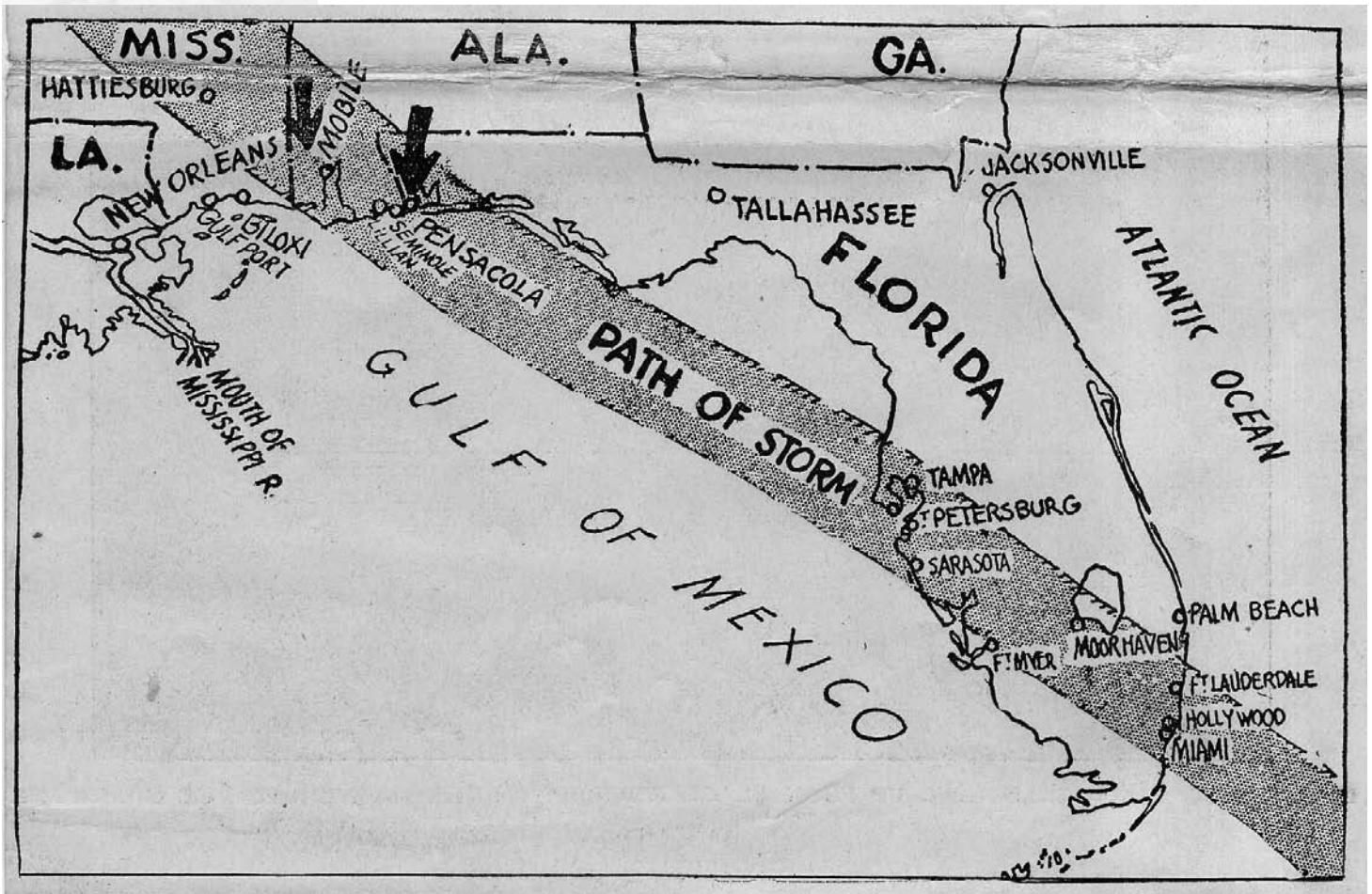


The Big Blow: Broward County and the 1926 Hurricane

by Denyse Cunningham



On the night of September 17, 1926, a hurricane struck the southeast coast of Florida. Winds of 140 miles per hour hit Miami-Dade and South Broward. The storm started around midnight on Friday and raged and scourged the Florida East Coast for twelve hours.¹ The U.S. Weather Bureau in Miami described the storm as probably the most destructive hurricane ever to hit the United States. Occurring many years before hurricanes were first formally named, the storm was known to those who suffered through it as “The Hurricane” or “The Big Blow.”



Wall Street looking west. Bryan Family Collection

In Broward County alone the death toll reached at least 64; in the entire state the number was nearly 400. The local paper reported that 15 died in Fort Lauderdale, 25 in Hollywood and 9 in Dania, but the death toll varies from source to source. More than 800 others affected by the storm were never accounted for.² The Chamber of Commerce tried to assist friends and relatives desperate to find their loved ones. Information requests appeared in the paper listing those missing.

The *Fort Lauderdale Daily News* on September 22, 1926, listed the following victims of the storm:

*Mrs. A. W. (Fern) Tillman, 34, Progresso*³
*Robert Tillman, 3, son of Peter and Fern, Progresso*⁴
*Bertha Tillman, daughter of Peter and Fern, Progresso*⁵
*Martha Tillman, 10, daughter of Peter and Fern, Progresso*⁶
*P. E. Gamble, 31*⁷
*James Terrell, Hollywood, 31*⁸
*Ralph McClure, 31, Fort Lauderdale*⁹

*Laura Crawley, 42, was found in Lake Mable; her home was in Nashville, N. C. and she was visiting from Ocala*¹⁰

*R. D. Crawley*¹¹

*Alma Thompson, 23 and infant*¹²

*Walter Martin, Fort Lauderdale*¹³

*Four African-Americans*¹⁴

Others who lost their lives included:

