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# Cultural Landscape Report for Golden, Oregon

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Draft - September 2007



*Looking westward at Golden, circa 1900*



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Draft - September 2007



*Figure 0.0.1 - Looking westward at Golden, circa 1900*

By Susan Johnson  
and  
Dustin Welch

This report constitutes the first draft of the Cultural Landscape Report for Golden, Oregon. The CLR has been prepared in collaboration with the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and the University of Oregon.

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All of the historic photos used in this document were provided by Golden Coyote Wetlands (GCW) P O Box 1562 Grants Pass, OR 97528.

### **Cover Photo**

This view westward of Golden, OR was taken circa 1900. The vantage point is on a hill that rises on the east bank of Jack Creek. (GCW Archives).

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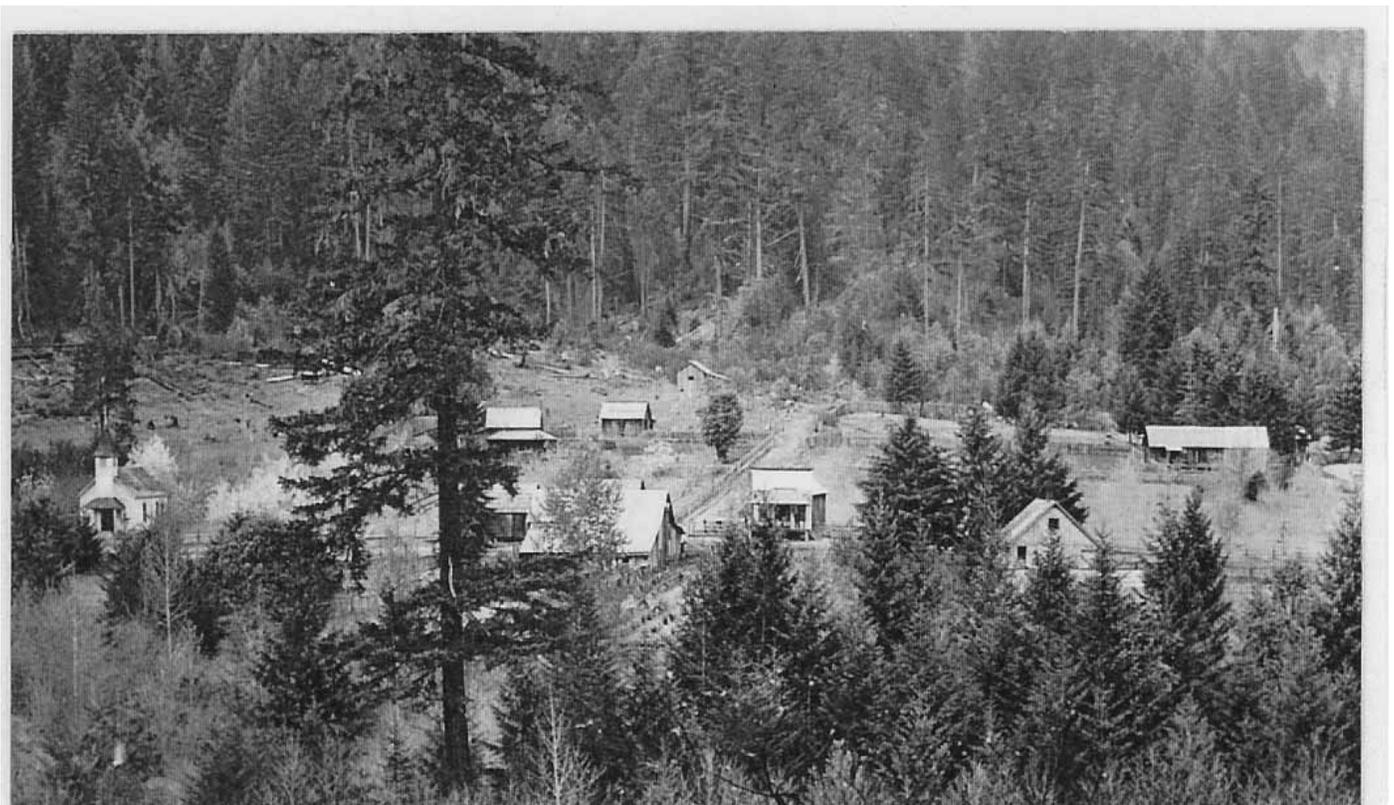
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# Chapter 1

## The History of Golden

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*Figure 1.0.1 - Looking northward at Golden, circa 1900 (GCW Archives)*

# *Chapter Overview & Project Background*

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This historic research was conducted and prepared by the authors in cooperation with the University of Oregon for the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

Golden, near Wolf Creek, Oregon, is one of the state's best examples of an abandoned mining settlement. It is the only mining community that has an associated mining landscape which is owned and managed by Oregon State Parks. As such, its interpretation is an important opportunity in public education regarding Oregon's mining history and the . The settlement was largely founded by the Rubles, a pioneer family that established a homestead in the Willamette Valley's Eola Hills. Lured by the southern Oregon gold rush, William Ruble Sr. began buying placer mining claims along Coyote Creek in 1878. By 1896 William Ruble Sr. and his family had established a settlement complete with a church, store, post office and an impressive orchard. By 1900, two of Ruble's sons, Schuyler and Willam Jr. patented the Ruble Rock Elevator, and hydraulic mining near Golden was in full swing.

The settlement, which is now the Golden Historic District was listed on the National Register in 2002. Golden was purchased by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in 2006, and this report is intended to further analyze the site in preparation for this new park's master plan. This history chapter provides the basis for the analysis and evaluation that will ultimately lead to the treatment guidelines for the park's historic resources. The guidelines will embody the management objectives of the upcoming master plan.

The historic chronology and narrative were prepared as a result of historical research conducted using primary and secondary sources. Research was conducted at the Josephine County Courthouse, the Grants Pass Daily Courier archives, the Josephine County Historical Society, the University of Oregon's Knight Library, The Oregon Historical Society and the Golden Coyote Wetlands archive in Grants Pass, Oregon.

The chapter is divided into three sections: one, an overview of Golden's historic periods, two, a narrative describes the rise and decline of Golden, and three, a chronology provides an annotated history of the site. The chronology is organized according to the defined periods of historical change, and the periods are organized according to sweeping changes in ownership.

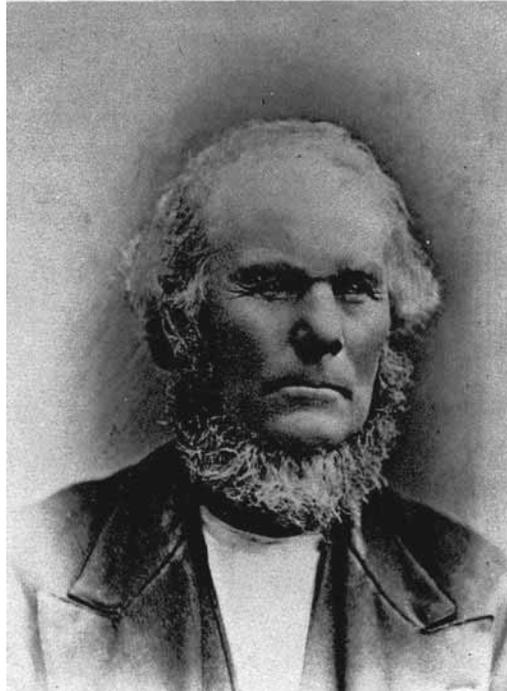
## *History Section 1.1:* *An Overview of Golden's Historic Eras*

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### **Pre-Settlement Era:** **1850s-1877**

Gold was discovered in southern Oregon in 1852, and mining on Coyote Cree likely began shortly thereafter. This era is intended to capture the period of early mining activity on Coyote Creek, before the settlement of Golden was conceived. It ends when Golden's founder, William Ruble Sr., begins purchasing the area's placer mining claims.



*Figure 1.1.1 - William Ruble Sr. circa 1890  
(GCW archives)*

### **Golden's Boom Era:** **1878-1913**

William Ruble Sr. purchased numerous placer mining claims on Coyote Creek in 1878. This era is intended to capture the period of Golden's rise as a mining settlement. During this Era, the Ruble's hydraulic mining activity reached its peak, and the settlement contained an estimated twenty-five buildings. It ends when the last of the Ruble family's Coyote Creek holdings are sold off.



*Figure 1.1.2 - Hydraulic mining with a Ruble  
Rock Elevator on Coyote Creek, circa 1900 (GCW  
archives)*

## Golden's Bust Era: 1914-1967

This era begins with Charles E. Forsyth in ownership of many of the Ruble family's mining claims. During this period the settlement of Golden declines sharply and the post office closes in 1920. The majority of the buildings associated with the settlement disappear during this period, and hydraulic miners wash away most of the settlement south of Coyote Creek Road. In 1964 hydraulic mining is banned. The era ends with Golden virtually uninhabited and Josephine county's purchase of the mining area.

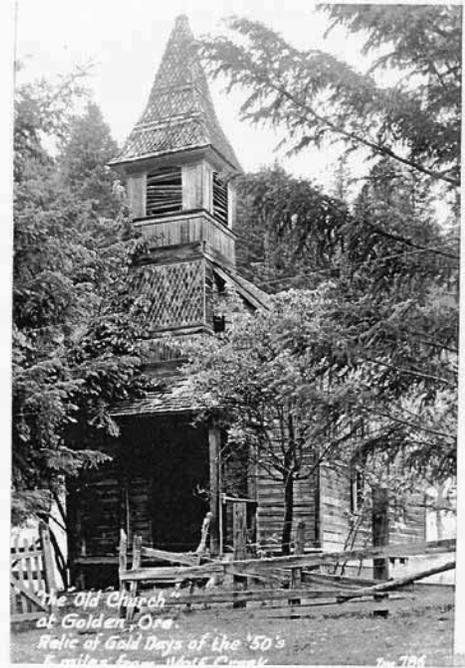


Figure 1.1.3 - Golden's church, circa 1930  
(GCW archives)

## End of Mining Era: 1968-2006

This era begins with Josephine County's purchase of the old Ruble placer mining claims near Golden. During this period, the core of the settlement and its few remaining buildings change hands several times. Also, alternative methods of mining were still allowed on Coyote Creek, and Jack Smith was the last miner to work what was once Ruth Ruble's placer mining claim. Smith's efforts to meet the environmental stipulations of his mining permit created the Golden Coyote Wetlands. And the logical end to this era is marked by OPRD's purchase of Golden in 2006.



Figure 1.1.4 - A dead fruit tree in the Ruble's orchard, 2007 (author's collection)

## History Section 1.2: A Chronological History of Golden's Pre-Settlement Era 1850s - 1877



Figure 1.2.1 - Piles of boulders are left behind after hydraulic mining with the Ruble Rock Elevator. Photo taken on Coyote Creek circa 1900 (GCW)

DATE	ACTION	THE PRE-SETTLEMENT ERA 1850s - 1877
1850s	Discovered	<p>There are various attributed dates for the first discovery of gold in southern Oregon, but the 1848 gold mining boom in California is generally credited with drawing miners through the area from the Willamette Valley. Newspapers of the day have editorials and articles lamenting the “gold fever” which drew farmers away from fertile lands. “In 1851 prospectors [from the Willamette Valley] bound for California thought to look for gold in the streams along the way, and southern Oregon, too, became Gold Rush country.”<sup>1</sup> Local accounts relate that placer mining on Coyote Creek began in this decade with pans and sluice boxes. Recorded mining claim transactions are scarce in the 1850s for the danger of travel to the county seats, lack of transportation, fear of claim jumping, etc.<sup>2</sup></p>
1851	Arrived	<p>The fact that the U.S. Census for 1860 showed an immense growth in Chinese immigration may be coincidental with the gold rush, but some scholars believe there is a causal link. “The movement of the Chinese into Oregon can be traced to the discovery of gold in southwestern Oregon in 1851.”<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the Chinese arrived in southwestern Oregon mostly by migrating north from California.<sup>4</sup> From census reports, it can be seen that Chinese immigration went from a total of 46 individuals over the period 1820-50 to 41,397 during 1851-60, the gold rush years on the west coast. During this same decade, the numbers of immigrants from the Azores (Portugese islands), Scotland, Ireland, England, Germany, and Switzerland, among others, also showed a massive increase.<sup>5</sup> Whether or not these were also tied to the mining boom in the western United States has not been determined.</p>

- 1852-53    Boomed        “Early in 1852,... gold seekers swarmed every gulch and creek in southern Oregon. Busy camps sprang up in a night at Kerbyville, Althouse, Waldo, Galice and Jacksonville. With rocker and pan millions were cradled from the auriferous gravel bars.”<sup>6</sup> In 1853, people were flooding into the Rogue River area from the Willamette Valley “hourly.”<sup>7</sup> Further proof of the mining boom in southern Oregon is provided by pioneer and German immigrant Francis Reinhart’s diary. While mining along Althouse Creek (in southern Josephine County), he wrote about seeing “miners prospecting in gulches all around Jacksonville.” He later took a land claim along Cow Creek (just northeast of Wolf Creek) and wrote about the mining and timber operations he saw there.<sup>8</sup>
- 1852        Sawing                The timber industry was also being developed to meet the needs of the influx of settlers and miners. While there were certainly log cabins built, milled lumber was also available – probably at a high price. Small, portable sawmills existed in southern Oregon during this time period. Reinhart’s diary records that Knott had a sawmill in Canyonville (north of Wolf Creek) in 1852.<sup>9</sup>
- 1856        Created                Josephine County was established in 1856. Jackson County had been created in 1852, Coos in 1853. The early 1850s population boom led to their creation.<sup>10</sup>
- 1857        Discriminated        According to McConnell, “By 1857 there were several hundred [Chinese miners] working the alluvial deposits of the gold-bearing streams of Jackson and Josephine counties.”<sup>11</sup> The Weekly Oregonian published a complaint by a resident of Josephine County about the number of Chinese in the county (1,000-1,200 estimated). “They are buying out American miners, paying big prices for their claims.”<sup>12</sup> The local legend of there being as many as 500 Chinese miners on Coyote Creek at one point seems unlikely, but there is not much solid census evidence either way. The accounts range from several hundred to twelve hundred Chinese miners, and considering the anti-Chinese sentiment of that time, it is understandable why they might have wished to avoid official notice. Also, they were made to pay an extra tax under an 1857 Oregon state law. “Chinamen must pay two dollars per month for the privilege of mining...”<sup>13</sup> The following year, the “Chinamen tax” was extended to not just those who were mining but engaged in any sort of commerce and raised to four dollars per month.<sup>14</sup>
- 1857        Passed                 The Constitution which Oregon adopted on Sept. 18, 1857 (became a state Feb., 1859) prevented any Chinese from owning real estate (including mining claims) or even working any mining claim unless they were born in Oregon before that day.<sup>15</sup> This is just one piece of evidence among many, some of them newspaper editorials, which reflects the strong feelings against Chinese immigrants. *(continued on next page)*

- 1857 Passed *(continued from previous page)* These immigrants did, in fact, purchase and/or work mining claims in Jackson and Josephine counties after the state constitution passed and since immigration from China only really began in significant numbers between 1851 and 1860, it's doubtful they were born in Oregon. It is open to interpretation, then, if this indicates not everyone was as prejudiced as the state lawmakers or if business transactions happened regardless of racial prejudice.
- 1859 Bought Despite discriminatory attempts to discourage Chinese immigrants from working in Oregon, as seen in the 1857 Oregon Constitution and 1857-58 "Chinamen taxes," they persevered and bought mining claims in southern Oregon. The first recorded transaction in our study area is that of a Chinaman (named "Chick" in the entry) buying a mining claim plus sluices, picks, other equipment and a cabin from Ephraim Allen for \$30. This occurred at Wolf Creek in Jackson County on August 20, 1859.<sup>16</sup> Francis Reinhart also sold a mining claim to some Chinese miners in 1859 but it is not clear where that claim was in southern Oregon.<sup>17</sup>
- 1859 Sawing Besides the sawmills, some men sawed lumber by hand with partners. Late in 1859, Francis Reinhart had a whipsaw operating on contract in the Wolf Creek area. He wrote that he could make more money at lumber than at mining, plus he would have the comfort of working "under shelter of a tree and shed... [not] in the cold water." The price was high, up to \$10 per 100' of lumber, whereas the saw itself only cost \$15.<sup>18</sup> Miners ordered lumber from him to build their sluices; no mention is made of them building houses with this lumber, but it is possible. Building a plank shack, even a box constructed house, was much faster and less labor intensive than a log cabin. McLane writes that there were 30 cabins on the upper reaches of Coyote Creek by 1860.<sup>19</sup>
- 1860 Settling Oregon was admitted as a state in 1859, so more data was gathered on its population during the 1860 U.S. census. Jackson County had a population of 3,756 while Josephine had 1,623. Not surprisingly, neither Wolf Creek nor Golden are listed as cities. Very few "free colored" or "Indian" people were counted in either county and there were many times more men than women in both.<sup>20</sup> Some nearby cities did have their individual populations enumerated, such as: Canyonville 322, Cow Creek 88, Leland 53, Jacksonville 892. In Josephine County, the number of native born: foreign born was 1115: 508, or approximately 2 to 1.<sup>21</sup> The numbers of immigrants in Oregon at that time from specific countries are as follows: 425 China, 1266 Ireland, 663 British America, 55 Australia, 690 England, 198 France, 1078 German (total of all German states combined), 217 Scotland, and less than 75 each from various other countries. There were 1,793 miners versus 7,861 farmers, although the distinction may have been blurred depending on the season. Still, mining and farming were the primary occupations given the lower numbers for every other profession.<sup>22</sup> *(continued on next page)*

- 1860      Settling      *(continued from previous page)* The data on the number of Chinese is unreliable for various reasons, not least of which was the blatant discrimination which would have made them wish to avoid official notice. There were likely many more than the officially listed ~400 in Josephine and Jackson counties.<sup>23</sup>
- 1860      Claimed      The earliest officially recorded Coyote Creek mining claim found with Josephine County's records (transferred from Jackson County after the boundary was changed) was that of P. Cassidy, who filed a quartz mining claim on October 24, 1860.<sup>24</sup> Earlier claims, if officially recorded, are lost as the paper record is now incomplete and scattered.
- 1861      Discovered      A mining rush began in eastern Oregon and Idaho with the discoveries of gold on Idaho's Salmon River and Oregon's Powder River. The Nez Percés mines of Idaho also drew miners from northern California and Oregon.<sup>25</sup> A resident and local historian of this region, Florence Arman, writes that the placer miners on Coyote Creek left for the Idaho gold mining boom of the 1860s.<sup>26</sup> However, McConnell asserts that gold lured Chinese miners along with their North American and European colleagues to eastern Oregon in the early 1860s with the promise of greater earnings.<sup>27</sup> Averaging all the accounts uncovered, it appears a great number of Chinese miners indeed migrated to the booms in eastern Oregon and Idaho but some stayed in the Coyote/Wolf Creek area and bought up mining claims. It is important to acknowledge the fact that at least some claims were bought and sold, not simply "taken up" as often mentioned in local lore. These miners, although suffering racial and economic prejudice, did engage in formal business transactions and were recognized as the rightful owners of real estate.
- 1862      Passed      Oregon's state legislature passed a poll-tax on October 15, 1862, levying an annual \$5 tax on Chinese and other minority groups of color.<sup>28</sup> This seems to be a further effort to discourage minorities from living in Oregon.
- 1862      Evolving      Despite the bonanzas outside of southern Oregon in the 1860s, mining did continue in the Wolf Creek/Coyote Creek area to some extent. Stovall claims that, shortly after 1862, southern Oregon "contained the largest number of hydraulic mines of any section of similar area in America... Following the era of rocker, shovel and sluice, the placer bars and channels of southern Oregon were in due time equipped with hydraulic mining apparatus."<sup>29</sup> Hydraulic mining meant more investment and committed labor, so it likely caught on somewhat slowly. The "giants" ran night and day during the rainy season and had to be human-operated. Due to the pressure they generated, they were also more dangerous than the simple mining of the past. They brought increased profit, which may explain why hydraulic mining was developing simultaneously with the boom to the east. Why move to an uncertain venture in unknown parts when one could buy claims from those miners who left and improve on their operation? *(continued on next page)*

- 1862 Evolving *(continued from previous page)* Southern Oregon mines also used arrastras. According to an account of Josephine County's history, an arrastra mill ground hard rock to get at gold, "a western adaptation of the grist mill, but much cruder." They were usually water powered but could be run with draft animals instead. "The arrastra served its purpose in early times by its relative low cost, but due to its inefficiency gave way to the more productive stamp mill."<sup>30</sup>
- 1862-1867 Boomed McLane posits this span as the height of Chinese mining on Coyote Creek from amount of claims sold to Chinese miners at the beginning and sold by them at the end. Some Chinese remained after 1867, and there were still non-Chinese miners working Coyote Creek at least in 1862 and 1863.<sup>31</sup> In August of 1867, Henry Smith sold a placer claim to "Ton {China}", and Gald & Smith sold a placer claim to Qualin & Gony (these names are hard to read in the original document) in February, 1869.<sup>32</sup> McLane counted a total of twenty-four Chinese claims on Coyote Creek between 1862 and 1872, some of which belonged to companies of three to six men.<sup>33</sup> This period can be considered the first "boom" in mining for Coyote Creek.
- 1870 Residing The Ninth Census of the U.S., 1870, does not give any data for Josephine County under population by state. However, in *Selected Nativities by County*, Josephine had 817 native born and 387 foreign born, of which 223 were from China. Germans were the second largest group of immigrants in Josephine County with 38. For Jackson County, 634 of the total 1057 immigrants were Chinese. (Jackson County had a much larger population in general, with 3721 born in the U.S.) Germans were again the second largest immigrant group after the Chinese in Jackson County with 144. Irish were the third largest group in both counties.<sup>34</sup>
- 1871? Arrived According to a modern day newspaper article, the Oregon California Railroad arrived in Wolf Creek in 1871.<sup>35</sup> This date sounds too early to be true, since the first through train from Portland to Grants Pass did not come through until Christmas of 1883, and the first train from California arrived in Josephine County in 1887.<sup>36</sup>
- 1871-72 Claimed There were several new mining claims along with transferals of existing ones along Coyote Creek in the early 1870s, and they could be the foundation of the next boom cycle for the creek's population and mining activity. Miners may have been returning from Idaho and eastern Oregon or simply trying their chances for the first time. Records show that there was nearly continuous mining going on here. For example, in 1871-72, E. G. Browning sold a quartz mining claim to F. M. Gabbett. Jack Robinson sold a placer claim to D. Levens in 1872. D. Mathews bought and sold "placer, etc." claims (i.e., land plus equipment), one of which was sold to him by Joy & Co.<sup>37</sup> In Larry McLane's *First There Was Twogood*, he writes that Joy & Co. was a Chinese mining operation and the last Chinese miners to sell their claims on Coyote Creek, in 1872.<sup>38</sup>

- c1873 Built Wolf Creek Tavern, per the late architectural historian Phillip Dole, was built circa 1873. According to local legend, the upper floor was used by miners from early times as a space to spread their bedrolls.<sup>39</sup> Although not much is known about the inn's early days, the settlement of Wolf Creek was probably a stopping point for the stagecoach by this time. There is no documented evidence about which came first, the stage stop or the tavern. As noted above, the Oregon California Railroad also may have passed through Wolf Creek as of 1871, although it is unclear if there was a stop there at the time. A train depot was built eventually. Regardless, Wolf Creek became an important outpost for the area as an outlet for transportation, supplies, mail, and even social events.
- 1873 Claimed On March 29th, John Post entered a quartz mining claim along the north bank of Coyota [sic] Creek in Jackson County. It was described as being 1500' long, 600' wide, and nicknamed The Post Ledge. Of special note is that it was sited "opposite [sic] the house and mining claims of Daniel Mathews," which is a rare mention of the built environment of the time.<sup>40</sup> The use of the word "house" instead of "shack" or "cabin" sounds permanent, but this may be reading too much into the text.
- 1876 Claimed O. Jacobs & H. Kelly claimed Mineral Entry No. 18 on June 14, 1876, being Lots 37 A & B of "unsurveyed public domain" (no Sec/Twp/Ranges assigned yet) on Coyote Creek of Jackson County. The second page of this entry refers to John Robertson's mining claim on Coyote Creek and the "stage road leading from Jacksonville to Roseburg crosses said Creek."<sup>41</sup> The description and locators of the stage road place it roughly through Wolf Creek. All or part of these 32 acres was sold two years later to William Ruble, a sale which became the subject of a drawn-out legal battle.



*Figure 1.2.2 - A hydraulic giant sprays gold bearing alluvial soil into a Ruble Rock Elevator, circa 1900. By 1870, hydraulic mining was spreading throughout southern Oregon's placers (GCW archives)*

(pre-1878) Described

Josephine County resident Florence Arman interviewed descendants of Coyote Creek's pioneers to document the history of the area. From her writings we can better understand life before Golden, before the Rubles, McIntoshes and Bennetts arrived. Pat O'Shea was supposedly using a hydraulic giant. Mail was exchanged in Leland (about four miles away), supplies could be obtained from Wolf Creek or Grave Creek, and most of the drinking was done in Placer.<sup>42</sup> There seemingly was no official community in the Golden area until the Rubles arrived. However, it is believed that there were miners cabins and perhaps more buildings, such as Dan Levens' store, along Coyote Creek besides those of Wolf Creek.<sup>43/44</sup> It is possible that there was a loose, unofficial mining settlement there which had a fluctuating population before the settlement of Golden, but the frequent buying and selling of mining claims and the fluid movement of miners to bonanzas in other regions and lack of investment in their claims' infrastructure makes it unlikely that anyone bothered to do more than open a store for supplying the miners.

