

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Clellan Sutton Interview (Part 2)

Local genealogist, Glenn Fields, interviewed the late-Clellan Thomas Sutton (1909–1999) on February 14, 1994, just a few short years before his death. The two-hour, videotaped discussion centered on Clellan's recollections of Bucklesberry and the Sutton family.

Part 1 of the interview was transcribed and published in last week's issue of the *Gazette*. Clellan and Glenn exchanged ideas on where the Bucklesberry name came from, and where the Suttons of Bucklesberry originated.

Part 2 of the interview, provided below, focuses on whether the Suttons of Bucklesberry, the Suttons from the west side of Bear Creek (the line from which Glenn descends), and the Suttons of La Grange were related.

Glenn: "Did you ever know what some of their names were? You heard that..."

Clellan: "Well, there was one part of them named,...Well, my side was named,...Let's see...I know over yonder one side of Suttons came from...his name was John Sutton."

Glenn: "That's what I was thinking."

Clellan: "Mine was named..."

Glenn: "There was a Ben Hardy back down the [Sutton] line there somewhere."

Clellan: "Ben...I think, Benjamin...my great-great-grandfather was named Benjamin Sutton."

Glenn: "Well, mine...my great-great-great-grandfather was Benjamin Sutton also, but he wasn't that Benjamin, and he was Benjamin...from what Estelle's [Sutton Creech] research was...my Suttons and your Suttons didn't tie together."

Clellan: "I don't think so."

Glenn: "But Alma [Lou Spivey Sutton], Mr. Clifton's [Rinehart Sutton, Jr., nicknamed, Nubby] wife, she did a thing on Billy's and Clifton's family."

Clellan: "Now they're kin to us. They were Clifton's [Sr.], Billy's father. That was one of my great-uncles."

Glenn: "Now she [Alma] traced Bill back, and they tied into my family."

Clellan: "They did." [Clellan nodded affirmatively]

Glenn: "And that kind of confused me a little bit because I have never been able to trace it back to....well, I haven't really put a lot of effort into it...of tying...seeing how she [Alma] tied it back in with the...what I call the Bucklesberry Suttons compared to our Suttons, which don't really tie to. The origin is different."

Clellan: "No...I think there's a little difference around here."

Glenn: "I think there is, too....We think about people being in a particular place, if you got the same last name then it seems like you ought to be kin. But when you think about such a long span of time people moved around a lot and they could build a family of Suttons here and then another family of Suttons come, too, and just happened so. I mean it's just like you could live in La Grange and have a name [and] wouldn't be kin to someone else that has the same name."

Note: DNA testing to determine relationships among families would not become available until the 2000s. In 2016, more than 20 years after Glenn's interview with Clellan, Y-DNA test results provided definitive proof that the Suttons of La Grange, the Suttons from the west side of Bear Creek, and the Suttons of Bucklesberry all descended from John Sutton, the first to arrive in Bucklesberry from Bertie County, NC in the mid-1700s.