THE BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA,
DAWSON, YUKON, 1898-1968
A USE AND STRUCTURAL HISTORY
by Richard Stuart
1979
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Acknowledgements

To research and write a structural history requires the co-operation of individuals of related disciplines and expertise. This one was made possible by the assistance of a number of people, particularly the extant recording team of Gary Duguay, Dan Kostiuk and Gord Menzies: E. Bush who wrote the pioneering study of banking in the Yukon in 1973, and who made freely available to the author copies of his research notes; and John Gould who put the author in contact with many of the informants.

The author would also like to thank all those who freely made available their time and information about the bank building: Muriel Cruden, David E. Gilliland, Charles W. Harrison, George Hunter, Mrs. Anne Hutchings, Donald McNab, Roy and Marjorie McPhail, Mike Rogers, Arthur Rooney, John Theed and Ben Warnsby.

Frits Pannekoek, Ian Clarke, Margaret Archibald, Jean Claude Lebeuf, Don Kostiuk, Gord Menzies and John Gould all commented on an earlier draft.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the technical assistance of Dan Kostiuk and Gord Menzies who executed all the diagrams used in this study.
The Bank of British North America: A Structural History

I. Background

a) The Yukon Economy

A classic simplification of Canadian economic history has been to present it as a conflict between the north-south pull of American economic power, and the east-west system of the St. Lawrence system, the C.P.R. and the National Policy. The situation in the Yukon was slightly different, particularly in the two decades before the Gold Rush. The main external economic links were not "north-south" with Canada, but rather "east-west" with American Alaska. Most of the whites in the Yukon basin were either prospectors or employees of American commercial companies. The former sought placer gold deposits in this northernmost extension of the Cordillera system, the latter supplied them with the provisions that made this possible. The companies operated through Alaska, purchased their supplies from American companies, especially Seattle and San Francisco, and brought them north in American ships. Some of the gold used to purchase these supplies originated in Canada, but most of it passed via this system into the United States. The system was based upon the economic unity of the Yukon River transportation system on both sides of the nominal border, the 141st meridian. The upper Yukon district, de jure part of the Queen's Dominion from 1825, was in fact an eastward extension of American Alaska. The gold that came from the Yukon River's bars and tributaries enriched the territory not at all, and Canada but little.

Chemically inert, extremely soft, and located in minute deposits, the need for gold either in lode or bullion form
had been one of the strongest forces behind the European expansion of the mercantile era. By the late 19th century, the accumulation of bullion was no longer the basis of "free trade" economies, but gold still determined the values of the world's currencies. As long as the money supply was related to the amount of gold backing it, its value remained fixed. But this also ultimately limited purchasing power. During the "Great Depression" from the 1870s on, a disparity developed between the expanding productive capacity of the industrial economies, and their capacity to consume the goods produced with a money supply based upon gold.

For the prosperity of the 1850s and 1860s to return, either the "gold standard" would have to be abandoned, or new sources of supply found.\(^1\) The former was unthinkable, the latter sent prospectors scrabbling for it all over the world, including the inhospitable wilds of the upper Yukon.\(^2\) The California and Australian gold finds rushes had ushered in an era of unprecedented prosperity in the 1850s; the geological formation of the northern Cordillera suggested that gold might be present there too, with the same effect on the world economy. From the 1870s, gold deposits were uncovered in sufficient volume to attract even more prospectors who covered even larger areas. The gold they found and extracted in increasing volume was not, however, to be used as the basis for white settlement. There was to be no "frontier" as in California, the Dakotas, or even British Columbia. Nor was it of much direct benefit to Canada, although there were Canadians among the prospectors. For the most part it was extracted and removed to the United States, the money supply of which was thereby expanded.

From 1894, with the arrival of the North-West Mounted Police, and the assertion of Canadian fiscal sovereignty, the Dominion at least began to share in the disposal of the Yukon's riches. American goods continued to flow in, and Yukon gold out to the U.S., but now both processes passed through the hands of the Canadian police. Its collection of customs
duties and of royalties was important, but much more would be needed if the Yukon district were to be of real benefit to Canada. The government needed the assistance of Canadian financial institutions to counter American economic power and to divert the Yukon's wealth towards Canada.

In the United States, a state-based banking system had developed in response to area needs. Most were small, locally-controlled, and although often weak, were oriented towards the development of the local economy. The Yukon basin, however, lacked a population sufficiently committed to settlement in the area or wealthy enough to develop a local bank on American lines. In any case there was no real alternative to a Canadian bank, either economically or politically. By the 1890s, Canada's federally chartered and highly centralized banking system was taking the form familiar today. While there were still some locally based "private banks" in existence, large commercial institutions chartered in central Canada were expanding by absorbing existing regional banks, or by opening branches across the country. In the U.S., local savings went into local banks for local use. The Canadian system had the effect of channelling dispersed savings into a few large concentrations in central Canada. The national banks were the counterpart of the Federal government, centralizing economic power in Montreal and Toronto as it sought to centralize politically in Ottawa. As it became obvious in the West after World War I, such a highly centralized system ultimately proved detrimental to peripheral areas, but the immediate effects of soundly financed, experienced, strong institutions in newly settled districts were usually beneficial. 3

The companies, the Alaska Commerical and the North American Trading and Transportation (A.C.C. and N.A.T.&T. Co.) provided some banking services to the miners whom they grubstaked and whose gold they held and transported. However, their interests were commercial, and they would have welcomed
the establishment of a bank in the Yukon. As the development of a local bank was unlikely, the companies turned to at least one Canadian institution, the Bank of Commerce, and suggested that it establish a branch at Fort Cudahy. The bank management declined the invitation, deterred by the prospects of insufficient business, inadequate police protection, and extreme isolation. Before the Gold Rush no Canadian bank regarded the Yukon as potentially worth its consideration, and a locally-based bank was unlikely, so existing economic ties with the U.S. remained strong. Except for duties and royalties collected, the Yukon was of little economic benefit—or interest—to Canada.

b The Gold Rush
The Klondike Gold Rush changed this. The arrival of gold measured by the ton at U.S. West Coast ports in 1897 transformed perceptions of this remote area; for the Canadian government, this meant that full sovereignty had to be asserted, and that the wealth of the Yukon basin must benefit Canada.

The Rush also undermined many of the earlier objections to a Canadian bank establishing a branch in the Yukon. It solved problems related to the volume of business, isolation and communication, while the Dominion government would enforce peace, order and good government in the mining camps. The government also needed a bank for its own purposes, both to act as its agent and to counter strong existing American institutions. Elsewhere in Canada, the Bank of Montreal acted as the government's banker. Like its major competitors, it was established across Canada by the 1890s, indeed, it was particularly strong in British Columbia. However, it was a cautious enterprise, reluctant to overextend itself during the period when its rivals' branches proliferated. Its policy was
...to establish strategic branches in the most important centres and to avoid, if possible, the unnecessary opening of branches in boom towns that would soon prove unprofitable when business conditions settled down to normal.7

The Bank of Commerce did not regard the Klondike Region as unfavourable as did the Bank of Montreal. There was every prospect of good business there and besides, it was assured or the government's business, which the Bank of Montreal did not want.8 But it was not to have the field to itself. The Bank of British North America was also interested in the area, and proposed establishing a branch in Dawson.

The B.N.A. Bank was something of an anomaly in the Canadian banking system, a national bank which operated on the basis of a charter issued not in Canada but in Britain.9 In 1898, it was almost sixty years old in British North America, having established its first branch in the Canadas in 1840. From here, it extended east to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, and west to British Columbia and even California. It was held to be a dynamic institution which, although controlled by directors in London, was finely tuned to conditions in Canada. It also played an important role in raising the general level of bank personnel in Canada, bringing over employees with English and Scottish experience who found their way into other banks.10

The epic tale of the dash from Vancouver to Dawson of the B.N.A. Bank's advance party ahead of its rival has been told elsewhere; suffice to note that it arrived in Dawson on 17 May 1898, and opened for business under its assistant manager, David Doig, the next day.11 Although lacking the assurances the Bank of Commerce had of government business, it had already lined up potential customers.12 Also unlike its rival it did not have a site secured at the Government Reserve, so had to find one in the townsite proper.
c The First Site, 1898-1899

When Doig and his small party arrived in May, Dawson had not yet recovered from the previous winter. The mining camp was still there; by June it had become the boomtown of myth. The "town" was long and narrow, stretching along both sides of Front Street for a mile, behind which it straggled back towards the hill a short way (Figure 1). The north end of Dawson was the warehouse and embryonic "industrial district." South of this to the slough was a rambling, ungraded, muddy thoroughfare flanked by log buildings "occupied principally by saloons, gamblers, real estate and mining brokers." Through this area all would-be miners had to pass on their way to the creeks, and to its saloons, dance halls and brothels they returned to spend their gold dust. It was the richest "claim" of all. South of here lay the Government Reserve occupied by the police and administration and by the Bank of Commerce from June 15th.

There being no obvious financial district, David Doig picked a site in the commercial area, but fairly close to the police in the Reserve. Every evening, he had to send the gold under guard to the Reserve for safekeeping. He chose for the bank's first premises a front room rented for $50.00 a week in the "Victoria Hotel", a two storey frame building on Front between Princess and Harper. While satisfactory in some ways, the site was too close to the river; it was flooded out May 30 (see Figure 3). The bank reopened in June 6, but moved two days later to a frame and canvas tent on higher ground near the corner of Second Avenue and Second (Queen) Street. (Figure 2)

The B.N.A. Bank did not have ties with the government, so it had to make mutually advantageous arrangements for a site with Dawson businessmen. As the city took shape in a gridiron pattern behind Front Street, the commercial advantages of a central, and flood-free, location at Second and Queen became obvious. Doig soon came in contact with Alex
McDonald (Figure 27), the "King of the Klondike," whose mining interests provided him with the means to invest in the most profitable "claim" in the Yukon—the Dawson townsite. Negotiations with McDonald must have started soon after Doig's arrival; in mid-June he wrote the Bank's general manager...

...I have almost completed arrangements with Alex McDonald, the Klondike Croesus, to put up a two storey log building for the Bank, the ground floor for office and the upstairs for accommodation for the staff, and he has promised to start work on it as soon as he can get the nails and logs—two scarce commodities in the Dawson market—logs in the meantime are worth $9 each and nails $20 a lb.

He is exceedingly anxious to have us there as he proposes putting up several buildings on some lots adjacent, and I have pointed out to him that they rent at high figures on account of their proximity to the Bank.

The arrangements must have been mutually satisfactory; the Bank obtained this site on a year's lease for about $350.00 a month.16

Construction of the building proceeded apace, and in mid-July, the Sun reported,

Alex McDonald is erecting a substantial log building on the corner of Second Avenue and Second Street for the new quarters of the Bank of British North America. It is two stories, 26 x 45 ft., carefully constructed of selected logs under the direction of Duncan Stewart. Its value reaches $10,000. The bank and assay office will occupy the first floor and the upstairs will be used by the bank officials for living rooms.17

The basic layout of the existing building (Figure 4) was probably based on this original one. In both cases, the main entrance was an angled door facing onto the corner of Second and Queen. The staff quarters in this first building, as the second, would probably have been entered through the door facing onto Second Avenue, with the assay office either in the shed along the south wall of the building, or else inside it, south of the staff entrance. It was constructed of logs,
probably spruce. Under the pressure of demand for building wood in Dawson that summer, the wood was more likely to be green than dried.¹⁸ Except for the main entrance, the doors and windows were merely planed lumber. The roof appears to have been sheet metal, as were the stove pipes from wood stoves inside extending through it. There was no electricity available in the summer of 1898, merely oil lamps, so the ground floor windows were quite large in order to allow as much natural light as possible into the banking area.

There exists no detailed account of the first building's structure, construction, etc., but there is for the Bank of Commerce's premises on the Government Reserve. As both were built about the same time under similar circumstances, the following note on the Bank of Commerce is worth considering for the light it shed on construction techniques in the summer of 1898.

"...This building...was constructed of logs sawn on three sides with bark left on the fourth or outer side. The roof was made of two thicknesses of boards, covered by an inch of moss and over three inches of mud...The second storey was divided by partitions of 1" match-boards and was used as staff apartments...The building was illuminated during the first year by lamps and heated by large wood burning stoves..."¹⁹

The only information available about the use of the interior comes from Neville Armstrong, a friend of Doig's. The staff, English and Scottish "lads" in the main, messed in the building, taking part of their salary in foodstuffs. In the first year, and later, they would prepare elaborate orders for "the most expensive canned foods imaginable," which their cook prepared, and which provided the basis for a lively social life. Doig lived with the rest of the staff, helping keep expenses up with champagne breakfasts. These made a deep impression upon Armstrong.²⁰

The landscaping around the bank building was primitive, as figure 5 indicates. The "moose pasture," Dawson's alluvial plain, had been stripped of its protective covering, and was
a bog. Except for the waterfront, the whole townsite north of the slough lay within the permafrost zone. As a foundation for large buildings, a less attractive surface could hardly be imagined. Its high water content kept it solid when cold, but once thawed, it turned into a glutinous muck neither water nor soil, which changed its texture with the seasons. A heated building standing on posts in this soil would soon shift as uneven melting and the weight of the structure took their toll. As this view of the street beside the bank demonstrates, it was an unpromising medium for construction, which would eventually have necessitated the reconstruction of the bank building.

d Banking during the Rush
The Bank of British North America had opened in its new quarters by August, offering a fuller range of banking services than had hitherto been possible. On August 15, the second party reached Dawson via St. Michael bringing with it a steel vault and assay equipment. The branch manager, James Cran, the assayer, John Warden, and a clerk named Hudson thereby avoided the horrors of the Skagway-Bennett-Whitehorse route.21

Only an extremely profitable enterprise could sustain the massive expenses of banking in Gold Rush Dawson, as well as cater to the staff's taste for caviar and champagne. The B.N.A. Bank obviously fit this description, although no figures are available. It was in Dawson, like every other individual and firm, to make money, but unlike many others, it did so. The bank arranged for drafts on exchanges with the outside world, (both Canada and the U.S.), thereby facilitating the removal of gold from the Klondike as well as the import of capital and consumer goods. It advanced loans, at rates which, even under the inflationary circumstances, were exorbitant.22 Most importantly, the bank purchased the gold dust that served as Dawson's currency in exchange for more widely negotiable bank notes.
Related to the purchase of gold dust (although not essential to it) was its assaying and reduction into gold bricks. As early as March, 1898 both the Commerce and the B.N.A. knew that the government was not planning to establish an assay office in Dawson.\(^{23}\) There was no ban on local individuals or firms assaying gold, but none could offer the range of other services the banks could.

Soon after its establishment in Dawson, the Commerce set up the first assay office. After some initial technical problems, it had this unique service to offer, and used it to attract business. It was able to make four complete shipments of gold out that summer; the B.N.A. only one, in the fall.\(^{24}\) Inevitably, perhaps, both banks came under newspaper attack for their handling of gold dust and for their assaying policies.\(^{25}\)

The question of the assay of gold dust, its melting into bars, and its removal from the Yukon was important for individual miners and ultimately for the territory. Simply stated, its use as a medium of exchange circulating in the Yukon economy stimulated local business. Although, its value varied from about $14.00 to $18.50 an ounce, and gradually declined, it was generally considered reasonably satisfactory. However, once it became merely a commodity to be exchanged for bank notes and coins (which each of the banks imported), its removal from the territory was made easier.

The administration wanted to earn full royalties on gold production and also to mitigate the inflationary effects of the dust's depreciating value. Thus encouraged, the banks acted as siphons, facilitating the removal of gold upon which royalties had been paid to more pleasant regions. A bank more directly based upon the local economy, as in the United States, might have been inclined towards keeping the wealth produced in that area in circulation there. As the branch of a larger system the B.N.A. Bank in Dawson had no such commitment to the local economy, so was even less reluctant to ship
wealth out. In that Canada profitted from the gold to a greater degree than before, the situation had improved. But the territory derived as little as ever.

The banks were in a most advantageous situation. They benefitted from government insistence that gold dust eventually cease to be used as a medium of exchange, and from the charges made for assaying, storing, shipping and insuring the gold. There was no escape for the miners, who had to submit their gold to the banks' valuation of it. The branch made large enough profits to cover its expenses—and more, by charging up to 4 per cent of value for assaying, high interest rates and "bank charges," and a percentage commission for drafts and royalties.

The Fire of April 1899
A town of log and frame buildings which had to be heated by wood-burning stoves during the long winter was particularly vulnerable to fire. Dried out by the heat of such stoves and by the low humidity, and often too close to red hot pipes, the roofs and walls of Dawson were little more than fuel waiting for a spark. The government was well aware of the vulnerability of such a town at the end of a long supply chain which shut down in the winter, and as early as 1898, had framed "An Ordinance for the Prevention of Fires." Alex McDonald and the B.N.A. Bank's directors were equally conscious of the threat of fire in winter. The building was insured for $15,000, so was probably constructed and equipped in conformity with the Ordinance.

But, in conditions of crowding, minimal urban planning and high combustibility, this building was ultimately only as secure as the least fireproof structure. Both were equally dependent upon an unreliable fire department.

The inevitable fire broke out on the night of 26 April 1899, under conditions of extreme cold. It began in the Bodega Saloon on the west side of Front and, after the fire
department failed to stop it, consumed much of the centre of town. By the time it was brought under control 111 buildings had been destroyed by the fire, and another 15 in the attempt to contain it.\footnote{31}

Among those lost was the Bank of British North America building, blocks from the Bodega. Once the fire went out of control, its destruction was inevitable, but the failure of the "fireproof" vault (Figure 6) was not. Fortunately, safes inside the vault were intact, but all combustible contents were lost and the gold either fused, or blown out.\footnote{32} Panning of the site recovered most of the ore; a combination of papers saved, copies of reports sent to headquarters, and depositors' information enabled the bank to recover from the disaster.
II Reconstruction of the Bank

a The End of the Boom

The fire of April 1899 had a cathartic effect on Dawson, ending the boom town, and making possible the construction of a more durable city. Its price was high in terms of property destroyed, but it forced the evolution of Dawson along to a higher stage of urban sophistication.

As construction of a better built city out of superior materials brought in from outside, in a more settled environment proceeded during the early summer of 1899, the least stable elements in Dawson—the stampeder's, boomer's, and camp followers set off for the next "Dawson" at Nome in Alaska. The boom was over; supplies would now more adequately meet the needs of the population, and prices would stabilize. The development of municipal services and the improvement of the town site indicated a general confidence that Dawson would not follow the path of other mining camps into oblivion but would, in fact, develop into the metropolis for the rich placer (and hard rock) deposits of the Yukon basin. For the first time, people other than natives began to consider the Yukon not just a treasure chest to be looted, but a real frontier, and a permanent home. In the end, this proved a fantasy, but their efforts to make it be so resulted in Edwardian Dawson, the ghost of which remains today.

