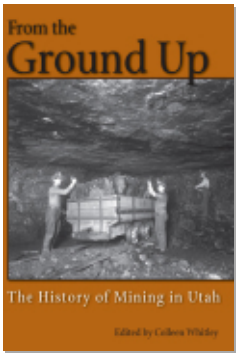
4. The Stories They Tell



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The Stories They Tell

Carma Wadley

Long before mining was an industry on this continent, it was a quest. From the very beginning of European settlement, myths and legends whispered of gold, of silver, of precious gems and metals all there for the taking. Such stories were a powerful pull for daring explorers in search of easy riches.

El Dorado, where the king supposedly coated himself in gold dust once a year in tribute to the gods, was surely just over the next ridge of hills, they said, despite the fact that for more than two centuries, no one—not the Spanish, not the French, not the English—ever found a city made only of gold. Gran Quivira, where gold and silver were supposed to be so plentiful people ate from plates made of the metals and where the king slept beneath trees filled with tiny golden bells, was just a bit farther north, they said—although Coronado went as far north as the American Great Plains always looking but never finding any gold.

Cortez believed in the islands of the Amazon women, somewhere in the South Sea, because, he said, "everybody who has any knowledge and experience of navigation in the Indies is certain that the discovery of the South Sea would lead to discovery of many islands rich in gold, pearls, precious stones, spices and other unknown and wonderful things."[1] The Seven Cities of Cibola, based on a story of a Christian archbishop who supposedly escaped from the Moors by leading his followers to fabulous islands where even the sand was made of gold, sent numerous Spanish conquistadors on numerous wild-goose chases.

Add to this myth-filled background the fact that mining has always relied to a high degree on luck and fancy. Before—and even after—geologists learned to read the language of the rocks, the richest finds were often capriciously made. Besides that, mining was extremely hard, extremely dangerous work where even slight mistakes could make huge differences. Fate must be carefully courted. And the work took place mostly underground, which was a world apart: dark, spooky, with all kinds of connotations related to the underworld. Given all those factors, it is not surprising that a rich body of lore, legend, myth, and superstition has grown up around mining. And Utah has its share of myths, characters, and stories.

Of Things Imagined

Miners were a superstitious lot, adept at reading signs and symbols into the most mundane of life's everyday occurrences. Most of the superstitions revolved around impending bad luck. Miners who dropped their tools, for example, or who had clothes fall out of their lockers had to worry about that being a sign that they themselves were headed for a fall. So strong was the belief, in some cases, that those miners refused to continue working their shift.

Miners also looked for signs in the flickering candles that provided light before electricity came along. If a candle was snuffed out, that was considered a sign that something bad had happened at home. And if it went out three times in a row, that supposedly meant some other man was involved with the miner's wife. A dog howling in the middle of the night meant a miner would be hurt the next day. Black cats that passed in front of someone on his way to work foretold doom. The presence of a woman in the mine was widely considered bad luck. And announcing in advance that you were planning to quit was a sure way to invite disaster.

Of all the superstitions, however, none seemed to be as generally feared as whistling in a mine, which was believed to dispel the "good spirit" of a mine. The *Park Mining Record* of 2 February 1882 told the story of miners who were leaving an abandoned shaft. One of them began to whistle, and although the others begged him to stop, he only whistled faster and louder. Suddenly they heard a loud, rustling noise and were all engulfed in a cave-in. They all escaped—except the man who was whistling.[2]

From a longtime miner in the Alta District came this opinion of whistling:

> It is a well-known fact, and I have never seen it to fail in all of my mining experience since the turn of the century, that something terrible happened almost immediately; and it has been demonstrated to me several times that the ore body would pinch out or be cut off by a fault or become too low grade to mine, the moment anyone whistled underground near where the stoping operations were being carried on; and in more than one instance the mine caved in, or it was hit by a sudden inrush of water. In no instance did I know of a death caused by a whistle underground, but almost everything else happened that could cause bad luck in the mine.[3]

But inadvertent actions were not the only sources of apprehension. Stories abound of miners who heard strange and unusual noises in the dark mine shafts. Often they were noises of work going on in sections where work had stopped. Sometimes they were the sounds of voices—particularly voices that sounded like miners known to be dead.