It seems unlikely that the Chinese miners of Coyote Creek built any lasting structures, either. A published first-hand account of a visitor to southern Oregon illustrates how the Chinese, at least, were treated at this time: "We observed, in squads, the ubiquitous Chinaman, moving from mining locality to mining locality, fleeing from the kick of one to the cuffs of the other, with no fixed abiding place to be called his permanent home."<sup>45</sup>

Jack Robinson is credited with homesteading and mining from the late 1860s in the area that became Golden, for whom Robinson Gulch/Jack Creek is named. He purportedly had a house or cabin and a barn for livestock.<sup>46</sup> He may have cleared part of the land which later became the site of Golden but it is difficult to determine this from the available evidence.

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## Section 1.2 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Martha A. Murphy, ed., A History of Josephine County (Grants Pass: Josephine County Historical Society, 1988), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Larry McLane, First There Was Twogood (Sunny Valley, OR.: Sexton Enterprises, 1995), p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> Gregory C. McConnell, An Historical Geography of the Chinese in Oregon (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, March 1979), p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Preliminary Report on the Eighth Census (1860) (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1862), pp. 18-19.

<sup>6</sup> Dennis H. Stovall, "Mining in Southern Oregon," Sunset Magazine, August 1906, p. 139.

<sup>7</sup> Oregonian (Portland), 16 April 1853, 2:2, letter from Table Rock City/Rogue River Mines.

<sup>8</sup> Doyce B. Nunis, ed., The Golden Frontier: The Recollections of Herman Francis Reinhart, 1851-1869 (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1962), pp. 40-44.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> McConnell, p. 20.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Weekly Oregonian (Portland), 31 October 1857, p. 2, as cited in Christopher H. Edson, The Chinese in Eastern Oregon, 1860-1890 (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, September 1970), p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> F. G. Young, "Financial History of Oregon," Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, 8 (1907), p. 181.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Oregon, Constitution (1859), Art. XV, sec. 8, as cited in Christopher H. Edson, The Chinese in Eastern Oregon, 1860-1890 (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, September 1970), p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> Verne Blue, "Mining Laws of Jackson County, 1860-1876," Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, 13 (June, 1922), p. 140.

<sup>17</sup> Nunis, p. 169.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>19</sup> McLane, p. 271.

<sup>20</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Population of the United States in 1860; compiled from the original returns of the eighth census (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), pp. 402-403.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 404.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 405.

<sup>23</sup> McConnell, p. 23.

- <sup>24</sup> General Index to Mining Locations, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).
- <sup>25</sup> Christopher H. Edson, The Chinese in Eastern Oregon, 1860-1890 (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, September 1970), p. 11.
- <sup>26</sup> Florence Arman, "Golden's Yesteryears," in A History of Josephine County, ed. M. Murphy (Grants Pass: Josephine County Historical Society, 1988), p. 46.
- <sup>27</sup> McConnell, p. 19.
- <sup>28</sup> Stovall, pp. 139-140.
- <sup>29</sup> Murphy, p. 13.
- <sup>30</sup> Oregon, General Laws, 1845-1864, Annotated (Deady, 1866), pp. 815-816 as cited in Christopher H. Edson, The Chinese in Eastern Oregon, 1860-1890 (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, September 1970), p. 10.
- <sup>31</sup> McLane, p. 277.
- <sup>32</sup> Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).
- <sup>33</sup> McLane, p. 278.
- <sup>34</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Ninth Census, vol. 1, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 369.
- <sup>35</sup> Daily Courier (Grants Pass), 7 September 1976, C1, Pat Biencourt.
- <sup>36</sup> Jack Sutton, 110 Years with Josephine: The History of Josephine County, Oregon, 1856-1966 (Grants Pass: Josephine County Historical Society, 1967), p. 92.
- <sup>37</sup> Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).
- <sup>38</sup> McLane, p. 277.
- <sup>39</sup> Special Collections, University of Oregon, Marion Dean Ross MSS, Coll. 231, Box 12, fol. 46.
- <sup>40</sup> Mining Claims, Book 2J (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass), p. 28.
- <sup>41</sup> Vol 240, pages 308-309 referenced, of General Land Office Mineral Certificate records. Vertical file photocopies of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.
- <sup>42</sup> Arman, p. 46.
- <sup>43</sup> Misc. Records, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass); also, Mining Claims, Book 2J. See first period narrative.
- <sup>44</sup> McLane, p. 299.
- <sup>45</sup> Captain John Mullam, USA, "From Walla Walla to San Francisco," Statesman (Walla Walla), November 29 & December 6, 1862, reprinted in Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, 4 (September, 1903), p. 219.
- <sup>46</sup> McLane, p. 280.

## *History Section 1.3: A Chronological History of Golden's Boom Era 1878 - 1913*



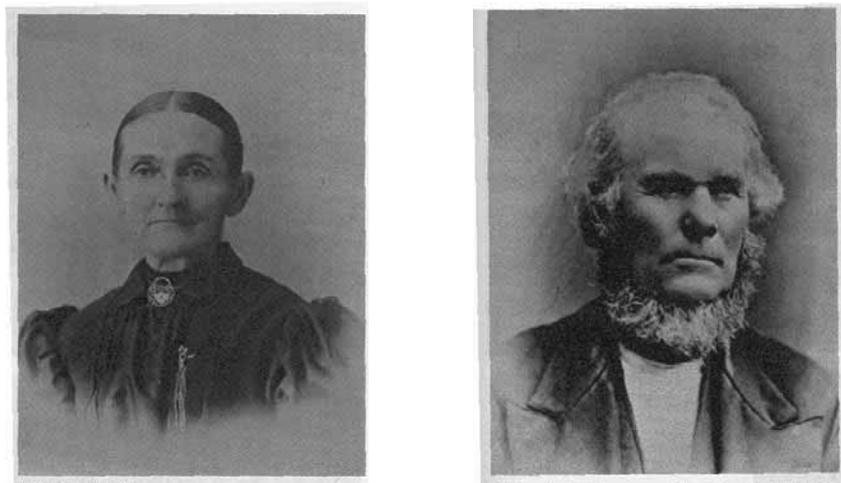
*Figure 1.3.1 - Mining on Coyote Creek with a Ruble Rock Elevator and hydraulic giant, circa 1900 (GCW archives)*

DATE	ACTION	GOLDEN'S BOOM ERA 1878 - 1913
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1878 Bought The Rubles and their relatives were not the first to mine with hydraulic equipment on Coyote Creek; rather, William Ruble had seen Pat O'Shea using a hydraulic giant and thus realized the potential in that technique. This was the inspiration for him to start buying up claims along Coyote Creek in 1878 and the mark of the second period's beginning.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the previous owners were J. McWilliamson et al, Mr. and Mrs. L. Ash et al, F. A. Rathborn, F. A. Davis et al, Mr. and Mrs. P. H. O'Shea, and John Robinson.<sup>2</sup> The most famous transaction was that of the Jacobs and Kelly claim, the sale of which had an injunction placed on it almost immediately. Local historian Larry McLane attests that this was the start of a contested ownership and legal feud for approximately the next ten years.<sup>3</sup> In December of 1878, William Ruble transferred some of his recently acquired placer mining property to his second eldest son, Walter, thus beginning his family's involvement.<sup>4</sup>

- 1880      Fluctuating      The changing county boundaries and temporary nature of the early mining camps would have made an accurate census count very difficult. Yet, if the Tenth Census of the U.S. is to be believed as accurate, Josephine County's population dropped from 1860 to 1870 from 1,623 to 1,204; it then grew to 2,485 by 1880. Jackson Co. grew from 3,736 to 4,778 between 1860 and 1870, but then it jumped between 1870 to 1880 to 8,154.<sup>5</sup> These numbers may reflect a relative bust of southern Oregon mining during the 1860s and its renewed popularity between 1870-1880. The increase in Jackson County's population from 1860-70 could also have been due to the constant arrival of homesteaders in search of donation land claims to farm.
- 1880      Mining      Regarding occupations, Oregon had a total of 3,699 miners in 1880, all males and almost all between the ages of 16-59. Of these, only 920 were born in the U.S. Some of the listed countries of origin for Oregon's miners are Ireland, Germany, Great Britain, "Sweden/Norway," British America, and "Other". There were at least 135 Irish miners, 110 German, 158 British, and less for various other countries.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, China is not listed and so would fall under "Other." According to the census figures, then, the era of Chinese mining in Oregon had passed its peak. Josephine County only had 291 Chinese immigrants by 1880, although this may not be reliable as a true count.<sup>7</sup>
- 1880      Struggling      Ruble and sons joined Henry Smith (builder of Wolf Creek Hotel), Pat O'Shea, Dan Mathews, Jack Robertson, and "another Smith (Coyote)" in mining on Coyote Creek.<sup>8</sup> With the problems surrounding the Jacobs-Kelly claim ownership and the small profit margin the Rubles were supposedly experiencing, it seems likely that their presence on the creek was still transient, claiming home elsewhere. For example, the 1880 census still lists Eola, Polk County, Oregon as the dwelling of William Ruble, age 56.<sup>9</sup>



*Figure 1.3.2 - Ruth Ruble and her husband William Ruble Sr. homesteaded in the Eola Hills of the Willamette Valley, but they are considered to be the founders of Golden, Oregon (GCW archives)*

- 1880 Arrived Ruth (Russell) Ruble's sister Martha, plus Martha's son, Columbus Bennett, her daughter Myra, son-in-law Henry Clinton McIntosh, and three young grandchildren, arrived in the Coyote Creek area in the early 1880s.<sup>10</sup> In fact, Martha Bennett recorded a placer mining claim on December 22, 1880 in the Coyote Creek District.<sup>11</sup> Columbus Bennett's presence is documented as of 1886 but he likely made the long westward journey with his family and arrived in 1880.
- 1882 Passed U.S. Exclusion Act, stipulating no Chinese immigration to be allowed for the next 10 years.
- 1883 Claimed Columbus Bennett entered a water claim ("Coyote") with the Josephine County Clerk.<sup>12</sup> This was likely for mining purposes but it is not known how active Mr. Bennett actually was in the daily operations of his mining interests. His name appears often on mining claims and property transactions, but he is remembered for his ability to turn a hand to many trades. He was listed as a farmer, postmaster and store owner at various times. McLane adds that Mr. Bennett was a photographer and took many of the historic photos of Golden which are now in various personal collections.<sup>13</sup>
- 1885 Began The first issue of the Grants Pass Courier, the self-proclaimed "Official Paper of Josephine County," was published on April 3, 1885. In that first issue, we see evidence that Henry Smith was living in Wolf Creek and working in the "merchandising and lumber business." There were also predictions about the future successes of fruit cultivation and mining for the county. "Regarding the mineral resources of Josephine county, it is but fair to say that aside from a few placer claims that are now being successfully operated, but little development has been made. ...[However,] large quartz deposits, consisting of gold, silver, copper, cinnabar, iron, marble, and coal .. exist, and only await the arrival of capital and energy to develop them into paying properties."<sup>14</sup>
- c1886 Opened Near the mining town of Placer, not far from Golden, it seems that Joe Dysert took the Courier's advice when he opened the Columbia hydraulic mine on Tom East Creek. The Columbia had thirteen miles of ditches, two hydraulic giants and was "probably one of the largest hydraulic mines on the west coast. It ran over two miles from the mouth of Tom East Creek" at the confluence with Grave Creek and operated from 1886 - 1938.<sup>15</sup>
- 1886 Advertised Henry Smith's saw-mill was advertised to open in August. "Mr. Henry Smith, of Wolf creek, ... will start his saw-mill about the first of August. He will put men to logging in a few days. Mr. Graves... is now his business manager."<sup>16</sup>

- 1886 Selected The names of annual jurors were drawn and listed in the newspaper. Wolf Creek's representatives were H. D. Harness, T. J. Makin, Columbus Bennett, S. B. Pettingill, Sam Anderson and T. J. Russell. Russell was listed as a miner whereas the others were all farmers.<sup>17</sup>
- 1886 Agreed S. P. McDulin et al granted William & Ruth Ruble et al a placer agreement in December regarding the "Davis, Rathborn & Robertson" claim.<sup>18</sup> The nature of this agreement is not yet known. It is also unknown if S.P. was the same McDulin who married one of William and Ruth's daughters, Annie.
- 1887 Incorporated Grants Pass was incorporated. It boasted of a brick business district and population of 6,000.<sup>19</sup>
- 1887 Mining "Mr. J. W. Johnston of Coyote creek was in [Grants Pass] last week, from whom we learn that the miners on the creek are still at work, notwithstanding the scarcity of water. Mr. Loomis, late of California, who is working Mr. Ruble's claim, found coarse gold, one nugget weighing nearly \$60. John Cayle [sic, Coyle] has struck some rich quartz [on Coyote Creek] and is preparing to put up an arrasta."<sup>20</sup>
- 1889 Mining Despite "extreme dry conditions," four placer claims continued mining for gold. Their income was good but diminished from the first mining years on or near Wolf Creek.<sup>21</sup> Columbus Bennett made a quartz mining claim in March, named the "Morning Star."<sup>22</sup>
- 1890 Census The Eleventh U.S. Census (1890) counted Josephine County's overall population as 4,878. The trend over the last few decades had been a decline in population between 1860 and 1870, a growth between 1870 and 1880, and then it doubled in population between 1880 and 1890. Part of that growth spurt may be due to Josephine gaining part of Jackson County between the 1880 and 1890 censuses. The Wolf Creek Precinct appears in 1890 (not listed in 1880 or before) with 200 residents; it was organized from part of the Leland precinct after 1880. ("Grant Pass town" had 1,432 residents, as a comparison.)<sup>23</sup> Josephine County had 483 foreign born residents in 1890, of which there were 97 Chinese, 105 German, 71 from Canada/Newfoundland, and scattered, small numbers from other countries.<sup>24</sup>

1890s Mining “At present there are two hydraulic mines on the creek. The uppermost is that of Ruble Bros. - William N. and S. C. - whose ground covers a couple of miles of the creek and back-channels.” The gravel was about 20’ deep, similar to Wolf Creek’s, with coarse gold in quantity. Finding dumps for the tailings and boulders caused problems for the hydraulic mines until the Rubles invented their elevator/seperator. The Ruble Elevator’s design was such that it “set at right angles to the flume, with the lower end resting on the flume at a rising angle of 15 to 20 degrees.” Bennett and McIntosh had hydraulic mines downstream, about 1.5 miles from the junction of Wolf & Coyote Creeks. They have had water availability issues in the past so ditches are being extended; there are other, “ground-sluiced” claims on the creek during the winter.<sup>25</sup>

William N. and Schuyler Ruble patented their hydraulic mining elevator under U.S. Patent # 651725 on June 12, 1900. This patent was filed in July of 1899, and the elevator was likely being used for several years prior to the official patent.<sup>26</sup>



*Figure 1.3.3 - The Ruble Rock Elevator was used to stack boulders and other hydraulic mine tailings while coarse gold was captured in the elevator’s lower sluice box. Photo, circa 1900 (GCW archives).*

1890 Moved Bernice Ruble writes of her family moving to Golden. Her parents, William N. and Sarah (McKay) Ruble, “mostly lived near Salem until the Fall of 1890 when we moved out to the ‘upper mine’ and my father took charge of operating the mine for my grandfather. Uncle Schuyler and Aunt Abbie moved out to the mine from Salem the same time we did, and he helped operate the mine.” *(continued on next page)*



Figure 1.3.4 - William N. and Sara Ruble on the left and Schuyler and Abbie Ruble on the right circa 1890 (GCW archives). By 1890 the Ruble brothers were busy working the family's placer mining claims.

1890 Moved

*(continued from previous page)* Her account suggests the move to Coyote Creek preceded the invention of the Ruble Elevator, that the brothers were simply more determined to make their mines profitable and being there instead of Salem made this possible.<sup>27</sup>

Arman relates that the Bennett/McIntosh clan “helped build up the community” of Golden, implying that the community formed soon after their arrival.<sup>28</sup> An official start date for Golden has not yet been determined in this study, but it seems safe to put its establishment between the Bennetts’ arrival in 1880 and the beginning of the increased Ruble presence in 1890, and probably more towards 1890. The Rubles, Bennetts, and McIntoshes not only added their numbers to those who were already living on Coyote Creek, but their consolidation of mining claims and increased investment in the operations seem to have brought about the second boom for Coyote Creek.

1890s Bought

Between October 1890 and July 1892, H.C. McIntosh recorded four separate purchases of mining property (three quartz, one placer), from Wallace (Anaconda), Wallace (Little Anaconda), Dysert and Pearson. McIntosh recorded buying at least one more placer claim in 1896. All of these were in the Coyote Creek Mining District.<sup>29</sup>

1891 Afflicted

Bernice Ruble suffered infantile paralysis in January of 1891 “while we were still living at the ‘upper mine.’”<sup>30</sup>

- 1891 Bought William Ruble bought mining rights and interest from three of his children, paying \$1000 to each: Schuyler, Viola (Ruble) Gardner and Annie (Ruble) McDulin, on May 25th. They conveyed to their father “all [their] right title interest and claim to certain gold placer claims on Coyote Creek.... Known as the Davis & Rathbone & John Robertson mining claim more particularly described as follows: beginning at the SE corner of Sec 24 in T33S R6W thence west...” totaling approximately 90 acres.<sup>31</sup> It is a mystery why William decided to buy from these three and not all of his children, especially as Schuyler was involved with the mining operations and the daughters likely were not. It may not have been a coincidence that the girls were married, and perhaps Ruble was worried their husbands might claim a piece of the profits.
- 1892 Visited The May 5, 1892 Rogue River Courier reported that “Wm. Ruble returned to his home near Salem after a year’s work in this [sic] valuable mines near here.”<sup>32</sup> The return was perhaps really a visit as he was back in Golden in 1893.
- 1892 Built William Ruble is generally given credit for building Golden’s church with a congregation of 50-60 people. One story is that an “itinerant craftsman” did the “fancy work” (diamond shingling) on the steeple.<sup>33</sup> However, Bernice Ruble credits her father, William N., with the construction of the church.<sup>34</sup>



*Figure 1.3.5 - Looking northwest toward Golden’s church with William N. Ruble’s house in the background, circa 1895 (GCW archives). This is the earliest photo of the church in this report, and it is not possible to discern any of the Ruble’s orchard in this image. Note that the two Douglas Firs are missing from the front of the church.*

- 1892 Recorded W.P. Ely filed for a mill site, and since this appears in the mining claim records of Josephine County, it was likely a stamp mill, not a saw or grist mill. Columbus Bennett et al filed a quartz claim, further proving there was both placer and hard rock mining on Coyote Creek.<sup>35</sup>
- 1893-96 Bought William Ruble continued to purchase and/or develop new mining claims. In 1893, he purchased at least 141 acres of Sec 24/T33S/R6W.<sup>36</sup> In 1896, he bought placer claims from H. McIntosh and wife, A. McIntosh. The sale included “15 original locations of placer mining claims” and a total of 84 acres in Sec. 19, T33S, R5W and Sec 24, T33S, R6W.<sup>37</sup>
- 1894 Built Local historian Larry McLane counts several new aspects to Golden’s landscape in 1894. Schuyler and his brother William N. both finished new houses for their families. Schuyler and his family moved out of their log house, thereby turning the log house into a store. William N. and family now lived west of the church, having lived previously at the upper mine. Mabel McIntosh, daughter of Myra and H.C., remembers her father building a new house between 1894 and the winter of 1896. McLane also reports that a better road was built to Golden during 1894 due to the success of the mines there.<sup>38</sup>



*Figure 1.3.6 - Looking northward at Schuyler Ruble’s house, circa 1895 (GCW archives). Note the large conifers which marked the northern edge of the settlement during Golden’s Boom Era. It is possible that this view of Schuyler’s house shows both his log cabin/store on the right and his new dwelling on the left.*

- 1894 Mapped The 1894 General Land Office (GLO) map for T33S, R5W shows present along Coyote Creek, west to east: Wm Ruble Placer Mining Claim No. 38, Kelly Claim No. 37, Ruth Ruble Placer Mining Claim No. 39. Also, some cabins and small claims are noted. There is no mention of Golden, but this does not mean it was not there.

1894 Built



*Figure 1.3.7 - Looking north toward William N. Ruble's house in the background, circa 1896 (GCW archives). This is one of the earliest photos of the Ruble house in this report. Note the age of the children sitting behind their parents Sarah and William N. Ruble. Also note the gazebo, the young fir tree and broad leaf tree (Pacific Madrone?) in their front yard.*

1894 Built



*Figure 1.3.8 - Looking northeast toward William N. Ruble's house in the background, circa 1900 (GCW archives). Note the age of the Douglas Fir in the front yard which appears to have aged several years. It is possible that a power pole appears on the left edge of this image. One is clearly visible in the photo to the right.*

1894

Built



*Figure 1.3.9 - Looking northwest at William N. Ruble's house , circa 1900 (GCW archives). Note the age and number of William and Sarah's children. They appear several years older when compared to the photo at right. Also the broad leaf tree (Pacific Madrone?) is missing from their front yard. A garden is visible in the foreground, and it appears to have been quite extensive, covering most of the ground between their house and the church, as evidenced by the photo below.*



*Figure 1.3.10 - Looking southeast toward Golden's church with the barn on the south side of Coyote Creek Road in the background, circa 1905 (GCW archives). William N. Ruble's large garden/agricultural field appears in the foreground. Note the power pole on the right edge of the photo and the orchard trees along the west elevation of the church.*

1895 Built

The Josephine County historic building survey of 1983-84 estimated the construction date of the shed to 1895, but the estimated dates for other buildings are known to be 5-10 years off.<sup>39</sup> The Golden Shed could be post-1900 along with the store next to it. It has the same type of construction and siding as the Ruble House and the store's lean-to, so a date range of 1894-1904 seems logical.

1895 is also the estimated construction date for the house of Lorenz Miller, a miner with his father Urias Miller.<sup>40</sup> The house is extant and visible from Coyote Creek Road, approximately ½ mile west of Golden. Although the building survey form lists the house as FRAME construction, this has not been confirmed visually. It has plank walls with board-and-batten siding like the Ruble House.

McLane asserts from his investigation into deeds and county records a few more Golden buildings were erected in 1895. Schuyler built a new store which replaced his old log house-turned-store. It was stocked by October with mostly groceries and some mining supplies. Fred Johnson built his house in the spring of 1895, the house that became known as the Yellow House and was later operated by Henry Gross as the Golden Hotel.<sup>41</sup> Although both of these are now gone, historic photos of the Yellow House show it to have vertical plank, board-and-batten walls with a simple massing. It may also have been box construction.



