

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Wykoff Commercial Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 100 S. Gold St.- 123 N. Gold St. not for publication N/A
city or town Wykoff vicinity N/A
state Minnesota code MN county Fillmore code 45
zip code 55990

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ian R. Stewart 6/23/94
Signature of certifying official Ian R. Stewart Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Minnesota Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Entered in the
National Register

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Gay M. Lapley 8/5/94

Gay M. Lapley Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>17</u>	<u>4</u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>17</u>	<u>4</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u> COMMERCE/TRADE </u> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Sub: <u>department store</u> <u>specialty store</u> <u>restaurant</u> <u>financial institution</u> _____ _____ _____
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Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u> COMMERCE/TRADE </u> _____ _____ _____ _____ <u> DOMESTIC </u> <u>GOVERNMENT</u> <u>FUNERARY</u> <u>VACANT/NOT IN USE</u>	Sub: <u>department store</u> <u>specialty store</u> <u>financial institution</u> <u>restaurant</u> <u>professional</u> <u>warehouse</u> <u>single dwelling</u> <u>post office</u> <u>mortuary</u> _____ _____
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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

<u> Queen Anne </u>
<u> Classical Revival </u>
<u> Late Victorian </u>
<u> Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals </u>

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u> Stone; Concrete </u>
roof	<u> Other: composite </u>
walls	<u> Brick </u>
	<u> Wood </u>
	<u> Concrete </u>
other	_____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance 1876-1930

Significant Dates 1895

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation _____

Builders Allen, David and Allen, Edward
Bartlett, E.D. and Derenthal, A.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Fillmore County Historical Society, Fountain, MN

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.1 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>558920</u>	<u>4839440</u>	3	<u>15</u>	<u>559000</u> <u>4839330</u>
2	<u>15</u>	<u>559000</u>	<u>4839440</u>	4	<u>15</u>	<u>558920</u> <u>4839330</u>
	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Demian Hess, Historian
organization Hess, Roise and Company
street & number 405 Cedar Avenue South, Suite 200
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55454
telephone (612) 338-1987
date 26 March 1993

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. Wykoff, Minn. 1965
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state ____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Wykoff Commercial Historic District

Fillmore County, MN

DESCRIPTION

The Wykoff Commercial Historic District consists of a strip of buildings standing on either side of Gold Street, Wykoff's main thoroughfare. All but two of the buildings lie on Gold between Carimona (to the south) and Front (to the north). Two additional buildings lie just south of Carimona, one on each side of Gold Street. In all, the district contains twenty-one buildings, seventeen of which are contributing.

The district's buildings are remarkably uniform in appearance. All stand either one or two stories in height, and all but five are built of brick. Of the five non-brick buildings, two are wood frame while three are non-contributing properties constructed of various modern materials. The lower floors of all the buildings were generally used as shops while the upper floors served as offices or residences. Almost without fail, the street-level facades originally featured a central recessed doorway with a transom light flanked by angled side lights, cast-iron columns, and plate-glass display windows. The shopfronts were generally shaded by canvas awnings. Many of these shops have been altered to meet the needs of current shopkeepers. These changes, however, are minor and reversible--a fact proven by the rehabilitation of a number of buildings along the street. In all of these cases, the current owners reported finding the original window frames and columns hidden behind exterior paneling.

In terms of architectural detailing, the district also displays a strong sense of cohesion. Almost all of the brick buildings employ an eclectic blend of Late Victorian design elements which recall the Queen Anne style. Windows are generally tall, narrow and rectangular, although semi-circular and elliptical arches are also used. Stone lintels and sills are common. Brick corbelling is widely used to articulate the cornices, and most buildings feature brick parapets (often stepped or pedimented), which are occasionally surmounted by stone finials.

The following summary description of each building is numbered to correspond to the map enclosed with the nomination, entitled "Wykoff Commercial Historic District."

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- 1. Historic Name: First State Bank of Wykoff**
Current Name: First State Bank of Wykoff
Address: 101 S. Gold Street
Date: 1905
Eligibility: contributing

The First State Bank is housed in a single-story, brick, Classical Revival building. A canted corner at the intersection of Gold and Carimona features an arched opening which leads to the main entrance. The arch springs from stone impostes inscribed with the construction date of 1905. A stone plaque is set in the frieze above the entrance and carries the name of the bank. The canted facade is capped by a corbelled brick cornice and low brick parapet which are repeated on the Gold Street facade to the south. The Gold Street facade is pierced by two large double windows with stone sills. Originally, the bank extended along Gold Street to the depth of only one window bay. In the late 1940s or early 1950s, the bank was enlarged southward along Gold, allowing the addition of the second window opening. The addition conformed to the bank's original architectural detailing and did little to alter the building's appearance. In 1980-1981, the financial institution enlarged the building again, constructing a brick and glass cube at the south end. Although the most recent addition does not resemble the original building, it does little to disrupt its appearance. The addition is set unobtrusively to the rear, and seems more like an adjacent structure than an integral addition. Entering the bank from Carimona and Gold, the viewer has little sense that the building has been changed. The building retains enough of its original appearance and fabric to possess good historic integrity.²

- 2. Historic Name: Wendorf Dry Goods Store**
Current Name: Kavanaugh's Auto Showroom
Address: 101 N. Gold Street
Date: 1895
Eligibility: contributing

When originally built, the Wendorf Dry Goods Store was a Queen Anne style building with pedimented stone window hoods, brick pilasters, a corbelled brick cornice, and stone finials. These decorative elements are still prominently displayed on the building's Carimona Street facade. In c.1935, however, the Gold Street facade was rebuilt. Currently, the ground-floor elevation on this side is filled by large plate-glass display windows and

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double glass doors. Two double windows are located on the second floor. Despite these alterations, the building's original character can still be determined from the Carimona Street facade and the property possesses good historic integrity.

