

THERE'S GOLD IN THEM 'THAR HILLS!

by

MARIELLE LUMANG

(Under the Direction of John C. Waters)

ABSTRACT

This thesis will examine several "boom and bust" towns in light of the gold mining industry. The primary focus will be the first major Gold Rush located in the mountains of North Georgia during the 1820s when the area would be dramatically changed with the discovery of gold. Not only will this thesis discuss the history and origins of gold mining, but it will also discuss the significance of the Gold Rush. In the process, several towns will be examined, Auraria and Dahlonega in Georgia, Telluride, Colorado; and Bodie, California. These towns are considered "boom and bust" towns, experiencing the success and decline of development that was so closely related to gold mining. However, each town has responded to the decline in distinct ways. The conclusion of this thesis will recommend several strategies for other "boom and bust" towns based on the successes of these four unique examples.

INDEX WORDS: Gold Rush, Tourism, Gold Mining, Industry, Heritage

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B.S., University of Arkansas, 2004

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of
Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree

MASTER OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2007

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Long since the start of civilization the appeal of gold has caused many to revere it for its beauty, rarity and value. From the Egyptian pharaohs to the Hindus of India to the Christian Heaven, gold has been an important element in representing divinity, intelligence and paradise. But it is the value of gold that gives people reason to be so consumed by it. Growing up in the Southwest, my interest in the Gold Rush first began when family vacations would revolve around historic sites like Wickenburg, Arizona where visions of the Old West piqued my curiosity. It was not just the reason why people came to populate such rural areas of the country but also the thrill and excitement of riches and prosperity and the rawness of frontier living that was brought along with it. Gold strikes and the overnight creation of towns and aftermath was a cultural and social phenomenon that deserves more merit than what is currently available. While there are plenty of resources available about the Gold Rush and Gold Rush towns, much of the information is focused on the history and demise of such towns. There seems to be very little information on what happened to

these towns after they busted. Even less information is available on the resources that are left from the Gold Rush in specific towns.

Some of these towns have remained viable after all these years, being able to adapt to the changing times as well as retain some of its historic character. This thesis will give further insight into the development of these towns from when the Gold Rush first boomed the town, the decline of the town and now what resources are currently available to these towns as well as the methods used in keeping the towns viable. Research methods are primarily archival research with site visits during both the spring, summer and fall seasons. This thesis will also attempt to provide analysis into the various models of heritage tourism and give examples for which other boom-and-bust towns may use to capitalize on the "gold" of tourism.

"Gold fever", as it is most commonly referred to, is to what many North Georgia towns can credit their existence. Beginning in the early 1800s, discoveries of gold led to an industry that peaked from 1828 into the mid nineteenth century. As the gold would play out in the Dahlonega region, miners rushed to California, Colorado and the Alaskan Klondike to try their hand at striking it rich. Wherever gold was, so were towns. Wherever gold was not, the towns soon died. The mining industry served as a catalyst for the boom and bust of a town.

Nationally, several different trends and changes affected gold mining and its industry no matter what region of the country. First, there was a growing interest in geography and geology. Then came the advent of electricity and the spreading accessibility to even the most rural areas. Mining technology itself would evolve from surface mining to sub-surface mining to utilizing water and other chemicals to extract the precious metal from ore.

These advances affecting labor forces allowed for more product but required less and less people to do the job. Other things affecting labor forces included the Civil War and World War. However, regardless of the things that affected mining on a national level, towns often found themselves struggling when a more "golden" opportunity presented itself elsewhere. People left, mines closed, and institutions such as banks and hotels fought to stay open. But more often than not, these towns became abandoned and forgotten in favor of the next big boom town.

Decades later what does tend to bring attention, and in some areas bring a new life to the community, is the industry of tourism. Whether it is recreational, cultural or heritage based - many towns are now looking to seek economic sustenance by attracting a tourist crowd. Some towns such as Dahlonega, Georgia and Telluride, Colorado have been successful in

achieving a balance between retaining historic charm while providing new businesses, housing, shopping, and other amenities. Other towns have looked to provide a unique experience to visitors and rely on a State support system, such as Bodie State Historic Park located in Bodie, California. Towns like Auraria, Georgia, however, have not seen quite the success as the above mentioned towns and are essentially abandoned with very little left to offer the remaining community and visitors. This thesis will examine these four towns, each chosen for their unique development, decline and response to the Gold Rush.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY

Although the origin of gold is still a mystery, the allure of gold has always existed. The first Native American found gold attractive as jewelry and ornament but no evidence has been found that they mined gold in large quantities. This allure was also what brought the first Europeans to this country. Ponce de Leòn, in 1513, came to Florida with information of a land that was rumored to have gold in abundance.¹ However, the first real evidence of gold was found when Diego Miruelo, an adventurer, was presented with a small amount of gold while trading with the native Floridians.² The allure of gold brought the Spanish northward towards the Appalachians with Hernando de Soto organizing the trek in 1540. During deSoto's journey, he heard stories of the richness of the land with people who wore gold as hats and gifts of gold in great quantities were given to women. Though there are accounts of de Soto stepping foot in what is now White County, he is rumored to have died near the

¹ George F. Becker, *Gold Field of the Southern Appalachians*, Geological Survey 16th Annual Report, 1895, 253.

² W.S. Yeates, S. McCallie, and F. King, *A Preliminary Report on a Part of the Gold Deposits of Georgia*, Atlanta: Franklin Printing & Publishing Company, 1896. 26.

Mississippi River in Arkansas never finding the abundance of gold laying beneath his feet as he traveled through the southern Appalachians.³

Evidence for gold in Georgia was found in 1564 when French expeditioner Renè Goulaine de Laudonniere was presented with gold by the natives. Other Spanish mining efforts followed until their efforts to find an *El Dorado* were intruded on by the British. The first successful settlement by the English, Jamestown, nearly failed because of a futile gold fever that fell upon the town a year after its founding.⁴ Over the next 200 years the occasional find would stir up some excitement including a note from Thomas Jefferson in his *Notes on Virginia* (1782) where he writes of a four pound piece of gold ore found on the Rappahannock River. However, in 1825 a small rich vein of quartz gold was found in North Carolina in Stanly County. By the end of that year, more than eight hundred ounces of gold was deposited at the Philadelphia mint, each ounce yielding as much as twenty dollars.⁵ But in 1828, a discovery by chance of a

³ Lawrence A. Clayton, Vernon James Knight Jr., and Edward C. Moore, eds., *The De Soto Chronicles: The Expedition of Hernando de Soto to North America in 1539-1543*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993).

⁴ Fletcher M. Green, *Gold Mining in Antebellum Virginia*. The Georgia Historical Quarterly, Vol. 19, No. 2 (June 1935), pp 93-111. and Vol. 19, No. 2 (September 1935), pp. 211-228.

⁵ J.T. Pardee and C.F. Park, *Gold Deposits of the Southern Piedmont*. U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 213

much larger and richer vein in Georgia would become the first major US gold rush. (see Figure 1.1)

No one is sure who exactly was the first to discover gold in Georgia but it is likely that the Cherokees knew about the wealth of the Southern Appalachian region well before they had any use for it. Towards the nineteenth century, they were cautious in sharing this information but by the 1820s, it was common knowledge.⁶ So that, in 1828, when Benjamin Parks stumbled upon a rock while following a trail and upon further inspection and saw that it was full of gold, news of this discovery spread quickly and by fall of the next year, there were estimates that up to 10,000 Georgia miners had taken over the North Georgia mountains.⁷ (see Figure 1.2)

However, this land had long been in the territory of the Cherokee Nation and the Cherokee had been fighting to hold on to that land for years. The pressure for land exerted by Europeans began a period of Indian withdrawal known as cessions. The first land cession was in 1721 in South Carolina. By 1819, ninety percent of the Cherokee's pre-colonial territory, stretching from east Tennessee, North Carolina and North Georgia, was lost. In 1828, the Georgia General Assembly enacted a bill mandating

⁶ David Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, University of South Carolina Press, 1993. 13.

⁷ *Ibid.*

the authority of the state of Georgia over the Cherokees signaling an end to the Cherokee Nation in the South.⁸

The year 1829 marks the beginning of the gold rush and the thousands of miners that came through North Georgia called themselves the "Twenty-niners", each with a dream of striking it rich.⁹ (See Figure 1.3) These miners quickly built up shanty towns that accommodated the pastimes of these miners: drinking, gambling, and fighting. One Georgia judge referred to these men as "thieves, gamblers, and murderers - quarrelsome, drunken and malicious - forming altogether a lawless, ungovernable community".¹⁰ Lawless or not, there were some who regretted that gold had ever been discovered in this region at all. They feared that Georgia might follow in the footsteps of Spain whose newfound wealth from Mexico and Peru was said to have caused a decline and changed the character in its population.¹¹ But the gold fever seemed impossible to stop with the purity of gold coming from this region surpassing all other known sources of gold at this time. Gold that is at least seventy percent pure is considered to be profitable to mine. The gold coming from Georgia averages to be about ninety-five percent pure of impurities compared to the eighty-eight percent average of gold

⁸ Andrew W. Cain, *History of Lumpkin County for the First Hundred Years, 1832-1932*.

⁹ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 25.

¹⁰ F.M. Green, *Georgia's Forgotten Industry*, 101.

¹¹ *Southern Recorder*, October 3, 1829

found in the California and Alaska region.¹² And with the thousands of miners in the area, a large quantity of this gold was coming from the Georgia mountains. So much so that by 1832, the U.S mint at Philadelphia had received more than half a million dollars' worth of gold from north Georgia.¹³

The first of these gold rush boom towns was six miles south of where present-day Dahlonega now lies. The first resident was William Dean, who built a cabin between the Chestatee and Etowah rivers in 1832. The next resident was Nathaniel Nuckolls who built a tavern, hotel, and several log buildings to house the influx of miners. These businesses were so popular that the town soon extended around them and the place was known as Nuckollsville. By 1833, the population of this town was estimated to be around a thousand and in the county, about ten thousand. Later that year, the town was renamed *Auraria*, from Latin *aurum*, "gold". As the only sizable town in the county, it was almost certain that *Auraria* would become the official center of county government. However, problems arose with two lots in *Auraria* when it was discovered that the man who owned these two lots had lied during the land lottery. The result was the move of the new county seat north towards Cane Creek and *Auraria* lost all chance of attracting new people. The summer of that year

¹² Becker, *Gold Field of the Southern Appalachians*, 258.

¹³ "Statistics of Coinaga" *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*, 384.

brought a drastic decline in population. Lots were being put up for sale or abandoned and businesses and county offices were relocating to the new county seat. The new town became known as Dahlonega.¹⁴

The name, Dahlonega, from Cherokee "dalanigei", meaning "yellow money" was appropriate for the abundance of gold found in the area. With its establishment as the county seat, Dahlonega experienced a boom similar to that of Auraria. Within a few months of gaining the official county government seat, a thousand people had crammed themselves into the small settlement with about five thousand more in the surrounding hills.¹⁵ Other counties experienced a gold rush boom including Habersham County, which had some of the most productive mines in Georgia. Clarksville had eleven stores, four law offices, the Jacob Stroup Iron Works, two churches, three taverns and a local brewery by 1831. Gainesville had already been growing as a town located just outside of the Cherokee Nation and was considered a gateway into the gold region. In 1830, its stores and businesses made a profit on gold worth \$120,000. Carroll County had Villa Rica, which made a considerable amount of profit from mining from areas that produced more than one thousand ounces of gold annually for several years.¹⁶ Mining activities in north

¹⁴ Cain, *History of Lumpkin County*, 42.

