

## **Chapter 25 A View of Tuscarora**

The North Carolina Gazetteer lists Tuscarora as being settled circa 1825 and named for the Indians who formerly lived in the area.<sup>1</sup> Craven County deeds name several families living in the area prior to 1800. Some of the names found on deeds from the 1790s are Benejah Bogey, Abraham Taylor, Solomon Wetherington, Andrew H. Richardson, David Hudler, James Mackelroy, and Francis Moore.

The Bogeys lived on the southernmost prong of Bachelor Creek near SR 1224, Tuscarora Rhems Road. The Bogey home was known as the Red House during the Civil War, and appears in Union army records. The home is long vanished but the Bogey-Richardson cemetery remains. Marcus Cicero Bogey 1798 – 1868, buried in the family plot there, was a wealthy farmer and the executor of Susanna Davis Wetherington's estate in 1840.

Abraham Taylor, Jr. received a grant in 1785 for 640 acres on Bachelor Creek. Numerous Taylors lived in Tuscarora in the early 1800's and were connected to the Wetheringtons by several marriages.

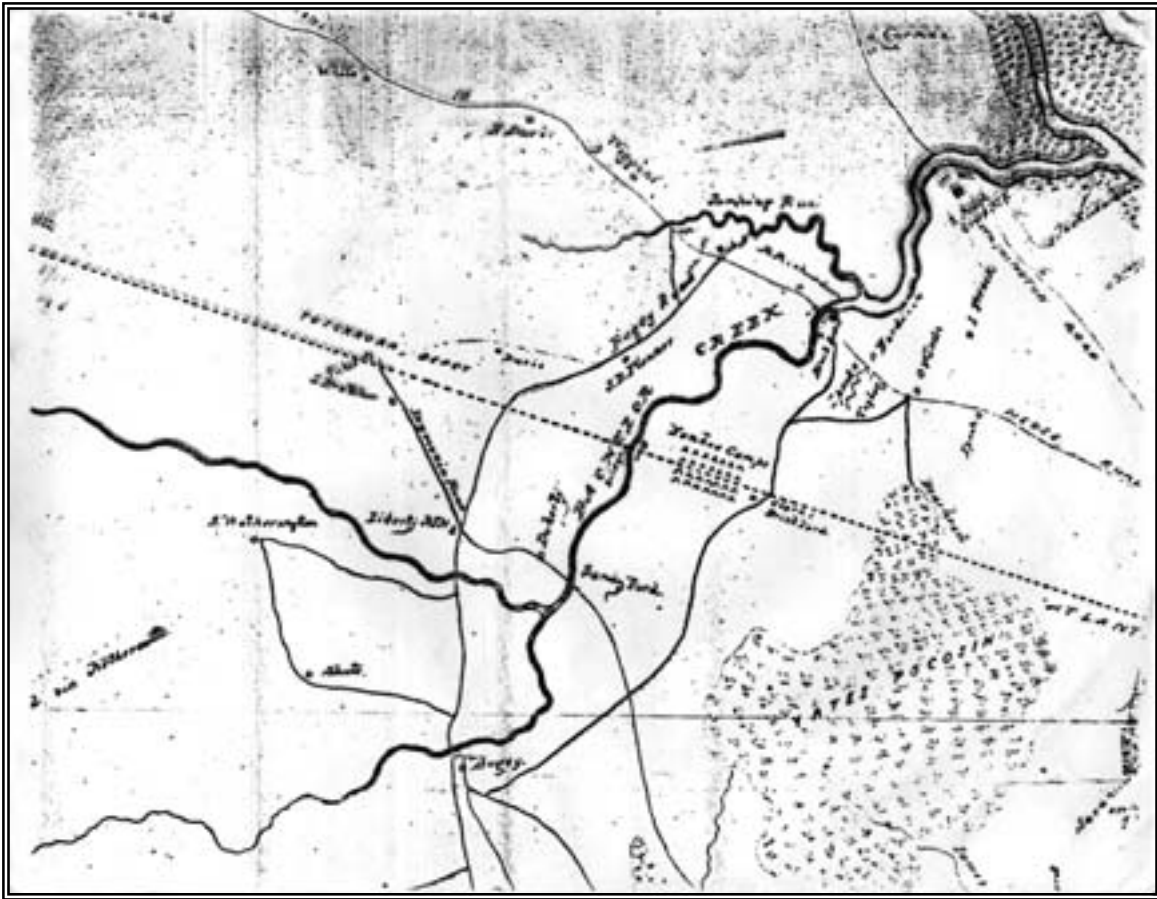
Ancestors of the Davis family of the Asbury area lived in Tuscarora in the early 1800s. Members of Another prominent Craven family, Andrew, Richard, and John H. Richardson also had sizeable land holdings there.