A fire in 1895 destroyed the building which originally stood on this site, along with nearly all of the other properties on the west side of Gold Street. Fortunately, the property was insured, and the local firm of E.D. Bartlett and August Derenthal constructed this two-story brick building to replace the original shop. By April 1895, the newspaper reported that the building had been sold to Kumm and Lenz, a dry goods merchandising company based in nearby Spring Valley. Otto Wendorf, a local merchant, acquired the store sometime before 1910 and continued to operate it for many years.³

3. **Historic Name:** Exchange State Bank
Current Name: The Bank Gift Haus
Address: 105 N. Gold Street
Date: 1894
Eligibility: contributing

The Exchange State Bank is a simple one-story, brick Queen Anne style building. Recently rehabilitated to conform to its historic appearance, the building's facade is divided into a central, recessed entryway with a transom light flanked by square, cast-iron columns and large plate-glass display windows. The building features a corbelled brick cornice and stepped brick parapet. This parapet is ornamented by corbelled brick brackets, pilasters, and a central plaque embossed with the word "Bank."

L.G. Kilborn of Wykoff founded the Exchange State Bank in 1880, originally operating out of a wooden lean-to located on another lot on Gold Street. In 1887, Kilborn sold the enterprise to Fred Wendorf, a blacksmith and farm implement merchant. Wendorf constructed the current brick building in 1894. This building was the only structure to survive the devastating fire which swept through the business block on the west side of Gold Street in 1895, although it did suffer some damage, particularly to its roof. The bank remained in operation until the 1930s, when it appears to have failed. Jerry Giornado, a local restaurateur, purchased the property for a cafe in 1936. He remained in business until the 1970s. The old bank building was then converted into a recreation center, complete with an indoor

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archery range. In 1990, Connie Bicknese and Lila Eickhoff purchased the bank for use as a gift shop, rehabilitating the property to conform to its historic appearance.⁴

4. **Historic Name: Peshak Hardware Store**
Current Name: Economy Grocery
Address: 107 N. Gold Street
Date: 1895
Eligibility: contributing

When built in 1895, this was a simple one-story, brick Queen Anne style commercial building featuring a central, recessed entrance and flanking cast-iron columns and display windows. Sometime before 1915, a second story was added which featured more elaborate Queen Anne elements. Currently, the second-floor facade is divided into three bays by brick pilasters. The central bay is pierced by a large, double-width, segmentally arched window opening with a brick hood. Each of the outer bays is pierced by a single-width segmentally arched window opening with a brick hood. The building is surmounted by a corbelled brick cornice and low brick parapet with stone finials.

T.R. Dahl, a merchant from Austin, Minnesota, purchased this lot shortly after the 1895 fire and hired David Allen and Edgar Allen of Chatfield to construct the single-story brick building. By 1899, a local merchant named D.M. Peshak had purchased the building to house his hardware business. Peshak appears to have passed the enterprise on to I.W. Peshak, presumably his son, in the early 1900s. I.W. Peshak remained in business until at least the 1910s.⁵

5. **Historic Name: Jacob Rau Dry Goods Store**
Current Name: Economy Grocery
Address: 109/111 N. Gold Street
Date: 1895
Eligibility: contributing

The Rau Dry Goods Store is a two-story Queen Anne style commercial brick building. The ground-floor storefront was once composed of a central recessed entrance flanked by angled side lights, cast-iron columns, and plate-glass display windows. The storefront has recently been covered by corrugated sheet metal. A doorway providing access to the second floor is located at the far north side. The second-floor facade is divided into three

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bays by brick pilasters. Each bay is pierced by a rectangular window opening capped by a pedimented, flush, stone hood. The building is surmounted by a corbelled, stepped brick parapet with stone finials. A stone plaque, set in the center panel of the parapet, is inscribed with the building's construction date of 1895.

A one-story, wood-frame, gable-roofed garage covered with corrugated-metal siding stands directly behind the Jacob Rau Dry Goods Store. The building is in poor condition, with a pronounced lean and numerous holes in its exterior walls. Research has not determined the building's date of construction, which could range from 1920 to 1950. The garage does little to enhance the historic integrity of the district as a whole, due to its relatively small size, poor condition, and unobtrusive location. Based on these facts and its unknown age, this is a non-contributing building.

Following its construction in 1895 by David Allen and Edgar Allen of Chatfield, the Rau Dry Goods Store served a string of different merchants. The first to occupy the building was Jacob Rau, who had operated a dry goods store on this site before the 1895 fire. Rau was followed by J.H. Schuldt in the 1890s, and W.H. Miller in the early 1900s. The property was eventually purchased by Fred Gehrking for a shoe store. The Gehrking family continued to operate the business until the 1980s.⁶

- 6. Historic Name: J.R. Murrell Hardware Store**
Current Name: J.B.'s Office Bar
Address: 113 N. Gold Street
Date: 1895
Eligibility: contributing

This is a single-story Queen Anne style commercial brick building. The facade once featured a central entry flanked by cast-iron columns, angled side lights, and large plate-glass display windows. During the 1930s or 1940s, a Moderne-inspired tile and metal storefront was installed. A recessed panel infilled with a single hounds-tooth course of brick is located above the storefront. The building is surmounted by a simple corbelled brick cornice.

