

GRAND FORKS



BELINDA MULROONEY, HOLDING THE STETSON, STANDS IN FRONT OF HER MAGNET ROADHOUSE WITH YUKON CHARACTERS, LIKELY 1897.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON DIGITAL COLLECTION #HEG794 ERIC A. HEGG PHOTOGRAPH

Located smack-dab in the middle of the Yukon gold rush at the confluence of the Eldorado and Bonanza Creeks, Grand Forks had the one thing Dawson City lacked—location, location, location—as they say in real estate.

Entrepreneur Belinda Mulrooney operated the first roadhouse in Grand Forks called the Magnet in 1897 a full year before the first hordes of gold seekers began to pour into the area and transform the face of the Yukon Valley. Almost as if by magic, in 1898 buildings began to be built down the valley of Bonanza Creek while above on the nearby hillsides inventive miners were scratching their way

down through the one-foot of moss and then 4 to 15-feet of frozen muck and gravel to reach the paydit on the bedrock. Cheechako Hill, French Hill, Gold Hill and others all yielded much more gold than the valley below. Mulrooney quickly built a new roadhouse, called the Grand Forks Hotel, to provide drinking, eating and sleeping needs for the the weary miners.

By 1903 Grand Forks was incorporated with a population of over 3,000 citizens. The town's location resulted in its demise when the large dredges began taking large concessions in the Yukon Valley. By 1921, the dredges had reached the outskirts of Grand Forks and since there was gold to be recovered from beneath the buildings the residents had to move. The buildings were torn down and the ground turned upside down. Today, nothing remains of Grand Forks.

BOGGED DOWN IN A DEEP RUT, A TEAMSTER POSITIONS HIMSELF IN READINESS TO ASSIST THE DRIVER AND TWO HORSES PULL A FREIGHT WAGON DURING A FLASH FLOOD IN FRONT OF THE W.M. WOODBURN DRUG STORE AT GRAND FORKS, 1901.

