes. It was to Seattle that the greatest number of Klondikers thronged. This was the hard-earned fruit of a publicity campaign run by the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, whereby advertising was carried on through mayors, postmasters, public libraries, railways and newspapers across the nation.<sup>43</sup> In terms of an intense, immediate and far-reaching reaction to the news of gold, no city was able to match it. By the time other cities tried to adopt Seattle's methods, that city's initial monopoly had been established.<sup>44</sup> The first year's reward for Seattle merchants was an estimated \$10 million.<sup>45</sup>

During the previous decade of commercial success, several Seattle firms had begun to flourish in the general grocery and wholesale hardware line. The well-known wholesalers included the Schwabacher Brothers, Seattle Trading Company, Harrington and Smith (bought out by A.E. MacCulsky in 1893) and Fischer Brothers.<sup>46</sup> As for the food processing industry, the farming country around the city produced quantities of raw materials for the much-needed staples – condensed milk, evaporated or dried fruits and vegetables and food extracts. A look at various lists of outfits shows that, while Canadian firms were competitive on some counts (flour, bacon and some fresh produce, for example), for the most part Seattle could pack provisions more cheaply. To market these products in the form of outfits, a new type of wholesale firm emerged that dealt mainly in groceries.<sup>47</sup> The dealers, supported by the Klondike trade, could handle the large demands in provisions and could outfit prospecting parties. Individual consumers had to buy from large retailers who could handle the range of single orders for the Klondike. An example of such a foods broker was the firm of Frank and May, which in 1895 advertised as manufacturers' agents. Various small industries had recently grown between railhead and port. In combination

with the existing lumbering industry, these had also converted Seattle into a strong hardware-producing centre.<sup>48</sup>

One significant feature of Seattle's successful outfitting business was the organization that pervaded the trade early in the game. The descriptive article which follows appeared in the Toronto *Globe* in February 1898.

[The Seattle merchants] *began to see not lists of goods in various lines but outfits. They prepared and packed complete outfits containing every thing necessary for the trip and a year's sojourning in the arctic placers. Intending Klondikers were not obliged to inquire of experts regarding their future needs and to hunt about among a number of stores to obtain supplies. They could find their hardware, groceries, furs, clothing, tools, cooking utensils, etc. all ready packed and ticketed as to weight and price at the outfitter's store. An outfit for one, two, three or four persons could be obtained without delay and without the risk of overlooking anything essential. This trade was fully established in Seattle while the British Columbia merchants were still adhering to their own lines of supplies and causing their customers to go from store to store when buying outfits.*<sup>49</sup>

Seattle's other advantage lay in the official realm of customs regulations. As long as there were no Canadian customs officers at the summits of the passes (that is, at the international border) Americans could bring in their supplies duty-free, avoiding the tariff that, for the commodities in question, ran between 25 and 30 per cent on the average. Although this loophole was plugged by the Canadian government by August 1897,<sup>50</sup> Seattle's "duty-free" reputation had been established. Ironically, it was still the Canadian-based Klondiker who suffered at the border. Until May 1898, American bonding regulations on Canadian goods were so severe and conveying fees across the panhandle so high that it was simpler to pay American duties at Dyea.<sup>51</sup>

As in Seattle, it was the wholesale dealer in Canadian centres who was most prepared to outfit. As the *Globe* article quoted above indicates, however, trade in Victoria and Vancouver was handled to a larger degree by specialists. In Vancouver, for instance, there were over twice as many wholesale grocers as either hardware or dry goods firms advertising in the "Holiday Klondike Edition." Lugrin's *Yukon Gold Fields* shows a preponderance of clothing merchants in Victoria. In tools and hardware, the name McLennan, McFeely and Company is irrevocably attached to any reference to Vancouver's role in the gold-rush.

It appeared at first that Seattle's main source of competition would come from the active British Columbia port of Victoria. Indeed, the *Victoria Daily Colonist's* first Klondike outfitting advertisement for miner's clothing outfits from Marks' appeared on 20

July 1897, only a few days after the news brought by the *Excelsior* and *Portland* had burst on the world. Victoria's campaign gained momentum throughout that first month and rose to an early peak with the publication of the pamphlet *Yukon Gold Fields* by Charles Lugin, the *Colonist's* editor. Heavily supported by local merchant advertising, the publication sold well in eastern Canada, where the Victoria Board of Trade intended to focus its advertising resources.<sup>52</sup>

Bypassed by Klondike-bound steamers from both Seattle and Victoria,<sup>53</sup> Vancouver had a poor position in the opening lineup. Not until the new year, when two CPR steamers were transferred to the Vancouver-Skagway run, were Vancouver's inadequate shipping facilities increased to the point where it could compete as a point of departure.<sup>54</sup> Consequently, the reaction of Vancouver's business sector to the rush past its door was a belated one. Sporadic Klondike advertising in the *Vancouver Daily World* was not replaced by impressive and consistent daily copy until after the "Holiday Klondike Edition" came out on 31 December 1897. Once fully mobilized, however, the Vancouver outfitting trade reached its peak between February and June 1898.

The notable exception to specialized outfitting on the Canadian west coast was the Hudson's Bay Company, the most seasoned provider of them all. While the company's advertising was kept to a low-keyed minimum, they announced in the spring of 1898 that they were unable to keep abreast of orders.<sup>55</sup> One can easily appreciate the pace of their business in Vancouver in March 1898:

*It is like a trip from Paris to Siberia to take the elevator from the fashionable lower floors of their block to the uppermost storey where piles of every conceivable supply for an arctic zone from dessicated potatoes to moosehide moccasins are scattered around while the busy clerks sell, pack and shift the goods away.*<sup>56</sup>

Another account of outfitting in that city, in February 1898, maintains that, in those grocery and hardware stores doing the most roaring business, shelves were completely empty by nightfall. This report singles out druggists as a third group to profit greatly from the rush, "furnishing men and women with different medications to fight scurvy, and especially unguents to discourage black flies and mosquitoes."<sup>57</sup>

The initial outfitting rush was short-lived; it lasted only until the end of the 1898 season.<sup>58</sup> By the fall of that year, Vancouver and Victoria merchants alike were plagued by overstocked shelves.<sup>59</sup> The battle between Seattle and Vancouver continued, but from then on it was to be fought over the long-term privilege of supplying Dawson retailers. While Victoria had originally seemed the

most likely rival to the American port, her position was in fact taken over by Vancouver. Once the two cities' shipping was equalized, Vancouver's rail connections with the east earned her a more advantageous position from which to deal with incoming goods and goldseekers.

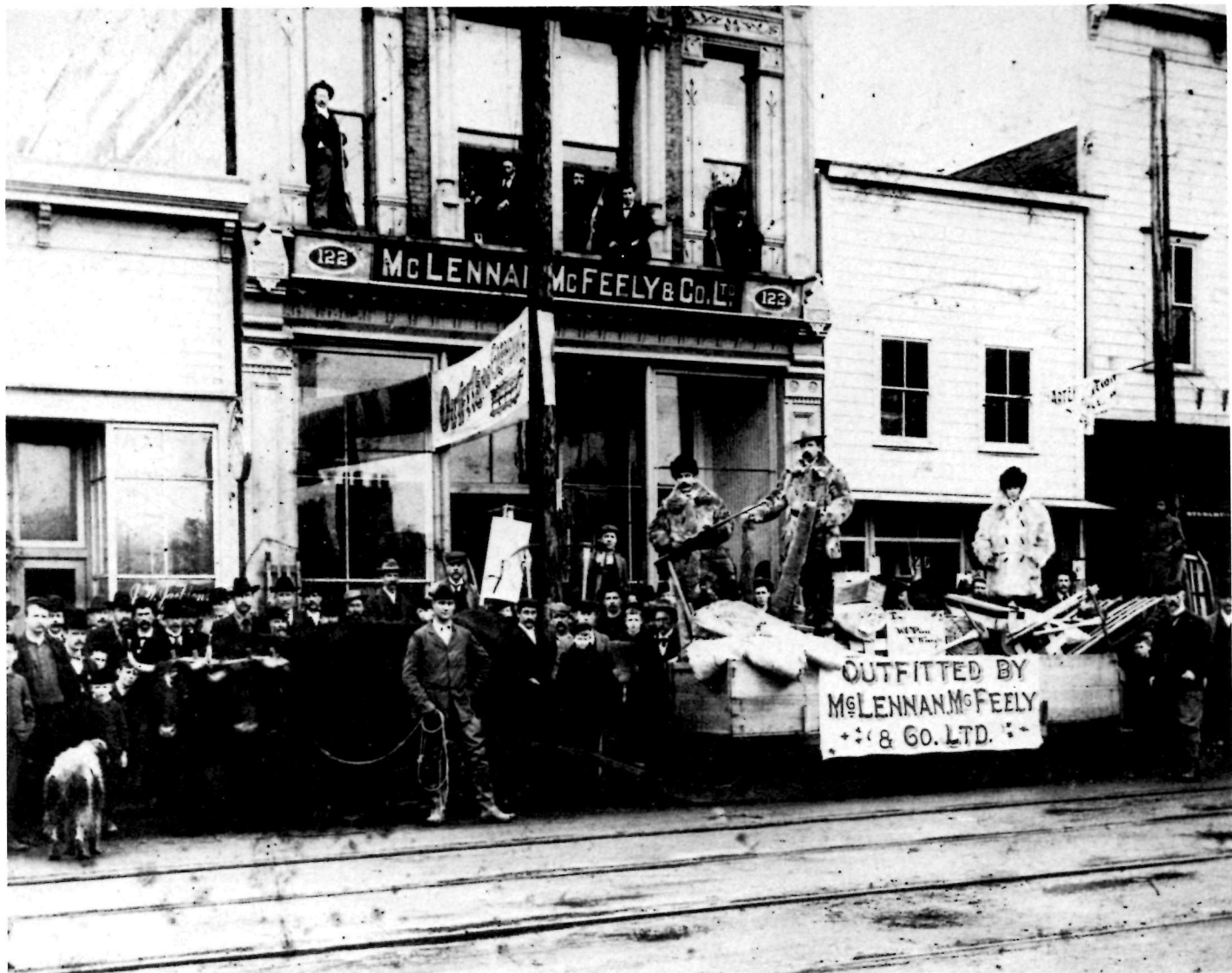
One very significant outcome of the outfitting rush was the keen and continuing interest in the Yukon trade which was generated by the outfitting experience of several Vancouver merchants. The Oppenheimer Brothers, commission merchants, importers and wholesale dealers in groceries, provisions, cigars, tobaccos and so forth, were leading participants in the Vancouver Board of Trade's campaign to wrest the Yukon trade monopoly from Seattle.<sup>60</sup> McLennan, McFeely and Company lost no time in establishing one of the earliest hardware and tinsmithing businesses in Dawson<sup>61</sup> (Figs. 16 and 17). McLennan himself moved north to manage the outlet, becoming Dawson's mayor in 1903. Thomas Dunn and Company, another wholesale hardware firm, made a long-lasting contact as one of the largest single suppliers of the Dawson Hardware Company. Kelly Douglas (in wholesale grocery supplies) remains to this day as familiar a name in the Yukon merchant's vocabulary as "Mc & Mc."

Calgary, Edmonton and Prince Albert were all recognized as experienced outfitting centres,<sup>62</sup> and enjoyed in addition the reputation of being the gates to the only all-Canadian route to the Klondike. Despite the rigours of the long overland haul along the Athabasca and Mackenzie rivers, it was a much-promoted route. Not the least enthusiastic of its promoters were the Toronto and Montreal suppliers who stood to profit directly from extensive outfitting in the northwest.<sup>63</sup> To the disappointment of all business interests concerned, the all-Canadian route never became a major shipping route to the Yukon.

While the outfits offered in these centres were complete in all areas, the prices were higher than on the coast (with the exception of those for flour and bacon).<sup>64</sup> Along with the Hudson's Bay Company, which had branches in Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton, the firms of McDougall and Secord and of Larue and Picard offered complete outfitting services in Edmonton. In Prince Albert, the majority of establishments were the experienced type of "general merchants and Indian traders . . . in the north for 15 years" who could outfit a man with everything from picks to to packaged potatoes.<sup>65</sup>

While at first glance it seems that the spoils of the Klondike rush went to Pacific coast merchants, Montreal and Toronto enjoyed a steady growth in the areas of importing, processing, manufacturing and distribution which permanently expanded their lucrative western market. It is worth noting at this point that

16 McLennan, McFeely and Company;  
outfitting for the Klondike from New  
Westminster, B.C. (Centennial Museum,  
Vancouver.)





17 The first Dawson headquarters of "Mc & Mc" s hardware store and tinshop, ca. 1898. (*Public Archives Canada, PA 13497.*)



the Toronto Board of Trade believed itself to have been influential in securing bonding privileges in Alaska more suitable to the entry of greater volumes of Canadian products.<sup>66</sup> While the names of Seattle and Vancouver distributors became bywords to the thousands of Klondikers they supplied, eastern manufacturers immediately understood the potential profit in establishing their brands in the north through these agents.

Outfitting was not a recent tradition in eastern centres. Estimates of the extent of individual outfitting in Montreal and Toronto as opposed to other cities are based on sketchy information. While there are few personal accounts which relate experiences of eastern outfitting, advertising in the *Globe* was considerable, and articles early in the 1898 season made much of Toronto's advantages as a starting point for the Klondike. One could outfit as early as possible, prices were lower, superior goods were assured and through freight rates were available.<sup>67</sup> Montreal in that period is reported to have had the exclusive privilege of outfitting British goldseekers entering Canada at that port.<sup>68</sup>

It was the newly stimulated food processing industry that was to earn outfitting prominence for these cities. The sudden flourishing of advertisements for suppliers and their jobbers, geared toward the Klondike outfitter, was a salient feature of the *Canadian Grocer* trade magazine early in 1898. One of its first issues that year states that "quantities of evaporated vegetables, carrots, onions etc., are being put upon the market in concentrated and convenient form for the Klondyke trade."<sup>69</sup> The Tillson Company of Tillsonburg, Ontario (split peas, kiln-dried), the Acme Dried Vegetable Company and the Kerr Vegetable Evaporating Company all focused their energies on supplying the Klondike through grocery jobbers and agents.<sup>70</sup>

The canning industry was another to benefit from the suddenly increased west coast demand. W. Boulter and Sons of Picton, Ontario, shipped two CPR carloads of "Lion" brand canned corn to Vancouver and San Francisco. By June of 1898, 3,500 cases of the upcoming pack of tomatoes and corn were reported ready to follow.<sup>71</sup> While rumours of spectacular deals between eastern firms and Yukon trading companies continued to fly,<sup>72</sup> actual market reports of unusually brisk trade in wholesale canned goods gave backing to the optimistic speculation.<sup>73</sup>

Importers, especially those in Montreal, gained the agency for several Klondike-bound British products. Bovril, Vimbo's Fluid Beef and E. Lozenby and Son's soup squares were all British products sold through such Montreal dealers as A.P. Tippet and Company of Montreal and Toronto.<sup>74</sup> One unnamed German manufacturer was allegedly doing well on the west coast and among eastern wholesalers, selling a product which had known

15 years of consistently slack markets.<sup>75</sup> Demand for his line of assorted evaporated vegetables reached dizzying proportions, thanks to the Klondike.

The commercial link between Ontario food packers and British Columbia outfitters was firmly maintained throughout the gold-rush and beyond by a relatively small and secure group of food wholesalers that jobbed (that is, distributed) the manufacturers' goods among western retailers. W.H. Seyler and Company, Eby, Blain and Company, Warren Brothers, and Davidson and Hays, all of Toronto, furthered their reputations as reliable distributors and thereby profited greatly, albeit indirectly, from the great discovery of 1896.

As the rush of individual goldseekers over the passes was a phenomenon of the winter and spring of 1898, the frenetic attempt to provide necessities to these men faded when their goal was reached. During the summer of 1898, once the mass of goldseekers had reached Dawson, a new supply system took over. The simplest statement that one can make about the fascinating mercantile mosaic of that summer is that trade was largely a matter of reselling the tens of thousands of tons of goods which arrived at the waterfront. This activity resulted in acute shortages in certain areas, exorbitant prices and uncertain quality of goods. These elements of unpredictability made for a chaotic, if picturesque, throng of companies, storekeepers, jobbers, pedlars and simple dealers.

As the shipping season closed, after the faint-hearted had sold out their outfits and gone home, it became clear that "starvation" winters, at least, were a thing of the past. Since few would venture into the Yukon valley before the next spring, the outfitting trade suffered a predictable slump. As such, the end of the 1898 shipping season marks a point of transition. For many outfitters, contact with the wealth of the Klondike would be limited to the early enthusiasms of 1897-98. For the larger, more experienced and more persistent companies, the initial rush would turn out to be more than a flash in the pan. Klondike gold was indeed going to hold out, and since their foundations had been successfully laid in the previous year or before, these companies would be the ones to reap the benefits of the new trade patterns by becoming steady wholesale suppliers to the Dawson merchants. To extend their bonanza, they had only to come to grips with the combined problems of distance, terrain and climate in order to supply the motley Dawson market with whatever it wanted – for as long as gold held out.

### **Swamp to Boom Town: Dawson from 1896 to 1898**

It was not by accident that Dawson's founder and first resident was an entrepreneur and speculator and that within a month of the Klondike strike he had set up a general store and sawmill to supply the imminent throng of goldseekers. After 13 years as a Yukon River trader, Joseph Ladue realized that the most reliable way to profit from a placer camp was to provide it with the essential services of food and shelter. He had spent his Yukon days doing just that, first under the banner of the AC Company and later in an independent partnership with the veteran trader Arthur Harper at Sixty Mile (or Ogilvie) about 100 miles south of Forty Mile on the Yukon River.

It was from this establishment at Sixty Mile that Harper and Ladue had grubstaked Bob Henderson, the seasoned Nova Scotian prospector, who reputedly recommended to George Washington Carmacks and his party to try what was to be the richest creek of the Yukon valley, and who subsequently lost out himself. In 1896, having prospected for two years along the Indian River, Henderson was working a creek which issued from the same height of land (or dome) as did Gold Bottom and its famous tributary, Bonanza Creek, known before the strike as Rabbit Creek. It was on the latter that Carmacks, Skookum Jim and Tagish Charlie, on Henderson's recommendation, panned out the gold which was to give rise to the Klondike stampede. The story goes that, contrary to prospecting ethics, Henderson was not immediately informed of the strike. Unaware until the best claims had already been staked on the creeks which lay over the watershed, Henderson never did become a rich man. Yukoners consider him to be something of a tragic figure.

Ladue, who had been a prospector himself, had been known to sit tight while others "rushed," impelled by the news of promising new finds. His years of stampeding experience had gained him a prospector's wisdom, if not the concomittant wealth.<sup>1</sup> It was perhaps less his experience than his mercenary instincts which moved him to act quickly on this most recent strike. He hurried downriver to Forty Mile to stake his own claim – though not on any part of the gold-bearing creekbeds. Sensing the magnitude of Carmack's discovery, Ladue intended to outstrip the entrepreneurs by laying claim to the only land in the area which could serve as a possible townsite, 160 acres of swampy flats at the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers some 10 miles from Carmack's claim. There is a story that, on his downriver trip to Forty Mile, Ladue met a Klondike-bound miner asking for lumber. Figuring that prices for timber would soon surpass anything yet seen in the Yukon, he immediately dismantled the Sixty Mile

sawmill and shipped it, together with all the dressed lumber he could find, down the Yukon to the new townsite.<sup>2</sup>

By 1 September, a mere two weeks after the discovery, the 160-acre townsite had been patented and was ready for survey.<sup>3</sup> The sawmill was reassembled immediately so that building materials would be available before winter set in, and a two-storey cabin was erected to serve as trading post and saloon. On what was known simply as Joe Ladue's townsite, these were the first stirrings of enterprise and civilization.

Although news of the Klondike strike spread like wildfire inside the territory that fall, the secret was kept well from the outside world. By January there were only four cabins beside Ladue's on the townsite. As spring came, eight more sprang up, surrounded by a collection of bedraggled canvas dwellings which increased daily.<sup>4</sup> It was not until 2 June that the AC Company steamer *Alice* slid around the Moosehide bend.<sup>5</sup> As the first steamer to reach the Klondike that year, she was to carry out with her the men whose arrival in San Francisco a month later was to trigger a worldwide scramble for Klondike gold. Among these men was Joseph Ladue. After spending half of his 43 years crossing the continent in search of his particular paystreak, Ladue had finally found it. He named his 160 acres of paydirt Dawson City, after George Dawson, the Canadian government geologist who had studied the territory in 1887.

There were some who, at the time, had suspected that Ladue had fabricated a grand rumour about a minor strike in order to set off a stampede in his region. But Dawson was no illusion, nor were the crates of dust that accompanied Ladue and the other on the *Excelsior*. While there were certainly those who thought that Joe Ladue was not above such things, it was hardly the time to voice their suspicions.

Before the hordes who would eventually pour into the Yukon valley had time to drop whatever they were doing and set out "Ho! for the Klondike!" the first steamers up the Yukon had already deposited two influential entities at the Klondike's mouth. While they were newcomers to Dawson, they were in a sense sourdoughs of long-standing reputation in the Yukon valley. No one was surprised to see them among the first arrivals. By early July, both the Alaska Commercial Company and the North American Transportation and Trading Company had erected stores and warehouses which became the focal point of Dawson's Front Street. The AC Company's two-storied store (40 feet by 80 feet) upheld the company's reputation along the Yukon for consistently putting up the biggest building in each town. Adjacent to it were three corrugated iron warehouses, another two-storey building which served as employees' living quarters, and an ad-

ditional warehouse. The next block had a similar store, quarters and warehouse of the NAT&T Company.

Bearing in mind that newcomers from the outside did not reach Dawson until the late summer of 1897, it is understandable that the summer's commercial activity was relatively slow and stable, carried out mainly by the two mercantile monopolies to provide for the most recent placer congregation. Ladue himself recorded an absence of competition. In another description of the town's business in the late summer of 1897, there is no reference to any individual provisions merchant.<sup>6</sup> (Ladue was dealing almost entirely in timber.) Prices were high, but neither inflationary nor unsteady (see Appendix J). Ladue explained them: "In the present conditions of trade things cannot be sold very much cheaper at a fair profit."<sup>7</sup>

The greatest problem facing the trading companies – and a serious threat to Dawson – was the potentiality of winter shortages and possible starvation in the new camp. During the winter of 1896–97, for example, the North-West Mounted Police contingent at Fort Cudahy, buying from both companies, had been forced to reduce the basic flour ration.<sup>8</sup> Some mines finished the winter with flour and nothing else. Dawson itself had suffered one particular shortage that winter, although not an acute one; there were no eggs. (This shortage gave rise to a legend about Swiftwater Bill Gates. To spite his unfaithful lover, Bill bought up the town's entire supply of her favourite food, a very rare commodity, whole fresh eggs. If Swiftwater Bill was as thorough in his retaliation as we are led to believe, there was not an egg to be had in the entire camp.)

The situation in Dawson in 1897–98 was far different from that experienced by the isolated community which had wintered there the previous year. The community of 1896–97 had been made up entirely of miners and prospectors already inside, experienced men of the north, who knew the essential requirement of an adequate winter outfit. The local population explosion of the late summer of 1897 (though it hardly compares with that of 1898) was composed almost entirely of tenderfeet from the south, men so smitten with gold fever that they had not hesitated a moment before rushing north. Leaving on the first crest of enthusiasm, they had neither help from published guides nor realistic advice. They did not know how unwillingly the Yukon valley gave up its gold, and with what ferocity its winters could punish the improvident.

The very presence of these hasty and unprepared arrivals was enough to dismay the head office of the AC Company. Such impatience could easily lead to a "starvation camp," an irrevocable blot on the company's record. As early as mid-July, the compa-

ny's president, Louis Sloss, made clear his concern to a San Francisco newspaper. For any outfitter or steamship company to encourage a rush that season would be both cruel and foolish. However sincere such promotion might be, it would be responsible for the resulting deprivation in the Klondike, and criminally responsible at that.<sup>9</sup>

Exactly how many ambitious Klondikers managed to enter the territory before winter closed in cannot be determined. Nor is it possible to know how many of them had winter outfits. Police estimated that by 1 January 1898 there were almost 2,000 people in Dawson and 5,000 in the Klondike region.<sup>10</sup> At the beginning of winter, starvation, or at least severe suffering, did seem likely. Once again a dry fall lowered water levels on the shallow Yukon River, cutting supply traffic short and prematurely ending the provision of winter staples. By the end of September, the NAT&T Company had 400 orders yet to fill; the AC Company had received scarcely a third of its paid consignments.<sup>11</sup>

Both companies traditionally received their stocks on the basis of individual orders for outfits. Early in the season, the consignee entered his name with the company and deposited half the price of his outfit. While the two companies were faced with the same prospect of shortage, their methods of dealing with the crisis differed. The AC Company, which had enough material to outfit 1,252 men completely and furnish flour to 1,589 more,<sup>12</sup> chose to fill to the best of its abilities all of the orders it had received. The NAT&T Company, on the other hand, preferred to bypass its original orders and to ration all its stocks on the basis of need.<sup>13</sup> In October, when the scare was at its worst, both companies were persuaded by the Mounted Police and government authorities to fulfill their responsibility to the worst-outfitted miners by offering transportation downriver to Fort Yukon, where supplies were said to be more plentiful.<sup>14</sup>

Both firms did attempt to curb skyrocketing prices; they eventually limited their sales to issues of supplies for two weeks at a time, thereby controlling food speculation.<sup>15</sup> Despite their efforts, prices for flour, the most basic as well as the most limited staple, ran wild on the black market. At midwinter the retail price for flour seems to have ranged from \$35 to \$100 for a 50-pound sack.<sup>16</sup> Butter, when it could be had at all, was going for \$5 a pound and salt for its weight in gold.<sup>17</sup> Such prices put these commodities beyond the reach of most buyers and turned their goods into mere figures on the speculative market.

As winter drew to an end, it became clear that there would be enough to go around and that Dawson would not starve after all. Two unexpected factors relieved the situation: extra commodities were thrown onto the market by people who left the district after

freeze-up, and those who stayed were blessed with an unusually mild winter. Indeed, the *Klondike Daily Nugget* declared in comfortable retrospect that, considering even the obvious cases of speculation and inflation,<sup>18</sup> the whole situation had been nothing but a scare. Many placed the blame squarely on the two supply outlets which, for all their protestations of innocence, were suspected of having rigged the shortage for their own benefit. Those citizens of Circle City who had made an orderly raid on the AC Company's steamer *Bella* in the late fall were only too aware that their camp was being by-passed by the company in order to get supplies through to Dawson, which lay further upriver. They interpreted the company's intentions as pure greed for the higher prices which undoubtedly prevailed at the newer camp. The NAT&T Company suffered as much, perhaps even more so, from accusations of unbridled favouritism in their rationing policy. The *Nugget* was the community leader in its outspoken criticism of the latter company, specifically of its manager, Captain J.J. Healy, for his handling of the food shortage. Healy was accused of refusing to fill some orders and then selling out such rare luxuries as molasses and tobacco to favoured speculators at fabulous prices. Over the summer of 1898 the *Nugget* painted the picture in increasingly lurid colours. The last instalment, released just before Healy was recalled by the company in September, disclosed that the *demi-mondaines* and "satellites who revolve in that particular sphere" had won Healy over, while honest miners and small businesses had gone short.<sup>19</sup>

Even those who denied that the situation had at any time been out of hand could not overlook the prevalence of scurvy in Dawson that winter. Limited and unvarying diets and poor-quality or badly cooked food had been the cause. By breakup, bacon was the only meat available; tinned vegetables had gone off the market early in the season.<sup>20</sup> Wherever the blame lay, a lesson had been learned by both consumers and suppliers, who resolved to stock up the town's warehouses over the coming summer. Further to ensure that the situation would not repeat itself, the North-West Mounted Police, who had kept watch over the winter supplies, enforced a regulation made by Commissioner Walsh that all men crossing the passes have at least 1,095 pounds of provisions to support themselves for a year's stay.<sup>21</sup>

To everyone's relief, the winter of 1897–98 officially ended on 8 June with the arrival of the *Mae West*, one of the steamers which had spent the winter locked in Yukon River ice.<sup>22</sup> Another good omen was the fact that her cargo included whisky. At that point bars had been serving what amounted to whisky-flavoured water; "thirsty" rather than "hungry" might be the best description of the badly stocked town.

When the ice broke up and the steamers could move freely again along the Yukon River, the news spread wide across the continent and the great Klondike rush was on. Perhaps the most eager were the thousands who had camped on Bennett Lake, impatiently awaiting their chance to be among the first to grasp at the pot of gold.

Mixed in with the multitude were speculators and entrepreneurs who had heard that Dawson was a starvation camp, that any conceivable article could be unloaded on that desperate town at prices unheard of in any previous placer camp. Such rumours seemed all the more believable in conjunction with out-of-date reports which had come out of the town the year before, before Dawson's first millionaires had left, when there were still enough nuggets to go around. Such testimonials as the following one, issued in June 1897 and republished later that year, fostered the vision of Dawson as exceedingly rich and very hungry. "There are more ways of making money here than any place I ever saw . . . Big money can be made by bringing in a small outfit over the ice this fall . . . I have seen gold dust until it seems almost as cheap as sawdust."<sup>23</sup>

Since these individual businessmen were to some extent in active competition with the already entrenched monopolies, their greatest advantage in the battle for the market was timing. Traditionally the first and the last boatloads of goods commanded the best prices. There was, therefore, a rush of a specialized kind which took place within the 5,000-craft armada in the great June boat race to Dawson.<sup>24</sup> The goal was to be the first into town with the goods and services which the population craved. The stakes were high, but they were equalled by the risks involved. While the passes had the advantage at first of being the fastest route to the Klondike (since the Yukon's northerly mouth did not thaw for shipping until early July) the probability of loss or spoilage over that precarious trail was considerable. Costs were high, even though most of the traders built their own scows. Early spring shipment by native packers from Skagway to Bennett Lake amounted to about 12 cents a pound, and would increase when the ice was replaced with the more treacherous spring mud.<sup>25</sup> The chances of meeting disaster on the river were fairly good, considering the unwieldy nature of many of the home-made craft and scows. Miles Canyon and the Five Finger Rapids had become legendary graves for men and merchandise, while the river's countless shoals and sandbars were particularly hazardous in the early spring and late fall, when the freezing of the river's tributaries lowered the water level. The final risk concerned the market itself, the chance that it might already be deflated by earlier arrivals. To the successful went the spoils in the form of astro-

nomical prices. The best-known example is H.L. ("Cow") Miller, who sold the products of Dawson's first milk cow at a phenomenal \$30 per gallon.<sup>26</sup> Ice cream was proportionately \$10 a glass. One dollar, the lowest negotiable sum, would buy a tin of meat or potatoes or one piece of fruit – unless the fruit was one of the few melons, which sold for \$25 to \$35.<sup>27</sup> Two-fifty would buy either a pound of butter or a dozen eggs, both at a fraction of their winter values.<sup>28</sup> Flour prices dropped dramatically as soon as the first sack hit the wharf; the inflated market collapsed and the price for a 50-pound sack plummeted from \$50 to \$12.50 to \$3.<sup>29</sup> Tobacco, once completely off the market, had returned to it and "Old Chum" cost 75 cents a pound and "T & B" cost \$1. Whisky was once again available at \$15 per bottle (*see also* Appendix J).

Unquestionably, the summer of 1898 was a high point of Dawson's commercial enterprise. Among the variegated memories of glitter and mud, dancing girls and disappointed goldseekers, are the recurring stories of the success and failure of enterprising individuals, partnerships and multi-departmental companies. Like the miners they supplied, they lived their Klondike adventure in the belief that gold and initiative made anything possible.

Yukon commercial activity was no longer the domain of a few large companies that it had once been. Just as the spread of the Klondike news had thrown open the goldfields to masses of hopeful prospectors, so the field of merchandising attracted a great number and variety of participants – large and small enterprises, some with vast experience and others with none whatsoever. Every miner entering the country bearing his required half-ton of goods was a potential trader. The commercial spectrum of Dawson extends from the large, established corporations to these individuals, unintentionally involved, "swapping" their wares on the Dawson waterfront.

Delving into the chaos of the Dawson marketplace that season, one can discern certain formative trends. Certain general types of merchant activity can be drawn from available examples. The first type of merchandising to be considered involves the largest and most influential mercantile interests in Dawson. These companies were able to control all phases of the supply and distribution process, from their purchasing agents outside, their sea-coast connections at Saint Michael and their river fleets to their storage and retail outlets in Dawson. The first such companies to join the ranks of the existing major firms were the Alaska Exploration Company (the AE Company) and the Seattle-Yukon Transportation Company (the SYT Company). Based in San Francisco and Seattle respectively, these firms announced their candidacy before the first of their river steamers had left Saint Michael bearing hundreds of tons of provisions, along with materials for corru-

gated iron warehouses, stores and winter quarters.<sup>30</sup> By the end of August, notice of complete stocks in their warehouses appeared in the *Nugget*.<sup>31</sup> In the case of the SYT Company, the mayor of Seattle, W.D. Wood, had resigned his post to come north and personally manage the firm.<sup>32</sup>

On a smaller scale, but still in control of all aspects of the trade, was the California-Yukon Trading Company. With the arrival of her steamer *Rideout* proudly bearing 500 tons of freight for the camp, construction was begun on warehouses and wharves.<sup>33</sup> From Vancouver emerged the British American Corporation, a transportation company running two river steamers, which in September bought out a local merchant and opened a store and warehouses in Klondike City, the community across the Klondike River from Dawson.<sup>34</sup> Another well-known firm (though without a river fleet of its own) was the Joseph Ladue Gold Mining and Development Company. As president and managing director of the New York-financed firm, Ladue made his final trip to his townsite in September 1898 for the opening of the company's store. Dawson had become everything that Ladue could have imagined when he first laid claim to the swamp. It was to be his last impression of the place, for he died of tuberculosis three years later.<sup>35</sup> His firm opened its store by advertising goods of the best quality, adapted to Klondike use, all at reasonable prices. "Come and examine our flour, beans, bacon, sugar, eggs, butter, teas, coffees, spices, canned fruits, dried fruits, tobacco, candies, clothing, underclothing, boots, shoes, stationery, etc."<sup>36</sup> The firm retained its founder's name, and survived Ladue by almost a decade as one of Dawson's reliable general supply firms and steam sawmills.

There was no doubt that the NAT&T and AC companies still controlled the bulk of Dawson's trade. Tappan Adney maintained that of the 7,540 tons of freight brought in on the lower river route (via Saint Michael) by 1 September 1898, half was carried by these two companies.<sup>37</sup> By this time, the AC Company was running a total of 13 steamers, and had four warehouses, one of which was exclusively for warm storage.<sup>38</sup> Their total capacity was 5,000 tons, but four more sheds were under construction. In reporting the growth of these two companies over the summer of 1898, the *Nugget* leaned heavily toward the AC Company. The newspaper's scathing articles led one to believe that the NAT&T Company's sales had suffered profoundly from the discredit earned by Healy,<sup>39</sup> but his recall eased the situation.

The success of these companies in terms of their prominence and popularity was largely due, according to the *Nugget*, to their specialized consideration of the needs of the miner. The three-storey AC Company building, an indisputably central point in the

Dawson business area, was organized on this basis. The first floor had rows of offices where clerks dealt with the daily tasks of outfitting, transportation, mail, cash and credit. Nearby were 22 safety deposit boxes of case-hardened steel set in a wall of masonry and concrete. Beyond this opened up a veritable emporium, where "countless shelves groaning under their loads"<sup>40</sup> of staples and luxuries were divided into departments according to the priorities of the miner-consumer. First came the grocery department, then hardware, china, glassware and drugs. The second storey had mens' furnishings, combining standard heavy-duty Klondike clothing, robes and boots with "fancy and dress shirts, beautiful neck wear of latest designs, knox and stetson hats in assortments equal to any shown in the avenues of New York, Chicago or San Francisco."<sup>41</sup> A recently opened showroom contained a housekeeping department as well as ladies' dry goods and clothing. The newspaperman describing the store was highly impressed with additional and separate facilities for delivery, for ice supply, for warm storage (with accurate checking and a 24-hour guard) and for the assaying and storing of gold. A final revelation was the clean and comfortably furnished employees' residence. The author's concluding comment on such large enterprises was that their impressive installations reflected a "faith in the permanence of the country and of Dawson in particular as a great distribution centre."

The second group of merchants to thrive that summer often did so interdependently with these companies. Although the large companies retailed some of their goods in yearly outfit lots, they were in effect wholesale firms as well. Through them, individual merchants could purchase their goods, then have them shipped, stored and delivered for further sale. Alternatively small merchants could buy the goods through their own outside agents, then have them shipped on vessels usually owned by these large companies. There were, in addition, several independent river transportation companies which catered to individuals, merchants and companies. On the lower river route, the Columbia Navigation Company and the Empire Transportation Company (with a fleet of 18 steamers) operated, making connections for Seattle at Saint Michael.<sup>42</sup> Goods could also be shipped in via Skagway, connecting at Bennett Lake with either the Bennett Lake and Klondike Navigation Company or the Canadian Development Company. Before long, a fleet of scows was also operating regularly on this upper river route, to expedite quick delivery of small consignments.

There is an understandable lack of information about most of the 300 "stores and saloons" recorded in the police census of July 1898.<sup>43</sup> Those who advertised or were mentioned in news-

paper reports leave a hazy idea of the retailing practices of Dawson's many individual merchants. Approximately 36 retail outlets for general merchandise, groceries, dry goods, furs, wines, liquor and tobacco (these three usually sold together in saloons and restaurants), jewelry, house furnishings and lumber advertised in the *Klondike Nugget*. Over 20 others were mentioned in articles and reports. By the end of the season the paper was singling out several individual merchants whose impressive stocks implied that they were in Dawson to stay. Among them was the partnership of O'Donoghue and Swift of Kingston, whose lines of groceries, wines, liquors and general merchandise were proclaimed outstanding in terms of quality and selection. Their wares apparently included many articles not otherwise obtainable in the city.<sup>44</sup> The Macaulay Brothers were similarly praised for their latest styles in dry goods as well as for their complete stock of groceries. Their shelves contained such delicacies as jams, jellies, pickles and olives, all of which would help "to make the Klondike life something of a pleasure."<sup>45</sup>

A third kind of merchant was the small trader who arrived in the Yukon with his own stock all ready to sell. He brought his goods with him; consequently he was able to act independently of the Dawson jobbers or wholesale firms. These traders have already been introduced as they patiently waited for spring breakup at the head of Bennett Lake. On one Yukon River boat it was later recorded, "the majority of the 30 passengers were going into the interior to make money through the sale of merchandise."<sup>46</sup> Their stocks were small (necessarily, for those crossing the passes), but usually highly sought after for the luxuries they included. Fresh meat, fruit and vegetables and dairy products were the most popular cargo – items rarely included in the miner's own outfit and both risky and expensive to ship. Once they had scanned the market situation, these traders could return to their outside supply bases in the hopes of freighting in another load. A particularly profitable enterprise that summer (and for long after) was livestock. The animals could be herded overland on the Dalton Trail, skirting the passes from the panhandle to Fort Selkirk on the Yukon River where the trail met the upper river steamer route. Dawson, the herders knew, was a seller's market.

One of the best known of these independent produce traders was R.J. Gandolfo, an Italian fruit seller, whose first shipment of eight tons of oranges, lemons, bananas and cucumbers arrived in an untouched market at \$1 apiece.<sup>47</sup> Paul Mizony, whose father carried in perishable stock over the same trail, recalls: *The prices we got for some of the articles were as follows:*

18 Scows along the Dawson waterfront.  
(Public Archives Canada, PA 16182)

19 Cheechacos "swapping" and selling  
out, Dawson, 1898.  
(Public Archives Canada, PA 13432)

18



19





potatoes	\$1.00
onions	.75
eggs	2.50
butter	2.50
oranges and lemons	75.00 a box
canned tongue	1.00 a can

*Other items like canned jams, salmon, milk, tomatoes and meat, brought like prices. Our perishables we sold at wholesale, the other merchandise at wholesale and retail. Most of our stock was sold out in about a weeks[sic] time.<sup>48</sup>*

These prices are only one example, providing a very general picture of the situation. Uncontrollable price patterns marked most of the summer of 1898.<sup>49</sup> As a significant element of Dawson's waterfront, the transient produce vendors were in later years to become the bane of general merchant establishments and their stable market conditions.

The final group of merchants (who never thought of themselves either as a group or as merchants) comprised an unknown number of men who never expected to earn their Klondike gold as traders. Many an eager goldseeker who had hauled his required half-ton outfit all the way to Dawson discovered that, while the cost of living was every bit as high as expected, the rich claims needed to support it were no longer available. He rapidly concluded that his outfit must be sold to obtain the necessary fare to return home. One outfit was good collateral, but many men amassed a number of them and temporarily became small retailers themselves. The familiar Dawson sign, "\$15,000 money wanted – this entire stock to be cleared out at once – prices very low"<sup>50</sup> demonstrates that one man could become a commission agent of sorts for several others sharing his desire to leave as soon as possible. Any man who was willing to speculate in provisions in order to raise enough capital to go into mining falls into this category as well. Jeremiah Lynch's career is an excellent example. Lynch began by buying up the flour in a consignment of goods which the AC Company had turned over to the Bank of British North America when the consignee failed to pay up. Lynch managed to sell the flour for \$3 a sack less than the prevailing price. With his profit from this transaction, he came back for other staples in the same consignment.<sup>51</sup>

These entrepreneurs and impatient traders shared, for the most part, a brief and disordered career in Dawson. The hectic, bazaar-like atmosphere of their activity dominated many a first visual impression of the city.<sup>52</sup> The subject of a great number of photographs, it presents a fascinating and detailed picture. Many who arrived in small boats and scows never left the waterfront, where they formed a "wobbly two-mile clutter from the

mouth of the Klondike to Moosehide Hill"<sup>53</sup> (Figs. 18–19). A sand bar to the south of the steamer landings was jammed with tents and scows so that there were only two narrow thoroughfares to the water. Hastily constructed shelves of planks and crates creaked with merchandise. The terms of purchase were based on the best offer or, in many cases, on barter. Photographs suggest that some booths specialized in certain commodities – case lots of condensed milk, sacks of flour, boots, saws or rifles, for example. One trader, by the look of his display, must have found argyle socks particularly hard to sell (Fig. 20).

As the season wore on, those hoping to leave tried desperately to get rid of their goods. While provisions were still limited and high-priced, dry goods of every description glutted the market at prices slashed to half what had been paid for them in Seattle or Victoria. In some cases that dealer had no choice but to auction off his stock. For a month Dawson was witness to "boots and shoes and rubber boots and the thousand and one things we all brought with us going at prices which would make a Clarke Street Chicago second hand man sick with envy."<sup>54</sup> The out-of-here-or-bust mood prevalent in the cramped canvas quarters was further encouraged by attractive newspaper advertisements for immediate passage outside. In one instance a group travelling out through the NAT&T Company got special rates 50 per cent lower than the standard rates earlier in the season.<sup>55</sup>

While Front Street remained the city's expensive commercial "strip," newly erected structures were gradually creeping along the cross streets (mainly York, King, Queen and Princess) to Second Avenue, where land was cheaper. Summer traders, who had little capital for land or lumber but wished to operate in this central business section, often opened simple booths – canvas-covered log frames tucked away between two larger buildings (see Fig. 21). Gandolfo, the fruit vendor, paid an astonishing \$120 per month rent for 5 feet of street frontage in his first quarters.<sup>56</sup> Plate glass of any kind was not to be had that summer, so booths and storefronts alike opened right out onto the street or (in some parts of Front Street) onto the sidewalk. Hooks, frames and cords were used as extensions of the tiny interiors of such shops to hold and display all manner of crumpled dry goods, used or warped tools and tangled tin masses of cooking utensils (Figs. 22–26).

Against the dismantled Yukon stove or the sluice box full of hip-length rubber boots leaned the proprietor. His waterstained tent sometimes bore a hand-painted sign, or more often no sign at all for his wares were known to all. He had lightened his own load onto the beaches of Dyea, packed all 2,000 pounds of it over the Chilkoot, pried it loose from the mud on the trail, and perhaps rescued it from one of the shoals along the Yukon River, un-

20 An early "specialist" in dry goods, Dawson, ca. 1898. (Public Archives Canada, PA 13490)



21 Captain Jack Crawford's store in Dawson, ca. 1898. (Public Archives Canada, PA 16924.)



22



23 The Northwest Trading and Commission Company: "All kinds of merchandise bought and sold," 1898 or 1899. (Public Archives Canada, PA 13402.)

23



24 Reselling outfits at the Dawson waterfront, probably 1898. (Public Archives Canada, PA 13501.)

24



25 "We buy and sell merchandise," 1898. Ben Levy was to become one of Dawson's better-known clothing merchants. (Public Archives of Canada, PA 13394.)

25



26 Selling out in Dawson. Asahel Curtis,  
photographer.  
(Photography Collection, Special Col-  
lections, University of Washington  
Library.)



til at last he had reached the mecca – Dawson, a muddy congestion of stumps, sawdust and dogs, populated by innumerable cheechacos or tenderfeet like himself. This population, it seemed, had one thought in mind: to get rid of the condensed milk and the mackinaw suits to a luckier (or more naive) gold-seeker who intended to stay inside, and to return to the relative sanity and security of Montreal or Seattle.

By the end of the shipping season (4 October that year), the majority of disillusioned or homesick cheechacos had managed to swap enough for a passage outside. Among those who had reason to remain, there was an unquestionable confidence in the air. There would be no talk of starvation in Dawson this fall. Well-stocked warehouses, busy order offices and hurried autumn construction all reflected what the *Nugget* termed the "faith of the moneyed men in the Klondike."<sup>57</sup> When Joe Ladue arrived in town late in August the newspaper turned to him, as if for a patriarchal blessing. Ladue was glad to oblige, and the *Nugget* reported that the city's founder was much pleased with the growth and stability he saw around him.

The daily arrivals of loaded supply vessels over the last months had allowed many a new establishment to blossom in elegant premises. The Fairview and Aurora hotels and the Monte Carlo saloon were known as Dawson's 'first class' establishments. For those who could afford them, shipments of mirrors and mahogany replaced newspapered walls and rough-hewn benches. By September two furniture stores were in business, one offering "bed room suites, parlour, office, dining room and saloon chairs, rockers, cobbler-seats, armchairs."<sup>58</sup> In addition to the already successful lumber trade, there was a burgeoning tinware industry manufacturing pipes, fittings and, as winter drew near, quantities of Yukon stoves. In this field McLennan and McFeely were pioneers. They had lost no time in opening branches of their establishment in Bennett and Dawson (Fig. 17). "Mc & Mc" was a well-known firm in Vancouver, and this act of faith in the potential of the district did not go unnoticed in the Dawson business community.

The two most significant features of the market at the season's end were the greatly increased variety of available commodities and the corresponding drop in prices.<sup>59</sup> The price of eggs settled at a respectable \$3 a dozen, tinned fruit and vegetables at 75 cents a can, bread at 25 cents a loaf. Tinned meat was expensive – \$2.50 a can – while potatoes were less than 50 cents a pound, half their July price. While such prices were not necessarily the cheapest such items had been, the arbitrary and fluctuating element in the market had been settled.

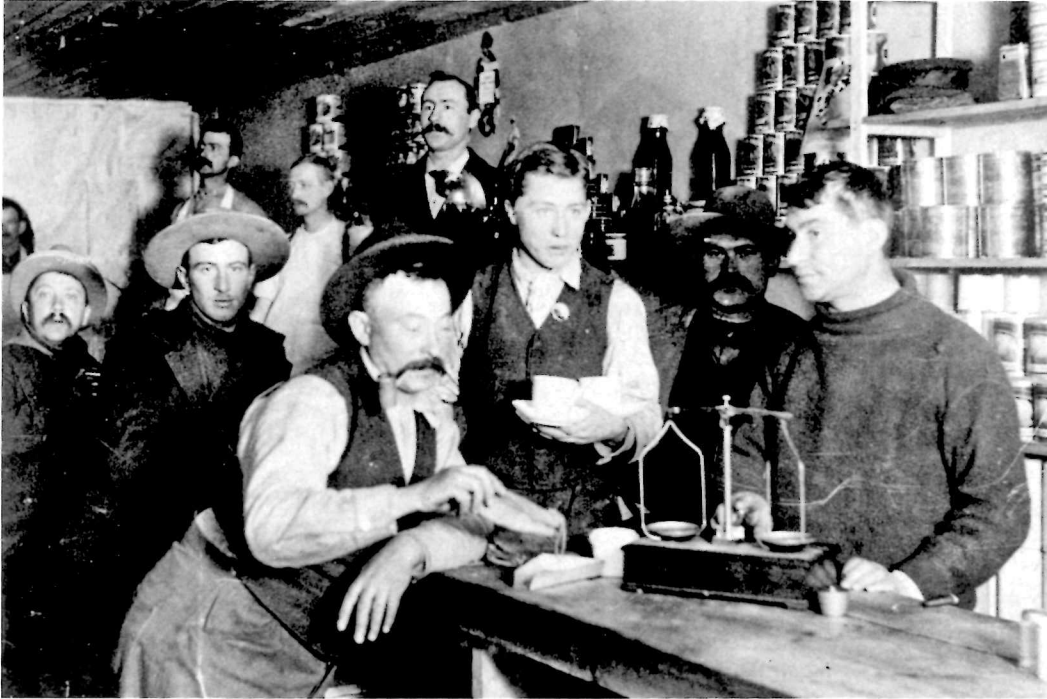
The multitudinous Dawson restaurateurs were among the most astute observers of market fluctuations (Fig. 27). By the end of the season, some of the more popular restaurants were reflecting the time-of-plenty atmosphere with extensive and elaborate menus. For the most part, though, there was little choice in which restaurant one frequented. One weary customer reported, "You can eat anywhere. Its all equally bad and dear."<sup>60</sup> The average menu card ran as follows:

<i>Sandwiches</i> .....	\$ .75 each
<i>Dough-nuts</i> .....	.75 per order
<i>Pies</i> .....	.75 per cut
<i>Turnovers</i> .....	.75 per order
<i>Ginger cake</i> .....	.75 per cut
<i>Coffee cake</i> .....	1.00 per cut
<i>Caviare sandwiches</i> .....	1.00 each
<i>Sardine sandwiches</i> .....	1.00 each
<i>Stewed fruits</i> .....	.50 per dish
<i>Canned fruits</i> .....	1.00 per order
<i>Cold meats</i> .....	1.50 per order
<i>Raw Hamburg steak</i> .....	2.00 per order
<i>Chocolate or cocoa</i> .....	.75 per cup
<i>Tea or coffee</i> .....	.50 per cup <sup>61</sup>

What form some of the more appetizing of these items actually took is anyone's guess. One wonders, for instance, whether the "caviare" was one of the dreadful pastes or tablets which had appeared in the territory, suitably reconstituted. The stewed fruits were probably evaporated ones, disguised, and the cold meats were undoubtedly tinned. What was contained in the "Raw Hamburg steak?" In reporting this menu, Tappan Adney registers his own doubts about the possibility of creating these meals from the meagre pile of tins and bottles which actually appeared on the shelf behind the counter. Eateries of this sort sprang up across the town. While there are no references to deaths as a result of their meals, the very experience must have given rise to a number of unpleasant epithets as alternatives to "Paris of the North."

Mercantile stability, the first signs of which had been confirmed that fall by the town's founding father, was not easily won. In Dawson itself there were tremendous physical obstacles to overcome before the overgrown mining camp would give way to anything like "civilization." Problems of health, sanitation, fuel and fresh water supply, muddy thoroughfares and fire prevention gained increasing newspaper consideration as winter approached. While the Yukon Territorial Council was expected to deal with these urban problems, the responsible merchants were acutely aware of the pressing need for an active municipal organization. Incorporation of the city of Dawson was the obvious first

27 Paying with gold dust, probably at one of Dawson's early restaurants. Note the newspaper wall-covering. (*Public Archives Canada, C 5393*)



proposal, and was initially a popular one among the city's commercial vested interests.<sup>62</sup> Municipal taxation was a fair price to pay for progress – improvements, protection and an increased political voice.

The issue was given greater urgency when, in October 1898, a \$503,000 fire in Dawson's business section levelled hotels, saloons, stores and other businesses to frozen rubble.<sup>63</sup> The matter of incorporation would be tossed about for another four years between Dawson citizens and the Yukon Territorial Council, where the power to initiate the process resided. The merchants, represented after August 1899 by the Dawson City Board of Trade,<sup>64</sup> would not always maintain the position on which they had united in the fall of 1898. Throughout these years the topic remained a lively one during the dark winter days around the Yukon stoves. There it competed with the gold royalty, freight rates, high prices, land speculation and newly exchanged gold claims as the basis for opinionated discussion. Dawson merchants turned their full attention to these concerns, alleviated by talk about team sports, social functions and newly organized fraternal orders in the days when the sun barely skimmed the top of the Midnight Dome, the height of land overlooking Dawson from the east. For most of the storekeepers who decided to winter inside, 1897–98 had been a good season. Leather pokes and iron warehouses bulged alike, and there was an optimism about the place which two major conflagrations could not destroy.<sup>65</sup> As far as anyone knew, the mother lode was still to be found.

### **The Hinterland Market**

The summer of 1898 ended on a note of general confidence for the Dawson business community. While the future of the trade seemed active and profitable, effecting a reliable permanent supply system for such a remote settlement posed staggering problems. This chapter delves into the various risks and obstacles which limited and threatened a prosperous and stable supply trade during the years 1899 to 1904.

The context in which this particular period of merchandising is discussed is that of the unique hinterland relationship between the Yukon and its southern supply bases. The salient features of the hinterland may be reduced to a combination of severe climatic conditions and immense distance from the major supply bases. Together they limited extensive trade to a short season and called for an expensive system of transportation that could reliably provide the community with its yearly supplies during a four-month period. The resulting market was unquestionably high-priced, speculative and increasingly limited to those merchants who had enough capital to cope with the inalterable problems of such a system.

These problems can be reduced to four main categories: (1) the constant risk of loss and miscalculation in shipping; (2) the necessity of year-round storage for heavy stocks; (3) dependence on distant financial obligations which contradicted the unlimited credit prevalent in a placer gold-mining town, and finally (4) the persistently high cost of transportation. Above all, the market in general commodities was totally dependent on outside sources for its entire stock.

Joseph Ladue had chosen Dawson's location on the banks of the Yukon waterway for the obvious reason that the river had always provided for the inflow of goods and the outflow of gold. In 1899 the traffic between Saint Michael and Dawson included 32 steamers which, by September of that year, made for daily arrivals at the Dawson wharves.<sup>1</sup> The gold-rush had opened the Chilkoot and White Pass routes as equally popular approaches to the goldfields. As long as time was of the essence, the latter routes remained important, since they were shorter and could be travelled earlier in the season than could the lower Yukon River. While statistics for 1899 show that 20 steamers linked Dawson to the upper lakes and to those passes,<sup>2</sup> the pass routes themselves were essentially unimproved mountain tracks which could hardly bear traffic more extensive than the freighting of individual consignments. Although the upriver steamship companies (i.e., those running between Dawson and Bennett Lake) were worked to capacity,<sup>3</sup> the lower river transportation companies maintained

their favoured position among merchants and importers of large consignments.

A major achievement in Yukon transportation was the successful completion of the White Pass and Yukon Route railroad. By modernizing a hazardous transit system over the passes and by offering a reliable link in the commercial chain joining supplier and merchant, the railroad served to temper the acutely seasonal Dawson market and further the self-confidence of local businessmen. The 110-mile line linked the Pacific coast at Skagway to the Yukon River at Whitehorse, the official railhead after 30 July 1900.<sup>4</sup> With the addition of a telegraph system between Dawson and Skagway in September 1899<sup>5</sup> and a similarly improved postal system, the north was greatly opened that year to commercial enterprise.

Despite these improvements, the constant factors of distance and climate continued to make the business of freighting of goods to Dawson a seasonal and risky endeavour. Ice left the Yukon River at Dawson on varying dates in May, and the first steamers from Whitehorse arrived in early June. Saint Michael steamers could not start upriver much before the end of that month.<sup>6</sup> The last steamer dockings in Dawson usually occurred late in October or during the first few days of November;<sup>7</sup> however, river navigation in autumn was notoriously difficult, for ice on the head waters lowered the water level and exposed dangerous shoals. A boat stranded late in the season would have to spend the winter encased in Yukon River ice. Success in avoiding the hazards of transportation and in ordering the proper quantity of goods to suit the trade required a calculating and knowledgeable entrepreneur. Such a businessman had to understand the tight yearly schedule of stock-taking, ordering and shipping which became a selective and highly speculative procedure, demanding the most sensitive timing.

By January the astute merchant could give his attention to the first catalogues and price lists to arrive at his store.<sup>8</sup> Orders which were intended for the first spring shipments had to be sent out by March, even though winter was far from over and business at that time was traditionally poor.<sup>9</sup> Until a through telegraph connection to the outside world was completed in 1901, the order itself took one to two weeks to reach Vancouver.<sup>10</sup> The spring ordering procedure also included travel by company representatives. Drummers or salesmen from Vancouver, Seattle and the east came north to scan the Dawson situation, and Dawson buyers went south to check the available stock in those centres. The first outbound boat of the season usually carried local merchants and agents going outside to solidify contacts for the rest of the year.<sup>11</sup>

Another spring phenomenon of the Dawson supply business was stocking up scows at the north end of Lake Laberge during the month before breakup. Since the ice on Lake Laberge broke almost a month before that on the rivers, the enterprising early-birds who capitalized on this route were the first to offer the winter-weary Dawsonites those perishable luxuries (cream, oranges, lemons, hams, honey, apples, eggs, etc.) that they craved.<sup>12</sup> After the initial rush had subsided in early July, a second very important round of orders was sent out, taking into account the long-term needs for heavy goods and staples for the winter market.

The theme of the summer shipping season was undoubtedly "ship it now while you can." It was possible that an order sent out as late as mid-July could arrive too late in the season to continue down the Yukon River. Goods so delayed were left in the warehouses in Whitehorse, and when these were full, the consignments came no farther than Skagway.<sup>13</sup> Goods rushed through to Dawson at the last minute risked being caught part-way along the river at freeze-up. In 1899, for instance, local merchants lost an estimated \$700,000 on 1,400 tons of unprotected meats, groceries, general merchandise and machinery abandoned between Selkirk and Dawson.<sup>14</sup> Again in 1903 a particularly high number of shipments was caught along the river in this way. While a winter recovery service by sleigh (such as the one operated by the White Pass Company) did restore some goods to the consignee, high rates made the service worthwhile only on the most saleable articles such as perishable fruit and dairy products, which would otherwise succumb immediately to the effects of frost. Hardware and dry goods were often left where they stood until later in the winter when the market for them would be more lucrative.<sup>15</sup> The fact that these articles were expected to survive such a rigorous winter, if stranded, gives weight to the reputed insistence of Dawson merchants on goods of the highest quality and the best pack.<sup>16</sup> A potential wholesale supplier might well have been asked to describe his packing procedure before any commitment was made on the part of an interested Dawson purchaser.<sup>17</sup>

The danger of winter storage through non-arrival of goods was gradually overshadowed in this period by the upsetting possibility of overstocking the market. For this reason, the winter of 1901–02 was a particularly unprofitable one. The brisk commercial activity of the previous summer had deceived even the most astute merchants into overestimating the needs of the winter to follow. The result was a glutted and sagging market, at its worst in the weeks before the renewal of the shipping season.



The plight of the general merchant with volumes of slow-moving stock to clear is forcibly brought home by such plaintive advertisements as

MUST GO!  
300 CASES ST. CHARLES MILK!  
AT LESS THAN COST LANDED  
*Special inducements on large lots.*<sup>18</sup>

and "Groceries free! We mean it!" An interesting case of one man's miscalculation turning to another's profit is related in the *Canadian Grocer*. Prices declined so far on an overstocked market of well-known brand tobacco that one speculator was able to buy up a huge quantity of the stuff in Dawson, reship it to Vancouver and Seattle and there undercut local prices to his own profit.<sup>19</sup>

Every summer the Dawson buyer faced the same dilemma: whether to ship in immediately by relying on a long-term estimate of the winter market situation, or to risk the perils of fall shipping in order to predict the winter needs more closely. For the produce dealer, there was the added temptation to ship late and obtain the freshest possible goods for advertisement as leaders in winter stock.<sup>20</sup> Dealers in perishable products also had the option of buying goods throughout the winter and freighting them in over the ice. Overland rates were high; consequently the only shipments consistently worth the risk were perishables which would find a ready market on arrival. On these trips, oil-heated sleighs covered with heavy tarpaulins were used to protect loads of butter, eggs and meat packed with unusual care. The merchant who could sell off his cold storage stock just in time to meet one of these convoys from Whitehorse could realize profits of up to 600 per cent.<sup>21</sup> By 1903, this winter trade in fresh products warranted fortnightly steamer trips from Vancouver, connection by rail to Whitehorse, and then travel along the overland road from that point to Dawson.<sup>22</sup>

Defined and perpetuated by the many factors of geography, Dawson's supply system was an expensive one to run, smoothly or otherwise. These costs were borne first by the shipping companies, then by the wholesaler, then by the retailer and finally by the consumer himself. Such a capital-intensive industry best served those trading concerns which could afford to participate in all phases of the commercial process and could, therefore, presumably offset losses in one field with gains in another. For the purposes of this chapter, the financial obligations of the merchant alone have been broken down to show the extent of his overhead in terms of buying and transporting the commodities required. Very basically, the costs included the following: the ex-

penses of communicating with outside wholesalers; compliance with their methods of payment in order to maintain this contact; high overhead in terms of storage costs; rent and insurance, and lastly, the consistently high freight rates on both major routes into the territory.

In the case of the first two areas mentioned, the advantages of the large companies are clear. These firms could afford to maintain permanent purchasing offices in the major cities as well as to buy in sufficient bulk to earn discounts and special terms from their wholesale suppliers. These firms in turn became the prosperous "wholesale-retail" merchants who could profit from supplying smaller traders. At the turn of the century, the AC Company, the NAT&T Company, the Alaska Exploration (AE) Company, McLennan and McFeely, the Ames Mercantile Company, the Seattle-Yukon Trading Company and the Dawson Hardware Company were some of the Dawson businesses which maintained head offices, permanent buyers or yearly agents outside. In some cases (such as the Dawson Hardware Company and Lilly's Gun Store) two smaller firms might co-operate by sending a common agent outside.<sup>23</sup>

The standard methods of payment for the early 20th century were hardly conducive to the success of any merchant in a placer gold-mining camp. The small retailer, whose income was entirely based upon the peculiar institution of open credit extended to miners and mining companies, was especially hard hit. Whether his customers' spring cleanup was good or not seemed of little consequence. Summer invoices from Seattle and Vancouver (or at least from Dawson wholesale firms) arrived with unflinching regularity, since the supply houses themselves were hounded by creditors. The nearly universal practice of allowing 30 days for the invoice and 90 days to pay was incompatible with northern commercial practices. Given the normal shipping delays, it was possible, under this standardized system, for the invoice to demand payment before the goods had materialized on Dawson's wharves.<sup>24</sup>

The only recourse available was acceptance of the most extended terms of payment available at the sacrifice of discounts on the price. Spot cash, a common way of getting reduced prices, was out of the question for buyers whose own income came from a credit system. Drafts on local banks could be made while the bank held as collateral the bill of lading,<sup>25</sup> equivalent to the consignee's receipt and claim of ownership in case of loss or damage. But with bank interest rates reaching as much as 10 per cent per month in 1900, the cost of loans put them virtually beyond the reach of borrowers.<sup>26</sup> Another problem was that terms of payment in the comparatively fast-paced grocery trade (as op-

posed to the dry goods or hardware business) were more pressing and discounts less inviting.<sup>27</sup> This must have been an especially depressing consideration for the Dawson food merchant; his goods did not necessarily move quickly, and payment for what amounted to nearly a year's stock was demanded in a few large cash outlays in late spring and early summer. Some Dawson merchants felt that the only equitable method of payment would be one which was arranged on a two-year credit basis. As long as the prevailing system held, Dawson merchants were subject to the demands of larger moneyed corporations, whether these were banks or trading companies.

A natural consequence of the short purchasing season in the Yukon was the need for year-round storage. Indeed, a most prominent feature of the Dawson skyline after 1898 was the sprawl of long, low corrugated iron warehouses which held the larger part of eight months' supplies for the city. By the summer of 1899 the prerogative of providing public storage, warm and cold, for the many individuals and merchants who could not afford the costs of their own warehouses was shared by nine large firms.<sup>28</sup> For most of them, warehousing represented only one segment of a multi-faceted trading operation. The season of 1900 left the White Pass and Yukon Route railway, probably the largest of the storage concerns, being owed \$225,000 for its public storage facilities.<sup>29</sup> This fact certainly suggests that the need for storage on a continuous basis was a yearly financial embarrassment for many Dawson merchants. Rates charged by the Yukon Dock Company in 1900 were \$7.50 a ton per month for warm storage and \$15 a ton per month for artificial cold storage.<sup>30</sup> While storekeepers might have found the rent high, the dock company felt justified; land rents along the river where warehouses were located were especially high, and insurance rates on cargo as precious as the city's yearly supplies were exorbitant. After the city's incorporation in 1902, steep storage rates were further justified in the light of higher land taxes.

The destructive fires that raged yearly in Dawson's business section during its early history explain both the high insurance rates (they ran between 5 and 7 per cent in 1902)<sup>31</sup> and the location of many of the city's warehouses five or six blocks from the core area, which was bounded by Front Street and Third Avenue. While warehoused goods were insured, goods on display in shops as merchandise were in virtual tinder-boxes. Insurance for places of business (stores and hotels) on Front Street and Second and Third avenues was unobtainable.<sup>32</sup>

The trend in real estate values in Dawson from 1900 onward was an unequivocal downward plunge, with rents for both land and storage reluctantly following suit. Nevertheless, the rents

charged by boom-town landlords did not reflect the economic slump very closely; the reduction in rents was neither large nor frequent enough to keep up with the gradually declining profits experienced by most merchants.<sup>33</sup>

The largest single item of capital outlay for any Dawson merchant, beyond the initial purchase of goods, was transportation. With the completion of the White Pass and Yukon Route railway (the WPYR) in 1900, the shipping monopoly was shared out between that company on the upper river and the competing AC and NAT&T companies on the lower river route. While improvements in both river and rail transportation gradually lowered rates from 1900 to 1902,<sup>34</sup> the fact remained that *the companies employed in freighting goods to Dawson went to large capital expenditure firmly convinced that they were taking great risks and under the impression that the life of their business would be very short and that the only chance of getting any profit from their investments was by charging rates that would bring back such capital and profit within a very short period.*<sup>35</sup> As far as clients were concerned, there seemed to be no end in sight to this period of high transportation costs.

S. Morley Wickett, in his 1902 article "Yukon Trade,"<sup>36</sup> claimed that the Saint Michael to Dawson (lower river) route rates were totally out of line. His objection was that, while these companies were capable of landing goods at Dawson for only \$30 per ton, their rates were on the average much greater – over three times greater, according to an agent of the AC Company in 1900.<sup>37</sup> Exceedingly high as these rates were, the WPYR was unable to compete with them at first. Clients found it profitable to ship by rail only those perishables and goods that required faster delivery than the cheaper river steamers could provide. After a summer of verbal dissent, led by the *Nugget*, and an actual boycott of the railway by many merchants, the government finally intervened on the issue in November 1901.<sup>38</sup> The rail monopoly was threatened by this action, and the WPYR lowered its rates.

Dealing with either rail or steamer transportation companies demanded a certain knack on the part of the shipper or merchant. He was required to interpret the rates in terms of their relative advantages to his own particular circumstances. As Wickett pointed out, a railway contract worked out by an astute merchant might cost him \$30 less per ton than the rate obtained by a less calculating negotiator.<sup>39</sup> More serious accusations of out-and-out favoritism toward large shippers on the part of the WPYR were never actually substantiated,<sup>40</sup> but merchants felt themselves at a disadvantage in dealing with the railroad. The small dealer in food products was a most unhappy client. While rail was the obvious way to import perishables, such heavy items as fresh butter

were among the most expensive to ship in lots of less than one carload. Other goods on which freight charges were almost prohibitive were hay, lumber and furniture.<sup>41</sup> Adding to the ill will which many Dawson traders felt toward the freighting companies was the notorious reluctance of both river and rail companies to reveal their new rate schedules each spring. Their April announcements came weeks after the first orders had been sent out.<sup>42</sup>

While increased competition between rail and steamer services did precipitate a so-called "rate war" in 1902,<sup>43</sup> price-cutting hostilities were of neither a degree nor a duration to encourage customers to any great extent. At least one client shipping shelf hardware (the most expensive category in the WPYR schedule)<sup>44</sup> felt that the rail tariff was still too high, and turned his business over to the river trading companies.<sup>45</sup>

On the issue of freight rates, the editor of the *Dawson Daily News* spoke up in defence of the business firms and consumers who ultimately bore the brunt of transportation policy:

*There is an unfortunate opinion prevailing on the outside to the effect that in Dawson people will pay any price for anything and everything sent in there, and that, therefore, there would be no need for transportation companies reducing their high freight tariffs.*<sup>46</sup>

The editorial reveals a certain unfortunate truth. High prices were inevitable to some degree, yet they were foisted on consumers by large companies as an unfair reflection of a commercial boom which had come and gone. To a certain extent the cost of living in Dawson was eternally doomed to be an inaccurate reflection of an earlier prosperity.

The working relationship between Dawson trader, transportation company and outside supplier has been discussed largely in terms of the problems encountered by the northern merchant. A shift in emphasis from the inside to the outside centres which served its needs brings forth a certain aspect of Pacific coast-Klondike trade, one that attracted the concern of both local and national press after the turn of the century. The issue is one of nationality; more precisely, of American versus Canadian control of the Yukon market.

To many North Americans in 1898, the golden words of "Klondike" and "Alaska" were synonymous. Some west-coast Canadian advertisers at the time of the rush had obviously encountered such ignorance on the subject that they felt compelled to advertise bluntly that the Klondike was indeed in Canadian territory.<sup>47</sup> Despite the town's location, the population was solidly American – in 1900, 62 per cent of Dawson's inhabitants came from the United States.<sup>48</sup> A discussion of the Americanization of

Dawson is far beyond the scope of this report. One aspect of American influence in the Yukon, however, is definitely relevant to the matter at hand: the influx into the territory of American goods and their eventual displacement by Canadian products. (See also "Satisfying the Sourdough Appetite" and Appendix B.)

The struggle between American and Canadian Pacific ports for hegemony in the northern market has already been discussed. As the issue developed, Vancouver and Seattle assumed roles representative of two opposing national thrusts. Seattle's position had been particularly strong in the days before Canadian customs regulations were actively enforced<sup>49</sup> (i.e., prior to the sending of the first detachment of customs officers from Victoria to the passes at the end of July 1897). Even the application of these tariffs, which averaged between 25 and 30 per cent on general merchandise, was not enough to knock the American port cities out of competition.<sup>50</sup> Cheaper goods and a legitimate headstart had won the battle for Seattle, Portland and San Francisco. Nevertheless, their lead on the British Columbian ports was widened by less honourable means, namely by capitalizing on the general ignorance of customs procedure at the passes.<sup>51</sup>

Long after it became clear that Canadian customs duties would be exacted on all American outfits entering the Yukon, the United States port cities could depend on one overriding advantage. Their agricultural outskirts, including luxuriant California, were more productive, more varied and closer to hand than anything the British Columbian ports could draw from. Even the British Columbian home market itself was within the sphere of rival distribution centres to the south. In the case of such products as lard, ham and bacon the Canadian alternative had to be brought all the way from Ontario. Once this general condition of the western Canadian market is recognised, the preponderance of American goods in the Yukon comes as no startling discovery. British Columbia market reports in the *Canadian Grocer* as late as 1904 reveal that the local sources were in heavy competition with suppliers both from the east and from the American west coast.

The process of "entering" American imports at Vancouver or Victoria was customary among many Dawson shippers. When the tariff was paid in British Columbia rather than in the Yukon, the goods were shipped north on Canadian vessels, passed through Alaska in bond, and were brought into the Yukon as duty-paid goods. The rationale for this process was as follows: since Canadian customs were based on a percentage of the original cost, freight and middleman's profit, customs could be as much as 50 per cent higher at a Yukon border point than at Victoria.<sup>52</sup> Any means of avoiding this added tariff burden was

understandably popular. One significant implication of this manner of importation was that, while Canadian customer reports showed a relative increase in duty-paid or “free” goods entering the territory, the figures could easily be misinterpreted to indicate that this was an increase in *Canadian* goods reaching the Yukon.<sup>53</sup> (The same cautionary remark must be made about any table showing an increased number of Canadian vessels plying the route between British Columbia and northern ports.)<sup>54</sup> Word came from the Skagway docks in 1900 that most shipments accepted as “B.C. goods” were in fact prepaid American products – canned meats and hams from the east, fruits from Oregon and California and milk from Illinois were cited as typical examples.<sup>55</sup>

Another consideration, reasonable in the light of the outfitting rush among west-coast dealers and the ensuing struggle to gain a permanent hold on the Dawson market, was the lasting popularity which could be earned by a brand which had won a foothold in the Yukon. According to S. Morley Wickett, “a name of a brand counts for much. A few Canadian houses in their Yukon trade appear not to have been sufficiently jealous of their name.”<sup>56</sup> The collective security of such American brands as Carnation or Borden’s Eagle Brand condensed milk, Agen’s butter, Rex meats or Germea breakfast cereal must have presented tough competition to any Canadian supplier.

The perpetuation of this monopoly was not simply the result of Seattle’s commercial ambitions. The facts that the Fourth of July was as much a holiday in Dawson as Dominion Day, that a large number of stores shut up shop on Washington’s birthday,<sup>57</sup> and that in 1899 Parson’s Produce Company was known as the only Canadian firm doing business in its field in the Yukon,<sup>58</sup> lead to one inescapable conclusion: what really determined the nature of the Dawson market was the national makeup of its population. A thorough search of the backgrounds of merchants in the city has yet to be done (see Appendix C), but a list of “foreign companies licensed by the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory to carry on business other than mining”<sup>59</sup> shows a preponderance of American firms among the larger trading companies. The list includes the Northern Commercial (NC) Company, the Joseph Ladue Mining and Development Company, the Ames Mercantile Company, the Pacific Cold Storage Company, the NAT&T Company, the Yukon Storage Company and the Dawson Hardware Company.<sup>60</sup> Investment in the NAT&T Company by the large Chicago meat firm of Cudahy is a prime example of connection between shareholders in Dawson enterprise and American big business. Governor General Lord Minto, in his tour of the Klondike in 1900, was well aware of this, and was asked to request some of the largest mercantile firms to furnish an estimate of their

Canadian purchases for that season. In a protestation of good will and of an acquired interest in Canadian industry, the NAT&T Company replied that the company preferred to buy Canadian goods, and endeavoured to seek out those Canadian commodities not readily available to their American headquarters.<sup>61</sup> “For many reasons” only one-third of their stock was actually found to be of Canadian packaging or manufacture.

According to a Canadian Manufacturing Association representative, the prominent foreign imports to Dawson in 1901 were as follows:

*coffee, baking powder, canned fruits and vegetables, honey, condensed milk, potatoes, tobacco and cigars, fine confectionery, boots and shoes, leather belting, rubber hose, gloves and mitts, cotton duck, copper wire, wire nails, cordage, wire rope, spades and shovels.*<sup>62</sup>

Admitting that Canadian houses had made considerable sales on their own that year, he offered valuable advice to those Canadian businessmen who wanted to increase their share of the trade. In all lines of general trade – hardware, dry goods and food – quality was an essential factor. Canadian clothing, especially flannel shirts and woollen underwear, was apparently unpopular because of poor tailoring. Likewise, Canadian rubber boots were thought to be far too cumbersome. In this case, Goodyear Rubber Company’s “Gold Seal” boots (made in San Francisco) maintained the unquestionable popularity they had earned in the first year of the outfitting rush.<sup>63</sup>

American successes in this matter were popularly thought to be due to their advanced techniques in packaging, which made their products both more durable and more attractive. Canadian fruit tins, for example, were considered heavy and unappealing at a glance. Similarly, Canadian methods in packaging butter, cheese and bacon were held to be inferior to those used in American products.<sup>64</sup>

Lest the situation for Canadian commodities seem too bleak, it should be noted that the Canadian part of the trade in 1902 was conservatively estimated at 60 per cent and was growing. This was indeed an effective, if not a startling, reversal of the American monopoly of approximately 90 per cent of the trade in 1898.<sup>65</sup> The ambitious efforts of Vancouver wholesale and shipping concerns had finally paid off, so they thought, in 1901, with the establishment of a long-awaited government assay office in that city. Seattle had previously monopolized the process of exchanging Yukon gold for American dollars. Now Vancouver believed that it could channel both the gold and its consequent credit away from those American businessmen who for too long

had been "waxing fat and insolent . . . when the golden millions of the Yukon were poured into their waiting laps."<sup>66</sup>

Ironically, the market that British Columbian merchants and shippers finally won was a sagging one; it was no longer the limitless prize which the ambitious Seattle and San Francisco outfitters had jumped at in 1897. It was "a Pyrrhic victory," according to one historian, reviewing the scene of the battle some 60 years later.<sup>67</sup> But whatever the factors governing their choice, Dawson buyers in 1902 exhibited what seemed to be an admirable preference for domestic products. By May of that year, the purchasing agent for the NC Company (which had succeeded the AC Company) admitted that most canned fruit, all canned vegetables, 90 per cent of the flour and much of the hardware in his warehouses came from Canadian sources.<sup>68</sup>

After the enforcement of Canadian customs on the upper river route in 1897, the AC Company, like all others with wholesale liquor permits, was forced to buy its wares in Canada. (Beer, however, continued to be imported until 1905, when the O'Brien Brewing and Malting Company of Klondike City entered the field.)<sup>69</sup> By 1904, a reporter of the British Columbia market in groceries could finally crow triumphantly that of 900 tons of merchandise going north on board the *Olympia*, 95 per cent was of Canadian origin. "The whole of the groceries, flour, feed and similar goods were from Canadian factories."<sup>70</sup>

Both population and gold production figures reveal that, not surprisingly, the 20th century marked a widespread and inalterable turning point.<sup>71</sup> Exact landmarks of Dawson's "rise and fall" or "life and death" lie in the disputed territory between memory and myth; there are as many histories of the Yukon as there are chroniclers. "Commercial development" is an arbitrary category of analysis in itself, for in keeping with the boom town's tradition of putting up false fronts, Dawson's business community was slow to admit the wrinkles of old age. The discovery of fresh gold in the Tanana district of Alaska in 1903 and the inevitable rush of "never-say-die" miners which followed it were in some ways the death knell of Dawson as a boom town. In established business circles, on the other hand, a plateau of economic stability followed as the transient fringe of customers and traders moved on. During this period of belt-tightening, the morale of the surviving merchants was maintained by a special brand of frontier booster spirit, characteristic of the age. Large doses of civic pride in brick warehouses, paved streets, telephone networks and loyal clubs and brotherhoods were registered in annual "Golden Clean Up" newspaper editions and glossy company catalogues. There the dream of northern prosperity, now realized, was broadcast.

The commissioner's introductory remarks to his 1902 report for the Department of the Interior are a fair indication of the prevalence of the spirit of renewed northern confidence. "Not only does a general air of prosperity and confidence pervade the whole business community," he wrote, "but the surest steps are being taken to insure a continuance of good times."<sup>72</sup> A remarkable contrast exists here between the overextended confidence which buoyed up the merchant community in 1903 and the realistic symptoms of chronic reduction that came in its wake.

In the context of Dawson's development as a commercial hinterland, these symptoms could no longer be concealed after 1904. In the first place, the peak volume of trade between Vancouver and the Yukon, belatedly achieved in 1903, was never to be repeated.<sup>73</sup> A second feature was the effect of financial stringency on the Yukon credit system. That enduring symbol of the extension of commercial methods to meet community needs was snapped in 1904 by the largest trading companies.<sup>74</sup> Spot cash was now demanded on purchase so that short credit terms from outside might be honoured – a reflection of both the decreased margin of profit and the skepticism of outside investors and creditors of risks in a tottering gold town. A third, very significant result of the general commercial slump was felt in the transportation field. In 1904, the WPYR railway was finally forced to reduce its rates in the form of a general summer discount because of acute dissatisfaction during the previous summer. The mercantile community could no longer manage the high overhead for rail transport.<sup>75</sup>

The next seven years were marked by incessant hostilities between merchants and the WPYR, as the former launched a hard-fought attack to compel the latter to adjust its rates in keeping with the economic decline. Strong protests by the Dawson Board of Trade in 1905 and 1906 did not force an appreciable cut in rates until 1909 and 1911. Tables of rates given by H.A. Innis for the year 1910 show that the WPYR's rates were (perhaps understandably) five times higher than those of the CPR<sup>76</sup> (see Appendix D). It is not difficult to imagine the attitudes of merchants dealing in any one of the commodities quoted (beef, pork, cheese and potatoes). On these items the rail rates from Skagway to Whitehorse ranged from 121 to 139 per cent of the price of the article itself as it landed on the Skagway docks.

The most blatant effect of decline on the commercial community was the steady consolidation of capital over the years 1901–06 (see Appendix G). Evidently the "continuance of good times" which Commissioner Ross hoped for in 1902 only applied to a decreasing number of Dawson businessmen. One can readily understand the depressing effects of a reduced economic

base on such a proportionately large occupation group. While the table shows a seemingly healthy and gradual contraction in all fields of merchandising, a comment by the manager of the NAT&T Company in 1909 indicates that there were still some who had not adjusted to the trend:

*The commercial conditions of the territory at the present time do not warrant the encouragement of a single individual; every line of business is represented and in fact many are overdone. This condition however will doubtless improve with the increase of investment capital in placer mining and the development of quartz and the renewed activity of the prospector.*<sup>77</sup>

This mixture of realistic adaptation to declining economic circumstances, combined with a continued belief in some variety of immediate upswing, characterized the business elite in Dawson over these years. In spite of this optimism, the chronic problems of serving an aging gold town remained a source of depression.

### **“Metropolitan Airst” – Dawson from 1899 to 1903**

In his annual report for 1899 Superintendent A.B. Perry of the North-West Mounted Police claimed to be *astonished to find so many substantial buildings, enormous warehouses, fine shops, articles of costliest and finest description* [in Dawson] . . . *The Yukon Council have provided sidewalks, bridges, graded and drained streets, fire brigades, electric street lighting and many other conveniences.*<sup>1</sup>

In that same fall the *Dawson Daily News* declared proudly that “substantial business blocks have taken the place of flimsy shacks and neat frame dwellings have succeeded the log house. All this indicates a belief in the permanency of Dawson as a mining centre.”<sup>2</sup> One passing writer openly expressed his surprised reaction to the city’s appearance in 1903.

*The first sensation experienced in Dawson was that of surprise at the size and appearance of the town. With a population of about 7000, with streets solidly built up for nearly a mile along the river, and business extending back from the riverfront to Third Street; with graded streets, water service and sidewalks and comfortable log and frame storehouses and dwellings, the impression created is one of solidity and permanence, which I venture to say is not generally entertained by those who have not seen this metropolis of the Yukon.*<sup>3</sup>

The self-confident view that Dawson wished to impress on the outside world at the turn of the century was one of stability, prosperity and progress, of rapid transition from a boisterous frontier boom town to a fine Canadian centre of business and industry. Indeed, contemporary journalistic reflections on the town during the period 1899–1903 radiated a booster-spirit aura, a feeling of civic pride in the orderly change of both appearance and behaviour. When corroborated by contemporary pictorial accounts of material changes and improvements, the impression of metamorphosis seems justified indeed. Dawson did not greet the 20th century with the shoddy boom town façade which characterized it in 1898. The new façade was a finer, glossier and more respectable one; it was more in keeping with that of a growing business community in southern Canada (Figs. 28 and 29).

Six lumber mills operated in the town by 1899. By 1903 frame buildings of two and three storeys had replaced log cabin structures in the business section to such a degree that those log cabins remaining in the city’s core were singled out by one observer with a touch of historical appreciation.<sup>4</sup> In 1899 the first brick building constructed entirely of local materials was erected on Third Street between Third and Fourth avenues.<sup>5</sup> It was a cold storage warehouse for the Dawson Warehouse Company, and

28 Bird's eye view of Dawson, showing docks, warehouses and stores between King and Queen streets, ca. 1902. (Public Archives Canada, C 17015.)



29 Northeast panorama of Dawson, ca. 1903. The main street to the right of centre is King Street. (Public Archives Canada, C 675.)





the building managed to withstand the rigours of permafrost, the greatest hazard associated with brick construction in the north. While the *Dawson Daily News* enthusiastically heralded brick as the building material of the future,<sup>6</sup> only a handful of these structures was actually erected.

One major factor in Dawson's more respectable appearance was the widening and macadamizing<sup>7</sup> of the streets which served the business core; that is, from Front Street to Third, and later to Fifth Avenue for five blocks from north to south. By the time Lord Minto, the governor general, arrived for an official visit in August 1900, the city boasted five miles of graded streets planked at intersections and 12 miles of wooden sidewalks<sup>8</sup> (see Fig. 31). The harrowing stories of passageways clogged with mud, pedestrians and animals (alive and dead) were now only memories (Fig. 30). With sophisticated nonchalance, the 1901 Dawson directory described the buggies and carriages which passed freely along the thoroughfares. "A pleasing sight of a summer eve is to see the many handsome turnouts together with several hundred bicyclists lining the boulevard of the waterfront in up-to-date Dawson."<sup>9</sup>

The extended use of electric lighting was clearly indicative of Dawson's material progress. The Dawson Electric Light and Power Company, incorporated in 1900, replaced several smaller concerns which had attempted, somewhat erratically, to satisfy the city's need for power.<sup>10</sup> By the first months of the new century, some of the town's leading trading companies had wired their stores to produce that "clear white light so different from the smoky yellow glare of coal oil lamps."<sup>11</sup> In that same year the entire mining district was served by the Yukon Telephone Syndicate. Two years later, 330 telephones were reported to be in use in Dawson.<sup>12</sup> Since some customers along the creeks were as far as 50 miles from Dawson, the installation of a working telephone system was an understandable asset to business.

One improvement essential to Dawson's physical survival was the construction of a successful drainage and sewer system with provision for a clean water supply. The excitement of the summer of 1898 had been marred by a serious epidemic of typhoid, as well as by cases of malaria and dysentery, all natural consequences of the unregulated overpopulation of a poorly drained swampy area.<sup>13</sup> While a new board of health made initial improvements in 1899, it was not until 1900 that adequate sewer and water supply systems were functioning.<sup>14</sup>

Probably greater than the apprehension of widespread disease was Dawson's fear of fire. The two huge blazes which roared through the overcrowded business district during the winter of 1898-99 had been ample cause for a constantly alert fire

department. By 1901 the increased subscription support of the merchant community had equipped the department with two engines, two hose carts, two chemical engines and a hook and ladder truck; hydrant connections were gradually extended along major arteries.<sup>15</sup>

In 1901, Dawson had unquestionably come of age. In no section was this achievement more visible nor more enthusiastically praised than in the business community. In fact this group was more responsible than any other for many of the changes which effectively transformed Dawson into an example of respectability. Few of the awed witnesses of post-gold-rush Dawson failed to refer to the sense of "permanency" which pervaded the city in general and its commercial sector in particular. Nearly all made mention of the success of Dawson's prominent merchants, the merchants whose large investments indicated their intentions to remain in the Klondike market.

