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### 3. General Patrick Edward Connor Father of Utah Mining

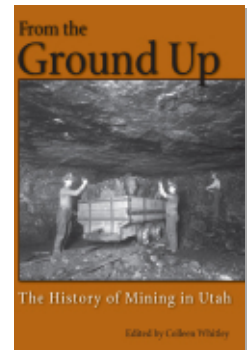
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## GENERAL PATRICK EDWARD CONNOR FATHER OF UTAH MINING

*Brigham D. Madsen*

General Patrick Edward Connor was the prime mover in the start of mining operations in Utah Territory. His soldiers, sent under his command from Camp Douglas (later Fort Douglas), established the first large-scale mining districts in Utah in the early 1860s. It is important to emphasize that most of his California Volunteers, sent to Utah in 1862 to keep the mail lines open during the Civil War, had been recruited by Connor from the gold camps in California and often considered themselves miners first and soldiers second. Wherever they went on Indian-hunting expeditions in Utah Territory, they spent almost as much time looking for silver and other metal outcrops as they did on their primary mission, hoping to return to these promising mining prospects after their military service was over. This chapter describes the activities of Connor's soldier/miners in opening mining areas to production and then examines Connor's own mining enterprises as he competed with other mine operators to develop the rich lodes in Utah.<sup>1</sup>

The peace that ensued following the Bear River Massacre of 29 January 1863 and completion of the 1863 treaties with the Shoshoni left time for the Volunteers to explore the mineral riches of the area. Connor's encouragement of this pursuit only added to tensions with Brigham Young, who had publicly opposed searching for mineral wealth. He told the Saints that farming was the most advantageous pursuit: "Go to California if you will; we will not curse you, we will not injure or destroy you, but we will pity you. People who stay will in ten years be able to buy out four who go."<sup>2</sup> Young also feared that mining camps would introduce unsavory elements and entice church members into abominations that would destroy their souls. However, Young also secretly sent two companies of young men on a "Gold Mission" in the fall of 1849 to gather gold dust to benefit church coffers.<sup>3</sup>

## MINING IN BINGHAM CANYON

Stories of rich veins of ore in Bingham Canyon in the Oquirrh Mountains across the valley from Salt Lake City had circulated. On 27 September 1863, George B. Ogilvie and several other Mormon cattle herders came upon an outcrop that contained silver. Ogilvie took a sample to Connor to have it assayed, and the general asked Ogilvie to locate the West Jordan Mine in the name of the Jordan Silver Mining Company at that site. Ogilvie received two shares, and the other 24 people listed each got one share, including Connor.<sup>4</sup> Ogilvie was at once denounced by church officials as an apostate.<sup>5</sup>

Other claims previously had been filed on 7 September and 17 September 1863. On the latter date, Mrs. Robert K. Reid, wife of the physician at Camp Douglas, located a vein near the Ogilvie find while on a picnic. A notice was made out designating Mrs. Reid as “original discoverer” and listing 19 other shareholders, including Johanna Connor, the general’s wife. Another claim, with 26 shareholders, was called the *Vedette*.<sup>6</sup> As soon as the claims were staked, the excited participants adjourned to the Jordan Ward House on the Jordan River near Bishop Archibald Gardner’s mill to organize the West Mountain Quartz Mining District. Gardner was elected recorder, and seven bylaws were passed.

Mormon reaction to this ore discovery on the very doorstep of the Mormon capital came most forcefully from Brigham Young, who, on 6 October 1863, asked who fed, clothed, and supplied the prospectors. “Were they really sent here to protect the mail and telegraph lines, or to discover, if possible, rich diggings in our immediate vicinity. . . ?”<sup>7</sup> William Clayton, in a letter to Jesse A. Smith, added, “A tremendous effort is now being made to bring to light the rich minerals and the enemy has already partially succeeded. The greatest trial to the integrity of the saints is now before them, viz. to prove whether their religion or wealth is of most value to them.”<sup>8</sup>

The coming of spring in 1864 did not produce the gold rush to Utah that Connor expected. A group of California miners returning from Bannack in Montana did discover a little placer gold in Bingham Canyon west of the city, which sparked temporary interest, but the excitement was short lived.<sup>9</sup> In Utah ore bodies were hidden deep in the earth, requiring money and technical expertise to extract the precious metals. Initially Connor believed that the slow progress in mining was due to Mormon hostility. On 1 January 1863, the *Union Vedette*, the newspaper for the Union soldiers billeted at Camp Douglas, stated that Brigham Young’s efforts to discourage mining were as futile as trying to “dam up the waters of the Nile with bulrushes.” However, from 1863 to 1869, the high cost of transportation, the price of labor, the scarcity of charcoal, and the inexperience of these would-be miners led to only limited development.<sup>10</sup> Eventually, the dearth of free gold and expense of investing in men and machines convinced Connor that mining in Utah was not easy.

General Connor began to receive information that nefarious tactics were being used to jeopardize his efforts to open up the closed society of Utah. A group of 26

miners wrote to him from Franklin, Utah Territory, on 5 February 1864, that town residents had made certain threats “that we shan’t prospect for gold in the country.”<sup>11</sup> In response to this message and other indications of Mormon opposition, Connor issued a circular on 1 March stating that any offenders “will be tried as public enemies, and punished to the utmost extent of the law.”<sup>12</sup> The *St. Louis Democrat* applauded Connor’s actions because he did not indulge “in covert insinuation or secret threats. He approaches his subject in plain old Saxon words, and says just what he means and means what he says.” On the other hand, Mormon William Clayton was particularly disdainful of the soldiers’ attempts to raise excitement about gold because so far “all they have done has been a failure.” He added, in another letter, “I do not enquire after gold, neither shall I trouble myself about it. . . . To me one thing is *certain*. If rich mines are opened in Utah, the Priesthood and honest saints will soon have to leave for some other region.”<sup>13</sup>

By March 1864 the Jordan Silver Mining Company reported construction of a tunnel 60 feet into the mountain, and P. Edward Connor was listed as one of the trustees of the company. Another company was organized to build the first silver quartz mill in Utah to crush and work the ore of the West (Oquirrh) Mountains. New discoveries of minerals were announced in Carr’s Fork of Bingham Canyon.<sup>14</sup> On 14 March 1864, the Kate Connor Gold and Silver Mining Company was organized, named for Patrick and Johanna Connor’s daughter. Connor was granted one of the 13 shares in the mine.

A unique mining claim called the “Woman Lode” was recorded on 7 May 1864. Nine women, six of them the wives of Fort Douglas officers, announced in the filing statement,

We the undersigned ‘Strong Minded Woman [Women?],’ do hereby determine and make manifest our intention and right to take up ‘Felt’ ore [sic] anything else in our names, and to work the same independent of any other man . . . 1000 One Thousand feet with all its dips, Spurs, and angles, and Variations and Whatever other Rights and priviledges [sic] the laws or guns of this district give to Lodes so taken up.<sup>15</sup>

The first name on the list was Mrs. Genl. P. Edw. Connor, and it seems obvious that she took the lead in producing this remarkable document. It was an indication of Johanna’s independence and her determination to exercise her own judgment.

