

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Patriot Benjamin Sutton, Sr.

Benjamin Sutton, Sr. was born around 1752 in the Bucklesberry Pocosin of Lenoir County, then part of old Dobbs County, NC. He died in 1837. Benjamin and brothers, John, Jr. and William, were the three proven sons of John Sutton (ca. 1730-bef. 1773). Among the early settlers in the mid-1700s, John was first in his paternal line to migrate to Bucklesberry from Bertie County, NC.

Benjamin lived his entire life in Bucklesberry and flourished with God's hand of blessing. He and beloved wife, Sarah Hardy Sutton (1759-1846), also from Bertie County, nurtured and grew a family of ten children: Elizabeth; Sarah; John; Thomas; William; Nancy; Winifred (Winnie); Mary (Polly); Benjamin, Jr.; and Hardy.

Like his father, Benjamin was a lifelong farmer. By 1850, his five sons and two of his grandsons had amassed 4,200 acres of land in Bucklesberry. Much of it is still owed by descendants today.

Other than devotion to family, the single most important contribution Benjamin made during his lifetime was to his country. He willingly served in the Revolutionary War, indisputably the greatest, most significant military event in American history that secured our nation's freedom, liberty, and independence.

Many fathers and sons from rural communities, including Bucklesberry, bravely served in this great War. Although his father, John, died before 1773, prior to the start of the War, Benjamin voluntarily enlisted as a Private on May 26, 1780. He served in Capt. John Creel's company under the command of Col. James Glasgow. Along with 46 other men from Dobbs County, Benjamin committed to join the fight for independence by signing the following resolution:

"State of North Carolina—We the Subscribers belonging to the Dobbs Regiment of Militia Do acknowledge that we have Severally Voluntarily enlisted into the Service of our Country to Serve in the state of South Carolina for the Space of Three Months after Passing the Limits of the State Agreeable to the late Aud. Bill, and that we have received from the Colonel of the said Regiment the Bounty of Three Hundred dollars each. Witness our hands the 26th day of May, 1780." (*State Archives of North Carolina*, Raleigh)

Under the leadership of Lt. Col. Richard Caswell, Jr., a unit from Dobbs Militia joined the War effort in the Battle of Camden, SC on August 16, 1780 during the three-month period in which Benjamin committed to serve. Although he was poised to fight, his name does not appear in the registry of participants in the Battle.

In recognition of service to his country, the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (NSSAR) officially certified Benjamin Sutton as a Revolutionary War Patriot (No.

339248) in 2019. A memorial service to honor Benjamin and beloved wife, Sarah, was held at the Hardy Sutton Cemetery in Bucklesberry on Saturday, November 7, 2020.

Attended by more than 100 descendants and guests, the service was conducted by officials from the North Carolina Society of the SAR (NCSSAR) and the local Gen. George Washington Chapter in Greenville, some dressed in authentic Revolutionary War uniform. A granite grave marker inscribed with the SAR insignia and the names of both Benjamin and Sarah was unveiled and dedicated.

Wreaths were presented from the NCSSAR, the companion NC Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NCSDAR), the NC Society of the Children of the American Revolution (NCSCAR), and the National Society of the CAR (NSCAR). Professional bagpiper and trumpeter, Robert J. White, career Army veteran and former Green Beret from Raleigh, provided special music.

A musket firing was rendered by Dr. Mike Arnette of Kinston, fourth great-grandson of Benjamin and Sarah Sutton. Following the service, the Bucklesberry community hosted a BBQ meal at the local Ruritan Building for those in attendance.

From Bucklesberry and beyond, untold numbers of descendants honor the life and service of Patriot Benjamin Sutton, Sr. in the War of Independence.