There was not only a desire to build a proper city; there were now the means. The shortages of supplies and insatiable demand for the crudest of unstripped logs for both mines and town were no longer a serious problem. By the summer of 1899, the size and wealth of the Dawson market
drew all building materials available outside to it. Similarly, most men lured to the Yukon by the Gold Strike realized they were unlikely to grow rich in mining, so returned to their earlier jobs in order to stay alive. Many were tradesmen who provided the skilled labour making this urban "boom," which went on until 1903, possible.

The most advanced materials and skilled labour came into Dawson, but several incentives originated locally. There was now lumber in abundance, produced in the seven local sawmills. Instead of the green logs of 1898 which soon warped and buckled, there was now available seasoned, planed lumber and the machinery to do mill work locally. Also arising out of local conditions were ordinances and regulations to drain the townsite, to improve sanitation, and to reduce the danger of fires by enforcing existing codes used outside, and by encouraging the use of non-combustible materials.

Although its primary function in the Yukon was essentially to expedite the removal of the territory's wealth, the development of a settled community for this would benefit the B.N.A. Bank. It was open for business as soon as possible after the fire; an advertisement in the Klondike Nugget several weeks later stated:

THE BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA


New premises at the old stand, on the corner of Second Avenue and Second Street.

E. O. Finlaison, Accountant - D. Doig, Manager

The same location would be used for the new building, which was again to be rented from Alex McDonald, whose "Hotel McDonald" was built across Second Avenue, and whose own office
was in the west side of the building. Although he did not receive actual title to the building from Ladue and Wilson until 1903, McDonald was assessed property taxes on it from 1902.

Except for what can be deduced from Figure 4, no structural information is available about the first building. For the existing one, however, extant recording and engineering investigation provide a full picture of a well-constructed frame building. Unfortunately the names of the contractor or men who built it cannot be found.

The basic plan of this building conforms closely to its predecessor. It is a two storey frame Classic Revival structure, approximately 12m. x 12m. square. It is balloon framed, supported on a post-mudsill foundation, and covered by asbestos building paper and corrugated iron. The first floor consisted of the bank itself (again entered from a door facing onto the corner), Alex McDonald's office on the west side of the building, and a separate assay office up against the south wall. The second floor, entered from a door on Second Avenue, was the employees' mess.

b The Foundation
Perennially frozen ground underlies the entire Dawson townsite, although the permafrost table is closer to the ground surface north of the slough than south. This is because the surface soil under the former is predominantly silt; under the latter sand deposited by the Klondike River allows better drainage. Trial and error over the past eighty years has demonstrated that the foundation which best combines efficiency and economy is one which consists of posts and jacks set in a ventilated crawl space on a gravel pad. Such a method was probably not unknown in early Dawson, but experience had not yet shown its superiority to other methods
of laying foundations.\(^{37}\)

The foundation for the British North America Bank building consisted of a mudsill and post system laid on the active layer of permafrost—a common type of foundation in Dawson.\(^{38}\) Under the original vault area, a large concrete pad was laid, but it proved impossible to determine whether this was laid on posts and mudsills. Later shifting would suggest it was not. The mudsill and post system provided support for the ground floor beams and columns as well as forming a crawl space skirted by retaining walls under the floors. This crawl space provided some ventilation, but exposure of the permafrost to the surface as well as drainage has caused pooling under the building and rotted the posts.

c. Exterior
The photograph in Figure 7 shows the north and east faces of the bank at a time when it was still nearing completion externally, but probably already in operation. This photograph most likely dates from June 1899; that in Figure 8 was taken afterwards, when the exterior sheathing was already in place and work was commencing on McDonald's Hotel, and Figure 9, a panorama dated 27 July 1899 shows both the bank and the hotel completed.

The exterior walls are balloon framed, consisting of 50mm. x 140mm. studs at 515mm. O.C. continuous from ground to roof level all around. The interior (Figure 7) and exterior (Figure 9) sheathing consists of 25mm. x 150mm. rough sawn lumber. The east and west wall studs are notched at the first floor level to let in the 25mm. x 150mm. ribbon boards that support the first floor joists. Diagonal bracing was set in place at the corners of the upper floor level to increase rigidity (Figure 7) above the balcony. The window lintels are generally two 50mm. x 140mm.
laid on flat. Most of the upper floor windows have diagonal bracing above the lintels in order to distribute the heavy roof loads more evenly to the adjoining studs. Some sawdust insulation was found between the walls, although it is difficult to determine if this was original to the building. Building paper was placed between the interior sheathing and the studs. Finally, corrugated iron plus asbestos building paper were put over the exterior sheathing. Under the circumstances in Dawson, this provided as effective a fire protection as was possible—an understandable concern to McDonald, the Bank, and the insurance companies.

The north face of the building (see Figure 11) had three windows (W1-03, W1-04, W1-05) on the ground floor, the first (W1-03) six-paned and the other two four-paned. There was also a door (fD1-06) into the office on the west side of the building, and a corner double door (Dl-01) into the bank. On the second floor there were four windows, (W2-06, W2-07, W2-08, W2-09), doubled in the centre and flanked by two single windows to its left and right, in a more symmetrical pattern than the ground floor.

The same number of windows were built into the east face, as well as one door (Dl-02) near the end. This led to the staff mess upstairs. Again, the window nearest the main entrance (W1-02) was symmetrical with W1-03 and larger than the other two (W1-01 and W1-08) presumably to allow maximum light into the banking area. The main entrance to the bank was a double door, each one with a single pane of glass, set on an angle back from the east and north walls. Upstairs there were three four-paned windows (W2-03, W2-17 and W2-16) as well as a door (fD2-17) onto the balcony.

The other faces are impossible to determine from photographic evidence, although extant recording investigation has indicated window locations. On the south face, there was one window (fWl-11) on the west position of the ground
floor façade, and another (fW2-19) near the centre of the upper floor. There were also doors into the annex, (fD1-12) downstairs and (fD2-14 and 2-15) upstairs. On the west side of the building, there were four windows (Wl-06, Wl-07, fWl-09 and fWl-10), all four-paned, as well as a door (fDl-11), the rear exit for the small office. Upstairs there were four windows, (W2-10, W2-11, W2-12, fW2-18), and probably four-paned.

There were several other distinctive features of the building's exterior which should be noted. The first was the temporary winter porch (a common Dawson phenomenon) over the main entrance to the bank, visible on the right side of Figure 10. This porch created a form of insulation by providing a dead air space between the outside and the main door of the bank. It is also worth noting that it covered only the door; not the transom above it. Finally, this porch was obviously portable, as it only appears in winter photographs.

Another form of insulation was provided by exterior (and probably metal) shutters for the windows and at least two of the other doors, the entrance to the office on the north side of the building (fDl-06) and the balcony door on the second floor (fD2-17). These were not installed immediately; neither Figure 10, dated 1900, nor a picture of the bank in November 1901 show the shutters. Unlike the winter porch, the shutters were not removed in the summer.

Finally, there was a balcony on the second floor which extended west and south from the corner of Second and Queen, and which was used by the bank staff for recreation. Because it extended over the full width of the boardwalk, its size can be determined from that. The first sidewalk ordinance was declared immediately after the April 1899 fire and was meant to establish a uniform pattern of roads, sidewalks...
and buildings for the rebuilt city. The first section of the Ordinance declared

1. "Every owner and occupant of any premises situated on First and Second Avenues and First [Princess], Second [Queen] or Third [King] Streets...shall forthwith construct, or cause to be constructed, in front of the premises occupied by him...a substantial sidewalk, at least 8' wide on said First Avenue and at least 4' wide on said other streets..."

Consequently, when the bank was built, the balcony on the Second Street side, in conformity with the ordinance, extended four feet (Figures 7, 10), though the Queen Street side might have been eight feet from the beginning (Figures 7, 8).

The next spring, however, the ordinance was amended by #13 of 1900. This stated that all sidewalks "shall be of a uniform width of eight feet, and in all cases of plank two inches thick." The ordinance was not enforced immediately but by the end of July, with the visit of the Earl of Minto, Canada's Governor-General, imminent, it was put into effect. The Dawson Daily News reported

"...the people along Second Avenue from Harper to Third Street have been notified by Sgt. Wilson that they are expected to have the regulation sidewalk required by the ordinance in place within five days. The order was issued yesterday, so that Second Avenue will be a center [sic] of activity for a little while. The regulation sidewalk as prescribed for Second Avenue is 8 ft. wide and made of 2" planking. There is scarcely a single frontage of the description within these three long blocks made in that way, so that almost the entire street will be laid."

For the bank, and Alex McDonald, the building's owner, this meant not only a new sidewalk; it necessitated the expansion of the balcony by four feet along Second Avenue if the posts were not to stand in the middle of the walk. It is not known
if the balcony was redone at this point or later, although it was probably now. Later photographs (e.g. Figures 11 and 12) show a more commodious balcony than hitherto over Second Avenue.

Two minor features are also worth noting; the bank's signs at the corner of Second and Queen and the very large flagpole opposite the centre of the north face of the building. The sign extended out from the corner on two boards emphasizing the words "Bank" and "British" fully visible from all directions. There was also a second sign which hung beneath the balcony at its west end; it emphasized just the word "Bank." Alex McDonald and other occupants of the west office also had signs. When he was alone (as in Figure 7), McDonald's sign was huge. Later (e.g. Figures 11, 13) a more modest sign, with a hand pointing to the office, sufficed. The huge flagpole was a curious item. It was not present in 1899 (Figure 7) nor 1900 (Figure 10), but was in later photographs. It is possible that the visit of the Governor-General in the summer of 1900 provided a reason for raising the flagpole. A picture taken at the time of the September 1904 fire that destroyed the Cecil Hotel (Figure 15) gives some indication of its magnitude. It was still there after the change of name to "Bank of Montreal" (Figure 18) in 1919, so was certainly a feature of the building during the historic period.

Brief mention should be made of the exterior of the annex which was torn down in the late 1940s. It was attached directly to the rear of the building, extending about three metres back. It had a shed roof, starting below the eave soffit of the main building, and sloping southwards. There were two windows on the east side, one small square one on the ground floor, and a larger rectangular one above it. There was also a ladder - useful both as a fire escape and to allow access to the roof in order to dislodge creosote in the chimney during the winter - to the south of these windows which was still in place in 1947 (Figure 21). In
1900, there was nothing along its south face. There were two doors into the annex from the main building as indicated above and, possibly, a door on its west face.

The question of the annex's size poses a slight problem. In 1925, the annex was described as being 10' x 35' (3m. x 10.67m.). Figure 10, however, the only photograph which shows the south face of the annex in any detail, indicates that it was about half the width of the main building—perhaps 6.3m. Figure 17, taken during the First World War, does not show the annex, while the photograph in Figure 20, taken twenty years later, shows the first storey of the annex extending the length of the building; there is no second storey on the western side, merely a flat roof and what appears to be a door onto it from the second storey of the original annex. The shed west of the annex obviously post-dates the original construction of the structure, but it is impossible to indicate when it was built.

The bank's roof was a gentle sloping gable, with patterned tin cladding covering the south and north gables. A circular vent at the centre of the north gable added to the Classical Revival image of the building. There was a brick chimney extending out of the centre of the annex roof; this was probably for the assay furnace. Along the east side of the main roof, there was one brick chimney on the south side of the building and a metal pipe on the north. There was also a vent near the brick chimney; together these probably indicate the location of the kitchen. For the west side of the building there was a brick chimney and a vent.

In the case of the chimneys, as with the balcony, local by-laws affected the exterior appearance of the building. The original fire regulations of 1898 stipulated that ovens and furnaces should be properly constructed of non-combustible materials, and that their chimney pipes extend at least three feet above the roof. Alex McDonald (and presumably the bank) conformed with this (Figure 10). However, in conditions of
extreme cold, and in a town built of wood, the tops of the pipes and chimneys were still too close to flammable roofs. Early in 1900, Commissioner Ogilvie suggested that several amendments be made to the Fire Ordinance. One proposed change was that a metal thimble extend at least two feet beyond the roof, and that provision be made for a scaffold or ladder on the building as a fire escape. However, as he noted, this "would prove very expensive and practically inoperative owing to the poverty of many of the residents." By 1903, the City of Dawson passed a comprehensive fire safety by-law, two provisions being that ovens, furnaces or stoves should be connected with a chimney of bricks, stone or metal, "extending at least three ft. clear of any roof..." and that any brick chimney or flue should have walls at least five inches thick, be plastered, and extend four feet above the ridge or deck of the roof. As a result, extended pipes were put on to the annex chimney and to the stove pipe on the south end of the east sloping gable (Figure 11); the chimney on the west side of the roof (Figure 12) was probably extended in similar manner.

Although the exterior of the building has been light coloured for many years, it was not necessarily always so. It received an exterior painting in September 1900, "much improving its appearance" according to the Sun. The photograph in Figure 10, probably taken in the spring of 1900 before the sidewalk was widened, shows it dark in appearance; presumably it was this appearance that wanted improvement. Figures 11, 12, 13 and 14 (this latter dated July 1904), shows a lighter coloured building. By September of that year, however, it may have been repainted, because the metal exterior appears somewhat darker than in Figure 15. Shadows and differential lighting suggest it may have been painted a dark hue later (Figure 16), but around 1919 it was as light as earlier (Figure 18). In the absence of paint samples from recycled
pieces of metal sheeting, it is impossible to determine the sequence of colours in the historic period. By 1935, however, the building was the light (with dark trim) colour it remained afterwards.

**d Interior**
The Victorian (and Edwardian) bank, like the church, had a symbolic significance that transcended its function. Such a building had to look sufficiently permanent to inspire the confidence of potential customers to leave their money in the bank, discreetly prosperous to emphasize past success, yet not so ornate as to suggest that the customers' money might be wasted on non-essentials. As did a church, a bank building needed gravitas, for it too was a house of worship, although of Mammon rather than God. Architecturally, this was a delicate balancing act, but one which was done in this case with some success. Also, whatever may have been the reality, the bank's staff were supposed to adapt to their surroundings, exhibiting sobriety, probity, and cautious concern for their clients' assets.

This was particularly the case with the Canadian banks, and their extensive branch systems. Each unit, whether made of marble and mahogany in a busy financial district, or of tin and pine on a dusty small town road, was an integral part of a much larger whole, and reflected the entire system. There was nothing frivolous about a Canadian bank at the turn of the century. Headquarters and minor branches throughout the country often were as much objects of civic pride as churches and the most elegant residences.

Dawson's branch of the Bank of British North America was no exception to this generalization. Its modified Classical Revival exterior fitted well into the prosperous city that Dawson's residents saw their city becoming; its interior should too. It was not difficult for the B.N.A. to conform to the image expected of it. Dawson was the metropolis of the
Canadian north, thriving on the extraction of the Yukon basin's mineral resources. Such an economy demanded banking services, so this branch would be a credit to the system with little difficulty. The best materials available would be used to construct and outfit it.

Unfortunately, there is none of the abundant information about the interior that iconographic sources provide about the exterior. No interior photograph taken before the late 1930s has yet surfaced, so any account of the history of the interior must be based upon the evidence of extant recording investigation and the oral testimony of bank staff who served in Dawson in the 1930s and 1940s. Of necessity, the picture of the historical development of the bank's interior must be drawn with very bold strokes; the former source is of value for establishing a sequence of developments, but provides no benchmarks for a chronology, while the latter takes the situation in the 1930s as its starting point.

What can be stated with certainty is that the interior consisted of four distinct units: the bank proper, Alex McDonald's office to its west, the assay office to its south—all on the ground floor—and the bank staff's mess upstairs. Three of these have undergone dramatic alteration and the assay office has been dismantled.

The most important part of the building was the bank, R1-01 of Diagram 2. There were probably few changes made here until the 1930s, certainly that was the impression of W. A. Hutchings, who succeeded E. O. Finlaison as manager in 1937,

...between 1900 and 1937 no paint, varnish or paper had desecrated the interior...the smoke and dust over the period had matured the original dark furnishings to a still darker hue.53

If Hutchings were correct, a distinction must be made between the furnishings, which may well have undergone little transformation, and the walls. It is worth noting that extant recorders found up to twenty different samples of wallpaper
and paint, extending throughout rooms R1-01 and R1-03 when it was one large room. One close to the roof, was described as "border-regal motif, purple on purple with gold highlights"—a misplaced attempt at elegance which reflects either questionable taste on the part of Doig, or limited supplies of wallpaper in Dawson when the bank opened.\textsuperscript{54} Hutchings painted a "bright ivory hue" and the walls "of similar hue." This was probably the sample found by the extant recording team, described as "heavy beige, plain blotter type." Underneath this sample near window W1-03 were some four different paint and paper layers at the wainscotting and five—not all the same as below—at the ceiling.\textsuperscript{55} There obviously had been changes made to the walls at different times.

The only information about the shape and position of the counter and tellers' cages comes from the descriptions given the author by two former employees, D. McNab who worked in the bank from August 1936 until September 1937, and C.W. Harrison who was there in 1939 and 1940. They described it as rectangular, running parallel to the north and east walls, creating a large public space to the left and right of the main entrance (D1-01).\textsuperscript{56} The counter had a teller's cage in the corner facing the main entrance, a second cage, long unused in 1937, halfway along the east counter, the gold cage at the south end of this counter, and the ledger keeper's desk along the north side. Hutchings described the two cages still in use at his arrival as

\ldots both built in the high style of the 1900s…

Money and gold were passed through small apertures

\ldots and when not in use a small velvet curtain was drawn over the aperture…\textsuperscript{57}

There were also several small counters along the outside walls for customers' use. One, between W1-03 and W1-04, was in place throughout the bank's existence. Two others, according to McNab, lay along the east wall on either side of window W1-01. These were presumably taken out when Hutchings
altered the interior.

Except for the size and position of the main vault and its brick casing in the centre of the south wall, it is impossible to indicate the position of other features. Hutchings' pictures of the interior before his renovations correspond closely to the descriptions of McNab and Harrison, and were not contradicted by the findings of the extant recorders. The location of scales, chairs, desks, files, small safes, etc. when the bank was built, are impossible to indicate, although the location of the manager's desk can be suggested. D. McNab informed the author that E.O. Finlaison seldom used his manager's office (Rl-02), because it was too far from the stove in the banking area for comfort. Rather, he used a desk near the west end of the counter where he would be more accessible to customers, and may have had his office there before. Hutchings had his to the east of the stove.

Services within the main bank area were very basic—a wood stove for heat and (in 1937) four single-bulb droplights for illumination. Of the two, only the heating system was original to the building.

