

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Annie Hill Sutton

The Clellan Thomas Sutton (1908-1999) Collection contains more than 300 documents and photographs dated 1748 to 1939. Heralded as one of the largest family albums of its kind, it provides considerable information about the Sutton family of Bucklesberry. Unfortunately, it offers little about other surnamed individuals who intermarried with the Suttons.

Annie Hill Sutton (1807-1881), wife of Hardy Sutton (1803-1861), is a case in point. After communicating with local genealogist William Everett (Mickey) Elmore of Greenville, NC, a twice great-grandson of Annie and Hardy, genealogist Rose Medford Parks of Avery, TX, concluded, "Mickey does not know where Anna Hill came from but possibly Beaufort Co. I don't see her in the Lenoir Co. Hills," (olddobbers.net, undated).

The names of Annie's parents are presently unproven. Although some have speculated she was the daughter of Harmon and Nancy Hill of Greene County, NC, no credible proof has emerged to date. The search to identify Annie's parents, then, rightfully begins with an examination of available documents that reference Annie Hill Sutton herself.

On four double-column pages in the Hardy and Annie Hill Sutton family Bible are names of many relatives, close acquaintances and slaves with birth and death dates. The single reference to Annie (Anna) is significant in that it confirms her birth date: "Anna Hill was born October the 3rd day 1807." As matriarch of the family, many of the hand-written citations in the Bible were probably made by Annie. Oddly enough, the names of her parents with birth and death dates are inexplicably omitted.

The U.S. Census taken in 1850 was the first that named all members and boarders of a household along with the head of household. Prior Censuses named only the head of household but included a tally count of others living in the household. Annie was born in 1807, so she was not listed by name in the 1810, 1820, 1830, and 1840 Censuses.

Forty-three-year-old "Ann Sutton" was first named in the 1850 Census in the household of her husband Hardy Sutton, age 46, along with eleven of their fourteen children, ages five months to 23 years. The Census taker did not include Annie's maiden name Hill nor a middle initial 'H'. There is little doubt, though, that Ann Sutton listed in the 1850 Census was Annie Hill Sutton.

In the 1840 Census, 33-year-old Annie was counted and listed but not named as the oldest female in the household of her husband Hardy, and again in the 1830 Census at age 23. By 1825,

the interim year between the 1820 and 1830 Censuses and the birth year of her and Hardy's first-born Nancy Sutton (married Josiah Wooten), Annie was 18 years old. In the 1820 Census, however, Annie was a 13-year-old adolescent, not yet married to Hardy Sutton, and likely still living with her parents. Her father or widowed mother would have been a Hill head of household named in that Census.

Annie and Hardy lived their entire married lives in the Bucklesberry section of Lenoir County. Courtship during that era generally occurred locally. Therefore, in the 1820 Census year, it stands to reason that Annie's family may also have been living within close geographic proximity to Hardy's parents, perhaps in Lenoir County or possibly in nearby Greene or Wayne County.

More on the search to identify the parents of Annie Hill Sutton in the 1820 and other Censuses will be shared in the next Bucklesberry article.