Miners from England, particularly from the Cornwall area, gave a face to some of the noises they heard, and they brought stories of the "Tommy Knockers" with them to this country. Tommy Knockers were said to be dwarflike creatures that inhabited

dark corners of the mine and seemed to exist solely for the purpose of harassing miners: creating distractions, luring them into dangerous passages and such. But occasionally the Tommy Knockers showed a more benevolent side. It was said that if a sleeping miner was awakened by a Tommy Knocker precisely between the hours of midnight and 2:00 AM and followed the sound of the knocking, he would come upon a new strike.

Of Things Unreal

Miners died. While occasional explosions and cave-ins took heavy tolls, more common were the accidents that killed one or two miners. The abrupt and freakish nature of some of these accidents led naturally to stories that some of the miners came back to haunt the places where they died. Stories were told of dead, and sometimes even headless, miners who would board the mine train with their former companions and ride to that day's place of work before disappearing. Some tales talked of phantom mules and horses, sometimes with a rider, sometimes not, that appeared in abandoned tunnels. Others described unseen forces that came to help push a loaded car or accomplish some other difficult task.

Ghosts have supposedly been sighted in a number of mines, but some of the more persistent stories come from the Ontario Mine in Park City, one of the richest silver mines in that district. After a 1902 explosion in the Ontario, sightings of the Lady in White began. Apparently one of the miners killed in the explosion had been married for only two weeks. When his wife heard the news of his death, she went crazy. She put on her wedding dress and ran into the mine, never to be seen again—except in odd circumstances. Another story from the Ontario tells of the Man in the Yellow Slicker. Several different versions of the story have developed, but they all feature a man who was apparently hired to go into the mine, perhaps to spy on the miners, perhaps to prevent other companies from stealing the rich ore. One day he went down and never came back. Since that time a number of miners claim to have seen him and even been helped by him.

The Ontario was shut down in 1982, and for a time after that, a concessionaire gave tours of the mine to tourists. The ghost stories persisted during those tours. Ron Kunz, one of the tour guides in the mid-1990s, claimed he had seen the ghosts. On two separate occasions, he said, he looked down tunnels and saw figures when it later was proved that no one was there. On another occasion, one of the women waiting for the tour train saw the reflection of a man's mustached face in a pane of glass. When she turned around, no one was there. "Believe what you want to," said Kunz. He personally felt it was an honor to have seen such specters and felt they were there to watch out for him.[4]

A ghost of a different sort may haunt the hillsides of Silver Reef, some 18 miles northeast of St. George, once the site of one of the state's most famous silver mines. Various stories are told about the fact that the mine was discovered when a grindstone

was broken up and taken to an assayer in an attempt to trick him. After the man found silver in the sandstone, some stories have him being run out of town; others say he was lynched. And some say he mysteriously disappeared—only to be heard from later when the conditions in the night were just right. A particularly detailed version of the story tells it this way:

> Metalliferous Murphy was a Pioche, Nevada, assayer who lived in the days before Silver Reef was even a glint in the eye of a prospector. It is said that he had an unrelated appearance, as though he had picked the wrong arms and legs out of a grab bag. He slouched like a marionette with no strings attached. Some say he had a beard that looked like a bush on fire, and that he smiled with a lot of teeth like an open piano. Others maintain he had a voice like a fire siren calling its mate. Some men have been known to proclaim that he wore a shirt of dizzy plaid.
>
> The story goes that he devoted his early twenties to the establishment of a reputation as a 'reader of rocks.' But then there have always been liars. At any rate he had manners out of a book, and was famed far and wide for his earthly erudition. Seems he claimed to be a graduate of the University of Edinburgh. "Yep," he used to say, "I'm a mineralogist, that's what I am. Member of the Royal Society."
>
> Many men had it in for Murphy, said he was a smooth-talking scalawag. They made a habit of bringing hunks of sandstone to him. Everyone knew that silver was never found in sandstone. Metalliferous found silver in nearly every piece. The town boiled. The end was in sight. No more nonsense would they stand. They mashed up a grindstone and took it to him. If he found silver in this, by gum, they'd practice a little cedar-tree justice.
>
> Murphy got out his test tubes, his bottles, and his magnifying glass. He peered at the sample as though his eyes were microscopes focused on a deadly germ. Suddenly, he did a short St. Vitus dance and threw his cap in the air. "Silver! Silver!" he cried. "Where did this stuff come from? It'll run 500 ounces per ton." All hell broke lose. The news was broadcast without the aid of a microphone. Like a typhoon going through a palm tree, a number of characters more agile than fragile grabbed Metalliferous. He was never heard of again.