YUKON ARCHIVES PHOTO #89/68-19 WALTER M. WOODBURN FONDS

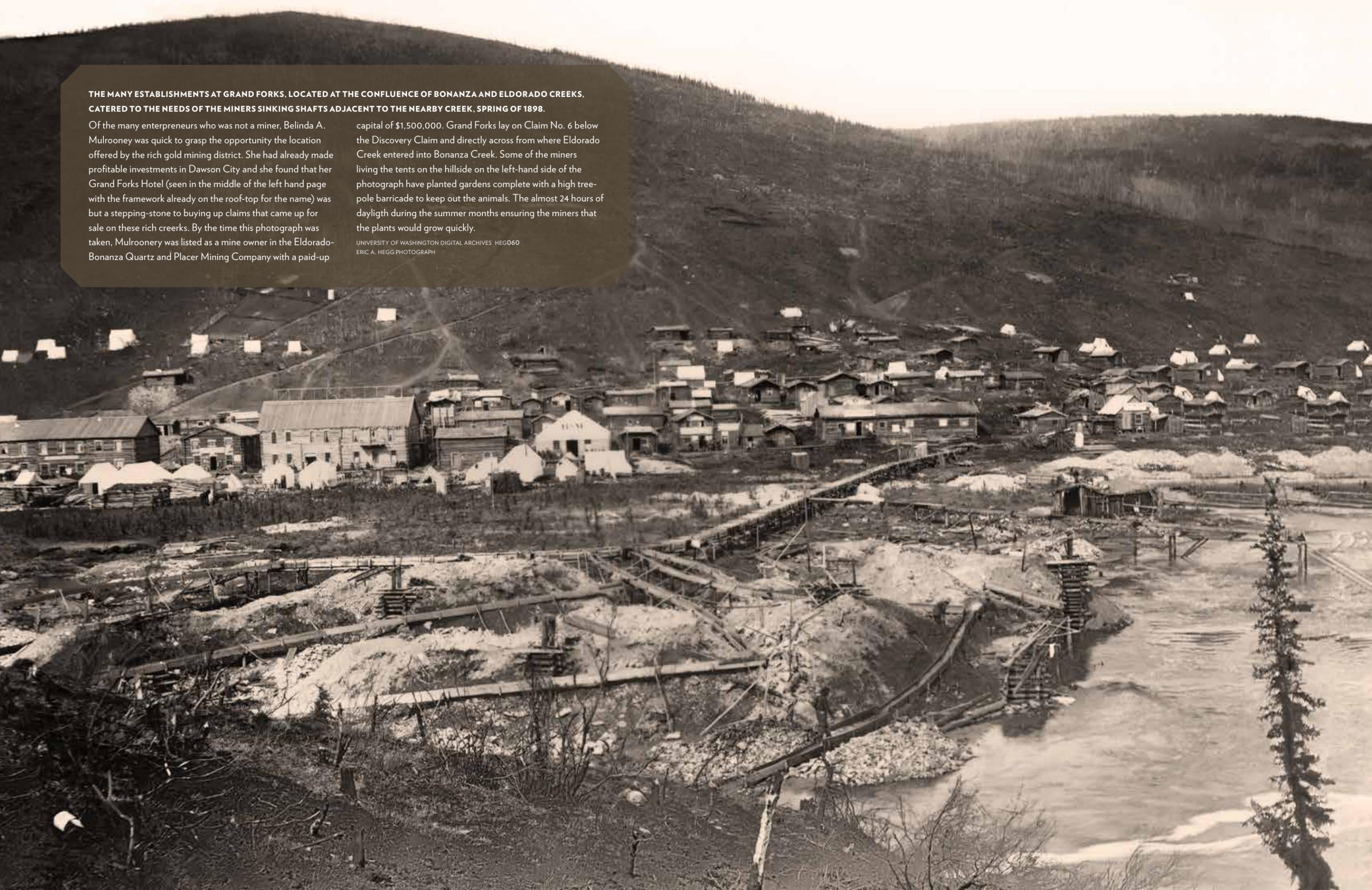


THE MANY ESTABLISHMENTS AT GRAND FORKS, LOCATED AT THE CONFLUENCE OF BONANZA AND ELDORADO CREEKS, CATERED TO THE NEEDS OF THE MINERS SINKING SHAFTS ADJACENT TO THE NEARBY CREEK, SPRING OF 1898.

Of the many entrepreneurs who was not a miner, Belinda A. Mulrooney was quick to grasp the opportunity the location offered by the rich gold mining district. She had already made profitable investments in Dawson City and she found that her Grand Forks Hotel (seen in the middle of the left hand page with the framework already on the roof-top for the name) was but a stepping-stone to buying up claims that came up for sale on these rich creeks. By the time this photograph was taken, Mulrooney was listed as a mine owner in the Eldorado-Bonanza Quartz and Placer Mining Company with a paid-up

capital of \$1,500,000. Grand Forks lay on Claim No. 6 below the Discovery Claim and directly across from where Eldorado Creek entered into Bonanza Creek. Some of the miners living the tents on the hillside on the left-hand side of the photograph have planted gardens complete with a high tree-pole barricade to keep out the animals. The almost 24 hours of daylight during the summer months ensuring the miners that the plants would grow quickly.