*Leroy Bishop, internal injuries*¹⁵

*The infant child of Ivan and Francis Montgomery Austin, Fort Lauderdale*¹⁶

*Frank Williams, 59, Fort Lauderdale, African-American*¹⁷

*J. B. Story*¹⁸

*Robert Nelson, African-American, of exposure*¹⁹

*Jack Merrel, 58, of Danville, Illinois*²⁰

*Mrs. Havelock (Edna Allen) Churchill, Dania, body was found in the wreckage*²¹

*Roy G. Coleman, 27, bookkeeper for Sawyer Motor Company of Hollywood, found in the wreckage of his home in the Little Ranches section*²²

*Margorie Emma Crory, buried in Dania cemetery*²³

*Philemon Crory, buried in Dania cemetery*²⁴

*Phyllis Crory, buried in Dania cemetery*²⁵

*Jim J. Gordon, Hollywood, died in hospital of injuries*²⁶

*Unknown woman, found in wreckage in Hollywood*²⁷

*Grady Albert Rogers, 36, Hollywood*²⁸

*D.A. J. Wunneberg, Biscayne Park, (formerly of Burlington), Iowa, buried in Dania*²⁹

*Vick Driver*³⁰

*James Terrell, 31, Hollywood*³¹

*George Frass, at Administration Building in Hollywood*³²

*Florence Goodrich, residence unknown, at Administration Building in Hollywood*³³

*Mrs. Sarah Head*³⁴

*L. W. Pool, at Administration Building in Hollywood*³⁵

*Mrs. L. P. Pool, at Administration Building in Hollywood*³⁶

*Mrs. Rhonda Louisa Priest, 55, at Administration Building in Hollywood*³⁷



The Beach Road, now A1A, was washed away by the storm. Meeks Collection

Peter Vighes, 2117 Polk Street, at Administration Building in Hollywood³⁸
Grady Albert, 36, from Hollywood Mortuary³⁹
Mrs. Yeager, Washington Street, at Administration Building in Hollywood⁴⁰
George W. Vinson, 30. Mr. Vinson died at the local hospital October 5, 1926 from injuries received during the storm. Vinson had been in Florida only 10 days, going to Hollywood in search of a home, when the hurricane struck the coast. Mrs. Vinson was still in the hospital suffering from a fractured skull and other injuries. Her mother and sister were killed, all being crushed beneath the house.⁴¹

Unidentified man, about

50, wore blue overalls, killed in Sawyer Motor Company, body at Hollywood Mortuary⁴²
Thomas M. McCarrell, Jr., 22, Hollywood⁴³
Gordon Brown, 35, Grant Street, at Hollywood Mortuary⁴⁴
Mrs. Gordon Brown, Dania, at Hollywood Mortuary⁴⁵
Murlean Brown, Dania, 4, at Hollywood Mortuary⁴⁶
Annie Carley, Dania⁴⁷
Mrs. Cory, Dania at Hollywood Administration Building⁴⁸
Mrs. J. H. Craft, Dania, at Hollywood Mortuary⁴⁹
Nettie Hickman, Dania, at Administration Building
Netty Kielman, Dania⁵⁰
Leon Helms, Dania⁵¹
Lorena Helms, Dania⁵²

Andrew Hevelock, Dania⁵³
Henry Grady Luther, 34, Dania, buried Sunday⁵⁴
Peter (or John N.) McAllister, Dania, at Administration Building⁵⁵
Andrew McFarland, Dania, at Hollywood Mortuary⁵⁶
Mrs. R. W. Moore, Dania⁵⁷
Moore infant, Dania⁵⁸
Jenny Ferral, Dania⁶⁰
Mrs. H. J. Kimball, Hallandale⁶¹
Infant Kimball, Hallandale⁶²
Earl Bateman of Davie was listed in the local paper as "critical with fractured skull" but, luckily for him, he appears in the 1930 Federal Census with the rest of his family in Davie.⁶³

Of the 64 individuals listed only two were registered to vote in Broward County. Only one was listed in the 1926 Fort Lauderdale City Directory and Broward County Gazetteer.⁶⁴ This is not surprising given the huge number of newcomers who moved to Broward County in the boom years of the early 1920s. The *Fort Lauderdale News* of September 17, 1926 warned on the front page that "Signals Warning of Storm Given Between Key West and Jupiter. Weather Bureau reports 'Very Severe Storm' of Hurricane Force Centering off Bahama [sic] Islands; Coast May Escape." Most of the victims had not lived

through a storm of this type. They may not have prepared. Also, an earlier rather mild storm had occurred that summer, so many thought that was all the damage a hurricane could do.

Many Homes and Las Olas Beach Devastated

Fifteen thousand homes were damaged in the entire storm and 6,000 to 7,000 of these were totally destroyed.⁶⁵ In a complete survey of storm damage made by the Red Cross to assist in administering aid relief, it was estimated that in Fort Lauderdale 868 homes were entirely destroyed, 76 in Floranada (now Oakland Park) and 88 in Davie.⁶⁶ Property loss was estimated to be from 8 to 10 million dollars in Fort Lauderdale. In Davie all the crops were destroyed and the citrus groves were badly damaged. The area was still under water from six to three feet deep as of September 28.⁶⁷