In a special "Midsummer Edition" in 1899, the *Dawson Daily News* estimated the combined capital investments of the AC Company, the NAT&T Company and the AE Company (the three leading trading and transportation companies in Dawson) to be \$5 million.<sup>16</sup> An assessment of 1901 showed that a total of 13 leading business houses were valued at sums between \$50,000 and \$1.8 million.<sup>17</sup>

Architecturally, the city's exterior at the turn of the century successfully projected the image of a thriving and prosperous community. The commercial backbone of Dawson was composed of the row of stores, hotels, small businesses and saloons which lined the entire length of the east side of Front Street (later known also as First Avenue), overlooking the chain of docks and warehouses which actually bordered the shoreline. Here the impressive emporia of most of the larger firms, as well as many of the city's finer hotels and theatres, were located on the "line" or boardwalk (so called because of the 12-foot-wide sidewalk which lined one side of that very wide street). Parallel to Front Street and immediately to the east was Second Avenue, an equally busy thoroughfare, where transactions occurred in every field from real estate to confections, from prostitution to embalming. The nucleus of primary activity extended as far as Third Avenue, the street singled out in 1902 as the general artery of the town. Fourth and Fifth avenues consisted mainly of warehouses and residences.

Quite a separate commercial and residential district grew up at the southern tip of the city in an area which owed its sense of isolation to the large tract of government reserve land which separated it from Dawson's core. South Dawson, as the quarter-mile strip was known, housed some of Dawson's more respected

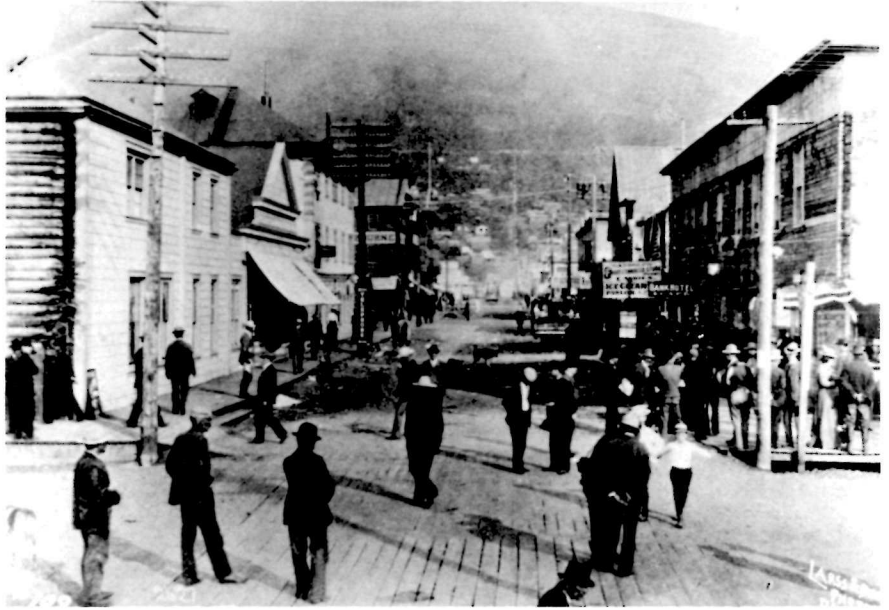
30 Dawson street scene, 1898. Each heavy rain was a reminder of Dawson's swampy origins. (Public Archives Canada, C 20891.)



STREET SCENE AT DAWSON

31 A major intersection: King and Front, ca. 1900. Contrast the road conditions to those in Figure 30. (*Public Archives Canada, C 13416*)

31



32 Boomtown architecture at its rococo best: Front Street, 1904. (*Public Archives Canada, PA 14537*)

32



small businesses by 1901. Across the Klondike River from this suburb lay Klondike City, maligned from an early period by its universal nickname "Lousetown." The less than sterling reputation of Dawson's younger sister was acquired in 1901, when the Yukon Council ordered Dawson's birds of paradise to nest beyond the city limits. The entire flock lighted in Lousetown. Councilmen were hard-pressed to convince the more respectable – and now irate and petitioning – residents of Klondike City that Dawson's *demimonde* had not expressly been ordered to their shores.<sup>18</sup>

Two- and three-storey frame commercial buildings dominated Dawson's streetscapes. While both the AC Company and the NAT&T Company favoured the simple unadorned structures erected in 1897, the most popular type of edifice still displayed some variation on the boom-town front. Such fronts ranged from plain rectangular shapes to elaborate outlines with peaks, parapets, domes and balustrades, often decorated with highly ornamental friezes and cornices, contrasting woodwork and trim (see Figs. 32 and 33). White seems to have been the predominant colour of building fronts, but the general effect was by no means one of blank space. The series of flat storefronts was broken by any number of variations on the general format of large display windows on either side of an indented doorway. Each store had its own colourful awning, often striped, scalloped or bearing the owner's name. Presumably these awnings were removed in the winter to let in the little sunlight that did appear.

Photographs taken at the turn of the century provide contrasting impressions of store-front signs. The majority show either letters neatly painted on building fronts or unspectacular signboards affixed over the central doorway. In one photograph, Front Street is festooned with carnival-like banners proclaiming the remarkable bargains to be made in various nearby shops. Perhaps Front Street tradesmen were among the offenders singled out in a *Dawson Daily News* editorial early in 1900 which complained of "those objectionable signs and banners, especially those transparencies with lights" (Fig. 34). As Dawson prepared for the upcoming visit of Lord and Lady Minto, the more "objectionable" visible aspects of trade were ordered to be removed.<sup>19</sup>

In the long run, this enforced and somewhat uncharacteristic tidiness did not prevail in Dawson. A photograph of Second Avenue taken in 1904 (Fig. 33) reveals a muddle of signs, competing with wires and lamp standards, on rooftops and overhanging the sidewalks – true manifestations of urban North American enterprise. One element of the tableau peculiar to Dawson in the long rain-free days of summer was the transaction of business out-

doors. Tradesmen extended their shelves, crates, barrels, kegs and racks beyond the display windows and out onto the plank sidewalks. During a closing-out sale (a regular summer occurrence over the years) the heaps of goods and "selling out" signboards spilled over the sidewalk to the street itself, in open defiance of the city's legal standards of respectable appearance.

Another unique feature of Dawson's skyline was the preponderance of huge corrugated iron warehouses scattered throughout the city. By 1901 these structures numbered nearly 50, with a total capacity of some 50,000 tons.<sup>20</sup> Even the earliest warehouses of the AC Company measured in size from 30 feet by 50 feet to 30 feet by 190 feet.<sup>21</sup> A good proportion of the entire capital investment in Dawson lay within these warehouses, as well as its means of survival for any entire year. The very presence of these enormous buildings was, understandably, impressive (Figs. 28 and 35).

When surrounded by such visible signs of prosperity, Dawson residents, more than those of any other Canadian city, must have continued to reflect upon the transience of fortune, the fickleness of the paystreak. Even the most optimistic among them must have realized just how tenuous was the validity of the city's nickname, "the Paris of the North." Only the more cynical among them, however, would have dared to interpret the town's newly gleaming exterior as a by-product of the much sought-after goal of Dawson merchants, the lasting market. Without this one promise of security no investment concern would have stayed in that isolated northern valley.

The fact that they did stay represents the second phase in a cycle of resource development. In proposing this theory, H.A. Innis suggests that the phenomenon describes the slow death of a primary resource leaving in its wake secondary industries, once urgently needed, as the basis of a new but somewhat less productive economy.<sup>22</sup> Given the undoubted value of the Klondike's primary resource, as well as its inaccessibility, the capital outlay in the opening of the industry was both extensive, immediate and necessary. The unusually high wages offered to miners in the first year of the rush,<sup>23</sup> the immediate influx of established transportation and trading corporations, the exorbitant cost of land and commodities and the immediate construction of a rail connection all signaled heavy initial capital investment.

In the service industries such investments could be repaid only if increasingly efficient methods, firm markets and high prices prevailed.<sup>24</sup> Using Innis's hypothesis, one can appreciate the influence of the Dawson merchant group as agents of change. Their eager support of urban improvements was evidence of a sustained effort to maintain business at a reduced overhead.

33 One of Dawson's main streets in 1904:  
Second Avenue as seen from King  
Street. (Public Archives Canada, C  
14540.)



34 Front Street in 1899: "those objectionable signs and banners." (Public Archives Canada, C 6648.)

35 AE Company warehouses, ca. 1899. (Public Archives Canada, PA 13297.)

34



35



While operations were certainly made more efficient on many counts, there were several basic aspects of doing business which remained costly, to the chagrin of businessmen and, of course, of the consumers who ultimately suffered unrelieved high prices. Rail and water transportation companies provided increasingly good service to Dawson, but the WPYR rates were still sufficiently high in 1901 to provoke what was essentially a boycott of the line by both merchants and passengers in the city.<sup>25</sup>

The lesson taught by one million dollars' worth of damage by fires had prompted businessmen to subscribe to a good fire department. Nevertheless, insurance rates remained high enough to be prohibitive – 5 to 10 per cent in 1902.<sup>26</sup> Commercial buildings in the city core continued to be practically uninsured; risks were taken only on stock in corrugated iron warehouses. The general opinion was that these rates, too, were unnecessarily high.<sup>27</sup>

High insurance rates, coupled with rents which managed to reflect the prosperity of the past rather than the present, ensured continuing high storage rates. More than transportation, this matter of rents uniformly affected all merchants, large and small.<sup>28</sup> The territory's Crown Timber and Land Agent, the official landlord of Dawson's waterfront properties, was singularly guilty in failing to reduce the rents of docking and storage facilities to a level in keeping with Dawson's post-boom economy. A petition to the agent in 1904 from the broker who had taken over the Seattle-Yukon Dock waterfront lease begged him to consider that the contract had been made during boom times "and certainly from a mistaken view of the permanency of the business then prevailing." With the change in conditions, the rental value of the property had fallen to one-third of its original value.<sup>29</sup>

For many of those who remained in the Yukon after the gold-rush, permanency was forever an illusion; northern commerce, however rationalized by technical progress, could never yield sustained profits or security. For them, economic survival was possible under one prevalent condition: consolidation. This constitutes the theme of the history of the mining industry during the period; claims and capital were amassed in order to apply modern technology rather than expensive labour to the full exploitation of secondary gravels.

Commercial operations followed a parallel development. In 1901, Dawson's business was estimated to be securely in the hands of the following eight firms:

- 1) McLennan and McFeely, wholesale and retail hardware (reported to have done the largest business of any firm in 1900);
- 2) The AE Company, general merchandise department store;
- 3) The Trading and Exploring Company, general merchandise;

- 4) Seattle-Yukon Trading Company, general merchandise;
- 5) AC Company, general merchandise;
- 6) NAT&T Company, general merchandise;
- 7) Ladue Company, general merchandise, and
- 8) Ames Mercantile Company, general merchandise.<sup>30</sup>

After this list had gone to press, the AC Company effected a merger within this group, leaving no doubt as to the only solution to the problem of duplicated overhead and services. On 1 June 1901 citizens were shocked to learn that the AE Company, Dawson's great emporium and owner of "the most magnificent and best appointed retail store and offices north of San Francisco" had been taken over by the AC Company.<sup>31</sup> Along with it went the Empire Trading Company. Four days later the president of the Seattle-Yukon Trading Company arrived in town to hand over his firm – lock, stock, steamer and warehouse – to the new company. The result, effective all the way along the Yukon River, was the formation of two new corporations, the Northern Commercial Company (the NC Company), which was to deal with mercantile concerns, and the Northern Navigation Company to handle shipping. W.D. Wood, the president of the Seattle-Yukon Trading Company, explained his part in the amalgamation in rather magnanimous terms: "We disposed of our holdings because we did not desire to oppose a movement the prime object of which is to decrease the cost of living in this northern country."<sup>32</sup>

Lois Kitchener, the historian of the NC Company, states that in 1901 no transportation company in the north broke even, and that the years 1901–03, despite appearances to the contrary, were not good ones for the newly merged firm.<sup>33</sup> Records are no longer available to provide evidence for this statement. Nor do Dawson newspapers offer confirmation, unwilling as they were to prick illusions of stability by admitting the existence of bad times among the city's largest investors.

While Commissioner Ross's report to the Department of the Interior for 1902 contains the usual booster bravado on the subject of commerce, Congdon's report in 1903 reflects seriously on the real state of business for the majority of merchants.

*Business generally in Dawson has been passing through a somewhat critical stage. Formerly, when enormous profits were usual, men in business made small fortunes in a year. Many of these . . . not unnaturally concluded that increased investments meant corresponding increase of profits, and put into business all available assets, including those arising from excessively liberal credits . . . Business is certainly on a more substantial basis now, although this result has only been obtained after the unfortunate results to many former large operators.<sup>34</sup>*

An obvious feature of this state of affairs was the inevitable decrease in Dawson's population. The depletion of high-grade gravels had gradually turned placer mining from a labour-intensive operation into a highly mechanized industry. While the legendary prospector of the Yukon valley had been an independent operator, the majority of his counterparts in 1898 were wage earners. If the widespread unemployment of the winter of 1898–99 had not driven them back outside, the Nome strike later that year offered them a second chance at the easy riches and independence which had probably lured them to the Klondike in the first place. An estimated 8,000 left for Nome over the winter of 1899–1900,<sup>35</sup> after the mother lode had been discovered in the Tanana district, 2,000 to 3,000 more evacuated Dawson for Fairbanks.<sup>36</sup> In consequence, the city's population, estimated at 18,000 in 1898, dropped to 10,000 after the Nome discovery, to 9,142 in 1901 and to approximately 7,000 by 1903.<sup>37</sup> With the exception of the 1901 figure (which comes from a Dawson census) these are approximations made by resident journalists. As such, they are statistically unreliable but the general trend they record is obvious.

While shrinking markets presented a setback to the whole community, larger firms were clearly in a better position to weather the storm than were the rank-and-file storekeepers. They had greater flexibility to cope with changing demands and conditions for many of them were anchored to established outside businesses.

It is therefore understandable that the NC Company of San Francisco had sufficient capital to maintain its posts all along the Yukon River, and could consequently profit from both the Nome and Tanana strikes. The Ames Mercantile Company and the erstwhile AE Company, both of San Francisco, were also able to command something of the Nome market by opening branches there. The Pacific Cold Storage Company of Tacoma, Washington, maintained branches in Nome, Dawson and along the river. The NAT&T Company of Chicago and Seattle was also a long-time proprietor of a chain of Yukon River stores and trading posts. It opened branches at Grand Forks (at the confluence of Bonanza and Eldorado creeks) and on Sulphur and Dominion creeks in order to tap the market in the heart of the Klondike district more fully.<sup>38</sup> Such was the pattern of a commercial system serving the placer gold-mining frontier. Like the goldseekers themselves, company stores could be found at the site of the most lucrative strikes. The operation of such branches helped offset the inevitable rise-and-fall economic cycle of any single gold town. The Vancouver hardware dealers McLennan and McFeely acted quickly in establishing outlets not only in the Klondike

but in Atlin and Bennett, British Columbia, as well.<sup>39</sup> As the initial rush through this area died off, McLennan and McFeely closed its operations near the Yukon headwaters to concentrate instead on the Dawson trade. All these companies could, to some extent, offset the vagaries of the Dawson market by operating branches throughout the territory.

In several articles of correspondence in 1903 and 1904, the Dawson Hardware Company referred without regret to the slump in shelf hardware sales. A conversion in mining equipment occurred as the industry gradually turned to hydraulic operations. Like its competitor McLennan and McFeely, Dawson Hardware was large enough to adapt itself to the transition by producing and selling larger items of machinery.<sup>40</sup>

Dawson, the reigning "gold rush town," unhappily surrendered her title to Fairbanks in 1903. In one important aspect, however, the older city did benefit from this rush, and its wholesale merchants were the men to reap the profits. Dawson's short shipping season necessitated year-round storage, which in turn produced the aggravating problem of slow-moving or dead-end stock which was impossible to unload on a decreasing population. A sudden strike in the north, with its concomitant and immediate demand for all sorts of provisions, put Dawson jobbers briefly in the fortunate position which their Seattle and Vancouver antecedents had occupied half a decade earlier. While this later rush was neither as large nor as sustained as the Klondike one had been, the immediate impact on overstocked merchants was a healthy one. Dealers whose surplus goods were American were especially fortunate, for their stocks could enter Alaskan territory duty-free.<sup>41</sup> In 1905 there were 24 bonded warehouses in the city with goods destined for Fairbanks. The customs collector at Dawson claimed that year that the previous season's trade with Fairbanks had earned Dawson wholesalers no less than \$750,000.<sup>42</sup>

The city's wholesale-retail firms made the most of Dawson's natural position as the entrepôt for the Klondike hinterland. While dealing in some retail trade themselves, an increasingly large part of their business was ordering and shipping complete lines of goods from outside for resale to retail outlets in Dawson and the creek centres.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, it was more convenient (if not necessarily cheaper) for these merchants to buy their goods from local wholesale dealers. They could at least count on suitable lines of commodities, insured storage and more charitable terms of payment than they might obtain from outside firms. Above all, the worrying trials of long-distance ordering and shipping could be left to those larger businesses better equipped to recover or absorb possible losses.



Whatever advantages the system might have offered the retailer, his permanent subjugation to the jobber or wholesale supplier, local or distant, was universally uncomfortable. In an article defending a retailers' purchasing cooperative in Ontario, the *Canadian Grocer*, always a friend of the individual merchant, sympathized with the retailer's difficult position.<sup>44</sup> The lot of the small merchant in the shadow of the large wholesale firm was brought sharply into focus by the *Nugget* during its war against the WPYR in July 1901. Not only did the WPYR charge more than the traffic could possibly bear, the crusading *Nugget* claimed, but it gave preferential rates to certain wholesale shippers. Although its charges were never substantiated, the paper cited the firms McLennan and McFeely, Palmer Brothers (general merchandise, wholesale and retail) and T.G. Wilson (wholesale groceries) as examples.<sup>45</sup>

The percentage of Dawson's wholesale or jobbing trade which actually went to the large multi-purpose companies, to the wholesale-retail dealers in specific fields (hardware, dry goods, groceries, meats or drugs) or to the amorphous group of wholesale importers and commission merchants ("do you want to buy or sell anything?") can only be guessed at. The only generalization one can hazard is that the initial distribution of goods in Dawson became the prerogative of an increasingly limited number of local jobbers.

The move toward consolidation within the Dawson merchant community is not to be interpreted as a simple and drastic reduction of the number of merchants participating in the trade. On the contrary, the number of merchants in the city directories of 1901, 1902 and 1903 is overwhelming and a numerical decline is not uniformly evident in this period. (See Appendix G. Note, for instance, the number of grocers and produce dealers, as well as hardware merchants.) One striking figure is that of 135 merchants and traders without definite fields or locations of business whose names appear in the alphabetical list of Dawson residents for 1901.<sup>46</sup> In what way these men and women did their business we have little or no indication. The number of these mysterious traders drops sharply to 41 in 1902; by the time the 1903 lists were prepared, they seem to have disappeared altogether. Those few names which reappear do so in connection with well-defined trades in groceries, hardware, second-hand goods or confectionery.

The incorporation of the city of Dawson in 1902 was undoubtedly the prime cause of their disappearance, for with it came taxes and enforced licensing of all businesses. Especially significant in this case was the increase in fees for transient traders<sup>47</sup> from \$150 per annum to \$500.<sup>48</sup> The annual spring scramble

from the upper Yukon River to supply Dawson with its first perishables was a lucrative business, and these traders represented a get-rich-quick system which seemed to show little regard for contributing to the growing community. License fees were constantly evaded, but by June of 1902 the law had caught up with the most blatant offenders, with the full support of the outraged merchant community.<sup>49</sup> By August, the heavy license fee was uniformly imposed. Since these scow traders were not residents of the city, there is no official record of their number, and no indication of their reaction to the unavoidable fees. One suspects that they, like the small permanent traders who suddenly fled Dawson, took this as provocation to push on to richer frontiers.

Two possibilities exist to explain the next moves of these traders. The more probable of the two is based on the idea that most individual entrepreneurs did not last long on the frontier. They were likely to return, richer or poorer, to the "civilized" heartland they had originally left. This is especially probable in the cases of those adventurers who had had no previous commercial experience. Mr. Bob Bloom, once of Dawson and Fairbanks and now of Seattle, has suggested a second possibility. Mr. Bloom was one of those Dawson traders who did survive incorporation, but who sold out his hardware stock to join the rush to Tanana, not as a merchant but as a miner. Bloom claimed that the true northern trader was merely marking time, buying and selling to support a much more fundamental quest. When the moment came, Bloom felt little remorse in leaving Dawson, but he was to turn again to the life of the general trader many years later in Fairbanks. Just as the Alaska-Yukon directories do not reveal the cycle of Bloom's frontier occupations, so we are left to imagine how the lives of those on its pages labelled simply "trader" or "miner" must have passed through similar patterns.

A third explanation of the fate of Dawson's floating merchant population, and the most popularly accepted one, is that they moved *en masse* to the creeks, in particular to Grand Forks.<sup>50</sup> This is hard to accept for a number of reasons. First, Grand Forks was itself incorporated as the town of Bonanza in 1902; thereafter it imposed its own increases in licensing fees, including a fee of \$500 for transient traders.<sup>51</sup> Second, the directories for the years 1901-03 show very little increase in the number of merchants doing business in Grand Forks (see Appendix H). Third, none of the 135 small Dawson merchants and traders listed in 1901, or the 41 listed in 1902, appear in subsequent listings for Bonanza in any capacity.

For various reasons, a steady amount of business was done on the creeks. The activity at Bonanza in particular was enough to cause some Dawson tradesmen to take notice, for the creeks

seemed to be growing progressively more independent of the centre.<sup>52</sup> In the light of this development, the commercial relationship between Dawson and the surrounding creeks bears further examination.

Bonanza, located some 12 miles from Dawson, was able to offer most of the services necessary to its own survival. As the largest of the creek towns (its population was 4,133 in 1900),<sup>53</sup> Bonanza was described by one visitor as being actually busier than Dawson itself. From the directories, it is obvious that no other creek offered the variety of services found in Grand Forks. Men working on such distant creeks as Sulphur, Dominion and Gold Run, well over 30 miles from either Dawson or Bonanza, had to purchase their supplies at one of these small creek centres.

Despite the presence of some local merchants on the more distant tributaries, several diaries and personal accounts report long trips (albeit only annual or semi-annual ones) into Dawson to buy the season's supplies. One such account by a miner from Sulphur Creek, 35 miles from Dawson, speaks resignedly of the muddy June trails which stretched the journey into a two-day trip. Lower food prices and the opportunity of exchanging the drudgery of mining for Dawson's urban excitement made the long trip worthwhile.<sup>54</sup> After a 25-mile trip into Dawson to place his yearly order, one miner commented with unconcealed awe on "some American Trading Company in which you could buy almost anything you needed."<sup>55</sup> While complaining bitterly about prices, the miner marvelled at the rapid delivery of goods. "I'd hardly be there myself before the store's dog-sleds would arrive with all that I ordered. The whole supply would be delivered to the door without any extra charge."

Until 1901, travel on the creek roads was arduous; consequently the cost of freighting goods was outrageously high. Summer rates varied from 25 cents to \$1 per pound, depending on the distance of the destination from Dawson. Winter rates dropped by one-half, since the frozen trails were considerably easier to negotiate.<sup>56</sup> The miner from Sulphur Creek quoted above tells us that an article which cost 50 cents in Dawson was worth \$1.50 once it had been transported into camp.<sup>57</sup> According to H.A. Innis, it was possible to pay ten times the Vancouver or Victoria price for an article just to transport it to an outlying creek.<sup>58</sup> As the transportation of heavy equipment such as steam thawers, pumps and boilers became increasingly necessary, the annoyance of bad roads intensified.

As early as 1899 the Yukon Council had realized the need for better roads, but an adequate network was not completed for several years.<sup>59</sup> By 1901 there were daily stage connections to the creeks, and the 25 cents per pound summer rate to Grand

Forks had fallen to a more reasonable 3 cents per pound.<sup>60</sup> Dawson's business with the creeks that year was active enough to support eight freighting companies on the circuit. In 1903 one visiting writer spoke grandly of the fine government highway to Hunker Creek and of the many six-horse stages that ran frequent trips into the territory. "Hence," he concluded, "Dawson takes on metropolitan airs, and considers herself the new metropolis of the far north and Yukon valley."<sup>61</sup>

Not all the general merchants on the creeks resigned themselves to Dawson's superiority. As roads improved and rates fell, so their ability to compete increased. Dick Craine of the Last Chance Hotel, General Store and Museum on Last Chance Creek put an advertisement in the *Dawson Daily News* late in the winter of 1900, announcing that "I will compete in prices with any house in Dawson. Come and get my prices. Pack train and delivery in connection. Give me a chance on your freight."<sup>62</sup> About a year later, the *Nugget* referred with a certain sympathy to the small Dawson merchants whose businesses were stagnating because of increased competition from the creeks.<sup>63</sup> According to the *Nugget*, the success of these outlying traders was largely due to the exorbitant storage rates charged in Dawson at the time, rates which creek traders were able to avoid if they met their consignments right at the docks. No evidence remains, however, to indicate the ultimate success of these creek merchants in avoiding the Dawson wholesale middlemen.

The sphere of Dawson's commercial influence extended well beyond the Kondike River and its tributaries. By 1902 the 307-mile Dawson-Whitehorse road had been completed.<sup>64</sup> To the Dawson supplier, this meant not only that winter goods would have a better chance of arriving intact but also that the completed road would give rise to an uninterrupted chain of road-houses to be stocked. Needless to say, Whitehorse jobbing grocers had much the same thoughts of possible gains. Fort Selkirk, at the junction of the Pelly and Yukon rivers, some 175 miles from Dawson, seems to have emerged as the dividing point between the Dawson- and Whitehorse-dependent posts.

While the division of spoils of the Yukon River trade was fairly clear-cut, spheres of influence along the tributaries were more hazily drawn. The Stewart River posts are a good example of this. An entire general store outfit (for the Stewart River Trading Company) and numerous individual consignments were sent out by steamer from Dawson in 1902.<sup>65</sup> At the same time, the North-West Mounted Police detachment on that river was supplied through Whitehorse. The year 1902, incidentally, marked the first occasion on which the Mounted Police stocked their posts with goods "from home corners," as the quartermaster put it in his an-

nouncement to the *Dawson Daily News*.<sup>66</sup> This must have come as good news to both Dawson and Whitehorse companies which might acquire contracts.

As the railhead, Whitehorse enjoyed a certain degree of commercial activity on its own. It was never as wealthy as Dawson, for there were no mining operations in the immediate vicinity. Yet a strike at nearby Kluane Lake in the fall of 1903 provoked a great deal of excitement among Whitehorse residents. The new strike was located on a headwater lake of the Yukon River, just over 100 miles west of Whitehorse by overland trail. Since Whitehorse, as the railhead, received freight on a continual basis all winter long, it was in a good position to capture the Kluane market. At this point the general merchandise trade in that community was well under control in the hands of four major dealers. In conjunction with a handful of specialists in hardware, men's clothing and groceries, this group monopolized the services in the new camp. Whitehorse itself was virtually deserted that fall.<sup>67</sup> Its citizens had spent too long a time as mere spectators to others' stampedes: they were determined to have an active hand in this one.

The propitious effect of the Tanana strike on Dawson suppliers has already been mentioned. Through a highly controversial point of Canadian customs policy, these same suppliers enjoyed a continually strong market in those downriver camps which, though in American territory, were closer to Dawson than to Saint Michael. Merchants in these communities (such towns as Eagle, Chicken, Steel Creek and Ramparts) soon became frustrated when they tried to ship in American goods. The shortest route was undoubtedly the upper river one; that is, the railroad through Canadian territory. Canadian bonding procedure required that duty on American goods be paid, to be refunded when such goods re-entered American territory. But after coping with miles of red tape in the customs office at Victoria, the receiving merchants found the refund almost impossible to extract. American goods were still a large part of Dawson's stock at this time (see "Satisfying the Sourdough Appetite," and victimized merchants soon discovered that it was much simpler to buy from Dawson wholesale dealers. An added advantage was that these goods could enter Alaskan territory under an American regulation as "American goods returned duty-free."<sup>68</sup> Ironically, customs irregularities had helped to flood Dawson with American goods in the first place. Now it was Dawson's turn to benefit from similar confusion on the other side of the border.

If H.A. Innis's hypothesis that the initial Klondike boom period was followed by a time of economic adjustment is accepted, then one can legitimately view commercial activity in the period 1899–1903 in terms of reduction and consolidation. This trend

was most profitable for the larger wholesale and retail establishments which could better adjust to the change. The diversity of their activities would ultimately be the factor which left to them the fulfillment of Dawson's role as Klondike metropolis. Conversely, such commercial progress was apt to be disastrous for the plethora of now-redundant traders and small merchants who had once jammed Dawson's streets, for their stake in metropolitan prosperity was a peripheral one indeed.

Such an insistent stress upon commercial consolidation might create an unnecessarily bleak picture unless a related view of Dawson in this period is also considered, for during these same years Dawson blossomed. A number of experienced and specialized storekeepers had built up known and respected businesses by maintaining high quality in their commodities and by stocking lines as varied as could be found along any main street outside. Variety and quality were more than anyone had dared hope for in the rough and ready days of "tent city" hawkers. They were qualities which Dawson merchants learned to provide.

### **Mercantile Mosaic: The Men and their Methods**

The swampy streets of Dawson had been turbulent, in the summer of 1898, with the activities of Everyman the entrepreneur, with his swapping, bargaining, peddling, profiting or losing, and ultimately with his selling out. In such a trade there was little to distinguish the buyer from the seller. A certain common spirit of adventure and enterprise did, however, exist; one which in most cases understood quick profits better than patience and planning. Nevertheless, an attempt to single out and identify The Dawson Merchant from the maze of active and peripheral participants results in a dilemma. The problem applies only to the period during and after the gold-rush, for the identity of the river trader of the pre-rush Yukon River commercial empire is very well defined indeed. Jack McQuesten represents a legitimate stereotype; he was the enterprising, trusting but astute frontiersman who differed little in character from the prospector with whom he did business.

After 1898 the stereotype blurs. While the mercantile procedure was definitely more structured and more rational in these years than it had been before the gold-rush, these factors do not make it more conducive to generalization. Instead, the group in question becomes more complex. Dawson merchants have, in the previous chapter, been introduced as a cohesive group with a known hierarchy and sphere of influence. Nevertheless the whole was far from uniform; great variety and individuality prevailed among its membership and within the community bond.

Consolidation, the unifying force which was considered necessary to ensure Dawson's commercial survival in the 20th century, was at work during the period in conjunction with another influential trend, one which was more a part of 19th-century mercantile behaviour. This trend was specialization. In the early years of the new century Dawson merchants were engaged in surprisingly narrow fields of endeavour. This in itself bespoke a maturing urban population. The general trader in provisions, dry goods, hardware, feed and livery had indeed been the predominant figure of both the rural and mining frontiers, but after the initial scramble for and distribution of provisions in 1897–98, this kind of small-scale general trade was no longer the rule in Dawson. After all, once the railway had been completed in 1900, the city no longer considered itself a remote outpost. In 1899 advertisements exhorted residents to "avoid the old style or back-woods trading" by shopping in one of Dawson's better-appointed department stores.<sup>1</sup>

The general merchant was still visible in the Klondike, but the typical role (as defined by the rural country storekeeper or frontier river trader) had altered considerably. After 1898 the trader

and general outfitter on the creeks probably conformed most closely to the 19th-century image. In many creek camps a single man looked after the general store, roadhouse, stable and post office. While his tasks were varied, he and his store were not necessarily the focal point of the community. In the context of the Klondike's cosmopolitan and, indeed, sophisticated population, neither was he necessarily the most travelled, the most experienced in the ways of barter, nor the most versatile man in the community, as the country storekeeper was reputed to have been.<sup>2</sup>

In Dawson itself, the term "general merchant" no longer evoked the trader or country storekeeper. City directories often applied the term to individuals who did most of their trade in a diversity of dry goods. The large multi-purpose or commercial companies, whose lines actually did cover the range of products traditionally carried by the general merchant, had from their infancy more resembled the modern department store. Business was conducted on several floors in such varied areas as hardware, men's and women's furnishings (clothing), groceries, drugs, tinware and stoves, china and glass. All these were overseen by managers and superintendents who directed a number of clerks, salesmen and saleswomen, warehousemen, weighers, cashiers, book keepers and stenographers. In 1902 the NC Company had 65 employees and the NAT&T Company had 31.<sup>3</sup> Hardly a classic example of the general store! Among Dawson's floating merchant population there were, however, dealers who were general merchants of the traditional sort. These traders usually operated for a summer season only, and none of them remained in the mainstream of Dawson's commerce for long.

The merchants who ran well-stocked shops carrying one specific type of goods were far more noticeable in terms of advertising, promotional photographs and newspaper articles, and far more representative of the variety to be found in the business community. In 1902, for instance, the Dawson consumer could obtain fresh poultry or "fresh eastern oysters" from any of 16 local meat markets. A total of 27 retail grocers were in town that year, but many of them were fairly specialized. W.A. Hammell and Avery's Grocery had acquired reputations for stocking more goods than the common everyday commodities. "Fancy goods" was the term they used to describe them. T.W. Grennan was known for his large supply of household goods and William Germer for his competitive tobacco counter. If the customer wanted "Armour" meats, John H. Hughes was the agent; if he was looking for "Swift's", N.P. Shaw and Company's store was the place to go. Grocers Darby and Schink specialized in baked goods from their German bakery next door, while M. Des Brisay

and Company concentrated in complete grocery outfits. The North End Grocery prided itself on its coffee (roasted fresh daily) and the South End Mercantile Company had a variety of Norwegian delicacies including herring, sardines, fishballs and anchovies.<sup>4</sup>

While several grocers dealt in butter, eggs and cheese, there were by 1899 five independent dairies. For those of Dawson's citizens who craved such luxuries as sweets, fruits and ice cream, there were from the earliest days stores to satisfy such particular appetites. The number of confectioneries in the city grew to 13 in 1902. These, along with the many similar establishments which sold tobaccos, cigars and cigarettes in addition to candies, comprised a total of 25 shops dealing in delicacies, treats and specialty items which had once been the prerogative of the general storekeeper. One of them, Zacarelli's, became Dawson's most luxurious palace of self-indulgence, dealing in stationery, ice cream and a full complement of current magazines as well as in bonbons.

Sargent and Pinska, Hershberg and Company, J.P. McLennan and (later) Oak Hall Clothing seem to have been the most popular men's clothing dealers and had full stocks of up-to-date "nobby" fashions for the northern gentleman. By 1902 there were 15 businessmen and women catering solely to the women of the city (who had, by this time, increased in number and respectability). They offered ladies' clothing, millinery, dressmaking and hair-dressing services.

Hardware, like groceries, was a singularly successful field of endeavour in the Klondike. At first most miners and new residents had been supplied from basic stocks of shelf hardware – largely an extension of the types of tools which had been contained in the average outfit (see Appendix L, below). It was not long before more domestic tools were required, as were those items of heavy hardware and machinery needed in the evolving mining industry. By 1903 Bob Bloom and Charles Kaiser were among the few who still restricted themselves to general shelf hardware. By contrast, George Apple's Pioneer Tinship, the Tacoma Hardware Company, the Dawson Hardware Company and "Mc & Mc" were focusing their efforts on producing their own stoves, tinware and pipe-fittings. F.G. Whitehead specialized in lamps, D.A. Shindlar in bicycles (commonly called "wheels"), and Brimstone and Stewart in furniture and undertaking.

While Dawson was soon rid of the diseases which had plagued the pioneers of 1897 and 1898, the average resident still had to consider his own well-being. A versified play on the equation of "health" and "wealth" exploited his concern in a popular form of advertising for patent medicine, both inside the territory and out.

With this all-important and universal goal in mind, drugstores were abundant and prosperous in Dawson. There were eight such firms in 1901, of which Cribbs and Rogers was the largest. As well as filling prescriptions, these drugstores provided another source of such "staple and fancy sundries" as cigars and sweets.<sup>5</sup>

With the possible exception of fresh meat and dairy products, all the foregoing types of goods were available from the complete stocks of the NC Company, the NAT&T Company, the Ames Mercantile Company and Ladue and Company, whose claims to excellence were based on their ability to fill the needs of the family table, the prospector's cabin and the mining camp in both essential and luxury items at reasonable prices. Yet these alternatives did not fulfill all the demands of Dawson's consuming population. By 1899 only one-fifth of the city's population was women,<sup>6</sup> and despite the influx of wives in the new century, Dawson's customers remained predominantly male and single. Understandably, their need for entertainment was treated as a highly promising market.

In this field, entertainment merchants held their own as successful and respected members of the commercial fraternity. The restaurant and saloon business was booming. According to Major H.J. Woodside, 50 per cent of Dawson's residents, even as late as 1901, kept house only as a place to sleep; daily they filled the city's 33 restaurants for the standard \$1 meal of pork and beans, bread, pie and coffee.<sup>7</sup> As consumers of large quantities of food, these restaurants were undoubtedly valuable clients of the large wholesale grocers.

A similar bond of interdependence existed between "respectable" businesses and dance halls. While the moral attitudes of the first group toward the commerce in pleasure associated with the second went unrecorded, their single-minded opposition to the closing of dance halls in 1902 was another matter. A petition bearing the names of many of the pillars of the business community clearly illustrates the close relationship between these merchants and the pleasure palaces. Not only were these dance halls, concert halls, theatres and their employees good customers, but a certain amount of their brisk trade tended to be deflected into nearby shops.<sup>8</sup>

Liquor was another product essential to the Klondike way of life, and, to some minds, one of the most profitable. At first the procedure of licensing premises for the wholesale distribution of liquor had been corrupted by the availability of black market permits. The fines levied on non-permit-holders were regarded by many establishments only as predictable working expenses.<sup>9</sup> By 1902 the schedule of license fees for the territory was as follows:

A. –Per Annum	
<i>For wholesale licence</i> .....	\$1,000
<i>For hotel in Dawson</i> .....	700
<i>For hotel in Klondike City, Whitehorse or Bonanza</i> .....	500
<i>For hotel at any other point in the Yukon Territory</i> .....	250
<i>For saloon in Dawson</i> .....	1,000
B. –For Season	
<i>For steamboats</i> .....	150 <sup>10</sup>

Lord Minto, on his trip through the city in 1900, hazarded a guess that every third house was a saloon.<sup>11</sup> A year later there were still 23 of these establishments. Despite Dawson's growing respectability as wives and family men asserted moderation, the number barely dwindled over the years. There were 16 saloons operating in 1905. These saloons, along with some restaurants and the city's many confectioneries, shared the cigar and tobacco trade, a lucrative one indeed. Tobacco had been regarded as a staple from the days when even the most spartan of prospector's outfits contained enough plug to make the long winter bearable. The *Canadian Grocer's* exhortations to grocers to keep a well-stocked tobacco counter were of no avail in Dawson, where that line of business had fallen into more specialized hands.

The consumption of liquor was aided by a number of merchants who dealt in wholesale wines and spirits. The AC Company, the NAT&T Company and the Ames Mercantile Company probably carried the largest stocks. In 1898 the AC Company was authorized to bring in 10,000 tons of liquor in exchange for a \$25,000 license fee and another \$60,000 in customs and revenue duties.<sup>12</sup> By 1901 only the two largest among the mercantile companies retained their licenses in wholesale liquor. The remaining trade was divided between Gandolfo (one of the enterprising fruit dealers of 1898) and Binet Brothers at the Madden House Hotel.

Dawson establishments were as varied in size and status as they were in the kinds of business they carried on. Again, loose categories may be drawn up, based on the amount of control exerted on the whole process of purchasing, shipping, storing and distributing. In determining comparative status, the distinctions made in the previous chapter between wholesale-retail companies and the smaller retail establishments which depended upon them are still useful as well. By compiling information from city directories for the years in question, a comparative list of the number of people employed by various businesses can be formed. Where more precise information as to capital and assets is not available, this list is a rough indication of business size. However crude the method, the results obtained reveal that the ten largest

employers and Woodside's list of the eight controlling firms correspond remarkably closely (see "Metropolitan Airs: Dawson from 1899 to 1903" and Appendix E). It also gives a fair indication of those merchants who were clearing enough profit to hire help, separating them from the third, more transient group of traders.

The large or controlling firms were lively promoters of Dawson's trade, both wholesale and retail. Their concern with the future of the community stimulated an interest in local elections to positions of prestige and authority, an interest which encouraged them as a group to play a significant part in local politics. Both as employers and as major investors they were able to exert an influence over the scope of candidates' policies. In some cases they entered the political fray themselves. H.C. Macaulay of Macaulay Brothers, wholesale importers, was one such; he was elected the first mayor of the newly incorporated city.<sup>13</sup> In the following year the mayoralty race was won by P.H. McLennan, the popular "Dawson-Vancouver Hardware King" and resident proprietor of McLennan and McFeely. His closest contestant was Thomas Adair, better known as one of the owners of J. and T. Adair, general merchandising, hardware and pianos.<sup>14</sup>

Local journals sometimes made mention of the various activities of leading merchants. While the names of smaller establishments rarely reached the columns except in advertisements, social notes frequently contained items about the more important proprietor when, for example, he left the north for the outside on a business tour of distributing houses across the continent and abroad. The Dawson Hardware Company, McLennan and McFeely, Sargent and Pinska, the AC Company, the Seattle-Yukon Trading Company, the Ames Mercantile Company and the NC Company could evidently afford the time and expense to set up their orders in this way.<sup>15</sup>

Occasional bits of information exist which record the careers of members of this group as they participated in related commercial ventures. R.P. McLennan (dry goods) and H.T. Roller (resident manager of the SYT Company) both held seats on various boards of directors in trust companies, stage transfer lines and power and telephone companies.<sup>16</sup> J.R. Gandolfo, who was originally known for being the first on the Dawson market with his citrus fruit in 1898, was in later years equally well known in real estate as one of Dawson's more cunning investors.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to this group, a second category of merchants existed, a smaller group which played a constant but less visible role in the community. This category roughly encompasses the city's variety of retail firms which, although they competed with the larger firms for the retail trade, were usually staffed only by

the proprietor and one or two assistants. The second part of Appendix E, showing those firms employing fewer than three assistants (1901–03), covers the majority of this group. There is little information about their personnel and operations.

Although they were exceptional in the fact that theirs was not a predominantly retail trade, Dawson's wholesale and commission merchants should also be noted. The details of these businesses remain vague, but newspaper advertisements reveal that they stocked their warehouses with complete lines of goods over a wide range. Hay, feed, flour, eggs, stored vegetables and canned milk might all come into their purview at one time or another. They purchased surplus consignments and goods brought in over the ice and stored them for resale and speculation. Barrett and Hull, Peter Steil (later Steil and Mullen), Stanley Scearce, and Cheney Kniffen and London were Dawson's largest commission merchants in the period 1901–03. Stanley Scearce's advertisements in the *Dawson Daily News* in 1902 reveal the business on its grandest scale (Fig. 36). Although they were neither as completely nor as consistently stocked, nor as responsible for the quality of the goods sold as were the commercial companies, these commission merchants were nonetheless their rivals.

The third group (if it can be so-called) of Dawson merchants in this period included its most colourful and certainly its most controversial members. For the purposes of this work, these merchants may be loosely described as unspecialized self-employed traders who operated without permanent mercantile establishments. This includes men who were either engaged in Dawson trade on a transient basis or who, if they took up residence, spent (as a rule) no more than one season in the town. It encompasses the transient trader – the mistrusted river or scow pedlar, treated by the majority of contemporary permanent merchants as a thorn in their sides and a universal scapegoat. While they were not similarly mistrusted, the local small traders who were to disappear during Dawson's belt-tightening after 1902–03 may also be placed in this third category. The identity of such a trader is marked by his absence from newspaper advertisements, photographs and business directories.

In retrospect, it would seem that these transient and local traders shared a particular function: they filled the gaps and shortages which were a perpetual feature of Dawson's market. These gaps were especially visible in the grocery trade, more specifically in fresh fruits and vegetables. In season and out, Dawsonites could never get enough of these commodities.

The *Dawson Daily News*, a faithful voice of the stable element of local business and a vehement advocate of commercial progress, spared no adjectives in its condemnation of the transient trader:

*Unscrupulous . . . unprincipalled curbstome dealers . . . with office in their hats and the half of whose capital consists of an immaculate nerve and an unequalled audacity. . . . The same chap one meets on the street today with a lot of moccassins for sale, "go sheep", tomorrow peddling out stale eggs and the next day probably selling socks or cheechako spirits. . . . They are a pest to the community and a parasite to the legitimate storekeepers, who have hundreds of thousands of dollars invested in buildings and stock, and yet who are brought into competition with these people, many of whom have not even a six by eight shack wherein to do business.*<sup>18</sup>

These traders were notorious for their evasion of fees and taxes and for their practice of passing one small rented building from hand to hand as they took turns going outside for more cargo.<sup>19</sup> As early as 1899 license fees were imposed on transient traders, but in 1902 the government of the newly incorporated city raised that fee from \$150 to \$500.<sup>20</sup> The imposition and strict enforcement of such fees must certainly have discouraged the transient element in Dawson's business community.

The yearly advent of the scowmen, as these transients were generally called, came in late May and early June. They arrived in Dawson along with the ice floes. Their winters were spent in Vancouver or Seattle where they gathered goods which were then shipped to be stored at Bennett Lake, where the anxious goldseekers had waited out the late winter weeks of 1897. At Bennett they too waited until the ice broke, and then they set out in small boats for Dawson. Their small craft navigated the ice-filled Yukon more easily than the larger sternwheelers which most Dawson merchants employed to transport goods, and theirs were understandably the first fresh perishables to reach the winter-weary Dawsonites. Turnover was rapid, and before a trader's presence had been really established, he was off to bring in a second lot. The speed of these trips was the secret of their success, for such traders were best at serving areas where known shortages existed. Such holes had to be plugged immediately, before the larger companies had a chance to order such products through regular channels. The trade was, in fact, an exhausting one, and after a few years of two round-trips each shipping season, the scowman had probably had enough.

Not every transient trader was denounced by reputable businessmen. Ezra Meeker was a yearly comer whose arrival was hailed and whose goods were announced in the newspapers.

1902

1902

1902

**STANLEY SCEARCE**

WHOLESALE

Shipper and Commis'n Merchant

Third Ave., Opp. Postoffice.

*Agent for T. M. Sinclair-Co. (Ld.) Fidelity Ham,  
Bacon and Lard. 10 tons Home in  
first shipment.*

*300 Cases Strictly Fresh Ranch Eggs.*

*400 Cases St. Charles Cream, Both Small  
and Hotel Size.*

*Best Oregon Creamery Butter.*

**STANLEY SCEARCE**

WHOLESALE

Shipper and Commis'n Merchant

Third Ave., Opp. Postoffice.

# FOLLOWING THE ICE WITH GOODS

I take this means to announce to my customers that for the season of 1902 now opening I will receive regularly large shipments of Produce, but for Eggs, Fresh Fruits, Etc., via the White Pass and will supply them in case lots and job lots only at the lowest possible figure. I will ship only careful lots of everything and give the trade the benefit of the lowest possible freight rate by the new tariff. All goods will be carefully sorted and graded and satisfaction will be guaranteed to the creek trade.

I now have in transit this side of Five Fingers, four scows loaded with everything short in the market in my particular line of business.

I wish to state now at the opening of the season that I shall sell my goods on their merits on a basis of cost and cartage and a reasonable margin for profit, and do not want to break the market, but, on the contrary, will try to maintain a legitimate schedule of prices on all goods in my special line.

**STANLEY SCEARCE**

WHOLESALE

Shipper and Commis'n Merchant

Third Ave., Opp. Postoffice.

*700 SACKS POTATOES.---The VERY BEST  
Selected Mature Burbank  
Potatoes.*

*5 Tons Onions---Best Selected Stock,*

*All Kinds Fresh Vegetables in Season Quick*

*LEMONS, ORANGES and APPLES.  
Brand New Stock.*

**STANLEY SCEARCE**

WHOLESALE

Shipper and Commis'n Merchant

Third Ave., Opp. Postoffice.

**STANLEY SCEARCE, WHOLESALE SHIPPER AND COMMISSION MERCHANT**

Third Avenue, Opposite the Postoffice.



Meeker was one of the traders who set up semi-permanent quarters on which he paid taxes and his trader's fee. (The building is still standing, or so a sign on a small one-storey cabin on Third Avenue across from Caley's Store indicates.) Meeker's first and most memorable trip was over the Chilkoot Pass in 1898. His flat-boat arrived in Dawson with 9,000 of his original 15,000 pounds of vegetables. Two weeks later, he pulled out with "two hundred ounces of Klondike gold in my belt."<sup>21</sup> Urged on by his hopes of a lifetime's wealth from Klondike gold, Meeker continued his yearly pilgrimage until April 1901 when his mining properties finally failed. In leaving Dawson for the last time, he vowed never to set foot in mining territory again.<sup>22</sup>

One fascinating feature of the Dawson merchant's history is his origin: what brought him to the Klondike? And what drew him into the business of buying and selling in the city? Many who were to become Yukon merchants had initially entered the territory as goldseekers, unsure of what form the paystreak would take. Some of these never made it to a placer creek, realizing along the way that there was a less heroic but more reliable way of getting rich. As long as thousands of others were determined or naive enough to continue the placer quest, there was money to be made in providing for their survival.

Many a Dawson merchant had his first taste of barter as a goldseeker-turned-entrepreneur along the famous trail of 1898. The commercial career of J.O. Drury, an Australian goldseeker, had an enterprising start when he bought a bolt of ticking, filled it with Dyea hay and easily sold the product to new arrivals. In 1899 he pooled his commercial know-how with Isaac Taylor, an Englishman he had met on the Ashcroft Trail to the goldfields the previous year.<sup>23</sup> Since their original meeting, Taylor had set up a store in Bennett which he had stocked with collected outfits and an initial consignment from R.P. Rithet in Victoria, representing an investment of \$200.<sup>24</sup> Before long, Taylor and Drury had moved to the new railhead at Whitehorse where the firm has remained ever since. It amalgamated with Whitney and Pedlar in 1912 and bought them out seven years later.

Like Taylor and Drury, Bob Bloom came to the Klondike in 1898 by the Chilkoot Pass. Like them, he perceived the possible profit in handling the redistribution of the tons of outfits on the passes. "Swapping," as he called the transaction which occurred when the disillusioned sold out to those who needed more goods to stay on, could lead to a fortune for the permanent middleman.<sup>25</sup> Bloom's first years of business in Dawson were based on continual "swapping." He supplemented his stocks by consignments from Victoria and Vancouver, primarily from McLennan and McFeely. During these early winters when busi-

ness was slack, he drove cattle from the coast to Dawson by overland trails.

Charles Sargent and Martin Pinska formed a partnership in February 1899 which marked the beginning of a firm which soon became one of Dawson's in 1898 (from Duluth and St. Paul, Minnesota, respectively) their initial interests in the Klondike had been somewhat dissimilar. Sargent hoped to acquire his wealth through mining, while Pinska came to Dawson with enterprise in mind. He brought with him a large stock of furs and opened a waterfront store in September 1898.<sup>26</sup> Business was good, and Sargent was persuaded to leave the drudgery of mining for a more reliable sort of profit-making operation. No sooner had the partnership been formed than its store was destroyed by the April 1899 conflagration. The firm relocated on a prominent lot at First Avenue and Second Street. By that fall Sargent and Pinska had enough capital to send one partner outside to buy stocks from New York and Boston manufacturers.

Like Pinska, other commercially minded men regarded the Klondike market as a worthwhile risk from the beginning. In many cases these men already possessed a quantity of capital which they determined to invest in mercantile ventures in Dawson. Some of them directed companies which dispatched representatives to open branches and extend operations into the north. (The extension of branch outlets by established west-coast firms has already been discussed as a factor in Yukon River development.) Others had no connections with existing companies, but possessed a large amount of capital which they invested in mercantile ventures. Both of these types were knowledgeable investors, men whose experience had led them to anticipate a large profit on money invested in gold-rush commerce.

One example of an extension of a large company was Parson's Produce Company, with headquarters in Winnipeg. This firm was, according to the *Nugget*, one of Canada's largest businesses. In addition to the Dawson investment, Parson's had branches in Vancouver, Nelson, Victoria, Rossland, Atlin and Bennett, British Columbia, as well as in Exeter, Ontario. The Dawson local manager, H.P. Hanson, had had two years of experience with the company and had at one point been mayor of Morden, Manitoba. By the end of 1899 Hanson had supervised the construction of three new warm and cold warehouses (to replace those lost in the April fire) as well as a second Dawson branch store.<sup>27</sup>

A good example of the second type of capitalist was S.D. Wood who, until he heard the call in 1897, was the mayor of Seattle.<sup>28</sup> Wood soon became something of a legend (certainly an example) in Seattle, for he relinquished his secure post and invested \$150,000 in a Yukon fleet and in stocks of goods and a

warehouse in Dawson and five other Alaskan points.<sup>29</sup> He continued to live in Seattle, leaving the management of his multi-purpose company (carriers and traders, staple and factory provisions, wholesale and retail, warm and cold storage and vessel leasing) to H. Te Roller.<sup>30</sup> Te Roller, as previously mentioned, invested in several Dawson concerns himself. When the SYT Company was sold out in 1900 Te Roller became the resident manager of the rival NAT&T Company.

Rather than embark immediately on a partnership or invest heavily in a large consignment of outside goods, many businessmen preferred to acquire capital and experience in northern mercantile activities by working as employees of one of the already established firms. In some cases, the prospective merchant probably sought temporary employment when he was unable to locate on the goldfields. Before long, he recognized the potential profit to be gained and resolved to embark on a commercial venture himself. Appendix E indicates the ample opportunities offered by Dawson businesses for such apprenticeships. The regularity with which such apprenticeships occurred is illustrated by several documented examples among the city's merchant population.

William Clark and W.A. Ryan were both experienced in northern trade when they opened the North End Grocery in 1900. Both had come north from Tacoma, Washington, where Ryan had been county clerk and correspondent for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and Clark had been an attorney.<sup>31</sup> Ryan had gained his experience as a clerk in the AE Company, while Clark's commercial training had begun when he was a waterfront trader.

Another Dawson merchant, W.H. Hammell, already had acquired some commercial experience in Montana when he arrived in the city in 1897. This experience undoubtedly helped him to find employment in the NAT&T Company shortly after he reached Dawson, and he remained with the company for the next two years. In August of 1899 he opened a store of his own, providing staples and fancy groceries for the family home or miner's cabin.<sup>32</sup> The understanding of commercial operations in the north and his capital, both acquired at the NAT&T Company, were without doubt the foundation of his operation.

In 1903 a partnership known as Cheney, Kniffen and London appeared in the city directory as commission merchants, auctioneers and general merchants with outlets on First Avenue and in Bonanza. Directory listings for previous years show that these three had been independently engaged in auctioneering before coming together in a partnership.

One especially notable case of a proprietor who worked up through the ranks of an established firm was that of R.S. Hilde-

brand. In 1901 Hildebrand was a mere shipping clerk for McLennan and McFeeley.<sup>33</sup> By 1905 he had bought out the firm's Dawson holdings.

While Dawson merchants' routes to commercial success varied, there is one feature of their collective origin which stands out clearly. Very few of them were Canadians. This fact was exposed in 1899 when the *Dawson Daily News* billed Parson's Produce as the only Canadian firm trading in the Yukon.<sup>34</sup> Why the *News* chose to overlook McLennan and McFeeley as Canadian operators must remain a mystery, but the data given in Appendix C is a fair indication that Canadian businessmen were not in the majority. This information has been compiled from all available references to the place of origin of any Dawson merchant or business firm. Such references do not abound, and the final product is, unfortunately, rather meagre. The results, however, are far from surprising. They merely reflect the fact that Dawson's population was predominantly American.<sup>35</sup>

Contemporary newspaper advertising conveys both the quality and versatility of Dawson's many stores. Weighted as they were in favour of each merchant's virtues, these advertisements leave one to wonder what reputation these men did indeed have with their customers.

The newspapers raised their voices in disapproval of business oversights or malpractices only on major matters which involved the entire business community. Consistently excessive prices and the cornering of a particular line of goods were usually the issues in question.

The NAT&T Company was censured by the *Nugget* in 1898 for its supposed irresponsibility and unfair distribution of goods during the preceding winter's shortages, but when Healey, the manager, was recalled that September, the fuss died down. Such an outright condemnation of a single firm was rare. One ardent critic of the Klondike trade in general was Mary E. Hitchcock, a wealthy American tourist who had chosen to spend her summer holidays in the Klondike. She was a connoisseur of fine goods and a more demanding customer than the average Dawson citizen during the summer of 1898. Few of the firms she dealt with escaped her caustic commentary: "Between the cheating of the people from whom we bought The goods, The spoiling and detention of our boxes by The steamship companies and the Non-responsibility of the warehouse owner, it is enough to drive one crazy."<sup>36</sup> It should be pointed out that the disorder of gold-rush times was hardly likely to produce the sort of mercantile habits which Mrs.

Hitchcock and her companion had come to expect in the more genteel commercial centres of the continent.

In keeping with the many other facets of northern progress, merchants prided themselves on their maturing business methods. The AE Company claimed in 1899 to have advanced beyond the crudities of backwoods trading "where you get what they want to give you in exchange for all you've got."<sup>37</sup> A rather long and highly laudatory newspaper article on the workings of the AC Company in 1898 praised that firm and its managers for their attention to order and detail, their execution of broad-minded plans, their fair prices and their absolute refusal to exploit the consumer. As the most seasoned of Dawson's firms, the AC Company was already capable of combining efficiency with elegance in their operations. Undeniably (the *Nugget* thought) this marked "progress towards civilization and its influences."<sup>38</sup> As long as business achieved that most important goal, the *Nugget's* reporter could find no reason to criticize.

H.P. Hanson, the courteous local manager of the Parson's Produce Company, was in turn singled out by the *Nugget* for public praise as being one of the most popular men in Dawson because of "certain straightforward qualities inherent in himself."<sup>39</sup> Honesty continued to be regarded as a virtue in the Yukon trader; the total dependence of the community on his goods required it to be so. At one time the trader had reciprocated by allowing almost unlimited credit to his mining customers. Much has been made of the swamping of the miner's code by the onslaught of the Klondike rush. Indeed, the kind of trust which had existed between Jack McQuesten and his customers would have been sheer naïveté in the grasping days of 1898 and after. But a certain amount of faith was still necessary, and Bob Bloom's wife spoke in retrospect of her husband's "uncanny knowledge of who he can trust and who he should avoid."<sup>40</sup>

Part of the price of 20th-century efficiency was the generally enforced restriction of the once promiscuous credit system.<sup>41</sup> The Dawson Hardware Company letterbook of 1903–04 shows that substantial security had to be presented before opening an account with that firm. The standard 60- to 90-day period of payment was all that was allowed, although this does not appear to have been rigorously enforced. Late in June a company collector was sent up to the creeks to clear up all unpaid bills.<sup>42</sup> His timing was good, since it followed closely on most cleanup operations and ensured the sudden income needed by the company to make its own large July payments. However severe the Dawson Hardware Company's methods seem to be in theory, in practice this rigorous system was essential to keep a balance. The company was constantly beseeched by miners for clemency on pay-

ments. The company letterbook is filled with scraps of paper with pencil-scrawled apologies for late payment: cleanup had been impeded, the paystreak was close at hand, unforeseen expenses for repairs had delayed other payments – in short, cash was not available. One letter from a medical doctor-miner in Dominion Creek starts with the common story of woe; his diggings had taken him unknowingly away from paydirt and into bedrock – therefore, no gold. His plea for time is made more complete by his statement that his own patients were not paying their bills either, and that he understood perfectly the position of the hardware company. One roadhouse proprietor explained that August was the month for the renewal of the expensive liquor licenses, and that as a result he had no cash remaining to pay his bills.<sup>43</sup>

As long as gold dust was used as a means of payment, extended credit was readily available and grubstaking remained a prevalent custom, Dawson trading ethics were a common subject of discussion. There was a legendary ritual of completing a transaction; one tossed one's poke on the counter and pointedly turned away while the merchant weighed out the amount owing on the purchase. If he so wished, the miner could request that a respectable store or saloon keeper look after or "bank" his poke for him.<sup>44</sup> An unlocked drawer was allegedly used for this purpose. (Presumably one avoided the premises of those less scrupulous dealers who exploited such ceremonies.) In 1899, before the arrival of official weights and measures from Ottawa, it was reported that no two sets of scales in town were the same, and that the only reliable ones were those used by the large companies.<sup>45</sup> In most cases, a certain percentage as a "tip" to the weigher was acceptable to both sides. It was possible, however, for some swindlers to gain as much as 50 cents on the dollar.

While gold dust was never officially legal tender, its widespread use as such was unavoidable. The miner paid for his provisions with the products of his labour in much the same way that the rural consumer paid for his supplies with crops, livestock or firewood. The custom was entrenched in Dawson commerce by 1898. In that year, hard currency was grievously scarce while dust was plentiful enough to be baked (one miner quipped) into Christmas puddings.<sup>46</sup>

The AC Company partly solved the currency problem by issuing vouchers and tokens.<sup>47</sup> These were paid out at a specified rate for contracted work; men selling cordwood to the store, stevedores on the company docks and store employees were all paid in this way with vouchers redeemable at the company counters. The policy did not last beyond 1898 and it does not appear that any other company followed suit.

The whole issue of the fluctuating exchange rate on gold dust was a vital one to both merchant and miner. The slightest variation brought cries of outrage from one camp or the other. The matter was complicated by two factors. First, each creek's dust assayed at a different value, varying from \$12.50 per ounce on one section of Hunker Creek to \$17.50 on another.<sup>48</sup> Second, the nearest official assay offices were thousands of miles away in Seattle. That necessitated initial payments by the store or bank to the miner, with the promise of refunds if the gold assayed more than the base value.<sup>49</sup>

The immediate solution adopted to cope with such an involved procedure was a streamlined operation whereby a recognizable and inferior gold dust, called "commercial" or "trade" dust, was circulated exclusively for local business transactions. This adulterated form was, of course, worthless, and could be bought from the bank at an established rate in exchange for the real stuff. The process resulted in uncontrolled inflation as the value of an ounce of trade dust dropped progressively in relation to the value of a pure ounce. In 1900 the ratio stood at \$14.50 to \$16.00.<sup>50</sup> If a case of goods was worth \$16.00 (one ounce of pure gold) it could be bought (theoretically) for an ounce of trade dust, but, given this ratio, the merchant would be reimbursed only \$14.50. As a result, rather than to assay all incoming gold to determine whether it was pure or trade assay, merchants simply went on the assumption that *all* dust in circulation was impure and accordingly raised their prices.<sup>51</sup>

Eventually the market was so inundated with trade dust that the Board of Trade reacted, announcing that the local exchange rate on all dust brought to the counter would be \$15 to the ounce.<sup>52</sup>

The placer labourers, an understandably discontented group at best, were infuriated by this announcement. They feared that the next step would be the total abolition of dust as a medium of currency. Throughout this controversy the *Dawson Daily News* stood squarely behind the merchants. The guilty parties, the editor claimed, were the mine owners and bosses who were buying up the cheaper dust and using it to pay their workers.<sup>53</sup> The crux of the matter was the fact that wages were computed on the basis of one ounce equalling \$16, which of course it did not. A worker paid in this way was bound to feel cheated at any store where his "\$16" ounce was accepted at less than that value.

By 1902, despite the threat among miners to form syndicates and buy their goods outside,<sup>54</sup> the exchange rate for commercial dust dropped again to \$13.50. A list of 36 firms which endorsed this policy was published. Since virtually every major company in each field was included, the buyer could do little to stem the tide against him.<sup>55</sup>

At the same time as the exchange rate was lowered, the practice of unlimited credit came under severe strain. More and more merchants demanded immediate payment. Call it the prospector's code or a backwoods style of trading, but the old order was being forced to change. The unwillingness of outside suppliers and manufacturers to make allowances for what they undoubtedly considered to be an outdated frontier system is fully understandable. By 1904 most controlling firms in Dawson were responding to this pressure by insisting on cash payments, even from their most trusted customers.<sup>56</sup> Up until that time, some 70 per cent of Klondike miners had been given credit for eight months, paying up with the results of spring cleanup.

The cash-on-the-spot demand was more than a bluff on the part of the large companies, but at the same time they could not deny that the credit tradition was still, for many miners, a way of survival. Both the use of gold dust and the extension of credit continued to a certain extent. Generally speaking, long credit and gold dust payments remained as regular practice only with the general merchants on the creeks whose clientele was still almost entirely composed of mine workers and whose methods continued to vary little from the acknowledged frontier traditions.

Lowering the exchange rate had the immediate effect of stirring up the long-simmering complaints against unduly high prices. On this issue the *Dawson Daily News* jumped to the defence of the consumer.<sup>57</sup> Like landowners and their own arch-enemy, the WPYR, merchants were (according to the editor) guilty of failing to scale down their prices in keeping with the post-boom pattern of economic belt-tightening. Little wonder, he exclaimed, that clubs were being formed to send outside for supplies.

During this period the T. Eaton Company began to make inroads in the Yukon Territory. Although the exact date on which Eaton's catalogue first crossed the Chilkoot is neither known nor celebrated, its arrival in the north marked the beginning of a long-lived association between the Dawsonite and the Dream Book. Since that time, loyalty to local merchants has been carefully weighed against the advantage of sending outside for goods.

Much of the general ill-will felt toward the Dawson merchants and their position on the monetary question should more accurately have been directed toward the Board of Trade, the official voice of the business community, including transport, mercantile, banking and real estate interests. Organized in September 1899,<sup>58</sup> the board played an especially active role before the incorporation of Dawson. During that time it was an important lobby to the Yukon Council on such matters as city improvements. Memorials from the board and reports from its various

members form a substantial portion of Lord Minto's Yukon correspondence.<sup>59</sup> The successive slates of the board's executive position over the years 1899–1903 were filled by a well-balanced sample of company directors, real estate brokers and bank managers.<sup>60</sup> The actual impulse needed to deal effectively with the trade dust problem had come from this body.

Those adversely affected by the policy regarded the Board of Trade as a dangerous combination designed to keep land and commodity prices high.<sup>61</sup> Merchants were thought to be doubly guilty as each year they faced additional accusations of cornering the market in certain commodities. This disreputable practice stirred "the collective sourdough memory" to recall the grim winter of 1897. Calling it the "starvation winter" was definitely hyperbolic. The root of the scare had in fact been indiscriminate cornering, resulting in scarcities of certain articles and black market dealings in many staples. Ever afterward, once the rumour of a natural shortage in a certain area reached public ears, fearful gossip about another such winter abounded.<sup>62</sup>

In 1899 the Yukon had frozen early, leaving many tons of freight stranded between Dawson and Skagway. During that fall and winter, massive manipulation was reported in the markets for rolled oats, hominy, sugar, Ogilvie flour, butter and potatoes.<sup>62</sup> No one was quite sure where truth ended and rumour began. Some firms were besieged with orders for 10,000 of a single item. The finger of blame was pointed squarely at those greedy and speculative "unprincipled curbstone dealers" who allegedly would not hesitate to deprive Dawson's poorer citizens. After individual interviews with representatives of the Ladue Trading and Exploring Company, the AE Company, the Ames Mercantile Company, the NAT&T Company and the NC Company, the *Dawson Daily News* discovered that all leading firms either pleaded total innocence of the scare or issued public assurances of their full stocks in all areas and their absolute refusal to sell staples in lots larger than an outfit. No staple line disappeared entirely and no one starved. Whether anyone actually made his fortune by the scare remains a matter of speculation.<sup>63</sup> Dawson would never be entirely free of price fixing of a certain kind. No one would deny the existence of open competition on one hand, but neither could one ignore the fact that, when the NC Company published its yearly price list, few merchants in Dawson were not affected.<sup>64</sup>

In 1902, again, the *Dawson Daily News* declared in December that the Pacific Cold Storage Company, the Standard Commercial Company and one other firm had the city locked in a three-way meat monopoly. The main point of the newspaper's criticism was that these firms, not content with their indisputable whole-

sale control of the market, had cornered retail sales as well.<sup>65</sup> Dawson residents were not adjusting to mercantile monopolies without complaints.

Merchants were also criticized for their failure to live up to the general public's expectations of high-quality goods. Dealers in groceries and provisions were especially vulnerable to these attacks, partly because of the shipping risks they had to take and partly because of the age of adulteration in which they lived. (This particular aspect of merchandising will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.) The North-West Mounted Police's health inspection provided a certain protection. The general efficiency of this unit is not known, but the *Dawson Daily News* described in lurid detail at least one successful raid in 1899. The trader in question had apparently been doing business up until the moment of his arrest – at which time the odor of his rotten eggs and tainted meat and fish was likened to that emitted by a sewer. Examination by one health official showed the meat to be "ready to walk." When the trader claimed that he was selling his merchandise as dog food, he was admonished, fined \$5 and court costs, and sent on his way.<sup>66</sup>

By all indications, the established Dawson merchant enjoyed a comfortable reputation in the city. Presidents and managers of leading companies, however they were considered by customers and employees, were generally respected as men of means and social prominence in the community. These leading merchants were part of a clearly visible post-boom elite, identified rather succinctly by Laura Berton in her witty and perceptive analysis of Dawson's social fabric in 1907. The event in question is the Grand Opening of the gala St. Andrew's Ball.

*It was led, of course, by Commissioner Henderson and his wife, followed by the church, represented by the Stringers, the law (the three head judges and police superintendent) and Mammon (the heads of companies). The rest of us followed behind.*<sup>67</sup>

As the northern store evolved from the cabin of the self-reliant river trader of the 1890s to the equally versatile but more elegant quarters of the department store, its role as a centre of social activity changed considerably. The importance of a warm, well-lit gathering place in the life of a prospector needs no further emphasis. Even in Dawson's heyday, when the cheechako hoards jostled along muddy Front Street, there was still a need for a central point of reference where friends could be found, news bartered and (above all) where word of any new strikes could be picked up, weighed as to authenticity and acted upon if necessary. The AC Company and the NAT&T Company, centrally located on Front Street and constructed side by side in the early summer of 1897, had from the start served as the *agora* of Daw-

son. Both stores opened onto large wide platforms which overlooked the traffic wending its way up Front Street, steamers rounding the bend from Whitehorse or Saint Michael, and, just across the way, the heaving and hauling of merchandise onto company wharves. The NC Company's verandah was indeed a fine place to spend long summer days waiting for a steamer, waiting for a strike, waiting for a stage bound for the creeks. In the early days of Dawson-Bonanza freighting, these companies were the arrival and departure points for various stage lines. There, without doubt, the pulse of the boom town could be felt daily. The AC Company's platform and the post office were the places to locate a long-lost friend, partner or husband. Stories of day-long lineups at the post office would seem to indicate that the crowd on the AC Company's platform probably had a better system for dealing with personal inquiries.

The end of summer in Dawson meant an end to steamers, freights, newcomers and Front Street activities. It meant the gnawing cold of winter, digging, thawing and the endless confinement in smoky cabins. There were, of course, diversions; unlike rural communities Dawson had scores of saloons, dance-halls, theatres, restaurants and (ultimately) ladies in Paradise Alley to compete for the gold of the lonely miner during his first long winter inside. The store, however, continued to hold its position as public assembly, reading room and social club.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the general reputation of boom town populations, not every Dawson citizen felt comfortable in the noise and smoky glitter of the dancehall. With a few exceptions, Dawson's restaurants seem to have been relatively cheerless eateries. The store, on the other hand, provided some element of companionship. While the cracker barrel tradition was no longer an element of its culture, the huge stove was undoubtedly the centre of any store gathering. The daughter of one trader recalled a vivid childhood memory of the tones of adult conversation punctuated by the occasional sharp hiss of spit hitting the hot metal.<sup>69</sup> This rag-chewing ran the usual gamut of Yukon topics from local injustices to prospecting adventure (every sourdough had his own "face-to-face-with-a-bear" story). References to the more distant past, to one's outside ties, were scrupulously avoided.

When electricity came to Dawson, it came first to the stores. A brightly lit room must have attracted many who found the hours of winter darkness increasingly unbearable. One sourdough gives us an idea of just how desperate the creek miner was for winter entertainment.

*On the creek where I spent the first several years the only form of recreation was playing cards by the light of a candle. There were neither books nor magazines, and at times we were so wistful for*

*a break in the monotony that we would visit the store in the evenings and read the labels on the cans.*<sup>70</sup>

Lord Minto's Klondike diary records that in 1900 the stores and shops seemed to be open night and day,<sup>71</sup> a practice that was probably directly related to long hours of summer daylight.

In time, some of the larger stores took to organizing activities to help fill the winter months. Editions of the *Dawson Daily News* during the winter of 1899–1900 made weekly references to hockey and bowling tournaments set up between the employees of some of the larger establishments. New Year's Day that year was celebrated around the punch bowl in the AC Company's store.

There were still vestiges, indeed, of the kind of trust and interdependence which had existed in the distant days along the Yukon River. But it was obvious, in the next decade, that the simplicity of this relationship would have to give way to the pressures of "progress towards civilization and its influences." The closely knit "family" of river traders working together more or less under the AC Company's banner had been forced to take on a new and multifarious membership. Streaming to the gold-bearing centres from all parts of the world, the merchant group of 1898 and later brought a vast range of experiences and backgrounds to bear on the traditional Yukon business methods. This new group was no homogeneous whole in terms of specialities, ways of operation or status in the community.

The next chapter focuses on one particular type of business and the demands which helped to mould it. The grocery and provisions trade was germane to all phases of Klondike outfitting and supply. As the Dawson business community matured, the small-scale general store became a peripheral rather than a central institution in the community. Only the provision merchants remained to carry on the trade most reminiscent of the gold-rush era in stores which were the most colourful emporia of them all.

## Satisfying the Sourdough Appetite

To the family:

*Laura may tell Frank Gross that we disposed of that pail of ham the same as we do of all grub, eat it up very quick. The dried fruit that his mother gave me went the same way, and all that Mother sent except the cherries. We have a lot of dried apples, peaches, apricots and such stuff we bought in Seattle. I do not miss the grub we have at home as much as you would think, but I will probably have a good appetite for it by the time I get home next June.*<sup>1</sup>

And so he probably would, for this miner, writing from Sulphur Creek in June of 1898, still had a long way to go on the crest of his optimism. His cache of dried fruits and vegetables, bacon and flour was still good; he would probably depend on these staples for his winter survival. While there were, of course, more interesting foods on the market in Dawson, the creek worker could afford neither the time nor the money to procure them.

Winter thawing was a long, tedious, back-breaking task – one which is too rarely brought to mind by the romantic concept of digging for gold. Only one man was released from this work at a time to take charge of cooking, a chore which in some cases involved no more than cooking up quantities of sourdough bread and beans. Cooked beans could be left to freeze solid; the cook could then hack off a chunk of them with an axe and heat them in skillet grease when necessary.<sup>2</sup> These solid victuals were consumed along with bacon and coffee, tinned or dried fruits and vegetables when they were available. For that first winter, at least, it was sourdough bread and brown beans – not the excitement of scooping nuggets from creekbeds – which kept the Klondiker's body and soul together. The first of these staples, sourdough, was such a thoroughly rooted Yukon tradition that it lent its name as a sobriquet to the Yukon old-timer. "Sourdough" described the pungent taste and smell of the fermented paste, or starter, which was used to start the leavening of dough. Why the name was earned by anyone who had spent one winter inside has never been successfully explained.

There were innumerable possible variations for the baking of sourdough bread. Two follow. The first recipe was used by Martha Louise Black in her earliest days in the Yukon. This recipe employs the traditional starter, a rising agent made ahead of time without the benefit of store-bought yeast. A small amount of starter was saved each time for subsequent bread-making:

*Mix a thin batter of flour and water. Add a little rice or macaroni water and a pinch of sugar. Put mixture in a pail, cover it and hang over the stove, keeping it warm for four hours. Sourdough may be used to raise bread, pancakes and doughnuts. For pancakes use a pinch of soda.*<sup>3</sup>

The second recipe was included in his diary by a Sulphur Creek miner.

*6 cups flour  
5 tea spoons baking powder  
2 tea spoons salt  
mix well  
4 cups water*<sup>4</sup>

The final traditional Klondike touch came with the baking, for the bread pan was the prospector's gold pan. With more modern methods of working dumps, the miner's pan was relegated to what, up to that point, had been its secondary functions as a vessel for baking bread and washing up.

The only food which could rival bread as a dietary staple was brown beans, *which exactly resemble[sic] the ordinary beans supplied to horses, and require boiling for about 3 hours before they become sufficiently soft. They possess strong nutritive and heating properties and in those days, when meat could only be obtained at fabulous prices, were consumed in enormous quantities. They were not unpleasant to eat when there was nothing else, and went by the name "Yukon Strawberry."*<sup>5</sup>

Such a dispassionate observation must have come from a man who wintered on something of a deluxe outfit.

Even a full stomach of bread and beans was not enough. The constant exposure to cold, the unrelieved monotony of mining, the dark, airless, unhygienic cabins and the endlessly repeated menu all contributed, if not to scurvy, to a most depressing physical condition. As late as 1900 a boy wrote from the creeks, *Happily the cold air and the work do sharpen our appetites and we could relish sawdust and garlic.*

*The succulent (and flatulent) bean is the mainstay of the miner during the winter. In Dawson, one can feast on oysters, frogs' legs, fresh eggs and beef, but on the creeks, while we may sigh for such delicacies we are content to feed on the meat of moose or caribou, bacon, canned mutton or canned roast beef.*<sup>6</sup> Moose, caribou and smaller game as well as fish in season were some of the few concessions made by the Yukon to provide for these newcomers. Even then, such concessions were not direct ones. If cheechakos were not suited to the arduous miner's life, they were even less competent as self-sufficient men of the bush. The inclusion of bacon and tinned meats in an outfit was presum-

ably intended to free the goldseeker from the necessity of hunting. When the tinned meat ran out and the bacon became unbearable, the cheechako could obtain game from the natives who had, until recently, depended on it themselves. With their moose pastures overrun by foreigners and alien gold-extracting equipment, many of these bands had turned to exchanging their game for the gold they had previously ignored. One band camped at Moosehide each summer to be nearer the lucrative market at the Klondike's mouth.<sup>7</sup> Winters were particularly productive, for during that season native life was "enlivened by quick trips to Dawson and the mining camps to sell meat at inflationary prices."<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the year, weekly newspaper reports of fish and game prices were regular features of the Dawson commodities market.<sup>9</sup> One sourdough recalled that caribou meat was tender and palatable, but less energy-giving than moose, beef or pork. *It doesn't stay with one as long. Moose has all the consistency of beef and is the same. The bulk of the meat is . . . stringy but the steaks are equal[to] beef steaks. It may be kept[frozen] in summer for as long as required by placing in glacial streams.*<sup>10</sup> Some of the more fastidious urbanites who had rushed to the goldfields ignorant and unquestioning were somewhat squeamish about eating fresh game.<sup>11</sup> Too late they realized that fresh meat of any sort was all too rare an occurrence in the early Dawson market.

One assistant surgeon for the North-West Mounted Police was very much aware of the positive relationship between varied diet and high morale among his men. As late as 1900, isolation and the lack of diversion were considered by Dr. Paré to be a serious danger to the mental health of the force. To counteract these conditions, he ordered that rations be made as appetizing as possible, even though most food still came from tins. "It is a daily and amusing sight," he remarked, "to see them going to their mess with cans of peas, corn, fruit, cream, milk, bottles of pickles, sardines, etc."<sup>12</sup>

The territorial health officer in 1899, Dr. J.W. Good, was similarly concerned about the well-being of Dawson's predominantly male population (80 per cent of the population in 1899).<sup>13</sup> If more women came north, he reasoned, their talents could be turned to raising vegetables, chickens and cows. The positive influence of family life in Dawson would put an end to scurvy once and for all.<sup>14</sup>

One northern woman who agreed with Dr. Good's philosophy was Mrs. Clarence Berry, the wife of one of Dawson's original Bonanza kings. She had accompanied her husband over the pass in 1895 because she thought that women had an essential role to

play in the goldfields, cooking for their men to prevent sickness and stomach-aches. She strained her imagination to produce a wholesome diet out of tins, yet despite her efforts, she still pined for anything fresh, raw or green.<sup>15</sup>

Martha Louise Black found her culinary talents similarly challenged by the limitations of an outfit and a general food shortage in trying to cook decent meals for lonely and hungry miners.

*This is Thanksgiving month, and I am going to celebrate with a dinner. It is difficult to cook here, with granulated potatoes, crystallized eggs, evaporated fruits and vegetables, canned meat and condensed milk, but I have made mincemeat and it is prime.*<sup>16</sup>

She came up with the following menu:

*Canned tomato soup – Bread Sticks*

*Oyster patties – Olives*

*Baked Stuffed Ptarmigan*

*Canned Corn – Dessicated Potato Puff*

*Bread – Butter – Pickles*

*Mince Pie – Cheese – Coffee*

*Popcorn Balls – and a taste of your Home Fruit Cake (the larger part to be saved for Christmas).*

In the isolated winter life of a miner, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year were bright moments indeed, moments when the cabin walls seemed less confining, the surrounding wilderness less oppressive. Such occasions called for cabin-to-cabin socializing – something of a luxury in itself, when there was thawing and digging to be done. Friends from the same hometown might get together in one cabin to sing and dance and eat as fine a meal as could be assembled from the best of the combined outfits.<sup>17</sup>

Roast moose often took the place of turkey, accompanied by the traditional cranberry sauce, if someone had managed to hoard a little.<sup>18</sup> Mince pie or plum pudding was another special treat, pulled from a corner of the cabin where it had been stored for the occasion. For one group of miners, the celebrational dinner consisted (by necessity) of dried potatoes, bacon, rice, evaporated fruit and their last can of tomatoes as a treat.<sup>19</sup>

In recording this dinner in a letter to his sister in England, a young miner reflected unhappily that whatever Dawson had for sale lay far beyond the reach of an ordinary miner working a claim deep in the Klondike valley. By the fall of 1898 the city boasted both specialized and general retail establishments which were known for their choice merchandise. In fact, one resident of Dawson and the creeks from 1898 to 1901 declared that "there was little you couldn't get there provided you had the money."<sup>20</sup>



Most Dawson residents, however, were as limited by economic considerations in their choice as were the workers on the creek beds. They too grew tired of tinned goods, the inescapable social leveller. Long after the outfits purchased in Vancouver had run out and Dawson warehouses had been fully stocked in all lines of new goods, tin cans continued to dominate Dawson's shelves – as well as its hillsides.

*As we approach the confines of the town the chief object that attracts the eye is the immense number of empty tin cans of every size and description, which lie in thousands upon all sides of the innumerable log cabins dotted about on the rocky hill slopes. The poorer inhabitants appear to live exclusively on canned food and there is surely here a great field open for an enterprising inventor who can put the masses of empty tins, which are thrown away in such quantities, to any practical use. The motto "One people one tongue" much quoted in Dawson, evidently refers to the canned commodity which forms the staple food of the Anglo-Saxons of the city.*<sup>21</sup>

Fruits, vegetables, milk and cream, butter, crystallized eggs, meats, fish (especially salmon), soups, baking powder, yeast, baking soda, cocoa and coffee had all been sealed, at one time or another, in those metal containers which lay strewn outside Dawson cabins. Baking powder tins, because of their size (a 2-1/2 lb. "Imperial" tin was 8 inches high and 4-1/2 inches in diameter)<sup>22</sup> were used as storage tins in the kitchen. Laura Ber-ton recalls that miners often stored their gold dust in these large cans.<sup>23</sup>

Yukon sourdoughs seem to have developed one common characteristic as a result of their first qualifying winter inside. Each one acquired a lifelong and unshakable loathing for one particular dish on the Dawson menu. For many it must have been one of the types of evaporated vegetables. The humble turnip may indeed have had the power to prevent scurvy, but it seems unlikely that it won many admirers in the Klondike in its evaporated form.

The granulated or dried potato was another item which, like the brown bean, won less than enthusiastic acceptance on Yukon dinner tables. "Lubeck's" German sliced potatoes led the field. The white substance, which rather resembled rice, was soaked in cold water and then doused with boiling water; so softened, it could be fried in bacon fat or butter.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the widespread use of the granulated potato in Dawson is best illustrated by the fact that the whole fresh potato was set apart by a special name, "cheechako potato," as being new to the territory. It was an expensive novelty at that. In 1899 one man who struck a rich claim celebrated his sudden wealth by splurging on fresh potatoes. He

bought 100 pounds which, at the prevailing price, would have cost him \$25. Ella Hall, who recorded the event, felt especially elated because, as a friend, she had received some of the treasured tubers.<sup>25</sup> By 1902 whole potatoes (as well as onions) were available year-round and "Lubeck's" registered a distinct decline in sales.<sup>26</sup> The price of fresh potatoes had dropped from the 25 cents per pound which the rich miner had paid three years before to a steady 9 cents per pound in 1902.<sup>27</sup>

The advent of cold storage in Dawson had had a decisive effect in enlarging the range of the city's diet. Cheese, butter, eggs, apples, citrus fruits, bananas, fish, poultry, meats, root vegetables and grains could all be kept in this way anywhere from 6 to 12 months.<sup>28</sup> Dawson, like the rest of Canada, was experimenting in a new process in dealing with perishables.<sup>29</sup> Across the country cold storage was greeted with general public discredit; most consumers insisted on "strictly fresh" goods.<sup>30</sup> But the northern customer was, unlike his far-off countrymen, in no position to make such demands. Cold storage had reintroduced whole meat into his diet and had rescued him from a lifetime of "Lamont's" crystallized eggs, "Lubeck's" evaporated potatoes and J.B. Agen's canned preserved butter.

On the other hand, creek workers who continued to do their shopping in Dawson on a twice-yearly basis kept the canned meat and vegetable trade flourishing.<sup>31</sup> A good week of frozen trails in the fall meant heavy purchasing traffic from the creeks, and a noticeable strain on the supplies of "Reindeer" milk or canned peas and beans.

Still, many comparatively privileged Dawson residents found that, after a few years, even cold storage food acquired a sameness in flavour which made one crave the "strictly fresh." Martha Louise Black yearned for dietary escape from the ten-month-old egg. Mrs. Black (who was by this time the wife of Commissioner George Black), was adventurous enough to decide that she would have to raise her own chickens if she was to have fresh eggs on a regular basis. Accordingly she sent to Vancouver for six dozen hens. Each and every fresh egg she relished, until she found out that the chickens had not prospered in the northern climate; all along her husband had been buying crates of the same cold-storage eggs which she believed that the gardener was delivering "fresh from the hen-house."<sup>32</sup>

The type of food which cold storage really freed from the confines of tin cans was meat. Without the benefit of refrigeration, Dawson had no access to the products of southern slaughterhouses. The only alternative was to ship in livestock, butcher it in Dawson and freeze the meat on the spot. This was no simple matter, given the obstacle course between Dawson and the

coast which had defeated beasts far more agile than beef cattle. Jack Dalton spent his gold-rush days laying a trail to skirt the passes on a wide sweep from the Lynn Canal to Fort Selkirk. For over 300 miles the footpath was long and rugged, but it avoided the treacheries both of the mountain pass trails and the upper river rapids. During the summer of 1898, some 2,000 beef cattle were herded over this route to the river.<sup>33</sup> When the overland trail from Whitehorse to Dawson was completed in 1902, herding was made even easier. During the winter, the stock was slaughtered at Whitehorse to save on additional feeding, and the frozen beef, pork and mutton were shipped over the ice from there.<sup>34</sup>

The greatest material improvement in Dawson meat provision was made by the Arctic Meat Company in 1899. A 250-horsepower steamer, the *Lotta Talbot*, was fitted out with liquid ammonia refrigeration compartments. She was constructed to make both the Pacific voyage from Seattle to Saint Michael and the shallow river journey up to Dawson. After a little more than two months of travel she arrived at the Dawson wharves, offering wholesale or over-the-counter meats to the city. The meat sold by this Puget Sound company was reputedly killed in its prime rather than after being driven to exhaustion over icy trails.<sup>35</sup>

By 1901 a similar firm, the Pacific Cold Storage Company, had entered the country from Tacoma, Washington, with both sea-going and river refrigeration steamers. It offered public storage and wholesale meat supplies at all points along the Yukon River as far upriver as Dawson. Meat was also brought in by the WPYR, which, by the same year, had installed special cars for transporting perishables. At Whitehorse, the *Canadian*, the *Columbian* or the *Yukoner* lay in berth to carry the refrigerated cargo down to Dawson.<sup>36</sup> With this modernization of cargo carriers, Swift and Armour, both large American meat distributors, could look to Dawson as an extension of their commercial empires.