Wood stoves were more commonly used than furnaces for heating buildings erected around the turn of the century; the main exceptions were the government buildings put up at that time. Cost would obviously have been one determining factor in the choice of a stove rather than a furnace, assisted by the possibility that in a building the size of this one, the use of one or more wood burning stoves, particularly if well sealed and connected to a piping system that did not pass directly outside, would be as effective. A minor, although probably unanticipated, advantage of a wood stove over a furnace at this location was that it would do less damage to the permafrost. For the Bank of Commerce along the waterfront or the buildings on the Government Reserve, such would not be a problem, but the B.N.A. Bank was well within the permafrost zone. The gradual subsidence of the vault
caused enough damage to the building; melting and thawing associated with a turn-of-the-century furnace would have added considerably to this.

The main stove stood in the centre of the banking area, radiating heat with diminishing effect throughout the room. In the 1930s, a pipe from here went up to the bathroom in the southwest corner of the building to heat it; it might have done so earlier too. Similarly, a chimney flue opening in the roof of the first floor near the front entrance would suggest that a pipe was also used to heat that corner of the building, and part of the upper floor. While it was an effective heating system by the standards of 1900, one should not romanticize it. As Hutchings told Bush, "We wore overshoes all winter, and concentrated our work as closely to the stove as possible." The situation in the winter of 1899-1900 could hardly have been more uncomfortable.

Although the first electric lights were turned on in Dawson in October 1898, only a few buildings were able to escape the limitations of oil lamps at this time. Photographs of the B.N.A. Bank building under construction (Figures 7 and 8) show no wires or utility poles which would indicate the building was wired into the system in the summer of 1899. That fall and winter, the "Dawson Electric Light and Power Company" brought in and set up generating machinery for both street and building lights. A list of buildings connected to the system in January 1900 did not include the B.N.A. Bank building. The first photograph showing wires and insulators on the building is Figure 10, probably taken in the early summer of 1900. By this time, lights were in place - or expected soon. The position of the insulators in 1904 over door D1-02 (Figure 11) differs slightly from the position in 1900, but conforms exactly to the position in the 1940s (Figure 22) and as late as 1961 (Figure 24).

The western portion of the main floor was a distinct, three room unit, separate from the bank with its own entrance
(fDl-06) and rear exit (fDl-11). It ceased to exist as a distinct unit long before any of the oral informants worked in the bank; there exist neither iconographic nor archival references to it except for a cryptic notation in a fire department report of 1905, "Office of Noel and Noel fronting onto Queen Street. 1 heater, Electric lights. Exits front and rear."63 The only other evidence of its separate existence comes from investigations by extant recorders (Diagram 2), as well as directory and tax roll references to a separate office, used by Alex McDonald and after 1903, various lawyers.64 Wallpaper samples taken near the location of the door include three levels of paint—green, brown and red-brown—different from the bank portion of the building and antedating the removal of the office's eastern wall.65

The assay office was torn down in the 1940s, and it is unlikely archaeological investigation will yield significant information from such a disturbed site.66 Beyond its dimensions, which were probably altered by a one storey addition on the west side, (see above, p. 20), little is known. There would presumably have been illumination by electric lights here, as well as a heating furnace (Figure 30, if the caption is correct), and an assay furnace, which was connected to the brick chimney and stove pipe extender visible in photographs. The annex was open to the south end of the bank where the gold cage was located. It is possible that this assay office, like the Bank of Commerce, was also heavily lined with corrugated iron and sheet zinc to render it fireproof, but there is no specific evidence.67 Again in the realm of hypothesis, investigation by the extant recorders suggested that the stairway to the second floor may have stood to the south of door Dl-02 inside the annex. One oral informant, D. McNab, thought this might be the case, but was not certain. On the other hand, neither Harrison nor J. A. Theed (in Dawson from 1940 until 1942 and again in the 1950s) would confirm this.
Nothing is known at present about the interior of the annex upper floor.

The upper storey was designated the staff mess, as was the bank's policy in its smaller branches. Because of the peculiar circumstances of Dawson in 1900, where the staff (like the rest of the community) was likely to be young, male, and transitory, the upper floor was built as a dormitory, not as apartments. How many members of the staff actually lived here is difficult to determine, but it was probably built for most. Extant recording and the testimonies of all informants indicate a basic dormitory structure: a wide hall running north-south in the centre of the building, flanked by bedrooms, a kitchen and a dining room, and with a living room in the north-east corner. There were two exits, one from fR2-02 through fD2-17 onto the balcony, the other down the stairway to D1-02.

All informants (see Diagrams 9, 12, 14, 17) agreed on the function of R2-02 as a living room, although they differed as to its size. Extant recording has demonstrated that the room extended only two-thirds of the length of the building, to a point between windows W2-08 and W2-09. McNab felt it was the full length of the building but, as Theed informed the author that fR2-01 was used as a bedroom when he was there, it is more likely that McNab was mistaken than Theed and the extant recorders. McNab did add the information that the living room (long abandoned by 1936) contained a bookcase at the north-east corner, a large table with chairs in the middle, a sofa along the east wall and assorted furniture. No one had information about wallpaper or paint colours.

Considering the limitations of a human memory called upon to describe an area last seen between twenty-five to forty years ago, there was a remarkable degree of consistency between the findings of extant recording and personal testimonies. McNab, whose experience was earliest and Rooney, who only saw the upper interior after Theed had made minor
alterations (below, p. 64) merely visited the second floor on occasion. R. McPhail did not see it until the 1960s. Yet their descriptions were sufficiently similar, and could be fitted into the historical development of the upper floor.

All agreed that FR2-05 and FR2-08 were bedrooms, and R2-10 was the water closet, although McNab with less certainty than Theed or Rooney. McNab and Theed both described FR2-04 as the dining room. McNab effectively disposed of FR2-01 and FR2-03 by extending FR2-02 to the west wall; Theed and Rooney described them both as bedrooms. The main disagreement was over the location of the kitchen. McNab placed it in FR2-07 and described FR2-09 as a bedroom. Theed reversed these. Both would be plausible locations for a kitchen, in mutual proximity to the dining room, FR2-04. Extant recording has demonstrated that plumbing facilities were not original to the buildings, a point verified by the Bank of Commerce claim to have the first flush water closet in Dawson in their new building on Front when it was built in 1901, two years after the B.N.A. Bank building. It is likely plumbing facilities were installed there soon after, although it is possible that as Theed noted, the kitchen did not contain running water for some time.

Returning to the location of the kitchen, as the location of plumbing services provides no information, other sources must be used. The location of a brick chimney and vent over FR2-09 and the discovery by extant recorders of what appeared to be remnants of shelving along the south wall of this room and of a large grease stain on its floor suggest that FR2-09 may have been the kitchen, and FR2-07 a bedroom.

Several questions about the interior of the second floor remain unanswered. The first relates to the width of the hallway, 2.5m. which is over half the length of the east bedrooms (3.9m. long) and half the size of the west bedrooms (5.1m.)—a remarkably large passageway. It is possible cabinets and
dressers were kept in this hallway, but this seems a rather unsatisfactory method of housekeeping. The second relates to the small size of fR2-04, its apparent use as a dining room, and the angled entrance to fR2-03. It is possible that both fR2-03 and fR2-04 were originally bedrooms, and fR2-02 a combination living room-dining room. Perhaps as the number of staff members using the residence declined, the partition between fR2-03 and fR2-04 was removed, and this larger room made into the dining area.

The fire inspection report of 1905 (above, p. 31) said of the upper storey, "Second floor of the building is occupied by the Bank of British North America as living apartments. 2 heaters. 1 cook stove. Exit by stairs onto 2nd Ave." No specific reference was made to electric lights, as it was for the rooms downstairs, suggesting that perhaps the mess was illuminated by gas rather than electric light as late as 1905. There was no mention made of plumbing in this report, although there would not likely be in a fire investigation.

The upper floor was probably well-heated, although there were not individual heaters (which does not exclude the possibility of braziers) in each room. If fR2-09 was in fact the kitchen, the cookstove would have warmed that corner. The location of the two stoves is not known, but there was a chimney flue opening in the floor of fR2-02 near its northeast corner which may have been connected to the stove downstairs and which went out a stovepipe directly above the corner. Another pipe came through from the ground floor near the wall between fR2-04 and fR2-06. These pipes may have been connected to the "2 heaters" upstairs in the two public rooms which with the cookstove in the south end of the building, heated the staff mess.

Within the limits of time, place, and resources available, the B.N.A. Bank building was a credit to its unknown designer, contractor and builders. Its neo-Classical façade, initially
marred by the balcony, fitted well into a town which was being rapidly transformed from a log boom town to an elegant city of frame structures. Its proportions are simple, graceful, and strong. The use of wood as a medium of construction was dictated by its availability and abundance, as well as the serious limitations of less plastic media under the conditions of Dawson's subsoil. The skill with which the medium was used is amply attested to in the continued usability of the building in spite of the ravages of nature, and the man-inflicted damage caused by the subsidence of the vault.

Specific evidence about the bank interior is lacking, but it probably conformed closely to the image of sober prosperity Canadian banks sought. By the summer of 1899, a well-developed transportation system as well as the activities of Dawson's sawmills and their skilled labour force made possible the outfitting of a Dawson branch to the standards of Vancouver. The Klondike mining camp was not going to go away, so there was every incentive of a long, profitable association with the extraction of the Yukon's wealth to encourage the Bank of British North America to use Alex McDonald's building for their bank. It is quite possible its appearance and the interior division reflect the perceived interests of both McDonald and the Bank in consultation.

The interior upper floor conformed to the pattern of living quarters supplied by the bank in small town branches. Because of the radical transformation made in 1961, it is difficult to determine the exact use and configurations of the second storey rooms, except that the dormitory shape was appropriate for young, male, single bank employees.

When the bank was first built, services were extremely basic—heat from wood stoves which was spread by mere radiation, or in pipes. There was no piped water for a water closet or kitchen for several years, nor electric lighting for at least several months. The provision of telephone service certainly postdated construction too.

The building's four units were built to perform specific
functions: gold assaying in the annex, money and gold storage as well as banking "services" in the main building area, general office functions in Alex McDonald's office, and accommodation upstairs. By the standards of the time, these units served their functions well, perhaps even more highly than the usual standard in Dawson.
The bank reopened for business in its new "Bank of British North America Building" early in the summer of 1899, although construction was probably not completed until the fall, and the only service available in the building that first winter was heat from the wood stove. As this was but one of many reopenings on the same site in an improved structure after the April fire, there was no trumpeting press coverage of the event. In retrospect, the timing appears ironic. The bank completed a major piece of fixed investment just in time to see the end of the Gold Rush. Throughout 1899, would-be Klondike Kings arrived in Dawson daily, but the more seasoned, and the merely disillusioned, departed. The former, an essentially unstable community, were off to the latest "Dawson" on the beaches at Nome; most of the latter departed for the outside and an easier way to make a living.

But Dawson was not about to wither away. It remained, and grew more like an outside community as miners, merchants, skilled tradesmen and officials began to regard it as a permanent home for themselves and their families, and to build a city suitable for such long-term aspirations. The two storey log bank building that had served Gold Rush Dawson well would have been picturesque, but incongruous in the changed circumstances. Although differing little in function from its ill-fated predecessor, this new building had to provide services in very different conditions.
Dawson appeared to be following a pattern set by other cities in Canada (and elsewhere) which had also enjoyed a brief frenzy as a boom town, then settled into the development of a metropolis linking its hinterland with the world market. In Dawson's case, this would mean the continued extraction of mineral wealth from the frozen muck of the Yukon basin. Perhaps it would not become another Winnipeg or Vancouver, but it appeared to have avoided the fate of other mining camps along the Yukon. The new B.N.A. Bank fitted well into these changed circumstances. Yet if Dawson were to escape the boom-bust-collapse pattern of other northern communities based solely upon the extraction of a single natural resource, the capital the mines generated would have to be employed locally in the development of an infrastructure, and the life of the mines would have to be extended over a long period of time. This same problem, of whether to regard the mines as a wasting asset to be exploited as quickly as possible, or a resource to be developed slowly, was facing men on the opposite side of the world, the South African Witwatersrand, where a different solution to that of Dawson's was developing.71

Although the value of gold production did not peak until 1900, the speculative boom was over in 1899.72 No new discoveries of the scale of the earlier ones were imminent, while the easiest pickings were quickly removed from the richest creeks, Bonanza and Eldorado. The boom of a poor man's gold rush based on the extensive application of labour—creating the large population Dawson would need in order to thrive—was coming to an end, and was obviously over by 1903.

The massive recovery of gold reserves and consequent generation of capital until about 1903 gave the Yukon the appearance of a very wealthy area, and provided it with its one opportunity to generate sustained growth if invested locally. This passed quickly. Instead of being carefully exploited, the treasure trove of Yukon gold was looted, initially by inefficient placer
miners, then more carefully by the dredges. By 1966, nothing was left of the Klondike's early promise but a near ghost town and vast tailings.

In 1897 and 1898, locally produced gold was a form of currency, "dust" which provided a medium of exchange. As indicated above, this was not an entirely satisfactory medium, it was potentially inflationary as the currency was "debased" easily, and was difficult for the government to tax. Consequently, with the assistance of the banks which circulated their own bank notes, the administration encouraged the replacement of gold dust as a currency by the more easily exchanged cash. Its use as a currency declined until April 1902 when, as part of a larger package of economic reforms, such use was abolished. 73

Obviously, for most who went to the Yukon, gold was of value merely as a commodity which would be used elsewhere; few saw themselves in Dawson the rest of their lives. 74 This tendency to regard the Yukon and its resources as a means to a far away end was facilitated by the Bank of British North America and Bank of Commerce. The institutions assayed the ore that was brought in, then purchased it (less assay costs) with their own bank notes which were easily convertible, but which reduced the gold to a mere commodity, not another medium of exchange.

As a commodity, the gold had to be disposed of in the best market at the highest possible price. World gold prices were generally fixed, an integral part of a complex web of supplies, silver and national currencies on the "gold standard." 75 Markets, however, were not. In theory, Canada would appear to be the best market, as one would expect the Canadian government to acquire as much gold as possible. In fact, the government had no particular need for gold. The banks held the bulk of the gold reserves as they issued the bank notes which had to be backed by gold. Their holdings (and the government's) expanded
five fold between 1899 and 1910 (Appendix C), but they did not provide the best markets. Canadian banks were sober, cautious institutions, loathe to expand their money supply too rapidly lest they overextend themselves, or reduce profits. Consequently, they could not absorb all the gold produced. They certainly retained some, and did expand their money supply somewhat, but most was sold in the best possible market—the United States. In a situation as close to free trade as ever in fact existed, and as a part of an expanding world economy, the Canadian government would have had no reason to absorb all the gold produced. In 1907, a branch of the Royal Mint began operations in Ottawa, offering the promise of a local market for Canadian produced gold. It was not until 1912, however, that it began to turn out Canadian gold coins. The Yukon World saw the potential value of the Mint, although it did not exaggerate its significance,

...Coins of all denominations that are used in the Dominion, both in gold and silver, will be minted, and with the institution in running order, a market for the gold mined in Canada that has for years found its way to the United States will be at once established.76

This certainly helped the Yukon, and other Canadian producers, but much more was needed. The U.S. market supplied this. The U.S. Treasury alone held ten times the gold reserves of all Canadian institutions; state and national banks held three times the Canadian total (Appendix C). The United States played a unique, and destabilizing, influence on the international economy, with its state and national banks, its violently cyclical booms and busts, and the absence of a central bank. Without the stabilization effect of the latter more gold was needed than in Canada or the United Kingdom to back notes of issue. Consequently, the American Treasury, the national and state banks, and the public provided a seemingly insatiable market for gold.77

With their American connections, both of the banks in
Dawson were able to direct the gold they purchased towards the American market. Some presumably was used to back their own slowly expanding currency issues or was used in Canadian coins but most was "needed" in the United States. In an account of his activities, one employee of the B.N.A. Bank demonstrated quite clearly the bank's view of its function: to facilitate the movement of a commodity as quickly as possible from the producer to the market thereby reducing the function of Dawson, which once aspired to the status of a major urban centre, to that of the mere producer of the commodity.

To husband the resources of a country and convey its industrial commodities from their place of production into channels of usefulness is the work of a complicated mercantile system...

The actual conveyance of the gold of the Klondike from its mines to the refinery or mint has been conducted almost entirely through the medium of the Dawson banks. Each bank has its trained gold buyers who, by dint of constant handling, acquire a precise and accurate knowledge of the values of the various grades of dust...The bank's currency is always available to meet the demands of industry...

Almost the entire output of the Klondike gold fields has been shipped directly to the assay offices and refineries of the U.S., where, after refining, it has either been placed on the market as an article of merchandise or has found its way to the vaults of the treasury of the United States.

...in the evolution of the science of economics gold bullion has taken its place among the articles of merchandise. Gold shipments between nations are controlled by rates of exchange, which in turn are governed by the balance of trade; gold, valued as bullion, being the only medium of payment of international balances. ...A large exportation of gold is still regarded by many as a loss of national wealth, whereas it is but one of a multitude of exchanges of commodities which are constantly taking place between countries. Dwellers in a remote mining country can at least appreciate the necessity for such exchange.
Harold Innis, for one, regarded gold more imaginatively, suggesting a relationship between its steady flow into the U.S. (and Canadian) market as a major impetus towards the expansion of credit and thus of trade and prosperity in the early 20th century. After the first flush of prosperity, Dawson felt little of this, relapsing quickly from a potential metropolis for the auriferous regions of the Yukon basin in 1899, to a typical resource extraction community by 1918.

Not everyone removed wealth from Dawson. The massive amounts brought in and, in most cases, wasted by cheeckakos laid the basis for a building boom once it appeared that Dawson would not disappear. Other signs of prosperity appeared to be the public works programme of the Dominion government which, based on a policy of procurement from Canadian suppliers, stimulated business for several years; the building of the Klondike Mines Railways (1905-1906); and the capital investment in dredges, hydraulicking systems and power that transformed the creeks from 1905. Business remained good for some, and the volume of trade was artificially maintained as these secondary "booms" took place, increasingly to the benefit of Canadian industry which could work through the branches of Canadian banks in the Yukon. Those who assumed a long and prosperous future for Dawson invested in urban real estate, companies, mines, capital equipment, secondary industry and agriculture. They would have been wiser to follow the example of those who merely regarded the Klondike as a wasting asset.

