

MYLES CONWAY

Myles Conway was born in Westport, Mayo, Ireland in the early 1830's. He was the eldest of a large family. His parents were Laurence Conway and Bridget MacHale. Myles' great uncle was John MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam. Probably as a result of the MacHale connection, Myles' family was literate.

To escape the Irish Potato Famine (which was most severe in Mayo) the family left Westport and were in Coleraine, County Derry in the north by the time of the 1851 Census. However, Myles was not with them - he emigrated alone to the United States during the California Gold Rush. His parents and most of his siblings had settled in Scotland by 1870.

At the end of 1854, Myles worked in Tuolumne County, California, at Poverty Hill (renamed Stent early on, probably due to a duplicate named town in Sierra County) as a partner with W.S. Bodey. Later he was at Red Mountain Bar near Chinese Camp. In 1859, he was Bodey's partner again at Marlow Diggings south of the town of Tuolumne at Turnback Creek.

By 1870, Myles was at Gold Hill working on the Comstock Lode at the Crown Point Mine. He boarded at the Golden Eagle Hotel. In October, 1872, he became a naturalized citizen at Virginia City. The photograph on the right shows Myles wearing a Pacific Coast Pioneer ribbon. The California State Bear has been highlighted with gold leaf. He is also wearing a Virginia City Vigilance Committee badge. The photograph was probably taken and retouched with water colors in 1873 at Edward Hurd's studio on 140 C street in Virginia City. He joined the Pacific Coast Pioneers in Virginia City on June 26, 1873. It is possible that this photograph was taken to commemorate the event.

He married Delia McColbaggot (most likely McElligott) in Virginia City on June 6, 1874. No other information on Delia could be found; she is currently lost to history.

In 1882, 1888, and 1892, Myles was registered to vote at Summersville/Carter (renamed Tuolumne in 1909) in Tuolumne County, California. He was described as five foot six inches tall with brown eyes and dark hair.

The Tuolumne County Genealogical Society has a transcript for "MYLES CONWAY, born, Ireland, miner, died April 16, 1897, buried Sonora". His family have been unable to find out in which cemetery he is buried.

His sisters were trying to locate him in 1905; a letter from their attorney in Auburn, CA indicated his nickname was Jimmy Two Dogs, and that he had interests in the "Nelly Bly," "King Fisher," and "Australian Queen" mines. Myles may have also had mining interests in the Copper Queen Mine near Bisbee, Arizona.



*Myles Conway circa 1873, Virginia City
Courtesy Myles Conway Family*