The prospect of local ranching had been discouraged from the start by the scarcity of nearby grazing land and a short and uncertain growing season. A red-topped hay grew wild in some Yukon valleys and meadows, but such fertile patches tempted only the hardiest ranchers.

Much more successful experimentation in both agricultural and monetary terms was done with vegetables. Such experimentation was not a recent phenomenon in those latitudes. One trader, Arthur Harper, had persisted in growing vegetables at every Yukon post at which he served.<sup>37</sup> Small sandy plots were ideal, and while the growing season was, of course, short, the long hours of daylight could be relied on to produce unusually large vegetables.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, the factor which most encouraged

the success of Yukon market gardening was the ready-made market of eager Dawsonites.

C.M. Bartholam and James A. Acklin were two entrepreneurs of 1898 who foresaw the effect of fresh produce on a population hitherto dependent on tinned goods. Cultivating land just above Dawson on the Klondike River, Acklin tried out various types of lettuce, cabbage, cauliflower, radishes, peas, spinach, mustard, "sweet peas," carrots, turnips, pea and string beans, onions, beets, rhubarb and rutabagas.<sup>39</sup> Like Acklin, Bartholam discovered that there was more than one way to extract gold from the Yukon's banks. One of the first water pails of greens from his Klondike River plot sold for more than \$100 to a northerner starved for fresh vegetables.<sup>40</sup>

By the next harvest season there were 12 local gardeners concentrated in the valley around Dawson, the Klondike River, the flats at the river's mouth (near the Ogilvie Bridge) and the area across the Yukon known as West Dawson.<sup>41</sup> From that time on, the city's summer residents were treated to fresh vegetables of all kinds. In addition to those successfully cultivated by Acklin, local strawberries were particularly good as a cash crop: a small box always sold for more than a dollar.<sup>42</sup> Potatoes, although prolific, were never considered mealy enough to contend seriously with the cold storage variety. Early frost and old seeds from the outside were additional problems which hampered the immediate success of market gardening.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, Dawson consumed everything that was grown in both market and private gardens. Even in competition with fresh goods rushed in over the ice, early local lettuces and radishes sold out as soon as they appeared on the market each June.<sup>44</sup>

But fresh vegetables retailed at an average price of 12 cents per pound, and not everyone could afford them. Restaurants found themselves tied in the same way to tinned goods because of the prohibitive prices of local fresh merchandise.<sup>45</sup> In four years, however, the status of homegrown products had changed; Commissioner Lithgow claimed in 1906 that importation of turnips, carrots, beets and celery had almost ceased.<sup>46</sup> The evaporated vegetables seem mercifully to have passed by 1907, but tinned fruits and vegetables were still regarded as staples. Dried fruit remained a popular item as well.

In the realm of grains and cereals, Dawson's tastes changed little during and after the gold-rush. Flour and rolled oats were still staples. While there was an increasing number of bakeries in town (the 1902 directory lists 13), breadmaking held its place as a normal kitchen activity, especially in the growing number of homes where wives had come north to supervise miners' eating habits.

There was one major change in cereal products which registered as something of a fad across the continent during this period. The idea of prepared breakfast foods, which began with the boxing of "Quaker Oats" as early as the 1870s, had taken hold.<sup>47</sup> By 1903 a substantial corner of the Dawson grocery store was needed for boxed cereals, if the storekeeper intended to keep up with the almost 20 brands which were available to the market (see Appendix B). Steamed cereal was considered an especially sensible way to start a Yukon winter morning.

A major advance in the Dawson grocery trade after the gold-rush, and one of which merchants were visibly proud, was the increased range of specialty items or luxury goods which brightened the rows of shelves. Many of those who reported spartan Christmas meals in 1898 would not have to repeat the menu the next year. Once his first outfit had been consumed, the customer could take advantage of the many delicacies which were advertised at the Christmas season. Besides the turkeys and plum puddings which were expected at most tables, the Dawson merchant made the most of his fancy stocks of wines and wafers, special apples and raisins, nuts and biscuits, candied fruit and other such treats in boxes, tins and bottles. "Crosse and Blackwell" figured prominently in these seasonal advertisements for luxuries which would have seemed too expensive at any other time of year.<sup>48</sup> Foreign names abounded as candy and prunes from France, oranges, grapes and raisins from Spain or Turkey and nuts from South America made their special appearances in the showcases.

Also in step with the times were the menus in those Dawson restaurants which maintained any pretence to elegance. The menu of the Holborn Café in the spring of 1900 offered such delicacies as oyster cocktails and lobster salad on mayonnaise, queen olives, eastern shad *au gratin*, fricandeau of veal *à la macedoine* and English plum pudding with brandy sauce.<sup>49</sup> All one can hope is that the elaborate names were accurate descriptions of better and more appetizing food than the beanery meals of 1898 had been.

For those who preferred and could afford to prepare their own *gourmandises*, speciality items were available all year round. One advertisement from the Ames Mercantile Company in 1900 offered the consumer everything from shrimp in tomato sauce, devilled ham and vienna sausage to French prunes, pitted plums, New Orleans molasses and fancy table syrups. In fact it seems, from scanning grocery lists in *Canadian Grocer* and Eaton's catalogue, that the average Canadian at the turn of the century had a greater craving for fancy fruits, jellies and condiments in pots, tins and bottles than do his descendants today. Stanley

Scarce, a Dawson commission merchant and importer, appeared to dominate the field of fancy goods in 1907. His store stocked items which ranged from "Cresca" stuffed dates to "Averbach" German truffled liver. He also advertised peanut butter, which made its first appearance in Dawson around 1907. For a large jar of the substance Dawson consumers paid one dollar.<sup>50</sup>

To speak of "imports" to the Dawson market can be somewhat confusing for the word has a variety of connotations. Foremost in the mind of the average resident was the fact that nearly all goods had to be imported from far beyond the Yukon's borders. As the awareness of Dawson's vulnerability to American goods increased, "import" came to refer to goods from American rather than Canadian producers. In the field of fancy groceries, the word "import" maintained the idea that the item came from distant ports.

By 1902 several influential articles had pointed out to Canadian manufacturers the extent to which the Yukon diet was dependent on American goods.<sup>51</sup> Tinned goods, packaged dairy products, ham, bacon, lard, flour and evaporated vegetables were areas which were primarily supplied by American sources. Most dairy products and flour came from Washington and Oregon and most fruits and vegetables from California, although Australia and New Zealand provided some of these goods. The competitive Canadian products in these fields (especially dairy products) usually came from Ontario, as did many overseas shipments of such things as teas, coffees and dried fruits, and were distributed by centrally located jobbers there.<sup>52</sup>

The quality of the edibles on the cabin shelf had vastly improved since the concentrated and desiccated days of 1898. But beans and canned goods might continue to dominate many a table over the next decade, for not every miner could afford *paté de foie gras* from Stanley Scarce. Still, those merchants who advertised regularly in the local newspapers in 1902 appeared to have had an extraordinarily wide variety of stock, even in staple items.

These advertisements were interesting for their lack of convincing rhetoric and descriptive journalism. Mere lists of goods and prices sufficed in most cases. By 1902 some brand names were mentioned, but no consistent and focused effort was made to sell one brand of goods in any line. The popularity of one brand was often inferred only through repetitious references by more than one store; by this means one can presume the success of such brands as "Rex" meats, "Heinz" and "Crosse & Blackwell" products, "Ogilvie's" flour, and "J.B. Agen's" butter. Over the years only a handful of manufacturers and distributors advertised their goods directly in Dawson newspapers. "La-

37 "Some advertisements should be taken with a grain of salt - *Blue Ribbon Ceylon Tea* needs only cream and sugar." A common advertisement in the *Dawson Daily News* in 1902. (*Dawson Daily News*, 10 June 1902, p. 3)

38 "Hand - - Y" brand evaporated fruit, advertised in the *Klondike Nugget* in 1898. (*Klondike Nugget*, 16 June 1898, p. 4.)

39 The grocery department of the Northern Commercial Company, 1909. (*Public Archives Canada*, C 3014.)

*Some advertisements should be taken with a grain of salt - Blue Ribbon Ceylon Tea needs only cream and sugar.*

38



**HAND--Y**  
... BRAND  
**Evaporated**  
**Fruit and**  
**Vegetables**  
**ARE THE BEST**

They have been used in Alaska and Mining Camps of the Northwest for a number of years, and have given highest satisfaction. Ask your outfitter for them.



mont's Crystallized Eggs," "Hand--Y Brand" evaporated fruits and vegetables, "Blue Ribbon" and "Salada" teas, "Durkee's" spices, "Libby, McNeill and Libby," "Clark's" meats, "Ogilvie's Blue Label" flour and "J.B. Agen's" butter were among the few products which were advertised in this way (Figs. 37 and 38). After 1902 this practice occupied increased space in the pages of the *Dawson Daily News*.

The more popular method of advertising was done directly through the retailers of the product.<sup>53</sup> In his own store the merchant felt the greatest responsibility for the sales of certain brands of goods. As technology in the last half of the 19th century brought both the packaged product and the widespread marketing of a recognized brand name, the manufacturer and distributor encouraged the individual merchant to vouch for his product. The storekeeper, it was reasoned, would appreciate the increased efficiency in handling (e.g., packaged cereals as opposed to bins of rolled oats) as well as a reliable clientele if he stocked only one company's goods.

The transition made a tremendous difference to the store's interior. Shelving became the primary method of display, since the majority of products were in tins, bottles and packages and could be displayed that way. In addition, colourful placards, posters, cut-outs, bunting and plaster models were obtainable from the manufacturer for the purpose of advertising the brand name of that company's products.<sup>54</sup> The NC Company store displayed this kind of interior advertising (Fig. 39) as various company-sponsored advertisements competed for the customer's eye. Merchants with imaginative or artistic capabilities could build a rather elaborate display around the product, placards and models.

Ornate window dressings in grocery stores were particularly popular among the subscribers to the *Canadian Grocer*. Photographs, hints, criticism and praise directed at particular window displays of this or that grocer became a regular feature between 1903 and 1905. The accompanying articles stressed time and again the importance of imaginative visual appeal in these displays. It appeared that great pyramids of packaged products surrounded by large placards bearing the company's name, along with sundry related decorations, formed a most popular genre of window dressing (see Fig. 40). While Dawson photographs offer glimpses of small piles of goods in the window (Fig. 41) there seem to have been no grand expositions on the British model suggestive of those in the *Canadian Grocer*. This may, however, be the result of a gap in the pictorial record of the city rather than a lack of sophistication on the part of the merchants. The fact that many of the smaller stores opened out onto the side-

walk for the light summer months may also have limited window display (Fig. 42).

The interior appearance of any well-appointed store was thought to be an essential factor of good salesmanship. In this matter the *Canadian Grocer* weekly espoused the cause of neat and tidy displays. Now that packaging was coming into its own as a refined commercial art, the pleasing array of goods in a store began to take over from the chaotic floor-boards-to-rafters approach of the previous century. "Within recent years it has become a generally recognized fact that appearance is to a grocery store almost of the same importance that clothes are to a woman. They are not everything but they account for a great deal."<sup>55</sup>

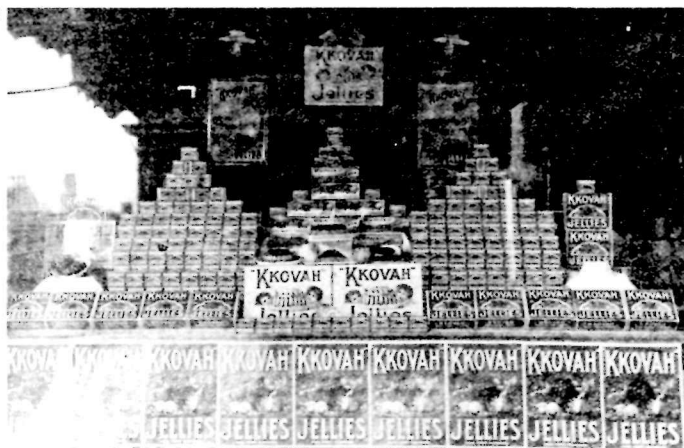
As with window displays, the *Grocer* made a regular feature of discussing the artistic and mercantile merits of the interiors of various Canadian establishments (Fig. 44). The pyramid or the three-dimensional stack of tinned and boxed products was universally popular, relying on floor-to-ceiling wall space along one whole wall of the store. Central display tables were used for some items, often in conjunction with brand advertising cards. Goods to be displayed in cartons, such as fruit, biscuits or candy, could be leaned against these central islands, leaving the counters free for conducting business. Showcases were also used for these sorts of goods, and in some stores for the grain products which had previously been hidden away in bins.

Flat, bevelled and sloping front glass cases were popular along the counters. In some establishments the display cases were built right into the shelves (Fig. 45). The *Canadian Grocer* had the following advice on the judicious and aesthetic use of store space:

*Barrels in sight, whatever the position may be, are not features of a neat interior. Counters should be free from almost all stock save what must be kept in show cases, and the office must be well built wherever it is placed. Neatness must exist in every successful store, and to obtain this the stock should be confined as much as possible to the shelves, show cases and fixtures specially made for the purpose.*<sup>56</sup>

Photographs of Dawson's commercial interiors show a marked similarity to those selected by the *Canadian Grocer* for favourable comment. Dawson merchants were obviously determined to keep pace with the latest display techniques (Figs. 39 and 43). In the NC Company's grocery department of 1909 only one barrel is in evidence; it contained ginger snaps. The cracker barrel had disappeared, and along with it a whole style of country store-keeping. Christie's appeared to have dominated the packaged

40 An exemplary grocery window display.  
(*Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 17, No. 50  
[Dec. 1903], p. 50)



41 The Dawson grocer did not always pay  
as much attention to his window dis-  
plays as did his southern counterparts.  
(*Public Archives Canada*, PA 13279.)

42 Mac's Grocery, 1903-05. Dawson  
stores extended to the sidewalks in  
summer. (*Public Archives Canada*, C  
7068.)



42





44 A store selected by the *Canadian Grocer* exhibits a popular display style. (*Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18 [July 1904], p. 53)



45 Glass showcases intended for confectioner's displays, 1897. (*Crandall and Godley Company, Bakers', Confectioners', Ice Cream Makers', and Caterers' Supplies, Tools, Fixtures, and Machinery* [New York: n. p., 1897], p. 21.)

THE CRANDALL & GODLEY CO., NEW YORK.

21

## SHOW CASES.

OVAL FRONT.

FRENCH DOUBLE-THICK GLASS, FULL GERMAN SILVER FRAME,

With Spring Hinge, or Sliding Doors.

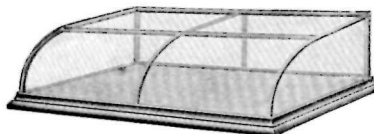


FIG. 10.

3 feet long for	85 00
4 "	7 25
5 "	9 10
6 "	10 30
7 "	11 50
8 "	13 30
9 "	15 30
10 "	19 50

BEVEL OR SLOPING FRONT.

Same Price as Ovals.  
No Extra Charge for Sliding Doors.

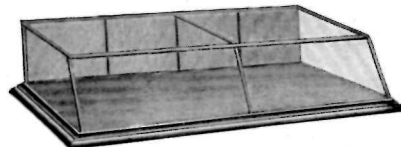


FIG. 11.

COMBINATION  
SHOW CASE.

Full German Silver.  
French Double-Thick Glass.

Can be made any height. Can have one or more shelves, as desired.

PRICES UPON APPLICATION.

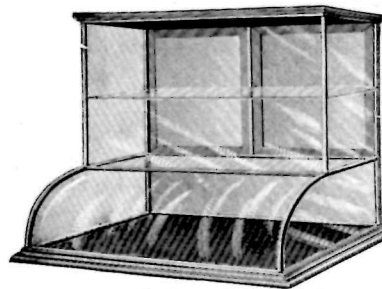


FIG. 12.

All goods are shipped at purchaser's risk of breakage or damage in transit, and shipped "Released."

Besides Fixtures, Tools and Machinery, we handle a Complete Line of Supplies.



biscuit business, but the open carton of cookies at the end of the counter never entirely disappeared.

Like biscuits and prepared cereals, much of what had once been bulk goods in barrels and bins appeared on Dawson shelves in neatly and uniformly packaged units. Bulk tea appeared in 40- and 50-pound packages. Coffee beans were also available in one-pound tins or in 25-pound sacks; the beans were ground into paper bags printed with the retailer's name, as a common method of distribution, and the coffee grinder never disappeared from the counter. In the photograph of the NC Company's store, a grinder is barely visible at the far end of the left-hand counter. While the *Canadian Grocer* carried advertisements for "Coles" coffee mills from Philadelphia and "National" mills (Eby, Blain and Company, Toronto, agents; see Figs. 46 and 47), smaller countertop models are displayed in the Dawson Hardware Company Museum; these are examples of the popular "Enterprise" (Enterprise Manufacturing Company, Philadelphia) and "Swift" (Land Brothers, Poughkeepsie, New York) coffee mills.<sup>57</sup>

Other goods were still available in bulk form, in addition to more modern packages. Apples still arrived tightly packed in barrels, but they were also sold in small tins and gallon units. While tinned butter was the only kind which arrived in Dawson at first, cold storage reintroduced the ordinary kind in 14-, 28- and 70-pound tubs, cases and barrels.<sup>58</sup> Tubs from the east were most often made of spruce. The tubs manufactured by United Factories in Toronto had lids firmly pressed on and four encircling hoops to hold them together. For protection from prolonged contact with the wood, the butter was wrapped in clean cloth and then in a salt and water paste. Cheese, like preserved butter, was most popular in the north in its prepared and packaged form.<sup>59</sup> MacLaren's cheeses were especially in evidence, in case lots of 24 small jars or 12 medium-sized ones (Fig. 48). Stilton, "Oregon Cream," "Genuine Swiss," "Young America" and "Ontario Twin" cheeses are recorded in 1905 market reports at various prices per pound;<sup>60</sup> the forms they came in, however, are not known. They were probably sold in boxed form, for at the same time the *Canadian Grocer* urged its subscribers in the cheese trade to avoid the false economy of cheap boxes.<sup>61</sup>

Rice and flour of all kinds were traditionally put up in 50-pound sacks, an especially convenient size for outfitting. This size continued to be standard. In the NC Company's photograph, however, the sacks on the left-hand back wall appear to be considerably smaller than 50 pounds (Fig. 39), but they may have contained dried peas or tapioca, which came in 10-pound sacks. Sugar was available in a wide variety of forms, each with its corresponding pack. Granulated sugar came in units of 20, 50 and

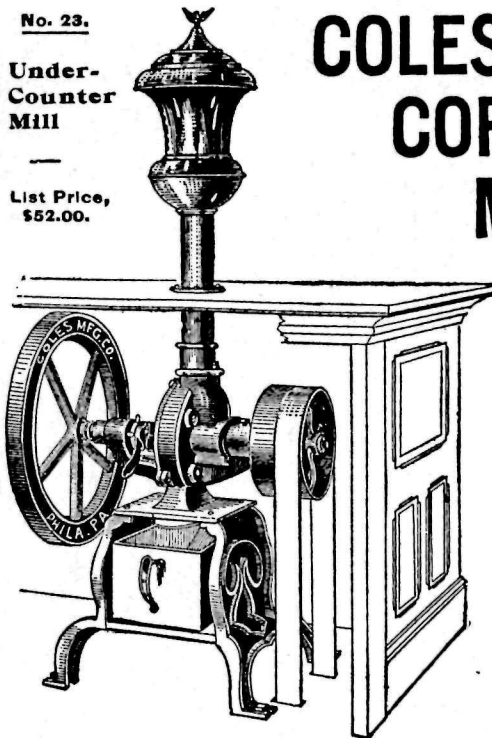
100 pounds; lump sugar came in barrels and half-barrels; bar or loaf sugar came in 25- and 40-pound packs, and pulverized sugar came in 25- and 100-pound barrels. Barrels and hogsheads of brown and white granulated sugar presented a common problem to the merchant. The contents became so hard over a period of time that a sugar augur had to be used to loosen the cemented mass.<sup>62</sup>

Syrup and molasses rarely arrived in the Yukon in large kegs. "Imperial" and "Log Cabin" were both popular brands of maple syrup (Fig. 49) and came in both 1- and 1-1/2 pound and in 5-gallon tins. Vinegar was still available in large quantities. Most preserving companies retailed their own vinegar in units from 1 gallon to 24 or 36 quarts. Pickled goods of all kinds were packed in wooden barrels or smaller kegs (Fig. 50). Pickled mackerel, herring, pigs' feet, hocks and beef, as well as the common pickled fruits and vegetables, were to be found in this form. "Heinz" advertised a number of packing units. Their pickles were put up in 1-, 2- and 3-pound kits, 16- and 30-gallon barrels, 5- and 10-gallon kegs and (of course) in bottles of less than a quart. Their motto, "57 Varieties," could be adequately vouched for in any large grocery department (Fig. 51). Salt came in barrels, as well as gunnies of 3, 5, and 10 pounds. Olive oil was marketed in quantities ranging from a pint to 12 gallons; French mushrooms came in sacks of as much as 100 pounds, and lard came in tubs of any size from 3 to 50 pounds.

While the shipping and retailing of products in bulk was maintained in various lines, these too were being gradually converted to packaged and name-brand items. Jams, jellies, sauces, olives, mustard and other condiments were packed into jars and tins (and, in the case of jams, pails) which varied from half a pint to 5 gallons in volume (Fig. 52). Baking powder came in standard-sized tins of 4, 8, 12 and 16 ounces and 2-1/2 pounds. Fruit and vegetable tins were usually of the 1-, 2-, 2-1/2- or 3-pound size. Breakfast cereal boxes contained either 1 or 2 pounds, while tins of cocoa were usually only a quarter or a half pound (Fig. 53). Tinned meats were generally sold in 1- and 2-pound quantities, as was condensed milk and cream.

With the packaging of staple goods in standard units, the standard case lot followed as a natural consequence. This provided a measure of efficiency in shipping, storage and wholesaling. In fact the photograph of the NC Company grocery department (Fig. 39) shows that packing cases were brought into the store and incorporated right into the displays. The transaction of moving goods from warehouse to shop was much easier than it had been in the days of bins and scoops. The case lot could be

**No. 23.**  
**Under-Counter Mill**  
 List Price, \$52.00.



# COLES COFFEE MILLS

None better for Granulating or Pulverizing.

Our mills will Pulverize without heating Coffee.

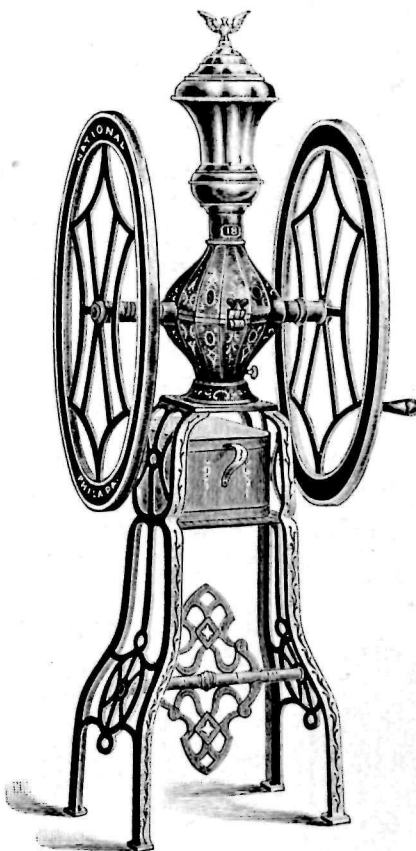
Every Coles Coffee Mill has a Breaker that breaks the Coffee before it enters the grinders, thus reducing wear of grinders.

**A GREAT LABOR-SAVER.**  
 Our Grinders wear longest.

Agents: TODHUNTER, MITCHELL & CO., Toronto.  
 DEARBORN & CO., St. John, N.B.  
 FORBES BROS., Montreal.  
 GORMAN, ECKERT & CO., London, Ont.

**COLES MANUFACTURING CO., PHILADELPHIA, PENN'A.**

THE  
 "NATIONAL"  
 No. 18  
 IS  
 GUARANTEED  
 TO  
 GIVE  
 COMPLETE  
 SATISFACTION—  
 AND—  
 —DOES  
 —IT—



SOLD ONLY IN CANADA BY THE  
**EBY, BLAIN**  
 CO., LIMITED  
 WHOLESALE GROCERS,  
**TORONTO.**

48



## Three Leaders

The road to prosperity lies through the desires of your customers.

These brands of cheese are the best you can offer. They are famous, and deserve their fame.

MacLaren's Imperial  
 Canada Cream  
 MacLaren's Roquefort

Don't make trouble for yourself by selling "just as good as" cheeses.



These three are standards of purity and excellence.

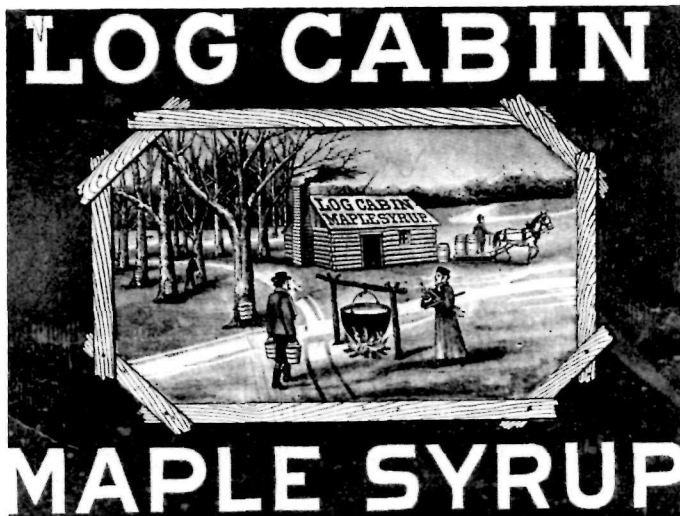
A. F. MacLAREN IMPERIAL  
 CHEESE CO., Limited,

Manufacturers and Agents,

TORONTO.



49



50



W. S. CLAWSON & CO.  
 ST. JOHN, N.B.

51 Five of the 57 varieties, 1904.  
 (Canadian Grocer, Vol. 18 [Oct. 1904],  
 p. 146)

52 E.D. Smith cherry preserves (probably  
 one pint), 1905.  
 (Canadian Grocer, Vol. 19 [March  
 1905], p. 55.)

53 A half-pound tin of cocoa. (Canadian  
 Grocer, Vol. 18, No. 1 [January 1904],  
 p. 7.)

51

**Wholesale Grocers and Wine Merchants,**  
**MONTREAL.**  
*The Most Liberally Managed Firm in Canada.*

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**OVER A CARLOAD A MONTH**

of  **HEINZ**  
**57 Varieties.**



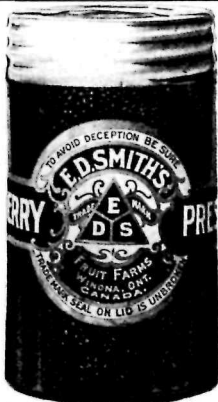




**Sole Agents in Eastern Canada: HUDON, HEBERT & CIE.**  
**Wholesale Grocers and Wine Merchants,**  
**MONTREAL.**  
**THE MOST LIBERALLY MANAGED FIRM IN CANADA.**

52

E. D. S. Jams, Jellies and Sealed Fruits  
IN GLASS



E. D. Smith's Fruit Farms, Winona, Ont.

53



**Registered Highest Award** **GOLD MEDAL** **Pat. Admitted**  
Exposition

The full flavor of the delicious quality, fine white purity of Lowney's Cocoa distinguishes it from all others. It is a natural product, and contains neither sugar nor other ingredients, so that, strictly prepared, cocoa should be obtained, making up the tin a perfect and useful product of the choicest Cocoa Beans. A quality that is superior to any other product of the choicest Cocoa Beans. A quality that is superior to any other product of the choicest Cocoa Beans.

**THE WALTER N. LOWNEY COMPANY, No. 22 COMMERCIAL STREET, BOSTON, MASS.**

opened for display and small purchases or it could be sold as a unit, as often happened in sales to miners from the creeks.

The standard case lot of cereals consisted of 36 boxes of either one or two pounds each; biscuits were packed in lots of four dozen 2-pound boxes. A case of cocoa had 24 half-pound tins; a case of baking powder was 36 8-ounce tins or 12 16-ounce tins or 6 2-1/2-pound tins. A case lot of butter usually contained two dozen 2-pound tins, while one of condensed milk comprised four dozen one-pound tins. Case lots of tinned fruit and vegetables were usually made up of two dozen of either the 2- or 3-pound size. T. Eaton and Company had a case lot of half a dozen gallon tins as well (Fig. 54). Dried fruits, both in Dawson and Eaton's catalogue, came packed in crates weighing either 25 or 50 pounds (Fig. 55). Tinned meats were sold in a variety of case lots, usually of one or two dozen of either the 1- or 2-pound size. Whole tins were packed directly into the cases, bottles were wrapped first in a paper wrapper, often printed with the company's name; "Lea & Perrins" wrappers had the company's name in blue ink diagonally across the outside.<sup>63</sup>

As F.C. Wade pointed out, one reason for the extensive American trade with the Canadian Yukon was the progressiveness of its packing industry. Lighter tin containers, more attractive label lithography, more reliable packing of hams, cheeses and butter, all had their effect on the competitive Dawson market.<sup>64</sup> As late as 1905 the *Canadian Grocer* took up the same issue with Canadian manufacturers who were hoping to increase their shipments north.<sup>65</sup>

While increased convenience and tidiness were generally associated with the transition to packaged foods, the quality of the food could be affected too. A brief look at food standards has been taken above, but many years after the outfitting rush, both retailer and consumer were still plagued with adulterations and substitutions. While substitution tended more to cheapen the product and add to its weight rather than to introduce harmful substances, the common malpractice was gradually being brought to public attention. Packaging had certainly cleaned up many products, such as rolled oats, by sealing them off from the dirt which naturally accumulated in any general store, but the practice of additions and substitutions in the canning and packing industry was still far from being eradicated.

A *Canadian Grocer* report in 1904 showed that of 74 tested samples of jams and jellies, only four were found to contain nothing more than fruit, cane sugar and water. The rest contained varying amounts of turnip, glucose, coal tar, dyes and salicylic acid (the last two of which are noxious).<sup>66</sup> The same report showed that 100 out of 188 samples of various spices contained

stone husks, shells, sweepings, charcoal, hair or dirt. The following common adulterants were singled out:

<i>Original</i>	<i>Adulterant</i>
olive oil	cotton seed oil
maple syrup	brown sugar
maple syrup	glucose, sugar, water
pepper	stones, pulverized nut shells
jellies, jams	apple jelly, artificial colouring
baking powder	terra alba

An early issue of the *Grocer* told of chicory in coffee (a practice which was widely accepted at the turn of the century), acid in vinegar, starch in mustard, old sugar covered by new and boric acid in butter.<sup>67</sup>

Of course not all food complaints could be passed over as the responsibility of the manufacturer. Laura Berton tells of a well-known Dawson fruit dealer who "for a fabulous price . . . could sell you a deep box of fruit, the top layer perfect specimens, and all underneath rotten, with a smile of angelic sweetness and a gracious phrase of broken English."<sup>68</sup> The trials of shipping and storing perishables were apt to have adverse effects on those foods. One lady complained of finding five or six bad eggs after paying \$2.50 for a dozen.<sup>69</sup> The taste of the eggs could be completely ruined by poor packing procedures. For example, if jack pine was used for the crates instead of basswood or elm, damp weather caused the eggs to absorb a very nasty odour. Egg crates, the ever-watchful *Grocer* warned, had to be well-constructed and ventilated, since breakages could release a dreadful and permeating smell.<sup>70</sup> Cheese boxes needed continual inspection, especially in warm weather; unless they were cool and dry, gases could form. When this happened, the merchant was instructed to use a wire to poke a hole in the cheese to give vent to the gas. Mould had to be scraped off, and the surface rubbed with sweet oil.<sup>71</sup>

The average Dawson resident was cautious about what he bought, not because he was an overly fussy customer, but because his experiences with frozen outfits, tinned or cold storage foods, goods shipped over several thousand miles (not to mention his encounters with poorly packed or adulterated products) had made him acutely skeptical at the grocery counter. While the merchant could never wax too descriptive in his newspaper advertisements, he did recognize the prevailing insistence on purity and worked his slogans around that demand. "Warranted perfectly pure," "everything we sell is guaranteed" and "no goods

## Assorted Fruits and Vegetables

FOR the convenience of those who find that case lots of single varieties of fruits or vegetables are too much, we have had cases put up containing assortments of popular varieties, and these we are selling at the regular prices for cases. In ordering, please mention the lot number, and remember we do not make any change in the assortments.



### Lot No. 1

This case contains twenty-four cans and six varieties of the most popular fruits. For a comparatively small family it is splendidly adapted, as it offers a good variety at small cost.

- 6 No. 2 Tins Strawberries
- 6 No. 2 " Raspberries, Red
- 3 No. 2 " Pears
- 3 No. 2 " Yellow Peaches
- 3 No. 2 " Damson Plums
- 3 No. 2 " Lombard Plums

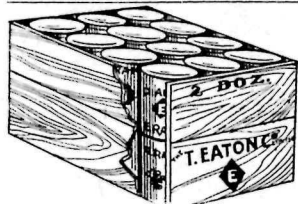
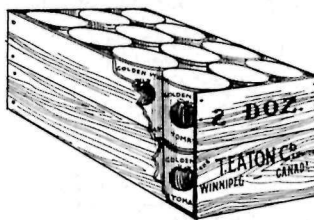
24 Tins ..... 3.19

### Lot No. 2

This case contains an assortment of fruits and vegetables in convenient quantities. We have included a considerable number of tomato, because tomatoes are used more than any other variety.

- 15 No. 3 Tins Canned Tomatoes
- 3 No. 3 Tins Pie Peaches
- 3 No. 3 Tins Canned Pumpkin
- 3 No. 3 Tins Green Gage Plums

24 Tins ..... 2.67



### Lot No. 3

This is a collection of vegetables that contains some of the most popular varieties, prepared from carefully selected vegetables by leading canners.

- 8 No. 2 Tins Cream Corn
- 8 No. 2 Tins Standard Peas
- 4 No. 2 Tins Golden Wax Beans (Cut)
- 4 No. 2 Tins Tomato Catsup

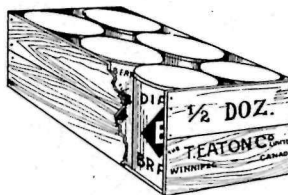
24 Tins ..... 2.00

### Lot No. 4

This case contains gallon cans and will be most useful at times when the family is augmented by additional help, as at the threshing season. It contains a good variety.

- 3 No. 1 Gallon (reputed) Apples
- 1 No. 1 Gallon (reputed) Tomatoes
- 1 No. 1 Gallon (reputed) Pie Pears
- 1 No. 1 Gallon (reputed) Pie Peaches

6 Tins, each 1 reputed gallon ..... 2.00



Everything  
We Sell  
We Guarantee

THE **T. EATON CO** LIMITED  
WINNIPEG . . . . . CANADA

Money Back  
If Not  
Satisfied

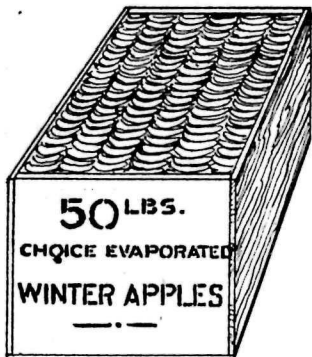
Prices guaranteed for January and February 1907.

9

# Evaporated and Fresh Fruits.

## EVAPORATED FRUITS.

Owing to the difficulty of obtaining fresh fruit in the Canadian West, evaporated fruits of necessity are largely used.



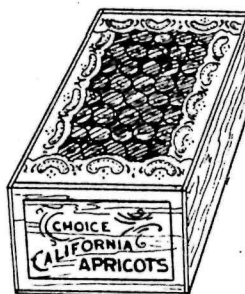
Apples, Evaporated, per lb. . . . . \$ .12  
per 50 lb. box . . . . . 5.75

The prices of Apricots and Peaches, owing to short crops, are high, but Prunes and Evaporated Apples are lower in price than last season, though the prices of both these lines have advanced very materially since we bought our present stock, and we could not quote these prices if we had to buy to-day but, like every article quoted in this catalogue, the prices are guaranteed for the months of January and February. Of course there is a possibility of our stock of some lines becoming exhausted, and we may then be unable to procure the goods, but if your order is filled it will be at the prices quoted in this catalogue, or at lower prices, for if any of the prices quoted here should decline we will give you the benefit in every case.



Peaches, Evap., Standard, per lb. . . . . .15  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 3.70

Peaches, Evap., Choice, per lb. . . . . .17  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 4.00  
Peaches, Evap., Extra Choice, per lb. . . . . .20  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 4.75



## APRICOTS.

Apricots, Choice Evap., per lb. . . . . .23  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 5.75

## RAISINS.

California Seeded Raisins, per lb.-1 package . . . . . \$ .12½  
Finest Selected Valencia Raisins, per lb. . . . . .11  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 3.00  
Fancy Sultana Raisins, per lb. . . . . .17  
Sultana Raisins, per lb. . . . . .15

## CURRENTS.

We import our currants direct from Greece, and after we receive them we put them through our electric currant cleaner, when all stems and sand are removed by a rapidly revolving brush. When they leave this machine they are ready for use.  
Finest Blue Vostizza Currants, re-cleaned, 3 lbs. for . . . . . \$ .25  
25 lbs. for . . . . . 2.00  
Choice Filiatra Currants, re-cleaned, 3½ lbs. for . . . . . .25  
25 lbs. for . . . . . 1.75

## DATES.

Golden Halloween Dates, per lb. . . . . \$ .07  
Fard Dates . . . . . .12

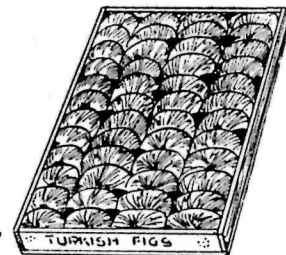
## FRESH FRUITS.

We do not advise our out-of-town customers to order fresh fruits at this season of the year as there is great danger from frost, and the only orders we can accept for fresh fruit during the winter months are those which are to be shipped by express to points where there is a station, so that the goods can be kept from frost until called for.

California Navel Oranges, per dozen, .25, .30, .35, .40 and . . . . . .50  
Finest California Seedless Lemons, per dozen, .25, .30 and . . . . . .35

## FIGS.

We import our Figs direct from Smyrna in car lots, and in this way are able to give our customers a much better quality of

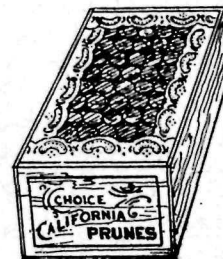


Figs than is usually sold at the prices we quote. Our Cooking Figs at 7c. per lb. are of a much higher grade than is generally sold for cooking purposes. They are packed in bags (not mats) of about 30 lbs. each. Our Layer Figs will all be found fresh and moist.

Natural Cooking Figs, per lb. . . . . \$ .07  
Five-Star Figs, 1-lb. box . . . . . \$ .15  
Five-Star Layer Figs, per lb. . . . . .12½  
boxes about 12 lbs., per box . . . . . 1.35  
Six-Star Layer Figs, per lb. . . . . .15  
in boxes about 12 lbs., per box . . . . . 1.60

## PRUNES.

Prunes, California—  
40 to 50 to the pound, per lb. . . . . .09  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 2.00  
50 to 60 to the pound, per lb. . . . . .08  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 1.85  
60 to 70 to the pound, per lb. . . . . .07½  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 1.75  
80 to 90 to the pound, per lb. . . . . .06½  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 1.50  
90 to 100 to the pound, per lb. . . . . .05  
per 25-lb. box . . . . . 1.25



are sold over our counter until we have personally sampled them and found them to be good” were common phrases in newspaper columns. Some merchants were more blunt. The AC Company in 1900 advertised “Bro-man-get-on” as “a delicious dessert jelly, absolutely pure . . . no injurious adulteration.” This store refunded money to the dissatisfied customer as a policy,<sup>72</sup> as did the Ames Mercantile Company. Weld’s Minnesota Grocery claimed in 1902 that “adulterations are barred out and pure groceries are sold at very moderate prices.”<sup>73</sup> In general, goods were advertised as fresh, palatable, nourishing, wholesome, good, of the finest or highest grade – or any combination of these.

Even in making his actual purchase the consumer had to be careful, although the phasing out of bulk goods alleviated much of the need for surveillance at the scales. The Dawson customer had added cause for caution, at least as long as he was dealing in gold dust. The understanding which existed between merchant and customer in this ritual has been discussed in the preceding chapter. The eventual insistence on hard currency as tender also contributed to the reduction of this worry. In the early days of Dawson trade, the scales – for dust and for goods – were among the most conspicuous features in a commercial establishment, for a variety of goods from beans and blankets to soap and candles was sold by the pound.<sup>74</sup> Romantic though they may have been, the gold scales were the first to go. They were replaced by one product from an up-and-coming company in Dayton, Ohio, which was already working its way into many a North American store. In 1898 the National Cash Register Company was retailing its wares at \$50 to \$70 in Vancouver.<sup>75</sup> Two years later, McLennan and McFeely were selling these machines to any merchant who wished to modernize his business.

The *Canadian Grocer* thought that the efforts of even the best-intentioned merchant to present his goods in an attractive fashion would be totally wasted if he did not ensure that the interior of his store was brilliantly illuminated. By 1900, however, a large number of Dawson firms were able to convert to electric lighting using the power supplied by the Dawson Electric Light and Power Company. In January, the AE Company had 50 lights installed, the SYT Company had 40 and the Ames Mercantile Company had 20. Rowe and Townsend (cigars and tobacco), the Melbourne Annex Lunch and the Criterion Hotel, as well as several other hotels, offices, homes and stores on Second Avenue, were also among the first to convert.<sup>76</sup> Two large corporations had already hooked up their own electric lighting.

Most Dawson stores were dependent for their large, centrally located stoves, which (naturally enough) became the social focus of the establishment. The larger department stores could not rely on this method of heating for their huge retail outlets. Many of them turned to the steam heat generated several blocks away at the Yukon Saw Mill. The old AE store, which became the hardware department of the NC Company, got its heat from one 100-horsepower and two 75-horsepower boilers. The connecting pipe was wrapped in asbestos and placed in a 12-inch box packed with sawdust. Radiators in every room supplied the heat. The company could claim proudly that they needed not one single stove.<sup>77</sup>

One important aspect of the store’s immediate appeal to customers was the way it smelled. While the merchant had probably grown accustomed to the olfactory jungle in which he worked, he had to take care that the total effect was not overwhelming. The *Grocer* suggested that foods emitting the most powerful odours (cheese and pickled goods, for example) be kept near the rear, that dried fruits be covered, that confectionery be kept under glass and that the sugar be checked regularly for melting and souring around the wood. At least one Dawson grocer discovered that, if he roasted his own coffee daily, the pleasant aroma would manage to dominate all the others.<sup>78</sup>

Food was not necessarily the only concern of the grocery and provisions merchant. T.W. Grennan, as has been shown, carried a considerable stock of household supplies; Germer stocked tobaccos – although the competition from confectioners and tobacconists must have been stiff. The following was considered to be a full slate of the household items offered by one merchant in 1899:

- stoves and ranges
- kitchen utensils
- wringers
- clothes pins
- potato mashers
- wash boilers
- flour sifters
- muffin tins
- portable forges
- stove furniture
- knives and forks
- wash boards
- rolling pins
- coffee mills
- tubs and pails



lemon squeezers  
cork screws<sup>79</sup>

While these items were more in the line of the hardware merchant than the grocer's, the latter stocked everything possible in household hardware equipment. The Dawson Hardware Company Museum contains a "kitchen reminder" issued by Ahlert and Forsha grocers. It contained such useful items as alum, blacking, blueing, lamp wicks, lye, stove polish and washing powder.

The appearance of rubber boots in the middle of the NC Company's grocery department (Fig. 39) is something of a mystery, given a department store which had a section exclusively devoted to Klondike clothing – especially since goods and clothing were among the earliest specializations in Dawson business. Newspaper advertisements placed by such clothiers as J.P. McLennan, Sargent and Pinska, Oak Hall Clothing, Hershberg and Company and Red Front Store were consistently prominent.

The most fundamental truism of Dawson business was that prices were exceedingly high, both on the wharves in 1898 and in major department stores a decade later. At this point the basis of the problem should be fairly clear. Appendix J has been compiled from the numerous references which had been made to the price of commodities over the years. Many of these were accompanied by complaints; many more were included in letters to shock the folks at home. A cursory study of this appendix brings a number of trends to light. The most evident is the monstrous gap which separates Dawson's retail prices from those in outfitting centres or in the Eaton's catalogue. The analysis of shipping and distribution conditions already given justifies to some extent Dawson's comparatively exorbitant prices. An indirect effect of long-distance shipping on prices was the need for Dawson's merchants to bring in the highest quality and most climate-resistant goods. Another way of looking at the same set of circumstances was to observe that, with freight rates so high, it never paid to bring in anything but the best.<sup>80</sup>

Another trend made obvious by Appendix J is that by 1907 prices had dropped considerably. Consequently, in some lines (especially canned fruit and vegetables) Dawson prices appeared to be nearly competitive with those in Eaton's catalogue. Explanations for this phenomenon are various. In general, the entire mercantile structure had been adjusted by 1907 to fit Dawson's population comfortably; that is, a settled trade operation was able to predict and provide for the needs of a more stable population. There were particular factors involved as well, including the reduction of rail rates and the insistence on cash or short-term payment – changes which created a more suitable system

for the businessman dealing in the modern business world. The character of the merchant himself was also a consideration, for everyone agreed that the boom days of speculation and sudden, immense profits had come and gone. In these and many other ways, Dawson was taking on the appearance and character of any contemporary Canadian town.

Nonetheless, the prices charged for staples after 1903 were in no way readily accepted by Dawson's citizens. "You can buy as handsome things here as in San Francisco or New York, if you don't mind the price," one visitor wrote coolly,<sup>81</sup> but Dawsonites themselves could not afford to be so nonchalant. From all sides came repeated criticism that merchants, like landowners, refused to lower their prices in keeping with the general depressing effect of falling wages. There were, of course, instances – usually corresponding with general shortages, such as that felt over the winter of 1899 – when merchants were actually accused of cornering the market and deliberate price manipulation.<sup>82</sup> During a suspected meat combine in 1900 the *Dawson Daily News* took up the cause of the "labouring classes" who could not afford the \$1 and \$1.50 per pound which was being charged for meat, and whose families, it was argued, hardly received enough nutrition from the cheaper moose and caribou.<sup>83</sup>

The comparative price chart (Appendix J) has been set up in such a way as to bring out one striking pattern of Dawson prices, seasonal variation, for the years 1897, 1902 and 1905. Without exception winter prices are higher during these years. The winter of 1897 (the "starvation winter") is an especially dramatic example of this phenomenon, and the price of flour most accurately reflects the pattern. As winter drew to a close, scows of provisions were dragged over the ice or were sent to Dawson immediately after breakup; the market broke, and prices returned to normal. The price of flour, for example, dropped to a startling low of \$2.00 per 50 pounds.

It is difficult to follow the sensitive reactions of retail prices to yearly market fluctuations. For instance, the end of the winter might mean that one line of goods (Carnation cream, perhaps) had been sold right out while overstocked canned goods, such as vegetables, were selling at rock-bottom prices in an attempt to clear them out before the arrival of fresh goods over the ice and the summer pack of canned goods. Such was the case in April 1902 when the *Dawson Daily News* declared that "staples are cheaper than ever in the history of the country,"<sup>84</sup> and commission grocers were practically giving their stocks away. The arrival of goods over the ice from Laberge did much to re-establish equilibrium in the market. By the end of May and June, prices in fresh goods and perishables were as low as they ever would be.

This basic pattern was played out annually. Once the structure had been established, improved and stabilized, once the city's tastes and needs had been formed and recognized, and once the number of participating merchants had reached a level commensurate with the reduced population, the machine was virtually self-perpetuating. As Dawson settled into its respectable middle age, its customers resigned themselves to the constant features of northern trade. Clark's "Ready Lunch Beef," Borden's "Eagle Brand" milk and the ubiquitous canned fruits would be with them always. Those who carried such commodities inside as part of their outfits had not been aware at the time of the precedent they were setting. Years later, if they were still in Dawson, they had no doubt resigned themselves to a northern diet which was, at best, tinned and boxed.

### **Conclusion: The Well-Appointed Ghost Town**

After 1905 it was obvious that the Klondike valley was to be divided among a few large corporate claim-owners whose technological and financial manipulation of the hydraulic and dredging processes would secure control of gold mining in the 20th century.<sup>1</sup> Population declined, and for those who remained there was a growing dependence on these large gold-mining companies for jobs – and, in the case of the merchant, for sales.

By 1906 most claims were mining camps whose owners stocked goods from Dawson wholesale firms to feed their employees.<sup>2</sup> Needless to say the system was a fine one for those wholesalers who could snap up one of these contracts (usually one of the two surviving trade corporations, the NC Company and the NAT&T Company) but many of the smaller firms were forced to close. Even then, the price offered by the gold companies was barely above cost, and the profits of those companies which did manage to survive were minimal. This new existence as a company town was itself short-lived, for in 1907<sup>3</sup> Guggenheim, the backers of one of the largest of the gold companies, announced that henceforth they would send their orders for provisions to the west coast. From that point forward, commercial Dawson was destined to continue as a shadow of its former active self.

But Dawson was an adamant ghost town and a reluctant has-been. While most of her early courtiers had loved her and left her, ten years after her prime she did retain a few sympathetic admirers. Among them was E.O. Ellingsen, who appreciated her still for her antiquated glamour. Ellingsen's craft was photography, and for his models he chose Dawson's most elegant parlours, emporia and sidewalks. In three 1909 photographs of some of the city's finer shops (the NC Company's, Zacarelli's and Jimmy's palace of sweet fruits and stationery – see Figs. 39, 56, 58 and 59) Dawson appears as a young Edwardian lady, only slightly overdressed for the occasion.

By that time, her riverfront façade was more rococo than ever. While the elaborate effect of storefront finery was really no more baroque than that found on King, Queen or Front streets in any other Canadian city, there was something stilted about Dawson's streetscapes. The original boom-town front – a matter of economy in times of astronomical lumber prices – had been distorted beyond recognition by the studied use of flourishes and curlicues.

Perhaps one had to see what lay behind that façade. While Second and Third avenues had once been lively thoroughfares and still did contain some thriving stores, the whole area was

56 Jimmy's Place, Dawson (tobacco, stationery and confections), ca. 1913. Note the electric lighting. (Public Archives Canada, C 21095.)

57 Daniel Kearney, a Dawson dry goods merchant, ca. 1905. (Public Archives Canada, C 16462.)

56



57



58 Zaccarelli's store in Dawson, ca. 1908.  
Photo by E.O. Ellingsen. (*Public Archives Canada, C 8121.*)





on the verge of becoming a desert of secondhand shops & junk yards. Some of the buildings were already vacant and the windows boarded up. The secondhand shops were jammed with the refuse of the gold rush: stoves, furniture, goldpans, sets of dishes, double-belled seltzer bottles, old fur coats, lamps, gardeners, cooking utensils, rubber boots, hand organs, glassware, bric-a-brac silver, and beds, beds, beds.<sup>4</sup>

One of the few general merchants to survive the heyday of the specialized retailer was E.S. Strait, his specialty, auctioneering and secondhand goods.<sup>5</sup>

By 1909, 11 grocers, 4 general merchants, 12 dealers in dry goods, 8 dealers in hardware, 4 secondhand traders and 4 fruit, candy and tobacco sellers remained in town to supply the 2,000 inhabitants.

Amalgamation and consolidation continued. In 1912 the NAT&T Company was forced to withdraw, leaving the NC Company as the final winner of the retail monopoly, a position which the San Francisco firm held in the Yukon until 1969. In that year the first of the great Pacific northwestern trade monopolies withdrew from its last bastion of retail sales, Whitehorse, just a little more than a century after its incorporation as a sealing enterprise. The sale left Taylor and Drury as the leading multi-purpose department store in Whitehorse. Founded upon a partnership formed 71 years earlier on the trail of '98, Taylor and Drury had worked from a keen sense of enterprise and an intuitive knowledge of what the goldseeker would buy at any price. "Buying from the downhearted and selling to the stouthearted:" the motto held true on the trail, along the river and on the wharves. Later conditions, however, called for a more rational and streamlined approach to ordering, shipping and marketing. The decade following the gold-rush demanded commercial skills of a different kind.

Hundreds of swappers, traders, pedlars and scowmen had swarmed over the passes, surprised to find their much-sought gold in a form which was crystallized, condensed, evaporated and tinned. Few of them outlasted the great monopolies as did Taylor and Drury, but then longevity had not been their goal. Their commercial careers had been for the most part brief; a few were notable and many were nameless. In Dawson, the permafrost has equalized their abandoned monuments. The false fronts sag and the nearly illegible grey names no longer speak of proud reputations. Lurching into the street, Strait's secondhand store still proclaims its "tobaccos, furniture, crockery, clothing, tents, guns, ammunition." Once there was a grocer and jobber who could declare, in truth, that he could provide "anything from a needle to a steamboat."<sup>6</sup>

## Appendix A. Lists of Supply Firms.

This appendix lists, by location, supply firms which were known as outfitters (or at least advertised as such) for the Klondike trade in 1897-98. These lists are, unfortunately, not comprehensive, especially in the case of Seattle for which newspaper sources are not as readily available as they are for Canadian cities. Information has generally been gleaned from newspapers, guides to the Klondike and from personal accounts of outfitting experiences on the west coast. From these sources it is impossible to determine either the relative successes of the firms mentioned or the honesty and wisdom of their service to the Klondiker. In the instances of the Hudson's Bay Company, Oppenheimer Brothers (Vancouver), Fischer Brothers (Seattle), and R.P. Rithet and Company (Victoria), mere repetition of references leads one to infer a proportionate popularity. For others, such as McLennan, McFeely and Company, Thomas Dunn and Company and Kelly Douglas and Company, all of Vancouver, an active supply trade maintained with Dawson City is a sure indication of groundwork carefully laid.

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### Seattle

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#### *Groceries and General Outfits*

Augustine and Kyer	grocers
Coffin Brothers	outfitters
Fischer Brothers	wholesale groceries
Frank and Way	foods broker
Lilly Bogardus and Company	wholesale grain and foods
Murphy Grant and Company	outfitters
Schwabacher Brothers and Company	wholesale groceries
Seattle Grocery Company	wholesale groceries
Seattle Trading Company	wholesale groceries
Sprague, Warner and Company	groceries
Winship Brothers	wholesale groceries

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#### *Hardware, Tools and Miners' Supplies*

Felitz Brothers Tent and Awning Company	tent and awning
Golden Rule Bazaar Company	bar and hotel fittings
Gordon Hardware Company	hardware
Hardy Hall Arms Company	firearms

Mitchell, Lewis and Staver Company	mining machinery
Seattle Hardware Company	hardware
<b><i>Dry Goods and Other Specialties</i></b>	
Red Front Furnishings	clothing
Steward and Holmes	drugs
Washington Shoe Manufacturing Company	footwear
<b>Victoria</b>	
<b><i>Groceries and General Outfits</i></b>	
Brackman and Ker Milling Company	grains and feeds
Braid and Company	wholesale groceries
Thomas Earle	wholesale groceries
T. Eaton Company	general outfits
Erskine Wall and Company	groceries
Fell and Company	groceries
Hall Ross and Company	flour
Hardress Clarke	groceries, tea
Hudson's Bay Company	general outfits
Simon Leiser and Company	wholesale groceries
Martin and Robertson	concentrated foods
Okell and Morris Fruit Preserving Company	prepared foods
R.P. Rithet and Company	wholesale groceries
Dixi H. Ross	groceries
M.R. Smith and Company	biscuit manufacturers
Turner, Beeton and Company	wholesale groceries, general outfits
Watson and Hall	groceries
Wilson Brothers	wholesale groceries
<b><i>Hardware, Tools and Miners' Supplies</i></b>	
Albion Iron Works	sheet iron stoves
Capital Planing Mills	boats

Hercules Gas Engine Works	engines (for boats)
Hickman Tye Hardware	hardware
Lemon, Gonnason and Company	Yukon boats
E.G. Prior and Company	tools and hardware
E.J. Saunders	sleds and harnesses
Spratt and Macaulay	Yukon canoes
M.J. Wiatt and Company	Klondike safes
Weiler Brothers	wholesale, retail furnishings and utensils
<b><i>Dry Goods and Other Specialties</i></b>	
Alaska Sail Loft and Tent Factory	canvas goods
Cameron	retail clothing
John Cochrane	medical outfits
A.B. Erskine	boots
Gilmore and McCandless	mining supplies, dry goods
Hall and Company	medical outfits
Arthur Holmes	dry goods
F. Jeune and Brothers	canvas goods
Langley and Henderson Brothers (Henderson Brothers after Jan. 1898)	drugs, wholesale
Lenz and Leiser	dry goods
Marks	clothing
George H. Maynards	footwear
E.A. Morris	tobacconist
Oak Hall	clothing
J. Piercy and Company	wholesale dry goods
Sam Reid's	clothing
Thomas Shotbolt	drugs
Thomas Brothers and Grant	clothing
The Westside	dry goods, blankets
B. Williams and Company	dry goods
W. and J. Wilson	clothing

<b>Vancouver</b>	
<b><i>Groceries and Other Outfits</i></b>	
Brackman and Ker Milling Company	grains and feeds
William Braid and Company	wholesale groceries
Dominion Grocery	groceries
Findlay and Company	dried foods
Hobson and Ingram	groceries and provisions
Hudson's Bay Company	general outfitters
Kelly Douglas and Company	wholesale groceries
W.H. Malkin and Company	wholesale groceries and provisions
Martin and Robertson	concentrated foods
McMillan and Hamilton	wholesale groceries
Oppenheimer Brothers	wholesale groceries
Page Ponsford Brothers	outfits
Webster Brothers	groceries
Weeks and Robson	groceries, provisions
Woodward's Department Store	outfits
<b><i>Hardware, Tools and Miners' Supplies</i></b>	
Thomas Dunn and Company	wholesale hardware
A. Godfrey	hardware
McClary Manufacturing Company	folding stoves
McLennan, McFeely and Company	wholesale hardware
E.G. Prior and Company	tools and hardware
<b><i>Dry Goods and Other Specialties</i></b>	
Bailey Brothers Company	books and maps
Robert Clark	Klondike clothing
Clubb and Stewart	outfits, clothing
C.F. Foreman	boots
S. Greenshields, Son and Company	dry goods
Johnston, Kerfoot and Company	Klondike goods

Langley and Henderson Brothers (Henderson Brothers after Jan. 1898)	drugs, wholesale
J.A. Pyke	Klondike boots
Wilzinski Optical	optical supplies



## Appendix B. Brand Names of Commodities.

This appendix lists the brand names of commodities that appeared, or probably appeared, in Dawson City from 1897 to 1907. The date beside each item records one date when that item was known to exist either in Dawson or as part of a Klondike-bound outfit. This does not necessarily represent the article's first appearance in Yukon warehouses.

The majority of references have come from the *Dawson Daily News* and the *Klondike Nugget*, but a number of other sources<sup>1</sup> have each given rise to one or two brand names. Artifacts in the Dawson Museum, the Dawson Hardware Company Museum and the McBride Museum in Whitehorse have added several brand names to the list (especially in tobaccos), names which are understandably undated in this appendix, since the exhibits did not give this information. Photographs from the Public Archives of Canada were extremely helpful, but names gathered in this way are apt to be misspelled and the description of the article is likely to be less than complete. A sizable proportion of the articles, which are registered as having appeared at the time of the initial rush, were recorded in advertisements in guidebooks such as William Ogilvie's *Klondike Official Guide* and the Alaska Commercial Company's *To the Klondike Gold Fields* as well as in newspapers published in the centres of Klondike outfitting; that is, newspapers like the *Vancouver World* and the *Victoria Daily Colonist*. In many cases the goods so advertised cannot be traced with any certainty to an ultimate Klondike destination. Nevertheless, our premise is that a sufficient quantity of these goods did, in all probability, reach the Klondike to warrant their inclusion in this appendix.

The range of brand-name grocery products which probably found their way to Dawson shelves has been increased by the use of additional subsections which include goods advertised at the time in the *Canadian Grocer*. This trade magazine has been consulted as the major source of advertising for Canadian and imported food products in the period. Whether or not these foods were ever sent down the Yukon River, their inclusion in this appendix makes sense from a contextual point of view. In cases where goods were advertised both in Dawson newspapers and in the *Canadian Grocer*, they have been listed only once, in the Dawson section.

Italics have been used to designate registered trade-marks (under the Trade Marks and Design Act of 1879, as found in the Trade Marks Registry) as well as common appellations which had the force of trade marks in the mind of the buying public. Unfortunately, since the registration of trade marks was not compulsory, it is not always possible to make the distinction between a

company's name and that of its product. Similar problems exist in trying to distinguish between manufacturer and distributor. These problems have given rise to some apparent inconsistencies in the lists.

The following symbols have been used to describe or qualify the items listed below:

\* Advertised or sold in a known outfitting centre as part of a Klondike outfit, 1897–98.

† Appearing initially as part of an outfit, but later advertised or mentioned as stock on the Dawson market.

‡ Advertised or sold as a luxury item.

§ Information derived from photographs.

? Label or package found undated in one of the Yukon museums.

<i>Brand, Company or Agent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reference Date</i>
<b>Meats and Fish</b>		
*† Bovril, Bovril (Montreal and London, U.K.)	extract of beef, extract of meat, concentrated essence of meat	1898
*Johnson's	fluid beef	1898
*Vimbo Fluid Beef Company (London, U.K.)	fluid beef	1898
§*†Cudahy Canning Company (Chicago)	canned lunch beef	1898
*Lozenby and Son (London, U.K.)	soup squares	1898
*Maggi, Maggi Company (Kempttal, Switzerland)	bouillon	1898
Armour and Company (Chicago)	canned ham, bacon	1902
Barataria	dried shrimps	1902
<i>Chicago</i>	shrimp	
<i>Ready Lunch Beef</i>	canned lunch meat	
William Clark (Montreal)	tongue, pork and beans	1902
Davies'	canned roast mutton	1906
Libby, McNeill and Libby (Chicago)	canned meats	1902
<i>Rex</i>	hams, bacon, canned meats, pork and beans	1900

<i>Fidelity</i> , T.M. Sinclair Packing Company (Cedar Rapids, Iowa)	ham, bacon, lard	1902
<i>1888</i>	hams, bacon	1900
<i>Winchester</i> , Swifts's	gelatinized hams and bacon	1902
§Snider's, T.A. Snider Preserve Company (Cincinnati)	pork and beans	1909
<i>Maple Leaf</i>	sausage	1905
<i>Holly</i>	sausage	1905
<i>Imperial</i>	oysters	1900
<i>Blue Points</i>	oysters	1899
Booth, Booth Fisheries (Chicago)	oysters	1905
<i>Saddle Rock</i>	oysters	1901
<i>Eagle</i>	fresh oysters	1903
<i>Morgan</i>	eastern oysters	1905
Puget Sound Small Olympic	oysters	1905
<i>Bluenose</i>	codfish	1906
Lochfyne	kippered herring	1900
‡ <i>Averbach</i>	German truffled liver	1907
‡ <i>R &amp; R</i>	curried fowl	1907
‡ <i>Teyt's</i>	purée de fois gras	1907
‡ <i>B.B.</i>	domestic tripe à la mode	1907
‡ <i>Purity</i>	crab meat	1907
‡ <i>Fleur de lis</i>	purée de fois gras	1907
<i>Cox</i>	gelatine	1901
<i>Knox</i>	gelatine	1901
<b><i>Meats and Fish advertised in the Canadian Grocer, 1898–1905</i></b>		
<i>Aylmer</i>	canned meats	
Black Brothers and Company	Atlantic cod	
<i>Cloverleaf, Sovereign, Lynx,</i> Anglo B.C. Packing Company	salmon	

<i>Maple Leaf, Horse Shoe,</i> <i>Nimpkish, Griffin, Sunset,</i> <i>Lowe Inlet, Eagle, Golden</i> <i>Net, Harlock, Empress,</i> British Columbia Packers Association (Vancouver)	salmon	
<i>Castle</i>	lobster	1901
<i>Crown</i>	lobster	1901
<i>Gold</i>	lobster	1901
<b>Fruits and Vegetables</b>		
* <i>Hudson's Bay Company</i>	California dried fruits and vegetables	1897
* <i>Gold Medal, Okell and</i> <i>Morris Fruit Preserving</i> <i>Company (Victoria)</i>	evaporated vegetables, preserves, peels	1898
* <i>L. Rose and Company</i> (Albans, U.K.)	lime juice	1897
* <i>Ames' Vegetable Pemmican</i>	canned vegetables (evaporated)	1898
*† <i>Lion, W. Boulter and Sons,</i> (Picton, Ont.)	canned corn	1898
* <i>California Preserve</i> <i>Company</i>	evaporated vegetables	1898
* <i>Columbus, Ora Balboa,</i> <i>Cosmos, Armona, Solar,</i> <i>Palmetto and Eagle,</i> Fontana and Company (San Francisco)	canned fruits and vegetables	1898
*† <i>Knorr's</i>	evaporated vegetables	1898
<i>Montserrat</i>	lime fruit juice	1898
<i>Hand- -Ybrand</i>	evaporated fruits and vegetables	1898
<i>Gilt Edge</i>	canned goods	1902
<i>Lubeck</i>	German sliced potatoes (evaporated)	1899
<i>Silver Seal</i>	evaporated potatoes	1902
<i>Succotash</i>	evaporated potatoes	1902
<i>Log Cabin</i>	tomatoes	1902
<i>Graham's</i>	evaporated potatoes	1905

‡ <i>Golden Crown</i> , Hickmott	artichoke hearts, asparagus tips	1907
<i>Golden State</i>	asparagus	1902
<i>Emerald Tip</i>	asparagus	1902
‡ <i>Gaudinot</i>	<i>haricot vert</i> , extra fin	1907
Smith's, M.R. Smith and Company (Victoria)	vegetable biscuits	1901
<i>California Extra</i> , Golden Gate Packing Company (San Jose, Cal.)	canned vegetables	1901
<i>Signature</i>	canned peas	1900
<i>Crawford</i>	California peaches	1902
<i>Epicurean</i>	canned fruits	1902
<i>Mission</i> , Dwight, Edward Company (Portland, Ore.)	canned fruits	1901
<i>Simcoe</i>	canned fruits	1902
<i>S &amp; W</i>	canned fruits	1902
<i>Violet</i>	canned soups	1905
Franco-American	soups, paté, chicken	1900
*Campbell's	soup	1898
Van Camp's, Van Camp's Packing Company (Indianapolis)	macaroni, cheese and tomato	1902
‡ <i>Bouden Island</i>	asparagus tips	1907
‡ <i>Amocat</i>	asparagus tips	1907
‡ <i>Cresca</i>	stuffed dates	1907
‡ <i>D &amp; G</i>	cherries in marasquine	1907
‡ <i>Pinmoney</i>	melon and pepper mangos	1907
§ <i>Diamond Mountain</i> brand	fruit	1908
<b>Fruits and Vegetables Advertised in the Canadian Grocer, 1898–1905</b>		
Acme Dried Fruit Company	evaporated vegetables	
Kerr Vegetable Evaporating Company	evaporated vegetables	
<i>Old Homestead</i> , Old Homestead Canning Company (Picton, Ont.)	canned fruits and vegetables	

<i>A.D.</i>	crystallized fruits	
<i>Aylmer</i>	tomatoes, corn, peas	
<i>Lakeport</i>	tomatoes, corn, peas	
<i>Little Chief</i>	tomatoes, corn, peas	
<i>Griffin</i>	dried fruits	
<i>Easter</i>	dried fruits	
<i>Loggie's Eagle</i>	blueberries	
<i>Tartan</i> , Balfour and Company (Hamilton, Ont.)	fruit and vegetables	
Batger's	lime juice	
<b>Cereals and Dry Baking Goods</b>		
*† <i>Keewatin</i> , Lake of the Woods Milling Company	flour	1897
<i>Blue Label</i> , Ogilvie	flour	1899
*Hudson's Bay Company	Hungarian and strong baker's flour	1897
*† <i>Okanagan Flour Mills</i> Company	Hungarian and strong baker's flour	1897
<i>Snowflake</i> , D.H. Ross and Company (Victoria) agents	flour	1897
* <i>Drifted Snow</i> , Sperry Flour Company (Salinas, Cal.)	white flour	1898
<i>Olympia</i>	flour	1898
<i>Quaker</i>	pancake flour	1900
Capital Mills	cream rolled oats	1902
*† <i>Germea</i> (San Francisco)	breakfast food	1898
*† <i>Christie Brown and</i> Company (Toronto)	Klondike biscuits, cookies, graham wafers	1898
*† <i>M.R. Smith and Company</i> (Victoria)	biscuits	1898
<i>B &amp; K</i>	oatmeal	1903
<i>Quaker</i> oats, American Cereal Company	rolled oats	1903
<i>Wheatines</i>	rolled oats	1903
<i>Cero-fruto</i>	rolled oats	1903
<i>Carolina</i>	rice flakes	1903
<i>Malt</i> , Wells Richardson Company (Vermont)	breakfast food	1903

<i>Shredded Wheat</i>	breakfast food and biscuits	1903
<i>Cream of Wheat</i> , Kelly-Clarke Company (Seattle)	breakfast food	1903
<i>Grape Nuts</i>	breakfast food	1903
<i>Malta Vita</i>	breakfast food	1903
<i>Force</i> , "Force" Food Company (Buffalo, N.Y.)	breakfast food	1903
<i>Farina</i>	breakfast food	1903
<i>Twin Brothers</i>	breakfast food	1901
<i>Vim</i>	breakfast food	1903
<i>Quail</i>	kiln-dried oats	1901
<i>Ralston</i> , Robinson-Danforth Commission Company (St. Louis, Mo.)	breakfast cereal	1903
<i>Orange Meat</i> , Frontenac Cereal Company (Kingston, Ont.)	breakfast food	1903
*† <i>Aunt Jemima</i> , Davis Milling Company (St. Louis, Mo.)	pancake flour	1902
<i>Del Monte</i>	flour	1902
<i>A.J. and S.R.</i>	flour	1902
<i>Ramsay</i>	biscuits and crackers	1906
*† <i>Magic</i> , <i>Imperial</i> , E.W. Gillett and Company (Toronto, Chicago, London)	baking powder	1903
<i>Yukon</i> (a special pack of <i>Royal</i> ), E.W. Gillett and Company (Toronto, Chicago, London)	yeast	1898
*† <i>Pure Gold</i> , Pure Gold Manufacturing Company (Toronto)	baking powder	1897
*† <i>Dr. Price's</i>	cream baking powder	1897
* <i>Preston and Merrill's</i>	baking powder	1897
* <i>Shilling's</i>	baking powder	1897
* <i>Cook's Friend</i> , W.D. McLaren (Montreal)	baking powder	1898
* <i>Royal</i>	baking powder	1898

<i>Cleveland</i>	baking powder	1898
<i>Cow Brand</i> , John Dwight and Company (New York and Montreal)	baking soda	1906
<i>Minute</i> , Whitman Grocery Company (Orange, Mass.)	tapioca	1903
<i>Gold Dust</i>	gelatine	1906
<b><i>Cereals and Dry Baking Goods in the Canadian Grocer, 1898-1905</i></b>		
Natural Food Company	shredded wheat	
Tillson's, Tillson Company (Tillsonburg, Ont.)	breakfast food	
<i>Wheat-os</i> , Eby, Blain Company (Toronto) agents	breakfast food	
P. McIntosh and Son (Toronto)	cereals	
<i>Peak Freen</i>	biscuits	
<i>Tartan</i> , Balfour and Company (Hamilton, Ont.)	baking powder	
<i>Ocean</i> , <i>Captain</i> Ocean Mills (Montreal)	baking powder	
<i>Knox</i>	baking powder	
<b>Dairy Products</b>		
*† <i>Eagle</i> ,	condensed milk	1898
*† <i>Peerless</i> , <i>Pioneer</i> ,	evaporated cream	1898
<i>Sunnyside</i> ,	condensed milk	1905
Gail Borden (New York)		
*† <i>Reindeer</i> ,	condensed milk	1898
<i>Jersey</i> ,	evaporated cream	1903
Truro Condensed Milk and Canning Company (Truro, N.S.)		
<i>St. Charles</i> , St. Charles Condensing Co. (St. Charles, Ill.)	evaporated cream	1902
<i>Carnation</i> , Pacific Coast Condensed Milk Company (Kent, Wash.)	evaporated cream	1902
<i>Pearl</i>	condensed milk	1900

<i>Highland</i>	evaporated cream	1902
<i>Poppy</i>	evaporated cream	1902
<i>Victor</i>	evaporated cream	1903
<i>Standard</i>	evaporated cream	1905
<i>Western Milk</i>	condensed milk	1905
J.B. Agen's (Seattle and Tacoma, Wash.)	canned creamery butter (fancy)	1899
* <i>Triumph</i> (Seattle)	butter	1898
Hills Brothers	vacuum packed (canned) butter	1902
<i>Crescent</i>	butter	1902
<i>P.B.</i>	butter	1902
<i>Eclen Bank</i>	canned butter	1903
<i>Bradner's Jersey</i>	canned butter	1903
Washington Creamery	canned butter	1903
Canadian Creamery	canned butter	1903
Canadian Government Creamery	canned butter	1905
<i>Innisfall</i>	canned butter	1905
<i>Meadowdale</i>	canned butter	1905
Fresh Ellensburg	canned butter	1905
<i>Elgin</i>	canned butter	1902
<i>Coldbrook</i>	canned butter	1902
<i>Gilt Edge</i>	canned butter	1902
New Westminster, B.C. Creamery	canned butter	1905
* <i>Klondike</i> (Exeter, Ont.)	canned butter	1898
Wisconsin Swiss	cheese	1906
<i>American Twin</i>	cream cheese	1906
Oregon	cheese	1903
J.B. Agen's	cheese	1903
<i>Ontario Twin</i>	cheese	1905
<i>Imperial</i> , A.F. McLaren Imperial Cheese Company (Toronto)	cream cheese	1900
<i>Stilton</i>	cream cheese	1905

<i>Young America</i>	cheese	1903
<i>Red Holland</i>	cheese	1905
‡Peck's	brie cheese	1907
J.B. Agen's	eggs	1903
<i>Lamont's</i> , C. Fred Lamont (Seattle)	crystallized eggs	1898
Springfield Crystallized Eggs (Springfield, Mass.)	crystallized eggs	?
<b><i>Dairy Products Advertised in the Canadian Grocer , 1898–1905</i></b>		
<i>Gold Seal</i> , Gail Borden	condensed milk	
<i>Mayflower</i> , Truro Condensed Milk and Canning Company	milk and butter	
<i>Silver Cow</i> , <i>Purity</i> , St. Charles Condensing Company	condensed milk	
Nestlé (Switzerland)	condensed milk	
<i>Canadian</i> , <i>Export</i> , Baldwin Condensed Milk Company	condensed milk	
<i>Milkmaid</i> , Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company	condensed milk	
<i>Owl</i> , <i>Dominion</i> , Canadian Condensed Milk Company	condensed milk	
Canadian Preserved Butter Company (Montreal)	canned butter	
<i>Roquefort</i> , <i>Canadian</i> , A.F. McLaren Imperial Cheese Company	cheese	
<i>Canada</i> , Gowan's, Kent and Company	cream cheese	
Millar's <i>Paragon</i>	cream cheese	
<b>Condiments, Jams and Sweets</b>		
* <i>Red Seal</i> , Washington Manufacturing Company (Seattle)	pickles	1898
* <i>Gold Medal</i>	ketchup, vinegar, sauces	1897
* <i>Sterling</i> , T.A. Lytle and Company (Toronto)	vinegar, syrups, jellies pickles, relishes	1898

* <i>Pure Gold</i> , Pure Gold Manufacturing Company (Toronto)	spices, mustard, extracts, flavouring, catsup	1898
Pendray's	vinegar	1906
Parnell's	vinegar and olives	1906
H.J. Heinz (Pittsburgh, Pa.)	pickles, vinegar, catsup, condiments	1902
‡Dessaux Fils	tarragon vinegar	1907
J.J. Colman (London, U.K.)	mustard	1909
Snider's, T.A. Snider Preserve Company (Cincinnati)	tomato catsup, soup	1900
<i>Blue Label</i>	catsup	1905
Lea and Perrin's	Worcestershire sauce	1907
<i>Phoenix</i>	prepared mustard	1903
<i>B.P.</i>	catsup	1903
<i>D &amp; B</i>	table sauce	1903
<i>Durand's</i>	olive oil	1906
<i>Ojal</i>	olive oil	1906
<i>Wethey's</i>	mincemeat	1906
<i>Key</i>	jams	1900
<i>Climax</i>	jams and jellies	1906
*Cairn's, Hudson's Bay Company, agents	marmalade	1897
Keiller's	marmalade	1906
*†Walter Baker and Company (Dorchester, Mass.)	chocolates	1898
*†Frye's, J.S. Frye and Company (Bristol, U.K.)	cocoas and chocolates	1897
<i>Van Houten's</i> , C.J. Van Houten, and Zoon (Weesp, The Netherlands)	cocoa	1907
<i>Epps</i>	cocoa	1901
Crosse and Blackwell's	plum pudding, jams and jellies, vinegar, condiments	1902
Glenwood (Marysville, Cal.)	jams	1902
<i>New Era</i>	plum pudding	1902

<i>Beaver</i>	chocolate	1905
<i>Milka</i> , Chocolat Suchard Soci�t� Anonyme	chocolate	1905
<i>Menier</i>	chocolate	1901
<i>Lowney's</i> , Walter M. Lowney Company (Montreal, Boston)	candy	1902
<i>Allegretti</i>	candy	1902
<i>Gunther</i>	candy	1902
<i>Huyler</i>	candy	1902
<i>Imperial</i> , Imperial Syrup Company (Montreal)	maple syrup	1902
<i>Log Cabin</i> , Table Syrup Company (St. Paul, Minn.)	maple syrup	1907
<i>Bro-man-gel-on</i>	dessert jelly	1900
*† <i>White Moss</i> , Canadian Cocoanut Company (Montreal)	cocoanut	1898
‡ <i>G &amp; D</i>	pickled limes	1907
‡ <i>Oneida</i>	sweet pickled peaches	1907
‡ <i>Spencer's</i>	almond paste	1907
Hire's	root beer	1903
‡Teyt's	plum pudding	1907
‡Long's	currant jelly	1907
* <i>Puritan</i>	mincemeat	1898
<b>Condiments, Jams and Sweets in the Canadian Grocer , 1898-1905</b>		
Upton's, Thomas Upton and Company (Hamilton)	marmalades, jams, jellies	
<i>E.D.S.</i> , E.D. Smith (Winona, Ont.)	jams, jellies, sealed fruits	
Morton's	pickles	
Ozo Company (Montreal)	jams, jellies, catsup, pickles	
Rowat's	pickles	
Grimble's	vinegar	
<i>Premier</i> , <i>Empress</i> , <i>Nabob</i> , Francis H. Leggett	olives	
Flett's	pickles	

R. Paterson and Son (Glasgow), American Coffee and Spice Company (Toronto), agents	Worcestershire sauce	
Lee's and Langley	Worcestershire sauce	
<i>Capstan</i> , Capstan Manufacturing Company (Toronto)	tomato catsup	
Stelton and Company (Worcester, U.K.)	Worcestershire sauce	
<i>Bar-le-duc</i>	jellies	
<i>Kovah</i> , Grieg Manufacturing Company (Montreal)	jellies	
<i>Tobler's</i>	Swiss milk chocolate	
<i>Mott's Diamond</i> , John P. Mott and Company (Halifax)	chocolate	
<i>Peter's</i>	milk chocolate	
<i>Cadbury's</i>	cocoa, chocolate	
Maclure and Langley	chocolate	
<i>Lowney's</i> , Walter M. Lowney (Boston, Montreal)	breakfast cocoa	
Nasmith	candies	
<b>Teas, Coffees, Sugar and Spices</b>		
* <i>Kurma</i> , agents Davidson and Hay (Toronto)	black and mixed tea	1898
* <i>Blue Bird, Elephant Banner, Sun</i> , agents Hass Brothers (San Francisco)	green tea, English breakfast tea	1898
<i>Lipton's</i>	tea	1902
<i>Blue Ribbon</i> (also white label, green label, red label, gold label)	Ceylon tea	1902
§ <i>Ridgeway's</i>	tea	1909
<i>Tabloid</i>	tea	?
T. Eaton Company	tea	?
<i>Rakwana</i>	tea	?
<i>Challenge Cup</i>	tea	?

* <i>Nonpareil</i> , Washington Manufacturing Company	ground coffee	1898
<i>Blue Ribbon</i>	coffee	1902
<i>Ensign</i>	coffee	1901
<i>Golden Gate</i>	coffee	1902
Hill's <i>Arabian</i>	coffee	1902
<i>Red Cafe</i> , Young Brothers	coffee	?
Pennant	coffee	1901
<i>Reknown</i>	mocha and java coffee	?
Braid's Best	coffee	1905
<i>White House</i>	mocha and java coffee	1902
§ <i>Mason</i> , Dwight Edwards Company (Portland, Ore.)	coffee	1909
Chase and Sanborn (Canada) (Montreal)	coffee	1903
* <i>Windsor</i> , Canadian Salt Company (Windsor, Ont.)	salt	1897
* <i>Mason</i>	herb extract	1897
<i>Pure Gold</i> , Pure Gold Manufacturing Company (Toronto)	lemon extract, spices, Turkish coffee	1903
Durkee's	spices and salad dressings	1900
<b><i>Teas, Coffees, Sugar and Spices in the Canadian Grocer, 1898-1905</i></b>		
<i>Red Rose</i>	tea	
<i>Salada</i>	tea	
<i>Ludella</i> , agents H.P. Eckardt and Company (Toronto)	tea	
<i>Quaker</i>	Ceylon tea	
<i>Golden Eagle, Manhattan</i> , American Coffee and Spice Company (Toronto)	coffee	
<i>Empress, Gold Medal</i> , Eby, Blain Company (Toronto), agent	coffee	
<i>Kolona</i>	Ceylon tea	

<i>Ram Lal's</i>	Indian tea
<i>Tartan</i> , Balfour and Company (Hamilton)	tea and coffee
Wood's	Boston coffees
St. Lawrence Sugar Refining Company (Montreal)	white sugar
<i>Redpath</i> , Canada Sugar Refining Company (Montreal)	white sugar
<i>Jardine's, Regal</i> , Pure Gold Manufacturing Company (Toronto)	spices
<i>McLaren's Invincible</i> , Hamilton Coffee and Spice Company	spices
<i>Acme</i> , Toronto Salt Works	salt

#### Tobacco and Cigars

In all cases of undated entries, labels were found either in the Dawson Hardware Company Museum or in the Dawson City Museum. Because of the large number of findings relating directly to the Dawson City trade, no additional commodities from the pages of the *Canadian Grocer* have been included.