The case of Alex McDonald, the "King of the Klondike" whose building the Bank of British North America rented, illustrates this. In the early days of the Rush, McDonald grew immensely wealthy by dint of hard work and exceptional luck. His money did not disappear into the bottomless pit of Dawson's saloons, gambling halls or brothels, nor was it put to work outside. It was reinvested in the Yukon, in urban real estate, in property, in more mines and machinery and even secondary industry—the McDonald Iron Works, for instance.
His career paralleled that of similar far-sighted capitalists elsewhere, who had lain the foundation of prosperous empires. But in Dawson, this was merely thrown away. Misjudgement of associates and mischance marked the latter half of his career as thoroughly as had shrewdness and luck the early. His investments in an economic infrastructure in Dawson were wasted as long as most capital was withdrawn to where it would produce a surer return, and what little (comparatively) there was invested locally was to extract the Yukon's primary commodity more efficiently. When he died in 1909, most of his fortune was gone. He had long since abandoned his office in the B.N.A. Building, and returned to prospecting. He did not ever have a home in Dawson, but stayed with the sisters at St. Mary's hospital during his infrequent visits to town. He retained the B.N.A. Building until the end; it was probably one of his few sources of income then, so an attempt by the bank to reduce its lease terms in 1905 could not even be entertained. Nobility and pathos are mingled in the assessment of his career made by the Dawson Daily News at the time of his death, ...He was one of the few Klondike Kings who choose to invest liberally in the Klondike rather than take the whole of what he might realize outside...  

The Dominion government had fallen back upon the coercive power of the N.W.M.P. to maintain minimal peace, order and good government in 1897 and 1898, proving itself barely able to control the gold rush. The competence of the police (if not other officials) assured the preservation of Canadian sovereignty and the collection of revenue during the most difficult period. Once the pressure of the boom period had subsided, the administration had to find a means of maintaining the life of the mining operations as long as possible, and derive maximum fiscal benefit from this. Revenue came initially almost exclusively from royalties and import tariffs, the latter collected by the N.W.M.P., and the former by the
banks. Initially set at 20 per cent of production, the royalties threatened to kill the goose that had laid the golden eggs, so they were reduced to 10 per cent of all production of $5000 in 1898, to 5 per cent in 1901, and then replaced by a 2½ per cent export tax in 1902. By this point, other taxes by the Dominion and new territorial government eased the burden on the miners whose royalty and tariff payments had hitherto financed the territory.

By 1902, however, gold production based upon inefficient methods were dropping off, dragging royalties, property valuations and population down with them. Thus in order to maintain revenue even to administer the territory, as well as to derive maximum benefit from the Yukon's placer deposits, the government encouraged the movement towards capital-intensive mining on consolidated holdings, using efficient dredging and hydraulicking technology provided by heavily capitalized companies. By 1901, the first dredge was in operation on Bonanza and Discovery creeks, but this was only a small scale operation. It was only in 1905 when the Canadian Klondike Mining Company began dredging Bear Creek that capital-intensive mining began on a large scale. By this point, Dawson and its relationship to its hinterland were transformed beyond recognition.

b The Bank's Operations
The Bank of British North America was intimately associated with the economic condition of the Klondike district, but as the branch of a national institution, it was less affected by the changeover from labour to capital-intensive mining than were local merchants. Its investment in Dawson was secure whether the town was the metropolis of a prosperous district, or merely a transit point between the river transportation system and the industries on the creeks.

The bank performed three main functions in the economic life of the Klondike region. The assay of gold (below, p.42)
and the collection of government revenue arose out of the unique circumstances of the area. The third, the provision of standard banking services, was affected by Dawson. The bank's activities fitted closely into government policy. Both the B.N.A. and the Commerce brought in their own bank notes from 1898 on, thereby enabling the government to decrease the use of gold dust as a currency, and eventually to end it in 1902. Perhaps more importantly, the two banks collected and paid the entire royalty (and export tax) on gold produced in the territory, at minimal expense to the government. How this was distributed between the two banks is difficult to determine, but it is possible the later distinction between the Bank of Commerce with the government account and the B.N.A. with the "company's" had historic roots. In the former case, there was the advantage of some prestige, but little else. In spite of the administration's efforts to transfer its account from the Commerce to the B.N.A., dropping the commission paid in the process, Finlaison of the B.N.A. did not consider the offer worthwhile. Only briefly in 1911-1912, was the government account moved to the B.N.A. by the new (Conservative) Commissioner, George Black, when the Commerce refused to allow an overdraft "to meet legitimate expenditure in connection with the Public Service of the Yukon Territory." The B.N.A., as indicated above (p. 6) had gone into the Yukon with the accounts of several companies already. During the period 1899-1918, it was managed by only two men, who thereby gained considerable experience in dealing with Yukon banking and mining conditions; the Bank of Commerce's six managers could not have done so. Also, as a bank ultimately based in London, the premier capital market in the world at the time, which also had offices in the United States, it was in a very strong international position. Comparative figures for other years are lacking, but for the year 1908, of the $3,215,456.66 worth of gold produced, the banks purchased $3,175,642.40 worth. The Bank of B.N.A. collected and
paid in $43,623.41 of export tax; the Commerce $33,267.65.
In June of 1909, the Bank of Commerce's gold handling was down
$113,913.75 compared to June 1908; the Bank of British North
America's was up $263,625.30. Whatever may have been the
case before, by 1909, the Bank of British North America was
the bank associated with mining, and it was their employee,
F. Stanley Long, not the Bank of Commerce's, who wrote an
article on bank activities in the Yukon for the Dawson Daily
News special issue of 21 July 1909.
A corollary to diminishing government reliance upon
royalties after 1902, and the establishment of the territorial
administration's right to collect revenues was the granting of
a civic charter for the city of Dawson, and the passing of re­
sponsibility for servicing the "city" to its administration.
Initially this meant a small business tax, but in 1900, an
ordinance respecting assessment was passed, and taxes were
levied in 1901. The property upon which the B.N.A. Bank
was built was assessed at $6,650 in 1902, and the value of the
building at $12,000. Unlike the Commerce, it rented the site
so was not directly responsible for land taxes. It was,
howeaver, assessed on its income, reducing this considerably
in 1903. Such a reduction reflected the economic decline
taking place in Dawson. By the time the Bank bought the
building from the McDonald Estate in 1910, the building's
value was down to $4,000 and the land to $2,500. Faced with
this decline in revenue, the city attempted several other
methods of generating revenue, two of which directly affected
the Bank of British North America. The first was an attempt
in 1902 to assess the bank's income on the basis of the
largest, rather than the average, amount of gold or deposit.
The second was an effort the next year to impose a $6,000
annual licence fee on the banks. Both failed.
Even ordinary banking services were affected by Dawson
conditions, where the smallest coin in circulation in 1908
was the twenty-five cent piece. While this was a convenience
to tellers "saved the bother of handling small silver and coppers," it reflected very high costs of operating the Dawson branch. In 1902, the Bank of Commerce estimated operating costs for the Dawson branch as 50 per cent of total earnings; the most costly Ontario ones were 17 per cent. The Bank of British North America branch was hardly likely to be less expensive. Salaries, while not princely, cost the bank over $23,000 a year in 1909, which meant maintaining staff members able to feed, clothe, and entertain themselves in Dawson, as well as the extra costs of skilled gold clerks and assayers. Although probably a more serious problem for the Commerce than the B.N.A., which had the companies' accounts, there was the problem of maintaining fixed expenditures in the face of declining volumes of gold production and trade. Finally, a constant price was extracted by Dawson's isolation in terms of transportation, communication and exchange.

Dealing with a bank attempting to maintain profits in the face of high costs could be expensive. The Bank of British North America, Dawson branch, was not confined to the legal maximum interest rate before the First World War, although some degree of competition with the Bank of Commerce kept rates below the extortionate heights of 24 per cent charged in 1898. It is worth noting that in a case involving the bank's interest charges (among other questions), which went all the way to the Superior Court of Canada between 1902 and 1905, they were not found to be excessive. There were no savings accounts to eat up interest, although the Post Office did offer this service. Further revenue generating measures included high rates of exchange charged upon loans, cash items, collections and money orders.

c Assaying Gold
What distinguished banking in the Klondike from banking outside even more than its exorbitant expense was its primary purpose for being there—the movement of gold. In 1908,
F. W. Heathcote of the Bank of Commerce noted that a large part of the bank's business was still the purchase of gold dust and its melting into bricks for shipment outside. Such a process was expensive in terms of capital investment and extra staff, but obviously profitable until at least 1918.

In the B.N.A. Bank, the gold cage was located at the south end of the counter, opposite window W1-01. It was strategically located off in a corner, away from the space used for general banking business, yet in close proximity to both the brick-lined vault in the centre of the room, and the assay office in the annex.

The miner, or an agent, brought his gold into the bank either in the form of dust mixed with "black sand" or dry amalgam if mercury had already been used. It was cleaned of visible impurities, then weighed in the presence of the vendor. Gold clerks developed the ability to distinguish between the gold produced on the different creeks, so had a fair idea of the gold's purity. Once weighed, the gold was either purchased outright or a receipt for value estimated and an advance made. Final value always depended upon the assay value determined outside. The Dawson value was determined by deducting from the full assay value the government royalty or, after 1902, the export tax of 2½ per cent (37½¢ per average $15.00 once) and the bank's charge, approximately 26¢-28¢ per ounce (2 per cent).

The basic assaying equipment was a melting furnace of fire brick, sufficiently hot to melt gold at 1063° C. The dust was placed into it, melted, and base metals such as iron and copper drossed off. The molten gold was poured into moulds, cooled and all remaining slag scrapped off. Next, the bar was weighed; the difference between this and the original weight (usually about 2 per cent) representing the loss in melting. The bar was then chipped or bored, the chips being assayed for fineness. Pure gold registered 1000 fine. If the sample assayed at 800 fine, this would mean 2 per cent
(or 70 fine) of dross, and 130 of silver. Gold at 1000 fine was worth $20.67 an ounce (in 1909); or 800 fine would be worth $16.54 an ounce. Once this was done, the difference between the advance and the final value, less shipping costs, was paid to the miner.  

With trained personnel and adequate equipment, this was not a difficult process. In the early years, the banks maintained assayers year round in Dawson, but as most of the work was done in the summer, this policy was changed, with the assayer only coming up then. Because this was the process whereby the miner exchanged his commodity for currency, paid his taxes, and saw his gold refined, it was central to the whole of the Yukon economy. The banks did not necessarily have a monopoly in gold assaying, but their range of other services (even if costly) and acceptance of royalty and taxation payment gave them considerable control over the process. Over the years others, such as "Uncle Hoffman," the Alaska Exploration Company, and an individual, (the former Bank of Commerce assayer), as well as jewellery shops, also assayed gold, but not in the volume the banks did.  

The bank's assaying was not entirely popular with the miners, or the local press. For one thing, the success of the government and banks in undermining the use of gold as a medium of exchange in 1898 was not greeted with universal joy. There was also a demand that the government establish an assay office, in order to eliminate the cost of selling gold to the banks—which were after all doing it for profit rather than as a service. An office was opened in Vancouver in 1901, apparently (and unsuccessfully) to divert gold bound for assay offices in Seattle and San Francisco, but the call for a government office in Dawson was a standard political demand until at least 1905. Perhaps one reason for a government office was to meet the peculiar needs of prospectors rather than miners; one Bank of B.N.A. advertisement in 1900 promised, "Gold dust melted and assayed. Assays made of
quartz and blacksand. Analysis of ores and gold"—presumably for a profit, and to put the assayer and his equipment to maximum use.  

How long the assay office was in operation is difficult to determine. From 1905 until the First World War, industrial and commercial activities conducted by the large mining companies transferred from Dawson to their operations on the creeks. As indicated above, assaying was only performed in the summer by 1908. In 1913, the Yukon Gold Company (whose account the Bank of B.N.A. had) was operating an assay office, but as late as May 1918, the Bank of British North America still had an assayer, Harold Marshall. The bank probably continued its office until it was taken over by the Bank of Montreal. With assaying going on in the creeks, a prospector's assay office in Whitehorse, and too small a volume of assaying work to justify the expense, the office was probably closed after 1918. By the late 1930s, it was long abandoned.

de The Bank Staff
There was a fairly large staff operating the bank, varying from eleven in the fall of 1901 to between seven and ten until 1916. It is difficult to imagine eleven people functioning with any degree of comfort or efficiency in the banking area, unless they worked in shifts. In 1902, there was a manager, two accountants, six clerks, and an assayer. Even with the assayer busy in the assay office and the messenger sufficiently peripatetic so as not to take up much space, the clerks could only have worked in shifts at the three cages. As the volume of business dropped off after 1900, a regular rhythm of banking activities probably developed to coincide with the mining schedule. In 1908, Heathcote said that by that date, it was...

...not necessary to maintain such large staffs as formerly. Each bank at the present time employs from eight to a dozen clerks, all according to the season, there being more work to do in summer than in winter.
Except perhaps during the first few years of the Bank of B.
N.A.'s operation, the nominal size of the staff did not reflect
the actual number in the office year round.

The question of space allocation in the mess upstairs
confirms the supposition that there were seasonal employees
and permanent ones, the latter having either a house in town
or lodgings elsewhere, and the former using the upper floor
residence either on their own or with one or two permanent
residents. Tax rolls merely list employees, they do not indi­
cate their residences, but the Directories often do. Of the ten
bank employees listed in the 1903 Directory, three—two clerks
and the messenger—have separate addresses listed, the rest
do not. The 1905-1906 Directory lists seven names, all but
the manager resident at the Bank of British North America Build­
ing. For the Directories of 1907-1908, 1909-1910, 1911-1912
and 1915-1916 only the manager, E. O. Finlaison's address is
given, but in 1917-1918, the addresses of the accountant S.
Chamberlain (504 Duke) and the assayer (712 Hansen) are listed.
Reference to the Electoral Rolls for 1917 and 1918 indicates
that one staff member—the teller, Harold Montgomery—lived
on "2nd Avenue"—perhaps in the bank building.

The addition to the staff of "Harry Miomi, porter" (1905-
1906), later "A. T. (or H.T.) Misumi, employee, Bank of B.N.A." suggests that the bank had a domestic staff. In Edwardian
Canada, it was highly unlikely anyone not of European (or even
Anglo-Celtic) pedigree would assume the social distinction of
bank employment. There were also, for reasons deeply rooted
in West Coast labour history, no Chinese in Dawson. Japanese
were, however, regarded somewhat differently. Their demon­
stration of virtues British usually ascribed solely to them­
selves—martial prowess, resourcefulness and organizational
ability—endeared them in a way unique in race relations at
the time. To use an anachronism both of time and place, they
were "honorary whites." Not honorary enough for bank employ­
ment, perhaps, but quite satisfactory for trade—or domestic
service. The employment of Japanese cooks and servants often indicated a successful establishment, and it is probable that A. T. (or H. T.) Misumi was, in fact, the bank staff's cook, working out of the kitchen upstairs. All of the above is merest hypothesis, except for the fact that one informant—D. McNab—mentioned Finlaison's telling him of a "Chinese cook" once employed by the bank. The cook's ejection from the building over the balcony in a drunken display of high spirits by the staff was given by Finlaison as one reason for his closing the staff mess and removing the balcony.\footnote{115}

Most of the staff remain little more than names on paper. The exception to this generalization are two managers, David Doig who effectively established the branch and who had charge from 1899 until 1907, and Edward O. Finlaison, a member of the first bank party, who served as manager of the Dawson branch of the Bank of B.N.A. and its successor, the Bank of Montreal, until 1937. Doig was a Scotsman, born in 1859, who joined the Bank of British North America in Victoria in 1884, and was manager of the Trail branch before taking the first party into the Yukon in 1898. He was a flamboyant, colourful figure, fond of women, good food and whiskey, who on one occasion, nearly died of exposure after setting out for home in \(-40^\circ F.\) temperature with a bottle and a half of whiskey inside him. He impressed one of his friends by his champagne breakfasts, and was alleged to have told the London directors, when queried about the rum expenses on his personal account, to run the Dawson branch better if they could. They probably could not have. He was no dilettante, however, shrewdly managing the bank, maintaining as good relations as possible with his mining customers, and not only obtaining, but holding the business of the large mining companies when they started up. He owned shares in claims, which he also worked, and made highly profitable personal loans. He was also active in civic affairs. According to Polk's 1903 Directory he was treasurer of the Dawson Board of Trade, and may have served
in other similar capacities. As a man of some social position in town, he could not remain domiciled in the bank building. Living "above the top" was appropriate for small shopkeepers, and perhaps others during the rush, but in Edwardian Dawson, the manager of one of the local bank branches, a man near the top of the local social pyramid needed a residence in the "suburbs" where he could separate his business from his home life. He went outside the winters of 1901-1902 and 1905-1906, and no residence was indicated for him in the 1903 Directory, but in 1905, he was living on the northwest corner of Duke and Fifth. Doig was transferred from Dawson to Victoria in March 1907, remaining there in bank service and retirement until his death in 1929. 116

E.O. Finlaison was a very difficult man in personality, but equally effective as a manager. Doig was a large Scotsman, outgoing and affable, who cultivated an image as appropriate to Dawson's early flamboyance as fully as the manager of a bank could. He served his employer well, but he was hardly the model of banking propriety. Finlaison, inevitably known as "Fin," was very different. He was a native of Victoria, a dapper, rather more fastidious man than Doig, initially a part of Dawson's social life, but later retreating into a bachelor's life of work and home. Although he had come into Dawson at the height of the rush, this dignified, shrewd man fitted the image of a banker more closely than did Doig. He had a reputation of being careful with the bank's money, even refusing loans on occasion. Yet he was so highly regarded that the Bank of British North America, and later—the Bank of Montreal, became known as "Fin's Bank"—to the surprise of his successor. The building reflected both this man's careful, even conservative, nature and Dawson's decline, as he probably made few changes to its appearance during his tenure. The bank, its manager and Dawson aged together in harmony, preserving a façade of continuity until his retirement after fifty-two years of banking in August 1937. He did not leave Dawson at
that point, however, remaining a year or so before returning to Victoria. 117

e  Alex McDonald's Office
The office along the west side of the building was distinct from the bank until at least 1910. Alex McDonald, the epitome of the "Klondike Kings," erected the building, although he did not obtain title to the property until 1903, and directed his numerous enterprises from here. According to the tax rolls he was "resident" in the building until about 1908, although this may have been no more than nominal, as he did not even have a house in town by that year. In 1904, August E. and Joseph C. Noel established their barristers' office here, taking in John Cormack in 1905, only to lose him and Joseph Noel in 1906. In 1907, Henry Bleecker operated his office here, taking in M. B. O'Dell in 1908.118 They were still in business in July 1909, several months after Alex McDonald died, but were gone by 1910, when the bank took possession of the entire building. The relationship between the various law firms that occupied the office and Alex McDonald was close. The News reported at the time of his death,  
...Bleecker and O'Dell are his present lawyers.  
In early days, McKinnon and Noel represented him, and after them Noel, Cormack and Noel were the legal advisors...119

Presumably Bleecker and O'Dell arranged the sale of the building to the bank for Mrs. McDonald who lived with their son in Vancouver. They then vacated their office on the premises, and left. Mansell B. O'Dell, "lawyer, 113 Queen" received an entry in the 1909-1910 Directory, but this may not reflect reality.

f  The Building During Dawson's Decline
The structure as erected in 1899 underwent no major changes until they became necessary in the 1930s and 1940s, although several minor ones were made between 1900 and 1918—and one
major change was prevented when a chimney burning out threatened the building in January 1904. The original banking area probably saw little change, except for a possible expansion of space made possible by the removal of McDonald's office around 1910. Other than that, the location of the vault, counter, cages, etc. did not alter. The structure originally built by Doig in 1899 was satisfactory, it would hardly have been worth the bank's while to invest money in expanding services in a declining community, and Finlaison's conservative temperament suited the situation. He was experienced, he was popular as only one who had come over the "Trail of 1898" could be with the townsfolk, and he probably saw no need for changes. The bank would be reluctant to make changes, Finlaison would have seen no need, while the miners and townspeople liked "Fin's Bank" just as it was. The status quo suited everyone.

