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Butler Family Biographies

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Butler Family Biographies

Peter Butler

Peter Butler (1789-1856) was born in Pulaski County, Kentucky, to John Butler and Elizabeth Dixon. He later moved to Barren County where he married his wife, Rachel Cook(e) Murphy (1788-1874) on July 25, 1811. He served as a Major in the War of 1812 and as Captain in the Black Hawk War of 1832 where his son Ira served under him. He moved first to Warren County, Kentucky in 1816, and then to Warren County, Illinois in 1830. In 1831 he surveyed and founded Monmouth, Illinois after turning down the opportunity to survey the new town of Chicago. In Monmouth he served as surveyor, sheriff, mayor, county commissioner, and one term in both the Illinois House of Representatives and Senate. His son Ira Butler and son-in-law Thomas Hutchinson helped found Monmouth University (now Western Oregon University). He and his wife had ten children, five of whom made the journey with them to the Oregon Territory in 1853, where he joined his son Elijah who had traveled there in 1850. Peter died of typhoid fever on June 24, 1856 and is buried with his wife in the Butler Davidson Cemetery. He died intestate, and a suit was brought against the remaining Butler family and their heirs in 1937 over their rights to land presumably owned by Peter Butler.

Children of Peter Butler:

- Ira Frances Marion Butler (1812-1909); married Mary Ann Davidson (1814-1888) in 1835; buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- William Cooke Butler (1814-1891); married Rebecca Elam (Blanche) Lucas (1818-1891) in 1837
- Eliza Ann D. Butler Ground (1816-1864); married Edward Ground (1809-1885) in 1834
- John Murphy Butler (1818-1864); married Eliza Smith (1818-1858) in 1842
- Joseph Franklin Butler (1820-1872); married Sarah Jane ?
- Margaret C Butler Smith (1822-1871); married Isaac Smith (1816-1897) in 1840; buried with her husband in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Elijah Davidson (Lides) Butler (1824-1858); married Sarah Elizabeth Lucas
- James Whitman Butler (1826-1905); married Mary Ground (1836-1880)
- Elizabeth (Lissie) Hannah Butler Hutchinson (1829-1866); married Thomas Hanna Hutchinson (1824-1860) in 1851 and Spencer W. Miser (1825-1904) in 1865; buried with her first husband in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Isaac Butler (1831-1913); married Sarah Webb

Land Claim: T9S R4W sec 17

Ira Frances Marion Butler

Ira Frances Marion Butler (1812-1909) was the eldest of Peter and Rachel Butler's children. In 1832 he served in the Black Hawk War under his father from June 11 to September 4. He also served as the deputy sheriff, sheriff and clerk of Warren County, Illinois during the time that he lived there. He married Mary Ann Davidson (1814-1888) on November 5, 1835 and had nine children with her. In 1853, they traveled with his parents to the Oregon Territory. He is believed to have selected the name of Monmouth for the new town in Polk County, Oregon Territory (presumably after Monmouth, Illinois where the Butler family came from), and broke the tie vote between the two possible names: Dover and Monmouth. He served as Justice of the Peace in Polk County, Oregon from 1853 to around 1880. Ira helped found Monmouth University (now Western Oregon University) and served as president for its Board of Trustees from 1855-1882. He served three terms on the Oregon Legislature in 1856, 1858 and 1862, and served as the Speaker for the Oregon House of Representatives for the Democrat Party in 1858. He also served as Polk County Judge between 1872-1878 and 1882 and became the second mayor of Monmouth, Oregon in 1882 after its incorporation in 1881. Additionally, he helped found the Polk County Bank. He died at age 96 and is buried with his wife in the Butler Davidson Cemetery.

Children of Ira Frances Marion Butler:

- Newton H. Butler (1837-1889); buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Paradine Butler (1839-1859); married William F. Reynolds in 1859; buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Cyrus B. Butler (1841-1842)
- Asa Douglas Butler (1843-1923); married Melvina (Mellie) Katherine Morris (1846-1879) in 1868 and Hazeltine Garn/Gorn in 1886
- Augustus Peter Butler (1846-1887); buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Mary Elizabeth Butler (1849-1851)
- Margaret (Maggie) Butler (1852-1939); buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Alice (Allie) Butler (1858-1940); buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery; Margaret and Alice employed young college students to work at the family home on East Main Street throughout their lives, employing more than 40 students over the years

Land Claim: T9S R4W, secs 28,33

Paradine Butler Reynolds

Paradine Butler Reynolds (1839-1859) was the oldest daughter of Ira and Mary Butler. She married William F. Reynolds on January 5, 1859, but died six months later on June 16, 1859. Her last correspondence in the Butler collection describes her love of quilting. She is buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery.

