

**Historic Resource Inventory
and Assessment of the
Whitehorse-Dawson
Overland Trail : Takhini
Crossing to Carmacks**

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**HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY AND TRAIL ASSESSMENT OF THE SOUTHERN
SECTION OF THE WHITEHORSE-DAWSON OVERLAND TRAIL:
TAKHINI CROSSING TO CARMACKS**

Sponsored by Yukon Historical and Museums Association and MacBride Museum

**Funded by YTG Heritage Branch, Lotteries Yukon and a Northern Research
Endowment Fellowship from the Northern Research Institute, Yukon College**

Written by Greg Skuce and Barbara Hogan

March 1997



Overland Trail and the Little River Valley



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LOTTERIES YUKON



Overland Trail near Braeburn Roadhouse

INTRODUCTION

The fieldwork on the Whitehorse-Dawson Overland Trail began in 1993 after a study, funded by the Northern Research Institute, on the methods of recording the historical resources. It was realized then, what a large project it would be, considering the distances to cover, and the fact that the original routes are mostly away from modern access. The trail was divided into four areas of study, determined largely by the difficulties of the river crossings. A long-term plan was made to prioritize recording the physical remains of the trail while there was still evidence, and then accumulate archival research.

The present report is a result of the third field-work project to be undertaken, designed to examine, locate and photographically record the roadhouse sites, farms and engineering features associated with the Whitehorse-Dawson Overland Trail. The first two projects covered the area from the Pelly River north to Dawson, and this year's field-work was from Takhini Crossing to Carmacks. The main trail between Carmacks and the Pelly River remains to be recorded.

Discussions about the project took place during the winter of 1995-96 with MacBride Museum, Yukon Historical and Museums Association and YTG Heritage Branch and it was decided to make a co-operative effort for funding. MacBride Museum sponsored a research fellowship grant from the Northern Research Institute and YHMA sponsored a grant from Lotteries Yukon, while Heritage Branch provided the rest of the funding. The original scope of the work area was to include Yukon Crossing, but because one third of the funding was not realized, the project was shortened to Carmacks. Of the areas of the Overland Trail that are not recorded, the route from Carmacks to Takhini was prioritized because of the interest of groups such as the Trans-Canada Trail Committee and the Yukon Quest Association in the use of parts of the trail for recreational purposes. The results of this project will help determine trails and future interpretation of the historical resources.

For our purposes the name Overland Trail, which was commonly used in newspapers and archival material in the early 1900's, has been used on the site maps and in the narrative report. However, because of some confusion with the "Overland Route" from the Klondike Gold Rush era, as the trail to Edmonton, the prefix Whitehorse-Dawson is used in the titles. Local people around Carmacks and Whitehorse call the road the "Dawson Trail" and it is also known as the Yukon Stage Line.

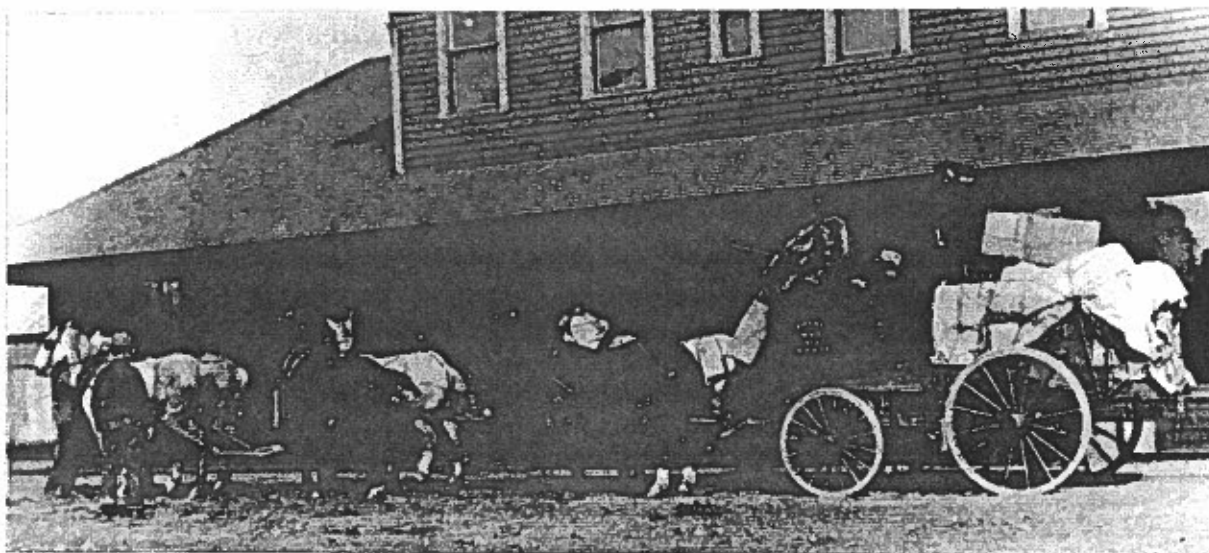
A considerable amount of preliminary research was done before conducting the field-work. Historic and contemporary maps and photographs helped to determine the location of possible sites. A 1904 Road Survey Plan for the Overland Trail has buildings noted. Oral histories, books, diaries and other resource materials were used to help define the function of the sites. The availability of modern routes and the best means of transportation to each site were decided after consulting with local individuals living in the areas concerned. Bill Drury Sr., from Whitehorse and Steve Watson, from Braeburn Lodge were very helpful, not only with directions but also with the history. Murray Lundberg kindly let us use his extensive research on roadhouses.

