

Sketch of the life of
JOHN LOWE BUTLER
Pioneer of
Spanish Fork, Utah
Pioneer of 1852

Written for Camp Two
Daughters of Utah Pioneers
Salt Lake City, Utah
by
Mary Butler Anderson - Daughter

MY FATHER

by Mary Butler Anderson

My father, John Lowe Butler II, was born at Nauvoo, Illinois, on February 28, 1844. He was the son of John Lowe Butler and Caroline Farozine Skeen. He was blessed by the Prophet Joseph Smith. His father was a bodyguard to the prophet.

My grandfather was a blacksmith by trade. Brigham Young asked him to stay in Nauvoo [correction, it was Council Bluff] and repair wagons for the Saints who were to cross the plains. Then in 1852, he brought his family to Utah, and they settled in Spanish Fork. My father was then nine [eight] years old.

When grandfather died, he left my father the full responsibility of caring for his mother and brothers and sisters. He was only sixteen. He hauled logs down from the mountain to build a home for the other seven bereaved wives of his father, John I.

One day, while hauling logs, his wagon became stuck in the muddy road. A man, who was a tailor by trade, came along, but refused to help him. So father had to unload all the logs, pull the wagon out, then load up again. About four miles further along the road, he met the tailor with his wagon stuck in the mud. He asked my father to help him get his wagon out, and promised to make him a fine suit of clothes. Father said he would help him on one condition: that he would promise never to refuse anyone help again. When father met this man ten years later, he told father he had never forgotten the best lesson he'd ever had; and he had learned it from a boy of sixteen.

After completing the home for the other wives of his father, John II took his mother to Paragona, Utah. He built her a home and helped her raise the younger children. When she died, he brought her body back to Spanish Fork to be buried beside grandfather. It was a long, difficult trip, and had to perilously ford the swollen rivers.

Father was married to Nancy Franzetta Smith on June 23, 1873, in the endowment house. Their oldest son, John Lowe, was born on June 5, 1874, and was the only child to see Grandmother before she died. Three other children were born in Paragona [Panguitch]. They were; Francetty, born April 7, 1876; Sarah (Sadie) born February 2, 1878; and Caroline, born December 2, 1880.

Father was made a deputy sheriff at Paragona [Panguitch]. One of his duties was to keep ruffians out of the dance hall. At one of these dances, four or five rough looking fellows entered the hall and threatened to break up the dance. Father told them to leave, and they cursed him and said they could lick anyone in town. He stepped to the door to enforce their leaving and one of the men hit him over the head with a slab. It smashed his skull, and he was rushed to Salt Lake City to be cared for.

During the operation father dreamed that nine men were picking on a little man. He tried to get up and knocked the doctor and his brother away from his bed. Another doctor grabbed him and forced him to lay down. They told him if he had hit his head again, it would have killed him. He suffered much in later years over that injury. He left the hospital sooner than he should have, as he was warned of sickness in his family.

Father moved his family to Joseph, Sevier County, Utah. Polygamy was still in practice, and he decided to marry my mother Sara Sariah Johnson, whom he had known since a child. He was nineteen years her senior. They were married in the Endowment House.

Six children blessed this marriage. Three lived to maturity: Denison, born April 7, 1883; Mary, born December 22, 1884; and Ann, born June 6, 1890. The children that died were: Farozine, born in October 1887; Ellender, born in January 1889; and Veniese, born on August 16, 1897.

The other children born to his first wife were: Horace Calvin, born Feb. 6, 1883; Olive, born January 26, 1885; Jane, born 22 February 1888; Kenyon Taylor, born May 10, 1890; Eva, born December 9, 1892; and Leland Thomas, born March 21, 1897.

Father moved his two families to Jerico, where they lived for several years on a large ranch. When the crusade against polygamy started, he had to separate his families. Aunt 'Cetty's' home was in Richfield for a time, and mother lived in Monroe. It was very hard for my father to have his families separated. He loved them, and always treated both families the same, and was good to them.

Father was sent to jail when the crusade started, for having two wives. When the case came up for trial, another man's trial preceded father's. The judge asked the man what he intended to do about his second family. The man said he would let them shift for themselves. The judge gave him five years imprisonment and \$500.00 fine. When the judge asked father the same question, he replied: "I'll do the best I can for them." The judge gave him 10 days in jail and only \$50.00 fine.

It was hard to provide a living for his families in later years as he suffered poor health. He died December 30, 1898.

In commenting on the above history by Mary Butler Anderson, her brother Horace Butler of Rupert, Idaho, wrote on April 13, 1952:

"I think that I could offer some corrections on the dates that Mary gave. . . . Instead of being in Paragona he was in Panguitch when he received the injury to his head, when he was a young man. The operation was not done until 1883."

In regards to Caroline Farozine Skeen Butler's burial it should be noted that she was initially buried in Panguitch but later John II took her body back to Spanish Fork and had it buried next to her husband.

In regards to John's prison sentence for polygamy, Church Chronology by Andrew Jensen contains the following recordss: "Monday, 23 September 1889: In the First District Court, at Provo, John L. Butler, of Elsinore, was sentenced by Judge Judd to eight months imprisonment, for alleged adultery." Then on "Sunday 13 April 1890: John L. Butler of Elsinore was discharged from the Penitentiary. (at Salt Lake City)." Then on "Wednesday, 23 September 1891: In the First District Court, at Provo, John L. Butler of Elsinore, and Josiah Bennett were each sentenced by Judge Blackburn to 10 days imprisonment for u.c. [unlawful cohabitation]." In light of this Mary's story of her father receiving only a 10 day sentence and \$50 fine must be in reference to this second trial.

This document was digitally created by Craig Dalton on April 29, 2010 from a copy of Mary's history on file with Daughters of the Utah Pioneers in Salt Lake City with minor corrections as found in other transcripts of the same history. Bracketed corrections were inserted by Craig Dalton.