

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Animal Stories

Human interest stories today focus on unsung heroes, victims, needy people, exceptional achievement, even people and their pets, according to Press Gazette. But in nineteenth and early-twentieth century rural Bucklesberry, where life revolved around the farm, animal stories were not uncommon. This week, we provide reprints of some of the more unusual and humorous newspaper articles about Bucklesberry folks and animals, originally published between 1879 and 1924, and quoted in-full.

1879–December 25: “One of our Bucklesberry subscribers says his neighbor D. Wood Jr...realized that the time has now come to cease frivolities and go to work, has recently traded off a beloved fiddle to John Holland for a good old steady bull. He lays down the fiddle and the bow. And he takes up his shovel and his hoe. For the time has now come when all will have to work. Though there’s nothing but a bull to make a show.” (Kinston Journal)

1880–January 8: “We learn that three of our Bucklesberry neighbors—W. L. Kennedy, A. T. Kennedy and D. Wood Jr., on reading the article in last weeks’ JOURNAL on the inhumanity of bird hunting, went forth and killed 175 birds in one hunt. Quite a commentary on the influence of the JOURNAL!! However it was pretty sharp shooting.” (Kinston Journal)

1881–February 17: “[Josiah] Sutton, down in Bucklesberry, don’t object to bird shooting anymore. D. Wood and Dr. Parks paid him a visit last week by special invitation. They bagged 25 birds, and “Joe” was well pleased.” (Kinston Journal)

1881–July 14: “A runaway that bid fair to be serious, took place at, or near, the township gate near Mr. Joel Elmore’s on Tuesday of last week. A gentleman, after leading his horse through turned to close the gate when the horse became frightened and ran nearly half mile. The horse was stopped by Mr. Junius E. Sutton. A little girl was in the buggy at the time. No damage, except severe fright.” (Kinston Journal)

1883–July 12: “The Free Press asks can any Lenoir county farmer make the same statement as ‘one of Nash county’s most successful farmers.’ Yes, Thomas Sutton, a farmer for over twenty-five years in the Bucklesberry section of this township, has never bought a pound of meat or lard, nor one bushel of corn or wheat, or one pound of flour, for his own use, and now has a goose with her second brood of goslings hatched by her from eggs laid by her this spring. It is rarely the case when a friend cannot get a barrel of corn or ham or bacon from him. The Wilson Advance will have to trot out another man.” (New Berne Weekly Journal)

1888–January 21: “One day this week Miss Laura Wood, a young lady living in the Bucklesberry section of Lenoir county, shot and killed a deer in the yard of her home.” (Goldsboro Argus, reprinted in The Smithfield Herald)

1902–August 4: “Master Phil Moore has a large owl in a chicken coop on exhibition in front of his father’s store. The owl is one of the largest that has been brought to Kinston in years. It was caught in the Bucklesberry section near Falling Creek. It caught seventeen chickens though, before entrapped in steel.” (The Daily Free Press, Kinston)

1903–January 2: “Bucklesberry can boast of fine crops and crowing roosters, for Mr. Gordon Sutton has a brown leghorn rooster only five weeks old that crows. (The Daily Free Press, Kinston)

1914–May 16: “Last Thursday a [man] killed a bald eagle near Hickory Grove Church in Bucklesberry, that measured 7 feet from tip to tip and weighed 11 pounds. He had claws that contracted measured 2 inches in length and when extended would reach 7 inches. It is the first bird of this species seen in these parts in some time and it was generally believed that they had become extinct. For some time the farmers in this vicinity have been suffering the loss of young animals and it is believed that the eagle was the cause of the disappearance. When exhibited on our street he attracted quite a deal of attention.” (La Grange Sentinel, reprinted in The Charlotte News)

1924–April 11: “Two dogs played havoc with a flock of twenty turkeys in the Bucklesberry section near here and Herman Sutton, owner of the deceased gobblers filed suit against Leslie and Leon Rouse for the sum of fifty dollars.” (The Progress, Enfield)

Caption for accompanying photograph:

Bettie Ann Barwick Sutton (1884-1937), left, and Charlie Sutton (1883-1945) of Bucklesberry seated in the family’s barouche, a buggy with retractable cover, pulled by a beautiful jet black horse. (1910 photograph, Clellan Sutton Collection)

