

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Glimpse in Time: 1874 (Part 2)

Bucklesberry enjoyed an unusually mild winter in 1874. According to news reports, the weather was so favorable in Lenoir County that farmers were able to jump-start their plowing in mid-January. The remarkable weather fostered such good health among folks that little sickness and no deaths were recorded.

Also in mid-January, officers for the newly-formed Moseley Hall Grange were installed, one of whom was La Grange townsman and Bucklesberry farmer, Samuel Ivey Sutton (1834-1904). Across the State and rural America, farmers organized associations called Granges to promote farming and community values, ensure competitive prices for crops, and influence State agricultural policies.

The *Goldsboro Messenger* wrote about other happenings in Bucklesberry in 1874. A spring news piece reported widespread planting, suggesting a potentially exceptional harvest ahead:

1874, May 14: "The editor of the [*Kinston*] *Gazette* has recently taken an extended trip to the country and observes the wise decision of the farmers to plant plenty of grain. Broad acres of corn, wheat, oats, rye, etc., greeted us on every hand, and the care with which these various crops were put in demonstrated that our farmers are in earnest, and determined to remain no longer dependent upon other sections for that which they should produce at home." (*Goldsboro Messenger*)

Indeed, farmers were celebrating a bumper corn crop by year's end. Cotton, however, did not fare as well:

1874, November 5: "The season having been favorable the Lenoir [County] farmers have already housed the larger bulk of their cotton crop, and most of it, we presume, is already in the market. The crop, though short, we are glad to learn, is not as bad as was feared it would be ere picking began. The corn crop is generally good, the best since close of the [Civil] war." (*Goldsboro Messenger*)

Other news reported in 1874 was not as positive. In the interim between planting and harvest, two Bucklesberry farmers suffered at the hands of smoke house thieves:

1874, August 6: "The *Kinston Gazette* learns that the smoke houses of Joshua Daley and Herring, two farmers who live in the Bucklesberry section of Lenoir County, were robbed on last Wednesday night. Mr. Herring lost every pound of meat he had, and Mr. Daley about two barrels.

The thieves taking more from Mr. Daley than they could conveniently carry, threw a part of it back, thus leaving him few pieces." (*Goldsboro Messenger*)

An unfortunate family situation occurred in the fall of the year. Thomas (1833-1894) and Ann Herring Sutton (1833-1907), whose household included seven children, posted a notice to sell their plantation, signaling a probable financial hardship:

1874, October 19: "Land For Sale. The undersigned offers to sell his plantation, on which he now resides, in New Hope township, Wayne County, consisting of about 285 acres and the improvements. The land is in a fine state of cultivation, highly productive for cotton, corn, peas, etc., about 125 acres of it cleared. In a good neighborhood and healthy locality. Terms: Part cash and one, two and three years on balance. Thos [Thomas] Sutton, La Grange, NC." (*Goldsboro Messenger*)

Thomas was the son of Bucklesberrian Benjamin, Jr. (1795-1864) and Mary Jane Hines Sutton (unknown-before 1840). Their homeplace was located directly off Alice Warters Road on the west side of Bear Creek along Highway 903.