The local firm of E.D. Bartlett and A. Derenthal appears to have constructed this building following the 1895 fire. The property

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was immediately occupied by J.R. Murrell, who operated a hardware and farm implement store. Murrell was succeeded by Osmond Brekke (or Brakke) and W.F. Krueger in 1901. The property became a cafe in 1911. In more recent years, the building has served as a liquor store and a bar. According to records from the State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society, the property was recently rehabilitated with a Community Development Block Grant from HUD.

7. **Historic Name:** Stockdill Drugstore
Current Name: Meisner Design
Address: 115 N. Gold Street
Date: 1895
Eligibility: contributing

The Stockdill Drugstore is a single-story, brick, Queen Anne style building of identical design to the neighboring Murrell Hardware Store. Whereas the Murrell Store has been altered, the Stockdill Store has recently been rehabilitated to conform to its historic appearance. The shop features a recessed, central entry flanked by cast-iron columns, angled side lights, and large plate-glass display windows. A recessed panel with a single hounds-tooth course of brick is located above the storefront, and the building is surmounted by a simple corbelled brick cornice.

W.F. Stockdill's original drugstore on this site was destroyed by the devastating fire of 1895. The local firm of E.D. Bartlett and A. Derenthal rebuilt Stockdill's store in brick shortly after the blaze. Stockdill appears to have sold his business a few years later, for by 1899 it was being run by E.L. McCulloch. In the 1910s, two other druggists, Oscar Hargesheimer and Harry Olin, are also known to have operated from this location. In the early 1990s, an interior design firm rehabilitated the Stockdill Building for use as an office. The work was aided by means of a Community Development Block Grant from HUD.⁷

8. **Historic Name:** Spies and Son Dry Goods Store
Current Name: residence
Address: 117 N. Gold Street
Date: 1895
Eligibility: contributing

This is a single-story, brick, Queen Anne style commercial building. Originally, the storefront featured a central,

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recessed entry flanked by cast-iron columns, side lights and plate-glass display windows. At some point, probably in 1980, the storefront was replaced by a recessed wall veneered with wood panelling. The new facade features three narrow, vertical, rectangular windows and an entrance set at the far north side. A corbelled brick cornice runs across the facade just above the original storefront area. A stepped brick parapet, decorated with several courses of brick corbelling, surmounts the building.

A one-story, gable roofed, concrete block garage constructed c.1960 stands directly behind the Spies Dry Goods Store, facing Front Street. Due to its late construction date, this building is a non-contributing property.

Henry G. Spies' original brick store which stood on this lot was destroyed by a fire in 1895. Spies rebuilt his building within a few months of the blaze and continued in the dry goods business until at least the 1910s. Henry Bicknese appears to have then purchased Spies' building to house his grocery and butcher shop. Bicknese was eventually succeeded by Paul Erdman, who also ran a grocery. When Erdman retired in 1980, he converted the building into his residence.⁸

9. **Historic Name:** Egleston Dry Goods Store
Current Name: warehouse/apartments
Address: 119/121 N. Gold Street
Date: 1895
Eligibility: contributing

The Egleston Store is a two-story, brick, Queen Anne style commercial building. It was recently rehabilitated to conform to its historic appearance. The ground-floor storefront is composed of a central, recessed entrance with a transom light flanked by angled side lights, cast iron columns, and plate-glass display windows. A doorway providing access to the second floor stands to the north of the storefront. The entire ground floor is shaded by a canvas awning. The second-floor facade is divided into four bays by brick pilasters. Each bay is pierced by a tall, rectangular window with a flush, pedimented, stone hood; sunburst transom light; and 1/1, double-hung windows. A brick arch with stone imposts and key is located above each second-floor window. Brick corbelling decorates the cornice of each bay, and the pilasters terminate in stone finials set along the roof line.

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Marvin Egleston and his brother D.J. Egleston had this brick building constructed in 1895 to replace their shop which had burned in the devastating fire of that year. Originally from Oneida County in New York State, the Eglestons settled in Minnesota in the 1860s. In 1867, the brothers opened a dry goods shop in the Village of Fillmore. With the coming of the railroad to Wykoff, the brothers sold their Fillmore business and opened a store in the new village in 1871/1872. D.J. Egleston quit the partnership around 1877, but Marvin continued until around 1912, when he finally retired to Minneapolis. Egleston's son appears to have operated the business for a short period, but he eventually sold the building to local resident Mike Flanagan, who operated a mortuary on the premises for many years. About 1980, the building became the property of William Bicknese, who rehabilitated it to conform to its historic appearance. The ground floor currently serves as a warehouse in association with Bicknese's grain elevator, while the second floor is used for apartments.⁹

10. **Historic Name:** barbershop
Current Name: office
Address: 123 N. Gold Street
Date: c.1895
Eligibility: non-contributing

This is a single-story, false-front, gable-roofed, frame building with composite siding. The front facade features a doorway with a transom light set just to the south of a 2/2, horizontal, display window with wood trim. The top trim extends over the doorway transom. Throughout the early 1900s, this building was covered by pressed tin siding featuring a brick pattern. The removal of this historic material coupled with the building's current siding constitute a loss of integrity, and this property is therefore non-contributing.

