

BUTTERNORTH, SAMUEL FOWLER

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UNION COLLEGE - A. B. 1830
Schenectady, N. Y.

Born at Newburgh, Orange County, New York, November 10, 1811.

Son of HENRY BUTTERNORTH and CHARLOTTE FOWLER.

Married Mary E. at _____ on _____ 18__.

Two daughters, (Mrs. C. P. Pringle) and (Mrs. Louis Haggin)

Educated at Union College and later studied law; was a successful attorney in New York City, and an active Democratic politician; appointed on June 25, 1838, by President Van Buren as United States Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi and served until February, 1841; served in the Treasury Department by appointment of President Buchanan as the first Superintendent of the New York Assay Office at a salary of \$3,500 per annum from May 23, 1854, when he took the oath and he filed a bond of \$20,000, until March 6, 1861, when he resigned at the beginning of the Lincoln administration.

First came to California in 1861 in connection with the attempted seizure by the Federal Government of the New Almaden quicksilver mine and effected a satisfactory compromise of the litigation; as President of the Arizona Mining Company he left San Francisco early in December, 1863, accompanied by Guido Küstel, a metallurgist, and Messrs. Louis Janin and Higgins, mining engineers; the following account of his escape from an Apache attack was written by Charles D. Poston, in 1891:

In 1863 we had made up a company in New York to work the Santa Rita mines. Capital was abundant and confidence in Arizona mines not destroyed. Sam Butterworth was elected President and provided with \$10,000 to make

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an examination of the mines, and we separated agreeing to meet in Arizona Christmas or thereabouts.

Butterworth and his party came by sea to Guaymas, where they took a couple of ambulances for the mines, with the best outfit in arms, provisions and liquors that San Francisco could furnish for money.

The Apaches were on the lookout for these enterprising gentlemen and descried the ambulance from the mountains and knew just where they would have to cross the Santa Cruz river between Calabasas and the old pueblo of Santa Cruz. Accordingly these merciless savages made an ambuscade under the bank of the river and waited until the mules had been unharnessed from the ambulance and the men had commenced to strip for a luncheon, when they opened fire and stampeded the camp.

Fortunately nobody was killed. Some of the guard mounted the naked mules and escaped, and the men on foot scattered in different directions. After the Apaches had secured the mules and the plunder from the ambulance they set fire to the grass, which was ripe and very high.

The fire smoked Butterworth out, and he had to climb a mesquite tree about 100 yards from the road to get out of the fire. I went to the tree afterwards and found the mud from his boots in the forks of the tree, and cut a minnie ball out of the limb about three feet above the print of the boots, by which I inferred that Mr. Butterworth came very near taking up his permanent residence on the banks of the Santa Cruz.

The Apaches are too smart to remain long on the public highway after committing a robbery, so they gathered up the plunder and made a camp on the hill about half a league from the scene of the robbery.

When I visited their Apache camp a few days afterward it was plain that Apache curiosity had induced one of them to pick open a cartridge

with a stone and the cartridge had exploded in his hand. They left the whole supply of cartridges in the camp as they evidently did not want any more of that explosive material. The saddest thing about the camp was some dozen bottles of the finest French brandy - empty.

After the Apaches left Butterworth "up the tree" he wandered up and down the Santa Cruz all night without any coat, and a cravat made of grass, and the next day was rescued by a Mexican named Comaduran, who piloted him to Santa Cruz, where some other members of the party had found refuge.

The conclusion of a more detailed account of the attack appears in "Adventures in the Apache Country" by J. Ross Browne, who visited the scene with Poston and reads:

"The Indians set fire to the grass again, and the flames swept toward him with fearful rapidity, compelling him to climb the tree for security, and even then burning part of the legs off his pantaloons. Two bullet-holes which we found in the tree indicated that his position was by no means a pleasant one.

"Upon further examination of the spot where the wagons stood, we found various fragments of the plunder scattered around, such as sardine boxes, broken candle boxes, cartridges, patent medicines, and a bottle inscribed "Philip Roach", San Francisco. This was one of a number bearing a similar brand, containing some brandy reputed to be fifty years old. Mr. Butterworth, I have been informed, said it went harder with them to see these brutal wretches drink up his choice brandy than all the rest of the disaster put together.

"Plunder was evidently their chief object; for as soon as they had gutted the wagons of their contents they retired across the Santa Cruz River, where they held a grand carousal over their booty. They had succeeded in getting \$1700 in gold coin and other property, amounting in the aggregate to about \$3000.

"It is gratifying to know that this band of Apaches has since met with summary vengeance at the hands of the California Volunteers, (Under Major Nelson H. Davis). Most if not all of them have been killed, and \$700 of the money taken from their dead bodies."

In 1864, he settled permanently in San Francisco and became the President and Manager of the New Almaden Company, a \$10,000,000 corporation; under his direction during the next six years, the mine paid all the purchase money besides building the works essential to its development; thereafter he made himself felt in the business community, his own capital accumulated and, at the time of his death, he had acquired a fortune estimated at \$7,000,000, a large part of which was invested in real estate.

Died at San Francisco, California, May 5, 1875, aged 63; buried _____ Cemetery; the following is taken from an obituary printed in the San Francisco Chronicle:

His personal characteristics were strongly marked. He was a man to be noticed in a crowd, and afterwards remembered. His features were clearly and firmly cut, almost to hardness, correctly indicating his mental peculiarities. The mouth and jaw solidly set, showing tenacity of purpose, and great self-reliance. He had that cold gray eye that calmly reads the secrets of others while resolutely refusing to betray its own. In person he was of medium height, compactly and not inelegantly built. His manners were always those of the cultivated gentleman.

Among the positions of trust which Mr. Butterworth filled was that of Commissioner of the Golden Gate Park, and to the duties of this office he gave much time and brought his good taste and business sagacity into profitable play. As a Regent of the State University

he rendered good and active service in the cause of education, and his name is indissolubly connected with that institution.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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Mowry, S. - Arizona and Sonora, N. Y., 1864, p. 199.
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Appletons Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 1, p. 484.
Executive Journal, U. S. Senate, 1838-1841.
Treasury Department - Secretary's files.
The San Francisco Chronicle, May 6, 1875, 3:9 (obituary).
The San Francisco Bulletin, February 9, 1864, 1:1.
The Phoenix Herald, September 3, 1891, 4:7.