

# Property Ownership in North Dawson City During the Klondike Gold Rush

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**Abstract:** This article examines the development of Dawson City during and immediately after the Klondike Gold Rush. The focus is on a series of cabin platforms recorded during archaeological survey on the hillside in north Dawson City. Property ownership information collected from the Yukon Archives and Whitehorse Land Titles Office is used to compare lots on the hillside with those in the level portion of the Government Addition, and this is used to identify the owners of lots containing cabin platforms. The results indicate that hillside lots were less desirable than lots in the level portion of the community. Hillside blocks witnessed lower levels of construction during the gold rush, very few were subdivided, property values were lower, and more lots remained in government ownership up to 1903. Evidence suggests that very few identified owners of hillside lots with cabin platforms actually lived on their property.

## **Introduction**

This article explores the contributions of property ownership records and archaeological survey data to our understanding of settlement development and community organization in Dawson City during the Klondike Gold Rush. Dawson City is located on a flood plain at the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers (figure 1), the closest access point for river steamers to the goldfields. The terrain is characterized by a small, relatively level area along the Yukon River, backed by a steep hillside on the east and north sides of the town. Joseph Ladue applied for the Dawson City townsite shortly after the discovery of gold in 1896. The town grew quickly, particularly after the ice left the rivers in the spring of 1898, and large numbers of stampeders floated down the Yukon River hoping to make their fortunes in the goldfields. While the core of the settlement was located on the level portion of the flood plain, historic photographs clearly indicate a substantial occupation of the hillside. In 1899, after the height of the gold rush in 1898, approximately 500 structures were situated on the slopes overlooking the

settlement. Archaeological investigations on the hillside (Minni 1978; Burley and Ross 1979; Brand 2002, 2003) have recorded more than one hundred platforms on which these structures were built. The present article is an elaboration of work first introduced in Brand (2002, 2003). The current focus is on fifteen platforms located on the hillside in north Dawson City near the east end of Judge Street in Blocks K and O of the Government Addition (figure 1). Property ownership data is used to answer two key issues relating to the settlement and development of Dawson City. First, were the hillside lots considered as desirable as properties on the flood plain? Second, who owned the lots containing platforms in Blocks K and O, and is it possible to determine if the owners actually lived on the property?

Gold rushes between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were responsible for much of the development of western and northern North America by non-Aboriginal people. Each of these phenomena followed a similar pattern (Paul 1974:9–10) and resulted in alterations to the landscape through mining and settlement that is still evident in towns throughout the west and north today. Land and community development is a prominent component of historical archaeological studies of mining districts (Hardesty 1988; Chen 2001; Lawrence 2000). Alanen (1979:51) classifies settlements associated with mining in Michigan into camps, “unplatted” or squatter’s locations, company towns, and speculative developments. Mills (1998:240–242) proposes a settlement hierarchy for placer mining based on five different types of settlements: entrepôts, intermediate transfer points, central distribution centres, secondary distribution points, and extraction camps. Each settlement type served a different purpose and developed along a different pattern.

Dawson City was a central distribution centre that, during the gold rush, met all of the characteristics set out by Mills (1998:241): located adjacent to the goldfields, at a prominent break in the transportation system, with docking and warehouse facilities, and providing retail, governmental, monetary, and social services to the community and surrounding region. Mills also notes that a gridiron layout is expected at this settlement type. Dawson City’s rectilinear grid layout clearly differentiated it from earlier mining settlements in the Yukon, all of which developed in an unorganized way. Becker (1983:88) suggests that Dawson City was founded by Joseph Ladue as a means of profiting from real estate sales, which would equate with Alanen’s speculative development settlements. As the central place for almost all mining in the Yukon, Dawson City’s population grew rapidly and fluctuated on a regular basis. Although we do not know how much Ladue profited from his real estate dealings (Becker 1983), the real estate market

in Dawson City was certainly dynamic during the height of the gold rush stampeders in 1898, with the first real jump in property values occurring in 1897 before the main body of stampeders arrived in the spring of 1898.