Although it is known that this building was erected after the Wykoff fire of 1895, its exact construction date has not been determined. An historic photograph, however, documents that the building was standing by 1899, at which time it was in use as a barbershop. The building appears to have remained a barbershop throughout the twentieth century, its string of owners including Paul Kabus, Elton Sikkink, and Joan Bicknese. Around 1980, William Bicknese purchased the building for use as an office for his grain elevator business. In the early 1990s, Bicknese

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rehabilitated the building using a Community Development Block Grant secured from HUD.¹⁰

- 11. Historic Name: Thauwald Mortuary**
Current Name: same
Address: 110 Front Street
Date: c.1960
Eligibility: non-contributing

The Thauwald Mortuary is a simple concrete block cube built just to the north of the Egleston Store and west of the adjoining barbershop building. Due to its recent date of construction, this is a non-contributing building.

- 12. Historic Name: Mitchell Saloon**
Current Name: Jack Spratt Store
Address: 100 S. Gold Street
Date: 1876
Eligibility: contributing

The Mitchell Saloon is a two-story, wood-frame building with a gable roof and wood siding. The gable end fronts on Gold Street. The building is entered through a canted doorway with a transom light set in the northwest corner. To the south of the entrance, the ground-floor facade on Gold is filled by two large plate-glass display windows shaded by a canvas awning. A drip molding runs the full length of the storefront above the display windows. Above the molding, the second floor facade is pierced by two 2/2 windows capped by drip moldings. A painted wooden sign is located just below these windows, and an octagonal picture surrounded by wooden molding is set between them. A small arched louver with a rectangular casement and capped by a drip molding is set below the eaves of the gable. A one-story, false-fronted, wood-frame addition with a gable roof stands south of the Mitchell Saloon. The facade of the addition is pierced by a 4/4, double-hung sash window set just to the south of a doorway. Drip moldings cap both the door and window.

John Mitchell constructed this building in 1876, making it the second saloon in the small village. The building operated primarily as a saloon throughout the early 1900s, although a harness manufacturer opened a shop in the basement in the 1870s, and a brewery began operations in the 1910s. The small frame addition to the south was erected by 1899 and was used as a

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barbershop. In the 1910s or early 1920s, the building became a grocery and general goods store. Early grocers included W.O. Wilson and L. Ferguson. Edwin Krueger acquired the property in 1933, turning it into a general store for the "Jack Sprat" national chain. Although Krueger remained in business until his death in 1989, he increasingly devoted the store to serve as a museum of the town's history. In his will, Krueger bequeathed the store to the City of Wykoff for use as a permanent museum. Community volunteers are currently rehabilitating the building to conform to its historic appearance.¹¹

- 13. Historic Name: Handey's Thirst Parlour**
Current Name: Dianne's Family Hairquarters
Address: 100 N. Gold Street
Date: c.1895
Eligibility: contributing

This one-story, Queen Anne style, commercial brick building is located at the northeast corner of Gold and Carimona. The entrance is set in a canted corner at the building's northwest corner and is sheltered by a canvas awning. The cornice area above the entrance features extensive brick work in the form of hounds-tooth courses, corbelling, recessed panels, and brackets. A pedimented brick parapet surmounts the canted corner facade. To the north of the entrance, the Gold Street facade is pierced by two large plate glass windows surrounded by decorative woodwork. As above the entrance, the Gold Street facade features an elaborate brick cornice and is surmounted by a brick parapet with stone finials.

Photographs document that this building was standing by 1899. It was probably constructed shortly after the Wykoff fire of 1895, when merchants on the east side of Gold Street began to rebuild their original wooden shops in fireproof brick. The building served as a saloon from the date of its construction until at least the 1910s. The property currently houses a beauty salon.

- 14. Historic Name: South Behring Building**
Current Name: commercial building
Address: 102/104 N. Gold Street
Date: 1906
Eligibility: contributing

The South Behring Building is a two-story Queen Anne commercial

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brick building. The street-level storefront features a recessed central entrance flanked by angled side lights, cast-iron columns, and large plate-glass display windows. A doorway providing access to the second floor is located to the north of the storefront, from which it is separated by a third cast iron column. The second-floor facade is pierced by four tall, narrow, 1/1, double hung-sash windows with stone sills. Each window is accented by semi-circular sunbursts with brick hoods. The building is capped by several rows of brick corbelling and a stepped brick parapet. The central panel of the parapet is framed by brick pilasters rising from buttress-like brackets. The panel carries a cast-iron plaque with the inscription: "1906, Behring."

R. Behring constructed this building in 1906 to house his "City Restaurant," a cafe and ice cream parlor which he apparently started on this site in a frame building as early as 1896. In the 1970s, the building served as a grocery, and in the 1980s it fell vacant. In the early 1990s, the building was rehabilitated for use as apartment and office space with the aid of a Community Development Block Grant from HUD.

- 15. Historic Name: North Behring Building**
Current Name: commercial building
Address: 106 N. Gold Street
Date: c.1915
Eligibility: contributing

The North Behring Building is a two-story, Queen Anne commercial brick building similar in appearance to the adjacent South Behring Building. Unlike its neighbor, however, the North Behring Building does not feature cast-iron columns, and does not possess a second entrance leading to the second floor. In addition, there is no plaque set in the central panel of the stepped parapet.

R. Behring constructed this building adjacent to his restaurant about 1915, apparently to house his dry goods business. The building was rehabilitated in the early 1990s for use as apartment and office space with the help of a Community Development Block Grant from HUD.

