

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Alexander Richard Sutton (Part 10)

The grist mill that Alexander Richard Sutton (1860-1928) owned and operated in the later years of his life was located on Bear Creek and U.S. Highway 903, a few miles south of the town of La Grange. Originally held by the Lassiter family, he purchased the mill in 1903 from descendant Lucy Jane Lassiter Joyner (1828-1913).

Known as Joyner's Mill before Alex bought it, the mill and dam suffered weather damage and vandalism from time to time. A popular site for fishing and religious events, various reports referenced the mill pond during the late 1800s:

1882, September 6: "A heavy rainfall on Monday night, in a portion of this county [Lenoir], Greene and Wayne, raising Bear Creek to overflowing, washing away bridges, etc. About fifty feet of the dam at Joyner's mill was washed away." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1883, November 25: "A number of our townsmen were at Joyner's mill this week, capturing the finny tribe. I think the trip did not turn out as profitable as expected." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1884, May 7: "The water has been drawn off at Joyner's mill, on Bear Creek, caused by a leak at the dam. Lots of fish are being caught, some of them very large. A seven pound 'chub' was caught last Saturday." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1885, May 18: "A weather-board plank was taken off the Joyner mill one night the past week. No contents of the mill were missed." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1886, July 21: "Last Thursday was the leading heavy rain, in some places, of any day of the wet season. West and north of here the rain was exceedingly heavy. Bear Creek was higher than it has been known to be for some time—bridges upset and Joyner's mill dam had to be cut in several places to save the mill house." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1887, September 15: "Church services at the Methodist [Episcopal] Church last Sunday by Rev. [William Ellis] Swain, and at the Disciples' [Church] by Rev. Mr. Harper. Four accessions at the Disciples' Church, and baptism at Joyner's mill Sunday evening. There will be services tonight, Monday." (*New Bern Weekly Journal*)

1890, May 20: "From the *Spectator* [La Grange newspaper] we see that there have been seven additions to the Church of Christ, all of whom were baptized at the Joyner mill Sunday, at La Grange." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1898, April 13: "Newbold Bros.' High School [La Grange] gave holiday today, commemorative of the resurrection of Christ. The pupils are picnicking at the Joyner mill. Five new pupils have been added to this splendid school recently." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

1898, July 1: "The water is low in the Joyner mill and great quantities of fish are being caught. Mr. C. P. Barrow caught 146." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

More on Joyner's Mill will be shared in an upcoming Bucklesberry article.