## MINING IN MEADOW VALLEY

General Connor was not only directly involved in opening mines; he also directed his officers, as surrogates, to prospect for minerals. He sent Captain Samuel P. Smith and Company K of the Second Cavalry to Raft River in Idaho on 9 May 1864 to protect the immigrants and to “thoroughly prospect the country for precious metals,

particularly placer gold, and report from time to time the result to this office.” To Captain N. Baldwin, Company A, Second Cavalry, Connor’s orders on 11 May were to proceed to Uinta Valley to “afford ample protection to prospectors and miners . . . [and] cause the valley and vicinity to be thoroughly prospected by your men, and will report from time to time the result to this office.” On 13 May he dispatched Captain David J. Berry to the Meadow Valley Mining District in southwestern Utah to “afford protection to miners from Mormons and Indians. . . . You will thoroughly explore and prospect the country over which you travel, and if successful in finding placer diggings, you will at once report the fact to these headquarters.”<sup>16</sup> Connor kept his superiors informed about directing “soldiers to prospect the country and open its mines . . . [to] peacefully revolutionize the obvious system of church domination which has so long bound down a deluded and ignorant community.”<sup>17</sup>

The Meadow Valley area, where Captain Berry was headed, was of interest to Connor at this time and after his army tour of duty ended. Located 100 miles west of Cedar City and about 10 miles southeast of present Pioche, Nevada, the Panaca silver mines were first discovered in the winter of 1863–64 by Mormon settlers from Santa Clara. The settlements near St. George then organized a party to go and examine the prospects to determine whether or not LDS church members should locate claims.<sup>18</sup> When Brigham Young was informed of the mining possibilities, he wrote Bishop Edward Bunker on 6 February 1864, advising the Saints to occupy Meadow Valley as grazing area for their stock “and also to claim, survey and stake off as soon as possible, those veins of ore that br. [William] Hamblin is aware of, . . . all that are sticking out, or likely to be easily found and profitably worked.”<sup>19</sup> Again, Young clearly had a private view on the development of the area’s mineral wealth that contrasted with his public stand about mining. He was eager to oppose Connor’s desire to open mines but willing to seize an opportunity for the church—especially when it was away from Salt Lake City and could be kept under wraps.

But the Mormon Church was not destined to have exclusive exploitation of these diggings. A group of Gentile (the Mormons’ name for those not of their faith) miners left Salt Lake City in February 1864, led by Stephen Sherwood, to share in the wealth Hamblin and the Mormons had discovered. On 16 March Hamblin agreed to guide the Sherwood group to the new mines. Connor had supplied Sherwood with a copy of the bylaws of the West Mountain Quartz Mining District before the group had left the Mormon capital, and Sherwood persuaded Hamblin and the Mormon prospectors to adopt these regulations.<sup>20</sup>

Local Mormon Church officials were disgruntled when Hamblin accepted Sherwood’s regulations because they had devised their own laws to exclude Gentile proprietors. But Hamblin had been given the impression “that the intentions of these men were honestly for the upbuilding of the church as they claimed to be Saints etc.” LDS leaders were now caught in the embarrassing position of opposing mining development in northern Utah while actively, though secretly, engaging in it in the southern part of the territory. The Sherwood party returned to Salt Lake City with samples of ore that

Connor had assayed to reveal a value of \$300 per ton. Sherwood returned to Meadow Valley by 18 May to develop the ore bodies with a larger group of eager miners.<sup>21</sup>

The race was on between Gentile prospectors and the local Mormons to grab the best claims. As indicated, Captain Berry's Company A had already been dispatched to the region. On 22 May Captain Charles Hempstead, editor of the *Vedette*, left Camp Douglas with a detachment of soldiers bound for the new mines. A third force under Captain George F. Price had left Salt Lake City to try to open a new road to Fort Mojave, Arizona Territory, near present Needles, California. While Price's orders had nothing to do with the Panaca mines at Meadow Valley, his troops patrolled through the area and represented still another military force to worry the Mormon miners.<sup>22</sup>

To counter the threat of all these troops, a party of Mormons under Bishop Erastus Snow left St. George on 20 May for the mining district.<sup>23</sup> On their return, the Snow group met Captain Hempstead at Mountain Meadows. Hempstead later recorded that "the party were all in high glee and wonderfully elated at the success of their mining enterprises. It was more than intimated to us that we were 'a day after the fair,' for the Saints had been before us at the new Dorado; gobbled up the prize, and left little for ungodly sinners, like unto us."<sup>24</sup>

Soon Mormon leadership at St. George, faced with aggressive prospecting by Connor's soldiers, began to have second thoughts about competition. At a High Council meeting on 11 June 1864, Bishop Snow stated that "he was satisfied it was the intention of Gen. Connor and Gentiles to settle in there and not only claim the mines of silver in that vicinity, but also the farming lands, water privileges, etc."<sup>25</sup> Agriculture was still of paramount importance to the Saints, and Mormon officials agreed to give up their claims. By midsummer, 417 claims had been filed on 33 veins, but little development was accomplished because local Indians became so hostile that most of the miners were forced out of the district. No significant mining activity took place again until 1869. William Hamblin did take some of the ore to a smelter in Rush Valley to have it processed into 26 "bars of metal—silver and lead," which were exhibited in Salt Lake City.<sup>26</sup>

Throughout the period of the Meadow Valley mining excitement, there was almost a "news blackout" in northern Utah on the claims being filed on the Panaca ledge. The Mormons in the St. George area were certainly involved, but church leaders or the *Deseret News* gave the matter little publicity. One southern correspondent to that paper wrote, "There is some talk about silver, etc., in this part of the country; but the people have but little faith in it; samples of the ore exhibited here are pronounced worthless." The LDS leaders also did not wish to lend any support to Connor's efforts at developing mines.<sup>27</sup>

## MINING IN RUSH VALLEY AND TOOELE

In addition to Meadow Valley, the Rush Valley region nearer Salt Lake City became important in Connor's postwar activities. Lieutenant Colonel E. J. Steptoe had

established a grazing camp near Rush Lake in September 1854, which later became a military reservation by executive order on 4 February 1855. When General Albert Sidney Johnston's army arrived, the reserve was being used as a forage area for animals from Camp Floyd. The government sold the site in 1861 to a Mr. Standish, who sold the land and buildings to General Connor's command for \$1,100 in April 1864. Connor established Camp Relief east of the lake, then only a pond due to dry conditions. Many acres of natural hay and good grazing for the cavalry horses of the Volunteers were available in the dry lake bed. Lieutenant Colonel William Jones and Captain Samuel P. Smith had already directed companies A, H, K, and L of the Second Cavalry to the camp in March, and all at once there were hundreds of former California miners-turned-soldiers within sight of the beckoning west side of the mineral-rich Oquirrh Mountains.<sup>28</sup>

On 11 March James W. Gibson of Company L of the Second Cavalry established the first claim, and the rush was on. The Rush Valley lode was located about two miles east of the north end of the valley. Trooper Gibson granted Connor one share in the mine.<sup>29</sup> The silver ore from this claim and the other early discoveries assayed from \$81.50 to \$97.50 per ton.<sup>30</sup> On 11 June the new miners organized the Rush Lake Valley Mining District with Andrew Campbell as recorder. As early as 9 June there were more than 30 ledges being worked that showed "from \$80 to \$350 per ton of silver" and enough lead to pay the expenses of extracting the ore, according to the exuberant editor of the *Vedette*. In another article, the editor did point out what soon became common knowledge: the ore bodies were deep in the earth and required capital and technological know-how to get the riches out—"a stern reality, and where . . . for mining purposes poor men are not wanted." Connor was to have a close association with the Great Basin, the Silver Queen, and the Quandary Mines in the area.<sup>31</sup>

The ambitious and audacious Connor now initiated a project to build a new town, the first Gentile settlement in Utah. He chose a site 7 miles south of the Mormon town of Tooele and about 16 miles from the south end of the Great Salt Lake. It was a strategic location, lying at the midpoint of the west side of the mineral-rich Oquirrh Mountains and close enough to the lake to allow wagon shipments of ores to a possible landing for steamboats on the inland sea. Connor had visions of a great mineral empire being developed in the area. The new settlement was named after Stockton, his home city in California, and was surveyed by Joseph Clark on 19 May 1864. The town had 811 lots and was large enough to accommodate 10,000 people. Connor revealed his penchant for the military and his high regard for Republican government officials by naming the streets Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, and Lincoln, Johnson, Wright, Doty, Seward, and Silver.<sup>32</sup>

The *Vedette* editor visited Stockton and reported on 13 July that a hotel/restaurant/saloon building was under construction and timber was being hauled from nearby canyons for other structures and houses.<sup>33</sup> It was obvious that experienced contractor P. Edward Connor was very much involved in establishing the new town. Connor made frequent visits to Camp Relief, where he could observe the development of