#### *Tobacco, Plug or cut*

<i>Three Nuns, Pic-o-bac, Capstan Navy, Union Leader</i> , Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada, agent	
<i>Climax, Battle Ax</i> , Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada, agent	1900
*† <i>Seal of North Carolina</i> , Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada, agent	1900
<i>Payroll</i> , Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada, agent	1902
<i>Masters and Mason, The Toiler, Patriot</i> , B. Houde Company	
<i>Weyman Brothers</i> , Weyman and Brinton	
<i>Le Petit Bleu</i>	1897
<i>Derby, Old Virginia, Old Chum, Pedro</i> , American Tobacco Company of Canada	1897
<i>Virginia Flake</i> (cut)	
<i>World's Navy</i>	
<i>Darling</i>	

*† T & B, George Tuckett and Son, (Hamilton) B.D.	1898
<i>English</i> (cut)	
<i>Star</i> (plug)	
<i>Apex</i>	
<i>Piper Heidseik</i>	1900
<i>Spear Head</i>	1900
<i>Horse Shoe</i>	1900
<i>Bull Durham</i>	1900
<i>Yale Mixture</i>	1900
<i>Gold Standard</i>	1900
<i>Wedding Bouquet</i>	1900
<i>William Penn</i>	1900
<i>La Rose Celeste</i>	1900
<i>Mother Lode</i>	1900
<i>El Grotto</i>	1900
<i>Westover</i>	1907
* <i>Magnet</i> , agents Hudson's Bay Company, Cope Brothers and Company (Liverpool)	1897
<b>Cigars</b>	
<i>Punch</i>	1902
<i>High Life</i>	1902
<i>Africano</i>	1902
<i>King Edward VII</i>	1902
<i>Puritano</i>	1902
<i>Pacific Union</i>	1902
<i>Upman's</i>	1902
<i>Urline's</i>	1902
<i>Amaryllis</i>	1902
<i>La Sonodoro</i>	1900
* <i>El Triunfo</i>	1897
* <i>Henry Clay</i>	1897
* <i>Benjamin Franklin</i>	1897
* <i>Oscar Amanda</i>	1897
* <i>Partagas</i>	1897



<i>* La Lola</i>	1897
<i>* Province</i>	1897
<i>B.F.</i>	
<i>London Fine</i>	
<i>Atlas Cigar</i>	
<i>Casebrook pur fin</i>	
<i>Edgeworth, Larus and Brothers Company</i> (Richmond, Va.)	
<i>T &amp; B, Marguerite, Tuckett and Son</i> (Hamilton)	1903
<i>Clear Havana</i>	
<i>La Cadena</i>	
<i>Melvin</i>	
<i>La Custodia</i>	
<i>Red Ross</i>	
<i>Lhenive</i>	1902
<i>Luccado</i>	1902
<i>Marnet Garcia</i>	1902
<i>La Mancia</i>	1902
<i>La Hispania</i>	1902
<i>Veregría</i>	1900
<i>Telegrapho</i>	1900
<i>General Arthur</i>	1900
<i>El Belmont, Westminster Tobacco Company</i> (London, U.K.)	1900
<i>Chancellor</i>	1900
<i>El Modelo</i>	1900
<i>Petit Bouquet</i>	1900
<i>Flor de Bahama</i>	1900
<i>La Carolina</i>	1900
<b><i>Cigarettes</i></b>	
<i>* Vanity Fair, W.S. Kimball and Company</i> (Rochester, N.Y.)	1897
<i>* High Life, Athlete, Imperial Tobacco Company of</i> Canada	1897
<i>* Sweet Cap</i>	1897
<i>Karnak, Tuckett and Son</i> (Hamilton)	1903

<b>Beer, Spirits and Wines</b>		
<i>Bohemian, Pabst Brewing Company</i> (Milwaukee)	beer	1899
<i>Schlitz</i> (Milwaukee)	beer	1899
<i>Bass Ale, Bass, Ratcliff and Gretton</i> (Staffordshire, U.K.)	beer	1899
<i>Guinness Stout, Arthur Guinness and Company</i> (London, U.K.)	beer	1899
<i>A.B.C. Bohemian</i> (St. Louis, Mo.)	beer	1903
<i>Ranier, Seattle Brewing and Malting Company</i> (Seattle)	beer	1901
<i>Lemp</i> (St. Louis)	beer	1903
<i>Klondike, Klondike Brewing and Malting Company</i> 1883, Joseph E. Seagram and Sons (Waterloo, Ont.)	beer	1907
<i>Canadian Club, O.P.S., Imperial, Hiram Walker and Sons</i> (Walkerville, Ont.)	rye whisky	1899
<i>Lacey's Celebrated Sourmash Whiskey</i>	rye whisky	1902
<i>Hudson's Bay Rye</i>	rye whisky	1902
<i>Runnymede</i>	rye whisky	1901
<i>Special 1884, Gooderham and Wart's</i> (Toronto)	rye whisky	1902
<i>Durar's</i>	rye whisky	1901
<i>Dhuloch</i>	rye and scotch whiskies	1901
<i>Bulloch, Lade and Company</i>	rye whisky	1901
<i>John Dewar's Extra Special</i>	scotch whisky	1899
<i>Robert Brown's 4 Crown</i>	scotch whisky	1899
<i>Greer's O.V.H.</i>	scotch whisky	1899
<i>Haig &amp; Haig</i>	scotch whisky	1901
<i>Leith</i>	scotch whisky	1902
<i>Usher's</i>	scotch whisky	1901

Mountain Dew	scotch whisky	1901
3 Star, John Jameson and Son (Dublin)	Irish whisky	1899
Bushmill's	Irish whisky	1899
James Hennessey's 3 Star	brandy	1902
Markel's 3 Star	brandy	1902
Lapore	brandy	1901
United Vinyard	brandy	1901
Burke's Old Tom, Nonpareil	gin	1901
Plymouth, Coates and Company (Plymouth, U.K.)	gin	1899
Extra Dry London, Dewer Brothers	gin	1899
Holland's Geneva, John de Kuyper and Son (Montreal)	gin	1902
Hudson Bay	rum	1899
Demerara	rum	1899
Jenkin's Fils	champagne	1900
Pommery Sec	champagne	1899
Mumm's Extra Dry	champagne	1899
Forrester's Oporto	port	1899
Medoc (Barton and Guestier)	claret	1901
St. Julien, Medoc (L. Champion and Company)	claret	1901
Margoux, Medoc (L. Champion and Company)	claret	1901
St. Julien (Leon Pinaud)	claret	1901
St. Julien (L. Champion and Company)	claret	1901
Sauternes (Barton and Guestier)	sauternes	1901
Haut Sauternes (L. Champion and Company)	sauternes	1901
St. Loubes	claret	1899
Cyrus Noble	bourbon	1901
Jesse Moore	bourbon	1901

### Household Goods

*† Ivory, Proctor and Gamble of Canada (Hamilton)	soap	1898
Lennox	soap	1905
* Sunlight, Lever Brothers of Canada (Toronto)	soap	1898
Monkey, Life Buoy, Cheerful, Lever Brothers of Canada (Toronto)	soap	1903
*Babbitt's	soap	1898
*†B.T. Barrett's	soap	1898
Royal Crown	soap	1901
Perfect	soap	1906
Fel's Naptha	soap	1906
White Swan, Royal Crown Soap Company (Vancouver)	soap	1906
Borax	soap	1901
Silk	soap	1903
*† Pendray's	soap	1897
Peerless	soap	1901
*Eclipse	soap	1897
Mechanic's	tar soap	1901
Copperas	disinfectant	1900
Scheider	candles	1903
Granite	candles	1903
Electric	candles	1903
Goodwin, Goodwin Manufacturing Company (St. Louis, Mo.)	candles	1905
Price's	candles	1905
Pennant	coal oil	1903
Water White	coal oil	1905
Pearl	coal oil	1903
Gillett, E.W. Gillett and Company (Toronto)	lye	1906
Pendray	lye and ammonia	1906
Keen's Oxford	blueing	1906

*Pearline, Proctor and Gamble Company of Canada (Hamilton)	washing compound	1897	*Dr. Fowler's	extract of wild strawberry	1897
Canada Paint Company	paint	?	*Dodd's	dyspepsia tablets, kidney pills	1907
British-America Paint (Vancouver and Victoria)	paint	?	<i>Eno's</i>	fruit salts	1907
Mander Brothers (Southampton, U.K.)	paint	?	Gillette	razors, blades	1907
A. Ramsay and Son (Montreal)	paint	?	Henry Tetlow (Burlington, Vt.)	face powder	?
Imperial Varnish and Colour	paint	?	Holme's fragrant <i>Frostilla</i> (Toronto, Elmire, N.Y.)	skin softener	?
Sherwin Williams Paints	paint	1901	*Hood's	liver pills	1897
*E.B. Eddy	pails and tubs, indurated fibreware	1897	Hudyen Cures, Hudson Medical Institute (San Francisco)	?	?
Rochester Lamp Company	lamp chimneys	?	Laxa-Liver Pills	liver pills	1897
Mason Fruit Jars	glassware	1907	Madame Roy's Complexion Soap	soap	1900
Rollman Manufacturing Company	apple corers and cutters	?	Millburn's	heart and nerve pills	1897
<b>Miscellaneous Articles</b>			Pabst Malt Extract, Pabst Brewing Company (Milwaukee)	natural and vegetable tonic	1902
<i>Imperial</i>	bicycles	1905	*Paine's, Wells, Richardson and Company	celery compound	1898
<i>Massey-Harris</i>	bicycles	1905	Perry Davis	pain killer	1898
<i>Singer</i>	sewing machines	1903	A Possoni	face powder	?
<b>Drugs and Toilet Articles</b>			*Repan's	tabules	1897
*Abbey's Effervescent Salts	fruit salts	1898	Rubiform	tooth powder	?
<i>Arcadian</i>	face powder	?	Seitzled's	powder	1898
*Ayer's	sasparilla (for hair vigour)	1897	Shoff's, E. Shoff (Dawson)	blood and liver bitters	1902
*Beecham's	pills	1897	Stuart's	dyspepsia tablets	1905
*Carter's	little liver pills	1897	*Vaseline, Cheeseborough Manufacturing Company	ointment	1898
*†Castoria	restorative	1897	<b>Boots and Shoes</b>		
<i>Cuticura</i> , Potter Drug and Chemical Corporation (Malden, Mass.)	soap	1903	*Alaska Mining Boot, Canada Rubber Company (Montreal)	rubber boots	1898
*Denneford's Magnesia	magnesia	1898	A.A. Cutter	working boots	1907
*Doan's	kidney pills	1897	<i>Dodge</i> , Alfred Dodge and Company	felt shoes, slippers	1899
*Dr. Chase's	ointment, catarrh cure	1897			

*English K-Boot, J.A. Pyke (Vancouver), agent	boots	1897
<i>Eureka</i>	rubber boots and shoes	1907
Felder	working shoes	1907
*† <i>Gold Seal</i>	rubber boots	1898
*†Goodyear Rubber Company (San Francisco)	duck leather-soled shoes and leather-top shoes	1898
* <i>Crack Proof</i>	boots	1898
* <i>Snag Proof</i>	boots	1898
Hanan and Son	shoes	1903
Hagar	shoes	1907
Hudson's Bay	moccasins	1907
<i>Invictus</i>	shoes	1907
Johnson and Murphy	shoes	1907
George E. Keith	Boston shoes	1902
J.D. King's	medium high cut boots	1901
McCreedy	high-grade shoes	1907
Nettleton (Rochester, N.Y.)	shoes	1905
* <i>Nova Scotia Seal</i> , Buckingham and Hecht (San Francisco), agents	Klondike waterproof mining boots	1898
Seltz	shoes	1900
* <i>Slater</i> , George T. Slater (Montreal)	mining boots, shoes, high boots, felt shoes	1898
Strathcona	boots	1902
Whitman	felt shoes	1901
Strong and Garfield	working shoes	1907
Todd, Bancroft and Company (Rochester, N.Y.)	ladies' oxfords and slippers	1907
<i>Twentieth Century</i>	shoes	1907
<b>Garments</b>		
*Shorey's (agents in all major Canadian cities)	miners' and Arctic mackinaw suits, Klondike shirt	1898
* <i>Rooster</i> brand, Robert C.	rubberized duck coats,	1898

Wilkins (Montreal)	pants (mackinaw lined), mackinaw jackets, pants, drawers, shirts, extra-strong rivetted overalls, jumpers	
*Jaeger's, Jaeger Company (London, U.K.)	woolen clothing	1898
§ <i>Mammoth</i> , <i>Acme</i> , A.R. Clarke and Son	shirts	1906
Dr. Deimel's	underwear	1902
Woolsey	unshrinkable underwear	1902
Earl and Wilson	shirts, collars, cuffs	1902
Wilson Brothers	shirts, neckwear	1901
<i>Cluett</i>	dress shirts	1907
<i>Monarch</i>	dress shirts	1907
<i>Summit</i>	dress shirts	1907
Hart, Schaefer and Marx Clothing	suits, coats, jackets, trousers	1901
Cahn, Wampolo and Company (Chicago)	suits	1902
<i>Albert</i> , <i>Kentwood</i>	black dress suits	1907
<i>Fit-Rite</i>	suits	1907
L. Adler Brothers and Company	summer suits	1902
<i>Stein-Bloch</i>	men's clothing	1902
<i>Fit-Reform</i>	men's clothing	1907
<i>Washington</i>	men's clothing	1907
<i>Levi-Strauss</i> , Levi Strauss and Company (San Francisco)	overalls	1907
Carhartt's	jackets	1907
Balbriggan	underwear	1907
Penman's	underwear	1907
Stanfield's	underwear	1907
Wright's	health and silk underwear, socks	1901
Clarke's, A.R. Clarke and Sons	mitts	1907

Hansen's	work gloves	1907
Eisendrath	work gloves	1907
H.B.K.	work gloves	1907
<b>Hats</b>		
Christie	hats	1907
Dunlap	hats	1905
Fit-Rite	hats	1907
Gordon	hats	1907
King	hats	1901
Knox	hats	1898
Stetson, John B. Stetson Company	hats, summer hats and caps	1898
Scott's	hats	1907
§ Regal, Wilkison and Company (London, U.K.)	hats	?
<b>Klondike Gear</b>		
*Hudson's Bay Company	blankets (4-point)	1898
*Strohmayr, Gillespie, Asley and Dixon (Toronto), agents	sleeping bags	1898
*Alaska brand, Hudson Bay Knitting Mills (Montreal)	waterproof eiderdown sleeping bags	1898
*Canada Fibre Company	sleeping bags	1898
*Millichamp, Coyle and Company	Klondike sleeping bags	1898
*Teslin, Dawson, McClary Manufacturing Company (London, Winnipeg, Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto)	folding stoves	1898
*Primus, Holbrook, Merrill and Stetson (San Francisco) agents	oil stoves	1898
*Clark's Improved Air-tight Stove (Seattle)	stoves	1897
*Nelson Peterborough Canoe Company (Peterborough, Ont.)	canoes	1898
*Mascoŧ, Yukon Sled Manufacturing Company (Vancouver); E.G. Prior (Victoria)	sleds	1897

*Alaska Freight Sled, Baker and Hamilton (San Francisco) agents	freight sleds	1898
<b>Magazines</b>		
§ Ainslies		1908
Argosy (London)		1898
§ l'Art et la Mode (Paris)		1908
§ Century		1908
§ Collier's		1908
§ Cosmopolitan		1908
§ Harper's Weekly		1908
§ Harper's Bazaar		1908
§ Illustrated London News		1908
The Ladies' Home Journal		1903
§ Leslie's Weekly		1908
McClure's Magazine		1902
Munsey's Magazine		1898
§ Saturday Evening Post		1908
Scientific American		1908
Strand Magazine (London)		1898
Success Magazine		1908
§ Town Topics: The Journal of Society		1908

### Appendix C. Origins of Dawson Companies and Merchants.

It should be pointed out that this appendix is by no means complete. It lists only the *known* sources of merchants and companies operating in Dawson from 1898 to 1905. Dawson sources do not delve into the past lives of the town's citizens with any regularity.

Alaska Commercial Company (Northern Commercial Company after 1901)	San Francisco
Alaska Exploration Company	London (U.K.) and San Francisco
Ames Mercantile Company	Chicago and San Francisco
William Clark (North End Grocer)	Tacoma, Washington
Eagle Clothing Company	Chicago, St. Paul, Minn.
J.R. Grey (Dawson Hardware Co.)	Vancouver and Seattle
Marion A. Hammell (grocery)	Mt. Gilead, Ohio, and Montana
Joseph Ladue Gold Mining and Development Company	Plattsburg, N.Y.
McLennan, McFeely and Company	Vancouver
Ezra Meeker (scow merchant)	Tacoma, Washington
North American Transportation and Trading Company	Seattle and Chicago
O'Donogue and Swift (general merchants)	Kingston, Ont.
Pacific Cold Storage Company	Tacoma, Washington
Parson's Produce Company	Winnipeg
Martin A. Piska (of Sargent and Piska Clothiers)	St. Paul, Minn.
Ryan (of the North End Grocery)	Tacoma, Washington
Charles S. Sargent (of Sargent and Piska)	Duluth, Minn.
N.P. Shaw and Company (livestock, meats and provisions)	Victoria
Seattle-Yukon Trading Company	Seattle
Trading and Exploration Company	London, U.K.

**Appendix D. White Pass and Yukon Railway Rates and Comparison with Canadian Pacific Railway Freight Rates, 1910.<sup>1</sup>**

**Relation of Freight Rates to Prices, Yukon Territory, 1910**

	<i>Vancouver price June 3, 1910</i>	<i>Steamship rate to Skagway</i>	<i>Assumed Skagway price</i>	<i>Local rate per ton Skagway to Whitehorse (dollars)</i>		<i>Percentage of local rate to Skagway price (dollars)</i>	
	<i>per ton (dollars)</i>	<i>per ton (dollars)</i>	<i>per ton (dollars)</i>	<i>Less than car load</i>	<i>Car load</i>	<i>Less than car load</i>	<i>Car load</i>
Beef (fresh)	16	27	43	70	60	162	139
Pork	24	27	51	70	60	137	117
Butter	80	14	94	70	60	74	63
Cheese	30	10	40	55	50	137	125
Bacon	50	10	60	55	50	91	83
Potatoes	30	11	41	55	55	134	121
Flour	65	9	74	50	45	67	60
Oats	34	9	43	50	40	116	93
Hay	26	15	41	50	40	121	97
Feed	36	9	45	50	40	111	88
Sugar	109	9	118	50	45	42	38

**Comparison of Railway Freight Rates, 1910**

	<i>White Pass and Yukon Railway (cents per ton-mile)</i>		<i>Canadian Pacific Railway (cents per ton-mile)</i>	
	<i>Less than car load</i>	<i>Car load</i>	<i>Less than car load</i>	<i>Car Load</i>
Flour	45	40	8	5
Salt	45	41	8	4
Sugar	45	41	8	7
Butter	63	54	13	10
Coal oil	45	41	10	7
Iron	45	41	8	7
Hay	56	50	23	4
Glass	45	41	10	7

### Appendix E. Employees, Dawson Firms, 1901–03.

This appendix shows the number of employees hired by various firms in Dawson from 1901 to 1903. The information given below has been compiled from Alaska-Yukon directories for these years.

	1901	1902	1903
<b>Companies Hiring Four Assistants or More</b>			
AC Company (NC Company)	45	65	55
NAT&T Company	35	31	34
Ames Mercantile Company	13	31	9
Seattle-Yukon Trading Company (to 1901)	14		
Joseph Ladue Company	5	9	14
McLennan, McFeely and Company	9	14	18
J. and T. Adair (general merchants)		5	8
Palmer Brothers (grocers, wholesale and retail)	3	6	6
Macauley Brothers (wholesale importers)		4	
Trading and Exploring Company (general merchants, wholesale)	4		
<b>Companies and Merchants Hiring Fewer than Four Assistants</b>			
Family Grocery	1		
Royal Grocery	2	2	2
Log Cabin Grocery	2		
Minnesota Grocery (wholesale)	1		
Dawson Hardware Company		3	3
Whitney and Pedlar (general merchants)		3	2
Dawson Wholesale Grocery		3	2
P. Burns and Company (wholesale meats)		2	1
McDonald Trading Company		1	
Klondike Trading Company		1	
Thomas Mahoney Trading Company		2	1
N.P. Shaw and Company (livestock, meats, provisions – wholesale)		1	
William Germer (grocer, wholesale and retail)		1	
Strait's Auction House		2	
Mechanic's Emporium (hardware)		1	

Stanley Searce (wholesale importer and commission merchant)	1	2	
Hershberg and Company (dry goods)	1	2	2
Sargent and Pinska (dry goods)		2	1
Klondike Market (meats)		1	
Bonanza Market (meats)		2	
Dominion Hardware		1	
Charles Milne (wholesale, retail grocer)		2	
Kilgore and Landahl (fruit)		1	1
Seattle Meat Market		1	
C.R. Williams (grocer)		1	
Anglo-American Commercial Company		1	
Logan Archibald (grocer)		1	
Avery's Grocery		1	1
Denver Meats		1	
Sam Ross and Company (general merchant)		1	
Standard Commercial Company (meats)		2	
Barret and Hull (commission merchants)		1	
Summers and Orrell (millinery and fancy goods)		1	2
Powell's Store (men's furnishings)		1	
Gregory and Company (auctioneers)		1	
T.W. Grennan (groceries and household supplies)		1	
J.E. Lilly and Company (wholesale-retail grocers)		1	

This list is far from complete by virtue of the fact that each year the policy of the directories changed as to the amount recorded in the alphabetical list of residents in the space allotted to occupation. Every employee hired by the establishments listed above, therefore, is not necessarily registered in this manner. Clearly this list shows that the 1902 directory was by far the most thorough in its listings of assistants in small concerns – that is, it referred directly to the firm for which each Dawson resident worked.



## **Appendix F. Wholesale Firms in Dawson, 1898–1903.**

The dates given are outside markers only; they do not necessarily mean that all these firms were involved in the wholesale trade throughout these years or that they even existed during the entire period. Those firms which were known to have a retail trade, in addition to their wholesale business, are marked with an asterisk.

### **General Merchants**

- \*Alaska Commercial Company (Northern Commercial Company)
- \*Alaska Exploration Company
- \*North American Transportation and Trading Company
- \*Seattle-Yukon Trading Company
- \*Trading and Exploring Company
- \*Whitney and Pedlar
- \*Palmer Brothers

### **Groceries and Provisions**

- \*Ahkert and Forsha
- Dawson Wholesale Grocery Company
- \*William Germer
- \*W.A. Harrington
- Macauley Brothers
- \*Jones Brothers
- \*Jacob Lawick
- A. Lewin
- \*J.E. Lilly and Company
- M. Marks
- \*Charles Milne
- \*H.A. Weld (Minnesota Grocery)
- \*Thomas G. Wilson
- \*Parson's Produce Company
- Northern Trading Company

### **Commission Merchants**

- Barrett and Hull
- Stanley Searce
- Lancaster and Calderhead
- Taylor, Warlock and Company

### **Dry Goods**

- \*Sargent and Pinska
- \*Macauley Brothers
- \*J.P. McLennan
- \*McLennan, McFeely and Company

### **Drugs**

- \*Cribbs and Rogers

### **Meat Markets**

- \*Alaska Meat Company
- \*Bay City Meat Market
- P. Burns and Company
- Dawson Stock Yards and Abbatoir
- Cattle Syndicate
- A. Gustaveson
- Swift and Company
- \*Portland Market
- N.P. Shaw and Company
- \*Pacific Cold Storage Company
- Standard Commercial Company
- Yukon Cold Storage

### Appendix G. Categories of Merchants in Dawson, 1901–06.

The information given in this appendix is drawn from Alaska-Yukon business directories for these years. Because the only available copy of the 1903 directory is an extract, the figures in certain categories are incomplete; these figures are marked by double asterisks. A single asterisk denotes an overlap; that is, the fact that some merchants are entered in both wholesale and retail categories, or that they sold both confectionery and tobacco.

<i>Category</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>1902</i>	<i>1903</i>	<i>1905–06</i>
Grocers and provisions dealers	30			
Wholesale		13*	5*	3
Retail		30*	39*	16
General merchants	28			
Wholesale		21	13	7
Retail		7	4	4
Commission merchants	8	7	4	4
Merchants and traders, unspecified	135	41		
Secondhand merchants, auctioneers		2	6**	5
Meat merchants	16			
Markets		16	13	7
Butchers		17	13	
Hardware dealers	11	9	13	9
Dry goods (men's and women's clothing, general dry goods)	28	16	21**	19
Fruit and confectionery	6*	13*	8*	7
Cigars and tobacco	15*	25*	21*	16
Drug stores	8	6	10	7
Saloons	23	18	**	16
Restaurants	33	33	**	22

**Appendix H. Categories of Merchants in Bonanza, 1901–06.**

The information given in this appendix is derived from the Alaska-Yukon directories for these years.

<i>Category</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>1902</i>	<i>1903</i>	<i>1905–06</i>
Grocers and provisions dealers		1		1
General merchants	5	6	5	3
Merchants and traders, unspecified	8			
Secondhand merchants and auctioneers		1	1	
Meat merchants, butchers	2	3	2	3
Hardware dealers	1			1
Dry goods	5	2	6	6
Fruit, cigars, confectionery, tobacco, etc.	1	3	4	6
Druggists	1	2	1	2
Saloons	8			
Restaurants	12	4	7	7

**Appendix I. Some Commodities Sold by the North American  
Transportation and Trading Company, November 1901.<sup>1</sup>**

GROCERY DEPARTMENT

Herring – kippered  
Herring – salted  
Herring – in Oil  
Fish Balls – Norwegian  
Caviar – Russian  
Sardines  
Oysters – Booth  
Oysters – Saddle Rock  
Oysters – Bule Point  
Codfish – Steaks  
Codfish – Boned  
Codfish – Bricks  
Mackerel – Kits  
Mackerel – In Mustard  
Mackerel – In Tomato Sauce  
Mackerel – In Oil  
Salmon – Bellies  
Salmon – Columbia River  
Salmon – Fraser River  
Lobster – Castle  
Lobster – Crown  
Lobster – Gold  
Shrimp – Magnolia  
Shrimp – Chicago  
Hamburg – Aala  
Gelatine – Cox  
Gelatine – Knox  
Hops  
Honey  
Hot Stuff  
Horseradish  
Jams  
Jellies  
Marmalade  
Mince Meat – (Bulk) Heinz  
Mixed Pickles – Heinz  
German Pickles – Heinz  
Gherkins – Heinz  
Olives Kraut  
Olives – (Bulk)  
Nuts – Pecans  
Nuts – Almonds

Nuts – Walnuts  
Nuts – Brazilian  
Nuts – Filberts  
Nuts – Peanuts  
Peel – Citron  
Peel – Lemon  
Peel – Orange  
Sauces – Chili  
Sauces – Cranberry  
Sauces – Pepper Green  
Sauces – Pepper Red  
Sauces – Tobasco  
Sauces – Lea & Perrins  
Sauces – India Relish  
Sauces – Chutney  
Sauces – Mango Chutney  
Sauces – Curry  
Sauces – Capers  
Franco-American Soups All Kinds  
Tomato Soups – Snyder's  
Catsup – Snyder's  
Apple Butter – Heinz's  
Biscuits – Christie's  
Crackers – Christie's  
Biscuits – Shredded Wheat  
Brown Bread  
Ginger Bread  
Carmel Cereal  
Plum Pudding  
Germea  
Grape Nuts  
Malt Breakfast Food  
Twin Bros. Mush  
Ralston Breakfast Food  
Wheat – Cracked  
Wheat – Creamed  
Wheat – Rolled  
Cocoa – Van Houten's  
Cocoa – Fry's  
Cocoa – Epp's  
Chocolate – California  
Chocolate – Menier  
Chocolate – Ground  
Chocolate – Unsweetened  
Coffee – Pennant  
Coffee – Ensign

Cheese – McLaren's  
Cheese – Beaver  
Cheese – Canadian (16 lb.)  
Cheese – Canadian (26 lb.)  
Cheese – Canadian (40 lb.)  
Cheese – Roquefort

#### HARDWARE DEPARTMENT

##### *BUILDERS' HARDWARE.*

Nails  
Tar Paper  
Building Paper  
Locks  
Butts  
Door Bells  
Sash Fasteners  
Door Bolts  
Latches  
Cupboard Catches  
Gate Hooks and Eyes

##### *CARPENTERS TOOLS.*

Sets of Chisels  
Sets of Bits  
Augers  
Planes  
Squares  
Hand Saws  
Stanley Combination Planes  
Hammers  
Files

##### *KITCHEN UTENSILS.*

Granite, Tin and Copper-ware  
Graniteware  
Tinware  
Copperware  
Cast Skillets  
Hotcake Griddles  
Wire Broilers  
Stock Pots  
Table and Pocket Cutlery  
Bora

##### *BLACKSMITH TOOLS.*

Iron  
Steel  
Cumberland Coal  
Hammers  
Anvils  
Bellows  
Forges  
Tuyere Irons  
Fletters  
Set Hammers  
Punches  
Cold Chisels  
Hot Chisels  
Tong  
Hardies  
Top and Bottom Swages  
Heading Tools

##### *MINERS' SUPPLIES.*

Picks  
Shovels  
Rope  
Valve and Machinery Oil  
Plough Steel Cable

##### *STOVES.*

Cariboo No. 7 and 8 for wood  
Leroy No. 7 for Coal or wood  
Jewel Range, for Coal or wood  
Air-Tights, for Wood (from 16 to 30 inches)  
Coles Hot Blast Heater fill the bill for Lignite Coal.  
No trouble to keep the fire over night.

##### EVERY KNOWN WANT IN HARDWARE

##### HAT AND SHOE DEPARTMENT

Hats, Caps and Shoes in any Quantity

##### *HATS.*

Stetson Cowboy Hats  
Stetson Crush Hats  
Stetson Fedora Hats  
Stetson Derby Hats  
King Hats  
Black Derby Hats

Pearl Fedora Hats  
Black Fedora Hats  
Pearl Golf Hats  
Cedar Fedora Hats

*CAPS.*

Beaver Caps  
Coon Caps  
Muskrat Caps  
Cloth Caps  
Silk Caps

*SHOES.*

Dodge Felt Shoes  
Slater Felt Shoes  
Whitman Felt Shoes  
Dolge Felt Slippers  
Dolge Fancy Slippers  
Mocassin Slippers  
Hudson's Bay Mocassins  
Infants' Mocassins  
Patent Leather Shoes  
Patent Leather Slippers  
Patent Leather Oxfords

CLOTHING DEPARTMENT

*HART, SCHAEFNER AND MARX CLOTHING.*

Fancy Tweed Suits  
Black Worsted Suits  
Fancy Worsted Suits  
Black Chevoit Suits  
Fancy Trousers  
Tweed Trousers  
Cassimere Trousers  
Full Dress Suits  
Coon Coats  
Beaver Coats  
Fancy Dressing Jackets  
Fancy Bar Coats  
Fancy Smoking Jackets

*FURNISHING GOODS.*

Wilson Bros. Colored Neglige  
Wilson Bros. White Shirts  
Wilson Bros. Dress Shirts

Wilson Bros. Neckwear  
Wright's Health Underwear  
Wright's Silk Underwear  
California Flannel Underwear  
California Flannel Overshirts  
Natural Wool Underwear  
Fancy Cashmere Socks  
Black Cashmere Socks  
Wright's Health Socks  
German Socks  
Golf Stockings  
Bicycle Stockings

## **Appendix J. Retail Prices, Dawson, 1897–1907.**

This appendix gives the comparative retail prices for staple commodities in Dawson, in outfitting centres and in the T. Eaton Company catalogues from 1897 to 1907. The information has been gathered from sources almost as widely spread as the bibliography itself, and for this reason, no attempt has been made to footnote specific references. The sources most heavily relied on were the *Dawson Daily News* (1899–1907) and, of course, Eaton's catalogues for the years in question. In the cases of many commodities there are, inevitably, gaps, and in others there is such a plethora of suggestions as to the "actual" price of an item that the choice is difficult. In the summer of 1898 the market was so erratic that the wide range of prices quoted is quite understandable.

Some attempt has been made to allow for the most obvious seasonal variations by making a rough division of prices into two categories. "Summer" and "winter" might be reasonably interpreted as "shipping season" and "storage season." Even so, there are bound to be variations within seasons. Where such variations are particularly pronounced, two or more figures have been listed in chronological order. Prices during the winter of 1902 show this trend.

"Outside 1897–98" is a general reference to the outfitting centres. Prices in Edmonton, Vancouver, Toronto, Seattle and San Francisco have been used, and while there were great differences among them, the variation is minimal compared to the prevailing prices inside.

The prices of the T. Eaton Company, as quoted in the company's annual catalogues, have been used as something of a reference point. The area which these catalogues covered was such that the prices they gave would have been competitive across the country, and for that reason they may be used here as a sort of national average – although the term is used very loosely. Eaton's lists covered a wide variety of goods in every area. In some cases two prices have been recorded to cover this range.

This appendix covers the following years and areas:

1897–98: outside outfitting centres

1897: Dawson, summer and winter (this was Dawson's "Starvation Winter")

1898: Dawson, summer

1900: Dawson, summer

1902: Dawson, summer and winter and Eaton's catalogue

1905: Dawson, summer and winter and Eaton's catalogue

1907: Dawson, summer and Eaton's catalogue.

Hopefully this selection will serve to show, first, the general trend of retail prices in Dawson between 1898 and 1907; second, the variations in Dawson prices on a seasonal basis, and third, the variation in prices between Dawson and the outside both during and after the rush.

Unless otherwise stated, all prices are given per pound. The following abbreviations have been used:

cs.: case

t.: tin

pck.: package

sp.: spring – that is, the price quoted during the last weeks before breakup. If there was a shortage of this item, the price will be higher than it had been during the winter, on the average; if there had been a glut, it would be lower.

	<i>Outside 1897-98</i>	<i>Dawson Summer 1897</i>	<i>Dawson Winter 1897</i>	<i>Dawson Summer 1898</i>	<i>Dawson Summer 1900</i>	<i>Dawson Summer 1902</i>	<i>Dawson Winter 1902</i>	<i>T. Eaton Company 1902</i>	<i>Dawson Summer 1905</i>	<i>Dawson Winter 1905</i>	<i>T. Eaton Company 1905</i>	<i>Dawson Summer 1907</i>	<i>T. Eaton Company 1907</i>
Beef													
Tinned	.25/t.	.75/t.		1.00/t.	5.50/cs.	3t./1.00	2t./1.00	.15/t.	.50/t.		.15/t.		.15
Per lb.	.05	1.00	3.50	1.50			.20-50 .30-60		.22-1/2			.30	
Ham and Bacon/lb.	.15	.40 .65	1.50		.35		.30 .40	.16 .17	.25			.35 .40	.17 .18
Fish							.40 each		.35 each				
Fresh				.25			3t./1.00	.10/t.	6t./1.00		.10/t.		.15/t.
Tinned		12.00/cs.			5.00/cs.			.15/t.			.18/t.		.17/t.
Tinned Oysters			18.00/t. 25.00/t.		13.00/cs.		.50/t.		.50/t. 1.00/t.	1.50/t.			
<b>Provisions</b>													
Flour/50 lbs.	1.20 2.50	6.00	100.00 50.00 10.00	12.50 3.00 2.50	6.00	4.00	3.25 4.00(sp.)	1.00 1.40	3.50	3.75	2.25	3.75	1.75
Rolled Oats	.02	.18		.30	.18	.09	.20	.03-1/2	.10	.11	.03 .04	.11	.03-1/2
Rice	.04	.25			.18		.12-1/2	.06 .07	.15		.04 .07	.12-1/2	.07
Sugar	.04	.50 .30 .25	1.00	.35 .25	.16	.10	.08 .10(sp.)	.04	.12-1/2	.12-1/2	.06	.10	.06
Beans	.02	.13 .10	1.50	.20	.08-1/2	.08	.09 .10(sp.)	.03	.10		.04	.14	.03
<b>Fruits, Vegetables</b>													
Fruit (2-lb t.)		.50/t.		.75/t. 1.00/t.	.50/t.	2t. or 3t./1.00	2t. or 3t./1.00	.10/t. .15/t.	2t./1.00	3t./1.00	10t./1.00	.25/t.	.12/t. .25/t.
Vegetables (2-lb t.)		.75/t.			.25/t.	3t./1.00	.25/t. .35/t.	.07/t. .10/t.	3t. or 4t./1.00	4t./1.00	10t./1.00	.25/t.	.10/t. .25/t.
Evaporated Fruit	.05 .10 .13	.25 .35	1.00	1.00	.22-1/2		.30	.12-1/2 .15	.20 .25	.25	.15	.25	.10 .20 .25
Evaporated Vegetables	.10 .18 .25	.50			.50	2t./1.25			.30	.10 (potatoes)			.12
Oranges		.50 each		75.00/box 1.00/each		14.00/box	3.00/doz.		1.00		.25/doz. .50/doz.		.25/doz. .50/doz.





**Appendix K. Dawson Grocers and Companies with Grocery Departments, 1901-06.**

This information is derived from Alaska-Yukon business directories for the period.

<i>Name</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>1902</i>	<i>1903</i>	<i>1905-06</i>
Ahlert and Forsha	x	x	x	x
Ames Mercantile Company			x	
Applebaum and Company	x			
Archibald, Logan	x	x	x	
Avery's Grocery		x	x	x
Bertram, Newton H.			x	
Bowan and Ellis (Colorado Market)	x			
Butler, Harold W.				x
Branson, Thadeus S.			x	
Cashman, Nellie	x			
C I K Grocery		x		
Clark and Ryan	x			
Cook, Mrs. Sarah (Klondike City)				x
Couch, W.N.				x
Cowan, Frank J.			x	
Creelman, Robert		x	x	
Darby and Shink			x	
Dawson Wholesale Grocery Co.		x		
Des Brisay, M. and Co.			x	
Dunham, Ferris S.			x	
Family Grocery		x	x	
Forrest, Paul				x
French, Albert C.		x		
French and Carroll	x			
Germer, William	x	x	x	
Gillespie	x			
Grennan, Thomas G.		x	x	
Hack, C.F.	x			
Hamburger and Weisburg	x			

Hammell Grocery Store	x	x	
Harrington, William A.	x	x	
Henry, Samuel			x
Hill Side Grocery	x		
Hobson, H.	x		x
Houston, J.H.	x		
Jones Bros.		x	x
Keith, H.C.	x		
Lawick, Jacob	x	x	x
Leighty, Barton and Diehl			x
Lilly, James E. and Company		x	x
Larsen and Shepherd			x
Log Cabin	x		
Mac's Grocery			x
Macauley Bros.			x
Mahoney Trading Company		x	x
Marks, M.		x	
McLennan, Sam		x	
McDonald Trading Company			x
Miller, Alex S.		x	
Milne, Chas.	x	x	
Minnesota Grocery	x	x	
Mohr and Wilkins	x		
Moore, William A.		x	
Neobson, H.		x	
Palmer Bros.			x
Perkins and Sharon			x
R.R. Company		x	x
Riverside Grocery	x		
Rook Bros.			x
Rosenthal, Marcus			x
Royal Grocery	x	x	x
Scarce, Stanley			x
Schreiber, Paul	x		x

Segrim			x	
Selman and Myers	x			
Shaw and Spence				x
Shaw, N.P. and Company			x	
Stein and Stewart			x	
Strait, E.S.			x	
South End Mercantile Company	x			
Twed and Bros.	x			
Vine, R.L.				x
Warwick's Store	x	x	x	
Weissberg, Simon				x
Weld, H.A.		x	x	
Wilkins, Chas.		x	x	
Wilson, T.G.		x	x	
Yukon Grocery	x			
<b>Department Stores with Grocery Departments</b>				
Ladue Gold Mining and Development Company	x	x	x	x
NAT&T Company	x	x	x	x
NC Company	x	x	x	x

**Appendix L. McDougall and Secord Outfit List.<sup>1</sup>**

GROCERY LIST

400 lbs. Flour	\$10.00	8 lbs. Compressed Vegetables	3.25
150 lbs. Bacon	16.50	1 lb. Pepper	.25
100 lbs. Navy Beans	4.50	1/2 lb. Mustard	.25
40 lbs. Rolled Oats	1.40	1/4 lb. Evaporated Vinegar	.75
20 lbs. Corn Meal	.75	75 lbs. Evaporated Fruits	10.00
10 lbs. Rice	.75	20 lbs. Candles	3.20
25 lbs. G. Sugar	1.63	6 tins 4 oz. Extract Beef	3.00
10 lbs. Tea	4.00	4 Pkg. Yeast Cakes	.40
20 lbs. Coffee	8.00	1 Pkg. Tin Matches	.75
2 doz. Condensed Milk	4.50	1/2 lb. Ground Ginger	.20
10 lbs. Baking Powder	5.00	6 lbs. Laundry Soap	.37
2 lbs. Baking Soda	.20	6 Cakes Borax or Tar Soap	.50
20 lbs. Salt	.40	2 Bottle Jamaica Ginger	.50
20 lbs. Evaporated Potatoes	5.00	25 lbs. Hard Tack	2.00
5 lbs. Evaporated Onions	2.50	1 lb. Citric Acid	.90
			<hr/>
			\$91.45

HARDWARE LIST

1 Camp Cook Stove	\$7.00	1 7 x 7 Heavy Duck Tent	4.50
1 Fry Pan	.25	1 Jack Plane	.90
1 Coffee Pot	.75	1 Inch Framing Chisel	.25
2 Granite Cups	.30	1 Whip Saw, 6 feet	7.50
1 Bake Pan	.75	1 Hand Saw	1.00
1 Set Nested Kettles	2.40	2 Files	.25
1 Galvanized Water Bucket	.40	1 Draw Knife	.75
2 Granite Plates	.30	15 lbs. Assorted Nails	.75
1 Knife, Fork & Spoons	.25	1 Drifting Pick and Handle	1.25
1 Butcher Knife	.25	1 Long Handle Shovel	1.00
1 Axe and Handle	1.00	1 Gold Pan	.75
1 Small Hand Axe	.60	200 ft. 3/8 inch Rope	1.20
1 Whet Stone	.10	5 lbs. Oakum	.60
1 Hammer	.50	10 lbs. Pitch	1.00
1 Brace and Bits	1.25	2 Caulking Irons	.60
1 Pair Gold Scales	2.00	1 pair Goggles	.15
1 38-55 Winchester Carbine	16.00	1 Compass	1.00
100 Cartridges	3.25	1 Quartz Glass	.60
		1 lb. Quick Silver	.90
			<hr/>
			\$62.30

*This Hardware List includes nearly all that would be required if the party consisted of five or more.*

CLOTHING OUTFIT

2 Suits Heavy Knit Underwear	\$8.00
6 Pair Wool Sox	1.75
1 Pair Heavy Moccasins	3.00
2 Pair German Stockings	1.00
2 Heavy Flannel Overshirts	3.50
1 Heavy Woolen Sweater	1.50
1 Pair Overalls	1.25
2 Pair 12 lb. Blankets	14.00
1 Waterproof Blanket	2.75
1 doz. Bandana Handkerchiefs	1.25
1 Stiff Brim Cowboy Hat	1.50
1 Pair Hip Rubber Boots	5.00

Medicine Chest	\$ 4.00
Horses	25.00

1 Pair Prospector's High Land Boots	4.50
1 Mackinaw, Coat, Pants, Shirt	\$11.50
1 Pair Heavy Buck Mitts, Lined	1.75
1 Pair Unlined Leather Gloves	.75
1 Heavy Duck Coat, Pants and Vest	11.50
6 Towels	1.50
1 Pocket Match Box	.15
Buttons, Needles and Thread	.25
Comb, Mirror, Tooth Brush etc.	.50
Mosquito Netting	.50
1 Dunnage Bag	1.00
1 Sleeping Bag	12.50
	<hr/>
	\$90.90

Packs, Saddles, complete	6.00
Flat Sleighs	8.00

Flour put up in 50 pound double sacks. Everything is sacked that can be, and no packages more than 50 lbs. All goods put up and packed in the very best manner. No charge for packing except extra sacks, which are 10¢ each. In these lists nothing but necessities are included. There are many other things that are usually taken, but are not absolutely necessary. Lumber suitable for boat building is from \$15 to \$20 per 1,000 feet here.

## Endnotes

### The Artery: Yukon River Trade Before 1896

- 1 Lois Delano Kitchener, *Flag Over the North: The Story of the Northern Commercial Company* (Seattle: Superior Publishing [1954], p. 24.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- 3 William Ogilvie, *The Klondike Official Guide: Canada's Great Gold Fields, the Yukon . . . with Regulations Governing Placer Mining* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose, 1898) (hereafter cited as *Klondike Official Guide*), p. 9.
- 4 William Ogilvie, *Early Days on the Yukon & the Story of Its Gold Fields* (Ottawa: Thorburn and Abbott, 1913) (hereafter cited as *Early Days*), pp. 24–25.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 6 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 28.
- 7 Pierre Berton, *Klondike: The Life and Death of the Last Great Gold Rush* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1961), p. 5.
- 8 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., pp. 32–33.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- 10 Richard Mathews, *The Yukon* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston [1968]), p. 76.
- 11 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, p. 48.
- 12 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., pp. 150–51.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 151.
- 14 William Ogilvie, *Early Days*, p. 68.
- 15 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 151.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 Kathryn Winslow, *Big Pan-Out* (New York: Norton [1951]), p. 143.
- 18 F. Mortimer Trimmer, ed., *The Yukon Territory: The Narrative of W.H. Dall, Leader of the Expedition to Alaska in 1866–1868; The Narrative of an Exploration Made in 1887 in Yukon District by G.M. Dawson: Extracts from the Report of an Exploration made in 1896–1897 by W. Ogilvie* (London: Downey, 1898), p. 301.
- 19 William Ogilvie, *Early Days*, p. 105.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- 21 F. Mortimer Trimmer, op. cit., pp. 379–80.
- 22 *Ibid.* Lois Delano Kitchener's sources estimate the territory's population as 400. This figure may include Alaska. See Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 152.
- 23 William Ogilvie, *Early Days*, pp. 69–70.
- 24 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 44.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 152.
- 26 Joseph Ladue, *Klondyke Facts, Being a Complete Guide Book to the Great Gold Regions of the Yukon and Klondyke, and the North West Territories* (Montreal: John Lovell and Sons [1897]), p. 164.
- 27 Veazie Wilson, *Guide to the Yukon Goldfields, Where They Are and How to Reach Them* (Seattle: Calvert, 1895), p. 71.
- 28 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 142.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46.
- 30 William Ogilvie, *Early Days*, p. 267.
- 31 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 187.
- 32 William Ogilvie, *Early Days*, p. 67.
- 33 E. Tappan Adney, *The Klondike Stampede* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1900), p. 272.
- 34 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 189.
- 35 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 272.
- 36 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 191.
- 37 Canada. Parliament. House of Commons, Sessional Papers, Report of the North-West Mounted Police, 1896, report by Inspector C. Constantine, Fort Constantine, 20 Nov. 1896.
- 38 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, p. 78.
- 39 Alan Innes-Taylor, "The Early History of Forty Mile and the Yukon," manuscript in possession of the author, reference to 1873; John W. Leonard, *The Gold Fields of the Klondike; Fortune Seeker's Guide to the Yukon Region of Alaska and British America; the Story as Told by Ladue, Berry, Phiscator and Other Gold Finders* (London: T.F. Unwin, 1897), p. 177. The 1897 reference is made to river posts at that date, not to Dawson.
- 40 Canada. Public Archives (hereafter cited as PAC), MG30, C2, Constantine Papers, Vol. 1, Constantine diary, 24 Nov. 1896.
- 41 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 266.
- 42 *Ibid.*, pp. 95–97.
- 43 Veazie Wilson, op. cit., Appendix, p. 3.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- 45 Pierre Berton, op. cit., p. 26.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 254.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- 49 Charles M. Gates, "Human Interest Notes on Seattle and the Alaskan Gold Rush," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 34 (1943), pp. 205–11.

### The Great Outfitting Rush, 1897–98

- 1 University of Toronto Archives. Dawson Board of Trade, *Paystreak* No. 6, Dec. 1899.
- 2 James Grierson MacGregor, *The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton, 1897–98* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart [1970]), pp. 257–59 quoted as Appendix L below.
- 3 E. Jerome Dyer, *The Routes and Mineral Resources of North Western Canada* (London: George Philip, 1898), pp. 254–58, reprint from the *Calgary Herald*, 16 Sept. 1898.
- 4 Laurence A. Johnson, *Over the Counter and on the Shelf: Country Storekeeping in America, 1620–1920*, ed. Marcia Ray (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1961), p. 85.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 90.
- 6 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 14, No. 7 (Feb. 1900), p. 13.
- 7 *Ibid.*, Vol. 19, No. 26 (May 1905), p. 99.
- 8 Laurence A. Johnson, op. cit., p. 87.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 Hannah Campbell, *Why Did They Name It . . . ?* (New York: Fleet Publishing, 1964), p. 58.
- 11 "A Backward Glance: 56 Years Ago This Week," *Saturday Night*, 13 Feb. 1954 (hereafter cited as "A Backward Glance"), p. 17.
- 12 *Klondike Nugget* (semi-weekly), 16 June 1898.
- 13 "A Backward Glance," p. 17.
- 14 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, p. 138.
- 15 E. Jerome Dyer, op. cit., p. 254.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 257.
- 17 The first truly effective food legislation in the United States was the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 (see United States. Laws, Statutes, etc., *United States Code* [Washington: Government Printing Office,

- 1941], Vol. 2, titles 17–33). In Canada no food standards were established (except pertaining to tea) until 1910.
- 18 Alaska Commercial Company (hereafter cited as AC Company), *To the Klondike Gold Fields and Other Points of Interest in Alaska* (San Francisco: AC Company, 1898), p. 69.
  - 19 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, pp. 137–38.
  - 20 *Ibid.*, p. iv.
  - 21 Chicago Record, *Klondike; The Chicago Record's Book for Goldseekers . . .* (Chicago: Chicago Record, 1897), p. 53.
  - 22 William A.R. Thomson, ed., *Black's Medical Dictionary*, 26th ed. (London: A. and C. Black, 1965).
  - 23 *Ibid.*
  - 24 Mary E. Hitchcock, *Two Women in the Klondike; the Story of a Journey to the Gold-Fields of Alaska* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1899), p. 332.
  - 25 Rose Helper, "The Yukon Gold Rush; A Study in Social Disorganization and Reorganization," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1945, p. 117, from Fred Palmer, 1899.
  - 26 Joseph Ladue, op. cit., p. 89.
  - 27 *Ibid.*
  - 28 Charles Henry Lugin, comp., *Yukon Gold Fields. Map Showing Routes from Victoria, B.C., to the Various Mining Camps on the Yukon River and Its Branches. Mining Regulations of the Dominion Government and Forms of Application, Together with Table of Distances, Extracts from Mr. Ogilvie's Reports and Other Information* (Victoria, B.C.: Colonist Printing and Publishing, 1897), p. 26.
  - 29 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, p. 139.
  - 30 University of Washington, Seattle, Northwest Collection, annual report of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, 1898.
  - 31 AC Company, op. cit., p. 73, Baker and Hamilton Company, manufacturers.
  - 32 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 222.
  - 33 William St. Clair Greever, *The Bonanza West: The Story of the Western Mining Rushes, 1848–1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 375; *Dawson Daily News* (hereafter cited as *DD News*), 28 Oct. 1899.
  - 34 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, p. xxxiii, Walter Dean, Toronto, manufacturer.
  - 35 Guy Lawrence, *40 Years on the Yukon Telegraph* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press [1965]), p. 17.
  - 36 Robert R. Still, "Historical and Competitive Aspects of Grocery Wholesaling in Seattle, Washington," Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Commercial Science, University of Washington, 1953, p. 25.
  - 37 Veazie Wilson, op. cit., advertising section.
  - 38 Joseph Ladue, op. cit., p. 89.
  - 39 Robert R. Still, op. cit., p. 43.
  - 40 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, p. 89.
  - 41 *Yukon Via Prince Albert* (Prince Albert, Sask.: n.p., 1898), unpaginated.
  - 42 J.D. MacGregor, op. cit., passim.
  - 43 Jeanette Paddock Nicols, "Advertising and the Klondike," *Washington Historic Quarterly*, Vol. 13 (1922), pp. 22–23.
  - 44 Norbert MacDonald, "Seattle, Vancouver and the Klondike," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 49 (1968), p. 243. Vancouver's Board of Trade did not begin its advertising campaign for the Klondike trade until August 1897, an entire month after the Seattle Chamber of Commerce had launched its campaign.
  - 45 Charles M. Gates, op. cit., p. 208.
  - 46 Robert R. Still, op. cit., p. 36.
  - 47 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
  - 48 Seattle Chamber of Commerce, *A Few Facts About Seattle, the Queen City of the Pacific, 1900*, comp. Arthur Charles Jackson (Seattle: A.C. Jackson, 1898).
  - 49 *Toronto Globe*, 7 Feb. 1898, p. 4.
  - 50 PAC, RG16, A4, Vol. 18, "Regulations re Transit of Goods Through Alaska," telegram from A.R. Milne, collector of customs, Victoria, to Commissioner of Customs, Ottawa, 29 July 1897. Customs collectors were dispatched to Dyea and Tagish (the confluence of the White and Chilkoot pass routes) on 29 July 1897. By mid-February 1898 two North-West Mounted Police detachments had hoisted the flag and were ready to collect on the summits of both passes. See Canada. North-West Mounted Police, *Report, 1894–1905* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1895–1906) (hereafter cited as N-WMP, *Report*), 1899, Supt. S.B. Steele, Dawson, 10 Jan. 1899, p. 6.
  - 51 Canada. Parliament. House of Commons, *Sessional Papers* (hereafter cited as *Sessional Papers*), 1899, Vol. 12, No. 15, part 3, report of Supt. Z.T. Wood, 1 November 1898, p. 47.
  - 52 *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 31 July 1897, p. 4.
  - 53 Patricia Roy, "Railways, Politicians and the Development of the City of Vancouver as a Metropolitan Centre, 1886–1929," M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1963, p. 78.
  - 54 Norbert MacDonald, op. cit., p. 244.
  - 55 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12, No. 14 (8 April 1898), p. 26.
  - 56 PAC, MG30, I11, Vol. 22, files 1–3, H.J. Woodside Papers, Yukon miscellaneous and memorabilia, March 1898.
  - 57 Guy Lawrence, op. cit., p. 3.
  - 58 The problems of distance and climate made it obvious that the shipping season to Dawson ended in July; after the middle of that month no one could be sure that goods sent north would arrive safely. This is fully discussed in a later chapter.
  - 59 Norbert MacDonald, op. cit., p. 242. See also the *Vancouver News Advertiser*, 5 Oct. 1898 and the *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 21 and 28 Oct. 1898.
  - 60 Patricia Roy, op. cit., p. 49.
  - 61 PAC, Picture Division, National Photography Collection, Neg. PA-13497 (1898).
  - 62 William Ogilvie, *Klondike Official Guide*, p. 136.
  - 63 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12, No. 7 (18 Feb. 1898), p. 36.
  - 64 James Grierson MacGregor, op. cit., pp. 257–59, and *Chicago Record*, op. cit., p. 49.
  - 65 *Yukon Via Prince Albert*, op. cit., advertisement for J.E. Sinclair.
  - 66 *Toronto Globe*, 15 Feb. 1898, p. 4.
  - 67 *Ibid.*, 8 Feb. 1898, p. 12, and 15 Feb. 1898, p. 4.
  - 68 *Ibid.*, 15 Feb. 1898, p. 4.
  - 69 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1 Jan. 1898), p. 13.
  - 70 *Ibid.*, Nos. 4, 9, 13.
  - 71 *Ibid.*, No. 24 (17 June 1898), p. 6.



- 72 Ibid., No. 6 (11 Feb. 1898). The article states that the agent for the Alaska Exploration Company in Dawson had been in Montreal in January. In *ibid.*, No. 4 (27 Jan. 1898) an AC Company agent was rumored to be on his way east.
- 73 Ibid., No. 3 (21 Jan. 1898), p. 13.
- 74 Ibid., No. 7 (18 Feb. 1898), p. 1.
- 75 Ibid., No. 7 (21 Jan. 1898), p. 15.

#### Swamp to Boom Town: Dawson from 1896 to 1898

- 1 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., p. 143.
- 2 Pierre Berton, op. cit., p. 52.
- 3 John W. Leonard, op. cit., p. 132.
- 4 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 214.
- 5 Pierre Berton, op. cit., p. 95.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Joseph Ladue, op. cit., p. 165.
- 8 PAC, MG30, C2, Vol. 1, Constantine diary, 3 Nov. 1896.
- 9 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 198.
- 10 N-WMP, *Report*, 1897, Supt. C. Constantine's report, 18 Jan. 1898, p. 1.
- 11 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., p. 200.
- 12 PAC, MG30, C2, Vol. 1, Constantine diary, 17 March 1898.
- 13 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 188.
- 14 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., pp. 202–4. Neither boat made it past Circle City, and when some desperate souls went on to Fort Yukon they found that supplies were limited there as well. See E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 190.
- 15 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., p. 103.
- 16 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 331.
- 17 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., p. 152.
- 18 *Klondike Daily Nugget* (hereafter cited as *Nugget*), 7 Sept. 1898. It should be noted that the *Nugget* was not on the scene until the crisis was over. Vol. 1, No. 1 appeared on 16 June 1898.
- 19 Ibid., 17 Sept. 1898.
- 20 PAC, MG30, C2, Vol. 1, Constantine diary, 2 May 1898.
- 21 *Sessional Papers*, 1898, No. 13, report of Major Walsh, commissioner, 15 Aug. 1898, p. 319.
- 22 Harold A. Innis, *Settlement and the Mining Frontier*, Vol. 9 of *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, eds. W. A. MacKintosh and W. L. G. Joerg (Toronto: Macmillan, 1936), p. 193.
- 23 Joseph Ladue, op. cit., pp. 136–37.
- 24 *Nugget*, 16 June 1898.
- 25 PAC, MG29, C3, George Coffey, Diary, 21 May 1898.
- 26 Pierre Berton, op. cit., p. 293.
- 27 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 377.
- 28 Paul T. Mizony, "Gold Rush – A Boy's Impression of the Stampede Into the Klondike During the Days of 1898," manuscript on file, Dawson Museum, 1956, p. 16. Eggs had cost as much as \$18 a dozen before the first boat arrived. See also *Sessional Papers*, 1899, Vol. 33, No. 15, report by Insp. F. Harper, Dawson, 29 Dec. 1898, p. 67. Subsequent scow arrivals drove the price down to \$10, to \$5 and finally to \$3 a dozen.
- 29 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., pp. 377, 467.
- 30 *Nugget*, 16 June 1898.
- 31 Ibid., 31 Aug. 1898.
- 32 Ibid.

- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid., 10 Sept. 1898.
- 35 *Nugget*, 4 July 1901.
- 36 *Nugget*, 10 Sept. 1898.
- 37 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 389.
- 38 *Nugget*, 3 Sept. 1898.
- 39 Ibid., 7 and 24 Sept. 1898.
- 40 Ibid., 8 Oct. 1898.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid., 28 June 1898.
- 43 PAC, RG85, Vol. 420, Northern Administration Branch, file No. 3008, 19 July 1898, N-WMP census.
- 44 *Nugget*, 1 Oct. 1898.
- 45 Ibid., 5 Oct. 1898.
- 46 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 194.
- 47 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., p. 152.
- 48 Paul T. Mizony, op. cit., p. 16.
- 49 Julius M. Price, *From Euston to Klondike; The Narrative of a Journey Through British Columbia and the North-West Territory in the Summer of 1898* . . . (London: S. Low, Marston, 1898), p. 172.
- 50 PAC, Picture Division, National Photography Collection, Neg. PA-13480, "Closing out sale at Dawson, Y.T."
- 51 Jeremiah Lynch, *Three Years in the Klondike*, reprint ed., ed. Dale L. Morgan (Chicago: R. P. Donnelly and Sons, 1967), p. 50.
- 52 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 377; Léon Boillot, *Aux mines d'or du Klondike: du lac Bennett à Dawson City* (Paris: Hachette, 1899), p. 122; J. Lynch, op. cit., pp. 34–35.
- 53 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., p. 144.
- 54 *Nugget*, 10 Aug. 1898.
- 55 Ibid., 13 Aug. 1898.
- 56 Kathryn Winslow, op. cit., p. 152.
- 57 *Nugget*, 17 Aug. 1898.
- 58 Ibid., 1 Oct. 1898, advertisement for Dawson Furniture Company.
- 59 Mary E. Hitchcock, op. cit., p. 239; Arthur Treadwell Walden, *A Dog-Puncher on the Yukon* (Montreal: Louis Carrier, 1928), p. 164.
- 60 Jeremiah Lynch, op. cit., p. 30.
- 61 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., pp. 346–47.
- 62 *Nugget*, 21 Sept. 1898.
- 63 Ibid., 14 Oct. 1898.
- 64 *DD News*, 1899.
- 65 Dawson's second major fire did over \$600,000 damage on 26 April 1899. There were two smaller fires in January and February 1899 (see Jeremiah Lynch, op. cit., p. 313, n.). All told, Dawson lost over a million dollars in fires during that season.

#### The Hinterland Market

- 1 *Sessional Papers*, 1901, Vol. 35, No. 28a, report by Supt. Z. T. Wood (N-WMP), Dawson, 31 Dec. 1900, p. 5.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 *Nugget*, 15 Oct. 1898.
- 4 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 213.
- 5 *DD News*, 28 Sept. 1899.
- 6 Dawson Hardware Company, Dawson, Yukon Territory, business records, 6 July 1903. Freight was just then arriving from Saint Michael.
- 7 PAC, RG16, A5, Vol. 45, Department of National Revenue, Customs Port Records, 1899–1924, Dawson Register of Vessels Inward.

- 8 Dawson Hardware Company, op. cit., Dawson Hardware Company to Dominion Wire Rope Company, 22 Jan. 1902.
- 9 Ibid.; also *ibid.*, 25 March 1901, stating that orders were then being sent out.
- 10 R.L. Polk and Company, *Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer and Business Directory*, 1902 (Seattle: R.L. Polk, 1902) (hereafter cited as Polk, *Directory*, 1902), p. 165.
- 11 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 17 (26 June 1903), p. 38; Dawson Hardware Company, op. cit., Dawson Hardware Company to Guttapercha and Rubber Manufacturing Company of Toronto, 13 Feb. 1903.
- 12 *DD News*, 22 May 1902.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 25 Sept. 1902; Dawson Hardware Company, op. cit., Dawson Hardware Company to Thomas Davidson Manufacturing Company re goods arriving in Skagway too late to catch the last steamer to Dawson and therefore having to be shipped back to Vancouver.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 22 Nov. 1899.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 25 Sept. 1902.
- 16 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (5 Jan. 1904), p. 12.
- 17 Dawson Hardware Company, op. cit., letter to Thomas Dunn and Company, Vancouver, 28 Dec. 1901. The letter describes in detail the poor condition of goods sent, after they had spent a month on the Skagway wharves. Axe handles had warped, and gas and oil had leaked through their packing cases. Blaming the condition of the goods on the shippers' lack of attention to packing, the Dawson Hardware Company was planning to deduct 25 per cent from their payment for those goods.
- 18 *DD News*, 14 May 1902, Barrett and Hull advertisement and *ibid.*, 2 May 1902, CIK Grocery advertisement.
- 19 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18 (29 June 1904), p. 44.
- 20 Canada. Department of the Interior, *The Yukon Territory, Its History and Resources* . . ., 1907 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1907) (hereafter cited as *The Yukon Territory*), pp. 79–81.
- 21 Paul T. Mizony, op. cit., pp. 27–28. Both the title ("A Boy's Impression") and the date (1956) of this manuscript should temper one's reaction to what might well be an exaggeration, except in a few instances. See also *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 10 (4 March 1904), p. 49. By this time, the heated sleighs described by Mizony had proved to be too expensive, and had been replaced by a process of insulating perishables in the middle of the load.
- 22 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (5 Jan. 1904), p. 44.
- 23 Dawson Hardware Company, op. cit., letter to Joseph Le Cappellain, 19 May 1903.
- 24 *Ibid.*, letter to Thomas Dunn and Company, 14 Jan. 1902.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 27 Dec. 1901.
- 26 PAC, MG27, IIB, 1, Minto Papers, Vol. 24, p. 74. L.R. Fulda to A.H. Sladen, 27 Aug. 1900.
- 27 Neil F. Shuffler and Emery W. Smith, "Terms of Purchase," in Committee on Retailing, *Principles of Retailing* (New York: Pitman, 1955), p. 266.
- 28 *DD News*, July and August 1899, *passim*, advertisements.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 20 Nov. 1902.
- 30 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records (in process to RG91) (hereafter cited as PAC, Yukon Territorial Records), File 20, application from Yukon Dock Company to Crown Timber and Land Agent for waterfront footage, 1 Feb. 1900.
- 31 *DD News*, 2 Sept. 1902.
- 32 *Ibid.* Hotels were an even greater risk; their owners, almost without exception, could not afford the high rates.
- 33 While S. Morley Wickett speaks of the fall in property values in 1902, complaints continued that rents were unnaturally and unfairly high. See S. Morley Wickett, "Yukon Trade: Report to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association on Trade Conditions and Prospects in the Yukon," *Industrial Canada*, Vol. 3 (1902), p. 166, and PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file 492, 12 Jan. 1904, F. Joslin to Crown Timber and Land Agent (rehigh waterfront rents).
- 34 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 214.
- 35 *Sessional Papers*, 1902, Vol. 36, No. 25, report of Commissioner James H. Ross, Dawson, 10 Oct. 1902, p. 4.
- 36 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 170.
- 37 PAC, MG27, II, B1, Minto Papers, Vol. 24, p. 93, William Heras (AC Company Agent) to A.H. Sladen, 17 Aug. 1900, enclosure No. 1.
- 38 *Nugget*, 23 Nov. 1901.
- 39 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 170.
- 40 *Nugget*, 24 July 1901.
- 41 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 255 and *DD News*, 7 April 1900.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 5 April 1900, announcement of Canadian Development Company's rates; *ibid.*, 20 April 1902, announcement of NC Company's rates. By this time, the Dawson Hardware Company had long since sent out its annual orders; see Dawson Hardware Company records, 25 March 1901 and 22 Jan. 1902.
- 43 *DD News*, 14 June 1902.
- 44 Dawson Hardware Company records, letter to Le Cappellain, 5 Aug. 1903.
- 45 *Ibid.*, Langley to Le Cappellain, 10 March 1904.
- 46 *DD News*, 7 April 1900, editorial, "Freight Rates Too High."
- 47 Victoria *Daily Colonist*, 18 August 1897, "The Klondyke Gold Fields Are in Canada."
- 48 *DD News*, 14 April 1900.
- 49 PAC, RG16, A4, Vol. 18, Dept. of National Revenue, Customs, Goods in transit through Alaska, 1898–1901, A.R. Milne (collector of customs, Victoria), to J. McDougald (commissioner of customs, Ottawa), 10 Aug. 1897, p. 2.
- 50 *Nugget*, 15 Oct. 1898. Listings of customs duties in various Dawson directories and gazetteers before 1910 show little variation from the 1898 schedule.
- 51 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12, No. 12 (25 March 1898), p. 15.
- 52 PAC, RG16, A4, Vol. 18, Privy Council, series of letters from Dept. of State re complaints from the Skagway Chamber of Commerce, letter from Lord Poncefote (Washington, D.C.) to Minto, 29 Nov. 1900.
- 53 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 9934, information for year-book, 1903–04, "Customs Canada," p. 6.
- 54 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18 (4 Nov. 1904), pp. 36–37.
- 55 *DD News*, 22 May 1900, "Canada's Big Trade."
- 56 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 172.
- 57 *DD News*, 23 Feb. 1900.
- 58 *Ibid.*, special "Midsummer Edition," 1899, p. 8. This claim first appeared in the form of an advertisement, but was borne out later by an article in the *DD News*.
- 59 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 9934. Submitted for the year-book, 1903–4, by the Territorial Secretary.
- 60 Appendix C gives a more complete list of companies and their places of origin.

- 61 PAC, MG27, II, B1, Vol. 24, p. 90, W.H. Isom, Dawson, to A.F. Sladen, 17 Aug. 1900.
- 62 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 171.
- 63 PAC, MG27, II, B1, L.R. Fulda to A.H. Sladen, 27 Aug. 1900, p. 9.
- 64 F.C. Wade, "A Business Talk on the Yukon," *Canadian Magazine*, Vol. 19 (June 1902), p. 30.
- 65 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 171; *DD News*, 14 April 1900.
- 66 Vancouver *Daily Province*, 1 June 1905, quoted in Patricia Roy, op. cit., p. 100, n.
- 67 Morris Zaslow, "The Yukon: Northern Development in a Canadian-American Context," in Canadian Historical Association Centennial Seminars, University of Victoria, B.C., 1967, *Regionalism in the Canadian Community, 1867-1967*, ed. Mason Wade (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, ca. 1969), p. 96.
- 68 *DD News*, 4 May 1902.
- 69 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 171. Wickett suspects that the earlier clause in the Yukon Act refusing to license any brewery in the territory was a reflection of the lobbying of Seattle brewers, who wanted to maintain their monopoly.
- 70 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 22 (3 June 1904), p. 44.
- 71 Yukon Territory. Commissioner's Office, *The Yukon Territory: A Brief Presented to the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects*, by F.H. Collins, Commissioner, at Edmonton, Alberta, on November 22, 1955 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955), Appendix B, "Population of the Yukon Territory, 1901-1951" (Dominion Bureau of Statistic figures). The population numbers are as follows:
- |      |        |
|------|--------|
| 1901 | 27,219 |
| 1911 | 8,512  |
| 1921 | 4,157  |
| 1931 | 4,230  |
| 1941 | 9,906  |
- 72 *Sessional Papers*, 1902, Vol. 36, No. 25, report of Commissioner James H. Ross, Dawson, 10 Oct. 1902, p. 4.
- 73 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18 (4 Nov. 1904), pp. 36-37. The figures for the tonnage of freight moved northward from Vancouver and the Yukon, 1902-4.
- |      |             |
|------|-------------|
| 1902 | 24,469 tons |
| 1903 | 30,675 tons |
| 1904 | 21,272 tons |
- 74 *Ibid.*, Vol. 18 (1 July 1904), p. 46.
- 75 *Ibid.*, 17 June 1904, p. 40.
- 76 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 255.
- 77 *DD News*, special cleanup edition, 1909, p. 10.
- Metropolitan Airs: Dawson from 1899 to 1903**
- 1 *Sessional Papers*, 1900, No. 5, report of Supt. A.B. Perry, N-WMP, Dawson, 30 Nov. 1899, p. 3.
- 2 *DD News*, 2 Sept. 1899.
- 3 John Scudder McLain, *Alaska and the Klondike* (New York: McClure, Phillips, 1905), p. 42.
- 4 William Seymour Edwards, *In to the Yukon* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke, 1904), p. 126.
- 5 Marian L. Ferguson, *Dawson City, Yukon Territory and Alaska Directory and Gazetteer, 1901* (n.p., n.p., 1901) (hereafter cited as *Directory, 1901*).
- 6 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, p. 3.
- 7 The process of macadamizing involved building a roadbed up into a solidly compressed mass of gravel and (in some cases) sawdust, and levelling and grading the clay surface to make the road firmer and less dusty.
- 8 Marian L. Ferguson, *Directory, 1901*, p. 47.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- 10 Yukon Territory. Laws, Statutes, etc., *Ordinances, 1900* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1901), No. 29.
- 11 *DD News*, 4 Jan. 1900.
- 12 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 166.
- 13 *Sessional Papers*, 1900, Vol. 34, No. 15, report of the Health Officer, Dr. J.W. Good, 26 Dec. 1899, p. 76. Three hundred cases of typhoid were reported in Dawson in 1898, but only seven were reported in the year June 1902 to June 1903. See PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 9934.
- 14 *Sessional Papers, 1901*, Vol. 35, No. 28A, report of Supt. Z.T. Wood, N-WMP, Dawson, 31 Dec. 1900, p. 4.
- 15 Marian L. Ferguson, *Directory, 1901*, p. 166.
- 16 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, pp. 2-3.
- 17 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 166.
- 18 *Nugget*, 12 April 1901.
- 19 Yukon Territory. Laws, Statutes, etc., op. cit., No. 13. This ordinance imposed a fine of as much as \$50 on any owner of a sign which projected over or onto the sidewalk. It was repealed in 1901.
- 20 Henry J. Woodside, "Dawson As It Is," *Canadian Magazine*, Vol. 17 (1901), p. 410.
- 21 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 215.
- 22 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 257.
- 23 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 145.
- 24 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 260.
- 25 *Nugget*, 8, 24, 25 and 29 July 1901.
- 26 *DD News*, 2 Sept. 1902.
- 27 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 166.
- 28 How Dawson's 50 warehouses were distributed among its wholesaler and warehousing companies is not known. It seems very likely, however, that the majority of merchants did not have their own warehouses. In 1900 the AE Company alone owned 7 of the 50.
- 29 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 492, F. Joslin to Crown Land and Timber Agent, 12 Jan. 1904.
- 30 Henry J. Woodside, op. cit., p. 411.
- 31 *Nugget*, 1 June 1901.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 5 June 1901.
- 33 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., pp. 46, 224.
- 34 *Sessional Papers*, 1904, No. 25, report of Commissioner Fred T. Congdon, 3 Aug. 1903, p. 5.
- 35 Rose Helper, op. cit., p. 251.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, p. 1; E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., pp. 461-62; Rose Helper, op. cit., p. 251; John Scudder McLain, op. cit., p. 42.
- 38 Marian L. Ferguson, *Directory, 1901*.
- 39 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, p. 8.
- 40 Dawson Hardware Company, records, Langley to Le Cappellain, 10 July 1903 and 9 April 1904 and letter from J.O. Le Cappellain, 22 June 1903.

- 41 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18 (2 Sept. 1904), p. 4 and *ibid.* (23 Sept. 1904), p. 50.
- 42 *Ibid.*, Vol. 19 (13 Jan. 1905), p. 39.
- 43 *DD News*, 9 May 1902.
- 44 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 17, No. 49 (Dec. 1903), p. 21.
- 45 *Nugget*, 24 July 1901.
- 46 These figures and those that follow have been compiled from the various Yukon directories and gazetteers for the years 1901, 1902 and 1903. See Marian L. Ferguson, *Directory, 1901* and Polk, *Directory, 1902*.
- 47 Yukon Territory. Laws, Statutes, etc., op. cit., 1899, No. 36, respecting transient traders, defines such a trader as "any person, partnership or company doing business within the Yukon Territory without having any established place of business either as a proprietor, tenant or occupant of any lot of ground subject either to rent or to taxation or in the possession of any private individual within the territory."
- 48 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 252.
- 49 *DD News*, 30 May and 10 and 11 June 1902.
- 50 This view is expressed by the commissioner himself; see *Sessional Papers*, 1905, No. 25, report of Commissioner Fred T. Congdon, 10 Aug. 1904, p. 3. Harold A. Innis maintains the same argument (Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 252).
- 51 *DD News*, 27 Aug. 1902.
- 52 *Sessional Papers*, 1905, No. 25, p. 3.
- 53 *DD News*, 3 May 1900. The N-WMP conducted a survey of population in various creek communities and produced these figures:
- |                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Bonanza            | 4,133 |
| Hunker             | 1,355 |
| Dominion (Cariboo) | 1,217 |
- 54 PAC, MG29, C19, Alden R. Smith, "Klondike Gold Rush 1898," letterbook, 30 June 1898, p. 15.
- 55 Michael MacGowan, *The Hard Road to Klondike* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, ca. 1962), p. 119.
- 56 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 252.
- 57 PAC, MG29, C19, Smith letterbook, 29 April 1898, p. 9.
- 58 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 217.
- 59 David Robert Morrison, "The Politics of the Yukon Territory: 1898–1908," M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Sask., 1964, p. 22; *Nugget*, 15 July 1899.
- 60 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 169.
- 61 William Seymour Edwards, op. cit., pp. 130, 152.
- 62 *DD News*, 23 April 1900.
- 63 *Nugget*, 5 June 1901.
- 64 *Ibid.*, 11 Aug. 1902. A report in the *DD News* special edition of 21 July 1909 states the road to be 330 miles long (p. 15).
- 65 *DD News*, 2 Oct. and 17 Sept. 1902.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 1 Sept. 1902.
- 67 William Seymour Edwards, op. cit., p. 106.
- 68 PAC, RG16, A4, Vol. 18, Dept. of National Revenue, Customs, "Goods in Transit Through Alaska," series of letters from the State Department, Washington, D.C., 27 Jan. 1900.
- Mercantile Mosaic: The Men and their Methods**
- 1 *DD News*, 20 Oct. 1899, AE Company advertisement.
- 2 Gerald Carson, *The Old Country Store* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), ch. 6, "A Man of Many Parts."
- 3 These figures are taken from Polk, *Directory, 1902*.
- 4 From advertisements in the *DD News*, 1902, *passim*.
- 5 *Nugget*, 20 Aug. 1898, advertisement of Kelly and Company, druggists.
- 6 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, p. 1.
- 7 Henry J. Woodside, op. cit., p. 409.
- 8 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 1443, petition of Dawson merchants, dated 10 July 1902 to Commissioner Ross re ordinance No. 8, 8 July 1902.
- 9 PAC, MG27, II, B1, H.G. Graham, "Across Canada to the Klondyke. July 19 to October 13, 1900," p. 129.
- 10 Yukon Territory. Laws, Statutes, etc., *The Consolidated Ordinances of the Yukon Territory 1902: Being a Consolidation of the Consolidated Ordinances of the North-West Territories, 1898, with the Subsequent Public General Ordinances of the Council of the Yukon Territory* ([Whitehorse]: n.p., 1903) (hereafter cited as *Consolidated Ordinances*), ch. 76, p. 602.
- 11 PAC, MG27, II, B1, H.G. Graham, op. cit.
- 12 PAC, MG27, G1(a), Laurier papers, Vol. 67, 1898, pp. 21706–8.
- 13 Polk, *Directory, 1902*, p. 174.
- 14 *Montreal Star*, 21 Jan. 1903, clipping in PAC, MG30, I, 11, Woodside papers, Vol. 22, file No. 2, memorabilia and clippings.
- 15 *Nugget* (semi-weekly), 26 Aug. 1899; *ibid.*, "Special Souvenir Edition," 1 Nov. 1899, p. 23, Sargent and Pinska; *DD News*, 14 April 1900, McLennan and McFeely; *ibid.*, 19 Feb. 1900, AE Company; *Nugget*, 31 Aug. 1898, SYT Company; *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Jan. 1898), AC Company.
- 16 Yukon Territory. Laws, Statutes, etc., *Ordinances, 1900*, Nos. 8 and 14; *ibid.*, 1901, Nos. 6 and 7; *ibid.*, public notice, 19 April 1901.
- 17 *DD News*, 25 Sept. 1902.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 20 Oct. 1899.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 11 June 1902.
- 20 Yukon Territory. Laws, Statutes, etc., *Ordinances, 1899*, No. 36. *DD News*, 7 August 1902. "More merchants on the stand," p. 5.
- 21 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, Commission, miscellaneous documents, Ezra Meeker, "Ezra Meeker's Klondike Venture," 1908, p. 1.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 23 Interview with Charles Taylor, Whitehorse, Aug. 1970.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 Interview with Bob and Jessie Bloom, Seattle, Sept. 1970.
- 26 *Nugget* "Special Souvenir Edition," 1 Nov. 1899, p. 23.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 31 Aug. 1898.
- 29 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 492, SYT Company.
- 30 *Nugget*, 28 Sept. 1898.
- 31 *DD News*, 9 April 1900.
- 32 *Nugget* "Special Souvenir Edition," 1 Nov. 1899, p. 25.
- 33 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 3006, petition from First Avenue property holders, 13 April 1907.
- 34 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, p. 8.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 14 April 1900.
- 36 Mary E. Hitchcock, op. cit., p. 328.
- 37 *DD News*, 20 Oct. 1899.
- 38 *Nugget*, 8 Oct. 1898.
- 39 *Ibid.*, "Special Souvenir Edition," 1 Nov. 1899, pp. 27–28.
- 40 Letter to the author from Jessie Bloom, Seattle, 25 Sept. 1970.

- 41 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., p. 167.
- 42 Dawson Hardware Company, records, letterbook, 1903. In June 1903 J.S. Patton is sent out to the creeks as a company traveller.
- 43 Ibid., letterbook, 1903–40, series of undated notes and letters.
- 44 E. Tappan Adney, op. cit., p. 336.
- 45 *DD News*, 23 Nov. 1899.
- 46 Nevill Alexander Drummond Armstrong, *Yukon Yesterdays: Thirty Years of Adventure on the Klondike. Personal Memories of the Famous Klondike Gold Rush, First-Hand Accounts of Lucky Strikes, Stories of Dawson in the Wild 'Nineties, Together With Adventures in Mining, Exploring and Big-Game Hunting in the Unknown Sub-Arctic* (London: J. Long, 1936), p. 39.
- 47 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., pp. 92, 99.
- 48 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., pp. 204–5.
- 49 Julius Price, op. cit., p. 181.
- 50 PAC, MG27, II, B, Minto Papers, H.G. Graham, op. cit., pp. 149–50.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 *DD News*, 29 Aug. 1900.
- 53 Ibid., 28 Aug. 1900.
- 54 Ibid., 2 Jan. 1902.
- 55 Ibid., 8 Sept. 1902.
- 56 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 26 (July 1904), p. 46.
- 57 *DD News*, 23 April 1900.
- 58 Ibid., 25 Sept. 1899.
- 59 PAC, MG27, II, B, Minto Papers, Vol. 24, Yukon correspondence.
- 60 Polk, *Directory*, 1902, p. 174; PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 2104, Dawson Board of Trade; PAC, MG30, I11, Woodside papers, Vol. 22, No. 2, memorabilia and clippings.
- 61 *DD News*, 29 Aug. 1900.
- 62 Ibid., 20 Oct. 1902.
- 63 Ibid., and ibid., 27 Oct. and 14 Nov. 1899.
- 64 Ibid., 18 Sept. 1902.
- 65 Ibid., 8 Dec. 1902.
- 66 Ibid., 17 Oct. 1899.
- 67 Laura Beatrice Berton, *I Married the Klondike* (Boston: Little, Brown [1954]), p. 52.
- 68 Letter to author from Jessie Bloom, Seattle, 25 Sept. 1970.
- 69 Interview with Bob and Jessie Bloom, Seattle, Sept. 1970.
- 70 Andrew Baird and Victoria A.B. Faulkner, "The Yukon," manuscript on file, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Ottawa.
- 71 PAC, MG27, II, B1, H.G. Graham, op. cit., p. 124.
- 7 Richard Slobodin, "The Dawson Boys' – Peel River Indians and the Klondike Gold Rush," *Polar Notes*, No. 5 (June 1963), pp. 24–36.
- 8 Ibid., p. 28.
- 9 *DD News*, 17 May 1900. "Dawson Markets" was a weekly feature of this newspaper from 1900 to 1905.
- 10 James Prendergast, op. cit.
- 11 John W. Leonard, op. cit.
- 12 *Sessional Papers*, 1901, Vol. 35, No. 28A, App. D, Assistant Surgeon L.A. Paré, annual medical report of the N-WMP, Whitehorse, 1 Sept. 1900.
- 13 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, p. 1.
- 14 *Sessional Papers*, 1900, Vol. 34, No. 15, App. G, report of Dr. J.W. Good, health officer, Dawson City, 26 Dec. 1899, p. 78.
- 15 John W. Leonard, op. cit., pp. 156–60.
- 16 Martha Louise Black, op. cit., p. 128, mentioning her letter home of 20 Nov. 1898.
- 17 PAC, MG29, C24, Charles Mosier, op. cit., 25 Dec. 1898.
- 18 Ibid., 24 Nov. 1898; PAC, MG29, C19, A.R. Smith, 24 Nov. 1898.
- 19 PAC, MG29, C6, Ella Hall, "Trip to the Klondike 1898," p. 29.
- 20 Michael MacGowan, op. cit., p. 119.
- 21 PAC, MG27, II, B1, H.G. Graham, op. cit., pp. 124–25.
- 22 Measurements taken from E.W. Gilbert "Imperial" baking powder tin, trademark registered 1887.
- 23 Laura Beatrice Berton, op. cit., p. 57.
- 24 PAC, MG29, C6, E. Hall, op. cit., p. 29.
- 25 Ibid., p. 30; *Nugget*, 13 Sept. 1899. According to the *Nugget*, "chee-chako" potatoes were 25 cents per pound.
- 26 *DD News*, 29 May 1902.
- 27 Ibid., 11 Dec. 1902.
- 28 Canada. Board of Inquiry into the Cost of Living, *Report of the Board* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1915) (hereafter cited as Canada, Board of Inquiry, *Report*), Vol. 1, pp. 678–705. Refrigeration engineers suggested that meat be stored for no more than 6 months, and eggs, poultry and butter be stored no more than 10 to 11 months (p. 694).
- 29 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 17, No. 46 (Nov. 1903), p. 16.
- 30 Canada, Board of Inquiry, *Report*, Vol. 1, p. 690.
- 31 *DD News*, 29 May 1902.
- 32 Martha Louise Black, op. cit., pp. 220–21.
- 33 Pierre Berton, op. cit., pp. 371–72.
- 34 *DD News*, 21 Aug. 1902.
- 35 Ibid., 17 Aug. 1899, and *Nugget*, "Special Souvenir Edition," 1 Nov. 1899, p. 27.
- 36 *DD News*, 21 Aug. 1902.
- 37 Lois Delano Kitchener, op. cit., p. 153.
- 38 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 9934, information for yearbook, 1903–4, agricultural information, p. 7.
- 39 Ibid., file No. 1191, James A. Acklin to William Ogilvie, Commissioner of the Yukon Territory re agricultural experiments, 5 Sept. 1899.
- 40 Russell Arden Bankson, *The Klondike Nugget* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1935), p. 176.
- 41 *DD News*, midsummer edition, 1899, p. 2.
- 42 PAC, Yukon Territorial Records, file No. 9934, op. cit., p. 6.
- 43 Ibid., p. 7.
- 44 *DD News*, 12 June 1902.
- 45 Ibid., 29 May 1902.

- 46 *Sessional Papers*, 1906, Vol. 40, No. 25, report of acting commissioner J.T. Lithgow on agricultural production, 22 Nov. 1906, p. 19.
- 47 Hannah Campbell, op. cit., p. 39, and Laurence A. Johnson, op. cit., p. 97.
- 48 *DD News*, 16 and 17 Dec. 1902.
- 49 PAC, MG30, I11, Woodside papers, Vol. 22, No. 3, Yukon memorabilia.
- 50 *DD News*, 5 and 15 July 1907.
- 51 S. Morley Wickett, op. cit., pp. 164–77, and F.C. Wade, op. cit., pp. 25–31.
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 30, and *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 19 (May 1904), p. 38; *ibid.*, Vol. 19 (27 Jan. 1905), p. 30.
- 53 H.E. Stephenson, *The Story of Advertising in Canada: A Chronicle of Fifty Years* (Toronto: Ryerson [1940]), p. 36.
- 54 Laurence A. Johnson, op. cit., p. 98. The firm of Proctor and Gamble was one of the first to promote its products on a national basis in this way (1882–83).
- 55 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 14, No. 26 (June 1900), p. 32.
- 56 *Ibid.*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Jan. 1904), p. 11.
- 57 Dawson Hardware Company Museum, Dawson, Yukon Territory.
- 58 This and all subsequent references to the weights and measure of standard units and lots of goods comes from an extensive list published in the *DD News*, 22 March 1906.
- 59 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12, No. 41 (Oct. 1898) and Vol. 17, No. 22 (May 1903), p. 43.
- 60 *DD News*, 6 July 1905.
- 61 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 20 (May 1904), p. 107.
- 62 Laurence A. Johnson, op. cit., p. 59.
- 63 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12 (1898), passim.
- 64 F.C. Wade, op. cit., pp. 30–31.
- 65 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 19 (27 Jan. 1905), p. 30.
- 66 *Ibid.*, Vol. 18 (14 Oct. 1904), pp. 47–48.
- 67 *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan. 1898), p. 11.
- 68 Laura Beatrice Berton, op. cit., p. 24.
- 69 *Nugget*, 20 May 1900.
- 70 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Jan. 1904), n.p.
- 71 *The Grocer's Companion & Merchant's Handbook. Containing a Comprehensive Account of the Growth, Manufacture & Qualities of Every Article Sold by Grocers. Also, Tables of Weights and Measures and Information of a General Nature to Grocers and Country Merchants* (Boston: New England Grocer Office, 1883), p. 34.
- 72 *DD News*, 9 April 1900.
- 73 *Ibid.*, 10 June 1902.
- 74 W.S. Dill, *The Long Day; Reminiscences of the Yukon* (Ottawa: Graphic Publishers, 1926), p. 91.
- 75 *Canadian Grocer*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan. 1898), p. 39.
- 76 *DD News*, 4 Jan. 1900.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 13 Aug. 1901.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 10 May 1900.
- 79 *Nugget*, 26 July 1899.
- 80 Laura Beatrice Berton, op. cit., p. 31.
- 81 William Seymour Edwards, op. cit., p. 129.
- 82 *DD News*, 20 Oct. 1899.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 29 Jan. 1900.
- 84 *Ibid.*, 17 April 1902.

### **Conclusion: The Well-Appointed Ghost Town**

- 1 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 237.
- 2 *DD News*, 18 July 1907.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Laura Beatrice Berton, op. cit., p. 37.
- 5 Other firms in this category are Alhert and Forsha, Avery's, J.E. Lilly and Company, grocers, and (of course) the NC and NAT&T companies.
- 6 *Nugget*, 6 Aug. 1899.

### **Appendix B**

- 1 These sources include the following: 1, PAC, MG27, II, B1, Vol. 24, Minto Papers, Yukon correspondence; 2, Kathryn Winslow, op. cit.; 3, Martha Louise Black, op. cit.; 4, Mary E. Hitchcock, op. cit., and 5, a program for the Dawson Amateur Operatic Society's production of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta "H.M.S. Pinafore," 1902, on file, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Ottawa.

### **Appendix D**

- 1 Harold A. Innis, op. cit., p. 255.

### **Appendix I**

- 1 *Nugget*, 6 Nov. 1901, advertisement by NAT&T Company.

### **Appendix L**

- 1 Reprinted from *The Klondike Rush Through Edmonton, 1897–98* by James Grierson MacGregor, by permission of The Canadian Publishers, McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto.

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# **St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lake Bennett, British Columbia**

by Margaret Carter

Canadian Historic Sites

No. 26

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### **Abstract**

Standing as it was, alone in a wilderness area, this church was an object of great curiosity to passengers who travelled nearby on the White Pass and Yukon Railway. Legends grew up to explain its existence – legends which always recorded that the church was never completed and never used. After the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada declared this building to be of national significance in 1967, Parks Canada began to collect some background material on it. The author completed a short report on the church in 1970 which proved that it was one of a series of missions operated by the Presbyterian Church at Bennett and was not only completed but also actively used as a religious structure. Since that time, Parks Canada has gathered more information on the building both in the course of its Yukon work and through the efforts of Mr. J.M. Sinclair, son of the church's first minister. Mr. Sinclair kindly offered his father's papers for reference, and these have proven an invaluable source of information on the building's construction.

Submitted for publication 1978 by Margaret Carter, Head, Architectural History, Canadian Inventory of Historic Building, Parks Canada, Ottawa.

### **Introduction**

"Wherever gold is found men are sure to flock, and the Church must follow the people and be prepared to make the sacrifices needed to meet their religious wants"<sup>1</sup> stated the *Presbyterian Record* as it explained the aim of the Church's Yukon mission to its readers. "The salvation of men's souls is first, the building up of congregations subordinate." And so the Presbyterians followed fortune seekers who went north after the great Klondike discovery of 1896, ministering to the people and opening mission churches wherever they were needed.