*Figure 1.3.11 -Looking southwest toward the Yellow House/Golden Hotel, circa 1900 (GCW archives). in the background, circa 1900 (GCW archives). Note the buildings to the left and right of the house and the branches of a Douglas Fir on the right edge of the photo. The tree is believed to be one of the large firs along the south edge of Coyote Creek Road.*

1895 Built



*Figure 1.3.12 -Looking northeast toward the Golden Shed in a recent photograph, circa 2000 (GCW archives). Often referred to as a granary, the building's box construction suggests other uses.*

1895 Built



*Figure 1.3.13 -Looking east at the Lorenz Miller house in a recent photograph, circa 2000 (GCW archives). Note the similarities in construction to the Yellow House and the Ruble House. The Lorenz Miller House is possibly another box construction building.*

- |      |             |   |
|------|-------------|---|
| 1895 | Dedicated   | The Golden church received its dedication by Rev. Stephen Jewell, pastor of Grants Pass Christian Church. <sup>42</sup>   |
| 1896 | Established | A post office opened in Golden on January 10th. Schuyler Ruble was the second postmaster, but the first one only served a week! Columbus Bennett served as deputy postmaster and then postmaster after Schuyler. <sup>43</sup>  |
| 1897 | Mining      | <p>Water was plentiful this spring and the mines prospered on Coyote Creek. Earlier newspaper issues this year spoke of a dry winter and how happy miners were in January for rains to come so they could work.<sup>44</sup> In fact, the precipitation may have come on too strong as a March issue reported that the rain and snow had driven N. H. Burley “out of his tunnel on Wolf creek and he has gone to Coyote creek mines until dry weather salutes us.”<sup>45</sup> The interpretation of this statement is that Mr. Burley could not work his hardrock mine for all the water, hence it was time to placer mine on Coyote Creek.</p> <p>By the following December “The mine of H.C. McIntosh on Coyote creek about 3 miles above Wolf Creek, is being fitted up for an extensive winter’s run. The owners of this mine have two No. 2 giants ready for operation and two more No. 1 giants will be put in soon, ready for the winter rains. Four giants operated at one time means that a great deal of earth will be moved...”<sup>46</sup></p> <p>The Rubles were doing very well at this point. The Ruble placer claim was deemed the “most important” on Coyote Creek with its elevator and separator.<sup>47</sup></p> <p>The most famous mine of the area opened in 1897 as well. This was the Greenback Mine, begun by Law Browning &amp; Ed Hannum, May 16 1897. By July, it had an arrastra. Located 1.5 miles northeast of Placer, it had a ten stamp mill added in 1899.<sup>48</sup></p> |
| 1897 | Booming     | <p>Wolf Creek and Golden were both booming communities. “With one sawmill in full blast and another to start up soon, times will hum here (in/near Wolf Creek).”<sup>49</sup> The Wolf Creek schoolhouse was a “shed,” which was adequate for the 22 pupils it housed 9 years ago. But in 1897, the enrollment had grown to 122, an increase from the 73 students in 1896. “...the large majority of our population are bachelors.”<sup>50</sup></p> <p>Wolf Creek had a Christmas Ball and Golden received a visit from Rev. and Mrs. Smith, both of them ministers. They had a “protracted meeting” with the residents. H. Gross and family visited Grants Pass, which may not seem noteworthy except that their visit records their presence in the Wolf Creek area.<sup>51</sup></p>  |
| 1897 | Built       | “The new school house at Golden is completed, excepting a globe, school marm, hedge sprout and other necessary furniture.” <sup>52</sup>  |
| 1897 | Electrified | The mines in the Wolf Creek district boasted of being the only ones “in western Oregon lighted by electricity.” <sup>53</sup>   |

1897

Mining



*Figure 1.3.14 -Members of the McIntosh family inspect a blown waterline near Coyote Creek, circa 1900 (GCW archives). Such waterlines were used to feed the water canons, or hydraulic giants that blasted away up to 3,000 cubic yards of gravel per day.*

1897

Mining



*Figure 1.3.15 -Looking eastward up Coyote Creek near the settlement of Golden, circa 1900 (GCW archives). Note the extensive erosion of the Ruble's hydraulic mining activity, their elevator to the left, a giant to the right, a flume in the middle and a building (mining equipment shed?) near the flume.*

- 1901 Moved William N. Ruble moved his family to Ashland to improve his children's educational opportunities. The Schuyler Ruble family along with William Sr. and Ruth left their residences at Golden shortly thereafter, but "some members of both [the William N. and Schuyler] Ruble families" regularly visited to operate the mines, maintain the church and generally take care of things.<sup>54</sup> McLane states that Henry C. and Myra McIntosh also moved their family away from Golden (to Grants Pass) for the sake of their children's education in the spring of 1901.<sup>55</sup> Even though there was a new school in Golden, it only operated two terms per year and had one teacher for all grade levels. It is not known if William Sr. and Ruth ever returned to Golden. He passed away in Salem in 1905 and Ruth followed him in death in 1912.<sup>56</sup>
- 1901 Transferred William Ruble and spouse transferred property in Section 19, T33S, R5W to S. C. Ruble.<sup>57</sup> Incidentally, it is not known to which William Ruble, father or son, the county clerk's recording refers. It could have been either because both moved away around that time. H. C. McIntosh also disposed of 2 placer claims in the Wolf Creek District in January and June, to Parham and Payne respectively, supporting the story that they moved away at this time.<sup>58</sup>
- 1902 Sold, Opened Greenback Mine was sold to Brevoort in 1902, who added thirty more stamps in 1903. This mine also used a cyanide process to extract gold. The town which grew up had a peak population of about 300. The Greenback went through periods of non-operation and changed owners several times.<sup>59</sup> Norman Weis' account of this mine claims that during its operating peak, the Greenback's mill operated 24 hours a day with a crew of 20. In order to make working there more desirable, cabins and a company store were built. He writes that in 1902, "Greenback became officially a town when a post office was authorized. It lasted only six years, but during that time many fortunes were made." The town at Greenback was dry (alcohol free) with frequent traffic to Placer's saloons. The mining there slowed down in the early 1900's when the "rich veins petered out."<sup>60</sup>
- 1903 Transferred S. C. Ruble transferred a placer claim in the Wolf Creek District to C. Bennett, specifically the property known as the John W. Robinson Claims.<sup>61</sup> McLane adds that Schuyler sold his land and store to his cousin Columbus in 1900, which closely aligns with Bernice Ruble's account of the Rubles leaving in or around 1901.<sup>62</sup>
- 1904 Built Columbus Bennett's new, larger store is reported as finished in December. He moved his inventory from the old store to the new one and was expected to add to Golden's lure as a supply post.<sup>63</sup> He hired nephew Ollie McIntosh as its builder.<sup>64</sup> The old store referred to was the one Schuyler built; the extant store is the one from 1904, not Schuyler's.
- 1904 Born Willis Ruble was born to William N. and Sarah (McKay) in Ashland during the month of May.<sup>65</sup>

circa 1900 Built



*Figure 1.3.16 -Student's and their teacher, Pearl Sams stand in front of Golden's school, circa 1900 (GCW archives)*

1904 Built



*Figure 1.3.17 -Myra McIntosh and Columbus Bennett behind the counter inside their store located next to the Golden Shed or granary, circa 1904 (GCW archives). Note the wood stove on the right, a similar stove is in the store today.*

- |      |             |   |
|------|-------------|---|
| 1904 | Operated    | By December, Henry Gross ran the Golden Hotel and advertized meals for \$0.25. Incidentally, William N. Ruble is reported as having pruned his orchard and plowed his land, revealing that he did visit. <sup>66</sup>  |
| 1904 | Appointed   | Columbus Bennett as postmaster of Golden, on June 30th. <sup>67</sup>   |
| 1905 | Died        | William Ruble, Sr., passed away in August in his home near Salem. <sup>68</sup>   |
| 1906 | Present     | Schuyler and Abbie Ruble, at least, were living at least part-time in Golden during May, June and September of 1906 as local newspapers report them visiting various people and getting business calls. <sup>69</sup>   |
| 1906 | Died        | Bertha, the eldest daughter of William N. and Sarah (McKay) Ruble, passed away in Ashland in July. <sup>70</sup>  |
| 1906 | Settled     | The William Ruble estate was appraised in September by R. A. Jones of Glendale, Wolf Creek postmaster T. E. Loban, and M. McLean of Greenback. The appraisers met in Golden and dined at S. C. Ruble's "just across the street from the Golden post office (C. Bennett, postmaster)..." <sup>71</sup>   |
| 1906 | Progressing | The Rogue River generated electricity by 1906 and possibly earlier. An account from this year reported several mines, including the Greenback, used electric power generated by the power dams on the Rogue. <sup>72</sup> In contemporary news, gold from Coyote Creek was "well known for its purity and fineness" and the Martha Mine, whose dumps were visible from Golden even though it was located two miles away, was an up and coming producer. The Martha connected by electric tramway to the Greenback. <sup>73</sup> |



*Figure 1.3.18 -Looking northeast at the Golden church, circa 1905 (GCW archives). Note the well established orchard on either side of the church and the Douglas Fir tree on the fence line. The tree is most likely one of the two firs that appear in front of the church today.*

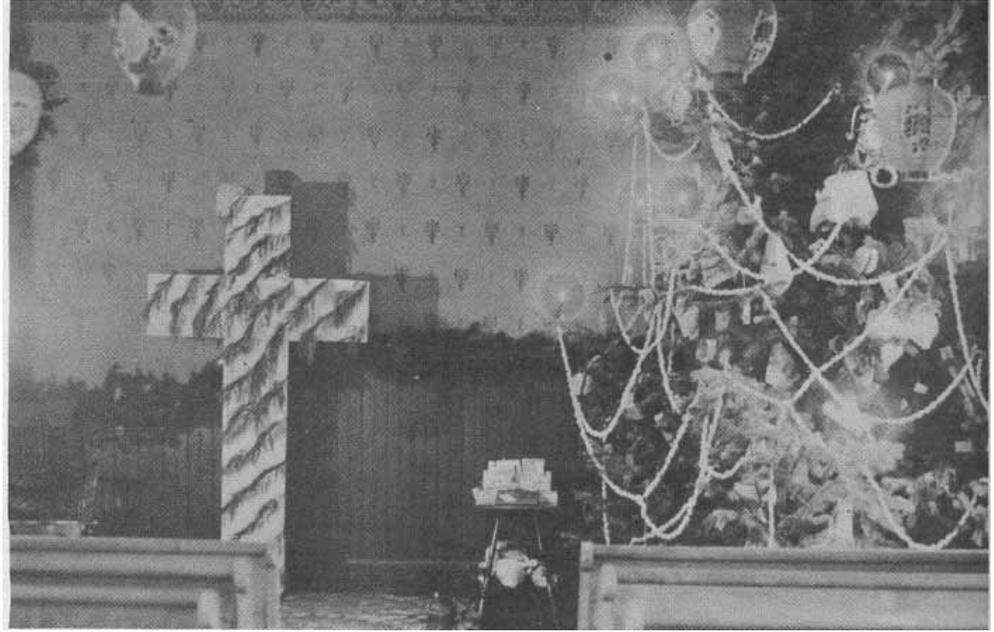


*Figure 1.3.19 -Members of both the Ruble and McIntosh families appear in front of the Golden school in 1908 (GCW archives). The reverend and miner, Mark Davis also held church in the school.*

- 1908 Died Bernice Ruble wrote that her uncle, Schuyler Ruble, passed away at his mother's place near Salem in July, 1908.<sup>74</sup> Schuyler's widow Abbie and their children may have gone to live near Ruth after Schuyler died, hence the 1909 Rogue River Courier's reference to her living in Portland.<sup>75</sup>
- 1908 Returned William N. Ruble and his family moved back to Golden for a couple of years, 1908-1910.<sup>76</sup> Their return from Ashland in December '08 coincides with Schuyler's death about six months before and was probably related. Schuyler's death left his brother William as the last Ruble patriarch to oversee the family mining operations. Although William and Ruth had nine children, the other Ruble sons are not mentioned in family accounts of the mining operations.<sup>77</sup> Yet, county clerk recordings show that Walter, Ann and Viola at least had some rights and interest in the Ruble claims. There is some evidence that Walter may indeed have profited from the mining.<sup>78</sup>

The Myra and Henry C. McIntosh family returned to Golden from Grants Pass in 1908, but it is not known exactly when they left, just that it was done to secure a better education for their children.<sup>79</sup> This coincides with Myra buying approximately 15 acres from her brother, Columbus Bennett, in Sec 19, T33S, R5W and also in lot 7.<sup>80</sup> McLane found that Myra also purchased her brother's store in 1908.<sup>81</sup>

- 1908      Appointed      Henry C. McIntosh became postmaster of Golden, July 8, 1908. His wife Myra served as the deputy postmaster from this time.<sup>82</sup> He was succeeded by his daughter Mabel in 1914.<sup>83</sup>
- 1909      Died              Grandma (Martha) Bennett passed away in Golden on January 8th at the age of 81. Her obituary in the Rogue River Courier said she “leaves behind a son, Columbus Bennett, and daughter, Mrs. C. McIntosh, both of Golden,” along with grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was interred at the Wolf Creek cemetery.<sup>84</sup>
- 1909      Arrived            John Kelley, of Hood River, bought land along Coyote Creek and had built a house there less than six weeks later per the newspaper accounts.<sup>85</sup> It was of milled lumber but there is no further description of the house.
- 1909      Growing        Bad spring weather, in the form of snow and ice, caused some area mines to shut down temporarily. T. E. Loban, Sr. went “to live on his mine on Upper Coyote Creek.”<sup>86</sup> Apart from these scarce mining reports, much of the news coverage in the Rogue River Courier during 1909 revolved around agriculture, perhaps reflecting its growing importance and the declining role of mining. For example, in Golden, Mr. Perkins was preparing to plant alfalfa.<sup>87</sup> John Kelley’s son and Earl Loban were leaving for Hood River for the berry season.<sup>88</sup> There were lots of Courier articles in the spring of 1909 about fruit cultivation, planting, gardening, and preparing of land for crops.
- 1909      Departed         “A farewell party in honor of Miss Bethel Ruble was given at the home of Hazel Perkins last Thursday evening. Miss Bethel has gone to spend the summer ...in Medford. She will attend high school at that place this year.”<sup>89</sup> Other citizens of Golden and Wolf Creek left as well, perhaps signaling the ongoing or coming “bust.” Mrs. H. Sheley of Golden moved to Waldo. The Stuarts of Wolf Creek moved to Montana. Abbie Ruble had already moved to Portland but returned to visit friends and settle her estate.<sup>90</sup>
- 1909      Mining            One of the Rogue River Courier’s cover stories on August 20th reported the rise of copper mining. “The mining world is fairly startled by the copper development which is going on this season in this part of the state...” There was nothing mentioned regarding Wolf or Coyote Creeks taking part in this new development.<sup>91</sup>
- 1909      News              In the Courier’s Wolf Creek update, there was apparently a “building boom” in Wolf Creek. E. H. Perkins sold beef in Grants Pass as well as did weekly vegetable sales in Glendale.<sup>92</sup> A December issue of the Courier mentions plans in Golden to put up a Christmas tree in their church, and Bernice Ruble’s memoir relates that that was the last time they celebrated with a tree there.



*Figure 1.3.20 -Inside the Golden church at Christmas, circa 1909 (GCW archives). Note the christmas tree, which was a tradition in the church as described by Bernice Ruble.*

1910      News      No Wolf Creek news updates were printed in the Rogue River Courier between Dec. 10, 1909 and Feb. 4, 1910. In general, there are not many updates from Wolf Creek compared to other mining districts between at least August, 1909 and July, 1910. This may be a sign of the lessening returns from mining or perhaps simply a factor of being a smaller community than Waldo, Murphy, Leland, Missouri Flat, Jerome Prairie, and the other communities with regular updates.

In February of 1910, the few updates from Golden were about the basket social to be held at the church and the sale of the Thompson mine on upper Coyote Creek.<sup>93</sup> In March, Mr. Newman received the contract to carry mail to Golden for the next four years.<sup>94</sup> Whereas Golden was suffering, Wolf Creek's community was considering a new school and church; it had six passenger trains pass through daily.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, two new wires on the postal telegraph were strung through Wolf Creek.<sup>96</sup>

1910      Operating      According to the 1910 Josephine County Directory, Columbus Bennett was still responsible for the general store and postmaster of Golden. The directory described Golden as "a mining settlement on Coyote Creek" with Grants Pass as the nearest banking point and Wolf Creek for shipping. It had a Christian Church, several stamp mills, and a "stage with mail to Wolf Creek daily." The businesses listed in Golden were the following: Clark & Son, quartz mill; Coyote Creek Mining & Milling Co; Hobson Mining Co; Jones Mining & Milling; Payne & Son, mining; Ruele [sic] Wm, mining; Sarah Belle Mining Co, quartz mill.<sup>97</sup>

- 1910      Assessed      A Josephine County tax assessment list appraised Abbie Ruble [widow of Schuyler] at \$1935, Mrs. Ruth Ruble at \$2325, and the William & Abbie Ruble Estate at \$6850, all in Wolf Creek.<sup>98</sup> These numbers look high compared to other residents that year, so they were doing well or had lots of taxable assets. There are no listings for Golden. Also, since neither Abbie nor Ruth were living in Wolf Creek, it must have simply been the nearest town of a size recognized by the county surveyor acceptable as an address for those claiming property in Golden.
- 1910      Moved      Many residents of Golden and Wolf Creek left in 1910. William N. Ruble moved his family for the last time, from Golden to Eugene. The memoirs of his daughter Bernice confirms a newspaper report from the Rogue River Courier: "W N Ruble, who is now practicing osteopathy in Eugene, made a flying trip to his home at Golden on business Monday."<sup>99</sup>
- Myra and H. C. McIntosh, two of Golden's co-founders, moved to Grants Pass and sold off property along Coyote Creek.<sup>100</sup> Namely, they sold 13.52 acres to Z. C. Brown (their son-in-law) for \$400, in lot 7 of Sec 19, T33S, R5W, "the same being all of said lot 7 except 8 acres in the SE part of said subdivision now owned by Henry Gross and W. J. Marvin."<sup>101</sup> Henry Gross was also to move away around this time, to Glendale.<sup>102</sup> T. E. Loban, a miner who had lived and worked on upper Coyote Creek, bought a lot and house in Wolf Creek.<sup>103</sup>
- At least one person was moving TO Golden in 1910 -- Ruby Longdo was contracted to teach at the Golden school.<sup>104</sup>
- 1910      Burned      A large forest fire threatened the residential section of Golden along with other parts of the surrounding area.<sup>105</sup> Issues of the Glendale News and the Courier after this date do not mention the final damage tally.
- 1910      Leading      Fruit production was growing and had by then taken over as the economy leader for Josephine County from mining and lumbering. The county directory of 1910 boasts "...today the growing of fancy fruit of all kinds easily leads; during the past year upwards of 4000 acres have been planted to apples, pears and peaches," plus 1400 acres of grapes.<sup>106</sup> The Ruble orchard at Golden reportedly had a good crop of pears, apples and prunes this year.<sup>107</sup>
- 1910      Mining      While the county directory for 1910 claimed a renewed interest in mining had occurred in Josephine County, the type of mining had become that of larger mining companies going after deep lodes or reworking old tailings. "At the present time mining for gold and copper is receiving much more attention than even in the past, as depth is obtained, the values are increasing, many recent discoveries are being fully developed and equipped; placer mining has been carried on extensively since the early fifties and today the hydraulics are tearing down the enormous deposits of old channel gravels and produce upwards of \$250,000 annually."<sup>108</sup> *(continued on next page)*

## 1910 Mining

*(continued from previous page)* There is no evidence yet discovered that Coyote Creek had deep lode mines or that any of the mines there became large operations like the nearby Greenback. Golden's miners may have been experiencing reduced returns by this time.

However, in February, W.D. and O.C. McIntosh were adding a giant to their "well-equipped mine on Upper Coyote Creek"<sup>109</sup> and by August were "again making preparation for the Winter's run on the Ruble Hydraulic Placers."<sup>110</sup> Also, in March, "U[ri]as] Miller (father of Lorenz Miller and father-in-law of Mark Davis) is getting some very fine prospects on the new mine he is opening on his place on Coyote Creek."<sup>111</sup> So, mining was still being done in the Golden area.



*Figure 1.3.21 - Pearl Sams, one of Golden's schoolteachers and Ethel Smith McIntosh (standing) pan for gold on Coyote Creek in the hydraulic mining scar near the settlement, circa 1910 (GCW archives). Note the flume and the exposed bedrock.*

- 1911 Built Wolf Creek's new brick schoolhouse was nearly complete.<sup>112</sup>
- 1911 Created The Oregon State Legislature formed a mines bureau; H. Lawrie, president.<sup>113</sup>
- 1911-12 Residing William N. Ruble worked as a mechano therapist at the First National Bank and resided at 730 Patterson Street in Eugene. Bernice E. Ruble lived at the same address.<sup>114</sup> The Bennett/McIntosh clan were mostly gone from Coyote Creek within the next couple of years, although Harold McIntosh returned (or never left) and continued mining. Ollie McIntosh also may have remained longer than his relatives. According to McLane, Columbus Bennett eventually moved to Grants Pass but it is not clear when he sold off his last properties along Coyote Creek.<sup>115</sup>
- 1912 Advertised In late 1911, Abbie Ruble Bishop, widow of Schuyler, published her intention to sell off her minor childrens' mining claim interests and rights, with the sale to start on or after January 1912. Included in the sale was the William Ruble Placer Mine (less 2.5 acres of Sec 24, T33S, R6W), "mineral lots 37 & 38 in Sec. 19/20/29/30, T33S, R5W, comprising roughly 275 acres."<sup>116</sup> It is not known who bought these rights.
- 1913 Leading Josephine County led Oregon for placer gold mining output for the year 1913 (state's total: \$1,393,322). This was an increase over the 1912 total of \$770,041, and that was in turn an increase over 1911. Oregon had 100 hydraulic mines (counted as part of 160 placer mines). The increase of gold production between 1912 and 1913 was accredited to deep mines in Baker County (50 or 60 operating in state).<sup>117</sup>
- 1913 Sold There are conflicting dates given by various sources for when the Ruble heirs sold off their mining and townsite property. A Ruble descendant claims his forebears sold to the Forsyths in 1911, who then mined around Golden until 1950 [sic, 1949].<sup>118</sup> Unfortunately, the Ruble-Forsyth property transaction does not show up in the county clerk's records until 1913.<sup>119</sup> This was not the last of the Ruble property, however.
- 1913 Declining "A railroad depot in Wolf Creek was one of the causes of the decline of Golden. Activity shifted to the town to the west, and Golden started dying in 1913."<sup>120</sup>

## Section 1.3 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Arman, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>3</sup> McLane, p. 285.

<sup>4</sup> In 1878, Walter turned 23 years of age, William N. turned 20, and Schuyler 13. More information on the other Ruble family members can be obtained from a collection of Ruble family memoirs. A copy is available at the Oregon Historical Society as Westward Ho!: Compilation of the history of the Ruble family, compiled by Charity Zoe Flook, Mollie Clark Lilly, David R. Ruble, and Russell Rose. [n.p.], 1935. Also, Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>5</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, June 1, 1880: Population, vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 75.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 842.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 405.

<sup>8</sup> Arman, pp. 45-46.

<sup>9</sup> Scanned copies of original census sheets viewed at <http://www.ancestry.com/> (accessed 8/9/07).

<sup>10</sup> Arman, p. 46.

<sup>11</sup> Index to Mining Locations, Book 1 (see 2J/172 for full entry, Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>12</sup> General Index to Mining Locations (claims), Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>13</sup> McLane, p. 288.

<sup>14</sup> Grants Pass Courier, April 1885, vol. 1, #1, 3:2 – 3:4.

<sup>15</sup> Murphy, p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> Grants Pass Courier, 16 April 1886, 3:2.

<sup>17</sup> Rogue River Courier, 24 September 1886, 3:5-3:6.

<sup>18</sup> Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>19</sup> Polk's Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Co. Directory 1910, Josephine section, p. 195.

<sup>20</sup> Rogue River Courier, 2 September 1887, 3:3.

<sup>21</sup> Rogue River Courier, 22 August 1889, 2:3.

<sup>22</sup> Index to Mining Locations, Book 1 (see 5/380 for full entry, Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>23</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Report on the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1895), p. 36.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 652.

<sup>25</sup> Oregon Mining Journal, Special Midsummer Edition, pps. 40-41, c1890-1900. Photocopy from Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council's vertical files.

<sup>26</sup> Bernice Ruble, "Golden, Oregon and the Little White Church," (1950), later published in Julia and Friend's Golden Scrapbook (n.p., n.d.), no page numbers. Natural Resources Conservation District vertical files, Grants Pass.

<sup>27</sup> Arman, p. 46.

<sup>28</sup> Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>29</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>30</sup> Mining Deeds, Book 5 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass), p. 694.

<sup>31</sup> Rogue River Courier, 5 May 1892, 3:1.

<sup>32</sup> Arman, p. 46.

<sup>33</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>34</sup> W. P. Ely also appears in the third era of mining on Coyote Creek and buys part of the Ruble Placer Claims in 1914. See "Golden's Bust, 1914 – 1967." General Index to Mining Locations, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>35</sup> Recorded February 27, 1893; vol 15, p. 305. Photocopy of original document, from vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>36</sup> Filed and recorded May 16, 1896; vol 265, pp. 457-463. Photocopy of original record document, from vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>37</sup> McLane, pp. 286, 289.

<sup>38</sup> Kay Atwood, recorder, Josephine County Cultural and Historic Resources Survey, November 1983.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> McLane, pp. 286, 296.

<sup>41</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>42</sup> McLane, pp. 287, 298. Cites National Archives as data source.

<sup>43</sup> “Wolf Creek Items,” Rogue River Courier, 18 March 1897, 3:5.

<sup>44</sup> “Wolf Creek Items,” Rogue River Courier, 25 March 1897, 3:1.

<sup>45</sup> “Wolf Creek Items,” Rogue River Courier, 2 December 1897, 3:4.

<sup>46</sup> Rogue River Courier, 2 December 1897, 1:3.

<sup>47</sup> Murphy, p. 15.

<sup>48</sup> “Wolf Creek Items,” Rogue River Courier, 18 March 1897, 3:5.

<sup>49</sup> “Wolf Creek Items,” Rogue River Courier, 25 March 1897, 3:1.

<sup>50</sup> “Boxankles Bulletin,” Rogue River Courier, 7 January 1897, 3:2.

<sup>51</sup> Rogue River Courier, 9 December 1897, 2:6.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Rogue River Courier (Grants Pass), 2 December 1897, 1:3.

<sup>54</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>55</sup> McLane, p. 290.

<sup>56</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>57</sup> Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (see 4/178 for full entry, Josephine County Clerk’s Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>58</sup> Indirect Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk’s Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>59</sup> Murphy, p. 15.

<sup>60</sup> Norman Weis, Ghost Towns of the Northwest (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1971), pp. 64-65.

<sup>61</sup> Bennett then relinquished same property in Aug ‘04 to W. Love et al. Direct Index to Mining Locations, Book 1 (see 5/245, 5/442 for full entries, Josephine County Clerk’s Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>62</sup> McLane, p. 286.

<sup>63</sup> Rogue River Courier, 8 December 1904, 3:8.

<sup>64</sup>Arman, p. 47.

<sup>65</sup> Sibling's birthdates and places taken from sworn affidavit by Bethel Ruble, photocopy in Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council's files.

<sup>66</sup> Rogue River Courier, 8 December 1904, 3:8.

<sup>67</sup> McLane, p. 298.

<sup>68</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>69</sup> photocopied newspaper clipping, handwritten dates, probably Rogue River Courier or Glendale News, courtesy of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council's vertical files.

<sup>70</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>71</sup> Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council's vertical files on Golden; photocopied newspaper clipping, Glendale News? 9-28-1906 handwritten.

<sup>72</sup> Stovall, p. 143.

<sup>73</sup> Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council's vertical files on Golden; photocopied newspaper clipping, appears to be from Glendale News, 9-28-1906 handwritten.

<sup>74</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>75</sup> Rogue River Courier, 9 April 1909.

<sup>76</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>77</sup> Westward Ho!, p. 15.

<sup>78</sup> In the Polk Directories for Salem and Marion County, Walter H or W H Ruble was assessed a tax value of \$6705 in 1907-08 (p. 365) and \$7775 in 1911 (p. 499). These figures appear to be relatively high compared to others. His connection to the family mining is not documented apart from the receipt of a claim from his father in 1878, so the link is purely speculation. However, he does not appear in the directories until 1907-1908 and with a great deal of property or wealth.

<sup>79</sup> McLane, p. 289.

<sup>80</sup> Warranty Deed dated and filed March 1908, vol 30 Deeds, p. 210. Photocopy of typed record document, from vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>81</sup> McLane, p. 288.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 298. (Cites National Archives as source.)

