

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Clellan Sutton Interview (Part 11)

Local historian, Glenn Fields interviewed the late Clellan Thomas Sutton (1908-1999) in 1994. What may be the only videotaped recording of a Bucklesberry patriarch to date, Clellan revealed important information about early-twentieth century life in this old community.

Previous installments of the transcribed interview, published by the *Gazette*, focused on Clellan's knowledge of Bucklesberry's early settlers, how Sutton families on the east and west sides of Bear Creek were related, Pine Bush Road and Pine Bush Landing, country stores, corn and grist mills, one- and two-room schoolhouses, how land has remained in family lines, the construction of roads in Bucklesberry, and Clellan's Civil War relic and Indian artifact collections.

In this part of the interview, Glenn and Clellan discussed tobacco and Clellan's brothers and sisters. Glenn also had a brief exchange with Clellan's wife, Pauline Sutton (1910-1995) about taxes:

Clellan: "As far as raising tobacco I reckon it would have been wild back then." [Clellan's wife, Pauline enters the room.]

Glenn: "Yeah, you know the Indians, they had tobacco already. In fact, [for] the white man, there was tobacco in Spain and Africa, but the Indians already had tobacco over here when the white man came over."

Clellan: "What kind was it? I imagine it was wild."

Glenn: "It was pretty rough."

Clellan: "I imagine it was strong. They smoked it."

Glenn: "It was about like Half & Half [tobacco]. I was reading a book not long ago and it said that an interesting fact was, when the white man came over, they had liquor. And the Indian had tobacco. And the white man didn't have any way of starting the economy. So they took tobacco from the Indian and gave him liquor. They said that tobacco never made the Indian, and it never brought the white man down. But when they traded, tobacco made the white man, but it brought the Indian down. It was right interesting. What each of them had, it wasn't all right until they switched. And the Indian, he couldn't do much with the tobacco himself. Then the white man tried to grow it and made some money with it. And they've been fighting it ever since."

Clellan: "Looks like it."

Glenn: [pauses to talk with Pauline]

Pauline: "We've got to go to La Grange and see about the income tax."

Glenn: "Oh, don't talk about that! I got to get started on mine."

Pauline: "I have never done taxes."

Glenn: "I used to do mine myself. I finally got tired it, and I let somebody else do it now."

Pauline: "Wooh, it's a job, isn't it?"

Glenn: "[I can't] keep up with it." [Pauline exits room; Glenn resumes talking to Clellan]

Glenn: "This land right in here, is this where you were raised and started, your daddy and all that?"

Clellan: "Right over here by Thomas [Sutton]."

Glenn: "Now, were your daddy and Thomas' daddy brothers? Or, were you and Thomas' daddy brothers?"

Clellan: "Thomas' [daddy], yeah, we were brothers."

Glenn: "Mr. Herman [Sutton, Jr., 1915-] was your brother?"

Clellan: "Yeah, Herman, Jr...."

Glenn: "And, Norman [Walker Sutton, 1912-1974], you all [were brothers]?"

Clellan: "And [James] Prentice [Sutton, 1910-1996]."

Glenn: "Prentice is your brother, too? OK. Ever since I've been working out in this area, I got it pretty well down [as far as] who was kin and how they were kin. Every once in awhile I learn something new. I didn't know Mr. Prentice was your brother. I hadn't really thought about it all that much."

Clellan: "And Annie [Elizabeth Sutton, 1921-2004] over here, you know, Parrott Sutton, his wife, is the youngest one. [Preston] Sherwood [Sutton, 1921-1996] married one of them [Gladys Estelle Sutton, 1917-1963]."

Glenn: "And Ms. Annie was your sister. I didn't know that either."

One other brother unintentionally omitted by Clellan was Grover Edward Sutton (1919-1920), infant son of Herman, Sr. (1876-1958) and Lola Estelle Sutton (1884-1972).