But the story told at campfires and whispered about the towns is that "when the sun is shining just right high above the steep north wall of Grand Canyon, a bony cedar tree reaches gnarled branches over the yawning chasm. Plainly visible yet are hatchet marks where a large limb of the tree with a man roped to it was cut off and let fall over the gorge."[5]

Some say Metalliferous Murphy walks the territory still, looking for those who did him wrong. His voice may be heard in the moaning wind. His ungainly shadow

may be seen on nights with unearthly moonlight—because it turns out that his report was accurate: even the sandstone around Silver Reef was full of silver.

Of Things Found

In those early days, ore was where you found it. And finding it was often based more on luck and intuition than on any science. Tales abound of prospectors who came across rich finds by quite literally stumbling across them or tossed their picks away in disgust only to have those very picks stick in the ground precisely where a rich vein was located. Mules kicked up rocks that contained pieces of gold. Some miners claimed they could smell the ore. Others looked for signs: certain plants and flowers that supposedly grew where ore was, or mountain slopes where snow melted too quickly. And they put their faith in happenstance. One story involves a sheepherder in Juab County who was riding through a narrow pass near Fish Springs when the stirrup of his saddle happened to break off a piece of rock. The man noticed something in the rock glistening in the sun, and he discovered a whole ledge of ore. Other miners later reported passing the outcrop numerous times without noticing anything.[6]

But of all the unusual methods for finding mines, few figure more prominently in Utah lore than dreams. Probably more of them remained dreams than became mines, but at least a few bore ore. The Amazon Mine in Logan Canyon, a coal mine between Smithfield and Richmond, a mine east of Santaquin, and one operated in Sardine Canyon were all mines supposedly found after the prospector had had a dream. The Humbug Mine in the Tintic District was discovered after Jesse Knight dreamed of a rich body of ore that was located beneath a certain sagebrush; the name came from what one of Knight's associates reportedly said when told of the dream.[7]

In 1893 a man named John Hyrum Koyle told his friends and relatives that he had been shown in dreams the location of rich ore in the mountains above Spanish Fork. He went to Benjamin Charles Woodward, a local man with some mine experience, and told him that the dream had said Woodward was to direct digging for the ore; in 1895 the men went to the designated spot and began the work. Woodward's son, Charles, who was "to do the cooking, sharpen the hand drills and picks and spend what time I could turning the air blower" picks up the story from there:

> Mr. Koyle had indicated that the working at the top of Windlass Shaft Number Seven would pass over what he called a "hog's back" or a triangle in the formation and that in a few feet we would hit a smooth wall, dipping about 80 degrees. . . . Mr. Koyle placed his hand to his body just below his chest and stated that this was the place where he had seen the ore, that we would only go down about as deep as he indicated on his body and would hit the body of soft, low-grade ore.
>
> But, as work progressed, no ore was found.

> Mr. Koyle was so sure that the ore would be found that he had all of us young fellows who were working at the mine carry wood from the hillside and pile it on the high peak about 1,000 feet above the mine. At the moment the ore was found, this wood was to be burned as a signal to the people of the valley that the ore had been encountered at the Dream Mine.

Koyle came to the mine soon after the Windlass Shaft Number Seven had reached the point where the ore was supposed to be and found young Charles sharpening tools as his father had requested. Koyle wanted Charles to go into the mine and operate a windlass, but the boy refused. Koyle fired him on the spot, then went into the mine to tell the senior Woodward that his services were no longer needed, either; a new dream had told Koyle he was to take over the operation.