One family story relates the name of Bachelor Creek to early, unmarried Wetherington brothers, however the name is most likely of Swiss Palatine origin, and an alternate spelling, Batchelder's Creek, also appears in early records. The name Bachelor Creek appears on the Moseley map of 1733, at least 50 years before the Wetheringtons arrived in the Tuscarora area of Craven County.

The name Tuscarora does not appear in early deeds but many watercourse names still identifiable are named. The most often used references are Bachelor Creek, Deep Branch, Hudler's Pond, Tomahawk Branch, Beaverdam Branch, and Limbo Branch. The name Rollover Creek does not appear until the Civil War, prior to the 1860's it was called Limbo Branch. The term Rollover first appears to have been used for an area along a section of Limbo Branch. The name Rollover Creek appears to come into use as the prevalent name for the watercourse and area after the Civil War.

Tomahawk Branch was a prong of Bachelor Creek north of the Liberty Meeting House (Gethsemane church) and south of the Atlantic and NC railroad. The construction of the US 70 highway by-pass in the 1970s all but obiterated the old watercourse.

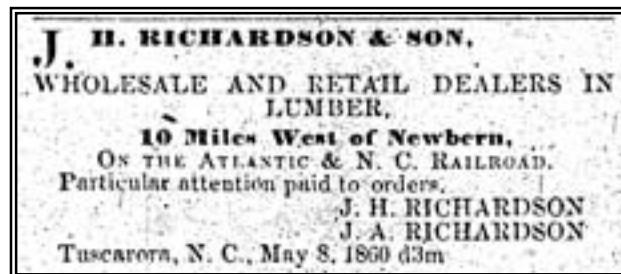
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**Figure 56** *Lt. Colonel Guion Map of Tuscarora*

A Confederate Civil War map (c. 1862-1864) shows the Clarks and Tuscarora area. Locations include Solomon Wetherington, Jr., Marcus C. Bogey, Bratcher, Shute, and others. (Excerpt from a larger map of the county drawn by Lt. Col. Guion from memory, from the Perkins Library Collection, Duke University)

The Tuscarora area began to prosper with the advent of the Atlantic and North Carolina railroad during the late 1850s. A depot was built in Tuscarora, and with the new transportation mode available, the area became a timber resource and the Richardsons operated a lumber business.



**Figure 57** *Early Tuscarora Advertisement, 1860*

Many of the land holders made a living from the naval stores business, turpentine resin was collected from the pines, tar kiln beds, aka “tarkle beds”, were used to process pitch, and others earned a living as a cooper, producing barrels for turpentine shipment.

In addition to the small landowners, others such as Solomon Wetherington, Jr. had numerous enterprises. Solomon raised several crops, held 18 slaves, and also was a producer of turpentine. In 1850, Solomon owned 2,000 acres and produced 1500 barrels of turpentine with 9 laborers earning an average wage of 90 dollars a month.<sup>2</sup>

During the Civil War and during early Reconstruction, the area was a lawless place. No civil authority existed and either side seized whatever valuables or commodities they could forage from the local residents. An account from 1867 exists where Solomon Wetherington, Jr. stood down a gang of Negro pillagers. On the other hand, the same paper lists an account of the murder of Reubin Bratcher while tending his turpentine boxes in the pinewoods.