Yet there obviously were changes which, if they cannot be dated with precision, can be suggested. It was probably sometime around 1910, when the Bank purchased the building from McDonald's estate that the door on Queen Street was removed. Certainly the absence of FD1-06 in the first picture available of the Bank of Montreal (Figure 18, taken c.1919-1920) is one of the few differences between this and a photograph from 1904-05, (e.g. Figure 11). Besides the name of the bank, the only other obvious change was in the ground floor windows, now two rather than four paned.

When the staff stopped using the mess upstairs is not known, but it does not appear abandoned in Figure 18; see window W2-03. At this point, it was probably only used for the summer staff—if they continued to come. The abandonment of the upper floor rooms and the removal of the balcony obviously postdated the period of Figure 18, but by how much is unknown. It cannot have been long; there was a much smaller bank staff after than before the war.
The assay office, the pivot of the bank's operations in the early days would have also gradually fallen into disuse as individual miners were replaced by large companies, which needed fewer deposits, and one of which—the Y.G.C.—operated its own office in 1913. There was an assayer on staff as late as 1918, but it was probably soon after, when the Bank of Montreal took over, that assaying ceased. The bank continued to purchase gold dust, but advances were against outside assay, not the bank's own.
For the student of Yukon history, in the years immediately preceding and during World War I, the Dawson Daily News "Discovery Day" editions each August 17 provide an annual record of developments. Local firms advertised in it, so that often the only indication of their disappearance was their absence from one issue. The Bank of British North America's advertisement was a constant, reassuring presence, a stereotyped notice which remained the same for several years, "Gold Dust Purchased. Collections Made and a General Banking Business Transacted..." In 1919 the ad did not appear, and in 1920, when Dawson's fortunes appeared bleakest, there was no "Discovery Day" issue. Instead, a special "Mayo Edition" was published in November carrying articles with headings like "Vast Yukon Conglomerate Deposits May Rival the Rand." The stereotype notice reappeared, announcing the bank's services, address and the name of the manager. This time, however, all this was offered by the "Bank of Montreal." Thus were felt the repercussions of the absorption by the Bank of Montreal of the B.N.A. Bank in the remote corner of each one's economic empire.

During the period from 1918 until 1920, historic events in Europe and closer to home filled the columns of the News, and there was no reference to the change at the Bank North America. Although title to the property passed from the Bank
of B.N.A. to the Bank of Montreal in June 1919, the event was obviously not considered newsworthy. Perhaps the change in name did not, in any case, really matter. The building at the corner of Second and Queen was merely the branch of a national banking system, one firm of which absorbed another. Had it been a local bank taken over by a larger outside concern, it might have made a difference, but this was still the same bank, at the same location, with the same manager. There might be a new shingle outside and the different bank notes inside, but the essential continuity remained. It was "Fin's Bank," performing the same cardinal function it had since 1898.

The process of absorption (or more politely, merger) was as old as the Canadian banking system. As a means of stimulating growth and ensuring profitability, it was—and remains—quite effective. Such mergers enabled the stronger institutions to avoid the expenses and risks of branch-by-branch expansion into new, untried regions. For example, the Bank of Montreal, although de facto the government banker, declined the opportunity of opening a branch in Dawson in 1898 because of an aversion to investment in boom towns that might soon disappear. The usual type of merger was between a large institution, usually based in central Canada, or a smaller one vulnerable either because of its regional limitations or some structural weakness. In the early part of the century, Bank Act revisions of 1900 facilitated mergers by allowing a bank to sell the whole or a part of its assets without a special Act of Parliament. The inevitable result of this was a rash of mergers, reducing the number of chartered banks from forty to twenty-two between 1900 and 1915. Concern over corporate concentration in banking led to two important changes in the 1913 revision of the Bank Act—any proposed merger would now need the prior consent, in writing, of the Minister
of Finance, and the shareholders would have the right to appoint outside auditors. This had little effect on the process; by 1922 there were only seventeen Canadian chartered banks left. 122

The 1900 Bank Act revisions made possible the Bank of Montreal's first merger in sixty years when it absorbed the Exchange Bank of Yarmouth. The 1913 revisions were intended to slow the process of concentration, but they could not stop the momentum. The First World War undermined the revisions by facilitating the merger by the Montreal of the B.N.A. The Bank of Montreal did well out of the war; its assets expanded dramatically and profitably. The First World War was not as beneficial for the London-based Bank of B.N.A.; its directors were forced by the financial stringencies of the war effort to direct their attention more closely to domestic matters, to the (presumed) detriment of their Canadian operations. Finally, the war enabled the Bank of Montreal to wrap itself in the flag, deflecting criticism of the further concentration of banking power—which the 1913 revisions were meant to impede—by appeals to patriotism. The President of the Bank of Montreal wrote the Minister of Finance, Sir Thomas White, presenting, among other arguments for the merger, the following,

...In this connection, I feel impelled to say that I think we are doing the country a service by our action in making it impossible for a Bank acting under an English Charter, with broad powers and certain disabilities, to enter the Canadian field of banking...

And the bank's shareholders were told,

...our action would also correct an anomalous situation in the Canadian banking system by eliminating the only bank operating in the Dominion not governed by the Canadian Banking Act... 123

There was nothing inevitable about the merger; the Bank of B.N.A. was almost as old as the Montreal, was national in its scope and was well-run. Its weakness, however, was its Charter. The catalyst that led eventually to the absorption
was the machination behind the scenes of Lord Beaverbrook to merge the Bank of B.N.A. with another London-based institution, the Colonial Bank. This would have the effect of creating a larger and more powerful British banking presence in Canada than the Bank of B.N.A. alone represented. The President of the Bank of Montreal pressed upon the Minister of Finance the danger such an expansion of British banking power would pose to Canada's control of its own banking system, and added that, as the directors of the Bank of B.N.A. were obviously intent upon disposing of the institution, it would be in the Canadian interest for a Canadian chartered institution to take over. The arguments were self-serving, but the Minister was impressed. A generous offer was made to the shareholders of the B.N.A. Bank in late 1917; a conditional contract signed between the two institutions in March 1918; this was then ratified by the shareholders of the two banks in September. The process was completed by an Order-in-Council in October which made possible the final takeover on 1 December 1918. The Bank of Montreal then went on to absorb two more banks—the Merchant's and Molson's—before the next Bank Act revision.

b "Fin's Bank" in the 1920s and 1930s

Such macrocosmic movements in the boardrooms of London, Montreal and Ottawa caused barely a ripple in Dawson. At some point early in 1919, the shingle and the bank notes changed, but Dawson that winter of 1918-1919 faced larger problems than this, essentially cosmetic, transformation. Although the News could report the "Chief Executive Sounds Optimistic Note on Yukon's Future," in March 1919, there was little evidence to substantiate this, particularly when compared to the promise of long-term prosperity the dredge operations offered in 1913. For one thing, the "chief executive" referred to was no longer the Commissioner; his office had been abolished. The chief executive was now the lower ranked "Gold Commissioner," who administered a budget sharply reduced
from that of 1917. More humiliating, was the Territory's ignominious—though not entirely unique—distinction for nearly losing its representative institutions when the Council was reduced from ten to three.

But such political disasters only reflected the economic ones. In 1914, the Klondike district seemed set on a course of continued prosperity as long as there was gold to be extracted. Production—and shipments—in 1914 reached the highest point since 1906, three companies were busily at work, and the industrial infrastructure for profitable extraction of the Yukon's gold was in place. The war ruined all this. Manpower was drained off from the dredging operations as well as from the town, few of the men who left for the Western Front with Joe Boule or George Black returned in 1919, and those who did found gold production almost at a standstill. Loss of manpower, coupled with exhaustion of the easiest worked gravels and inflated costs of production sank the three existing mining companies into receivership by 1919. Finally on top of these economic and political blows came two more—the influenza epidemic of 1919, an affliction Dawson shared with the rest of the world, and its own unique disaster, the sinking of the S. S. Sophia on 23 October 1918 with the needless loss of over three hundred passengers, many of them Dawson residents. By 1921, there were several dredges in operation, but the companies were in receivership, and the population of the territory—officially 27,200 in 1901 and 8,500 in 1911—had dropped to 4,100 of whom almost half were Indians. The only hope for the survival of what had once promised to be the metropolis of the north was to tie its fortunes to the extraction of a single commodity, until that was completed—to become a company town.

Dawson did not die after World War I, the dredges continued to operate, although their proceeds went towards the settlement of old debts, and "Fin's Bank" did not close. The company could assay its own gold; the bank now bought and
and shipped both bars and dust, so closed its assay office. Neither the mines nor the town demanded the attention of a legion of tellers, clerks and accountants, so the size of the staff dwindled. This meant the eventual abandonment of the mess of the second floor (except for toilet and perhaps storage purposes) and the removal of the balcony which was now not only unnecessary but dangerous. The small staff could be accommodated more efficiently in hotel rooms during their Dawson tours of duty. Land values reached their nadir; the bank building which was valued at $4,000 from 1910 until 1916 was only worth $2,000 in 1924; the once valuable site at Second and Queen had been worth $2,500 during the same period, it declined to $1,200 in 1924.

As Dawson shrank through the 1920s, its newspaper became little more than a village newsheet subsidized by government announcements. Except for the dramatic, or the bizarre, there was little local "news"; word of mouth sufficed. The Bank of Montreal, under the management of E. O. Finlaison, continued along its tranquil ways, doing little that was newsworthy. Thus the only mention of the bank (except for the ritual advertisements on special occasions) during the 1920s was in 1922 when the exterior of the building was painted. Also, although based on oral testimony of an employee in the 1930s, the vault in the centre of the building continued to sink into the permafrost to the amazement of tourists now finding their way into the Yukon.

The low point of mining operations was reached during the period 1919-1923. By 1923 A.N.C. Treadgold had exercised financial legerdemain to create the "Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation" out of the unpromising remains of the earlier companies, and which, like them, dealt with "Fin's Bank." Between 1925 and 1929 he managed the dual distinctions of reestablishing dredge and hydraulic operations on a sound technical basis, and reducing the new company to financial disaster.

Such circumstances were not necessarily detrimental to
the Dawson branch of the Bank of Montreal, the profitability of which ensured its maintenance. Reduced fixed costs of staff and assaying lowered expenditures, while all previously profitable transactions were maintained. Because of the situation of Dawson, merchants had to purchase large inventories in the summer, then realize their profits in the winter. This demanded access to capital. Probably the larger companies were able to generate it internally, or obtain it elsewhere at lower rates, but most local merchants had to deal with the two Dawson branches at interest rates unaffected by the workings of the Bank Act. The bank also had the payroll of the company to use, as well as employee's accounts. Treadgold's financial sleight of hand was probably done with the assistance of Finlaison, whose operations would prosper whether or not the company was run by prudent businessmen or a profligate. Finlaison also knew mining operations around Dawson as well as anyone else, consequently he did extensive business with many of the small claim holders to the bank's (and probably his own) profit.

While Finlaison maintained a bank run along traditional lines, the banking system outside was changing. His was still a temple of Edwardian dignified aloofness which met the needs of the aging population of Dawson nicely. A sober, dignified banker working out of sober, dignified—if slightly dingy—premises was what they had long been used to. Anachronistic, perhaps, but then so was much of Dawson—and satisfied to be so. Elsewhere, the old traditions were broken. Banks were no longer a male preserve; female tellers were taking their place alongside men, although the rigid barrier between a predominantly female "staff" and a male "management" that later developed was not yet in place. The banks had learned to woo small depositers by the need to sell war bonds; their cumulative deposits were profitable and grew more so in the prosperous 1920s. The Merchant's and the Molson's Banks had had traditions of good relationships with
small businessmen, farmers, etc. in their communities. In order to maintain the goodwill these had established, and to expand the opportunities prosperity in the 1920s created, the Bank of Montreal began slowly to shed some of its dignified aloofness. There remained temples to Mammon, granite assurance of the strength and permanence of the Canadian banking system, but even these were painted brighter colours, were better lit, and lost their old high cages and counters in place of lower, less forbidding counters. New branches reflected this transformed image, a veritable sea change from the dour institution built before World War I.134

But the past lived on into the late 1930s in Dawson. Fortunately Finlaison's operation of the Bank of Montreal there during the 1920s and 1930s fit the needs of an aging community and so more than paid for itself. Also important, as the Depression took its toll of the economy outside, was the increased profitability of Klondike mining operations. In 1929, Treadgold was finally driven from the Y.C.G.C., although his attempts to regain control of the company he created from the engineers who deposed him continued till his death. He had laid the foundation for a profitable extractive enterprise in the 1920s; a group of engineers inherited his capital equipments and, by 1932 operated a well-run company. Gold, the flywheel of the Western economies, was not depressed during the 1930s; with the increase in its value to $35.00 an ounce in 1933-34, the efficient Y.C.G.C. was in a most advantageous situation. Throughout the 1930s, a combination of good management, modern high quality machinery, low operating costs and a comparatively inexpensive work force of seasonal skilled and unskilled labour driven north by the misery of the Great Depression enabled the company to construct new and improved dredges, and expand operations to the point where with ten dredges, employing over six hundred men, the Y.C.G.C. paid its first dividend in 1940.135

Unlike the outside, Dawson was a very good place for a bank
to do business during the 1930s. Between 1929 and 1933, there was a 20 per cent reduction in bank assets, resulting in the closure of 432 of Canada's 4069 branches—but not one failure. For the Bank of Montreal, the number of branches fell from around 670 in 1929 to 517 in 1934.136 Dawson, a two (or three) man operation in a faded boom town was not one of these. Mining prospered both for the company and the small claim holders who also benefitted from the increased price of gold. Businesses in town, although not important to the Y.C.G.C., provided services for employees, and enjoyed a return to prosperity. Essential to all—the company, its employees, small claim placer miners, and town firms—was the bank. According to one informant, in the late 1930's it had the accounts of most of the businesses in town, the Y.C.G.C., staff payroll—and even the prostitutes of Second Avenue whose prosperity was assured by the hundreds of seasonal workers the Y.C.G.C. brought in. The Bank of Commerce was a poor second, sustained primarily by the government account. Finlaison's successor said that he inherited one of the most profitable branches in the B.C. Division. Without the costs of assaying, it earned a loan interest (officially a "commission") on gold deposited by the company and by individual miners then dispatched to Vancouver and Ottawa for assay. It charged interest rated beyond those allowed in the Bank Act; and continued to avoid essentially unprofitable savings accounts, although these would be transferred at no cost to branches in British Columbia.137

**The Last Years, 1937-1968**

In May 1938, the fortieth anniversary of the bank's first opening in Dawson was noted by a brief article in what was now the Dawson Weekly News.138 The town and the district had come full circle during that period, from the Golden Age of 1898, through the exhaustion of the placer deposits, to the false dawn of dredge operations before the war, to its nadir in the immediate post-war period, and back to a renewed prosperity in the late 1930s. Yet this was a more modest prosperity
than 1898 had promised.

By the late 1930s, the Yukon's place in Canada's political economy was fixed. Early fantasies of a great metropolis growing wealthy off of the exploitation of the vast mineral deposits of its rich hinterland lasted only a few seasons. The costs of production, the finite amounts of placer (and apparent absence of quartz) deposits, and the rapid removal of the wealth created in the Yukon to more congenial climates instead of its investment locally doomed such hopes. Those who invested in real estate or secondary industry, agriculture or even small business saw their investments decline in value. Others, wiser, recognized that Dawson was no more than another placer mining camp, and so either removed their capital totally, or invested it in the efficient extraction of the gold. The territory whose boosters had once predicted would achieve provincial status was, in reality, no more than a series of shifting mining camps. It was of value to the outside world only to the extent that its mineral deposits could be extracted and transported to distant markets at a profit. The Klondike demonstrated in an early and a stark form that Canada beyond the agricultural regions was no frontier; it was peripheral, and only worth developing if recognized as such.

The banks performed a cardinal function in this. Their establishment in 1898 and purchase of gold dust with their own widely negotiable bank notes helped undermine dust's utility as a local medium of exchange (however unsatisfactory this might be) and expedite its removal from the Yukon as a commodity. As branches of national banking systems, they prevented the emergence of a local bank closely tied to the local economy on the American model. They served a more positive function as agents of Canadian government policy,
collecting royalties and export taxes and facilitating the penetration by Canadian firms of the Yukon market—an economic counterweight to the American companies. Until about the First World War, the most important part of the Bank of British North America Building was its assay office. After the war, when it gave up assaying, the core of the bank, literally, was the vault. But this brick and iron structure slowly sank into the permafrost, until the point was reached where it could not be closed properly.

E. O. Finlaison was a strong link with the heroic age of Dawson. The town, the bank and its manager all aged with grace and some dignity, retaining into the late 1930s the flavour of the brief Gold Rush. By 1937, as prosperity—and people—returned to Dawson, the Bank of B.N.A. Building was in danger of becoming an anachronism. "Fin" retired in August 1937, and was replaced by W. A. Hutchings. He did not leave Dawson right away, however, as he was too much a part of the town to depart immediately. He had turned down promotions which would have enabled him to leave several times, so remained for a while after his retirement before returning to Victoria where he died several years later.

W. A. Hutchings, who had joined the Bank of Montreal in 1914, had first come to the Yukon in 1932, replacing the first manager of the Bank of Montreal's Mayo branch, Percy Ransom, (1928-1932) who left bank service under a cloud. He remained at Mayo until 1934, returned to Byalone B.C. as manager there, then came to Dawson to replace Finlaison in 1937. He combined some experience in the Yukon with experience outside, so was able to bring a critical eye to the bank's appearance.

The assay office in the annex would never be revived as such. It had served as a wood storage shed for several years, and would continue in that function until it fell in. Similarly, with transient staff accommodated at the Yukonia, Royal Alexandria, or the Regina Hotels, and the manager living in
a rented house on Eighth Avenue, there was no need for the upper floor except, as indicated above, the toilet and perhaps for storage. The exterior was basically satisfactory but the interior, the main banking area, needed work done to it.

