

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Clellan Sutton Interview (Part 13)

The leading patriarch of Bucklesberry for many years, Clellan Thomas Sutton (1908-1999) was the historian for the community, an honorary position he held with great pride. No one at the time knew more about Bucklesberry, its people, and its origin than Clellan.

For purposes of preserving his knowledge for posterity, Glenn Fields of La Grange interviewed Clellan by videotape in 1994. Facing the camcorder with extraordinary calmness and sharp recollection ability, Clellan answered questions from Glenn. In the transcribed and edited segment of the interview that follows, Clellan and Glenn share information about the famous mineral spring water from Seven Springs (formerly, White Hall), then part of the outskirts of Bucklesberry:

Clellan: "Seven Springs."

Glenn: "Did you ever go to...[the other] springs in there called, Ninth Springs?"

Clellan: "Oh, I've heard of it. I know where the [road] sign is that points in there."

Glenn: "I've never been there."

Clellan: "I've never been there [either]."

Glenn: "[People say] there was another hotel up there. Alice Price owned the farm. It was always closed. You couldn't go back there, you know. I never have been back there....About when did the [mineral] springs end over there [in Seven Springs]? Do you remember?"

Clellan: "When people started getting cars. About 1924-25."

Glenn: "So you'd go somewhere else then?"

Clellan: "About that time they were opening up the coast [Atlantic Beach area], you know!"

Glenn: "Did you ever go over there much to the [mineral] springs?"

Clellan: "Ole [Morgan] Maxwell. He's a big fellow to deal with! Yeah, I haven't been there lately, but I've been there a lot of times to try some of that spring water."

Glenn: "When you were a real young man, did you go to any of the happenings they had over there [in Seven Springs]?"

Clellan: "I used to...I been over there a few times with them. I don't remember too much about it. But I remember going. That was about in the late...about in 1918-19-20, along in there."

Glenn: "About the time [my] daddy [Roland Fields, Jr., 1920-1999] was born. He was born in 1920. Well, Mr. Morgan Maxwell, he was the one who owned the [mineral springs]. He's been dead for ten years, I reckon. But he wouldn't ever let anybody go down there. You could hardly get out of your car on the road!"

Clellan: "Well, that's the way it is over there nowadays."

Glenn: "Yeah, they don't want you messing with [the mineral springs] now either."

Clellan: "I've been there a few times when he [Maxwell] was in there loading up them jugs he sells. You could go in there. I've been there to get me a big jug of water for a quarter or fifty cents or something. But he was a cranky somebody."

Glenn: "I know. Cecil Burke [1924-2010] and I went over there one day. Cecil just wanted me to take him around, you know, on a tour. And I took him over there, and he wanted to stop down there at the springs. And he [Maxwell] was down there then, and we pulled up. We didn't even hardly get stopped good when he was over there wanting to know what we wanted. But I told him and explained to him that Cecil was interested in it [mineral springs] and all that. He was just as nice as he could be then. He took us over there, and told Cecil all about the spring house."

Clellan: "And everything there is just like it was back yonder. You got provisions there on the [Neuse] River banks, you know....It's in right good shape where they...[were] opened all the way around in there."

Glenn: "It was in good shape. I don't know how good of shape it is now. They've let it grow up so bad in there that you can hardly see it anymore."

Clellan: "Yeah, all grown up. I know it is."