Upon arrival at each site a map was made of the orientation of the buildings and structures, engineering features, surface modifications and natural forms. Site maps were drawn oriented to true north and buildings indicated with solid lines and foundations with dotted lines. Colour slides and black and white photographs were taken of each building, feature or artifact. Flashes were used for interiors and "fill-flash" for heavily shaded areas. Overall views are also taken if feasible. When recording each site, the resources were labelled as B - "building" or F - "feature". A building is a structure or any part of a structure and a feature is a man made item, ie. a foundation or a bridge. Artifacts were noted on the site forms and the maps.

Buildings and features have each side measured from corner to corner and the distances from each other noted. All measurements are in meters and are rounded off to the closest centimetre. Condition of the walls, roof, and foundation was noted. Some features were difficult to determine, depending on the age and the amount of traffic through the area, in which case a general measurement was taken. A one hundred meter perimeter around each site was inspected to ensure that all the information pertaining to the site was documented.

The information was then transcribed to the Yukon Government Heritage Branch Historic Site Inventory Forms. These forms list site names, site numbers, general locations, and specific locations such as U.T.M., Latitude/Longitude, land status, ownership, buildings, features, artifacts, and resource history and references. Each site was marked on national topographic maps. Diagrams are drawn to scale showing the location of the buildings, features, and artifacts. The photographic images were assigned unique numbers and record forms are compiled for each roll of film, listing location, description, and direction of each view. The finished site forms, photographs, and maps are available to the public through Heritage Branch. This project report containing a narrative of the field-work and a brief site description is available at Yukon Archives, Yukon Historical and Museums Association, MacBride Museum, Dawson City Museum, Heritage Branch - Government of the Yukon, and the Northern Research Institute.

Stage at White Pass & Yukon Route station, Whitehorse, Yukon.
(MacBride Museum, 990.23.1A.267)



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Overland Trail was developed as a winter route for mail, passenger and freight service between the railhead at Whitehorse and Dawson City. Dawson was a busy mining centre and the capitol of the Yukon, at that time, and was in need of a dependable transportation system. In the summer the transportation was by means of sternwheelers on the Yukon River. Travel in the winter was mostly over the ice on the Yukon River, initially by dogteam, and later by teams of horses. Travel on the river often proved to be difficult because of varying ice conditions and there was always delays during freeze-up in the fall and break-up in the spring.

The Canadian Development Company operated a transportation and mail service in the winter from 1899-1901, when it was bought by White Pass & Yukon Route. Their route was via the Yukon River except for the "C.D. Cut-off" which was cleared in 1899 and departed from the river at Lower LaBarge, travelling overland through Chico, Montague, Carmacks and re-joining the river at Hutchiku.

In 1902 the Yukon Territorial Government contracted White Pass & Yukon Route to build a trail that was totally over land except for four river crossings. The road was built through the summer and fall of that year to a specified 12 foot width with wooden culverts and cribbed embankments. The new route was west of the Yukon River between Whitehorse and Yukon Crossing, incorporating the C.D. Cut-Off, and east of the river from Yukon Crossing to Dawson. Roadhouses and stables were built every 20-25 miles, and the existing ones on the CD Cut-Off incorporated. The finished trail was 330 miles long, 70 miles shorter than the river route and was called the Overland Trail or Yukon Stage Line.

It is probable that the road builders used existing First Nations trails whenever possible, most likely in the Takhini River valley and the Nordenskiöld valley between Braeburn and Carmacks. On the "Chikaht Chief Koh-klux Map" the "return trail of Koh-oklux" certainly follows close to the same route as the Overland Trail from Braeburn Lake to Carmacks. The Little River valley is referred to on the map as "the Great Grass Valley", and is a natural corridor heading straight north.

White Pass & Yukon Route obtained the contract for the Royal Mail Service and began operating the Yukon Stage Line with a tri-weekly service increasing to daily trips in the spring and fall when passenger traffic was heavier. An average trip took five days but emergency trips were made in three. The fare was \$125, with roadhouse expenses extra at \$1.50 a meal and rooms at \$1.00. Wheeled stages were used in the spring and fall, and sleighs during the snowy months, both pulled by four and six horse teams. Sleighs could carry up to 14 passengers and 1000 pounds of freight. The service was operated in the western American style of trotting the horses between relays, then changing them for rested ones. White Pass employed a veterinarian and maintained a horse hospital to help care for the 200-275 horses that were used. Harness, sleighs and carriages were manufactured and repaired in Whitehorse after it was discovered that the imported products did not stand

up to the colder temperatures and rougher roads. Another northern innovation was the use of a bag-like device placed over the horse's nostrils and breast protectors to help prevent their lungs from freezing in the extreme cold. Passengers were provided with buffalo robes and foot warmers.

The roadhouses were of log construction, well heated, with comfortable beds and good meals were served. The roadhouses were often named for the people that ran them and were renowned for their hospitality. Farms were started along the trail in order to help supply hay and oats for the horses. Stables were maintained at all the roadhouses as well as on each side of the main river crossings, except Takhini Crossing. During the spring and fall, while the ice was unsafe, passengers and freight were paddled across by "expert canoemen", until 1914 when cable ferries were installed.

The Overland Trail north of Minto changed extensively; in 1912, a diversion to include the mining districts of Scroggie and Black Hills Creek and in 1914, a winter road to Keno was built from Minto. By the 1920s the bulk of the traffic was headed to and from Mayo and Keno, mostly carrying silver ore from Keno. The small amount of traffic to Dawson followed the Mayo road to Crooked Creek, and then diverted to Dawson.

The trail in the southern section went from the White Pass Station in Whitehorse, up Two-Mile Hill (the steepest hill on the whole trail), and NW through Rabbit's Foot canyon. It stayed on the south side of the Takhini River as far as Takhini Crossing, where it crossed the river and continued west to the Little River valley. The Overland Trail headed north along the Little River to a lake chain that drains into Klusha Creek which it follows downstream to the Nordenskiold River, then down the Nordenskiold valley to Carmacks. From Carmacks it stayed west of the Yukon River until Yukon Crossing, where the road crossed, and followed the east bank of the river to Minto. The road in the southern section, from Minto to Whitehorse was hardly changed, except for some short relocations from swampy areas to higher ground in order to make it an all-weather road.