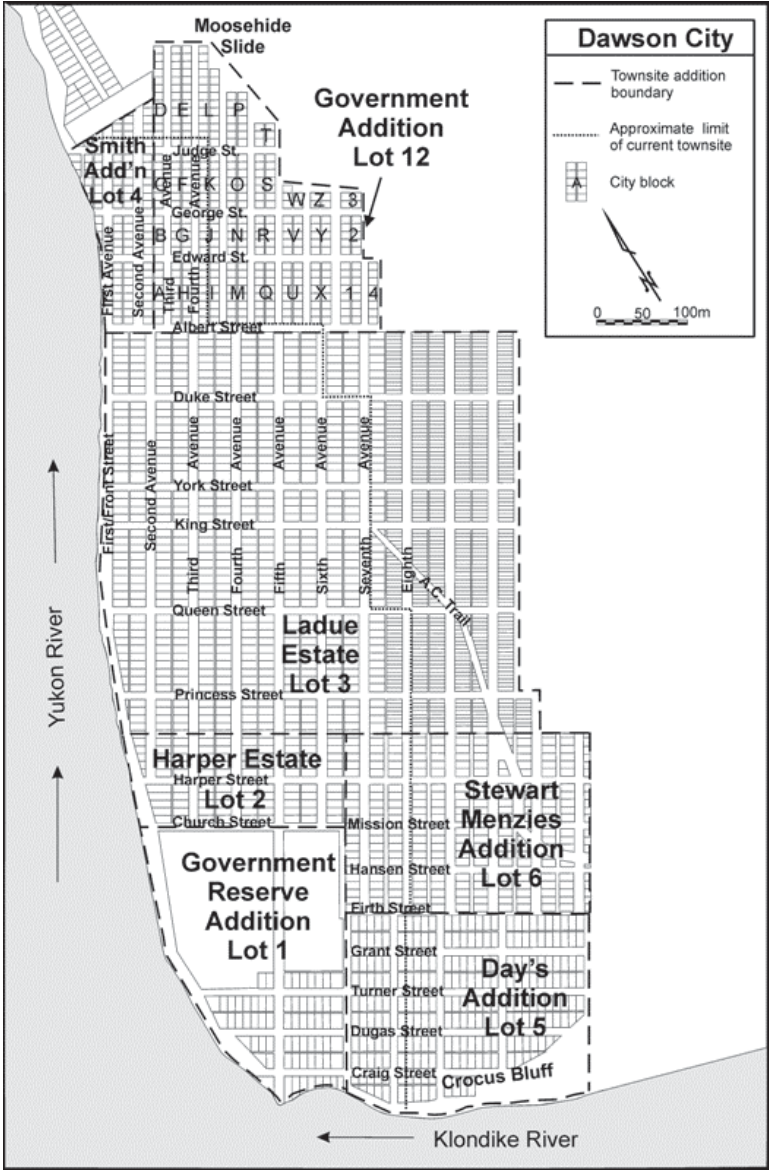


Figure 1. Additions to the Dawson City townsite (after Quad Sheet 116B/3, 1998, Dawson City, used with permission of the Government of Yukon, Department of Tourism and Culture, Cultural Services Branch).

There has been considerable interest in the development of Dawson City (Lotz 1963; Duerden 1981; Guest 1982; Becker 1983; Porsild 1994; Brand 2003) but beyond the downtown core and the broad divisions of the main townsite—Klondike City and West Dawson—the organization of the settlement is not well understood. The relationship between settlement structure, that is to say the physical organization of Dawson City, and the social context of the community requires explication. Did Dawson City have identifiable neighbourhoods and if so, what is their social significance? Comparing hillside ownership and habitation patterns to other portions of the settlement will contribute to our understanding of the organization of Dawson City during and immediately following the boom period.

### **Dawson City Townsite**

Located at the confluence of the Yukon and Klondike rivers (figure 1), Dawson City consisted of three separated areas: the main townsite occupied a small flood plain on the right bank of the Klondike River; Klondike City (now known as Tr'ochëk) was located on the left bank of the Klondike; and as the population increased, the community expanded to the west side of the Yukon River in an area that became known as West Dawson. Joseph Ladue staked a townsite soon after the discovery of gold on Bonanza Creek. His portion of the townsite, known as the Ladue Estate, occupied most of the flood plain and contained the core of the community. Ladue started his real estate business almost immediately (Guest 1982:30). Dominion Land Surveyor James Gibbon finished the townsite survey started by William Ogilvie early in 1897. Dawson City was laid out using a rectilinear grid (Guest 1982:29), with standardized avenues and streets.

Inspector Constantine of the Northwest Mounted Police (NWMP) reserved forty acres at the southern end of town for government purposes. Dawson City's growth was also partially controlled by individuals interested in the real estate opportunities offered by the coming boom (Becker 1983:87). Arthur Harper, a long time Yukon trader, applied for the land between the Government Reserve and the Ladue Estate (figure 1). East of these areas, Albert Day and Stewart Menzies both staked additions approximately forty acres in size. Adjoining the north end of Ladue's property was the Government Addition, in which the Dominion Government sold lots directly. The Smith Addition covered a small area between the Government Addition and the Yukon River at the north end of the settlement.

The main townsite is flanked by steep hills along the north and east margins extending from the Midnight Dome (elevation 860 m above sea level) on the northeast to Crocus Bluff at the Klondike River. Day's Addition,

the Stewart Menzies Addition, Ladue Estate, and Government Addition all include portions of the hillside. Today, part of the townsite extends onto the lower section of the slope, beginning at Sixth Avenue. Seventh and Eighth avenues are located on the slope itself. The steepness of the hillside increases considerably above Eighth Avenue. The height of the hillside at Crocus Bluff is 400 m above sea level.

The Government Addition (Lot 12, Group 2) is located at the north end of Dawson. It is situated north of Albert Street and east of the Smith Addition (Lot 4, Group 2) between Second and Third avenues. Steep slopes bound the north and east sides of the addition, with the north boundary located in proximity to the rubble of the Moosehide Slide. A small cemetery, listed as “Catholic Cemetery” in the tax assessment books, occupies six lots in Block J (Assessment and Tax Rolls, City of Dawson [ATRCD] 1902). Otherwise, use of the addition appears to have been primarily residential in nature.

Lots in the Government Addition were smaller than those in the rest of the townsite (Brand 2002:133–134). Standard lots in the Ladue, Menzies, and Day additions measure fifty feet by one hundred feet (the exception being hillside lots in the Ladue Addition that are only twenty-five by one hundred feet). All lots in the Government Addition measure fifty by sixty feet. The Government Addition contains thirty blocks—A through Z, and 1 to 4 (figure 1).

Terrain in the addition is relatively level west of Third Street. Fourth Avenue runs onto the hill just north of Albert Street. Blocks F, G, and H lie west of Fourth Avenue, on a slight incline. Blocks J and K are located on the east side of Fourth Avenue, where steepness of the slope increases. Although streets and avenues are indicated on the town plan, there are no roads east of Fourth Avenue and north of Albert Street. At the planned location of Fifth Avenue the slope of the hill increases considerably. Blocks considered to be located on the hillside include J–Z and 1–4.