W. A. Hutchings had to solve two problems relating to the banking area. The first was its dingy, Edwardian appearance, an anachronism at a time when the trend in bank interior design was towards better-lit, brighter accommodations. In the process, he had to rearrange the counters in order to use the interior space more efficiently. As in 1898, the manager wanted the best possible materials. These were not available in Dawson so were brought in, putting off renovations until 1938. Figures 18 and 19 in Bush's report show the interior before the alterations, figures 33 and 34 afterwards. In his own words, Hutchings described both the alterations he made, and the reaction:

At that time many Bank offices in Canada and the U.S. were dark, dreary, and clothed in mystery and our office, as previously mentioned was the prime example. However, some U.S. Banks were beginning to get away from tradition by using light colouring for new premises, a pattern since reversed to warmer browns in recent years. Not to be outdone and thinking of the long dark winter, I conceived the idea of tearing down the high counters, replacing them with moderate low glass counters painted a bright ivory colour with walls of similar hue. The floors were first levelled, the size of the office reduced to 1/3 by blocking off the remainder and some light fixtures were added. A large part of the work and painting was done on a long week-end. When Tuesday morning arrived, I surveyed my creation with pride and affection. What a pleasant surprise for my good customers who had put up for so long with such a dingy Bank. Little did I know of human nature. When the customers began to arrive they were surprised alright but not as agreeably as I had thought. To most of them, the old premises represented the true rock of finance, integrity, mystery and tradition. As one old-timer disappointingly said, "My, my it just looks like a cheap grocery store." Such sentiment was common. While some of the ladies congratulated me on my artistry, I felt such things were spoken with some reservations.
I am sure I lost business to my competitor and decided in future if I ever made drastic changes, to be a good democrat and get some ideas from my customers. However, it was a relief to get a better floor.

The change was dramatic and, obviously, not welcomed by many who were used to "Fin's Bank". The result was probably also an improved working environment, certainly lighter and brighter with stronger illumination and probably warmer with a larger and more efficient stove (figure 32).

A more serious problem was posed by the vault which, after forty seasons of alternating freezing and thawing ground, was sinking into the floor and the permafrost below. Unfortunately, it was not sinking evenly, so sloped to the west, cracking the bricks around it. According to Harrison, it finally reached a point where its base lay 18"-24" below the floor level, steps had to be dug down in order to enter it, and it was often impossible to close. On one occasion, said Hutchings, the vault contained a half million dollars worth of gold "sealed" with a piece of wire for a month waiting for a fog to lift so that planes could land. The vault became a tourist attraction, a lopsided structure, not always sealed shut, within which visitors to Dawson could see real gold bars. In 1939 Hutchings ordered three book safes; these arrived in August. Too large to bring in through the main door, they had to be put into the bank through a hole cut into the east wall on Second Avenue at window W1-08. According to Hutchings, these were placed along the west side of the bank, and "kept in place by a battery of jacks placed under the floor and adjusted each spring." The vault then became what it should have been all along, a curiosity piece.

The annex had fallen into such an advanced state of decay that the assay office floor had rotted away. Harrison and other bank staff were able to pan the soil here for gold whenever they were short of cash. Later Gilliland would also "mine" it when he renovated the bank. Upstairs was little
better. According to McNab, it appeared to have been merely abandoned. The upper floor was obviously not taken care of; in September 1939, the Fire Department was called to the bank to extinguish rags on a shelf which had ignited by spontaneous combustion, and burned the paper on two walls, fortunately causing only slight damage.\textsuperscript{145}

Hutchings had effected important changes in the work area of the bank but did not touch other parts of the building. The upper floor would have remained abandoned, but for the efforts of John Theed who tired of living in a hotel in 1941. With the other staff member, he made renovations to the second floor, and moved in there. The bathroom was a full one, with a tub, and an electric hot water storage. There was electricity on the second floor, but no heating and only plumbing in the bathroom. They decided to live on the north side of the building, rather than the south, probably because of the size of the old living room. There was no furniture in this main room, just a carpet on the floor, and a table, so they brought in a stove which they put into fR2-02, then cut a door between this and fR2-05, where Theed put a hot plate for cooking and which he used as a bedroom. His companion used fR2-01. The combination of heat from downstairs, and the stove kept enough of the second floor warm for them, and Theed remained there until he left Dawson in 1942.

Hutchings served as manager until 1942, when he was succeeded by Theo Hall, from Mayo. In 1943, Hall grew sick, and in February of the next year he was replaced by D. E. Gilliland who remained as manager until July 1950. Hall does not appear to have made any renovations to the building; his one innovation, which was also a response to wartime conditions, was to hire the first woman teller, a Dawson girl named Margaret Neff.
Gilliland took the transformation of the building that Hutchings had begun several stages further. Like Hutchings, he had several years tenure with which to effect changes, he was a dynamic individual, and he became a convinced partisan of the Yukon. He had little but sentimental attachment to the Dawson branch's traditions. He wanted to make it, and the town, more dynamic, modern and prosperous.

Unfortunately for Dawson, the Y.C.G.C. could not sustain the momentum it acquired in the 1930s forever. The war, again, reduced the labour supply, with men either drawn into the war effort or attracted by better paying jobs outside. Key employees stayed with the company, but the crew of 400 men in 1941 fell to 172 in 1944, only climbing back to 400 in 1946. Shortage of supplies also meant that operations ran down; by 1945, only three dredges were in operation. In the immediate post-war period, prospects for returning to the levels of production, and of prosperity, achieved in the late 1930s appeared promising. By 1949, eight dredges were in operation, and production was returning to the levels reached in the late 1930s.

It was during this period of apparent return to pre-war production that Gilliland renovated the bank. There appeared to be an indefinite future of continued profitable operations before the Bank of Montreal in Dawson, so money invested in the renovation of an aging, but still serviceable, structure would not be lost.

So was the case in 1938, the main changes revolved around the old vault. By 1946, the old vault had sunk about two feet, and was leaning even further to the west than it had been at the time Hutchings abandoned it. But, in order to remove the old vault and install a new one properly, other changes were necessary.

One informant, D. E. Gilliland, who was the manager between 1944 and 1950 was unclear as to the dates or sequence of the changes he made. Another, Arthur Rooney, said that
they all took place in the summer of 1946. The photograph in figure 22 is dated "December 4, 1947" but an article in the News in July 1946 mentioned that the building was undergoing a thorough foundation job under the supervision of a local contractor, Bob Hastie. The photograph might be misdated; Rooney's account of the total package of renovations fits closely with the News article; it is likely that the removal of the vault, etc., can be dated to the summer of 1946. In a letter to the author, A. J. Rooney wrote:

The old vault was essentially a heavy steel box, on the outside of which, to make it fireproof, bricks had been placed...The roof of the vault was arched but, being behind a wall, this was not noticed from the banking room [see figure 32]. So as a result of the gradual melting of the permafrost, the vault had sunk at least two feet, as I recall, but it had sunk on an angle as

and it was necessary to use stout blocks of wood to keep the safe (inside the vault) [see figure 31] as level as possible. Also, some of the office floor was cut away to accommodate the swing of the vault door.

It was largely as a result of the problem with the vault that led to the decision (sic) to make some additional renovations to the building. The new vault structure concrete was placed on pilings with the hope the piles would provide a firm foundation. It is my recollection that the piles (i.e. logs) were about 14 feet long, and it was interesting that the bottoms of the logs were in the form of a cone, that is the logs were pencil-shaped and, I believe, about sixteen piles were used. The cone shape facilitated driving the logs into, or through the permafrost and it was thought the
angle would minimize heating by the ice, it was also thought unlikely the permafrost would melt at the depth of 14 feet.

... [assay office] It was removed simply because it served no purpose and its removal facilitated dealing with the removal of the old vault...

Then the removal of the vault in fRl-07 and rebuilding in Rl-04 also meant the dismantling of the annex, and probably also meant the removal of fDl-11, fw1-09, fw1-10 and fw1-11. However, if the photographer in figures 22 and 23 were taken at the same time, it is difficult to reconcile the disappearance of two windows and a door from the west side of the building with the continued presence of the annex. It is possible that the door and windows along the west side as well as fw1-11 on the south were, in fact removed somewhat earlier; Rooney only indicates one window in diagram 15.

Other changes to the banking area related to the effective disappearance of the rear portions of Alex McDonald's office when the vault was moved, the removal of the book safes—according to Thees, to the bank's Whitehorse branch; the transformation of the old manager's office by light coloured wood and glass panels (see figure 36). Finally, at some point during his term as manager, Gilliland installed a furnace to replace the old stove. According to Theed, there was only the wooden stove at his departure in 1942, but an oil furnace was in place when he returned in 1950. Rooney, who served in Dawson from August 1944 until the autumn of 1946 said the furnace ("like a huge oil barrel") was a wood burner. But with the depletion of the Yukon, timber resources over the previous fifty years, wood was no longer as abundant as it had been, nor as inexpensive. The short growing season in the territories ensured that it would be many years, even centuries, before the original stands returned. So, when after the war, an improved transportation system into the territory helped reduce
the cost of fuel oil, it became competitive with wood.

From the time of Theed's changes to the upper floor in 1946, staff had lived there. Rooney, however, suggested that this was just seasonal, April - September, then back to the hotel for the winter. Gilliland panned the soil under the annex, and with the $650 worth of gold dust thereby obtained improved accommodations upstairs, purchasing a Wilton rug and more modern furniture.

Hutchings and Gilliland lived in the Bank manager's house on 8th, not over the bank, but those single staff members not resident in Dawson had been accommodated from Theed's time upstairs. Accommodations were probably little more elaborate until Gilliland improved the second floor sometime after Rooney's departure in 1946.

Gilliland was succeeded by John Theed on his second assignment to Dawson, in 1950. Again, as so often happened before, an apparent prosperity was thwarted by forces beyond the control of Dawson or its citizens. The town had no real economic purpose except the dredging operations and the government; there was virtually no local economy. So, when the price of gold stayed at $35.00 an ounce for reasons having to do with economic policies determined by the American government, as costs of labour, supplies and transportation rose, the Y.C.G.C. was squeezed. There were no new, immensely wealthy gravels to work, the company could not increase the price of its one commodity, and rising costs could be contained briefly, but not controlled. Dredging operations, and gold production, slowly declined, to the detriment of the bank's operations. Two other economic blows to the town were the transfer of the territorial administration to Whitehorse in 1953, and the opening of an all-season road into Dawson. The town lost people, the merchants business, and the whole area the stimulus of the steamer economy. Dawson was not even the terminus of the steamer route; after 1954, it became merely the
end of a long, dusty road; a decaying community in the central Yukon whose whole economic raison d'être was disappearing.

John Theed remained as manager until 1954, then was succeeded by J. W. Wakley (1954-58) and J. L. Cunliffe (1958-59). The volume of bank business declined further as mining operations slowed down and local businesses either folded or contracted. The changes made by Hutchings and Gilliland remained, but it is unlikely others were made. The staff of two continued to live at least part of the year over the bank, the manager in his house, the "Charlie McLeod Cabin" at 414-8th Ave., and the bank to ship out a decreasing volume of gold.

It is questionable whether the volume of business in Dawson in the 1950s could justify the operation of two banks, but they were obviously both profitable operations, so they continued. Certainly the Bank of Montreal kept its company account. But the end of gold operations on a large scale in the Yukon was imminent; if Dawson were not to die, its economy needed a new basis.

Ironically, it was the physical presence of decay in its buildings still reflecting the aura of the Gold Rush, as well as the existence of the road from Whitehorse that made possible the next twist in Dawson's economic fortunes. As mining ran down, it would be replaced by tourism. In the early 1960s, the federal and territorial governments, together with the local Klondike Visitors' Association (KVA) set out to capitalize on Dawson's striking architectural assets, and its myth. The Dawson City Festival was organized in 1962 to stimulate tourism. The centre pieces of the Festival were the restored Palace Grand Theatre and the last of the river-boats, the "S.S. Keno" brought to Dawson and landed for use as a dance hall and casino. The Festival was a tremendous success in that it attracted 18,000 visitors to Dawson in 1962, but it lost money. However, it did show that Dawson had real potential as a tourist attraction, and that the town need not die when
the Y.C.G.C. ceased operations, as cease it must soon.

In August 1959, Roy McPhail became manager of the Dawson Bank of Montreal, remaining until September 1962. When he arrived the staff consisted of the manager and two men; it fell to one staff member the next year, then averaged three until 1962—at which point two women hired on a part-time basis brought the staff up to five in total.151

It was during McPhail's term as manager that the last renovations were made, changing the bank to its present appearance. The reason for the changes were probably two. The first was the need to move the manager out of the house on Eighth into the bank, but in an apartment suitable for a family, with the other part of the building to be used, as before, for single staff members. The second relates to Dawson's economic prospects in 1960-61; there appeared to be sufficient economic potential in tourism to justify further investment in the building. It is unlikely such an investment would have been made had it been known the branch would shut down in 1968.

It was a sign of the times that the renovations were not done by a local contractor, but by one in Whitehorse, Arne Anderson, who brought supplies in from there. Approval for the renovations was obtained from the Superintendent of the bank in Vancouver, the contractor paid by the local branch, and the costs charged to a building account on the books of the Dawson branch. The work was done during the first part of 1961, and was nearing completion when fire broke out one night at the end of March 1961 and nearly destroyed the building.152 The workmen had almost finished their reconversion, the building was ready for painters. The Fire Department responded quickly, and eventually brought the fire under control. But the upper floor was entirely gutted, although the banking area downstairs sustained only minor water and smoke damage and was only closed a day. The workmen were obviously responsible for the fire; the fire chief blaming it on a lighted cigarette,
and McPhail ascribing it to the heat from a bare bulb. The contractor cleaned up the mess, hauled the debris to the dump, and started the renovations over again.

There had been no indication of changing the exterior, but the metal over the second floor had to be removed when FW2-16 and 217 were replaced by W2-01, 202 and 204, and it was decided not to replace it after the fire. The corrugated metal over the ground floor was not removed by McPhail but must have been by one of his successors.

The transformation of the interior of the upper floor was nearly total; only a modified FR2-10, now R2-08, containing the toilet, remained. The east apartment was to be the manager's, the rest the staff's. The former contained two bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, and a large (R2-02) living-dining area. The staff apartment was, again, very small, containing two bedrooms (R2-07). Neither apartment was excessively large, but both were comfortable.

Roy McPhail like so many bank managers before him, took a prominent part in Dawson life, particularly during the 1962 Festival. Roy, in fact, was president of the Festival foundation, and his wife, Marjorie, played an important role in publicity. They utilized the magnificent historical resource that was the bank building, built a replica of the original tent-shack across the road and donned appropriate costumes for the occasion.

The Festival, as indicated above, was a success, but it alone could not revive Dawson. Gold mining—whether by dredges, hydraulicking or pan and shovel—was becoming decreasingly profitable. When the end of corporate gold mining in the Yukon came, it came quickly. As late as 1963, there were still 300 men working on the dredges; in November 1966 the last four dredges ceased operations, and the staff was reduced to two, then none. By 1967, over sixty years of large scale gold mining in the Klondike had stopped.
With the company gone, there was little future for the Bank of Montreal. The economy of the area received a brief boost when Clinton Creek started up, but the Bank of Commerce got the Cassiar Asbestos Company's account. Local firms closed, the population declined, and the volume of business too fell. There was a promise of some prosperity based on tourism, but it would be several years yet before this could be realized.

The Bank of Montreal branch continued to make a profit on its operations even after 1966, but it was unable to cover costs for inspections or frequent transfers of managers. According to the last manager of the Dawson Branch, Mike Rogers, this latter amounted to $16,000 in his case. The bank still made money on local loans, and certainly provided welfare and pawnshop services as well as "penny ante" loans of $5.00 and $10.00 at a time, but the company felt it could use its staff more efficiently elsewhere.

The Bank of Montreal stayed open one winter and two summers after Y.C.G.C. dredging operations ceased, but its future was dismal. In September 1968, the staff consisted of the manager, Mike Rogers, and a staff of one, the teller Loretta Barber. As of September 30, the branch ceased operations. Rogers was transferred to the Whitehorse branch, with Loretta Barber—and the bank's remaining accounts—going over to the Bank of Commerce. In the end it was the government account, not the miners' or the company's that proved the more important.

d  After the Bank, 1968-1972

In 1972, Parks Canada bought the Bank of Montreal Building as a part of the development of the "Klondike National Historic Site", not from the Bank of Montreal, but from the second owner of the building since 1968, a bankrupt.

The Bank had no sentimental attachment to the Dawson branch. Once it was closed, there was no thought of returning.
Rogers was given the responsibility of disposing of the property, building and contents. He said the Bank expected $4,000 for the building and its site; he got $13,000, to the delight of the company's real estate division. He also sold the remaining furniture (but not apparently the appliances) and all but the counter downstairs. The furniture was well used, that upstairs of low quality; he received only a few dollars for the lot.

As of October 1968, ownership of the building passed to Ben Warnsby who valued it only for speculative purposes. He left it empty; in fact, was not even sure he left the heat on the winter of 1968-1969. In the spring of 1969, he started negotiations with a Calgary geologist, Blake Brady for the sale of the building. This was done by the fall for about $25,000.

Blake Brady regarded the structure as much more than a speculative holding. He was taken by the tourist potential of Dawson, and proposed a grand scheme of a "Sourdough Village" built back of the town for tourists. He gathered properties, and began promotion of his scheme, but it was perhaps a few years ahead of its profitable potential. The scheme collapsed in bankruptcy, and Brady suffered a breakdown, and declared bankruptcy, thus necessitating the disposal of all his property in the case of the bank building, this meant to Parks Canada. In the end Warnsby obtained his money not from Brady, but the accountancy firm of Touche Ross.

The Bank of Montreal building was not integral to Brady's "Sourdough Village" but it was a structure of great historic significance, central to the interpretation of Dawson's history, and it was available. He did not leave it empty as had Warnsby, but rented the ground floor portion, the banking area, to two Dawson women who operated a women's and children's clothing store, the "Uptown Toggery" from 1969 to 1971. The upstairs was used as staff accommodations by the Bank of Commerce—an ironic twist. Muriel Cruden, one of the Toggery's owners,
informed the author that they made no changes to the interior, using the counter—and the vault—that remained there for the shop, and bringing in other furniture needed. In conjunction with the bus depot, which operated out of the building, they were able to run a profitable operation for two years. They might have been able to continue, but when Parks Canada took over, it wanted to renegotiate the lease, charging them for fuel as well as rent. As this was beyond their means, they closed down. After their departure the ground floor remained empty, but Parks Canada's summer employees began to use the upper floor as a residence.
Conclusion

The bank building was central to the history of Dawson from the time of the arrival of the first banking party in May 1898 until the branch's final closing in September 1968. It was a Canadian institution (even if initially British-owned), which served as an economic counterforce to the economic power of the American companies in 1898, and which helped turn the Yukon's economic orientation southwards, to Canada. It served as an instrument of government policy for years, facilitating the collection of royalties and export taxes, and assisting in the replacement of gold dust by bank notes.

