

CONTENTS

FOREWARD	1
INTRODUCTION	3
CHAPTER ONE Elliot S.M. Hill <i>Scranton's First Mayor, 1866-1869</i>	8
CHAPTER TWO William N. Monies <i>Scranton's Second Mayor, 1869-1872</i>	12
CHAPTER THREE Mathew W. Loftus <i>Scranton's Third Mayor, 1872-1875</i>	16
CHAPTER FOUR Robert H. McKune <i>Scranton's Fourth Mayor, 1875-1878</i>	20
CHAPTER FIVE Terence Vincent Powderly <i>Scranton's Fifth Mayor, 1878-1884</i>	24
CHAPTER SIX Francis Allen Beamish <i>Scranton's Sixth Mayor, 1884-1886</i>	28
CHAPTER SEVEN Ezra H. Ripple <i>Scranton's Seventh Mayor, 1886-1890</i>	32
CHAPTER EIGHT John H. Fellows <i>Scranton's Eighth Mayor, 1890-1893</i>	36
CHAPTER NINE William Lawrence Connell <i>Scranton's Ninth Mayor, 1893-1896 & 1901-1903</i>	40
CHAPTER TEN James G. Bailey <i>Scranton's Tenth Mayor, 1896-1899</i>	44
CHAPTER ELEVEN James Moir <i>Scranton's Eleventh Mayor, 1899-1901</i>	48
CHAPTER TWELVE Alex T. Connell <i>Scranton's Twelfth Mayor, 1903-1906 & 1918-1922</i>	52

CHAPTER THIRTEEN J. Benjamin Dimmick <i>Scranton's Thirteenth Mayor, 1906-1909</i>	56
CHAPTER FOURTEEN John Von Bergen, Jr. <i>Scranton's Fourteenth Mayor, 1909-1914</i>	60
CHAPTER FIFTEEN Edmund B. Jermyn <i>Scranton's Fifteenth Mayor, 1914-1918 & 1926-1930</i>	64
CHAPTER SIXTEEN John F. Durkan <i>Scranton's Sixteenth Mayor, 1922-1926</i>	70
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN Fred K. Derby <i>Scranton's Seventeenth Mayor, 1930-1934</i>	74
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN Stanley J. Davis <i>Scranton's Eighteenth Mayor, 1934-1938</i>	78
CHAPTER NINETEEN Fred J. Huester <i>Scranton's Nineteenth Mayor, 1938-1942</i>	82
CHAPTER TWENTY Howard J. Snowdon <i>Scranton's Twentieth Mayor, 1942-1946</i>	86
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE James Thomas Hanlon <i>Scranton's Twenty-First Mayor, 1946-1962</i>	90
CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO William T. Schmidt <i>Scranton's Twenty-Second Mayor, 1962-1966</i>	98
CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE James J. Walsh <i>Scranton's Twenty-Third Mayor, 1966-1970</i>	106
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR Eugene J. Peters <i>Scranton's Twenty-Fourth Mayor, 1970-1978</i>	114
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE Eugene F. Hickey <i>Scranton's Twenty-Fifth Mayor, 1978-1982</i>	122
CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX James Barrett McNulty <i>Scranton's Twenty-Sixth Mayor, 1982-1986</i>	130

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN David J. Wenzel <i>Scranton's Twenty-Seventh Mayor, 1986-1990</i>	142
CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT James Patrick Connors <i>Scranton's Twenty-Eighth Mayor, 1990-2002</i>	154
CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE Chris Doherty <i>Scranton's Twenty-Ninth Mayor, 2002-Present</i>	168
EPILOGUE Scranton's Future	173
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	175

FOREWARD

AUTHOR'S NOTE

On July 3, 1966, *Scranton Times* reporter William Cullen wrote about the evolution of power of the Mayor of Scranton since the city's founding in 1866. I asked his son, Attorney Chris Cullen, to update his father's treatise on the changing role of the Mayor of Scranton.

For the first 100 years of its existence, William Cullen wrote, the City of Scranton dramatically changed from Slocum Hollow to the "Anthracite Capital of the World." At the same time, the demands of city life placed more and more challenges and responsibilities upon the City's chief executive, the Mayor. While the electorate continued to expect more of its chief executive, the structure and organization of city government not only worked to prevent the Mayor from rapidly addressing the pressing issues of the day, but also compelled the Mayor to govern by personality and will.

The expanding role and power of the City's chief executive in modern times led to a concentration of power and established the Mayor's Office as the virtual center of city government. Starting with Mayor Hanlon and continuing through Mayors Schmidt and Walsh the rapid increase of federal funding of city-related economic development programs, as well as the rise of television and press access to the public, provided modern mayors with necessary resources and power to shape and direct the present and future of the City of Scranton.

Mayor Eugene J. Peters greatly benefited from the infusion of Federal Revenue Sharing and the Community Block Grant program and Model Cities. These federal grant programs and others from the state of Pennsylvania provided not only critically needed revenue streams to stimulate and support economic development opportunities but also discretionary authority in the Mayor to direct and oversee program applications. Former Mayor Eugene F. Hickey's administration capitalized on both the UDAG program and the opportunities presented in the use of program funding, in order to create city-wide employment opportunities and to restore and renew the City's neighborhoods. Mayor Hickey's foresight in recognizing the crucial need to bring to the decision-making process the input and participation of the City's neighborhood associations democratized both appropriation of the UDAG funding, and the allocation of the funds in the public interest.

In contrast, former Mayor James B. McNulty employed the Mayor's Office as a means to address national issues as they related to those issues confronting the City. Mayor McNulty's strength of personality coupled with his fierce determination only tempered by gift of promotion and imagery, forged for the City a new and improved identity as the city as an

INTRODUCTION

The American Civil War ended in April 1865. While a nation of war-weary citizens struggled to resume their lives, men of vision were planning to create new communities to meet the needs of a growing nation. So it was that the settlers of Luzerne County in the Lackawanna Valley had decided to merge the boroughs of Scranton, Providence and Hyde Park to form a new political entity – the City of Scranton. Pioneers of progress were ready to forge new frontiers and take the reunited nation into bold new territory. Scranton was going to get them there.

The population of Scranton in 1866 was about 25,000¹ and the Lackawanna Iron Works owned by George and Seldon Scranton was the biggest employer. The mills turned out T-rails used for the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad, the greatest engineering feat of the 19th century. This achievement would unite the American empire from East to West. By the beginning of the 20th century, 5,000 men would be employed in these mills and the amount of steel produced in Scranton would be third in the world behind Birmingham, England and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.²

In 1866, anthracite coal was just beginning to be mined in large quantities.³ With the exception of small areas in New Mexico and Colorado, Pennsylvania had the only anthracite coalfields in the United States. The workable areas were further limited to Lackawanna, Luzerne, Carbon, Schuylkill and Northumberland counties in an area that only measured 500 square miles. From 1870 until the 1920s, this black gold from beneath the City of Scranton would fuel the industrial revolution and make Scranton one of the richest and most progressive cities in the United States.⁴ Scranton would play an important role in transforming an agrarian country of 65 million in 1866 to a nation of 100 million and the industrial leader of the world by 1900. With this bounty came a price.

In the early 1900s, when coal was king, life in a mining town was profitable but harsh. There were 20,000 men and boys who toiled daily in Scranton's mines. Since 1870, over 31,000 miners have been killed in accidents in the anthracite mines of Pennsylvania; some are still buried there.⁵ Labor strife, child labor, culm banks, mine acid runoff and the quality of life for those who worked the mines are all issues leaving legacies and scars that continue to this day. By

¹ Scranton Times, December 4, 1937, p. 9.

Editors note: Census figures for 1860 were: Scranton Borough 9,273; Hyde Park 3,319 and Providence 1,410. Based on the 1870 Census of 35,092, the 25,000 estimate is valid.

² "Scranton Once Upon a Time" by Nicholas E. Patula, 1985, p. 41.

³ According to <http://www.memberbbb.com/state.pa.us>, in 1815, the output of anthracite was 50 tons but rose steadily to 74,347,102 tons mined in 1908.

⁴ "The Industrial Titan of America," John Oliver La Gorce, *National Geographic Magazine*, May 1919, p. 384.

⁵ http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/enved/go_with_inspector/coalmine/Coal_Mining_in_Pennsylvania.htm.

