

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Small Business (Part 2)

Mention Bucklesberry, and farming immediately comes to mind. Farming allowed early families to settle this old community in the mid-1700s. Through farming, Bucklesberry flourished and residents made a good life for their families. Farming continues to sustain Bucklesberry today.

But not all Bucklesberrians were farmers through the years. By the late-1800s, some had ventured into various small businesses, due in part to economic changes on the horizon, according to local journalists:

1895, December 9: "New England has grown rich not only from here big cotton mills, but from the hundreds of small industries scattered all over that section. Day by day the South is recognizing the wisdom of this course. It is gratifying to know that right at our own door the good work is going on in various enterprises...." (*Goldsboro Daily Argus*)

Some of the first small businesses to emerge in Bucklesberry were gristmills, lumber mills, and cotton mills and gins. Country stores and mercantile business soon followed:

1884, September 10: "J[ulius] E[ri] & J[unius] E[li] Sutton have opened a stock of groceries at the gin house in Bucklesberry." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1885, September 9: "A[ndrew] J[ackson] Sutton, who intends [on] doing business in this place [La Grange], left for Baltimore Monday to purchase his stock of goods." (*The Daily Journal*, New Bern)

1890, December 10: "Mr. Kirby E. Sutton, of La Grange, of the prosperous and substantial firm of Isler & Sutton, a young gentleman brim full of energy and business sagacity, was on a visit to the wholesale establishments of our city yesterday." (*Goldsboro Daily Argus*)

The small business that may have signaled growing technology in agriculture at the time centered on poultry:

1895, December 9: "For two years, Mr. Oscar Sutton, a prosperous farmer of New Hope township, has been engaged in the business of raising chickens [through incubators] for the Northern markets. He has quite an extensive plant, costing several hundred dollars, and his investment has been a very satisfactory one. He is now busy with hundreds of 'biddies.' In a few weeks they will be ready to send to the big North, where they will bring high prices." (*Goldsboro Daily Argus*)

The need for more residential houses and buildings in La Grange and surrounding cities prompted work for brickmakers:

1882, March 2: "I learn that Bryan & Frank Bizzell contemplate making brick on the lands of Alex[ander] Sutton near this place. A few more brick stores would be beneficial as well as ornamental." (*Kinston Journal*)

Some Bucklesberry families invested in real estate, which subsequently introduced the rental property business:

1886, April 15: "There are two or three dwelling houses unoccupied in our little village, that could be rented at a bargain. The one recently purchased by Mr. J[unius] E[li] Sutton, near the L[enoir] C[ollegiate] I[nstitute], would be very convenient to any one desiring to patronize that institution." (*New Berne Weekly Journal*)

But farming would remain the big business of greater Bucklesberry for many years to come. Some recognized this reality, and farm equipment sales became a necessary small business:

1899, November 27: "Pea Threshers and Bean Threshers. They thresh field peas and wax beans successfully. Hand, steam or horse power. If you are interested write me and I will call and show you their work. Oscar Sutton, Agt., Seven Springs, N.C." (*Goldsboro Daily Argus*)