

Bucklesberry, Back in

Lillian Sutton Perry (Part 13)

By the time Lillian Sutton Perry (1864-1946) and Daniel Elijah Perry (1857-1897) married in 1885, Dan had already established an impressive resume. As provider for their home, he maintained his law practice and his position as a U.S. Commissioner while continuing his involvement in politics.

The couple were richly blessed with five children. Although well-educated, Lillian laid aside career aspirations and dedicated herself unconditionally to homemaking and motherhood. Public reports about Lillian and Dan during their nearly twelve years of marriage are sparse:

1887, January 29: "W. B. Griffin of Dover was before U.S. Commissioner D[aniel] E. Perry last week charged with selling liquors without a license. The evidence showed that the prosecution was malicious on the part of the informing witness and Mr. Griffin was discharged." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1887, August 4: "Some time ago a mad dog in Lenoir County bit several valuable horses, belonging to farmers. One of these horses, the property of Mr. D[aniel] E. Perry, has died of hydrophobia, after suffering the most horrible agonies." (*Weekly State Chronicle*, Raleigh)

1895, November 23: "State vs. Red Joyner....There are 90 or more witnesses on each side....The defendant is charged with setting fire to Mr. B. N. Fields' stables, and his conviction would necessarily implicate others. Great interest is manifested in this case....the defense [is represented] by Mess. T. C. Wooten and D[aniel] E. Perry..." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1895, December 25: "John Franklin Woodard...who worked for Mr. D[aniel] E. Perry jumped out of the cart he was driving Saturday and got tangled up in the lines and thrown down. The cart ran over him, breaking an arm and a leg." (*The Wilmington Messenger*)

One of the last two known public records that named Dan a few weeks before his untimely death reported an overnight stay in Raleigh, likely business-related:

1897, March 10: "Yarborough House [Hotel] Arrivals....D[aniel] E. Perry, Kinston..." (*The News and Observer*, Raleigh)

Lillian's marriage to Dan was short-lived. At the time of his premature death, their children were from one to eight years of age. Two published obituaries reported his passing:

1897, April 6: "Death of a Member of the Kinston Bar. Kinston is called upon to mourn the death of one of her best citizens. Daniel E. Perry, member of the law firm of Jackson & Perry, died of pneumonia at his home here at 8:30 o'clock p.m., Saturday, April 3, after a severe illness of two weeks. He was member of the Methodist church, and the funeral will be held from his residence this afternoon, conducted by his pastor, Rev. J. A. Lee." (*The Wilmington Messenger*)

1897, April 9: "Mr. D[aniel] E. Perry died Saturday night...aged 39 years. He was buried with Masonic honors Monday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock. Rev. J. A. Lee read the burial service at the residence, and also at the grave, assisted by Dr. H. D. Harper. The burial was attended by a large crowd.—*Kinston Free Press (King's Weekly, Greenville)*

Dan's love and devotion to family was evidenced by his strong work ethic. A wise steward of earnings, returns from his investments more than sufficiently met the needs of his surviving widow and children. The value of his reported estate was equivalent to approximately \$1.27 million in current purchasing power:

1897, April 9: "The *Kinston Free Press* notes the death of D[aniel] E. Perry, a member of the Kinston bar. He left an estate worth \$40,000, including \$13,000 insurance." (*Asheville Citizen-Times*)