Stockton. In one instance, Connor also went to inspect his new smelters, accompanied by investors from New York and California.<sup>34</sup> Eventually Connor invested \$80,000 of his own money in the town, in the Rush Valley mines, and in the new smelters, a pioneering contribution from which he received inadequate returns.<sup>35</sup>

Connor led the way by constructing the Pioneer Smelting Works and a reverberatory furnace in 1864.<sup>36</sup> Other furnaces followed. The Knickerbocker and Argenta Mining and Smelting Company of New York City invested \$100,000 in machinery to separate the lead from the valuable silver and gold. It seemed that a smelting process would work for the Rush Valley ores, and an exuberant Connor wired Lieutenant Colonel Drum on 1 September, "The furnaces in Rush Valley are a decided success. Much rejoicing among miners."<sup>37</sup> But developments were defeated by the scarcity of charcoal and the high cost of wagon transport.<sup>38</sup>

Discharged Volunteers and hopeful miners flocked into Stockton as a base for their prospecting and mining. The grateful citizens sponsored a "grand opening ball at the [two-story, adobe] Emporium of regenerated Utah" for Connor and his guest, Warren Leland, in late October; later, the *Vedette* reported that there were 38 buildings, a completed sawmill, and two furnaces in actual operation.<sup>39</sup> By the end of 1864, hundreds of mining claims had been recorded in the Rush Valley District, and Connor owned shares in 29.<sup>40</sup>

Connor reported to his commanding officer that he was spending "every energy and means" he possessed, "both personal and official, towards the discovery and development of the mining resources of the Territory, using without stint the soldiers of my command, whenever and wherever it could be done without detriment to the public service."<sup>41</sup>

Connor continued to find time to maintain his interest in mining and with others became involved in locating some oil springs on the overland route about 30 miles from Fort Bridger. The *Union Vedette* kept up its constant hammering to entice miners to Utah, announcing such exciting prospects as a New York company being organized to invest \$100,000 in Utah mines, and reporting that Connor, a few of his officers, and some private citizens had gone on a visit to the Rush Valley Military Reservation and the town of Stockton.<sup>42</sup> To make the *Vedette* more a part of the business community of Salt Lake City, and no doubt to further show his independence from the Mormons, Connor moved the office of the paper in November 1865 from Camp Douglas downtown to an adobe building on the northwest corner of Second South and Main Street with Adam Aulbach as printer.

On 30 April 1866, Connor was discharged from the military service, breveted as a major general, and free to devote his entire time to his mining operations.<sup>43</sup> Now back in Salt Lake City, he and Brigham Young continued their "cold war" feud. Young wrote two of his missionary sons in England on 11 August 1866 that "Connor is out of the service, and is here now as plain 'Pat,' engaged in mining business, which, as Government pap has been withdrawn, will very likely, if he pursue it diligently, break him up financially."<sup>44</sup>



## GENERAL PATRICK EDWARD CONNOR

Brigham Young also deprecated Connor and other would-be mining entrepreneurs for wasting their time trying to develop the new silver mines in Rush Valley. Samuel Bowles noted that the Gentiles were wasting money and labor in the new mining district and quoted Brigham Young as saying “that for every dollar gained by it, four dollars have been expended.”<sup>45</sup> Connor was still enthusiastic about the prospects in the Stockton area and spent a lot of time traveling back and forth the 40 miles from his home in Salt Lake City to his mining claims in Rush Valley and the new reduction works he was constructing to process the ores.<sup>46</sup>

By the end of 1866, Connor’s investment in the Rush Valley Mining District probably made him the leading mining promoter there. During this year he purchased 27 transfers of 51,465  $\frac{2}{3}$  feet for \$5,326 and invested in 26 new mines, owning 6,700 feet of the claims. Some of the new purchases revealed his connections with friends—the General Dodge and the Hempstead lode.<sup>47</sup> His relationship with Grenville Dodge was extended further, as revealed in a 4 July 1866 letter. Dodge was by then working as chief engineer for the Union Pacific Railroad and wrote confirming a verbal agreement which the two men had entered into earlier. Connor was to engage two prospecting parties to locate any valuable silver, gold, coal, or iron mines and then was to bill Dodge, by voucher, for the expenses. In addition, Connor agreed to locate suitable sites in Utah, close to coal and mineral lands, on which to erect foundries in the names of companies submitted by Dodge. Finally, Connor could establish as one of the foundry companies a firm under his own name and those of Dodge and Judge W. H. Carter. With such outside contracts and his personal investments in Rush Valley, Connor was well launched on a career as a mining entrepreneur.<sup>48</sup>

By the first of 1867, the Connors had become convinced that their safety and certainly any kind of comfortable living circumstances were threatened in Salt Lake City. As Episcopal Bishop Daniel S. Tuttle remembered on his arrival in the City of the Saints in 1867, “The little company of the Gentiles was practically ostracized as if they had been in the heart of Africa.”<sup>49</sup> This was particularly true of the bitterly hated founder of Camp Douglas. So on 8 January the Connors left their comfortable home on Fifth South between First East and East Temple (Main Street) and moved to a house Connor had constructed in Stockton, Utah. The change must have been traumatic for Mrs. Connor—leaving the tree-lined streets of Salt Lake City for the stark desert atmosphere of a new, rough mining town where, by the end of the year, the camp had “dwindled down to ten or twelve men.”<sup>50</sup>

Connor attempted to live in Stockton because he had invested so much in developing his silver mines there that he could not leave “without much financial sacrifice.”<sup>51</sup> He was also committed to the new town he had helped found and, with John Paxton, owned most of the lots in the settlement.<sup>52</sup> His reduction works were operating part of the time, and a government survey of mineral resources in the territories indicated some optimism for Utah, and especially for Rush Valley, where Connor’s smelters were revealing a wealth of silver and lead ores.<sup>53</sup>

Uncomfortable with his situation in Stockton, Connor sought advice from his friend Grenville Dodge. In a long letter of 16 January, he assured Dodge that he could make a success of his mining ventures if he had, in addition to his present reduction works, \$15,000 in working capital. But the Mormon Church authorities were throwing every obstacle in his way. "Brigham Young and his satellites [sic] in the pulpit and through the press have been grossly abusing me since my return from the East, indeed, so much so that my friends feared that some of his fanatical followers would assassinate me." He added that Brigham Young's hatred of him was "intense, caused by my making him behave himself while I commanded here." Unless the government provided help and security for him and other Gentiles, all of them would be forced to leave Utah in the spring. In fact, Young was making every effort to drive them from the territory and had, through his agents in Washington, succeeded in "prejudicing the President against me." Connor concluded his long letter by stating that his chief hope was that Dodge would be able to complete the Union Pacific Railroad to Salt Lake City by summer or begin to manufacture iron in Utah. If not, Connor would be forced to leave his property, "\$351,000, worth," and move to California.<sup>54</sup>

No doubt to the relief of Johanna Connor, the general moved his family from the frontier town of Stockton, Utah, in May 1867 first to a hotel in San Francisco but eventually to a permanent home in Redwood City, where Mrs. Connor and her children lived for the rest of their lives while the general pursued his dreams of a fortune in the Utah mines and visited his California family as often as he could. He could not leave without a final blast at his nemesis, Brigham Young, in a letter to U.S. Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, resigning his post as sutler at Camp Douglas. Connor wrote Stanton that, "having in the performance of my duty as district commander in this Territory incurred the deadly hostility of Brigham Young and his fanatical followers, I do not deem it prudent to remain with my family in Utah in the present unfortunate aspect of affairs." Connor explained that Young had "absolute and unchecked" power over the lives and property of all citizens, Mormon as well as Gentile, that the Mormon leader was "arrogant and vindictive," that Gentile lives were held "at the pleasure or caprice of an autocratic church leader," and "that they remain and pursue their several avocations only by his permission."<sup>55</sup>

As for Connor's mining holdings in Rush Valley, the 1868 official report of the federal government on the mineral resources of the territories did not sound encouraging. The smelters, including Connor's, "failed to extract the metal in a satisfactory manner." The writer of the report made a very important point which Connor and other mining operators of the Stockton area did not heed, and they suffered financially over the years as a result: "Silver occurs in galena in the same irregular manner as in quartz. Many suppose that if a vein of galena assays well in one part it will do the same in all; an erroneous idea, as miners frequently find to their cost." The article concluded that the mines in Rush Valley would become valuable when transportation and labor were cheaper and fuel more abundant.<sup>56</sup>

## TRAINS AND SHIPS

The approach of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads to Utah by late 1868 promised cheaper and speedier transportation necessary for successful mining operations. In anticipation of this fact, Connor, in November 1868, launched a steamboat on the Jordan River named the *Kate Connor* after his daughter. He had built the boat during the summer, obtaining the machinery from California but using local materials for everything else. He planned to use the 90-ton craft to tow ties and telegraph poles across Great Salt Lake to sell to the Union Pacific during the coming winter, probably through a contract arranged with his friend Grenville Dodge.

