



*Dawson City's Front Street was like a river of mud when the Yukon River*

*overflowed its banks in the spring breakup of 1898.*

In 1962, the Palace re-opened in renewed grandeur with the Broadway musical *Foxy*, featuring the late Bert Lahr in the lead. The Dawson opening was the most distant "off Broadway" opening of any show in New York's theatrical history.

Dawson, the city that was born on golden dreams, now lives on the memories of those dreams that were actually realized. The Klondike gold rush was one of the international news stories of the nineteenth century and now, 75 years later, the gold fever has never cooled; the ghosts of the past are resurrected with every story, and every summer, from June to mid-September, vaudeville still lives at the Palace Grand.

*The Fate of a Poor Miner's Daughter* or *Shame on the Man Who Pursued Her*, produced by Yukon-born writer Meg Sutherland McCall, are two of the old-fashioned "meller dramers" presented. On alternate nights the New Dawson City Gaslight Follies feature an acceptable version of the *cancan*, crack traditionally awful jokes and entertain audiences with songs, piano, banjo and violin. The "old" theatre again sways to the strains of *Sweet Rosie O'Grady*, *Sidewalks of New York* and the violin solo and recitation, *The Touch of a Master's Hand*.

The curtain falls and the applause fades to a scraping and shifting of old-style straight-backed chairs as the patrons of the Palace Grand rise to leave. Most, if not all, will repair directly to Diamond Tooth Gertie's, Dawson's (and Canada's) only legal gambling casino.



DANCE HALL IN DAWSON

*The Palace Grand Theatre in Dawson City was built in 1899 by Arizona Charlie Meadows, who went up the Chilkoot Pass with a portable bar and the idea that he would make a fortune from the miners, not the mines. He used lumber from two dismantled steamships to build the theatre. It was restored under the auspices of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board.*

Public Archives of Canada photos.



*The Hub saloon in Dawson City was typical of the saloons of the day.*