

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Lillian Sutton Perry (Part 20)

The early, untimely death of Daniel Elijah Perry (1857-1897) left Lillian Sutton Perry (1864-1946) widowed with five young children. A woman of impeccable character, she found the strength to pick up the pieces of her life and move forward in caring for the children and overseeing family business.

Lillian never married again. Understandably, she may have grieved long after the death of her husband. Far from recluse, though, she was sociable and did not shy away from the public eye.

By the turn of the century, Lillian was traveling and enjoying outings, sometimes accompanied by her children. In 1900, two of her trips were reported:

1900, June 14: "Rev. C. W. Howard, Mrs. Lillian Perry and children, Misses Hattie Moseley, Mary Hodges and Sadie Hardee left yesterday for Morehead City." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

1900, September 11: "Over fifty tickets were sold at Kinston for Pipkin's excursion to Washington and Baltimore, which left here this morning. Among those who went were: Mr. and Mrs. J. A. McDaniel, Mrs. Cora E. McRae, Mrs. Thomas Harvey, Mrs. Hugh Parham and Mrs. Lillian Perry." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

Lillian graciously hosted various social gatherings over the years. Having cultivated an appreciation for the arts, she opened her home on occasion for music students to perform:

1902, November 11: "Miss Claypoole's music class gave a most enjoyable music recital at the residence of Mrs. Lillian Perry on Friday evening last. After the program was completed delicious refreshments were served by the hostess." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

Lillian studied piano at Kinston Collegiate Institute. Afterwards, as a college student she studied advanced piano at Salem Female Academy where she grew her talent. The Academy offered a broad liberal arts curriculum that undoubtedly prepared her in the social graces. An elegant lady, her well-honed skills of hospitality caught the eye of a local journalist:

1917, October 10: "Notable among many lovely compliments to the United Daughters of the Confederacy and their guests was the brilliant reception given...by Mrs. William Darwood Pollock at her home on McLewean Street. For this occasion, the interior of the house was made

most beautiful with lovely autumn flowers, the colors of the Confederacy, red and white being used with charming effect....White candles in crystal candelabra shed a soft hued light over the radiant scent lending added beauty to the lovely white chrysanthemums which formed a beautiful setting for the splendid looking, handsomely attired women who were in themselves a most charming decoration feature....Just at the dining room door...[was] Lillian Perry, who invited the guests into the dining room where Miss Susie Perry [Lillian's daughter] most delightfully entertained them while delicious refreshments were served....Mrs. Pollock's charming hospitality will long be remembered by the many visitors who called in the afternoon, over four hundred ladies being present." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)