¹⁵ F.M. Green, *Georgia's Forgotten Industry: Gold Mining*, 109.

¹⁶ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 63-4.

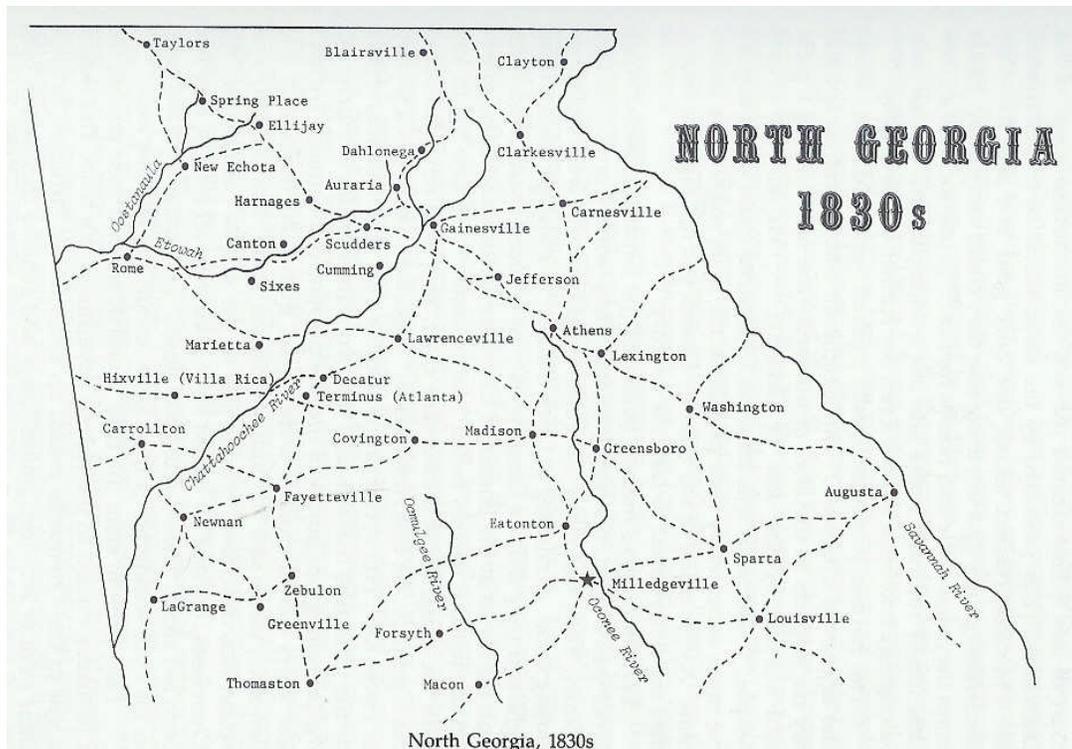
Georgia continued well into the 1830s using techniques that ranged from panning to cradle rockers to large stamp mills. In order to provide a stable environment for banking as well as raise the value of gold, a branch of the U.S. mint opened in 1838 in Dahlonega. The first year of operation produced 20,583 coins with a face value of \$102,915.¹⁷ However, by the early 1840s, it was already becoming increasingly difficult for Southern miners to turn a profit. Mines were slowly closing. Land that had, a decade earlier, sold fairly quickly, was now difficult to sell. The Dahlonega mint hit a peak in 1843 with production being worth \$600,000. But by 1861, it was clear that the mint had failed in the expectation that it would help overcome the national shortage of coins and closed by the end of the year. The local economy did not even see the benefits of having a local mint since the coins were never distributed freely.¹⁸ The Civil War delivered the final blow to the Georgia gold rush. Mining continued sporadically after the war, and new technology allowed for a couple of new companies to open; however, the cost of opening and maintaining a mine in an area outweighed the value of gold that could be found.¹⁹ A small wave of gold fever spread in the area after the Great Depression but mining was just not profitable. Today, there are remnants

¹⁷ Cain, *History of Lumpkin County*, 82.

¹⁸ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 117

¹⁹ William S. Kinsland, *The Dahlonega Mint: A Civil War Mystery*, 39-46.

of the gold rush throughout the north Georgia area, such as the Dahlonega Gold Museum housed in the old Lumpkin County Courthouse built in 1836. There is also thirteen ounces of gold that cover the steeple of Price Memorial Hall of the North Georgia College campus and forty three ounces of gold that cover the dome of Georgia's State Capitol. Geologists have confirmed that there are still rich veins of gold in the Appalachians but a successful operation would cost close to a million dollars.²⁰ Though no effort has been made to cash in on that opportunity, another Georgia gold rush may still occur.



Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*

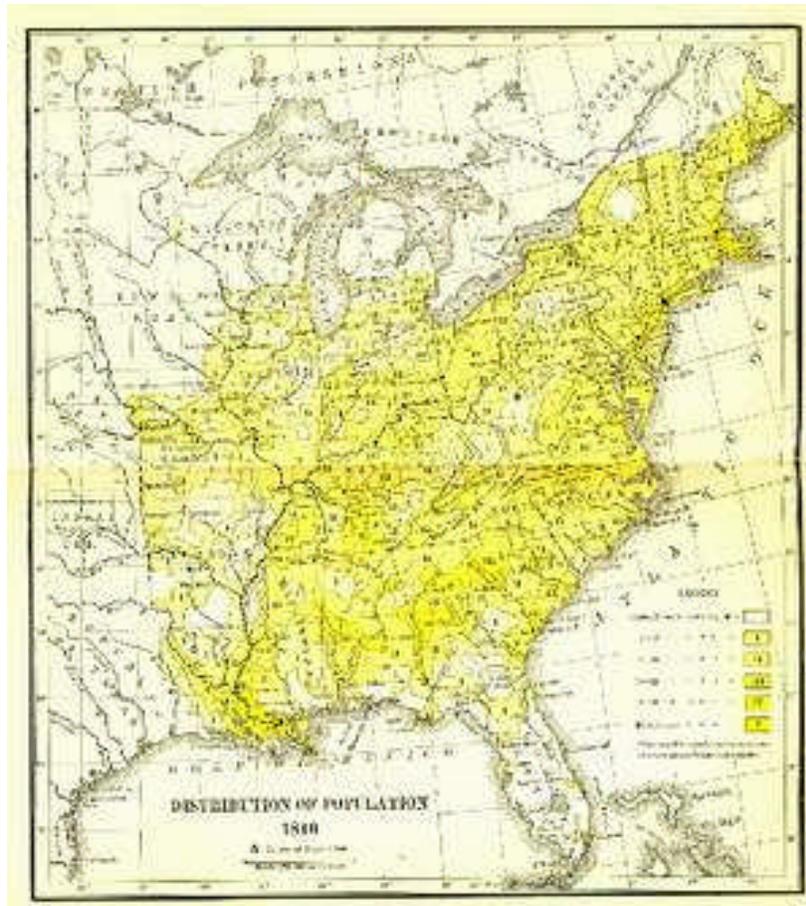
Figure 1.1

²⁰ W. Larry Otwell, *Gold of White County Georgia*. Cleveland, Ga: Rainbow Sequoia 1984.



Map LUMP1. Blake ca. 1858? <http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/lump1.jpg>

Figure 1.2



Population distribution map, published in 1840. The darker the yellow, the heavier the population. A clear westward trend is evident. *Image courtesy of [Political Science Dept, College of New Jersey](#).*

Figure 1.3

CHAPTER 3

SIGNIFICANCE

When one thinks of "Gold Rush" one almost automatically assumes the California Gold Rush was the first and only gold rush in North America. But many fail to know that the first significant gold rush was actually in North Georgia. Though there have been many small waves of gold fever that had spread through North America beginning with the Spanish Conquistadors, it is the Georgia Gold Rush that is considered to be the beginning of the larger gold mining era based on two things: its impact on the land and its impact on the people.

The land that contained the veins of quartz gold had for generations been the territory of the Cherokee people. Their nation was the largest of the Five Civilized Tribes of the Southeast with more than 40,000 square miles in territory in the southern Appalachians. They had an estimated population of 22,500 by 1650.²¹ (See Figure 3.1) Since the 16th century people who wanted the riches that this land was rumored to hold -- first the Spanish then the British -- had imposed their presence on their land. And by 1828, the Cherokees had lost close to

²¹* <http://ngeorgia.com/history/cherokee.html>

ninety percent of their territory to the "white people" and they began to fight back with fierce resistance to hold onto what little land they had left.²² They were not the 'savages' that were typified in the newspapers and general presumption. Rather, they had assimilated many of the European customs, built roads, schools and churches, farmed and ranched.²³ They had an alphabet thanks to a half Cherokee named Sequoyah.²⁴ The Cherokees even had their own planned community called New Echota. The town began in 1819 when delegates from the eight different Cherokee districts met to create a capitol for the nation, Newtown. In 1825, the name changed to New Echota in honor of Chota, a town in present day Tennessee.²⁵ By 1830, the town had fifty residents, a main street and a two acre town square. However, mandates enabled by state legislation allowed the Georgia government to seize the Cherokees' land and to impose rules and regulations over the traditional Cherokee culture. They soon lost rights to their own land and were not recognized as citizens or were allowed to testify in court whether as witnesses or defendants.²⁶ In 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act that would have given the United States all of the Cherokee land. This was fought with fervor from both sides and

²² William G. McLoughlin, *Compulsory Indian Removal*, 608.

²³ William C. Sturtevant, *John Ridge on Cherokee Civilization in 1826*.