Through the 1920s the mail contracts were obtained by various companies including Coates and Kastner, Greenfield and Pickering, and Klondike Airways. The use of caterpillars and half-track trucks gradually replaced horses as the means of transport. In fact, motor vehicles were so common by 1914, a speed limit was posted. Many of the roadhouses were no longer necessary, and the trip was purportedly much less comfortable for the passengers, who were required to bring their own food.

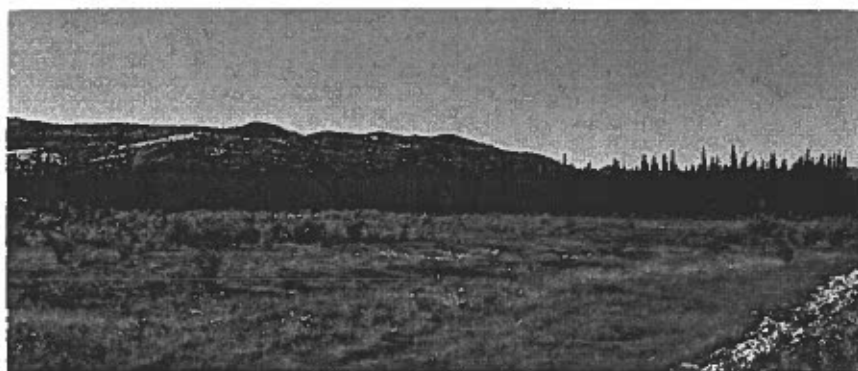
In 1927 the first mail was flown between Whitehorse, Dawson and Mayo. White Pass & Yukon Route obtained the mail contract again in 1937 and used airplanes to transport passengers and mail. Scheduled road service was abandoned, except for some freighting.

During the second world war there was some discussion of the Alaska-Canada Highway being built along the already established route of the Overland Trail to Dawson and then west to Fairbanks. One of the arguments in this route's favour was that it could provide the war effort easier access to the Yukon's proven mineral producing areas of Dawson and Keno. The more direct route, of

course, was chosen in the end, although the length of Kluane Wagon Road / Overland Trail from Whitehorse through Takhini Crossing to Little River was used by the Alaska Highway.

The modern highway to Mayo was constructed in 1950 and followed only a short section of the earlier route. In 1955 the highway was completed to Dawson, intersecting with the Mayo road much further east than the more direct Overland Trail. About 1958 the bridge over the Takhini River was built and the Alaska Highway then was then re-routed to the south side of the Takhini River. A huge forest fire that burned from Takhini to Carmacks in 1958 burned all of the roadhouse sites in the southern section except the existing ones of "New" Montague and Carmacks.

Dalton's camp during a cattle drive on the Overland Trail north of "New" Montague, [MacBride Museum, X89.26.1a.69], and a modern view from the same location on the Klondike Highway.



PROJECT REPORT

During the summer of 1996, Barbara Hogan and Greg Skuce recorded fifteen sites on the Overland Trail between Takhini Crossing and Carmacks, as well as Nine Mile Roadhouse. Nine Mile Roadhouse was not originally included in the study area, but because there has been a considerable amount of research and re-construction done on the Carmacks Roadhouse, it was decided to include the 9-Mile site instead, even though it is south of Takhini Crossing. However, the trail itself, or other probable sites between Whitehorse and Takhini were not examined.

The project was divided into three work areas after determining what sites could be reached by four-wheel drive vehicle, and what areas were more accessible using horses or on foot. The road between Takhini Crossing and the junction of the Overland Trail and the Kluane Wagon road is passable by vehicle. The Dawson trail between Carmacks and Braeburn is within a kilometre of the modern Klondike Highway, so a vehicle and/or hiking could be used for the sites in this area as well. Between Braeburn and the Kluane Wagon road the crossings of the Klusha and Little River are impossible for vehicles so it was decided to use horses for this section.

Cliff and Gail Hannah were hired for guide services and to provide and take care of the pack horses. Cliff has worked before on these projects (Overland Trail between the Pelly and Stewart Rivers) and has a good understanding of the special needs of locating historic sites. The group assembled and left from a point near the mouth of Little River. The Kluane Wagon road was followed from the west until it's junction with the Dawson Road. The trail follows the E. side of the Little River valley, heading upstream through pine forest and burn remains from the 1958 fire. Throughout this area the original road is more heavily overgrown than the surrounding forest, so a new trail has been cleared, presumably by trappers, that follows close to it or intersects it at intervals. There are also many intersecting trails here, and it is somewhat difficult to find the Dawson Trail at times. This area would have to be clearly marked for recreational use.

There was a bridge at the crossing of Little River that has washed out and a couple of foot bridges have been built. There were no sign of any habitation in this area, other than some campsites. After this crossing, the trail is more definite, and becomes narrow with underbrush in places. The roadhouse site of Little River is on a high bench some distance from the river. (For a detailed description of the sites see the following site report). The Overland trail climbs out of the valley, shortly after the roadhouse site, and along a ridge that offers a good view of Pilot Mountain and eventually reaches the first in a chain of lakes. Partway along the second lake in the chain is the Dooley Dog Grave, at a very picturesque spot with several campsites in the area. The trail is at it's most pleasant for the next several kilometres, winding along and between the lakes with no evidence of a burn here. There are several "bridges" (constructed of beams and planks with tow-hooks intact - similar to Bailey-type bridges used by the army) close to the road in one spot. They were possibly used for crossings, or for low spots in the trail. In fact the road is in poor shape for the next kilometre where it skirts closely to a lake,

and has been flooded. Where the trail departs from this lake, another gravesite is visible on the top of a hill overlooking the lake. This grave is very ornate with turned posts and carved rails and is said to belong to a member of a First Nations family that lived here.