Connor also had a grand design for recouping and enhancing his modest finances while striking a blow at the monolithic Mormon establishment. He would construct and would encourage other entrepreneurs to provide steamboats to ply the Great Salt Lake from Lake Point on the south shore to a connection with the Central Pacific near a spot on the Bear River. Ore from his many claims in Rush Valley would have to be moved only 20 miles by wagon to the lake, where it could be picked up by boat and delivered, at very low water rates, to the railroad.<sup>57</sup>

During 1869, and with rail transportation providing easier, faster, and more comfortable access from Salt Lake City, Connor established a pattern of constant travel that was to dominate the rest of his life. He practically lived in railroad cars and hotels with intervening visits to his family in California as often as he could conveniently leave his business interests. At this point mention needs to be made that from 1877 to 1885, Connor spent almost as much time in Eureka, Nevada, in a mining venture as he did with his property in Utah, but that is a part of his life that has little relevance here.

Despite his interests in Nevada, Connor concentrated most of his mining efforts in the Rush Valley District. Whereas a national survey the year before had reported mining developments in all of Utah to be “very slight and unimportant,” by 1870 conditions had changed.<sup>58</sup> Miners who had left the depressed White Pine area of Nevada discovered rich deposits of ore at the southern end of the Oquirrh Mountains in Rush Valley. On 1 October 1870, a new Ophir Mining District was organized. Connor participated and was partly responsible for the renewed vigor.<sup>59</sup> He purchased footage in two new claims in the Rush Valley District in June and in nine mines at Ophir during the months of October and November.<sup>60</sup>

Connor’s most valuable mines were the Silver King, Great Basin, Quandary, and Silveropolis. By May he was taking out more than \$3,000 worth of ore each week from the Silver King.<sup>61</sup> The new *Mormon Tribune* of 13 August 1870 described the mine as a “true fissure vein of argentiferous galena, five feet wide between walls, depth of shaft 100 feet, length of incline tunnel 150 feet at present shipping ore to California for reduction.”<sup>62</sup> The *Utah Reporter* was even more enthusiastic: “The Silver King, the great work of the Stockton District . . . is General Connor’s great lode, and occupies a central position on what is thought to be ‘the mother ledge’ of this

district.”<sup>63</sup> The Great Basin, destined to be one of the richest strikes in the area, at this time was a “gash vein” only two feet wide with a 50-foot tunnel and “some ore on the dump.”<sup>64</sup>

The Silveropolis, owned by Connor and the Walker brothers, seemed to be the most promising of all. They had paid \$10,000 for the property but by October had shipped 500 sacks of ore, worth from \$50 to \$100 per sack. About two weeks later, the *Utah Reporter* crowed, “General Connor has just been offered \$12,000 for two hundred feet of the Silveropolis, and has refused it! Bully for P. Edward!” On the other hand, William Clayton sounded a little discouraged: “Gold and silver mines are being opened upon every hand, but it seems that the Lord does not design the Elders to be corrupted much by them for nearly all the mines that are worth anything falls to the lot of the gentiles.” He thought the influx of non-Mormon miners was “most serious” and noticed that there were “200 known apostates in the 14<sup>th</sup> Ward and five hundred in the 13<sup>th</sup> Ward.”<sup>65</sup>

Connor prepared the *Kate Connor* to transport ores across Great Salt Lake to the Central Pacific at the new town of Corinne. The craft was refitted with new engines from California. Connor also made necessary improvements for passenger comfort on tours across the lake.<sup>66</sup> By late June the *Kate Connor* was ready to make the first of what were supposed to be regular triweekly trips to Salt Lake City and Lake Point.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1870, Connor shipped ore from Rush Valley first by wagon 20 miles to Lake Point and then by the *Kate Connor* across the lake to Corinne. Using the *Kate Connor* to transport ore was not the success Connor had hoped for, however. Eventually he had to resign himself to the reality that the Mormon-built Utah Central Railroad would transport nearly all of the ore from the Salt Lake City area to the transcontinental railroad.

At this point Connor began to take a much larger role in Utah politics. A new party, non-Mormon in point of view, was organized in the Gentile town of Corinne on 16 July 1870. Connor was elected temporary chairman of the new Liberal Party and spent the rest of his life involved in the party’s affairs; in fact, he became an icon for it, eventually receiving the title of “the father of the Liberal Party.” Thus, as the father of twins—in mining and politics—he became prominent in Utah affairs in the years from 1862 to his death on 16 December 1891; however, his principal child was mining, and his role as its founder in the territory remains his main contribution to the history of his adopted state.<sup>67</sup>

The completion of the Pacific railroads and influx of non-Mormon miners changed LDS attitudes toward mining. English traveler Charles Marshall observed that “the whole Gentile population is mad with the excitement of the gold fever and the Mormons feel the contagion.” Although there were only a couple of thousand Gentile miners in Utah at the time, Marshall thought the rush to wealth would bring 20,000 by the end of the year.<sup>68</sup> J. H. Beadle explained that there were perhaps 3,000 Gentiles speculating in mines, 5,000 “hunting” for mines, and 2,000 really “working mines.” He wrote, “The Mormons now propose to become a mining people.” The

change in Mormon attitudes could be seen in the correspondence of men like William Clayton, who wrote to his business partner, H. Starr, about a mine they were developing: "I estimate the mine to be well worth forty millions of dollars, and I should be very unwilling indeed to sell out for less than three million. . . . We have a mountain of mineral of immense value."<sup>69</sup>

Rossiter W. Raymond, special commissioner for collecting mining statistics in the states and territories west of the Rocky Mountains, gave some reasons for the Mormon about-face toward mining. The new railroads had broken the isolation and destroyed Mormon control of trade; the new mining population offered business opportunities and profits: "They [the Mormons] can no longer help themselves if they would"; and "they have to a considerable extent caught the prevailing fever, and are locating and prospecting ledges with truly Gentile zeal."<sup>70</sup>

Another report by John R. Murphy, who, incidentally, relied on an interview with Connor for the history of Utah mining, gave the mineral production for the years 1869–71. Utah Territory produced 16,200 tons of silver and gold ores with a value of \$3 million in almost three years. Whereas there had been only 2 mining districts in the territory in 1868, there were now 44, and 18 smelting furnaces had been built at a cost of \$200,000. Murphy gave Connor credit for inducing a "large number of his California friends" to erect smelters in the Rush Valley District.<sup>71</sup>

Connor finally gave up his attempt to operate a smelter at Stockton. In 1870 he collaborated with Simons and Company to build a smelter, but in April 1871 he sold it to "a practical and experienced gentleman in the business, F. Wallace," who began to enlarge and improve the facility.<sup>72</sup> William S. Godbe also built a smelter in the Rush Valley District in 1871. The mine operators of the entire Salt Lake area no longer sent their ores out of the territory because it was "cheaper by far to smelt it here," as Clayton explained.<sup>73</sup>