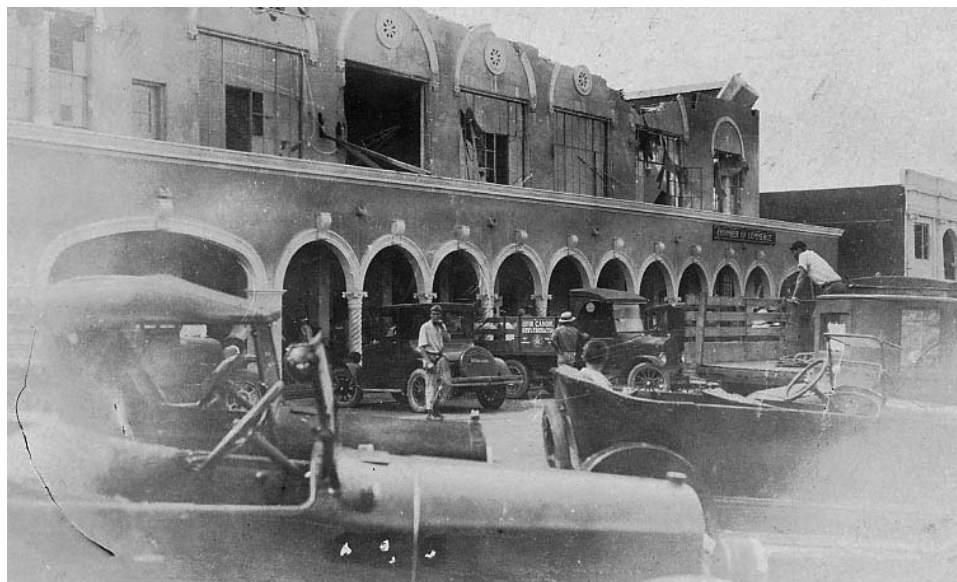
The considerable damage many of the newer structures suffered was the result of the boom-time construction of flimsy buildings that were put up by people who knew nothing about hurricanes. Old-timers, who had lived through storms before, put up buildings that would withstand the strong winds.

One of the first things done to provide relief was the erection of a tent city of hundreds of tents to house the destitute and homeless. One was set up for whites at Stranahan Field and another for African-Americans.⁷⁰ The Florida East Coast Railroad furnished free transportation for the destitute.

The effect of the storm on the African-American communities of Broward County is difficult to determine as the papers of the day did not always list news from those areas. Even the names of some of the victims were left out. A tent was set up by the Red Cross on 5th Avenue in the northwest section of Fort Lauderdale where African-



Red Cross tents were set up to house the homeless.



Fort Lauderdale City Hall at 301 North Andrews Avenue, now the site of Broward County Governmental Center. Bryan Family Collection

Americans could be treated. Mercie L. Mims remembered working for the Red Cross in the relief efforts giving shots and medicine to the injured. Typhoid vaccines were given out to all residents. She also remembered a tornado that went straight down 5th Avenue and turned on 2nd Street.⁶⁸

Fort Lauderdale Mayor Jack Tidball declared martial law and County judge Fred Shippy warned he would deal summarily with anyone found pilfering from open stores or dwellings.⁶⁹ Prisoners were used to help in the clean up and rebuilding efforts.

The Las Olas beach area suffered much damage during the storm as

the *Fort Lauderdale Daily News* reported on September 24, 1926:

Work burying fish, which were washed ashore, and drowned rabbits, rats and other small animals, has been accomplished along the bathing beach... Miss Virginia West, 10 year old daughter of Frederic West, manager of the Las Olas Inn, was especially commended by members of the Red Cross corps for her untiring assistance in burying these decayed fish and animals and for assisting in removing broken bottles from the beach.

By September 30, 1926, bathers were allowed back to the beach, only if wearing a suit.⁷¹

Letters Recall Horrors of Storm

Muriel H. Bair (1896-1989) wrote a letter describing her experiences during and after the 1926 hurricane. Mrs. Bair's husband, Russell O. Bair (1897-1973), was a teacher at Central High School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. They lived at 736 North West 3rd Avenue in 1926. They survived the storm with their infant son Lowell Bair (1925-present). Mrs. Bair gave birth to a daughter, Twyla Mary Bair, shortly after the storm on December 14, 1926. A transcript of this letter was provided to the Broward County Historical Commission by her step great-granddaughter, Christine Lee.

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Sept 21, 1926

Dear Folks:

You are indeed lucky to receive this letter as you will see later when I have tried to tell you all that has happened. When we got our paper Friday afternoon we had just washed all our dishes and cooking utensils, cleaned the bedroom and just got things so we could begin to feel at home. The paper stated there would be a tornado strike Fort Lauderdale between 6:00 pm and midnight. We expected some hard wind of course but never dreamed of what we got.

About nine the wind began to come so we didn't go to bed tho we both pretended it was just because we were not sleepy. By one o'clock there was about a foot of water all around the house and it was shaking so Russell said, "Well we had just as well quit pretending and talk about what we are going to do."

So, we dressed and put on coats and I fed Lowell. We were in the living room about that time and the house fell over off the foundation and our big tall bookcase fell over on Lowell and me, but Russell grabbed it and held it until we got out. We were not hurt except just shaken up. We got Lowell wrapped in two blankets and I had one around me and we started for the garage but when we looked for the garage it was a pile of splinters. So Russell began piling the trunk and suit cases on the bed as the water was rushing into the house.



Muriel Bair, 1981



The north-east view of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in Fort Lauderdale on South Andrews and SE 6th St. People went there for shelter and some were killed during the storm. Marshall-Anglin Collection

We waited and worked in agony until 5:00 in the morning. The house began to crack and we started for the east door. (That was the direction the storm was from) Before we got there the whole top part of the house blew away with a mighty crash. We made it to the door and the wind was so strong it pinned us against the side of the door and we couldn't move for some time. Russell had Lowell in one arm and me in the other. A big 2 x 4 came whirling at us and hit Lowell on the ankle and he began to scream. By Russell's being so strong we managed to slide down flat on the porch floor (that was about all we had left). Lowell cried



The Methodist Episcopal Church located at U.S. 1 & Van Buren in Hollywood. The picture on the top was taken in 1925. After the storm the congregation rebuilt incorporating the damaged structure into the new church. Graham Collection



The Methodist Episcopal Church South Fort Lauderdale, South Andrews and 6th Street. Charlie Flinn Collection

for a long time and there was a knot as big as a hen egg on his ankle and an open gash that was bleeding. Then he hushed crying and shut his eyes real tight.

There we lay flat in about an inch of water. We kept Lowell between us to keep him as warm as we could, but we were just freezing and shaking to death. I'll never forget Lowell's pale little face and black lips as long as I live. There we lay in a 150 mile wind and a cold beating rain with one blanket over the three of us and the mighty roar of the wind, big tall trees snapping and crashing on all sides, timbers and everything flying in the air and we could see all the houses blowing away one by one.