<sup>84</sup> Rogue River Courier, 15 January 1909, 8:1.

<sup>85</sup> Rogue River Courier, 12 February & 26 March 1909.

<sup>86</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 2 April 1909, 23 July 1909.

<sup>87</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier 2 April 1909, 12:3.

<sup>88</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 28 May 1909, 6:3.

<sup>89</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 11 June 1909, 6:4.

<sup>90</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, April 2 & 9, 1909.

<sup>91</sup> “Properties to Be Worked,” Rogue River Courier, 20 August 1909, 1:5.

<sup>92</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 20 August 1909, 8:2-3.

<sup>93</sup> Rogue River Courier, 18 February 1910, 5:5.

<sup>94</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 4 March 1910, 6:4.

<sup>95</sup> Rogue River Courier, 19 August 1910, 6:2-3.

<sup>96</sup> Rogue River Courier, 22 April 1910, 6:1.

<sup>97</sup> Polk’s Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Co. Directory, 1910, p. 237.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>99</sup> Rogue River Courier, 22 April 1910, 6:1.

<sup>100</sup> “Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Coffman & baby of Golden were visiting their parents, Mr. & Mrs. H.C. McIntosh of Grants Pass.” Rogue River Courier, 18 February 1910, 5:5.

<sup>101</sup> Warranty Deed dated April 1910, filed May 14, 1910, vol 35 Deeds, p. 19. Photocopy of typed record document, from vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council. Note: Browns sold part of this lot 7 parcel to A. W. Zoellner for \$50 in October 1915 (Warranty Deed, vol 45 Deeds p. 222)

<sup>102</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 22 August 1910.

<sup>103</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 4 March 1910.

<sup>104</sup> “Wolf Creek News,” Rogue River Courier, 22 August 1910.

<sup>105</sup> The Glendale News, 26 August 1910, 3:3. “News from Golden” heading.

<sup>106</sup> Polk's Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Co. Directory, 1910; Josephine section, p. 195.

<sup>107</sup> The Glendale News, 26 August 1910, 3:3. "News from Golden" heading.

<sup>108</sup> Polk's Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Co. Directory, 1910; Josephine section, p. 195.

<sup>109</sup> Rogue River Courier, 4 February 1910.

<sup>110</sup> The Glendale News, 26 August 1910, 3:3. "News from Golden" heading. Also, Ruth Ruble sold at least part of the Ruble placer claims to her nephews, W. D. and O. C. McIntosh, since the transaction was recorded in September 1910. Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 2 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>111</sup> Rogue River Courier, 4 March 1910, 6:4.

<sup>112</sup> Rogue River Courier, 17 November 1911, 2:3.

<sup>113</sup> Sunday Oregonian (Portland), 29 March 1914, sec 4, p. 12.

<sup>114</sup> Polk's Eugene and Lane Co. Directory 1911, p. 230. The next year, William N. Ruble worked as a physician at the Willamette Naturopathic Sanitarium and resided at 308 E. 15<sup>th</sup> in Eugene, Oregon; his daughter Bernice is also listed as residing at this address. Polk's Eugene and Lane Co. Directory 1912, p. 199.

<sup>115</sup> McLane, p. 288.

<sup>116</sup> Notice of Sale, Rogue River Courier (Grants Pass), 5 January 1912, 7:2.

<sup>117</sup> Oregonian (Portland), 8 January 1914, 13:2.

<sup>118</sup> Golden Times, August 2006, a newsletter from Golden Coyote Wetlands, Inc. "Golden Memories" an interview with Web Ruble Jr., Fairview, OR.

<sup>119</sup> Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 2 (see 43/463, 465, 474; Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>120</sup> "Owner of Golden 'Always Wanted to Be Mayor,'" Daily Courier (Grants Pass), 25 November 1978, p. B3, Becky Nelson.

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## History Section 1.4: A Chronological History of Golden's Bust Era 1914 - 1967



*Figure 1.4.1 -Looking northeast at Golden with the Bennett's store and lean to at right, the Golden Shed or granary in the middle and the blacksmith shop at right, circa 1925 (GCW archives). Note the edge of the Ruble's barn on the far left of the photograph.*

DATE	ACTION	GOLDEN'S BUST ERA 1914 - 1967
1914	Transferred	<p>The beginning of this period has been placed at 1914 for the disposal of what may have been the last remaining Ruble owned property along Coyote Creek. Ruth Ruble transferred ownership to W. P. Ely in two separate transactions, a warranty deed and a quit claim deed, which were recorded in February of 1914.<sup>1</sup> (Note: Ruth Ruble passed away in 1912 per family history, so it may have been her estate's and not her personal transaction.) Harold and Bethel (Ruble) McIntosh had run the Golden store after his mother sold it to him in 1910, but they moved to Wolf Creek and opened a new store around 1914.<sup>2</sup> It appears he fluctuated between the two communities as he made mining claims in the middle part of the 20th century (see next period chronology) in the Golden area.</p>
1914	Producing	<p>Wolf Creek District was hailed as one of the best placer districts, along with Sucker Creek, Althouse, Grave Creek, and Kerby. A dredging machine was hauled from Grants Pass to Althouse with 30 teams and was capable of plowing through gravel from 14-40' deep.<sup>3</sup> There was a dredge mine operation at Laurel Camp, east of Wolf Creek, at one point but to our knowledge no dredging was done at Golden.</p>

1914	Died	Henry Gross, the former proprietor of the Golden Hotel and prominent Golden resident, passed away. <sup>4</sup> He had moved away from Golden in 1910.
1915	Purchased	A. W. Zoellner bought land from the Browns as well as Ollie & Ethel McIntosh (husband and wife). The respective property transactions included a total of about 3.5 acres in Section 19, T33S, R5W, “located near Golden.” <sup>5</sup>
1915-17	Taught	Mrs. Ethel (McCallister) Loller taught an average of six pupils at the Golden School. <sup>6</sup> Mrs. Harry Stumbo taught the same number the following year. Enrollment had reached at least thirty-six prior to 1915. <sup>7</sup>
1916	Died	His daughter writes that William N. Ruble “passed away rather suddenly at a gold placer mine at Yellowjacket, Idaho, in April 1916 -- where he had gone to help install a Ruble Gravel Elevator.” <sup>8</sup> This is upheld by the 1918 Eugene City Directory, which lists Sarah Ruble as the widow of Wm. N. Webster and Willis Ruble were both students residing with their mother and sister, Bernice. <sup>9</sup>
1917-22	Dropped	The Golden School’s attendance went from eight or nine students in 1917-19 to only four or five during 1919-22. <sup>10</sup>
1920	Closed	Post office at Golden closed on March 20th and moved to Wolf Creek on March 31st. A. W. Zoellner was the last postmaster in Golden, from 1919. Earl Loban served before Zoellner as he was appointed March 1916. <sup>11</sup>
1925	Revived	“F. C. Butler of Los Angeles recently took over the Horseshoe mine on Coyote Creek... owned by J. H. Loban, and during the past few days has opened up a rich body of high-grade gold ore.” The Greenback reopened under new ownership, “now running 5 stamp mills.” A new processing plant opened in Grants Pass (Metals Extraction and Refining Company, 50-ton per day capacity) to capture gold left in tailings and in black sand. <sup>12</sup>
1925	Mining	The Bratton brothers were developing tunnels in their Gold Wonder mine on Coyote Creek, with 900’ excavated so far. The ledge was 57’ wide and highly promising. Mr. Butler of the Horseshoe mine “brought in 48 ounces of gold ore” which showed merit for further investment and development. <sup>13</sup>
1925	Sold	A. W. Zoellner sold 2 parcels of lot 7, Sec 19 plus 1/4 interest in an irrigation ditch/water right on “Jack Robinson Gulch”, tributary of Cayote (sic) Creek, for \$1 to James Zoellner. Incidentally, the M. Davis who notarized this transaction was a Justice of the Peace in Wolf Creek. It could have possibly been Mel Davis or his father, Mark Davis. <sup>14</sup>
1928	Quit claim	Columbus Bennett granted approximately 10 acres of lot 7, Sec 19 to James Zoellner for \$1. The tract was due north of part of the William Ruble Mining Claim 38. The Browns and Myra McIntosh also quit claimed this tract to James Zoellner for \$1 each. <sup>15</sup> This property was due west of Golden along Coyote Creek and likely outside of the current park boundary, but it shows that the Browns, Columbus and Myra still owned or appeared to own land in Golden.
1931	Died	Lorenz Miller, a resident and miner of Coyote Creek who may have had ties to building the Golden School, passed away. His house still stands approximately ½ mile west of Golden. <sup>16</sup>

- 1933-34 Mining The U.S. moved away from the gold standard, thereby increasing the price of gold from \$20 to \$35/oz. This brought on a new gold rush in Josephine County, and the third mining “boom” on Coyote Creek. With the hard economics of the Depression-era, “sniping” for gold was an appealing solution to unemployment.<sup>17</sup> Webber reports that the price of gold increased from \$20 to \$25 in 1933, and in 1934 it went up again, to \$35/oz.<sup>18</sup> It is claimed that 750 gold pans sold in a two month period in Grants Pass and that many of the streams in Josephine County were sites of Depression mining.<sup>19</sup>
- c1933 Sniped Dorothy Bogue and her husband moved into a cabin along Coyote Creek “temporarily” (16 years), sniping for gold (panning/digging). They were not alone, but it is not clear from historical records how many other “snipers” there may have been around the Golden area. Mr. and Mrs. Bogue’s residency on Coyote Creek has no known year span, but she refers to living there during the Depression-era.<sup>20</sup>
- 1938 Died Columbus Bennett passed away in Grants Pass.<sup>21</sup>
- 1942 Ordered Webber states that, with the government’s price increase for gold in 1934, “the industry flourished.” He goes on to state that gold production in Oregon remained high from then until 1942, when the War Production Board Order L-208 brought gold mining almost to a standstill and encouraged extractive operations to produce materials useful for the war effort.<sup>22</sup>
- 1947 Shifted Although lumbering and mining were counted as the principal industries for Josephine County this year, gold was no longer the metal being sought. According to the Grants Pass city directory for 1947, “The mining of gold which brought the first settlers into the County about 1856 continued uninterruptedly until halted by the start of World War II. Exploration work has brought to light deposits of numerous other nonprecious metals.” Silver, platinum, copper, chromium, and limestone (for paper rock and cement) were among the sought after materials. “During the period of World War II the mines of the County made an important war contribution in the form of chromium ore, paper rock and limestone in various forms.”<sup>23</sup> Under the county listings, there are no names or addresses for Golden.
- 1948 Mining In the list of Active Mining Operations, M. H. Davis’ Blue Channel Placer in Sec 19, T33S, R5W appears. Despite the location of his mine, he is listed in Wolf Creek, not Golden; he was hydraulically mining for gold. Also listed are the Coyote Mine of Wolf Creek (as “developing” in Sec 22, T33S, R5W); the hydraulic Hole-in-the-ground Placer of L.O. Krewson of Wolf Creek (in the NW 1/4 Sec 16, T33S, R5W), producing gold; the McIntosh Placer, run by Harold McIntosh of Wolf Creek, producing gold (in Sec 20, T33S, R5W); the Schleigh Placer, owned by W. C. Schleigh of Wolf Creek, producing gold (in Sec 19, T33S, 5W); and 19 others in Josephine Co. but in other townships.<sup>24</sup>

- 1949 Purchased John and Anna Porter, husband and wife, bought the former Ruble property from Lydia Forsyth. The property, specifically, included the core of the townsite, 900' long (west from Robinson's Gulch) and 300' wide (approximately north from Coyote Creek Road). Z. C. Brown owned the property due north of this plot. Ms. Forsyth also sold them part of the Ruth Ruble Mining Claim # 39 in Sections 21 & 28. John Porter was the owner of the Wolf Creek Inn then.<sup>25</sup> McLane writes that Porter tried in vain to revive Golden.<sup>26</sup> This claim is echoed in a Courier article in November of 1978. "In 1950 the people of the [Golden] community restored the little church and again held meetings until the attendance gradually fell away." The reopening of the Golden church is attributed to Rev. Newton A. Carman. But, the lack of jobs forced many residents to move out of the area, and the church again closed.<sup>27</sup>
- c1950s Residing After their parents' deaths, orphaned siblings took up residence in the William N. Ruble House, which was already considered a "shack."<sup>28</sup> It would be logical to conclude that the Porters were living in Wolf Creek, not Golden. Prior to the orphans, local lore says that the Forsyths lived in the William N. Ruble house. Although Lydia Forsyth sold the property on which the house sits to the Porters, it is not known for sure if the Forsyths actually inhabited the house and if so, for how long and what changes they may have made to it.
- 1952 Granted John Porter granted a right of way to the California Oregon Power Company (SE 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Sec 19, plus part of Sec 28, both T 33 S, R 5 W).<sup>29</sup>



*Figure 1.4.2 - Looking northwest at the William N. Ruble house circa 1950 (GCW archives). Note the rear of the house is still intact. This photograph was taken by the orphans who lived in this house during the 1950s. The fact the house was inhabited during this period probably explains why it is still standing.*

c1950s Residing



*Figure 1.4.3 - Looking north at the William N. Ruble house circa 1950 (GCW archives). Note the large fir in the front yard which appeared in earlier photos. This photograph was taken by the orphans who lived in this house during the 1950s.*

c1950s Residing



*Figure 1.4.4 - Looking west down Coyote Creek Road past the William N. Ruble house circa 1950 (GCW archives). Note the road is still unpaved, and two orchard trees are on the fence line. This photograph was taken near the entrance to the church by the orphans who lived in the Ruble house during the 1950s.*

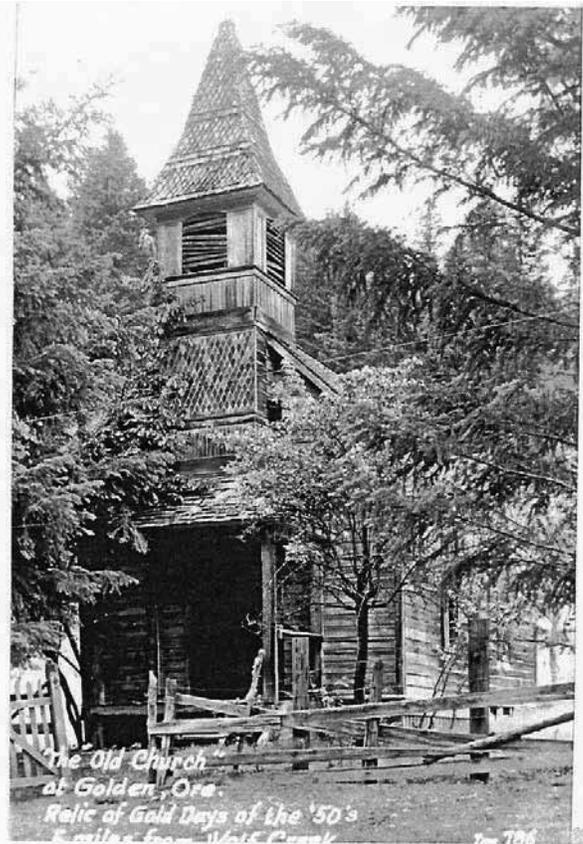


Figure 1.4.5 - Looking north at the Golden church circa 1925 on the left and circa 1950 on the right (GCW archives). Note the firs on either side of the church in the 1925 photo and the same fir limbed away from the church in the 1950 photo. Also, the small tree that appears in front of the church in the 1925 photo appears again on the right edge of the 1950 photo. The same tree is still standing today, but it does not appear to be part of the Ruble's orchard.

1958	Patented	Seven placer and/or lode claims were patented by Harold McIntosh in Sec 20, T33S, R5W. Some of his claims, however, dated back to at least 1933, indicating his mining activity spanned this period. The claims included several along Robinson's Gulch or accessible by that road. <sup>30</sup>
1964-67	Ended	According to McLane, Joe Inman and Hap Fitzpatrick, grandson of Joe Dysert, were the last hydraulic miners on Coyote Creek, operating from 1958 – 1964. Their operations were closed down for environmental, specifically water quality, concerns. <sup>31</sup> However, mining of a different sort occurred through the 1990s, along with permit-stipulated environmental mitigation. Inman and Fitzpatrick retained ownership of this land through 1967.

## Section 1.4 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 2 (see 43/463, 465 for full entries, Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>2</sup> McLane, p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> Sunday Oregonian (Portland), 29 March 1914, sec. 4, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Photocopy of acknowledgement by Ollie McIntosh to The Public, filed Feb 20, 1928, before a notary public, James Martin. From the vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>5</sup> Warranty Deed, dated and filed Sept. 1915, vol 16 Deeds, p. 114. Photocopy of original document in the vertical files of the Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Loller is also credited with helping to consolidate the Golden school into the Wolf Creek district. Arman, p. 46.

<sup>7</sup> Photocopied excerpt from "School Memories," a self-published scrapbook and history of schools in Josephine County. Courtesy of the Josephine County Historical Society, Grants Pass, no page numbers.

<sup>8</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>9</sup> Polk's Eugene City Directory, 1918 (R. L. Polk & Co.), p. 64.

<sup>10</sup> "School Memories."

<sup>11</sup> McLane, p. 298.

<sup>12</sup> "Big Gold Mining Revival is Being Staged in Southwestern Oregon," Salt Lake Mining Review, 30 June 1925 p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> "Southwestern Oregon Mining News: Rich Gold Strikes Still Being Made," Salt Lake Mining Review, 15 August 1925 p. 23.

<sup>14</sup> Warranty Deed, dated May 1925, filed July 1925, vol 60 Deeds, p. 279. Photocopy of original document in the vertical files of the Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>15</sup> Quit Claim Deed, dated and filed February 1928, vol (blank). Photocopy of original document in the vertical files of the Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>16</sup> Josephine County Cultural and Historic Resource Survey, recorded by Kay Atwood, 1983.

<sup>17</sup> Sutton, p. 100.

<sup>18</sup> Bert Webber, ed., Gold Mining in Oregon (Medford, OR: Webb Research Group Publishers, 1995), p. 27.

<sup>19</sup> Arman, p. 47.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> obituary clipped from unknown newspaper with handwritten date of 1938. From vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council. McLane also references this event and gives the date and place, p. 288.

<sup>22</sup> Webber, pp. 5, 27.

<sup>23</sup> Salisbury's Grants Pass City Directory including Josephine County (Eugene: T. W. Salisbury & Co., 1947), vol. 2, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> Sixth Biennial Report of the State Dept. of Geology and Mineral Industries of the State of Oregon, July 1, 1946 to July 1, 1948, Bulletin No. 38. Submitted to governor and 45th Legislative Assembly October 1, 1948. pp. 36-41.

<sup>25</sup> Deeds, vol 156, pp. 193-195, Josephine County Clerk, Grants Pass.

<sup>26</sup> McLane, p. 298.

<sup>27</sup> Daily Courier (Grants Pass), 25 November 1978, B3, Becky Nelson.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Amy Wilson, Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council, Grants Pass, Oregon, 9 August 2007.

<sup>29</sup> Photocopy of the official document, vol 164, p. 435, from the vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>30</sup> Patent issued April 22, 1958. Photocopy of the official document, from the vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>31</sup> McLane, p. 295.

## History Section 1.5: A Chronological History of Golden's End of Mining Era 1968 - Present



Figure 1.5.1 - Looking northeast at Golden with the Bennett's store and lean to at right, and the Golden Shed or granary on the left in 2007 (author's collection). Note the changes to the store front and the window in the lean to. Compare to the historic photo at the beginning of Section 1.4.

DATE	ACTION	GOLDEN'S END OF MINING ERA 1968 - PRESENT
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1968	Sold	<p>The beginning of this period is defined by the transition of the mining site from private to public ownership. The Inmans and J. E. Fitzpatrick sold their property to Josephine County for \$16,000, property which included a portion of the Wm Ruble Mining Claim in Sec 24 of R6W, the Jacobs/Kelly Claim 37, and a portion of the Wm Ruble Mining Claim 38 in Secs 19, 20, 29, and 30 in R5W. The third portion mentioned "being a portion of the townsite of Golden."<sup>1</sup> So, Josephine County has owned at least part of Golden since 1968.</p>
1970s	Built	<p>According to a long time area resident who is familiar with Golden, the wooden stage at the southeast corner of the main settlement site dates to the 1970s; an exact construction year has not been found.<sup>2</sup></p>

- 1972      Filmed      The T.V. series “Gunsmoke” filmed an episode in Golden and installed fake wooden gravemarkers on both the west and east sides of the church. Later owner of Golden, Roger Ramsey, found the removed wooden markers in one of the outbuildings and replaced a few of them on the east side of the church as interpretation aids to visitors on the building’s role in Hollywood history.<sup>3</sup> As of 2007, the graveyard now has some real gravemarkers in it, but it is not known whether they mark burials or simply sit as memorials to people related to Golden’s history.



*Figure 1.5.2 -Looking northwest at the “grave yard” on the east side of the church, 2007 (authors collection). Today, the real head stones of Marion Ellis, Webster Ruble and Joseph Fitzpatrick are in the plot, however, none of these men are buried here.*

- 1973      Reopened      “The Cornwells opened the general store as an antique shop for about six months.”<sup>4</sup>
- 1977      Bought      Harry Aldrich bought Golden in November of 1977. He moved there in March of 1978, into the trailer previously owned and installed by the Cornwells. Aldrich hoped to rent the church for weddings, meetings, funerals and other events.<sup>5</sup> The Cornwells may have been the prior owners of Golden, not just the general store, but this is not clearly understood.
- 1978      Refurbished      Aldrich tore down the church’s tattered wallpaper and replaced it with burlap. He put peckerwood cedar on the wall at the front of the church.<sup>6</sup>

1970s Refurbished



*Figure 1.5.3 -Looking northwest at the Bennett's store in 2007 (author's collection). It is probable that Harry Aldrich replaced the front porch during the time he owned the settlement. Note the similarities in construction between the new porch and the stage below that also appeared during this era.*

1970s Refurbished



*Figure 1.5.4 -Looking northwest at the stage in 2007 (author's collection) The stage appeared during this era, and can probably be attributed to Harry Aldrich. Note the same cedar shake siding and round railings on the stage and the new store front above.*

1988	Granted	<p>Troxler and Freeman granted an easement to Donald Stiffler, Pauline Dandridge, Lynne Wegner, Douglas Smith for ingress and egress on road from county road N/NE along Robinson's Gulch, or Jack's Creek, in Sec 19 and 20 of T 33 S, R5W. In separate documents of the same period, Harry Aldrich as well as the Redwood Empire Products Assoc. granted the same access/easement to the same individuals, notarized in Washington and California, respectively, in Jan 1988.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>The significance of these easements is they show that Aldrich, Redwood Empire Products Assoc., Troxler and Freeman must have been property owners along the Robinson Gulch road. Oddly enough, the Cornwells granted an easement to the same group of people on the same access road one year earlier, although it appears they had sold their property holdings in Golden to Harry Aldrich in 1977.<sup>8</sup> It is not clear why the Cornwells were still asked for such an easement, but perhaps they still owned some of the site. Furthermore, since Aldrich's easement granting was notarized in Washington in 1988, this may indicate that he was no longer living in Golden or only there part-time.</p>
1989	Bought	<p>Roger Ramsey bought the Golden settlement site.<sup>9</sup></p>
1990s	Revived	<p>Roger Ramsey, great-grandson of Joe Dysert, and his wife Lynn attempted to restore the buildings of Golden.<sup>10</sup> Mr. Ramsey held weekend tours of the site upon request and generally tried to revive interest in the town and its history.<sup>11</sup> A few days after Mr. Ramsey moved away from Golden and left the site without a resident caretaker, the church bell was stolen.<sup>12</sup></p>
1990-93	Mined	<p>Jack Smith, of Greenstone Contractors, Inc., mined along Coyote Creek near the townsite of Golden from January 1990 – September 1993 (and possibly for a longer span) for gold and other precious metals. This mining was conducted under a lease from Josephine County and included a re-forestation clause to be activated at the cessation of his operations. The specific mining areas were TL 800, 33-5-19 and TL 700, 33-6-24.<sup>13</sup> Since Josephine County bought the William Ruble Mining Claim in 1968 from Inman and Fitzpatrick, along with part of the townsite of Golden, it is unclear if they allowed others to mine this property before Mr. Smith.</p>
1992	Formed	<p>Golden Coyote Wetlands formed out of the desire to enlarge the environmental mitigation clause of Mr. Smith's mining lease. After realizing that the area was better suited to wetland creation than reforestation, he and others proceeded to form this non-profit organization to oversee the design and development of the site as wetland habitat with additional goals of minimal impact public recreation and environmental education. Funding for the Master Plan was obtained in 1995 and the site design was chosen in 1996.<sup>14</sup></p>

- 2002 Nominated The Golden Historic District was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>15</sup>
- 2005 Restored The church received a new foundation and a bit of shoring under the direction of Historic Consultant George Kramer and engineer Joel Woodward.<sup>16</sup> The Golden settlement site was purchased by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and a condition assessment was completed by Fred Walters and Shannon Bell in 2005.

## Section 1.5 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Witnessed Feb 9, 1968 in vol 257, p. 968. Photocopy of the official document, from the vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Neil Thuresson, Wolf Creek, Oregon, 11 September 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Daily Courier (Grants Pass), 7 September 1976, C1, Pat Biencourt. Also, email from Roger Ramsey, 9 September 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Daily Courier, 25 November 1978, B3, Becky Nelson.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> First entry witnessed Jan 4, 1988, Josephine County Title Co. Photocopies of original record documents, from vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>8</sup> Witnessed Dec 23, 1987; Josephine County Title Co. Photocopy of original record document, from vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>9</sup> Email from Roger Ramsey, 13 September 2007.

<sup>10</sup> McLane, p. 298.