The upsurge in mining activity brought new growth to Stockton, which Froiseth's mining map of Utah identified with the caption, "P. E. Connor, Proprietor." This was no doubt accurate because Connor was still the chief property owner.<sup>74</sup> By the end of the year, Stockton had a population of 300 and boasted 60 houses, one hotel, a post office, several saloons, one store, and an assay office. J. H. Beadle, on a visit in October, described the town as "a little dull just now" while awaiting the sale of some of the mines to an English company. Noticing a new hotel, he asked its name and was informed that it was the "Lop Ear House." Upon entering the establishment, he learned that it was really the La Pierre House and concluded, "They say it is all the same in French."<sup>75</sup>

Despite Connor's continuing optimism about his Rush Valley mines in 1871, the chief interest was in the new camps in Ophir.<sup>76</sup> R. W. Raymond wrote that ore assayed from 500 to 27,000 per ton, turning "the heads of the oldest miners."<sup>77</sup> Connor purchased 1,633 ½ feet in eight mines in the Rush Valley District in 1871 but apparently nothing in any Ophir District claims.<sup>78</sup>

Although Connor maintained his mining interests in the Salt Lake area in 1872, newspaper notices were not as numerous as in previous years. Connor and

some partners sold their Lexington Mine in Little Cottonwood Canyon to Samuel G. Phillips of London for \$75,000, according to the *Salt Lake Review* of 13 January.<sup>79</sup> But in Rush Valley, the Jacobs Smelter, built during the summer, ceased operations by the end of the year.<sup>80</sup> The extensive sawmill in Soldier's Canyon was kept busy filling large orders for lumber for the Oquirrh mining camps. Connor also supplied the town of Stockton with water "through lumber pipes a distance of over one mile."<sup>81</sup>

The coming of the transcontinental railroad and the infusion of new Gentile blood into the mainstream of Utah life lessened the apprehension and sense of isolation Connor and other non-Mormon residents of the territory experienced. A greater sense of forbearance and more tolerance of Mormon ways took over. This did not mean that Connor had given up his deep-seated abhorrence of polygamy or his desire to destroy the economic and political control of Brigham Young and the Mormon leadership. Connor retained his basic antipathy to anything Mormon and continued political attempts to disfranchise the Saints. His Gentile friends persisted in rallying around him as the point man for most operations against Mormon power, and Connor accepted this attention as befitting his status in the community.

## STRIKING LODES IN THE STAR DISTRICTS AND THE LAW COURTS

Meanwhile, Connor's chief mining interests in 1872 centered on the new Star District in the Picacho Range of mountains several miles southwest of Milford, Utah. The area had divided into two parts on 11 November 1871—the North Star and South Star Districts. Eventually there were 581 mining locations in the North Star District and 1,046 in the South Star District. The boom lasted from 1872 to 1875, and Shauntie, Shenandoah City, Elephant City, and South Camp were the chief mining camps.<sup>82</sup>

The Beaver County Recorder's Office shows that Connor was involved, usually with three or four other men, in locating a number of claims in the North Star District. John P. Gallagher was involved in all but one of the claims and was evidently a close associate of Connor in these mining ventures.<sup>83</sup> Connor also owned the Temperance Mine located in a third West Star District, which was described as "a vein of mineral [which] had held out with an increase of mineral."<sup>84</sup> George W. Crouch, a printer for the *Salt Lake Tribune*, gave up his newspaper job to become Connor's agent in the Star districts.<sup>85</sup>

In the Beaver County Court records, there is also a notice of a judgment in default against John P. Gallagher and P. E. Connor of the Flora Mining and Smelting Company. Dated 8 December 1879, the record shows that Gallagher had failed to pay \$682.97 on a promissory note and mortgage, and the aggrieved party also asked \$100 in attorney fees. The court ordered that the property be sold at auction to satisfy the debt. If the sale price was not sufficient to pay off the claim, a personal judgment was to be rendered against Gallagher for the difference.<sup>86</sup> Such lawsuits over mining property were to haunt Connor until his death.

## GENERAL PATRICK EDWARD CONNOR

Connor started other businesses in the North Star District. He and a man named Lawrence laid plans to build a sawmill in Mill Canyon in the Wah Wah Mountains, about 25 miles west of Milford, to furnish lumber for the mining camps in the Star districts and also Pioche, 60 miles away. In April and May of 1872, Connor and others purchased land and water rights in Beaver County.<sup>87</sup> By late August the Connor steam sawmill was in operation with a “fire engine of 30-horse power” turning out 8,000 feet of lumber each day. The mill was “said to be the finest in the Territory of Utah or the State of Nevada.” P. L. Shoaff was the sales agent for Connor in Pioche.<sup>88</sup> By fall Connor also was preparing to build a ten-stamp mill near Shenandoah City on the Beaver River.

In the busy North Star District, there was much activity. Connor and John P. Gallagher were developing the copper, silver, and gold deposits of the Silveropolis group of mines, and the veins of ore were of “mammoth proportions, being from 25 to 100 feet in width and extending, in some instances, a mile in length.” Connor was still supplying water and lumber to the camps.<sup>89</sup>

Connor was listed on the Third District Court docket in August and September in proceedings he initiated in the case of *P. Edward Connor vs. Leopold Kramer et al.*<sup>90</sup> M. Livingston sued Connor on 7 July 1873 for a balance of \$454.55 he claimed Connor owed for merchandise. Connor testified that he had already paid Livingston \$2,238.29, which took care of the indebtedness. The goods may well have been for the Eureka Hotel in Stockton that Connor was renovating at the time. There is no record of a judgment, and the case may have been settled out of court.<sup>91</sup>

In another case concerning the Lexington lode in Little Cottonwood Canyon, Connor emerged the victor. On 7 December 1871, he had loaned Thomas L. Moore \$4,000 on a promissory note with a mortgage on 1,280 feet or four-fifths of the Lexington Mine as security. When Moore died suddenly, Robert J. Goldring and Albert P. Dewey, administrators of the estate, refused to pay off the promissory note. A judgment issued on 8 November 1873 determined that Connor was entitled to a decree of foreclosure of the mortgage.<sup>92</sup>

Connor maintained business offices in the Connor Building between First and Second South in Salt Lake City in addition to his residence near the Walker House. His office became a central meeting place for his business and political associates. He had himself listed in the Salt Lake City directory for 1874 as “Connor P. E.—capitalist, office Connor’s Building, E. T. es. . . . bet. 1 and 2 so.”<sup>93</sup>

One of the early meetings held in Connor’s office was “for the purpose of discussing the advisability of petitioning Congress for an appropriation to aid in a geological survey of the mineral resources of the Territory.” A committee of nine was appointed to draft the memorial to Congress, and Connor’s name led the list of signers.<sup>94</sup> The same nine men had already petitioned the Utah Legislature seeking the appointment of a territorial geologist, pointing out that the total production of the Utah mining industry during the previous four years had amounted to \$12,557,357. Connor’s name was first among the signers, and he seems to have taken the initiative in both actions.<sup>95</sup>

## Brigham D. Madsen

At his mining locations in the North Star District, Connor's only product for 1874 seemed to be lawsuits. Most cases were initiated and completed in 1874, but some suits extended over several years. Much of the litigation revolved around ownership of mining claims.<sup>96</sup>

In the Ophir District, Connor owned the Chloride Point Mine, which had shipped the first carload of ore to California from the Ophir District. A 180-foot tunnel had been dug to the chloride and horn silver ores, but in 1874 the mine was idle. Connor's most important investment in the Ophir District—the Queen of the Hills and Flavilla Mine—was announced in a notice published in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on 25 August 1874: "All persons are warned against purchasing or removing any ores therefrom, as we are the owners of an undivided interest in said mine or mines, and intend to appeal to the proper tribunals for possession of our interests, illegally withheld. P. E. Connor, L. D. Osborn."<sup>97</sup>

The Queen of the Hills and Flavilla was elsewhere described as an "immense mine" with a seven-foot vein of solid ore 450 feet in depth. In one week the owners shipped more than 3,000 sacks of ore. One writer called it the "finest producing mine, so far, that has ever been found here [Dry Canyon]."<sup>98</sup> Even more impressive evidence of the mine's worth came from the announcement that a resident of Tooele, "John Lawson, who sold an interest in the Flavilla mine for \$75,000, is building a \$10,000 residence for his aged father and mother."<sup>99</sup> It is understandable why Connor and Osborn were warning off intruders.

