

# Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

## Harper's Landing

Bucklesberry has a number of historic landmarks. Some are unnamed, for example, the large tree on the corner of Dawson Mill and Frank Barwick Roads. Planted around 1860 just before the start of the Civil war, it may be the oldest living pecan tree in the community. Still standing tall after numerous hurricanes and wind storms over the years, this tree provided much-needed shade for field workers through the late 1900s.

Other landmarks were purposely named by early residents, such as Slick Rock, Frog Point, and Sutton Seine Beach (Hardy Bridge sandbar). Sometime after 1863, the Ration Ditch was hand-dug by laborers who accepted 'rations' for their wages. Pot Neck, aptly named, is a sharp curve in the Kennedy Home Road on the east side of Bucklesberry that turns northeasterly towards Falling Creek.

Harper's Landing is another noteworthy landmark. Its name, however, is not unique to Bucklesberry. Madison Township in Lake County, OH can trace its roots to a community in the early 1800s originally called Harper's Landing, named after Revolutionary War Patriot Col. Alexander Harper (1744-1798).

Two towns in Texas—Conroe and Fairview—presently have a road named Harper's Landing. On the east coast, there is a Harper's Landing about fifteen miles from Conway, SC by the Waccamaw River that originates in Brunswick County, NC.

Interestingly, a 2006 book titled *Dead Men Don't Lye* authored by Tim Meyers identifies a fictional town in North Carolina named Harper's Landing. Although the State has no real town by this name, Garner, NC has an annexed community called Harper's Landing. No longer recorded on public maps, Wilmington, NC once had a Harper's Landing in 1888. In Pink Hill, NC, there are residents today who have a Harper Landing Drive address.

Harper's Landing in Bucklesberry is not an annexed development, nor is it a road. Rather, like Pine Bush Landing a mile or so up the Neuse, Harper's Landing was a water terminal. In days gone by, it was a stopping point for steamboats and other vessels that transported cargo and passengers to and from Bucklesberry.

Geographically, Harper's Landing is located on the east side of Bucklesberry in the Pot Neck area. Next to the former country store operated for many years by Roland Octavius Dawson, Jr.

(1916-1978) and wife Estelle Haddock Dawson (1919-1984) was a dirt path that stretched directly through a patch of woods to Harper's Landing by the Neuse River.

A local Bucklesberrian recalls her father's memories of Harper's Landing as a functioning River terminal during his lifetime in the early 1900s. Another local resident employed with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the early 1980s witnessed Harper's Landing. He estimated the distance from the top of the landing to the surface of the water to be about twenty feet or more on a typical day.

More on the history and origin of Harper's Landing will be shared in an upcoming Bucklesberry article.