CHAPTER ONE

Elliot S.M. Hill

Scranton's First Mayor, 1866-1869

In 1866, the new City of Scranton had all of the character of the boomtowns of the western United States. Immigrants were arriving directly from Europe every day to dig the anthracite and work in the iron mills of the Lackawanna Iron Works. The migration came in waves, first from England, Wales and Scotland. Then the Germans came, escaping the political turmoil in their country. Next were the Irish, Poles, Italians, Lithuanians and Russians. The melting pot was more like a salad as each group settled in its own section of the city. In his history of Scranton, John Beck said:

“The new town (Scranton) had no past, no power structure, no system of elites, no ‘old money’ to get in the way of these newcomers. The Scranton family had decided early on that their city would be an open city.”⁷

In the early days, the common meeting ground was Lackawanna and Wyoming Avenues. The present location of the Lackawanna County Courthouse was still a duck pond and cobblestone roads were just a dream. Public transportation consisted of a horse-drawn “cab” that could seat ten people, a conductor and driver.⁸ Just getting from one end of the city to the other was a task. The number of bridges over the Lackawanna River was few and fording the river at some points was treacherous.

Reporting the daily happenings was *The Scranton Register*, a newspaper owned by Elliot S.M. Hill. Its offices were located at 312 Lackawanna Avenue. Hill was born in Carmel, New York in Putnam County on December 6, 1820. His family relocated to Providence Borough in 1843. He studied law under Charles H. Silkman and was a practicing attorney.⁹ Hill “drifted” into the newspaper business and was editor of *The Spirit of the Valley*, *Luzerne Legal Observer* and *Scranton Register*.

⁷ “Never Before in History: The Story of Scranton,” John Beck, Windsor Publications, 1986, p. 46.

⁸ *Scranton Times*, December 9, 1937, p. 12.

⁹ “Tales of Scranton,” Philip V. Mattes, p. 124.

CHAPTER TWO

William N. Monies *Scranton's Second Mayor, 1869-1872*

According to the 1870 national census, Scranton had a population of 35,092. Scranton was the 4th largest city in Pennsylvania and 35th in the United States. It had a larger population than Kansas City, MO, Savannah, GA and Wilmington, DE. In 1869, a history of Scranton still emphasized that the city was a manufacturing center for iron rather than a mining community.¹⁶ As Scranton's second mayor, William N. Monies served from 1869 to 1872. Born in Scotland, on May 10, 1827, Monies migrated to the United States in 1849. He met Mary Kirk Baker on the trans-Atlantic voyage and a shipboard romance led to marriage. The couple settled in Carbondale where Monies worked in a bakery. He opened his own bakery but sold it in 1852 to travel to the gold fields of California. The account of his journey is full of close calls and hardship.

Monies returned to Northeast Pennsylvania in 1858 with no sign of the fortune he had sought in California. He got back into the baking business as a miller and in 1859 was elected Burgess of Providence Borough. His political career was cut short by the Civil War.

In 1862, William Monies organized a company of troops and was named captain of Company B, 136th Pennsylvania Volunteers and fought at Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg. After nine months the unit was honorably disbanded. When General Lee invaded Pennsylvania, Monies was able to gather a company of 136 men within 24 hours. Three months later they disbanded again and Monies retired with the rank of colonel.¹⁷

In 1865 Monies returned to the milling business with Lewis Pugh. Monies & Pugh Company set up on the south-east corner of Lackawanna and Washington Avenues. Monies prospered and was able to acquire the Pittston Stove Company. By 1869 he had been elected Mayor of Scranton as a Republican. According to *The Scranton Times*, Col. Monies was a very popular man with the kind of appeal that crossed party lines. He was elected in a town that was

¹⁶ The Anthracite History Journal, "The Rise of Regional Industry," D.L. Humphrey.

¹⁷ *Scranton Republican*. January 11, 1881, p. 3.

CHAPTER THREE

Mathew W. Loftus *Scranton's Third Mayor, 1872-1875*

Scranton's third mayor was Mathew W. Loftus. Loftus was born in Foxford, County Mayo, Ireland in 1839. He was married to Margaret Gibbons. They migrated to Scranton in 1860, where his oldest brother lived, and operated a general store. Loftus served as alderman and as Tax Collector before he was elected mayor in October 1872. He was a Democrat and ran against Squire Ebenezer Lynch of the Providence section of Scranton. The election was a straight partisan affair and Lynch had no support from Democratic voters.²¹

According to Chris Cullen, a distant relative of Loftus, many of the streets that make up present day Scranton were laid out during Loftus' administration and, considering the number of horses that traveled the downtown, a concerted effort was made to keep the streets clean.

In 1874, the City of Scranton charter was "surrendered" and Scranton was classified as a 3rd class city. As a result, there was some confusion regarding the election of the next mayor. Robert McKune was elected to succeed Mayor Loftus in February 1875. Technically, Loftus' term would not expire until October 1875 but McKune argued he should assume office in June of that year under the terms of the new 3rd class code. McKune was anxious to have a say in whom the new Chief of Police would be; he came to an agreement with Loftus that he would take over the reigns of government on March 20. The city seal and some furniture were transferred at that time. The Select Council would not go along with McKune's choice and named J.W. Boice as Chief. The controversy went on for months with the incumbent Chief of Police, Augustus Ferber, staying in place until there was a resolution.

Meanwhile, Mayor Loftus, who had been suffering from a sprained ankle, decided to resume his duties as mayor in September and reopened his office at the front of the Police Station. *The Republican* saw the humor in the situation when it reported, on September 7, 1875, "With two Mayors, three Chiefs of Police and an efficient corps of Police Officers, our city cannot fail to be governed in a way that will make evil-doers tremble, banish crime from our midst and make Scranton

²¹ *Scranton Republican*, January 11, 1881, p. 3.

CHAPTER FOUR

Robert H. McKune *Scranton's Fourth Mayor, 1875-1878*

Robert H. McKune was born in Newburg, New York, on August 19, 1823. His father died when he was three. Young Robert left school at age 13 to take a job as a shoe clerk. He eventually took over a bakery owned by his mother and later opened a grocery store in Newburg. McKune married Elmira Smith of Mamaking, New York, in 1844 and lived in Newburg and Cold Spring over the next four years. He sailed for California in 1849 and became the first American to set up a bakery in Panama. After seven months in the gold fields of California, he returned to New York and began a grocery business in Binghamton, New York. In 1862, McKune, now 39, moved to Scranton and became a first lieutenant in the Keystone Guards. The Guards joined the Army of the Potomac and fought at Antietam. He left the Guard but continued to serve in the military until the end of the war. He stayed in the South for another year before returning to Scranton where he entered the insurance business. He was appointed as United States Commissioner in 1868.²⁴ McKune was nominated by the Democratic Party to run for mayor of Scranton in 1875.

As Mayor of Scranton, McKune found himself in the middle of labor strife between the workers and the owners of the coal mines and railroads. After a bitter railroad strike collapsed in 1877, a group of agitators marched up South Washington Avenue towards Lackawanna Avenue. Mayor McKune, along with Father Dunne from the Cathedral Roman Catholic Church, tried to stop the mob. McKune was attacked by the mob, knocked to the ground, and his jaw was broken. Father Dunne had just helped McKune to his feet when the Mayor was struck on the head again and knocked unconscious. Fearing that the frenzied workers would try to loot the businesses in downtown Scranton, a hastily formed group of volunteers, including Civil War veterans, were led by W.W. Scranton to confront the mob. Shots were fired and three rioters, including the one that struck McKune, were killed before the mob dispersed in panic.²⁵

McKune recovered and served out the last year of his term. He later moved to Wilkes-Barre and served for a time as secretary of the Wilkes-Barre Board of Trade (i.e. Chamber of Commerce). While visiting his sister in Newburg, New

²⁴ The Scranton Truth. October 9, 1894, p. 1.

²⁵ "Tales of Scranton," Philip Mattes, 1973.

CHAPTER FIVE

Terence Vincent Powderly *Scranton's Fifth Mayor, 1878-1884*

Terence V. Powderly served as the fifth mayor of the City of Scranton. In his autobiography, *The Path I Trod*, he relates the circumstances regarding his nomination. On December 20, 1877, a convention of the Greenback-Labor party was held in Scranton to nominate a candidate for Mayor of Scranton. Powderly had already accepted a job in Oil City, Pennsylvania. He had his railroad ticket and his trunk was at the station. At 3 p.m. that afternoon, the convention nominated Powderly. "The idea of being mayor appalled me," said Powderly. He went to the convention to turn down the offer. As he walked in the door, a most vociferous crowd of backslappers and well-wishers greeted him. He could not say, "no" to such a reception.

Born in Carbondale, Pennsylvania on January 22, 1849, Powderly was one of 12 children of Irish immigrant parents. He grew up a "good, faithful member of the Roman Catholic faith" but drifted away as church doctrine clashed with the goals of the American Labor Movement.