Concerning the Stockton area, the *Salt Lake Tribune* of 18 June 1874 reported, "The General is interested here in something over one hundred mines and prospects in various stages of development." Among the most prominent of these claims were the California, with a four-foot vein and silver assaying \$80 per ton; the Great Central and Silver Queen; and the Last Chance with a value in silver of \$2,000. But the Silver King and the Great Basin remained the leaders. The former was continually mentioned in the press with a note in November that it was "now being worked by contract." The ore was rated at 25 ounces in silver and 65 percent lead. The Great Basin was "working four men daily" under foreman B. F. McCarty by the end of the year. The *Tribune* reported that it "will no doubt open into a valuable mine."<sup>100</sup>

When not operating his mines, Connor occasionally found himself in the Third District Court in Salt Lake City. He faced at least two cases in 1874. Amos Woodward and John S. Worthington, on 24 August 1874, sued Connor, Heber P. Kimball, and W. C. Rydalch for failure to pay off a promissory note of \$10,000. The money must have been intended for the Salt Lake, Sevier Valley and Pacific Railroad. Judgment was rendered against Connor and the other two defendants on 12 January 1875 in the sum of \$12,075, which included interest at 15 percent. The defendants had 60 days to pay the debt, or the court would sell enough of their joint property to satisfy the claim.<sup>101</sup> The second case, *Steven F. Nuckolls vs. P. Ed. Connor, William S. Godbe, Julian F. Carter, and John H. Latey*, was filed on 27 August 1874, again for



a promissory note for \$500. On 9 September 1874, a judgment was rendered against the defendants in the sum of \$583.74.<sup>102</sup>

Apart from his occasional politicking, the general was very busy managing his mining property. On 9 January 1875, he sold 360 feet in the Shamrock lode and 50 feet in the Shenandoah Mine Number One to John P. Gallagher for \$2,000 as he continued to divest his holdings in the North Star District. He also sold to Gallagher, for \$250, a claim of 50 feet in the Gay Deceiver Mine on 1 March 1875.<sup>103</sup> The *Salt Lake Tribune* of 22 October 1875 thought that Connor's holdings in the Stockton area were "at last on the road to prosperity."<sup>104</sup>

### THE OPHIR MINING DISTRICT AND MORE LAWSUITS

The Ophir Mining District especially attracted Connor. He purchased 500 feet each in the Delaware and Georgia Mines on 14 January. The Queen of the Hills and Flavilla Mine was now producing 500 tons of ore each week with a return of more than 100 ounces of silver per ton. The *Tribune* praised "the lucky owners of this immense and valuable mine."<sup>105</sup> In June it was reported that a Colonel J. W. Johnson had sold a half interest in the Queen of the Hills and Flavilla to the Chicago Silver Mining and Smelting Company for \$350,000 in cash, attesting to its value. The paper further noted that 5,000 tons of ore had been extracted in one year.<sup>106</sup>

Connor was involved in several court cases in 1875 and 1876 regarding ownership in interests in mines,<sup>107</sup> and in a case involving Hiram S. Jacobs and the Salt Lake, Sevier Valley and Pacific Railroad. Jacobs owed the railroad more than \$30,000, and Connor was awarded \$1,348.46 plus costs of \$69.50.<sup>108</sup>

Except for short visits, Connor did not spend much time in Salt Lake City and Utah in 1876. His Silver King Mine was being operated for him by a man named Potts, and little mention was made of developments in his other mining property.<sup>109</sup> His visits to Utah were only occasional because he was spending most of his time in Eureka and Oreana, Nevada, hoping to discover some rich ore bodies.

A significant event which must have brought back memories of the 1860s was the death of Brigham Young on 29 August 1877. The two old antagonists had evidently never met, both being quite careful to prevent that from happening. And yet there was a mellowing of the firm positions the two had formerly held with perhaps a mutual feeling that if they did ever meet, they might actually like at least some aspects of each other's character. The Mormon Prophet never forgot the general's generous offer to sign a bond of up to \$100,000 for Young because Connor was so strongly opposed to the actions of Judge James B. McKean in his 1872 court case, where the judge indicted Young for lascivious cohabitation but did not allow him bail. There was in Connor's makeup a quality of conciliation for past hostilities determinedly held at the time. Besides, the general was now an accepted member of the Utah business community and could ill afford to continue open warfare with the leader of the Saints. A new Mormon president, John Taylor, now directing

church affairs created an opportunity for a new chapter in Connor's relations with Mormon Utah.

Connor's two chief concerns for the next year, 1878, were mining and politics. The Great Basin Mine received the most notice. Only two men were now employed at the Great Basin, under lease to James D. Coursa. The shaft was down 400 feet, and in 1877 the mine had produced 120 tons of ore which assayed at \$35 per ton and gave the lessees \$4,200. Connor also spent a few days in December examining mining prospects at Alta in Little Cottonwood Canyon east of Salt Lake City. This visit, plus a few to Stockton, summed up his mining efforts in Utah for 1878.<sup>110</sup> His attention was shifting to Nevada again.

Connor made at least two trips east in 1879 and perhaps a third. The first, from 21 January to 19 April, was to raise capital for his mining enterprises. The second, from 11 May to 27 June, to New York and Boston was for the same purpose.<sup>111</sup> His itinerary, as listed in the local newspapers, suggests that his home was on the road during the year.<sup>112</sup>

Connor found some exciting prospects in his mines in Rush Valley. The 1880 annual Utah governor's report announced that "the business of mining has never been more prosperous or more profitable than at the present time."<sup>113</sup> To construct a smelter for the ores, Connor needed water. He obtained five acres of land in Spring Canyon a mile and a half east of Stockton. He used galvanized pipe to conduct water from the springs to the mill. He also located the Silver King Number-Two Mine in the Rush Valley District in December of 1879.<sup>114</sup> His two Silver King mines were inactive most of 1878 but started up again in the fall and continued to operate during 1879.<sup>115</sup>

His chief interest was the Great Basin Mine, solely his property except a small interest. The De Courcy who ran the Eureka Hotel in Stockton may have held a minor share. One report has De Courcy as the one who in 1879 discovered a large body of ore at a depth of 250 feet in the mine. Connor was able to get some Boston capital on one of his trips east and then incorporated the Great Basin Mining and Smelting Company in May 1879, under Connecticut laws, with a capital stock of \$2.5 in 100,000 shares. Besides the Great Basin, the company also owned the General Garfield, the Arthur, and the Silver Queen Mines. Connor employed a man named Gove as superintendent at the Great Basin Mine; he ran two shifts, a daylight one of 10 hours and a night one of 9 hours. The miners received three dollars per shift. The concentration works were in the old Jacobs smelter, built in 1872, and while they were "not models of elegance or convenience, . . . they do good work." During the year the Great Basin Mine produced a little more than 3,382 tons of ore with a return of \$48,275.33. The ore was valued at 40 percent lead and from 18 to 21 ounces of silver plus varying amounts of gold. As the *Salt Lake Tribune* wrote, the mine "at present is one of the richest in the Territory,"<sup>116</sup> leading observers to comment that General Connor was on his way to becoming an exceedingly wealthy man.

As often happened when news got out about a rich strike, one man, a Leonard S. Osgood, claimed part ownership in the Great Basin and sued Connor. The case, filed

in Third District Court on 21 July 1880, was quite convoluted and involved several people. The suit was finally settled out of court on 13 November 1882, the “action having been compromised.”