The whole roof of a house went right over us. You can't even imagine the horror of it. It seemed we had been there for years when the water was getting so high there was danger of drowning. The wind seemed to slow down so we just had to do something. Russell took Lowell to a house we could see a short way off which was off the foundation but still standing and part of the roof was off. A woman and her two sons (young men) had just gotten there also. Russell gave Lowell to the woman and came back for me. We waded water almost waist deep in a crushing wind, pushed our way through floating trash, wires, etc. and got here finally. When Lowell saw me he began to cry a little – the first since he got hurt and we discovered his hurt was just a bruise and flesh wound. (It is getting along fine.)

Russell looked at his watch and it was about 20 minutes till 11, Saturday morning. We had been out in that storm almost 5 hours. The water was 6 or 8 inches deep in the house and I sat with my feet up in a chair and Lowell in my lap. The storm raged all day. About 4 o'clock Russell ventured out and God was good enough to let him find one of



The devastation of the Hallandale Garage



The Red Cross set up tents for those displaced by the storm.



Many power lines went down in the storm. Barwick Collection

Lowell's bottles and his milk. So Lowell had something to eat. About dark the water began to rise so Russell went to investigate a house he saw standing over a block away. It was a right new house and two-story so he carried me all the way to the house and went back and got Lowell. About 30 of us slept on the floors that night.

The next day we were fishing around in the water in the wreck that had once been our home to see what we could fish out and the Scotts came over and said they had found a place for us all to stay. Claude's and Mary's house was a low stucco so was only damaged some and they are not here so we have all been staying in their house. I had two dresses and a night gown which I used for underwear so Dr. Robinson's wife gave me a suit of underwear, a slip & 3 house dresses so I am all O.K. and we have found several of Lowell's & Russell's clothes and I have been washing them out.

We have been able to get enough to eat and relief trains are coming in every day so I guess we are all fine. We don't know what to do yet but Russell's job is here. As soon as they can clear a place at the school house, school will begin and then we will have money enough.

So, you see we have things yet to be thankful for. All we prayed for was that our lives would be spared and God heard and answered our prayers and has blessed us besides. No one who has never had the experience can half imagine the long hours of horror and agony we have been thru. Lowell's ankle is doing fine but he is some upset in his stomach & bowels which is caused from not having his proper feed. All Russell & I had Saturday was two dishes of oatmeal and two cups of coffee but since then we have had plenty such as it is. We feel that God alone has been with us and saved us thru the storm and that he will not forsake us now. It seems a miracle



The Tangerine Tearoom in its heyday (top) and the remains of the Tangerine Tea Room on the beach in Hollywood after the storm.



Many local grocery stores were damaged by the storm. Canned goods were some of the few things to survive. Labels were stripped from the cans and meals were often a surprise.



that in my condition I stood it so well and am feeling reasonably well. I surely have a strong constitution. Russell is alright except his feet and legs are scratched and cut up pretty bad and being in that filthy water so long they are kind of poisoned but we have a bottle of iodine so I don't believe they will give serious trouble. None of us have a hat to our name, so we are a little sunburned but we will get over that alright.

Now, I believe I have told you all, the main points and kept nothing from you so don't worry. The whole town is certainly a pitiful, desolate looking place but we are under martial law and they are clearing streets etc. as quickly as possible.

Everybody they see on the street that can't tell their business there, they are drafted into work. No one is allowed out after night after 10:30 without a permit or they are arrested immediately. I imagine we will be able to fish out several of our things and be able to use them but of course our loss is awful to us and our house is just a hopeless wreck.

Russell has the car out and got it so it will run but not very good and it is sure a pitiful looking sight but we are thankful to have it anyway. I don't know Willie's and Violet's addresses so you can send this on to them when you have read it so they will know we are alright. Several people were killed and lots & lots injured but there are so many tales, I don't think anyone knows for sure how many. We will write more when we can. We are awfully busy now trying to do something with nothing.

Worlds of love from us all.

Muriel, Russell & Lowell.



Ford Garage in Fort Lauderdale



Progresso after the 1926 hurricane. Mrs. Clyde Brown Collection

The letter below was included in the “Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Supervisors of the Napoleon B. Broward Drainage District” held in the Office of the District in the Maxwell Building, October 6TH, 1926, at 2 O’clock P.M. It is reproduced here complete with punctuation, spelling and typographical errors as shown in the original document. The original document is kept in the archives of Central Broward Water Control District, 8020 Stirling Road, Hollywood, FL 33024. Telephone: 954-432-5110. www.centralbrowardwcd.org.

“STATE OF FLORIDA

Tallahassee

October 1, 1926

“Mr. James S. Rickards, Secretary
N.P. Broward Drainage District
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Dear Sir:

“Your favor of the 29th of September advising that you were sending to me thirty (30) \$1000 Napoleon B. Broward Drainage District Bonds, Nos. 401-430 inclusive, to be signed by me and placed with the State Treasurer. I will do as you have requested and await your further instructions in the matter.

“I note there is a great deal of dissatisfaction, criticism and condemnation as to drainage operation in the Everglades. It has been my observation since I became identified with this work that the newspapers and others in that section of the State have never let an opportunity go by to criticize and knock the work that has been done. This agitation is likely to cause a move to change the personnel of the Drainage Board. This continued knocking and agitation will make it impossible for the Drainage Board to finance this district and carry on this work.

“You can readily appreciate that there is not a member of the present Drainage Board who would not like to get from under this responsibility and let others carry it. It has been a night-mare for years. The Everglades District is the back country and the natural support of all the contiguous towns and cities. There is no reason in the world why this drainage project should be a failure. If we should have the minimum rain fall that we had down there from 1912 and 1922 there would not be sufficient water to make farming in the glades possible.



The U.S. Coast Guard base was blown across the Sound. Charlie Flinn Collection.