A washed out bridge on Klusha Creek.

The bridge on the Overland trail is washed out on the first crossing of Klusha Cr., although the approaches are evident. This is the first of three crossings of the same creek (between Takhini and Braeburn) and although only a half meter or so deep, the traveller on foot would get wet feet. For recreational trail purposes footbridges would have to be considered at all these crossings. Elijah Smith's training and hunting camp is on the last lake in the chain and consists of several plywood cabins and tent frames in a nice spot, but it was not included in the inventory because it is relatively recent. The Overland trail in this vicinity is in good shape travelling through open pine forest in a sparsely burned area, across Klusha Creek and on to Kynocks or Nordenskiöld. This site is on a high bank above the creek and is hard to see from the creek except for a huge can dump spread along the edge of the bank. The trail north of here travels through rolling hills with few trees on the south facing slopes for ten kilometres or so.

At this point a graded road is encountered, which leads westward to a mineral exploration camp on the Nordenskiöld River. The mining company recently used ten - twelve kilometres of the Dawson Trail for access from the Klondike Highway from near the Braeburn Lodge and widened, graded and installed culverts. Unfortunately this detracts from the recreational experience, but it is for a comparatively short distance.

This area was also investigated for signs of a historic road to the Nordenskiöld River, connecting the east branch of the Dalton Trail with the Overland Trail, but apart from some wagon ruts nothing was found. On some maps the trails intersect south of Montague, but there may have been a connecting trail here because it is so close. A trip was made to the Nordenskiöld R. to examine the Dalton Trail and it was found to be quite obvious.

The Overland Trail from here follows the shores of a few small lakes until the third crossing of Klusha Creek, which is by now a meter deep, because of some recent beaver dams. The road stays west of Braeburn Lake, in fact only occasional glimpses are to be had of the lake, until the north end. There are two log buildings here that were noticed and recorded later when the Braeburn Roadhouse was recorded. Close to the cabins, a road intersects the Dawson Trail and heads east through the cottages on the north shore of Braeburn Lake to the Braeburn Lodge on the Klondike Highway, where a horse trailer had been parked.

The second part of the field-work project involved recording sites from the Braeburn area to Carmacks. A base camp was established at Twin Lakes, about midway between, and a truck was used as far as possible and then on foot to the sites. The Overland trail is close to the Klondike Highway in this area, usually within a kilometre to the west, although it winds back and forth and uses the same route in places. Some stretches of the trail have been used for access and kept clear but usually it is completely overgrown with alder and polar. Using the 1904 road survey plan, the site locations were known in miles from the previous roadhouse on the 1904 route. The information had to be converted to work with the modern highway, being in kilometres, and much straighter. Also, the distances around Montague, were from the "Old" Montague, some two miles different than the existing roadhouse. The system worked to a point where the area to examine could be narrowed down to a couple of kilometres, then the Overland Trail could be found and followed until the site was reached.

The Wayside Inn, between Carmacks and Montague was located and recorded as well as "Old" Montague. South of Montague several old trails intersect the Dawson Trail, one which is probably the east branch of the Dalton trail. The location of the "Dalton's Cattle Near Montague, Y.T." [MacBride Museum photograph #X89.26.1A.69] is north of Montague where the Klondike Highway follows the original route for a short distance. It looks exactly the same today. The location of the "old cabin" on the 1904 road plan is the same as the Jackson Bill cabin, so the site was recorded, but later reports indicate it was either built or rebuilt in the 1950's.

The Braeburn area was returned to by vehicle, and the two cabins close to Braeburn lake were recorded, then the Overland Trail was followed N. until the intersection of the "trail to Lake LaBarge" as noted on the 1904 road survey. This was probably a trail connecting with the Canadian Development Co. Trail or "C.D. Cut-off" from 1899-1901. The Braeburn Roadhouse site is 500 meters N. of the intersection. This was recorded and located, and the road N. was followed on foot until it's final crossing of Klusha Creek, where it begins to follow the same basic route as the Klondike Highway.

The general area of the Miller Roadhouse, as noted on the 1904 road survey, was between Twin Lakes and Braeburn. The vicinity was searched extensively, but no sign could be found. There has been a forest fire in the area and several highway re-locations, making it possible that any remains were covered or bulldozed. The west end of Twin Lakes was checked and some cans and old campsites were found, but there was no sign of the Overland Trail in that area - according to the surveys it appears to have gone in between the lakes much the same as the modern road.

The third part of the field-work was from the Takhini area to the junction of the Dawson Trail with the Kluane Wagon Road. This is all accessible by vehicle, and in fact is in quite good condition, because it was used as the route of the Alaska Highway, and gravelled more than most sections of the Overland Trail. The Takhini River Roadhouse site was recorded after receiving permission from the person living there - several newer places have been built in the vicinity up the hill or south of the historic area. The north side of the river was reached by driving around via the Alaska Highway and the Takhini River Road. This area was searched for signs of structures but this crossing was the only one that had stables on one side of the river. The ramp for the cable ferry and bridge piers were recorded.

The road was followed north from here with the distance to 31-Mile area noted and it was reached and the sites recorded. The roadhouse location coincides with the 1904 road plan. The intersection of the Overland Trail and the Kluane Wagon road was examined and photographed, but no building remains were found. The 31-Mile stop is so close, another roadhouse wasn't necessary. The Nine-Mile Roadhouse, just west of the intersection of the Klondike Highway and the Alaska Highway was also determined and recorded.