Some interesting information about the operation of the Great Basin came out during the case. Connor denied that he had extracted ores from the mine totaling \$50,000 or that he had taken 150 tons per week at a value of \$50 per ton. Instead, he testified, the value had been \$15 per ton, and prior to 1880 he had never taken more than 75 tons per week. He further said, “There is no considerable quantity of high grade ore” and until there was “a large outlay of capital, said mine cannot be worked at much if any profit, and had hitherto been worked at no profit.” Connor could well have been downplaying the value of the mine.<sup>117</sup>

At the end of the year, the various properties associated with the Great Basin were consolidated under the new title of the Honorine Mine, although many still called it by its original name. L. D. Davis actively controlled the daily operations under Connor and had a crew of 55 men. The ore was valued at 25 to 30 ounces of silver per ton, three to six dollars in gold, and 30 percent lead, and was processed by the Brooke Smelter in the Rush Lake District. The stock of the company was listed on the Boston Exchange on 21 August 1880 at five dollars with 625 shares sold that day. The *Western Mining Gazetteer* observed that “the immense ore-body . . . is beyond a doubt . . . apparently inexhaustible,” while the *Salt Lake Tribune* gave Connor credit for the development of the mine: “General Connor has worked upon the property for years, has surmounted a thousand difficulties, and it is a pleasure to think he is about to reap the reward due the sagacity, faith, pluck and patience which has enabled him to develop one of the most valuable mining properties in Utah or any other country.”<sup>118</sup>

To allow a night shift to operate his reduction works, the Rush Valley Mining and Smelting Company, Connor installed two electric lights in the building at a cost of \$1,500. When residents of Salt Lake City marveled at this new miracle, the *Salt Lake Tribune* published a letter of endorsement Connor had written to the Brush Electric Light Company of Stockton, California. In it the general expressed his satisfaction with the “light electric machine” he had purchased from the firm—“the light is brilliant, clear and beautiful, so that the men can work as well by night as by day.” Furthermore, “it is cheaper than oil while an infinitely greater quantity of light is furnished. It requires no special attention from the engineer and runs with perfect regularity. With this light the men cannot shirk. I would not be without it.”<sup>119</sup> Evidently this was the first installation of electric lights in Utah Territory.

Because the line he had already built did not supply sufficient water for the mine, Connor constructed another in 1880. He filed on more Soldier Canyon water, which came to be called Connor Springs, and laid five miles of four-inch pipe at a cost of \$20,000. This new source also supplied water to the town of Stockton.<sup>120</sup>

The entire operation of the Honorine/Great Basin enterprise was so successful that the Utah Western Railroad began to complain. The *Salt Lake Tribune* of

20 October 1880 reported, “General Connor, in shipping material to his mine and ore from it, has of late overtaxed the capacity of the rolling stock of the road.” The newspaper concluded, “If there was one more man in that region like General Connor, the railroad would have to go into liquidation because of overwork.”<sup>121</sup>

Connor was also involved with other active mines in Rush Valley and invested in more in 1880. He extracted sufficient ore from his Silver King Mine to pay for further development and sinking a deeper shaft. Another property, the Quandary Mine, “principally owned by Gen. Connor,” was located near the Great Basin, and its owner was working to connect the two and “making active preparations for a vigorous onslaught into the ore bodies.”<sup>122</sup> He also invested in seven mines, four of which he personally located, and he filed on some land in Soldier Canyon so that he could construct the General Connor Tunnel to better access the ores in the Argonaut, Broughton, Jumboldt, and Roxie Mines.<sup>123</sup>

In Salt Lake City, citizens could watch the general in the Fourth of July 1880 celebration, which he supervised as marshal of the day. It “was the first non-Mormon Fourth of July celebration ever attempted in Utah.” To emphasize that fact, the parade included 20 boys dressed as miners, other real miners from the various districts, and young men and women representing the 13 colonies and the 38 states and 11 territories. The *Salt Lake Tribune* gave special notice to all the “new generation” of young Mormons who lined the streets in appreciation of the display: “It shows that a leaven is working in our midst that by and by will leaven the whole lump.”<sup>124</sup>

In 1881 the chief mining news in the Rush Valley District was the Great Basin Mine and two lawsuits about it. In the first, the plaintiffs claimed the employees of the Great Basin had ousted them from possession of their vein of ore that lay nearby and had, since then, taken out ores worth \$50,000 belonging to them. The plaintiffs asked for the money and an injunction to stop the theft of their ore. On 13 November 1883, the suit was dismissed by the Third District Court without costs when all claims for damages were settled by the participants out of court.<sup>125</sup> In the second case, filed 19 July 1881 in the Third District Court, the plaintiff charged that Connor had promised to pay him \$3,000 for testimony he had furnished in another case. There seems to be no record of a decision.<sup>126</sup>

The various mining journals of 1881 were high in their praise of the Great Basin Mine as “one of the most valuable properties in the Territory.” The mine shaft was at 800 feet but had encountered water at the rate of 1,000 gallons per hour, a “small matter” to dispose of “when desirable,” according to one report. The working crew was getting out 60 tons per day with the ore averaging 25 percent silver and 45 percent lead. The Great Basin Company was processing 8 tons per day at its mill near the mine while another company smelter at Stockton worked 25 tons per day. The *Salt Lake Tribune* recognized the “indomitable will” of Superintendent Connor in making a success of the Great Basin: “After expending his tens of thousands, helping every miner that ever came to him, building dwelling houses and hotels, collecting the meager streams that trickled to the foothills and sunk in the arid earth, and doing

all that human power could do to breach the wealth hidden within those bleak and forbidding hills, the treasures seemed ever to elude him—still beyond his grasp.” The *Tribune* then concluded, “But, though well-nigh exhausted, in endurance as in means, he struggled on, and to-day his faith and fortitude are rewarded by the possession of the Great Basin mine.”<sup>127</sup>

Other Connor-owned mines in Rush Valley also continued to show promise. The Silver King had produced “a good deal of ore.” Connor had recently incorporated the Quandary, which was connected to the Great Basin by a tunnel, in Boston under the name of the Rush Valley Mining Company. The *Tribune* reported in January that Connor had purchased for \$25,000 the Leonore Mine, which had \$40,000 worth of ore in sight.<sup>128</sup>

Connor initiated additional projects in Rush Valley in 1881. He laid claim to five acres of land in Spring Canyon, near Stockton, to construct a Quandary Number-Two mill. He was the owner and manager of the General Connor Tunnel and Mining Company, operated a coal mine on the Weber River, and, according to Edward Tullidge, owned more mining property in the territory than any other mining entrepreneur.<sup>129</sup>

At his town of Stockton, Connor installed an electric-lighting system, evidently making it the first town in Utah to receive more light. When the lights first went on, the Mormon citizens of nearby Tooele thought Stockton was ablaze. John Codman, on a visit to Utah, commented that Gentile Stockton “seemed a representation of misery sought for and found.” It was in one of the “bleakest spots” that could ever be chosen, where “scarcely a sage brush can show its head,” and the town was built on piles of logs except for an “abortive frame-house called a hotel.” It was a most “execrable hole.”<sup>130</sup> Codman was too harsh in his judgment; Stockton was no worse than any other western mining town.

Connor went east in February 1881 for a month’s visit to a number of leading cities. He was in Washington for the inauguration of President James A. Garfield and took in “other great sights.” In July he left Salt Lake City “for a month’s run to Boston” on matters concerned with the Great Basin and other Rush Valley mining properties. A month earlier he had gone on a short trip to Montana.<sup>131</sup>

The years from 1878 to 1881 found Connor on the edge of political fame and mining fortunes in Nevada and Utah. The promise of success with the Great Basin Mine and the Eureka Tunnel in Nevada kept him busy traveling much of the time. He moved back to Eureka for another two years, but then, like a moth attracted to a flame, he returned to live out his final years in Mormon Zion.

A cloud was hovering on the horizon for Connor as 1882 opened. A disturbing speech by the general that his fight against Mormon domination had impoverished him seemed uncharacteristic. Connor’s opposition to Mormon control was not the sole reason for his financial discomfort. His private meetings with eastern financiers had led to loss of ownership of his Great Basin and Quandary Mines and the unsettling knowledge that he was now a hired hand. While he bore the title of managing

director, he was still employed by the faceless Boston corporation he had turned to for financial assistance. Connor in 1882 was not the independent owner/operator of his own mines as in the past. Despite continuing reassurances by newspapers like the *Salt Lake Tribune* and his own friends that success was still just around the corner, things had changed.