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16. **Historic Name:** Schroeder Saloon
Current Name: post office
Address: 108/110 N. Gold Street
Date: 1897
Eligibility: contributing

The Schroeder Saloon was originally a single-story Queen Anne style brick building. The ground-floor facade featured a central entrance flanked by angled side lights, cast-iron columns, and large display windows. The frieze above the storefront was highlighted by several courses of denticulated brick. A brick parapet capped the building and was ornamented with elaborate corbelling. An elliptically arched, raised section at the center of the parapet carried a date stone inscribed "1897." About 1915, the owner of the building demolished the original parapet and added a second floor. Little changed from the time it was built, the second-floor facade is currently divided into three bays by brick pilasters. Rectangular, 1/1 windows with stone sills are centered in each bay. The cornice is ornamented by brick corbelling, and the building is capped by a stepped brick parapet.

A man named Schroeder constructed this brick building in 1897 to house his saloon. Around 1910, William F. Crowley purchased the property for a confectionery store. Until that time, Crowley had operated from a cramped shack on the opposite side of Gold Street, just north of the small wooden barbershop adjacent to the Egleston Store. In 1928, the village post office moved into the building, where it has remained to the present day. This building was rehabilitated in the early 1990s with a Community Development Block Grant from HUD.¹²

17. **Historic Name:** Fligge Grocery
Current Name: residence
Address: 112 N. Gold Street
Date: c.1895
Eligibility: contributing

This is a single-story, Queen Anne style brick building. The storefront was once composed of a central recessed entry with a transom light flanked by angled side lights, cast-iron columns and large plate-glass display windows. The original shopfront has been recently covered with wood siding. A new doorway has been set in the old entry area, and small, 1/1, double-hung, sash

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windows have been placed to either side. The cornice features a hounds-tooth course of bricks. The building is capped by a brick parapet ornamented with brick corbelling and a central, recessed panel. Historic photographs reveal that the current parapet was installed around 1915, replacing an earlier parapet.

This building was probably constructed shortly after the Wykoff fire of 1895 when merchants on the east side of Gold Street began to replace their wood frame shops with more fireproof brick construction. Historic photographs document that the building was standing by 1899. The property originally housed W.D. Fligge's grocery. It is currently used as a private residence.

- 18. Historic Name: Schatz Jewelry Store**
Current Name: residence
Address: 116 N. Gold Street
Date: c.1910
Eligibility: contributing

The Schatz Jewelry Store is a two-story, Queen Anne style commercial brick building. The street-level storefront is composed of a central, recessed doorway with a transom light flanked by angled side lights, cast-iron columns, and large plate-glass display windows. The storefront is sheltered by a metal awning supported from above by tie-rods. The storefront's frieze has been covered by vertical wood siding. The second-floor facade is divided into three bays by brick pilasters. A rectangular, 1/1 window with flush stone hoods is set in each bay. The building features a corbelled brick cornice and stepped brick parapet. The pilasters terminate above the parapet as short brick finials.

Charles F. Schatz's original watch and jewelry store building was destroyed by fire in 1899. The blaze began when a saloon located two buildings to the north exploded, apparently due to a gas leak. The blast ignited Schatz's wooden building and caused damage to the neighboring Thoeny Building. Based on historic photographs of Gold Street, it does not appear that Schatz rebuilt until c.1910. The building is currently used as a private residence.

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- 19. Historic Name: Thoeny Building
Current Name: Gateway Inn
Address: 118 N. Gold Street
Date: 1896
Eligibility: contributing**

This is a striking two-story Queen Anne style brick building. The street-level storefront has been extensively remodelled. It currently features two central display windows set above a low stone wall flanked by two doorways. The storefront is sheltered by a metal awning supported from above by tie rods. The storefront frieze has been covered by vertical wood panelling, although the corbelled brick cornice is still visible. The second-floor facade is dramatically composed around a large, central, arched window opening divided by a transom and fluted mullion into a semi-circular transom light and two rectangular 1/1 windows. The window is accented by a brick hood with stone imposts and key. Tall, narrow, rectangular, 1/1 windows are located to either side of the central opening. The second-floor facade also features stone belt courses, brick pilasters, and a corbelled brick cornice. When originally built, the transom carried the name "Thoeny," the building owner, and the keystone was engraved with the construction date of 1896.

Born in Switzerland in 1851, Simeon Thoeny (or Thoeni) came to the United States in 1871, settling first in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and then Wykoff in 1879. Originally a wagon maker, Thoeny opened a billiard hall and saloon on the east side of Gold Street in 1882.¹³ Following the devastating fire of 1895 which destroyed almost all of the buildings on the west side of Gold, Thoeny rebuilt his saloon in brick. One of the earliest merchants, Thoeny was a prominent member of the community, eventually serving as mayor. His ornate new brick building clearly reflected his status. In addition to being a saloon, the building functioned as a meeting hall for local clubs, which occupied the second floor. The building is currently a restaurant. In the 1990s, this property was rehabilitated with the help of a Community Development Block Grant from HUD.