### **Property Ownership Data**

Three primary sources of data were used in the analysis of property ownership. The first consists of applications for town lots in the Government Addition, completed by individuals interested in property during the spring and summer of 1898 (Agent of Dominion Lands, Dawson, Yukon District [ADL] 1898). These documents provide the applicant’s name, the lot to be purchased, and details of improvements made to the lot. Applicants were also required to identify any other people they knew to have an interest in the lot. Two hundred and two applications are available for blocks D–Z and

1–4. Whether or not these are all of the applications received by the Agent of Dominion Lands is unknown.

The second source of property ownership data consists of the City of Dawson Assessment and Tax Rolls for 1902, 1903, and 1904 (ATRCD 1902, 1903, 1904), which were consulted specifically for lots located on the hillside. The Assessment and Tax Roll books provide the name(s) of the lot owner, the current value of the lot, and the value of improvements made to the property. Land title records (LT) in the Yukon Land Titles Office, Whitehorse, were the third primary source consulted for data on the ownership and transfer of title to properties on the hillside. The Assessment and Tax Rolls and all the land title records were handwritten and not always easily decipherable. Initials were commonly used instead of full given names, creating another limiting factor in the data set.

Supplementary sources include a variety of correspondence relating to property ownership in the community. Government documents regarding the sale of property in the addition provide useful information, but are often limited to small numbers of lots. Filson's Pan for Gold Database (2001) proved an invaluable resource for information on property owners, allowing online searches of twenty-three different databases. The most important for this study are Polk and Company's 1903 *Alaska Yukon Gazetteer and Business Directory* and Clary Craig's (n.d.) list of people leaving or dying in Dawson City.

### **Property Ownership and Development in the Government Addition**

Construction in the Government Addition was well underway by early 1898 (Wade 1898). Following completion of the survey and valuation of lots, applications to purchase property were accepted starting 15 April 1898. Based on the applications, which required applicants to identify any improvements they had made to the property prior to the application process, construction on lots in the western part of the Government Addition began in the autumn of 1897 (ADL 1898) (See figure 2). Approximately forty-five cabins were built in Blocks D through I and Block L during September and October. Ten of the sixteen lots in Block I had structures built on them during the fall of 1897. Blocks J, K, and L, on the other hand, are located on the east side of Fourth Avenue, the eastern most avenue in the addition. Prior to 1898, very few cabins were constructed east of Blocks I, J, and the eastern halves of Blocks K and L.

Block X is an interesting exception; for some reason, cabins were constructed on six lots during the fall of 1897. This area is near the corner of Albert Street and Sixth Avenue (Ladue Estate), which appears to be the eastern most area serviced by roads. Dates for the construction of these



roadways are required to help place this small pocket of construction in context. Albert Street and Sixth Avenue appear to be present, as trails at the very least, in 1899. There is, however, no record of construction during 1897 on lots in Blocks U, Q, and M, which lie west of Block X, on the north side of Albert Street. By 1898, eleven of sixteen lots in Block X were built upon. In Block 1, east of Block X, seven lots (all in the southern end of the block) had structures by 1898. Only two lots in Block U and one in Block M were built upon by 1898. Burley and Ross (1979:14) found evidence for only four, possibly five, structures in the northern half of Block U (covering nine lots) and the adjacent, undeveloped, right-of-way for Seventh Avenue (Government Addition), suggesting that occupation of this area remained low.

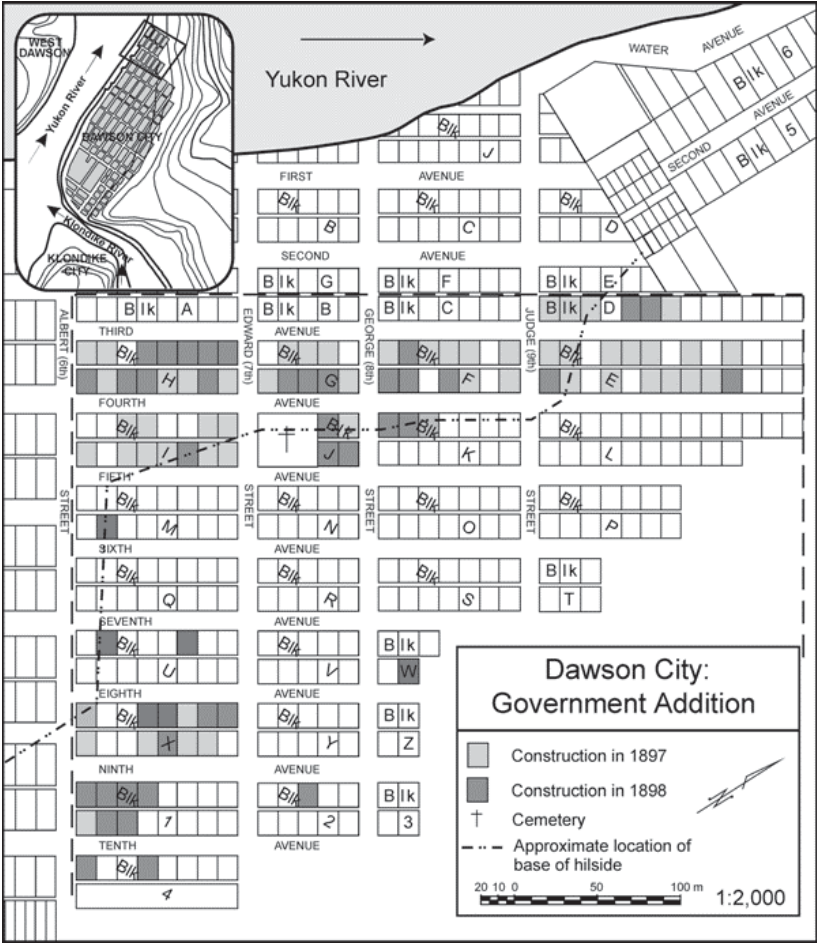


Figure 2. Construction sequence to April 1898 in the Government Addition (after Quad Sheet 116B/3, 1998, Dawson City, used with permission of the Government of Yukon, Department of Tourism and Culture, Cultural Services Branch).