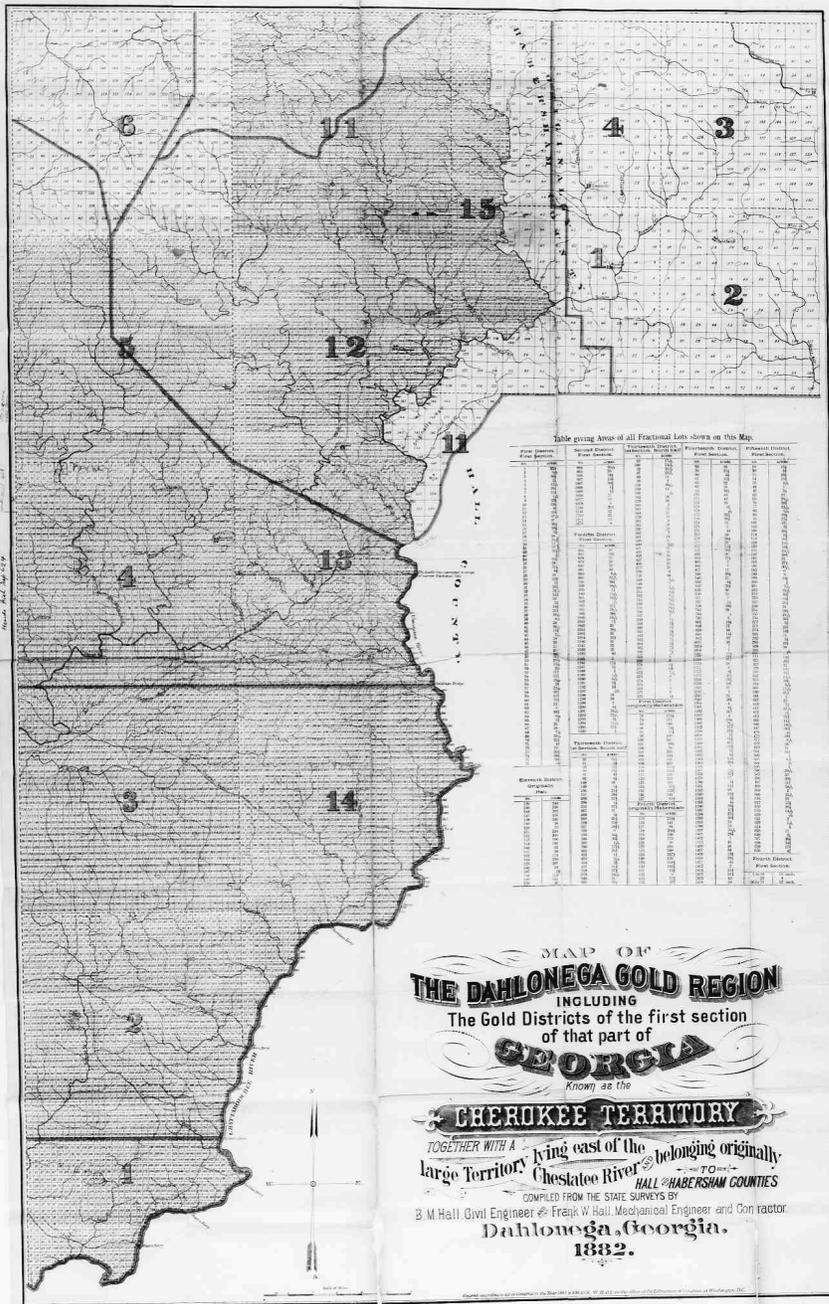
²⁴ Yvonne W. Dennis, *Sequoyah: 1770-1843*, Makato, MN: Capstone Press. 2004.

²⁵ *The Cherokee Nation : the story of New Echota*. Atlanta, GA : Film & Video, Dept. of Natural Resources 1992

²⁶ *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, 1828*.

it took several years in court before Chief Justice John Marshall decided that the Cherokee Nation was a sovereign entity. In order for the Indian Removal Act to be enabled, both the Senate and the Cherokee Nation would have to agree to removal in a treaty. The Treaty of New Echota, signed in 1835 by Major Ridge, a prominent Cherokee Chief, and by others in the Treaty Party gave the government the legal document it needed to begin the removal. Though the majority of the Cherokee Nation was against removal, Major Ridge saw the Treaty as a viable solution to the white encroachment. Charged with the removal was General Winfield Scott. (See Figure 3.2) During the winter of 1838-39, the arduous journey of removing the Cherokee began. The facilities for shelter were very minimal and human losses were very high. Though they were allowed to forage for food, over 4,000 Cherokee died on the route, thus the naming of the trek, Trail of Tears.²⁷

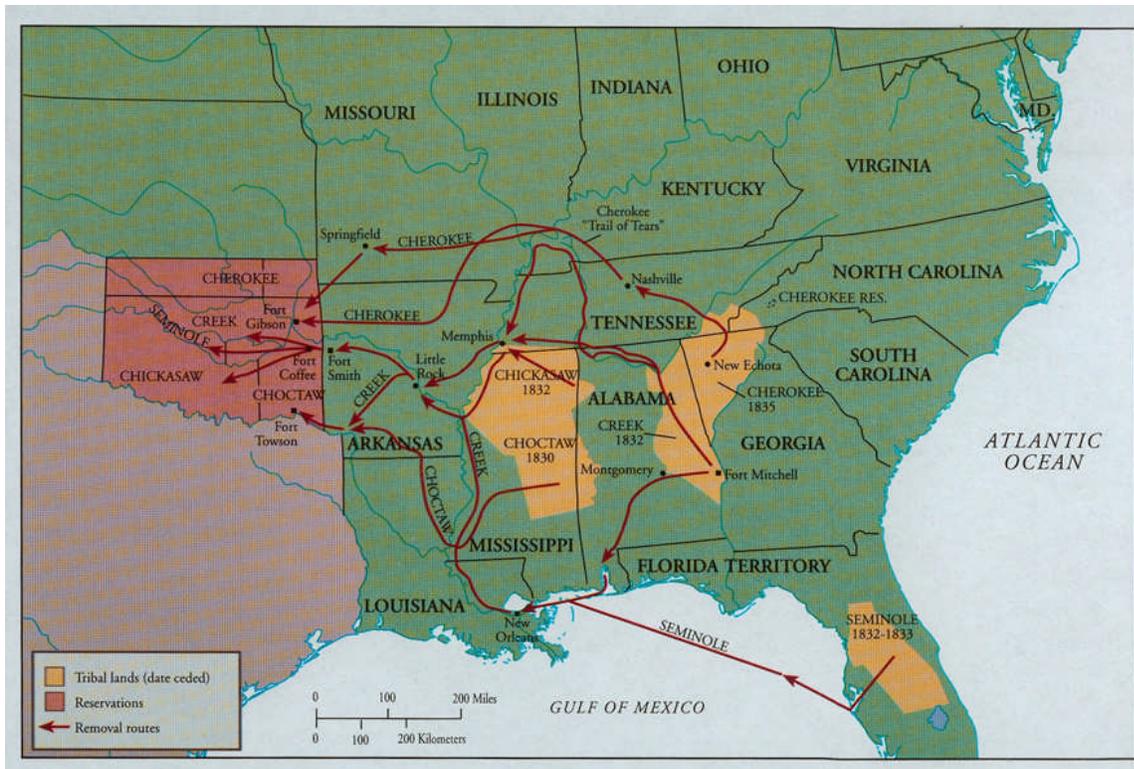
²⁷* Ehle, John. *Trail of tears : the rise and fall of the Cherokee nation*. New York : Doubleday, 1988



Map 1831 B4 n.a. 1831

<http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/nine.html>

Figure 3.1



<http://cla.calpoly.edu/~lcall/204/outline.weektwo.html>

Figure 3.2

In addition to the seizing of the land from the Cherokees, the land was also harshly abused. The techniques of extracting gold ore range in a wide variety of methods and impact. The least impacting is panning by which a handful of dirt from a river or creek is swirled around in a pan. The lighter dirt and rocks is washed away and the heavier gold sediment is hopefully left at the bottom. The idea here is to collect the gold ore that has naturally washed off the mountainside into the waterways. (See Figure 3.4) Another technique that is similar to this is cradle rocking in which a large narrow basin with

several compartments each with a graded wire mesh sifts through shovels of dirt in order to again leave either gold sediment behind or leave dirt that can be panned for gold sediment behind. (See Figure 3.3) The basin is rocked back and forth like a cradle in order to move the dirt from one compartment to another. However, these two techniques focused on getting the gold ore that was close to the surface. As the gold became played out by these techniques, new techniques were needed to extract the gold from deeper within the earth. One of these techniques was hydraulic mining in which large powerful water cannons were aimed towards the cliffs of the mountains in order to carve out sections of the earth that presumably had a quantity of quartz gold. (See Figure 3.5) Awaiting at the bottom of the cliffs were, again, cradles and panners to collect the gold. Another invasive technique was the use of a stamp mill. This was a machine that had several heavy weights that would systematically crush chunks of rock that contained gold ore. Then, the smaller pieces of gold ore would be put into a basin in which the bottom was coated with mercury. This "quicksilver" technique allowed for the gold to amalgamate to the mercury and the other non-gold components were washed away. This technique was much more effective in getting larger amounts of gold and did not require as many people to extract the same amount of gold ore if other techniques had been used. The mill would periodically shut down

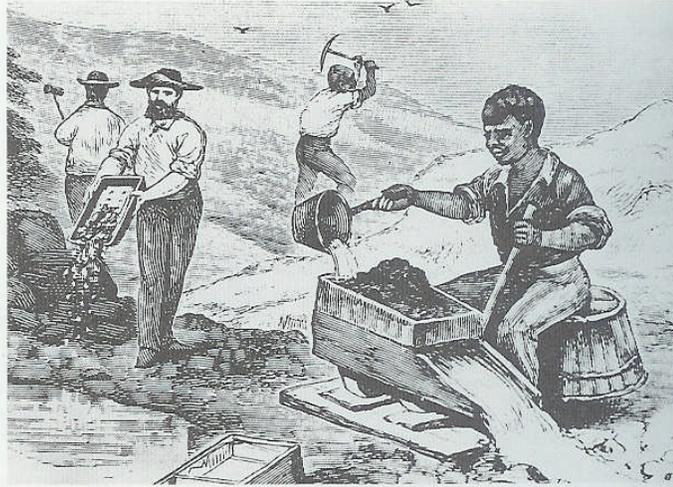
so the mercury plates could be scraped and the amalgam could be boiled to 400 degrees to separate the ore from the mercury.²⁸ This allowed for more gold to be extracted in a shorter amount of time but it had its shortcomings. One, this process still allowed a large percentage of the ore to be washed away and wasted.²⁹ Another is that procuring a stamp mill was difficult and expensive. If any of the stamp heads were to become damaged or needed to be replaced, the process would be lengthy causing the mine to lose money in their endeavors. Another problem was that the quicksilver process exposed the miners to high amounts of mercury, which was dangerous and potentially fatal.³⁰

The combination of the techniques described above made for effective gold mining that produced a large quantity of gold extracted from the area, money for the lucky prospectors and, for the merchants and outfitters, a large profit to be made from the gold rush. However, as gold mining played out in the North Georgia Mountains, the land was left with large holes, the water was polluted from the remnants of the stamp mills and much of the mining equipment was left abandoned. The Georgia Gold Rush would permanently scar the landscape with the physical impact resulting from gold fever.

²⁸ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 70-2.

²⁹ Thomson, Francis Andrew. *Stamp Milling and Cyaniding*. McGraw-Hill, 1915.

³⁰ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 73



The cradle rocker was one of the most widely used placer mining devices in the Southern gold fields. Gold-bearing dirt was washed through a perforated plate, or "hopper," and riffle bars trapped small particles of gold in the lower trough. University of North Carolina Library.

Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*

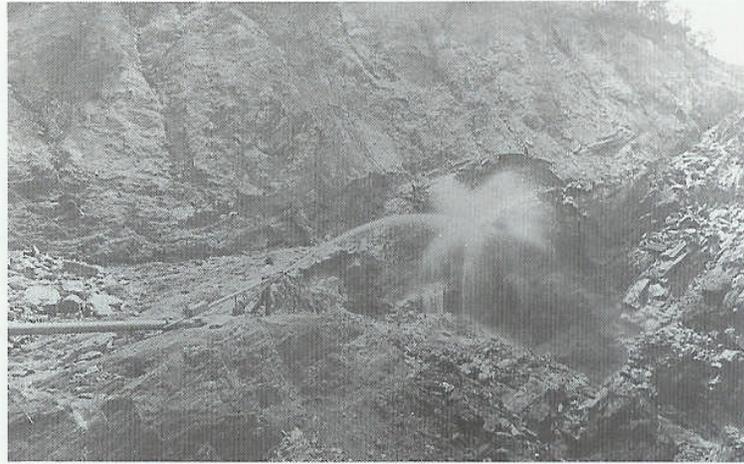
Figure 3.3



Panning for gold. This was the simplest and most widely used method during the early days of the gold rush. Even using more elaborate methods, miners were usually fortunate to pan out five dollars a day. The average was less than half that amount. In this 1934 photo, a poor farmer supplements his income by panning along the banks of Long Branch, five miles south of Dahlonega. Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*

Figure 3.4



Hydraulic mining was brought to Georgia in the 1850s by miners returning from the California gold fields. A single miner using one of these giant water cannons could cut an enormous gash in a mountainside like this one on Crown Mountain just south of Dahlonega. This image was recorded about 1900 at the height of Georgia's short-lived second gold rush. Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*

Figure 3.5

Not only did the Gold Rush have a dramatic effect on the landscape, but the Gold Rush also had a dramatic effect on the people of North Georgia. The state had seen a steady rise of residents in the past thirty years or so before the start of the Gold Rush. However, gold fever quickly spread and brought with it a mass of people throughout the Dahlonega area. Auraria itself grew from two people with modest dwellings to over 1,000 living illegally on Cherokee land.³¹ It became a boomtown overnight and quickly had a major road, newspaper, post office and hotel owned by John C. Calhoun, then Vice-President of the United States.

³¹ *Georgia Messenger*, April 25, 1833.

Dahlonega saw a significant rise in population particularly with the gain of the county seat, it went from a settlement of miners to a town with several thousand people in less than a year.³² Architecturally these towns grew quickly to accommodate the fast growth. Saloons, taverns, hotels, restaurants and houses were built and crammed into whatever space could contain another building.

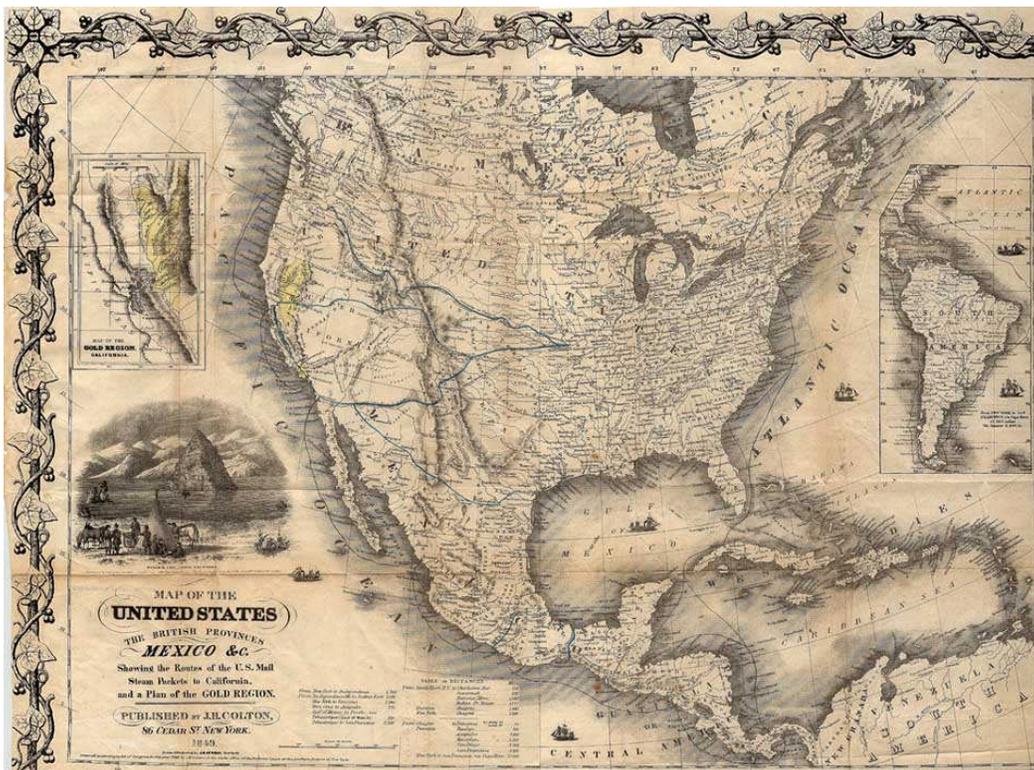
In addition to the built environment of houses, taverns, hotels, and the like, mines could be seen spotted all over the mountainside. These mines ranged in size and intensity of operation, but nonetheless, mines meant jobs. The Richardson Mine on Duke's Creek was noted for its wealth, it would employ six to twelve hands. In 1833, this mine allegedly brought in between a hundred and five hundred dollar's worth of gold per day.³³ The Calhoun Mine employed twenty hands and the average daily output was around three dollars per hand.³⁴ When vein mining was introduced in 1832, nine new mines opened in that same year. From 1828 to 1849, these jobs would produce more than \$20 million worth of gold. However, in 1849, news of the California Gold Rush reached the North Georgia Mountains. Matthew F. Stephenson, assayer of the Dahlonega mint, pleaded to the miners, in a speech given in front of the Lumpkin County

³² F.M. Green, *Georgia's Forgotten Industry: Gold Mining*, 109.

³³ *Southern Banner*, December 28, 1833.

³⁴ Clyde N. Wilson, *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, Vols. 11-13. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1979. 12:555

Courthouse, to stay in Dahlonega saying that there were millions [of dollars] in the mines. Mark Twain wrote his famous version of those words in his *Gilded Age*, "There's gold in them thar' hills." Nevertheless, miners left with purpose as they again traveled to where golden opportunity lie. (See Figure 3.6) Towns saw a dramatic decline in population and areas that were once bustling with miners were now quiet.³⁵



J. H. Colton.

Map of the United States, the British Provinces, Mexico &c.

New York: J. H. Colton, 1849.

Showing the Routes of the U.S. Mail Steam Packets to California, and a Plan of the Gold Region.

Drawn and engraved by J. M. Atwood.

Colton's map accompanied Fayette Robinson's guidebook, *California and its Gold Regions*.

In this map, the gold region is hand-colored in yellow.

Figure 3.6

³⁵ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 118.

But in 1880, technology for hydraulic mining was introduced and mining again began on a larger scale. One of the largest was Canton Mining Works in Cherokee County whose network of tunnels and shafts went as deep as two hundred feet down.³⁶ Although discoveries resulting in large amounts of gold did occur, it never again was as heated a gold fever as it was fifty years earlier. In an effort for the US to control the value of gold, a new law was passed in 1934 that made owning gold and mining it illegal. This ban did not last very long, however, and the ban was lifted in 1968. Most of the mines from the nineteenth century have long since closed down but one mine, Crisson Mine, was opened in 1831 and continues to mine today on a much smaller scale.³⁷

³⁶ William P. Blake and Charles T. Jackson, *Gold Placers in the Vicinity of Georgia*. Boston, 1859.

³⁷ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 123.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDIES

AURARIA

Development

Located just three miles south of Dahlonega, Auraria is known as America's original gold rush boomtown. Once a town of just a few residents, the discovery of gold in 1828 brought in thousands more. The town grew further when then Vice President John Calhoun bought land east of Auraria and established his mine, Calhoun Mine, which went on to become one of the most profitable and well-known mines in the area. Auraria was the county seat of Lumpkin county from 1828-1832 and had a population of around 1,000. A number of saloons and hotels were built including the one that remains today.

Decline

However, the county seat was moved to Dahlonega in 1832. And, due to politics and land ownership, the town of Auraria quickly fell into a bust losing population, stores, and banks. Dahlonega soon became the center of business and politics. The 1849 California Gold Rush further added to the decline of

Auraria and the rest of North Georgia but it was not until the Civil War that all commercial gold mining enterprises moved to land northeast of Dahlonega. Most buildings in Auraria were deteriorated or gone by the end of the Second World War. The town is now largely abandoned and most likely will not attract visitors in its current state due to a lack of visibility and cultural resources left. This is perhaps due to the fact that many of the settlers had no personal ties to the land and simply came to Auraria for the gold. Once other opportunities arose elsewhere, the miners had no problem leaving the town.

Present day

A few buildings do remain, however, but all are in very poor condition. The biggest being the old Graham Hotel which currently stands in ruins. The next building is Woody's, a store that was in operation until the 1980's. (See Figure 4.2) The last remaining structure is a red house that used to serve as the town bank. An historical marker is the only sign that marks where Auraria once stood at the intersection of Old Auraria Road and Castleberry Bridge Road. (See Figure 4.1) Though it is difficult to know just how much of the community is left in the area, the Auraria Church of the Almighty God is still an active congregation. Just to the east of the church is an old hand pump that is currently set in concrete. Besides these buildings, the town of Auraria is largely abandoned and

forgotten leaving barely a hint of the kind of bustling community that it once was. This begs the question of whether or not a ghost town like Auraria is worth saving when there is little left to interpret.

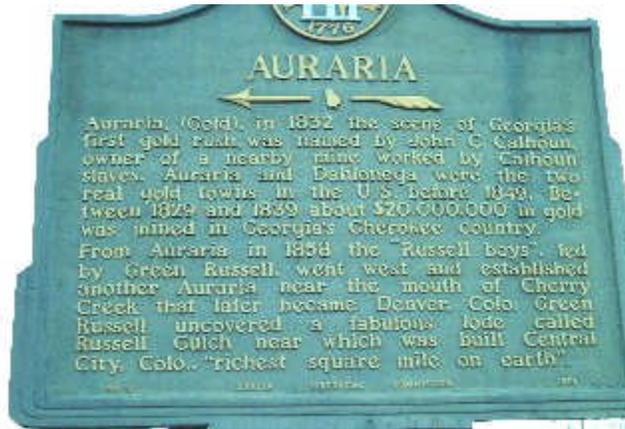


Photo taken by author

Figure 4.1



Louis Harshaw. *The Gold of Dahlonega*. Hexagon Company: Asheville, North Carolina. 1976

Figure 4.2

DAHLONEGA

Development

Located in Lumpkin County, Dahlonega got its start when the country's first major gold rush brought a huge boom of people, jobs, and money into the North Georgia Mountains. Settlements were established throughout the region. (See Figure 4.5)



Map LUMP1. Blake ca. 1858? <http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/lump1.jpg>

Figure 4.5

However, the town of Dahlonega did not really boom until after it had gained the county seat in 1833.³⁸ With the county seat, the town of Dahlonega boomed to several hundred in population. New buildings were built and businesses either were created or relocated from Auraria. Six years later, one of the first Federal Branch Mints opened in Dahlonega where more than \$6 million in gold coins was made. Miners and other settlers now had other reasons to come to Dahlonega, besides gold. There was a commercial area, entertainment in the saloons, politics was centered here in the county, and banks were available and stable due to the Mint.