Powderly had very little formal education. In his autobiography he hints at reaching no more than sixth grade. At the age of 13, he worked as a switch tender for the Delaware and Hudson Railroad and at 17 he moved to Scranton to work as an apprentice machinist for the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad. In 1871, at the age of 22, he joined the Machinists and Blacksmiths International Union and became president of the local. During the Panic of 1873, he was fired and blacklisted as a union organizer.

He organized a "Peter Cooper Club" in Scranton in 1876 and worked for the Greenback party. Joining the Knights of Labor he worked his way up to corresponding secretary of the Scranton District Assembly. In 1877 the American Labor movement became political after a series of railroad strikes. A labor party was founded and they swept the Luzerne County courthouse.

At the age of 29, Powderly was elected Mayor of Scranton on the Greenback-Labor party by only 500 votes over a

CHAPTER SIX

Francis Allen Beamish *Scranton's Sixth Mayor, 1884-1886*

Francis Allen Beamish was the sixth Mayor of the City of Scranton. At the peak of his career he was “one of the best known men of Northeastern Pennsylvania.” Politics was his “passion” and he possessed a “magnetism” to win faithful friends and endear him to the masses.³⁶

He was born in County Cork, Ireland on March 9, 1842. His parents migrated to the United States when he was five and settled in the Scranton area. Beamish attended public school until he was 11; he then secured a job in a rolling mill owned by the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company.

In 1863, Beamish joined the Union Army and rose in rank to a commissioned officer before returning to his job in 1864. After the war, he engaged actively in politics and held positions on the Scranton Poor Board, Scranton School Board, and clerk of the Scranton Common Council. In 1871 and 1878, Beamish ran for state senator of the 20th senatorial district. He lost both races because of a third-party candidate that siphoned votes from the Democratic ticket. He served as Sergeant-at-Arms in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1872. Along the way Frank Beamish became owner of *The Sunday Free Press*, a weekly newspaper that reflected his Democratic view of local politics. One of his contributing writers was Edward J. Lynett who later owned *The Scranton Times*.³⁷

In the race for mayor of Scranton in February of 1884, Frank Beamish defeated Asa B. Stevens, a former sheriff:

Francis A. Beamish (D)	4,160
Asa B. Stevens (R)	3,714 ³⁸

Mayor Beamish proved to be a seasoned politician who impressed the opposing party's newspaper, *The Republican*. In a

³⁶ *Scranton Times*. September 11, 1895. p. 1.

³⁷ *Scranton Times*. June 24, 2005. p. E4.

³⁸ *Scranton Republican*. February 27, 1884. p. 4.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Ezra H. Ripple *Scranton's Seventh Mayor, 1886-1890*

The Civil War had a huge impact on the political history of our country. Of the 10 presidents elected after Andrew Johnson, six were veterans of the Civil War. Similarly, five of the 10 mayors elected from 1869 to 1899 were veterans of the war. None suffered more from his wartime experience than the seventh Mayor of the City of Scranton, Ezra H. Ripple.

Ripple was born on February 14, 1842, in Mauch Chunk (Jim Thorpe), Pennsylvania as the only son of Silas and Elizabeth Ripple. Four years later the family moved to the Scranton area and eventually settled in Hyde Park. He graduated from Wyoming Seminary and with his father managed the White Tavern (corner of Jackson Street and Main Avenue) until his father died in 1861.

During the Civil War, Ripple volunteered on two occasions to serve short stints, once under Col. Monies. In March of 1864, he enlisted in the regular army under the command of Col. H.M. Holt of K Company 53rd Pennsylvania Infantry (Holt later became Pennsylvania's 19th Governor). On July 3, 1864, during an assault on Fort Johnson in Charleston Harbor, Ripple along with 140 fellow soldiers were captured by the Confederates. They were taken to the infamous Andersonville Prison, which was nothing more than a fenced-in area with no buildings or shade to protect the prisoners from the hot, Carolina sun. In these 25 acres of hell, 25,000 Union prisoners struggled to stay alive on meager rations. By the end of the war it was estimated that 14,000 inmates died of disease, starvation and the treachery of their fellow inmates.⁴² Ripple stayed at Andersonville for two and a half months before being transferred to Florence, South Carolina, and another atrocious prison for eight months.

At Florence, Ezra Ripple was able to gain the trust of Confederate officers because of his musical talent with a violin. By providing entertainment for the officers, Ripple was given access to a minimum security area. Together with three other inmate musicians he escaped. Ripple recounts the escape in two memoirs he wrote for his wife and children:

⁴² "Col. Ezra Ripple's Life in Confederate Prisons," Lackawanna Historical Society Journal, Fall, 1989, Vol. 21, No. 3.

CHAPTER EIGHT

John H. Fellows *Scranton's Eighth Mayor, 1890-1893*

John H. Fellows had quite a pedigree. His English grandfather, Joseph Fellows, came to America in 1790. In 1796 he settled in what is now Hyde Park on a farm of over 100 acres that stretched from present day Washburn Street back to Keyser Avenue. A true founding father of Hyde Park, he speculated in land and became prosperous. When he was 80-years-old he was engaged in litigation with a Dr. Malone, a physician; in a fit of rage Malone struck Fellows with a club, killing him. Joseph Fellows had eight children including Benjamin Fellows. Benjamin married a young lady of French ancestry from the Wyoming Valley. From this mix of Scottish, English and French ancestry, John Fellows was born. John became a stalwart supporter of the newly formed Republican Party and was a member of the Universal Church. He married Cynthia Pierce of Cooperstown, New York who traced her ancestry back the "Mayflower." John and Cynthia had nine children; the fifth child was John H. Fellows, future Mayor of Scranton.⁴⁶

John H. Fellows was born on July 23, 1849 at what is now 418 10th Avenue in the Hyde Park section of Scranton. At the age of 12 he left home without permission and traveled to Harrisburg where he tried to enlist in the Union army. Unsuccessful, he returned home dejected. For the next eight years he was a painter by trade until he enrolled in Gardner's Business College. He worked for the Lackawanna Railroad for a short time before taking a job with the German Fire Insurance Company of Erie, which he developed into one of the best agencies in Scranton. In 1882 he sold the business and began the task of settling the estate of his great uncle, Joseph Fellows. The extensive land holding became his full-time job. Over the years he would have land holdings in Duluth, Minnesota; Atlanta, Georgia; and Spokane and Tacoma, Washington.⁴⁷

Fellows became active in local politics when he was elected, in 1886, on the Peoples ticket to the Board of School Commissioners. He later switched to Republican and continued to serve until 1890. In February of 1890 he was elected Mayor of Scranton. He served for three years and then made an unsuccessful try for U.S. Congress.

⁴⁶ Scranton Times. July 28, 1911, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Republican. July 29, 1911, p. 1.

CHAPTER NINE

William Lawrence Connell *Scranton's Ninth Mayor, 1893-1896 & 1901-1903*

FIRST TERM

William L. Connell was the ninth Mayor of Scranton. He was born in Scranton on October 14, 1862, the son of James and Jessie English Connell. Educated locally, Connell was part of the clan that dominated the Scranton business community.

W.L. Connell became manager of the Enterprise Coal Company and also gained prominence in the Scranton business community as a member of the firm of Hill and Connell, furniture dealers, which was organized in 1891.⁵² W.L. Connell was a life-long Republican. His uncle, William Connell was a mining pioneer who rose from coal miner to become the richest man in Scranton. He purchased *The Scranton Tribune* in 1891 to be the voice of the Republican Party.⁵³ W.L. Connell ventured into politics by winning election to the Select Council of Scranton, representing a ward in the Hill Section of Scranton. In 1893 W.L. Connell at the age of 30 ran for mayor of Scranton against a Democrat named Randolph Crippen and won by 2,000 votes.⁵⁴ He served for three years.

It was during W.L. Connell's term in office that Nay Aug Park was acquired by the city. The park's acquisition began in the Ripple administration when the proposal was put forth to obtain 76+ acres of land at a place called "Cobb's Gap" where Roaring Brook cuts through the mountain. The parcels that make up the park were part of the Becket estate, Consumer's Powder Company and the Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company. The deal was not finalized until 1893 when \$60,000 was expended to remove the tangle of brush and undergrowth to make the park a statewide attraction.⁵⁵

⁵² Hitchcock, "History of Scranton," p. 667.

⁵³ *Scranton Times*. June 24, 2005, p. E4.

⁵⁴ *Scranton Republican*. February 22, 1893, p. 3.

⁵⁵ Hitchcock, "History of Scranton," p. 101-102.