Up to mid-April 1898 the pattern of development in the Government Addition was similar to that of 1897. New construction tended to fill empty lots in the aforementioned blocks, including Blocks X and 1. Despite the activity, the number of people living on the lots may not have been particularly high as most of the lot applications indicate ongoing construction, stating, for example, that some of the required construction materials had been hauled to the lot, a foundation had been made, or the cabin was under construction. It is important to note that all this activity took place before the main thrust of the stampede arrived in Dawson City.

Unfortunately, complete data sets for the period 1899 to 1901 have not been found for property ownership in the Government Addition. Dawson City was incorporated in December 1901 and the earliest available tax roll and assessment is 1902 (ATRCD 1902). Similarly, there is no 1902 data for Blocks A, B, C, D, E, F, and H, and no 1903 data for Blocks A, B, and C. Sometime between 1898 and 1902 numerous lots in the Government Addition were divided (figure 3). Without data for the intervening years it is impossible to identify the exact cause, although it seems only a small leap to suggest that this process started with the arrival of the main body of stampedeers in the spring and summer of 1898. At that point, issues of land availability, particularly affordable land, would have become acute.

By 1903, 38 percent of the owned lots had been divided into two or three parts. The pattern of lot division followed a similar sequence to the percentage of lots sold per block and the pattern of cabin construction. Lots located in the western part of the addition and along Albert Street tended to be divided first. Seventy-two percent of the lots sold in Blocks E–H, located between Third and Fourth avenues, were divided by 1903 (ATRCD 1902, 1903). Only eleven of the sixty-four sold lots (17 percent) located north of Edward Street and east of Fourth Avenue were divided. Eight of these were located in the west half of Blocks J, K, and L that fronted onto Fourth Avenue.

Examination of the tax assessment and roll was limited to the hillside properties, all of which are located east of Fourth Avenue and north of Albert Street. A surprising number of these lots were divided in halves, thirds, or quarters, with different owners for each portion. Property values were assessed separately for each lot fraction. The majority of blocks J, K, L, N–Z, and 1–4 are located entirely on the hillside and lack direct street access. Table 1 illustrates the decrease in property values from Block C in the west side of the addition, east to Block S on the hillside. In each block, Lot 1 is located at the southwest corner (west side of block), and Lot 9 is located near the northeast corner (east side of block). Lot 14 in Block S is located immediately east of Lot 1 (east side of block). Between 1898 and 1904 the price of lots



appears to have peaked around 1901 and dropped consistently afterward. Prices also decreased according to the position of the lot on the hillside, with those higher up (and furthest from the town) costing less. In 1898 a lot in Block O or S was worth a quarter of the value of the same sized lot in Block C or F (table 1). Even the western lots in Block K, which had access to Fourth Avenue, were worth half the value of lots in the western blocks. Proximity to roadways clearly influenced the price of a lot, however, as prices were less on the east side of Block K and lots in Block O were worth less again. It is interesting to note that the four southern most lots in Blocks Q, U, and X, which are located along Albert Street, were valued at \$75; the remaining lots in these blocks, away from any roads, were valued at \$50 (Brand 2003:132). As a final indication of the lack of interest in the eastern most blocks of the addition, 58 percent remained unsold as of 1903 (figure 3).

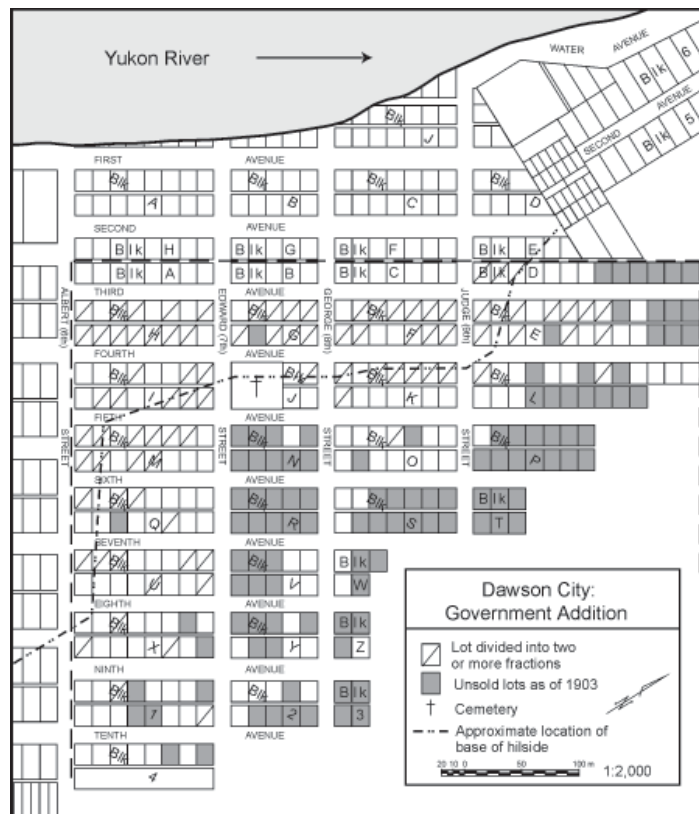


Figure 3. Divided and unsold lots in the Government Addition as of 1903 (after Quad Sheet 116B/3, 1998, Dawson City, used with permission of the Government of Yukon, Department of Tourism and Culture, Cultural Services Branch).