<sup>11</sup> Email from Roger Ramsey, 9 September 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Master Plan & Final Report of Golden Coyote Wetlands, Josephine County, Oregon. Prepared by T. J. Bossard, Inc. for the GCW Board of Directors, June 1997, Section II: History of the Project.

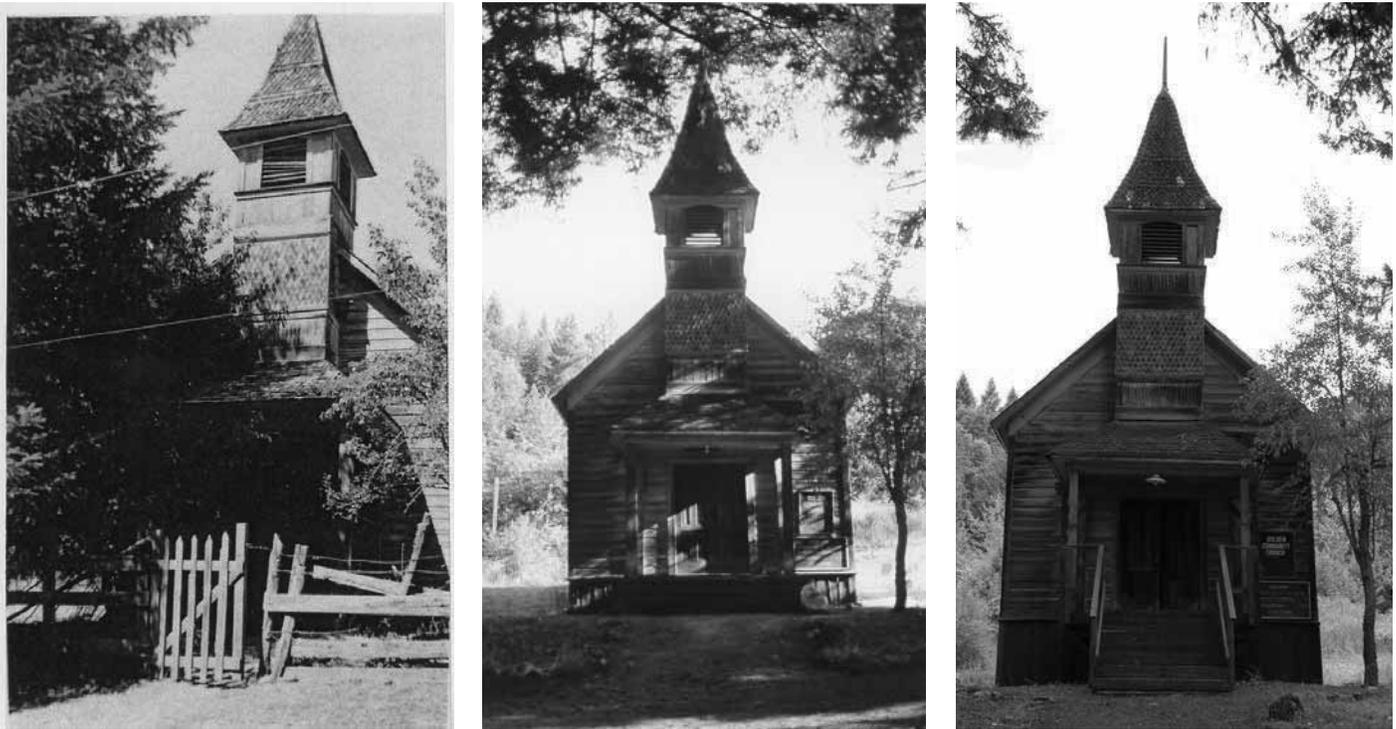
<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> National Register Nomination form, Golden Historic District. Prepared by S. Adams-Jacobs.

<sup>16</sup> Golden Times, August 2006, a newsletter from Golden Coyote Wetlands, Inc.

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## *History Section 1.6: A History of Golden, Oregon*



*Figure 1.6.1 -Three views of the church: circa 1940 (left, GCW archives), circa 1990 (center, GCW archives) and 2007 with new porch (right, author's collection)*

### Introduction

Golden is the only mining community that has an associated mining landscape which is owned and managed by Oregon State Parks. As such, its interpretation is an important opportunity in public education regarding Oregon's mining history in general. This narrative presents historic facts and trends that have been discovered to date regarding the evolution of mining on Coyote Creek, how Golden compares to other mining settlements, how Golden itself evolved and why it became a ghost town. This chronological story of Golden and Coyote Creek is also presented against a very general account of southern Oregon's development. Golden's buildings are discussed in a separate section, where the significance of single wall, or box, construction is explored in greater detail.

The history of Golden has been divided into four periods: 1850s-1877, 1878-1913, 1914-1967, and 1968-2006. These periods have been determined primarily by shifts in the site's ownership and use, but they closely reflect changes in mining technology and population as well. Across these artificial divisions, three different boom cycles can be observed. The first predates the settlement of Golden and the last falls after its principal demise. It is the middle boom cycle that brought about the founding of Golden and which anchors the primary period of significance, 1878-1913. For each period, only the main events and trends are mentioned; for a more detailed history, please see the period chronologies in this report.

## Historic Periods

### Early History<sup>1</sup>, 1850s – 1877

After the discovery of gold in southern Oregon in the mid nineteenth century, that area of the state experienced an increased, if inconsistent, rate of settlement. “In 1851 prospectors [from the Willamette Valley] bound for California thought to look for gold in the streams along the way, and southern Oregon, too, became Gold Rush country.”<sup>2</sup> Josephine County was established in 1856. Jackson County had been created in 1852, followed by Coos County in 1853. The early 1850s population boom is generally credited with their creation, and the population boom had strong links to the discovery of gold.<sup>3</sup>

Local accounts relate that placer mining on Coyote Creek began in this decade with pans and sluice boxes, but there is little evidence to verify this or estimate how much mining activity there was at that time.

The timber industry was also being developed to meet the needs of the influx of settlers and miners. While there were certainly log cabins built, milled lumber was available and meant less time investment by the builder. Small, portable sawmills existed in southern Oregon during this time period. Francis Reinhart’s pioneer diary records that Knott had a sawmill in Canyonville (north of Wolf Creek) in 1852.<sup>4</sup> Besides the sawmills, some men sawed lumber by hand with partners. Late in 1859, Reinhart had a whipsaw operating on contract in the Wolf Creek area. He wrote that he could make more money at sawing lumber than at mining, plus he would have the comfort of working “under shelter of a tree and shed... [not] in the cold water.” The price was high compared to urbanizing areas like Kerbyville or Grants Pass, where milled lumber could be had for 2 or 3 cents per foot.<sup>5</sup> Reinhart, meanwhile, charged up to 10 cents per foot.<sup>6</sup> Miners ordered lumber from him to build their sluices; no mention is made of them building houses with this lumber, but it is possible. McLane writes that there were 30 cabins on the upper reaches of Coyote Creek by 1860 but this number could not be confirmed.<sup>7</sup>

By the late 1850s, mining was likely carried out by not only North Americans but immigrants from other countries joining the gold rush. According to McConnell, “By 1857 there were several hundred [Chinese miners] working the alluvial deposits of the gold-bearing streams of Jackson and Josephine counties.”<sup>8</sup> The *Weekly Oregonian* published a complaint by a resident of Josephine County about the number of Chinese in the county (1,000-1,200 estimated), further protesting that “They are buying out American miners, paying big prices for their claims.”<sup>9</sup> This statement in itself discredits the common notion that Chinese miners squatted on the abandoned claims of miners who left for bonanzas elsewhere. The local legend of there being as many as 500 Chinese miners on Coyote Creek at one point also is questionable, but there is not much solid census evidence either way. Considering the anti-Chinese sentiment of that time, it is understandable why they might have wished to avoid official notice such as census counts. Also, they were made to pay an extra tax under an 1857 Oregon state law.<sup>10</sup> The following year, the “Chinamen tax” was extended to not just those who were mining but engaged in any sort of commerce and the monthly tax amount doubled.<sup>11</sup>

Oregon's Constitution of 1857 prevented any Chinese from owning real estate (including mining claims) or even working any mining claim unless they were born in Oregon before that day.<sup>12</sup> As shown in the recorded mining claims, however, Chinese miners prevailed and did purchase and/or work mining claims in Josephine County after the state constitution was accepted.<sup>13</sup> These miners, although suffering racial and economic prejudice, did engage in formal business transactions and were recognized as the rightful owners of real estate.

The fact that the U.S. Census for 1860 showed an immense growth in Chinese immigration may be coincidental with the gold rush, but some scholars believe there is a causal link. "The movement of the Chinese into Oregon can be traced to the discovery of gold in southwestern Oregon in 1851."<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the Chinese arrived in southwestern Oregon mostly by migrating north from California.<sup>15</sup> From census reports, it can be seen that Chinese immigration went from a total of 46 individuals over the period 1820-50 to 41,397 during 1851-60, the gold rush years on the west coast.<sup>16</sup> During this same decade, the numbers of immigrants to the U.S. from the Azores (Portugese islands), Scotland, Ireland, England, Germany, and Switzerland, among others, also showed a massive increase.<sup>17</sup> The numbers of immigrants in Oregon at that time from specific countries are as follows: 425 China, 1266 Ireland, 663 British America, 55 Australia, 690 England, 198 France, 1078 Germany (total of all German states combined), 217 Scotland, and less than 75 each from various other countries.<sup>18</sup> Whether or not these were also tied to the mining boom in the western United States has not been determined.

Thus, Chinese miners had a key role despite the social and legislative barriers put up against them. According to McLane, the height of the Chinese presence on Coyote Creek came during the years 1862-1867.<sup>19</sup> This period could also be considered the first "boom" in mining for Coyote Creek. Any earlier mining is not documented and thus cannot be compared.

Despite the bonanzas in eastern Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia in the 1860s, mining did continue in southern Oregon. The first hydraulic giant there was supposedly that of Jack Layton's mine on the Applegate River in 1862, but "...in a few years this region contained the largest number of hydraulic mines of any section of similar area in America."<sup>20</sup> Pat O'Shea was using a hydraulic giant on Coyote Creek in the 1870s, prior to the arrival of William Ruble.<sup>21</sup> But, perhaps due to the expense in setting up hydraulic operations, especially on a creek with less water flow than the Rogue or Applegate Rivers and more isolated from lumber supply posts, this type of mining did not blossom during this period for the Coyote Creek mines. Hydraulic giants required a constant water flow, typically brought down from the mountains via ditches and flumes, and the mining season stopped when the water ran out. The dry season was then used for clean-up and all the activities which could not happen during the wet, such as farming and construction. The giants had to be operated 24 hours a day when there was water. Many men of the time were probably both farmers and miners, depending on the season, so it is curious that the 1860 federal census counted 1,793 miners versus 7,861 farmers in Oregon. How these numbers were determined if many men were both is a mystery. Still,

mining and farming were primary occupations for the state given the lower numbers for other professions.<sup>22</sup>

There were several new mining claims along with transferals of existing ones along Coyote Creek in the early 1870s, and they could be the foundation of the next boom cycle for the creek's population and mining activity. Miners may have been returning from Idaho and eastern Oregon or simply trying their chances for the first time. For example, in 1871-72, E. G. Browning sold a quartz mining claim to F. M. Gabbett. Jack Robinson sold a placer claim to D. Levins in 1872. D. Mathews bought and sold "placer, etc." claims (i.e., land plus equipment), one of which was sold to him by Joy & Co.<sup>23</sup> Joy & Co. was one of the Chinese mining companies active along Coyote Creek which are mentioned in McLane's First There Was Twogood; McLane writes that they were the last Chinese miners to sell their claims on Coyote Creek, in 1872.<sup>24</sup> The Wolf Creek Inn has been dated to 1873, and although not much is known about the inn's early days, the settlement of Wolf Creek was probably a stopping point for the stagecoach by this time. There is no documented evidence about which came first, the stage stop or the tavern. Regardless, Wolf Creek became an important outpost for the area as an outlet for transportation, supplies, mail, and even social events. Leland, Grave Creek and Placer were also important settlements to those early miners on Coyote Creek, for mail, supplies, and entertainment.<sup>25</sup> There was no official community in the Golden area until the Rubles arrived; however, it is believed that there were cabins and perhaps more buildings, such as Dan Levins' store, along Coyote Creek during this period.<sup>26/27</sup>

It is possible that there was a loose, unofficial mining settlement there which had a fluctuating population before the settlement of Golden. Jack Robinson is credited with homesteading and mining from the late 1860s in the area that became Golden, for whom Robinson Gulch/Jack Creek is named. He purportedly had a house or cabin and a barn for livestock.<sup>28</sup> He may have cleared part of the land which later became the site of Golden but it is difficult to determine this from the available evidence. But, the frequent buying and selling of mining claims and the fluid movement of miners to bonanzas in other regions makes it unlikely that anyone bothered to do more than open a store for supplying the miners. As Coyote Creek's mines seem to have lagged in their technological evolution behind the larger operations of the region, it seems safe to say that the Coyote miners were after the easily recoverable nuggets and did not have many flumes, ditches, or giants before the end of this period.

### Golden's "Boom" and Primary Period of Significance, 1878 – 1913

This period starts in the year that William Ruble started buying numerous placer mining claims along Coyote Creek.<sup>29</sup> Although there were other miners already working claims in that area, hydraulic mining was just getting a foothold; Ruble's fervor and investment brought more settlers and more attention to the mining opportunities there.<sup>30</sup> Through the 1880s, it seems as if William plus at least two of his sons, William N. and Schuyler, worked part of the year on the hydraulic mines and lived in existing buildings, perhaps included in the mining claim sales.<sup>31</sup>

The landmark year of 1890 was when William N. moved his family from the Salem area to Coyote Creek. Around that time Schuyler married Abbie Smith, both of them also moving from near Salem to the family mining settlement.<sup>32</sup> This can be seen as the start of the second and largest mining boom on Coyote Creek as well as the most likely start of Golden.<sup>33</sup> Golden's peak of vitality would be the 1890s and early 1900s, as evidenced by the building boom and the notoriety of the Ruble mines. Columbus Bennett's new store of 1904 is the last building known to be constructed before the town's primary bust of the 1910-1920 decade.

From a larger perspective, the changing county boundaries and temporary nature of the early mining camps would have made an accurate census count very difficult. Nevertheless, the Tenth Census of the U.S. found Josephine County's population dropped from 1860 to 1870 but then grew to 2,485 by 1880. Jackson County grew slightly from 1860 to 1870, but then it almost doubled between 1870 and 1880 to 8,154.<sup>34</sup> These numbers may reflect a relative bust of southern Oregon mining during the 1860s and its renewed popularity between 1870-1880. Josephine County's population doubled in between 1880 and 1890, but part of that may be due to gaining part of Jackson County in that span. The Wolf Creek Precinct appears for the first time in the 1890 census with 200 residents; it was organized from part of the Leland precinct after 1880. By comparison, "Grant Pass town" had 1,432 residents.<sup>35</sup> Josephine County had 483 foreign born residents in 1890, of which there were 97 Chinese, 105 German, 71 from Canada/Newfoundland, and scattered, small numbers from other countries.<sup>36</sup>

Grants Pass could be classified as a mining town since it had a stabilized population, a commercial district, and brick buildings around 1887.<sup>37</sup> It had a newspaper at least by 1885, when the Rogue River Courier started publishing. Some mining towns, and perhaps true of Grants Pass or Kerbyville, had "macadamized or cobbled streets, gas lighting, sewer systems, water lines, and public transportation" by the mid 1880s – things that Golden did not have even by the turn of the century.<sup>38</sup> Although Wolf Creek was an important supply and transportation hub, Grants Pass was where Myra and Henry McIntosh moved their family in 1901 in order to seek better educational opportunities for their children, only four years after Golden had an official schoolhouse built.<sup>39</sup>

Proof that hydraulic mining caught on slowly is shown by the fact that along Myrtle and Cow Creeks, just to the northwest in Douglas County, miners were only starting to build the infrastructure for hydraulic systems in 1890.<sup>40</sup> A mining journal report from c1890-1900 reports that there were two hydraulic mines on Coyote Creek and states, "The uppermost is that of Ruble Bros. - William N. and S. C. - whose ground covers a couple of miles of the creek and back-channels." There was still coarse gold in quantity, but finding dumps for the tailings and boulders caused problems for the hydraulic mines until the Rubles invented their elevator/separator. Bennett and McIntosh had hydraulic mines downstream, about 1.5 miles from the junction of Wolf and Coyote Creeks. They had water availability issues in the past so ditch extensions were planned. Apart from these hydraulic mines, there were still "ground-sluiced" claims during the winter.<sup>41</sup> There is no

confirmed first year of use for this elevator, but from all accounts it seems that they were using at least some form of it by 1897 and therefore prior to its patent in June 1900.<sup>42</sup>

So, hydraulic giants were an improvement on panning for gold in placer, or water based, mines. Southern Oregon mines also had hard rock or lode mines. According to one account of Josephine County's history, an arrastra mill ground hard rock to get at gold, "a western adaptation of the grist mill, but much cruder... The arrastra served its purpose in early times by its relative low cost, but due to its inefficiency gave way to the more productive stamp mill."<sup>43</sup> Although W. P. Ely filed a mining claim for a new mill on Coyote Creek in 1892, it is not known what type of mill he wished to build, a stamp or an arrastra. Columbus Bennett filed a quartz, or hard rock, claim that same year on Coyote Creek.<sup>44</sup>

By 1897, the Ruble placer claim was deemed the most important on Coyote Creek with its elevator and separator, presumably for size, production and technology.<sup>45</sup> However, the rise of mines like the Greenback, begun by Browning and Hannum in 1897 and which had forty stamp mills by 1903, throws the mining technology and success of Golden into sharp relief.<sup>46</sup> The Courier in 1897 claimed its readership area had "the only mines in western Oregon lighted by electricity."<sup>47</sup> However, since electricity was presumably only used in lode mines to light the tunnels and so forth, wires would have had to be strung into the hills to reach them. The small mines of the Coyote Creek District likely did not receive electricity this early. However, large operations like the Greenback Mine did indeed have electricity at least by 1906.<sup>48</sup>

Still, in 1897, the newspaper accounts show Wolf Creek and Golden as booming communities. The Golden Post Office opened in 1896, located in the 1895 store Schuyler had built.<sup>49</sup> In 1897, one sawmill operated in/near Wolf Creek and another was expected to open soon.<sup>50</sup> Wolf Creek's school enrollment jumped from 73 students in 1896 to 122 in 1897.<sup>51</sup> Golden's schoolhouse was finished in 1897, following Schuyler Ruble's store, the Ruble brothers' new houses, and the Yellow House by a couple of years.<sup>52</sup> However, the buildings in historic photos all appear to have board-and-batten siding with the exception of the church and the Bennett storefront. Today, only one balloon frame building survives, and if it was a widely used construction type there, one would expect more examples to be extant. So, single wall, or box, construction likely dominated and although this is not a sign of transience per se, it puts Golden in the mining camp stage of development.<sup>53</sup> The camp's boom did not end with the departure of all the Rubles and the family of Myra and Henry McIntosh in 1901, but by 1910 it was suffering.

There are multiple reasons for the departures of 1901, including a desire for children to have a better education than could be had in Golden.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, William senior was 78 years old in 1901 and perhaps physically incapable of the rigors of mining. Family history tells us that William Ruble passed away in 1905, Schuyler in 1908, and Ruth in 1912, all in the Salem area. Furthermore, the part-time presence of the Rubles to oversee the mines after 1901 returned to full-time when William N. moved his family back from Ashland in 1908; he was the last Ruble patriarch left to oversee the family business.<sup>55</sup> When William N. and family

left Golden in 1910 for Eugene, he pursued a career path in medicine, a far cry from the physical rigors of mining.<sup>56</sup> His presence in Golden after this is not clear, but he did return at least once for business matters and the Ruble property was not completely sold off for several more years.<sup>57</sup>

Myra and Henry McIntosh also returned to Golden in 1908, at which time she bought her brother's store and began working at deputy postmaster; Henry took over as postmaster. Myra's mother, Martha Bennett, passed away in January of the next year, and her obituary says both Myra and Columbus were still residing in Golden.<sup>58</sup> By 1910, however, there was virtually an exodus. William N. and family, Henry Gross, T. E. Loban, Myra and Henry McIntosh, and others moved from Golden to larger communities.<sup>59</sup> By the description of Golden in the 1910 Josephine County directory, it was a mining settlement with a general store, post office, and several stamp mills. Grants Pass had the nearest bank, Wolf Creek was the closest shipping point, but there was a "stage with mail to Wolf Creek daily".<sup>60</sup>

Fruit production was growing and had by then taken over as the economy leader for Josephine County from mining and lumbering.<sup>61</sup> However, in February, 1910 W.D. and O.C. McIntosh were adding a giant to their "well-equipped mine on Upper Coyote Creek" and by August were "again making preparation for the Winter's run on the Ruble Hydraulic Placers."<sup>62/63</sup> Also, in March, "U[ri]as Miller (father of Lorenz Miller and father-in-law of Mark Davis) is getting some very fine prospects on the new mine he is opening on his place on Coyote Creek."<sup>64</sup> So, mining continued on Coyote Creek but with fewer neighbors.

### Golden's "Bust", 1914-1967

The beginning of this period has been placed at 1914 for the disposal of what may have been the last remaining Ruble owned property along Coyote Creek. Ruth Ruble, or rather her estate, transferred ownership to W. P. Ely in two separate transactions, a warranty deed and a quit claim deed, which were recorded in February of 1914.<sup>65</sup> So, Ely then owned the Ruth Ruble Placer Mine directly south of Golden whereas the Forsyths took over the William Ruble Placer Mine downstream, towards Wolf Creek. There were other shifts in this year besides the ownership of the Ruble mines. For example, Harold and Bethel (Ruble) McIntosh had run the Golden store after his mother sold it to him in 1910, but they moved to Wolf Creek and opened a new store around 1914.<sup>66</sup> One year later, Harold's brother and sister-in-law, Ollie and Ethel McIntosh, sold some or all of their land to A. W. Zoellner in 1915, as did their in-laws the Browns. The respective property transactions included a total of about 3.5 acres in or near Golden.<sup>67</sup> A. W. Zoellner, incidentally, served from 1919-1920 as the last postmaster of Golden.<sup>68</sup>

Whereas the Golden School had reached an enrollment of at least thirty-six pupils prior to 1915, Mrs. Ethel (McCallister) Loller taught a much reduced audience (six pupils) that year and Mrs. Harry Stumbo had the same number the following year, 1916.<sup>69</sup> The Golden School's attendance went from eight or nine students in 1917-19 to only four or five in 1919-22.<sup>70</sup> There are no available numbers for pupils after 1922, but since the

post office closed in 1920 and moved to Wolf Creek, perhaps there were no more students in Golden or they attended in Wolf Creek.

The sharp decrease in Oregon's gold production in the 1920s is not surprising given the healthy economy and relatively high average standard of living in the U. S. during the 1920s, and indeed this may explain why Golden had so few residents that the post office closed.<sup>71</sup> However, there was a slight mining revival in Josephine County in 1925. The Bratton brothers were developing tunnels in their Gold Wonder mine on Coyote Creek, with a highly promising ledge and over 900' of tunnels. Mr. Butler of the Horseshoe mine, also on Coyote, "brought in 48 ounces of gold ore" which showed merit for further investment and development.<sup>72</sup> The nearby Greenback reopened under new ownership, "now running 5 stamp mills." A new processing plant opened in Grants Pass (Metals Extraction and Refining Company, 50-ton per day capacity) to capture gold left in tailings and in black sand.<sup>73</sup>

While Golden declined in population and faded from the news reports of Grants Pass, Wolf Creek continued to blossom. In 1914, the Wolf Creek District was hailed as one of the best placer areas, along with Sucker Creek, Althouse, Grave Creek, and Kerby.<sup>74</sup> It is in this period that Golden's second bust, third boom and third bust occurred, but the third boom/bust cycle was on a smaller scale than the prior one. Some McIntoshes and Davises continued to mine on Coyote Creek through this period but exact dates or production levels are not available.

It appears that Harold McIntosh, at least, fluctuated between the communities of Wolf Creek and Golden after he left his Wolf Creek store since he made seven new placer and/or lode mining claims near Golden from 1933-1958, including several along Robinson's Gulch or accessible by that road.<sup>75</sup> Desperate, unemployed people reportedly flocked to the creeks of Josephine County during the Great Depression of the early 1930s, a flood encouraged by the increase in the price of gold in 1933 and again in 1934.<sup>76</sup> So, Coyote Creek's third boom may have started in either 1933 or 1934 for these price improvements and likely stopped around 1942 with the War Production Board's cessation order on gold mining.

The Great Depression, which began in 1929, must have made gold mining more attractive and Webber claims it "brought labor and materials costs back into line with gold prices... [so] when gold was revalued at \$35/oz. in 1934 the industry flourished." He goes on to state that gold production in Oregon remained high from then until 1942, when the War Production Board Order L-208 brought gold mining almost to a standstill and encouraged extractive operations to produce materials useful for the war effort.<sup>77</sup> This may have affected large operations more than individual placer miners like those on Coyote Creek.