*From the New Bern Journal of Commerce, July 23, 1867:*

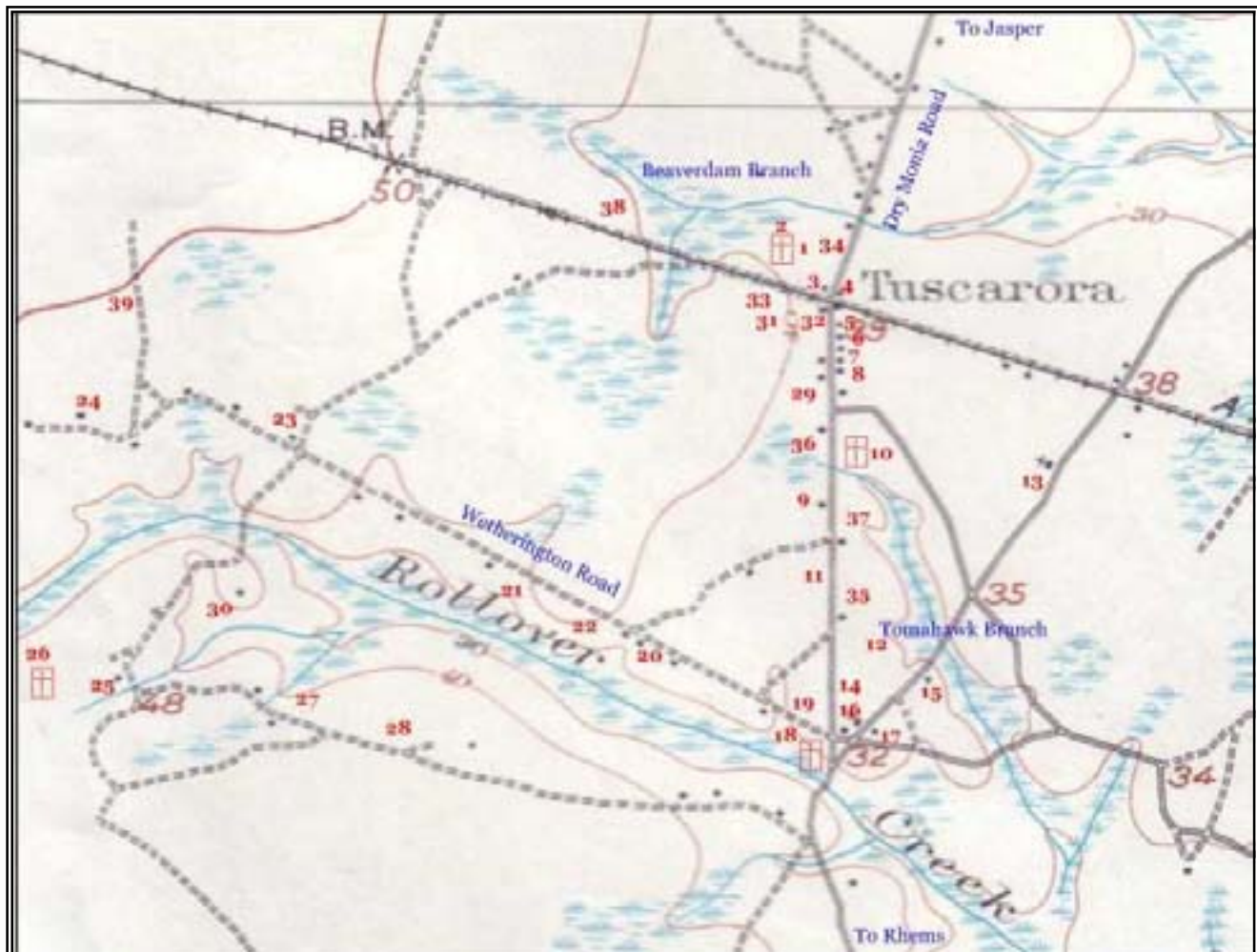
We learn by a passenger on the train last evening that still another **Robbery** has ben perpetrated in the region of Tuscarora, about 10 miles from the city. We did not learn the name of the party robbed, but hear that they took everything he had. This was night before last. On yesterday in broad daylight, four negroes went to the residence of Mr. **Solomon Wetherington** near Tuscarora, but Mr. Wetherington not showing any fear they departed. It was thought to be the party that did the robbing the night before. <sup>3</sup>

**Another Murder** – We are again called upon to record another atrocious murder committed on the person of **Reubin Bratcher** at Bachelor Creek in this county and almost within site of the steeples of this city. The murder was committed on Saturday last while Mr. Braches [Bratcher] was in the woods chipping turpentine boxes. It is supposed to be the work of . . . . Sturgiss and as the murdered man was one of the most important witnesses against Sturgiss, and as it is not probable he would have been shot for money or valuables at such a distance in the woods while at hard work. <sup>4</sup>