Table 1. Sample of property values in the Government Addition of Dawson City between 1893 and 1904<sup>1</sup>

Block	Lot	1898 <sup>2</sup>	1902 <sup>3</sup>	1903 <sup>4</sup>	1904 <sup>5</sup>
C	1	\$200	n/a	\$290	\$170
F	1	\$225	n/a	\$280	\$150
F	9	\$200	n/a	\$200	\$90
K	1	\$100	\$100	\$80	\$20
K	9	\$75	\$80	\$60	\$20
O	1	\$50	\$100	\$80	\$10
O	9	\$25	\$60	\$40	\$10
S	1	\$50	\$70	\$60	\$10
S	14	\$50	\$50	\$40	\$10

<sup>1</sup> Blocks C and F are in the level portion of the addition. The hillside starts at Block K, with Blocks O and S on progressively steeper parts of the slope.

<sup>2</sup>Wade 1898; <sup>3</sup>ATRC 1902; <sup>4</sup>ATRC 1903; <sup>5</sup>ATRC 1904

### Property Ownership in Blocks K, O, and S

Block K is located east and southeast of Fourth Avenue, between what would have been George and Judge streets had these roads continued up the hill (figure 4). Judge Street ends at Fourth Avenue; this corner forms the eastern most road access in the addition. Block O is located east of Block K, between the locations reserved for Fifth and Sixth avenues. The location of Fifth Avenue appears to have been generally respected by people building cabins, but no effort was expended to actually build the road; it existed as a vacant strip between cabins. Block S is located east of Block O, between the locations reserved for Sixth and Seventh avenues. East of Block S the grade of the slope increases to the point that platform construction would have been difficult. The number of lots sold, subdivided, and built upon is shown in table 2. Six of the divided lots in Block K front onto Fourth Avenue. Proximity to Fourth Avenue clearly made Lots 1–7 desirable enough that the owners could sell fractions of their lots to other people.

Archaeological investigations in Blocks K, O, and S (Brand 2002, 2003) recorded fifteen tent or cabin platforms arrayed around a small talus slope that covers Lots 10 and 11 in Block K, Lot 5 in Block O, and part of the unopened right-of-way for Fifth Avenue (figure 4). Platforms were built by digging into the slope and allowing the loosed fill to build up downslope until a level construction surface was created. Dry-laid stone retaining walls were constructed along the downhill edge at nine of the platforms in

this location. The average platform size is thirty square metres. Based on remaining structure outlines, the cabins built on the hillside platforms were small, ranging in size from eleven to forty-eight square metres. Few cabin platforms correspond with individual city lots. Although measurement error could contribute to this lack of correspondence, it is more likely that strict adherence to lot boundaries was not maintained during construction. Many of the town lot applications note the presence of cabins situated on two lots or in the street. The following discussion includes all lots in Blocks K, O, and S that were covered by the survey; however, no platforms were identified in the area covered by Block S. Ownership histories for lots on which cabin platforms were recorded in Blocks K and O are presented in tables 3 and 4 respectively.

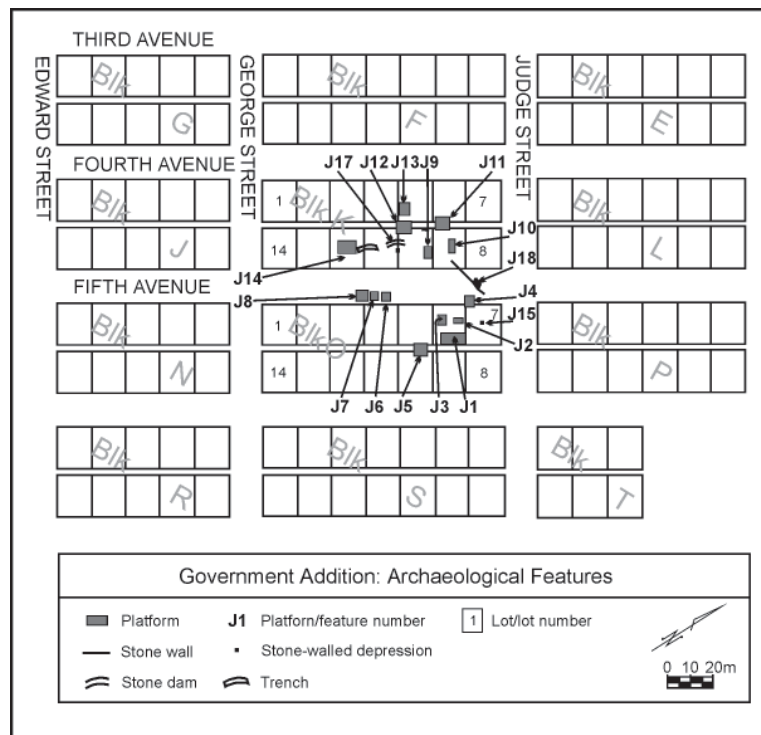


Figure 4. Archaeological features recorded in Blocks K and O of the Government Addition (after Quad Sheet 116B/3, 1998, Dawson City, used with permission of the Government of Yukon, Department of Tourism and Culture, Cultural Services Branch).

Table 2. Lots sold, subdivided, and built upon in Blocks K, O, and S

	Block K	Block O	Block S
Road access	Fourth Ave	none	none
Total lots	14	14	14
Lots owned	14	12	3
Lots subdivided	7	1	0
Structures present <sup>1</sup>	26	11	1
Still owned by government in 1903 <sup>2</sup>	0	3	11

<sup>1</sup> Based on Larss and Duclos photograph Yukon Archives 3739; <sup>2</sup> ATRCD 1903

A total of thirty-five people are associated with lots that have platform features on them in Blocks K and O between 1898 and 1907. Owner's names were obtained from land applications, lists in government correspondence, and the 1902–1904 Tax Assessment and Rolls (ATRCD 1902, 1903, 1904). Four lots in Block K and one lot in Block O had joint owners. One individual, Swan Beemen, owned two lots (Lots 6 and 7). Data were inadequate to determine if seven of the property owners in Block K and two of the owners in Block O lived on their property.