Decline

Productivity declined in general throughout the 1840's but the California Gold Rush in the 1848 provided enough news and excitement that many of the miners from North Georgia left to seek further riches and glory. After the Civil War, under the direction of the federal government, the mint closed. The building was used to house federal troops until 1869 but later, in 1879, the main building caught fire and burned.³⁹ Soon after, the Price Memorial Hall and North Georgia College was built over the mint's original foundation. The Military College of Georgia

³⁸ F.M. Green, *Georgia's Forgotten Industry: Gold Mining*, 109.

³⁹ Cain, *History of Lumpkin County*, 82.

was founded 1873 and is the nation's only public, coeducational, liberal arts, military university.⁴⁰

Despite the continuing deteriorating industry of gold, Dahlonega was able to sustain itself by attracting institutions such as banks, the courthouse, a mint, and in later years, a university. All this led to a stability that is important to the development of current cultural and social amenities.

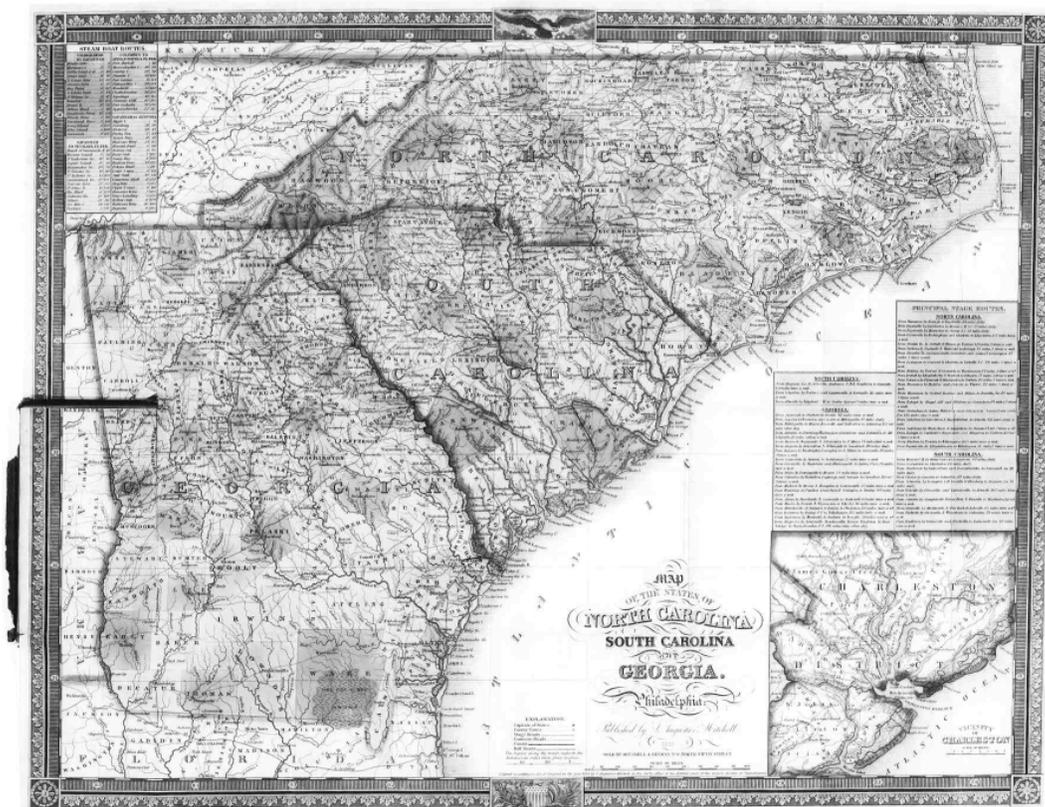
Present Day

Besides the college and gold rush, other attractions bring visitors into the area such as a number of State Parks, bed and breakfast inns, vineyards and wineries, and golf resorts. Tourism is by far the leading industry in Lumpkin County and the Dahlonega Gold Museum is one of the most visited historic sites in Georgia. In Georgia alone, 48 millions travellers came to and through the state in 2003 spending \$25 billion a year and supported 200,000 tourism-related jobs.⁴¹ Other Gold Rush attractions include the two local mines, Crisson and Consolidated Gold. Dahlonega's town square is designated as a National Historic District.⁴² (See Figure 4.6)

⁴⁰ Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush*, 120

⁴¹ Georgia Dept. of Trade, Industry and Tourism.

⁴² *Once around the Square: A Walking Tour*. Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce.



Map 1835 M5 Mitchell 1835

<http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/nine.html>

Figure 4.6

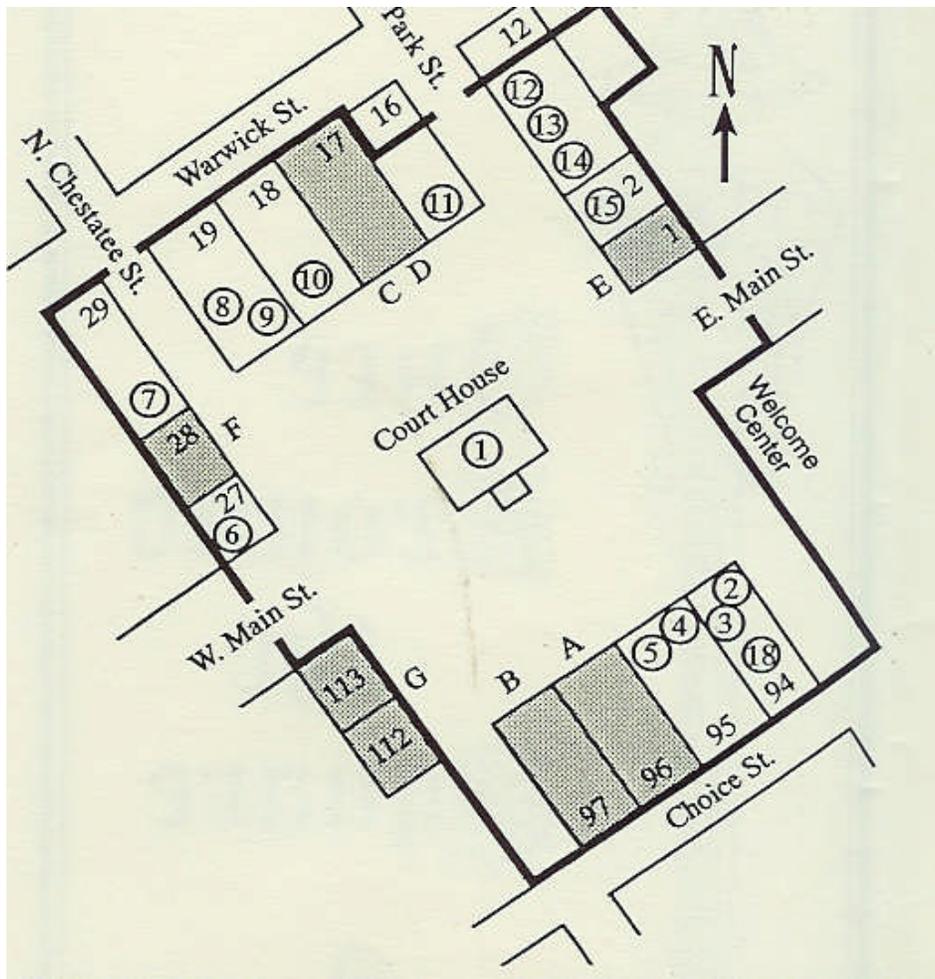
This commercial district, which includes the public square, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1983 with buildings dating back to 1836 to 1935. Buildings in this district range from tiny brick buildings with a simple commercial façade, storefronts with clapboard exteriors and bracketed cornices, to houses with a variety of Victorian styles including details that are considered to be more Italianate or Mansard. There are also two residential historic districts off the town center, Hawkins Street and Park Street including a

Depression Era community building that was the town's library until a new library was built in 1983.⁴³ This district includes a variety of Victorian style buildings that were once used as residences and now have been converted into offices. Dahlonega is also a popular venue for festivals and special events including the Dahlonega Mountain Music and Medicine Show and the Folkways Mountain Music Revue. Community theatre and movies are presented in the historic Holly Theatre.⁴⁴ The Dahlonega area also features four vineyards, all of which feature wine tastings and offer gourmet dining.

Today, the town holds a population of 3,638 and covers an area of 6.4 square miles. In addition to the historic districts and local attractions, Dahlonega participated in the Better Hometown Program run by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The program is designed to revitalize small communities between 1,000 and 5,000 people. In order to stimulate downtown revitalization, these cities have access to technical assistance and financial resources. (See Figure 4.7)

⁴³ *Hawkins Street Neighborhood: Walking Tour*, Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce.

⁴⁴ Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce Visitor Services



Dahlongega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce.

Figure 4.7

TELLURIDE, CO

Development

Telluride is located in the southwest corner of the state of Colorado. Historic Telluride edges the Telluride ski area on the southern border and is surrounded by the peaks of the Uncompahgre National Forest. It is the county seat of San

Miguel county and consists of fifty square blocks.⁴⁵ (See Figures 4.8-4.10)

Historically, Telluride was used as a summer camp by the Ute Indians and later was settled by Spanish explorers. In 1875, mining prospectors climbed into the box canyon and found rich deposits of gold and silver along the San Miguel River.⁴⁶ Throughout the mid 1870s, the Sheridan Mine was the first to establish local claims and a tent camp. By 1890, the local railroad was completed and Telluride experienced a boom in population, not only in local miners but the influx of immigrant workers boosted the population to 5,000.⁴⁷ During this time, new buildings such as the New Sheridan Hotel were built. New businesses, saloons, banks as well as makeshift housing for the settlers added to the architectural diversity of Telluride.

Decline

By the turn of the century, the gold begins to play out and the boom begins to bust. Mines began closing due to decreasing profits. Then WWI affected the town greatly and the population dwindled to the low hundreds. After the war, most of the mines closed and the banks shut down.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ *Telluride and Mountain Village Visitor Guide*. Official Guide Colorado, Convention and Visitor Bureau.

⁴⁶ Victor J. Danilov. *Colorado Museums and Historic Sites*. University Press of Colorado, 2000. 360-1

⁴⁷* Marketing Telluride Inc.

⁴⁸ Danilov

The town was saved from complete abandonment in 1953 when the Idarado Mining Company bought up what was left of the existing mines in order to connect them via a network of tunnels sprawling 350 miles. For twenty five years, the mine was able to produce millions of dollars worth of copper, lead, zinc, silver and gold before finally shutting down in 1978.⁴⁹ During the final years of operation, the idea of creating a ski resort developed. Ground was broken for the new facility in 1971.

