

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Clellan Sutton Interview (Part 9)

Known generally as a quiet man, nothing would get Clellan Thomas Sutton (1909-1999) chirping like a discussion about his Civil War relics, unless it was sharing information about his Indian artifacts. He was Bucklesberry's resident expert on both topics back in the day.

Local Civil War enthusiast, Glenn Fields of La Grange, knew exactly how to get Clellan to talk. In a 1994 interview of Clellan that was videotaped at his and wife, Pauline Sutton's home in Bucklesberry, it took only one question from Glenn to get Clellan going on the Civil War.

The two-hour long interview captured Clellan's knowledge and recollections of early twentieth century Bucklesberry. Eight previous installments of the interview were published in November-December 2017 issues of *The Weekly Gazette*. Part nine of an edited transcript of the interview is provided below:

Glenn: "Tell me about your...collection...over there, your rifles and stuff [pointing to Clellan's wall display]."

Clellan: "[Chuckling] I tell you, I bought these...about twenty-five years ago, except the two rifles [and] shotgun. All of that's Civil War stuff."

Glenn: "...[My] second and third love is Civil War study in this area."

Clellan: "Everything up there was bought back there when it was a whole lot cheaper."

Glenn: "When you could afford to buy it! The stuff out there is so outrageously high now you can't even hardly...pay high enough. [Someone] was talking about buying a sword, and it cost six hundred dollars, just about any kind of sword that you can get your hands on."

Clellan: "Them bullets right there come from down here at Wyse Fork Battle."

Glenn: "My daughter's boyfriend's daddy has some land down there around Wyse Fork somewhere....and he plowed up a cannon ball. It was like a six-pounder, I think. It was about as big as you could hold in your hand....And he gave me that cannon ball for Christmas. I was tickled to death over that. I didn't have one....I heard him say they found it....But I had no idea I was going to get it for Christmas...."

Clellan: "Has it got a cap in it?"

Glenn: "No, it's a solid ball, but it doesn't have [a cap]."

Clellan: "Solid, you say?"

Glenn: "Yeah, it's just a projectile is all it is. It didn't have an explosive in it. I thought all [cannon balls] had explosives in them. It doesn't have a hole in it either."

Clellan: "If there's something inside....it'd either be a hole in it or either that cap in there, one or the other. I've seen some of both....And I wouldn't be surprised if there wasn't a cap in there. If you go [to] beating on it, it might explode."

Glenn: "I've examined it pretty closely and, of course, it's rusty and rough. But there's no indentation or any gap or evidence of a hole...where there would've been a charge placed in it or a cap....I think it was just a projectile ball."

Clellan: "You know they actually pulled some of those things out of the Neuse River where they used to pull seine....I don't know how. You can't believe one of them would've floated down here to the mouth of [Bear] Creek. And the Hardy's over the River [use] some for door stops. There were some of them [that] had caps in them, and some of them [there'd] be a hole in there where the cap had come out."

Glenn: "Caps comes out, [and] the powder comes out, too,...where they wouldn't be dangerous."