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Notes

1. Historical information on the following buildings was largely drawn from materials located at the Wykoff Historical Society, Wykoff, MN and the Fillmore County Historical Society, Fountain, MN. In particular, the Wykoff Historical Society possesses a set of historic photographs showing the buildings on Gold Street which were all taken on the same day. While the series is undated, it depicts the Schroeder Saloon, constructed in 1897, and C.F. Schatz's wood frame store, which is known to have burned in 1899. The photographs, therefore, date to c.1898. Any additional sources will be noted individually for each property.
2. Information on additions to the bank building provided by W.C. Rohe, President of First State Bank of Wykoff, Personal Interview, 24 February 1993.
3. Spring Valley Sun, 28 May 1895, 1:2; Arabella Kidd, Kathy Kidd, and Selma Stender, Wykoff Centennial (n.p., 1976[?]), 75-76; Matie Pulford, A Journey into Yesterday (Chatfield, MN: Snider Publishing Co., 1976), 17.
4. Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, History of Fillmore County, Minnesota (Chicago: H.C. Cooper, Jr. and Co., 1912), 446; Connie Bicknese and Lila Eickhoff, Personal Interview, 24 February 1993.
5. Spring Valley Sun, 9 April 1895.
6. "Wykoff's Big Blaze," Spring Valley Sun, 2 April 1895, 4:4; Spring Valley Sun, 25 June 1895, 4.
7. "Wykoff's Big Blaze," Spring Valley Sun; Spring Valley Sun, 28 May 1895, 1:2; Jane Meisner, Personal Interview, 24 February 1993.
8. Jane Meisner, Personal Interview, 24 February 1993.
9. Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, History of Fillmore County, 751-752; Matie Pulford, A Journey into Yesterday, 52-53; William Bicknese, Personal Interview, 24 February 1993.
10. William Bicknese, Personal Interview, 24 February 1993.

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11. Connie Bicknese and Lila Eickhoff, Personal Interview, 24 February 1993.
12. Arabella Kidd, Kathy Kidd, Selma Stender, Wykoff Centennial, 40.
13. History of Fillmore County, Minnesota (Minneapolis: Minnesota History Company, 1882), 580.

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Wykoff Commercial Historic District is significant under National Register Criterion C, as an excellent architectural example of a late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial center. Consisting of a one-block long strip of mostly brick commercial buildings, the district is readily distinguishable from its surrounding residential neighborhood. Unlike many downtown centers which have been largely altered through new construction, the Wykoff district has excellent historic integrity. The compact commercial center also has very good visual cohesion, for its buildings, most of which date to the mid-1890s, are extremely similar in terms of material, architectural design, and scale. The Wykoff Commercial Historic District is also significant under National Register Criterion A, being associated with the statewide historic context of Agricultural Development and Railroad Construction. The district's period of significance begins in 1876, when the first extant building was constructed. The period ends in 1930, when the area lost its importance as a commercial center due to the growing use of automobiles which carried trade to larger neighboring cities.

A townsite company associated with the Southern Minnesota Railroad platted the Village of Wykoff in 1871. The company named the new town after the president of the railroad, Cyrus Gates Wykoff, who had spearheaded a drive to reorganize the railway after its bankruptcy in 1859. By 1866, the new owners had pushed the line westward from La Crescent, on the Mississippi River, to Houston, in Fillmore County, Minnesota. By 1890, the line reached as far inland as Ramsey, in Mower County. As sections of the railroad opened, the townsite company platted new villages along the right of way to profit from land sales and develop rail traffic.¹

The Village of Fillmore, located approximately five miles north of Wykoff, had originally been the area's main commercial center. Settled as early as 1854, the village was sited on a major stage road running between Dubuque, Iowa and St. Paul. The stage road could not, however, compete with the railroad. Wykoff quickly eclipsed Fillmore in importance, stealing away many of its businesses and attracting new trade to the area. To facilitate its growth, Wykoff incorporated in 1876.²

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By the early 1880s, Wykoff boasted a thriving commercial district on Gold Street just south of the railroad tracks. Marvin Egleston and D.J. Egleston's general store on the west side of Gold Street was one of the earliest businesses, having moved from Fillmore in 1871. Other early businessmen included Fred Wendorf, who opened a harness shop in 1872; John Mitchell, who constructed a saloon in 1876; and Simeon Thoeny, who started a carriage shop in 1879. In 1880, J.G. Kilborn established the Exchange State Bank, which was later acquired by Wendorf. By the early 1890s, the commercial district was concentrated along a one-block stretch of Gold between Carimona, to the south, and Front Street, which ran along the railroad tracks to the north. At that time, the district contained at least four general stores, two saloons, three carriage shops, two hardware stores, two drug stores, one bank, and at least one light manufactory.³

Wykoff's business area was initially very uniform in appearance. Early photographs show that businesses were chiefly housed in one- or two-story, gable-roofed, wood-frame buildings which often featured false fronts. The Mitchell Saloon, built in 1876 and still standing at the southeast corner of Gold and Carimona, is typical of this early construction.

The first masonry buildings in the district appear to have been a two-story dry goods store erected by Henry Spies sometime before 1895, and a one-story building built by the Exchange State Bank in 1894. The appearance of the Spies Store is not known, for it has since been destroyed, but the Exchange State Bank has been preserved. The bank's front facade features a central entry flanked by cast-iron columns and plate-glass display windows. A brick parapet rises above the storefront, giving the building a higher and more imposing appearance, much like a false front. The parapet is embellished with fancy brickwork in the form of recessed panels, pilasters, and corbelling. The liveliness of the brickwork recalls a simplified Queen Anne style popular for commercial buildings at that time.