Perhaps this latter was the most important function the bank performed in Dawson, eliminating the use of gold as a medium of exchange, and emphasizing its importance as a commodity, to be offered in the best market, which, until at least 1914, was the United States. The bank played an important role in the Yukon's development as a resource-based, peripheral territory rather than the settled, industrial province its early advocates wished.

The building was ideally suited to this function. Built to fit into Edwardian Dawson, its assay office, vault, banking area and staff residence were all essential to its operation. It underwent only slow changes over its six decades of service, but these corresponded closely to Dawson's altering fortunes. Changes, or lack of such changes, to the building arose out of Dawson's economic and social history, reflecting the bank's central place in its history.
Postscript - Removal of the Annex

After the completion of the report, three photographs, shown in figure 37, 38 and 39, were brought to the author's attention by Roy and Marjorie McPhail.

Although he did not become manager of the branch until 1959, Roy McPhail had spent some time in Dawson briefly in the early 1950s. At that time, he was at the Bank of Montreal's Whitehorse branch, and went to Dawson as temporary manager during John Theed's absence. He was by himself, and sent these photographs to his wife.

Of the three, figure 37 shows the north and east façade of the building, figure 38 shows the northeast corner of the upper floor, window 2-05 in FR2-02 and the door to FR2-05, and figure 39 shows the vault door (DL-07) on the ground floor.

The two photographs of the interior are of particular value. Figure 38, of the upper interior, is the only one of that part of the building. It shows the door put in by John Theed to make the upper apartments more livable than they had been. The picture in figure 39 shows Gilliland's new vault before it too began to shift and sink. Contrast this with the picture of the vault in the early 1940s, shown in figure 32.

The photograph in figure 37 reopens a question previously considered settled, for it does not complement existing information as the other two do. The photograph shows the bank in winter, revealing a structure different only in such details as the colour of the trim from the picture of the bank before the annex was removed, figure 22. However, it shows the annex in place,
some three or four years after it was supposed to have been removed. According to the oral testimonies of David Gilliland, Arthur Rooney and John Theed (pp. 68-70), the annex was dismantled in 1946 or 1947, creating a contradiction between three—independent—oral testimonies and a photograph. The author checked again with Theed and Rooney; both restated that the annex was removed around 1946 and 1947. He also contacted two other informants, Cliff Brown of Burnaby B.C. and Giovanni Castellarin, an employee of Parks Canada in Dawson. The former confirmed the removal of the old vault, installation of the new one in its present location, dismantling of the annex and installation of the furnace in room R1-03 which took place in 1946 or 1947. The latter, familiar with the Parks Canada programme, in the Klondike National Historic Site, stated that the annex had been removed before his arrival in Dawson in 1949.

In the absence of a photograph with a verifiable date taken after the removal of the annex, the author depended upon the evidence of oral testimonies. As these were confirmed in spite of the suggestion that the photograph in figure 37 was taken in the early 1950s, two forms of evidence come into conflict.

Under normal circumstances, a photograph, with a verifiable date, would be considered more reliable than fallible memories. In this case, however, five independent informants all confirmed the removal of the annex to the building between 1946 and 1949, even though they differed on other details. Against this is a picture which does not have a verifiable date attached to it, but which was taken by a man who was not in Dawson before 1950. While the possibility certainly remains that the annex was not, in fact, removed until after 1950, the impact of five independent testimonies must be weighed against one testimony dating the photograph to 1950. Although absolute certainty is impossible, it would appear more likely that the annex was removed in the later 1940s, than the early 1950s.
Appendix A. Managers of the Bank of British North America and Bank of Montreal, Dawson Branch, 1898-1968

**Bank of British North America**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>D. Doig (pro tem)</td>
<td>selected temporary site on Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rented site at Second and Queen from A. McDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898-1899</td>
<td>J. Cran</td>
<td>manager at time of fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>began reconstruction of building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1907</td>
<td>D. Doig</td>
<td>completed construction of building, and established assay office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>installed services - electricity, water, telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-1919</td>
<td>E.O. Finlaison</td>
<td>absorbed A. McDonald's office, c. 1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>closed down assay office and residence on second floor, probably removed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>balcony and replaced fD.217 with W-102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bank of Montreal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1919-1937</td>
<td>E.O. Finlaison</td>
<td>as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-1942</td>
<td>W.A. Hutchings</td>
<td>remodeled bank area, installed three bank safes and stopped use of vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>began to use upper floor area as residence, but made minimal changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-1944</td>
<td>A.T. Hall</td>
<td>removed old vault and installed new one, sent bank safes to Whitehorse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-1950</td>
<td>D.E. Gilliland</td>
<td>installed oil furnace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>remodelled banking area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>demolished old assay office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>foundations repaired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>improved living accommodations on second floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Range</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 - 1954</td>
<td>J.A. Theed</td>
<td>- closed flW-09, l-10, l-11 and fDl-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954 - 1958</td>
<td>J.W. Wakley</td>
<td>- second fire, upstairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958 - 1959</td>
<td>J.L. Cunliffe</td>
<td>- total redecoration of upper floor apartment and change of windows, east side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959 - 1962</td>
<td>W.R. McPhail</td>
<td>- removal of corrugated iron from upper floor exterior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962 - 1964</td>
<td>G. Hunter</td>
<td>- foundation repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964 -(1966?)</td>
<td>R. Benson</td>
<td>- removed corrugated iron from ground floor exterior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1966?- 1967?)</td>
<td>E. Thompson</td>
<td>- disposed of furniture and records in bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967 - 1968</td>
<td>M. Rogers</td>
<td>- closed bank down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B.

The figures used have indicated the difficulties associated with gold production figures. The broad agreement about trends, however, is probably accurate. The graph from Ross at the bottom represents the amount of gold handled by the Bank of Commerce, and it is quite likely the greater part of the difference between this and the figures for the total amount of gold handled between C.1904 and 1917 was handled by the Bank of British North America.
Appendix B.

VALUE OF YUKON GOLD PRODUCTION 1898-1925
Appendix C. GOLD RESERVES HELD BY MONETARY AUTHORITIES IN SELECTED COUNTRIES (in Sterling, positions taken on Dec. 31 of the years mentioned)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1889</th>
<th>1899</th>
<th>1910</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank of England</td>
<td>17,784,000</td>
<td>29,002,000</td>
<td>31,095,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Banks of Issue</td>
<td>4,591,000</td>
<td>6,227,000</td>
<td>4,918,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Banks of Issue</td>
<td>3,480,000</td>
<td>2,816,000</td>
<td>3,649,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany (Reichsbank)</td>
<td>12,234,000</td>
<td>22,939,000</td>
<td>32,760,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Fund</td>
<td>5,869,000</td>
<td>5,869,000</td>
<td>5,869,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria-Hungary</td>
<td>5,426,000</td>
<td>43,982,000</td>
<td>54,971,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Bank of Serbia</td>
<td>345,000</td>
<td>286,000</td>
<td>992,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of France</td>
<td>50,471,000</td>
<td>74,310,000</td>
<td>130,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Spain</td>
<td>6,009,000</td>
<td>13,485,000</td>
<td>16,301,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Portugal</td>
<td>1,028,000</td>
<td>1,075,000</td>
<td>1,348,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of the Netherlands</td>
<td>5,069,000</td>
<td>3,730,000</td>
<td>10,391,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Bank of Belgium</td>
<td>2,606,000</td>
<td>4,329,000</td>
<td>5,037,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy (Bank of Italy)</td>
<td>18,132,000</td>
<td>15,702,000</td>
<td>2,261,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Sicily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Naples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Russia</td>
<td>42,565,000</td>
<td>90,275,000</td>
<td>8,091,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Finland</td>
<td>861,000</td>
<td>888,000</td>
<td>130,288,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Bank of Roumania</td>
<td>2,011,000</td>
<td>1,444,000</td>
<td>873,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Bank of Bulgaria</td>
<td>426,000</td>
<td>127,000</td>
<td>4,759,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Bank of Sweden</td>
<td>1,379,000</td>
<td>2,195,000</td>
<td>4,482,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Ottoman Bank</td>
<td>740,000</td>
<td>1,384,000</td>
<td>6,171,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Bank of Denmark</td>
<td>2,754,000</td>
<td>3,249,000</td>
<td>4,085,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Bank of Norway</td>
<td>1,755,000</td>
<td>1,755,000</td>
<td>1,904,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss Banks</td>
<td>2,364,000</td>
<td>3,890,000</td>
<td>6,187,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Greece</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>79,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States (National Banks)</td>
<td>17,348,000</td>
<td>41,860,000</td>
<td>46,849,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Banks</td>
<td>5,306,000</td>
<td>16,400,000</td>
<td>16,323,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasury</td>
<td>64,459,000</td>
<td>82,279,000</td>
<td>226,131,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Australasia</td>
<td>18,465,000</td>
<td>21,862,000</td>
<td>37,919,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Banks and Treasury</td>
<td>1,505,000</td>
<td>4,651,000</td>
<td>22,235,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South African Banks</td>
<td>1,028,000</td>
<td>6,740,000</td>
<td>10,357,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>296,031,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>530,850,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>866,856,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Appendix D. WORLD GOLD STOCK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Millions of Pounds</th>
<th>Millions of Dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>5,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>5,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>1,249</td>
<td>6,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>1,267</td>
<td>6,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>1,286</td>
<td>6,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>1,304</td>
<td>6,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>6,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>1,342</td>
<td>6,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>1,362</td>
<td>6,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>1,383</td>
<td>6,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>1,408</td>
<td>6,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1,432</td>
<td>6,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>1,459</td>
<td>7,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>1,489</td>
<td>7,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>1,523</td>
<td>7,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>1,560</td>
<td>7,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>1,599</td>
<td>7,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>1,644</td>
<td>8,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>8,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>1,759</td>
<td>8,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1,809</td>
<td>8,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1,858</td>
<td>9,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>1,915</td>
<td>9,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1,979</td>
<td>9,632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>2,046</td>
<td>9,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>2,122</td>
<td>10,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>2,202</td>
<td>10,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>2,281</td>
<td>11,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>2,368</td>
<td>11,524</td>
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<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>2,456</td>
<td>11,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>12,387</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Marcello de Cecco, Money and Empire, Oxford, 1974, p. 245, Table 14.
Endnotes

[research notes of E. Bush are indicated by (B)]


5 It is possible that individual Americans who arrived with capital may have considered opening banks there along American lines. See W.B. Haskell, Two Years in the Klondike and Alaskan Goldfields, (Hartford, 1898), p. 358; N.A. Armstrong, Yukon Yesterdays: Thirty Years of Adventure in the Klondike, (London, 1936), p. 189.

6 Canada. Public Archives of Canada [hereafter cited as PAC]. RG. 19, Vol. 3137, file 9804, E.S. Clouston-J.M. Courtney, 14 January 1898. This reference was kindly made available to the author by Mr. E.F. Bush, who put his research notes for "Banking in the Klondike: 1898-1968" (M.R.S. 118, 1973) at his disposal. Such notes will be indicated by (B).
9 The only other bank with a similar origin was the Bank of British Columbia. It amalgamated with the Bank of Commerce in 1901.
10 Jamieson, op. cit., p. 25.
13 Whitehorse. Yukon Territorial Archives [hereafter cited as YTA], MSS, Box 7, 1, letter of D. Doig to H. Stikeman, 13 June 1898.
14 Ibid.
15 Montreal. Bank of Montreal Records, note from J. Carroll to E. Bush (B)
16 YTA, Doig-Stikeman. He also remarked that real estate was worth $400 a front foot, although such a figure would be less likely on Second than Front.
17 Yukon Midnight Sun, 18 July, 1898, (B) Doig estimated the building and lot would cost $20,000 to $25,000.
18 See Margaret Carter's historical study of the lumber industry in the Yukon. It was not yet published when this manuscript was completed, although the author was able to see a draft version.
20 Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 185-188.
21 Bank of Montreal Records, enclosure with Gilliland letter to staff magazine. (B).
22 "I have applications daily for loans...a few carefully selected loans might be made with very little risk, and at large rates of interest, 2 or 3% per month. Since
opening a month we have made over $1000 in commission...

"People coming in here get used to paying high for everything and we can collect a large commission here..."

Y.T.A., Doig-Stikeman. See also J. Lynch, Three Years in the Klondike, (London, 1904), p. 34.

23 PAC, RG 19, vol. 3137, file 9804, Fielding-Stikeman, 31 March 1898 (B). After persistent political agitation in Dawson for such an office, one was established in 1901 in Vancouver.

24 Ross, op. cit., p. 166.

25 Yukon Midnight Sun, 4 November 1898, (B).

26 Klondike Nugget, 5 October 1898, (B).


In diminishing volume dust continued in circulation as a currency until 1902.

28 PAC, RG 19, Vol. 3161, file 10395, dated 8 November 1899 (B), YTA, Doig-Stikeman.

29 PAC, RG 91, Vol. 16, file 4054, Ordinance #13 of 1898, dated 7 December 1898.

30 Klondike Daily Nugget, 21 August 1901.

31 Semi-Weekly Nugget, 27 April 1899.

32 Klondike Midnight Sun, 2 May 1899. (B), Lynch, op. cit., pp. 137-138; Ross, op. cit., p. 183.

33 The number of sawmills in Dawson is taken from Appendix E of Margaret Carter's study. Much of the information contained here on building supplies and conditions in Dawson in 1899 is from this study.

34 Klondike Nugget, 14 June 1899. Doig, the assistant manager, established the branch in June 1898, Cran took over in August when the bank moved into the building at Second and Queen, but left in June 1899. Doig was then named manager, a position he held until February 1907. Yukon Sun, 27 June 1899, (B). Notes on the history of the Dawson branch, dated 8 May 1925, in the "Dawson Branch Treasury Book"
provided to the author by the Bank of Montreal Archivist.

35 For an indication of McDonald's property holdings at the height of his prosperity, see Dawson Daily News, 1 September 1899. This "Klondike Croesus" as Doig called him, eventually overextended himself, and died in poverty.

26 These consist of extant recordings done by G. Duguay, D. Kostiuk and G. Menzies, which are deposited in the Engineering and Architecture Division, Prairie Regional Office, and a structural investigation by C.A. Lévesque.

37 The best study of permafrost and building problems associated with it is R.J.E. Brown, Permafrost in Canada, (Toronto, 1970), Chapter 4, pp. 55-63.


39 Other buildings in Dawson constructed at the same time (e.g. Mme Tremblay's Store) were not so insulated but rather depended upon a combination of a vapour barrier between the inner and outer sheathing and very hot stoves for warmth. However, it cannot be asserted with absolute certainty that there was no such insulation put in.

40 Dimensions from Lévesque, op. cit., "The Bank of British North America reported to have had the building covered with heavy corrugated iron", Yukon Sun, 19 September 1899, The Description of the building dated 8 May, 1925 (above F.32) mentions "asbestos and iron covering".

41 For a better view of the door, which had a window facing east and a single door on its north wide, see Bush, op. cit., p. 70.

42 Klondike Daily Nugget, 8 November 1901. The picture was not necessarily taken then.

Ibid.; Ordinance #13 of 1900 "An Amendment to the Sidewalk Ordinance", dated 17 May 1900.


See endnote 34.

The vent on the south end of the building probably dates from the 1961 alterations.


Yukon Sun, 8 September 1900, p. 4.

There is a passing reference to at least one paint job, see Dawson Daily News, 2 June 1922, p. 4.


Extant Recording Notes, deposited in Engineering and Architecture Division, P.R.O., Rl-01, Rl-02, pp. 40/49-44/49.

Ibid, pp. 40-49, 43-49. The most important levels of wall covering found in Rl-01 near Wl-03 from the surface back were: frost pattern, silver highlights on white, heavy beige, plain blotter type, plain green paper blotter type, green plain paper, light brown plain, asbestos paper, wall.

See diagrams 10 and 11. The author interviewed D. McNab and C.W. Harrison at their homes in Victoria and Ganges B.C. respectively on 15 November 1978.

Testimony of D. McNab and C. Harrison, Hutchings' letter. See also Bush, op. cit., Figure 19, p. 78 which shows the gold cage incorrectly identified as a teller's desk.
Bush, pp. 74-78.

Hutchings letter, Bush, op. cit., pp. 74-78. A third service, telephones is not referred to at all. By 1903, both the bank and Alex McDonald had phones (Tel. 30 and 54 respectively) although they were probably connected earlier by the Yukon Telephone Syndicate. Rates (1901 Directory, p. 34), were $23.00 a month for business phones. The "Dawson Telephone and Electric Co." was incorporated 15 April 1900. (PAC, RG 91, vol. 16, file 4054, Ordinance #8, 1900).

When the Bank of Commerce opened in its present location, it had a large furnace in the basement, and was heated by steam and forced air. Semi-Weekly Klondike Nugget, 19 May, 1901, (B).

Semi-Weekly Klondike Nugget, 5 and 8 October 1898, (B).

See Dawson Daily News, 13 October 1899, 5 December 1899, and 4 January 1900; Yukon Sun, 9 and 30 January 1900; Klondike Nugget, 8 October 1898, 1 November 1899. Two companies (besides the "Dawson Electric Light and Power Co." mentioned in the Nugget article) were incorporated in 1900, the "Dawson Telephone and Light Co." and the "Dawson City Water and Power Co." See PAC, RG 91, Vol. 16, file 4054, Ordinances #8 (5 April 1900) and #14 (25 May 1900) of 1900.

Fire Department, Dawson City. "Fire Department Investigation", October 10, 1905, p. 41. Fire department log books and inspection records were kindly made available to the author by Mr. R. Rehn of the Dawson City Fire Department.


Extant Recording Notes, pp. 43-49.

Two of the author's informants, J.A Theed of Vancouver and D.A. Gilliland of Victoria mentioned panning the soil inside the old assay office. They were probably not the
only ones to do this.

67 For this information about the Bank of Commerce office, see Semi-Weekly Klondike Nugget, 19 May 1901, (B).

68 Semi-Weekly Klondike Nugget, 19 May 1901, (B).

69 Water for domestic use was originally supplied by vendors who sold it from door to door. The Dawson City Water and Power Co. was incorporated early in 1900, charged, among other responsibilities, with supplying piped water for Dawson. It opened its first pumping station in September 1900, but this proved unequal to Dawson winters. Only by 1904 were the problems of freezing overcome by warmer water maintained at a constant flow.

70 The extant recorders also found that fD2-19, which went into the upper floor of the annex, showed evidence of extensive use. This would, in turn, suggest that this door led to a storage area, like a pantry, although lacking the evidence the annex would provide, such an assertion cannot be proved.

