

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

C. S. Wooten Reflections (Part 2)

Council Simmons Wooten (1840–1930) wrote a significant news piece about Bucklesberry and the Sutton families that appeared in an 1886 issue of the *Goldsboro Messenger*. The previous Part 1 article in this series provided a re-print of Wooten's reflections. We continue below with Part 2 of Wooten's original article titled, *Bucklesberry: Some Interesting Notes from Lenoir County*:

“My father although not a lawyer, did most of the legal business for the people of that section. His only fee was a big dish of chicken pie. He used to say that nobody but a Sutton could make a chicken pie fit to eat. If anybody will ever try one of their pies he will come to the same conclusion. I imagine that some of the legal fraternity who read this will think that he was a cheap worker, but I will wager my Sunday hat that if some of them could go down in Bucklesberry and eat a chicken pie made by one of the Suttons, (for the art has been transmitted to this generation) he would think he had received a good and liberal fee.”

“I recollect when I was a boy I went with my father to Hardy Sutton’s [1803–1861] to attend to some business for the old gentleman. When dinner was announced I went to the table and such a profusion of good eating I never saw before spread on one table. At the foot of the table was a dish at least three or four feet long filled with chicken pie.”

“Mrs. Sutton took a stand behind my chair kept piling up the pie on my plate, and telling me that I was eating nothing and that I must be sick. I was young and small and was afraid not to eat, for from the way the old lady piled it on my plate I thought she would be mad if I did not eat it. Now I tell you that you can’t insult me or make me sick by putting something good to eat on my plate, for nature has blessed me with good digestive organs.”

“Insisting on people’s eating is characteristic of the Sutton family. A stranger who is not acquainted with this habit of theirs is liable to get into trouble, for there is danger of eating too much, especially a man who is not accustomed to such sumptuous fare as they spread before him.”

“Last summer one of the Wayne county men went to a reaping at old man Josiah Sutton’s [1810–1898]. He went in the dining room and old Uncle Josiah, who loves to see people eat when they come to see him, took a position at the back of his chair and commenced filling his plate with the good eating, and every time the Wayne county man would slacken in his eating, the old man would tell him he was eating nothing and that he must be sick.”

"The gentleman from Wayne says he thought old Uncle Josiah knew more about what he was eating than he did himself, so he kept piling in. After he went home during the night he had the colic and he had to have a doctor and before he got well the bill amounted to \$30. He says he will never let a Bucklesberry man feed him or scare him into eating too much again, and that they may get behind his chair and threaten and persuade, but he has learned one lesson he will not forget."

"On one occasion I was at Josiah Sutton's [Jr.; 1835–1902] and when we sat down to dinner he commenced apologizing for the small turkey he had. I remarked that I thought he was a very fine one. He replied that according to the unwritten law in Bucklesberry, no one ever killed a turkey that weighted less than 30 lbs. and that his one weighted only 27 lbs. Jo is a widower and is ready and willing to make somebody a good, kind and faithful husband and I can cheerfully recommend him."

"Hardy Sutton, of whom I have had much to say, left several sons, Thomas, Benjamin F., John A., and Julius and Junius Sutton. Thos. Sutton, the oldest, is more like his father than any of them. He is one of the nicest farmers and makes more money according to his piece of land than any man in the county. Benjamin F. Sutton is also a thrifty, enterprising farmer. Both of these gentlemen have excellent wives and are among the best places to visit in the county, for I have been there. They keep up the old fashion of setting out country made brandy and honey before dinner, and yet they are both sober men. I have never visited the three younger brothers, but I intend to do so, for they are chips off of the old tree."

The final Part 3 of C.S. Wooten's reflections of Bucklesberry will appear in next week's issue.