The first of these missions founded in Canadian territory was at Lake Bennett, British Columbia. The history of the church at Bennett mirrors the history of the early gold-rush itself, for unlike the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians did not enter the Yukon mission field until the time of the rush. When they did, they were concerned only with white men, and their missions reflected the movement and the attitudes of the southerners who came "inside" to make their fortunes during the days of '98. Rapid changes wrought in the north by the influx of these men and the civilization they brought are also seen in a study of the church, for the development of the mission in Bennett is inextricably bound with the gold-rush that occurred at the head of the lake.

## Founding a Mission

In 1897 the Reverend J.M. Dickey, Presbyterian minister in Skagway, marked Bennett as the next logical centre of population. A town was already forming – a collection of tents on the south end of Lake Bennett at the junction of the Chilkoot and White Pass trails. Although many routes “inside” were publicized during the days of '98, these were both old Indian routes, and the Chilkoot had been used by white prospectors in the north for many years. They were undeniably the most popular for men who could not afford exorbitant steamer rates to travel the whole journey by water through the mouth of the Yukon River. They could be reached by commercial steamer from the south, but at the neck of the Alaskan panhandle a long self-propelled trek began.

Although the Chilkoot and the White Pass (Fig. 1) were regarded as the best trails, they were both arduous. The *Year Book of British Columbia* written for publication early in 1898 outlined the latter this way:

### WHITE PASS

*The White Pass commences at Skagway Bay at the head of Lynn Canal at which point ocean steamers may call and where a wharf has been built for the accommodation of shipping . . . The first four miles is an easy water grade to Four-Mile Flat, to Porcupine Creek, up and down the side hill, is five miles; from there it is three miles to the first bridge on the Skagway River; it is swampy for a mile and a half to two miles to the second bridge; from there to the third bridge, one and a half miles, there are some hills and swamp land; to the Crossing by the Skagway is three quarters of a mile on foot, but by the trails for pack animals it is three miles along what is known as 'Bad Hill'. From the Crossing to the Summit to Lake Bennett twenty-two miles. The trail leads along the southern side of Summit Lake and Shallow Lake to Government House and from there touching Lake Lindeman to Lake Bennett.*<sup>1</sup>

Edwin Tappan Adney, who travelled the route late in 1897 gave a more graphic description.

*Gradually, stage by stage, the trail rises, following the sloping shelves of the bare rock, so smooth as to afford no foothold . . . Where there are no rocks there are boggy holes. It is all rocks and mud – rocks and mud.*<sup>2</sup>

Animals and men often went lame on the trail (Figs. 2 and 3). They were exhausted when they reached Bennett.

The Chilkoot was somewhat quicker, though no less tortuous. It was an old Indian trail and “has always been the best in summer,”<sup>3</sup> explained one veteran Mountie. Unfortunately in 1898 most Klondikers travelled in the spring to reach the diggings in time for a full season. There were so many of them that the steps

carved in the ice on the mountain side by Al Lobleby and Sam Taggart<sup>4</sup> thawed (Fig. 4), and the presence of would-be miners helped set off three avalanches in an already avalanche-prone area (Fig. 5). Nevertheless, one guidebook gave adventurers the following dispassionate description of the route:

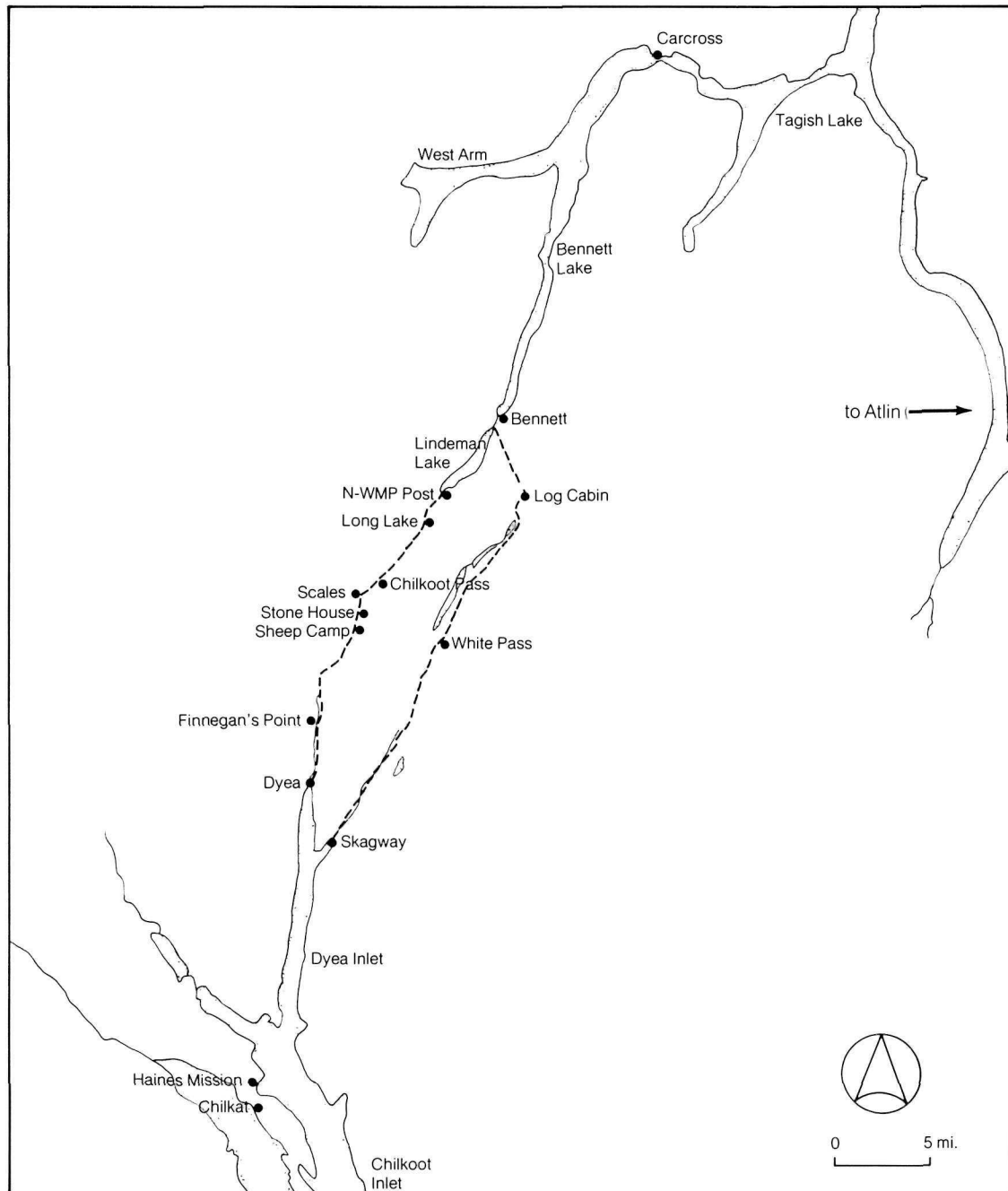
### DYEA OR CHILKOOT

*From Dyea landing to the Canon is eleven miles, practically on the level of the Dyea River flats; from the Canon to Sheep Camp is a hilly trail five miles long, reasonable passable. Up to the Scales, three miles, is steep and rough and the trail bad. From the Scales to the Summit, which is an altitude of 3,700 feet, is a distance of three-quarters of a mile, very steep and impassable for pack animals. The distances, with bad trails all the way, with the exception of the last mile, upon which waggons are used from the Summit are as follows: To Crater Lake, three-quarters of a mile; Crater Lake, two miles; to Portage, two and a half miles; to Lake Lindeman, five miles; to Lake Bennett, one mile.*<sup>5</sup>

Despite its apparent difficulties, the Chilkoot route was very popular. Martha Black reported that in July of 1898 “the young officer told me that since the previous May eighteen thousand men had passed the pass and I was the six hundred and thirty-first woman”<sup>6</sup> (Fig. 6). By the early spring of 1898 a tramway had been built over the mountains to carry goods to Crater Lake on the other side. Indian packers also sold space in packs like those shown in Figure 7, but both of these services were expensive, and most Klondikers carried goods to Bennett themselves (Fig. 8).

Bennett marked the end of the trails, but these comprised only the first lap of the journey to the gold-fields on the southern route. The rest of the journey from Bennett to the Klondike was made on the Yukon River itself (Fig. 9). During the winter when the river was frozen, men continued their journey by sled. Hazardous conditions near Miles Canyon and the Whitehorse Rapids made the second or river half of the journey as exhausting as the early trail portion, so Bennett grew as the half-way resting point.

A crude centre appeared at the southeast end of the lake as men pitched tents and took up temporary residence (Fig. 10). By September of 1897 a sawmill had been built near the “settlement” to provide lumber for boat-building,<sup>7</sup> and tent stores had been erected to buy outfits from discouraged men returning home and sell them to the hopefuls on their way north. Canvas beaneries and saloons were also set up. In response to this activity, the Reverend James Robertson, Superintendent of Home Missions, decided to act on Skagway minister Dickey's recommendation and establish a mission at Bennett. Consequently, the second Presbyterian minister to the Klondike, Rev. Andrew S.







4 While hundreds of men waited to start up the Chilkoot Pass, those on the thin black line were climbing the steps.  
(University of Washington)



5 Snowstorm on Chilkoot summit, 1898.  
(University of Washington.)



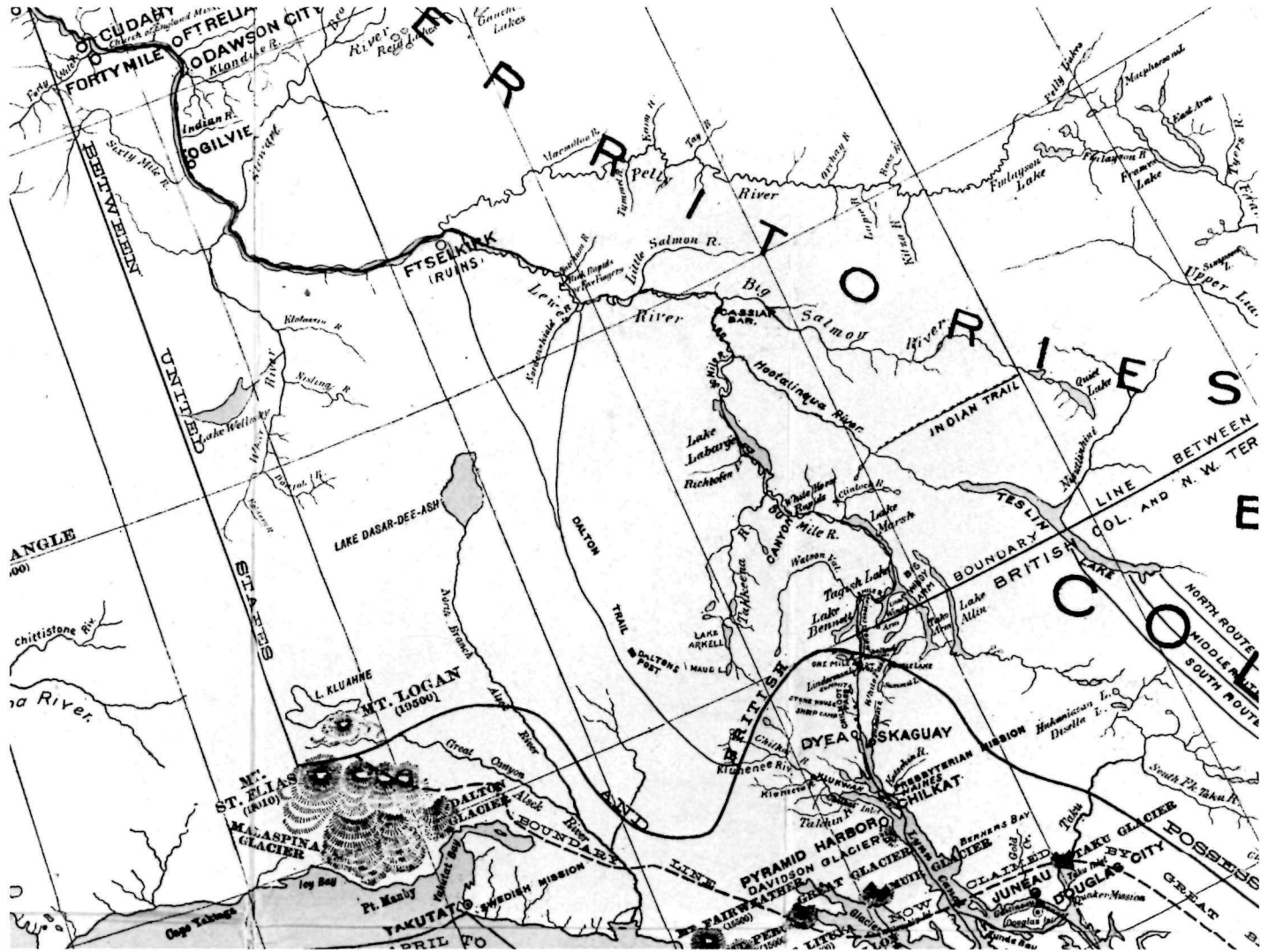


7 Indian packers carrying heavy loads.  
(Missouri Historical Society.)



8 A Klondiker totes his own load.  
(Missouri Historical Society.)





10 Boat-building camp, Bennett, 1897 or very early 1898. (*R.N. DeArmond, Juneau*)



11 Revs. Dickey and Grant, Presbyterian missionaries at Skagway en route to Klondike, January 1898. (*University of Washington*)

11



Grant from Almonte, Ontario, arrived in Skagway on 22 January 1898, and moved straight inland (Fig. 11). He reached Bennett in mid-February and reported to Robertson that the journey on the White Pass had been "the herculean task of my life."<sup>8</sup> His comments were similar to those of the thousands of other gold-seekers accustomed to city life who made the trek north. "The trail is a brute," he wrote, "but thanks to the Lord we have conquered it, and our stuff is all over here. It would have cost our party \$1,800 to have our stuff freighted over and we took it ourselves in three weeks."<sup>9</sup> The task meant doubling back again and again to carry the heavy outfit along the trail (Fig. 12). A large supply of staples had been required by the North-West Mounted Police for entry into the country since the previous winter when Dawsonites had almost starved to death. This made travel quite a hardship, but it was only one of many the ordinary Klondiker had to brave. "It is not the most comfortable thing sleeping on the snow 40° below, and doing our own cooking but we are all right."<sup>10</sup>

Despite the difficulties, Grant's sense of mission was strong. His parting address to the civilized world reveals a determination to succeed in the north: "When the Superintendent faced me with the question 'will you go to the Klondike?' every personal and selfish consideration said 'No!' but all that was best in me said 'Yes!' But I would not go, were I not overwhelmingly convinced that I am called."<sup>11</sup> An impartial observer would have found his attitude refreshing, for many have commented on "cold-bloodedness of the gold-seeking multitude"<sup>12</sup> found around Lake Bennett in the winter of 1897-98.

On 28 February, Grant informed Robertson that "Those who ought to know affirm that Bennett will have a large population this summer."<sup>13</sup> Even at that time, men were braving the searing chill of Yukon winter to travel downriver by sled (Fig. 13). Few would stop for long at Bennett until the melting ice signalled danger. Then, there would be a back-up of men waiting for the shift to summer modes of transportation. "I have selected a site for a Church in Bennett and think of ordering a large tent and erecting it on this site, put a block floor in, and a sort of framework to support the tent. We must occupy this post at once,"<sup>14</sup> wrote Grant to Robertson. He evidently expected there would be a large influx.

By the middle of March, Grant had built a 12 by 16 foot log cabin as a residence or "manse," as he called it, to act as shelter from the cold. He paid gold-rush prices for his supplies, and although he cut the logs himself, the building cost over \$200 to complete. "For three short boards for a door I paid \$9.00. For the tar paper for the roof \$21.00 &c."<sup>15</sup> (Fig. 15). Gold-rush prices were high, and Grant was on a normal salary. It is a tribute to his dedication that he borrowed money to complete the work he felt

necessary and promised to pay it back himself if the church did not consider it a worthwhile investment.<sup>16</sup>

Grant was finding little support among the Klondikers. Earlier, on his way up the trail, he had commented on their disinterest in the establishment of a church. In the Klondike "Gold is God" recalled another man looking back on his experiences,<sup>17</sup> and Grant found it was a vicious competitor. On 28 February he wrote to Robertson, "I tried to conduct services at bunk houses along the way but with little success."<sup>18</sup> In these canvas or poorly chinked log houses, two or three men squeezed on a single bunk of split slabs to restoke for the day ahead<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 14). They slept in shifts, mindless of the stench and discomfort in their push north to the gold-fields. "Most of the people work on the Sabbath," continued Grant, "and it is difficult to interest them in Christian work. A man requires much of the grace of God to sustain him in the midst of difficulties of exposure and all such like, perhaps when we get down to work it will be easier."<sup>20</sup> But the first three services held in the new "St. Andrew's Manse" in Bennett attracted only 30 people of varying denominations. They "were comfortably seated on logs laid across blocks of wood, and the logs were upheld and stored with my blankets and sleeping bag under them."<sup>21</sup> Still, the collection of \$5.00 did little to finance the construction of the building – a measure traditionally used to evaluate the success of the work.

A subscription fund for the new St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lake Bennett, had nevertheless been started, and by 29 March, Grant was able to report, "so far as I have gone with the Manse and Church everything is paid for." This may have satisfied readers at home, but Grant himself was much less certain about the venture. "I am sure that short of my medical mission work the manse . . . would not have been an accomplished fact," he wrote. In the brutal, competitive Klondike situation, Grant applied his practical talents as a medical doctor to yield the slim margin he obviously felt was essential for continuation. "I got a number to subscribe small amounts and then having had occasion to treat a great many patients (some days as many as 15) when asked my fee, asked a subscription."<sup>22</sup> Still, the mission at Bennett, the first of a series in Canadian territory, was in operation by March 1898.

12 While these men are not Grant's party the size of their outfit gives an idea of what the ordinary Klondiker brought "inside." (Provincial Archives of British Columbia)



13 During the winter men travelled on Lake Bennett by sled, continuing their journey. (R.N. DeArmond. Juneau.)



W.P. Co.  
©



14 Hotel Dormitory. Two men to a bunk of split slabs and blankets that smelled like axle grease. (*Sinclair Papers*)



15 The congregation at a church service in the spring of 1898. Note Grant's "manse" in the background on the left, the tent church on the right, and the bell and scaffold in between. (*Public Archives Canada*)

15



### Cheechako, Canvas and Congregation

The following month amid border hostilities heightened by the on-going Alaska Boundary Tribunal,<sup>1</sup> Dickey abandoned the church he was occupying in Skagway. He moved on to Bennett which was at that time considered to be the first certain point inside Canadian territory. There, he was to assist Grant in securing the church's position while Grant prepared to move on to Dawson as early as possible after breakup.

Both men worked to ensure there were quarters to accommodate the large congregation they expected to find among the throngs of Klondikers waiting for breakup. The first thing needed was better church facilities, so they completed on 1 May a large tent of canvas over a wood frame for use as the church. A scaffold containing a bell stood in front of it (Fig. 16), but apart from that it looked very much like the other buildings that were being hastily constructed in Bennett in the spring of 1898. From that time to the end of the summer season, Bennett had a constant total population of 10,000.<sup>2</sup>

Anything that could be put together was used as shelter, for supplies were in great demand. Men lined up in front of the hastily constructed sawmills for days waiting for boat-building materials to avoid the rigours of the whip-saw pit (Figs. 17–19). Dickey and Grant had to compete with the builders when they were ready to have boards for church seats cut at King's sawmill. Once they finally got them Grant wrote, "we had to pack the material through the mud a quarter of a mile, pull it on a hand sled over a mile, then over a rickety bridge. After that I got a horse and hauled it to the church."<sup>3</sup> The sawdust they used to cover the dirt floor probably came from the same source.

Conditions were crude, and many of the men who waited around the lake for the ice to melt found themselves in unfamiliar roles. "The men who run the saloons are, with one exception, I think new to the business and ashamed of being in it. One of them – a member of the 'Christian Church' – one day showed us his family Bible rolled up carefully in a silk handkerchief. The others often apologize for being in the trade."<sup>4</sup> Like their saloon keepers, most of the Klondikers at Bennett felt ill at ease in their bid for fortune. By the spring of 1898, the rich claims in the Klondike were already taken. In spite of this fact, the largest influx of population was either waiting at Bennett for the ice to break, or still *en route* north. After they arrived in Dawson, these men would work on claims owned by a fortunate few and find employment in service industries. Before that, they paid dearly for the opportunity to watch their dreams dissolve. Scalpers charged such heavy prices for services that more profit was probably made from the prospective millionaires than was ever made from min-

ing; nevertheless, at Bennett this was still in the future, and few were ready to turn back and give up their "prospects." Yet they were uneasy. The church was a reminder of what they had left behind, and some reached out for the comfort of familiarity. For the first time, Dickey was able to report "people interested."<sup>5</sup>

The spring of 1898 brought a new attitude toward the church. As the gathering at the head of the lake grew, the congregation increased, and soon it outstripped accommodations. The collection plate also showed improvement – "The liberality of the people, specially considering that so many have little or no money, is very marked. Their ordinary Sabbath collections have gone as high as \$27."<sup>6</sup> "You will be pleased to learn," wrote Dickey to Robertson in May,

*that the tent and cost of erection have now been paid for by the people here. At our last meeting a Mr. Elliot enquired how much was the debt, and, on being informed \$50, he said 'We'll pay it to-night.' He and Capt. Jack Crawford spoke to the people in very enthusiastic terms of the enterprise of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in so promptly following up the people. They passed round the hat, and in a few minutes had more money than was needed. In the name of the Church and myself I thanked the people for this and all their kindness, assuring them that, while the home Church is sufficiently interested in the work and generous enough to bear the expense, yet the liberality of the people here will not only cheer their hearts, but enable them to undertake more vigorously still mission work in this new and needy land.<sup>7</sup>*

In part, the change was a tribute to Dickey's and Grant's work, but to a larger degree it was a manifestation of the changed nature of the gold-rush itself.

16 Whipsawing boards for building a boat. The whipsaw pit put a strain on many partnerships. (*Yukon Archives, MacBride Museum Collection*)



17 Building the boat. (*University of Washington*)



18 Caulking a boat with oakum and pitch. Note the mast is made of poles, and the sail is probably handmade. (*R.N. DeArmond, Juneau*)



19 Boat building at Abbott's Cove, Lake Bennett 1898 – a typical boat-building camp. (Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta, H. Pollard Collection.)



## A Hectic Limbo

In late April, Grant (Fig. 21) left to go to Lake Laberge where the ice would clear earlier than it would at Bennett. There, he would build his own boat to travel to his new mission at Dawson. Meanwhile, Dickey (Fig. 22) was to stay in Bennett to await Grant's successor, then follow the miners into the creek area around Eldorado. As he waited, he lived in Grant's "manse" and applied for the lot in Bennett where the church tent was pitched.

One afternoon in mid-May, Dickey returned to the church tent and *found someone – 'apparently drunk' – in possession, and by carrying out the delusion for a few minutes I had an interesting exhibition of the good nature, sympathy and tact which characterizes Dickey in all his work. You may imagine his surprise when the supposed drunk suddenly sat up and announced himself as his successor at Skagway sent by the Committee.*<sup>1</sup>

The joker was the Reverend J.A. Sinclair (Fig. 23), newly arrived in the Yukon from his parish at Spencerville, British Columbia. As he had been in transit since Dickey's move in April, he had not heard of his relocation.

With Sinclair's arrival, Dickey was free to continue on to Dawson. He nevertheless stayed until July 1898 to initiate his successor in the ways of the Yukon mission field. One of his more pleasant duties was to introduce Sinclair to the Klondikers at the head of the lake: some of this occurred at a series of evening socials.<sup>2</sup> At a social in honour of Dickey's departure, Sinclair learned a lesson about the men he was to work with when an ex-wild west showman, Captain Jack Crawford, recited a poem he had composed on the state of Klondike madness. Ridiculing the dangers of the river journey ahead, the worries about families left behind, the hazards of the trail, the horrors of the food and the corruption around him, Crawford urged the Klondikers to forget their problems with a spirited "say 'never die' " (see Appendix A). His verse emphasized uncertainty, and it touched a responsive chord in most of the men at the gathering, for Crawford had a knack of reflecting the sentiments of those around him.<sup>3</sup>

This uncertainty was also evident in Sinclair's activity after Dickey left. As was stated earlier, Sinclair was appointed Dickey's successor at Skagway; however, when he arrived in the north he found that Dickey had moved inland to Bennett because Skagway had been declared American. When he arrived in Skagway, Sinclair had also found the manse and church Dickey built there occupied by an American Episcopal minister, a Dr. Campbell. Dickey had left the buildings in Campbell's keeping on the understanding that he would become the "resident Minister of the Union Church of Skagway," and maintain the interdeno-

minational character in which Dickey had founded and operated the mission. Sinclair, however, found that Campbell reserved the right to restrict the use of the church to visiting ministers who wished to offer services in their own denominations. Campbell had also scheduled Episcopalian services at eleven in the morning, the best time, leaving to the other denominations the division of the eight o'clock hour.<sup>4</sup> Sinclair was not prepared to see the Presbyterians so easily pushed out of the church they had constructed in Skagway. He sent for an American replacement, and resolved that until such a man arrived he would himself service Skagway, Bennett, and the 43-mile area in between.

This area comprised Sinclair's ministry from May of 1898 to May of 1899. During that time, portions of it were continuously occupied by construction gangs building the railroad from Skagway to Bennett (Fig. 24), and Sinclair visited the camps frequently as he made his rounds "by canoe, on horseback or on foot"<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 25). As the rail-line progressed, he rode from Skagway to the end of the line and continued his cold march from there. He soon was known and trusted by both railway men and management, and this allowed him to successfully negotiate a dispute between them during the spring of 1899.

No matter how much he travelled, Sinclair felt the services of one man were inadequate. By April of 1899 when he wrote to Rev. Norman B. Harrison who had been named his successor in Skagway, he was beginning to show signs of strain. "I shall probably spend one week at Bennett and then two here [Skagway]. This is the best I can do until you or someone else arrives. But that is far from doing justice to this important work. So I hope you will hurry."<sup>6</sup> All the time Sinclair was occupied with Skagway he was attempting to keep the church going in Bennett. He managed this with the assistance of a layman, who held services there when he was not available. Nevertheless the task was a frustrating one.

Sinclair was always aware that if conditions remained favourable he would move to a parish in Bennett after he left Skagway. As a result, he watched developments in Bennett closely. During August 1898, he realized that the lot Grant had chosen for his "manse" was outside the area that was developing as the centre of town. In 1898 this began to shift away from Lindeman-Bennett rapids area on the southwest corner of the lake and towards the southeast corner where the wagon road on the White Pass trail was nearing completion (Figs. 26 and 27).<sup>7</sup> It was the latter area where Sinclair selected a second property as the future location for his church. He petitioned the British Columbia government for the property, knowing that if a town stabilized in Bennett this land would be needed to build a church. When he returned to Bennett

20 Ready to leave. (R.N. DeArmond, Juneau)

21 Rev. R.S. Grant, first minister at St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett. (United Church Archives, Toronto.)

22 Rev. R.M. Dickey, second minister at St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett. (United Church Archives, Toronto.)

23 Rev. J.A. Sinclair, third minister at St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett. (Sinclair Papers.)

20



21



22



23



24 Railway construction. Men at work secured by ropes. (*Sinclair Papers*)

25 Interior, railway camp hospital, 1898. Sinclair visited the location regularly. (*Sinclair Papers*)

24



25







27 Lake Bennett, October 1899. (*Sinclair Papers.*)

28 Services were held in the Hotel Portland during the winter of 1898 and 1899. (*Yukon Archives, Vogee Collection.*)

27

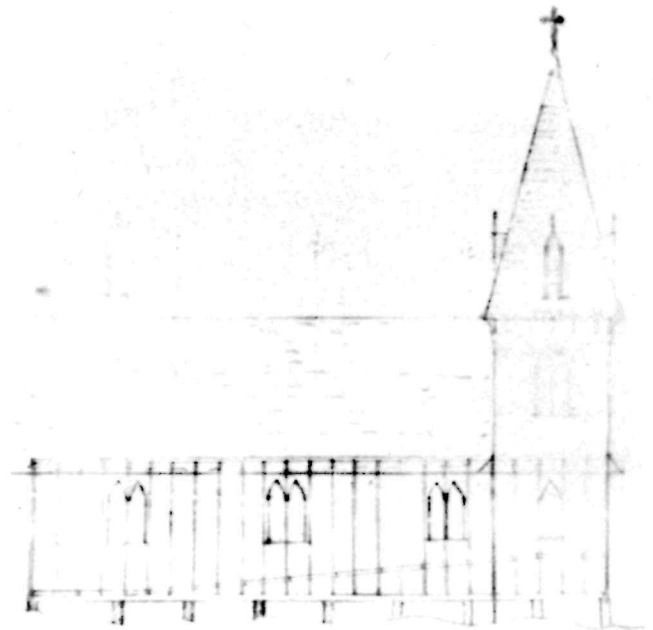


28



for his next visit in October, "I found the site built upon by Maitland Kersey of Dunraven Yacht race fame."<sup>8</sup> Rather than cause unnecessary tension, he elected to select another on the government reserve<sup>9</sup> and, *in order to prevent this being also 'jumped', I went for our large tent which was in the shack [Grant's manse], to hold down the lot, but I found the tent so cut up and so much of it gone as to make it utterly useless. The thieves were found, tried, and sentenced, but this did not help us out of the difficulty.*<sup>10</sup>

"The difficulty" can be neatly defined as no tent in which to hold services in Bennett during the cold winter of 1898-99. Such accommodation had been unnecessary during Sinclair's summer visits, but the coming of winter presented a serious problem. This was temporarily solved when the Portland and Northern hotels<sup>11</sup> offered their "dining rooms" – although each probably had only one room for bar, food and sleeping – as accommodation for services during Sinclair's visits (Fig. 28). While the hotels satisfied the major requirement of "shelter," they were less than ideal as the location for a church. The constant arrival of dog teams yielded hungry travellers and prevented tables from being cleared for an early service: people were turned away from the buildings for lack of room. By the end of the winter, a combination of the inconvenience of the hotels, the receptiveness of the people he had been preaching to, and the solid prospects of Bennett as the major transshipment centre for the Klondike had convinced Sinclair that he should build a church in the town.<sup>12</sup>



## Building a Church

Just before he left Skagway to move to Bennett in May 1899, Sinclair took precautions to ensure that he had a proper title<sup>1</sup> to the third piece of "church" land, the last lot he had filed on in the fall. When Harrison arrived in Skagway the weary Sinclair moved to Bennett. There he saw "some professional lot stakers taking a suspicious interest in my new site"<sup>2</sup> and decided he urgently needed a new building to hold it. Consequently, he ordered 7,000 feet of rough lumber at \$100.00 per thousand and laid a foundation and board floor with the help of some volunteer labour.<sup>3</sup> The following Sunday a church service was held in a borrowed tent pitched on the floor (Fig. 30), and the tent remained there several weeks while a church building was constructed Yukon-style around it (Figs. 31 and 32).

By 24 May 1899, sufficient work had been completed on the building to permit a celebration for the laying of the cornerstone. John Hyslop, C.E., assistant chief engineer for the White Pass and Yukon Railway, was master of ceremonies for a programme of music and speeches that culminated in the appointment of a building committee to solicit financial support. Activity around the new church seems to have captured the attention of a community spirit new to Bennett for Sinclair wrote that his building committee was composed of a Roman Catholic, a Congregationalist, two Episcopalians and two Presbyterians. "When the average citizen saw this 'priest' bearing down on him" quipped the 31 May *Bennett Sun*, "his hand immediately sought his pulse." All agreed that the first church on the ground should receive united support,<sup>4</sup> no small feat in an era of rigid religious definition.

By the first of June 1899, a crude building had been constructed around the tent, and the tent was removed and returned. Sinclair described the structure in the following way: "The roof was of rough lumber, tar paper and slabs, the floor of rough lumber and the windows of cotton."<sup>5</sup> The walls were of saw-jointed slabs, readily available in local sawmills.

Herein lies the mystery of St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett. Had the building remained as Sinclair described it in June 1899, the oral tradition that the church was an unfinished structure built in the midst of the gold-seekers' tents might have been partially credible.<sup>6</sup> As the summer of 1899 wore on, however, plans for the construction of the church continued. In July, Sinclair wrote to his friend Dr. Campbell in Victoria, requesting the windows needed to complete the structure: "we shall require seven munion windows to fill openings 3'-10" × 5'-10", three triple windows for the front to fill an opening 7'-0" × 9'8", also a door with a gothic transom to fill an opening 28'-10" × 9'8 3/4".<sup>7</sup> He inquired whether Dr. Campbell's church would be able to donate the windows, as

there were no suitable materials available in Bennett. When these windows arrived, they were of leaded cathedral glass,<sup>8</sup> quite a sophisticated material for a wilderness church! (Fig. 33).

Many a veteran Yukon miner would have wondered what all the fuss was about. Low log buildings windowed with "bottle glass," roofed with sod, and chinked with mud had long ago proven successful (Fig. 34). These structures were built of materials at hand for the practical purposes of shelter and warmth with little thought to aesthetics.

Clearly, both the physical and spiritual elements of building concerned Sinclair as he drew up the plans for the Bennett church. His letters reveal that he attempted to shut out Yukon winters by leaving a dead-air space of 4 inches between the inside and outside walls.<sup>9</sup> Building paper was bought at Bennett at \$4.00 a roll<sup>10</sup> and applied tightly to the inside surface of the outside wall (Fig. 35). Window and door frames were caulked with oakum, the familiar boat-building compound, and the floors were ventilated to take off the draft and save the heat.<sup>11</sup> The roof was shingled,<sup>12</sup> and chimneys for fireplaces were located at either end of the building. "So I have demonstrated that one can be perfectly comfortable in this country and with little cost if they build right," Sinclair proudly wrote to his father and early carpentry instructor<sup>13</sup> while surveying the success of his design.

The church at Bennett Lake was probably the most beautiful building "inside" when it was completed. Dawson certainly had nothing that could compete with the sophisticated traditionalism of its design at the time. Most of its "substantial" structures looked wonderful from the front where fancy boom-town façades gave the appearance of design, but from the side and rear their true common-log characteristics were evident (Fig. 36). Many of the "City of Gold's" public buildings did not even make that pretence. Figure 37 shows the squat but serviceable log structure that functioned as Dawson's courthouse until 1902 when a classical revival building (Fig. 38) more in keeping with its role was constructed. Indeed, Dawson City's Anglican parishioners were attending the small log church seen in Figure 39 until at least a year after St. Andrew's, Lake Bennett, had been completed. Only between 1901 and 1903 did the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics (Figs. 40–42) settle down to building "proper" churches. The reasons for Dawson's seeming slowness are two: first, transportation facilities did not yet exist to import sophisticated materials that were not locally available; second, the future of the boom-town was uncertain and its "residents," concerned only with utility, were not willing to risk the expense of buildings that would last.<sup>14</sup>

30 "Preaching, Mushing and Carpentering all in the same suit, May 1899." This photograph shows the early tent church as it received its congregation. (Sinclair Papers)

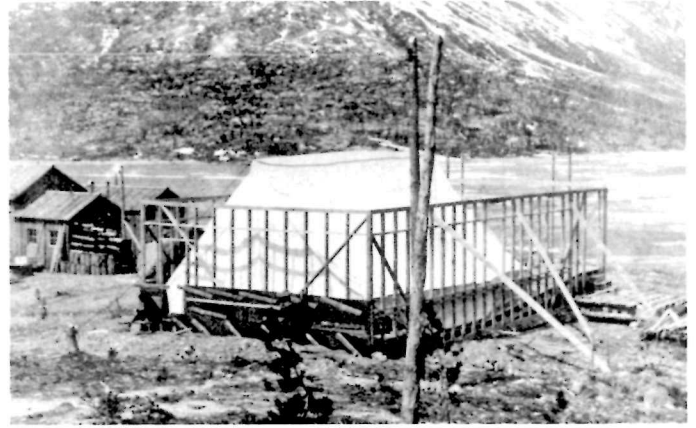


31 "I lay the foundation floor upon which I pitched the tent." (Sinclair Papers)

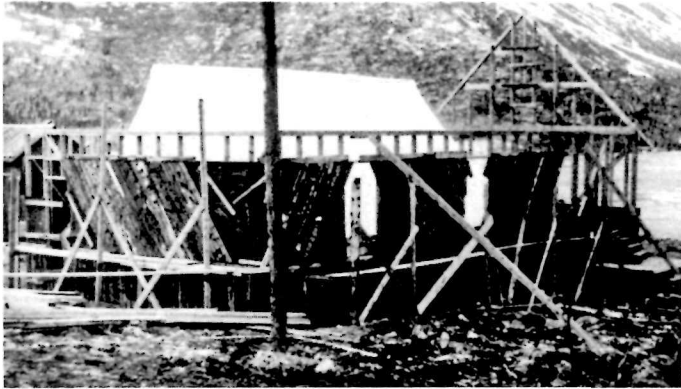
32 The exterior of the church progressed quickly. (Sinclair Papers)

33 A close look shows the leaded glass windows. (Sinclair Papers)

31



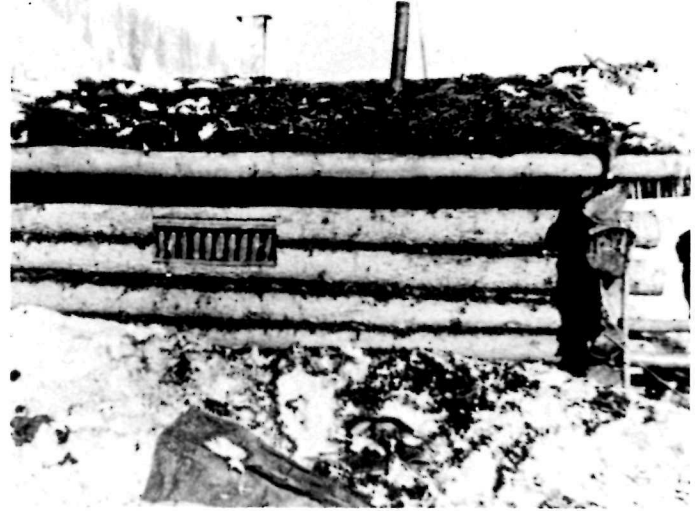
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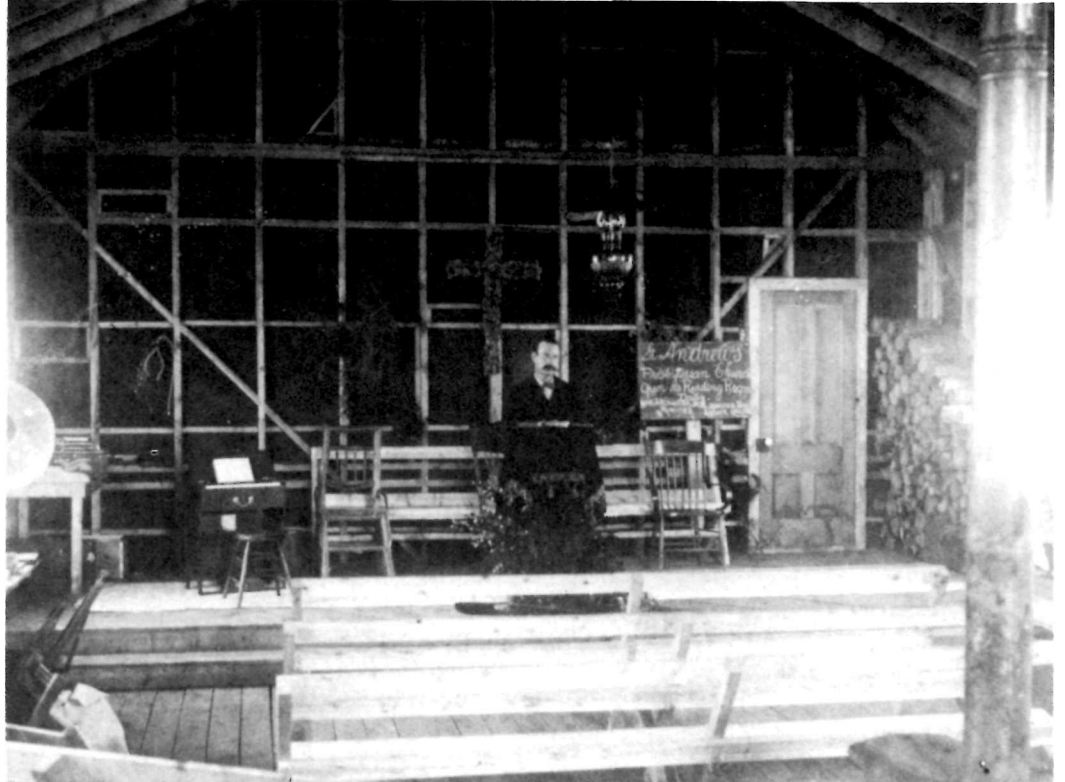


34 House with bottle windows. (*University of Toronto, J.B. Tyrell Collection*)



35 Interior of Bennett Church showing the building paper and the framing before the interior walls were put in place. Arthur Copeland, Sinclair's lay assistant, sits at the desk. The small organ Sinclair brought north with him is on the left. (*Sinclair Papers*.)

35



36 This magnificent building is shown with log side walls in Public Archives of Canada photos, PA 13442 and PA 13324, although they display the façade to less advantage. (*Public Archives Canada. C 18622*)



37 Early Dawson Court House. (T.G. Fuller, Ottawa.)

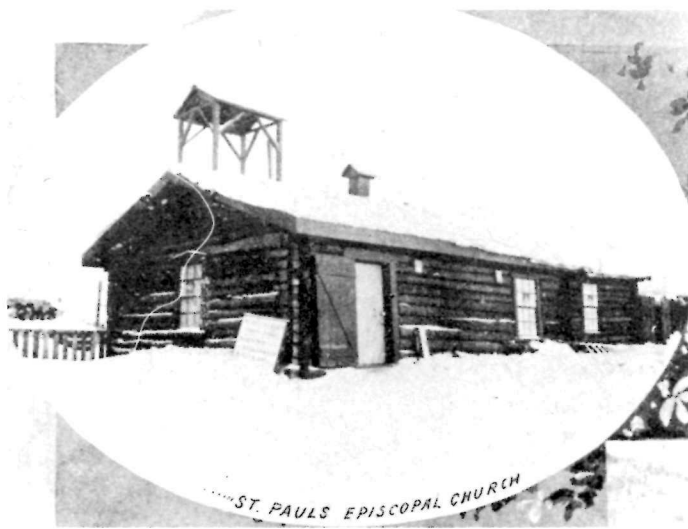


38 New Court House, Dawson. (Vancouver Public Library.)

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39



40



40 St. Paul's Anglican Church, Dawson. (T.G. Fuller, Ottawa.)

39 St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Dawson, until 1901. (G. Cantwell, *The Klondike A Souvenir* [n.d., ca. 1908], p. 58.)

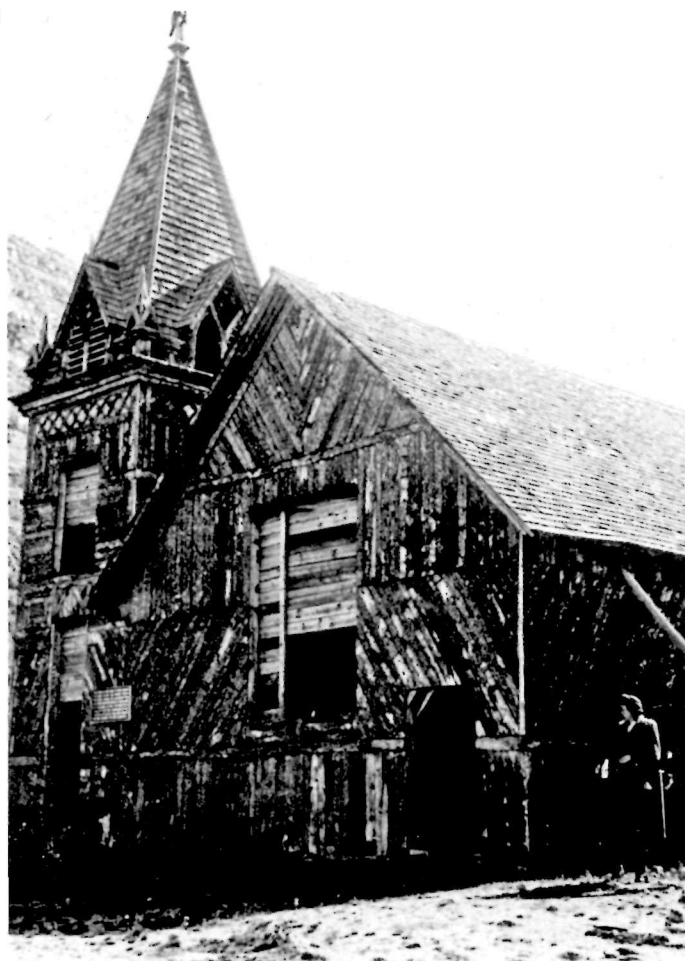
41 Side view of St. Andrew's Church,  
Dawson. (*University of Toronto, J.B.  
Tyrell Collection*)



42 St. Mary's Church and Hospital, Daw-  
son. (*Public Archives Canada*)



43 Church at Lake Bennett, 1949. (*Yukon  
Archives, MacBride Museum  
Collection*)





Both of these factors are also relevant to Sinclair's design of the Bennett church. Examination of Figures 43 and 33 will reveal that it adheres to the gothic revival tradition in its elements.<sup>15</sup> A spire tops its tower above a lattice border. In itself, the spire is relatively ornate, supporting gables with vented double windows that arch to a point. Decorative finials grace its corners. While the main part of the building is relatively simple, with a rectangular shape and single gabled roof, its windows do gently curve to a barely perceptible point. The later Dawson churches (Figs. 40–42) also show evidence of gothic revival characteristics, and it is interesting to note that they were – and still are – commonly used in churches in “civilized areas.” Indeed, it has been said that gothic is “the only proper style” for use in that type of structure.<sup>16</sup> While the all-inclusive implications of this statement may occasion some debate, the important issue here is why so sophisticated a structure appeared at all in a frontier area.

Clearly, the Bennett church is in the gothic revival tradition because Sinclair designed it to be so. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the man a little more closely at the time he conceived the idea. In March 1899, before he had even located in Bennett, he wrote to Rev. Robert H. Warden in Toronto that he expected it would become the main distributing centre for the Atlin and Klondike gold-fields<sup>17</sup> – a factor that would make it a centre second only to Dawson in “inside” importance. Sinclair may have been planning the church at that time, and even if he was not, nothing occurred between then and the time he drew up the plans for the exterior to shake his faith in the “town's” stability.<sup>18</sup> Sinclair evidently decided to build a structure that would not only last for a long time, but continue as a source of pride to his congregation.

As will be evident later, this was certainly in accordance with his program of encouraging “civilized” behavioral standards through southern-style entertainments once he had the building in operation. Sinclair seems to have been a man who practised “progressive” values wherever he went. An article in the *Bennett Sun* of 5 August 1899 stresses this aspect of his character. Remarking on the “noticeable improvements” on the Presbyterian mission property, the editor commented: “If owners of lots would follow that gentleman's [Sinclair's] example, the appearance of the town would be greatly improved.” It is consequently, not surprising that Sinclair designed and built a traditional civilized church a little ahead of the time that Bennett or any other town would normally have been ready for it.

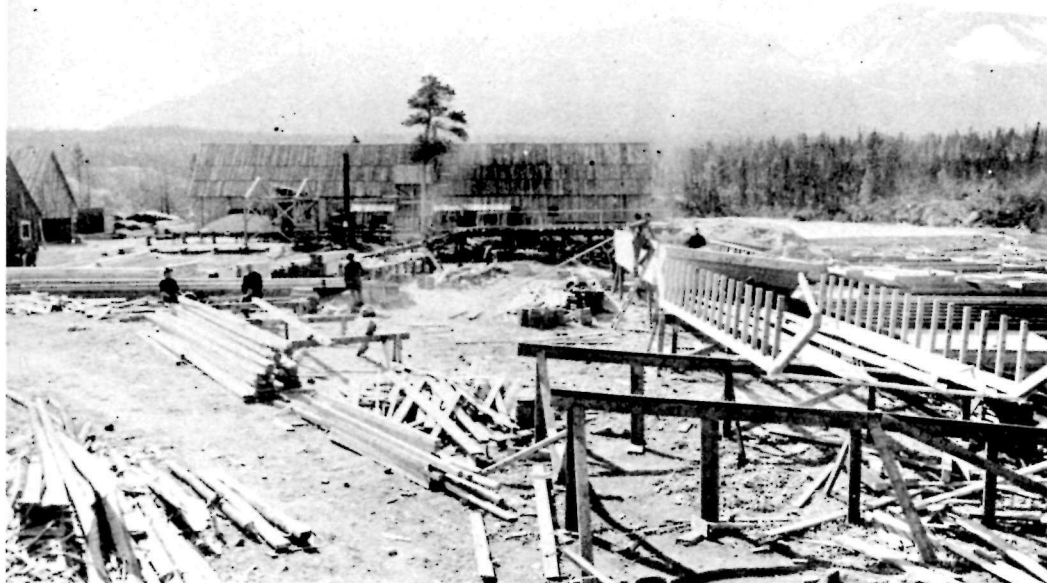
Such an undertaking is strewn with difficulties, and it is interesting to examine how intelligently Sinclair coped with the prevailing conditions in Bennett when planning the execution of his design. It must be remembered that when he began his task,

building materials were in short supply, and there was no easy way of importing them. He consequently defined the aesthetic mood of the building's exterior – the first part constructed – as “rustic.”

This adapted very well to the use of Bennett's unique (and cheap) building material, split slabs. These were the rounded slabs trimmed from the outside of logs before the main portion was cut into lumber (Fig. 44). As they still contained their bark, they made excellent waterproof sheathing. Most of Bennett's early buildings were made of this material: the Victoria Yukon Transportation Company applied them to their warehouses as both roofing and siding (Fig. 45), as did the government telegraph office (Fig. 46) and the Merchant's Bank of Halifax (Fig. 47). In June 1899, they sold for \$40.00 per thousand, while rough lumber cost \$100.00.<sup>19</sup> Sinclair had little choice but to use them, for he was on a very tight budget. This is clear in Figure 43, which shows that even the eaves were faced with them. Nevertheless, he did employ them with distinction. Comparison of the church's siding with that of other Bennett buildings seen in Figures 45–47 shows that its slabs alone have been placed in a deliberate design, with a layer on the vertical, then a layer on opposing 90° angles, then a repeat of each of these. The slabs on the other buildings are all horizontals.

There can be four explanations for this – and each of them may have some truth. First, it is possible that the only slabs available to Sinclair were short ones, left from cutting the railway ties that would have been the Bennett mills' mainstay at the time he built the church, while the telegraph building, the bank building and the earlier warehouses had been made of boat lumber remnants. If so, he may have been forced to design such a pattern as a way out of an awkward problem. Second, even if slabs from boat lumber cuttings were available they may not have been sufficiently long for use on the tall church. The Victoria Yukon Transportation Company was unable to use them on the ends and roofs of its large warehouses, even when continuous slabs could be applied on the sides (Fig. 45). Third, he may have felt the building needed extra strength. As Figure 48 shows in the construction of Dawson Telegraph Office, this was often provided through diagonal sheathing. Such sheathing was usually composed of a separate layer of rough boards and then covered with clapboard (as was the telegraph office, Fig. 49) or another exterior material; however, at Bennett prices this layer would have cost Sinclair two and a half times the price of his “finishing” material; and so the fourth possible reason for his decision is evident – cost. At least two other examples of the use of a “patterned” single layer of boards for the exterior finish of a building have been found in

44 Sawmill at Bennett. Note split slabs at bottom left. (*Provincial Archives of British Columbia*)



45



45 Exterior view, King's sawmill, Bennett, 1900. Note end walls of building on left appear to be one continuous slab, while the long side walls and the roof are larger and composed of several lengths. Building at right has walls of

shorter slabs, and may have been constructed later. (*Yukon Archives, Vogee Collection*)

46



47



48 Telegraph Office, Dawson. The structural under-layer of boards is being applied. (*T.G. Fuller, Ottawa*)

49 Telegraph Office, Dawson, with final siding almost complete. (*T.G. Fuller, Ottawa*)



49



Canada: one in Peterborough, Ontario (Fig. 50), and the second in Dawson itself (Fig. 51). In both of these cases as in the Bennett church, the boards used are short. In Dawson's Palace Grand the use of this type of construction was certainly also forced by the availability of material, for the building was made of the hull of a wrecked sternwheeler at a time when lumber was at a premium in the town. Here also it was occasioned by the desire for strength with an accommodation to aesthetics; the theatre was one of Dawson's first public buildings, and its entertainment value was based on its ability to impress paying customers with its glamour.

With the arrival of the railway in Bennett in July 1899, the restrictions on the material Sinclair was able to use to complete the church's exterior eased somewhat. It is worthy of note that he wrote Dr. Campbell to order his windows during that month. It is also interesting to note that the windows he ordered were a pointed gothic style (Fig. 29) although he wanted them made to be set in an easily built square frame (Fig. 34). As Dr. Campbell was in Victoria, it is probable he had the windows custom-made<sup>20</sup> on Vancouver Island, then shipped north.

At some time in Victoria the window design was altered from a true gothic to an arch with a slight concession to a point. The reason for this change is not evident; however, it is possible that Dr. Campbell and the designer decided to sacrifice gothic purity for shipping security in the required frame shape. This was a compromise Sinclair was also willing to make, for although he tried to make use of the southern facilities that would make his task easier, he was careful to keep the tone of the design consistent. He reminded Dr. Campbell that the windows "will require no facing on the outside as they must be fitted with rustic slab facings to correspond."<sup>21</sup> Sinclair also imported shingles as a roofing material sympathetic to his intentions, for they are not found on earlier buildings. The exterior of Bennett church was a curious but successful combination of frontier necessity and civilized taste.

The labour that constructed it straddles the transition from frontier to traditional behavior as well. Although Sinclair seems to have participated in the shingling and some of the later dirty jobs himself, Bennett carpenters performed the finishing work under his supervision at the rate of \$5 a day.<sup>22</sup> While several accounts of people living in Bennett in 1899 include passages stating they voluntarily helped build the church,<sup>23</sup> this was almost certainly the early work of raising the outside (Fig. 53) and not the later finishing detail. Sinclair's papers make no reference to voluntary assistance during the later period.



51 Dawson's Palace Grand (Savoy) Theatre in 1901. Note the use of diagonal wall material here also. (*Yukon Archives, Vogee Collection.*)





For the second, more time consuming portion of the construction, donations seem to have taken a much less arduous, more civilized form. The Northern Pacific Navigation Company carried lumber at the low rate of \$5 per thousand, and the captain of the *Rosalie* transported all building materials "free" from Vancouver and Victoria to Skagway.<sup>24</sup> From there, the White Pass and Yukon Railway, remembering Sinclair's role in their recent strike, extended the same favour and carried the materials to Bennett on their newly completed line – a service that Sinclair later evaluated at almost \$1,500.<sup>25</sup> The Victoria Yukon Transportation Company, a Victoria firm which operated both a sawmill and boat-building business at Bennett, donated \$100 worth of lumber through its manager, Mr. King.<sup>26</sup> Mr. Partridge, a sawmill owner at the far end of Lake Bennett and an active member of the congregation, provided unspecified "help with my church."<sup>27</sup> J.B. Charleson, superintendent of the Department of Public Works at Bennett donated \$200.00 toward construction in lieu of applying his considerable talents as a building aide.<sup>28</sup> "In the same way almost everyone approached has done splendidly in proportion to their means, so that, operating roughly, today we have a building worth \$4,000.00 with so little debt that with slight assistance we can remove it all next spring."<sup>29</sup> The community of Bennett supported the construction of "their church" in a full-hearted but traditional way. Their final donation, a pipe organ (Figs. 54 and 55) to replace the portable one that Sinclair originally brought north with him<sup>30</sup> (Fig. 35) adds credence to the suspicion that the lonely Klondikers regarded the church as a symbol of the values of home away from home.

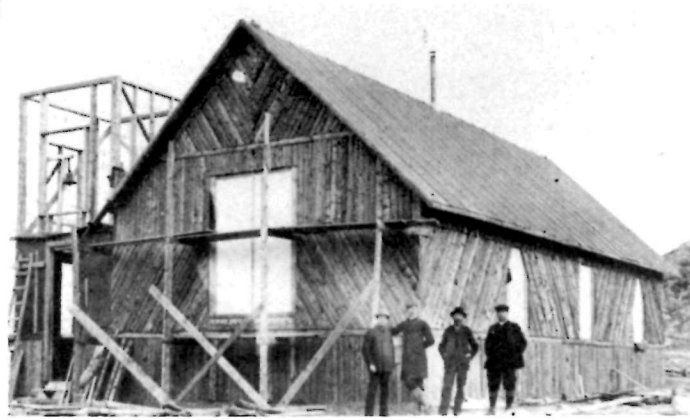
This was, in fact, an attitude that Sinclair considered carefully as he planned the interior of the church. The building itself was 24 by 50 feet with a 10-foot square tower containing a new bell<sup>31</sup> and vestibule. Inside the vestibule was the "congregation" area, which occupied most of the interior. It was lined with sawn lumber, probably the same pine mill ends as were on the exterior (as pine was the only wood suitable for finishing construction cut in the area).<sup>32</sup> They also were arranged at angles to create a visual pattern. Those closest to the floor were vertical to provide an impression of wainscoting, while the next layer was horizontal (Fig. 56). Just under the roof line, a shallow band of boards at a 45° angle slanting toward the front of the building drew the eye toward the "platform" where the preacher held the service (Fig. 54). At the front of the building (and presumably also at the back), where the A-shaped end extended higher, these boards were counterpoised by lumber of a similar width on an opposing 45° angle. This served to create a sunburst or halo effect over the "platform" (Fig. 55).

The 'platform' itself was semicircular at the front end which projected toward the congregation. It was "about 11 ft. square (– all but a little corner off each)"<sup>33</sup> and projected back to an alcove between two rooms at the rear of the building. An arch surrounded it "over the preacher's head"<sup>34</sup> on the surface of the main wall. As the arch was "gothic . . . the same style as the arches on the main windows,"<sup>35</sup> it was probably imported with the window material. At the back of the platform, two doorways cut diagonally on the corners were also faced with imported doors. Both doors and mouldings shown in Figure 55 were common in southern Canada in 1900.

Figure 57 is a rough diagram of the rear portions of the building that Sinclair drew for his wife. It shows the two tiny rooms that were closed off in the back – one for Sinclair to use as an office and sleeping room, the other for a Mr. and Mrs. Bindley and their eleven-year-old boy. The Bindleys kept the premises in order in exchange for rent, and in addition Mr. Bindley, "a professional organist with fifteen years experience in London, England"<sup>36</sup> played the new organ. Cooking was done in a combination woodshed-kitchen tent which extended off the back of the building (Fig. 58). There seems to have been a wooden kitchen shack added later<sup>37</sup> (Fig. 59). Although Sinclair wrote to his wife that the interior of the Church "is an entirely new and original arrangement that I am designing as I go almost," it seems to have been very successful. "I think that the comfort of the building and the homelike surroundings has much to do with the interest being taken by everyone in our work."<sup>38</sup>

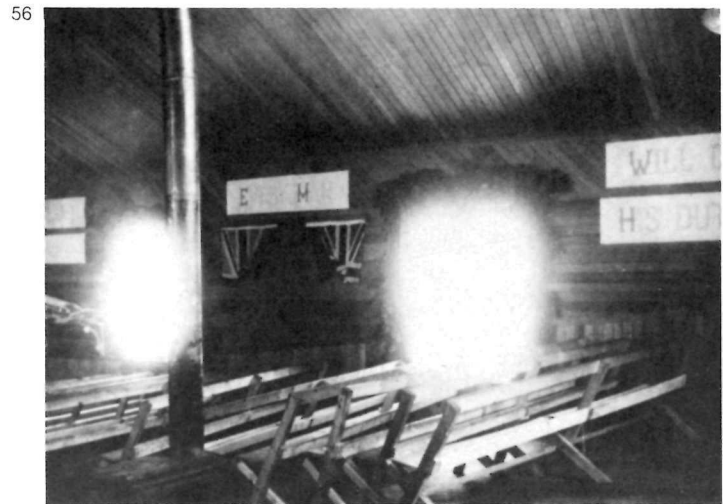
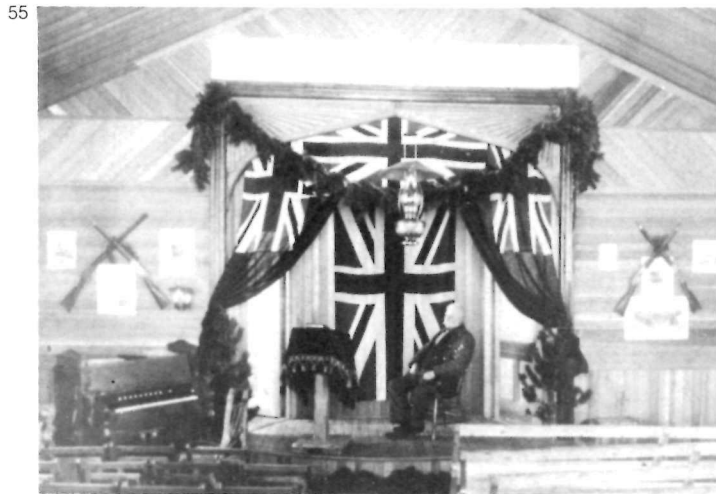


53 Sinclair and some of his helpers. Note the bell is the same as that shown on Grant's "church," Figure 15. (*Sinclair Papers*.)



54 "Our pretty little church is the most popular rendez-vous in Bennett." Note the tables for reading and writing along the side walls. (*Sinclair Papers*.)

55 Bennett Church decorated for a patriotic meeting marking the Boer War. The church played an important social role in Bennett. (*Sinclair Papers*.)

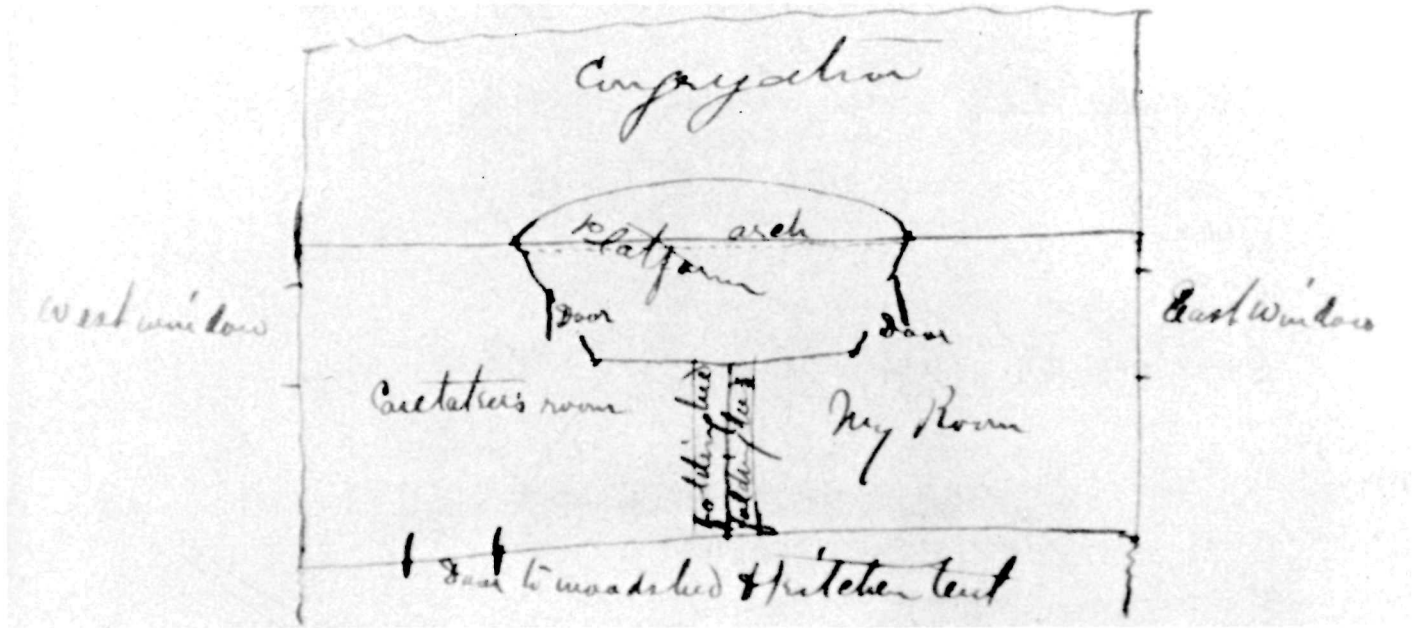


57 Sketch of the front surface area of the interior of building that Sinclair drew for his wife. (Sinclair Papers.)

58 Note the man near the white tent. He is standing where the shack is to be located. (Sinclair Papers.)

59 St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, showing the shed and 'Yukon' addition. (Provincial Archives of British Columbia.)

57



58



59



## The Church in Action

Comfortable quarters were still scarce in Bennett in 1899, and it was important they serve as many functions as possible. An Anglican missionary arrived in Bennett in 1899 and set up headquarters in a crude tent (Fig. 60), but upon completion of St. Andrew's Church he held services in the building as well.<sup>1</sup> Presbyterian services were conducted at 2 and 7 on Sunday, and were well attended: "although the population has decreased by two thirds I had one of the best congregations yet last Sunday."<sup>2</sup> Sunday school classes were held every week long before the church was completed. Hazel Hartshorn Gloslie, who was in Bennett as a child, remembers sitting on crates in the unfinished building to learn her lessons.<sup>3</sup> There was an active Ladies Aid Society<sup>4</sup> (see Fig. 61). An evening prayer and praise service was also held in the middle of the week. Those attending sat on benches that could easily be moved aside, for church uses extended far beyond the usual worship function.

Socials occurred every week, first on Thursday, then on Tuesday. Their object was "to bring the men into contact with what family life we have in the town. It is remarkable how an introduction to wives and daughters make the average man without a family more particular about his conduct and associates,"<sup>5</sup> wrote Sinclair. These socials were so popular that they attracted as many as 60 people to one gathering<sup>6</sup> – a number which included visitors, church members as well as other Bennett residents. A description of one of the socials in the *Bennett Sun* of 5 August 1899 accounts for their success, for everyone participated. The program included several solo and duet renditions of favourite songs, political discourses and comical elocutions. At a later session, Sinclair himself entertained as a part of a quartette – "Messrs. Stewart, DuBressy, Cullen and Sinclair! We sang (1) 'The watch on the Rhine' encore Canadian Boat Song. (2) 'Polly Wolly Doodle All the Day! Encore 'Trembling O'er us.' What do you think of your old man in this new role!"<sup>7</sup> he jokingly wrote his wife.

The church was used as a community centre during the day. Sinclair reported,

*Our pretty, cosy little church is the most popular rendezvous in town for the best people. They hold socials, write letters, have business meetings, meet engagements, read, smoke, file saws (when there are no ladies present), and sometimes do a little courting in the place, which in a better equipped town, they would reserve exclusively for worship.*<sup>8</sup>

He provided plenty of fuel for the stove, books, and a wide variety of periodicals sent from the south for reading matter (see Appendix B). The church also contained paper and pens for writing.

Figure 54 shows that special tables were constructed on the front sides of the building to hold these materials and act as writing desks. Sinclair secured a gramophone for those who wanted entertainment and kept it in good repair while ensuring that those interested had a variety of music to listen to.<sup>9</sup> He encouraged discussion among the thoughtful. The aim of this activity was to keep men away from saloons and gambling, and Sinclair was so successful at this campaign that the gamblers themselves singled him out for blame when their 'dens' were closed in 1900.<sup>10</sup>

The pastor of Lake Bennett church held his first wedding in the church while the walls were still of canvas (Fig. 62) and buried many dead. He sought out the sick and escorted the seriously ill to hospital in Dawson or Skagway.<sup>11</sup> Hospital bills were paid through a fund collected at the weekly socials. During the winter of 1899 he repaired the cracks in Grant's old manse.<sup>12</sup> Before long, everyone knew and liked Sinclair; consequently, they felt welcome in the church.

Not the least of the reasons the church at Bennett grew as it did by the spring of 1900 was its success in meeting some very pressing Yukon needs. On his return from the Klondike in 1899, Bennett's second minister Dickey pointed out, "a great many of the people have been on the frontier for many years and look upon a church as altogether unnecessary. They do not feel the need of a church unless you can show them that the church is doing some practical good."<sup>13</sup> He continued to list the avenues they considered productive: "caring for the sick, providing for the destitute, leading intellectual and social pursuits." This list aligns very well with a detailing of the possible functions that could be performed by Yukon churches given by G.E. Gartrell in a thesis on the subject.<sup>14</sup> Gartrell outlines four: ministrations of spiritual needs, entertainment, hospital services and education. As the previous paragraphs indicate, Sinclair developed all of these aspects extensively while he was in Bennett – with considerable emphasis on the practical.

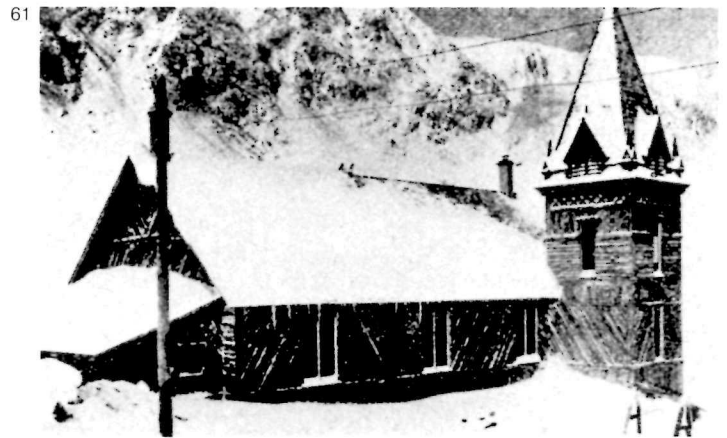
Sinclair's ability to understand community needs and take measures to fulfil them played no small part in the growth of the church. His autonomy and that of the ministers that preceded him in Bennett was an integral part of the Presbyterian mission policy. According to Gartrell, the Presbyterian Church's policy of treating each missionary or "parish" as a unit which could best determine its own needs<sup>15</sup> played a major role in making it the most successful in the Yukon field.

60 The church. (*Sinclair Papers*)



61 One of the postcards printed up and sold by the Ladies Aid to obtain money for the church. (*Sinclair Papers*)

62 First wedding in St. Andrew's Church tent. (*Sinclair Papers*)



62



### Inseparable Destinies

Part of the reason for the importance of the church in Bennett by late 1899 and early 1900 was the changed nature of the town. During 1899 many men brought their wives and children north<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 63), and their presence had an undeniable effect in drawing community life closer to the church.

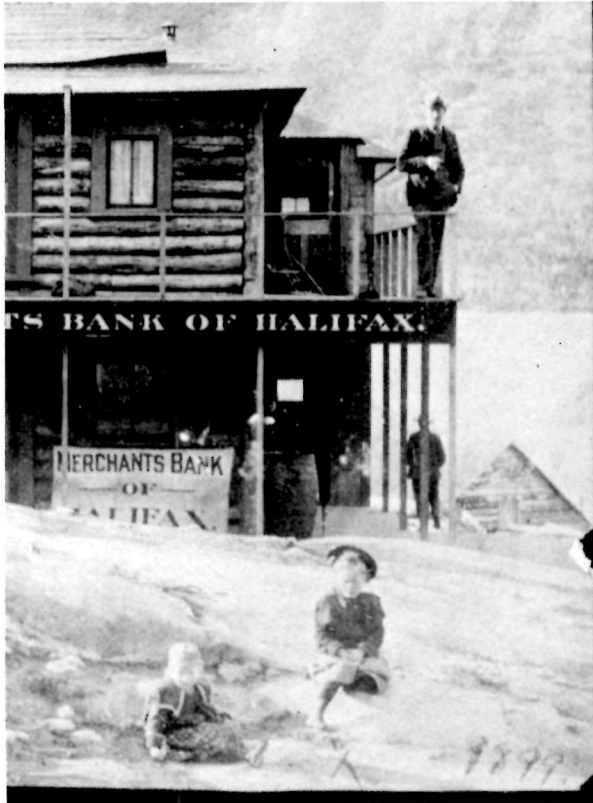
The hotel, the church's major contender as a social centre, was also undergoing substantial change. In the spring of 1898 when Martha Black passed through Bennett, she commented "there were two or three so-called hotels, canvas roofed, wooden affairs, each of which had a kitchen, dining room, bar and dance-hall in one room."<sup>2</sup> These hotels also provided sleeping place on the floor at night, and gambling was certainly a preoccupation in some of them. Any traveller who wanted a place to eat, drink, sleep, or meet his fellow man was forced to spend some of his day there. As time passed, the hotel's role as hub was gradually reduced. Mounted Police enforcement of a no-work Sunday regulation assisted the division of functions.<sup>3</sup> Before long, respectable hotels which provided food and accommodation appeared, and all other activities were relegated to a separate institution, the saloon.<sup>4</sup> As the saloon's entertainments could only be reached by deliberate intention, participation in its activities often caused moral indignation and by 1900 gamblers were even asked to leave town. All of these things, of course, are signs that Bennett was forgetting it was a northern boom town and adopting southern "civilization."

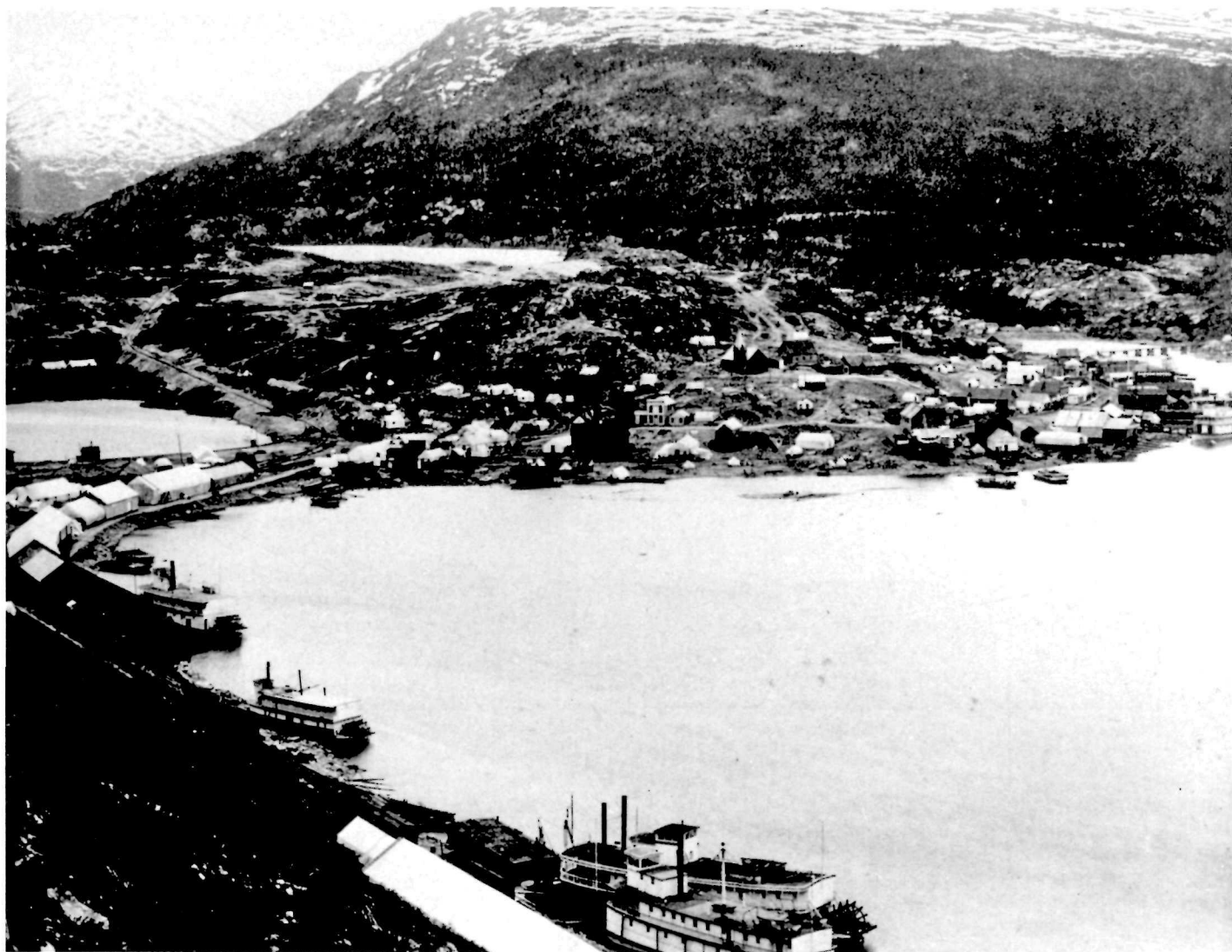
By 1899 when Sinclair began to build the church, the town was thriving on what many thought would be a permanent base. After the throngs of gold-seekers disappeared in 1898, Bennett became the transshipment centre for goods moving to the gold-fields at Dawson and Atlin (Fig. 64). Fleets of sternwheelers (Fig. 65) and scows (Fig. 66) carried goods away from Bennett to their destinations. The goods arrived in Bennett from the south in a variety of ways. They were carried over the Chilkoot Pass on aerial tramways (Fig. 67) to Crater Lake where they were put aboard crude carts on rails that took them to Bennett (Fig. 68). They came over the White Pass first in wagons on the Brackett Wagon road that was completed to Bennett in 1899<sup>5</sup> (see Fig. 69), then as far as possible by train as stages of the White Pass and Yukon Railway were completed. Some of these companies headquartered in Bennett: most of them had warehousing facilities there. As soon as the railway reached the summit of the White Pass it became the preferred route for passenger traffic (Figs. 70, 71).

Passengers stayed in Bennett hotels, banked in Bennett banks, and often they outfitted in Bennett stores. Employment in these industries provided a constant reason for five to six hundred people to remain in the town.<sup>6</sup>

Although there was a fairly high turnover in the bodies that comprised this figure,<sup>7</sup> between 1899 and 1900 most Bennett residents remained long enough for a sense of community to develop. Concern for the industries that fed the town's prosperity was common to all, and they took pride in noting the physical manifestations of success. Every time a two-storey hotel sided with corrugated iron was constructed (Fig. 72), the event was heralded in the pages of the town's most enthusiastic booster, the *Bennett Sun*. The *Sun* also delighted in recounting the shock new improvements caused men who had not been to Bennett since 1898.<sup>8</sup> St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett, profited from this growing community spirit in the support and encouragement it received, for the period of its construction capped the height of Bennett's prosperity.

In fact, the condition of the Presbyterian mission at Lake Bennett parallels gold-rush developments at that centre closely. The mission was established early in 1898 just before a throng of gold-hungry men arrived to await spring breakup on their way north. At that time the church building was temporary, a log shack similar to those used by old-time northern miners. It was sufficient because the church received so little support that it was all that was required. The few men it was attempting to serve were preoccupied with their push north over the ice in a single-minded drive to meet worldly ambitions. This attitude moderated as more men were trapped in Bennett waiting for the spring breakup of 1898. A proportion of such a large crowd of southern men would inevitably be interested in the church, and this is reflected in increased financial support and attendance at services. A canvas church was constructed to accommodate them. After the Klondikers left, Bennett itself hung in a limbo of little activity until the railroad reached the summit of the White Pass and it became an easy matter to ship goods north in quantity. During this period the Bennett missionary, Sinclair, spent most of his time in Skagway and in the railway camps, devoting little selective time to the town. Such services as were held, took place in Bennett's hotels on an irregular basis. Once Bennett began to fulfill a major role in the territory's transportation network, however, the town showed signs of becoming better established. It was then that Sinclair built a permanent church with the assistance and approval of its residents.





65 The Steamer *Gleaner* that ran from Bennett to Atlin. (Hazel Hartshorn [Glosie])



66 W. B. Copping's party arriving in Dawson, October 17, 1900 with 5 scows and 100 tons of merchandise. These goods were transhipped at Bennett. (University of Washington.)

66



68 The cart that completed the tramway operation between Crater Lake and Bennett before completion of the railway. (Sinclair Papers.)



68

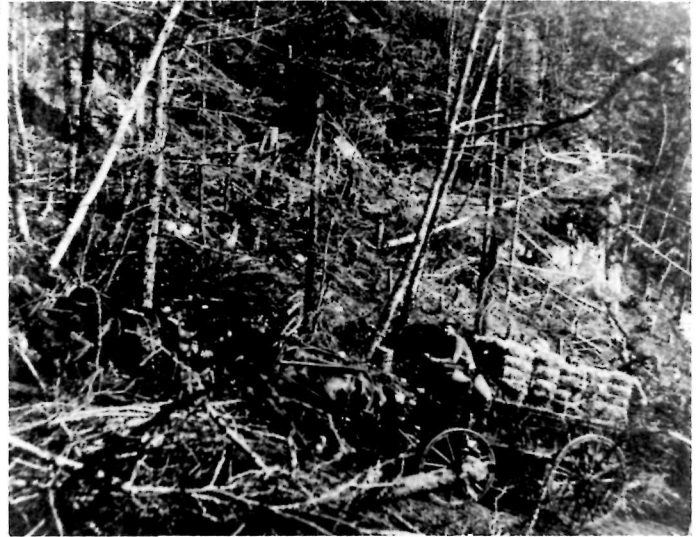




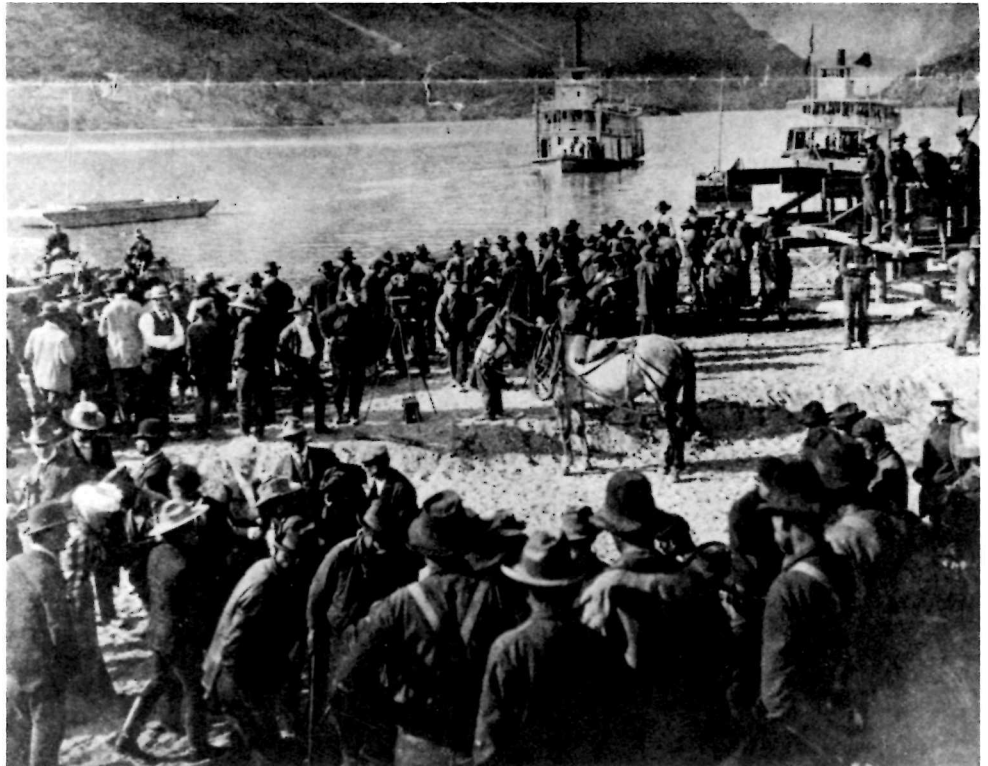
69 Freighting goods by waggon. This is probably one of the Red Line waggons that operated out of Bennett. (*Sinclair Papers.*)

70 Driving the golden spike at Bennett, 6 July 1899. (*Sinclair Papers.*)

69



70



71 First passenger coaches into Bennett, B.C. (Washington State University, Pullman)

72 Tug of War, 1900 – a sign of Bennett's new community spirit. The Dawson Hotel and the warehouses in the distance on the left are covered with corrugated iron. (Sinclair Papers)

71



72



The close relationship that existed between the church and the town of Bennett provides the inevitable explanation for the end of church activity. As has already been indicated, by 1899 Bennett had become the transshipment hub for goods moving north. During most of 1900 it thrived on this role; however, late in that year the White Pass and Yukon Railway was completed to Whitehorse. This event alone relocated the transportation centre for the Yukon in Whitehorse, and along with it went most of Bennett's population.<sup>9</sup>

The Reverend J.A. Sinclair participated in the exodus. As early as 1899 he had identified "Closeleigh," or Whitehorse, as a possible area for development and had obtained a church lot there.<sup>10</sup> Late in 1900, when it became evident that some development would shift to that point, he moved there to establish a church. At the time he left, Sinclair felt "the future of Bennett is somewhat problematical."<sup>11</sup> Earlier he had speculated that the scow and sailboat trade that operated from the town would keep it alive.<sup>12</sup> This trade quickly supplied the Dawson market with fresh produce and filled its food shortages. Sinclair's predictions might have come true if developments at Dawson had continued to expand, and if railway rates had been high. As it was, not only were the rates competitive, but mining in the Dawson area was mechanized and "the Eldorado" stabilized at a population below that of 1900. This precluded the demand for an extensive scow and sailboat trade.

This situation was not clear when the Reverend R. James Russell arrived from Schreiber, Ontario, to take Sinclair's place in Bennett in the fall of 1900. Russell continued church functions in Bennett until 1902 when the population had shrunk to a handful because there was no employment. At this point he moved to take John Pringle's place in the mining area at Atlin where his services were required.<sup>13</sup> With his move, the church was abandoned.

## Survival

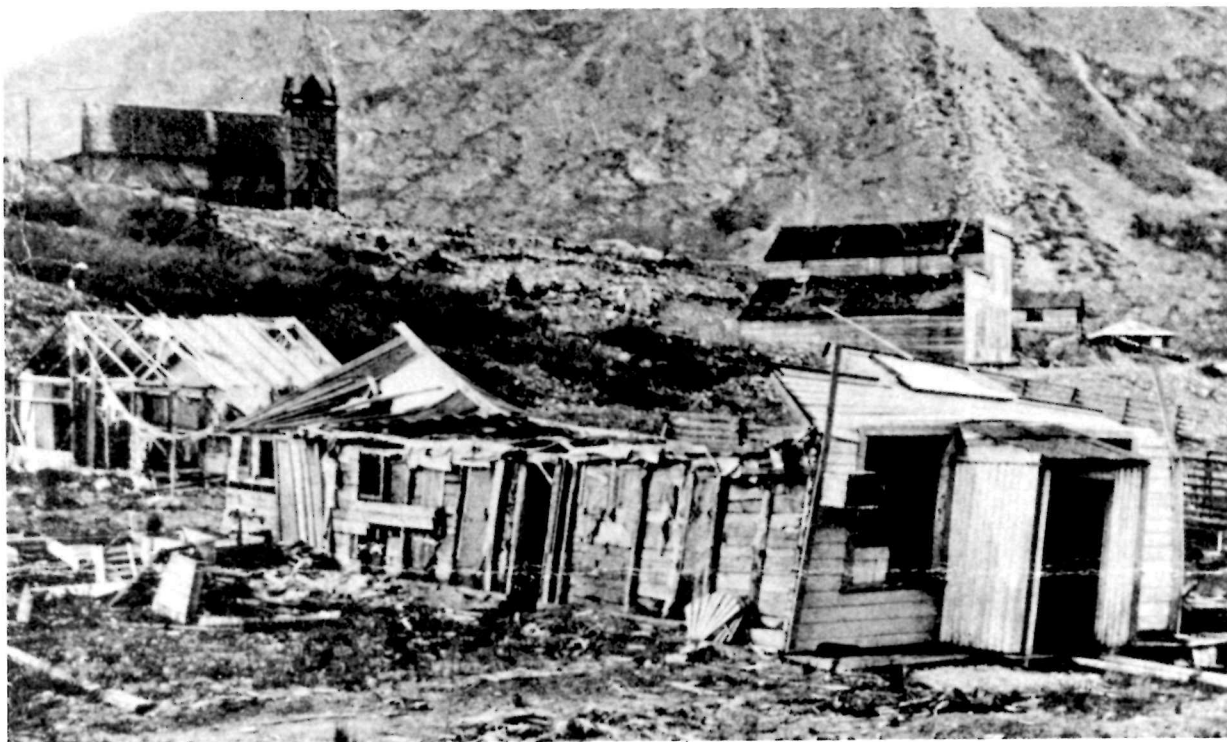
Since Russell moved to Atlin in 1902, St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett, has stood vacant while evidence of the town disappeared around it. Tex Rickard, who passed through Bennett in 1907, commented,

*The only structure surviving in anything like decent order is the church. . . , but even this suggestion of morality amid sin and canned vegetables appears old and sightless, for the windows are boarded and the bell dismantled.*<sup>1</sup>

Figure 73, probably taken in 1929, depicts the progress of the destruction. The church's windows were taken to the Mounted Police chapel in Whitehorse, then used on the air base chapel at the Whitehorse airport.<sup>2</sup> Its floor and interior walls have disappeared in the campfires of passersby along with the rest of the town of Bennett. For some reason, the exterior of the church remained relatively free of looting. Ironically enough, the structure has been shored up yearly by gangs from the White Pass and Yukon Railway. Today, the abandoned Church at Bennett still stands, a memorial to the phantom gold-rush.