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ERIC A. HEGG PHOTOGRAPH

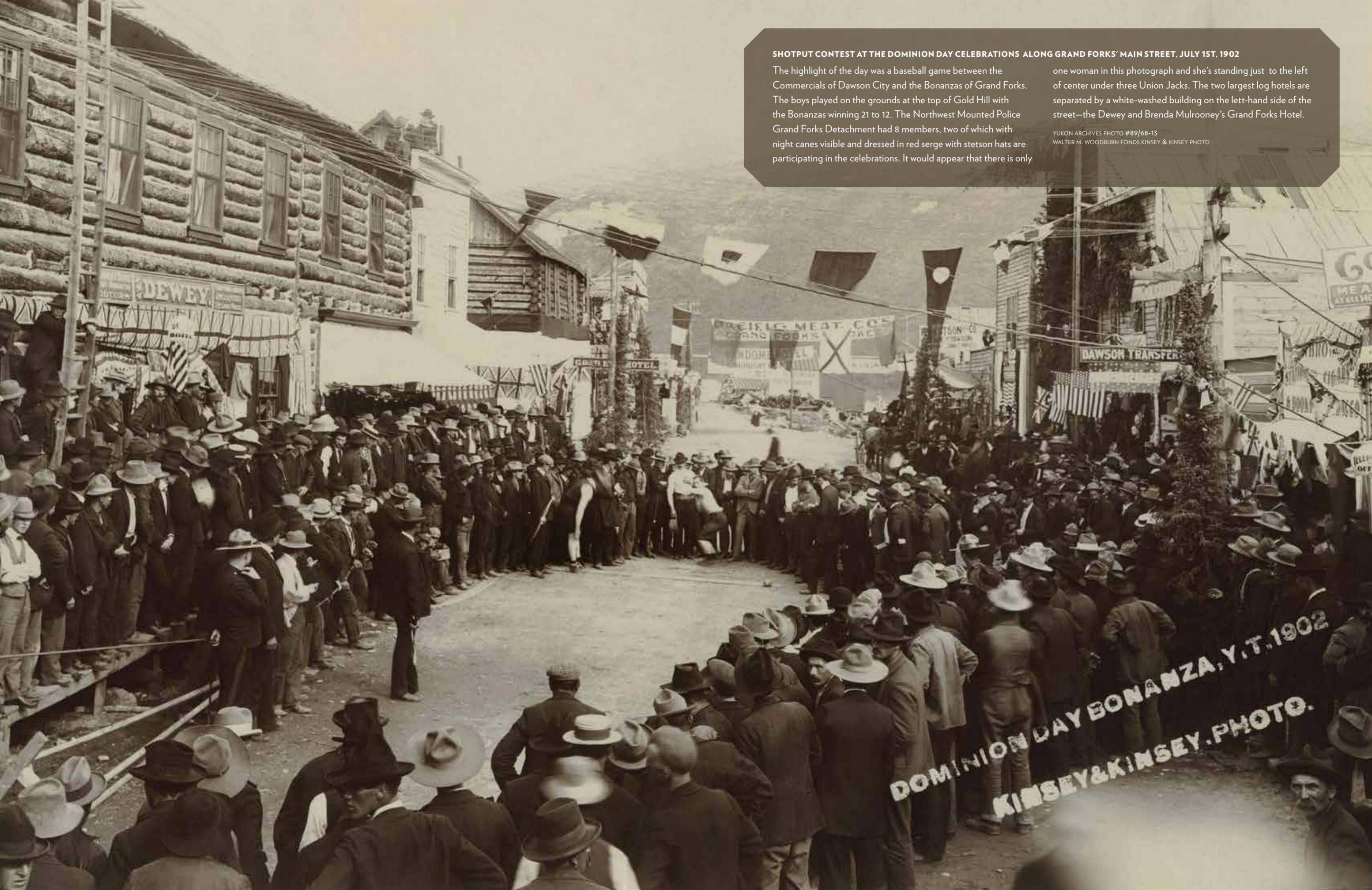


SHOTPUT CONTEST AT THE DOMINION DAY CELEBRATIONS ALONG GRAND FORKS' MAIN STREET, JULY 1ST, 1902

The highlight of the day was a baseball game between the Commercials of Dawson City and the Bonanzas of Grand Forks. The boys played on the grounds at the top of Gold Hill with the Bonanzas winning 21 to 12. The Northwest Mounted Police Grand Forks Detachment had 8 members, two of which with night canes visible and dressed in red serge with stetson hats are participating in the celebrations. It would appear that there is only

one woman in this photograph and she's standing just to the left of center under three Union Jacks. The two largest log hotels are separated by a white-washed building on the left-hand side of the street—the Dewey and Brenda Mulrooney's Grand Forks Hotel.

YUKON ARCHIVES PHOTO #89/68-13
WALTER M. WOODBURN FONDS KINSEY & KINSEY PHOTO



SPRING COMES TO CLAIMS 4 THROUGH 16 ON GOLD RUN CREEK IN THE YUKON GOLD FIELDS.

This photograph is a panorama of claims 4 through 16 on Gold Run Creek. Claims on Gold Run Creek were numbered from its mouth in sequence, running upstream. This was because the mining recorder did not grant a discovery claim on this creek, reasoning that it was merely a "pup" or tributary of an already discovered creek. This was the same situation as was found on Eldorado Creek, which was a tributary of Bonanza Creek. Therefore, claim number 16 would be 16 claims up from the mouth. The claims were 500-feet in width; therefore, number 16 was approximately a mile and a half from its mouth.

Gold Run Creek had a very shallow grade at its lower end which is the area depicted in this photograph. To increase the grade to do a better job of sluicing, tall flumes on stilts were constructed and water was pumped up into them from holding ponds. Sluicing was usually done in the spring by which time the underground diggings from the winter's work had accumulated in huge conical

shaped mounds. The water for the sluicing had to have sufficient grade to provide the necessary washing effect to separate the gold from the paydirt.

In this panorama steam can be seen rising from three different steam pumps that were required to raise water into the elevated flumes and perform other work such as the hoisting of paydirt from the shafts. Gold Run Creek had a very low water volume and the miners had to build holding ponds so that they could recycle the water. The flumes were also used to direct water away from around the work area to alleviate inconvenient flooding. In the foreground of the photo is the government road that leads into Dawson City. This gulch was located on the north side of the valley so this photograph is looking in a southerly direction.

YUKON ARCHIVES PHOTO #86/87-110 EDMUND C. SENKLER FONDS