"The Drainage Board has had to see the project as a whole. They have not been able to discriminate in favor of one locality as against another. The lake section wants to have the water turned out of the Lake regardless of whether it drowns those in the lower Glades or not. The North side of the Lake objects to the levees along the South rim of the Lake but to remove these levees would spread the entire Kissimmee River Valley waters over all the Glades and would prevent the utilization or drainage of these lands until these waters could be carried off.

"It has been the policy of the Board during excessive rains to undertake to hold the surplus water in the Lake until the canals have taken the water off of the land and then turn the water out of the Lake through the canals as the canals are able to take care of it without overflowing the land.



House on Las Olas Beach. Charlie Flinn Collection.

"I am writing you this for the purpose of calling the attention of those who are vitally interested in drainage work to get thinking heads together and if the personnel of the Drainage Board is to be changed and this work to be carried on under some different system then it is to the interests of the entire contiguous territory and all owners of lands in the Glades to frame and propose a bill which will function fairly and equitably and which will insure the finances necessary to carry on this work. Hasty and ill advised action might set this matter back for years and put the same in a condition where recovery might be almost impossible.

"If nothing unforeseen happens, the St. Lucie canal will be 100 per cent complete in another week or two. I am thoroughly satisfied that when this canal is functioning to its full capacity the greatest problem of drainage will have been solved. The St. Lucie canal would have been completed long before this but for the flood of 1924, when thousands of yards of earth were washed into this canal and had to be pumped out. The flood of 1924 broke the banks of this canal in numerous places, cutting great gullies and carrying all the earth into the canals.

"Everyone should appreciate the fact that when 10 inches of rain falls over that entire territory within a period of a week the entire country will be flooded temporarily and all the surplus water has to drift out. That entire country should appreciate that if Lake Okeechobee were lowered to a minimum or as low as it has been in times passed, there would be



Mother and Child survey the damage. Charlie Flinn Collection.



300 North Andrews Avenue, Broward Development Company. Charlie Flinn Collection.

no moisture in the Glades and navigation up to the canals would be practically impossible, and navigation over the Lake greatly curtailed. This matter should be considered by level headed people down there and if a change is made let same be made along consistent and conservative lines. So many folks seem to lose sight of the fact that the Board has no control over winds and rains.

"I want to express to you and to all the people down there my sorrow and regret at this storm

calamity. It is something that no one could have foreseen or anticipated. I believe that it was the worst storm that has ever struck any portion of the United States unless it was equaled by the Galveston storm where 5,000 or more were destroyed. I have no financial interest in any section or part of the Everglades. I have become vitally interested in the success of this drainage operation. I sincerely hope this storm and these floods will not cause folks down there to lose their sense of proportion and cause hasty action which might be regretted. I think the people of that part of the State have the right more than any other section of the State to say what shall be done in this matter. I am for anything that will procure the carrying on and success of the drainage of the Everglades.

"With best wishes for all in that section,

Very truly yours,

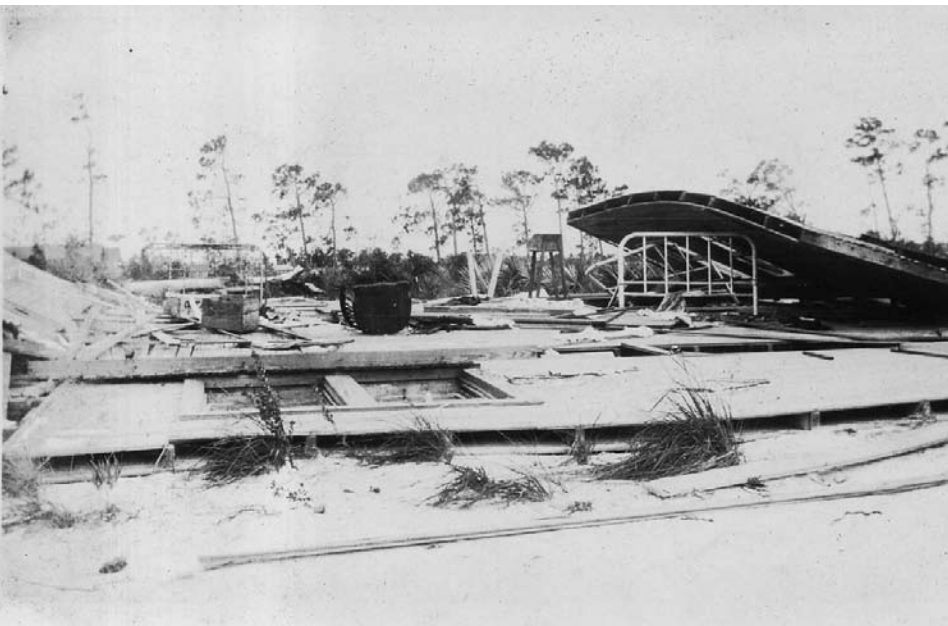
*J. B. Johnson
Attorney General"*

Andrew Percy Hansen (1880-1962) was a longtime Fort Lauderdale resident and prominent real estate broker. He and his wife Minerva lived at 716 SE Seventh Street in 1926. Mr. Hansen was the president of the Fort Lauderdale Board of Realtors and a member of the Knights of Columbus and St. Anthony's Church. He was born in Iowa.

This letter was published in the *Daily Telegram* of Eau Claire, Wisconsin on October 1, 1926. A. P. Hansen wrote this letter to his brothers, William D. Hansen and Fred Hansen giving considerable detail of the great devastation wrought by the hurricane.



Ruins of the Gallagher House, Charlie Flinn Collection.



Ruins of Progresso, Charlie Flinn Collection

*Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Saturday, Sept. 25, 1926*

My Dear Fred, Wm, and All:--

Here it is Saturday, a week ago tonight we got back home to our cottage, and a week ago last night that awful storm began. One just can't realize time has gone so fast with even the long hours which we have had to put in. Last night was the first night I have had my clothes off for two nights. None of us had a wink of sleep.

While we have lots to do in rehabilitating ourselves into living conditions again, we couldn't help to be of service to the many surrounding us who were left in destitute circumstances with everything gone, their home and all their belongings – they only saved what they had on.