73 Ruins of the town of Bennett, 1929.  
(Hazel Hartshorn [Gloslie])

74 Bennett church. (Provincial Archives  
of British Columbia)



74



## **Appendix A. Impromptu Farewell Poem by Capt. Jack Crawford.<sup>1</sup>**

The following little poem was hurriedly written and rendered by "The Poet Scout," at the last of a series of socials held in St. Andrew's Church tent, at Lake Bennett, on the evening of 23 May. The author's sense of its lack of finish was expressed in his characteristic manner when he introduced it to his audience as "a little piece of impromptu 'doggerel,'" and he only consented to its publication because of the importunity of his many friends who wanted copies. But unpolished as it is, it faithfully depicts the scenes of the trail, contains some fine passages, and touches some of our tenderest and holiest feelings.

*Oh Comrades, friends, and women fair,  
Oh girls and boys, without a care,  
Oh age and youth, with hearts aglow,  
While hope's bright star is shining so  
Beyond the lakes, where we are told,  
Is found the bright seductive gold.  
God knows I hope with you and pray  
That fickle fortune will not play  
You false good friends, and that before  
Old ninety-eight is known no more  
Your hopes may all be realized,  
And not a boat or scow capsized.  
But sailing smoothly down the lakes  
Behind the treacherous little cakes  
Of once strong glistening glorious ice,  
Whereon you have "mushed" along so nice  
With dogs, and sail and loaded sleds.  
Whereon you've spread your feather beds  
Of soft and soothing hemlock boughs,  
Now changed to holds of rustic scows,  
And while you smoothly glide along  
Let voices ring in merry song,  
Let faith in Him who, over all,  
Doth even note the sparrow's fall,  
Give heart and strength, and bring good cheer,  
And make us glad that we are here.*

*Give mirth full sway, let laughter flow,  
And scatter sunshine as you go.  
Forget the hardships of the trail,  
Forget you ever heard men rail  
And cuss, and "mush, mush on! "Dick, Blue,"  
Oh maybe, I won't larrup you!"*

*Gee, gee, I say! Haw. Dick! Gee, Spot  
Confound you! Now I'm getting hot,  
"There now, take that, and that, now yell,"  
And then he whispers "this is hell."*

*Ah friends, we must forget all this,  
And think of home – the parting kiss  
From woman's lips, so sweet, so fair,  
On those same lips that swore a swear.  
Don't blame the man. Don't censure Hush,  
Just blame the dog and too much "Mush,"  
Or, if you wish, just blame the cat  
(And thereby hangs a tale, eh Watt!)*

*But seriously, I fain would win  
That touch that makes the whole world kin,  
(Spanish excepted, for I declare  
There is no human nature there).  
But you, my boy, with prospects fair  
Think of home, a mother's prayer –  
"God bless my wayward, wandering boy.  
His father's pride, his mother's joy.  
Oh guide his barque from shore to shore  
And bring him safely home once more."*

*Think of the wife, of little Ted.  
Of guileless May, and roguish Fred.  
And how they clambered on your knee,  
And laughed with merry childish glee,  
And how, at eve, with faces bright  
And all aglow with heavenly light  
They clasp their little hands, and say:  
"God bless dear papa, far away."*

*So men and boys – and you, dear girls –  
Sweetness refined, you precious pearls,  
Who graced our camps, laughed at the gale,  
And sprinkled sunshine on the trail!  
And you, it was, who started these  
"Mental Improvers." if you please!  
These meetings where, as brothers, we  
Can meet and "mush" and "haw" and "gee;"  
Enjoy as good a social feast  
As that dished up in South or East  
And as for eatables, we fare  
As good as people over there –*

*Except that we are short on greens.  
But Boston cannot beat our beans  
And toothsome pork, and solid cake.  
And doughnuts only men can bake.  
And then the firm, the rubber pie  
We'll use for ballast bye and bye.  
And then we've got some talent too.  
As good as York of Kalamazoo;  
Or Skaguay town beyond the pass,  
Where every robust lad and lass  
Who passes through, I've heard them say,  
Are mighty glad to get away –  
From "shell game" fiends, and "bunco steer's,"  
And all the lies one daily hears  
About the town across the bay,  
Just newly built and called Dyea.  
But as for lies – to be quite fair.  
They're just as robust over there.  
While here in Bennett, well I'm loath  
To tell the truth – its worse than both.*

*But joking all aside good friends,  
Success or failure all depends  
On you. Each one must do his part,  
Must work with hands and brain and heart,  
For there is no such word as fail,  
Except to those who will not sail  
When winds are fair. So come what will,  
Despite the rushing stream or hill,  
Press on! and climb. Say "never die,"  
And you will get there bye and bye.*

## **Appendix B. Magazines for the Reading Room, St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett.<sup>1</sup>**

Renewing subscriptions for:

Momsey  
Cosmopolitan  
Puritan  
Strand  
Scribners  
Century  
Canadian Magazine  
Illustrated London News  
Black & White  
Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly  
Wide Wide World  
Harper's Monthly Magazine  
Ladies Home Journal  
Woman at Home  
Review of Reviews  
McLure's

## Appendix C. Music at Bennett Church.<sup>1</sup>

"I would also like another dozen records of a little different stamp from most of those which I have. They are with the exception of the patriotic pieces, nearly all of a light character and patriotic pieces are all American. You know we are British. Could you give us any British airs like, 'The Royal Grenadiers', 'Soldiers of the Queen', 'Death of Nelson', 'The Maple Leaf', 'Rule Britannia', 'Flowers of the Forest', 'Scots wa' Hae', 'God Save the Queen' (i.e. 'America'), 'Locholea no more'. Are there any records of any of the classic pieces of sacred music, like 'The Messiah', 'Redemption', 'Jerusalem'?. Possibly too you could find some of the great hymns with variations played by some of the great bands or orchestras. These would be very acceptable for some occasions. I notice too that I have no recitations or speeches. A few of these both serious and comic would be good for variety. You might also add one half a dozen blank cylinders for making records."

## Endnotes

### Introduction

- 1 *Presbyterian Record* (Montreal), Vol. 24 (September 1899), p. 261.

### Founding a Mission

- 1 R.E. Gosnell, Compiled from the *Year Book of British Columbia and Manual of Provincial Information to which Is Added a Chapter Containing Much Special Information Respecting the Canadian Yukon and Northern Territory Generally* (Victoria: R.E. Gosnell, 1897), p. 493.
- 2 Edwin Tappan Adney, *The Klondike Stampede of 1897-1898* (Fairfield Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, 1968), pp. 73-74.
- 3 Canada. Parliament. Senate, *Report of Special Committee of the Senate upon Opening Up Direct Communication between the Railway System of Canada and the Navigable Waters of the Yukon* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1898), p. 117.
- 4 Washington State Historical Society, Olympia, Washington, E.A. Becker Papers. Miscellaneous newspaper clipping entitled "Chilkoot Step Cutter Celebrates 77th Birthday; Surprised."
- 5 R.E. Gosnell, op. cit., p. 492.
- 6 Martha Louise Black, *My Seventy Years, by Mrs. George Black As Told to Elizabeth Bailey Price* (London: Nelson, 1938), p. 115.
- 7 Robert C. Kirk, *Twelve Months in Klondike* (London: Heinemann, 1899), p. 64.
- 8 United Church of Canada Archives, Victoria College, Toronto. Rev. J. Robertson Papers (hereafter cited as Robertson Papers), A.S. Grant to Robertson (no locations given), 28 February 1898.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 James M. Sinclair, J.A. Sinclair Papers. Private papers in the possession of Mr. James Sinclair, Winnipeg (hereafter cited as Sinclair Papers). Manuscript of a speech delivered to a Ladies Aid Group in Victoria by Arthur Copeland. N.d. (approx. 1900), p. 2.
- 13 Robertson Papers, A.S. Grant to Dr. J. Robertson, c/o Mr. McLean, 28 February 1898.
- 14 Ibid. In *My Seventy Years* Martha Black comments that "Instead of the dirt floor, we pounded the earth in small round poplar blocks," p. 122.
- 15 Robertson Papers, A.S. Grant, Lake Bennett, to Dr. J. Robertson, 29 March 1898.
- 16 Ibid., 28 February 1898.
- 17 Sinclair Papers, Copeland manuscript, p. 3.
- 18 Robertson Papers, A.S. Grant to Dr. J. Robertson, 28 February 1898.
- 19 Sinclair Papers, Sinclair's legend on a photograph taken in one of these bunkhouses is "Two men to a bunk of split slabs and blankets that smelled like axle grease" (Fig. 14).
- 20 Robertson Papers, loc. cit.
- 21 Ibid., St. Andrew's Manse, Lake Bennett, B.C., 29 March 1898.
- 22 Ibid.

### **Cheechako, Canvas and Congregation**

- 1 As discussions at the tribunal proceeded, Canadians opened customs offices at the White Pass and Chilkoot summits. From February to May of that year, the Americans insisted on conveying goods to Bennett, refusing to recognize the Canadian claim to the Pass area. See "Appendix A. Annual Report of Superintendent Z.T. Wood, Tagish," November 1898 in Canada, Parliament, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police, 1898* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1899), p. 47.
- 2 Murray Morgan, *One Man's Gold Rush: A Klondike Album* (Seattle: Univ. of Wash. Press, 1967), p. 45.
- 3 *The Westminster: A Paper for the Home* (hereafter cited as *The Westminster*), 16 July 1898, "Letters from the Klondike An Interesting Budget: Latest News from the Yukon Missionaries," Letter from Rev. R.M. Dickey, dated 29 May 1898, pp. 70–71.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- 5 United Church of Canada Archives, Victoria College, Toronto, Robert McCahon Dickey (hereafter cited as Dickey), Yukon Diary 1897–99, 7 April 1898.
- 6 *The Westminster*, 16 July 1898, "Letters from the Klondike." Letter from R.M. Dickey at Bennett dated 29 May 1898, p. 70. The congregation itself was composed of many denominations, not just Presbyterians. On 16 July 1898 the *Westminster's* readers received the following note from Dickey in its series of "Letters from the Klondike": "At the request of a number of people I conducted a communion service last Sabbath. Fifty-nine joined in the celebration – four for the first time. They were composed as follows: 16 Presbyterians, 9 M.E., 10 Wesleyans, 4 Christian Church, 3 Episcopalians, 3 Lutheran, 3 Baptist, 3 Congregationalists, 3 Roman Catholics, 1 Volunteer of America (converted saloon keeper), 4 denomination not stated," p. 71.
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

### **A Hectic Limbo**

- 1 Robertson Papers, J.A. Sinclair to Dr. J. Robertson, 31 May 1898.
- 2 *The Westminster*, 16 July 1898, "Letters from the Klondike." Letter from Rev. J.A. Sinclair, Skagway to Gordon, editor of the paper, 10 June 1898, pp. 72-73.
- 3 Paul T. Nolan, "Captain Jack Crawford: Gold Searcher turned Playmate," *Alaska Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1964), p. 42. This ability was also evident in Dawson, see photos, Alaska Historical Library and Museum, Juneau, "North American Trading and Transportation Co. people at Dawson, July 4, 1900;" Public Archives of Canada, C1337; Public Archives of Canada, PA 16238 showing Crawford in the height of Dawson activity.
- 4 Robertson Papers, J.A. Sinclair to Dr. J. Robertson, 31 May 1898. Some evidence of this tension must have been evident earlier, for before Dickey joined Grant at Bennett, Grant had written to his supervisor (Robertson Papers, A.S. Grant, Lake Bennett, to Rev. Dr. Robertson, 29 March 1898): "The beauty of it is that it [St. Andrew's Church, Lake Bennett] is not a union church, but a Presbyterian. While it is not wise in this work to give too great prominence to denominationalism, yet I am convinced that wherever we set up a mission, it should be not union but Presbyterian . . . We are first on the field, our people are supporting us in the work, and why should we make our churches union. We can be as Catholic as our Creed in our teachings and in the charity we extend toward others, but our work must be defined."

- 5 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Rev. Norman B. Harrison, Sheldon, North Dakota, 27 April 1899, p. 71.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 71–72.
- 7 A comparison of photos Provincial Archives of British Columbia 13493 (Fig. 26) taken in 1898, and Sinclair collection "Bird's eye view of Lake Bennett looking South," October 1899 (Fig. 27) shows a shift in population and area development to the east.
- 8 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Dr. J. Robertson, 3 December 1900, p. 163.
- 9 The "Government Reserve" referred to in this case evidently belonged to the provincial government, as N-WMP reports the federal government had no reserve at Bennett. Wood's report (op. cit.), p. 41, states that the area in which federal government buildings stood had already been disposed of to private parties; indeed, the same report indicates the N-WMP purchased their buildings in Bennett from "Messrs. McLeod and Sullivan," owners of most of the townsite, p. 35.
- 10 *The Presbyterian Record*, "Home Mission Jottings – The Yukon," October 1898, pp. 294–95.
- 11 In Sinclair Papers, an undated manuscript version of a speech to a Ladies Aid Society in Victoria, Arthur Copeland, the layman who presided over many of these meetings, cites the Hotel Northern as the site in which they occurred. In a letter to Dr. Robertson, written from Skagway, 3 December 1900 (Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, p. 162), Sinclair himself states that his last service in Bennett was held in the Portland Hotel. As both men were participants, it must be assumed that both were correct; consequently, both places have been named.
- 12 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Norman B. Harrison, N. Dakota, 27 April 1899, p. 71, and J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Mrs. Laura Sinclair, 10 April 1899, p. 63.

### **Building a Church**

- 1 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Mr. Bethune, Atlin, 1 May 1899, p. 77.
- 2 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to Robertson, 3 December 1900, p. 163.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 162.
- 4 *Ibid.*, pp. 162 and 164.
- 5 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to Principal R.M. Grant, 2 December 1900, p. 159.
- 6 This is the interpretation held in all published works in this building between *The Westminster* and *Presbyterian Record* in the 1900 period and an article in the *Alaska Journal* (Vol. 4, No. 4 [Autumn, 1974], pp. 242–50) published by J.M. Sinclair. This was also the belief of the people in Skagway and Whitehorse in the early 1970s.
- 7 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to Dr. Campbell, Victoria, B.C., 12 July 1899, p. 104.
- 8 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Dr. Robertson, 3 December 1900, p. 165.
- 9 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to his father (Lanark County, Ontario), 9 January 1900, p. 193.
- 10 *Ibid.*, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Principal Grant, 2 December 1900, p. 159.
- 11 *Ibid.*, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to his father (Lanark County, Ontario), 9 January 1900, p. 193.
- 12 *Ibid.*, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Rev. R.H. Walton, D.D., Toronto, 28 December 1899, p. 106.



- 13 Ibid., J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to his father (Lanark County, Ontario) 9 January 1900, p. 193. J.M. Sinclair, J.A.'s son and the most credible authority on Sinclair family matters, writes in his *Alaska Journal* article, "Early in life the missionary had shown great love for all work of a mechanical nature. His father, who had homesteaded in Lanark County Ontario, had trained his son in the use of tools and together they had designed and built most of their farm buildings and had repaired and even constructed some of their own implements. The young man, having had access to mechanics and carpenters tools at an early age, as well as inheriting his father's mechanical ingenuity, had acquired a practical knowledge which now stood him in good stead," p. 245.
- 14 Margaret Carter, "History," in Canada. Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, *Dawson City, Y.T. Conservation Study*, Vol. 4 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1974), pp. 12–21.
- 15 Barbara A. Humphreys and Meredith Sykes, *The Buildings of Canada, A Guide to Pre-20th-Century Styles in Houses, Churches and Other Structures* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1976), p. 3.
- 16 Calder Loth, *The Only Proper Style: Gothic Architecture in America* (New York: Graphics, 1975), title. On p. 122 Loth provides evidence that gothic was the major style used in American churches between 1877 and 1929.
- 17 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Rev. R.H. Warden, Toronto, 3 March 1899, p. 14.
- 18 A sketch of the church appears undated in Sinclair's Letterbook on page 85 – which would place it in late May or early June 1899 if he used his pages sequentially (Fig. 29).
- 19 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Principal R.M. Grant, 2 December 1900, p. 159. From the contents of this letter it would appear that Sinclair bought both the slabs and the lumber at these prices around the same time.
- 20 It is unlikely that these were mass-produced windows as a survey of churches constructed at the turn of the century in British Columbia recorded by the Canadian Inventory of Historic Building reveals no similar windows. The only other example of such windows located in Canada was at Gravenhurst, Ontario (Fig. 52) in a church constructed in approximately 1890. As the Canadian Inventory of Historic Building's survey is not exhaustive, it is impossible to say whether other examples do exist; however, they are certainly not common enough to have been prefabricated.
- 21 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to Rev. Dr. Campbell, Victoria, 12 July 1899, p. 104.
- 22 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to Rev. R.H. Walton, 28 December 1899, p. 106: 'I received your notice one evening after working all day shingling in a snowstorm – had to do so or get no man to stick to the trying task, I was stiff and wet and chilled;' and Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to Rev. Dr. Campbell, Victoria, 12 July 1899, p. 104.
- 23 Paul T. Mizony, "Gold Rush: A Boy's Impression of the Stampede into the Klondike during the days of 1898," p. 25. Hazel Hartshorn (Gloslie) Papers, Caption on back of photograph titled "Bennett Church" reads "my father helped build this church in his spare time." See also *The Presbyterian Record*, "Home Mission Jottings – The Yukon," p. 295.
- 24 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Dr. J. Robertson (no location given), 3 December 1900, p. 165.
- 25 Ibid., J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Principal R.M. Grant (no location given), 2 December 1900, p. 159.
- 26 Ibid., J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Dr. J. Robertson (no location given), 3 December 1900, p. 166.
- 27 Ibid., J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to Laura Sinclair (Ontario), 8 January 1900, p. 176.
- 28 Ibid., J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Dr. J. Robertson (no location given), 3 December 1900, p. 166.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 The new organ was purchased by the Ladies Aid Society of St. Andrew's Church. See *ibid.*, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Dr. Robertson, 3 December 1900, p. 167. A photograph of the tiny portable organ can be seen in Figure 35. This organ is still in the possession of Mr. James Sinclair, Winnipeg.
- 31 The bell was ordered from George Powell & Co. of Victoria, B.C., for \$17. Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to Scott, 30 January 1900, p. 211.
- 32 In a report on the wood contained in the Tagish district which covered the area from the Passes to Tagish in the south, Superintendent Z.T. Wood stated in his annual report (Canada. Parliament, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police, 1898* [Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1899], App. A, p. 50), "The timber on this district consists principally of fir, spruce, pine and poplar. On the low flats there are scrub willows." Presumably fir, spruce, or poplar may have been used for rough construction on the church as well.
- 33 Sinclair Papers, Loose Pages, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to Laura Sinclair (Ontario), 22 November 1899, p. 2.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid., Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Dr. J. Robertson, 3 December 1900, pp. 166 and 167.
- 37 See also Photo, Hazel Hartshorn Gloslie, Hartshorn Papers, "Bennett Church 1899."
- 38 Sinclair Papers, Loose Papers, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to Laura Sinclair (Ontario), 22 November 1899, p. 3.

### The Church in Action

- 1 *Presbyterian Record*, "Home Mission Jottings – The Yukon," October 1899, p. 295.
- 2 Sinclair Papers, Loose Papers, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to Laura Sinclair (Ontario), 22 November 1899, p. 4.
- 3 Hazel Hartshorn Gloslie, Hartshorn Papers, comment on back of photograph "Bennett Church 1899" reads "Mother gathered the few (3 or 4) children together and took us in the church for S.S. [Sunday School] lessons. We sat on boxes as the interior was never finished." The Hartshorns left Bennett in the fall of 1899.
- 4 *Bennett Sun*, "The Presbyterian Church," 5 August 1899, p. 5.
- 5 *Presbyterian Record*, "Home Mission Jottings – The Yukon," October 1899, p. 295.
- 6 Sinclair Papers, Loose Papers, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to Laura Sinclair (Ontario), 22 November 1899, p. 4.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 *Presbyterian Record*, "Experiences in Yukon by our Missionary J.A. Sinclair," April 1900, p. 100.

- 9 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to J.P. Taylor, Esq., Seattle, Washington, 14 March 1900, pp. 353–55.
- 10 Ibid., J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to Laura Sinclair (Ontario), 19 February 1900, p. 298.
- 11 Sinclair Papers, Copeland Manuscript, p. 6.
- 12 Grant had evidently chinked the cabin with mud, which created a dust storm as it blew inside the cabin during the spring thaw of 1898. For an account, see *The Westminster*, "Letters from the Klondike," 16 July 1898, p. 70.
- 13 *The Westminster*, "En Route from the Klondyke: A Chat with Mr. Dickey," 30 September 1899, p. 353.
- 14 George Edward Gartrell, "The Work of the Churches in the Yukon during the Era of the Klondike Gold Rush" (M.A. thesis, Univ. of Western Ontario, 1970), pp. 154–68.
- 15 Ibid.; Gartrell, p. 153, states that parish autonomy in addition to strong financial support from the south were the reasons for Presbyterian success. While this argument is ultimately true, if the Presbyterian ministers had waited for financial support to arrive before moving, the mission field would have been slow in growing. Both Grant and Sinclair provided funds from their own pockets to develop the facilities they felt were necessary. See note 17; also Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Rev. R.H. Walton, Toronto, 28 December 1899, p. 105.

#### **Inseparable Destinies**

- 1 *The Westminster*, "En Route from the Klondyke: A Chat with Mr. Dickey," 30 September 1899, p. 354.
- 2 Martha Louise Black, op. cit., p. 110.
- 3 Although no evidence of the date of an intentional crackdown seems to be available in published N-WMP reports, it is possible it occurred after July 1900 when P.C.H. Primrose became the new N-WMP superintendent of the district. Canada. Parliament, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of the North-West Mounted Police*, 1900 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1901), App. A, "Annual Report of Superintendent P.C.H. Primrose, commanding H. Division, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory," 15 December 1900, p. 34.
- 4 *Bennett Sun*, various ads, 31 May and 5 August 1899.
- 5 Minnesota Historical Society, George A. Brackett Papers, Vol. 14, Box 3. George A. Brackett, Chicago, to Chas. W. Needham, Washington, D.C., 2 May 1899.
- 6 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to MacLaren 20 February 1899. However, the page allocation in the Sinclair papers would argue the date of this letter as 1900. At that time, Sinclair wrote that Bennett's population was "an average probably 500 people," p. 304.
- 7 Ibid.; also J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to MacLaren, 13 February 1900, p. 278: "There is only one family here now that was here a year ago. And out of from 50 to 120 who attended our services I do not think half a dozen were here six months ago."
- 8 *Bennett Sun*, 5 August 1899, excerpt beginning "Col. George Brackett," p. 4.
- 9 A comparison of names listed in advertisements in the *Bennett Sun*, 31 May and 5 August 1899 issues, and R.L. Polk & Company *Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer and Business Directory*, 1903 (Seattle: R.L. Polk & Co., 1903), reveals that the following businesses relocated in Whitehorse: *The Bennett Sun*, P. Burns & Co., meat market; the Arctic

- Hotel and Restaurant; Whitney and Pedlar, merchants, and Taylor and Drury, merchants. Undoubtedly there were others.
- 10 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair to Copeland, 10 December 1899, p. 132. This letter refers to "Closeleigh" as the new name for "Whitehorse." Obviously it was an ill-fated attempt at change.
- 11 *Presbyterian Record*, "The Yukon, Atlin & C.," January 1901, p. 16.
- 12 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Skagway, to Rev. R.H. Walton, D.D., Toronto, Ontario, 28 December 1899, p. 112. Sinclair's reasoning was based on the speed of scow and sailboat freighting: "scows and boats run the rapids thus saving transfer and the prevailing winds and the strong current both go with the freight during the whole season of navigation."
- 13 *Presbyterian Record*, "A Letter from Atlin B.C.," March 1902, p. 8. By this point, Russell is well settled in Atlin.

#### **Survival**

- 1 Thomas Arthur Rickard, *Through the Yukon and Alaska* (San Francisco: Mining and Scientific Press, 1909), p. 154.
- 2 W.D. McBride, "A Brief History of the White Pass and Yukon Route and the Trails of '98." Transcript, Indian and Northern Affairs Library, Whitehorse, 1945, p. 3.

#### **Appendix A**

- 1 "Impromptu Farewell Poem" by Capt. Jack Crawford found as a miscellaneous clipping in Sinclair Papers.

#### **Appendix B**

- 1 Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Lake Bennett, to Messrs. Bailey Bros., Vancouver, B.C., 13 March 1900, p. 357.

#### **Appendix C**

- 1 Extract from Sinclair Papers, Letterbook, J.A. Sinclair, Bennett, to J.P. Taylor Esq., Seattle, Wash., 14 March 1900, pp. 354–55.

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# The Old Fort Point Site: Fort Wedderburn II?

by Karlis Karklins

Canadian Historic Sites No. 26

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## Abstract

In 1971, The National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, excavated a site on Old Fort Point at the west end of Lake Athabaska, Alberta, initially believed to be Fort Chipewyan I. Subsequent research suggests that the site may have been the temporary 1817–18 location of Fort Wedderburn, a Hudson's Bay Company post operating on the lake from 1815 to 1821.

The site consisted of 12 pits and the well-preserved foundation of a single four-room structure measuring 24.7 ft. by 39 ft. Enough of the building's components remained so that many of the construction techniques could be determined. Each room had a wooden floor and a clay-cemented stone fireplace. No celars were encountered.

Most of the 271 recovered artifacts were household and personal items; however, tools, hardware and items concerned with subsistence, defence and transportation were also encountered. The artifacts which could be dated bracket the period from about 1810 to 1815.

Submitted for publication 1975, by Karlis Karklins, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, Ottawa.

## Preface

In 1968, the National Historic Parks and Sites Branch initiated the Western Fur Trade Research Program in accordance with recommendations by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to interpret this major theme of national historical importance and general interest. The fur trade occupies a prominent niche in Canadian history since it was the nation's primary industry and the base upon which the country's economy was built. It also served as the impetus for the original exploration and settlement of the interior of Canada.

As a first step in the project, Terence Smythe, then National Historic Parks and Sites Branch staff historian, prepared a report, "Thematic Study of the Fur Trade in the Canadian West, 1670–1870," which presented a detailed discussion of the fur trade posts located in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba (Smythe 1968). In 1969, a general reconnaissance of the areas discussed in the report was undertaken by Smythe and James V. Chism, former staff archaeologist, to determine the location of fur trade sites, their state of preservation, the technical feasibility of on-site research, the logistical problems of maintaining research parties in the areas under investigation and the status of local interest and research (Smythe and Chism 1969: 1).

One of the areas visited was the west end of Lake Athabasca where several sites were sought, including Fort Chipewyan I, a late 18th-century North West Company post located on a peninsula called Old Fort Point on the south shore. A brief survey of the north shore of the peninsula resulted in the discovery of two sites (Smythe and Chism 1969: 94). Although neither seemed large enough to be Fort Chipewyan I, there was the possibility that portions of the sites had eroded away and that excavation would reveal more features. Thus, as an archaeological follow-up to the survey work, the two sites were investigated during the summer of 1971 by five university students under the direction of the author.

Test excavation of the smallest site revealed an approximately 22-ft.-square building which contained artifacts dating to the third quarter of the 19th century. On the other hand, the few diagnostic artifacts (buttons, gunflints, etc.) that were uncovered in the initial trenches at the other, much larger site were in keeping with what would be expected at a late 18th-century fur trade post. It therefore seemed that a structural portion of Fort Chipewyan I, possibly the main house, had been located and archaeological work proceeded in earnest.

Only after the site had been almost completely excavated did doubts arise concerning its identity. While the size and floor plan of the structure were compatible with that of a trading post's main

house, certain expected features were lacking. Cellars, which are usually found at fur trade posts, were not encountered inside or outside the building, nor was there any evidence for documented features such as a palisade or outbuildings in any of the test trenches dug around the main excavation. Furthermore, several fragments of a transfer-printed pearlware bowl found on the floor of the building during the last few weeks of the project were of a type which dates from about 1810 to 1815. Although it was possible that the structure had been part of Fort Chipewyan I originally and was subsequently used as a fishing station or outpost after the post was moved to the north shore of the lake around 1800, the historical identity of the excavated structure was far from certain.

In an attempt to determine whether the site was Fort Chipewyan I or not, the available literature on the fort was reviewed once more. This revealed the possibility that Fort Chipewyan may have stood on the west side of Old Fort Point (Tyrrell 1934: 398) and not on the north side as suggested by Guy Blanchet (1946: 34) who had supposedly found the remains of the fort there in 1925. With this in mind, a four-day foot survey of Old Fort Point was carried out by the author in June of 1972, with the assistance of W. Dean Clark, Director of the Heritage Sites Service of Alberta, and Daniel M. Cameron, a summer employee. The survey resulted in the discovery of nine additional sites on Old Fort Point, including a substantial one on the point's west side which is almost certainly Fort Chipewyan I. Hence the identity of the site excavated in 1971 remains to be determined. Thus, aside from describing the structural remains and artifacts uncovered at what is hereafter referred to as the Old Fort Point site, this report attempts to date and identify the structure using both archaeological and historical resources.

The faunal material recovered from the site is not discussed in this report but is the subject of a separate report by Anne M. Rick, Head of the Zooarchaeology Research Centre, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa. Her detailed study, "Analysis of Animal Remains from the Old Fort Point Site, Northern Alberta," appears elsewhere in this volume.

The author wishes to thank the Department of Lands and Forests of Alberta for permitting the excavation of the Old Fort Point site which is situated on provincial land. Thanks are also extended to John S. Nicks, until recently the Historic Sites Officer for the Province of Alberta, and his wife Gertrude for providing much useful information concerning the archaeological findings at other historical sites which helped in the interpretation of the Old Fort Point site and the analysis of the recovered artifacts. Gerald Lyster, recently retired Park Warden of Wood Buffalo Na-

tional Park, Fort Chipewyan, provided general assistance while the archaeological field party was in the area.

The field crew, consisting of Krystyna Spirydowicz, John J. Hill, Daniel M. Cameron, Steven R. Acheson and James V. Caddy, did an outstanding job of excavation despite poor weather, numerous mosquitoes and horseflies, leaky tents and other problems. Gratitude is also expressed to those of the staff of the Research Division of the National Historic Parks and Sites Branch who helped with the analysis of the artifacts and the preparation of the illustrations, as well as to all the others who provided information or constructive criticism.

## Introduction

### Historical Background

Although the Canadian fur trade had been expanding westward from its inception, the period of major English expansion north-west of the Great Lakes began in the 1770s (Smythe 1968: 10, 17). During this period, the Montreal pedlars began turning their attention to the country that lay to the north of the Saskatchewan River. The Frobisher brothers were the first to enter the area and had penetrated as far as Ile-à-la-Crosse by 1776 (Smythe 1968: 16). Their profitable ventures proved that the area was rich in furs, and as a result other traders followed shortly thereafter.

One of the first to exploit the new territory was Peter Pond who, in 1778, established Pond's Fort on the Athabasca River, about 30 to 40 miles from its mouth. Operating as a "free trader" for the first few years, Pond became a partner in the newly formed North West Company in 1785 which thereby gained the only post in Athabasca (Chalmers 1974: 51). Pond's Fort functioned for another three years and was then abandoned for a site on Lake Athabasca since the old establishment was not in a suitable location either as a base for the exploration of the country to the north and west of the lake or to adequately trade with the Indians of the region. Further, it lacked the resources to support an establishment large enough to meet the future requirements of the Athabasca area (Smythe 1968: 249).

The new post, Fort Chipewyan I, was constructed in 1788 by Roderick Mackenzie on a small peninsula on the south shore of Lake Athabasca, about 6 miles to the east of the Athabasca River delta. This location was in the centre of excellent fisheries and near the mouths of the Athabasca, Slave and Peace rivers and at the hub of a vast network of water routes. It was also about as far west as a post could be placed and still allow canoes from the fort to rendezvous at Grand Portage in the summer, exchange furs for supplies and return to the north before the rivers and lakes froze over (Chalmers 1971: 8).

Although relatively little is known about this post, it was a sizeable operation, being deemed "the compleatest Inland House I have seen in the Country" and "the Grand Magazine of the Athapiscow Country" by Philip Turnor who visited the site in 1791-92 (Tyrrell 1934: 398). During the 12 years of its existence, Fort Chipewyan I served as company headquarters and as the chief trading establishment in Athabasca, as well as a base of operations for the exploration of the northwest and the subsequent expansion of the North West Company into the explored regions. The fort was also a redistribution centre for furs coming from and supplies going to the other posts in the district.

In the late 1790s, the importance of Fort Chipewyan I began to decline. The tremendous expansion of the Athabasca Department during this period was at the root of the difficulty (Smythe 1968: 250). With posts westward along the Peace River and north on the Mackenzie diverting some of the concern's attention, Fort Chipewyan suffered. Consequently around 1800, the post was relocated on the lake's northwest shore in the immediate vicinity of the present settlement of Fort Chipewyan, Alberta. This locale was free of ice sooner than the old site, thereby allowing the earlier departure of the traders in the spring. It was also much closer to the Slave and Peace rivers, as well as nearer to the major fur suppliers, the Chipewyans, whose territory lay to the east and north of the lake.

The move did not end the post's troubles however. At about the same time that Fort Chipewyan was relocated, Alexander Mackenzie's XY Company established a post in the immediate vicinity (Smythe and Chism 1969: 89). Further competition in the form of the Hudson's Bay Company appeared in 1802, when Peter Fidler established Nottingham House on English Island about two miles from Fort Chipewyan II. Nevertheless, the competition was short-lived. By 1806, the North West Company had absorbed Mackenzie's concern and driven the Hudson's Bay Company from the area (Smythe 1968: 246, 248). With the two companies out of the way, the Nor'Westers once again had a monopoly in the Athabasca region.

It was not until 1815 that the Hudson's Bay Company re-entered Athabasca to challenge the North West Company's hold on the area once again. In that year John Clarke, a former Nor'-Wester, built Fort Wedderburn on Potato Island opposite Fort Chipewyan. This post was occupied until October of 1817, when it was decided that a residence on the island would not be feasible that winter because of a lack of dogs to haul fish to the fort from the outlying fisheries (Krause 1972: 28). Temporary headquarters (Fort Wedderburn II) were, therefore, erected on Old Fort Point which had always been considered an excellent fishery. However, the new location did not prove to be any better than the old one had been; by 25 March 1818, the Hudson's Bay Company men were back on Potato Island (Krause 1972: 29).

Fort Wedderburn continued in existence until 1821, when the union of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company brought an end to the bitter rivalry between the two establishments. Fort Wedderburn was subsequently abandoned and Fort Chipewyan II became the Hudson's Bay Company's district headquarters and principal northern depot for western Canada.



Although the importance of Fort Chipewyan II declined gradually after 1821 due to the depletion of the fur resources of the area, it remained the main trading post in the Athabasca District for over a century (Smythe 1968: 247); however, as the fur trade in the district diminished, the need for the post diminished as well. Hence, in 1939–40, the buildings at the site were either torn down or moved to new locations to serve as storage facilities and a modern Hudson's Bay Company store was erected in the town that had grown up around the post over the years. Now only a stone cairn marks the site of the post that was once called the "Emporium of the North."

### Geographical Setting

The site discussed in this report is located on Old Fort Point, a small peninsula at the west end of Lake Athabasca in the extreme northeast corner of Alberta (Fig. 1). The point is approximately 21 miles to the east-southeast of Fort Chipewyan, the nearest community, at latitude 58° 39' N. and longitude 110° 36' W.

The peninsula, approximately 0.75 miles wide and 1.75 miles long, juts northwest from the south shore of the lake approximately 6 miles to the east of the Athabasca River delta. A small, sheltered bay is located west of the point and Old Fort Bay, which is larger, is to the east.

The land at the extreme northwest tip of the peninsula is very low and moist; dry land is just slightly above the level of the beach at an elevation of 701.97 ft. ASL (Canadian Engineering Services, Ltd., Bench Mark 36). From here, the land rises gradually toward the mainland, achieving an altitude of over 900 ft. ASL in a prominence about 0.75 miles east of the bench mark. The land is below 800 ft. ASL elsewhere on the peninsula.

The Old Fort Point site is approximately 600 ft. east of BM 36, at an estimated elevation of 718 ft. ASL. It is on the crest of a gradual slope up from the west and 25 ft. to the south of the edge of a 15-ft.-high steep bluff that forms a portion of the north side of the point (Fig. 2). The land continues to increase in elevation east of the site, while it slopes down toward a marsh to the southeast.

Although the bluff is stable adjacent to the site – being overgrown with moss and trees – several old, narrow, slumped terraces indicate that erosion has taken place at some time in the past. The extent of erosional activity and its effect on the site, if any, are not known. A wide cobblestone beach extends to within 7 ft. of the bluff's base.

Old Fort Point is situated in the southern fringe of the permafrost region at the transition between the Upper Mackenzie and the Athabasca South sections of the Boreal Forest Region of

Canada (Rowe 1972: 44–5, 154). In the Upper Mackenzie Section, west of Old Fort Bay, white spruce (*Picea glauca* [Moench] Voss) and balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera* L.) constitute the main forest cover on the alluvial flats bordering the rivers. Few other species occur although balsam fir (*Abies balsamea* [L.] Mill.) and white and Alaska birch (*Betula papyrifera* Marsh. and *B. neoalaskana* Sarg.) are prominent south of Lake Athabasca. On the benches above the flood plains an entirely different forest pattern exists. Here jack and lodgepole pine (*Pinus banksiana* Lamb. and *P. contorta* Dougl.), trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides* Michx.), black spruce (*Picea mariana* [Mill.] B.S.P.) and tamarack (*Larix laricina* [Du Roi] K. Koch) predominate, while white spruce occurs only in minor quantities (Rowe 1972: 45). The soil cover in the section typically consists of deep deposits of glacial tills or more recently deposited lacustrine and alluvial materials overlying Devonian and Cretaceous bedrock. Gray luvisols and eutric brunisols are developed on well-drained sites in the Athabasca area, although immature profiles are more usual in alluvium (Rowe 1972: 45).

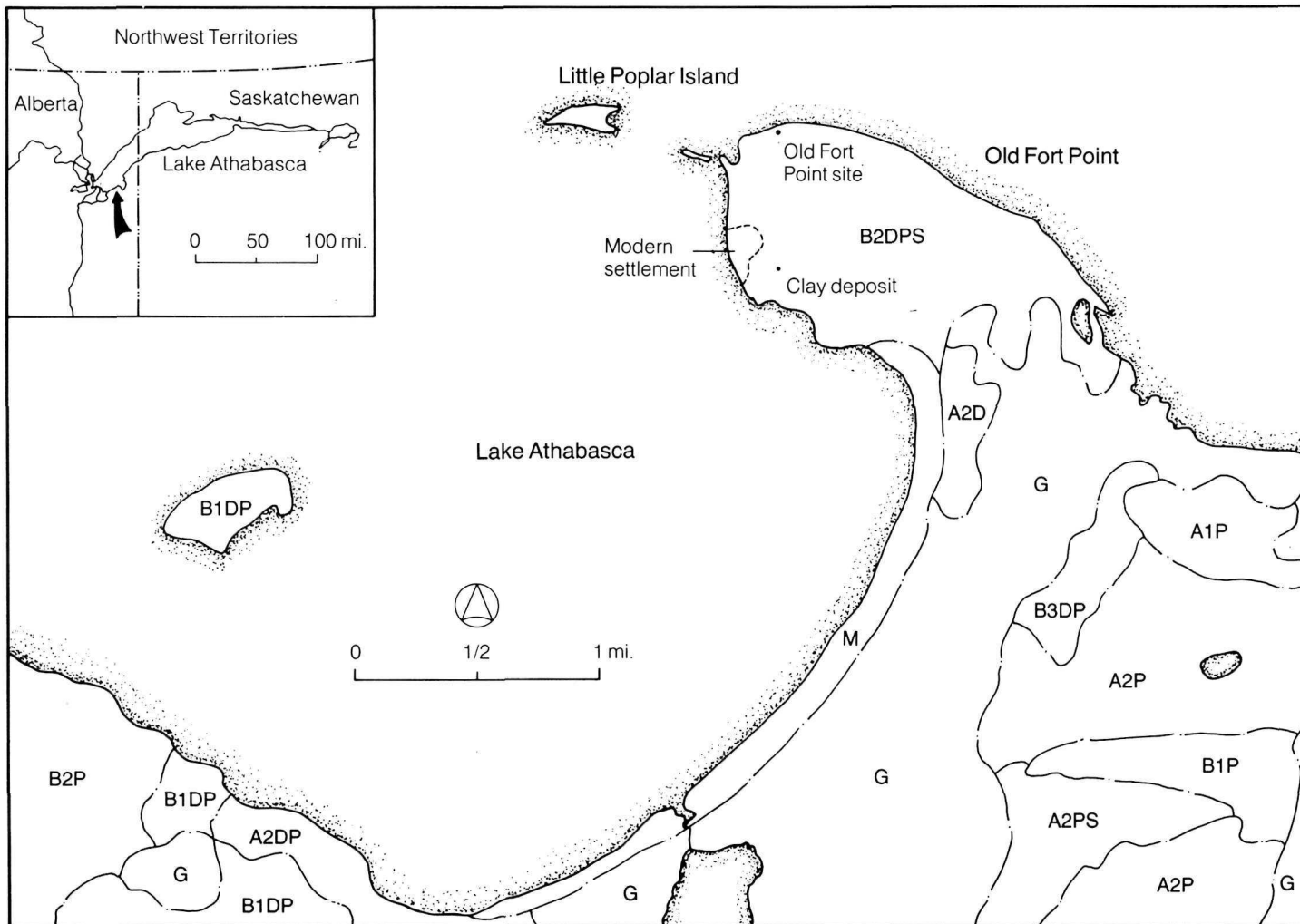
The Athabasca South Section east of Old Fort Bay is characterized by jack pine, black spruce and tamarack. White spruce, trembling aspen and balsam poplar are uncommon except along river valleys and lake shores where there is good growth. The sandy soils are derived from the underlying sandstones (probably late Precambrian) by glacial action. Humo-ferric podzols, gleysols and organic (peat) soils are present (Rowe 1972: 44).

On Old Fort Point itself, the forest cover is of medium density and consists of white spruce, jack pine, trembling aspen, balsam poplar, white birch and alder (*Alnus* sp.). Shrubs are represented by the common juniper (*Juniperus communis* L.), saskatoon-berry (*Amelanchier alnifolia* Nutt.) and choke cherry (*Prunus virginiana* L.). Wild raspberries (*Rubus* sp.) and strawberries (*Fragaria* sp.) occur in scattered patches, and there are several species of flowers, including wild roses (*Rosa* sp.). Grass and moss grow in areas not choked with the omnipresent juniper bush. Willows (*Salix* sp.) and horse tails (*Equisetum* sp.) are common along the beach.

In the vicinity of the site, the dominant growth on lower ground (to the west of the site) is trembling aspen, white birch and juniper. To the east, on higher ground, the dominant types are white spruce and birch with scattered jack pine. The site is located at an elevation where white spruce and jack pine first appear, and was probably chosen for a building location so it would be adjacent to a source of good timber.

1 Map of the Old Fort Point area showing site location and vegetation zones. Forest density: A sparsely stocked; B, medium stocked. Tree height: 1, up to 31 ft.; 2, 31 to 60 ft.; 3, 61 to 80 ft. Vegetation type: D, deciduous trees;

G, treed grassland; M, grass marsh; P, pine; S, white spruce. (Drawing by S. Epps).



The soils are, for the most part, podzols consisting of Pleistocene and post-glacial sediments and are characterized by a distinct, leached, strongly acidic whitish or grayish Ae horizon underlain by a reddish Bf horizon in which accumulate oxides of iron and aluminum (Lindsay et al. 1962: 30, 33; Rowe 1972: 164). The soil cover rests on Precambrian Athabasca Sandstone which forms a part of the Precambrian Shield (Lindsay et al. 1962: 33).

The climate in the Athabasca Region is classified as dry subhumid (Rowe 1972: 155). The average annual rainfall is 7.6 inches while the average annual snowfall is 44 inches. Average rainfall and snowfall are highest in July (1.8 inches) and November (9.1 inches) respectively (Canada. Department of Transport. Meteorological Division 1954: 20–21).

The annual mean temperature in the area is  $-6.7^{\circ}\text{C}$ . January is the coldest month with an average daily mean temperature of  $-23.9^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The warmest month is July with an average daily mean temperature of  $17.2^{\circ}\text{C}$ . From November to April, the average daily mean temperature is below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  (Canada. Department of Transport. Meteorological Division 1954: 15).

The prevailing wind in the vicinity of Old Fort Point is from the north and is frequently quite strong since there is nothing to break its force as it sweeps across the lake. Subsequently, the lake is usually choppy along the south shore and often unnavigable by small boats, swells over five feet in height not being uncommon. The area is also subject to sudden storms which can come up in a matter of minutes. On one occasion during the 1971 field season, the author witnessed the approach of a storm front from the northwest wherein the wind speed changed from perfect calm to an estimated 40 to 50 miles per hour in less than 15 minutes. Similar occurrences were also recounted by several local residents.

### Archaeological Techniques

When the archaeological field party arrived, the Old Fort Point site was marked by eight depressions and three probable fire-place mounds which occupied an area approximately 45 ft. square. The area was overgrown with a dense stand of vegetation and had not been previously disturbed.

After the site had been cleared, three test trenches were dug in what appeared to be strategic areas to recover a sample of artifacts which might shed light on the date and identity of the site as well as to obtain information concerning the orientation and size of the structure or structures involved. When this had been accomplished, the site was divided into horizontal units (Fig. 2) which would facilitate the recording of uncovered features and

the assignment of artifacts to specific sections of the site for interpretative purposes.

Each horizontal unit was subsequently excavated stratigraphically in order to segregate recovered artifacts and structural components to determine if the site had been occupied more than once. Due to the shallowness of the overburden, the digging was performed using hand tools such as trowels, grapefruit knives and brushes from the start so that the recovery of cultural objects, faunal remains and structural features would be as complete as possible. To further facilitate the achievement of this objective, all flooring was removed after being recorded and the areas beneath were excavated to sterile subsoil. In addition, when small objects like beads and lead shot were encountered, the soil in their immediate vicinity was screened through both 1/16-inch and 1/4-inch hardware cloth to ensure the recovery of as many small items as possible. Screening of the fill at other times was not performed since the paucity of small objects during several trial periods when all soil was screened indicated that constant screening was not warranted.

During excavation, all features and stratigraphic layers were recorded as they were uncovered so no information would be lost. To facilitate the comparison of the features at the Old Fort Point site with those described in historical documents and other site reports, all measurements were recorded in feet and tenths of feet.

After the core area of the site (a single, large building) had been excavated, a trench was dug perpendicular to each side of the area in an effort to locate other features (Fig. 2). No evidence of any additional structures or occupation areas was uncovered in any of the trenches. The completion of these trenches marked the end of the project and the site was backfilled to return the area to as natural a state as possible.

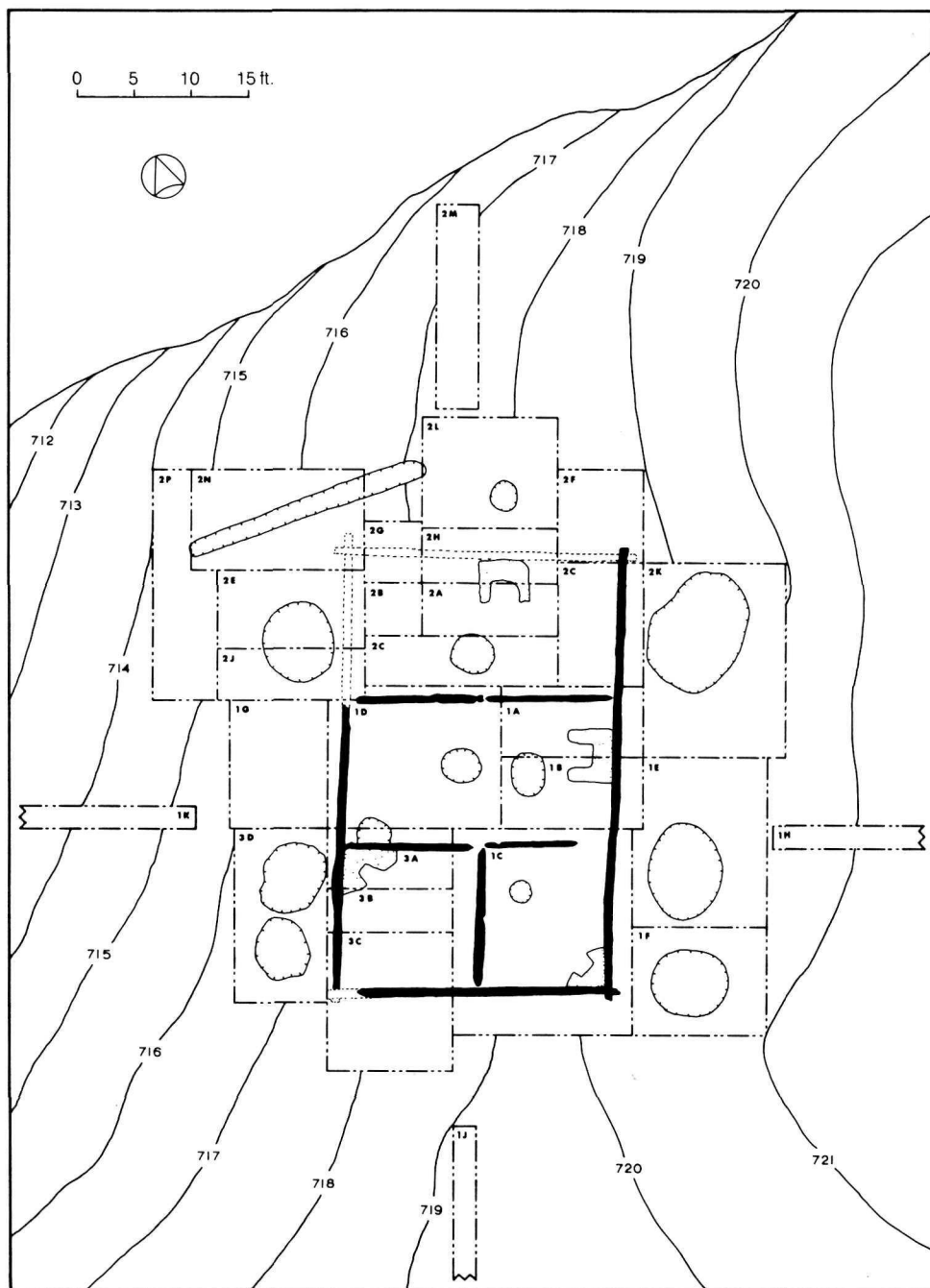
### Stratigraphy

Five major stratigraphic layers and numerous localized zones were encountered at the Old Fort Point site. The major layers were present in all or most of the excavation units; the localized zones were spatially restricted.

#### *Layer 1*

Moss and decaying vegetal material (primarily juniper needles) comprised the uppermost layer which was 0.01 ft. to 0.5 ft. thick (0.14 ft. average). This detritus was deposited after the site fell into ruin and was overgrown with vegetation.

2 Contour map of the Old Fort Point site showing the excavation units. The solid black areas represent the remnants of building walls while the dashed lines indicate where walls once existed. The stippled areas denote fireplaces. ( *Drawing by E. Lee* ).



### **Layer 2**

Directly below layer 1 was a stratum of yellowish red and white sand which contained scattered charcoal, artifacts and lenses of both dark brown sandy clay and reddish brown sandy clay. This material was up to 1.65 ft. thick, averaging 0.48 ft., and originally covered the roof of the solitary building at the site.

### **Layer 3**

Under the sand was a discontinuous layer of dark brown sandy clay which contained small lenses of sand, charcoal flecks, fish remains, wood chips and birch bark. This stratum was up to 0.35 ft. thick, with an average of 0.22 ft., and constituted the material used to chink the roof of the building. This and the previous layer tapered out at a distance which varied from 4.5 ft. to 9.5 ft. to the north, east and south of the structure. To the west, where the ground sloped noticeably and erosion had washed the material downhill, the sand and clay terminated 18 ft. from the building.

### **Layer 4**

The fourth layer was a charcoal deposit up to 0.3 ft. thick (0.07 ft. average) which covered the sterile subsoil in the immediate vicinity of the building, and apparently represents overgrowth burned off prior to the construction of the structure. The charcoal tapered to a distance of 15 ft. to 25 ft. from the building on all sides, suggesting that an area only slightly larger than the structure was thoroughly cleared.

### **Layer 5**

Layer 5 was the undisturbed soil underlying the site, consisting of well-drained, white sand overlying yellowish red sand which rests on fine to coarse gravel. No clay was encountered, indicating that the clay used to chink the building was obtained elsewhere on the peninsula.

The *localized zones* consist of pit fill and fireplace ash, and are described in the 'Description of Features' portion of this report.

## **Description of Features**

The foundation of a wooden building surrounded by seven small to very large pits comprised the site (Fig. 3). The foundation was well preserved and enough features were present to indicate the floor plan of the building, as well as some of the construction techniques employed.

### **The Building**

The structure (Figs. 3, 4) was 39 ft. long (north-south) and 24.7 ft. wide (east-west). It was not rectangular but slightly rhomboidal in outline; although opposite walls were parallel, adjacent walls were not perpendicular in almost all cases, possibly as a result of sloppy or hurried workmanship.

The building contained four rooms, one in the north end, another in the centre, and two in the south end. Each room had a wooden floor and a fireplace. Several, small sub-floor pits were present in all but one room. There were no cellars.

Spruce and jack pine appear to have been used exclusively in the construction of the structure. Of five wood samples submitted to the Eastern Forest Products Laboratory in Ottawa for analysis, three specimens from one interior and two exterior walls were identified as spruce, while two floorboards in the central room of the building were identified as jack pine (E. Perem 1971: pers. com.).

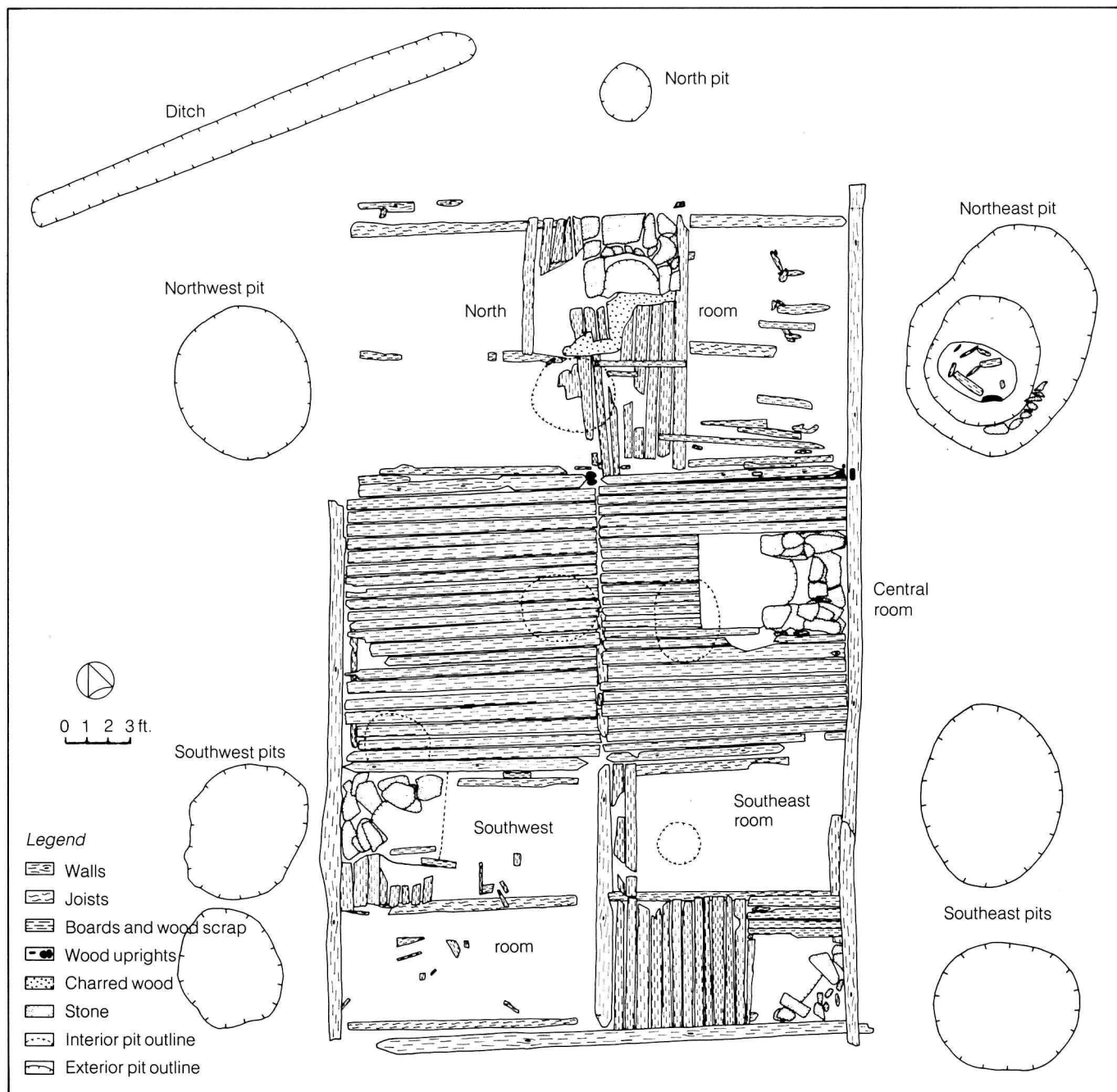
### **General Construction Techniques**

Prior to the construction of the building, the site area was cleared and portions of it were levelled or filled to provide a level footing for the foundation. Levelling was noted at the structure's south-east corner where the land rose noticeably toward the east. Here the bottom of the east foundation log was up to 0.85 ft. below the original ground surface just to the east of it. The levelled area extended about 0.3 ft. to the east of the wall, suggesting that only enough soil was removed to ensure that the southeast room's floor and the adjacent walls would be level.

Filling had occurred in spots along the west wall where the ground began to slope down toward the west. In these areas, sand mixed with charcoal and clay covered the charcoal layer deposited when the site was initially burned off, and the various building components rested on the surface of the fill material.

### **Exterior Walls**

The sills of the building were constructed of flattened logs 0.55 ft. to 0.7 ft. in width which were laid directly on the prepared ground surface. The east and west sills were laid down first and the north and south sill logs overlapped them. Sandy clay was then



4 The Old Fort Point site structure, view looking north.



5 View of the southeast corner of the structure, looking north-northeast. Note the half-lap construction.



6 The rectangular mortise in the eastern segment of the north interior wall which may have accommodated a tenoned door frame component. View looking south.



7 The north room, view looking north-west.



packed against the exterior face of each sill to insulate the foundation.

The sill logs met at the corners in half-lap joints (also called half-notched and simple lap joints). These joints were formed by cutting halfway through each log 1.10 ft. to 1.24 ft. from each end and then splitting off the wood to produce a flat, rectangular surface. The logs were then laid with the flat surface of one log overlapping that of another. The ends of the logs were left untrimmed and projected past the plane of the walls by 0.5 ft. to 0.8 ft. There was no evidence of nails or wooden pins reinforcing the joints.

The superstructure appears to have been erected using a combination of post-on-sill and half-lap log construction. The use of post-on-sill construction is suggested by the presence of a mortice containing a tenon in the upper centre of the east sill adjacent to the north interior partition wall. The 0.2-ft.-wide (east-west) and 0.5-ft.-long (north-south) tenon presumably originally anchored a grooved upright set in the sill. Although no mortices were observed elsewhere, probably because of the decayed nature of most of the sills, it is likely that an upright was located adjacent to the end of each interior wall. The complete lack of evidence for an alternative method of holding the interior wall ends in place indicates that they were probably anchored in grooved uprights set in the sills.

Thus it is fairly likely that two uprights were located in the east and west walls and that one was in the centre of the south wall. Although there is no direct evidence for it, an upright was also probably located in the centre of the north wall where it would have helped support the ridge pole.

As with the sills, the corners of the superstructure were of half-lap construction. This was clearly evident at the exceptionally well-preserved southeast corner of the building (Fig. 5). At this point, a 9-ft.-long remnant of the east wall's first course log overlapped the south sill and projected past its face for a distance of 0.8 ft. Again, no pegs or nails were found reinforcing the joint.

The first course log remnant was slightly flattened. This suggests that all the other horizontal wall components were probably similarly treated. The grooved uprights may have been roughly squared or only flattened on the surfaces which contained the vertical grooves. The presence of clay concentrations along the sills indicates that the walls were chinked with sandy clay to weatherproof the structure.

### *Interior Walls*

The two major interior walls were composed of two aligned sets of flattened logs which were connected by a grooved upright set in the ground in the approximate centre of each wall (Fig. 3). The

logs varied from 0.4 ft. to 0.6 ft. in width, and were crudely tenoned; that is, they had 0.3-ft.- to 0.6-ft.-long, wedge-shaped ends with vertical faces that were flat to slightly concave.

The eastern segment of the north interior wall was 11.2 ft. long. It was represented by a single log that ran along a floorboard which formed the northern edge of the central room's floor. The log's east end was 0.15 ft. from the east sill of the building, and was held in place by a small wooden upright on either side of the log's wedge-shaped tip. One of these was located 0.06 ft. to the north of the tip and was approximately 0.12 ft. square. The other, 0.14 ft. to the south of the tip, was round and had a maximum diameter of 0.17 ft. A wooden wedge 0.42 ft. long and 0.11 ft. wide occupied the space between the southern upright and the log's wedge-shaped end, apparently to ensure a tight fit between the log and the uprights.

A rectangular mortice 0.45 ft. long, 0.15 ft. wide and 0.25 ft. deep was situated in the upper centre of the aforementioned log, 3.76 ft. from its east end (Fig. 6). The function of the mortice is not certain. However, it may have accommodated a tenoned door frame component.

The west end of the wall's eastern segment was situated 0.2 ft. from a grooved upright. Although badly deteriorated, the upright appeared to consist of a round, 0.6-ft.-diameter log set vertically in the ground. A vertical, squared groove in line with the wall segments was situated on either side of the upright. The grooves were from 0.15 ft. to 0.2 ft. wide and up to 0.15 ft. deep.

The western segment of the north interior wall was represented by a single, incomplete log. The section was 11.15 ft. long, as found, but was probably 11.3 ft. long originally – the length of its counterpart in the south interior wall. The crudely tenoned eastern end of the log was in place in the adjacent groove in the central upright. The log's opposite end was missing due to erosion but was probably also crudely tenoned and held in place by two uprights, as was the interior wall's east end.

The southern interior wall was practically the same as its northern counterpart, and both its segments were the same length as the corresponding ones in the northern wall. Although there was no evidence of small uprights holding in place the tenoned ends of the logs adjacent to the sills, it seems likely that they were used here as well since, again, there was no evidence for an alternative means of anchoring the logs.

The large, grooved upright at the juncture of the two wall segments was also missing, although the presence of a 0.8-ft. gap between the central ends of the wall segments suggests that an upright had originally been present in this area.



The short wall separating the southeast room from the southwest room was represented by a single broad log roughly perpendicular to the adjacent walls. The north end of the log terminated at the central gap in the southern interior wall. The log's northwest corner appears to have been cut off so that there would be ample room for the upright post which presumably existed in the aforementioned gap. The south end of the log had the usual wedge-shaped end and was 0.2 ft. from the south sill of the building. This end may have been held in place by two small uprights.

All the horizontal interior wall components described above served as footings for the upper portions of the walls. The logs which formed the remainder of the walls were probably slightly flattened and had tenoned ends that fitted in the vertical grooves of the uprights situated at either end of each wall segment.

Although no clay concentrations were found along the interior wall remnants, it is probable that the walls were "plastered" with mud to insulate them.

### *The Roof*

While no wooden components of the roof were uncovered, enough information to describe the probable method of construction is provided by two of the major stratigraphic layers (layers 2 and 3) covering the remains of the building and by historical documentation concerning the construction of houses in the Athabasca and Mackenzie regions.

The roof was probably low gabled and constructed of either "roofing sticks" (small round logs) or "slabs" (split logs) laid perpendicular to the long axis of the building, from the ridge pole to the eaves (Back 1836: 205; Barbeau 1945: 11). To render it tolerably waterproof, the roof was chinked with sandy clay (possibly mixed with grass) and then covered with a thin layer of mud (layer 3 material) upon which was placed a layer of sand (layer 2 material) estimated to have been approximately 0.45 ft. thick. Sheets of spruce bark held in place by horizontal poles probably covered the sand.

### *North Room*

This room (Fig. 7) occupied the northern third of the building. It was 23.3 ft. long (the interior width of the building) and 12 ft. wide. The room contained a well-preserved fireplace, remnants of a wood floor, and a sub-floor pit. Although the north and west walls of the room were fragmentary, enough remained of both to establish their location.

### *Fireplace*

The fireplace in the north room (Fig. 8) was located against the north wall of the building, slightly east of centre. It was constructed of relatively flat quartzite and rhyolite porphyry beach cobbles "cemented" together with dark brown sandy clay mixed with grass. The rocks were laid horizontally except at the base of the back where several flat stones were set on edge.

The fireplace was 4 ft. square and stood, as found, to a maximum height of 2.2 ft. The back of the fireplace was 2 ft. thick. The cheeks of the firebox were perpendicular to the back and parallel to each other. They were 2 ft. long and 1.0 ft. thick. Most of the interior of the 2-ft.-square firebox was faced with a layer of clay up to 0.35 ft. thick. The clay facing covered the back, curved around the corners, and tapered out on the cheeks 0.9 ft. to 1.6 ft. from the back of the firebox.

At the base of the firebox was a clay hearth whose surface sloped downward slightly toward the back. Several small, flat stones were embedded in the hearth clay, apparently to increase its solidity.

The hearth did not have an apron. Instead, the floorboards were flush with the hearth and were, therefore, charred. A 0.4-ft.-thick layer of pale brown ash containing some charcoal and tiny bone fragments covered the hearth and the adjacent floorboards.

A beam flanked either side of the fireplace and originally extended across the room to the south wall. The beams were from 0.4 ft. to 0.5 ft. wide and up to 0.12 ft. thick. They apparently reinforced the base of the fireplace.

### *Floor*

Although little remained of the floor in the north room, remnants indicated that the entire room was floored, the floorboards running north-south. The floorboards were supported by three joists or sleepers, each of which was composed of several segments.

A two-segment joist ran along the north wall of the building, with one segment on either side of the fireplace. The eastern segment was 7.2 ft. long, 0.45 ft. to 0.55 ft. wide and 0.25 ft. thick; the western section was about 10.1 ft. long, 0.4 ft. to 0.75 ft. wide and up to 0.18 ft. thick. Although most of the north wall was missing, fragments indicated that the joist sections were located from 0.28 ft. to 0.5 ft. from the building's north sill log.

The second joist ran along the centre of the room and was apparently composed of three segments. Although all segments were fragmentary, it could be determined that one segment occupied the space between the two beams that flanked the fireplace, while the other two extended from the flanking beams to

8 View of the centre of the north room, looking north-northeast. The clay facing which originally covered the interior of the firebox has been removed to show the stone pattern. A sub-floor pit, probably for storage, is visible in the lower left hand corner.



9 The central room, view looking west-northwest. Note the intact floor and the fireplace against the approximate centre of the room's east wall.



10 The central room, view looking east-southeast. The left half of the packed clay apron in front of the fireplace was removed so information concerning its construction could be obtained.



11 View of the fireplace in the central room, looking north-northwest. Note the raised clay apron to the left of the fireplace.



the east and west sills respectively. The segments were 0.45 ft. to 0.55 ft. wide and up to 0.1 ft. thick.

The third joist was situated 0.11 ft. to 0.3 ft. from the room's south wall. This joist was also composed of three segments which occupied the same respective loci as those of the central joist. The segments were 0.3 ft. to 0.33 ft. wide and up to 0.3 ft. thick.

Only two small sections of flooring remained in the north room; one in the approximate centre of the room and another adjacent to the west side of the fireplace (Figs. 3, 8). The boards comprising these sections were up to 0.11 ft. thick and from 0.34 ft. to 0.58 ft. wide, with an average width of 0.46 ft. None of the boards was nailed or pegged to the joists and apparently just rested on them.

The floorboards in the centre of the room covered an area about 4.2 ft. wide and extended from the fireplace to the south wall. The northern ends of the boards were not supported by a joist, but were apparently embedded in the base of the fireplace.

The flooring to the west of the fireplace was composed of four floorboards, one of which was complete. The boards overlapped the north joist and were probably flush with the inner face of the north wall. The complete board was 6.3 ft. long and extended from the north joist to the central joist, lapping the latter for about 0.2 ft.

Thus it appears that five sets of boards formed the floor of the north room; one set of boards about 8 ft. long in the approximate centre of the room, and two sets of boards in either end. The boards in the north half of each end of the room were 6.3 ft. long, while those in the south half were about 5.6 ft. long.

Numerous fragments of logs and boards were scattered about the east end of the room. The majority of these were perpendicular to the floorboards and probably represent collapsed wall and roof components.

#### *Sub-floor Pit*

A small, circular pit with curved sides and a relatively flat bottom was uncovered below the floor of the north room, about 3 ft. southwest of the fireplace. The pit had a maximum diameter of 3.9 ft. and was about 2 ft. deep. It was lined with wood chips and what appeared to be birch bark set in sandy clay.

The pit was partially filled with dark brown sandy clay which contained lenses of white and yellowish red sand, an abundance of fish remains and 37 artifacts, primarily beads. This fill was overlain by white to yellowish red sand. Most of this material appears to have washed into the pit after the collapse of the building.

The function of the pit is uncertain. However, the presence of artifacts in the bottom of the pit suggests that it may have been used for storage.

#### *Central Room*

This 12.3-ft.-wide and 23.3-ft.-long room (Figs. 9 and 10) occupied the central third of the building. The room contained a well-preserved fireplace, an intact wooden floor, and three sub-floor pits.

#### *Fireplace*

The fireplace (Fig. 11) was situated against the east wall of the room, 2.5 ft. from the north wall and 5 ft. from the south wall. It was 4 ft. deep (east-west), 4.5 ft. wide (north-south), and stood to an existing height of 1.75 ft.

Fireplace construction was similar to that in the north room, with the following exceptions: the firebox was 2.3 ft. wide, the cheeks were 1.0 ft. to 1.2 ft. thick, and a packed clay apron fronted the entire fireplace. The latter feature was 3 ft. long (east-west) and up to 0.6 ft. thick. Its sides were roughly perpendicular to the upper surface which was 0.3 ft. above the adjacent floorboards. The apron overlapped the floorboards for about 0.1 ft., suggesting that the apron was constructed after the floor had been laid.

The hearth of the fireplace contained a 1.4-ft.-thick layer of brown ash mixed with scattered charcoal, burned clay and several pieces of burned bone (Fig. 12).

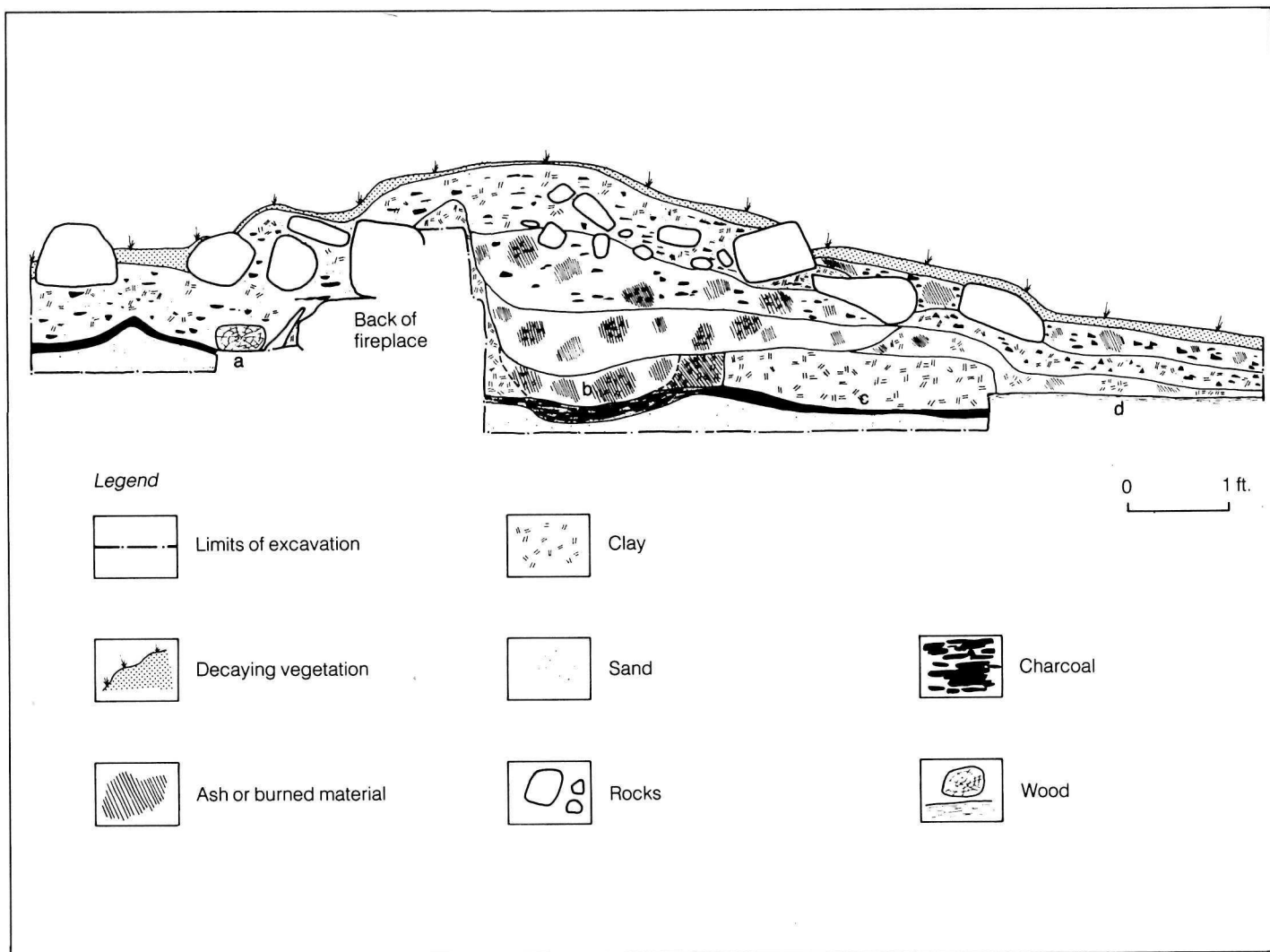
#### *Floor*

Three joists (one along the east wall, one in the centre of the room and one along the west wall) supported the floor. The joist in the east end of the room consisted of two sections, one on either side of the fireplace. The sections were parallel to and 0.23 ft. from the east wall. Both segments were very fragmentary; the most intact section was 0.33 ft. wide and only 0.01 ft. thick.

The central joist, situated 11.1 ft. from the east wall and 11.8 ft. from the west wall, extended from the grooved upright in the centre of the north interior wall to the presumed location of the upright in the south interior wall. The joist consisted of a split log 0.42 ft. wide and 0.13 ft. thick with its flat face uppermost.

The west joist was located about 0.3 ft. from the adjacent wall, and also appeared to be a split log laid on its curved side. The joist had a maximum width of 0.36 ft. and a thickness of about 0.12 ft.

12 Profile of the south side of archaeological unit IA (looking south) showing a cross-section view of the fireplace complex in the central complex in the central room. *a*, east wall sill log; *b*, hearth; *c*, fireplace apron; *d*, floorboards. (Drawing by S. Epps.)



The floor in the eastern half of the room was constructed of boards while that in the western half was composed of planks. Of the 23 floorboards in the eastern section, five boards were to the north of the fireplace, ten to the south of it, and eight to the west. These were 0.35 ft. to 0.65 ft. wide with an average width of 0.43 ft., and up to 0.05 ft. thick. The boards on either side of the fireplace were 11.4 ft. long and extended from the east wall to the central joist. Those in front of the clay apron were 4.65 ft. long and stretched from the central joist to just under the hearth.

Since no evidence was found for a joist along the front of the hearth, it appears that the eastern ends of the short boards rested directly on the ground and were held in place by the hearth.

The 21 planks in the western half of the room extended from the central joist to the west wall. The planks were 11.8 ft. long, 0.4 ft. to 0.65 ft. wide (with an average of 0.5 ft.) and up to 0.35 ft. thick. The majority of the planks consisted of split logs with flat upper surfaces and curved bottoms which still retained the bark. The undersides of the ends of the planks appeared to have been flattened to ensure the solid seating of the planks on the joists.

As was the case with the floor in the north room, no evidence was found for nails or pegs securing the boards and planks to the joists.

#### *Sub-floor Pits*

One pit was located in the east end of the room, adjacent to and partially under the southwest corner of the clay apron fronting the fireplace. The pit was oval in outline and measured 3.75 ft. (north-south) by 3 ft. (east-west). It had a maximum depth of 1.1 ft. The pit had vertical sides and a flat bottom. The sides were lined with a mixture of grass and clay. The bottom was composed of consolidated, possibly baked, sand.

The pit had been purposely filled with dark brown clay containing lenses of white and dark reddish brown clayey sand, scattered wood fragments and charcoal. This material was flush with the top of the pit, and the fireplace apron was built over it. As the fill settled, the floorboards and the corner of the clay apron situated over it sank into the depression that was created.

Another pit was situated adjacent to the west edge of the central joist, just slightly to the north of the room's centre. This pit was circular, with a diameter of 3.2 ft. and a depth of 1.0 ft. It had vertical walls and a relatively flat bottom. The sand forming the floor of the pit was hard, as if baked by fire or hot coals. The sides were lined with a grass/clay mixture.

Pit fill consisted of dark brown clay, charcoal stained sand, scattered charcoal, burned clay and fire-cracked rock. That this pit had also been purposely filled is indicated by the presence of the fire-cracked rocks which could not have fallen into that pit because of the presence of the floor.

The third pit was in the extreme southwest corner of the room, with a portion of it extending under the south interior wall for about 0.7 ft. This pit was roughly circular with a diameter of about 3 ft. and a depth of 0.4 ft. The sides sloped gradually toward the slightly curved bottom and were lined with wood chips set in clay. Soft white sand formed the floor of the pit. Fill consisted of dark brown clay containing lenses of white sand, charcoal and scattered wood fragments. This pit had been intentionally filled so the south wall of the room could be constructed over it.

The three sub-floor pits were dug into sterile soil through the charcoal layer which was formed when the site was initially burned off. However, all of the pits were intentionally filled before the floor of the central room was laid. Since the pits are all shallow and two of them have what appear to be baked bottoms, it is possible that they served as fire pits which either warmed the workers or produced clouds of smoke that repelled mosquitoes and flies during the initial phases of building construction.

#### *Southwest Room*

The room occupying the southwest corner of the building (Fig. 13) was 22.2 ft. long (north-south) and about 11.6 ft. wide (east-west). It contained a poorly preserved fireplace and a very fragmentary wooden floor. No sub-floor pits were encountered.

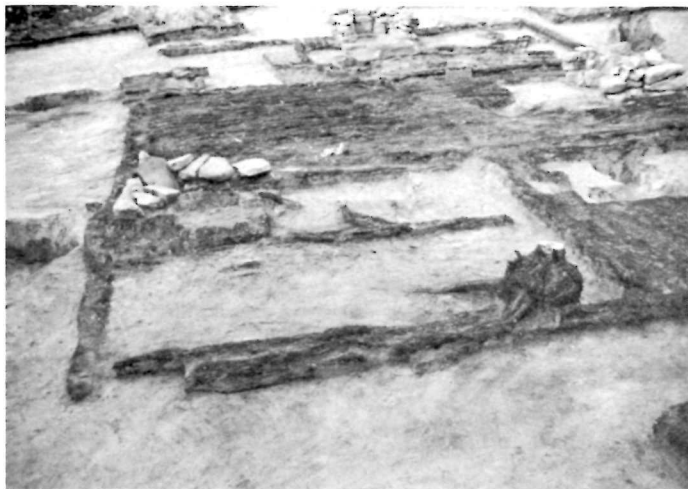
#### *Fireplace*

The fireplace was situated in the northwest corner of the room and had a triangular outline (Fig. 14). The west side was 3.9 ft. long, the north side was 4.7 ft. long, and the front was approximately 6 ft. across. The existing height of the structure was 1.3 ft.

The back of the fireplace was composed of a large rock set vertically in the extreme corner of the room. Another flat, vertical rock was situated in front of it and formed the back of the firebox. The cheeks were narrow and only one stone thick at their juncture with the back. However, the cheeks expanded toward their ends, achieving a maximum width of 2 ft. The ends were relatively straight and practically perpendicular to the sides of the firebox.

The firebox was slightly trapezoidal in outline and faced the southeast corner of the room. It was 1.2 ft. wide at the back, 1.75 ft. wide at the front and approximately 2 ft. deep.

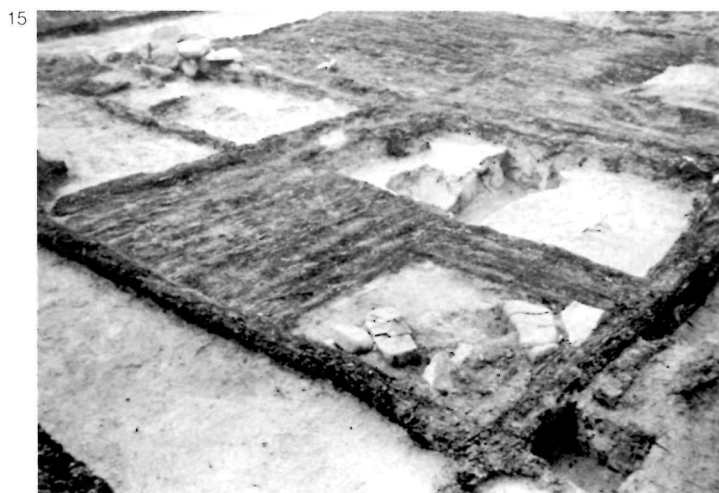
13 The southwest room, view looking north-northeast. Although most of the floorboards are missing, the three east-west joists which supported them are still visible. Note the triangular fireplace in the northwest corner of the room.



14 The triangular fireplace in the northwest corner of the southwest room, looking north-northwest. A portion of the hearth has been removed to reveal construction techniques.



15 The southeast room, looking north-northwest. Although the floor in the south half of the room was intact, that in the north half was practically non-existent. Note the fireplace remnant in the southeast corner of the room.



16 View of the remains of the triangular fireplace in the southeast room, looking south-southeast. The clay apron fronting the fireplace was removed during excavation, but was originally level with the surface of the hearth in the firebox.



Two clay hearths, one below the other, occupied the firebox. The earliest hearth rested on the original ground surface and was about 0.32 ft. thick. A very thin layer of charcoal covered most of its surface. Directly above the charcoal was a layer of sterile sand and clay up to 0.3 ft. thick which also extended out into the room for approximately 8 ft. This material had apparently been used to fill and level a slight depression in the north half of the room before the floor was laid. The most recent hearth rested on top of the fill material and was 0.3 ft. to 0.4 ft. thick; its upper surface was about 0.8 ft. above the base of the fireplace.

The above configuration suggests that the initial hearth was a temporary one in use – possibly to warm the workers – after the fireplace had been constructed but before a level footing for the floor had been prepared. The permanent, upper hearth was installed after levelling had taken place.

A triangular, packed clay apron fronted the entire fireplace. The two sides facing the room were about 4 ft. long and were perpendicular to each other. Hence the entire fireplace complex was roughly square in outline.

A thin layer of brown ash containing numerous fish vertebrae occupied the most recent hearth and spilled out onto the apron. Although only the extreme basal portion of the fireplace remained, a layer of burned clay above the ash suggested that the interior of the firebox had been faced with clay.

### *Floor*

Although the floor in the southwest room was very fragmentary, enough remained to indicate that the floorboards ran north-south and were supported by three parallel joists. One 0.38-ft.-wide and 0.07-ft.-thick joist paralleled the room's north wall and was about 0.4 ft. from it. Although incomplete, the joist apparently extended from the fireplace apron to the east wall. The second joist extended across the centre of the room; it was 0.5 ft. wide and about 0.15 ft. thick. The third joist was approximately 0.4 ft. from the south wall. This joist was about 0.36 ft. wide and 0.15 ft. thick, and consisted of a split log with the flat face resting on the ground and the curved section, with the bark attached, uppermost. The other two joists may also have consisted of split logs.

The only existing section of flooring consisted of eight fragmentary boards in the area between the central joist and the fireplace. They were up to 2.4 ft. long, 0.35 ft. to 0.65 ft. wide and approximately 0.2 ft. thick.

Three of the boards were relatively intact and extended under the south edge of the fireplace apron to within 0.1 ft. of the fireplace. Since no evidence for a joist was found along the south edge of the apron, it seems probable that the north ends of all the

boards in this area rested directly on the ground and were anchored in the apron. Their south ends overlapped the central joist.

Although no other floorboards existed in the room, the presence of the three joists implies that three sets of boards probably comprised the floor: one set of about 2.5-ft.-long boards in the area between the fireplace and the central joist; another set of boards approximately 6.1 ft. long to the east of the fireplace, and a third set of boards about 6.1 ft. long in the south half of the room.

### *Southeast Room*

The room situated in the building's southeast corner (Fig. 15) was 12.4 ft. long (north-south) and 11.1 ft. wide (east-west). It contained a poorly preserved fireplace, a wooden floor and one sub-floor pit.

### *Fireplace*

This feature (Fig. 16) occupied the extreme southeast corner of the room and was very similar to the one in the southwest room.

The back of the fireplace was composed of rocks and pieces of wood set in clay which abutted the adjacent walls of the building. The cheeks were triangular in outline and composed of horizontally oriented stones cemented together with clay. The ends of the cheeks were relatively straight and from 1.4 ft. to 1.8 ft. wide. They were at an angle of 60 to 70 degrees to the adjacent walls of the building. The sides of the fireplace were approximately 3.5 ft. long.