Only three of the fourteen property owners associated with lots in Block K can be said with some confidence to have lived on their lot. Polk and Company's 1903 gazetteer gives Benjamin H. Porter's address as "E s 3d av nr Judge," a relatively accurate description of Lots 4 and 5 if "E s 3d" refers to Third Avenue in the Ladue Addition. Smaller lot sizes in the Government Addition created an extra avenue; as a result, Third Avenue in the Ladue Addition connects to Fourth Avenue in the Government Addition. The location of platform HAP-J13 at the boundary of the two lots, and Porter's ownership of portions of both, suggests that he lived on this platform.

Virginia M. Arbuckle purchased the east half of Lot 5 and title was put in her name on 13 June 1901 (LT 185B). The land title lists Arbuckle's husband as George W. Arbuckle. George M. Arbuckle, foreman for the *Daily Klondike Nugget*, is listed in the 1903 Polk and Company gazetteer; his address is given as "Head of Judge," which would be relatively close to Lot 5. Aurel Marigold purchased the south half of Lot 6 on 3 January 1901 (LT251A). Polk and Company's 1903 gazetteer gives Marigold's address as "3d av N nr Judge." This is a relatively accurate address for Lot 6 and platform HAP-J11 would have been at least partially on Marigold's portion of the property.

Improvements to the lots listed in the tax assessments indicate that five owners of lots in Block K that contained platforms had the potential to live

on their lot. Seven owners did not live on the lots they owned. Residential addresses in other parts of the townsite were found for a number of people who owned hillside lots (Polk 1903). Patrick J. Berford, part owner of Lot 4 (Block K), is listed as living at "306 Church" in Polk and Company's 1903 gazetteer. Church Street is located in the southern end of Dawson, suggesting Berford did not live on the hillside. George Crocker, who owned Lot 6 (Block K) with Myron Christopher Harris, is listed as living at "Alley off s s Duke bet 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> av S" in Polk and Company's 1903 gazetteer. This address would place Crocker's residence, at least in 1903, in the Ladue Addition. The results for Block O are very similar. Improvements listed in the tax assessments indicate six owners were potentially living on their lots. Five owners of lots associated with platforms definitely did not live on their property. The available data indicates that none of the owners of lots associated with cabin platforms lived on their property.

Expanding the analysis of property owners to include all lots in Blocks K, O, and S between 1898 and 1907 includes a total of seventy-eight people (Brand 2003). On the basis of given names, men owned most of the lots. Only four of the seventy-eight owners were women. Marian S. Tracie, for example, purchased Lot 11, Block K, on 1 March 1901 (LT 28 B). Tracie was an "accomplished actress and elocutionary artist" (*Klondike Nugget* 1900) who was quite popular with Dawson's music lovers. She owned Lot 11 for less than a month before selling the property to Wilfred Delage who was issued a new title on 27 March (LT 47B).

Occupation data is present for forty-two of the seventy-eight property owners. This information has been pieced together from Applications for Town Lots (ADL 1898), Wade's (1898) list of property owners, and the 1903 Polk and Company's gazetteer, none of which consistently identify occupation. Miner is the most common occupation. The next most common occupations are lawyer, contractor, and civil employee, all represented by three individuals. Other occupations include: bank manager, butcher, newspaper circulator, clerk, dentist, janitor, lumberman, police chief, rancher, and stenographer. Five additional owners had their occupation listed as miner in one source, and another occupation in a different source. In all but one instance their listing as a miner occurs in the earliest source. The evidence suggests that upon arriving in the Klondike these people intended to be miners. At some point they were forced to take other jobs or return to their previous occupation while trying to start mining careers, or they changed occupations when they realized mining would not work out.

Identifying lot owners who could have lived on their property is a challenging task given the data available. Of the sixty-two people for whom

reliable information could be found, seven people can be demonstrated to have lived on their property on the basis of statements on lot applications, or on addresses in Polk and Company's (1903) gazetteer that approximates the location of their lot (this includes the individuals on lots associated with platforms). These individuals owned and lived in lots 1, 5, 6, 7, and 14 in Block K (Brand 2003:322–324). Twenty-two owners could have lived on their property, but there is no data indicating that they did. The thirty-three remaining property owners, particularly for lots in Blocks O and S, did not live on their hillside lots. In a number of cases these individuals submitted an application in 1898 but did not end up purchasing the property, which remained in the government's possession (ADL 1898).

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Dawson City, like all communities, was divided into different sections or neighbourhoods. The most obvious of these were the main townsite, Klondike City, and West Dawson; however, the main townsite itself was also divided into distinct areas. The most clearly defined of these was the business section of town along the Yukon River. Identifying the boundaries of other segments of the community is not as clear cut. Distinct neighbourhoods are often defined by the presence of natural features. In Dawson City the steep hillsides along the east and north margins of the townsite are one such division. This article has examined the relationship between the hillside areas and the main townsite in the Government Addition as a step toward identifying the arrangement of neighbourhoods in Dawson City's development.