Feel They are Fortunate

As each day goes on we realize more that we were indeed fortunate in many ways coming out of this hurricane as we did. Our lives were spared and no one injured by the storm. However, we have had a few accidents or injury to ourselves in working around the water and debris, but the Red Cross has been good to dress up our wounds.

"Minn"⁷² is holding up fine. It's a marvel how she has kept up.

Through the terror of the storm which cannot be described, and the endless amount of work in trying to clean up and dry out the salvage we had left, I still cannot sleep nights, as the roaring of that awful wind as it hit our place comes to my ear and conscience, and we haven't overcome the fear, as every time it clouds up and the least shower and rain comes we are sensitive to its appearance.



The washroom sink remained after the storm at the Lamar filling station, Dania Beach.
Floyd Plyes Collection



A scene along Dixie Highway in Hollywood. Photo by Higby

There has not been much sunshine all the week and it's overcast most of the time with showers which keeps doing more damage to all the places without a roof and prevents the purification which the Florida sun is endowed with. But today it's clearing up and let's hope we are in for a spell of sunshine to help clear conditions for health. The water has receded around our place and is drying up, but in the lower places where the filthy water stands, the stench is something awful.

Find Baby Alive But Parents Dead

A few dead bodies were still taken out yesterday from under wrecked homes. One place they found the bodies of a father and mother, and a small child was alive sucking a rag. The cries of the child brought the attention of the relief workers who were looking over the wreckage.

Every speck of our belongings was soaked, including all our stuff in storage. This hurricane brought with it a continual sheet of rain that seemed to go right through the wood of the house as well as everything in boxes and in dressers and drawers and it's hard to get the furniture put back into place again, it's so badly warped and the water took out the glue that so much of it is apart. Any place where there was veneering is all curled up and almost impossible to repair. Our office furniture and the things in the front two rooms of our house came out in pretty good shape, that is, it was not so badly soaked with water; the rain and

water did more damage than perhaps the storm as much of the lumber and building materials can be salvaged. All our clothes, furnishings and the girls' outfits are mostly ruined.⁷³ Every kind of color went through the rest of it. We unpacked all this as it was already mildewed, but in trying to wash and rinse this colored stuff out it was nil; but to save it was to get it rinsed out and many times the line would break as it was so heavy, and into the water or lake below it would go. Then showers would come every few hours and the things had to be taken in and out so many times before we could get the things dry.

Our house was so wet things would not dry inside so had to depend on the outside air, even if it did not shine, the breeze would dry the things.

A Sorry Sight

It's a sorry sight to see the large warehouses of furniture packed several stories high with fine furniture, without any roofs and in most cases these warehouses have no walls left just a mass standing in the center. Garages packed two and three stories high with cars standing in the same way – no roof and walls with cars hanging over the edge and a mass in the center. Wholesale grocery, fruit, and provisions are the same.



View from automobile looking towards Hollywood Hills. Cox Collection

Badly twisted

But when we look around in our section, Progresso, our place looks pretty good; although it's badly twisted and the different sections are apart, it can be repaired.⁷⁴ The floors and ceilings are buckled up, and the floors up and down as something got under each section which holds up the end.

We were moved between three to four feet north, when the hurricane changed to the south toward the end about 4 o'clock Saturday afternoon. If it hadn't been for this sudden change to the south, I think our place would have stood up on the foundation. We have to get the house moved over on our line and up again, as the slime and stench comes up between the sections that is apart. Also it will dry up and get

circulation underneath. Have tried to raise it with some of the neighbors, but can't do anything, but will get one of the raising and moving crews to come next week. Except we will have to take our turn.

The Dixie Highway which runs in front of us and which is the so-called main street of Florida, was cleared up for traffic. It was completely covered with wreckage of every kind, twisted up with all the electric wires and poles which all went down, but they are doing great work in restoring this, and we may have light within 30 days. The entire city has to be restrung and poles set up again. Ice is being shipped in from Palm Beach, Jacksonville, and Orlando; also water. We have had our first "shot" of anti-typhoid serum. All except Jack who was called back to the Western Union.⁷⁵

Free Transportation For Women and Children

Hollywood is giving free transportation to all women and children to any point in the U.S. Men are required to stay. Fire trucks from nearly all the northern cities along the coast are coming daily. They are burning up all the rubbish and wreckage that cannot be salvaged. One state and the cities are spreading disinfectants of every kind everywhere to prevent any epidemic of disease; there are so many animals, cows, horses, dogs and poultry killed lying around in the wreckage that it is a job to get this cleared up. The militia is here now helping, and wonderful progress is being made to clear this up. Already the city is rebuilding and the sound of hammers is everywhere, like a city of beehives. Outside relief is coming in slow. Northern Florida cities have done wonderfully in sending down trucks of food stuffs and clothing. We are among only a few in Progresso that can't come in on any charity here. It's hard to ask even though we



Hollywood Beach Hotel before (top) and after the 1926 storm

need it as much as anyone, our situation and appearance doesn't warrant them giving to us when so many have nothing and with rations not too plentiful. At first they gave the sufferers milk, butter, eggs and even meat, until this supply has run low and this has to be paid for by most everyone now. The Highway is just jammed with trucks bringing in roofing, paper, which can be here in a few days so that the buildings now standing can be put under a roof to prevent further damage, and so folks can get under cover. I have much property which I have had in charge for rentals, some of which are standing and the owners most of which are north. I have a desk full of wires to look after these houses and business places, also to arrange for the rebuilding of the places which are down; each day the work and responsibility of this piles up, scarcely know where to begin. Have to make calls to see how the tenants who are still able to have a place to stay in and see what can be done with their houses, and to get roofing over their heads. Every able bodied man has been called to the city headquarters to help.

Many Leave State

So many left at first who had been wiped out but had their cars and started out before any signs of rebuilding was in sight, and many of course that did not have courage to stay. Now labor is getting scarce, the slogan is now to get rehabilitated and rebuilt by Christmas for the winter tourists.

