

HISTORY QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What early Butlerville resident spent 50 years working as a stationary engineer? What was a stationary engineer?

ANSWER

Neri Butler was born December 25, 1847, in Amboy, Indiana. He came to Utah about 1858 with his father and siblings. They settled in South Cottonwood. When Homestead Grants became available in 1869, he settled on what would become the Butler Bench. In the 1870's, he along with his brothers, Leander and Philander filed a claim for a water powered mill near the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. The mill was in operation until sometime after 1890. He also was part owner of a mill in Brighton. That mill was steam powered. In 1884, there was an explosion at that mill that killed one man. He also worked at the Granite Paper Mill before it burned down. Neri moved to Union sometime after 1906. After his wife died, he lived alone before going to live with his daughter Molly Green. He died December 24, 1936.

A **stationary engineer**, also called **power engineer**, is one who operates industrial machinery and equipment that provide energy in various forms. They are responsible for the safe operation and maintenance of this equipment. The trade emerged during the Industrial Revolution and still flourishes today in many different industries. Neri's work with both the water powered and steam powered equipment used in the saw mills and at the Granite Paper Mill, certainly required those skills.