Present day

In 1973, the Telluride Ski Resort opens and over time is recognized as being one of the leading skiing areas of the West. Excellent snow conditions and the 3,145 feet of vertical ski slopes combine to bring world-class skiing and also cultural events, festivals, music, and performing arts to Telluride. All combine to create an ambience that attracts thousands during the peak tourist season. Average population throughout the year is roughly 2,200 but can rise to up to 14,000 during peak skiing season. New developments to accommodate the new industry include hiking, bike trails, bluegrass, film, and hang-gliding festivals, and the new Mountain Village mega-resort with lodges, condos, homes, an 18-hole golf course, and a gondola connection to town.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Danilov

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

The people of Telluride have long been committed to preserving its Victorian charm and the historically significant features such as the architecture, open space and design features. The core of the town was designated a National Historic Landmark District, the highest level of historical recognition by the Secretary of the Interior, in 1964. Telluride is one of only four such districts in the state of Colorado.⁵¹

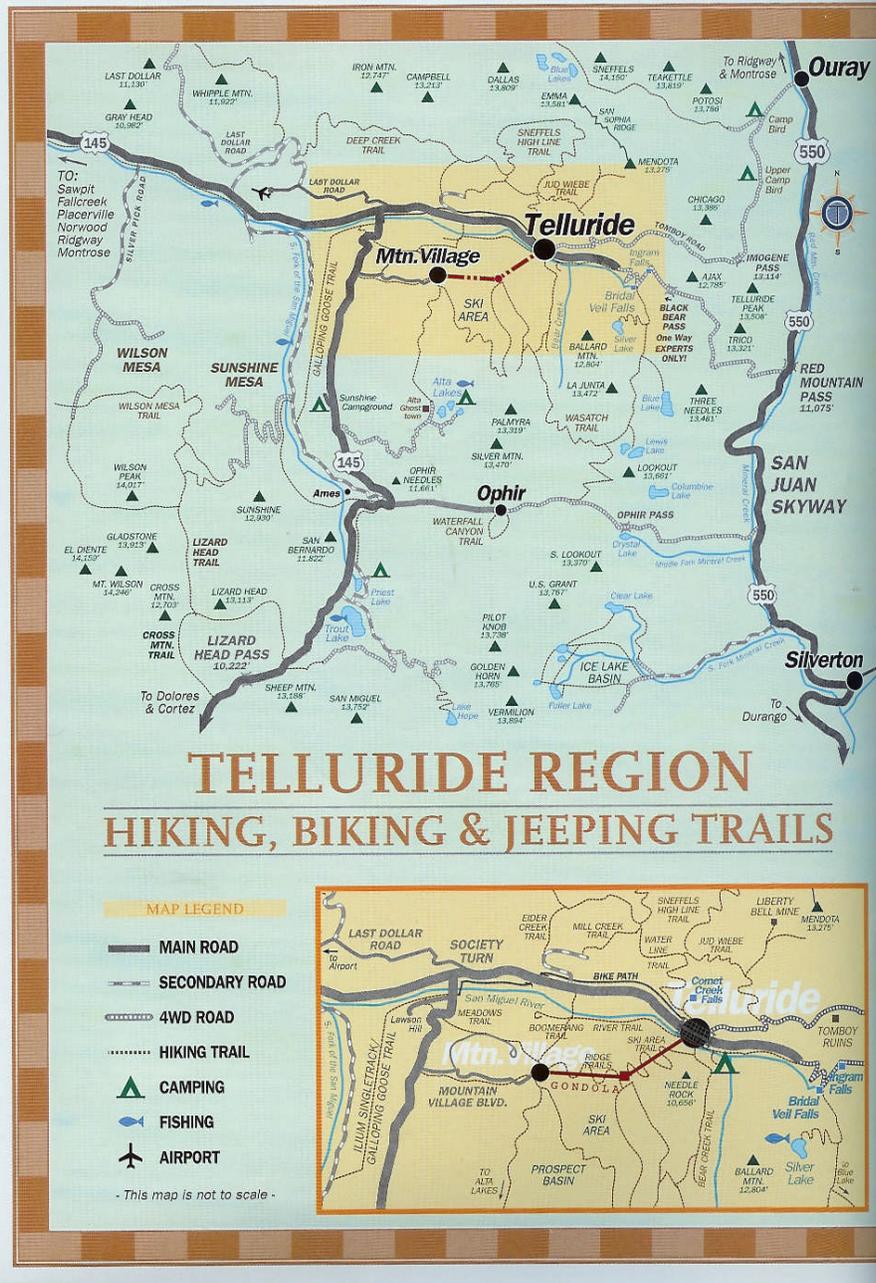
Of the ski resort towns in Colorado, Telluride has been one of the most successful in incorporating the cultural and recreational resources for the state and is known from the overall appeal of the town. It was one of the first to create a summer festival and event season. This created a viable economy for both the summer and winter seasons. Another strength of the town is the two positions that are established to manage the cultural and recreational resources. One is the position of the Town Manager. This position is appointed by the Town Council and is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the activities of all Town departments and agencies except those associated with the Town Attorney and the Municipal Court. Another position is the Commission for Community Assistance, Arts and Special Events (CCAASE.) Their responsibility is to develop, maintain, and encourage an environment conducive to

⁵¹ *Telluride and Mountain Village Visitor Guide.*

Community Support organizations and those organizations dealing with the Arts. They provide recommendations to the Town Council on grant fund distribution through an application and review process. The Parks and Recreation Director acts as Staff administrator and liaison for CCAASE. In addition, the architectural review committee is established to scrutinize building plans to guarantee that the basic character of the town remains unspoiled. Aiding in this is the accessibility to important planning documents online for the town including the Master Plan, Land Use Code, and Design Guidelines.⁵²

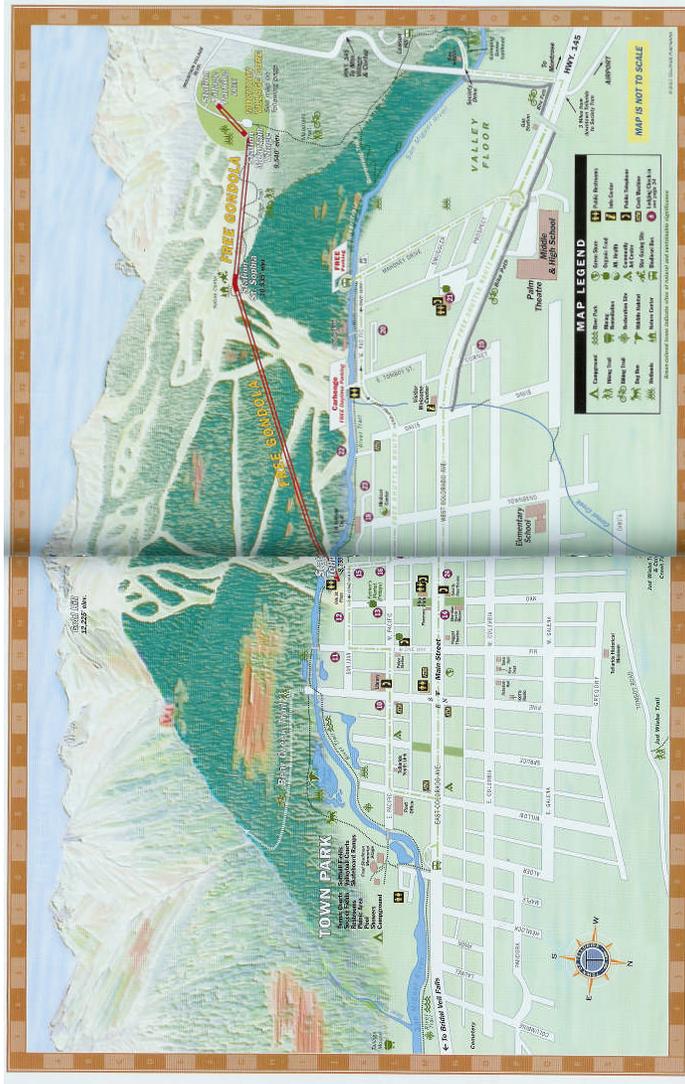
On the whole, Telluride can pride itself in being a community that offers a diverse range of different tourist opportunities including shopping, skiing, trails and historic buildings. Newer amenities are kept away from the town center but is accessible by the free gondola. Another strength that Telluride has is that it has funds from the already established skiing industry, and tourists, on the whole, are willing and able to spend money. This can also play as a weakness, however, and is already perhaps becoming too much of a resort town, attracting only those who seek Telluride as an escape but not as a viable community.

^{52*} Town of Telluride



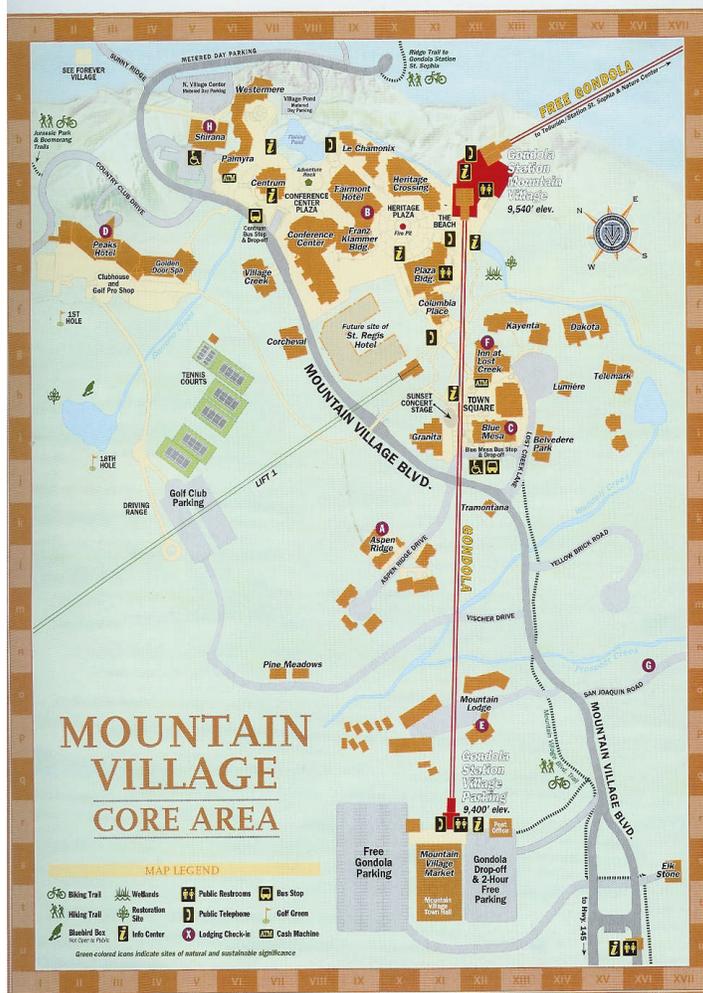
Telluride and Mountain Village Visitor Guide

Figure 4.8



Telluride and Mountain Village Vistor Guide

Figure 4.9



Telluride and Mountain Village Vistor Guide

Figure 4.10

BODIE, CA

Development

Bodie is located 50 miles south of Lake Tahoe in California, near Bridgeport. (see Figure 4.11) Gold was first found in the Mono Lake region after the mid-nineteenth century. Even by this time, towns had already begun to boom and bust including Dogtown

and Monoville.⁵³ Prospectors Waterman S. Bodey and E.S. "Black" Taylor were among the many hopeful miners. Although placer mining was the main method for mining the harsh and arid land, the lack of water forced some of the miners to look for gold-bearing quartz veins, most commonly found near water.⁵⁴ Bodey and Taylor traveled 12 miles away from a base camp near Monoville in search of quartz veins and returned with sacks of dirt that were rich in gold. Later that same year in 1859, Bodey and Taylor were bringing back supplies to the camp when they got caught up in a fierce winter storm. Bodey collapses in exhaustion and Taylor is forced to leave Bodey, wrapped in a blanket, behind. When Taylor returned to find Bodey, his body was nowhere to be found.⁵⁵ It was not until six months later that Taylor would find the bones of his former companion, less than a mile from the cabin. The miners living in the area called the camp "Bodey's Diggings".⁵⁶

Although this area saw a few larger scale attempts at finding a profitable lode, neither attempt amounted to much. Mining continued throughout the Civil War and the 1870s but efforts were slow. One mine, Bullion Mine, was able to see some

⁵³ Thomas C. Fletcher. *Paute, Prospector, Pioneer: The Bodie-Mono Lake Area in the Nineteenth Century*. Artemisia Press: California, 1987.