John Murphy Butler

John Murphy Butler (1818-1864) was the third son of Peter and Rachel Butler. Along with his brothers William, Joseph, and James, John Butler elected to stay behind in the Midwest when his parents and six other siblings moved to the Oregon Territory. He married Eliza Smith (1818-1858) in 1842 and they had seven children, although their first died at the age of five. Most of the correspondence in the Butler collection is addressed to John, who was tasked with handling the majority of the family estate left in Illinois, particularly after the death of his father, Peter Butler, in 1856. Throughout the 1850s, Matilda Smith, Eliza's sister, lived with John and Eliza in Illinois, and helped raise their children after Eliza's death in 1858. He died of typhoid fever April 8, 1864.

Children of John Murphy Butler:

- McDowell Butler (1842-1847)
- Lavina Matilda Butler (1844-1929); married William Ground
- Erastus Ewing/Edward Butler (1846-1928); married Margaret McHenry
- Granville/Granvil Ashburg Butler (1848-1901); married Agnes Kitt
- Isaac Smith Butler (1851-1932); married Emma Hattie Fleming (1860-?)
- Peter Franklin (Frank) Butler (1855-1927); married Lucinda Emmeline Day (?-1887) in 1881 and Dora Matilda Arp (1867-?) in 1888
- Ralph Otis Butler (1858-1940); married Josephine Floy Tracey in 1882

Lavina Matilda Butler

Lavina Matilda Butler (1844-1929) was the oldest daughter of John and Eliza Butler, and married to William Ground in 1866. She graduated from Abugdon College in 1864. In 1876 they moved near Creston, Iowa, where they remained until their deaths. From the Butler correspondence, it appears that she was close to her aunt, Elizabeth Hannah (Lizzie) Butler Hutchinson (1829-1866), who moved to the Oregon Territory in 1853, and frequently corresponded with her.

Children of Lavina Matilda Butler:

- Mary Grounds (?-1933); married Thomas McCormak (?-1905)
- Ira Grounds; married Mame Higgens
- Lena Grounds (?-1916); married Will A. Baker
- John Franklin Grounds (1873-1944); married Martha (Mattie) Wallace (1888-?)
- Grace Grounds; married Robert Wallace
- Sanford Grounds; married Nellie Furnish (?-1935)
- Floy Grounds; married Carelson Tupper (?-1925)
- Maud Grounds (?-1936)

Erastus Ewing Butler

Erastus Ewing Butler (1846-1928) was the eldest surviving son of John and Eliza Butler. On January 15, 1868, he was married to Margaret McHenry Butler (1843-1910), and immediately moved near Jamaica, Iowa. Erastus served with the Co.K.7th Regiment Illinois Cavalry for one year before the Civil War ended. Margaret Butler endured brothers who fought on both sides of the war. They later moved to Utah to be with their son.

Children of Erastus Ewing Butler:

- Emma Mae Butler (1870-1938); married Ronald Schuyler Witter (1869-1942) in 1889
- Frank Edward Butler (1880-1952) ; married Josephine Arilson (1875-1957) in 1901

Isaac Butler

Isaac Butler (1831-1913) was the youngest of Peter and Rachel Butler's children. He accompanied his parents to the Oregon Territory in 1853 where he met and married his wife Sarah Webb (1849-1906) on May 11, 1856. They had at least one child, Mary Ellen. Isaac was elected twice to a two-year term as Polk County Sheriff in 1860 and 1862.

Children of Isaac Butler:

- Mary Ellen Butler (1857-1904)

Land Claim: T9S R5W secs 5,4,8,9

Mary Ellen Butler

Mary Ellen Butler (1857-?) was the only child of Isaac and Sarah Butler. She was born in the Oregon Territory, and as the only child to a sickly mother, was doted on by her father, as witnessed in many of the Butler family letters.

William Cooke Butler

William Cooke Butler (1814-1891) was the second eldest son of Peter and Rachel Butler. In 1837 he married Rebecca Elam (Blanche) Lucas (1818-1891) with whom he had nine children. While William did not travel with his parents to the Oregon Territory, letters from him to John M. Butler suggest that he lived variously in Allen Creek, Kansas; Warren County, Kentucky; St John, Missouri; and Breckenridge County, Louisiana Territory.

Children of William Cooke Butler:

- Josephine Catherine Butler (1838-1923); married Joseph Kempton
- Victoria Louise Butler (1840-1915); married Lewis McHone (?-1915)
- Draper Cook Butler (1842-1922); married Ella Vista Davidson (?-1885) and Daisy Butler
- John Lucas Butler (1843-1916); married Mary Elizabeth Swim (1850-1925) in 1870
- William Henry Butler (1844-1937); married Elizabeth Jane Yount (?-1932)
- Sarah Alice Butler (1846-1886); married John Holland and Wash Elliot
- George Edmund Butler (1852-1933); married Elida Clarissa Smith (1852-1886)
- Viola Butler (1856-1894); married C. A. Shaffer
- Jessie Lavina Butler

Joseph Franklin Butler

Joseph Franklin Butler (1820-1872) was the fourth son of Peter and Rachel Butler. He stayed behind when his parents moved to the Oregon Territory, and settled down in Dutch Creek, Iowa with his wife Sarah Jane Butler. Records of his life are sparse in the family correspondence.

