

### March Historical Question:

At the turn of the 20th Century, the gold rush "town" of Gold City appeared for a brief time near the mouth of Poulson Canyon, south of Little Willow Canyon (renamed Deaf Smith Canyon), which is now the site of the Golden Hills housing development. What is the history of this mining-era boomtown?

Answer:

In 1894, rich gold discoveries were made in the foothills between Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons at the New State Mine in the vicinity of old Emmaville. The ore was white quartz thickly studded with gold. News of the discovery quickly circulated and it was not long before the foothills were dotted with prospectors and miners. The "town" of Gold City was located a half mile from where gold was discovered in the New State Mine.

By 1905, there was a shaft house, blacksmith shop, assay office, two-story bunk house, boarding house, store, and stables. The buildings and mine were lighted by electricity generated by a 250 to 400 horsepower water power plant located on Willow Creek, 2,000 feet from the mine.

The New State vein discovered by Daniel and William Wolstenholme locally assayed to several hundreds of ounces of gold per ton at the surface, but thousands of feet of tunnels and shafts failed to find major ore bodies. By 1903, only two major claim holders remained in the area. One, an old hermit named Clayton, had a cabin on the Blue Jay claim. The other, Nicholas R. Schmittroth, kept his wife and seven children busy on his Jefferson and Josephine claims. Schmittroth, a Bavarian-born baker-turned-pro prospector, had worked in the district for a decade sinking and tunneling on promising veins, financed partially by the sale of a bakery in Salt Lake City.

Schmittroth finally had the opportunity to purchase the New State property for \$20,000 but had no resources to do so. So, in June 1902, he formed the Consolidated Jefferson Gold and Copper Mining Company and took a job on a cattle train going to Chicago. In Chicago and Omaha he sold \$35,000 in stock. He returned to Utah and put a crew to work deepening the New State shaft. A five stamp mill was erected, and the Jefferson Mercantile Company below the mine at the site of Gold City supplied the various needs of the miners.

While taking his daughter to Munich to study voice and elocution, Schmittroth met a New York crockery merchant named Getz who invested heavily in the mine, a necessary move since the Jefferson Company was often in debt. When Schmittroth asked his stockholders to approve a \$250,000 loan for further development, they refused, and A.W. Nieman, a Chicago grocer, was elected company president. Schmittroth, thus removed from the directorate, left to open a bakery in Ely, Nevada.

In 1908, Nieman reorganized the property as Wasatch Utah Mining Company. Two mills were built but neither was successful, and Schmittroth repurchased the properties a decade later. Work ceased when he died in 1937 and Gold City became another relic of Utah mining history. The area is now known as the Golden Hills housing development.