71 South Africa's gold was in huge, low quality deposits. Its long-term extraction using a combination of large drafts of inexpensive labour and advanced technology had served to increase its recoverable reserves constantly. Also, the geographical situation of the Rand and its political power within the South African state has ensured that its mines would be exploited with maximum efficiency, both for the state and the companies. The result has been that gold production to the value of billions of dollars has served as an essential "fly wheel," enriching and stabilizing an otherwise poor and politically volatile country.

72 See Appendix B for gold production figures, 1898-1925.

73 Yukon Sun, 25 and 27 April 1902, (B).

74 A remark by the Dawson postmaster in 1909 is revealing; it indicates another means of removing the Yukon's gold. "For a time the Dawson office was the first in rank in the world in the amount of money handled through any one office. That was caused by the great sales of money orders to those
making homestakes and sending them out of the country. With the changed conditions, Dawson still makes a splendid showing, and the office here ranks among the leading offices of Canada in volume of business." In 1907, $337,625.95 (less $48,879 paid out) worth of money orders was sold by the Dawson office. I.J. Hartman, "Mails of the Yukon", Dawson Daily News, Special Issue, 21 July 1909.

75 See M. de Cecco, Money and Empire, (Oxford, 1974) for an account of the role played by gold in the era of the "gold standards" up to the First World War.

76 Yukon World, 1 August 1907.

77 de Cecco, op. cit., pp. 120-121.


80 Dawson and the Klondike placer fields could be regarded as the link between nineteenth century "frontier" communities, and twentieth century resource-extraction communities, most of which are located in the shield. Its failure to develop beyond the former category doomed it to become a model—in some ways a negative one—for the latter. See Zazlow, op. cit., pp. 101-141.

81 M. Carter's study of the Lumber Trade, Chap. V.

82 See Zazlow, op. cit., pp. 140-141.

83 Bank of British North America Minute Books, reel M-137 pp. 211-212 (B). Bibliographical information for McDonald is scattered, but for an account written at the height of his career, see Dawson Daily News, 1 September 1899; for the latter part and his death, see 9 and 19 January 1909.


For references to the Bank of B.N.A. importing bank notes, see *Yukon Sun*, 21 April 1900 and 30 March 1901 (B).


As early as 1909, the Bank of B.N.A. had the account of the Yukon Gold Company, PAC, RG 91, Vol. 16, file 3429, J.T. Lithgow—T.C. Boville (Deputy Minister of Finance), 6 July 1909. At the same time output by individual miners was decreasing, so such an account was of increasing importance.

For federal government attempts to drop the payment of the commission by changing banks, see R.G. 91, Vol. 16, file 3429.

Yukon Council Journals, 1912. pp. 73-74.

Figures from Bush, op. cit., pp. 128-129.

PAC, RG 91, Vol. 16, file 3429, J.T. Lithgow—T.C. Boville, 22 January and 6 July 1909. Probably the reason for the figures being released in 1909 was the B.N.A. Bank's grievance with the government over having to transfer payments to the Bank of Commerce, thereby providing its competition with an advantage, rather than transmit them directly to the Receiver-General.

PAC, RG 91, Vol. 16, file 4054, Ordinances #11 (26 April) and 30, (10 July) 1900 and #29 of 1901 (20 July 1901).

Dawson Daily News, 23 October 1903. (B) The Bank of Commerce succeeded in reducing its assessment from $22,000 to $150,000. Such reductions were common place, reflecting economic realities, and the power of a few large companies, but eventually undermining the city's capacity to raise revenue.

Figures from the Dawson City Tax Rolls, filed by lot in an incomplete manner in the Historic Research Division, Parks Canada, P.R.O. The Originals are deposited in the Yukon Archives, and a xerox copy of these is located in the
Historic Research Division, Parks Canada, National Capital Region. According to Zazlow the mill rate on property in 1901 was 12½, op. cit., p. 127.

97 Dawson Daily News, 25 October 1902 and 18 May 1903 (B). Their license fee was only $1200 a year. PAC, RG 91, Vol. 16, file 3429, G.M. Gibbs (manager)-O-J.T. Lithgow, 30 June 1909.

98 F.W. Heathcote, "A Banking Outpost", Journal of the Canadian Bankers' Association., XVI, 1908, pp. 54-55. This condition prevailed into the 1930s, Green, op. cit. p. 290.

99 Bush, op. cit., p. 86.


101 PAC, RG 91, Vol. 16, file 3429, J.T. Lithgow—J.M. Courtney, 12 August 1903. Among other expenses, Lithgow listed getting money into the country, costing 3/4 of 1% insurance and 3/4 of 1% express, shipping out the notes of other banks, foreign currency and mutilated notes, all at the bank's expenses. He also mentioned in passing, "A great deal of American currency finds its way into the Territory and is taken at par by the Bank; there is, in fact, far more American than Canadian silver in circulation".


103 Heathcote, op. cit., p. 56.

104 The photograph in figure 30 is captioned "Dawson, B.N.A. Bank, Gold which fell in furnace", but whether or not it does in fact show the assay office of the B.N.A. Bank is difficult to tell, particularly as the position of windows and of the furnace are not consistent with what little information there is known about the annex.


106 Heathcote, op. cit., p. 56. He worked for the Bank of Commerce, so
it cannot be proven that the Bank of B.N.A. had the same policy, but it probably did. See also Klondike Nugget, 11 April 1903 (B); at that point it was done once a week in winter, but continuously in summer.

107 Klondike Nugget, 17 June and 9 September 1900; (B); Dawson Daily News, 5 April 1910.

108 See, for example, Klondike Nugget, 5 October 1898 (B).


110 Klondike Nugget, 14 June 1900. But by 1903 as Dawson's economy deflated, there was a rush for business by the banks and a brief flurry of competition. The Commerce offered, "Gold Dust bought outright or taken at assay value less export tax and charges for express and insurance. No charge for assaying". The B.N.A. countered with "Gold dust bought at highest rates with or without assay. Free assays". Dawson Daily News, 1 June 1903 (B) Clearly there was some distinction between assaying for prospectors and for miners.

111 Innis, op. cit., p. 241.

112 Dawson Daily News, 8 May 1918.

113 The 1901 figure is taken from figure 28, the other years from the tax rolls and from Polks Directories, 1903, 1905-1906, 1907-1908, 1909-1910, 1911-1912, 1915-1916, and 1917-1918. Large numbers could also indicate rapid turnover. It is not clear how carefully directions were compiled. See also Dawson Daily News, 31 March 1910 "Bank Boys at their Old Work". Referring to the return of 3 staff members (including the assayor) "after being absent on the outside in the winter".

114 Heathcote, op. cit., p. 52.

115 Oral Testimony, McNab. The other reason was danger of fire. Considering the potential value of a resident in the building to catch a fire in its early stages, Finlaison's
concern indicates a low regard for the employees' standards of safety. The myth of the staff quarters persisted a good half century after they ceased being used as such "...it was here [second storey quarters] that the accountants, the tellers and the ledger keepers held forth after hours, with parties, dancing, poker games and other recreations," Whitehorse Star, 12 September 1968 (B).


117 Dawson News, 26 August 1937, Whitehorse Star 12 September, 1968; Nordling reminescences to Bush (B); oral testimony of McNab. Fin may well have also owned claims; he certainly did property, including the house north of the IOOF Hall on Second known as "Ruby's Place".


120 Dawson City Fire Department Diaries, 1904, 9 January, 1904.

121 Dawson Daily News, 29 November 1920.

122 See Dennison, op. cit. pp. 278, 282, 310, 346.


124 See especially Dennison, pp. 3321-332. The purchase price for the assets of the Bank of B.N.A. (£16,000,000) was £1,500,000; a considerable sum but a bargain under the circumstances.
127 Green, op. cit., p. 221.
129 It is impossible to determine the size of the staff during this period, but it was small. The 1917-1918 Directory listed six names, but two of these were absent on "active service". The Tax Rolls list no names from 1918 until 1929 when the entire staff consisted of Finlaison and S.M. Samnelson. It increased 50% in 1930 when Otto Nordling joined the bank staff.
130 Dawson News, 2 June 1922, testimony of D. McNab.
131 See Green, op. cit., pp. 221-254.
132 When W.A. Hutchings arrived in 1937, interest rates varied from 8% to 12% which is well above the Bank Act's limits.
133 It is unlikely Treadgold's financing was all based on the Dawson banks' capital resources, but short term loans would be. John Gould told the author of an incident illustrating this. On one occasion, Finlaison advanced a huge loan to the company in order to meet its payroll. The size of the loan went well beyond normal prudent banking practices, but was not excessively risky in his estimation. Knowing the head office would object, he delayed informing it as long as possible; by the time the inevitable reprimand came back he had recovered the original loan and made a handsome profit for the bank. The reprimand was withdrawn, and his sagacity commended.
134 For the changes in the Bank of Montreal's operations "outside" see Dennison, op. cit., p. 355; for the anachronism of the Dawson branch, the author relied upon the testimony of McNab and the letter of Hutchings to Bush.
136 Dennison, op. cit., pp. 378, 380, 391. The number of branches is given as 669 in 1929 (p. 380) and 672 in 1930 (p. 391). They continued to reduce in number until they reached 468 in 1943.
Oral testimony, C.W. Harrison; letter of W.A. Hutchings to E.F. Bush. (B)

Dawson News, 17 May 1938.

Ransom got involved in speculation, and was accused of misappropriating bank funds. He was defended by George Black" and despite the evidence was acquitted, much to the disgust of Judge Macaulay." Hutchings to Bush (B), Dawson News, 26 August 1937.

D. McNab, when he arrived in Dawson in August 1936, was told specifically by Finlaison to board at the Regina Hotel. John Theed, who came later, was put up at the Royal Alexandria.

Bush, op. cit., pp. 74 and 78.

All the above is from Hutchings's letter to Bush. (B)

For the vault, see Whitehorse Star, 12 September 1968. (B) Also oral testimony of Harrison, and McNab.

Dawson News, 25 August 1939; oral testimony of J. Theed He said that when he returned in 1950, there was a new vault in place and the book safes had been removed, perhaps to the new Whitehorse branch.

Dawson City Fire Department Reports, September 1936-September 1941, 2 September 1939.

Green, op. cit., pp. 286-287. In 1941, the company was hit by its only strike, which arose out of wartime conditions, but this was quickly settled.

Bush, op. cit., p. 78.


The information about the changes during Roy McPhail's tenure is taken from two letters from Roy and Marjorie McPhail to the author, dated 10 December 1978 and 18 January 1979, P.R.O. file C84401D-61.

See also, Klondike Korner, April 1961. The attitude towards the historic character of the building was now different, "Another historical building seemed to be marked for destruction..."

Michael Rogers, last manager of the bank, informed the author in a telephone conversation on February 2nd, 1979, that the furniture was of a low quality and so only sold for a few dollars when he left, also that the staff was heavily subsidized with employees paying only $7.00 a month rent, and the manager, $80.00. Such an income would have barely met costs.

Marjorie McPhail wrote an article entitled "The First Bank in the Klondike" for the Bank of Montreal staff magazine in December 1962. The article makes reference to "old signature books, gold ledgers and current account ledgers in the attic." Rogers was expected to dispose of these. Most of the old material was destroyed, recent material was transferred to Vancouver, and, on a very selective basis, some ledgers and correspondence went to the Bank's Archives in Montreal. Material was not transferred to the public depositories because of the desire to maintain confidentiality of information about the parents and grandparents of existing customers, or to Montreal (except on a limited basis) because of expense. Rogers himself salvaged the Gold Seals, and donated one of Alex McDonald's gold pokes to the Museum. Finally, a fur coat, probably brought in by Doig and used by every manager, was in the building to the end, but disappeared soon afterwards.
This last section is based on the oral testimony of Mrs. Muriel Cruden, (30 January 1979), Ben Warnsby, (1 February 1979) and Mike Rogers. There were some inconsistencies between testimonies and also several gaps. Unfortunately there is no archival material to resolve the differences in recollections or fill in missing information.
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   3. Central Registry, Temporary Series #2, File 13081 #4, Files 315-1 and 2
   4. Manuscripts - Box 1, File 17, "First Bank in Dawson" Box 6, File 1, Letter of D. Doig - H. Stikeman, Dawson, 13 June 1898. Deposited in the Y.T.A. from the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, and used here with the permission of the P.A.B.C.
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O. Nordling, phone conversation with E. Bush (B).
Diagram 1
East Structural Elevation
Diagram 2
Extant Recording - Ground Floor,
1899 - ca. 1910.
Diagram 3
Extant Recording - Ground Floor, ca. 1910 - 1940.
Diagram 4
Extant Recording - Ground Floor,
c.a. 1940 - c.a. 1946.
Diagram 5
Extant Recording - Ground Floor,
ca. 1946 - 1968.
Diagram 6
Extant Recording - Upper Floor,
1899 - 1961.
Diagram 7
Extant Recording - Upper Floor
Diagram 8
Legend for diagrams 9 - 19,
 juxtaposing drawings done by former bank employees with extant recording evidence.
**LEGEND**

- Wall traces found on original flooring, also indicates extant wall location.

- Denotes wall location based on informants recollection.

- Possible former wall location in conjunction with informants wall location.

- Possible former wall location.

- No real understanding of what happened.
Diagram 9
D. McNab diagram ca. 1937 related to upper floor plans, first stage.
Diagram 10
D. McNab diagram ca. 1937 related to lower floor plans, second stage.
Diagram 11
C. Harrison diagram ca. 1939, related to lower floor plans, third stage.
MANAGER'S OFFICE

PUBLIC AREA

LEDGER KEEPERS DESK
TOLLER'S CAGE
PUBLIC AREA

GOLD
DESK

STORAGE AREA
VAULT

STAIRS UP TO 2ND FLOOR

ANNEX

MAIN ENTRANCE

REAR ENTRANCE
Diagram 12
J. Theed diagram ca. 1940 - 1943, related to upper floor plans, second stage.
Diagram 13
J. Theed diagram ca. 1940 - 1943, related to lower floor plans, third stage.
Diagram 14
A. Rooney diagram ca. 1945, related to upper floor plans, first stage.
Diagram 15
A. Rooney diagram ca. 1945, related to lower floor plans, third stage.
Diagram 16
A. Rooney diagram ca. 1947, related to lower floor plans, fourth stage.
Diagram 17

R. McPhail diagram ca. 1960, related to upper floor plans, first stage.
Diagram 18
R. McPhail diagram ca. 1960, related to upper floor plans, second stage.
Diagram 19
Diagram ca. 1960, related to lower floor plans, fourth stage.
1

"June 1898," Public Archives of Canada
(C-16871)
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"Highwater in Dawson" University of Washington Yukon File. (Cities-Location-Dawson #3)
"Bank of British North America-Dawson Y.T.-
This burned down in 1899"

Provincial Archives of British Columbia
(#42276)
"Street at the side of the Bank-Dawson, Y.T." Provincial Archives of British Columbia (#42275)
"Bank Vault after the fire, Dawson, April 26, 1899," Vancouver Public Library, (Uncatalogued Yukon Photo with negatives, "Yukon -1", p. 8).
"Dawson," Vancouver Public Library, Uncatalogued Yukon Photos, (Yukon 1, Kier Collection, [4])
"Portion of panorama of Dawson, Y.T.,
July 27th, 1899"
Provincial Archives of British Columbia
(2116 b)
"A 'Wash Up' from 14 and 15 Eldorado consisting of 1/4 million" Public Archives of Canada (C8256)
A WASH UP FROM 11 & 15 EL DUROADO CONSISTING OF 4 MILLION. 1900.
"Bank of British North America and Dental Works," Public Archives of Canada (C8124)
12
"Bank of British North America" Thomas
Gibson Collection in the Archives,
University of Alaska, Fairbanks
(#59-804-40)
"Horse Drawn Sleigh on Queen Street, Dawson 1904," Yukon Archives, University of Washington Collection, (#1246)
"Queen St. West from Second Avenue, July 1, 1904," Public Archives of Canada (C14546)
"The Burned District, Dawson, September 23, 1904," University of Washington, (Adams and Larkin # 32)
"Second Avenue at Queen looking north to King," Bancroft Library, University of California, (#17109-6244)
"Portion of Dawson Panorama,"
(ca. 1914-1918), Parks Canada, Ottawa.
"Bank of Montreal, Dawson, probably early 1920s". Loaned to the author by A. J. Rooney.
"Discovery Day Parade down Second Avenue, Dawson, August 17, 1935," Yukon Archives, Haines Collection (#1939)
"Portion of Dawson Panorama, (ca. 1935-1945)"
from Mrs. J. White, Victoria, B.C.
"South end of annex, ca. 1944, showing annex corner and woodpile outside" loaned by Mr. D. E. Gilliland.
"Dawson, December 4, 1947," Bank of Montreal Archives (P3848)
This photograph was probably taken at the same time as figure 22 (i.e. December 1947) but from north, not east. Collection of D. E. Gilliland.
"Bank of Montreal, Dawson, March 30, 1961"
Bank of Montreal Archives, (# P3847)
"Taken at Midnight," probably summer of 1962, Bank of Montreal Archives (# 13381)
"Bank of Montreal," 1967
Department of the Environment, Ottawa
"Alex McDonald, 1897-1898"
California State Library, Sacramento
California, A.A. Martin Collection
(Neg # GL3572)
Picture of staff taken when D. Doig on his way outside, September 1901, from left to right: *rear* John B. Warden (assayer), Percy Margetts (clerk), F. Stanley Long (clerk), F.J. Dixon (clerk), John Mackinnon (clerk), J.N. Morritt (messenger); *front* E.S. Ward (clerk), F.S. Suter (clerk), D. Doig (manager), E.O. Finlaison (accountant), S. Burpee (accountant). Loaned to the author by D.E. Gilliland.
W.A. Hutchings, Mayo, 1933. Department of the Environment, Ottawa
"Dawson, B.N.A. Bank, Gold which fell in furnace" n.d., Vancouver Public Library, (#33186)
THREE TONS OF GOLD BRICKS IN THE BANK OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA, DAWSON
32
Bank of Montreal, Dawson, 1940 (sic) after renovations, Heating Plant in front. Three large safes were installed to supplant the sinking vaults. Department of the Environment, Ottawa
33
Interior of Bank of Montreal, Dawson
c. 1942. Department of the Environment,
Ottawa.
Interior Bank of Montreal, Dawson, c.1942. Department of the Environment, Ottawa
Interior of bank, showing manager's glassed-in office with $250,000 worth of gold brick.

Staff: D. E. Gilliland, Jack Chipin, Doug Stratton and Don Campbell. Loaned to the author by D. E. Gilliland.
37
Exterior of the bank ca. 1951 (?)
Loaned to the author by R. McPhail.

38
Livingroom, upper floor apartment ca. 1951.
Loaned to the author by R. McPhail.
Vault door, gold scales and Gus Martin, janitor.

Loaned to the author by R. McPhail.