CHAPTER TEN

James G. Bailey *Scranton's Tenth Mayor, 1896-1899*

James G. Bailey was the tenth Mayor of Scranton. Born in Waverly, Pennsylvania on May 2, 1849, Bailey attended elementary school before joining his father in the family general store in Waverly. When he turned 21, the name of the store was changed to G.W. Bailey & Son. Five years later Bailey moved to Scranton and worked in a grocery store, H.R. Shipman, on Penn Avenue. In 1882 he opened his own store on the corner of Penn Avenue and Mulberry Street.

Bailey was nominated by the Democrat Party to run for Lackawanna County Prothonotary but was defeated by Clarence Pryor. He was then nominated for County Sheriff but was defeated by a slim margin, after a heated campaign, by Frank Clemmons. When he ran for mayor in 1896 Bailey's opponent on the Republican ticket was former mayor Ezra Ripple, who was backed by William Connell, publisher of *The Tribune*.⁵⁸ Ripple had won the Republican nomination from James Moir, who was backed by Congressman Joseph Scranton of *The Morning Republican*, and many of Moir's disgruntled Republican supporters sided with Bailey. The election was unique because Bailey got higher vote totals in Republican strongholds than Democrat wards.⁵⁹

During this time Scranton was a booming community with many refinements. Franchises were negotiated and voted on by the Select and Common Councils for such things as water, sewer and electricity contracts. Unfortunately for Mayor Bailey, not all members of the Councils were honest men. As Attorney Philip Mattes noted, "The temptation to offer and accept bribes was not always resisted. Scandals assailed the city government and an honest and well-intentioned Mayor (Bailey) found his administration discredited by the misdeeds of others."⁶⁰

After he left the Mayor's office, James Bailey's grocery business failed. The experience was too much for the former mayor. Bailey suffered a nervous breakdown and had to be committed to the Hillside Home (Clarks Summit Mental Hospital). On April 27, 1905, he died at the age of 55. His second wife, Julia Ober, and a daughter from his first marriage

⁵⁸ *The Tribune*. July 25, 1970. p. 5.

⁵⁹ *Scranton Times*. Feb 18, 1896. p. 1.

⁶⁰ "Tales of Scranton," Philip Mattes, p. 131.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

James Moir

Scranton's Eleventh Mayor, 1899-1901

Captain James Moir was the eleventh Mayor of Scranton and was addressed by his rank as a member of the Thirteenth Regiment of the Pennsylvania National Guard. He was born on October 17, 1839 and raised on the Orkney Islands, Scotland. His father, John M. Moir, worked for many years for the Hudson Bay Company of Saskatchewan, Canada. He died while James was still a young man, leaving James to find early employment. James Moir's odyssey took him from Scotland to London, England, where he learned the tailor's trade and remained until 1864. In London he met his future wife, Frances Flint, a London resident. During their marriage they were blessed with six boys and four girls. At the age of 25 Moir brought his family to America and worked in Philadelphia for several years until he moved to Scranton in 1871. He worked at his trade for five years and finally opened his own tailoring establishment at 408 Lackawanna Avenue. The business immediately prospered; by some accounts it was the largest tailoring establishment in Pennsylvania outside of Philadelphia.⁶²

Personal tragedy struck the Moir household when Moir's son Robert, a West Point Cadet in his second year at the Academy, came down with a case of poison ivy – so severe that he was discharged with a disability. Returning to Scranton, Robert was able to recover and was appointed to the City of Scranton engineering staff, a position he held for a short time until his death in 1896 from an appendicitis complications; he was 22 years of age.⁶³

Moir was always a conspicuous figure around Scranton. He carried his Scottish ancestry proudly. Caledonian games, traditional Scottish contests, were popular at that time and Mayor Moir, in kilts and Highland outfit, was always a participant. He was also a great storyteller and in his thick, Scottish accent could do a great imitation of Disraeli and Gladstone debating.

Captain Moir's politics were Republican. Before becoming mayor, he served 10 years on the Common Council for the 9th Ward. He served as chairman of the Council and helped push through the authorization to build the present City

⁶² *Scranton Times*. Feb. 15, 1923, p. 1.

⁶³ Hitchcock, "History of Scranton," p. 233.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Alex T. Connell *Scranton's Twelfth Mayor, 1903-1906 & 1918-1922*

FIRST TERM

Alex T. Connell was the Twelfth Mayor of the City of Scranton and the cousin of Mayor William L. Connell. Alexander was born in Minooka, now part of Scranton, on June 13, 1861. He was son of Thomas and Elizabeth English Connell, natives of Nova Scotia. As a boy he worked in the family grocery store and as a young man was employed as a bookkeeper for the Lackawanna Iron and Steel Company. The discovery of gold in the Yukon held a fascination for Alex Connell. He left Scranton to seek his fortune but after enduring many hardships returned as a poor but wiser man.

Young Alex took an early interest in politics. He ran as a Republican and won a position in the state legislature; he defeated John P. Quinnan, a popular lawyer and Democrat incumbent. Alex won a second term before being elected Mayor of Scranton in 1902.

With the mayoral election coming just after the mine workers strike Alex Connell was not considered a strong candidate because of his relationship with his uncle, a mine owner. To be successful in this race, Connell had to defeat former Mayor Moir in the primary. In addition, he then faced two candidates in the general election: John Fahey, the Democrat and Thomas R. Watkins, the Labor candidate. The final tally was:

Connell (R)	6,561
Fahey (D)	4,433
Watkins (L)	3,203

During Mayor Alex Connell's term, the largest sewer system ever constructed by the city was completed. Also a large stone building in the rear of City Hall, which would be used as a general headquarters for the bureaus of Fire and

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

J. Benjamin Dimmick *Scranton's Thirteenth Mayor, 1906-1909*

“In one of the most bitterly conducted elections in recent years in Scranton,” J. Benjamin Dimmick was the thirteenth Mayor of the City of Scranton.⁷² Dimmick was born on October 3, 1858 in Honesdale, Pennsylvania. He was the son of Attorney General Samuel E. Dimmick. Samuel had built “a handsome brick residence” for his family in the 1860s; it was located on Court Street in Honesdale. After World War I, J. Benjamin turned it over to the county to be remodeled as the Wayne Memorial Hospital as a tribute to the boys who fought in the war.⁷³ Dimmick was a graduate of Adams Academy in Quincy, Massachusetts and Phillips Exeter Academy. He subsequently received a B.A. degree from Yale University, class of 1881. That same year he married Louisa B. Hunt of Hartford, Connecticut. He was admitted to the Bar in Wayne County in 1882 and 1883 he moved to Scranton where he had many financial interests. He served as President of Lackawanna Trust and Safe Deposit Company, Director of the Third National Bank and President of the Scranton Lace Company.

Dimmick was a Republican and defeated William Corless, the handpicked candidate of Mayor Alex Connell, in the Republican primary. According to *The Scranton Republican*, “...while [Dimmick] had always been liberal in his tendencies and progressive in his spirit he was marked as a ‘regular.’” To his opponents he was a “silk-stocking” candidate.⁷⁴ He defeated “Honest” John Gibbons in the general election on February 20, 1906:

Dimmick (R)	10,006
Gibbons (D)	9,024

In declaring himself for office, Mayor Dimmick spelled out in a very businesslike manner what the platform was for

⁷² *Scranton Republican*, February 21, 1906. p.1.

⁷³ “History of Scranton,” Hitchcock. p. 701.

⁷⁴ “Tales of Scranton,” Philip V. Mattes, p. 133.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

John Von Bergen, Jr.

Scranton's Fourteenth Mayor, 1909-1914

John Von Bergen, Jr. was the fourteenth Mayor of the City of Scranton. His grandfather, Andrew Von Bergen, was a carpenter who brought his family to the United States from Switzerland in 1851. They first settled in Illinois before relocating five years later to Taylor, Pennsylvania. John Von Bergen, Sr. was 11-years-old when the family arrived in Taylor. He helped his father on their farm before becoming a miner. John, Sr. later married Caroline Weisen of Scranton and they had six children. He became a mining contractor, served two terms on the Scranton Council, and was director of the Providence Bank. He continued as a contractor until his death in 1910.