In 1895, the appearance of Wykoff's business district changed literally overnight. Early in the morning of March 28th, a fire started at the south end of the block on the west side of Gold Street. A northerly wind fanned the blaze, and within hours flames engulfed the entire west side of the street. By morning, every building had been leveled except for the Exchange State Bank. The Spies Store, although also constructed of brick, did

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not prove to be fireproof.⁴

While the fire was a catastrophe, all of the buildings were insured, enabling the owners to rebuild. To prevent a recurrence of the disaster, the city council reportedly passed an ordinance requiring fireproof construction on the block.⁵ Rebuilding, in brick, began in May. A brickmaker from nearby Spring Valley erected a dry-press brick plant just outside of Wykoff to supply construction materials.⁶

It is not known how many different contractors helped rebuild the business area, but two firms have been identified through newspaper research. One was the local company of E.D. Bartlett and A. Derenthal, which built the Wendorf Dry Goods Store and the Stockdill Drugstore. The J.R. Murrell Hardware Store, standing just north of the Stockdill Drugstore and having the same design, was probably also built by Bartlett and Derenthal. The other known contracting firm was the partnership of David Allen and Edward Allen of nearby Chatfield. Newspaper accounts indicate that the Allens constructed the Peshak Hardware Store and adjacent Jacob Rau Dry Goods Store.⁷

Local tradition maintains that another devastating fire leveled the east side of Gold Street in 1896.⁸ Newspaper research, however, does not support this story. East side shopkeepers apparently did not need another fire to convince them to fireproof their buildings, and they gradually rebuilt in brick after 1895. Simeon Thoeny appears to have been the first merchant on the east side of Gold Street to fireproof his business, constructing a fine two-story brick building in 1896. Other brick buildings followed, including the Schroeder Saloon in 1897 and, at an undetermined date before 1900, W.D. Fligge's Grocery and Handey's Thirst Parlour.⁹

The buildings constructed on the east and west sides of Gold Street in the 1890s were remarkably similar in appearance. All were built of the same orange-red colored brick and many share identical elements, such as the cast-iron columns with floral patterning which appear in the Exchange State Bank, Peshak Hardware Store, Stockdill Drugstore, Spies and Son Dry Goods Store, and the Egleston Dry Goods Store. All of the street-level storefronts feature central entries flanked by side lights and plate-glass display windows. In the two-story buildings, the second-floor windows are generally tall and narrow, and

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frequently capped by flat or elliptical-arched stone lintels or hoods. On all of the buildings, ornamentation is generally concentrated along the roof line and takes the form of brick parapets (often stepped or pedimented) with corbelling, pilasters and brackets. In some buildings, the parapets are surmounted by stone finials. All of this ornamentation recalls a simplified Queen Anne style, as exemplified by the Exchange State Bank.

Four additional buildings were constructed in the business district after 1900. In 1904, a group of businessmen founded the First State Bank, erecting a one-story brick building on the southwest corner of Gold and Carimona the following year.¹⁰ Symmetrically composed around an arched corner entrance and having minimal ornamentation, the bank recalls the Classical Revival rather than the Queen Anne. In 1906, R. Behring constructed a two-story brick building on the east side of Gold Street to house his restaurant and ice cream parlour. He added a second building of virtually identical design to the north side of his restaurant sometime before 1915. C.F. Schatz added a final building between 1906 and 1911, constructing a two-story brick store to the south of the Thoeny Building for his watch repair and jewelry business. Like the buildings constructed in the 1890s, these three buildings were all constructed in a Queen Anne idiom and feature extensive decorative brickwork.¹¹

With two banks, several bars and restaurants and a large number of general and specialty stores, Wykoff served as an important financial, retail, and service center for Fillmore Township until at least the 1920s. Along with most small towns, however, Wykoff's importance began to dwindle with the increasing use of automobiles in the 1930s. Rather than shop along the village's main street, area farmers began to range further afield, finding markets in larger cities such as Preston and Rochester, Minnesota.¹²

Ironically, Wykoff's decline may have initially helped save the historic commercial building stock along Gold Street. With business slowing down, merchants had little incentive to construct new buildings or make major alterations. By the early 1970s, however, the decline had begun to have a negative impact as the worsening business climate led to vacancy and demolition. Reflecting this trend, two frame buildings at the north end of Gold Street were torn down in the early 1970s, and by the 1980s several properties stood vacant, including the Exchange State

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Bank, Stockdill Drugstore, and the two Behring Buildings.

Fortunately, Wykoff underwent a modest revival in the early 1990s. At that time, residents secured a Community Development Block Grant from HUD, the money being administered by the city. Shopkeepers and residents used the grant to rehabilitate at least seven buildings along Gold, many properties being restored to their historic appearance. Through its preservation efforts, the community appears to have halted Gold Street's slide toward vacancy and demolition.

The Wykoff Commercial Historic District currently stands as an excellent example of the type of architecture which flourished in small towns throughout Minnesota at the turn of the century. In most cases these buildings were extremely simple in form, featuring flat facades, regularly spaced windows, and storefronts composed of central entries flanked by display windows. This simplicity was livened by an eclectic blend of architectural embellishments such as finials, stone lintels and hoods, and brickwork in the form of corbelling, pilasters, and brackets. These flourishes were intended to express the prosperity and sophistication of the building's owners, as well as the importance and permanence of the town. In Wykoff, an unusually large number of these early buildings have been preserved, representing the heart of the town's historic commercial center. Surrounded by a small residential area in the midst of open farmland, the district seems to transport the viewer back to the 1890s and early 1900s, when Wykoff, along with other small villages in the interior of Minnesota, was the social and commercial center for its agricultural community.

Notes

1. History of Fillmore County, Minnesota (Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Company, 1882), 300-301, 571-572; Matie Pulford, A Journey into Yesterday (Chatfield, Minnesota: Snider Publishing Company, 1976), 5.
2. History of Fillmore County, 568, 575; Pulford, A Journey into Yesterday, 8.

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3. History of Fillmore County, 572, 575, 580; Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, History of Fillmore County, Minnesota (Chicago: H.C. Cooper, Jr. and Co., 1912), 446, 751-752.