⁵⁴ Michael H. Piatt. *Bodie: The Mines are Looking Well*. North Bay Books: California., 2003.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Wasson, *Bodie and Esmeralda*. San Francisco: Spaulding, Barto & Co. 1878. 5-6.

significant profit by the spring of 1877. \$45,000 in bullion was found in one shipment of 1,000 tons of ore. This amount was well more than what had been produced from that same mine the previous year.⁵⁷

Also that year the Standard Company completed the construction of their operations with a stamp mill with 36 stamp heads, 10 amalgamating pans, 5 settlers, 2 agitators and 200 feet of sluices. Ore was now being produced twice as fast as before. The anticipation for striking it rich grew and many new miners amassed at Bodie, now spelled this way and recognized as the most commonly accepted way to spell it. Success was abundant at the Standard Gold Mining Company. The profits from that year alone were \$784, 523. By the end of 1877, 13 gold mines were operating out of the Bodie mining district.⁵⁸ Other businesses proved profitable as well. The future of the mining town was dependent on wood. Five men including Robert N. Graves, formerly of the Syndicate Mine, organized the Bodie Wood and Lumber Company. Their holdings amounted to at least 11,000 acres out of the largest California forest area east of the Sierra.⁵⁹ Immigrants also flocked to the area and a strong Chinese population grew to develop their own Chinese district in

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁵⁸ Piatt, 28.

⁵⁹ Wasson, *Bodie and Esmeralda*, 42

town, King Street.⁶⁰ This influx of immigrants adds another dimension to the heritage of the site.

Decline

The boom of Bodie was short-lived and already by 1881 the decline began. Again, the gold was being played out in the mines and the cost of operating a mine was beginning to outweigh the profit of the product being extracted. By 1882, six of the thirteen mines closed. The town continued to decline despite attempts at incorporating new technology into the mining methods; mines were closing and businesses were abandoned.⁶¹

Electricity came into the town in 1893 with the hopes of providing power to run the mill, but unfortunately, this did not bring more profit.⁶² In 1894, James Stuart Cain, Bodie's major banker, began purchasing abandoned mines and created a network of mines that would use a cyanide process to extract precious metals from finely ground ore. Though this method was efficient, it was costly and left large amounts of unusable waste called slime.⁶³ This process, too, played out and mines began to close again by the early 1900s. Labor unrest began to ensue and some mines could not keep up with the technology needed to continually extract precious metals from the ore effectively.

⁶⁰ Herbert L. Smith, *The Bodie Era: Chronicles of the Last of the Old Time Mining Camps*. 106-107

⁶¹ Piatt, 175-6.

⁶² Piatt, 182.

⁶³ California State Mining Bureau, *Thirteenth Report of the State Minerologist*, September 15, 1896.

The final blow to the town was a fire in 1932 that destroyed about 75% of the town. Unable to get the fire under control, the town lost a number of buildings including the US Hotel, Occidental Hotel, J.S. Cain bank and a number of the stores. The population at this time was around 20-30 people.⁶⁴

Present day

The part of town that survived the fire was designated as a National Historic Site and became a State Park in 1962.⁶⁵ (See Figure 4.12) What remains is being preserved in a state of "arrested decay" meaning the buildings are stabilized as needed but otherwise left alone. The buildings are largely in a vernacular style but some of the larger buildings such as the hotels and church are in a Victorian style. The town's structures and the 495 acres on which they stood were safeguarded from any further mining damage; however, the actual mining district was still owned by private owners. A few mines have since attempted to begin mineral drilling with the most recent being Galactic Resources, Ltd. In 1988, their exploratory drilling determined that the hills behind Bodie contained anywhere from 1,000,000 to 40,000,000 ounces of gold. However, to extract any of this would require open pit drilling that would have ruined the landscape of historic Bodie.

⁶⁴ James Watson and Doug Bodie, *Big Bad Bodie: High Sierra Ghost Town*. Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation 2000. 77-99.

⁶⁵ *Los Angeles Times*. 1 July 1992, E1, E5.

Grassroots efforts and other company legal hardships delayed Galactic long enough for Congress to pass the Bodie Protection Act of 1994. In 1997, 564 acres of what would have been in the mining district was bought by the State and was added to the Bodie State Historic Park.⁶⁶

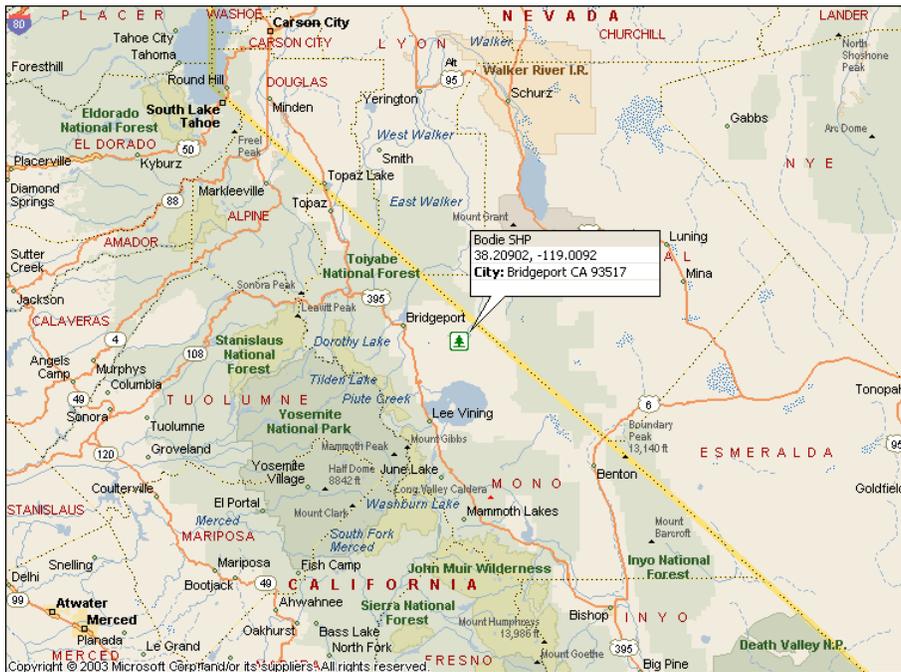


Figure 4.11

⁶⁶ Piatt, 269.

CHAPTER 5

PRESERVATION ISSUES

Though Bodie has been threatened with further mining, legislation is in place to protect the historic character of the town that has been so well preserved. But further mining is not the only threat faced by Gold Rush Towns. Since their decline, they all also relate in similar struggles for preservation. The biggest one being that the original industry, gold mining, is no longer a workable industry. Either the gold has played out or the cost to continue to mine gold outweighs the profit gained from the product. In this sense the need for alternative industries is obvious. All these towns have, since the bust of the gold rush, struggled to find other industries to remain viable. The north Georgia area turned to logging, then poultry, then carpet production. Another small industry is the pottery industry deriving its clays from the banks of the creeks and lakes in the area including white clay or kaolin. Telluride continued to mine but after the gold played out, other precious metals were mined such as copper and zinc. Bodie also continued mining but also allowed its town to be featured in several movies. However, industries like logging are also dependent on

what resources are still available setting up another boom and bust cycle when the resources play out similar to the mining of gold.

Another threat is that Gold Rush towns now no longer have a reason to grow and little viability for sustenance exists. One factor in this situation is that many gold rush towns are usually located in areas far from an existing metropolis. In addition, they may be hard to access due to mountainous roads and seasonal hazards. In turn, these towns become bedroom communities with no local vitality. Residents tend to turn to other cities for cultural and commercial experiences. Another potentially unwelcome threat is that these towns are facing a gentrification trend. Older couples or younger families willing to spend the money for what is typically a mountain escape are attracting developers into the surrounding landscape of these historic towns taking away from the authentic gold rush character.

Therefore, new industries are needed that are independent of a consumable resource such as recreation and tourism. Recreation and tourism can continue to grow and evolve independent of current available resources. Whether it is just a few historic homes, or a museum, or trails, or slopes, these activities can always be marketed to attract visitors and bring extra income into the town. Recreation and tourism does not

just have to attract other visitors; it can also integrate the other cultural highlights of the area including the local arts and crafts and festivals. Money derived from the local tourism dollars can then be used to fund local infrastructure as well as maintenance of the historic and cultural resources. Dahlonega is an excellent example of this. With a commercial historic district and a residential historic district, plus the gold museum, Dahlonega has many resources to offer visitors while at the same time offers the locals several cultural amenities such as a downtown with shops and restaurants. Dahlonega is also in an area rich with recreational opportunities including the nearby Amicalola Falls, Unicoi State Park, and Vogel State Park.

However, recreation and tourism is not without its consequences. For example, a town can become a victim of its own success. Telluride has experienced phenomenal growth and income during the winter season but struggled to sustain a viable summer tourism season. Now that the town has festivals and such during the summer, the town is now an attraction year-round. With that attraction comes people and money as well as trash and other maintenance issues. Trails need supervision year-round and the historic resources need maintenance. People do come for tourism and locals suspect anything that is a little too oriented for people who only visit a few weeks of the year.

However, Auraria on the other hand, is as far from being a resort as one can get. With so few resources left, one has to wonder what the outcome of the ghost town will be. Thus, raising the question of authenticity. Webster defines 'authentic' several ways. One definition reads, "that which is conforming to an original so as to reproduce the essential features", while another reads "that which is true to one's own personality, spirit or character". So then, is something like Bodie State Historic Park that authentic? Working from these definitions, the answer is yes. Very little change has occurred and the site is interpreted as is. However, the site is also minimal in what it provides for its visitors. There is a visitor center and a walking tour but visitors are then left to interpret the site to how each would imagine the site to be. Also, as a State Park, all maintenance is left up to federal funds and whatever fundraising the park and docents can acquire for themselves, leaving a lot more work to be done than what can be provided for. Telluride has done great work in continuing to be a viable town with a strong recreational industry, but how much of the mining history is actually passed on to the visitor? Further, with the changes to the town necessary to accommodate visitors, one has to wonder how much authenticity is left.

