

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Healing Business

Bucklesberry and agriculture go hand in hand. Mention one, and the other immediately comes to mind. From record-breaking crops to prize-winning hogs and poultry, Bucklesberry has amassed an extraordinary record of success in the farming business that has spanned several hundred years.

Beyond farming, however, some Bucklesberrians ventured into other lines of work, for example, the healing business. To practice formally as a doctor or physician, a college education and completion of a medical degree were eventually required by the profession and the State.

Of the handful of families who established Bucklesberry, John Sutton (1730-1773) arrived in the mid-1700s from Bertie County. He had three known sons: Benjamin; John, Jr.; and William. A number of descendants from each of these three Sutton lines became medical professionals. The following are practicing physicians today:

Dr. Michael David Arnette, DDS (Benjamin Sutton line) is a dental surgeon in Kinston. Affiliated with Lenoir Memorial Hospital, he operates a private practice and specializes in oral and maxillofacial surgery.

Dr. Rose Mary Stocks, MD, PharmD (John Sutton, Jr. line) is a professor and Residency Program Director for the Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery Department at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Memphis, TN. She also has a clinical practice in conjunction with LeBonheur Children's Hospital and St. Jude's Research Hospital.

Dr. Frank Morrison Sutton, Jr., MD, MBA (William Sutton line) is an anesthesiologist and Clinical Director for Anesthesia Services and Business Development for Asheville (NC) Anesthesia.

Two Bucklesberry descendants from yesteryear had unusually unique careers in medicine: Dr. Carl Whitt Sutton, MD (John Sutton, Jr. line); and Dr. William Gordon Sutton (Benjamin Sutton line).

Dr. Carl Whitt Sutton (1882-1943) was a great-grandson of John, Jr. and Ferebee Isler Sutton of Bucklesberry. He married Annie E. Koonce from Onslow County. They were parents of three children: Annie K.; Sarah B.; and Carl, Jr. Carl established a medical practice in Richlands, NC. During the 1920s, his doctor's office was located at the People's Bank building.

Over the course of his lifetime, Carl was also a banker and businessman. He was owner of the Ford dealership in Richlands and operated the Carl Whitt Sutton Automotive Showroom. He built two homes in Richlands, one in 1913 and the other in 1938. Although Carl's residence at the time of his death was still in Richlands, his death certificate indicates that he died of cirrhosis of the liver at the Memorial General Hospital in Kinston where he had been a patient for the ten days prior to his death.

Dr. William Gordon Sutton (1860-1943) was a great-grandson of Benjamin and Sarah Hardy Sutton. William married Jessie Frances Quinn from Duplin County. They were parents of six sons: Jesse G.; Thomas D.; Paul M.; Kenneth K.; William W.; and George H. The family lived in White Hall (now Seven Springs) township, where William was the local physician his entire adult life.

In the 1921 edition of the *Directory of the Living Alumni of the University of Virginia* (Lewis D. Crenshaw, Editor), William Gordon Sutton was listed as a student in the Medical Department at UVA.. His last year of study was 1887-1888. Interestingly, he was classified as a non-graduate. In other words, he did not complete the doctor of medicine (MD) degree.

During that time period, physicians who had formal medical education were allowed to use the title of Doctor, even if they did not hold an MD degree. William is buried in the Piney Grove Church Cemetery north of Seven Springs. His grave marker reads, "Dr. William G. Sutton."