

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Sutton Seine Beach Bridge (Part 2)

The Neuse River bridge in Bucklesberry was constructed in 1954. But it wasn't the first bridge built there. Almost 70 years earlier, a wooden bridge, no longer standing, was constructed immediately west of the sandbar located by the current bridge on Hardy Bridge Road. Back then, the sandbar was known as Sutton seine beach.

Last week's article discussed the year-long committee work and planning for the bridge that occurred in 1882, as reported by newspaper outlets. Eventually built in 1883, interest in the bridge was unusually broad. Newspapers in Goldsboro, Kinston and New Bern continued to report on it:

1883, April 4: "...Nearly, or quite all, of the posts for the bridge across Neuse at Sutton's beach, are delivered, and that work in driving them may commence at an early day. Who knows but what we will have a bridge after all." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1883, April 8: "The pile driver, to drive the posts for the new bridge, will be at the site by tomorrow (Saturday) noon, and the driving will commence Monday next. The bridge company [has] paid all obligations up to date, and [has] a sufficiency on hand to pay for towing the driver, and a surplus left. The committee seems in earnest, and it may be put down as a thing in the near future—bridge across Neuse, at Sutton's seine beach." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1883, April 9: "—*Newbern Journal*: Mr. R. B. Kinsey of La Grange was in the city yesterday looking for a steamer to tow a derrick up Neuse for the purpose of driving piling for a bridge to be erected across the river near La Grange. He secured the services of the [steamer] *Trent*." (*Goldsboro Messenger*)

1883, April 16: "—*Kinston Journal*: A steam derrick of the Government river works came up the river Saturday, towed by the steamer *Trent*, on its way to Pine Bush, on the Neuse River in this County, to build a bridge across the river at that point. It will be remembered that the County appropriated \$500 for building this bridge and the remainder, necessary for the building of the bridge, was made up by private subscriptions." (*Goldsboro Messenger*)

1883, July 15: "The new bridge across Neuse River seems to have come to a stand still. Spur up gentlemen, and have the bridge done in time for the fall trade." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1883, August 12: "The taxpayers around here are pretty free in their expressions of condemnation of the action of the commissioners and justices in appropriating \$1000 to build the road from Kinston to the County bridge. They still feel the unjust treatment received in regard to

the bridge across Neuse near here [in Bucklesberry], and are opposed to appropriations unless those asking do as they have done, raise two-thirds the amount. We are compelled to admit that our treatment was unfair, but one wrong does not justify another." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1883, November 25: "Jeffries, contractor for the 'new bridge,' after an absence of three or four weeks, has returned with lumber to finish, and an increased number of hands. The work will be pushed to completion as fast as possible." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1883, December 16: "A part of the building committee met at the new bridge Thursday to examine and receive the bridge. They suggested some little change as being desirable, which will be made, and the work is to be received and paid for next Monday, and then we'll sing the long-meter Doxology and be glad of it." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

It was not a happenstance that much of the reporting on the bridge occurred in the New Bern newspaper. One of Bucklesberry's very own, Samuel Ivey (S.I.) Sutton (1834-1904), was a news reporter for *The Daily Journal* during the years when he was transitioning from farmer to La Grange townsman.

S.I. had a vested interest in, and enduring love for, Bucklesberry. Born there, he and his wife, Mary Jane Uzzell (1833-1915) reared six children and farmed 200 acres on the immediate north side of the Neuse River on the east and west sides of the current Hardy Bridge.

A celebrated Bucklesberrian, S.I. held various posts in the city of La Grange including magistrate, Justice of the Peace, postmaster, politician, and railroad-express agent for the Atlantic and NC Railroad, an office he operated until his death in 1904.