

# Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

## Alexander Richard Sutton (Part 11)

Joyner's Mill was sold to Alexander Richard Sutton (1860-1928) in 1903. Known for good fishing, the mill pond was also used for local church baptisms:

1903, June 26: "The protracted meeting in the Christian Church [La Grange] closed last night. The five accessions, the result of Rev. Mr. Jones' sermons, were baptized at the Joyner Mill this p.m." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

Convenient to townspeople and rural folks, Joyner's Mill was a familiar geographic reference point for the U.S. Postal Service:

1902, April 12: "La Grange will have four [postal delivery] routes covering 93 miles and serving 2,930 people, living in 650 houses. The routes are laid out as follows....Route No. 3. Beginning at post office in La Grange the carrier will go thence south to White Hall Bridge Forks, 8 miles; then northwest to Angle post office, 5 miles; thence north and east to Walnut Creek Church, 3 miles; thence southeast to Joyner's Mill, 4 1/2 miles....Requisition has been made for 13 U.S. collection boxes to be placed at following places:....Route 3—Forks of White Hall Bridge; at Angle post office, at Walnut Creek, [and] at Joyner's Mill." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

Initially called Lassiter's Mill after owner Jesse Lassiter, Sr. (1800-1866), Joyner's Mill remained in the family line for a half century or more. One of the last public reports about the old grist mill described its demise and the intent of descendant-owner Lucy Jane Lassiter Joyner (1828-1913) to sell the property:

1903, August 17: "Destruction of Mrs. Joyner's Mill. La Grange, August 15—Mrs. L. J. Joyner's mill, about two miles from here, was undermined and washed away Thursday night. As Mrs. Joyner is old she will not undertake to rebuild. The site will be offered for sale. The property was very valuable and its destruction is a public loss as well as a private one. Our fishermen were on hand and some fine fish were caught. The most of the timbers will be recovered." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

The sale occurred within a matter of weeks after the mill house was lost. A news item announced Alex's purchase of the property and his decision to rebuild:

1903, October 2: "Mr. Alex Sutton, of Falling Creek, has purchased the mill site of the Joyner mill and will soon begin the erection of a mill house thereon." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

The grist mill was not reconstructed right away and may have taken longer than expected. Completed one year later, though, it made front page headlines in the State's leading newspaper:

1904, September 11: "The old Joyner Mill, a mile south of the town [La Grange], which collapsed a year or more, has been reconstructed and placed in operation by the present owner, Mr. Alex Sutton." (*The News and Observer*, Raleigh)

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