> We stayed until the next morning, when Father and I left. The night before we left, however, I gathered the boys together, and we climbed to the high peak where we had been carrying and piling wood, and we proceeded to set it on fire. We were not to be cheated out of that experience after so much hard work. The next morning it looked like a herd of sheep coming up from the valley. The people had seen the signal fire and came to see the final success of the Dream Mine.[8]

Of Things Lost

Just because you found gold once, there was no guarantee that it would be there when you came back again—at least, according to a number of legends surrounding Utah's lost mines. Many of the stories may have grown out of reports that early Mormon leader Brigham Young supposedly knew that there were valuable minerals in the mountains surrounding the valley but did not want his people caught up in the fever gold and silver produced.

One story told of a man who was riding in the hills above the town of Enterprise and happened upon a ledge of richly colored rock. He took it to be assayed, and it was confirmed as valuable ore.

> That afternoon a white-bearded old man was seen riding a donkey past the prospector's house. After he had stopped, he was asked to dismount and take dinner with the family. Almost the first words uttered by the old man were to the effect that a rich mine had been found. The prospector, surprised that anyone should know of his good fortune so soon, asked how he knew of the discovery. The ancient one avoided the question and merely said, "The mine is an evil thing, and any attempt to develop it foreshadows only ruin for you and your boys."

> The prospector accepted the statement rather lightly and excused himself to prepare dinner. When he returned, the old man had vanished. The next day he endeavored to relocate the mine, but search as he did, he could find no trace of the gold-bearing ledge. Nor could he find any of the signs by which he had thought to return to the spot. The very configuration of the hills seemed unfamiliar. After much meditation, he came to the conclusion that the stranger was one of the Three Nephites and that the loss of the mine, after all, was for the best.[9]

Other "lost mines" in Utah include the Lost Josephine Mine near Monticello, the Lost Rifle-Sight Mine near Hite, the Lost Jack Write near Moab, and the Bullet Mine in Uintah County.[10] Folklorist Wayland D. Hand collected this lost mine story:

> An old man in eastern Utah watched gophers throw up particles of gold in their mounds. He located a mine on the property in this remote area and proceeded to mine gold for use in the Salt Lake Temple. He always approached his mine from a different direction, so as not to betray its location to the Indians. The Indians, however, found the mine and finally killed him, but there was a big cave-in in the mine, and they stayed away from it because of a superstition that a bad spirit hovered near.[11]

Of all the lost mines in Utah, however, none is more famous than the Lost Rhoades Mine, believed to be located somewhere in the Uinta Mountains. This rich gold mine was supposedly under the guardianship of the Ute tribe and made sacred by the forced labor and sacrifice of past generations of the Utes. Some accounts tell of the Spanish explorers working the mines and treating the Utes so brutally that they revolted, killed their overseers, and buried the entrance to the mine.

Chief Wakara was the keeper of the mine in the mid-19th century. Supposedly he was told in a dream that when the big hats (Americans) came, he was to tell them about the gold. As the story goes, Brigham Young's policy of feeding rather than fighting the Indians gained him the confidence of Wakara (Walker), who told him of a rich deposit of gold and allowed him to send someone to get some of it for the church to use. The man chosen for the task was Thomas Rhoades, one of the early pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley, who had learned to speak the Ute language.

Thomas Rhoades faithfully fulfilled the task for a number of years, but he became ill and was unable to continue, so Brigham Young chose Rhoades's son Caleb, 19, to continue in his father's place in 1855. Robert A. Powell, a nephew of Caleb, wrote this account, based on a speech he heard his uncle give at an Old Folks' Party in Price in 1898 or 1899:

> Before Caleb was permitted to start, he said he had to make a covenant with God, before Brigham Young and Indian Chief Walker, that he would never

tell or show anyone where this gold was located. Then Brigham Young laid his hands on the head of Caleb and blessed him and set him apart the same as his father had been set apart before he was sent after the gold.

The next step was to secure a guide to show him where the gold would be found. Chief Wakara selected a young Indian to act as guide and instructed him to protect Caleb from other Indians with whom they came in contact on the trip. They started with a pack horse and one horse for each man to ride. When they met other Indians, the guide would explain their mission and they went unmolested. The guide showed Caleb the place and they got ore they could carry, after which they returned safely to Salt Lake City. Caleb said when his father recovered from his illness, they, together made a number of trips of gold, and as long as Brigham Young lived the Indians never interfered. However, after Brigham Young's death, the Indians forbade the taking of any more gold from the mine, and what Caleb was able to get after that, he had to take out and sell unbeknownst to the Indians.