The eldest son of John and Caroline, John Jr. was born November 15, 1874. He was educated in the Scranton School District and Woods Business College. He secured a job as weightmaster for the D.L. & W. Railroad and worked his way up to assistant superintendent. He left the D.L. & W. when he was offered the position of clerk in the Lackawanna County Courthouse.⁷⁷ In 1902 he was elected Clerk of Courts for Lackawanna County but failed to get re-elected in 1906, losing by only 34 votes. Three days after the election, Charles Graf was declared the winner of the race. Meanwhile, Von Bergen supporters were crying “foul” and looking for legal action. In a show of magnanimity Von Bergen conceded the election. He pointed out, however, that while the rest of the county Republican ticket lost by 3,000 votes, his race was the closest and showed his wide political appeal.⁷⁸

In 1909, at the age of 35, Von Bergen was nominated for mayor on the Republican ticket and faced Democratic opponent, Thomas P. Gordon, who advertised himself as “the man of the hour.” On February 16 in the General Election Mr. Gordon ran out of time; the results were:

Von Bergen (R)	8,482
Gordon (D)	7,385 ⁷⁹

⁷⁷ History of Scranton. Hitchcock. pp. 204-205.

⁷⁸ The Scranton Republican. February 14, 1909. p. 3.

⁷⁹ The Scranton Republican. February 17, 1909. p. 1.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Edmund B. Jermyn

Scranton's Fifteenth Mayor, 1914-1918 & 1926-1930

FIRST TERM

Edmund B. Jermyn was the fifteenth Mayor of Scranton. His father came to Pennsylvania from Suffolk, England and made a fortune in business enterprises. Edmund was the seventh of 10 children. He was born on April 12, 1867 in the township of Jermyn, Pennsylvania, which was named after his father. He attended public school in Jermyn as well as Peekskill Academy in New York, Harry Hillman School in Wilkes-Barre and Pierce Business College in Philadelphia, making him the most educated Mayor of Scranton thus far.

Edmund joined his father's firm in Scranton. Over the years he went from running the family gristmill to becoming the founder and president of the Archbald Bank. In 1896, just six years before his father's death, Edmund became manager of the Jermyn mining operations in Old Forge. He expanded his ownership to include the Lakeside Coal Company in Laflin. Jermyn was also one of the organizers of the Taylor Hospital and served as its president. A lover of horses, he owned a farm in Waymart and enjoyed racing.⁸²

In 1913 at the age of 46 he became a candidate, along with six others, in the non-partisan primary for Mayor of Scranton. The law had been changed in Harrisburg so that candidates of public office would not have party labels. Every candidate ran in the primary and the two highest vote getters would have a runoff election in the fall. *The Scranton Times* reported on Jermyn's campaign:

“It was a whirlwind campaign from the minute he entered as a candidate for the nomination. With a bankroll that no rubber band could stretch around. He bought newspaper space and lots of it. He hired a band and a bunch of automobiles to carry him and his

⁸² *Scranton Times*. November 14, 1934, p. 3.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

John F. Durkan

Scranton's Sixteenth Mayor, 1922-1926

John F. Durkan was the sixteenth Mayor of the City of Scranton. Born September 20, 1875, he was the son of Patrick F. and Sally Filan Durkan, Irish immigrants. John's father was a learned man who served as teacher in the Scranton School District for 30 years and also served as a principal. John was raised in West Scranton and lived there all his life. He graduated from St. Patrick's High School and St. Thomas College (now the University of Scranton). Upon graduation he worked for the Lackawanna Railroad before becoming an "undertaker" in 1908.⁹³

In 1902 Durkan married Margaret Rees, the daughter of William and Mary Rees of Scranton. They raised four children: Mary, Margaret, Frances and Gene.

John F. Durkan was one of the founders of the Scranton Surface Protective Association (SSPA) and served as its president for 10 years. He began his life-long crusade against mine cave damage in 1912 when homes and buildings, both public and private, became badly damaged by mine cave-ins, especially in West Scranton. Durkan was one of the leaders who contended that mining companies should be held responsible for damages caused by cave-ins. In 1917 Durkan was enlisted to run against Alex Connell. He lost by a small margin but kept the issue of subsidence before the public for the next four years.⁹⁴

The SSPA hired legal counsel and lobbied aggressively in Harrisburg to pass the Kohler-Fowler Mine Cave Acts in 1921. The Acts would hold coal companies accountable for any damages caused by mine subsidence or cave-ins. After the coal operators indicated that they were going to appeal the law and stop enforcement of the Acts, Durkan ran again for mayor. His campaign slogan was, "Finish the Job." He went on to win a great victory in the general election in November. He was the first Democratic mayor to be elected in Scranton in 30 years.

⁹³ Hitchcock, "History of Scranton," p. 856.

⁹⁴ *Scranton Times*. September 5, 1967, p. 3.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Fred K. Derby

Scranton's Seventeenth Mayor, 1930-1934

Fred K. Derby was the seventeenth Mayor of the City of Scranton. He became mayor during the time when the bubble of prosperity burst around the world and here in the United States. In October 1929, the stock market took a tumble and pulled the county into a Great Depression.

Fred was born in Plymouth, Pennsylvania in Luzerne County on February 26, 1882. His father was Zeno Derby and mother, Sarah A. Phillips Derby. He was educated in Plymouth's public school but went to California where he received an engineering degree in mining. When he returned to Scranton in 1902 he was regarded as "one of the leading mining engineers" in the area.¹⁰⁰

His first job in the Scranton area was surveyor of the Brisbin Mine. For 10 years he worked for the D. L. & W. mining department, which later became the Glenn Alden Coal Company. During this time, Derby got to know many mining people who would aid him politically in the future. He first got involved in local politics as one of the advisors to E.B. Jermyn in his quest for the Mayor's Office in 1913. For his efforts, Mayor Jermyn appointed him to his cabinet as Director of Public Safety. One of his tasks was the modernization of the Fire Department with the introduction of motorized vehicles. Derby proved to be an able administrator, serving the City for four years as Director. This high visibility job allowed him to accrue much political capital in the city's Fire and Police Departments.

After four years in City Hall, Derby returned to his job as mining engineer with his office in the Mears Building. He served a year as warden in the county jail but resigned and returned to private life until 1924. In that year he was elected as Representative from the 2nd Legislative District to the State Legislature where he served two terms. When E.B. Jermyn returned to the Mayor's Office in 1926, he appointed Fred Derby as the City's mining engineer. The subject of mine cave-ins was a major issue of municipal government and Derby's experience was invaluable. On January 1, 1929, Derby resigned from city government to mount his own campaign for the Mayor's Office against John Durkan, who was try-

¹⁰⁰ Scranton Times. January 18, 1945. p. 3.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Stanley J. Davis *Scranton's Eighteenth Mayor, 1934-1938*

Stanley J. Davis was the eighteenth Mayor of the City of Scranton. His father, George Davis, was born in Wales and came to America with his family when he was 16. The Davis family settled in North Scranton in 1905. George worked in the mines for the Hudson Coal Company for over 50 years. Stanley was one of his four children, born on January 14, 1889.

Stanley Davis was educated in the public schools. He worked briefly for the Hudson Coal Company. Not wanting to be a miner, Stanley began working as a clerk in George A. Dickinson's grocery and later went into the grocery business with E. M. Casterline. In 1911 Davis married Ethel Buckland of Waymart; they had no children.

In 1913 Stanley opened his own meat market at 1823 Wayne Avenue but moved to 126 West Market Street as proprietor of the Providence market in 1916. Eventually he opened another store in the 1800 block of Sanderson Avenue but disposed of both enterprises in the 1930s.

Stanley Davis was Republican who was persuaded in 1921 by Mayor Alex Connell to run for Scranton City Council. Davis was elected and served for a total of three terms, 12 years. In 1933 he decided to seek the nomination of Mayor on both the Republican and Democratic tickets, which was permissible at that time. Mayor Derby had announced he was running for re-election and what followed was a bitter and bizarre election. Davis ran on the platform that a mayor should be limited to one term in office. He reasoned that the city's chief executive effort should not be wasted building up a political machine. Derby had the endorsement of prominent Republicans while Davis had rank and file support. In the primary election, Derby beat Davis by 1,723 votes for the Republican nomination. Stanley Davis, however, beat Michael C. Cavanaugh by 119 votes to gain the Democratic nomination for mayor.