The firebox faced the northwest corner of the room and was slightly trapezoidal in outline; it was 1.76 ft. wide at the front and about 1.5 ft. wide at the back. The firebox contained a burned clay hearth which was level and smooth for a distance of approximately 1.0 ft. in from the mouth. It then began to slope upward toward the back. Since only the base of the fireplace remained, the exact depth of the firebox could not be determined; however, the remains suggest that it was probably not more than 1.5 ft. deep.

A triangular, packed clay apron fronted the fireplace. The two sides facing the room were about 4 ft. long. Although the apron was removed during excavation because it could not be distinguished from collapsed fireplace clay, the elevation of the hearth in the firebox indicated that the top of the apron had been originally at least 0.25 ft. above the adjacent floorboards.

A 0.35-ft.-thick layer of yellowish brown ash which contained fire-cracked stone, pieces of burned clay, charcoal and several pieces of melted pane glass was in the firebox.

### *Floor*

The floor was very well preserved in the southern half of the room but was almost non-existent in the northern section, possibly as a result of the very thin layer of soil covering this portion of the room. The floor was constructed of three sets of boards that ran in two different directions, and as a result, the floor was supported by five joists instead of just three.

Three of the joists were major ones and occupied the same relative positions as those in the southwest room. They were 0.37 ft. to 0.5 ft. wide and up to 0.13 ft. thick. The two minor joists ran north-south and did not span the entire room. The first of these extended from the south joist to the central one and flanked the west side of the fireplace complex. It appeared to have been about 0.35 ft. wide. The other joist ran along the east wall from the central joist to the fireplace. It was 0.42 ft. wide and 0.2 ft. thick.

The floor in the south half of the room was composed of two sets of floorboards. The section to the west of the fireplace was constructed of 13 boards. Twelve of these extended from the south wall to the central joist. They were approximately 6.1 ft. long, 0.32 ft. to 0.53 ft. wide (0.4 ft. average) and up to 0.2 ft. thick. The remaining board flanked the west side of the fireplace apron and ran along the short north-south joist which was located there. This board was 3.9 ft. long, 0.35 ft. wide and 0.05 ft. thick.

Directly to the north of the fireplace were four short boards that ran east-west and were supported by the two minor joists (Fig. 3). The boards stretched from the east wall to the second board in the section of flooring to the west of the fireplace. Because of this, the short north-south board bordering the west side of the fireplace apron abutted the board that flanked the apron's north side. The north side of the northernmost board overlapped the central joist, ending at its centre. The boards were 4.4 ft. long, 0.4 ft. to 0.5 ft. wide and 0.04 ft. thick.

Although most of the floorboards in the north half of the room were missing, those that remained indicated that the floor in this area had been composed of boards that extended from the north wall to the central joist and were the same size as their counterparts in the south half of the room.

### *Sub-floor Pit*

A small, circular pit with curved sides and a rounded bottom was uncovered in the northwest quadrant of the room, 2.3 ft. from the west wall and about 3 ft. from the north wall. The pit was 2 ft. in diameter and 1.5 ft. deep. It appeared to have been lined with clay containing sparse wood chips.

A layer of charcoal and partially burned wood about 0.15 ft. thick was in the bottom of the pit. Above this was a mottled mix-

ture of dark brown clay, yellowish red and white sand, wood chips, fire-cracked rock and charcoal. The charcoal layer constitutes the original fill, while the material above it was probably deposited after the building collapsed; thus it is probable that the pit served as a fire pit during the initial phases of building construction.

### **Associated Features**

Seven small to very large pits were situated around the building; one to the north, three to the east and three to the west. In addition, a narrow ditch was uncovered near the northwest corner of the building. A natural ramp which apparently provided the site's inhabitants with easy access to the beach was located to the west of the site.

### *North Pit*

This feature was situated 4.4 ft. to the rear of the north room fireplace. It was slightly oval in outline with a maximum diameter of 2.8 ft. and a depth of 1.8 ft. The walls were almost vertical; the bottom was slightly curved. The pit was lined with a thick (up to 0.13 ft.) layer of small wood chips and bark mixed with clay.

The pit contained three different types of fill. At the bottom was a 0.12-ft.-thick layer of dark yellowish brown ash which contained an abundance of burned clay. Above this was dark brown sandy clay which contained large lenses of ash just above its juncture with the bottom-most layer. These lenses indicated that the ash layer had been at least 0.4 ft. thick prior to the deposition of the sandy clay which had mixed with it. Adjacent to the clay in the eastern portion of the pit was sterile grayish white sand. Both the sand and clay contained collapsed fireplace stones and had been deposited after the pit was no longer in use. The ash and burned clay constitute the original fill. On this basis, the pit is identified as an ash receptacle.

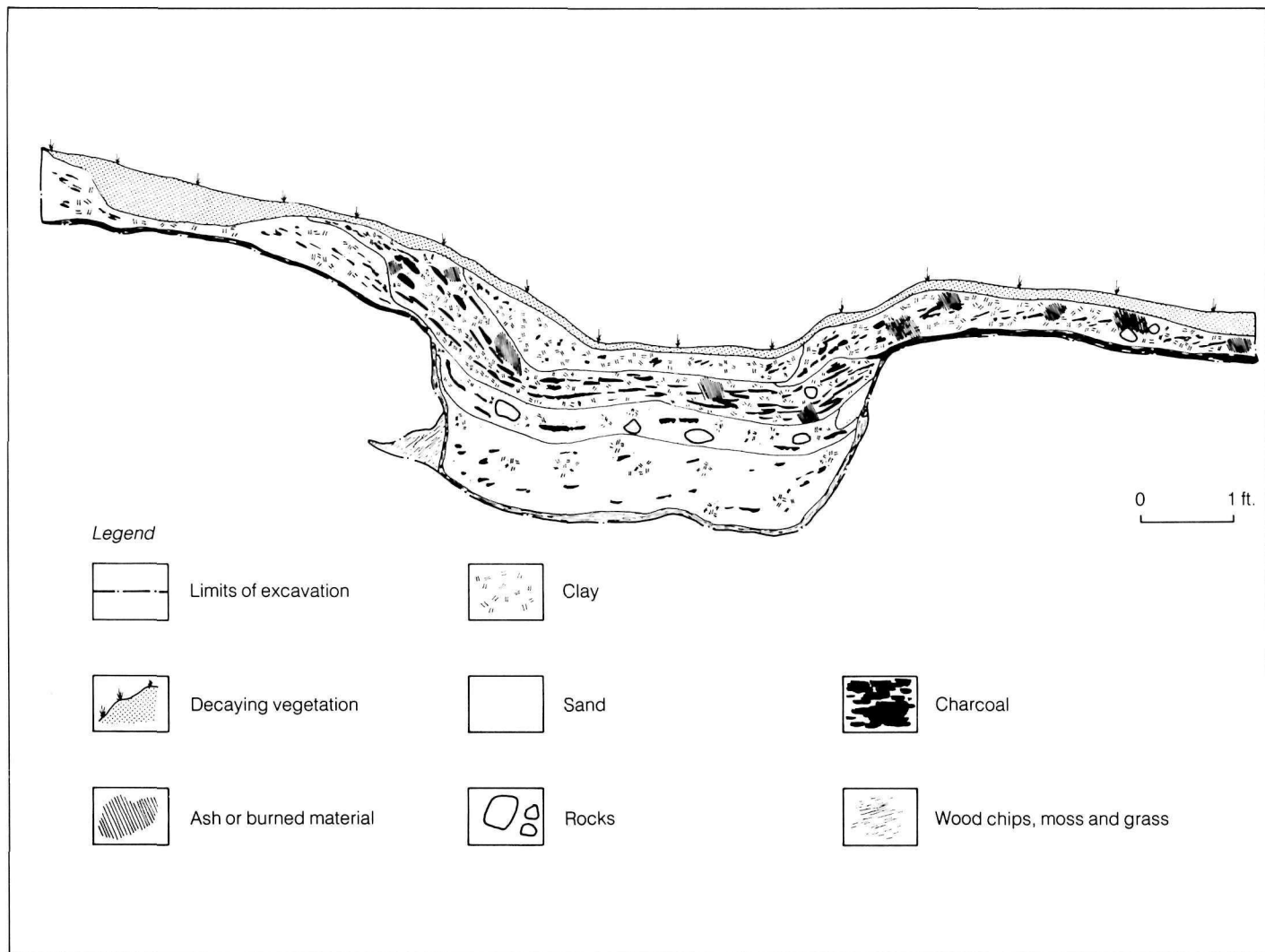
### *Northwest Pit*

A large circular pit about 4.8 ft. in diameter and 2.7 ft. deep was located approximately 1.9 ft. to the west of the building, adjacent to the southwest corner of the north room. The pit had relatively straight sides that converged slightly toward a flat bottom.

The upper portion of the pit was lined with wood chips and bark set in sandy clay to a point about 1.2 ft. above the bottom. Below this the sides were covered with fairly large, but thin, pieces of wood. This lining was about 0.05 ft. thick. The bottom was covered with a layer up to 0.1 ft. thick of large wood chips and wads of grass and moss.



17 Profile of the south side of archaeological unit 2E (looking south) showing a cross-section of the northwest pit. (Drawing by S. Epps).



The pit contained a mottled fill composed primarily of dark brown clay, sandy clay, grayish sand and charcoal (Fig. 17). Fire-cracked rock, brown ash, wood chips, faunal remains and artifacts were also present in various proportions in all but the lower 0.8 ft. of the deposit. On the basis of the relative proportions of the components, the fill could be segregated into four fairly distinct layers, all of which had been deposited by erosion after the site had been abandoned. This was indicated by the fact that the two uppermost layers were extensions of the same material outside the pit and by the distinct wash slopes of the two bottom layers at the sides of the pit (Fig. 17).

Since the pit was carefully lined and the bottom-most 0.8 ft. of the fill was devoid of artifacts, bones and ashes, it can be assumed that the pit had not functioned as a trash or ash pit but was probably a storage pit, most likely for food.

#### *Southwest Pits*

Two pits were situated just to the west of the southwest room. One of them was located in the area adjacent to the north half of the room, 0.45 ft. from the building's bulged west wall (the pit was approximately twice as far from the wall before the bulge was formed by the gradual down-slope movement of the adjacent fireplace). The pit had an irregular, ovate outline, vertical sides and a slightly concave bottom. It was 6.5 ft. long, 5.3 ft. wide and 1.9 ft. deep.

The second pit was 0.45 ft. to the south of the other and 2.2 ft. west of the building. It had an irregular, ovate outline; the sides sloped in gradually toward a curved bottom. The pit was 5.4 ft. long, 4.8 ft. wide and 1.3 ft. deep.

The pits were unlined and filled with material (sandy clay, sand, fireplace stones, etc.) that had washed and fallen into them after the site was abandoned. Both are identified as borrow pits which supplied some of the sand used in the construction of the building's roof.

#### *Southeast Pits*

There were two other borrow pits on the other side of the building (Fig. 18). Both were oval in outline with sides that sloped in toward concave bottoms. One of the pits, located 3.5 ft. to the east of the building's southeast corner, was 6.7 ft. long, 5.9 ft. wide and 2.4 ft. deep. The other pit, 8.5 ft. long, 6.5 ft. wide and 3.6 ft. deep, was 2.5 ft. north of the previous pit and 3 ft. from the building.

Both pits contained a sterile, mottled fill composed of white, gray and yellowish red sand mixed with charcoal flecks. This fill material had been deposited by erosion and was 1.2 ft. deep in the south pit and 2.2 ft. deep in the north pit.

#### *Northeast Pit*

The largest exterior pit was situated 2.1 ft. to the east of the north room, and consisted of one pit within another. The primary pit was oval in outline and had sides that sloped in gradually toward a relatively flat bottom. It was approximately 10.8 ft. long and 8 ft. wide, with a maximum depth of 2.3 ft.

A secondary pit was located in the southern half of the primary pit. It had a slightly ovate mouth that was 5.2 ft. wide and 5.8 ft. long. Several flat stones lined the southeast edge. The sides sloped sharply toward the bottom in the southern half of the pit and gradually in the northern half. The bottom was flat and 3.7 ft. long by 2.5 ft. wide. It was 1.4 ft. below the floor of the primary pit and about 3.5 ft. below the original ground surface.

Nine pieces of wood (up to 1.5 ft. long, 0.35 ft. wide and 0.27 ft. thick) were uncovered on the bottom of the secondary pit. These scraps may be the remains of a small chamber that, covered and enclosed by sand on all but its north side, could have served as a small cold cellar. Though it is possible that the wood was thrown or fell into the pit, the lack of similar fragments in the primary pit suggests that this was not the case. Furthermore, the stones along a portion of the secondary pit's upper edge, possibly placed there to deter erosion, indicate that this feature is more than just a borrow pit.

The pits contained up to 2.2 ft. of mottled grayish white and yellowish red sand containing infrequent, minute pieces of charcoal and dark brown clay. This material was essentially sterile, yielding only one piece of melted glass.

#### *Ditch*

A shallow ditch or trench was located near the northwest corner of the building. It began 6 ft. to the northwest of the north pit and extended to the west in a straight line for about 22 ft. where it faded out; at the nearest point it was within 5 ft. of the structure. The ditch was 1.3 ft. to 1.7 ft. wide and 0.3 ft. to 0.5 ft. deep. Its sides were slightly curved; the bottom ranged from concave to relatively flat.

That the ditch was an intentional feature and not a natural depression is evidenced by the fact that it was dug through the charcoal layer which was deposited when the site was initially burned off. Although its function is not certain, it is possible that the ditch represents a section of a fence or picket line, the re-

18 The southeast borrow pits, view looking southwest. The trench bisecting the pits was dug to obtain a profile of the two features.

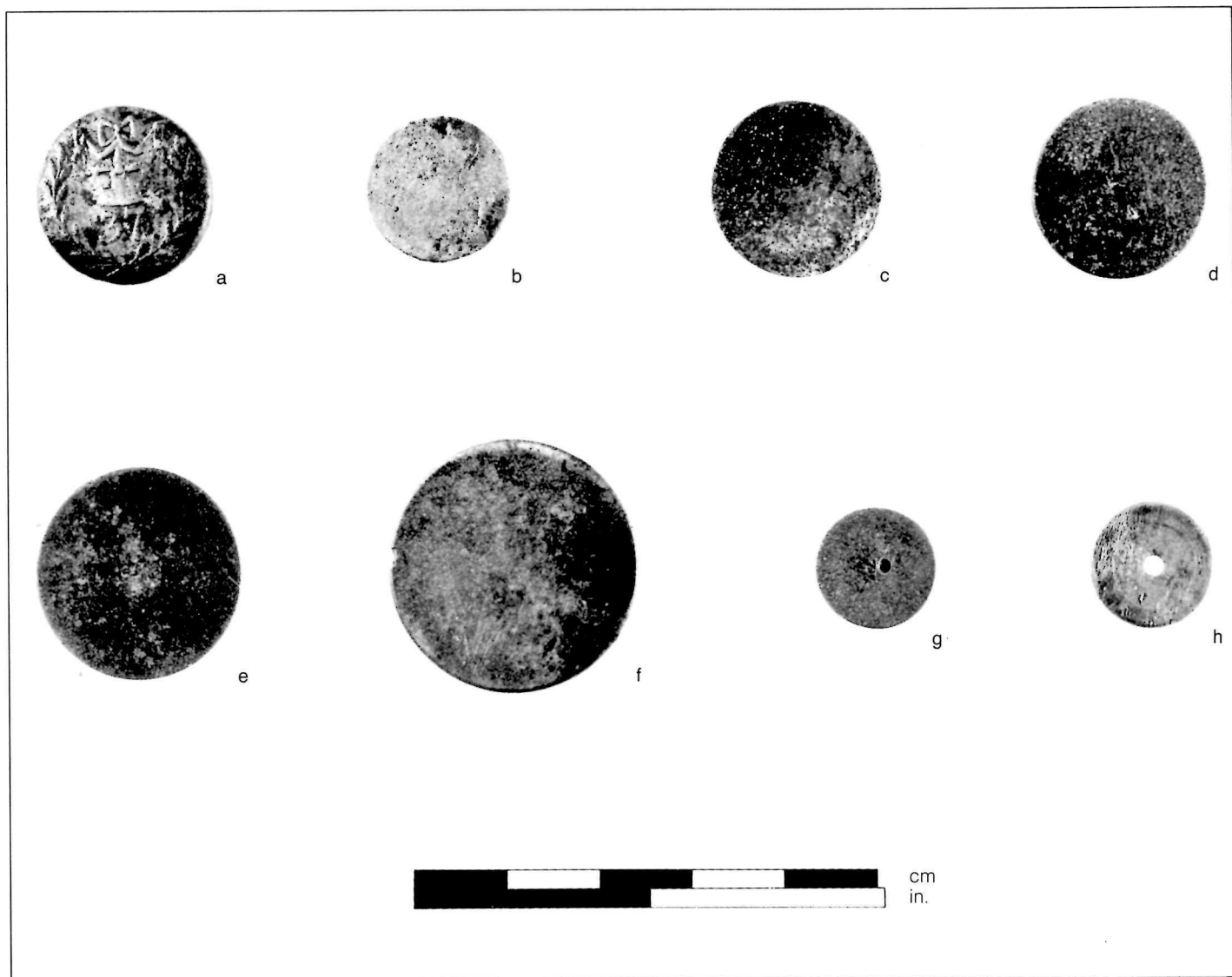
mainder of which has either eroded away or otherwise become obliterated.

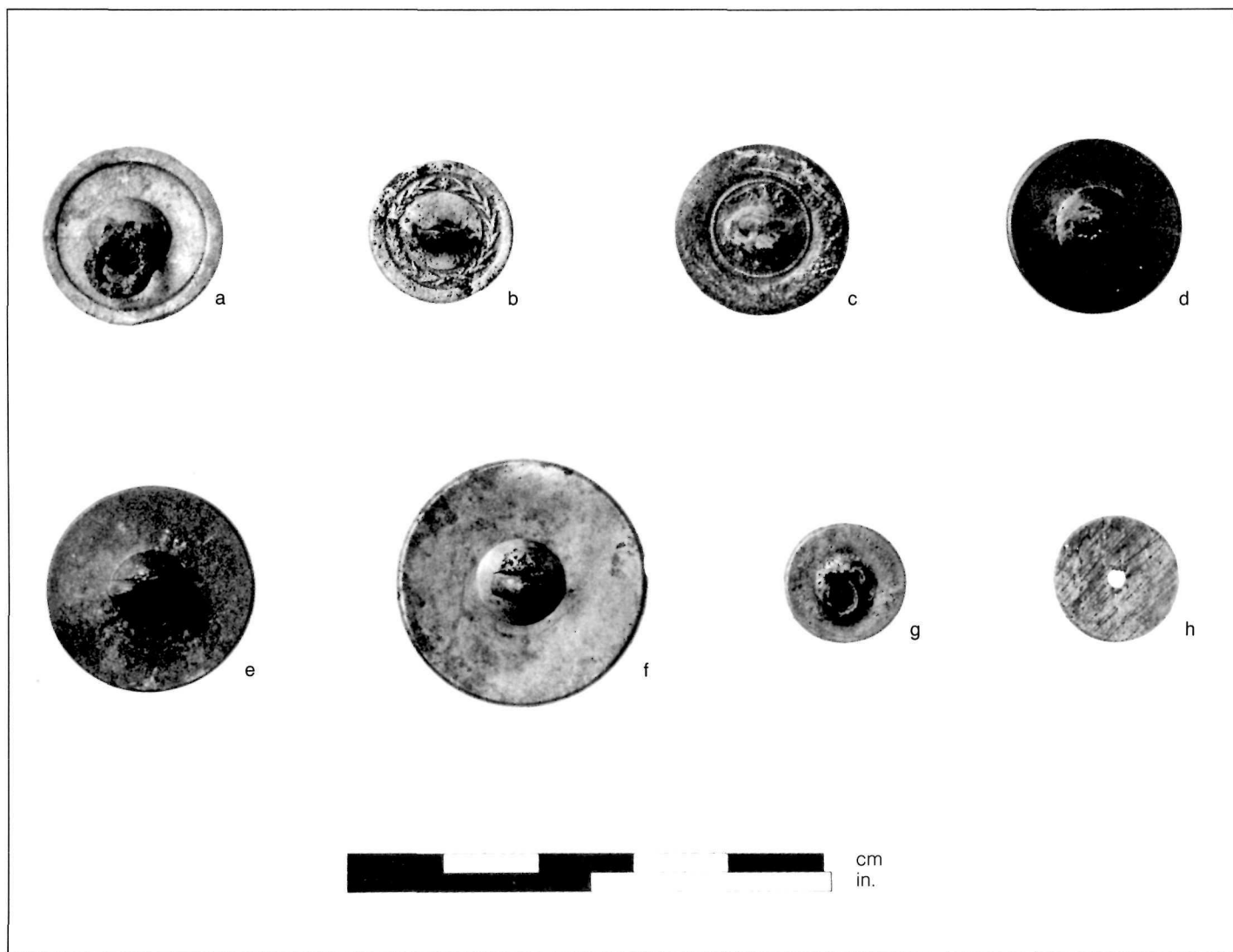
### *Ramp*

A natural ramp extended from the top of the bluff to the beach approximately 61 ft. to the west of the building. This feature was about 25 ft. wide at the top of the scarp, but narrowed to a width of only 3 ft. at its base. Its surface was relatively even and had a slope of about 45 degrees. Elsewhere in the area, the bluff was marked by numerous, stabilized slump terraces; erosion had caused a vertical drop up to 6 ft. high at its base. Thus, if this area is still much as it was when the site was occupied, the sloped area would have provided the only easy access to the site from the lake.



19 Buttons. *a*, regimental, cast pewter;  
*b-c*, stamped brass with quality  
marks; *d-g*, undecorated tombac; *h*,  
bone.





## Artifact Descriptions

The Old Fort Point site produced only 271 objects of which 35.4 per cent are glass beads and lead shot. However, while the collection lacks quantity, it does not lack variety in that 50 major classes of artifacts are represented. Thus, the artifacts provide some insight into the material culture of the site's occupants.

The artifacts are described in detail so that the data presented herein will be of use to those involved in the comparative analysis of materials found at other historic period sites in western Canada. Artifact dimensions are primarily presented in millimeters because of the ease of rendering fractions. However, the measurements of the nails are given in inches and fractions thereof since this is the standard method of noting their size.

Colours are designated using the Munsell colour notation system (Munsell Color Company 1960) with one exception. The colours of the glass beads are designated using the names and codes proposed in the *Color Harmony Manual* (Jacobson et al.: 1948) so that the beads could be typed using the classification system developed by Kenneth and Martha Kidd (1970). Nevertheless, the equivalent Munsell colour code is also provided for the benefit of those who may not be familiar with the manual.

All glass objects were tested for lead content by exposing them to short-wave ultraviolet light. Those pieces which contained lead fluoresced a pale ice blue (Elville 1951: 266). A representative sample of these was then tested chemically for lead with positive results. These tests proved that all the clear bottle glass contained lead, as did a very pale yellowish green glass lens.

The artifacts are assigned to four major functional categories: personal and household items; tools and hardware; subsistence and defence, and transportation. Objects which could not be identified or whose use was not evident were placed in a fifth or miscellaneous category.

## Personal and Household Items

### Buttons

The site yielded eight different buttons. Materials include pewter, tombac (white brass; probably tin-plated brass alloy), brass and bone.

### Pewter

The solitary pewter button is a cast, one-piece specimen with the raised device of the 37th (North Hampshire) Regiment on its face: the numeral 37 surmounted by a crown under a festoon, surrounded by a laurel wreath (Figs. 19a, 20a; Parkyn 1956:

189–90, Fig. 303). The face is slightly convex; the back is slightly concave and has a raised, flattened rim. An iron wire alpha shank is cast into a low-domed boss which is well defined at the base and has a raised ridge which is parallel to the plane of the shank. No marks resulting from manufacture are visible. Its diameter is 19.4 mm.

### Brass

The two one-piece, stamped brass buttons may have been gilded originally (Figs. 19b–c, 20b–c). The faces are flat, as are the backs. A brass wire alpha shank is soldered to the back of each button. The faces are undecorated while the backs have quality marks. The mark on one specimen is a raised wreath which includes a star between the wreath's upper ends. The wreath is situated in a depressed, circular band (Fig. 20b). On the other specimen it consists of a raised circular decoration of an eagle with outstretched wings and seven stars, encircled by a raised, dotted circle (Fig. 20c). The former button is 15.6 mm in diameter; the latter is 18.8 mm in diameter and has a section of thick thread in the eye of the shank. No marks resulting from manufacture are evident.

### Tombac

There are four "tombac-type" buttons, all of which have undecorated, cast, one-piece discs. Two of the buttons have flat faces and backs (Figs. 19d–e, 20d–e). A brass wire alpha shank is cast into a truncated cone-shaped boss on each button. The bosses are well defined at the base and exhibit casting spurs. On one specimen the boss is spun. On the other there are no marks resulting from manufacture. Their respective diameters are 19.1 mm and 22.3 mm.

The third button has a flat face and slightly concave back (Figs. 19f, 20f). A brass wire alpha shank is cast into a spun, truncated cone-shaped boss that is well defined at the base and has a casting spur. The button's diameter is 27 mm.

The remaining "tombac-type" button has a flat face and a very slightly concave back (Figs. 19g, 20g). A brass wire alpha shank is cast into a slight, irregular rise in the centre of the back. The rise has a pebbled surface and a casting spur. The feet of the shank show through on the face. The back is spun. The button's diameter is 13.2 mm.

### Bone

The single bone button is undecorated and has flat surfaces and a single, central perforation (Figs. 19h, 20h). One side is spun; the other exhibits distinct cut marks. Its diameter is 13.8 mm.

The non-military buttons can be dated according to the method of manufacture (dates provided by DiAnn Herst 1973: pers. com.). The tombac buttons appear to date to the last quarter of the 18th century and the first quarter of the 19th century. The stamped brass buttons were probably made during the 1790–1840 period. The bone specimen can be attributed to the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The pewter button is of a type that was worn by the enlisted men of the 37th Regiment from an unspecified date until 1830 (Parkyn 1956: 190). How this button came to be at Old Fort Point is uncertain since the regiment was never in western Canada (Stewart 1962: 187). Their activity was concentrated in the eastern portion of the country, although a small party did accompany Selkirk to the Red River in 1816 (Stewart 1962: 187). Since it is unlikely that a member of the regiment ever visited the site, the only other possible explanation is that the button was a souvenir brought to the site by one of the residents, or was on a “war-surplus” uniform used by one of the inhabitants.

### *Glass Beads*

Eighty-one glass beads representing ten types were found. These are classified using the system developed by Kenneth and Martha Kidd (1970), and their identifying code precedes the detailed description of each bead type. Bead types in the collection that do not appear in the Kidd lists are marked by an asterisk (\*) since they do not, as yet, have type numbers. Although the Kidds use “clear” in lieu of “transparent,” the latter term is used herein since it is felt to be more descriptive.

### *Drawn Beads*

These were made by heating and agitating very short sections of glass tubing in a large metal drum or pan until their broken ends became rounded.

Ila12. Circular; small; translucent, oyster white (b; N 9/10); 15 specimens (Fig. 21a).

	<i>Diameter(mm)</i>	<i>Length(mm)</i>
Range	2.3–3	1.8–2.6
Average	2.7	2.1

Ila14. Circular; very small and small; opaque, white (a; N 10/0); 8 specimens (Fig. 21 b).

	<i>Diameter(mm)</i>	<i>Length(mm)</i>
Range	1.5–2.5	1.2–1.7
Average	2.3	1.5

Ila59. Circular; small; transparent, rose wine (8 1e; 10RP 4/6); 3 specimens (Fig. 21 c). The beads appear black unless held up to a light.

	<i>Diameter(mm)</i>	<i>Length(mm)</i>
Range	2.1–2.9	1.2–1.6
Average	2.4	1.4

Ila\*. Circular; very small and small; transparent, bright blue (I6 1c; 5B 5/7); 43 specimens (Fig. 21d). The glass contains numerous tiny bubbles.

	<i>Diameter(mm)</i>	<i>Length(mm)</i>
Range	1.6–3.1	1.2–2.5
Average	2.7	2

### *Wound Beads*

These were produced by winding a thin filament of molten glass repeatedly around a rotating metal mandrel until the desired size and shape were achieved.

W1b\*. Round; large; transparent, sunlight yellow (1-1/2 ga; 5Y 8/8); 1 specimen (Fig. 21 e). Several round bubbles are in the glass.

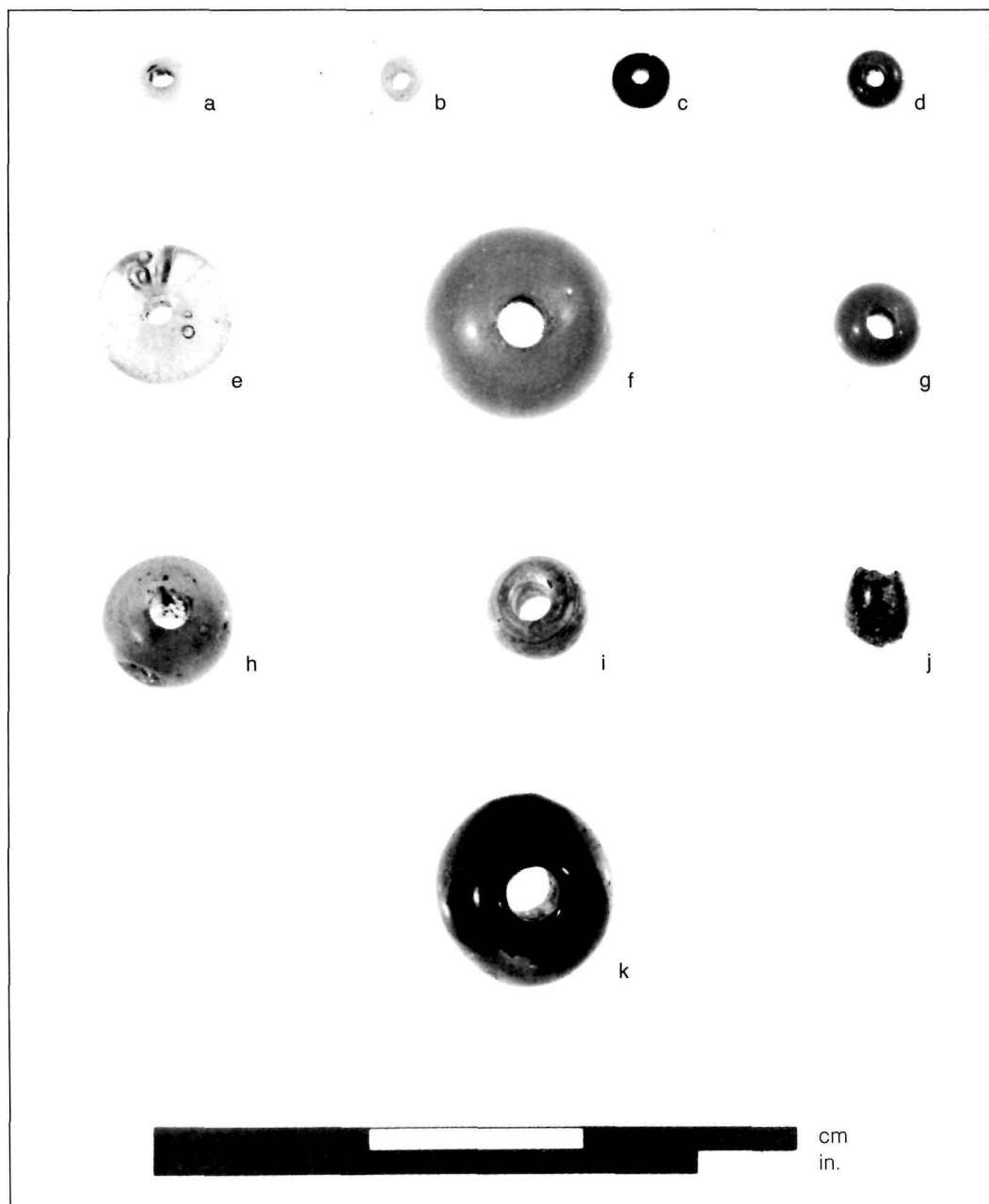
	<i>Diameter(mm)</i>	<i>Length(mm)</i>
	6.9	4.6

W1b\*. Round; medium and large; translucent, horizon blue (15 ic; 10B 6/6); 7 specimens (Fig. 21 f–g). The glass is swirled and contains several bubbles.

	<i>Diameter(mm)</i>	<i>Length(mm)</i>
Range	4.2–9.5	3.5–8.2
Average	8.2	7.1

21 Glass beads. *a*, circular, translucent, oyster white; *b*, circular, opaque, white; *c*, circular, transparent, rose wine; *d*, circular, transparent, bright blue; *e*, round, transparent, sunlight yellow; *f-g*, round, translucent, horizon

blue; *h*, round, transparent, bright blue; *i*, round, transparent, turquoise; *j*, oval, opaque, dark palm green; *k*, round, decorated.





W1b\*. Round; large; transparent, bright blue (16 1c; 5B 5/7); 1 specimen (Fig. 21 h). The glass contains bubbles.

<i>Diameter</i> (mm)	<i>Length</i> (mm)
6.3	5.3

W1b\*. Round; medium; transparent, turquoise (17 pa; 10BG 5/7); 1 specimen (Fig. 21 i). Several bubbles are in the glass. Swirl marks are visible on the surface.

<i>Diameter</i> (mm)	<i>Length</i> (mm)
5.1	5

W1c\*. Oval; small; opaque, dark palm green (23 ni; 10GY 4/4); 1 fragmentary specimen (Fig. 21 j).

<i>Diameter</i> (mm)	<i>Length</i> (mm)
3.2	3.7 (existing)

W111b\*. Round; large; transparent, coral (6 1c; 7.5R 5/10) body decorated with an opaque, white (a; n 10/0) floral-like wreath which encircles the equator; 1 specimen (Fig. 21 k). Numerous bubbles are in the glass.

<i>Diameter</i> (mm)	<i>Length</i> (mm)
9	6.7

Circular beads, those commonly used in embroidery, are represented by 69 specimens. Using Conn's (1972: 7) size groups, 2 of these are of "seed bead" size (1 mm to 2 mm in diameter), 64 are of "intermediate" size (2 mm to 3 mm in diameter), and 3 are of "pony bead" size (3 mm to 5 mm in diameter).

Necklace beads (those which are large or very large in size) are rare, being represented by nine specimens only. The small- and medium-sized wound beads could have been used either for necklaces or embroidery.

The majority of the beads are not diagnostic of any specific time period and cannot be used to establish or corroborate dates for the site. The circular embroidery beads are useless for dating purposes because of their extremely long temporal range. The remaining beads are more distinctive, but a chronological sequence has only been worked out for one of the types. The decorated bead (W111b\*) is assigned to the Late Historic Period (1760–1820 or slightly later) by Quimby (1966: 88). However, while the earliest date is probably relatively accurate, that this type continued to be manufactured and traded until at least the

1860s is suggested by the presence of similar specimens at Fort Berthold II, North Dakota, which was in operation from 1862 to 1886 (Smith 1972: 150).

### **Brooch**

This item consists of a faceted, rectanguloid glass "stone" with an ornamented, gilded brass band encircling its perimeter (Fig. 22). The object is 22.5 mm long, 19 mm wide and 6.8 mm thick. The glass is transparent and very light green (5G 8/6).

The face of the "stone" has a large, elongated- octagonal central table facet bordered by 4 diamond-shaped and 16 triangular crown side facets. The four crown corner facets are pentagonal. The back has eight rectangular pavilion side facets, four pentagonal pavilion corner facets and a low pyramidal apex.

The band is decorated with a pressed design consisting of two parallel rows of crenulations along the base, above which is a series of connected diamond-shaped outlines with a dot in the centre of each. A short crenelated spine is located at the juncture of adjacent diamond elements along the upper edge of the band. The spaces between the various design elements are filled with parallel, horizontal ridges. A circular catch open on one side is soldered to one end of the brooch. The pin is missing but a small area of solder at the other end indicates where it was attached.

### **Silver Ring**

A ring consisting of a plain silver band with an oval cross-section is represented by four fragments. The band is 2.1 mm wide and 0.5 mm thick.

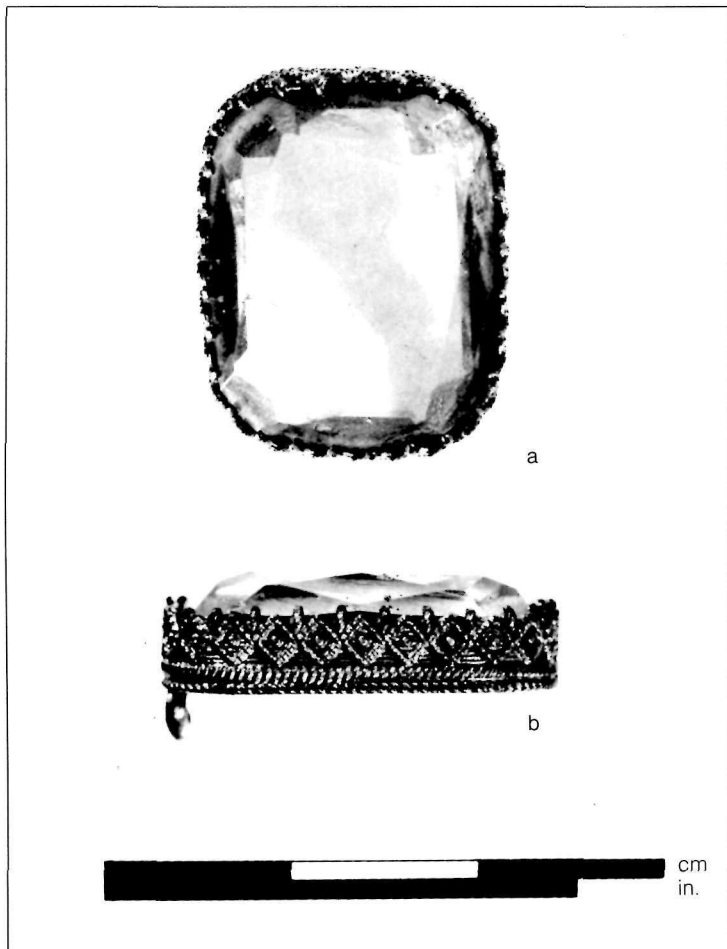
### **Bottle Glass**

The remains of three different bottles were encountered. Strangely enough, the remains consisted entirely of body and shoulder fragments. Since no necks or bases were recovered, only a description of the body styles is possible.

An angular, olive green (10Y) bottle with concave chamfered corners is represented by five body fragments with one or two flat faces adjacent to a fluted face, two flat body fragments and four curved shoulder fragments. The fragments suggest that the bottle was either square or rectangular in cross-section, and had concave chamfered corners about 14 mm wide. The body fragments have an "orange peel" surface indicating that the bottle was blown in a mold.

An angular, clear lead glass bottle with slightly rounded corners is represented by eight flat and angular, slightly heat-warped body fragments which indicate that it was either square or rectangular in cross-section.

22 Brooch composed of an ornamented, gilded brass band encircling a light green, faceted glass "stone". a top view; b, side view.



A cylindrical, clear lead glass bottle is represented by two body fragments whose curvature indicates that the bottle was approximately 80 mm in diameter. The fragments have smooth surfaces.

Three small curved shoulder fragments of clear lead glass may be from either of the two clear glass bottles mentioned above.

#### *Lens*

The lens, a magnifying or burning glass, is made of very pale yellowish green (7.5GY) lead glass. It has a circular outline and a bi-convex cross-section. The edges have been rounded by grinding. The specimen is 48 mm in diameter, with a maximum thickness of 3.1 mm.

#### *Ceramics*

The only ceramics encountered were seven basal fragments from a "Chinese-shaped" pearlware bowl decorated on the outside and the interior centre with a cobalt blue (5PB 5/11) under-glaze transfer-print which apparently depicts an English rural scene (Fig. 23). The bowl has a 9-mm-high footring that is about 80 mm in diameter. The thickness of the bowl at the base of the side is 4 mm. Numerous use scratches are present on the interior surfaces of the sherds.

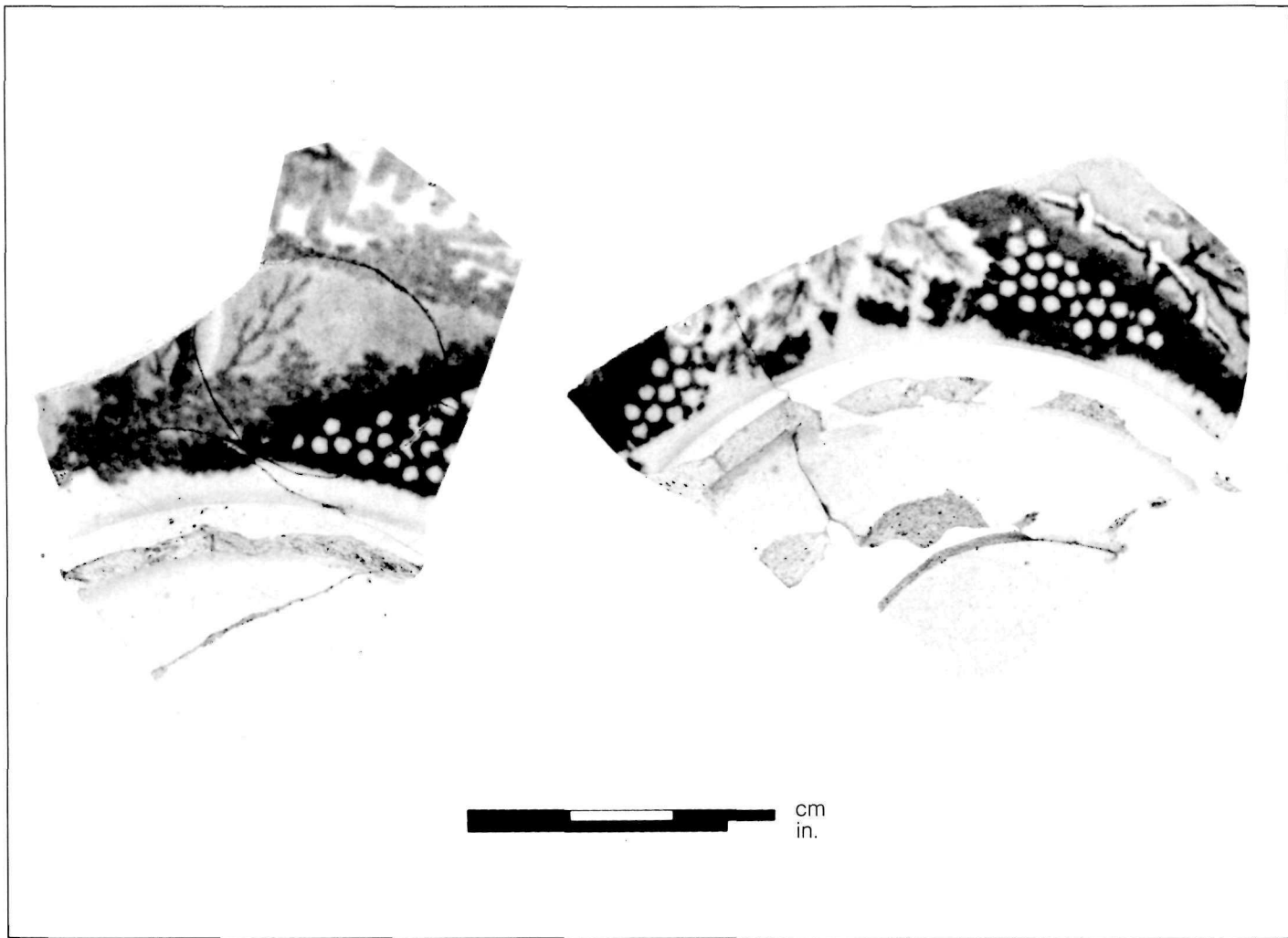
This type of pearlware was manufactured in England (probably Staffordshire) from about 1810 to 1815 (Dorothy Griffiths 1975: pers. com.).

#### *Knives*

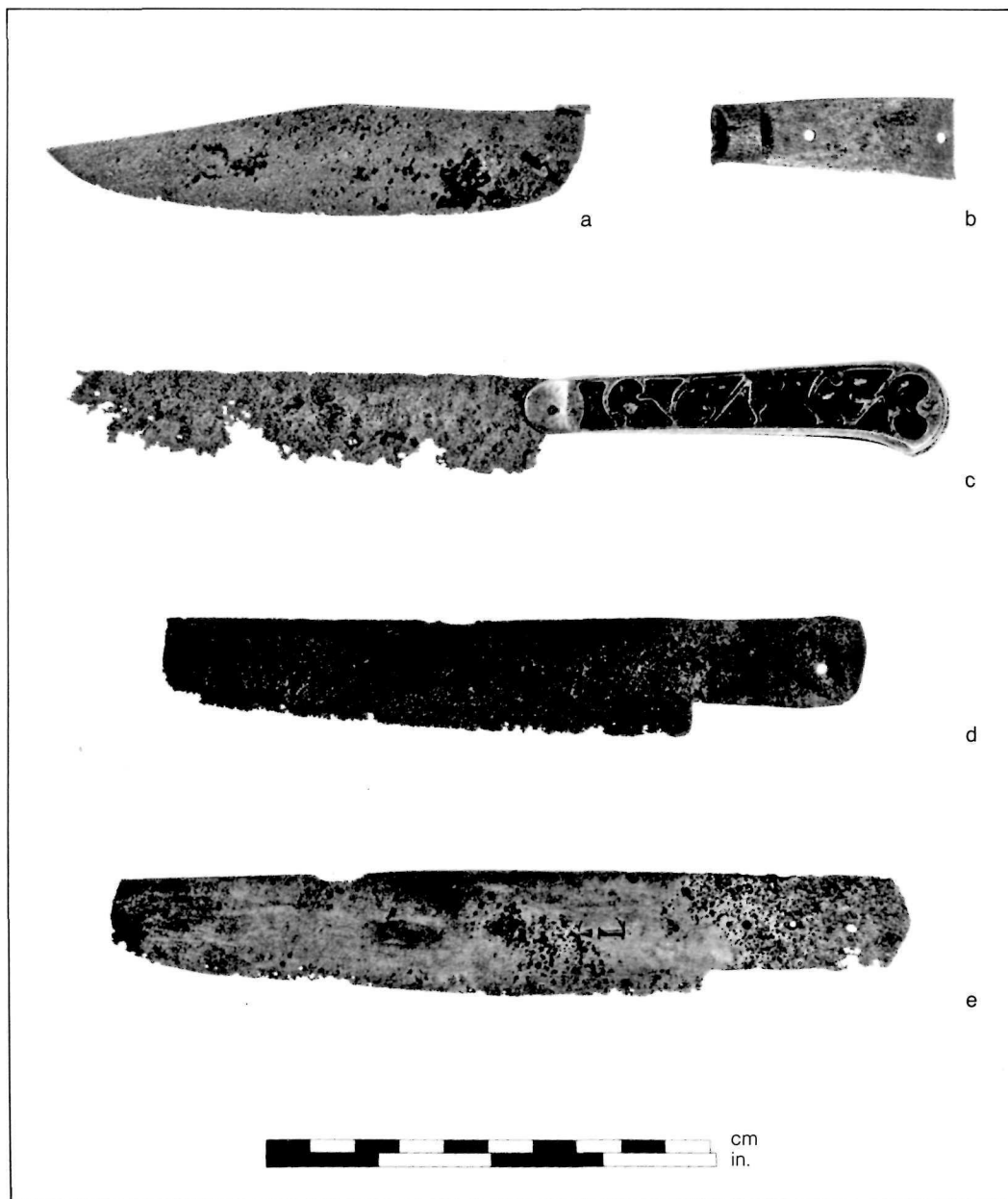
The six blades and one complete knife recovered from the site can be grouped into three major categories: clasp or pocket knives (3), table knives (2) and kitchen (butcher) knives (2).

#### *Clasp Knives*

The clasp knife blades are identical and of the "French" or "Spanish" style (Russell 1967: 170–1). Two are posterior fragments; one blade is complete (Fig. 24 a). The back of each blade is composed of two straight sections. The posterior sections of the three specimens are 49.6 mm to 52.4 mm long (excluding the flange) and slant upward very slightly toward the centre of the blade. The one intact anterior portion is 70.1 mm long and slants down toward a sharp point. The "V" grind cutting edge is broadly convex and curves up toward the point. A circular, horizontal flange 7.5 mm to 8.6 mm in diameter is situated at the top of the strongly convex butt. An intact hinge rivet is located at the juncture of the butt and cutting edge on two of the specimens. The rivets are 14.4 mm and 18 mm long, with a diameter of 1.7 mm.



24 Knives. a clasp knife blade; b, table knife with bolster separating blade from tang; c, table knife with ornamental brass handle; d-e, kitchen knives with marked blades.



25 Magnified view of the "cross-over-L" hallmark stamped on the blades of two kitchen knives.



The maximum thickness of the three blades is 2.3 to 3.3 mm. The intact blade is 128.1 mm long and has a maximum width of 26.4 mm. No manufacturer's names or marks are present on any of the specimens.

#### *Table Knives*

The table knives are of two types. The first is one that has a bolster separating the blade from the tang (Fig. 24 *b*). Although the blade is missing, a portion of the choil (sometimes referred to as the "heel" of the blade) is present and indicates that the specimen is a knife and not a fork or spoon. The bolster is oval in cross-section, 14.5 mm high and 11.2 mm wide. The anterior faces of the bolster, one on either side of the blade, are at an angle of 125 degrees to the blade. The posterior faces are perpendicular to the tang. The tang is a maximum of 1.7 mm thick and expands slightly in width toward the butt end which has been broken off. Two 2.4-mm-diameter rivet holes are situated 9.5 mm and 41 mm from the bolster. The knife fragment is 59 mm long.

The other table knife has an ornamental brass handle and is practically intact (Fig. 24 *c*). The back of the blade is straight; the 'V' grind cutting edge curves up very gradually toward a broken point. The blade is a maximum of 23.5 mm wide and 2.5 mm thick. The choil is angular and distinct. The tang is 92 mm long and is the same shape as the handle scales. The latter are made of polished cast brass and are decorated with a floral-like openwork (Fig. 24 *c*). The interior surface of each scale is concave and contains a horn or tortoise shell inlay (the substance is brown in colour, laminated, and gives off an acrid smell – like that of burning hair – when ignited). Three iron rivets secure the scales to the tang; one at either end of the handle and another in the centre. The scales are 97.5 mm long, 3.2 mm thick and a maximum of 22 mm wide. The knife is 203.3 mm long overall.

A complete knife of this type, as well as two scale fragments from another specimen, were uncovered at Nottingham House (Hudson's Bay Company, 1802-6) which is located 21 miles to the west of Old Fort Point site. Identical brass scales were also recovered from Fort George (North West Company, 1792–ca. 1800) in east-central Alberta (R. Kidd 1970: 79); from strata in two structures at the English fort at Coteau-du-Lac, Quebec, which date to the period from 1812 to 1823 (Barbara Wade 1974: pers. com.), and from an Indian group burial in Kent County, Michigan, which was interred at some time between 1820 and 1850 (Herrick 1958: 7, 21).

#### *Kitchen Knives*

The two kitchen knives are of the same type (Fig. 24 *d–e*). The "V" grind blades have practically straight backs and their cutting edges curve up gradually toward broken points. The blades have a maximum width of 27.7 mm and 29 mm and a maximum thickness of 2.2 mm and 2.7 mm. The one intact choil is distinct and at a right angle to the tang. The flat half-tangs (those which do not extend the full length of the handle) are relatively parallel-sided and have convex butts. They are 39 mm and 47 mm long and 21 mm and 22.5 mm wide. Three rivets originally secured the handle scales to the tangs. Of the two surviving rivets, the longest is 1.9 mm in diameter and 19.3 mm in length, indicating that the handle was at least this thick. The two knives are 161.6 mm and 184.5 mm long overall.

A "cross-over-L" hallmark (Fig. 25) is stamped on the reverse (left) side of each blade, 19.5 mm and 26 mm from the juncture of the blade and tang. The marks are oriented parallel to the long axes of the blades and are a total of 12.5 mm and 13.7 mm high. The "formée" crosses (arms narrow at the centre, expanding toward the ends; the sides straight or concave, and the ends flat) are 5.6 mm and 6.4 mm high. The "L" marks are 5.8 mm and 6.4 mm high.

The "cross-over-L" mark is reputed to be the Hudson's Bay Company's "own old mark" used on scalping knives shipped to York Factory in the 19th century (Evans 1965: 47). However, Douglas A. Birk of the Minnesota Historical Society has carried out extensive research on knives bearing these marks and found that they appear predominantly at North West Company sites (Birk 1973: pers. com.). Thus the mark cannot be attributed solely to one of the above establishments. Birk (1973: pers. com.) feels that the mark was in use from at least 1780 until the 1830s.

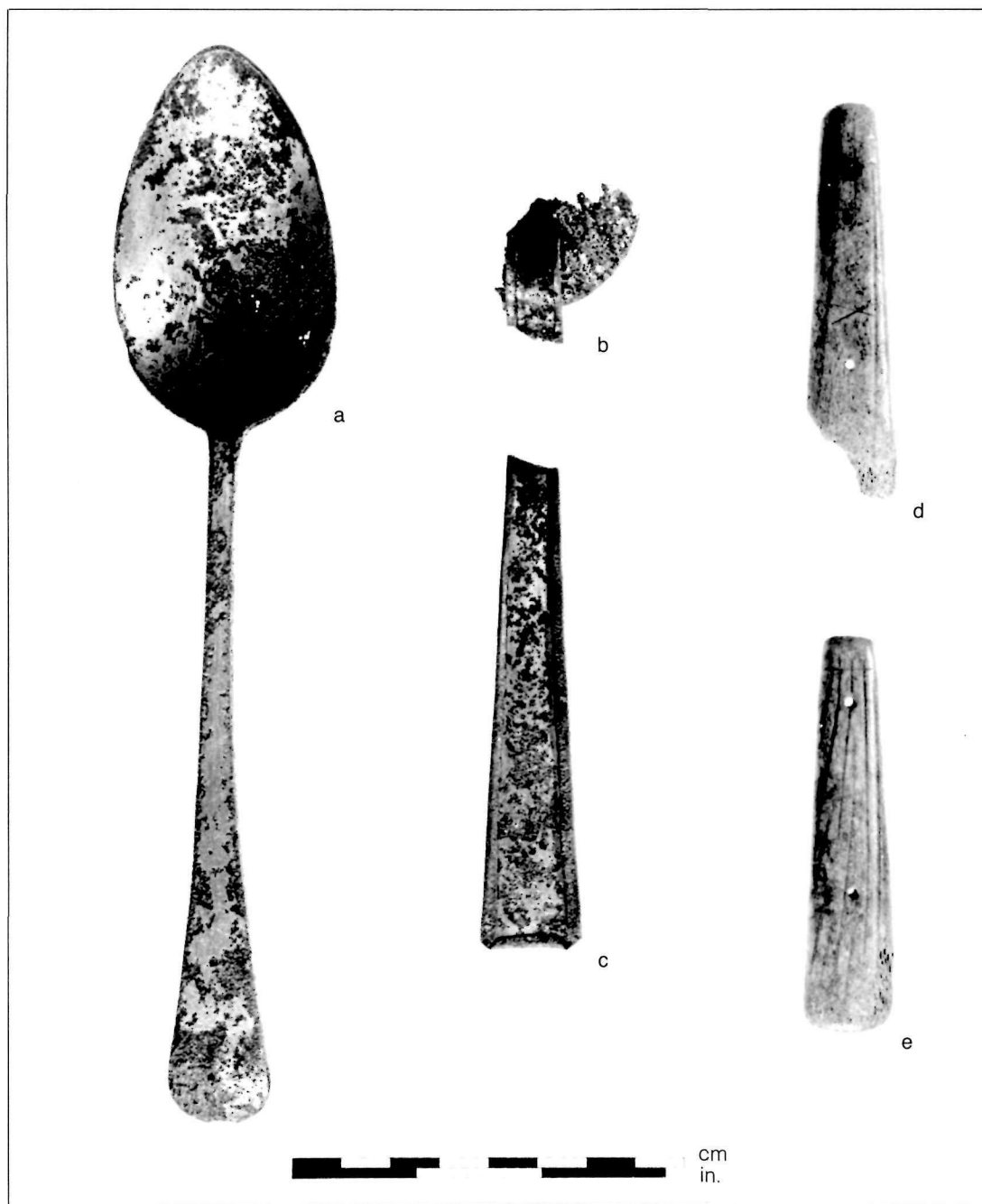
#### *Spoons*

The Old Fort Point site spoon collection contains one intact specimen, a bowl/handle fragment and two incomplete handles. All of these are made of iron.

#### *Tablespoons*

The complete specimen is a heavy, one-piece tablespoon (Fig. 26 *a*). It is 222.2 mm long and has an oval bowl that is 77 mm long, 46.5 mm wide and a maximum of 12 mm deep. The handle is rectangular in cross-section and expands in width and decreases in thickness toward the distal end which is rounded and bent down slightly. The handle is 6.3 mm wide and 2.8 mm thick adjacent to the bowl and 21 mm wide and 1.2 mm thick at the distal end.

26 Spoons and cutlery handles. *a* intact  
tablespoon; *b*, tablespoon bowl/han-  
dle fragment; *c*, tablespoon handle;  
*d-e*, bone cutlery handles.



The bowl/handle fragment (Fig. 26 *b*) apparently represents another tablespoon. The bowl and handle were made separately from 0.3-mm-thick sheet iron and a 23-mm-long section of the proximal end of the handle was then soldered to the bottom of the bowl. The handle is flat and 12.2 mm wide at its juncture with the bowl. The edges of the handle are folded over onto the back; the edges of the bowl are unaltered.

The almost complete flat handle of a similar, if not identical, spoon (Fig. 26 *c*) is also made of 0.3-mm-thick sheet iron and has its edges folded over onto the back side. The sides of the handle are straight and converge gradually toward the proximal end. The distal end is also straight. The handle is 104.8 mm long, 11.2 mm wide at the proximal end and 21.3 mm wide at the other.

#### *Teaspoon*

The fourth specimen is a proximal handle fragment which probably came from a teaspoon. The handle has a rounded and slightly bent end. The edges are unaltered. The piece is 30.4 mm long, 10.6 mm wide and 0.9 mm thick.

#### *Cutlery Handles*

Bone cutlery handles are represented by two complete, decorated specimens (Fig. 26 *d–e*) and one plain fragment. All three have plano-convex cross-sections and their flat bottom surfaces exhibit straight cut marks which are perpendicular to the sides. The ends of the handles are curved.

The two intact specimens taper toward one end and are perforated by two rivet holes, one near either end. An intact, iron rivet which is 12.6 mm long and 1.9 mm in diameter occupies one of the holes. The handles are 83.3 mm and 83.5 mm long, 11.2 mm to 18.7 mm and 11.5 mm to 20 mm wide, and 7.4 mm and 6.6 mm thick respectively.

Both handles have polished exterior surfaces which are decorated with four and ten longitudinal incised lines respectively. An incised "X," probably added by the owner, is situated in the centre of the handle which has four lines (Fig. 26 *d*). A fine incised line extends across the other handle 7.2 mm from its narrow end (Fig. 26 *e*).

The undecorated fragment has parallel sides and a highly polished outer surface. A rivet hole is situated 21 mm from the intact end. The specimen is 16.5 mm wide and 5.7 mm thick.

These handles are of the wrong shape and size to fit any of the knife blades recovered from the site and may be fork handles.

#### *Scissors*

A medial fragment of the blade of a small pair of scissors has a triangular cross-section and exhibits a portion of the pivot hole. The fragment is a maximum of 2.4 mm thick and 8 mm wide.

#### *Kettle Hook*

The kettle hook is a 153.6-mm-long object shaped like an elongated "S" and consists of a straight iron rod with a short hook at either end (Fig. 27 *b*). The rod is 6.9 mm in diameter.

#### *Lug*

A perforated iron strap may be the lug (Fig. 27 *a*) from a kettle or other container. The object is 87 mm long, 26.3 mm wide and 1.2 mm thick. One end is trapezoidal in outline and at an angle of about 65 degrees to the rest of the strap. This end is 17 mm long and has a single, central perforation which is 4 mm in diameter. The opposite end is square and has a 5-mm-diameter hole at either corner. It appears that the square end was riveted to a container while the other accommodated a handle.

#### *Strike-a-light*

The strike-a-light (Fig. 27 *c*) is shaped like an elongated "C" and is 84 mm long and 28 mm wide. The specimen has a rectangular cross-section and measures 6.4 mm by 4.4 mm at the centre of the shank. The shank tapers gradually toward the flat ends.

This artifact may have been made from a file fragment since the two widest sides of the object exhibit traces of cross-cut teeth. The narrow sides are smooth.

#### *White Clay Pipes*

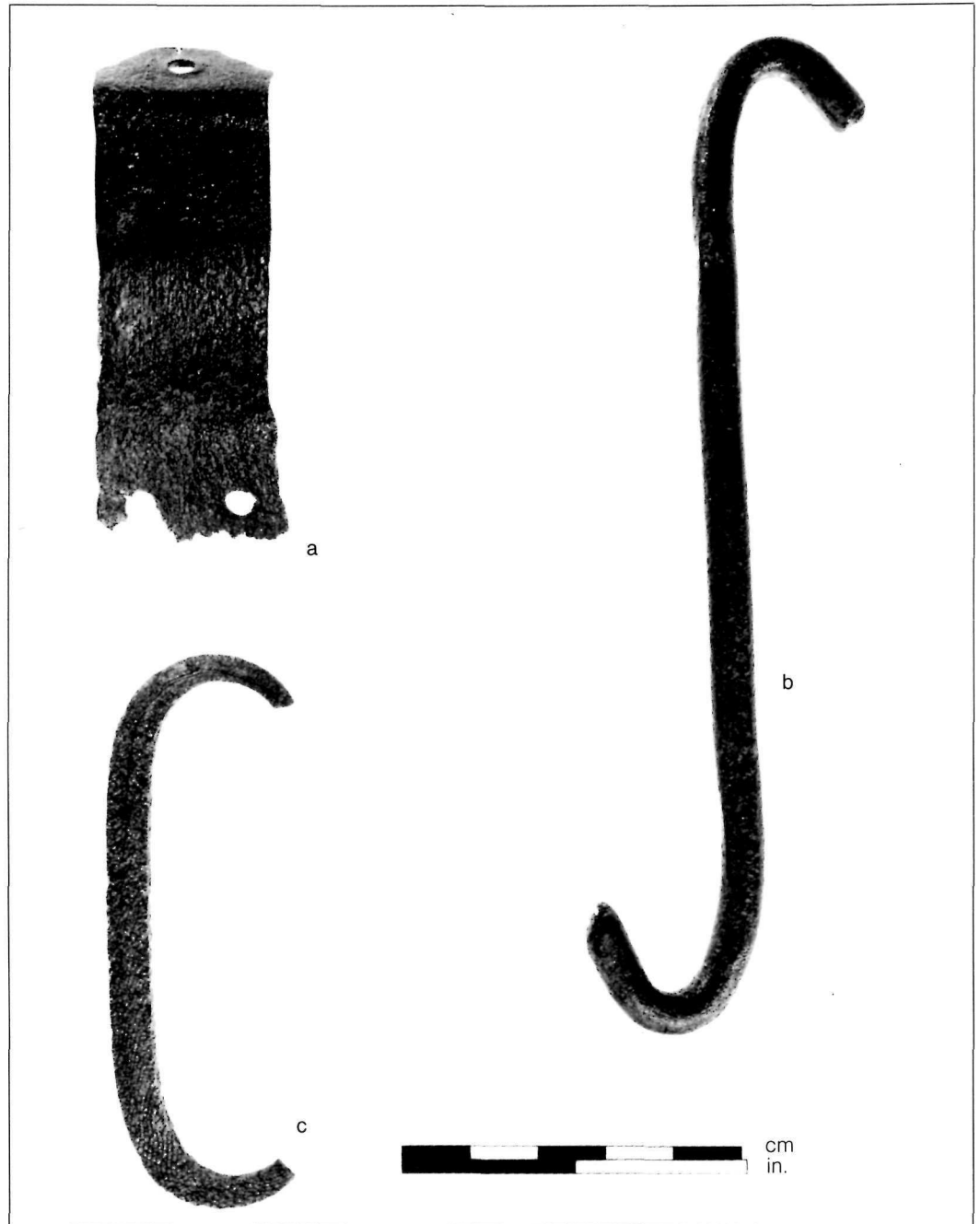
Clay pipe remains were scarce and very fragmentary. The collection contains 4 bowl/stem fragments, 4 bowl fragments and 8 stem fragments.

#### *Bowl/Stem Fragments*

Of the bowl/stem fragments, three have a spur below the bowl, while the remaining one does not. The latter specimen (Fig. 28 *a*) has a bowl decorated with narrow, vertical ribs. The end of the 27-mm-long stem has been tapered for a distance of 16 mm by cutting or grinding, probably to accommodate a wood or reed stem. The bowl is at an obtuse angle to the stem.

The spurred bowls are of two types. The first, represented by two specimens, has an oval spur 6 mm and 8.2 mm wide, 5 mm and 6.2 mm thick and 5 mm and 6 mm high with the letter "T" on its left side (when viewed with the stem pointing toward the observer) and the letter "D" on its right side. The letters are raised

27 Assorted personal and household items.  
a, possible kettle lug; b, kettle hook; c,  
strike-a-light.





and their bases face the stem. The ends of the stems of both specimens have been tapered for a distance of up to 15 mm by cutting and/or grinding, probably to accommodate a wood or reed stem. The distance from the bowl to the end of the stem is 28 mm and 30 mm. The angle between the bowl and stem could not be determined.

The second spurred type has a bowl whose upper portion (starting 10.6 mm above the stem) is decorated with vertical, smoothed-over ribs. Superimposed on this decoration and facing the smoker is a horizontally oriented, rope-like oval or wreath encircling the letters "T-D" (the hyphen may simply be a flaw in the clay). The oval is 11 mm high and 15 mm wide. The letters are 3.5 mm high. The entire motif is impressed in the clay. The 6.5-mm-wide, 5.5-mm-thick and 6-mm-high oval spur exhibits the letter "W" on its left side and the letter "G" on the other. The letters are raised and their bases face the smoker. The bowl is at an obtuse angle to the stem.

#### *Bowl Fragments*

Two of the four bowl fragments are plain and two are marked with impressed "TD" motifs. One of the latter exhibits a portion of a rope-like oval enclosing the letter "T." The ends of curled lines are located above and below the "T." The other bowl has a 14-mm-diameter circle enclosing the letters "TD" which are 4.4 mm high (Fig. 29). A highly stylized floral design is situated above and below the letters. The bowl has an exterior lip diameter of about 22.5 mm.

#### *Stem Fragments*

The stem fragments are all straight and unmarked. The longest fragment is 64.5 mm in length. Five of the stems are unaltered, while three have chewed ends. No original mouthpieces were found.

The bore diameters of the twelve stem and bowl/stem fragments are as follows: 4/64 in. (3 specimens; 25 per cent), 5/64 in. (8 specimens; 66.7 per cent) and indeterminate (1 specimen; 8.3 per cent).

The three chewed pipe stems and the three bowl/stem fragments with tapered ends suggest that pipes were used until they were functionless. However, it is also quite possible that the occupants were using broken pipes such as were frequently encountered in poorly packed shipping crates. The lack of original mouthpieces at the site seems to bolster this interpretation.

The pipes enumerated above are useless for dating the site. Clay pipes with "TD" motifs have been made since the 1750s by

a number of manufacturers, and a chronology for the various motifs has not been determined as yet (Walker 1966: 100).

#### *Stone Pipe*

One side of a tulip-shaped "Micmac style" pipe bowl (Fig. 28 b) was recovered. The stone is dark reddish brown in colour and appears to be a fine-grained claystone.

The bowl is 30.6 mm high. It has a rounded base with a circular, centrally located hole which is 7 mm in diameter. Remnants of an 11.6-mm-square projection surround the perforation. The base is separated from the body of the bowl by a slight shoulder. The bowl expands to a maximum diameter of 30.4 mm just above the shoulder. The sides then converge toward the mouth where they recurve very slightly. The mouth has an external diameter of 20.3 mm. The lip is flat and 1.5 mm thick. The exterior of the bowl is polished although diagonal grinding marks are visible on the upper portion. The conical interior exhibits vertical gouge marks.

This specimen may be of native manufacture; however, it is also possible that it was made by Euro-Canadians using native techniques (R. Kidd 1970: 153).

#### *Cigar Holder*

An item identified as a cigar holder (Fig. 28 c) consists of a tapered, cylindrical bone tube 79.4 mm long. The cigar end is 15 mm in diameter and is encircled by a 9.8-mm-wide raised band with a concave surface. The shaft tapers gradually toward the opposite end and then expands slightly into a rounded mouthpiece which is 10.3 mm in diameter. The shaft has a maximum diameter of 12.7 mm adjacent to the band and a minimum diameter of 9.3 mm just in front of the mouthpiece. The surface is smooth but faint grinding/scraping marks are visible.

The bore was drilled from both ends. As a result, the two sections are not perfectly aligned. The bore at the mouthpiece end is cylindrical and 5.5 mm in diameter. That at the other end is conical, with a maximum diameter of 10.2 mm.

#### *Tobacco Box Lid*

The brass lens retaining ring and three fragments of the iron lid of what appears to have been an oval tobacco box with burning glass were recovered from the sub-floor pit in the north room. The lid is flat and has a 6.5-mm-high sleeve that would have fitted over the sides of the bottom portion of the box. The metal is 0.7 mm thick.

The brass ring which held the burning glass in place appears to have been centrally located in the lid. The ring is 46 mm in di-

28 Smoking and entertainment items. a white clay pipe fragment with decorated bowl; b, "Micmac style" stone pipe; c, bone cigar holder; d, brass Jew's harp.



imeter and projects above the top of the lid for a distance of 3 mm. It has smooth, vertical sides and would have accommodated a low, slip-on cap which protected the burning glass.

The size of the container could not be determined. However, the width of the fragments and the diameter of the ring suggest that the lid was at least 100 mm across at its widest point.

#### ***Brass Straight Pins***

The four recovered specimens are 32 mm to 32.7 mm long and have globular heads 1.9 mm in diameter. The heads are composed of two to two and one quarter spiral turns of brass wire soldered in place. The shanks protrude very slightly from the tops of the heads and are 0.8 mm to 0.9 mm in diameter.

#### ***Jew's Harp***

This musical instrument (Fig. 28 d) is equivalent to Series B, Type 1, Variety a in Stone's (1970: 98) typology. The frame is made of cast brass and has a diamond-shaped cross-section throughout. The head is circular and the shanks are tapered. Distinct file marks are present on all surfaces. The harp has a head width of 24 mm, a length of 55.2 mm and a maximum thickness of 7 mm.

#### ***Brush Fragment***

A 23.5-mm-long, 4.3-mm-wide and 5.5-mm-thick bone fragment that has two parallel rows of drilled conical holes is identified as a portion of a brush. Four holes are located in one row and five in the other. The holes are 4 mm in diameter, 4.4 mm deep and about 1.0 mm apart. A straight, centrally located square keel 3.1 mm wide and 1.8 mm high extends along the base of the fragment. This may have been glued into a slot in a wooden handle.

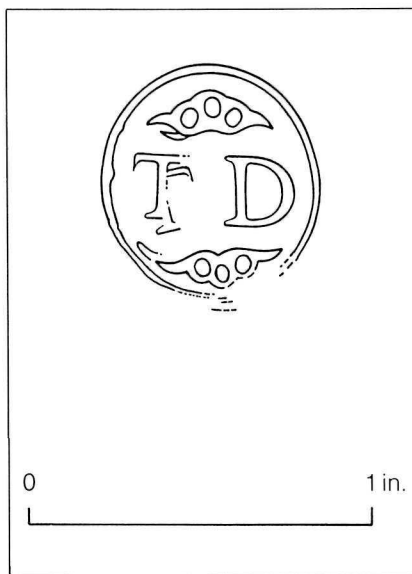
#### ***Vermilion***

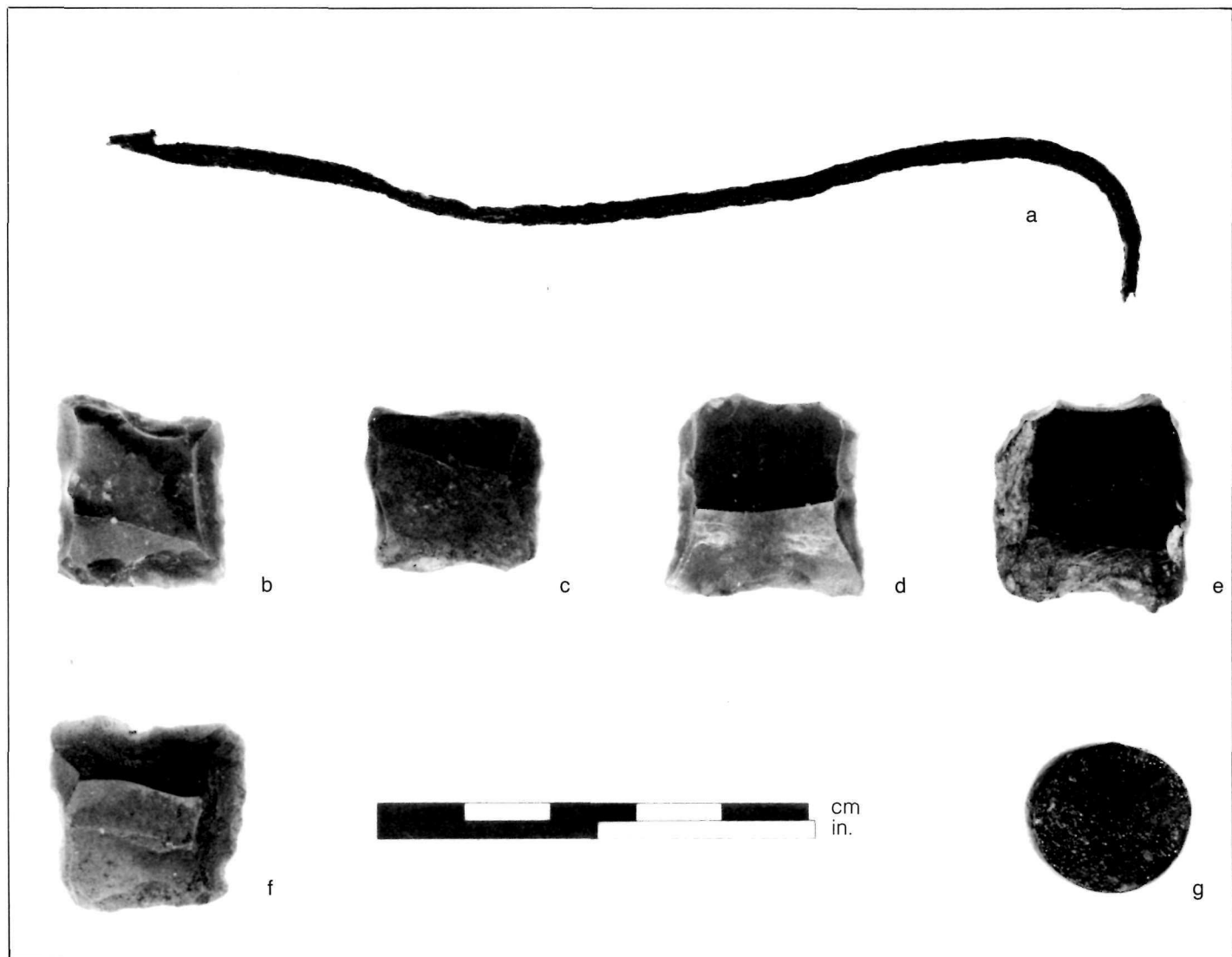
Five tiny pieces of bright red cinnabar (HgS) represent this pigment.

#### **Subsistence and Defence**

#### ***Fishhook***

A straightened, eyeless fishhook (Fig. 30 a) has a shank diameter of 2.7 mm and a total length of 142 mm. One end has a flat, 6.5-mm-long barb; the other end is flattened perpendicular to the plane of the barb. The barbed end has been straightened while the shank end has been bent into a gradual curve, possibly to act as a palm rest so that the fishhook could be employed as a crude awl.





### Gunflints

Five translucent, dark-brown gunflints were recovered. All have been struck from blades as indicated by the presence of a demi-cone of percussion on one or both sides of each flint, and all are of English origin (Witthoft 1966: 36). The flints are square to rectangular in outline and have trapezoidal longitudinal cross-sections. Four of the flints are single-edged (one gradually sloped bevel or striking edge; Fig. 30b–e) and one is double-edged (two beveled striking edges opposite each other; Fig. 30f).

The flints are 20.5 mm to 24.3 mm wide, 19.6 mm to 26 mm long and 6.2 mm to 8.8 mm thick. Based on English specifications of 1819 (Woodward 1960: 34), one of the flints (Fig. 30b) is of "pistol" size (slightly more than 1.0 in. long by 3/4 in. wide, or ca. 26 mm by 19 mm) while the remaining specimens are between "pistol" and "carbine" size (1-1/4 in. long by 1.0 in. wide, or 31.8 mm by 25.4 mm). However, in that all four edges of all the flints are slightly to severely battered and chipped, it seems likely that they were primarily used with strike-a-lights rather than flint-lock weapons.

The gunflints do little to date the site. English flints first appeared about 1775–80 (Hamilton 1971: 62; Witthoft 1966: 36) and are still being made (personal observation). However, they were in use predominantly during the first half of the 19th century (Hamilton 1971: 62).

### Lead Shot

Fifteen specimens of lead shot fall into the size categories shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Lead Shot Sizes and Quantities**

<i>Diameter (mm)</i>		<i>Diameter (in.)</i>		<i>American</i>	
<i>range</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>range</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>shot size</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
3.70	3.70	.146	.146	2	1
5.15–5.20	5.18	.203–.205	.204	T	6
5.25–5.45	5.35	.207–.214	.210	TT	6
5.60–5.65	5.62	.220–.222	.221	F	2

The specimens are of sizes such as are currently used to hunt large game birds and medium-sized mammals, for example, ducks, geese, swans and foxes.

### Musket Balls

Unused musket balls occurred in the sizes and quantities shown in Table 2. The gauges provided correspond to those used by the London proofing companies in 1883 (Hamilton 1960: 218).

**Table 2. Musket Ball Sizes and Quantities**

<i>Diameter (mm)</i>	<i>Calibre</i>	<i>Gauge</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
13.00	.512	34	1
13.73	.540	29	1
14.10	.555	27	2

An intentionally flattened musket ball (Fig. 30a) has an oval outline and is 20.1 mm long, 17.8 mm wide and 6.3 mm thick. Similar specimens were uncovered at two North West Company posts in operation from 1791 to 1800 – Fort George, Alberta, and Fort Rivière Tremblante, Saskatchewan (R. Kidd 1970: 75; W. Dean Clark 1971: pers. com.). R. Kidd (1970: 75) suggests that the flattened balls may have served as gaming pieces.

### Tools and Hardware

#### Awls

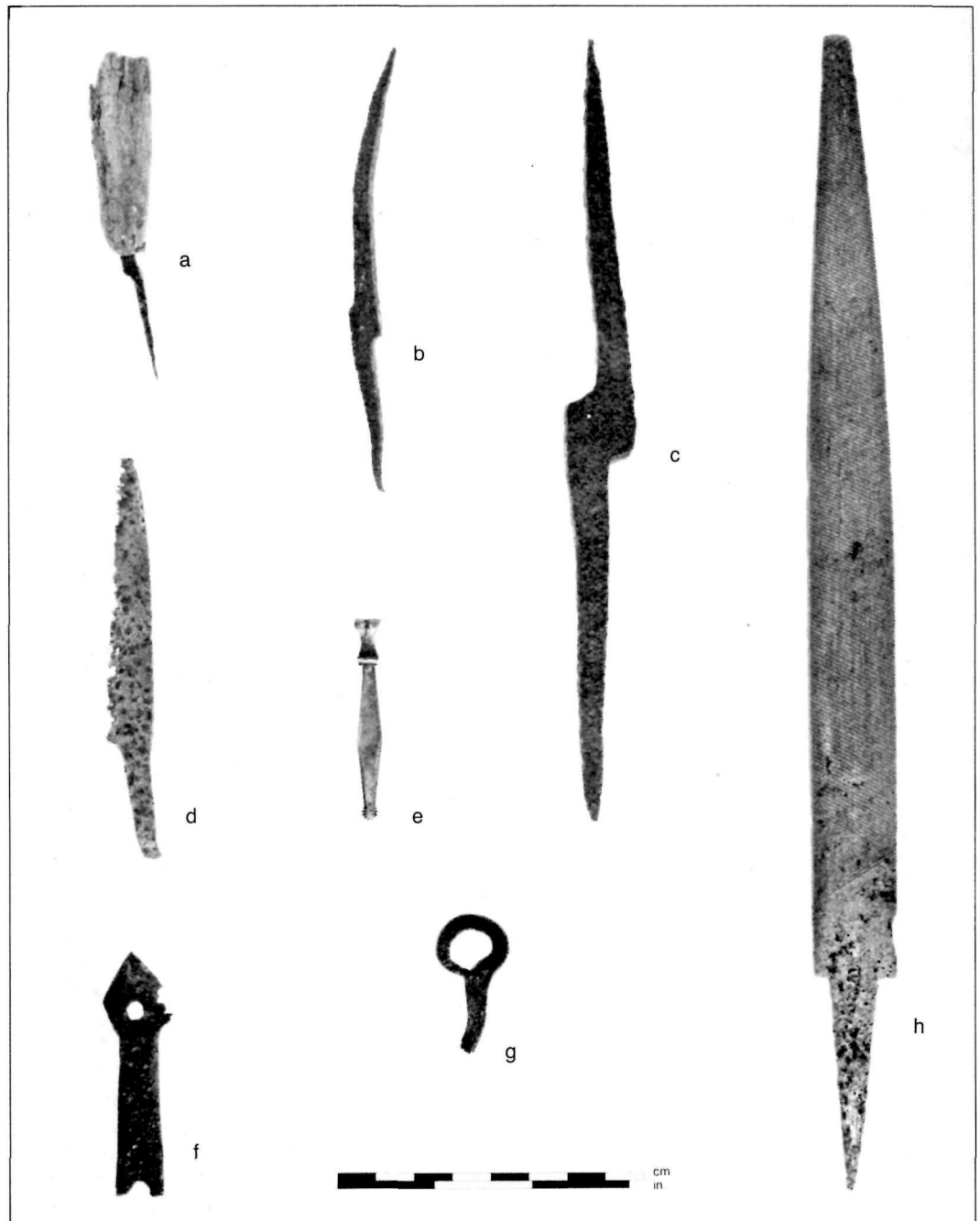
Three bi-pointed, offset iron awls of varying size were found. The smallest of these (Fig. 31a) is hafted in a tapered antler handle that is 53 mm long and has a maximum diameter of 15 mm. The portion that protrudes from the handle has a round cross-section and tapers to a very sharp point. It is 30 mm long from the tip to the offset. The portion in the handle has a rectangular cross-section and is 49 mm long. The awl is 80.3 mm long, minus the handle, and 4.5 mm wide and 2.9 mm thick at the offset. The overall length of the tool is 87.4 mm.

The second specimen (Fig. 31b) is 121.5 mm long. The offset is not in the centre of the tool with the result that the ends are 42 mm and 73.5 mm long respectively. Both ends are square-sectioned and taper to sharp tips. The awl is 8.3 mm wide and 4.6 mm thick at the offset.

The largest awl (Fig. 31c) is 213.1 mm long, and has a centrally located offset that is 19.3 mm wide and 9 mm thick. Both ends are square-sectioned and 100 mm long. The tip of one end is sharp; that of the other is slightly rounded.

The two smallest awls were probably used for sewing items like hides and canvas, while the largest one was probably used in the manufacture and repair of birchbark canoes or similar, heavy-duty work.

31 Tools and hardware. a-c, awls; d, canoe knife; e, brass "dotting wheel"; f, strap hinge fragment; g, iron eye; h, ten-inch file with "MV&co." stamped at base of blade.



### **Canoe Knife**

A canoe knife or iron woodworking tool (Fig. 31 *d*), also called a crooked knife or "mocotaugan" (Russell 1967: 216), has a 76.7-mm-long blade that curves gradually to the left when viewed with the blade downward and the tang toward the viewer. The blade has a maximum width of 12.8 mm and a maximum thickness of 2.8 mm. It has a relatively straight back and a "V" grind cutting edge which curves up gradually to the broken point. The choil is concave. The 30.9-mm-long tang tapers toward the butt end which is bent sharply to the right and served to anchor the blade in its handle. The knife has an overall length of 107.6 mm.

### **File**

The file which was found (Fig. 31 *h*) is a complete, flat, ten-inch, double-cut file which has a rectangular cross-section. It was apparently hand-forged and not stamped from sheet metal. The file is 22 mm wide and 4.7 mm thick at the square heel (the point where the tang begins). It expands slightly in width and thickness toward the centre of the blade which has a maximum width of 23.3 mm and a maximum thickness of 6 mm. The file then tapers sharply in both thickness and width toward the slightly rounded tip. The blade is double cut on both sides and edges, with 33 cuts per linear inch. The triangular tang is 57 mm long and 13 mm wide at its junction with the blade. The overall length of the file is 312.7 mm (12-5/16 in.).

The mark "MV&co." is impressed parallel to the long axis of the file at the junction of the blade and tang. Another file with this mark was recovered from Edmonton House III, a Hudson's Bay Company fur trade post which operated on the North Saskatchewan River in central Alberta from 1810 to 1813 (Nicks 1969: 133).

Files of this size and type are used for fast metal removal and where a rough finish is permissible (Nicholson File Company 1956: 10).

### **Brass Instrument Fragment**

The 54.4-mm-long arm of a hinged, cast brass instrument (Fig. 31 *e*) identified as a "dotting pen" was recovered from the extreme northeast corner of the building. The distal portion of the arm is composed of two 41-mm-long parallel blades which have an elongated diamond shape in plan view and a trapezoidal cross-section due to beveled exterior edges. The blades are 2.6 mm wide at the distal end, 6.8 mm wide at the centre, and 3.1 mm wide at the proximal end. They are 1.3 mm thick.

A rotating brass roulette which is 4.8 mm in diameter and 0.8 mm thick is held in place between the distal tips of the blades by a brass pin. At the opposite end, the blades are attached to the hinge element which is 12.7 mm long, 6.8 mm wide and 6.4 mm thick. Of its four sides, three are concave and one is flat. A longitudinally concave socket parallel to the roulette is located at the top of the hinge element. A remnant of a 100-mm-thick iron pivot plate is situated in a slot which cuts across the socket. Apparently another arm with a split drum end fitted over the pivot plate and was held in the socket by a pin passing through the centre of the drum and a hole in the pivot plate. Except for the iron pivot plate and the roulette and pin, the arm is of unit construction.

Dotting pens, also called wheel pens and dotting wheels, were mathematical instruments used to produce dotted lines (Uta C. Merzbach, Smithsonian Institution 1975: pers. com.). Ink was placed in the "reservoir" between the blades of the pen (as is done with modern ruling pens) and the rotating roulette deposited the ink as a series of dots when the instrument was run across paper.

The recovered dotting pen cannot be dated because of a lack of information concerning these instruments. However, it can be mentioned that a practically identical specimen is illustrated in Plate 46 of *A List of Prices Agreeable to Quality and Size, of Mathematical Instruments, Brass Compasses, Brass Dog Collars, Etc.*, Birmingham, England, 1797 (microfilm copy obtained from the Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.).

### **Nails**

The site produced 35 hand-wrought iron nails. Of these, 20 have rose heads and seven have flat heads. The remainder is made up of unclassifiable fragments.

