



Guide to the Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company Records

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**University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special
Collections and Archives.**

Box 457010

4505 S. Maryland Parkway

Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-7010

special.collections@unlv.edu

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company
Title:	Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company Records
ID:	MS-00744
Date [inclusive]:	1904 to 1930
Physical Description:	9.45 Cubic Feet (2 boxes, 2 oversized boxes, and 8 flat files)
Physical Description:	10.26 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company Records (1904-1930) consist of correspondence, invoices, receipts with voucher checks, mining leases, insurance policies, payroll accounts, published notices and articles. Also included is a monthly Goldfield Consolidated Mines reports ledger from February 1914 to October 1916 for mines located in the south central Nevada area. The collection primarily dates from 1904, before the consolidation when the boom in Goldfield was beginning in earnest, until 1919, when the company ceased its operations in Goldfield, although there are a few records post-1919 as the company continued to exist after the mines and mill closed down.

Preferred Citation

Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company Records, 1904-1930. MS-00744. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Historical Background

The Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company was the culmination of years of shrewd investments, skillful maneuvering in the volatile financial and mining stock markets, and mastering the art of personal persuasion by two of Nevada's most colorful millionaires of the early twentieth century, George S. Nixon (1860-1912) and George Wingfield (1876-1959). Wingfield, a rover and

gambler who dabbled in mining in northern Nevada, found his way, like many others, in the soon-to-boom silver town of Tonopah in 1902. George Nixon, personable, self-taught banker with political ambitions had met Wingfield in Winnemucca where Nixon had established a bank. The two became life-long friends and ultimately hugely successful business partners, Wingfield the richest man in Nevada and its premier political power-broker, and Nixon, a U.S. Senator. In 1902, however, both were still small players in a Nevada that was rapidly changing. In Tonopah, Wingfield did what he did best, gambled, won, bought a saloon with his winnings, and began investing in local mining operations. Nixon, the banker and politician, saw the potential of the Tonopah boom, and with his friend and now business partner George Wingfield, brought his financial resources into play. When the gold strikes in neighboring Goldfield began to draw investors, Nixon and Wingfield followed, first in small ventures in Columbia (just outside Goldfield) and eventually as major investors in the Goldfield Mohawk Mining Company, whose mine was the site of a phenomenally rich strike in 1906. Wingfield and Nixon proceeded to acquire control over the Mohawk and its earnings, which they then used to gain control over neighboring mines. The scheme that resulted in creation of the Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company arose initially as a defensive move against the intrusions of the Goldfield Combination Mining Company, whose claims encroached on the Mohawk mine. Given the muddle of overlapping mining claims over the same ore deposits and the looseness of the Nevada mining laws, Wingfield and Nixon's attorneys advised them that rather than pursuing litigation with an uncertain outcome, the better strategy would be to buy out the neighboring mining companies, thereby neutralizing their claims. And this is precisely what Wingfield and Nixon did. Using their extensive capital, financial acumen, and east-coast connections, they were able to buy controlling interests in the Goldfield, Red Top, Jumbo, and Laguna mining companies, controlling the Mohawk, Florence, Red Top, and Jumbo mines, the largest producers in Goldfield. Wingfield and Nixon organized a holding company, the Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company, incorporated in Wyoming and capitalized for \$50,000,000. To complete their near monopoly of mining in the Goldfield district, Wingfield and Nixon leveraged a buyout of the Combination Mines Company, their only major competitor, in 1907. This completed the consolidation of mining in Goldfield by a company that by 1917 was ranked as the 148th largest industrial corporation in the United States. The centralized, systematic and direct management of mining operations, as opposed to the older system of leasing mines to smaller, independent operators, made Goldfield Consolidated the most efficient and cost effective mining company in the state with its own mill and railroad, and also the most productive, at least while the ore held out. Consolidation helped Goldfield Consolidated weather the financial slumps that ruined most smaller mining operators, but by 1913 the ore was playing out and the company's dividends fell off. In 1919, in the wake of the post-war depression, the company ceased operations in Goldfield and closed its mines and mills, although the company continued as a holding company for Wingfield's mining ventures throughout the west. Wingfield lost his fortune (and his stock in Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company) in the Great Depression but he remained on its Board of Directors until his death in 1959. While it lasted, the Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company paid out a total of over \$29 million in dividends to stockholders, of which at least \$8 million was paid to George Wingfield personally.

