

# Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

## Clellan Sutton Interview (Part 1)

Clellan Thomas Sutton (1909–1999) lived his entire life in Bucklesberry. An honorable man and respected farmer, he never had an opportunity to attend college. But his keen abilities and leadership skills were evident early on. At the young age of 21, he became the Sunday School superintendent at Hickory Grove Church in Bucklesberry, a position he held admirably for decades.

Clellan was widely regarded as the Bucklesberry historian. He recognized the importance of preserving old family documents that had been passed down for generations. In the 1930s, Clellan obtained a handwoven basket from his grandparents' home that contained about 300 documents spanning nearly 200 years from 1748 to 1939. These papers have been recently transcribed and are now available on the worldwide web at [www.suttonancestry.com](http://www.suttonancestry.com).

A few years before his death on February 14, 1994, local genealogist, Glenn Fields, interviewed Clellan by videotape at his home on Kennedy Home Road. Discussed were topics related to Bucklesberry and the Sutton family. With this article, and in others to follow, edited transcripts of this video will be presented:

Glenn: "I was interested in anything you knew about the people who came here and settled in Bucklesberry and things you've heard down through the years. I've read Estelle [Sutton Creech's] book and gotten a general idea about things and how Bucklesberry got settled. But I know you've heard down through the generations how it got settled and some of the stories about it and how it was back then. If you will, just tell me what you know about Bucklesberry getting started and discovered."

Clellan: "Well, as far as I know, I think the Suttons are Irish. And, as far as I know, [this community] got its name from the Pocosin, Bucklesberry Pocosin."

Glenn: "Where was that?"

Clellan: "It's over there between here and La Grange."

Glenn: "Near La Grange. That was...one thing I was going to ask you, if you knew where the name Bucklesberry came from."

Clellan: "Back there...it was known as Bucklesberry Pocosin."

Glenn: "The reason I was asking is I've got a map. It's a North Carolina State map, but it's one that showed the lay of the land. It's got elevations and all on it. And over there in Bertie County, over in the northeastern part of the State, there were a lot of Suttons who migrated down the coast from New Jersey and down that area. They settled...in [Bertie County]...back in the 1600s and 1700s. And there's an area on that map that's called Bucklesberry Pocosin...in Hyde County or Bertie County somewhere. What I was thinking was probably some of the Suttons might have migrated over here and brought that name with them."

Clellan: "No, I don't think so, but there are a bunch of Suttons over that way, ...where you are talking about. I think the ones here, as far as I am concerned, have always been right in here."

Glenn: "Local then."

Clellan: "There are Suttons are all over the world, as far as I know. But they ain't all kin!"

Glenn: "No, I don't think so either because...the origin of Sutton name, when people started taking last names way back when...it was a variation of South Town from what I understand reading the history books. And South Town could have been a town, or it could have been south of town, or it could have been south of this town or...south of another town."

Clellan: "Well, I think the Sutton's name is just like the Smith's."

Glenn: "Yeah, I think so, too."

Clellan: "Or some other's name. They took that name after awhile. But I think they are scattered all over. I think most of the Suttons here...this bunch has been in here ever since the forefathers came over."

Glenn: "I think you're right."

Clellan: "I think the very first of our people are even buried here. We have a graveyard over here [Hardy Sutton Cemetery] and over there at the Barwick's [John Sutton Cemetery]....If I know anything about it, ...the first ones are buried there and lived there."

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Clellan Thomas Sutton (1909–1999)