Although he said many other things in his remarks, which lasted about one and one-half hours, the thing that impressed me most of all was his closing statement, in which he said: "Until this day I have kept my covenant that I made with God, before Brigham Young and Chief Walker. I have never showed any man or told any man, and I never intend to do so, as long as I live." These closing remarks . . . explained to me why he never would show any man where it was, but as soon as he thought the reservation was to be thrown open for settlement he had a very strong desire to locate it which would have broken the covenant he said he had made. He even went so far as to send some of the ore back to Washington, D.C., and offered to pay the national debt, which was pretty large at the time, if they would fix it in Washington so he could locate the mine, but they turned him down, then tried to find it themselves by organizing the Florence & Raving Mining Company. Although prospecting on the reservation was prohibited, this company prospected and located all the latterite, filsonite and other minerals they could find, before the opening for the public to file on mineral land, but they never found the Rhoades mine and I know there have been not hundreds, but thousands of men hunting for it. No one as yet has found it, and when the Florence & Raving Mining Company was prospecting the country, Caleb was asked if he was not afraid they would find it. He said, "No, they will never find it because it is where they will least look for it."

One thing that has made me feel there was something in the covenant he made, is the fact that a short time before the opening of the reservation, he took sick and only lived a few days. While he was sick my father visited him often and was there to help wait upon him as much as possible. Father said all Caleb wanted to talk about was his mine and if he could only live to locate it. When he realized that he might die, he tried to draw a map of it so

that his wife, then an old woman, would find it after he was dead. She spent two summers searching but failed to locate the mine.[12]

The Lost Rhoades Mine has attracted a lot of interest ever since. In 1971 Kerry Ross Boren and Gale Rhoades, two relatives of Caleb, published a book called *Footprints in the Wilderness: A History of the Lost Rhoades Mine,* which detailed the story of the mine and where they noted, "By definition the story of the Lost Mines is not a legend, for there is ample proof that they did in fact exist."[13]

In 1998 Boren and his wife, Lisa Lee, published *The Gold of Carre-Shinob: The Final Chapter in the Mystery of the Lost Rhoades Mines, Seven Lost Cities and Montezuma's Treasure,* including maps, where they link the Rhoades Mine to ancient Aztec treasures and claim to know where the mine, which they believe belongs to the Utes, is located. "The reader should not expect to be given directions to Carre-Shinob," they write; "the primary purpose of this book is to verify the existence of the world's largest gold source. . . . Keep in mind that thousands have lost everything in their quest for the fabulous wealth of the Rhoades mine, and hundreds more have lost their very lives. It should be kept in mind that even if one is fortunate enough to find the treasure of Carre-Shinob, there would be little opportunity to capitalize on the discovery."[14]

But until the mine is actually found, it appears that the final chapter may not have been written after all. Certainly its lore and legends will continue to tantalize folklorists for years to come.

Of Things Living and Legendary

For all the tales that have developed in and around Utah's mining towns, real-life adventures have also contributed to our understanding of life in these often-remote places. For example, Maggie Tolman Porter wrote of her experience growing up near the town of Ophir:

> Our nearest town was Ophir, a beautiful little mining town nestling is a lovely canyon home four or five miles from our town. I can still see in my mind's eye the beautiful autumn colors as we drove up the canyon to do our marketing. I can remember the purple elderberries dipping and nodding in the creek as it gurgled by the roadside, the flashing maples, the wild flowers that grew on every side. I can still remember the ruins of a house by the roadside, a mile or two from the town, Mother would show me the blackened ruins and tell me how the mother and father locked their two little children in the home and then went to town and both got drunk. Their home caught fire and their children were burned to death. I was always saddened by the sight of those ruins.
>
> I saw my first pansy blossoms in that little town. My mother and I had gone to call on a lady who used to buy butter from mother. I walked around