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Scope and Contents Note

The collection primarily dates from 1904, before the consolidation when the boom in Goldfield was beginning in earnest, until 1919, when the company ceased its operations in Goldfield, although there are a few records post-1919 as the company continued to exist after the mines and mill closed down.

The Goldfield Consolidated initially was a holding company for a group of independent mining companies whose records were later incorporated into the umbrella company's records. These independent mining companies represented the largest and most productive mines in the district, and their records document the initial bonanza period of mining prior to the consolidation effected by Messrs. Wingfield and Nixon. There were four major companies that controlled the richest mines: the Goldfield Mining Company, which owned the January mine, the Red Top Mining Company which owned the Red Top mines, the Jumbo Mining Company which owned the Jumbo mines, and Wingfield and Nixon's own Goldfield- Mohawk Mining Company which controlled the famous Mohawk mine. Nixon and Wingfield acquired other mines and mining companies but these were the most important and their early pre-consolidation records are significant. The Consolidated Company did not fully centralize its operations until 1908, the various accounts reflect the transition in the period 1906 to 1907.

The bulk of this collection originated in the company's accounting office, and consists primarily of original invoices from the company's suppliers, employees, and contractors, receipts for payments made, and voucher checks that constituted the actual payment. In the absence of account ledgers, these invoices and vouchers constitute the most complete record of the company's expenditures, whether for machinery, lumber, or chemicals for ore processing, to services rendered from employees, attorneys and engineering consultants, or the private detectives the company employed as miners to inform on their employees. Unlike ledgers in which expenditures are usually abstracted or summarized, as, for example "sundries" or "general expenses," the invoices itemize everything the company paid for, including ore cars, or freight charges, office rent, legal fees, cigars and whiskey for George Wingfield, and or the ambiguous expenses of the legal department for "entertaining" jurors after a trial.

The collection also contains a series of surveys of the underground workings of the Consolidated mines in the period of deep mining development after 1908. Intense geological analysis of the district revealed the probability that the rich veins of gold ore which had sustained the initial bonanza mining operations from 1904 to 1908 ran much deeper underground than originally thought or could be reached by the earlier system of shafts and lateral prospecting. After the settlement of the labor troubles in Goldfield of 1907-8, when the Consolidated resumed operations, its management undertook a program of extensive development and prospecting by sinking its shafts down to 1000ft and cutting lateral tunnels at 600, 700, 800 and 1000 feet. Consolidated sunk deep shafts on the Clermont mine, the Red Top, the Combination the Laguna, and the

Mohawk. Eventually all these mines connected at various levels allowing the company to extract and bring the ore to the surface more efficiently using an electric underground rail system and utilizing central shafts. The surveys document this extensive exploration. Prepared by a mining engineer, the surveys are carefully annotated by detailed notes of the geological conditions being encountered as the various laterals, crosscuts, winzes and stopes were cut. The surveys from the Laguna Mohawk mine include 21 sheets covering a depth of 153 feet, averaging eight feet between survey levels. The data from the surveys allowed a much more scientific approach to underground prospecting. According to a newspaper account in the *Goldfield News* the Consolidated would show visitors a three-dimensional model of their mines and the ore bodies, with large sheets of glass held in place a fraction of an inch apart, with all the different workings and veins marked in the proper location.

A series of eleven vertical sections of the vertical boundary between the Combination and Florence Mines properties show the underground workings on either side that either cross or approach the boundaries in relation to the ore vein which both mines were tapping.

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Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically with the exception of the two ledger books and one oversized flat folder.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Acquisition Note

Materials were purchased in 2012, 2013, and 2015; accession numbers 2012-17, 2013-20, and 2015-49.

Processing Note

Collection was processed in 2015 by Joyce Moore. Collection description was written by Peter Michel.