Lined up against Davis in the general election were the combined forces of the incumbents in City Hall as well as the County Courthouse. To counter their strength, Davis pledged his full support to other Democrats on the ticket with him. Democratic voters had little choice but to embrace Davis and his campaign against the "political machines" he was bucking. The results of this unprecedented election were:

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Fred J. Huester

Scranton's Nineteenth Mayor, 1938-1942

Fred J. Huester was the nineteenth Mayor of Scranton. He was born on September 27, 1886 in Scranton to Charles and Arabella Sohns Huester. Fred's father was an early settler in Scranton. He came to America from Hottenbach, Germany in 1881 at the age of 17. He was a molder by trade and worked for the D. L. & W. Railroad before opening two hotels in South Scranton: one at 1815 Cedar Avenue and the other at 346 Birch Street.¹⁰⁹ A devoted member of the volunteer fire department, Charles Huester was a good Republican who was elected tax collector of the 11th Ward and served three years as Recorder of Deeds for Lackawanna County.¹¹⁰

Fred Huester was educated in Scranton public schools. After graduation he became an apprentice machinist with the D. L. & W. for six years. He then worked as a machinist for Allis-Chalmers Locomotive Works. From 1916 until 1922 Fred was employed by the Erie Railroad as an assistant foreman. In 1922 Fred was appointed mercantile appraiser for Lackawanna County. A lifelong Republican and native of South Scranton, Fred was appointed Alderman to fill out the term of his brother, Jacob F. Huester, who died on January 11, 1922. On January 1, 1926, Fred was appointed as a clerk in the Lackawanna County Prothonotary's Office. In 1928 he was elected to the Pennsylvania State Legislature as a Representative from the 3rd Legislative District.

Fred sponsored legislation for the creation of the Scranton Single Tax Office. In 1929 the County and the City each had its own set of assessors, engineers and clerks. There were 4 different locations that Scrantonians went to pay their taxes (city, school and county real estate tax, and wage tax). All of these were consolidated into the Single Tax Office run by a tax collector who was elected to a four-year term. That year, Huester left the legislature and successfully ran for Tax Collector of the newly created Single Tax Office. In 1933 Huester ran for re-election against former Police Superintendent M. J. McHugh. Huester won by a margin of 2,033 votes with the strength of the Republican organization.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ *Scranton Times*. October 6, 1949, p 3.

¹¹⁰ "The City of Scranton and Vicinity and Their Resources." p. 15.

¹¹¹ *Scranton Times*. November 3, 1937, p. 6.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Howard J. Snowdon *Scranton's Twentieth Mayor, 1942-1946*

Howard Snowdon was the twentieth Mayor of the City of Scranton. He was born in Pittston on September 8, 1888, son of Joseph and Maria Huntley Snowdon. On July 19, 1898, when Howard was 10, he went fishing with his father and brother, Bert. Joseph had just finished a night shift as hoisting engineer at No. 10 mine in Pittston. The family was fishing from the D.L. & W. Bridge over the Susquehanna River when Howard decided to go swimming. He was quickly caught in the swift current. His father jumped in fully clothed to rescue him. Rescuers were able to save Howard but Joseph drowned. He left behind his wife and five children; he was only 38-years-old.

Howard was educated in West Pittston Public Schools and Wyoming Seminary. He graduated in 1908 from Eckels College of Embalming in Philadelphia. His brother William was a funeral director in Pittston and Howard opened two funeral homes in Scranton, at 802 Mulberry Street and 1810 Sanderson Avenue. Snowdon married Lottie Morris, an elementary school teacher, in 1915; they had a son, Howard Jr. and a daughter, Charlotte. Snowdon entered public life when Mayor Fred Huester appointed him as City Treasurer. He served in the capacity for three and a half years before announcing his intention to run for Mayor. He was backed by a strong, Republican organization that had a Republican registration edge of 9,000 voters over the Democrats. His opponent in the mayoral race of 1941 was State Senator Edward J. Coleman. *The Scranton Times* reported that the contest was free of mud slinging with Snowdon winning by only 727 votes.¹¹⁶ During the election, Snowdon did not accept political contributions and he was not linked to any organization other than the Republican Party. His cabinet appointees were all well respected former office holders.

On December 1, mayor-elect Snowdon gave a talk to a group of 40 businessmen and stated that his number one goal was to attract new businesses to Scranton. He called for the creation of an industrial authority to build plants at government expense to attract businesses to the area.¹¹⁷ Snowdon and a delegation of Scrantonians traveled to Harrisburg to lobby Governor Arthur James on the concept and were told by James that he could not support such legislation. James

¹¹⁶ *Scranton Times*. November 5, 1941. p. 6.

¹¹⁷ *Scranton Times*. July 1, 1960. p. 1.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

James Thomas Hanlon

Scranton's Twenty-First Mayor, 1946-1962

On January 31, 1940, James T. Hanlon was named Superintendent of the Clarks Summit State Hospital, a facility for the mentally disabled. As Jim “Cotton” Hanlon was inspecting the grounds his first day on the job he came across a patient he recognized from his Bellevue neighborhood, in West Scranton. The surprised fellow greeted Jim and they began to talk about the good old days. Finally, the curious patient asked Hanlon, “So why are you here?” Jim proudly replied, “I’m the new Superintendent.” The inmate looked at Jim strangely, smiled and whispered to him in a conspiratorial way, “They’ll knock that out of you!” Joseph X. Flannery, a columnist at *The Scranton Times* loves to tell that story about Jim Hanlon.¹²⁷ When you are involved with politics for a long while, people tell stories about you. Jim Hanlon hung around for a long, long time. He ran for Mayor six times and won four times.

James Hanlon was born in Scranton to Thomas and Catherine Roche Hanlon, two Irish immigrants from County Sligo. His father operated a grocery store and the family lived at 460 Railroad Avenue in the Bellevue section of Scranton. It was a working class neighborhood located between the Lackawanna River and the D. L. & W. Railroad tracks. This was where Jim Hanlon would live his entire life. Jim worked for a time at Andrew Brown’s drugstore in South Scranton. The amount of education young Jim had is vague but he learned to fill prescriptions and was a qualified assistant pharmacist. When Jim’s father died, Jim and his brother Joseph worked the family grocery store.

In 1926, when he was 34-years-old, he married Helen Luby from the Minooka section of town. Friends of the future Mayor indicated that Helen’s dad was not enthused with the marriage but it lasted 36 years until Jim’s death. They were childless. In 1928 Jim Hanlon entered the gasoline and tire business. He opened a store, States Tire and Service Company on Lackawanna Avenue. In 1934, when his close friend, Stanley Davis, was elected Mayor of Scranton, Hanlon was tapped to be his Public Safety Director. For the next three years Hanlon distinguished himself as an effective administrator.

¹²⁷ Flannery, Joseph X. Personal interview. 29 Dec. 2004.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

William T. Schmidt

Scranton's Twenty-Second Mayor, 1962-1966

On January 1, 1962, an ebullient 38-year-old William (Bill) Schmidt became Scranton's twenty-second Mayor. His political supporters cheered and partied extra hard that New Year's Day, who could blame them. Schmidt had overcome a 20,000 Republican voter registration disadvantage. He had taken on an opponent who had greater name recognition after serving 16 years in office and was widely known as "Friendly Jim." Taking its cue from Hanlon, the Chamber of Commerce even nicknamed Scranton, "The Friendly City." Schmidt had overcome all of this to win the Mayor's Office by 719 votes. On that January day, 700 supporters packed City Hall and the Council Chambers as Bill Schmidt took the oath of office. Floral tributes, including dozens of roses, were everywhere; however, the road ahead would not be a bed of roses for the new Mayor. A Democratic majority controlled council and after 16 years of Democratic control, Jim Hanlon had hired almost everyone that worked for the City!

As Judge Otto Robinson administered the oath and her husband recited his pledge, Margaret Schmidt watched proudly, along with her daughters Debbie and Gayle. Then Mayor Schmidt gave his inaugural speech. He painted a picture of a young man just elected as Mayor of Scranton, facing the problems of a burdening debt; labor problems; a divided City Council; and questioning what lay ahead for his city. While the situation was similar to Schmidt's, the Mayor in the story was Terrence V. Powderly. The message was simple: just as 83 years earlier Scranton was beset with seemingly insurmountable problems, the City would again see great prosperity. This would be what Mayor Schmidt called a "Decade of Progress."¹⁴⁵ The speech was similar in theme to that of President Kennedy who had been inaugurated less than a year earlier. Just as Kennedy succeeded 69-year-old Eisenhower, Bill Schmidt was taking the reins of government from 69-year-old Hanlon. Kennedy promised to land a man on the moon; Schmidt just hoped to move Scranton forward. The early 1960s was a time for young men with new visions of what our nation or our city could accomplish. Mayor Bill Schmidt was a man of his time. The eldest of four siblings, Bill Schmidt was born on September 23, 1923 to August Schmidt and Louise

¹⁴⁵ *Scranton Times*. January 2, 1962. p. 1.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

James J. Walsh

Scranton's Twenty-Third Mayor, 1966-1970

In 1966 the City of Scranton celebrated its 100th birthday. On Friday, July 1, Centennial Week started with a luncheon at the Hotel Casey. That evening, the Governor's Ball was held at the Scranton Estate Grounds, which is part of the University of Scranton. Anti-aircraft searchlights with 800 million candlepower swept across the night sky. Rev. Aloysius C. Galvin, S. J., President of the University indicated that the ball was symbolic – a fusion of Scranton's past and future. Governor Scranton was in attendance with his wife, Mary, who wore a gown made in 1850 that once adorned the wife of Joseph Scranton, cousin of the founder of the city. Future governors and first ladies: State Senator and Misses Robert P. Casey and Lt. Gov. Raymond Shafer and his wife were joined by 1,800 citizens of the Scranton area. They danced to Mary Scranton's favorite tune, "Everything's Coming Up Roses."¹⁷⁰

Everyone in attendance knew the history of Scranton's first 100 years and was there to celebrate the city's past glories. Among the guests that night, escorting Ms. Mary Fran McHugh, an elementary school teacher from West Scranton, was Attorney James J. Walsh. The voters of Pennsylvania's fourth largest city had elected Jim as its twenty-third mayor just eight months earlier. Jim Walsh was bestowed with the challenge to set the course for Scranton's next 100 years.