During the fall and winter the b & w photographs, colour slides and prints were developed and identified, the site maps drawn and the YTG Heritage Inventory Forms completed. Further research was done and historic photographs of all the main White Pass Roadhouses in this section of road were "found", and the final reports written.

The project was very successful, with the recording done of all but one of the pre-determined sites and recording several more en route.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The condition of the road-bed itself on the southern section of the Overland Trail is in quite good condition, having been used for a longer period of time than the northern routes. In fact, the road from Whitehorse to Yukon Crossing is listed as an all weather road on a 1948 road map of the Yukon [MacBride Museum]. The bridges are all washed out and there are some signs of pilings and earthen bridge abutments. There are long stretches of corduroy (logs laid cross-ways on the road and earth piled on top), and wooden box culverts. There are also culverts made from oil drums welded together in the vicinity of the Wayside Inn. There is comparatively little overgrowth on the road, partly because more gravel has been used, but also because it has had fewer years to grow over. The middens on the southern roadhouse sites are much larger than in the north.

It was unfortunate that the 1958 forest fire did so much damage to the roadhouse sites in this region. It had been hoped that perhaps there were some structural remains at some of the roadhouse sites, but there were only charred boards and some sill logs. However, very distinct foundation berms left by the perimeter of earth piled around the lower logs enabled accurate measurements to be made, especially of the roadhouses, themselves. The Little River and Kynocks roadhouses were similar in size and shape (L-shaped), and both being 14 x 14 meters. Takhini Roadhouse, was harder to discern, but judging from the historic photograph [MacBride #990.23.1a.57] it was also built in an L-shape and had similar measurements. Braeburn and "Old" Montague didn't have additions, but were longer, 19.3 x 7.9 meters and 17.5 x 5.5 meters, respectively. The "New" site of Montague is quite small, comparatively at 9.5 x 12.4 meters, but it may have had a frame addition on the north side that is no longer there [Bill Drury]. Also, when it was built in 1915, the amount of traffic had decreased considerably from 1902.

The barn areas are usually less distinct than the roadhouse foundations, but have a vegetation change, usually to brome grass, wherever there was manure piled. However, the floorboards in the Nordenskiold barn are still intact, and it measures 26.8 x 9 meters, with room for up to 40 horses. The barns were converted to motor vehicle garages in the later years with some evidence of vehicle parts and a profusion of square gasoline cans at the roadhouse sites. This is more evident in the southern section than north of the Pelly River, where the trail had largely been abandoned on those routes by the time motor vehicles became commonly used in the 1920's.

The potential for the section of Overland Trail from Takhini Crossing or 31-Mile north to Braeburn for use as a recreational trail is excellent. It is quite scenic and the presence of the lake chain make it a very pleasant journey. There are no difficult grades so it could be classified as an easy trip. The trail itself needs little improvement, other than some re-routing in a couple of low areas, and some clearing. There is no lack of fresh drinking water and good campsites. Foot bridges need to be built and some directional signs installed as previously mentioned. There are a few side trails such as the E. branch of the Dalton trail that could be incorporated. There is great potential for the interpretation of aspects of First Nations history, as well as that of the Overland Trail.

Another area of potential historic interest is the site of "Old" Montague, which is on a stretch of the Overland Trail that is intersected by the Klondike Highway both north and south of the site. A short (4 km.) walk from the highway would give the visitor an idea of what the older road was like, and interpretation signs could be placed at the site. There is also a short example of corduroy road en route.

It is important to complete the recording of the historic resources on the Overland Trail in the central section of the Yukon. The increased usage of the Freegold-Nansen road which follows the trail for some way will affect the inventory. There is a roadhouse site listed between Carmacks and Yukon Crossing to examine. Yukon Crossing has standing buildings and Minto played an important part in the Overland Trail history.

The information and photographs obtained during these projects have proven to be useful in slide shows and exhibits, land use decisions, and the determination of recreational areas and parks. We would like to thank YTG Heritage Branch, Lotteries Yukon and the Northern Research Institute for their support of this project.

B. Hogan on Overland Trail overlooking Klusha Creek.



SITE DESCRIPTIONS

SITE NAME: 9-Mile Roadhouse

LOCATION: On the Overland Trail, 9 miles (14 kilometres) N.W. of Whitehorse, 200 meters west of the junction of the Alaska Highway and the Mayo Road.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135°12'17"/ 60°48'37"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There is the remains of one out-building, not the roadhouse, itself. There are four rounds of logs, saddle-notched in one corner with some evidence of a window or door framing, no roof or floor evident, possibly collapsed and overgrown with moss and willows. An ATV track is running over south end of building, and the rest of the site has had a considerable amount of cat work from various road relocations in the area.

RESOURCE HISTORY: This was the first roadhouse north of Whitehorse, originally on the Overland Trail, but also on the Kluane Wagon Road. Although it is not listed as a scheduled White Pass stage stop, it would have been used by the freighting teams to rest the horses, because the freighters did not relay horses during a trip as did the mail stages or sleighs.

REFERENCES: MacBride Museum photograph 990.23.1A.207.PH., Bill Drury.

Nine Mile Roadhouse looking east in 1912.
(MacBride Museum, 990.23.1a.207)



SITE NAME: Takhini Crossing (North and South Side)

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland trail, 22 miles (35.4 kilometres) N.W. of Whitehorse, where the road crosses the Takhini River.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 28'00"/60° 51'42"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are no structural remains here, however there are foundation berms, charred logs, clearings and can dumps to support evidence of 9 buildings including roadhouse, barn (later-motor vehicle garage), and NWMP barracks and barn, and a ramp and tower support for a cable ferry and bridge piers.