> the house and there was a bed of gorgeous pansies. I just stood spellbound, unable to speak, they were so beautiful. The lady asked, then, if I liked them and I began to cry. I must have been about eight years old at the time. The lady placed her arm around me and told me I could pick every blossom if I wanted to. I did, but wept when each blossom faded. I was a little girl starved for beauty on a bleak, dry ranch where we could scarcely get enough water to drink the last five years we were there.[15]

Water was also a concern for Angus Cannon, who had tried to find ore in Dugway in western Utah. He had some limited success and established 33 claims in the area, containing copper, lead, silver, and zinc. But, as he told a visiting geologist, nothing "rich enough to pay the transportation to a mill, nor to justify the building of a mill here." But beyond that, "the main trouble here is a lack of water. Every drop used for cooking, dishwashing, bathing or laundry, to say nothing of what the animals drink, must be hauled a distance of 12 miles from the river, either in wagons or by muleback."

The geologist stayed at the camp for several days, examining the terrain and studying ore samples. At last it was time to leave. "I can't encourage you about the minerals," he told Cannon. "Low-grade ore is plentiful, but the expense of converting it to metal would be high, but I can do something about the water situation." He looked around, walked a short distance, looked down at the ground, kicked at some of the dirt, and said, "Dig here."

Cannon called over three available men, who went to work. They dug down about eight feet, and suddenly water began seeping into the hole. Cannon thought of the terrible need they had for that precious liquid. "Here was water, right under the camp all the time!" he exclaimed.[16]

La Platta, a little mining town in the mountains above Huntsville, is another place where real doings almost take on the aura of fiction. A sheepherder, who noticed a particular gleam in the rock he was sitting on, found the first ore here in the 1870s. Men swarmed to the area, and during the heydays of the 1890s, La Platta produced much of the ore used in northern Utah. But those days came to an abrupt end—not because the ore ran out (the basin is still rich in minerals) but because of "the fast grinding wheels of the mines and the slow grinding wheels of the law."[17]

It seems that four mines were operating on a single hill where an especially rich vein was located: the Sundown, the Sunup, the Red Jacket, and the Yellow Jacket. They were all working at full speed when they realized they were soon going to run into each other. One after the other, they filed suits and countersuits, trying to shut down the operations of the others, and, as those suits got bogged down in court, miners began to look for work elsewhere. Eventually the town was left to crumble, just another ghost town among many. There are still a few old buildings and mine shafts left. But all of the land around the old town is now privately owned, making access

difficult. The town itself "belongs to no one, or someone, or everyone, but the courts have never said who."[18]

Lore and law came together in an altogether different fashion in the story of Raphael Lopez, a celebrated mystery in the Bingham Canyon area. In 1912 a period of labor upheaval and unrest led to a strike by the union, and the company brought in some strikebreakers, many of whom were Mexican. Lopez may have been one of them. It is known that he later obtained a claim for the Utah Apex Mine.

Lopez regularly ran afoul of the law and was twice sentenced to jail. On 21 November 1913, he became the prime suspect in the shooting of a man named Juan Valdez. Some said the men had known each other in Mexico; others claimed that Lopez was angry because Valdez had testified against him in a trial. A wanted man, Lopez left town pursued by a posse. In a shootout at a ranch near Utah Lake, he shot and killed three of his four pursuers. Returning to Bingham, he gathered and stole food, clothing, and ammunition and holed up in the Apex Mine. Efforts to smoke him out and storm the mine were unsuccessful. Another officer was killed, and a posse member wounded. Entrances to the mine were sealed and guards posted, but Lopez had disappeared into the maze of tunnels. On 15 December a thorough search of the mine turned up nothing, and Lopez was never heard from again.[19] In 1921 the Texas Ranger who had killed Bonnie and Clyde claimed in a book that he had killed Lopez near Del Rio, Texas, where, he said, Lopez was leading a band of outlaws.[20] If so, it would have been a fitting end to what many considered Utah's greatest manhunt.