From the looks of the city already at this first week-end, and if this keeps up with increase of workers, by New Year's our Lauderdale and other Lower East Coast cities won't look as though a hurricane had ever struck the place, only for shrubbery, trees, etc. This hurts me very much to see so much of this destroyed. We had our place looking fine surrounding the cottage and the office and also in the back, but we will have to keep up courage and start over again. One thing, every kind of shrub grows well and hardy. It's true a city and its citizens must have a lot of courage to rebuild and if you could see the wreckage one would at first wonder how it can be done. But history tells us as far back as records go, that stricken cities and communities have in most cases come back. Lauderdale is now working with Hollywood and Miami to have the financial aid that is



Destroyed apartment on beach. Charlie Flinn Collection.

coming in, transferred into loans, extending over a period of years, in place of accepting all as charity. A banner was posted downtown today which read, "Many men are hitting the trails, but men worth while are hitting the nails."

Get Wire from The Culvers

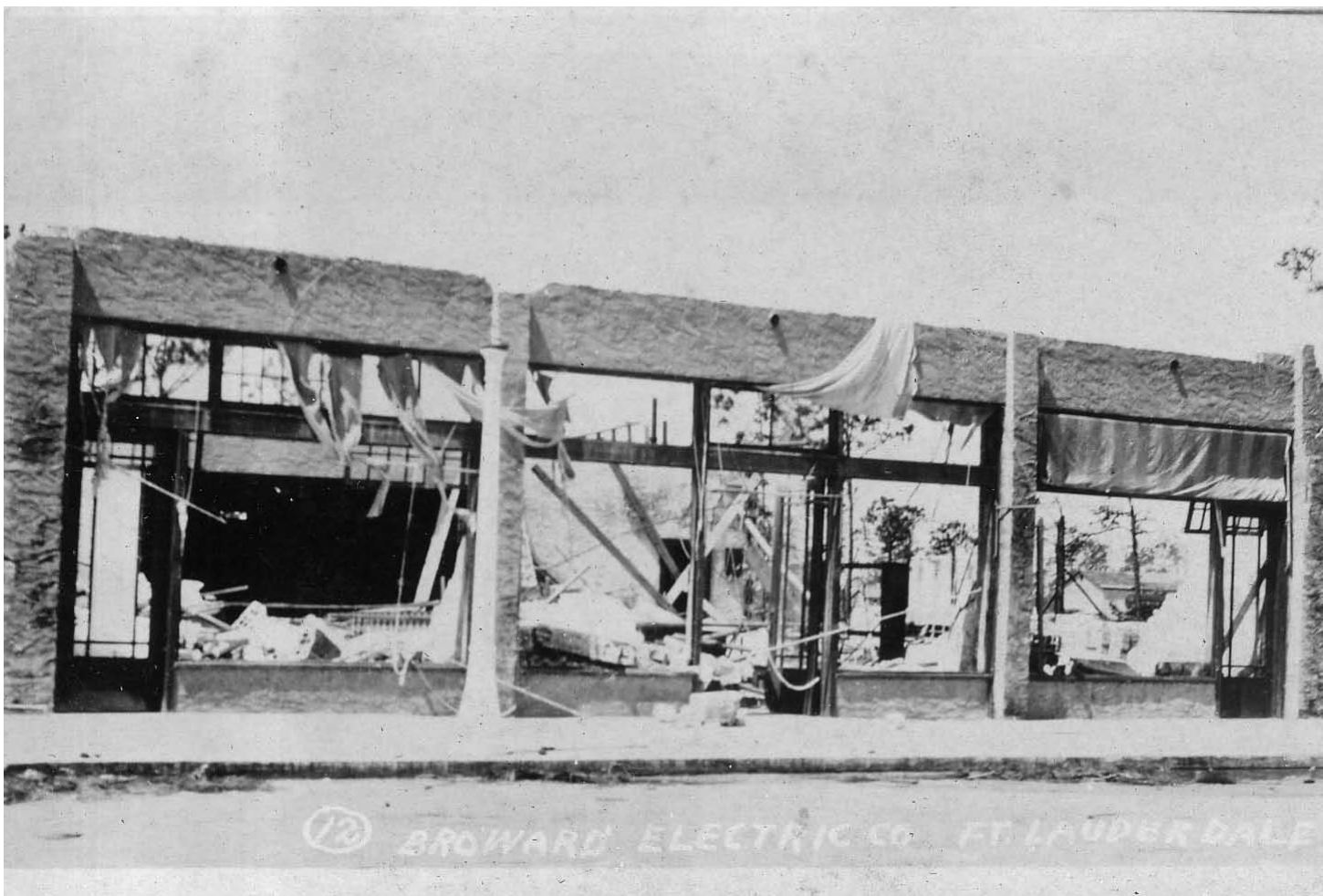
We received a wire from the Culvers telling us they were safe and wanting to know how we were.⁷⁶

We had not time to write, so on Monday sent you a card. Mail was the only service out at the time as the wires were down. Every minute counted when we had daylight, and as darkness came with only two small lamps, we were kept busy getting our place in some order inside. We had to sleep on the springs without any pillows as

the mattresses and pillows and blankets were soaking wet and slow to dry out, but we didn't mind that as long as were under a cover. Your wire was a day late in reaching us, as it was addressed to our P.O. Box. Had it been addressed to care of N.H.P. Realty Co., No. Dixie, the telegraph office would have delivered it here as we have messenger service to our office. They now have five wires going; three north and two south, but with 1200 to 2000 messages coming in daily a great portion of these had to be delivered by motorcycle to Palm Beach as most of these had to be answered. Air mail is now working good. I have had a good deal of my business correspondence come in from owners in the north, regarding their property, come by air mail. The new St. Anthony's school came out without a scratch and the church only a little damage: the tiling near the edge of the roof was blown off. It is remarkable how a great number of the fine stucco houses that were closer to the beach in the fine residential sections came through without much damage. The city schools were damaged quite a good deal, but present plans are for the opening of schools next week Monday. They may use some other buildings, as I don't see how they can have the big high school repaired completely by that time, as that is damaged the most. The trend you get from the discussions you hear from the men of affairs here is to go ahead in a better and bigger way than before and if the arrangements and progress continue as has been done this week, indications surely point strongly that way, they surely have a big way of doing things here. It's a big loss folks are taking here. When you think of it less than 5 per cent of the loss is covered by storm insurance.

