

Bucklesberry, Back in the Day

Lillian Sutton Perry (Part 22)

A young widow in her early thirties, Lillian Sutton Perry (1864-1946) never married again. Alone, but with God's grace and strength of character, she lovingly reared five children from her short marriage to Daniel Elijah Perry (1857-1897).

The settlement from her husband's estate, along with an estate division from her mother-in-law, Susan Rhem Perry (1834-1897) and husband, Eli Hamilton Elsworth Franklin (E. H. E. F.) Perry (1831-1912), left Lillian and the children financially secure to live comfortably. She never had to work outside the home.

Lillian was not immune from the typical heartaches and tragedies of life, however. Within seven years of her husband's death, Lillian's mother, Elizabeth (Bettie) Gray Sutton (1842-1904), passed away.

Less than ten years later, she faced the worst sadness for a parent. Her firstborn son, attorney Daniel Elijah Perry, Jr. (1887-1913), died at the young age of 26. The deaths of yet two more immediate family members, a grandson and another son, followed before the 1920s:

1916, May 10: "Joseph, 2 1/2-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. J[oseph] W[right] Carey of Estill, S.C, died at 8:45 this morning in the home of Mrs. Lillian Perry, mother of Mrs. [Bliss Byna Perry] Carey, in this city [Kinston]. The child had been sick some days. The parents arrived here with the little fellow Tuesday. The funeral will be held at 4:30 Thursday, from the home of Mrs. Perry." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

1918. September 26: "Noah Strong Perry, 26, died at the residence of his mother, Mrs. Lillian Perry, Peyton Avenue and East Street, Thursday morning at 3 o'clock. Pneumonia was given as the cause of death. Young Mr. Perry was well-known in this city [Kinston]. He was prominently connected. He was employed at the Kinston Manufacturing Company's plant. He completed his business education in the North in recent years. He was a member of the Baptist Church. His father was the late D[aniel] E[lijah] Perry. The following near relatives survive: Mother; two sisters, Mrs. Joseph Carey and Miss Susan Perry; and one brother, Ely Perry, a law student now in the Navy. The funeral will be conducted from the residence Friday afternoon at 4 o'clock. Burial will be in Maplewood Cemetery. Rev. W. Marshall Craig, pastor of the First Baptist Church, and Rev. Bernard P. Smith, pastor of Gordon Street Christian Church, will officiate at the services." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

In early 1920, Lillian herself suffered illness, although reportedly not life-threatening. Dedicated to his mother, son Ely Jackson Perry, Sr. (1896-1968) was by her side:

1920, February 27: "Mrs. Lillian Perry will return from Beaufort during the next few days. Mrs. Perry's recent illness there was not serious." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)

1920, February 28: "Mr. Ely Perry is at the bedside of his mother, Mrs. Lillian Perry, at Beaufort. Mrs. Perry is reported to be improving." (*The Kinston Free Press*)

A few months later, Lillian left her Kinston home for an extended period of time in Lincolnton, northwest of Charlotte, NC. Whether the brief relocation was health-related is unknown:

1920, August 14: "Mrs. Lillian Perry has gone to Lincolnton to spend the remainder of the summer." (*The Daily Free Press*, Kinston)