4. "Wykoff's Big Blaze," Spring Valley Sun, 2 April 1895, 4:4; Arabella Kidd, Kathy Kidd, Selma Stender, Wykoff Centennial (n.p., 1976), 5-7.

5. Spring Valley Sun, 9 April 1895, 1.

6. Spring Valley Sun, 7 May 1895, 1:3.

7. See the Spring Valley Sun for the following dates: 28 May 1895, 1:2; 4 June 1895; 25 June 1895, 4.

8. See the following for examples: Pulford, A Journey into Yesterday, 17; Kidd, Kidd and Stender, Wykoff Centennial, 7.

9. "The Conflagration," Spring Valley Mercury, 8 June 1899; also see material on file at the following locations: Wykoff Historical Society, Wykoff, Minnesota; Fillmore County Historical Society, Fountain, Minnesota.

10. Kidd, Kidd and Stender, Wykoff Centennial, 32.

11. Refer to photograph collections of the Wykoff Historical Society and the Fillmore County Historical Society.

12. Pulford, A Journey into Yesterday, 22.

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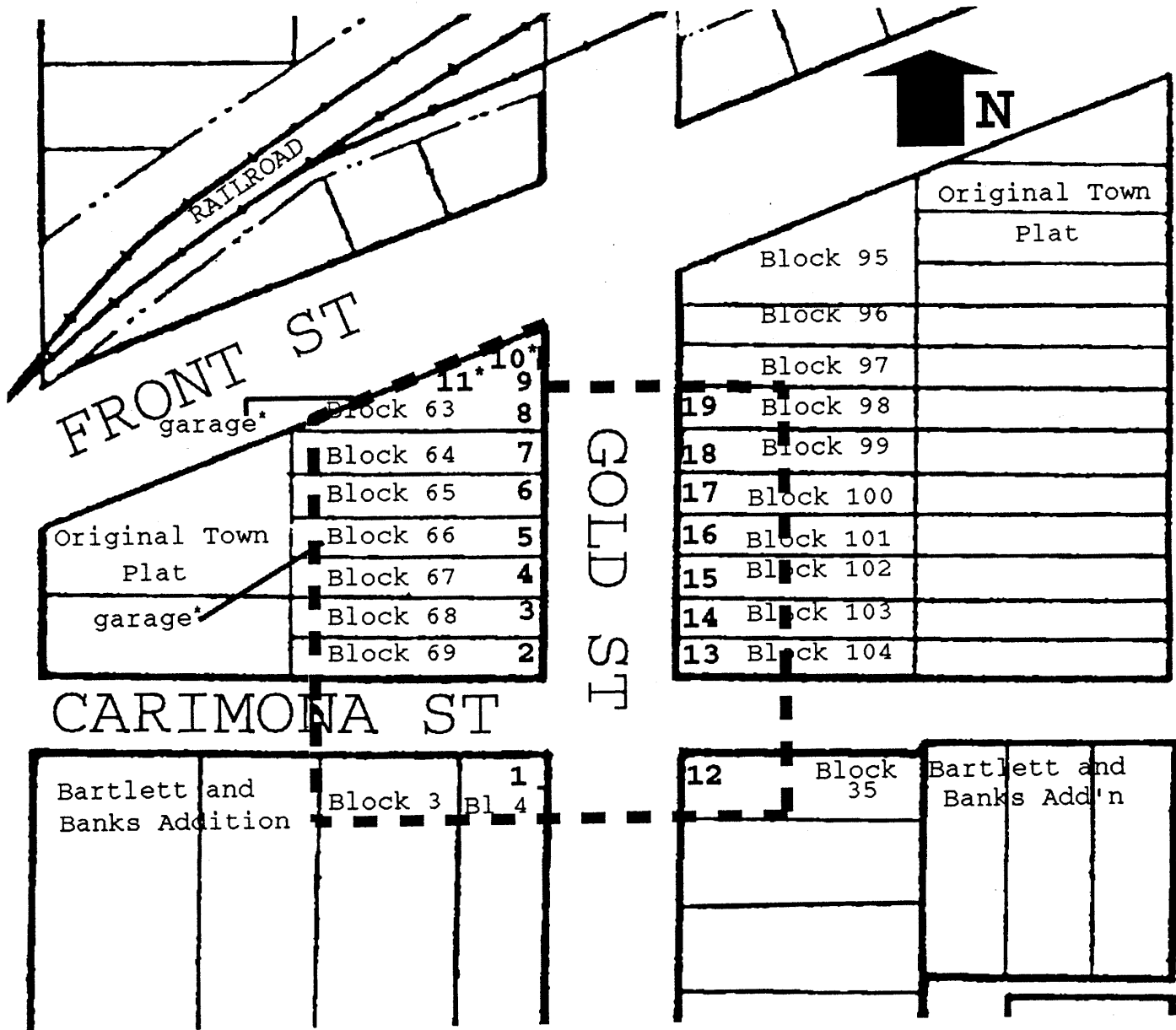
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundary of the Wykoff Commercial Historic District is shown as the dashed line on the accompanying map entitled, "Wykoff Commercial Historic District, 1993."

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundary encloses all extant historic buildings which served as Wykoff's main business center and which stand in a well-defined cluster along Gold Street. Historic buildings once fronted on Gold Street in Blocks 95, 96 and 97 (Original Town Plat), but have since been demolished. This area, therefore, has not been included in the district.

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 Verbal Boundary Description, 1993



KEY

SCALE
 1 inch equals 100 ft

100 ft

--- District boundary

Numbers in bold indicate properties
 Asterisk indicates non-contributing property