



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Butcher

Samuel Butcher
Born in Hungary

Little is known about Samuel Butcher, but Harriet and Fred Rochlin mention him in their book, *Pioneer Jews: A New Life in the Far West*. Samuel appears to have been one of the few Jewish miners in Leadville during the 1880s:

“A few Jews did make industrial mining their lifelong trade. Sam Butcher, a strapping Hungarian Jew who came to Colorado in 1875, worked in Leadville and later in Cripple Creek hacking out a living and a reputation as an able hard-rock miner and blaster. Aware that miners could be abusively anti-Semitic – he had seen a man beaten for no

other reason than that he was Jewish – Butcher took pains to conceal his identity. A Leadville tailor, however, gave away the Hungarian’s secret. Challenged by a knot of rough miners to cite a single Jew in their line, the tailor could not resist naming his muscular coreligionist. By then, however, Butcher was an accepted member of the hard-rock miners’ fraternity, and the revelation was received with nothing more than surprise and disbelief.”¹

While there are no mentions of a miner Sam Butcher in the census or city records, there is a rag seller who appears in the 1888 city directory of the same name.² Nothing else is known of Sam Butcher in Leadville.

¹ Rochlin, Fred and Harriet. *Pioneer Jews: A New Life in the Far West*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984. Pg. 38.

² 1888 Leadville City Directory