RESOURCE HISTORY: This was the only river crossing on the Overland Trail that had facilities such as stables and roadhouses only on one side of the river, the south side. The roadhouse was built in 1902 probably by White Pass. There was another roadhouse known as the Takheena, located downstream at the mouth of the river on the Canadian Development Co. Trail (1899-1901). The Dawson Daily News of Oct. 29, 1902 list of Overland Trail Roadhouses name it the "Takhini Crossing, Pucket's Roadhouse". A later reference in the Whitehorse Star in Oct. 1905 states that W. A. Puckett buys out his partner, G.I.C. Barron, and is now the sole owner of the Takhini and Little River Roadhouses. Charles Boutillier also operated the roadhouse and Bill Drury remembers it being in business in the early 1950's. NWMP also had a barracks and barns here from 1907. A cable ferry was used until 1942, when the Alaska Highway came through and the army built a bridge, although it purportedly washed out frequently. In the late 1950's when the Alaska Highway was re-routed to the south side of the Takhini river in this vicinity, the crossing was no longer used. The site burned in a forest fire in 1958. References: MacBride Museum photos #990.23.1a.57,61,396, and 1989.26.1a.10. Murray Lundberg's "Historic Cafes, Saloons, Hotels and Roadhouses".

Takhini Roadhouse and NWMP buildings looking south, 1912. [MacBride Museum, X89.26.1a.10)



SITE NAME: 31-Mile Cabins

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail 30.8 miles (49.5 kilometres) N.W. of Whitehorse and 1.6 kilometres E. of the junction of the Kluane Wagon Road and the Overland Trail.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 39'29"/60° 53'55"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There is one standing log cabin in good shape with the roof and walls intact but no floor, doors or windows, and one fallen and dismantled log building in poor shape nearby. Site is 60 m. N. of road and wasn't burned in the 1958 forest fire.

RESOURCE HISTORY: Several First Nations (Southern Tutchone) families lived here and in this vicinity for years. Locals refer to the general area as 31-Mile. The Kluane Wagon road was built from here to Kluane in 1904.

SITE NAME: 31-Mile Roadhouse

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail 31 miles (49 kilometres) NW of Whitehorse and 1 kilometre from the junction of the Kluane Wagon Road and the Overland Road.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 39'50"/60° 53'55"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There is a rectangular shaped foundation berm and tent frame base and tent poles. The whole area has scattered household objects such as washtubs, china glass, pails, stoves, bed-frames, barrel hoops, hinges, spikes and cans.

RESOURCE HISTORY: The 1904 road survey for the Dawson Trail has two buildings marked in this location, one labelled as a roadhouse and the other presumably a barn. It is not listed as a regular mail stage stop, but was likely used as a resting point for the freighting teams. The Kluane Wagon Road was built from here to Kluane in 1904. This may be the same roadhouse that Jim Boss and his father Mondessa operated and lived at. There were several First Nations families living here as well as the cabins at the previous site during the 1930-50's.

SITE NAME: Little River Roadhouse

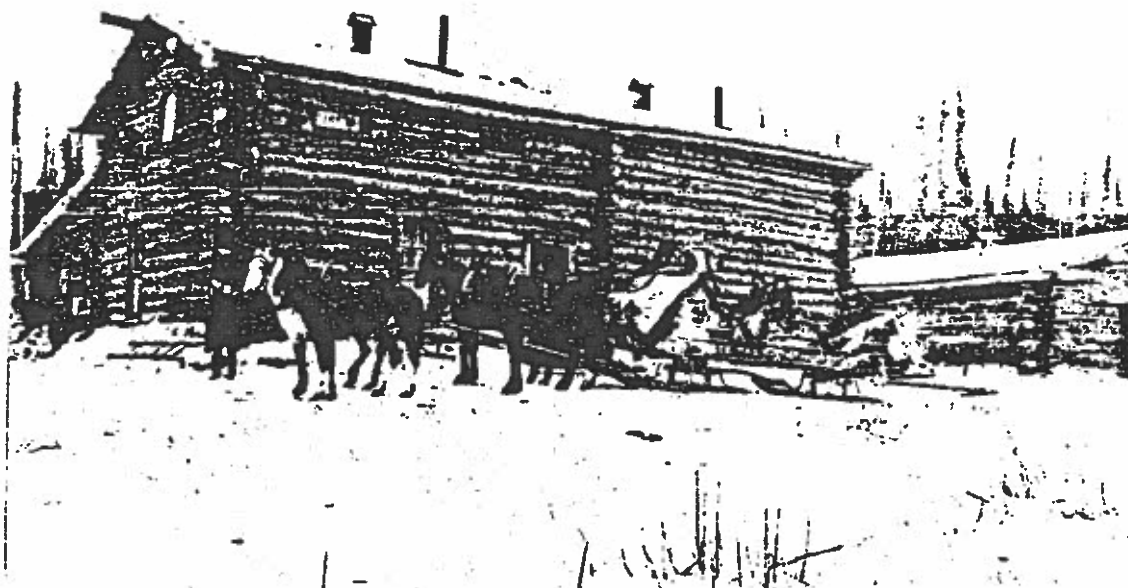
LOCATION: On the Whitehorse-Dawson Overland Trail 40.5 miles (65 kilometres) N. of Whitehorse, where the road starts to climb out of the Little River valley.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135°46'32"/61°00'36"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are no structural remains here, however, there is a very distinct foundation berm in an L shape with a depression in the addition that was the roadhouse and less distinct linear mounds in the area of the barn, judging from the historic photograph. There are two large several large clearings with scattered objects such as bottles, baking pans, cookstoves, heaters, corrugated tin, rubber hose, enamel cookware, pans, pails, horseshoes, pieces of harness, and a large quantity of square gasoline cans. There is also a "Holt" gas powered caterpillar tractor that is partially dis-assembled.

