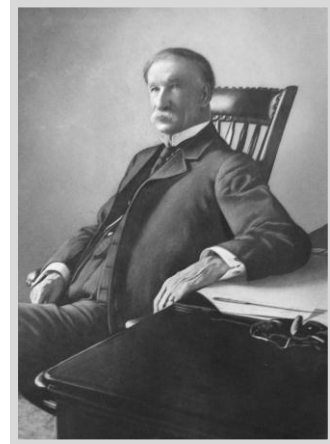


**William Connell**  
(1827 - 1909)

Wm. Connell was born in 1827 in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. He was of Scotch-Irish descent.

In 1844, he came to Hazelton, PA with his parents, James & Susan (Melville) Connell and his three brothers, James, Alexander & Thomas (a foster child). There he worked in the mines as a driver boy for \$.75 a day.

In 1852, he married Annie Lawrence (b. 1835). They had 11 children. According to one biographical account, Annie taught her husband how to read and write.



As a young man, Connell was described as energetic and optimistic; an ambitious visionary. In 1856, at the age of 29, he moved to Minooka and ventured into his first management position as a foreman at the National & Stafford mines owned by the Susquehanna & Wyoming Valley Railroad & Coal Company.

In 1870, he raised capital, formed William Connell & Company, purchased both Minooka mines from the railroad and turned them into a prosperous business. By 1881, his firm had grown into one of the largest shippers of coal in the valley and remained in that position for over 20 years.

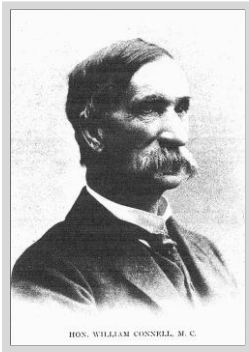
In 1872, he helped found the Third National Bank (*photo at right*), served first as director, then later became president (1879), a role he held for 26 years.

In 1887, he was active in the formation of the Scranton Safe Deposit and Trust Company, and later became Director.



In the midst of their growing prosperity, Mr. and Mrs. Connell never forgot their humble roots. They gave generously to multiple causes, including the rebuilding of Elm Park Methodist Church following two devastating fires in the early 1890s. Mr. Connell was the first president of Elm Park's Board of Trustees. In honor of their children, the Connells donated beautiful bell chimes to the church. There are ten bells. A large bell is engraved with the names of Mr. & Mrs. Connell and two of their oldest children. Each of the others is engraved with the name of one child and is designed to produce a unique tone. Miraculously, the bell tower survived both fires that destroyed the main body of the church.

Connell was identified with many industries and commercial enterprises in Scranton, including:



- President, Scranton Button Company, one of the largest manufacturers of buttons in the United States, which branched out into the manufacture of telephone parts and phonograph records.
- President, Lackawanna Knitting Mills
- President, Weston Mill Company
- President, Meadowbrook Land Company
- Founder, The Scranton Tribune

He built the Connell Building on Washington Ave, the location of the administrative offices for the Connell Coal Company, formed in 1890. The Connell Building still stands today. Its office space has been converted into apartment units.

Connell served on the Board of Directors for many local companies and organizations, including, Scranton Iron & Steel Co., Dickson Manufacturing Co., Lackawanna Lumber Co., Scranton Forging Co., Scranton Bolt & Nut Co. and Scranton Packing Co.

He donated the land for Connell Park in South Scranton, a recreation facility with a playground, pool, basketball court, athletic fields and a new dog park, the first in the city.

Connell was a Republican who served for nine years (3 terms) as U.S. Representative from Pennsylvania (1897-1903, 11<sup>th</sup> District), (1904-05, 10<sup>th</sup> District).

In 1900 and 1908 he served as a Pennsylvania delegate to the Republican National Convention.

Two of Mr. Connell's nephews served as Scranton Mayors: William L. Connell (1893-96) and Alexander T. Connell (1903-06 & 1918-22).



Pictured (above right) is the Connell Homestead at 1105 Vine St, Scranton; now the site of the Jewish Home. (Photo courtesy of Lackawanna Historical Society)

Mrs. Connell died in Scranton on June 24, 1902 at the age of 66. William Connell died in Scranton on March 21, 1909 at the age of 79. They are buried at Forest Hill Cemetery along with many other members of the Connell Family.

- *Biographical Summary compiled by Thomas W. Costello for Elm Park Church's 'Heritage Sunday' – May 17, 2009.*
- *Sources: 'History of Scranton and its People' by Frederick L. Hitchcock (1914) and 'Portrait and Biographical Record of Lackawanna County, PA (1897), Chapman Publishing Co., NY.*

William Connell and Annie Lawrence married January 2, 1852. They had 11 children.

<u>Emma</u>	- 1852 - died in infancy	
<u>Mattie</u>	- 1854 - 1888 (married <i>Samuel W. Edgar</i> )	- died at 34
James L.	- 1856 - 1919 (married <i>Leonora Pratt Connell</i> )	
<u>Mary E.</u>	- 1858 - 1891 (married <i>Edward J. Dimmick</i> )	- died at 33
<u>William A.</u>	- 1860 - 1899 (married <i>Matilda Keer</i> )	- died at 39
Jessie A.	- 1862 - 1926 (married <i>James S. McAnulty</i> )	
Charles R.	- 1864 - 1922 (married <i>Lizbeth R. Shafer</i> )	
Alfred E.	- 1867 - 1950 (married <i>Jane Harris</i> )	
Anna A.	- 1869 - 1950 (married <i>Charles W. Fulton</i> )	
<u>Theodore E.</u>	- 1871 - 1903	- died at 32
Ezra H.	- 1873 - 1920 (married <i>Elizabeth Thomas</i> )	

Row 1:(top, center) Annie Connell (1835-1902), William's wife

Row 2 (l to r): James L. Connell (1856-1919, Wm's son); Annie A. (Connell) Fulton (1869-1950, daughter); Wm Connell (1827-1909); Jessie A. (Connell) McAnulty (1862-1926, daughter); Mary E. Connell (185-1891, daughter, deceased)

Row 3 (l to r): Theodore E. Connell (1871-1903, son, deceased); William A. Connell (1860-1899, son, deceased)

Row 4 (l to r): Ezra H. Connell (1873-1920, son); Mattie Connell (1854-1888)

Row 5 (l to r): Charles R. Connell (1864-1922, son); Alfred E. Connell (1869-1950, son)

*Thanks to Norma Reese and Bruce Van Deusen for their assistance.*