

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Winter 1890-1891

The most life-threatening season of the year in nineteenth century America was winter. Severe weather placed folks at risk for food supplies and shelter. Blogger, Kylie Ora Lobell (2017) rightly noted, "Survival was anything but guaranteed. People had to take extreme measures just to get through the cold and snow."

The winter of 1890-1891 was one of the coldest of all time worldwide. The U.S. experienced some record-breaking weather, for example, a historic snowstorm in Roanoke, VA on December 16, 1890 that dumped three feet of snow. The most intense, frigid weather, however, occurred on the other side of globe:

1891, January 29: "A violent blizzard has caused great suffering in Europe. In Great Britain, France, Germany and Austria the weather is the coldest ever known..." (*New Berne Weekly Journal*)

Winter down South in eastern North Carolina was generally mild to moderate. No direct weather reports are available for the winter of 1890-1891 in Bucklesberry. But news from nearby towns of Goldsboro and New Bern during the winter months of December, January and February provide a glimpse of the cold season that Bucklesberry likely experienced:

1890, December 7: "The weather is just splendid, and the farmers are making it count for all it is worth." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1890, December 10: "The predicted cold wave came true. There was rain, and some wind and snow and it was cold. In view of the accounts of cold weather elsewhere we are not having it as bad as might be expected." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1890, December 11: "The cold wave got in on time. The signal service man [weather observer-forecaster] is improving, and so is the weather." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1890, December 17: "Owing to the inclemency of the weather not many country people were in the city yesterday, and consequently not much business was done." (*Goldsboro Daily Argus*)

1890, December 25: "The weather is beautiful. Our Heavenly Father has been propitious and the land has brought forth abundantly. Let us with grateful hearts acknowledge His goodness and celebrate His praise in this season of festivity." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1891, January 1: "Mr. E. L. Travis, of Halifax, is on a visit to our town, not exactly to see our country...but one of our lady teachers who is from his town. He spent Christmas with her, and this rainy weather is justifiable cause to keep him in doors..." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1891, January 7: "Cold weather has given a new impetus to trade....The resources of the South have become better known than ever before, and their development in the immediate future will be much greater than at any former period..." (*Goldsboro Daily Argus*)

1891, January 29: "The [Winter] Fair race track [in New Bern] as first laid out lacked a little of being a third of a mile....With another week or ten days at most of fair weather all the work will be completed." (*New Berne Weekly Journal*)

The cold, but pleasant temperatures eventually plummeted during the final days of January, and February would usher in a cold snap just before springtime. More on the winter of 1890-1891 in next week's Bucklesberry article.