#### **Rose-Head Nails**

The rose-head nails (Fig. 32 *a-e*) have square to irregular peaked heads with three to usually four flat facets. The shanks are square (19 specimens) to rectangular (1 specimen) and taper to a sharp point on all but one of the ten complete specimens. The exception has had its point blunted by hammer blows. The complete specimens have the following lengths:





<i>Length(in.)</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
2	1
2-3/8	2
2-5/8	2
2-7/8	2
3	1
3-1/8	1
3-1/4	1

#### *Flat-Head Nails*

The flat-head nails (Fig. 32g) have plain heads that are square to hexagonal in outline. The shanks are square (6 specimens) to rectangular (1 specimen) and taper to a sharp point on all but one of the six complete specimens. The exception has had its tip blunted through use. The lengths of the complete nails are as follows:

<i>Length (in.)</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
7/8	2
1	1
1-1/4	1
2	1
2-7/8	1

#### *Unclassifiable Fragments*

The eight unclassifiable fragments consist of headless specimens or those with heads that are too corroded to be classified. All fragments have square to rectangular shanks and, where extant, sharp points.

#### *Eye*

This object was made by forming a circular loop at one end of a short, rectangular iron bar (Fig. 31g-h). The loop has a maximum inside diameter of 11.6 mm. The shank is slightly curved and tapers gradually toward the broken distal end. The shank is 21.2 mm long, and a maximum of 6.7 mm wide and 3.3 mm thick. The overall length of the eye is 37.4 mm. This item may have been used in conjunction with a door hook.

#### *Strap Hinge*

The distal portion of a wrought iron strap hinge (Fig. 31f) was recovered. The shank is rectangular in cross-section and tapers slightly toward the distal end. It is 3.3 mm thick, and 10.6 mm (minimum) to 13 mm (maximum) wide. The distal end has a roughly diamond-shaped outline and was thinned during shaping to a thickness of 2 mm. It is 18.4 mm wide and 22 mm long. A fastening hole 4.8 mm in diameter perforates the distal end. Another hole of the same diameter is situated in the centre of the shank 43 mm from the first hole. The fragment is 65.4 mm long. Its small size suggests that it was probably used on a chest or something similar, rather than on a door.

#### *Transportation*

##### *Harness Buckle*

The buckle (Fig. 33g) is made of iron and has a rectangular outline. It is 39.8 mm long, 25.4 mm wide and 4 mm thick. The tongue has a plano-convex cross-section and a blunt tip; it is 4 mm wide and 2.2 mm thick. The base of the tongue is flattened and wrapped around one long side of the frame. The opposite side of the frame is round-sectioned and a thin, loose, iron sleeve is wrapped around it. The other sides of the frame are square-sectioned. The buckle may be from a sled-dog harness (Doug Bryce 1974: pers. com.).

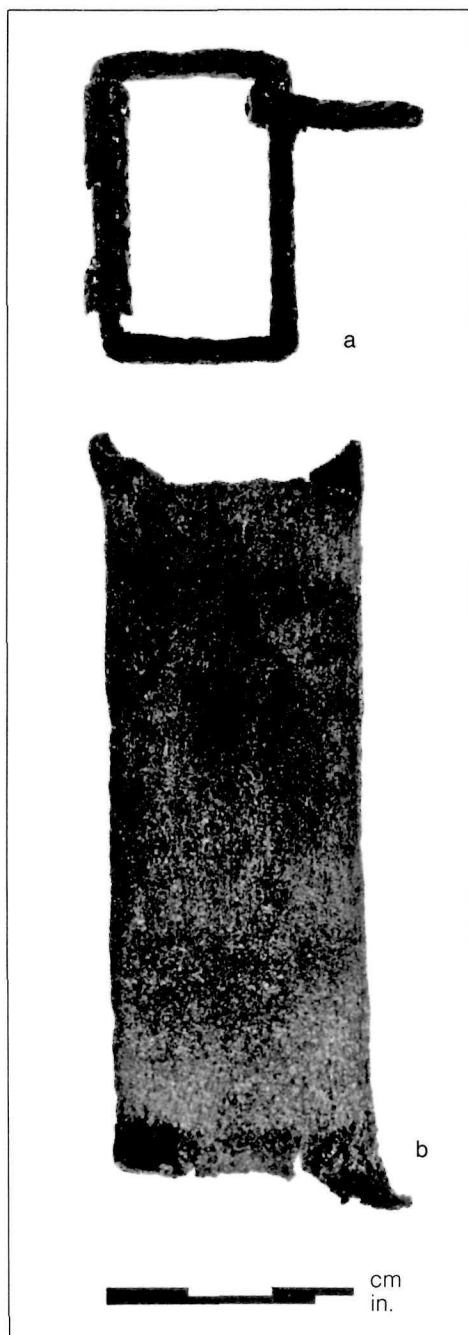
##### *Ice Creeper*

One artifact, an ice creeper, consists of a slightly curved, rectangular iron strap with a small, down-pointing, triangular prong at each corner (Fig. 33b). The object is 88.4 mm long, 32 mm wide and 2 mm thick. The upright loops at the centre of each end, through which passed the rope or leather thong which held the creeper on the user's boot sole, are missing.

#### *Miscellaneous*

##### *Cloth*

A 153 mm by 196 mm piece of folded cloth (Fig. 34) and numerous smaller fragments were recovered from the northeast corner of the central room. The fabric is "plain plaited" (a coarse over and under weave) and apparently composed of jute, a strong vegetal fibre used for manufacturing coarse sacks and burlap. The material is 0.6 mm thick and has 30 to 40 threads per linear inch. Colour ranges from brick red (7.5R 5/12) to dark blue-green (5BG 3/6). The red pigment is identified as iron oxide and may be a natural soil stain. The blue-green pigment is identified as cobalt-



tous stannate which has been known since the early 19th century and marketed under the name "Cerulean Blue" since 1860 (Maurice Salmon 1974: pers. com.).

#### *Pane Glass*

Twenty-nine fragments of light yellowish green (2.5G) to very light bluish green (5BG) pane glass are from 1.0 mm to 1.5 mm thick, with an average of 1.1 mm. Nine fragments are burned and slightly distorted. Another nine have one straight cut edge. One large piece has two parallel cut edges which are 63 mm (2.5 in.) apart.

#### *Burned Glass*

This category contains 14 amorphous pieces of olive green (10Y), very light yellowish green (2.5G), and clear glass.

#### *Wooden Wedge*

A wooden wedge (Fig. 35) was recovered from the pit located to the northwest of the building. One side was roughly perpendicular to the base while the other is at a sharp angle to it. The wedge is 113 mm long, 50 mm wide and 35 mm thick. It is very similar to the wedge used in the construction of the eastern segment of the central room's north wall and may have served the same purpose elsewhere in the structure.

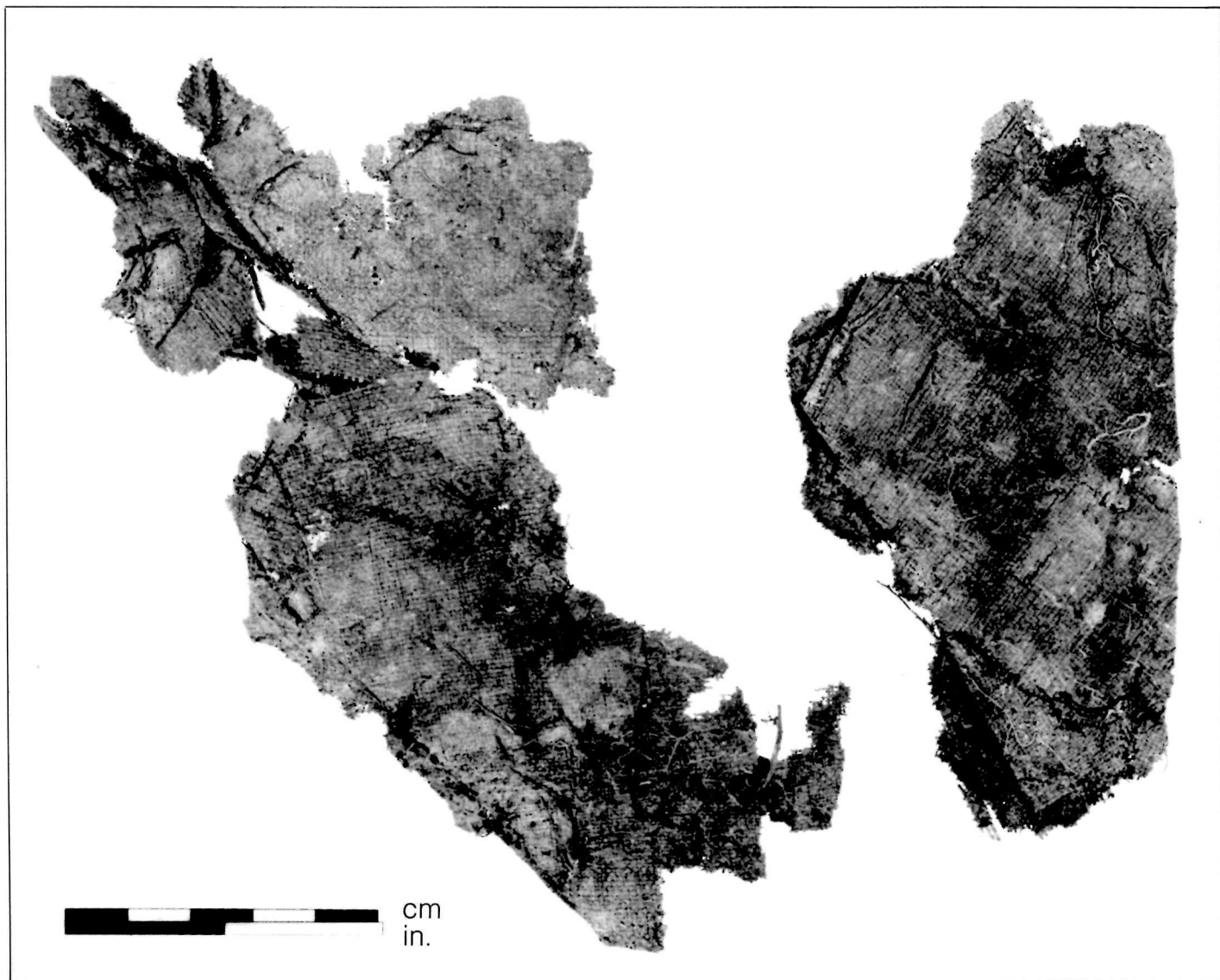
#### *Worked Bone*

An unidentified, highly polished, cylindrical bone object (Fig. 36a) is 139.7 mm long and 8 mm to 9 mm in diameter. One end is spatulate for a distance of 35.5 mm. The opposite end has been ground on four sides to form a blunt pyramidal tip. This end is slightly battered and missing a large, longitudinal flake. The surface of the break is highly polished, possibly from use.

Another piece of worked bone consists of a split mammal rib fragment. The outer surface of the bone has been scraped to flatten it and most of the cancellous tissue has been removed from the interior surface. One end has been broken through a groove cut into the bone. The opposite end is straight, smooth and beveled slightly from both sides. The longitudinal edges of the fragment are broken and uneven. The specimen is 46 mm long, and a maximum of 18 mm wide and 2 mm thick.

#### *Lead Tubing*

An unidentified object (Fig. 36b) made from a section of lead tubing, is 41 mm long and 11 mm in diameter. One end of the tube is open. The edges of the opposite end have been folded in, almost





sealing the opening. An irregular hole 6 mm by 8.5 mm perforates one side of the tube 5.5 mm from the open end.

Another piece of round tubing is 4 mm long and 12.3 mm in diameter. The perforation is slightly off-centre and 7.7 mm in diameter.

#### *Lead Scrap*

Two small pieces of amorphous, melted lead may have been formed during the manufacture of musket balls or other items at the site.

#### *Sheet Copper*

The site produced three small pieces of 0.3-mm-thick sheet copper.

#### *Iron Wire*

Three specimens of iron wire were recovered. One piece that is 1.3 mm in diameter and 280 mm long has been folded into a little bundle. Another piece is U-shaped and 4.7 mm in diameter, with a total length of 219 mm. The third piece is a straight section of 2.7-mm-diameter wire with a circular loop (7 mm interior diameter) at one end and an oval loop (20 mm by 6.5 mm interior diameter) at the other. Both loops are in the same plane. The wire has a total length of 193 mm.

#### *Bi-point Iron Rod*

A complete but unidentified object (Fig. 36 d) consists of a round, slightly bent rod 212.7 mm in length and 7 mm in diameter with a blunt point at one end and a slightly wedge-shaped point at the other.

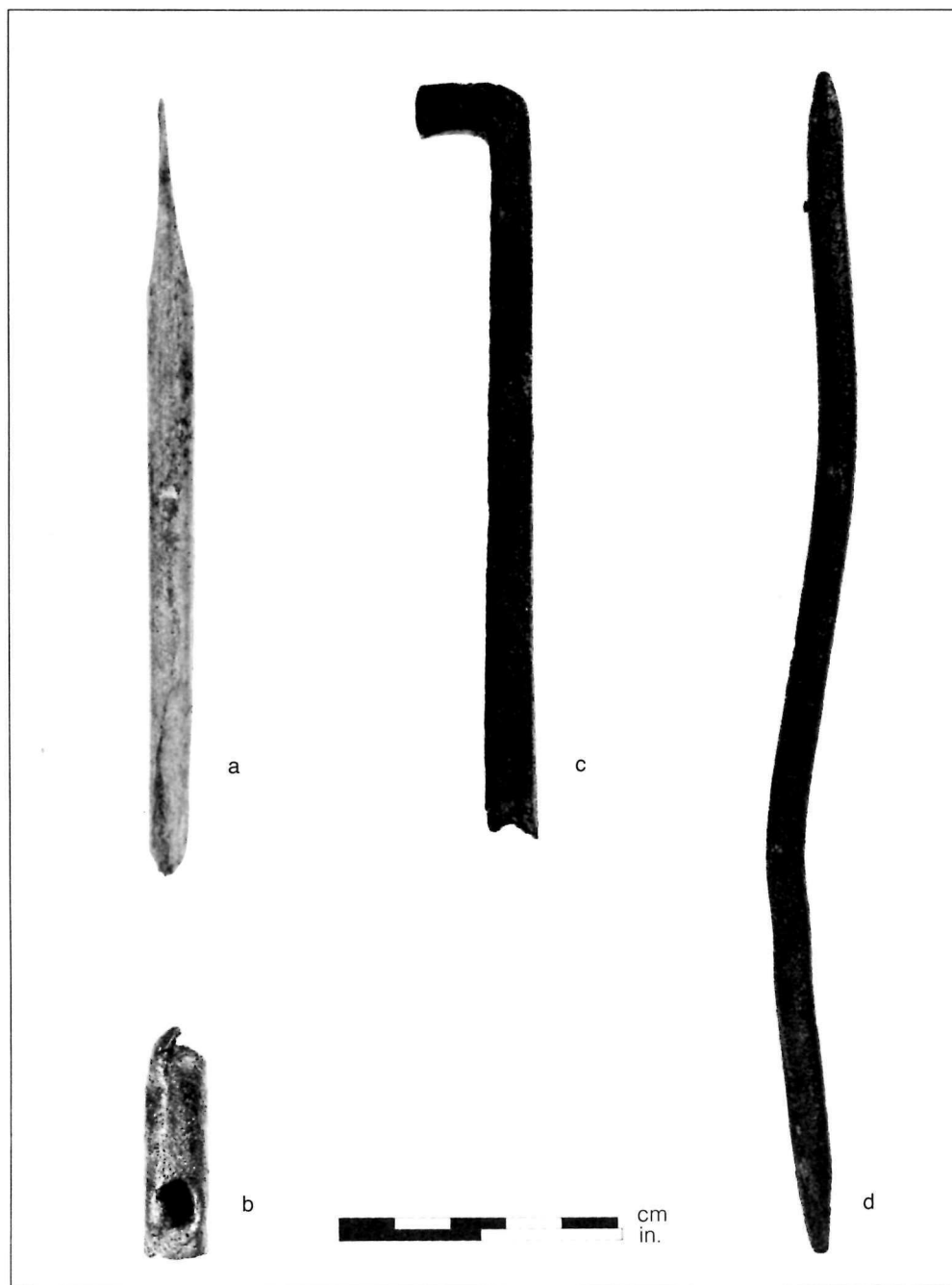
#### *Iron Rod Fragments*

Of three round rod fragments, one is 40.5 mm long and 7.3 mm in diameter. The other two are tapered. They are 92.4 mm and 69.5 mm long, and 4.2 mm to 7.4 mm and 3.5 mm to 5.5 mm in diameter respectively. The ends of the fragments are broken or, in one instance, cut.

#### *Iron Bar Fragments*

Two tapered, rectangular bar fragments are in the Old Fort Point site collection. The smallest of these is 52 mm long, 14 mm wide and a maximum of 9 mm thick. Both its ends are broken. The other fragment is 137 mm long and has a perpendicular, wedge-shaped protrusion at the narrow end (Fig. 36c); the opposite end is broken. The protrusion is 13 mm high and 9.5 mm wide. Its edge is blunt and parallel to the long axis of the bar. The bar

36 Miscellaneous. a cylindrical bone object; b, unidentified object made of lead tubing; c, unidentified iron object; d, bi-point iron rod.



measures 9.3 mm by 14 mm at the broken end, and 7.5 mm by 9 mm adjacent to the protrusion.

### *Iron Band Fragments*

Two iron band fragments were recovered. The first of these is 117 mm long, 35.7 mm wide and 1.4 mm thick. One end is cut square and has two 4.7-mm-square nail holes through it. A third nail hole (6-mm-square) is located near the other broken end. The second example is unperforated and broken at both ends. It is 123 mm long, 35 mm wide and 1.6 mm thick.

### *Sheet Iron Strip*

A 268-mm-long and 27-mm-wide strip of thin (0.35-mm-thick) sheet iron is represented by two mending fragments. The two longest edges of the object are folded over onto opposite sides of the strip for a distance of 5.3 mm. The distal ends are square and unaltered.

### *Amorphous Iron*

Two amorphous iron fragments complete the miscellaneous object inventory.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The solitary 39 ft. by 24.7 ft. building at the site was probably a one-storey structure erected using a combination of post-on-sill, post-in-ground, and half-lap joint construction techniques. The roof was apparently low gabled and constructed of either slabs or "roofing sticks" chinked with mud and covered with a layer of sand probably overlaid with sheets of spruce bark held in place by horizontal poles. The floors were composed of boards and cleft planks resting on, but not nailed to, joists laid on the ground. Nails appear to have been used in the construction of the building only when absolutely necessary.

While no conclusive proof concerning the locations of doors was uncovered, it is likely that the main entrance was situated in the centre of the central room's west wall. This is suggested by three things: (1) the central room is the main one in the structure; (2) the west side of the building faces the ramp leading to the beach, and (3) the three pits on the west side of the building preclude a door elsewhere along this side. It is not known if other exterior doors existed.

As for interior doors, there had to be at least three, one leading from the central room to each of the other three. While no evidence was found for their exact location along what remained of the south interior wall, there is some evidence for a doorway in the approximate centre of the eastern segment of the north interior wall. The evidence is in the form of a rectangular mortice, in the upper centre of the eastern segment's sill log, which may have accommodated a tenoned door jamb.

Pane glass fragments, indicative of windows, were encountered in every room. While the number and location of windows in the southeast room could not be determined because the pane glass there had no definite distribution pattern, the presence of at least one window in the west wall of each of the other three rooms was indicated by concentrations of pane fragments along this particular wall. A lack of pane glass along the other walls of these rooms suggests that other windows, at least those with glass components, did not exist.

The scarcity of the pane glass fragments (only 29 were recovered) and the isolated nature of the site suggest that a piece of moose-skin parchment with a pane of glass in its centre probably formed each window (as at Fort Reliance, N.W.T.; Back 1836: 198), rather than several glass panes mounted in a sash. However, it is quite possible that windows composed entirely of parchment were used in conjunction with the parchment/glass type and occupied walls where no evidence for glass component windows was found.

The pane glass fragments indicate that the panes in the parchment/glass windows were 1.1 mm thick on the average, and about 63 mm (2.5 in.) wide. Their length could not be determined.

Although all the chimneys at the site had collapsed, the large quantity of burned clay covering the fireplaces and the paucity of collapsed stone around them indicate that the chimneys were composed of a pole framework covered with clay. The framework presumably consisted of four vertical corner poles to which were attached closely spaced, horizontal crosspieces. The impressions of poles in some of the burned clay fragments suggest that the framework components were around 0.26 ft. in diameter.

The clay used in the construction of the chimneys and fireplaces, as well as the walls and roof of the building, was apparently obtained from a large clay deposit on the south side of Old Fort Point (Fig. 1). This deposit – marked by two irregular holes, approximately 40 to 50 ft. in diameter and up to 4 ft. deep – was the only source of clay encountered during the 1972 survey, and had been mined for many years. In light of this, it is quite probable that the deposit had provided clay for the construction of the buildings at Fort Chipewyan I, as well as all subsequent structures in the area that had clay incorporated into their fabric.

Some indication of the use of the rooms in the Old Fort Point site structure is provided by the horizontal distribution of the recovered artifacts (Table 3) and faunal remains. The concentration of cutlery, ceramic fragments, bottle glass, gunflints apparently used with strike-a-lights, and faunal remains in the central room, suggests that this room served, in part, as a kitchen and dining area. In that this room also contained the majority of the smoking paraphernalia, as well as a Jew's harp, it appears that the central room was also the primary recreation and gathering place in the building. Some of the other items, such as the musket balls, lead shot and glass beads, found in this room may represent trading activity.

As for the north room, the artifacts indicate little except that this portion of the building was used as living quarters. The presence of a substantial number of animal bones suggests that this room may also have served as a dining area. The broken brooch found in the north room may be evidence of the presence of a woman or women at the site.

The relative scarcity of artifacts and faunal remains in the two remaining rooms suggests that they were used for little else than sleeping quarters.

Unfortunately the recovered artifacts are of types that could be encountered at several different kinds of sites (e.g., fur trade posts, wintering sites and fisheries) and, therefore, are practi-

cally of no use in determining the function of the Old Fort Point site. Furthermore, in the event that the site was a satellite establishment, such as a fishing station of one of the fur trade posts in the area, the artifacts do not indicate whether the North West Company or the Hudson's Bay Company is represented, as nothing specifically diagnostic of either concern was uncovered. Thus, the identity of the site will have to be deduced using other means.

The majority of the artifacts have either an indefinite chronological position or too great a temporal range to be of use in dating the Old Fort Point site. However, those that can be dated bracket the period from about 1810 to 1815 (Table 4); that is, all the datable artifacts would, theoretically, have been available to the occupants of the site during this period. The earliest date is the year that the type of pearlware found in the house apparently had its inception, and is probably relatively accurate. On the other hand, the 1815 date – the year that the pearlware apparently ceased to be made – is probably a little too early because this specific ceramic type may still have been in use in peripheral areas like Athabasca as late as the 1830s and 1840s. It would, therefore, be safer to say that the site was in use at some time during the period from about 1810 to 1840.

The paucity of artifacts, as well as faunal remains, at the site suggests a short occupation, possibly only several months, or a series of brief occupations over a period of several years. Although it is not certain if the site was utilized year round, the ice creeper and the harness buckle, probably from a dog-sled rig, indicate that it was definitely in use during the winter. This is substantiated by the faunal material: the remains of two animals (the willow ptarmigan and arctic fox) which are only in the Old Fort Point area from October through April were found at the site (Anne M. Rick 1975: pers. com.). The absence of immature bird and mammal bones suggests the unlikelihood of a summer occupation. It is, therefore, possible that the site was occupied only during the winter of one or more years.

Table 3. Horizontal Distribution of Artifacts at the Old Fort Point Site

	<i>North room</i>	<i>Central room</i>	<i>Southwest room</i>	<i>Southeast room</i>	<i>Outside building</i>	<i>Indefinite provenience</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Personal and household items</b>							
Buttons							
Pewter	1						1
Brass			1		1		2
Tombac	1	1	2				4
Bone		1					1
Glass beads	34	12	1	1	33		81
Brooch	1						1
Silver ring					1		1
Bottle glass							
Angular, olive		5		3	3		11
Angular, clear				1	6	1	8
Cylindrical, clear		2					2
Shoulder fragments, clear		2			1		3
Lens						1	1
Ceramics	1	4	1		1		7
Knives							
Clasp knives		2			1		3
Table knives	1				1		2
Kitchen knives		2					2
Spoons							
Tablespoons		2			1		3
Teaspoons		1					1
Cutlery handles	1	1			1		3
Scissors		1					1
Kettle hook					1		1
Lug		1					1
Strike-a-light				1			1
White clay pipes							
Bowl/stem fragments		4					4
Bowl fragments	1	1			2		4
Stem fragments		4	3		1		8
Stone pipe					1		1
Cigar holder		1					1
Tobacco Box Lid	1						1
Brass straight pins	3	1					4



	<i>North room</i>	<i>Central room</i>	<i>Southwest room</i>	<i>Southeast room</i>	<i>Outside building</i>	<i>Indefinite provenience</i>	<i>Total</i>
Jew's harp		1					1
Brush fragment		1					1
Vermilion fragments	5						5
<b>Subsistence and Defence</b>							
Fishhook	1						1
Gunflints		3			2		5
Lead shot	1	13			1		15
Musket balls	1	3			1		5
<b>Tools and hardware</b>							
Awls	2				1		3
Canoe knife	1						1
File		1					1
Brass instrument fragment	1						1
Nails							
Rose-head nails	4	6			9	1	20
Flat-head nails	1	5			1		7
Unclassifiable fragments	2	4			2		8
Eye			1				1
Strap Hinge					1		1
<b>Transportation</b>							
Harness buckle					1		1
Ice creeper					1		1
<b>Miscellaneous</b>							
Cloth		1					1
Pane glass	1	1	9	10	7	1	29
Burned glass		6			6	2	14
Wooden wedge					1		1
Worked bone		1			1		2
Lead tubing	1	1					2
Lead scrap	1	1					2
Sheet copper	1	2					3
Iron wire					3		3
Bi-point iron rod	1						1

	<i>North room</i>	<i>Central room</i>	<i>Southwest room</i>	<i>Southeast room</i>	<i>Outside building</i>	<i>Indefinite provenience</i>	<i>Total</i>
Iron rod fragments	2				1		3
Iron bar fragments		1	1				2
Iron band fragments					2		2
Sheet iron strip		1			1		2
Amorphous iron		1	1				2

**Table 4. Temporal Ranges of Datable Artifacts from the Old Fort Point Site**

	1750	1760	1770	1780	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860
Bone button	_____ ?											
Tombac button	_____											
Stamped brass button	_____											
Pewter button	? _____											
Decorated bead	_____											
Transfer-printed pearlware	_____											
English gunflints	_____											
White clay "TD" pipes	_____											
"Cross-over-L" knives	? _____ ?											
Ornamental brass knife	? _____ ?											
Marked file	? _____ ?											
Probable period of site occupation	_____											

## Historical Identification

Historical sources concerning the Fort Chipewyan area during the first half of the 19th century suggest several possibilities for the identity of the Old Fort Point site. Taking all the possibilities into account, the site could have functioned either as (1) a native dwelling; (2) an independent fur trader's post; (3) a temporary camp or wintering post; (4) a fishing station, or (5) the temporary location of Fort Wedderburn during the winter of 1817–18.

Taking each of these in turn, the first possibility – that the building at the site is a native dwelling – can be discounted immediately because the indigenous population did not begin to use wooden houses until the 20th century (Oswalt 1966: 45). Prior to this time, the typical dwelling was a tepee or tent (Oswalt 1966: 42–45).

It is also unlikely that the site functioned as an independent trader's post. First, there is no record of any independent trader ever operating on Old Fort Point. Second, Fort Chipewyan II, located on the north shore of Lake Athabasca, was the major post in the area after 1800. Therefore, to be in an ideal position to compete with this concern, an independent trader would have had to establish himself in its general vicinity rather than 21 miles away on Old Fort Point. However, it is improbable that even this happened until the late 19th century because the North West Company, and after 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company, were too powerful for an independent trader to challenge profitably.

It also appears that the Old Fort Point site did not serve as a temporary camp or wintering post. Although several explorers and surveyors (John Franklin on his two arctic land expeditions; George Back and his party in search of Sir John Ross, and Peter W. Dease and Thomas Simpson on their way to survey the arctic coastline) passed through the area during the suggested 1810 to 1840 period, all set up temporary camps at Fort Chipewyan II (Alan B. McCullough 1973: pers. com.), the only source of supplies and companionship for many miles. While numerous other unrecorded persons probably travelled through the area as well, it is doubtful that they would have done differently. Old Fort Point was just too far away from the post to be the logical place for a camp site.

Considering the fourth possibility, Old Fort Point was one of the best fall fisheries in the west end of Lake Athabasca and both the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company maintained fishing stations there during the period that the site could have been occupied (Krause 1972). Unfortunately, little information concerning these stations has survived and it is, therefore, impossible to positively identify the site as such. However, sev-

eral inferences can be made on the basis of the information that is available.

In most cases, the fishing stations on Old Fort Point consisted of "sheds," "huts" and "small houses" which accommodated only two to four men (Krause 1972), yet a "house" built by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1816 to serve as a fishermen's residence is documented as being 30 ft. in length and divided into two apartments (Krause 1972: 26–27). Other "houses" may have been even larger, especially those constructed by the North West Company during near-famine years when almost all the men at Fort Chipewyan II were sent to the various fisheries in the area to fend for themselves (Krause 1972: 23). Nonetheless, it does not seem likely that a seasonally occupied fishermen's house would be as large or have as complex a floor plan as the building at the Old Fort Point site. Thus, while the recovered artifacts and the inferred short occupation or a series of such occupations for the Old Fort Point site are in keeping with what could be expected at and of a seasonally occupied fishing station, the size and complexity of the Old Fort Point structure would tend to refute its identification as such.

Another possibility along the same line is that the building at the site functioned as the Superintendent of Fisheries' dwelling established on the point by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1816 (Krause 1972: 27). (The superintendent had jurisdiction over the area fisheries and made periodic checks to ensure that the fishermen were performing their duties [Krause 1972: 27].) Unfortunately, nothing is known about this structure's dimensions or layout. Furthermore, it is quite possible that the superintendent's dwelling and the two-room house mentioned above are one and the same. Thus, no positive identification can be made.

Regarding the fifth possibility: the permanent site of Fort Wedderburn (Hudson's Bay Company, 1815–21) was on Potato Island opposite Fort Chipewyan II. However, in October of 1817, it was decided that a residence on the island would not be feasible that winter because of a lack of dogs for hauling fish from the area fisheries to the fort (Krause 1972: 28). Hence, to be near a productive source of fish, the men of the company removed doors, boards, etc., from the fort and moved to Old Fort Point (Krause 1972: 28). It is not certain whether new buildings were constructed there or if structures already in existence were repaired (Krause 1972: 28). In any event, the site was not occupied for long; by the end of March 1818, Fort Wedderburn had been reestablished on Potato Island (Krause 1972: 29).

In keeping with the convention of numbering different sites of the same post in chronological sequence, the temporary location of Fort Wedderburn will henceforth be referred to as Fort Wed-

derburn II. Accordingly, Fort Wedderburn I is the designation of the post on Potato Island which was occupied from 1815 to 1817, while Fort Wedderburn III is the post that operated on the island from 1818 to 1821, and was apparently not situated on the same site as the first post (John S. Nicks 1974: pers. com.).

Unfortunately, detailed information concerning the structures at Fort Wedderburn II is lacking. It is therefore impossible to positively identify the Old Fort Point site as this establishment. Nevertheless a tentative identification can be made on the basis of the information available and comparative data from other fur trade posts.

To begin with, the optimal date range derived for the Old Fort Point site (ca. 1810–40) is compatible with the 1817–18 date of Fort Wedderburn II. The short occupation inferred for the Old Fort Point site is also in keeping with that of Wedderburn II. Furthermore, that the site was utilized from late fall to early spring is indicated by the faunal remains (Anne M. Rick 1975: pers. com.), as well as two recovered artifacts – a possible sled dog harness buckle and an ice creeper. Moreover, of all the sites found on Old Fort Point in 1972 (excluding two sites which have been tentatively identified as Fort Chipewyan I and a Hudson's Bay Company wintering post), the Old Fort Point site is the only one which is large and complex enough to be Fort Wedderburn II.

In addition, the size, as well as the layout, of the building at the Old Fort Point site is similar to that of other Hudson's Bay Company "houses." In fact, the Old Fort Point structure is practically identical to the main house at South Branch House (1786–94), a pemmican post located on the South Saskatchewan River in central Saskatchewan. This structure had a 36 ft. by 24 ft. interior that was divided into five rooms: a 24 ft. by 12 ft. "master's room" in one end; the same sized "guard" or trading room in the centre; and three 12 ft. by about 8 ft. "mens' rooms" in the opposite end (John S. Nicks 1974: pers. com.). Comparing the Old Fort Point building to this floor plan, it is clear that the 23.3 ft. by 12 ft. north room is equivalent to the master's room; the similarly sized central room is the trading room, and the two small rooms in the south end of the structure are the men's rooms.

Less conclusive proof is found in the form of the ditch near the northwest corner of the Old Fort Point structure. The historical record states that shortly after the establishment of Fort Wedderburn II, the North West Company set up pickets around the post, presumably to mark off the latter's boundaries (Krause 1972: 28–29). This prompted the men of the English company to set up their own pickets (Krause 1972: 29). In light of this, it may be that the ditch represents a portion of one of these picket lines. How-

ever, this is quite speculative as no evidence for a picket line was encountered elsewhere at the site.

In a similar vein, it is also known that after erecting the pickets, the Nor'Westers built new buildings (probably huts or small houses) within 50 yards of Fort Wedderburn II – one on either side of the post – so that they could observe their rivals (Krause 1972: 29). While no evidence of such a building was found to the east of the Old Fort Point site, a small, single-structure site was located about 100 yards to the west during the 1972 site survey. Thus, it may be that the latter site represents one of the North West Company's observation posts. However, since the distances do not match and the exact nature of the unexcavated site is unknown, this identification is highly speculative.

Conversely, a possible point of contention concerns the implication that more than one "house" comprised Fort Wedderburn II (Krause 1972: 28–29). As only one structure was unearthed during the 1971 field season, it is debatable whether Fort Wedderburn II is represented. However, the term "house" may have been used in the Wedderburn journals as an aggrandized, inclusive term used to denote various structures, such as huts and *hangards*, or individual compartments in the main building and not just dwellings. This is suggested by the fact that such terms as "warehouse," "men's house" and "cabin," as used in other Hudson's Bay Company journals, often refer to specific rooms in a single building and not to individual structures (personal observation). Thus, it is quite possible that Fort Wedderburn II may have consisted of only a main house and one or two small out-buildings. Although the remains of such small structures were not found, they may have been situated in areas left unexcavated, or they may have decayed or eroded away without leaving a trace.

From the foregoing it is obvious that the Old Fort Point site cannot be positively identified on the basis of the information that is presently available. However, considering all the possibilities mentioned above and taking all the evidence into account, it seems probable that the site excavated in 1971 and the temporary location of Fort Wedderburn are one and the same. Hence, the Old Fort Point site is tentatively identified as Fort Wedderburn II.

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# **Analysis of Animal Remains from the Old Fort Point Site, Northern Alberta**

by Anne Meachem Rick

Canadian Historic Sites  
No. 26

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## Abstract

A small faunal assemblage from Old Fort Point on Lake Athabasca, northern Alberta, was analyzed. Remains consisted of 2,251 fish bones, 57 bird bones, 365 mammal bones, one bone of uncertain class and two freshwater mussel fragments. Of the vertebrate remains, 1,613 fish, 29 bird and 61 mammal bones were identified. Occupants of the site utilized most species of larger fish found in the lake, all large ungulate species in the area, and several furbearer species, but caught fewer birds than might have been expected from their abundance in the region. Mammals provided most of the meat at the site according to calculations based on the faunal remains, but fish probably played a more important part in the food economy than indicated by the bone material studied. Presence of Arctic fox and willow ptarmigan bones at the site indicate that it was occupied during the period October to April. The paucity of bird remains recovered may result from the site having been utilized after most birds had gone south in the fall and before the beginning of the main spring migration. No definite faunal evidence for summer occupation was found. Results of the faunal analysis are in accord with the site's identification as Fort Wedderburn II, a Hudson's Bay Company post which existed at Old Fort Point from October 1817 to March 1818.

Submitted for publication 1975, by Anne Meachem Rick, Zooarchaeological Identification Centre, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa.

## Introduction

The Old Fort Point site is located in the Boreal Forest Region of Canada on the south shore of Lake Athabasca at the lake's western end, 58°39'4" N. latitude, longitude 110°36'12" W. The site sits on the northern tip of the peninsula called Old Fort Point, near the edge of a fifteen-foot-high bluff overlooking the lake.

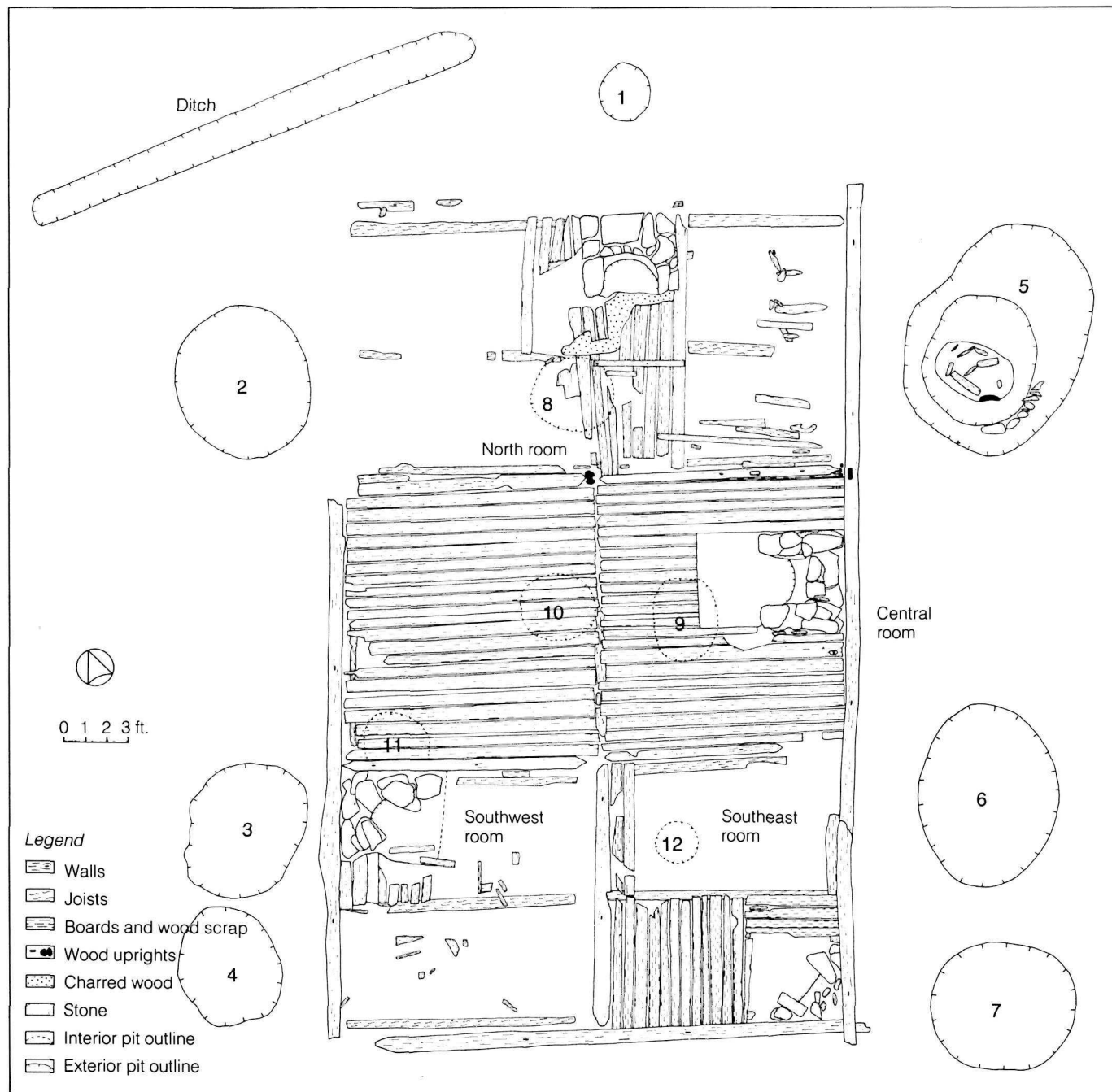
Archaeological work, essentially an excavation of the entire habitation area, took place during 1971 under the direction of Karlis Karklins, National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, whose report also appears in this issue. Excavation was by trowel and shovel; some dirt was sifted through window screen mesh when concentrations of small artifacts were found. Remains consisted of the foundation of a four-room building and 12 pits (five sub-floor pits within the building and seven exterior pits) associated with the structure (Fig. 1). Stratigraphy was poor and consisted of an artifact- and fauna-producing layer less than one foot deep overlain by a stratum of decaying vegetal material deposited after abandonment of the site. Pits contained up to two feet of fill. Archaeological evidence indicates that only a single, short occupation occurred at the site.

The site was known to be associated with the fur trade but its exact identity was uncertain until archaeological and faunal studies were completed. Final analyses show that the site is probably Fort Wedderburn II, a Hudson's Bay Company post. The original post (Fort Wedderburn I) was located on Potato Island near Fort Chipewyan but in October 1817, the entire establishment moved to Old Fort Point in order to be closer to a good fishery. There it remained until the end of March 1818, when the fort was re-established on Potato Island. Thus Fort Wedderburn II at Old Fort Point existed for only about six months.

A total of 2,251 fish bones, 57 bird bones, 365 mammal bones, one bone of uncertain class and two freshwater mussel fragments comprise the faunal remains studied, a rather small assemblage. Archaeologists saved all bird and mammal bones they found but discarded many fish bones that were in poor condition; therefore the 2,251 fish bones are a selection from the fish material and do not represent the total number originally recovered. Twenty-seven mammal and five fish bones found in the layer of decaying vegetation overlying the site have not been included in this report because they probably represent later activity at this locality having nothing to do with the 1817-18 occupation. Sixty-five fish scales were recovered and do belong to the 19th-century occupation but are considered beyond the scope of this report and therefore are not discussed further. A long

1 Plan of the Old Fort Point site. 1, north pit; 2, northwest pit; 3, north-southwest pit; 4, south-southwest pit; 5, northeast pit; 6, north-southeast pit; 7, south-southeast pit; 8, north room pit; 9, east-end central room pit; 10, centre central room pit; 11, southwest

corner central room pit; 12, southeast room pit. (Drawing by Ellen Lee.)  
Copy for Fig. 1



bone shaft found in the north room sub-floor pit may be from a small bird or a small mammal. It has been listed as "class uncertain" in the tables.

## **Methods**

The abbreviation MNI is used throughout the text and tables for the minimum number of individuals represented by the faunal material using all possible information such as age, size and breakage pattern rather than solely from a numerical count of the most abundant element for each species. All bones from the site are treated as one assemblage for MNI calculations.

Following Chaplin (1971: 64–65), bone fragments which unite with other fragments are counted as separate fragments if they are separately identifiable; otherwise the pieces fitted together are counted as one.

Fish identification efforts centred on skull and girdle elements; no attempt was made to identify vertebrae, spines or pterygiophores although some of these potentially identifiable elements were present in the faunal material.

Unidentifiable bird bone has been divided into three classes based on size of animals from which the bones came and defined as follows: medium bird – from approximately crow size up to and including such forms as ducks, larger hawks and owls; large bird – geese, swans, cranes, eagles, etc.; medium to large bird – a category including bones which could belong to either medium or large birds but are too fragmentary to assign to either category.

Unidentifiable mammal bone has also been divided into three classes: medium mammal – from muskrat or cat size up to approximately fox size; large mammal – from the size of a large dog up through all larger mammals such as caribou, moose, bison and bear; medium to large mammal – bones which could belong to either medium or large mammals.

There were no bones attributable to small fish, birds or mammals except the one bone assigned to uncertain class; their absence in the material may be a function of excavation techniques rather than real absence from the site.

Bone identifications were made using comparative skeletons at the Zooarchaeological Identification Centre and from other collections in the National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa, as well as from the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. Special collections of birds and fish from the Lake Athabaska-Fort Smith area were made by Dr. R.F. Coupland, then with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Fort Smith, to facilitate identification of the Old Fort Point bones; these specimens are now in the Zooarchaeological Identification Centre collection.

Both the animal bones and raw data from which this report was prepared have been deposited with the National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Ottawa.

## Fish

A total of 2,251 pieces of fish bone were submitted for faunal analysis. Of these, 638 (28.3 per cent) were identifiable and represent at least 76 individuals of six genera and species. The remaining 1,613 bones (71.6 per cent) were unidentifiable and consisted mainly of ribs, other post-cranial elements and poorly preserved cranial fragments.

### *Coregonus* species. Whitefish or cisco

Fifty-five bones from the skull, pectoral and pelvic girdles of this genus were identified. The bones were found in the central room, the sub-floor pit in the north room and outside the building (including 15 fragments from the northernmost of the southwest pits). The MNI is 11.

At least two and perhaps as many as four species of the genus *Coregonus* may inhabit Lake Athabasca, depending on the way in which the genus is subdivided. Because taxonomy of the genus is unclear and because skeletal reference material was limited, no attempt has been made to classify bones below generic level. However, the size of the bones indicates that they may have come mostly from whitefish (*Coregonus clupeaformis*) rather than cisco (*C. artedii*), a smaller species.

A related fish, the round whitefish (*Prosopium cylindraceum*), also is found in Lake Athabasca. Possibly a few broken bones identified as *Coregonus* belong to this species instead, but no whole bones could be referred to round whitefish.

Whitefish – “attihawmeg, or *poisson blanc* of the voyageurs” – was the major food fish produced by the fall and winter gill-net fisheries on Lake Athabasca. Many thousands were caught in a good season and provided most of the food for both men and dogs from October until March. Whitefish are said to be highly nutritious; men and dogs in the northwest who subsisted almost wholly on whitefish were able to keep in reasonably good health throughout the winter (McPhail and Lindsey 1970: 84, 94).

Fish taken during fall and winter fishing were preserved by simply freezing them (Krause 1976: 37). Whitefish caught at other seasons were split and dried or hung by sticks through the gills; the techniques of smoking and salting seem to have been little used in the area (Krause 1976: 37). Richardson (1836: 519–20) mentions cooking methods: “The most usual method of cooking it in the fur countries is by boiling, so as to form an excellent white soup; but it is extremely good when fried, and especially if enveloped in batter.”

### *Salvelinus namaycush*. Lake trout

Five jaw and three pelvic girdle fragments of lake trout were found, six in the central room and one in the north room sub-floor pit (the provenience of one bone is unknown).

Lake trout, which can grow to a weight of almost 100 pounds, were important in the diet of the fur traders. They were caught in gill nets and also by hook and line; March was considered the best month for trout fishing (Richardson 1836: 520; Krause 1976: 8).

The MNI here is three on the basis of two left articulars and a large dentary which could not belong to the same fish as the articulars.

### *Esox lucius*. Northern pike, Jackfish

After walleye, pike was the most abundant fish at the site both in numbers of identified bones (119) and MNI (13). Pike bones were found in all four rooms as well as outside the building. The sub-floor pit in the north room, the north pit, the northwest pit and the northernmost of the southwest pits all contained bones of this species: Skull elements and pectoral and pelvic girdle bones were identified.

Northern pike, some weighing up to 40 pounds, were caught in gill nets by 18th- and 19th-century Lake Athabasca fishermen (Krause 1976: 7, 16). The flesh was esteemed at the posts and was of good quality throughout the winter in contrast to whitefish and “perch” which tended to turn soft after early December (Krause 1976: 7). Richardson (1836: 520) says of this fish, *The pike is of more importance to the inhabitants of the fur countries, from the readiness with which it takes a bait at all seasons of the year, than from its excellence as an article of diet, for, in that respect, it is inferior to all the trout tribe.*

Six pike bones show knife cut marks. Two left and two right cleithra have cuts laterally at the upper end which probably represent attempts to cut off the head behind the gills. One left preoperculum shows a dorsolateral cut of unknown purpose (removal of the cheek?) and a right maxilla is cut medially.

### *Catostomus* species. White or Longnose sucker

Twenty-two bones, including skull and pectoral girdle elements as well as a last caudal vertebra, were referred to this genus. Bones were found in the north, central and southeast rooms, outside the building and in two pits: the sub-floor pit in the north room and the northernmost of the southwest pits. At least four fish were present according to the MNI count.

Both the white sucker, *Catostomus commersoni*, and the long-nose sucker, *C. catostomus*, are found in Lake Athabasca. Bones were identified only to genus because of lack of adequate comparative material for these two similar species.

Suckers, sometimes called “red carp” in the early literature, were caught in gill nets at the fur-trade posts. Although suckers were not considered particularly good food, their abundance made them useful when more preferred species were scarce. Richardson (1836: 520) notes that suckers “are all well adapted for making soup.”

#### ***Lota lota*. Burbot**

Four bones from the head and pectoral girdle of at least one burbot were excavated from the central room.

The burbot (known also in the past as “methy” or “loche”) was taken in gill nets or on hooks, probably more by accident than intent as the flesh was usually considered inferior to that of forms such as whitefish and trout. Preble (1908: 514–15) notes that “It is so little esteemed as a food fish that even the dogs will not eat it unless starving, but the liver and roe are considered delicacies.” Richardson (1836: 520–21) also had a poor opinion of burbot flesh but he describes an interesting culinary use of roe: “Its roe . . . makes good bread when beaten up with a little flour; and even when cooked alone, it forms cakes that are very palatable as tea bread, though rather difficult of digestion.” At least two modern authors (McPhail and Lindsey 1970: 300) attest to the edibility of burbot meat: “From cold water, or in winter, however, burbot meat is white, firm, and delicately flavoured and is attracting an increasing body of sportsmen.”

#### ***Stizostedion vitreum*. Walleye**

The walleye was by far the commonest fish in the faunal remains; 430 (67.3 per cent) of the 638 identified fish bones and 44 (57.8 per cent) of the 76 individuals at the site belong to this species. Bones were found in all rooms of the building as well as outside, and were present in the sub-floor pit in the north room and in the north, northwest and northernmost southwest pits. Pectoral and pelvic girdle bones and many skull bones are present.

Curiously, Krause’s report on the Fort Chipewyan fisheries never mentions this species by any of its better-known common names – walleyed pike, pikeperch, pickerel and doré – so that there is no clear historical reference there to walleye use at the Athabasca posts. Krause (1976: 7, 10) does mention perch as being caught by the Hudson’s Bay Company men in the Old Fort Point area during 1791–92 and 1802–03; this may refer to the walleye rather than to the yellow perch, *Perca flavescens*, which

also occurs in Lake Athabasca. Preble (1908: 514) says that the walleye “is rather common north to Great Slave Lake. It is taken in numbers in Athabasca River, Athabasca Lake, and Slave River, and is rather common in Great Slave Lake.”

Walleye feed year-round and thus can be taken on hooks in winter. At Old Fort Point probably many were gill-netted.

## Birds

Bird bones are scarce at this site. Only 57 pieces were recovered, of which 29 (50.8 per cent) were identified at least to family. The 28 (49.1 per cent) which could not be identified were mainly small fragments of long bones. Only two families are represented, Anatidae (ducks, geese and swans) and Tetraonidae (grouse and ptarmigan). These families contain many of the native Canadian species usually considered edible. At least seven species and 12 individuals are present.

### *Olor buccinator*. Trumpeter swan

A partial left femur was found west of the building and a right femur shaft came from the sub-floor pit in the north room. Their sizes are similar and thus there is no way of determining whether they came from the same or two different individuals. Therefore the MNI is one.

The left femur has faint crosswise cuts along the shaft which probably represent nicks made when meat was removed from the bone. The other bone lacks both ends and has deep cuts at the shaft edges. The purpose of these cuts is unclear.

Richardson (1836: 512) notes that the trumpeter swan is the first of the waterfowl to reach the fur country in spring. This species and the whistling swan, *Olor columbianus*, were killed both for meat and skins, the latter being an important export item from the fur-trade posts. MacFarlane, quoted in Preble (1908: 309–10), states that 2,705 swan skins (probably from both species) were sent from the Athabasca district between 1858 and 1884, most of them coming from Fort Chipewyan. The trumpeter bred throughout the area at the time of Fort Wedderburn II's existence.

A method of hunting the trumpeter is described by Richardson (1836: 512). "Being difficult of approach, it is most frequently killed at a long shot by a single ball."

### Goose, medium

Eight bones from at least three individuals were found either within the building or down the slope west of the structure. Three of the eight specimens were recovered from pits: a humerus from the sub-floor pit in the north room and a humerus and scapula from the northwest pit.

Goose bones of this size could have come from a medium-sized Canada goose (*Branta canadensis* subspecies), a lesser snow goose (*Chen caerulescens*), or a white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*). Only a few skeletal elements of these genera possess diagnostic shape characteristics which allow their identification, and size overlap precludes identification on that basis

alone. Unfortunately, none of the diagnostic elements were present among the eight bones. One femur shaft represents an individual smaller than the rest and may be attributable to one of the smaller Canada goose subspecies; it is larger than femora of the tiny Ross's goose (*Chen rossii*), a species which stops at Lake Athabasca during migration.

A right humerus distal end from the sub-floor pit in the north room has a cut across the external condyle, probably made during removal of the lower wing at the elbow.

Geese were a mainstay of diet at many fur-trade posts. They were usually hunted in spring and fall during migration and in late summer when birds which bred in the area were molting and flightless and the young were not yet fully feathered. Geese were either frozen or salted, depending on the season in which they were caught (Preble 1908: 297; Richardson 1836: 515). Richardson (1836: 516) says of the white-fronted (laughing) goose, "Its flesh is superior to that of the Canada goose," and, remarking on another species (1836: 517), "The snow goose when fat is a very excellent bird, vying with the laughing goose in its qualities as an article of diet." Goose skins were trade items at some fur-trade posts (Innis 1970: 307).

### Goose, large

Four bones from large geese were found west of the building, a fifth in the sub-floor pit of the north room and a sixth in the northwest pit. A fragment of a right humerus head from the north room sub-floor pit matches another fragment found in the northwest pit. The two pieces could have been deposited originally in the two localities or erosion could have separated them. At least two geese are represented by the faunal material.

One fragment of a right humerus shaft bears a crosswise cut which may have been made during meat removal.

These bones are larger than average for geese of the region, as indicated by museum skeletal collections. They may have come from large individuals of species known in the area, or possibly from birds of more southerly Canada goose subspecies. The large forms *Branta canadensis maxima* and *B. c. moffiti* breed in southern Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba but some individuals have been known to migrate northward in late summer prior to their final southward migration (W. Earl Godfrey: pers. com.).

### ***Anas platyrhynchos*. Mallard**

A complete right radius from a mallard was found to the west of the building. Mallards are abundant in the area, especially in the lowlands at the western end of the lake, and were available to the fur traders during spring, summer and fall.

Mallard bones cannot be separated from bones of the closely related black duck (*Anas rubripes*). Although there are rare records of black ducks from the Athabasca delta (Godfrey 1966: 56), the range of this species does not usually extend farther west than Manitoba: therefore this bone is assigned to the mallard.

### ***Mergus merganser*. Common merganser**

A partial right ulna from a large merganser was found in fill of the northwest pit. It bears a crosswise (meat removal) cut on the shaft.

Common mergansers breed in the region but are not found in large numbers. Preble (1908: 275) saw this species near Fort Chipewyan in May 1901.

Merganser meat often has a strong taste due to the bird's fish diet.

### ***Canachites canadensis*. Spruce grouse**

A right humerus from the central room and a partial right tarsometatarsus found west of the building are assigned to the spruce grouse. A minimum of one bird was present. This species is a year-round resident at Lake Athabasca but is said to be less common in summer than in fall and winter (Soper 1942: 45–46). Richardson (1836: 506) mentions its importance as a food item in the north: "from the facility with which it can be killed at certain seasons when game is scarce [the spruce grouse] is of great service to the Indian hunter."

Spruce grouse flesh may have a resinous flavour because the birds often feed on coniferous buds and needles.

### ***Bonasa umbellus*. Ruffed grouse**

A pelvic fragment found in the central room was identified as ruffed grouse. This species is a permanent resident at the lake.

### ***Lagopus lagopus*. Willow ptarmigan**

Four bones, a carpometacarpus, right and left humeri fragments and a wing digit were recovered from the central room, north room, northernmost of the southwest pits and the north pit. Although three elements are from a right wing, their scattered location makes it unlikely that they came from a single individual; nevertheless, the MNI is one.

The willow ptarmigan is a winter resident at Lake Athabasca but breeds farther north on the tundra. Soper (1942: 47) remarks that the species "invades the park [Wood Buffalo National Park at the western end of the lake] in large numbers as migrants for the duration of the winter months." The value of these birds as winter food in the northwest was noted by Richardson (1836: 506–7).

*This ptarmigan is of still more importance to the Indian population of the fur countries than the preceding grouse [i.e., the spruce grouse], on account of its vast numbers sufficing for the support of many of the tribes for a considerable part of the year. . . . Ten thousand have been caught by nets or snares in one winter at a single post.*

### **Tetraonidae. Grouse and ptarmigan family**

One bone was found in the central room and one in the north room; the north and northwest pits each contained a single bone.

Five members of the family Tetraonidae occur in this area: spruce grouse, willow ptarmigan, rock ptarmigan (*Lagopus mutus*), ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed grouse (*Pedioecetes phasianellus*). Size and shape overlap in skeletal elements of these four genera make identification of bone fragments and even some whole bones difficult. Therefore these four bones have had to be referred to family only.

A rather large right carpometacarpus may be from a willow ptarmigan or sharp-tailed grouse. One tibiotarsus distal end and a complete tarsometatarsus are quite small and could represent unusually small spruce grouse or willow ptarmigan or may have come from rock ptarmigan (no skeletons of this small species were available for comparison). Rock ptarmigans are known to winter at Lake Athabaska but are absent from the region in summer. The MNI here is one based on the small size of the tibiotarsus or tarsometatarsus; the remaining bones (the carpometacarpus and an ulna fragment) could belong to individuals already in the spruce grouse and willow ptarmigan categories and thus do not add to the MNI.

### **Unidentified bone: Medium bird**

Two fragments were found in the central room and a third in the northernmost of the southwest pits. These bones belonged to a bird about the size of a large duck.

### **Unidentified bone: Medium to large bird**

Four small long-bone fragments from the central room may belong to geese or other medium to large birds.

### Unidentified bone: Large bird

Twenty-one bone fragments from large birds were found both inside and outside the building. Four bones were recovered from the central room and four from the north room (including two in the sub-floor pit). West of the building were eight bones and a single fragment occurred north of the structure. Three pieces came from the northwest pit and one from the northernmost of the southwest pits. Although these fragments cannot be identified, their size and shape indicate that they probably came from geese and swans.

Five bone pieces bear cut marks. A distal fragment of femur shaft has deep crosswise cuts near the end of the shaft and an ulna shaft fragment has a deep crosswise cut at its distal end. These marks may indicate sloppy attempts at disarticulation of the wing; they do not seem to be the type of ringing cuts associated with Indian bone bead manufacture or tool-making. Three other fragments show faint transverse cuts, probably resulting from meat removal.

### Mammals

Three hundred and sixty-five mammal bone fragments were recovered from the site, of which 61 (16.7 per cent) were identified and 304 (83.2 per cent) were unidentifiable primarily because of their fragmentary nature. At least ten species occur, representing a minimum of 14 individuals.

#### *Lepus americanus*. Snowshoe or varying hare

Six bones of this species were found, including two right pelvic bones, three leg fragments and a right lower jaw. Two pieces came from the sub-floor pit in the north room, one from the southwest room and three from the north pit outside the building. One of the pelvic elements has faint cut marks across the ilium which may represent an attempt to disarticulate the leg at the hip socket. At least two individuals are present.

Varying hare skins, mainly in their white winter form, were exported from fur-trade posts (Sabine 1823: 665) and Indians also used the skins for making robes, mittens and other items of apparel (Preble 1908: 201). However, the hare's major role in the economy of Indian and fur trader was as food, and hares were a mainstay of diet at many wintering posts. Preble (1908: 199) noted that in 1901 at Fort Smith some Indians "were living principally on rabbits, taking them in snares." He goes on to describe the method of preserving hares as follows: "They freeze in the snares and are kept for weeks and months in this state without deterioration, and figure extensively on the winter bill of fare at the northern trading posts" (Preble 1908: 201).

This species is noted for undergoing spectacular variations in abundance, such fluctuations being greatest in northwestern Canada (Banfield 1974: 82). During a population cycle of approximately 10 years hares may increase from several animals per square mile to several thousand and then fall again, with consequent suffering on the part of humans dependent on them. Innis (1970: 277) mentions one instance of privation in the Athabasca district due to scarcity of hares.

*As a result of the reduction of supplies which made dependence on the country increasingly necessary, a failure in the supply of rabbits in 1810 was the cause of starvation in the district in which several people died and others were forced to live on beaver skins and other furs.*

Varying hares were called "rabbit" by fur traders (Richardson 1836: 496), *ga* in the Chipewyan language and *wapoos* in Cree (Hohn 1973: 166).



### *Castor canadensis*. Beaver

Two lower leg bones from at least one beaver were recovered from the slope west of the structure. A left tibia distal end is burned in one place and exhibits a number of cuts which ring the bone just above the articulation. Guilday et al. (1962: 71) interprets cuts in this position as skinning marks where the pelt was cut from the foot.

The beaver not only was the basis of the Canadian fur trade, but also was considered tasty food by traders and Indians. Richardson (1836: 495) states that "The flesh is much prized by the natives as an article of diet, – a roasted beaver being the prime dish on their [the Indians'] feast days."

### *Canis* species. Dog, coyote or wolf

Three *Canis* pieces were found, representing two or more individuals. An upper jaw fragment (left premaxilla and maxilla) containing teeth from fill in the northwest pit and a temporal fragment found outside the building west of the central room are probably from a wolf; they are assigned only to genus because of the possibility that wolf-dog hybrids were present at the site. The jaw fragment shows slight wear polish along the nasopremaxillary suture and also on the premaxillary surface dorsal to the incisors. An isolated upper incisor from the central room is probably from a dog although on the basis of size it might have come from a coyote. However, during the early 1800s the coyote's range supposedly extended only to approximately the 55th parallel; according to Banfield (1974: 289) it was not until 1829 that the species began its northward colonization into the Mackenzie District, Yukon Territory and Alaska.

The two wild canids are sometimes impossible to distinguish from domestic dogs on the basis of bone remains and in northern North America, where wolves and dogs were deliberately interbred, lines of separation blur even further. Richardson (1836: 492–93) says of the two latter species, *The wolves and the domestic dogs of the fur countries are so like each other, that it is not easy to distinguish them at a small distance; the want of strength and courage of the former being the principal difference. The offspring of the wolf and Indian dog are prolific, and are prized by the voyagers as beasts of draught, being stronger than the ordinary dog.*

Gnawed mammal, bird and fish bones at the site, point to the presence of dogs although scavenging by wild carnivores could account for some of the chew marks. Dogs were used at fur-trade sites to haul supplies, especially loads of frozen fish being taken from fishing stations to wintering posts (Krause 1976). Such dogs were fed mainly on fish but also ate other scraps and

bones. There were dogs at Fort Wedderburn I (although perhaps not many), for Krause (1976: 26) implies that they were present in his statement that Fort Wedderburn was moved to Old Fort Point in the winter of 1817 because there were not enough dogs to haul fish from the fishery there back to the original fort site. Presumably any dogs present at Fort Wedderburn I were brought to the new site at Old Fort Point.

Fur traders were not averse to eating their dogs (and anything else that was even faintly edible) when food was scarce. Krause (1976: 31) says that fishermen in the Old Fort Point area during the spring of 1821 consumed dogs because the fishing season had been poor.

### *Alopex lagopus*. Arctic fox

Seven bones from right and left hind legs and from a right front leg were found and, judging by size, all could have come from the same individual. Provenience makes it even more likely that the bones represent one animal, since six came from the northwest pit and the seventh was found in the area around this pit. The MNI is one.

The bones are assigned to this species rather than to the similar but larger red fox on a size basis. All seven fragments fall within the size range of Arctic fox (and below that of red fox) as determined from measurements of specimens at the National Museum of Natural Sciences. Six bones are adult since their epiphyses are fully fused; the seventh, a tibia shaft fragment, appears adult but since the epiphyseal regions are lacking, fusion cannot be demonstrated.

Western Lake Athabasca is slightly beyond the usual southern limit of the Arctic fox's range. However, these animals make occasional migrations into the Athabasca region during late fall and winter depending upon food and weather conditions. Preble (1908: 217) remarks of this species:

*In winter many of the animals migrate southward in search of food, the extent of this wandering varying greatly with the amount of snow and from other causes. During the winter of 1900–1901, the snowfall being light, they penetrated much farther south than for many years previously. We saw a number of skins which were taken during that winter in the vicinity of Fort Smith, where they had not appeared for several years.*

Extralimital records (Banfield, 1974: 297, map 131) show that Arctic foxes are known from areas some distance south of Lake Athabasca.

### ***Vulpes vulpes*. Red fox**

The large number of red fox bones is mainly due to a series of 12 caudal vertebrae found in fill of the north pit. The remaining seven bones, except for a femur fragment of indefinite provenience, were recovered from the north room and the area outside that room to the west and northwest. There were at least two individuals at the site. A humerus has faint cut marks at the distal end of the shaft.

Red foxes were common in the area and Preble (1908: 217) says of them,

*During the early winter the Peace-Athabasca delta is a favorite trapping ground. The foxes are said to be attracted by the large numbers of wounded ducks and geese which escape during the fall hunt. Upward of 50 black and silver foxes, in addition to large numbers of skins in the red and cross phases, a large proportion taken in the immediate region, have been traded at Fort Chipewyan during a single season.*

### ***Lutra canadensis*. River otter**

Only one otter bone was found, a pelvic fragment from the northwest pit.

Otters occurred throughout the northwest and yielded valuable furs; in 1821 a large, prime otter skin was worth two beaver skins and a small one was equivalent in value to one whole beaver (Innis 1970: 319).

### **Mustelidae. Weasel family**

A lower left canine tooth lacking most of the root and with a worn enamel surface is assigned to this family. It probably came from a skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) or marten (*Martes americana*). The tooth was excavated from the western part of the central room.

### ***Alces alces*. Moose**

Four vertebrae and three long-bone fragments were identified as belonging to two or more moose. Three of these vertebrae, probably belonging to the same individual and deposited together, were found in fill of the southernmost of the southwest pits and the fourth came from the west part of the central room. The long-bone pieces were excavated from the west part of the central room and the north room. Two fragments of radius plus ulna and an atlas show cut marks.

The moose was an important animal to the economy of the fur-trade posts, being a major source of red meat along with caribou and often bison and elk. As late as 1903–04 some northern posts still depended on moose meat; over 40 moose were killed that winter in the Fort Simpson area (west of Great Slave Lake on the

Mackenzie River) to supply the fort (Preble 1908: 132). Richardson (1836: 498) writes that the moose “furnishes the best and most juicy meat, with the exception of the rein-deer, the flesh of which, when in season, is more delicate. A full-grown fat moose deer weighs 1000 or 1200 pounds. The skin, when dressed, forms the best leather for mocassins.”

The Chipewyan name for moose is *deneeé*, in the Cree dialect of the Fort Chipewyan area it is called *mooswa*, and this is the origin of its English name (Hohn 1973: 170).

### ***Rangifer tarandus*. Caribou**

Seven bones including vertebrae, leg fragments and part of a right lower jaw were identified as caribou. Four pieces were found outside the building to the west; two lower leg fragments came from the central room and the jaw from the southeast room. The MNI is one. Butchering cuts occur on a leg fragment (proximal end of a metacarpal) and a vertebra.

Barren-ground caribou reach the Lake Athabasca region in winter when the herds migrate south into the forest from the tundra, but the animals usually pass by the eastern end of the lake rather than the western end. The larger woodland caribou occur to the west and southwest of the lake throughout the year, making only short seasonal movements. The identified bones are closer in size to the woodland form.

### **Cervidae. Deer family**

Five bones can be assigned to family but not to genus or species, although they resemble caribou most closely. A small piece of an ulna came from the northwest pit and three other fragments were found west of the building; the provenience of the fifth piece is unknown. Two fragments exhibit cut marks. A separate individual cannot be assumed on the basis of these bones, for none of them duplicate any elements in the caribou or moose categories.

### ***Bison bison*. Bison**

Two front leg fragments, a radius and ulna, were recovered from the excavations north of the building. Both pieces are part of the same individual. The ulna fragment has faint cut marks on the medial side of the olecranon. These bones compare well in size with a radius and ulna of an adult male wood bison (NMC 39875) in the National Museum of Natural Sciences collections. A thoracic vertebra spine fragment from the north southwest pit has also been assigned to this species.

Wood bison (*Bison bison athabascaae*) ranged over the Lake Athabasca-Great Slave Lake area in the 19th century but the herds were smaller and less abundant than those of the plains bi-

son to the south. Franklin's 1819 expedition (quoted in Preble 1908: 145), while travelling near the mouth of the Athabasca River, "observed the traces of herds of buffaloes, where they had crossed the river, the trees being trodden down and strewed, as if by a whirlwind." As late as 1885, Fort Chipewyan hunters still killed a few bison every winter, but by the end of the century wood bison were so scarce that legislation was enacted to protect the few remaining animals. Most of the bison now at Wood Buffalo National Park are a mixture of remnants of the original herds and imported plains bison.

Pemmican, a concentrated, long-lasting food made from pounded dried bison meat, fat and sometimes dried berries, was a staple food of voyageurs while travelling.

#### **Unidentified bone: Size uncertain mammal**

Three small charred pieces of bone were found in the eastern part of the central room. Not only were the fragments unidentifiable, but it was impossible even to determine the approximate size of the animals from which they came.

#### **Unidentified bone: Medium mammal**

A single toe bone from an animal about the size of a cat was recovered from the northwest pit.

#### **Unidentified bone: Medium to large mammal**

One hundred and seventy-four small bone fragments in this size class were found at the site, both within (54 fragments) and outside (120 fragments) the building. A group of 73 tiny pieces, 58 of which were burned, was found in the northernmost of the southwest pits and may represent material washed into the pit from the fireplace in the northwest corner of the southwest room. A few fragments were also found in the north and northwest pits. Two pieces bear cut marks.

#### **Unidentified bone: Large mammal**

One hundred and twenty-six unidentified large mammal bones were found at the site. Fifty-two rib fragments were recovered, one from the north room and the remainder from various locations outside the building (including one fragment from the north pit and one from the northwest pit). Most of the remaining 74 bones were long-bone fragments and a few pieces of vertebrae. Only three were found inside the building. The northwest pit contained two long-bone fragments and the north pit held three. Many bones had visible cut marks. Much of this large mammal bone is probably caribou, moose and bison scrap; several very large rib fragments are within the size range of bison.

#### **Molluscs**

Two small fragments of freshwater clam shell were found in the southwest room. Only two species of freshwater clam (family Unionidae) occur in the northwestern Canadian interior: *Anodonta grandis* and *Lampsilis radiata*. Both forms have been collected from the Athabasca River near Lake Athabasca (Clarke 1973: 87, 107). *Anodonta grandis* is a thin-shelled clam while *Lampsilis radiata* has a much heavier shell; the two archaeological fragments are thick and thus probably belong to the latter species.

## Discussion and Conclusions

Bones of most of the larger fish species occurring in Lake Athabasca were found among the faunal remains. Walleye and pike were the most abundant species, both in number of bones and MNI; these are fish of fairly shallow water habitat and can be caught during most months of the year. The whitefish, staple food of fur-trade wintering posts, here ranks only third in numbers of individuals, but whitefish bones are fragile and they may not have survived as well as those of walleye and pike. Grayling, *Thymallus arcticus*, and goldeye, *Hiodon alosoides*, were not found although both are good-sized, edible fish occurring in the delta area at the west end of Lake Athabasca (Scott and Crossman 1973: 302 map, 328 map).

The Peace-Athabasca delta, just a few miles west of Old Fort Point, is an area extremely rich in waterfowl, particularly during spring and fall when many species migrate through the area: thus it is interesting that so few waterfowl bones were found at the site. If the site is assumed to be Fort Wedderburn II, then this paucity becomes more understandable, for the occupants would have been there after the major flights of migrating birds had passed southward in fall and before spring migration began in earnest. The presence of grouse and ptarmigan in the faunal remains indicates that these edible birds were hunted as well as the larger aquatic species. Probably all birds found at the site were used for food although the trumpeter swan was valued for its skin as well as its flesh and goose skins were also occasional trade items at the fur posts.

Among the mammals, all three large ungulates which ranged through this region – caribou, moose and bison – were found at this site. Only two varying hares occur although this species was often a major food item at posts. Four furbearers – beaver, Arctic fox, red fox and otter – were definitely identified and as many as seven (adding the unidentified mustelid, wolf and possibly coyote) might have been present. Of this group only beaver and otter were valued highly for meat as well as fur; however, during periods of food scarcity almost any kind of meat was eaten. Thus the furbearers found here could have been food items, animals trapped near the site and brought into camp to be skinned, or both.

Of domestic animals, the dog was almost certainly present despite the fact that no single canid fragment could be identified unequivocally as this species. The dogs at Fort Wedderburn I were probably taken along in the move to Fort Wedderburn II. No domestic ungulates such as horse, cow, sheep or pig were recorded from the faunal material and this is in keeping with the proposed 1817–18 date for the site. Perhaps the first ungulate in-

troduced to this area was the horse; one was known to have been at Fort Wedderburn in 1820–21, after the fort had been moved back to its original location (Krause 1976: 33), and Innis (1970: 295) notes that the journal of 1823–24 mentions horses in use at Fort Chipewyan.

Few general conclusions can be made about butchering or cooking at this site because of the small size of the sample. Fish, birds and some mammals probably were brought to the site whole, since skeletal elements from various parts of the body were present in many cases. Large mammals could have been brought in as sections or entire animals. Beaver, Arctic fox, red fox and otter are represented by major body bones indicating that some furbearers arrived at the fort as whole animals rather than as skins. Cut marks were found on bones of pike, swan, goose, hare, beaver, moose, caribou and bison and seem to be primarily butchering marks, although some of the cuts on bird bones may have been made during removal of meat after cooking. The only clear example of a skinning cut is a beaver distal tibia fragment showing marks where the pelt was cut away. Not many bones were burned: several pike and walleye bones, a single unidentified bird femur, a beaver tibia, three red fox bones and some fragmentary unidentified mammal bones. Burning does not necessarily indicate cooking; it could result from deliberate disposal of bones in a fire or chance burning of bone refuse.

Archaeological evidence indicates that the site occupation was brief, and this in itself could account for so few animal remains being found. Another reason for the scarcity of bones at Old Fort Point may be the presence there of dogs. Dogs are efficient bone destroyers and can chew up some bones to the point where they leave no archaeological trace. Many of the fish, bird and mammal bones from the site bore tooth marks and other indications of gnawing by large carnivores, probably dogs.

Calculations of usable meat (based on MNI) provided by species which may have served as food are useful at localities where large numbers of individuals have been identified but are of doubtful value at a small site such as Old Fort Point where the presence of one or a few large animals can distort the results. Nevertheless, these calculations have been made and are included in Table 1. A total of 1035.1 kg of edible meat is estimated from the faunal remains, divided among the vertebrate classes as follows: fish, 103.5 kg (10%); birds, 22.1 kg (2%), and mammals, 909.5 kg (88%). The single bison accounts for nearly half of the total usable meat at this site and mammals seem to have provided a much larger proportion of meat than did fish. However, keeping in mind that many fish bones were discarded by the ar-

chaeologists because of their poor condition and that perhaps only part of a bison might have been brought back to the fort rather than an entire animal, fish may actually have played a much larger part in the economy than indicated by the bone remains analyzed. In addition, the figures for kilograms of usable meat per individual are averages which do not take into account large individuals, particularly important in the case of fish where the adult size range is extensive. Birds provided only a small amount of meat in comparison with fish and mammals.

Note that no weight and usable meat estimates are given in Table 1 for the two individuals classed as Tetraonidae and Mustelidae or the two *Canis* individuals. Since these animals cannot be accurately identified, one can only guess at their average weights. However, the bird would have supplied less than .5 kg of meat, the mustelid probably less than 1 kg and each *Canis* probably somewhere between 25 and 50 kg. Percentages of edible meat provided by the three classes would change only slightly if these figures were added to the totals in Table 1.

Table 2 gives bone numbers and weights for the different vertebrate classes and is included to aid comparison of these data with those from other sites in which bone numbers and weights have been stressed as analytic tools. While both these types of information are useful, many adjustments must be made to raw data before they can be compared, in order to reflect natural differences between classes in number of skeletal elements and skeletal weight.

Depositional patterns in the faunal material are unclear. Many bones could have been thrown over the nearby scarp and thus lost to archaeologists. Site erosion caused movement of artifacts downslope toward the northwest. Although an attempt was made to fit together broken bones, only one crossmend could be made, and that between two fragments of a large goose humerus found in the sub-floor pit in the north room and in the northwest pit. This seems to indicate that bones, too, eroded out in a northwesterly direction. In general, bones occur inside the building and outside to the north and west (the direction of the downslope). The north and central rooms contained moderate amounts of fish, bird and mammal bones, while the southeast and southwest rooms contained lesser amounts of fish bone, no bird bones and only a few mammal bones. Even when the two south rooms are considered together (each is only one-half the size of the other rooms) they contain little bone compared to the north and central rooms.

Twelve pits (Fig. 1, Table 3) are present, five within the building in the north, central and southeast rooms and seven outside to the east, north and west. The three pits east of the building are

devoid of animal bones and four of the inside pits (in the central and southeast rooms) have no bones or only a very few. Of all the inside pits, only the sub-floor pit in the north room contained a significant quantity of faunal remains. Eighty-six fragments representing five fish species (whitefish, lake trout, pike, sucker and walleye), swan, medium and large goose, hare, unidentified large bird and mammal and a bone of uncertain class were found there. The southernmost of the southwest pits held three moose vertebrae but no other bones. The north pit outside the building contained 103 bones among which were whitefish, pike, walleye, ptarmigan, Tetraonidae, hare, red fox and unidentified medium to large and large mammal bones. The northwest exterior pit held 119 bones including whitefish, pike, walleye, merganser, Tetraonidae, medium and large goose, *Canis* sp. (wolf?), otter, Arctic fox and some unidentifiable medium to large and large mammal pieces. The northernmost of the southwest pits contained 435 fragments, mostly fish (whitefish, pike, sucker and walleye), as well as one ptarmigan bone, medium and large bird fragments, a bison vertebral spine and numerous fragments from medium to large mammals. Fish, bird and mammal bones are represented in the pits in approximately the same proportions in which they occur over the whole site, although the sub-floor pit in the north room contains nearly as many bird as mammal bones. While some pits may contain bones secondarily deposited by erosion, the relatively large quantities of bone in four pits may indicate that those pits served some sort of storage or disposal function.

Information on the season during which this site was occupied was important in determining its identity. Historical and archaeological evidence pointed toward the site being Fort Wedderburn II, but was not conclusive. The faunal analysis, while not proving that this is indeed the fort site, is in accord with this identification. The fish at the site could have been caught in most seasons; fish were taken throughout the year at Lake Athabasca outposts although fishing was poor in summer and the major part of the catch was collected in late fall and early winter. Most of the mammals yield no information on seasonality since they could be caught year-round; however, furbearers were more likely to have been taken during winter when their fur was prime. No bones of young birds or mammals were found, thus providing no evidence for summer occupation although not denying it. In contrast, the presence of Arctic fox and willow ptarmigan remains indicates occupation during the cold season. The Arctic fox's range is usually farther north than Lake Athabasca but some animals occasionally wander south during fall and winter. Willow ptarmigan breed on the tundra, migrating south to the forest in October and November and returning north in April. Both these species would

have had to be taken during the period October to April, the approximate time during which Fort Wedderburn II existed. Spruce and ruffed grouse are resident in the area all year. Swans, geese and ducks would have been in the region during spring, summer and fall; the large goose bones may represent migrant forms occurring in the area during spring and fall or perhaps late summer and fall only. Possibly the scarcity of bird bones is an indication that the site was not in use during the late spring, summer or early fall when waterfowl would have been abundant and easily obtained.

Table 1. Summary of Animal Remains

Species	Area*						Total	MNI	Estimated live weight/ individual (kilograms)	Usable meat/ individual† (kilograms)	Total usable meat (kilograms)
	North room	Central room	South-west room	South-east room	Outside building	Indefinite provenience					
<b>Fish</b>											
Whitefish or cisco ( <i>Coregonus</i> species)	8	24			23		55	11	1.8	1.4	15.4
Lake trout ( <i>Salvelinus namaycush</i> )	1	6				1	8	3	4.5	3.6	10.8
Northern pike ( <i>Esox lucius</i> )	14	19	4	3	57	22	119	13	2.3	1.8	23.4
Sucker ( <i>Catostomus</i> species)	2	11		2	6	1	22	4	1.4	1.1	4.4
Burbot ( <i>Lota lota</i> )		4					4	1	1.4	1.1	1.1
Walleye ( <i>Stizostedion vitreum</i> )	41	163	5	1	167	53	430	44	1.4	1.1	48.4
Total identified bones	66	227	9	6	253	77	638				
Total unidentified bones	49	1102	66	5	369	22	1613				
Total identified & unidentified bones	115	1329	75	11	622	99	2251				
Total MNI								76			
Total usable meat											103.5
<b>Birds</b>											
Trumpeter swan ( <i>Olor buccinator</i> )	1				1		2	1	11.3	7.9	7.9
Goose											
medium	1	1			6		8	3	2.6	1.8	5.4
large	1				5		6	2	4.1	2.9	5.8
Mallard ( <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i> )					1		1	1	1.1	.8	.8
Common merganser ( <i>Mergus merganser</i> )					1		1	1	1.4	1.0	1.0
Spruce grouse ( <i>Canachites canadensis</i> )		1			1		2	1	.5	.3	.3
Ruffed grouse ( <i>Bonasa umbellus</i> )		1					1	1	.7	.5	.5
Willow ptarmigan ( <i>Lagopus lagopus</i> )	1	1			2		4	1	.6	.4	.4
Grouse and ptarmigan (family Tetraonidae)	1	1			2		4	1			
Total identified bones	5	5			19		29				
Unidentified bone											
medium bird		2			1		3				
medium to large bird		4					4				
large bird	4	4			13		21				
Total unidentified bones	4	10			14		28				
Total identified & unidentified bones	9	15			33		57				
Total MNI								12			
Total usable meat (kilograms)											22.1

Species	Area*						Total	MNI	Estimated live weight/individual (kilograms)	Usable meat/individual† (kilograms)	Total usable meat (kilograms)
	North room	Central room	South-west room	South-east room	Outside building	Indefinite provenience					
<b>Mammals</b>											
Snowshoe hare ( <i>Lepus americanus</i> )	2		1		3		6	2	1.4	.7	1.4
Beaver ( <i>Castor canadensis</i> )					2		2	1	25.0	17.5	17.5
Dog, coyote, wolf ( <i>Canis</i> species)		1			2		3	2			
Arctic fox ( <i>Alopex lagopus</i> )					7		7	1	3.2	1.6	1.6
Red fox ( <i>Vulpes vulpes</i> )	2				16	1	19	2	3.6	1.8	3.6
River otter ( <i>Lutra canadensis</i> )					1		1	1	8.2	5.7	5.7
Weasel family (Mustelidae)		1					1	1			
Moose ( <i>Alces alces</i> )	2	2			3		7	2	363.2	181.6	363.2
Caribou ( <i>Rangifer tarandus</i> )	2			1	4		7	1	124.9	62.5	62.5
Deer family (Cervidae)					4	1	5				
Bison ( <i>Bison bison</i> )					3		3	1	908.0	454.0	454.0
Total identified bones	6	6	1	1	45	2	61				
Unidentified bone											
size uncertain		3					3				
medium mammal					1		1				
medium to large mammal	9	40	3	2	115	5	174				
large mammal	13	19	1	1	85	7	126				
Total unidentified bones	22	62	4	3	201	12	304				
Total identified & unidentified bones	28	68	5	4	246	14	365				
Total MNI								14			
Total usable meat (kilograms)											909.5
Class uncertain	1						1				
<b>Molluscs</b>											
Freshwater mussel Unionidae			2				2	1			

\* Bones from the 12 pits are included in this table under the appropriate area headings.

† % of live weight/individual as follows: fish, 80%; birds, 70%; heavy-bodied animals, 70%; long-legged mammals, 50%.



**Table 2. Bone Numbers, Weights and Percentages by Class**

<i>Class</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage of total number</i>	<i>Weight (grams)</i>	<i>Percentage of total weight</i>
Mammal	365	13.6	5410.8	86.7
Bird	57	2.1	121.8	1.9
Fish	2251	84.1	707.5	11.3
Class uncertain	1	<0.1	0.1	<0.1
	2674	99.8	6240.2	99.9

**Table 3. Animal Remains from Pits**

<i>Pit designation</i>	<i>Fish</i>	<i>Bird</i>	<i>Mammal</i>	<i>Class uncertain</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Outside pits</b>					
North	73	2	28	0	103
Northwest	80	8	31	0	119
North-southwest	340	3	92	0	435
South-southwest	0	0	3	0	3
Northeast	0	0	0	0	0
North-southeast	0	0	0	0	0
South-southeast	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Inside sub-floor pits</b>					
North room	74	5	6	1	86
Central room					
East end	2	0	1	0	3
Centre	0	0	0	0	0
Southwest corner	0	0	0	0	0

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## Canadian Historic Sites No. 26

### **Grubstake to Grocery Store: Supplying the Klondike, 1897–1907**

by Margaret Archibald

This particular version of the Klondike story is devoted particularly to the entrepreneur, the person who saw a gold strike not simply in terms of dust or nuggets, but rather envisaged the activity that gold would engender, imagined the placer boom town in its lively totality and foresaw the mining community in terms of its most blatant needs and its probable life-style. This version focuses not only on the entrepreneur in Dawson with his vigorous spirit of enterprise and profit but also on his predecessors – the traders along the Yukon River during the days of earlier and smaller rushes, and the west coast outfitters with their concept of a grubstake and an understanding of the rigorous demands of the Yukon Valley.

What makes their story so worth telling is that the stage on which they played out their parts was so bleak, so inhospitable and unyielding, that what they built stands out sharply by comparison. In less than a decade a legendary city was built and all but abandoned.

### **St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Lake Bennett, British Columbia**

by Margaret Carter

"Wherever gold is found men are sure to flock, and the Church must follow the people and be prepared to make the sacrifices needed to meet their religious wants" stated the *Presbyterian Record* (September, 1899) as it explained the aim of the Church's Yukon mission to its readers. And so the Presbyterians followed fortune seekers who went north after the great Klondike discovery of 1896, ministering to the people and opening mission churches wherever they were needed. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lake Bennett, was the first of these missions founded in Canadian territory. Its history has been a well hidden secret; few people know it was not "abandoned before completion."



### **The Old Fort Point Site: Fort Wedderburn II?**

by Karlis Karklins

In 1971, as part of its Western Fur Trade Research Program, the National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, excavated a site on Old Fort Point at the west end of Lake Athabasca in northeastern Alberta. Initially believed to be Fort Chipewyan I, a historically significant fur trading post operated by the North West Company from 1788 to about 1800, subsequent research suggests that the site may have been the temporary 1817–18 location of Fort Wedderburn, a Hudson's Bay Company post operating on the lake from 1815 to 1821.

### **Analysis of Animal Remains from the Old Fort Point Site, Northern Alberta**

by Anne Meachem Rick

Results of the analysis of a small faunal assemblage from Old Fort Point on Lake Athabasca, northern Alberta, are in accord with the site's identification as Fort Wedderburn II, a Hudson's Bay Company post which existed at Old Fort Point from October 1817 to March 1818. The analysis also provides some information on the diet of the traders at the post.