Other real people have taken on legendary personas, but nowhere did life and legend come together in mining any better than the story of Joe Hill. On the night of 10 January 1914, a grocer named John G. Morrison and his 17-year-old son, Arling, were shot and killed during a robbery of their store on the corner of West Temple and Eighth South in Salt Lake City. It was known that Arling had gotten off a shot at the robber, and when a man was treated for "an ugly wound in the breast" two hours later at the home of a Murray physician, Salt Lake police figured they had their man.

That man was variously known as Joseph Hillstrom, Joel Hagglund, and Joe Hill, a Swedish emigrant who had come to Utah in 1913 to work in the Park City mines and was active in the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) movement. He was convicted on mostly circumstantial evidence: he claimed he had received the wound from a lady friend he refused to name, and he was wearing a suit with the name "Morrison" printed in the arms and legs with indelible ink.[21] Because of Hill's IWW connections, the case attracted wide attention. Many Americans, including Helen Keller and then-president Woodrow Wilson, were concerned that Hill might not be treated fairly because of his prolabor stance.[22] Despite the public outcry, Hill was executed by a firing squad on 19 November 1915—only to become a legendary figure much larger in death than in life.

During his life Hill had had some success writing ballads, workers' anthems, and parodies of popular songs. His most popular was probably the one he penned to the hymn tune "In the Sweet Bye and Bye":

Long-haired preachers come out every night,
Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right,
But when asked about something to eat,
They will answer with voices so sweet:

You will eat, bye and bye,
In that glorious land about the sky;
Work and pray, live on hay,
You'll get pie in the sky when you die. [23]

After his execution, Hill's body was taken to Chicago, where his funeral, on Thanksgiving Day, attracted thousands of people to the West Side Auditorium. According to his wishes, his body was cremated, and his ashes scattered the following May 1 in several different countries. That area did not include Utah because Hill had always said he did not want to be caught dead in Utah. His songs and his cause were taken up by numerous other labor workers. Stories, books, plays and songs were written about him. Among the most famous was one by Earl Robinson and Alfred Hayes:

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night,
Alive as you and me;
Says I, "But Joe, you're 10 years dead."
"I never died," says he; "I never died," says he.[24]

Of Things Still to Come

Alta, located in Little Cottonwood Canyon, was the home of rich silver mines such as the Emma, the Prince of Wales, the Flagstaff, and the South Star. At its height it had a population of about 5,000, with more than 100 business buildings. But, with more than 30 saloons, it had a wild and woolly side as well. By the 1870s it also had a rather large cemetery, not only filled with those killed in mining accidents, snowslides, and avalanches but also, it was said, with more than 100 men killed in brawls or murdered. So it is not surprising that Alta is where one of Utah's best mining stories comes from. The story, told by John W. Smith, goes something like this:

> It happened in the 1870s, when the camp was at its peak. In the 10 years following 1865, when silver was discovered, Alta's cemetery had grown by leaps and bounds. The law of those days was the law of the six-shooter, and that law was frequently enforced. To the graveyard just below the town at the mouth of Collins Gulch were carried the remains of those who met death. Some of the deaths were accidental; some deaths were natural; but many occurred in disputes, barroom brawls, or "grudge fights." Whatever the cause, the graveyard grew until it was occupied by more than 150 "tenants."

> Few names were ever carved on the headstones. So many nicknames were given in camp, and so many aliases were used by the men, that their names really meant nothing. Most of the corpses were carried to their shallow graves "as is," with their boots on, and thrown in without benefit of casket, flowers, burial robes, friends, or clergy.
>
> One day a religious mountebank came into camp claiming the power to resurrect the dead. He proposed, for a nominal sum, to bring back to life the 150 corpses in the cemetery. The camp went into a dither. Could he really do it? And if he could, should he? Alarm spread through the camp as the miners considered how many embarrassing family triangles would result from the resurrection. What a number of double crosses would be revealed! And what a multitude of old grudges would be relived!

No, thanks, they told the man. Ah, he said. He had come to like the good people of Alta so much that he would perform his service anyway—unless, of course, they could, um, give him a little something to help him on his way.