That said, Auraria now has an incredible opportunity to become a steward of the State. Not only will the State have the

original gold rush boom town in their possession, but they have an opportunity to capitalize on incorporating the North Georgia area into a network of Gold Rush tourism. At the very least, the State has the opportunity to be stewards of the two remaining buildings, Graham Hotel and Woody's Store, both of which are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Gold Rush is already being capitalized upon in states like California and Colorado, and though Dahlonega is currently using the Gold Rush in its tourism, the potential for the North Georgia region and the entire Southeast region is still untapped.

In addition, gold rush towns do not seem to have a strong national network to tap into for support. At this time, there is not a National database or network with which communities can be linked to get help. Despite the lack of a cohesive national support network, there is opportunity for state and local programs to bring a stronger awareness and educational programs to the general public. By incorporating Georgia into a larger network of other Gold Rush towns, national awareness will only encourage stronger local support.

CHAPTER 6

HERITAGE TOURISM, THE NEW "GOLD"

In 2004, the United States had an income of \$74billion from foreign tourists and ranks number one over Spain and France with a margin of over \$30billion according to the World Tourism Organization. With the mining industry so prevalent throughout this country and the world, the opportunity to make the most of its history and impact is tremendous. The common heritage of the Gold Rush towns leaves great potential for tourism. The economic benefit is apparent in that visitors are already able and willing to spend money on a product or service that is of interest to them, whether that is recreational or heritage based. Revenue is generated locally while at the same time providing jobs. Monies from tourist dollars can be used to further improve infrastructure saving local residents tax money. Not only is the benefit economic but everyone benefits by the educational factor. Tourism inherently depends upon the resources available so as to provide the unique services and experiences to the visitor. Therefore, protecting cultural and natural resources is a high priority. Trails need to be created and maintained and the built environment can be planned to be

utilized in one form or another to present the history that the Gold Rush has to offer. The benefits of tourism are both short and long term. Heritage may be profited from in the present but it can also be safeguarded and taught to future generations. Tourism offers something for everyone, whether that person or group is interested in something recreational or more heritage based.

In his attempt to determine heritage as capital or culture, Graham suggests that heritage is something of the past that is selected for the current moment. It is only worth whatever meaning we choose to give it and therefore, exploited to our economic benefit. Heritage, or wherever heritage is exploited, becomes its own micro landscape in which everything is consumed. Unfortunately, due to the nature of tourism, this also leads to the homogenizing of the resources.⁶⁷ In order to prevent this, careful planning must be done beforehand to assess which parts of the heritage are best suited to be capitalized upon. Towns must understand that not all resources are beneficial to the cause of tourism. One has to realize that the commercial value of a resource is worth as much as the resource's ability to continue to have cultural integrity. Those areas that have high potential to be easily marketed and can withstand higher levels

⁶⁷ Graham, Brian. "Heritage as Knowledge: Capital or Culture?". *Urban Studies*, Vol. 39, Nos 5-6, 1003-1017, 2002

of visitation would need an overall plan of development and management to ensure that adverse effects do not occur. Places that have high marketability, but whose integrity will easily be damaged should be presented in a way that discourages visitors. Areas that can withstand moderate levels of visitation but may not be attractive to tourists, can be marketed in new ways to perhaps create new and innovative programs. Other options include using the areas for research.⁶⁸

As with any new industry, one must consider the consequences, both good and bad, and tourism is no exception. When asked why they visited an historic site, a group of tourists visiting sites in Israel responded that among the most important reasons were for the recreational experience and to learn from the site as an educational experience.⁶⁹ And when asked why "do" tourism, a panel of experts ranging from curators, academics, and historic site managers, unanimously decided that conservation was the primary mission. Following closely behind was accessibility, that is, allowing the visitors to experience the site with careful consideration to protecting the site itself. Tied for the third element of importance was the financial stability of the site and the effectiveness of

⁶⁸ duCros, Hilary. "A New Model to Assist in Planning for Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism". *International Journal of Tourism Research*, No.3165-170. (2001)

⁶⁹ Yaniv Poria, Arie Reichel, Avital Biran. "Heritage Site Perceptions and Motivations to Visit." *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 44, February 2006, 318-326.

educational opportunities and the interpretation of the site.⁷⁰ These reasons suggest that tourism is not just about gaining money from visitors, nor is it just providing a venue for leisure but heritage tourism ideally will conserve the site for future generations while at the same time, educating them about the significance of the site in a manner that is financially sustainable to continue the mission of heritage tourism.⁷¹

This is why sites such as Telluride and Dahlongega are so successful at achieving a balance of providing access to historic resources as well as providing a community viability to sustain both new development and growth. (See Figure II) Each town declares its history and quality of life above other missions. The fact tourism exists is simply a means to the end. Both communities are committed to having the resources be a part of their heritage for as long as possible and are willing to do what is necessary to keep newer development away from historic areas. For both Telluride and Dahlongega, the historic center is very compact and contained. They also have local support to maintain these structures. Companies who choose to bring tourists into their facilities modestly advertise themselves using only print and websites to bring attention relying on the

⁷⁰ Yaniv Poria, Richard Butler, and David Airey. "Links between Tourists, Heritage, and Reasons for Visiting Heritage Sites." *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 43, August 2004, 19-28

⁷¹ Brian Garrod, Alan Fyall. "Managing Heritage Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research*. Vol. 27, No. 3, 2000, 682-708.

context of the Gold Rush to pique interest. For Telluride, skiing and summer hiking and camping are the main attraction that incorporates its golden history into its recreation. For Dahlenega, promoting its historic features is primary but this also incorporates the beautiful landscape, wineries, shopping, arts and the university. Regardless, both communities emphasize their history in order to maintain a quality of life and to attract and educate visitors in the process. Bodie, in a sense, is a successful model because it also prides itself on providing, at the very least, a very accurate physical description of what the mining town would have looked like. At the same time, the park offers other recreational opportunities such as trails and educational opportunities about the Gold Rush through Ranger-led Programs. As a State Historic Park, the town is protected both by legislation and by providing a system of visitor management in perhaps the only way that could be provided. (See Figure I) Visitor management is not the only benefit of tourism. Though Bodie may not be a strong example; towns like Telluride and Dahlenega are more successful because of the local support and the active participation of the residents thus enhancing a sense of place and pride in the shared heritage. ⁷² In 1962, the Georgia Department of Commerce put out a study of the

⁷² Bill Bramwell, Bernard Lane. "Interpretation and Sustainable Tourism: The Potential and the Pitfalls". Interamerican Journal of Environment and Tourism, Vol. 1, no. 1. Aug 2005.

preservation of historical features and the promotion of tourism in Dahlonega that outlined strategies such as an intense marketing campaign that began locally and emphasized the strengths in resources that Dahlonega has, including the diverse range recreational opportunities.⁷³

This does not mean, however, that caution should not be taken to ensure that the heritage that is being shared does not become just another commodity. For example, in determining what has high market appeal, one has to be careful to not oversimplify the very meaning of the resource to get a quick dollar. Heritage education is of greater value because it will continue to benefit multiple generations. Interpretation is vital in that enough is given to provide the visitor the essential information and not too much is given that perhaps the integrity of the resource becomes too biased. Interpretation must also happen in a mainstream sense so that everyone can benefit and not just those who seem to be more educated and motivated about the particular topic.⁷⁴

⁷³ *A Study of the Preservation of Historical Features and Promotion of Tourism in Dahlonega and Lumpkin County, Georgia.* Planning Division of Commerce. July, 1962.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The gold rush was an important industry responsible for the development of many towns and cities. It brought life, money, architecture, and in some cases prestige, especially to certain individuals who were able to strike it rich. However, the Rush also brought crime, gentrification, and hard labor. Many times, miners were disillusioned from the lack of riches and the so-called promise of prosperity. The Gold Rush also left many with no money and often was the cause of many towns' demise as miners left in search of gold elsewhere. The towns that remain, on the other hand, have been able to capitalize on a new "gold", tourism. Whether it be through skiing, trails, shopping, or walking around an historic district, tourists are now attracted by the promise of leisure. One thing that has been a positive factor in all of these towns is that the historic nature of the gold rush seems to attract visitors just as the allure of gold attracted miners. The Gold Rush was an intense time of activity and development, a characteristic of rawness seems to appeal to tourists. Therefore, recommendations are made on three primary levels: local, state and national. Communities that have a gold

mining history or a heritage that similarly reflects the boom and bust growth, like gold mining, have potential to capitalize on that heritage.

Local:

1. The community must decide if and what resources they are willing to share with visitors. Consider a wide range of interpretation models (State and National Register of Historic Places listings, signs, appropriate brochures to visitors at welcoming centers, etc.) covering a variety of topics related to mining and get local government support to enable interpretation.
2. Provide basic amenities to visitors such as lodging, dining, and shopping. These should be done in a matter that is feasible and acceptable to the integrity and character of the community itself. If recreational opportunities already exist, coordinate to promote both the heritage and recreational aspects as a way to enhance the other. Annual festivals and events also enhance a sense of place and can be great opportunities to bring income from visitors.

States:

1. Consider becoming stewards of some of these sites to ensure proper protection and management of the site.

2. States can also sponsor local community events to promote and highlight cultural events.

National:

1. The National Trust could also see mining as a new initiative to create a network of communities throughout the country to share in a common heritage.

2. Create links according history. One community in one state could be linked to another community in another state particularly if it boomed from the bust of the first community, such as Auraria, Georgia and Auraria, Colorado. The community in Colorado was settled by the original miners in Georgia.

3. Training workshops could also be given and national conferences representing mining communities would aid to share ideas and successful strategies.

International:

1. A network could be created internationally, as mining is a global industry in addition to providing a link to those miners from other countries.

The following pages contain two figures that were created based on the observation of the research assembled for this thesis as well as personal observation of the traits and characteristics of the Gold Rush towns themselves. Essentially, the figures organize the towns into areas that make each one unique from the other. The first figure outlines some of the more common solutions taken by the historic towns and also incorporates their feasibility and what it may take to initiate the solution. The second figure separates each town into different areas of resources that the town capitalizes on. Perhaps it is the combination of these two figures to which other Gold Rush towns can relate.

One consideration to take from this thesis is that only four sites were visited. More sites should be analyzed in the future in order to see what other successful and unsuccessful models have done to capitalize on Gold Rush history. Another consideration is that although this thesis only looked at one industry, the Gold Rush, it could be possible to apply many of

these same ideas and methods to other forms of industry that follow a boom and bust pattern as well.

TABLE I: LONG-TERM FEASIBILITY

	Historical marker	National Register of Historic Places	Local Historic District	State Park
Level of intensity	low	low to medium	medium to high	high
Initial costs	low	low	low	high
Level of management	low	low	medium	high
Level of effectiveness/protection	low	low to medium	high	high

TABLE II: GOLD RUSH TOWN CHARACTERISTICS

	Local support	Comprehensive plan	Accessibility/ Proximity to larger metro areas	Shopping	Local Arts/ Crafts
Auraria	no	no	no	no	no
Dahlongega	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Telluride	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Bodie	n/a	yes	no	no	no

	Recreation	Historic buildings and sites	Heritage	Year-round attractions	Educational Institutions
Auraria	no	Yes	yes	no	no
Dahlonaga	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes
Telluride	yes	Yes	yes	yes	no
Bodie	yes	Yes	yes	limited	no

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