RESOURCE HISTORY: The roadhouse and barn were probably built by White Pass in 1902. The roadhouses listed on the Overland Trail in the Dawson Daily News of Oct. 29, 1902 call it "Little River, Gordon's Roadhouse". There is a reference in the Whitehorse Star in 1905 about W.A. Puckett buying out his partner G.I.C. Barron and becoming the sole owner of the Takhini and Little River Roadhouses and it was still operating in 1923 according to the Polks Gazetteer and Directory of Businesses [from Murray Lundberg's Report on Roadhouses]. Judging from the amount of gas cans, the place must have been used as a stop for repairs and fuelling of the cats, half-tracks and trucks used by the later operators of the mail contracts, such as Klondike Airways, and Greenfield and Pickering. The buildings burned in the 1958 forest fire.

Little River Roadhouse, 1905. [Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, Joseph Tyrell Collection, 1905.8.6]



SITE NAME: Dooley Grave (Dog)

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail on the second lake in the chain of lakes heading north.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 54'28"/61° 05'40"

SITE DESCRIPTION: Grave consists of fenced enclosure made of milled lumber covered with chicken wire. Grave has mason jars with flowers placed on it and wooden headstone reads; "In Loving Memory of Dooley the Pet Dog of Mr. and Mrs. F. Burwash Died Aug 28, 1918 Aged 4 years and 6 months". Area of site has several campsites, tent poles and fire pits.

SITE NAME: "Bridges"

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail on the fourth lake in the lake chain heading N.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 57'20"/60° 07'23"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are four wooden bridges, similar to "Bailey"-type bridge used by the armies, constructed of beams, topped with lighter planks and tow hooks installed. Also in the area was a small foundation with sill logs intact, a couple of heavy chains and many cut stumps.

RESOURCE HISTORY: Possibly used as bridges for crossing small streams, or for low-lying areas on the road. Stumpage in the area suggest trees cut for corduroy road of which there is a kilometre of next to the nearby lake.

SITE NAME: First Nations Gravesite

LOCATION: 80 meters NE of Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail on a hill overlooking the fourth lake in the chain of lakes heading N.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 57'58"/61° 07'40"

SITE DESCRIPTION: Elaborate structure measuring 1.6 x 2.2 meters made from turned posts and carved rungs, all from milled lumber. Slight depression in centre of grave but no headstone or other marker present.

RESOURCE HISTORY: First Nations families lived in this area and at nearby 37-Mile Lake and the grave probably belongs to a family member.

SITE NAMES: Nordenskiöld/Kynocks/McDonald Roadhouse

LOCATION: On the Whitehorse-Dawson Overland Trail 62.5 miles (100 kilometres) N. of Whitehorse near the second crossing of Klusha Cr.

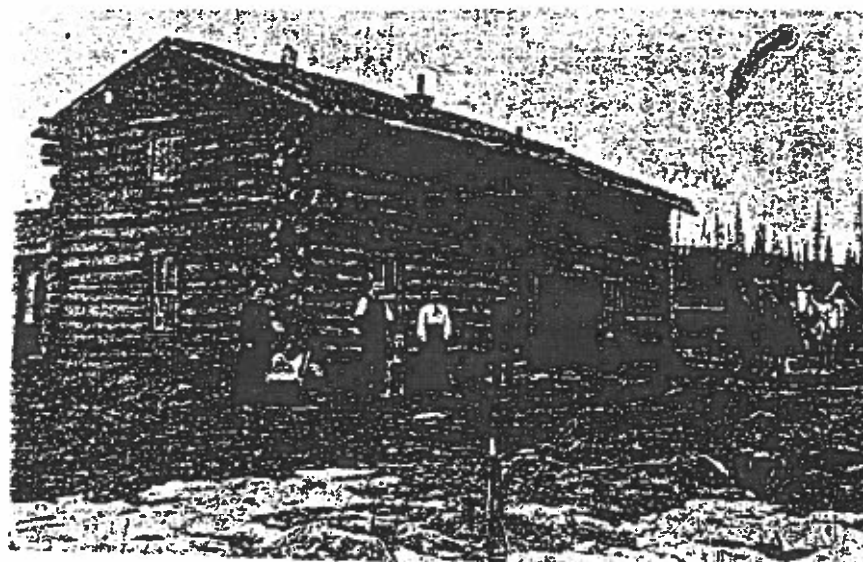
LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 58'40"/61° 15'38"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are no structural remains here, however, seven foundations are quite distinct, especially the roadhouse, and a large midden over the edge of a hill overlooking Klusha Cr. The foundations have charred boards, logs, heaters and cookstoves and there is scattered tins, bottles, dishware, harness pieces, and horseshoes in the area. There is also some remnants of fencing and cleared fields.

RESOURCE HISTORY: Robert Henry McDonald purportedly built this roadhouse in 1899, which seems unlikely because there was no reason for a roadhouse here at that time. It seems more likely that he built it as a contract with White Pass or privately in 1902 when the Dawson Trail was built. In the roadhouse listing in the Dawson Daily News of Oct. 29, 1902 it is called "Nordenskiöld, McDonald's Roadhouse". In the 1902 White Pass stage stop list it is named Nordenskiöld but occasionally the newspapers list it as Kynocks. At any rate, it is some distance from the Nordenskiöld River. McDonald operated it until 1909. At the time of the transfer of the mail contract from White Pass in 1920 to Coates and Kastner, White Pass made an arrangement for rental of the stable but not the roadhouse, indicating perhaps they did not own it. The NWMP maintained a barracks and stable here from 1902-1905. The site was burned in the 1958 forest fire.

