



BUTTERS James Stewart

Parents: Robert Butters and Isabella Stewart

Siblings: Robert Butters

Birth: 19 February 1832, in Blairgowrie, Perthshire, Scotland

Death: 1 September 1912 Sandringham Melbourne

Marriage:

1. Helen Ellen Spankie, daughter of James Spankie J P and Ellen, in 1853 at Dundee, Angus, Scotland. Helen died on 12 June 1856
2. Matilda O'Neill, daughter of David O'Neill, on 5 November 1860, in Warrnambool, Colony of Victoria. Matilda died in Tasmania in 1878
3. Agnes Stewart Hatterman, daughter of Theodor Hatterman and Fredericke Shaf, in 1882
4. Florence De la Forwood, daughter of Charles Rossit Forwood and Prudence Delafontaine in 1892 in Malvern, Melbourne, Victoria

Immigration: On *Pauline* in July 1853

Children:

- 1.1 Helen b 1854 d 1854
- 1.2 James Spankie b 1855 d 1855
- 3.1 Clina Theodora Stuart b 1883 d 1883
- 3.2 Irene Stewart Beany b 1884 d

Place of Residence: Red Bluff Hotel, Sandringham.

Death & Burial:

The West Australian, Monday 2 September 1912

The death of Mr. James Stewart Butters, which occurred today, removed a characteristic and picturesque figure from the daily life of Melbourne. He was 80 years of age.

The funeral was from the Red Bluff Hotel, Sandringham, on 3 September, with the burial at the St Kilda Cemetery.

Obituary:

The Argus, Monday 2 September 1912

DEATH OF MR J. S. BUTTERS. A PICTURESQUE CAREER.

Though it was not unexpected, the news of the death of Mr. J.H. Butters, which occurred at his home at Sandringham at about half-past 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, will be read with very general regret. Within the last few months Mr Butters suffered from two attacks of pleurisy and pneumonia, but from both of which, despite his age, he recovered after surprisingly short illnesses. A chill contracted not long after his return to health subsequent to the second attack of pleurisy and pneumonia, drove him to his bed again at the beginning of July last, and since that time he has been slowly declining.

The death of Mr. James Stewart Butters, at the age of 83 years, removes a characteristic and picturesque figure from the daily life of Melbourne. It was not what Mr. Butters did which made him of remarkable interest so much as what he was. In his prime, 40 years ago, there was no better man in the city. He was seen everywhere and known to everybody. He was invariably smartly dressed, a fine, soldierly figure, about 6ft. in height, and weighing from 13st. to 14st., with dark hair, which

even the fingers of old age could not whiten. In the mid-Victorian costume, with the frilled ruffles of his shirt-front punctuated with the gleam of diamonds, and frothing out through the open-breasted vests of those days, he was, say those who knew him, a smart looking man, a man to take the eye. This open vest he wore always, with his frock coat and top hat, carrying the mid-Victorian atmosphere with him to his grave. The atmosphere of a generation clung about his tall figure, and arrested the attention of every passer-by.

Born in 1832, he came to Victoria from Blairgowrie, Perthshire, in 1853, a handsome, tall, young man, with experience in the drapery trade to recommend him. He had not been a week in the little city of Melbourne before he was engaged by a Mr. Wiseman (probably one of the old Wiseman Bros. firm) to take charge of a new warehouse in Collins -street. A year later he entered into partnership with a Mr. Wilke, of Warrnambool, and built a drapery store in that town.

But drapery held no fascination for him. He fled from the tedium of dry-goods to the romance of gold, becoming clerk to Edwin Khull and Co., goldbrokers. There he met W G Baillie, and the two young men set up business in stocks and shares under the name of Baillis and Butters. In 1858 the firm became interested in joint stock mining at Bendigo (then Sandhurst). Mr. Butters rose to a position of notice during the next few years. He became a member of the committee of the old Benevolent Asylum, and an active worker in the cause of all the other charities of the city. With J V A Bruce (of Cornish and Bruce, Contractors for the Mundhurst railway), he organised an auction sale of free gifts, which brought in £12,000- 'a new way to pay old debts.' This new way was so successful that it has persisted even to this day, and when church committees hold a 'Bruce' auction they may thank Mr. Butters for the idea as well as the gentleman whose name has been handed down.

In 1861 he associated with James Purves and W H Creswick, boomed Ballarat stock, and over £1,000,000 was invested in the district as the result of their joint efforts that one year. In 1865 he was elected to the Melbourne City Council as the representative of Lonsdale Ward, becoming Mayor in 1867 and holding this office at the time of the visit of H R H the Duke of Edinburgh. The ball he gave, on behalf of the city, at that time is looked back to now by the older citizens as the most gorgeous affair of its kind ever held in Melbourne. It was held in a hall which stood where now the great new library rears itself - a wooden building, which was used for all public functions, as the temporary Town-hall, was not suitable for any great gathering. The guests, in fancy costume, wandered through the corridors of the Picture Gallery, and the decorations were, it is said magnificent.

Mr. Butters was in favour of the purchase of the Yan Yean waterworks by the council, but was overruled in the matter. He was mainly instrumental in the building of the Town-hall and the Western Markets. He was twice elected for Portland in Parliament, and sat until 1870. Then he left Melbourne for a while, and went to Fiji, at the time when constitutional changes were being made in the government, of those islands. Kipling has a little verse heading to one of his chapters about the 'poor exile from Erin' who landed in the new country, and who' ere the steamer which brought him had passed out of hearin' was Alderman Morke, inthrojuein (sic) a bill. With such energy Mr. Butters descended upon the smiling islands in the Pacific. In his brief sojourn of four years he became successively Chairman of Committees and speaker of the old King Thakamhau's Parliament, and having an intimate knowledge of the Standing Orders of the Parliament of Victoria (through having been called to order on most of them) he was in a position to draw up the Standing Orders for the new Parliament, which he did. Having that attained honour in a new country, his thoughts flew back to Victoria, and in 1874 he returned to Melbourne. For a brief period he was a member of the Legislative Council. He founded the Victoria Club in the building opposite 'The Argus' office. It was then, on account of its decorative ironwork, known as 'The Birdcage,' and now is the Victoria Coffee Palace.

In addition to his other interests, he was for a long time a member on the Melbourne Hospital committee, and belonged also to numberless sporting and athletic clubs. He it was who, with other devoted sons brought the game of bowls into Australia and took vast interest in the sending of the first team to England. He lived every day of his years, and the citizens will miss the familiar figure with the frockcoat and top-hat, and curious ancient waist-coat, cut open in the middle.

The funeral will be held tomorrow, the procession leaving the deceased's last residence, Red Bluff Hotel, Sandringham, at half past 2 o'clock for the St. Kilda Cemetery, arriving there at 4 p.m. A masonic service will be held at the graveside.

Life: James Stewart Butters came to Victoria, with experience in the drapery trade, in 1853. After first setting up in business in Melbourne, he came to Warrnambool and set up a business in partnership with James Wilkie. Their shop opened in October 1855 in Timor Street.

In 1860 James married his second wife in Warrnambool. In this year he was involved with others, in setting up a stock exchange in Melbourne.

In 1868 James Butters entered Parliament as the Member for Portland. He was later expelled from Parliament after being involved in a Parliamentary corruption scandal, but was re-elected as the Portland Member.