In an annual report on mining on 1 January 1882, the *Salt Lake Tribune* gave credit for the success of the Great Basin Mine to Connor for “the able manner in which the extensive property has been managed” and commended the strict economy he employed for the Boston company. A little more than three months after this encouraging report, Connor filed a lawsuit on 12 April in Third District Court contending that the Great Basin Mining and Smelting Company owed him more than \$5,000 in back pay for expenses. The suit attached the following property of the Boston company by writ: the Great Basin Mine itself, plus the buildings and machinery, mill, boardinghouse, camp house, “out house,” spring of water and pipes, 38 lots in Stockton, and all the dwellings, office buildings, and improvements on the lots, even down to the scales, safe, letterpress, office chairs, stool, button molds, assay furnace, and ore hammer. The list detailed the “blood, sweat, and tears” Connor had poured over the years into this property that was now lost to him. It was not a friendly action. On 14 November 1883, the case was settled out of court and the attachment vacated.<sup>132</sup>

The *Utah Commercial* of July 1882 wrote about Connor, the Eureka Tunnel, and the Great Basin Mine in an editorial:

It is rather hard papers for Gen. Connor to have to assess his Eureka Tunnel when he might have unloaded \$100,000 worth of his stock as well as not; and to have to abandon the Great Basin when he might have closed it out at one time at \$50 a share. But he has one consolation. He had not in these two cases enriched himself at the expense of the public and particularly of his friends. If they made nothing by joining him in these enterprises, so neither did he. . . . We trust Gen. Connor will yet find a bonanza in his Prospect Mountain (Eureka) Tunnel, and that the fellows who have traced him out of the Great Basin will go broke in it.<sup>133</sup>

After winding up his affairs in Nevada by 1885, Connor was back in familiar surroundings in Salt Lake City. He picked up his life almost where he had left it when he had moved to Eureka, Nevada, in 1877. However, there was a significant difference in Connor’s position. Eight years before, he had been the owner of the Great Basin Mine and had had greater financial security. Having lost both that property and his position with the Eureka Tunnel Company, Connor was forced to scabble for a living among his lesser investments. He was still affluent enough to take care of his own living expenses and those of his family in Redwood City, but times were harder.

## CONNOR'S LIFE AND FORTUNES EBB

Information about Connor's activities for 1887, 1888, and 1889 is fleeting. He seemed to be semiretired, although he still took care of his Rush Valley mining property. In late April of 1887, he gave a lease to George Etagh to continue work on the General Connor Tunnel near Stockton.<sup>134</sup> Meanwhile, his old Great Basin Mine, now called the Honorine, was still the leading mine in the area.<sup>135</sup> Connor had a nephew, John F. Connor, who also had business interests in Stockton, and the two often traveled together between there and Salt Lake City.<sup>136</sup>

In 1890 Connor presumably returned to the only means of income he had—his mines. The Tooele County Recorder's Office has records of lot transactions in Stockton during 1890, although the sums involved do not register any income for Connor. A typical entry has him quit-claiming lots in Stockton to B. C. and Amelia D. Harvey for one dollar on 15 September.<sup>137</sup>

When not involved in politics, Connor was still a mining entrepreneur, although on a smaller scale. The *Tribune* ran several articles in January 1891 describing the development of the General Connor and its group of mines, composed of the General Connor Tunnel and the Roxie, Broughton, Jane, Humboldt, Little Joe, and Argonaut lodes. Connor owned the properties jointly with Joseph Broughton of Walkerville, Montana. The Argonaut Mine was leased to some men in Stockton who were "happy over the prospects." The General Connor Tunnel had penetrated the mountain 985 feet, and ore from the Argonaut, as an example, assayed 35 percent lead, 36.5 ounces of silver, and \$15.07 in gold. The *Tribune* believed that the two partners "are richly entitled to a big mine as they have pushed this enterprise with energy for many years."<sup>138</sup>

In one transaction on 14 March 1891, Connor's son-in-law, B. P. Oliver, gained possession of the Chloride Point Mine in the Ophir Mining District and Connor's two-thirds interest in six mines associated with the General Connor Tunnel in an indenture for \$2,000. This cash payment no doubt was a great financial help to the general.<sup>139</sup>

Not only was his financial condition worsening but his health deteriorated also in 1891, and on 17 December 1891, the *Tribune* reported his death: "General Patrick Edward Connor, whom patriots have sometimes alluded to as the 'Liberator of Utah' died in his rooms at the Walker House last evening at 7:55 o'clock after a painful illness of three weeks." His funeral was a "Magnificent Demonstration," according to the *Tribune*, despite a heavy snowstorm and seas of mud. In accordance with his wishes, the adjutant general's office, on 17 June 1889, had set aside a burial plot in the Fort Douglas Cemetery. There the old soldier and persistent mining developer was laid to rest.<sup>140</sup>

Patrick Edward Connor died intestate so the probate court for Salt Lake County appointed two administrators of the estate. The first was Maurice J. Connor, the eldest son, appointed on 13 February 1892 after posting a bond of \$2,400. Then, on

*Brigham D. Madsen*

4 March 1892, Patrick Edward Connor, Jr., was appointed administrator. The change in administrators was probably made because at the time Maurice was living in Montana. On 10 July Patrick, Jr., issued an inventory of P. Edward Connor's property and money holdings.<sup>141</sup>

The inventory showed the following:<sup>142</sup>

1	A one-half interest in Lots 38 & 39 of Block 1 of the Richland Addition, Salt Lake City	\$40.00
2	Cash deposit in W. F. & Co's Bank, Salt Lake City	736.14
3	A one-third interest in Fairmont Lode, Wasatch Co.	500.00
4	Holding of 2,000 ft. in Chloride Point Mine, Ophir	2,000.00
5	A two-thirds interest in General Connor Tunnel, consisting of 6 mines—Roxie, Broughton, Jane, Humboldt, Little Joe, and Argonaut Lodes	1,000.00
6	Series of town lots in Stockton, Utah	920.00
7	Tools, fixtures and other personal property in Chloride Point and General Connor Tunnel Mine	<u>40.00</u>
		\$5,236.14

As already indicated, the Tooele County mining records show that the general had granted an indenture to his son-in-law, B. P. Oliver, on 14 March 1891 for \$2,000 on the Chloride Point Mine and the General Connor series of six mines. Unless Oliver had released his father-in-law from indenture, General Connor's assets amounted to only \$3,236.14. It was a meager reward for 25 years of effort as a mining entrepreneur. Brigham Young had been a true prophet when he had written on 11 August 1866, "Connor is out of the service, and is here now as plain 'Pat,' engaged in mining business, which, as Government pap has been withdrawn, will very likely, if he pursue it diligently, break him up financially."<sup>143</sup> Connor's assets of \$3,236.14 at his death contrasted sharply with the \$351,000 he had claimed as the worth of his property in 1867.

Although General Patrick Edward Connor has been memorialized as the "Father of the Liberal Party," and even by some admirers as the "Liberator of Utah," his chief contribution to Utah Territory and its history is as the "Father of Utah Mining." He and his soldiers created the first general mining districts and started the movement by Gentile leaders in Utah, aided even by some Mormon promoters, to break down efforts by Brigham Young to discourage development of the mineral wealth of Utah. Connor and other Gentile leaders were determined to break what they and others perceived as Mormon political and economic domination of the territory, and the coming of the transcontinental railroad offered the means of bringing into Utah many outsiders eager to exploit the undeveloped mineral riches available in the Mormon kingdom. Connor became the leader in the initial opening of Utah mines and devoted the rest of his life after the Civil War to a personal search for the "mother lode" in Utah; unfortunately, he lacked the business acumen to achieve his dreams.