

# Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

## Early Beginnings (Part 5)

The earliest known document that identifies Bucklesberry by name is a 1738 land patent of 150 acres to John Williams in then old Craven County. It stands to reason that colonization of the farm community probably started by 1738, possibly before that year.

Long before the earliest European settlers arrived in Bucklesberry in old Craven County, Tuscarora Indians had occupied the area for many years, as they had the coastal and central Piedmont section of North Carolina. The Tuscarora War of 1711-1713, however, and the culminating battle at Fort Neoheroka in Snow Hill, NC, just a few miles north of Bucklesberry, permanently crippled the Tuscarora.

Nine hundred were killed at Fort Neoheroka, according to [TuscaroraNationNC.com](http://TuscaroraNationNC.com), and "about 250 Tuscaroras fled to New York to join the Iroquois Confederacy, while as many as 3,500 additional Tuscarora sought refuge in the swamps of North Carolina," (para. 50). This remnant continued to reside in their hunting territory villages along the Neuse and Cape Fear Rivers after the war ended. Tuscarora numbers began to dwindle by the mid-1700s, as settlers started trickling into the backcountry of North Carolina.

An abundance of land awaited the earliest settlers upon their arrival in Bucklesberry, then part of the unsettled backcountry of old Craven County, one of the thirteen British colonies at the time. Described by historian-author Dr. Lindley S. Butler, PhD, "'Backcountry' was the term used during the early settlement and colonial periods for the vast interior of North Carolina, located away from the coastline and including both the modern day Piedmont and Mountain regions..." (para. 1)

The exact year that colonization began in Bucklesberry may never be known for certain. As for the Bucklesberry name, genealogist-historian Martha Mewborn Marble (1944-2019), herself a descendant of the Bucklesberry Sutton line, offered a theory that can be substantiated with historical records. She believed the Bucklesberry name likely was brought over by the Herring family, who migrated inland from Bertie County and whose descendants remain landowners in Bucklesberry of Lenoir County today.

Indeed, "Bucklesberry Pocosin" located in the Merry Hill area of Bertie County was established decades before the Bucklesberry of old Craven County. Two communities with the same name, in the same time period, and in the same geographic region of the country, is almost certainly not happenstance.

Ms. Marble's view is supported by research from Herring descendant Dr. Robert A. Herring, MD (1882-1983). In his 1969 genealogical narrative, Dr. Herring contended that available land deeds in Bertie and Chowan Counties during the early to mid-1700s "bear[s] out the tradition extant among succeeding generations of the family that John Herring was one of seven brothers who lived in eastern North Carolina" (p. 3). Joining John were brothers Abram, Anthony, Edward, Samuel, Simon, and Thomas Herring.

Court records easily establish a connection between Herrings associated with land in Bertie County Bucklesberry with some of the same Herrings who obtained land in old Craven County Bucklesberry. Transcribed abstracts of ten Bertie County land deeds dated 1723 to 1757 all reference Bucklesberry Pocosin in Bertie County, and all name Abraham (Abram), John, or Samuel Herring as grantor, grantee, or witness. Interestingly, several of the Herring brothers were issued land patents in or near Bucklesberry in old Craven County during the same general time period.

More on the significance of the Herring family as early settlers of current day Bucklesberry of Lenoir County will be discussed in the next article.