> The camp just couldn't afford to take the chance. Better pass the hat, take up a collection for the miracle man, and ask him to leave.
>
> This they did. The prosperous but panicky miners contributed $2,500 for the bold charlatan, and gave it to him on condition that he would leave Alta's graveyard intact and let its dead rest in peace. So today, the 150 bodies (and others added later) are at rest in the mouth of Collins Gulch—still awaiting the resurrection.[25]

Maybe by that time the truths of all these mysteries and legends will come to light as well. In the meantime, they provide fodder for the imagination and delight for the sensibilities—at least for anyone interested in the significant role that mining played in Utah.

Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

Patrick Edward Connor, the "father of Utah mining," originally came to Utah as a general with the United States Army in 1862.

Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

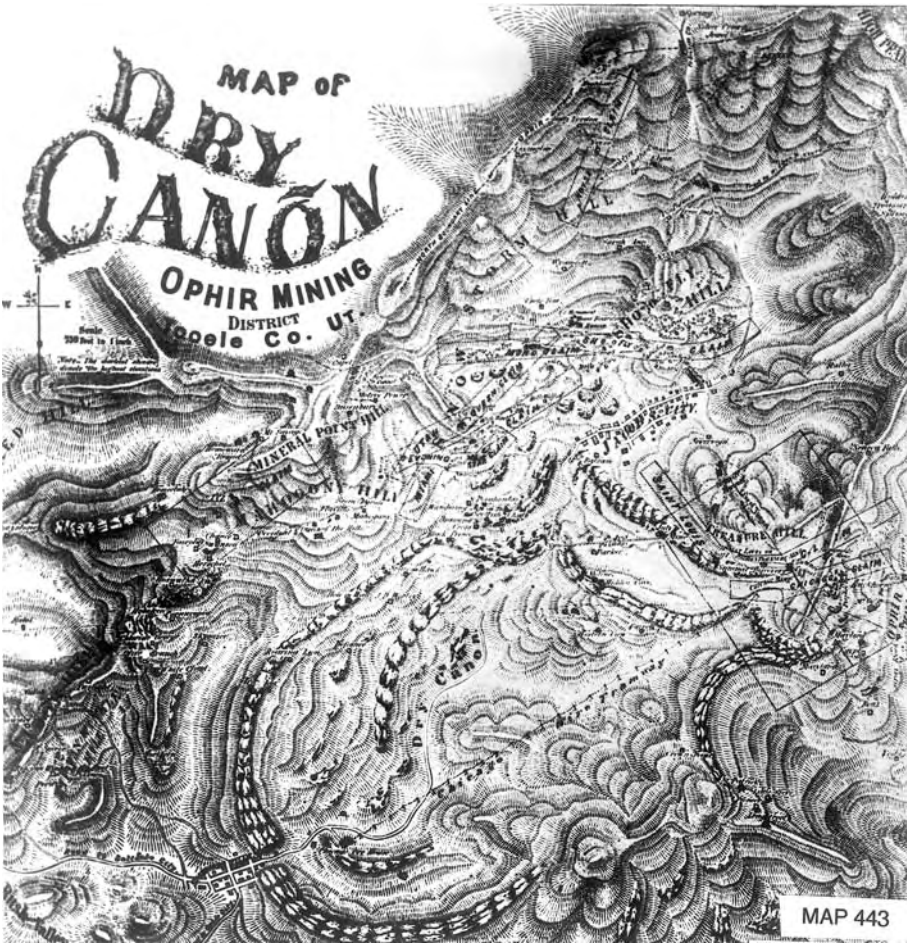
Johanna Connor was not only the wife of Patrick Edward Connor but was also listed as a shareholder in his mining properties.

Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

Soldiers under Connor's command explored for ore as much as they looked for hostile Native Americans; a few years later, most of them became full-time miners, such as these shown in Stockton in the late nineteenth century.

Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

Connor built a boat, similar to this one, to haul ore on the Great Salt Lake and named it after his daughter, Kate.



Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

The Dry Canyon area became covered with claims, some of which overlapped, prompting lawsuits and counter claims.

Courtesy Utah State Historical Society.

Stockton, Utah, became the first city in Utah Territory, and one of the first in the nation, to use electric lights.

Courtesy *Deseret Morning News.*

Joseph Hillstrom, better known as Joe Hill, became an American labor organizer, songwriter, and eventually a martyr when he was executed in Salt Lake City for the murder of storekeeper John G. Morrison.