Little specific information about the place of the hillside in the community from the perspective of its inhabitants has been found in the gold rush literature. William Haskell (1998:356), who was an early inhabitant in Dawson City, thought that the hillsides would become a desirable residential area. Mary Hitchcock (1899) held the opposite view, and was displeased by the large scatter of tin cans around the hillside cabins. The fact that the hillsides were some of the first areas abandoned after the decline began indicates that Hitchcock's assessment may have been a more accurate indicator of the contemporary perception of the hillsides. Comparison of the lots in the western half of the Government Addition, where the ground was level or only gently sloping, with those on the hillside, also suggests that the hillside areas were considered less desirable. Information regarding construction in the Government Addition is available in the Applications for Lots, and can be used to gauge pre-1898 occupation of this portion of the townsite. It shows a greater amount of construction in the western half of the addition than on the hillside. Purchase of property on the hillside subsequently increased, but



by 1903 a large proportion of these lots remained unsold. The preference for individuals to purchase half, or even one-third of a lot in the western portion of the addition, when lots on the slopes were still available, reinforces the idea that the hillside property was less desirable.

The presence of roads was clearly an important factor in the purchase of property. It is important to note that a built road, cleared and levelled for example, was not necessarily present early on, but photographs from 1899 indicate that the locations of the roadways were respected, even if there was only a trail present. Although not all lots in the western portion of the addition were located along a road, they had access to the roads that were present. The division of property into halves or thirds was most prevalent in Blocks E to H (72 percent), while east of Fourth Avenue, on the hillside, divided lots consisted mostly of those in the western half of Block K.

Property values are considerably different between the western and eastern halves of the Government Addition. This difference in monetary value is obvious right from the beginning in 1898, where lots in the western portion of the addition were valued at up to \$225, while a lot on the hillside in Block S, for example, could be purchased for \$50. It is unfortunate that data is currently not available for 1899–1901. There was definitely an increase in property values during this time. By 1902, lots in Blocks O and K had increased in value. Unfortunately, property values for Blocks C and F for 1902 are not available, as it is likely that 1902 represents the peak in the market. In 1903, Lot 1 in Block C had increased from \$200 to \$290. By 1903 the price of lots in Blocks K and O had begun to drop, suggesting that lots in Block C and F may have been valued at more than \$290 in 1902. Although property values declined in 1903, they were still higher than they had been in 1898. This brief look at property values suggests that 1904 marked a turning point for land values in this portion of the townsite. At that time, the value of all sample lots in table 1 dropped below the 1898 prices. Throughout the fluctuations in the value of property in the Government Addition between 1898 and 1904, the difference between land values in the western portion of the addition and the hillside lots in the eastern portion was maintained. While there was consistently a difference between land values in these two areas, the difference was not consistent. Lot prices for the sample lots in table 1 for Blocks C and F dropped by 15 percent to 55 percent between 1898 and 1904. Property values for the lots in Blocks K, O, and S, on the other hand, decreased by 60–80 percent; as the boom subsided and the decline began, the hillsides became increasingly less significant as residential areas in the settlement.

Given that the hillsides were less desirable than the level portions of the Government Addition, what can we learn about the people who purchased hillside lots? The data indicate that the majority of people who owned lots in Blocks K and O did not live on their property, although the potential was there. Alternatively, they could have rented the property to others. Jeremiah Lynch (1967:37) rented an unfurnished cabin at a cost of \$100 a month, and although he does not specifically say, his general description suggests that this cabin was located on the hillside, probably in the Government Addition. At rental rates such as this, landowners could make a considerable profit.

Real estate speculation is another reason people bought lots on the hillside. Robert Craig makes this perfectly clear in an 1898 letter. Craig (1898) and a friend named Bolton purchased a lot in the Ladue Estate in April 1898 for the substantial sum of \$1,800, noting that property prices had taken a big jump. In June 1898 they both bought lots on the hillside in the Government Addition; Craig bought Lot 14 in Block O and Ellsworth Bolton bought Lot 1 in Block S. Craig (1898) notes in his letter that he paid \$50 for the lot, and believed it would increase in value if the market performed as he expected. As demonstrated in table 1, Craig likely thought he was doing well as the value of his lot increased, but by 1904 the property was almost valueless. Property tax rolls for 1902 through 1904 (ATRCD 1902, 1903, 1904) show Craig as the owner of Lot 14; they also indicate that the property was vacant during this time. In 1925 (LT 232W), the lot went to the City of Dawson directly from Craig's name indicating that he never sold the lot. Bolton probably had a similar plan for his lot in Block S. The number of times that properties in tables 3 and 4 changed hands also suggests that people were buying property on the hillsides in hope of making money. Marian Tracie may be a good example of this as she owned Lot 11, Block K for less than a month.

This analysis indicates that property ownership data can make an important contribution to our understanding of the development and organization of Dawson City during and immediately after the gold rush. The evidence clearly indicates a difference in the perceived value between the hillsides and the relatively level portions of the townsite. The names of hillside lot owners, obtained from the tax assessment and land title documents, provide a starting point for future archival research. Ideally, journals or letters containing information about the daily experiences of both those who lived on the hillside and those who merely owned property in the Government Addition could be compared to one another, and to residents of the more affluent and central areas of town. Archaeological analyses suggest the hillside supported a transient population, whose contributions to the community of Dawson City had a very different impact and left a unique material culture signature relative to the permanent population (Brand, in press).