Law and order gradually returned and in 1882 a post office was established by the railroad. A listing of the post masters for Tuscarora, NC: <sup>5</sup>

Christopher C. Wetherington	5 Oct 1882
Robert A. Dillon	3 Apr 1884
James M. Moore	31 May 1892
Thomas A. Dillon	28 Dec 1900
Hattie Dillon, Acting	29 Apr 1931
Hattie Dillon	21 Jul 1931
Discontinued	15 Feb 1938

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**Figure 58** Map of Tuscarora, NC circa 1930

#### Map Legend

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|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 John C. Moore Farm     | 14 Jackson Home              | 27 Mary Civils Wetherington |
| 2 Moore Cemetery         | 15 Joyner Home               | 28 Leon & Retta Cook        |
| 3 PO and Tom Dillon Home | 16 Gethsemene FWB Ch.        | 29 Mary Bratcher Webster    |
| 4 RR Freight Depot       | 17 Herman E. Stewart Home    | 30 Wiley A. Moore, Jr.      |
| 5 OHP Wetherington Store | 18 Cemetery                  | 31 Wiley A. Moore, Sr.      |
| 6 Wm. A. Adams Home      | 19 Harvey Griffin Home       | 32 Earl S. Weeks            |
| 7 William & Marion Cook  | 20 Abner Wetherington        | 33 Clifford E. Moore        |
| 8 Methodist Church       | 21 John & Wealthy Taylor     | 34 Sutton Home              |
| 9 Noah Wetherington      | 22 Nettie Eubanks Howell     | 35 Widow Jackson            |
| 10 Bratcher Cemetery     | 23 OHP Wetherington          | 36 Nathaniel Thomas Weeks   |
| 11 Tuscarora School      | 24 Fred & Marie Morton       | 37 Skinner Farm             |
| 12 Stewart Cemetery      | 25 Solomon Wetherington, Jr. | 38 James M. Register        |
| 13 Church (Black)        | 26 Solo Wetherington Cem     | 39 Josephus S. Wetherington |