Children of Joseph Franklin Butler:

- Mary Ann Butler (1840/50-1851/61)

Sarah Jane Butler

Sarah Jane Butler was the wife of Joseph Franklin Butler (1820-1872). They both stayed behind when the Butler family moved to the Oregon Territory in 1853, eventually settling in Dutch Creek, Iowa.

Children of Sarah Jane Butler:

- Mary Ann Butler (1840/50-1851/61)

Margaret C. Butler Smith

Margaret Butler Smith (1822-1871) was the second daughter of Peter and Rachel Butler. She married Issac Smith in 1840, and traveled with him and her parents to the Oregon Territory in 1853. Together they had nine children. During the Civil War, she worked tirelessly for the war effort. She died of cancer in 1871 and is buried with her husband in the Butler Davidson Cemetery.

Children on Margaret C. Butler Smith:

- Rufus Marion Smith (1842-1920); married Irene Melissa Smith (1850-1924); buried at the Fir Crest Cemetery
- Silas Wright Smith (1844-1912); married Esther Barney in 1867
- Berryman Murphy A. Smith (1846-1906); married Sarah Nealy (1851-1943) in 1866
- Flora Alice Smith (1848-1907); married James P. Campbell (1844-1900)
- Mary Eliza Smith (1852-1858); married Napoleon Bonaparte Humphrey (1839-1917); buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Rachel Matilda Smith (1853-1936)
- John Butler Smith (1856-1905); married Maggie Smith (1867-1905)
- Ira S. Smith (1859-?)
- Isaac Lucas Smith (1862-1920)

James Whitman Butler

James Whitman Butler (1826-1905) was the youngest of the Butler family to remain in Illinois when parents Peter and Rachel traveled to the Oregon Territory in 1853. He was married to Mary Ground (1836-1880). They had at least one child in 1856. Records of James are sparse in the family correspondence.

Children of James Whitman Butler:

- Seldon Butler (?-1904)

Elijah Davidson (Lides) Butler

Elijah Davidson (Lides) Butler (1824-1858) was the third youngest son of Peter and Rachel Butler. He married Sarah Elizabeth Lucas (1830-1871) on August 26, 1846, and then preceded his parents to the Oregon Territory in 1850. Often sick after arriving in the Oregon Territory, he died on January 25, 1858 and is buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery. He and his wife had at least three children.

Children of Elijah Davidson Butler:

- Cynthia Ann Butler (1853-1876); married Andy Allen
- Charley Willet Butler (1855-1857); buried in the Butler Davidson Cemetery
- Rachel Butler (1857-18??); married G. William Pickett (?-1902)

Land Claim: T9S R4W secs 27, 28, 33, 34

Eliza Ann Butler Ground

Eliza Ann Butler Ground (1816-1864) was the oldest daughter of Peter and Rachel Butler. In 1834 she married Edward Ground (1809-1885) and had seven surviving children with him. She and her family made the journey to the Oregon Territory in 1853 with Peter and Rachel Butler. She is buried with her husband in the Butler Davidson Cemetery.

Children of Eliza Ann Butler Ground:

- William Butler Ground (1836-1880); married Sarah Jane Jones in 1864
- Francis Ground (1838-1840)
- Robert Ground (1840-1918); buried at the Davidson Family Cemetery
- Luther Ground (1842-1918); married Sarah Jane Butler in 1868; buried at Fir Crest Cemetery
- Franklin Pierce Ground (1842-1936); married Emma J. Wells in 1868
- Peter Ground (1848-1874)
- John H. Ground (1855-1914)
- Sylvester Ground (1858-1860)

Elizabeth (Lissie) Hannah Butler Hutchinson Miser

Elizabeth (Lissie) Hannah Butler Hutchinson Miser (1829-1866) was the youngest daughter of Peter and Rachel Butler. She married Thomas Hanna Hutchinson (1824-1860) on July 1, 1851. Together they had three children, one of whom was born (Robert Cascade) on their way to the Oregon Territory while crossing the Cascade Mountains. After her husband's death, she remarried to Spencer W. Miser (1825-1904) in 1865, and had one child with him. She is buried with her first husband in the Butler Davidson Cemetery.

Children of Elizabeth Hanna Butler Hutchinson Miser:

- James Butler Hutchinson (1852-1872); died in Napa, California
- Robert Cascade Hutchinson (1853-1922)
- Tom Otis Hutchinson (1855-1944); married Sarah Adeline Rone in 1877

Children with Spencer W. Miser:

- Haver Lacey Miser (1865-1952); married Cora Ellis Miser