Although lumbering and mining were counted as the principal industries for Josephine County in 1947, gold was no longer the metal being sought. According to the Grants Pass city directory for that year, "The mining of gold which brought the first settlers into the County about 1856 continued uninterrupted until halted

by the start of World War II. Exploration work has brought to light deposits of numerous other nonprecious metals.” Silver, platinum, copper, chromium, and limestone (for paper rock and cement) were among the sought after materials. “During the period of World War II the mines of the County made an important war contribution in the form of chromium ore, paper rock and limestone in various forms.”<sup>78</sup>

However, in 1948, the difference between large and small mining operations is highlighted by the fact that there were still several active gold mines listed for Coyote Creek, such as M. H. Davis’ Blue Channel Placer, the hydraulic Hole-in-the-ground Placer of L.O. Krewson, the McIntosh Placer (run by Harold McIntosh of Wolf Creek), and the Schleigh Placer, owned by W. C. Schleigh of Wolf Creek. There were at least 19 other mines producing or in development in Josephine County but in other townships.<sup>79</sup> Neither the Forsyths, Zoellners, nor W. P. Ely are mentioned, and so it may be concluded that they were no longer actively mining here by 1948. Indeed, Oregon’s gold production in general has diminished since 1947.<sup>80</sup>

Indeed, John and Anna Porter, husband and wife, bought the former Ruble property from Lydia Forsyth in 1949. The property, specifically, included the core of the townsite, 900’ long (west from Robinson’s Gulch) and 300’ wide (approximately north from Coyote Creek Road). Z. C. Brown owned the property due north of this plot. Ms. Forsyth also sold them part of the Ruth Ruble Mining Claim, although it is not known when she acquired this property or if it came directly from W. P. Ely. John Porter was also the owner of the Wolf Creek Inn at that time.<sup>81</sup> McLane writes that Porter tried in vain to revive Golden.<sup>82</sup> This claim is echoed in a *Courier* article in November of 1978. “In 1950 the people of the [Golden] community restored the little church and again held meetings until the attendance gradually fell away.” The reopening of the Golden church is attributed to Rev. Newton A. Carman. But, the lack of jobs forced many residents to move out of the area, and the church again closed.<sup>83</sup>

After their parents’ deaths, orphaned siblings took up residence in the William N. Ruble House, which was already considered a “shack.”<sup>84</sup> Since they owned the Wolf Creek Inn, it would be logical to conclude that the Porters were living in Wolf Creek, not Golden. Prior to the orphans, local lore says that the Forsyths lived in the William N. Ruble house. Although Lydia Forsyth sold the property on which the house sits to the Porters, it is not known for sure if the Forsyths actually inhabited the house and if so, for how long and what changes they may have made to it.

According to McLane, Joe Inman and Hap Fitzpatrick, grandson of Joe Dysert, were the last hydraulic miners on Coyote Creek, operating from 1958 – 1964. Their operations were closed down for environmental, specifically water quality, concerns.<sup>85</sup> However, mining of a different sort occurred through the 1990s, along with permit-stipulated environmental mitigation. Inman and Fitzpatrick retained ownership of this land through 1967. From historic photos, it seems most of the buildings in Golden were lost during this period; it is estimated that Mel Davis moved the Golden School to his property during this period but no motivation has been confirmed.

## Mining's End, 1968-2006

As of 1968, Josephine County owned the mining property along Coyote Creek. The settlement of Golden, however, remained in private ownership until Oregon Parks and Recreation Department bought it in 2006. While the creek bed underwent environmental remediation in the 1990s in the form of intentional wetland development, the buildings and landscape of Golden have suffered less positive changes albeit good intentions. Once hydraulic mining was banned in 1964, the few residents of Golden tried to care for the town through attempts at tourism.

Deed evidence on when and to whom the Porters sold their property at Golden has not been found, but the Cornwells opened an antique shop in the old Bennett Store for about six months in 1973.<sup>86</sup> One of the most hyped events in Golden's recent history was the filming of an episode for the television series "Gunsmoke" in 1972, as part of which fake wooden gravemarkers were installed on both the west and east sides of the church. Later owner of Golden, Roger Ramsey, found the removed wooden markers in one of the outbuildings and replaced a few of them on the east side of the church as interpretation aids to visitors on the building's role in Hollywood history.<sup>87</sup> As of 2007, the graveyard now has some real markers in it, but it is not known whether they designate burials or simply sit as memorials to people related to Golden's history.

Harry Aldrich bought Golden in November of 1977. He moved there in March of 1978, into the trailer previously owned and installed by the Cornwells. Aldrich hoped to rent the church for weddings, meetings, funerals and other events.<sup>88</sup> The Cornwells may have been the prior owners of Golden, not just the general store, but they may have also retained some property rights at least until 1987.<sup>89</sup> Aldrich tore down the church's tattered wallpaper and replaced it with burlap. He put the peckerwood cedar on the wall at the front of the church.<sup>90</sup> According to a long time area resident who is familiar with Golden, the wooden stage at the southeast corner of the main settlement site dates to the 1970s.<sup>91</sup> An exact construction year has not been found, but the appearance of the stage in material and construction is a close match to the store porch, believed to be another of Aldrich's renovation.

Roger Ramsey bought the Golden settlement site in 1989.<sup>92</sup> Mr. Ramsey, a great-grandson of area miner Joe Dysert, and his wife Lynn attempted to restore the buildings of Golden.<sup>93</sup> Mr. Ramsey held weekend tours of the site upon request and generally tried to revive interest in the town and its history.<sup>94</sup> The last resident and private owner of Golden, Mr. Ramsey related in a communication that the church bell was stolen the day after he moved away from the site.<sup>95</sup>

The camp of Golden had but a couple of residents at any given time, it seems, from at least the 1970s. The title of "ghost town" seems inappropriate while it had any residents, however this may have been a convenient marketing hook for the gift store run by the Cornwells, for Harry Aldrich's dream of renting the church for events, and perhaps even for the interpretive tours given by Roger Ramsey.

Jack Smith was the last miner on Coyote Creek and a founding member of the nonprofit group Golden Coyote Wetlands. Mr. Smith was authorized by Josephine County to mine along Coyote Creek and won an award for his excellent reclamation work there, so it is difficult to believe that his backhoe shaved the bank so close to the county road.<sup>96</sup>

## Conclusion

Why did Golden develop the way it did? Its proximity to Wolf Creek may have allowed for initial growth because of the availability of sawn lumber, transportation and supplies. Wolf Creek may have helped end Golden as well because of its advantages and lure when the camp was declining. As for why Golden declined after its second and largest boom, there are various reasons. Families left to give their children better education and the general benefits of living in a more urban setting. Golden reached the mining camp stage but fell short of ever being a mining town with a stabilized population and diversified economy. Most of the residents of Golden were involved with gold mining, so when that industry suffered, they suffered. After World War II, gold mining never recovered from its wartime restrictions.<sup>97</sup> With the exception of some small operators, gold mining was a thing of the past.

Some families, like William and Sarah Ruble or Myra and Henry McIntosh, returned briefly but not permanently. The formers, at least, returned for the sake of their mining interests and perhaps to settle their affairs. William N. was not a miner at heart since he went on to much different work in Eugene, whereas some of the McIntosh sons kept mining but were perhaps living in Wolf Creek. After all, Wolf Creek had the train as well as the nearest post office after 1920, a telegraph, and generally more social activity.

Even larger operations like the Greenback Mine went through periods of nonoperation, so smaller operators with lesser profit margins could not be expected to continuing mining when the work was physically difficult and only seasonal. People moved on to other things except for those few who chose it as a lifestyle, like the Davis and McIntosh descendants. Mining continued throughout the boom and bust cycles, even if at a much reduced rate.

The founders of Golden may never have expected it to be their home forever. The fact that the church is of balloon framing and has some excellent craftsmanship would seem to indicate the intention of permanence, as would the planting of the orchard. However, the church may simply be a testament to the importance of religion to the Rubles and their neighbors.<sup>98</sup> As far as the orchard is concerned, William Ruble planted orchards elsewhere on his journey westward, and it was not uncommon for mining settlements to have gardens and fruit trees. Corri Jimenez studied the mining town of Bodie, California in relation to other mining settlements and found that, in general, “though the miners lived in isolated towns, they valued the comforts of home and imported them, whether fruit trees or familiar architectural styles.”<sup>99</sup> Also, as noted

during the late nineteenth and early part of this century, fruit production had a growing economic role in Josephine County.

If the Rubles and their relatives were never sure of how long they intended to stay, a typical question for many mining community residents, how did they perceive mining? Columbus Bennett did not seem to be actively involved with mining yet his name appears on many a claim transaction. The Rubles also approached it as a business, hiring help or renting claims but never giving up their land near Salem. It was a profitable venture but not the career of choice at least for William N. as seen in the next chapter of his life in Eugene. William Ruble's background was in grist mills and nursery work, not mining.<sup>100</sup>

How does Golden reflect the development of southern Oregon? Josephine and Jackson Counties were created because of the influx of gold prospectors and homesteaders. Golden was one of many mining camps or small outposts, whereas Wolf Creek was sited along transportation and shipping routes, thus becoming an outlier for Grants Pass. Chinese immigrants were among a variety of nationalities active in Oregon's early development, and they are documented as mining on Coyote Creek at least in the 1860s.

How does Golden reflect mining's evolution? Before, during and after Golden's vitality, mining of various sophistication was conducted on Coyote Creek. It progressed from pans and sluice boxes to hydraulic giants and hard rock mining in the surrounding hills, eventually ending with a backhoe reworking the old tailings on the creek. Hydraulic mining was conducted from the 1870s until 1964 and "sniping" occurred before and during that time. Dredge mining occurred at nearby Laurel Camp. In total, mining occurred in that area for approximately one hundred and forty years but not at a constant rate of activity.

Some questions and gaps in understanding the site's history still remain for future researchers. Hopefully, archaeological testing will glean information on the locations, sizes and construction style of buildings now gone. Unfortunately, there is much more data available on the subject of mining in Oregon and indeed the western United States than can be included in this narrative, but the resources appendix may be consulted for leads to further information.

## Section 1.6 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Alternate name for this period could be “Southern Oregon Mining Inception and Immigration Era.”

<sup>2</sup> Murphy, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> McConnell, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Nunis, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup> In 1857, two different timber sales were recorded in Josephine County. 346 of hewn timber sold for 10 cents per board foot whereas the same amount of milled lumber sold for 2 or 3 cents per board foot. At least one of these transactions occurred in Kerbyville (later renamed Kerby). Miscellaneous Records, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk’s Office, Grants Pass), pp. 39, 48.

<sup>6</sup> Nunis, p. 170.

<sup>7</sup> McLane, p. 271.

<sup>8</sup> McConnell, p. 20.

<sup>9</sup> Weekly Oregonian (Portland), 31 October 1857, p. 2, as cited in Christopher H. Edson, The Chinese in Eastern Oregon, 1860-1890 (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, September 1970), p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> “Chinamen must pay two dollars per month for the privilege of mining...” F. G. Young, “Financial History of Oregon,” published in Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, vol. 8, 1907, p. 181.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Oregon, Constitution (1859), Art. XV, sec. 8, as cited in Christopher H. Edson, The Chinese in Eastern Oregon, 1860-1890 (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, September 1970), p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk’s Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>14</sup> McConnell, p. 19.

<sup>15</sup> McConnell, p. 20.

<sup>16</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Preliminary Report on the Eighth Census (1860) (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1862), pp. 18-19.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Population of the United States in 1860; compiled from the

original returns of the eighth census (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), p. 405.

<sup>19</sup> McLane, p. 277.

<sup>20</sup> Stovall, pp. 139-140.

<sup>21</sup> Arman, p. 46.

<sup>22</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Population of the United States in 1860; compiled from the original returns of the eighth census (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1864), p. 405.

<sup>23</sup> Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>24</sup> McLane, p. 277.

<sup>25</sup> Arman, p. 46.

<sup>26</sup> From mining claim entries, Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass. See first period narrative.

<sup>27</sup> McLane, p. 299.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

<sup>29</sup> General Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass). Larry McLane notes that Henry Smith, builder of the Wolf Creek Inn, had bought up numerous claims in the area when many miners left for other bonanzas, but it seems he merely bought and sold claims as real estate and never mined like the Ruble family. McLane, p. 274.

<sup>30</sup> Some of the miners from whom Ruble bought placer claims were J. McWilliamson et al, Mr. and Mrs. L. Ash et al, F. A. Rathborn, F. A. Davis et al, Mr. and Mrs. P. H. O'Shea, and John Robinson. These names were taken from the Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 1 in the Josephine County Clerk's Office and were recorded in October, 1878. The most famous transaction, that of the Jacobs and Kelly claim, the sale of which had an injunction placed on it almost immediately, was not found in the Josephine County records. However, it may have been recorded in Jackson County. Local historian Larry McLane attests that this was the start of a contested ownership and legal feud for approximately the next ten years. McLane, p. 285.

<sup>31</sup> The index to mining claims as well as the index for mining conveyances list names, dates, and basic information such as type of mining claim, district, etc. The full entries from many of the early transactions, Book 1J, is missing from the Josephine County Clerk's vault, so specific details about size of the claims and what else, such as buildings and equipment, might have been included in each sale are not known.

<sup>32</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>33</sup> Although there is no definite proof of when Golden was officially established, the extant buildings date to this period and various accounts give 1890 as the start date.

<sup>34</sup> The increase in Jackson County's population from 1860-70 could also have been due to the constant arrival of homesteaders in search of donation land claims to farm. U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census

Office, Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, June 1, 1880: Population, vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 75.

<sup>35</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Report on the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1895), p. 36. A Grants Pass and Josephine County Directory for 1910 states the town was incorporated in 1887 and had a population of 6,000 at that time. This number is very inflated from the 1890 census figure of 1,432.

<sup>36</sup> U. S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Report on the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1895), p. 652.

<sup>37</sup> Polk's Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Co. Directory, 1910, Josephine section, p. 195.

<sup>38</sup> T. H. Watkins, "Golden Dreams and Silver Realities," The American West 8:3 (May 1971), p. 41.

<sup>39</sup> McLane, p. 290.

<sup>40</sup> The China Ditch was reportedly the longest mining flume built in Oregon, stretching 33 miles total and only operating a few years before encountering legal obstacles. As can be inferred from its name, Chinese laborers were instrumental in its construction. It was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, China Ditch, prepared by Stephen Dow Beckham, 1989, sec. 7, p. 1 and sec. 8, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> Oregon Mining Journal, Special Midsummer Edition, pps. 40-41. Photocopy from Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council's vertical files.

<sup>42</sup> Patent for Ruble Elevator and Separator was filed on July 21, 1899 and published in the June 12, 1900 Gazette. It was under the names of William N. and Schuyler Ruble of Golden, Oregon. U. S. Patent Office Gazette, vol. 91 (June 12, 1900), p. 2149.

<sup>43</sup> The account further states that the arrastras were usually water powered but could be run with draft animals instead. Murphy, p. 13.

<sup>44</sup> General Index to Mining Locations, Book 1 (Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>45</sup> Rogue River Courier (Grants Pass), 2 December 1897, 1:3.

<sup>46</sup> Murphy, p. 15.

<sup>47</sup> Rogue River Courier, 9 December 1897, 2:6, Wolf Creek Items.

<sup>48</sup> Stovall, p. 143.

<sup>49</sup> McLane, p. 286.

<sup>50</sup> Rogue River Courier, 18 March 1897, 3:5, Wolf Creek Items.

<sup>51</sup> Rogue River Courier, 25 March 1897, 3:1, Wolf Creek Items.

<sup>52</sup> Rogue River Courier, 9 December 1897, 2:6; McLane, pp. 286, 289, 296.

<sup>53</sup> Richard V. Francaviglia, Hard Places: Reading the Landscape of America's Historic Mining Districts (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991), p. 157.

<sup>54</sup> Bernice Ruble.

<sup>55</sup> Bernice Ruble. Also, the 1907-08 Salem area directory shows W[alter] H. Ruble as living in Silverton, so he had apparently by then left the family mining operations. Polk's 1907-08 Salem City and Marion County Directory, p. 365.

<sup>56</sup> In 1912, William N. Ruble worked as a physician at the Willamette Naturopathic Sanitarium and resided at 308 E. 15<sup>th</sup> in Eugene, Oregon; his daughter Bernice is also listed as residing at this address. Polk's Eugene and Lane Co. Directory 1912, p. 199.

<sup>57</sup> "W N Ruble, who is now practicing osteopathy in Eugene, made a flying trip to his home at Golden on business Monday." Rogue River Courier, 22 April 1910, 6:1.

<sup>58</sup> Rogue River Courier, 15 January 1909, 8:1.

<sup>59</sup> Rogue River Courier, 22 August 1910, n.p., Wolf Creek heading; Rogue River Courier, 4 March 1910, 6:4, Wolf Creek heading; Rogue River Courier, 18 February 1910, 5:5.

<sup>60</sup> Polk's Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Co. Directory, 1910, p. 237.

<sup>61</sup> Polk's Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Co. Directory, 1910; Josephine section, p. 195.

<sup>62</sup> Rogue River Courier, 4 February 1910.

<sup>63</sup> "News from Golden," The Glendale News, 26 August 1910, 3:3. Ruth Ruble sold at least part of the Ruble placer claims to her nephews, W. D. and O. C. McIntosh, since the transaction was recorded in September 1910. Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 2, Josephine County Clerk's Office.

<sup>64</sup> Rogue River Courier, 4 March 1910, 6:4.

<sup>65</sup> Direct Index to Mining Conveyances, Book 2 (see 43/463, 465 for full entries, Josephine County Clerk's Office, Grants Pass).

<sup>66</sup> McLane, p. 290; Arman's interview with Harold McIntosh confirms that he purchased the store from his mother (who bought it from her brother Columbus in 1908) but there is no year mentioned. 1910 seems logical as his mother left Golden that year (p. 47).

<sup>67</sup> Warranty Deed, dated and filed Sept. 1915, vol 16 Deeds, p. 114. Photocopy of original document in the vertical files of the Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>68</sup> McLane, p. 298.

<sup>69</sup> Arman, p. 46; Photocopied excerpt from “School Memories,” a self-published scrapbook and history of schools in Josephine County. Courtesy of the Josephine County Historical Society, Grants Pass

<sup>70</sup> Photocopied excerpt from “School Memories,” a self-published scrapbook and history of schools in Josephine County. Courtesy of the Josephine County Historical Society, Grants Pass.

<sup>71</sup> Bert Webber, ed., Gold Mining in Oregon (Medford, OR: Webb Research Group Publishers, 1995), p. 27.

<sup>72</sup> “Southwestern Oregon Mining News: Rich Gold Strikes Still Being Made,” Salt Lake Mining Review, 15 August 1925 p. 23.

<sup>73</sup> “Big Gold Mining Revival is Being Staged in Southwestern Oregon,” Salt Lake Mining Review, 30 June 1925 p. 11.

<sup>74</sup> Sunday Oregonian (Portland), 29 March 1914, sec. 4, p. 12.

<sup>75</sup> Patent issued April 22, 1958. Photocopy of the official document, from the vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>76</sup> Arman, p. 47; Price of gold in the U.S. was constant from 1837-1933, when the federal government raised the price from \$20.67/oz to \$35.00/oz, as of January 31, 1934; however, price in 1933 was approx. \$25.56. Webber, p. 4.

<sup>77</sup> Webber, pp. 5, 27.

<sup>78</sup> Salisbury’s Grants Pass City Directory including Josephine County (Eugene: T. W. Salisbury & Co., 1947), vol. 2, p. 8.

<sup>79</sup> Sixth Biennial Report of the State Dept. of Geology and Mineral Industries of the State of Oregon, July 1, 1946 to July 1, 1948, Bulletin No. 38. Submitted to governor and 45th Legislative Assembly October 1, 1948. pp. 36-41.

<sup>80</sup> “Oregon gold production reached its post-war high in 1947... [yet was] only 17 percent of the 1940 output.” Webber, p. 27.

<sup>81</sup> Deeds, vol 156, pp. 193-195, Josephine County Clerk, Grants Pass.

<sup>82</sup> McLane, p. 298.

<sup>83</sup> Daily Courier (Grants Pass), 25 November 1978, B3, Becky Nelson.

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Amy Wilson, Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council, Grants Pass, Oregon, 9 August 2007.

<sup>85</sup> McLane, p. 295.

<sup>86</sup> Daily Courier, 25 November 1978, B3, Becky Nelson.

<sup>87</sup> Daily Courier, 7 September 1976, C1, Pat Biencourt. Also, email from Roger Ramsey, 9 September 2007.

<sup>88</sup> Daily Courier, 25 November 1978, B3, Becky Nelson.

<sup>89</sup> Cornwells granted an access easement to someone along Robinson's Gulch, Witnessed Dec 23, 1987, Josephine County Title Co. Photocopy of original record document, from vertical files of Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council.

<sup>90</sup> Daily Courier, 25 November 1978, B3, Becky Nelson.

<sup>91</sup> Interview with Neil Thuresson, Wolf Creek, Oregon, 11 September 2007.

<sup>92</sup> Email from Roger Ramsey, 13 September 2007.

<sup>93</sup> McLane, p. 298.

<sup>94</sup> Ramsey, 9 September 2007.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> "Respecting land pans out for man," Mail Tribune, Medford, Oregon, 7 July 1992.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Both William and William N. were ordained, but many of the family members had roles in the church's ministry. Visiting ministers had extended meetings with the community, and the church's construction was a community effort. Bernice Ruble.

<sup>99</sup> Corri Jimenez, Bodie, California: Understanding the Architecture and Built Environment of a Gold Mining Town (MA Thesis, University of Oregon, 2000), p. 30.

<sup>100</sup> D. R. Ruble, "A Brief Synopsis of the William Ruble Family History," in Westward Ho!, pp. 17-18.

# Chapter 2

## The Historical Significance of Golden

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*Figure 2.1.1 -Looking southeastward at Golden, circa 1906 (GCW archives). Note the addition to the Bennett's store (left of center) and a section of Schuyler Ruble's house is just visible on the left edge of the photo.*

# *Significance Section 2.1: Golden's Architectural Legacy: Examining Box Construction*

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## Abstract

Buildings are physical artifacts of, and connections to, the past. When trying to understand what they represent, it helps to consider them as products of their time and place. In the case of Golden, the remaining buildings all date to the town's peak of vitality yet reflect a complex set of influences. As part of the discussion of the significance of Golden's remaining buildings, this narrative will highlight some of the possible origins for single wall or box construction, why it may have been used here, and what these buildings add to the current knowledge of historic building technology.

## Background

Building technology and architectural style tend to progress through more or less defined periods, each period being like a layer of soil for an archaeologist. In this sense, Golden presents both mysteries and valuable evidence. Three of the four extant buildings are of single wall construction, a construction technique familiar to those who have studied pioneer settlements such as mining camps. However, it is not well documented or understood, especially in a context beyond that of pioneers. Single wall construction has been explained by some as a technique defined by a certain period and/or by certain conditions or variables. It has been dismissed as merely a temporary solution, a quick and easy way to build immediate shelter until something better could be erected. In this sense, single wall buildings are seen as similar to log cabins, yet easier and faster to put up. There is evidence, however, that single wall construction did not simply give way to balloon framing. Park City, Utah has examples of stylish single wall houses which were built after neighboring balloon frames.<sup>1</sup> Park City and Golden both show that the two coexisted, probably due to the unique advantages of each.

Golden's evidence that this choice between building techniques was not a linear evolution can be seen in the construction dates of the extant buildings. The church in Golden was built in 1892, according to the daughter of William N. Ruble.<sup>2</sup> It is a balloon frame structure, meaning it has a stud frame and both exterior and interior walls. The other three buildings, namely the William N. Ruble House, the Bennett/McIntosh Store, and a storage shed, are of single wall construction and were built after the church (between 1894-1904, approximately).<sup>3</sup>

During the 1878-1913 period in Golden, the primary period of significance, most of the residents were involved with mining of some form. Hydraulic mining was carried out twenty four hours a day while the rainy season allowed for a constant water supply. In the off season, hard rock mining could be carried out and many miners had seasonal farming responsibilities.<sup>4</sup> A post office was opened in the early 1890s, a stage route connected the camp with Wolf Creek and the larger commercial center of Grants Pass, and the mines were producing well. The Ruble Elevator also came into use in the 1890s.<sup>5</sup> Before 1878, the height of mining activity along Coyote Creek came with the Chinese mining companies during the 1860s and early 1870s.<sup>6</sup> They were typically single men intent on making a profit to bring home, and historical accounts relate that they did not build permanent communities.<sup>7</sup> There are mentions of various miners cabins along the creek in the recorded mining claims for Josephine County, but no mention of a town.

## Origins of Box Construction

There is no shortage of confusion over the terminology for these types of buildings. The term box construction has often been used interchangeably with single wall construction. Another architectural historian and investigator of single wall building traditions, Michael Ann Williams, uses “plank houses” or “boxed houses” as well as “vertical-plank architecture.”<sup>8</sup> C. P. Dwyer referred to these buildings as “balloon houses” due to their lightness in his 1872 builder’s guide, so the term has even changed over time.<sup>9</sup> Deborah L. Randall chose to use “single wall construction” in her study of Park City mining architecture as it is more descriptive of the technique and also to avoid confusion with the seventeenth and eighteenth century heavy timberframe, or box frame, construction.<sup>10</sup> Although the scope of each term could be debated for quite some time, for the purposes of this report it will suffice to say that box is a type of single wall construction.<sup>11</sup>

Knowledge of how to build with single wall or box construction likely passed not only through published material, including carpenter’s guides like Dwyer’s *The Homestead Builder*, but also through tradition. In her thesis research on box construction, Shannon Bell found that there are areas of high prevalence for this type of building, including the states of Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, and Connecticut.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps coincidentally, William Ruble, Sr. lived in both Arkansas and Missouri before Oregon.<sup>13</sup> Both Bell and Williams hesitate to draw connections or potential patterns of diffusion.<sup>14</sup> Williams claims this type of building was “widespread, both temporally and geographically.”<sup>15</sup> It may be a natural evolution of construction that occurred independently in many places, or it may have originated from one area or ethnic tradition.