1. **John Moore Farm** - located north of the railroad near Beaver Dam Branch, home place of John Moore family.
  2. **Moore Cemetery** - located on the Moore farm above, the oldest known interment is John Moore, born 1816, and there are numerous unmarked graves.
  3. **Tuscarora Post Office** – was located in the northwest corner of the railroad and Drymonia Road. There were several postmasters, Thomas Dillion served thirty years, from 1900 to 1931 and his wife, Hattie Smith Dillon, superseded him until the post office was discontinued in 1938.
  4. **Atlantic & NC Railroad Depot** - was located in the northeast corner of the railroad and Drymonia Road.
  5. **Oliver Wetherington Store** – was located in the southeast corner of the railroad and Drymonia Road.
  6. **William Allen Adams House** - located south of the railroad, property was in this area was acquired by W. A. Adams from Amos Wetherington in 1885. The date of the structure is unknown.<sup>1</sup>
  7. **William and Mariam Cook Home** – located south of the railroad the house was later purchased by Levi Norris.
  8. **Tuscarora Methodist Church** – Originally the Baptists and Methodists shared the use of the Liberty Meeting House, a new Methodist structure was built about 1890 on this site, the church became inactive in the 1960-70s. It has been converted into a private residence.
  9. **Noah Wetherington** – the home was located on the west side of the present US 70 bypass and was relocated during the highway construction. Noah's son, Elbert Ray Wetherington operated the farm in the 1930's and sold it to his brother-in-law J. Milton Speight. It remained in the Speight family until the property was acquired by the highway right-of-way. Levi Ricks purchased the house and relocated the structure to Clarks, NC.
  10. **Bratcher Cemetery** – was located on the northeast side of the current US 70 highway interchange. The highway reconstruction removed the known graves to the Gethsemane Church cemetery. A listing of the graves removed from the site exist, only two infant grave markers survived the relocation.
  11. **Tuscarora School** – was located on the southwest side of the current US 70 highway interchange. The wooden frame L-shaped structure contained was 2-3 schoolrooms and was built about 1881.
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12. **Stewart Cemetery** – located on the southeast side of the current US 70 highway interchange. The oldest known interment is John Stewart, born 1809. The cemetery fell into disuse after the 1920s and many wooden markers have since disappeared. The Gethsemane Church now maintains the cemetery and this genealogical and historical resource is being preserved.
  13. **Unnamed Church** – A dirt road once existed and ran from the Gethsemane church to the railroad, east of Tuscarora. A soil survey map of the area in 1902 locates a church on this road.
  14. **Jackson Home** – located adjacent to the Gethsemane Church, the Jackson family once occupied this wooden structure.
  15. **Joyner Home** – was located on the now grownover road behind the Stewart Cemetery.
  16. **Gethsemane Free Will Baptist Church** – established in 1890, is a wooden frame structure with additions. Reportedly the Liberty Meeting House, was moved from the southwest corner of the current intersection to the church's present northeast corner location. One tradition states the current church incorporated the older building into its structure.
  17. **Herman E. Stewart Home** – located on the south side of Gethsemane Church Road, the home was built about 1910-1925.
  18. **Gethsemane Cemetery** – Also referred to as the Wetherington cemetery, this cemetery has been known as the Gethsemane Church cemetery in more recent years. Once the site of the old Liberty Meeting House, the oldest known interment is Rebekkah (Wetherington) Taylor 1820 – 1898.
  19. **Harvey Griffin Home** – was located in the northwest corner of the Gethsemane FWB Church intersection.
  20. **Abner B. Wetherington Home** – was located on Wetherington Road (now Rollover Creek Road). An abandoned silo remains on the old homeplace.
  21. **John and Wealthy Taylor** – located on the south side of Rollover Creek Road in a group of pines. The wooden home and detached kitchen was built about 1870-1880 by John Ed Taylor. The ruins of John E. Taylor's woodwork shop is nearby the house.
  22. **James R. and Nettie Eubanks Howell** - located on the south side of Rollover Creek Road, date unknown.
  23. **Oliver Hazard Perry Wetherington** – once owned a house on the north side of Rollover Creek Road, now demolished.
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24. **Fred and Marie Morton** - lived at end of Rollover Creek Road, the home no longer exists, a modern two story home stands on the site.
  25. **Solomon Wetherington, Jr** – built about 1850, the home has been extensively modified from its original design.
  26. **Solomon Wetherington Cemetery** – Also known as the Griffin Cemetery, the cemetery is on a trail behind the horse barn on the old homestead. The oldest known interment is Solomon Wetherington 1761 – 1840. Many wooden markers known to have existed in the 1920-30s have deteriorated completely. Old Wetherington deeds also refer to the cemetery in 1820 and in the 1840's as the old cemetery. The oldest known interment is Mary Moore, 1<sup>st</sup> wife of Solomon Wetherington, died 1822.
  27. **William H. Wetherington** – the home of William and wife Mary Civils, was located on the south side of Rollover Creek, sometimes referred to as “across the creek”.
  28. **Leon and Retta Cook** – an abandoned, small wooden structure on the south side of Rollover Creek still remains. Leon and Retta Cook lived here in the early 1900's.
  29. **John Webster** – the home was located on the west side of SR 1224 in Tuscarora, was the home of John Webster and wife Mary Bratcher Webster.
  30. **Wiley A. Moore, Sr** – was located south of the railroad in a now overgrown area, the homesite of Wiley “Gus” Moore and wife Nancy Shepard Stewart.
  31. **Wiley A. Moore** – lived in a house once located on the south side of Rollover Creek, across from the Solomon Wetherington homeplace.
  32. **Earl S. Weeks** – the home was located on the southwest corner of the intersection of SR 1224 and the railroad.
  33. **Clifford E. Moore** – also lived on the old Wiley A. Moore homeplace south of the railroad.
  34. **Sutton Home** – located north of the railroad near the John Moore farm.
  35. **Widow Jackson** – lived in a small wooden home once located between the Stewart cemetery and SR 1224.
  36. **Nathaniel Thomas Weeks** – the home was located on the west side of SR 1224.
  37. **Skinner Farm** – was located on the east side of the current US 70 highway bypass
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38. **James M. Register** – the farm and home was located west of Tuscarora near the current firetower.
39. **Josephus S. Wetherington** - Josephus' father Abner owned a small house on a lane at the end of Wetherington Road (Rollover Creek Road). Josephus and wife Amy Register lived there for a time.