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Names and Subjects

- Gold mines and mining
- Mining -- Nevada
- Mineral industries

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
Goldfield Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1904	box 01
Goldfield Mining Company time sheets, 1904	box 01
Goldfield Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1905	box 01
Magazine, newspaper, and journal articles and notices, 1905 to 1913	box 01
Goldfield Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1906 to 1907 Physical Description: 2 Files	box 01
Red Top Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1904 to 1907	box 01
Jumbo Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1906 to 1907	box 01
Goldfield-Mohawk Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1905 to 1907	box 01
Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company bylaws, 1906	box 01
Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company payroll sheets, 1908-1910, 1914	box 01
Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company correspondence, 1907	box 01
Insurance policies, 1907	box 01
Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1907	box 01
Red Top Mining Company, Goldfield-Mohawk Mining Company, and Consolidated Mill payroll ledgers, 1907 to 1908	box 01
Insurance policies, 1908	box 01
Goldfield Mining Company invoices and receipts, 1908	box 01

Physical Description: 4 Files

Time sheets, 1908	box 01
Invoices with voucher checks, 1908	box 01
Invoices, receipts, and insurance policies, 1909	box 01
Physical Description: 3 Files	
Railroad Voucher checks, 1909-1910	box 02
Mohawk Mining, payroll receipts, 1909	box 02
Mining leases, 1917-1918	box 02
Insurance policies, 1910	box 02
Invoices and receipts, 1910	box 02
Physical Description: 6 Files	
Mining leases, 1910	box 02
Invoices with voucher checks, 1910	box 02
Insurance policies, 1911	box 02
Invoices with voucher checks, 1911	box 02
Insurance policies, 1912	box 02
Invoices and receipts, 1912	box 02
Invoices with voucher checks, 1913	box 02
Metal production analysis, 1914-1915	box 02
Invoices with voucher checks, 1914	box 02
Insurance policy, 1915	box 02
Correspondence regarding mine accidents, 1916	box 02
Invoices with voucher checks, 1916	box 02
Insurance policies, 1917	box 02
Invoices, receipts, and voucher checks, 1917-1919	box 02
Insurance policies, 1918	box 02
Mercantile Department receipts, 1918	box 02
Correspondence regarding A. H. Lawry, general superintendent, 1924-1927, 1930	box 02
Patent advertisement ledger, 1906-1914	box 02
Monthly mining reports, 1914 February-1916 November	oversized box 03
Financial ledger, 1911-1945	

	oversized box 04
Mohawk Mine summary of direct costs and productions, 1915 June-December	flat file 05
Underground surveys	
Mohawk Mine, 2nd level, Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 10
Mohawk Mine, 3rd level, Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 10
Mohawk Mine, 4th level/Clermont 3rd level, Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 10
Mohawk Mine, 4th level, 450 ft., Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 10
Mohawk Mine, 600 ft., Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 Physical Description: 2 Items	flat file 10
Clermont Mine, 3rd level, Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002068) (view online) Physical Description: 2 Items	flat file 09
Clermont Mine, 4th level, Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002063) (view online)	flat file 09
Clermont Mine, 4th level, Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002069) (view online)	flat file 09
Clermont Mine, 5th level, Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002064) (view online)	flat file 09
Clermont Mine, 600 ft., Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002070) (view online)	flat file 09
Clermont Mine, 600 ft., Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002067) (view online)	flat file 09
Clermont Mine, 8th level, Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002065) (view online)	flat file 09
Red Top Mine, 1st level, Washoe County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002062) (view online)	flat file 07
Red Top Mine, 2nd level, Washoe County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 07
Red Top Mine, 3rd level, Washoe County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002054) (view online)	flat file 07
Red Top Mine, 4th level, Washoe County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002061) (view online)	flat file 07
Combination Mine, 328 ft., Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002057) (view online)	flat file 08

Combination Mine, 330 ft., Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002059) (view online)	flat file 08
Combination Mine, 130 ft., Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002058) (view online)	flat file 08
Combination Mine, 5986.31 elevation, Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 Physical Description: 2 Items	flat file 08
Locke Mine/Combination, 380 ft., Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 08
Locke Mine, 380 ft., Nye County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 (snv002060) (view online)	flat file 08
Laguna Mohawk, various elevations, Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 Physical Description: 21 Items	flat file 12
Cosser shaft, 150 ft., Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 11
Cosser & Terrell lease on Blue Bull, Esmerelda County, Nevada, approximately 1900 to 1925 Physical Description: 2 Items	flat file 11
Unidentified mine, 180 ft. shaft, approximately 1900 to 1925	flat file 11
Cross-sections (A-L) of Combination and Florence Mines, Goldfield, Nevada, approximately 1902 to 1908 (view online) Physical Description: 12 Items	flat file 06