In fact, England via New England is one suggested origin for box construction. Randall agrees with the suggestion that single wall construction grew out of the plank framing used in England and New England.<sup>16</sup> However, there are other plank house construction traditions which could have contributed, such as those of Native Americans.<sup>17</sup> Richard Candee tempers the English/New England plank building origin with the condition that commercially produced sawn lumber was readily available.<sup>18</sup>

Abbott Lowell Cummings, as cited in Williams, echoes the connection between box construction and the availability of milled lumber, specifically that the construction technique was an adaptation to this new building material.<sup>19</sup> But, what is meant by milled or sawn lumber? Randall points out the difference between board lumber, such as that used for plank houses, and dimensioned lumber, such as that required for balloon framing, and postulates that the lack of availability of the latter kind of lumber may have affected the dominance of single wall construction in Park City; however, single wall houses continued after balloon framing was employed, so availability obviously was not the sole factor.<sup>20</sup> So, while sawmills have been documented in the Golden/Wolf Creek area by the 1880s, it is not clear what type of lumber they were producing. Given the emphasis on mining, board lumber was likely more common.

Regarding single wall construction, Williams explains that differences are found in the method of securing the planks to the frame, the use or absence of corner posts, and the treatments of exterior and interior walls... Still, it is evident that in many places and times, vertical-plank construction was an option in vernacular building in the United States. Interestingly, vertical-plank construction in many instances was a product of both tradition and change. This type of construction was probably known in the repertoire of many traditional builders, but the popularity of the vertical-plank dwelling was predicated on specific economic, environmental, and social conditions.<sup>21</sup>

## Ruble House

The Ruble House is built of wooden vertical planks (1 ¼" x approx. 12") nailed to a wood sill at the base and a wood ledger across the top. Battens (¾" x 2 ½") are nailed over the joints between planks. An intermediate ledger (horizontal support member) is nailed to the interior side of the planks to receive the second floor joists.<sup>22</sup> It is a classic example of single wall construction except it has a second floor, making it more complex than many pioneer houses. In at least one historic photo, it is obvious that the windows were four over four, double hung sashes. There was an eavestrough along the front elevation with a downspout to the entry portico roof, and the gable ends had trim boards at the roofline, mimicking a cornice.<sup>23</sup> The entire house was painted a light color, perhaps white, and the shingled roof appears to have had enclosed rafters. For more information on the current condition and treatment recommendations, please see Walters' 2005 report.

Placing this house within its context, the chronology of Golden's evolution and the constraints on the builders themselves, may help explain why Ruble seemed to go backward in his choice of construction technique. In reality, a multitude of factors likely determined which technique was used by a builder at any given time or place. For example, the Ruble House was not the first dwelling place for William N. and family, so it was not fulfilling a need for immediate shelter. It was the conscious successor to where they were living on the upper mine. The Ruble House is situated close to the church and faces the main road. Moreover, it was the intentional home of a founding family of the town, not to mention the church's minister. This, then, was no ramshackle miner's cabin. The house occupied a place of prominence both geographically and socially.

For all its prominence, the house was still probably by needs built quickly and perhaps economically. Sawmills were operating in the Golden/Wolf Creek district but lumber was in demand for the building boom in both communities as well as the increase in mining activity. Planks were used to build irrigation flumes for the placer mines, sluice boxes, and other mining essentials. It is not known the price of sawn lumber on Coyote Creek during the 1890s, but if it followed the pattern of other mining communities, prices during a boom were high due to the sharp increase in demand and a lag in the mills' ability to supply.

Besides the probable high price of milled lumber, the nature of hydraulic mining would not have allowed Mr. Ruble much free time with which to build. The church was built with community labor, whereas residences are generally attributed as built by their owners and assuredly with fewer hands than the church, thus further reducing the means with which to build.<sup>24</sup>

The church may represent how the Rubles would have built their residences if given the time, labor and materials. According to his grand-daughter, William Ruble, Sr. was a man intensely interested in religious matters, although he preferred the scholarly expression of his faith over public speaking. His son, William N. Ruble, took over the sermons after being ordained in April 1893. William Ruble, Sr. donated the land upon which the church sits and is believed to have been the financial backer of the construction, with his son William N. as the chief carpenter.<sup>25</sup> The construction of a solid, balloon framed church is not surprising in light of the family's strong faith; it may even have been how the two William Rubles expressed their faith, as a labor of love.

Then again, perhaps something happened between 1892 and 1894 that made them change their vision as to how long they would remain on Coyote Creek. There was a national depression in 1893, which may or may not have affected mining operations in Golden. All of the Rubles left Golden around 1901, visiting as needed to manage the mining operations.<sup>26</sup> Or, perhaps there is yet another, unforeseen reason why they built a single wall house two years after a balloon frame church. It may simply have been a shifting preference in style

manifested in building technique.<sup>27</sup> According to Williams, Dell Upton holds that the “popularity of board-and-batten siding was enhanced by its link to tradition, and many vernacular builders who accepted it eliminated the redundant stud frame.”<sup>28</sup> With its board-and-batten siding, the Ruble House may uphold Upton’s theory.<sup>29</sup> Or, perhaps it was simply a style of the region reinforced by the available materials.<sup>30</sup> In historic photos of Golden, nearly all of the buildings appear to be board-and-batten, with the exception of the church, the front of the Bennett Store, and a few log buildings.

Single wall construction lacks adequate documentation partly because most building surveys are conducted from the exterior and do not involve the level of investigation often required to distinguish between a balloon frame structure and a single wall structure. Since balloon framing is more widely recognized (and a modified version still in use today), many single wall structures get listed on tax records and various surveys as “frame” when they are not. Single wall construction may take various forms, but their common denominator is that the walls are the frame. Siding planks are nailed directly onto the sill instead of a stud frame. In some cases, horizontal siding was applied over the vertical planks, further camouflaging the building from the untrained eye. Also, single wall buildings may be hard to identify because some of them have received studs at a later time, in the case of the Bennett Store and some of the houses in Park City, Utah.<sup>31</sup>

The date of the Ruble House has been contested partly due to the limited number and scope of studies published on single wall construction. As stated by Fred Walters in his 2005 Condition Assessment of Golden, “the construction technique of the Ruble House does not coincide with the current scholarly studies of this building type.”<sup>32</sup> Walters, a respected and experienced specialist in the field of historic preservation, states the generally held belief that “box construction was a prevalent construction technique used in the Pacific Northwest from the early 1850s through the early 1880s.”<sup>33</sup> However, even if the 1894 construction date is too late, the house would not have been built before 1890, which is still beyond Walters’ end date. William N. Ruble was not living year-round on Coyote Creek until he moved his family there in the fall of 1890.<sup>34</sup>

Park City, Utah also has documented examples of single wall construction houses built after 1890, as well as some houses post-1895 which were balloon framed but with single wall utility areas.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, there are several examples in Josephine County of single wall buildings erected in 1910 and 1915, far beyond the common cut-off date.<sup>36</sup> Altogether, there is enough evidence of single wall construction continuing in the Pacific Northwest after 1890 to accept that this building technique is misunderstood and requires further study to expand its accepted period of influence.

## Bennett/McIntosh Store

The store built for Columbus Bennett in Golden appears to have had studs added later or only to certain portions of it.<sup>37</sup> The Rogue River Courier advertised the store’s readiness to open in December of 1904, so the construction date is reliable.<sup>38</sup> A local historian also wrote of the store and explained that Bennett’s nephew, Ollie McIntosh, built the store whereas another nephew, Harold McIntosh, added the lean-to.<sup>39</sup> Bennett was a prominent citizen of Golden and the nephew of William Ruble, Sr. and Ruth Russell Ruble. This store replaced an earlier one built by Bennett’s cousin, so, like the Ruble House, it was not filling an immediate need. Since the store is commercial instead of residential, it is unclear if the trends in single wall construction observed in Park City can be applied.

## Storage Shed/”Granary”

The shed next to the store is dated to c1900.<sup>40</sup> Like the Ruble House and the store, it has a prominent location along the main road. However, it is a utilitarian building with a simple, open floor plan. The board-and-batten walls are typical of the area, and the single wall construction is not surprising given the simple purpose along with the aforementioned cost and time factors.

## Significance of Golden’s Buildings

C. P. Dwyer’s 1872 builder’s guide claims box construction was the best for those who wished to “save time, labor and money” in erecting a decent house.<sup>41</sup> Single wall buildings were cheaper, faster, and required less carpentry skill than balloon since there were fewer types of framing members, windows and doors could be cut anywhere, and generally the house required less planning.<sup>42</sup> Balloon framing, with its double walls and air space between, provided for the ability to insulate against the elements. Professor Emeritus Don Peting believes one of the factors which signaled the end of single wall construction in favor of balloon framing was the arrival of utilities, particularly of electricity.<sup>43</sup> Stud walls hide the wiring and other necessary services of a modern home, whereas single walls leave all of that exposed. Indeed, the installation of utilities may have spurred the retrofitting of single wall houses with studs.

The desire for larger, more comfortable, more modern houses along with other factors, such as increased availability of dimension lumber, may have caused balloon framing to win out eventually. The persistence of single wall construction in Josephine County for agricultural outbuildings like the Echo Cove Orchard Barn or the Beveridge Fruit Packing Shed may be attributed to their utilitarian nature. Randall found that the “introduction of balloon frame into residential construction coincides with Park City having become a well established, mature community characterized by a stabilized population and larger more permanent buildings.”<sup>44</sup> In other words, the evolution from camp to town stage coincided with an increase in balloon framed houses.

The construction of a balloon framed church, then, would seem to signify an intention of permanence by the Rubles in 1892. The other three buildings raise questions about the possible interruption of that vision, although perhaps Golden was similar to Park City in the fact that “the balloon frame never replaced single wall for the construction of modest dwellings.”<sup>45</sup> At the very least, Golden’s architecture reveals that the settlement never progressed beyond the mining camp phase.

There is evidence from Golden as well as Park City, Utah, that balloon framing did not always replace single wall construction immediately, that the two techniques actually coexisted.<sup>46</sup> Golden’s three single wall buildings also debunk the notion that such construction ended by the 1880s in the Pacific Northwest. Each of these revelations could be considered significant in their own right for the field of architectural history, but they also broaden our understanding of the realities of mining life. Unfortunately, with only a few remaining buildings, no trends can be definitely observed. With only one house, in particular, it is impossible to know if the Ruble House was an anomaly. However, the structures in Golden can add to the body of knowledge concerning mining architecture when compared to the built environments of other settlements like Park City.

## Box Construction in Oregon

Box construction in Oregon has been studied by Shannon Bell and Philip Dole, among others. Bell’s thesis on this building technique found examples of it in Kings Valley and the Corvallis vicinity, Junction City, Albany, and Salem, and this list is not exhaustive. She estimates that between 1850 and 1890, nearly half of

the buildings in Oregon were of box construction.<sup>47</sup> Dole, founder of the historic preservation program at the University of Oregon, wrote extensively on Oregon's architecture. He found that Oregon pioneer buildings showed a "tenacity of traditional forms."<sup>48</sup> Of the three types of pioneer construction, he saw box construction as the most remarkable, the others being balloon framing and the New England hewn frame. Furthermore, he noted that box construction continued in Oregon after 1900 and was used throughout the Willamette Valley. However, he supports Bell's idea of high prevalence areas, stating there are "certain areas [in Oregon] where each of the systems was used almost exclusively. That circumstance suggests that a mill's capability, a builder's preference or a clan's traditions were the factors dominating technological choice."<sup>49</sup> Golden, obviously, is not one of the areas exhibiting one technique or the other, although if there were more surviving structures, they might well show a predilection for one type. As it is, we may never understand completely why box and balloon construction were both used there.

## Section 2.1 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Deborah Randall, Park City, Utah: An Architectural History of Mining Town Housing, 1869-1907 (MA Thesis, University of Utah, 1985), p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Bernice Ruble, "Golden, Oregon and the Little White Church," (1950), later published in Julia and Friend's Golden Scrapbook (n.p., n.d.). Natural Resources Conservation District vertical files, Grants Pass.

<sup>3</sup> The Bennett/McIntosh Store appears to have had studs added to sections at a later time. See 2005 Condition Assessment by Fred Walters and Shannon Bell for more information on this building's construction.

<sup>4</sup> Columbus Bennett, for one, was involved with both farming and mining. Five of the six Wolf Creek District jurors in 1886 were listed as farmers and only one as a miner, but some of those listed as farmers also appear in mining claim records. Rogue River Courier, 24 September 1886, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Patent for Ruble Elevator and Separator was filed on July 21, 1899 and published in the June 12, 1900 Gazette. U. S. Patent Office Gazette, vol. 91 (June 12, 1900), p. 2149. The elevator was mentioned in the Rogue River Courier in 1897, so it was definitely in use before the patent filing. See the historical narrative and chronologies for more information on this device.

<sup>6</sup> Mining claims and conveyances, Josephine County Clerk, Grants Pass.

<sup>7</sup> Captain John Mullam, USA, "From Walla Walla to San Francisco," Statesman (Walla Walla), November 29 & December 6, 1862, reprinted in Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, 4 (September, 1903), p. 219.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Ann Williams, "Pride and Prejudice, The Appalachian Boxed House in Southwestern North Carolina," Winterthur Portfolio, 25:4 (Winter 1990), p. 218. Also, Williams, Homeplace: The Social Use and Meaning of the Folk Dwelling in Southwestern North Carolina (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1991), pp. 31-32.

<sup>9</sup> C. P. Dwyer, The Homestead Builder: Practical Hints for Handy-Men (New York : Lyons Press, 1998), 10<sup>th</sup> ed., pp. 75 – 78. First published as The Immigrant Builder (Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1872).

<sup>10</sup> Randall, pp. 57-58.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Shannon Bell, Eugene, Oregon, 17 July 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> D. R. Ruble, "A Brief Synopsis of the William Ruble Family History," in Westward Ho!, compiled by Charity Zoe Flook, Mollie Clark Lilly, David R. Ruble, and Russell Rose (n.p., 1935), p. 17.

<sup>14</sup> Bell, interview. Also, Williams, Winterthur Portfolio, p. 218.

<sup>15</sup> Williams, Winterthur Portfolio, p. 218.

<sup>16</sup> Randall, p. 62.

<sup>17</sup> Francis Ching, A Visual Dictionary of Architecture (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1995), p. 136.

<sup>18</sup> Richard M. Candee, "A Documentary History of Plymouth Colony Architecture, 1620-1700," Old Time New England 60, no. 2 (October-December 1969):37-53 as cited in Williams, Winterthur Portfolio, p. 218.

<sup>19</sup> Abbott Lowell Cummings, The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 89; cited in Williams, Winterthur Portfolio, p. 218.

<sup>20</sup> Randall, p. 140.

<sup>21</sup> Williams, Winterthur Portfolio, p. 218.

<sup>22</sup> Fred Walters, Existing Conditions section, 2005, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> The hipped portico entry looked very similar to the one still present on the church and that of the now destroyed Yellow House or Golden Hotel.

<sup>24</sup> Given the Ruble family's prominence in the community and the church, William N. may have had assistance from the community in building his house. There is simply no written record either way.

<sup>25</sup> Bernice Ruble also claims her grandfather, William Ruble, Sr., was the church founder. The two books he wrote were titled "Letters to the Jews and Gentiles" and "Wonders of the Revelations of Jesus Christ." Bernice Ruble, no page numbers.

<sup>26</sup> She says her family moved away for the sake of better education for the children as well as other benefits. Her father, William N., moved his wife and children back to Golden briefly, 1908-1910, before moving to Eugene permanently. Bernice Ruble, no page numbers.

<sup>27</sup> The Golden Church has Queen Anne decorative elements while the Ruble House might be considered a greatly simplified version of Downing's carpenter Gothic style for the board-and-batten walls and verticality.

<sup>28</sup> Dell Upton, "Traditional Timber Framing," in Material Culture of the Wooden Age, ed. Brooke Hindle (Tarrytown, N.Y.: Sleepy Hollow Press, 1981), pp. 45-49, as cited in Michael Ann Williams, Winterthur Portfolio, p. 218.

<sup>29</sup> The Beveridge Packing Shed and Echo Cove Orchard House, both in Josephine Co., were built in 1910 and 1915 respectively. Both were also board-and-batten, single wall construction. Kay Atwood, Josephine County Cultural and Historical Resource Survey (Josephine County Planning Department, February 1984).

<sup>30</sup> In other historic photos of Golden, the Yellow House (aka the Golden Hotel) built by Fred Johnson in 1895,

now gone, is very similar to the Ruble House in that it had board-and-batten siding, regular fenestration, and a hipped portico entry. The Yellow House was 2 ½ stories and front gabled, not side gabled and 1 ½ stories like the Ruble House. Yellow House construction date from McLane, p. 305.

<sup>31</sup>Randall, pp. 116, 123.

<sup>32</sup> Fred Walters, 2005, Existing Conditions section, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Bernice Ruble, no page numbers.

<sup>35</sup> Randall, pp. 117-118, 127.

<sup>36</sup> Examples of 1910 and 1915 box construction buildings include the Echo Cove Orchard Barn and House as well as the Jennie Beveridge Packing Shed. Kay Atwood, Josephine County Cultural and Historical Resource Survey (Josephine County Planning Department, February 1984).

<sup>37</sup> Walters, 2005.

<sup>38</sup> Rogue River Courier, 8 December 1904, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> Florence Arman, "Golden's Yesteryears," in A History of Josephine County, ed. M. Murphy (Grants Pass: Josephine County Historical Society, 1988), p. 47.

<sup>40</sup> Kay Atwood, Josephine County Cultural and Historical Resource Survey (Josephine County Planning Department, 1983).

<sup>41</sup> Dwyer's term for what we would now call balloon framing was simply a "frame house." He recommended a 4" x 6" for the sill, a 3" x 4" for the plate, and to put up the corner planks first. The battens covering the external vertical plank joints should be 2" wide x 1 ¼" thick, dimensions very close to those of the Ruble House. Dwyer, pp. 75 – 82.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Don Peting, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 23 July 2007.

<sup>44</sup> Randall, p. 141.

<sup>45</sup> Randall, p. 141.

<sup>46</sup> Randall.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Shannon Bell, Eugene, Oregon, 17 July 2007.

<sup>48</sup> Philip Dole, "Farmhouses and Barns of the Willamette Valley," in Space, Style and Structure, vol. 1, ed. Thomas Vaughn (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), p. 79.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

# Significance Section 2.2: Major Periods of Development in Golden

## Introduction

Periods are used to identify historic eras and allow preservationists a means to determine the significant features of a study area or historic site. The period of significance is that period of time in which a site attained significance. The period may be as short as one year, as in an architecturally-significant building or landscape that was constructed in a single year. Historic sites can also have multiple significant periods. In the case of Golden, the primary period of significance occurs between 1878 and 1913. This period is referred to as Golden's Boom Era, and it is intended to capture the peak of the settlement's development. The following section describes Golden at the end of each era, with a detailed period plan of the settlement and a brief narrative of the landscape.

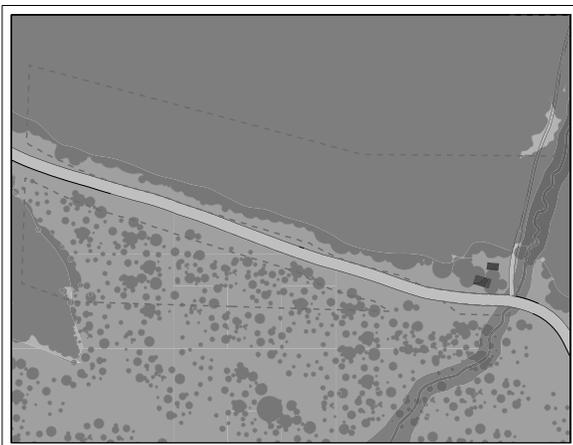


Figure 2.2.1 - 1877 period plan, showing Golden at the end of the Early History Period with the future OPRD property boundary (dashed red line).

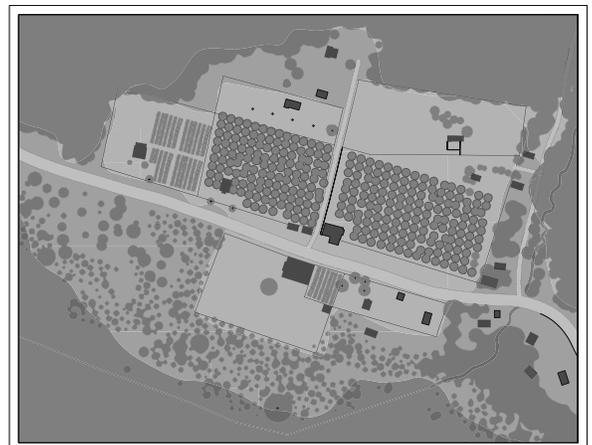


Figure 2.2.3 - The same view in 1913, showing the settlement at the end of Golden's Boom Period, the primary period of significance.

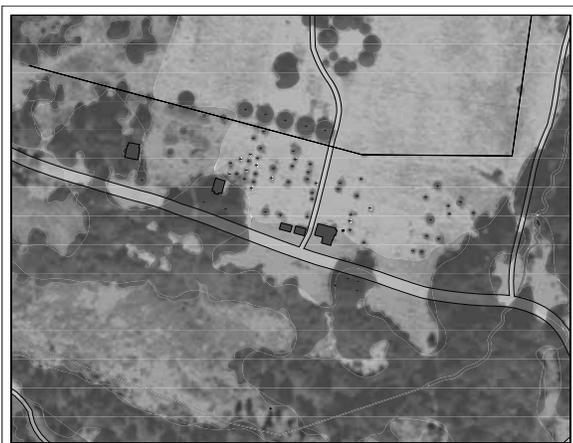


Figure 2.2.3 - The same view in 1967, showing the remains of the settlement at the end of Golden's Bust Period.

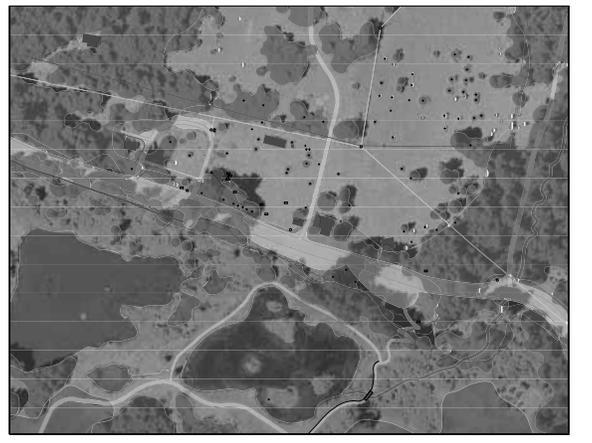


Figure 2.2.4 - The same view in 2007, showing the current conditions at Golden one year after the Mining's End Period.

## Pre-Settlement Era: 1850s-1877 (refer to fold out on opposite page)

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*“The face of the country is hilly and in some parts mountainous, interspersed with valleys of rich alluvial soil. Its geological features have both volcanic and sedimentary indications with quartz lodes of gold, silver, cooper and other mineral deposits, showing to the experienced miner a district of great mineral wealth.”<sup>1</sup>*

### Geology and Topography

Southern Oregon’s geology and its rugged topography made it particularly well suited for hydraulic mining. The area is underlain with highly deformed and metamorphosed mineralized rocks that are both volcanic and sedimentary. Southwestern Oregon is associated with intrusions of ultra-basic (periodite) and intermediate to siliceous (granitic) magmas. Deep below the earth’s crust, these intrusions of molten rock injected valuable metallic minerals, such as gold into a layer of older fractured rocks. After millions of years, the mineralized rocks were uplifted and exposed by erosion.<sup>2</sup> Wind, rain and gravity deposited the heavy minerals into the region’s many alluvial gravel bars, forming the areas famous placers.

Southern Oregon’s mountains provided a complex network of creeks and rivers, which concentrated alluvial deposits throughout the region’s many watersheds. The vertical relief in this part of the state also provided the gravity necessary to pressurize water canons, known as “giants.” To expose the gold buried in alluvial deposits, Hydraulic miners used the giants to wash away millions of cubic yards of soil and gravel.

### Buildings and Structures

John Robinson, or Uncle Jack as he was known came to Coyote Creek in the latter part of the 1860s. He homesteaded on Coyote Creek, and his house and barn were the first known buildings in the area that was to become the settlement of Golden.<sup>3</sup>

### Circulation Features

Coyote Creek Road was most likely a horse trail in 1877. The trail or road was used to access the mines along Coyote Creek. Josephine County approved the construction of a road to Golden in 1893, and it is believed that the road follows the original trail up Coyote Creek.<sup>4</sup> A small trail most likely followed Jack Creek to access the mining claims up Robinson Gulch.<sup>5</sup>

### Vegetation

A virgin stand of mixed conifers covered most of the future settlement of Golden north of Coyote Creek Road. South of the road, the forest was cleared near the end of this period, leaving behind a cut over woodland (see figure 3.1.1 ). *(continued on next page)*

## Mining

Hydraulic mining began in Southern Oregon during the 1870s and occurred on Coyote Creek before the end of this period. However, it is unclear if there had been mining of this sort near Golden before 1877. Most of the Coyote Creek drainage had been worked with pans, shovels, picks and small sluice boxes (also known as rocker boxes) by the end of the period. While there may have been some hydraulic mining near Golden before 1877, it is unlikely that the Ruble's would have purchased heavily mined placers.

# The Primary Period of Significance (refer to fold out on opposite page)

## Golden's Boom Era: 1878-1913

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### Buildings and Structures

By 1913 it is estimated that there were at least 25 buildings associated with Golden: twelve residences, one hotel/residence, one church, one school, two barns, one store/post office (Schuyler Ruble's store was inactive after the Bennett's store opened), one carriage house, one blacksmith shop, one shed (often referred to as the granary) and four other unidentified sheds or buildings. If in fact, more than two-hundred residents lived in Golden at its peak, there were probably more residences located beyond the borders of the 1913 period plan.