James Walsh was one of two sons of the former Dorothy Gurrell and Edward Walsh of West Scranton. Mrs. Walsh had been widowed since 1946. Jim's brother, Ed Walsh, became Principal of South Scranton Intermediate School, and then went on to become Scranton Tax Collector for two terms and later tried unsuccessfully to be elected mayor. Jim Walsh was educated at St. Patrick's School in West Scranton and graduated from West Scranton High School where he was the captain of the football team. He won a football scholarship to Washington and Lee University but the Korean War interrupted his education. After serving in the U.S. Army for two years, he received a Bachelor of Science from the University of Scranton in 1955 and later earned a Law Degree from Georgetown University. He also acquired a teaching certificate. He returned to practice law in Scranton and became the Associate Counsel for the Scranton Redevelopment

¹⁷⁰ Scranton Times. July 2, 1966. p. 3.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Eugene J. Peters

Scranton's Twenty-Fourth Mayor, 1970-1978

On election night, November 4, 1969, Eugene Peters was elected as the twenty-fourth Mayor of the City of Scranton. In a city where the Democrat voter registration was two-to-one against Republicans, Gene Peters beat the odds. His opponent Jim Walsh had bucked the party to win the Democratic nomination for mayor in 1965 and went on to defeat Mayor Bill Schmidt. Gene Peters had served in Schmidt's cabinet as Director of Public Works and now he had won the Mayor's Office back for the Republicans. *The Scranton Times* described the scene that November night as the election results showed a Peters' victory, "Mister Peters was full of surprises Tuesday night, not only for the Democrats but his well-wishers." Instead of arriving by car at the Jermyn Hotel, where the victory rally was well underway, Mayor-elect Peters chose to walk the distance from the I.B.E.W. building where he was watching the election returns. Escorted by four policemen, he chose to walk up the middle of Wyoming Avenue. Gene Peters was engulfed in a sea of humanity.

Hours earlier his supporters had started to gather. Phil Brady, head of the Scranton Central Labor Union, arrived with a contingent of men and women representing the labor unions. They carried 'Peters' signs and had worked the polls hard that day. Twice, cars passed by with 'Walsh' placards, only to be greeted with catcalls and jeers. District Attorney-elect Paul Mazzoni arrived by car as did Judge Edwin Kosik and were cheered by the crowd. Charles 'Kid Mango' Tremilozzi was not selling many papers on the corner; it was too early for the election results. Instead he explained his presence by saying, "I still get the guys who play the horses." Former Mayor Bill Schmidt arrived with State Representative Charles Luger and Attorney John Dunn. John (Bruno) Gallagher, chauffeuring Mrs. Gene Peters and her children, emerged and yelled, "It's a great victory!"¹⁹⁴ And so it was.

How did the 41-year-old Eugene Peters, professional engineer, son of Lebanese immigrants, running on the Republican ticket, become head of the fourth largest city in Pennsylvania? Eugene J. Peters was born the youngest of 17 children of Lebanese immigrants Edward and Selma Zadie Peters. Both of his parents came to America from Lebanon when

¹⁹⁴ *Scranton Times*. November 5, 1969. p. 1.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Eugene F. Hickey

Scranton's Twenty-Fifth Mayor, 1978-1982

On January 2, 1978 Eugene F. Hickey was sworn in as the twenty-fifth Mayor of the City of Scranton. As he took the oath of office from Judge James Walsh, the twenty-third Mayor of Scranton, Mayor Hickey may have had his fingers crossed. Though the election had been two months earlier, contender James B. McNulty was still contesting the results. Just three days earlier, the Lackawanna County Board of Elections had certified Hickey's victory but McNulty pledged to appeal the decision. With this cloud of doubt hanging over City Hall, Mayor Hickey had not even had a chance to have his cabinet ratified by the City Council. He was going to have to govern the city with Mayor Peters' cabinet for a few days. As Judge Walsh concluded giving the oath of office to his good friend and political ally, he remarked to the new Mayor, "Mister Mayor, if you think the campaign was hard and if you think the last few weeks were hard – you don't know what you're getting into."²¹¹

Eugene F. Hickey was born March 22, 1926, the son of Richard and Anna Flanagan Hickey. Gene Hickey was a graduate of St. Patrick's High School in West Scranton. He was a Navy veteran of World War II (1944-1946) and recipient of the Pacific Theater Ribbon, American Theater Ribbon and the Victory Medal. He was one of the many returning veterans of World War II, 12 million in all, who were determined to get an education under the G.I. Bill. He enrolled in the University of Scranton and graduated in 1950 with a B.S. degree in business administration.

During the early 1950s when jobs were scarce, even for college grads, Hickey held several short-term jobs. He was a clerk and carrier for the U.S. Postal Service for two years, an equipment operator, and worked for the U.S. Hoffman Machine Corporation. From 1955 to 1956 he was the purchasing agent for the Federal Pacific Electric Company. In 1956 Hickey started his own insurance agency in West Scranton and worked there for the next 44 years. Gene Hickey was always looking for ways to improve the community. He was founder and past president of the West Side Men's Association, a member of: the Realtors' Association of Lackawanna County, Elks Lodge 123, Catholic War Veterans, and the Knights of

²¹¹ *Scranton Times*. January 3, 1978. p. 29.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

James Barrett McNulty

Scranton's Twenty-Sixth Mayor, 1982-1986

On April 1, 1982 an article appeared in *The Scranton Times* by syndicated columnist Michael J. McManus. He wrote about the late F. Nelson Blount, a wealthy New England industrialist who loved railroad lore and had accumulated a collection of 20 steam locomotives. Blount had the money to buy the engines but not enough to build a decent museum to showcase them; so they sat rusting away in a meadow in Bellows Falls, Vermont. He called it Steamtown, USA. The article caught the eye of the Managing Editor of *The Scranton Times*, Ed Rogers. Rogers contacted Dan Ball, the Executive Director of Steamtown who expressed an interest in moving the collection to Scranton. Scranton had been a hub where five different railroads from all parts of America converged. Once, the railroad shops, now part of the Chamberlain Corporation used cutting-edge technology and employed many workers. The “iron horses” were a common site on the Lackawanna Valley landscape. The shell of the brick roundhouse that dated back to the 1850s, older than the city, still stood in the acres of deserted railroad yard that was located just a stone’s throw from Scranton’s Lackawanna Avenue. The City of Scranton and the steam locomotive grew up together; fell on bad times together and now were being resurrected together. Scranton and Steamtown, USA were a perfect match.

None of this was lost on the new mayor of Scranton, who had taken office just two months earlier. James Barrett McNulty was recognized as an accomplished politician but uppermost he was a first-class promoter. Mayor McNulty was onboard the Steamtown project from the start. McNulty, along with former Governor William W. Scranton and the Chamber of Commerce, saw Steamtown, USA as a tourist lure that would make downtown Scranton a destination for tourists.²⁴⁴

Over the next several years the city raised funds to bring the Steamtown collection to Scranton, buy the rail yards, and establish excursion rides to Moscow, Pennsylvania. In May 1983 McNulty and the Steamtown Foundation signed an agreement for \$2 million to accomplish those goals. The first pieces of equipment began to arrive in February 1984 and as Engine No. 2317 rolled into the Lackawanna Station to the cheers of fellow Scrantonians, Mayor McNulty descended from

²⁴⁴ The Sunday Times. July 3, 2005. p. A8.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

David J. Wenzel

Scranton's Twenty-Seventh Mayor, 1986-1990

In 1971 the United States was winding down its military operations in Vietnam. There were only 20,000 combat-active troops throughout the country, including First Lieutenant David Wenzel. Wenzel had been “in country” for close to four months and was in charge of the Mortar Platoon of A Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry, 11th Brigade of the Americal Division. Contact with the enemy was light but there were signs everywhere of their presence – they were called booby traps.