REFERENCES: Yukon Archives Photo 387, 89/67 #1, D.D. Cairnes M-5 "Lewes and Nordenskiöld Rivers Coal Mining" Geological Survey of Canada pg. 16, Murray Lundberg's "Roadhouse Report", pg. 360.

McDonald's Roadhouse, Possibly spring 1905.
(YA, R.H. McDonald Coll. 387, 89/67, #1)



SITE NAME: Braeburn Lake Cabins

LOCATION: On the Whitehorse-Dawson Overland Trail at the N. end of Braeburn Lake, 14 meters from the road.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135°48'56"/61°28'41"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are two log buildings here in poor shape, one being three rounds high with no visible roof, doors or windows. The other is also in poor shape with two walls standing, a collapsed pole and dirt roof, and an excavation inside.

RESOURCE HISTORY: unknown

SITE NAME: "Jackson Bill" Cabin

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail 2 kilometres S. of "Old Montague".

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 136°01'52"/61°47'25"

SITE DESCRIPTION: A log cabin in good shape with square notched logs chinked with mortar and a pole/dirt roof with shingles. door and windows intact.

RESOURCE HISTORY: This cabin is at the same location as a cabin noted on the 1904 road survey, but it appears to have been rebuilt recently, possibly using parts of an older cabin.

SITE NAME: Braeburn Roadhouse

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail 84.5 miles (136 kilometres) N. of Whitehorse, north of Little Braeburn Lake.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 135° 49' 32" / 61° 30' 42"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are no structural remains, however, there are very distinct foundation berms for ten buildings here, including the roadhouse, barn, residences, NWMP buildings, outhouses and greenhouses. There is a large can and bottle dump at the edge of the hill overlooking Klusha Cr. Scattered throughout site are stoves, truck springs, horseshoes, harness pieces, burned boards and logs, broken china and glass and gasoline cans.

RESOURCE HISTORY: The roadhouse and stable were probably built by White Pass in 1902. The Dawson Daily News listing of roadhouses on the Overland Trail for the fall of 1902 name the roadhouse in the same location as "Hootchi, Mehenna's Roadhouse" (not to be confused with "Hutshi", a stop on the Dalton Trail, or "Hutshiku", a steamboat stop on the Yukon River). By 1904, however the White Pass "Winter Service" brochure calls it Braeburn. Also in 1904 there is a reference to Fred Holland buying into Braeburn [Yukon Archives 77/31 Holland Collection], but he soon moves to Montague. The NWMP had a post there until 1906. In 1920, at the time that Coates and Kastner take over the Royal Mail contract from White Pass the value of the roadhouse is placed at \$1500, three times that of the other roadhouses (it was a frame building). In the 1950's the Nelson family dismantled the roadhouse and used the lumber at a place near Carmacks. The remaining buildings burned in the 1958 forest fire.

REFERENCES: Yukon Archives - PHO. 218, 83/19, #88., Bill Drury

Braeburn Roadhouse. [MacBride Museum Photograph - X90.1A.3A.105]



SITE NAME: "Old" Montague

LOCATION: On the Whitehorse-Dawson Overland Trail 106.5 miles (171 kilometres) N of Whitehorse, or approximately 3 kilometres SW of the "New" Montague on the Klondike Highway.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 136° 02' 30" / 61° 47' 32"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are no structural remains, however, at least six foundations are evident and the roadhouse berms are very distinct. There is a large midden and scattered cans, bottles, boards, and stoves throughout area of site. The roadhouse foundation has a large cookstove with a double oven and the barn area has a cribbed well with a galvanized pipe inside.

RESOURCE HISTORY: The Montague site is most likely the same location as the original roadhouse on the Canadian Development Co. Trail, because the mileages listed on the C.D. schedule [Yukon Archives PAM 1900-47] and the White Pass schedule are the same, 24 m. to Carmacks. This was on the "C.D. Cut-Off", cleared in 1899, that went from Lower LaBarge overland through Carmacks to Hutchiku. The Dawson Daily News list of roadhouses of Oct. 29, 1902 name the site "Montague, on cut off, O'Neil's Roadhouse". The first roadhouse was a rough looking single storey building such as the C.D.Co. used, and it was rebuilt in 1903 as a more typical large two storey building that White Pass built. From 1903-05 the NWMP had a post here. In 1904 F.J. Holland purchased the place and operated it until 1907 when it was sold to Mrs. Niles [Yukon Archives 77/31 Holland Collection]. Sometime around 1909 it burned and Mike Cyr built the "New" Montague in it's existing location in 1915.

REFERENCES: MacBride Museum: Braulin/Wheeler Collection, RCMP Research - Helene Dobrolwolsky, White Pass & Yukon Route Brochure

Midden with barn area in background at Montague



SITE NAME: Wayside Inn

LOCATION: On the Dawson-Whitehorse Overland Trail approximately 119 miles (191 kilometre) N of Whitehorse, or 600 meters W of Klondike Highway at KM. 340.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: 136°12'45"/61°58'35"

SITE DESCRIPTION: There are no structural remains and no distinct foundation berms, however, there are several pits and mounds in a flat clearing. The pits are possibly excavations near a building in order to obtain dirt for the roofs. Some of the pits are filled with cans and bottles, and there are pieces of stovepipe, a sheet metal stove, shoes, bottles and charred wood throughout area.

RESOURCE HISTORY: The site location coincides with a roadhouse and stable named the Wayside Inn on the 1904 road survey of the Overland Trail. There is also a photograph taken in 1906 [Jim Fee 1609 Dalby Court, Modesto, California] but it is not listed as a regular stage stop for the White Pass mail stages. Because it is mid-way between two stops (in fact it is 24 miles between Carmacks and Old Montague - a longer distance than most), it was probably used by the freighting teams to rest their horses. Judging from the amount of cans it was comparatively short-lived.

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