An extensive flume carried water along Coyote Creek to feed the hydraulic giants (see figures 1.3.15 & 1.3.21 ). McLane estimates that there were more than fourteen miles of pipes, flumes and ditches in the Coyote Creek area.<sup>6</sup> Within the settlement, fences, surrounded the orchard and divided the cleared land to mark property lines and control animals.

### Circulation Features

All the roads through Golden were dirt. Coyote Creek Road was still the main artery that connected to the main stage road that ran through Wolf Creek. A central road split Golden's orchard in half and the former trail along Jack Creek was improved to access the growing mines up Robinson Gulch.<sup>7</sup>

### Vegetation

In 1913, the virgin mixed-conifer forest formed an edge along the northern boundary of Golden, and a young stand of mixed conifers and broad-leaf trees formed a buffer between the settlement and the hydraulic mining area (see figures 2.1.1 & 3.1.1 ). The Ruble's planted the orchard and it seems to be composed primarily of apples and pears. The grove of fruit trees appears to have been approximately ten to fifteen feet in height during this period, but the height would have varied after pruning. Cherries may also have been mixed into the orchard, but this remains to be determined. There were two main gardens or crop-fields in the settlement: one next to the Ruble's barn and the other next to William N. Ruble's house. There were also grass fields or pastures within the fenced portions of the settlement.

### Mining

The Ruble's hydraulic mining equipment, striped away the alluvial soils, and riparian vegetation along Coyote Creek. Small cliffs of exposed soil and gravel would have marked the extent of the mining activity. The mining scar was strewn with piles of boulders, some as high as thirty feet.<sup>8</sup> These hydraulic mine tailings were stacked by the Ruble Rock Elevator. The mining scar left a broad depression devoid of vegetation, littered with boulders and showing patches of newly exposed bedrock (see figure 1.3.15 ).

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## Golden's Bust Era: 1914-1967 (refer to fold out on opposite page)

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### Buildings and Structures

By 1967, Golden may have been completely uninhabited. From the previous era's estimated twenty five buildings, only five remained: William N. Ruble's house, Golden's church, the blacksmith shop, the shed/granary, and Columbus Bennett's store. William N. Ruble's house was still relatively intact (see figure 1.4.2 ). The flume along Coyote Creek appears in a 1957 aerial photograph and was most likely still standing, although abandoned by the end of the period with the cessation of hydraulic mining in 1964. The fence line along the northern boarder of the Ruble's orchard survived from the previous period and appears in figures 3.2.1 and 3.2.2..

### Circulation Features

Coyote Creek Road seems to follow its original path and continued to be the main artery through the area. It was probably still a gravel road in 1967 and appears that way in a 1950s era photo (see figure 1.4.4 ). Jack Creek Road and the other single lane road that split the Ruble's orchard in half were still in use during this period. The "orchard road" served as an easement and was extended to connect to a farmhouse that was constructed during the period. A new single lane road appeared along Coyote Creek during this period, traversing the hydraulic mining scar.

### Vegetation

Most, if not all of the virgin mixed conifer forest had been cut from the study area to clear an agricultural field. Aside from the surviving members of the orchard, there were several noteworthy trees associated with Golden's Boom Period: the two Douglas Firs planted in front of the church, a group of four Douglas Firs planted near the former Golden hotel, and a Sugar Pine next to William N. Ruble's house. A conspicuous row of trees, presumably five Big Leaf Maples, may have been planted during the previous period along the north boarder of the Ruble's orchard. The maple closest to the orchard road appears to be the pollarded tree in figure 3.1.1 . With most of the orchard missing, the center of the settlement appeared more like a field during this period, and a young stand of trees encroached upon the eastern edge of the orchard boundary. Most of the barnyard and garden associated with the Ruble's barn washed away as a result of hydraulic mining. The garden next to the William N. Ruble house appears to be a patchy field with mixed shrubs and young trees.

### Mining

Patchy trees and shrubs began to take root in the hydraulic mining scar near Golden. Judging from aerial photographs the most exposed or denuded areas persisted closer to Coyote Creek (see figures 3.2.1, 3.2.2 & 3.2.3). *(continued on next page)*

It is possible the hydraulic mining after Golden's Boom left more soil behind for vegetation to propagate. The boulders exposed by the mining seem to be disappearing during this period. They were likely crushed and used in road building projects. By 1964, hydraulic mining was banned, but the seemingly exhausted placer would continue to be mined by other means until the 1990s.

## End of Mining Era: 1968-2006 (refer to fold out on opposite page)

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### Buildings and Structures

By 2007 only four of the buildings from Golden's Boom Period remained, and one of them, the William N. Ruble house is in danger of collapsing. Only the front porch of the house appears missing in a 1972 photograph.<sup>9</sup> However, during this period the rear of the house was removed, exposing the interior and compromising its structural integrity. The church has received the most attention and a new foundation was added in 2005.<sup>10</sup> A barn, a stage and a trailer home appeared during this period, although only the barn and the stage remain. Two outhouses appear on the property today, and they were most likely constructed around 1975, when the barn and the trailer home first appear in an aerial photograph (see figure 3.2.2 ). Judging by its construction, the stage was probably built in the late 1970s (see figures 1.5.3 & 1.5.4 ). The fence line along the northern boarder of the Ruble's orchard remains intact.

### Circulation Features.

Coyote Creek Road follows the same path through the site and continues to be the main artery in the area. It is now a two lane paved road with a gravel shoulder that is widened to accommodate parking near Golden and the entrance to the Golden Coyote Wetlands. Jack Creek Road and the "orchard road" are surfaced with gravel and remain intact. A new network of hiking trails and roads traverse through the Golden Coyote Wetlands.

### Vegetation

The Ruble's orchard has been reduced to a handful of trees and several dead fruit trees occur on the eastern edge of the orchard where conifers continue to encroach. Some of the fruit trees on the site are probably sprouting from the roots of the original pear and apple trees. The Ruble's orchard may have been composed of several varieties of fruit trees that were mixed throughout the grove. There are several cherry trees on the site, but none appear to be as old as the oldest pear and apple trees. The cherries may be seedlings from the nearby orchard on the north side of the OPRD boundary. The new orchard first appears in a 1975 aerial photo (see figure 3.2.2 ). If cherries were not planted during Golden's Boom Period they may have also originated from a tree that was planted near the Ruble house during Golden's Bust Period. The two Douglas Firs in front of the church remain and are approximately 100 feet tall. The Sugar Pine near the Ruble house is nearly as tall, and three of the Douglas Firs that grew next to the Golden hotel remain. These firs appeared much larger than the "church firs" in historic photos from Golden's Boom Period, and must predate the "church firs" by more than twenty years. The row of maples along the northern edge of the Ruble's orchard are obscured by thick vegetation, and one of them is standing dead (possibly the pollarded tree that appears in figure 3.1.1 ). Maintained by mowing and with most of the orchard missing, the center of the settlement continues to appear more like a field. *(continued on next page)*

## Mining

Today the hydraulic mining area contains a constructed wetland known as the Golden Coyote Wetlands. The area contains ponds that capture winter rains and water from Jack Creek. The site is very exposed and covered with a layer of fine gravel, and grasses appear sparse. Riparian vegetation is thickening along Coyote Creek, which is hidden from the settlement. Patches of young trees occur sporadically, and most vegetation is clustered near the ponds. Exposed cliffs of eroding soil, approximately 30-40' high, occur along the southern edges of Coyote Creek Road. The cliffs are the result of hydraulic mining, but it is unclear when the mining occurred so close to the road. The soil in the cliff area is classified as Josephine gravelly loam, which is prone to erosion when exposed on steep slopes.<sup>11</sup> It is highly likely that the cliffs are continually eroding back toward the road.

### Section 2.1 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> A. J. Dufur, "Statistics of the State of Oregon: Containing a Description of Its Agricultural Development, and Natural and Industrial Resources, Together with the Physical, Geographical, Geological, and Mineral Statistics of the State.," (Salem, OR: State Agricultural Society, 1869).

<sup>2</sup> Len Ramp-Field, "Oregon's Mining Began in Josephine County," Daily Courier, April, 2 1960.

<sup>3</sup> Larry L. McLane, *First There Was Twogood: A Pictorial History of Northern Josephine County*, 1 ed. (Sunny Valley, OR: Sexton Enterprises, 1995):280. Also, see page 333 for a photo of John Robinson's house and barn.

<sup>4</sup> Stacy D. Stumbo, "Not Your Typical Mining Town," Grants Pass Daily Courier, September 15 2007.

<sup>5</sup> McLane, *First There Was Twogood: A Pictorial History of Northern Josephine County*:299.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*:326.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*:302.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*:325.

<sup>9</sup> unknown, "Golden Ghost Town," Grants Pass Daily Courier, February, 26 1972.

<sup>10</sup> Golden Coyote Wetlands Incorporated, "Golden Coyote Wetlands, Inc: Summary Report 1993-2005," (Grants Pass, OR: 2005).

<sup>11</sup> Roger Borine, "Soil Survey of Josephine County," (United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, 1983):65.

# Chapter 3

## Evaluating the Historic Integrity of Golden

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*Figure 3.1.1 - Looking northward at Golden, circa 1905 (GCW archives). Note the large Douglas Fir in the foreground is growing amongst a much younger stand of trees. This suggests that the area was logged sometime towards the end of Golden's Early History Era.*

# *Historic Integrity Section 3.1: An Overview of Contributing and Non-Contributing Features*

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## Introduction

Through an historic analysis of Golden, two possible character areas were identified for treatment: the settlement area and the hydraulic mining area. Of these two areas, the settlement area was chosen for further analysis, because it possesses historic integrity from Golden's primary period of significance. The hydraulic mining area does not have integrity, because it was re-designed as a wetland in the 1990s. Yet, these two areas are critical components of Golden's history, and the mining area should be used to interpret the site. It would be difficult to apply preservation guidelines to the mining area. Today, it is a rehabilitated hydraulic mining scar, and any further treatment in this area should focus on ecological restoration and soil stabilization (especially on the cliffs adjacent to Coyote Creek road). The settlement area, however, "contributes" to the historic significance of Golden because it was constructed during the primary period of significance, and it has maintained contributing landscape characteristics.

## Contributing vs. Non-Contributing

Contributing landscape characteristics and features were constructed during the period of significance. In the case of Golden, contributing landscape characteristics and features were developed during Golden's Boom Era by the Ruble family and the other families and miners associated with the settlement between 1878 and 1913. Therefore, non-contributing features were developed after the period of significance, or after 1913. Non-contributing features also occur before the period of significance. Features that were developed before 1878 do not contribute to Golden's primary period of significance. However, existing features that pre-date 1878 should be considered as an important component of Coyote Creek's cultural and natural history.

## Historic Integrity

A character area will have integrity if it contains enough contributing landscape features and characteristics to evoke the historic period. Integrity is evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics from the period of significance. Currently the NPS uses seven elements to determine integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A site does not need to possess all seven elements to have integrity, but a sufficient degree of the following elements is needed in order for a site to convey its historic period. To determine historic integrity, these seven elements were evaluated by an analysis of landscape characteristics.

# Landscape Characteristics

Landscape characteristics are features, both natural and cultural, that distinguish a place. To evaluate integrity, seven landscape characteristics were chosen: spatial organization, circulation, vegetation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, land use, and cultural traditions. A description of each landscape characteristic follows:

- **Spatial Organization:** the arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that defines and creates space.
- **Circulation:** spaces, features and materials that constitute systems of movement, particularly roads and paths.
- **Vegetation:** indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous material (this study focuses on the relationship between woodlands and meadows).
- **Buildings and structures:** three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges and walls.
- **Views and Vistas:** features that create or allow a range of vision, which can be natural or designed and controlled.
- **Land Use:** the principal activities in the landscape that have formed, shaped, or organized the landscape as a result of human interaction
- **Cultural Traditions:** the practices that have influenced the development of the landscape in terms of land use, patterns of land division, building forms, stylistic preferences, and the use of materials.

## Summary

The evaluation of integrity is based on the presence of identifiable landscape characteristics from the period of significance. The analysis compared the present function and appearance of the character areas to the contributing or historic function and appearance of the character areas. Decisions about historic integrity require judgements about whether a site reflects the spatial organization, physical components and historic associations that it attained during Golden's Boom Era. The period of significance acts as the benchmark for measuring the character areas integrity. Changes outside of the period of significance will diminish or destroy integrity, and a character area either has, or does not have, integrity. However, if a site does have integrity, it will have either high or diminished integrity. Of the two character areas identified, only the settlement was evaluated. There was enough historic fabric within the current OPRD property boundary to warrant further analysis. It should be noted, however, that the current park boundary does not contain all of the historic, or contributing, settlement. Beyond determining integrity, the following evaluation of landscape characteristics is intended to aid OPRD with the treatment and future development of Golden.

# Golden's Character Areas and the current OPRD Park Boundary



Figure 3.1.2 – Golden 2007



Settlement  
Character Area  
Boundary



OPRD  
Park  
Boundary



Mining  
Character Area  
Boundary



# Historic Integrity Section 3.2: Analyzing Landscape Characteristics in Golden’s Settlement Area

Identifying the surviving features, or landscape characteristics from Golden’s primary period of significance (1878-1913) make’s it possible to assess the site’s integrity. Of the two character areas, the settlement was chosen for a more detailed historic analysis, mainly because the mining area has been so dramatically altered since the end of Golden’s Boom Period. Of all the possible landscape characteristics that contribute to the mining area’s significance, only spatial organization seems applicable. As a character area, it was determined that the mining area does not have historic integrity. However, as mentioned earlier, this character area represents a very important piece of Golden’s history, and it has a very high interpretive value.

On the other hand, the settlement area, with its contributing buildings, orchard remnant, circulation features and spatial organization has historic integrity, albeit diminished. Beginning with a comparison of the earliest aerial photographs available, the following section identifies the contributing and non-contributing features in the settlement area.

## Evaluation of Landscape Characteristics & Integrity

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC	CONTRIBUTING	AREA OF INTEGRITY	LEVEL OF INTEGRITY
Buildings & Structures	Yes	materials, workmanship, design	diminished
Circulation	Yes	design	high
Spatial Organization	Yes	design	high
Vegetation	Yes	location, setting	diminished
Views & Vistas	No	design, location, setting	none
Land Use	No	design, feeling, association	none
Cultural Traditions	No	feeling, association	none
Do the landscape characteristics contribute to the significance of Golden?	YES	Does the character area have integrity?	YES
		If yes, what level?	diminished

# A Comparison of the Aerial Photographs from 1957 - 1985



Coyote Creek

OPRD Boundary

Figure 3.2.1 - 1957 aerial photograph of Golden and Coyote Creek



# A Comparison of the Aerial Photographs from 1957 - 1985



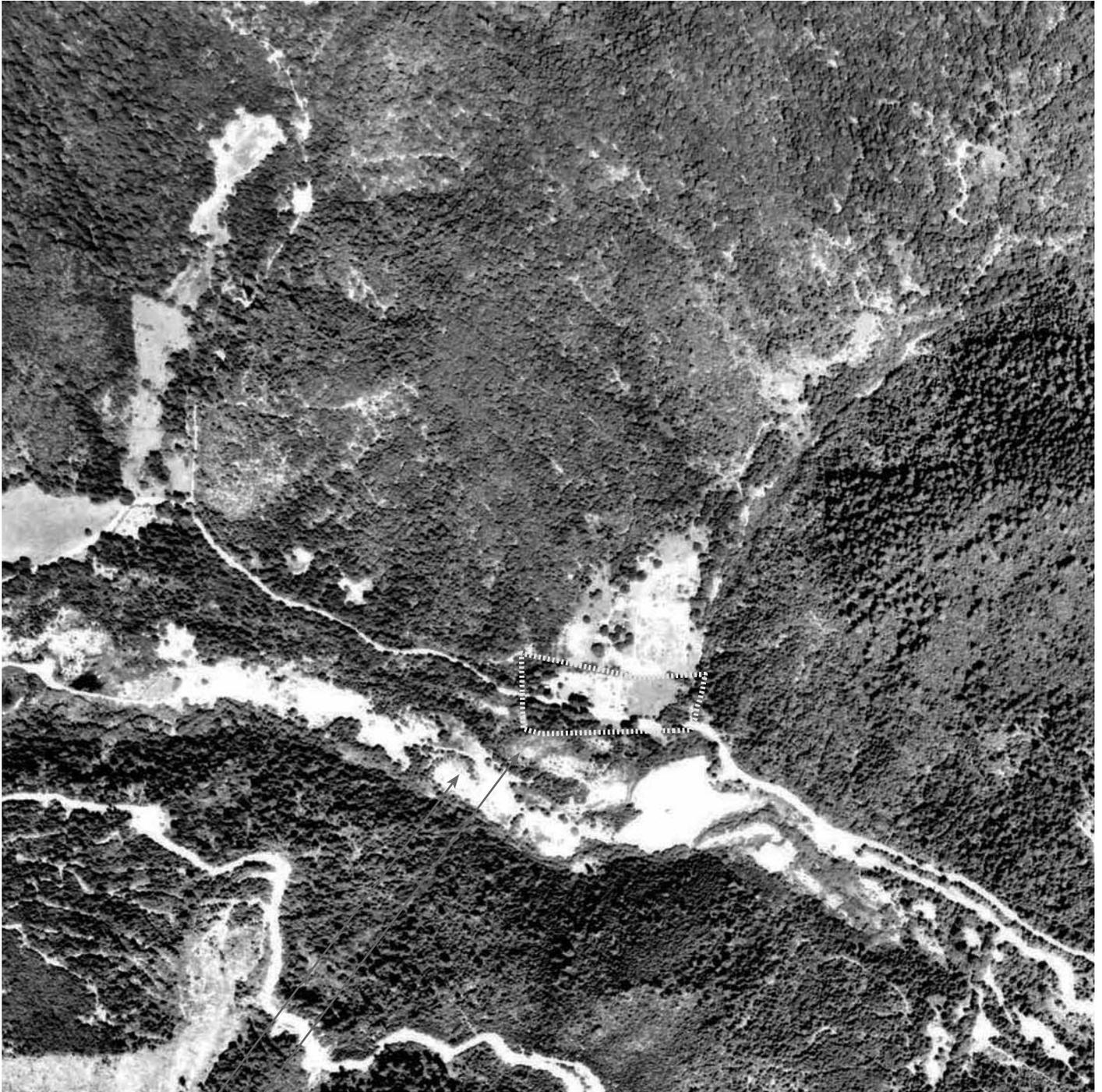
Coyote Creek

OPRD Boundary

Figure 3.2.2 - 1975 aerial photograph of Golden and Coyote Creek



# A Comparison of the Aerial Photographs from 1957 - 1985



Coyote Creek

OPRD Boundary

Figure 3.2.3 - 1985 aerial photograph of Golden and Coyote Creek



## Circulation Features (refer to fold out on opposite page)

### Pre-Settlement Era Circulation Features

Coyote Creek Road was most likely a horse trail in 1877, and it would have been the primary route up Coyote Creek. There is no hard evidence to support that today's road follows the very same route it did in 1877. However, there is also no evidence that suggests the road followed a different course. Josephine County approved the construction of a road to Golden in 1893, however, Golden's church (built in 1892) already seemed oriented to a road that predates the county's approval. Numerous historic photographs from Golden's Boom Era show an unpaved Coyote Creek Road following the same path that it does today. The road is considered to be the oldest cultural feature in the study area. A small trail most likely followed Jack Creek, allowing miner's access to Robinson Gulch. This trail would have likely become more of a service road for several mines located in the headwaters of Jack Creek during the Boom Era.

### Golden's Boom Era Circulation Features

All the roads through Golden during this era were dirt. The only circulation feature that seems directly linked to Golden and this era is the central road that split Golden's orchard in half. The "Orchard Road" appears to be close to the same width and is well within its original location. The road was extended to a farm house during the Bust Era.

### Golden's Bust Era Circulation Features

Besides the extension to the Orchard Road, the only additional circulation feature of this era was a single lane dirt road that followed Coyote Creek. This road probably provided access for miners working the areas placer claims. The road disappeared during the End of Mining Era.

### End of Mining Era Circulation Features

During this era, Coyote Creek Road became a two lane paved road with a gravel shoulder that is widened to accommodate parking near Golden and the entrance to the Golden Coyote Wetlands. A new network of hiking trails and roads traverse through the Golden Coyote Wetlands. None of the circulation features in the mining area, which is now the wetlands, nor the driveway contribute to the significance of Golden. Also during this era, a horse-shoe shaped driveway was put in between the church and the Ruble House. The non-contributing driveway accessed a trailer house that was put on the site circa 1975.



*Figure 3.2.4 - Jack Creek Road most likely predates the Orchard Road and first appeared during the Pre-Settlement Era as a trail that miner's used to access Robinson's Gulch. The trail became a dirt road during the Boom Era as mining activity increased and Golden Grew. (author's collection)*



*Figure 3.2.5 - Looking northeast at the Orchard Road, a contributing circulation feature that appears unmoved from its original location. Trees in the Ruble's orchard were never planted this close to the road, and the fruit tree in this image is probably sprouting from the roots of an older tree (author's collection)*

## Buildings, Structures and Vegetation (refer to fold out on opposite page)

### Pre-Settlement Era Buildings, Structures and Vegetation

A virgin stand of mixed conifers covered most of the future settlement of Golden. None of these trees exist on the site today. John Robinson's house and barn were built during this era, but they disappeared sometime during the Bust Era.

### Golden's Boom Era Buildings, Structures and Vegetation

Only four of an estimated twenty five buildings from Golden's Boom Era exist today: the Church, the Bennett's store, the Shed (often referred to as the granary) and William N. Ruble's house. During this period, fences surrounded the orchard and divided the cleared land to mark property lines and control animals. Although not constructed of contributing historic materials, the fence line along the northern boarder of the orchard contributes to the significance of Golden.

Only seventeen trees from the Ruble's orchard were identified, and three of them were dead. It seems the orchard was composed primarily of apples and pears, but cherries may also have been mixed into the orchard. The two Douglas Firs in front of the church, the Sugar Pine near the Ruble house and the three Douglas Firs that grew next to the Golden hotel are also contributing vegetation features.

### Golden's Bust Era Buildings, Structures and Vegetation

There are no buildings and structures from this era on the site today. A farm house and barn, built during this area were constructed north of the settlement (and outside of the study area), but these structures are non-contributing. Several farm implements on the site are most likely non-contributing. An old fence post in the southeast section of the site probably dates to this era, and it may mark the location of the fence line that ran along Coyote Creek Road during the Boom Era.

The agricultural field to the north of the settlement was cleared during this era. Conifers encroached upon the eastern edge of the orchard boundary during this period. A cherry near the Ruble House appeared during this era and may be the parent of a cluster of cherries to the rear of the church. The row of five Douglas Firs near the church are non-contributing.

### End of Mining Era Buildings, Structures and Vegetation

The barn, the stage and the outhouses are non-contributing. Judging by its construction, the stage and the front porch of the Bennett's store were probably built in the late 1970s by the same builder. The rock wall and the split rail fence along the south side of Coyote Creek Road are also non-contributing. The graveyard is also of this era.

The nearby orchard on the north side of the OPRD boundary first appears in a 1975 aerial photo. The conifers in the field and the assorted ornamental shrubs near the trailer house driveway are non-contributing.



*Figure 3.2.6 - Looking northeast at the William N. Ruble's House. The back half of the building is missing, and the structure could collapse at any moment. (author's collection)*



*Figure 3.2.7 - Looking northward at a dead tree from the Ruble's orchard. Conifers, like this California Incense Cedar are encroaching upon the orchard and choking out the older fruit trees (author's collection).*

## Conclusion (refer to fold out on opposite page)

### Buildings and Structures (Contributing)

Less than a quarter of Golden's Boom Era buildings remain. Despite this fact, the remaining contributing buildings have historic integrity. These buildings provide an authentic link to Golden's past, and they should be cared for. Today the buildings and structures from Golden's Boom Period contribute to the significance of the site. The non-contributing buildings on the site are few, and their removal will not adversely affect historic integrity.

### Circulation Features (Contributing)

Coyote Creek Road and Jack Creek Road most likely originated in the Pre-Settlement Era, but they should be considered as contributing features, because they follow the same routes that they did during the primary period of significance. Along with the Orchard road, these three circulation features contribute to Golden's significance. Removing the horse-shoe shaped driveway will not adversely affect historic integrity and could be a step towards rehabilitating the Ruble's garden.

### Spatial Organization (Contributing)

The basic organization of Golden's physical elements contributes to the site's significance. Golden was constructed along Coyote Creek Road and organized around the Ruble's orchard. The northern property line is the same today as it was in 1914. The spatial organization of the settlement south of Coyote Creek Road, was destroyed by hydraulic mining. The opening for the wetland parking area has persisted since 1952 and is probably the original location of Golden's school.

### Vegetation (Contributing)

The Ruble's orchard has virtually disappeared. However, the field that the Ruble's orchard grew in remains relatively intact, and enough contributing vegetation remains to retain historic integrity. The large Sugar Pine, the two firs in front of the church, and the three firs that mark the location of the Golden Hotel should be protected. Removing all of the conifers from within the orchard boundary would help rehabilitate the fruit grove. Furthermore, removing vegetation from around the existing buildings would not affect historic integrity.

### Level of Integrity (Diminished)

Views and Vistas, Land Use and Cultural Traditions are non-contributing landscape characteristics. However, maintaining a view of the settlement from Coyote Creek road is important. Furthermore, church services occur infrequently in Golden's church. Providing for this cultural tradition would at least partially restore the church's original function. When assessing all of Golden's landscape characteristics, the settlement retains historic integrity. However, when compared to the primary period of significance, Golden's integrity is diminished.

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