On January 25, Wenzel's platoon had been ordered to occupy a small mound that was about two miles from Hill 411, the battalion fire base. Wenzel and his platoon left the fire base at 10:30 a.m. and arrived at the base of the mound around 11:10 a.m. He led three men up a well-traveled trail that led to the top of the mound. They were looking for booby traps before the rest of the platoon would join them. This was a well-known area to them; they had bivouacked there before without incident. This day would be different. As his men scoured the top of the mound, Wenzel mapped out where the mortars would be set up later that afternoon. The mortars would be arriving by chopper that afternoon along with the evening meal and mail. Off in the distance a Vietnamese was working his rice patty. The sun was exceptionally bright; the rainy season was over. It was 11:20 a.m. when Wenzel took one step forward and felt the ground give way under his right foot. There was a metallic clicking sound followed by a horrendous explosion. In an instant, Lt. Wenzel became one of 300,000 United States casualties of the Vietnam War. Of the 75,000 Vietnam veterans who were permanently disabled, only 52, including Wenzel, lost more than two limbs in the conflict.

David John Wenzel was born in Scranton on June 18, 1945. His father Edward was employed by the Hudson Coal Company from the time he was 20 until he retired at age 65 in 1963. He worked as a clerk in the main office but was often called upon to take a new client out to the Marvin Breaker to tour an actual working mine. David's mother was the former Doris Heidig. She worked for a time at the Scranton Dry Goods Company as hostess of the Tea Room. She married Edward and started a family. Their first son, Bruce, was born four years before David. Tragically, Doris died at the young age of 35, in 1950. Edward, Bruce and David went to live with Doris' parents John and Charlotte Heidig on Pear Street in South

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

James Patrick Connors

Scranton's Twenty-Eighth Mayor, 1990-2002

Mayor David Wenzel announced on January 24, 1989 that he would not be seeking a second term as Mayor. The announcement came as a surprise to Scranton's Community Development Director James "Jim" Connors. He had often talked to Wenzel about the upcoming election and was planning to back Wenzel for another four-year term. Now he needed to support a new candidate, someone who shared the concerns of the community groups who vied for Community Development funds for quality of life projects, such as: baseball fields, parks, sidewalks and police patrols. Connors turned to Ed Pisano. Ed Pisano was the Director of the Department of Public Works in the Wenzel administration. He held that post for three and a half years while employed full-time as a United States Postal carrier. Pisano had been the president of the Hill Neighborhood Association before Wenzel tagged him for the post at the DPW. Connors had played a large role in urging Wenzel to hire Pisano. Despite the awkward employment situation Pisano comported himself so well that many people, including the press, were openly urging Pisano to run for the Mayor's office. The pressure was on Pisano to declare himself a candidate. Jim Connors saw Ed Pisano as a person who would work for the neighborhoods. To run for mayor, Pisano would have to resign his federal job and lose some of his pension benefits in accordance with the Hatch Act.

The climax came on March 5, when Pisano called all of his supporters to a rally at the Green Ridge Club; the place was packed. As Jimmy Connors stated, "Ed Pisano walked to the stage that night still not knowing if he was going to run" and proceeded to explain to a very disappointed crowd of 800 that he would not be a candidate. Today, people still believe that Ed Pisano could have been elected mayor. As Jim Connors stood there listening to Pisano give his explanation, Arnie Scacchitti, a good friend, whispered in Jim's ear, "Straighten your tie. You're running!"

That night, Connors, David Baker, Mickey Coyne, and Jim's brothers Tom and Pat retreated to the Dunkin' Donuts on Moosic Street and started making plans for Jim to run for the Office of Mayor of Scranton.³²¹

James Connors was one of seven children born to Lucille Conlon Connors and Thomas V. Connors, an auditor

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

Chris Doherty

Scranton's Twenty-Ninth Mayor, 2002-Present

The mayor's election of 2001 will be remembered as the beginning of a new era in Scranton. The previous three mayors, McNulty, Wenzel and Connors wear all born within 18 months of each other and they were the "boomer mayors" of the Baby Boom generation; they dominated the Scranton political scene from 1981 until 2002. Their era now passed into history as Chris Doherty, one term City Councilman, walked away with the Democratic nomination for Mayor of Scranton and crushed his opposition in the November election:

Doherty (D)	13,998
Bolus (R)	5,948
Costa (Reform)	1,235 ³⁶⁷

The general election of 2001 also included a referendum for a new home rule charter. The changes would have limited the mayor and other city elected officials to only two consecutive terms; require the mayor and the city's business administrator and city controller to attend city council meetings on a regular basis; demand educational and professional requirements for some city workers to ensure professionalism in technical positions; and the right of citizens to place items on city council's agenda. It also mandated that the city's wage tax be reduced by 21% over five years.

The referendum was backed by Scranton Tomorrow, a civic organization made up of city leaders and young professionals that were tired of "politics as usual." They took to heart the section of Partnership '87 that stated, "city government worked for the good of city workers not the public." In a guest editorial for *The Scranton Times* they stated: "A primary benefit of Scranton's new proposed home rule charter is that it places increased control of city government in the hands of the electorate."³⁶⁸

³⁶⁷ The Tribune. November 7, 2001. p. 1.

³⁶⁸ Scranton Times. November 5, 2001. p. 6.

EPILOGUE

Scranton's Future

The national census of 2010 is only three years away. Since 1940 Scranton has always decreased in population and the census has become a symbol of Scranton's "decline" as a city. The greatness of this city is not in its numbers but in its quality of life. Over the years we have rid ourselves of the dirty, smoking culm dumps that fouled our air. We have cleaned up the Lackawanna River and worked to eradicate slums and rampant crime that confronts many northeastern cities. We care for our elderly and disabled with three great hospitals and Allied Services. We educate our children at state of the art high schools and colleges. What other city in America can point to a model coal mine, a pristine Lake Scranton, and Montage ski resort all in its city limits?

Already the people of the great metropolitan areas of New York and New Jersey are discovering our area and its quality of life. If they come in increasing numbers, if the young people who leave this area return and bring their skills to rejuvenate our city, if we can keep life affordable in the city then those census figures will become numbers that will point us toward "Scranton's greatest century - the next 100 years."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I first conceived the idea for this book three years ago when asked to give a talk on the Mayors of Scranton at the Mall at Steamtown for History Month. The only book that had brief biographies of the mayors was Philip Mattes' "Tales of Scranton," written in the early 1960s, and did not include those mayors after Bill Schmidt. I thought about the format and content for about a year before I began to write.

The essential textbooks were "History of Scranton and its People" by Frederick L. Hitchcock, printed in 1914 and a more recent "Never Before in History: The Story of Scranton" by John Beck (1986). Other books cited are "The Kingdom of Coal: Work, Enterprise and Ethnic Communities in the Mine Fields" by Donald L. Miller and Richard E. Sharpless (1985) and "Scranton: Once Upon a Time" by Nicholas E. Petual (1985).

I am indebted to my family for their time and help in the creation of this book. My wife, Janet, has quietly supported and encouraged my endeavors for over 36 years; she is my anchor. My sister-in-law, Carol Wenzel, edited this book and relentlessly challenged me. I appreciate my nephew, Christian Wenzel, who brought his knowledge of grammar as he typed and formatted this book on his laptop; he is also my technical support.

The families of the mayors were very supportive. Debbie Schmidt McNickle and Barbara Noto of the Schmidt family bonded easily with this project. Mayor Peters' daughter, Carol, was fast and efficient in getting information when I needed it. Peter Huester lives in North Carolina but his heart is in Scranton. Eileen Freeman and Catherine Zenke were my windows to the world of Mayor Fellows. Kay Kloss gave me a quote from Mayor Durkan. Ellie Axford retold the story of how Mayor Howard Snowdon almost drowned at the age of 10. Bruce Van Deusen set me straight on who's who in the Connell family.

Evie McNulty provided most of the material that is in the McNulty chapter and I spent three hours with Mayor McNulty going over the text on his chapter. Janet and I spent an enjoyable afternoon with Judge and Mary Fran Walsh. Susie and Mayor Jim Connors were most generous with their time and are fun to be with, as Jim always adds his Irish humor.

An unforgettable breakfast at Smith's Restaurant assembled Bernie Blier, Ike Refice (former *Times* photographer), Joe Flannery and Judge Richard Conaboy where we talked for two hours about Mayor Hanlon and everyone before and since.