Table 3. Ownership history for Block K lots with archaeological features present

Feature	Lot	Lot Owner/Date	Improvements	Notes	Lived on Lot?
	5	Mary Morrison 1898	None <sup>1</sup>		No
	5	Ross & M.A. Dalin 1898			No data
HAP-J13	5 SW $\frac{1}{4}$	Isaac Smith 1898–99+(?)		1899 Miner <sup>3</sup>	No data
Part HAP-J10	5 pt E $\frac{1}{2}$	V.M. Arbuckle 1901–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>		Yes
	5 W $\frac{1}{2}$	Berg H. Porter 1902–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>	Carpenter <sup>2</sup>	Yes
	5 pt E $\frac{1}{2}$ 33 $\frac{1}{3}$	T.F. Sinclair & Hood 1902–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>	Sinclair 1909 <sup>8</sup>	Possible
	6	M.C. Harris & G. Crocker 1898–99	None listed <sup>1</sup>	1898–99 Miners <sup>3</sup> Crocker 1903 Carpenter <sup>2</sup> Crocker left 1904 <sup>8</sup>	No
HAP-J11	6 S $\frac{1}{2}$	Aurel Marigold 1901–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>	1903 Janitor <sup>2</sup>	Yes
	6 N $\frac{1}{2}$	A.J. Keller & C. Peasley 1900–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>	Left 1907	Possible
	6 N $\frac{1}{2}$	Frederick G. Crisp 1907	No data	1907 Barrister <sup>3</sup>	No data
HAP-J10	9	E.B. Newman 1898	No data	1907 Miner <sup>3</sup> 1905	No data
	9	Jeremiah Lynch 1902–04	1902 vacant <sup>4</sup> Yes 1903 <sup>5</sup> 1904 <sup>6</sup>	1898–1901 Miner/ Trader <sup>7</sup> 1901 <sup>7</sup>	No
HAP-J 9 Part HAP-J12	10	W.A. Robertson 1898–1900		Hotel Keeper <sup>3</sup>	No data
	10	T. Marrimon 1900–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>		Possible
	11	W.H. Rourke 1898–1900		1900 Contractor <sup>3</sup>	No data
HAP-J17	11	Marian S. Tracie 1901		1900 Entertainer <sup>9</sup>	No
	11	Wilfred Delage 1901–04	No 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>	Left 1907 <sup>8</sup>	No
HAP-J14	12	A.Y. Wilson 1898–1904	No 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>	Lumberman <sup>3</sup>	No

<sup>1</sup> ADL 1898; <sup>2</sup> Polk 1903; <sup>3</sup> Patent (Pat.) and Land Title (LT) Records, Land Title Office Whitehorse; <sup>4</sup> ATRCD 1902; <sup>5</sup> ATRCD 1903; <sup>6</sup> ATRCD 1904; <sup>7</sup> Lynch (1967); <sup>8</sup> Clary Craig (n.d.); <sup>9</sup> Klondike Nugget 1900

Table 4. Ownership history for Block O lots with archaeological features present

Feature	Lot	Name/Date	Improvements	Notes	Lived On Lot?
HAP-J8	3	G.A. Gouin 1898–1901		1901 Miner <sup>3</sup>	No data
	3	Ole Lien & J. Louset 1902–04	Yes 1902 <sup>4</sup> 1904 <sup>6</sup> No 1903 <sup>5</sup>		Possible
HAP-J6 HAP-J7	4	A.E. Elliott 1898		1907 Miner <sup>3</sup>	No data
	4 S <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	Gussie Bard 1902–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>		Possible
	4 N <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	H.K. Stephanson 1902	Yes in 1902 <sup>4</sup>		Possible
	4 N <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	P.H. Harking 1902–04	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>		Possible
HAP-J5	5	Geo A. Peabody 1898	None listed 1898 <sup>1</sup>		No
HAP-J1 HAP-J2 HAP-J3	6	A.E. Epler 1898	None listed 1898 <sup>1</sup>	1901 Miner <sup>9</sup>	No
	6	Swan Beemen 1898–1904	Yes 1902–04 <sup>4,5,6</sup>	1901 Miner <sup>3</sup> 1903 Carpenter <sup>2</sup> left 1905 <sup>8</sup>	Possible
HAP-J4	7	J.M. Yates 1898	None listed 1898 <sup>1</sup>		No
	7	Swan Beemen 1898–1904	Yes 1904 <sup>6</sup>	1901 Miner <sup>3</sup> 1903 Carpenter <sup>2</sup> left 1905 <sup>8</sup>	Possible
HAP-J5	10	C.M. Carter 1898–1900		1900 Miner <sup>3</sup> 1903 Stenographer <sup>2</sup>	No
	10	C.M. Woodworth 1900–04	Yes 1902 <sup>4</sup> , 1903 <sup>5</sup> No 1904 <sup>6</sup>	1900 Advocate <sup>3</sup> 1903 Lawyer <sup>2</sup>	No

<sup>1</sup> ADL 1898; <sup>2</sup> Polk 1903; <sup>3</sup> Patent (Pat.) and Land Title (LT) Records, Land Title Office Whitehorse;

<sup>4</sup> ATRCD 1902; <sup>5</sup> ATRCD 1903; <sup>6</sup> ATRCD 1904; <sup>7</sup> Lynch (1967); <sup>8</sup> Clary Craig (n.d.)

Further research is necessary to address gaps in the hillside data, particularly for the years 1899–1901. Similarly, the Government Addition represents only a small portion of the townsite. Further research should expand the analysis of property ownership and values to other additions. Aside from an attempt to identify neighbourhoods within the community, property ownership data could be used to address other social issues such as the roles and experiences of women in Dawson City. The data presented in this article, for example, demonstrate that most of the property owners were male, but there were a small number of women who owned property in the Government Addition. There is some evidence that some of these women

may have been speculating in the real estate market. Numerous publications have examined the occupations held by women in Dawson City during the gold rush (Mayer 1989; Moore 1994; Ryley 1997); few have specifically addressed property ownership and participation in the real estate market (see Mayer 1989:207; and Mayer and DeArmond 2000:68–72, for one example). Pursuing property ownership by women is a necessary step toward a fuller understanding of women's participation in the gold rush.

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