God only Controls

Well folks, I must sign off and can say we are thankful and happy we came out of all this as well as we did, and I hope we can keep well, so that we can hold the fort and carry on the duties that are before us. It's not the time to give up the ship and as long as we can keep up courage, there no doubt will be some way of working out of this, and we may not ever have a storm like this again, but these are elements which God only controls, and this may have been sent to Florida for some good reason. Let's all hope



Broward Electrical Company, 149 N. Brickell Avenue, Fort Lauderdale. Charlie Flinn Collection.



West end of an apartment house. Charlie Flinn Collection.

we may take a lesson from it. One thing sure, we may lose material things here but Florida is surely blessed with climate and sunshine most all the time. As there is no electricity we have no daily papers in Lauderdale; was told today they would get some sort of edition out on hand (press) this week. As everything here is dependent on electricity, there is no provision made for any other kind of power. No steam plants here and very rare in other places, and gasoline about the only thing that is used for is motor cars – trucks, etc. No stationary gasoline engines as we see so much of in the north. But as soon as a paper is out we will send you a copy. Miami began sending their papers here yesterday. With best love and wishes to you all.

*Sincerely,
Percy (A.P. Hansen)*

The American Legion, Salvation Army, Odd Fellows, churches and other groups participated in relief work. On October 3, 1926 the *Fort Lauderdale Daily News* reported the following:

MASONIC TEMPLE WAS CENTER OF RELIEF DURING STORM

HUNDREDS FED, WOUNDED ARE CARED FOR DAILY BY VOLUNTEER WORKERS

by August Burghard

The hub – the center of all relief and first aid activities in Fort Lauderdale during the period immediately following the hurricane of September 18 and up to the present time has been the Masonic Temple in Fort Lauderdale.

There refugees were brought by the hundreds. More than 1,000 were given first aid the first day of the storm. Volunteer cooks fed to these people 1,000 gallons of soup and 15,000 gallons of coffee within 24 hours after the worst of the storm was over.



The Masonic Temple was located on the corner of S.E. 1st Avenue and S.E. 1st Street.

Besides the temporary hospital which was opened in the south wing of the building, the food dispensaries, the temporary barracks, and the first aid stations – the Temple was also used as a milk depot, as a place for giving out relief for the St. Anthony's Catholic Church and the Park Street Temple church, as a point for reuniting lost families and as a general storehouse for foods and supplies to be divided among both white and negro people.

The Masonic Temple Dining Room, which occupies the first floor and is privately managed by Mrs. Lillian B. Griffioen, presented a mad scene by 10 o'clock Saturday morning of the storm.

Several hundred refugees had already found their way to the Temple, or had been brought in by relief workers. The first first aid was given to a woman who had been brought in with a broken back and a broken blood vessel by E. "Dutch" Anderson.

Anderson, a member of the Fort Lauderdale Fire Department, who had had four years experience in the medical corps of the Navy, gave first aid to dozens of cases during the entire time of the emergency period.

Mrs. Griffioen turned her entire facilities over to the workers. Her living quarters on the south side of the first floor were crowded with injured and several who had died. Linen napkins from the dining room were used as bandages and the greater part of her dry clothes were given to those who had escaped the storm only with their lives.

Mark Hannah, bookkeeper for the dining room, took full charge of the work in the front part of the Temple, assisted by his partner in the automobile repair business, Elmer Kellar.



Ruins of the Lauderdale Beach Hotel



"Sand Finished" Automobile. Cox Collection

This group of men worked from Friday until Monday night without even attempting to get any sleep. By Monday the second floor of the Masonic Temple was so crowded with sleeping people that one could not find a place to put a foot down. They crawled under benches for two hours sleep and were back at work.

Feldman and Howard were on the Florida East Coast train which picked up refugees at Avenue E in Progresso during the storm Saturday morning. This group of a hundred or more victims was also brought to the Temple.

Most pitiful of all the cases brought in, according to Mr. Feldman and Mrs. Griffioen Friday morning, were Mr. and Mrs. Davis, of North Lauderdale. Mrs. Davis' back was broken and she was floating with only her face showing above water. Her husband had both legs crushed and was lying at the other end of the partly submerged house, unable to give his wife any aid. Both are now at a Miami hospital and are said to be recovering nicely.



Hollywood Hills. Cox Collection

W.J. Feldman, owner of the M and W Café (blown down in the storm) took charge of the kitchen. He was assisted by W.P. Howard and J. Fisher.

On the Saturday of the storm this group of men cooked and fed to storm victims 1,000 gallons of soup and 15,000 gallons of coffee. Incredible as it may seem, the work was done on small oil stoves. Coffee and soup, the only food and drink available in the city, were prepared in new garbage cans which had been procured from a hardware store.

The Tillman family, Mrs. Tillman and two small daughters, who were killed, and another child badly hurt, were first brought to the Temple.

According to Mr. Feldman the conductor and crew of the Florida East Coast rescue train are deserving of much credit for the manner in which they rescued and cared for the victims in North Lauderdale. The baggage car was thrown open for the dead and injured. Coffee and cocoa were prepared for the women and children. As this party left the Temple wind was still blowing so hard that shirts were literally torn from the backs of several of the workers.



Not much left of this house except the ice box.



*H. A. Hoxie's Home on beach, Mr. Hoxie was a "Copeland" dealer.
Floyd Pyles Collection*

Mrs. Byrtene Anderson, of the State Board of Health with headquarters in Jacksonville, arrived in Fort Lauderdale the Sunday following the storm and assumed charge of all nursing service and nursing personnel, establishing her headquarters at the Temple.

On the first day she estimated that more than 1,000 cases of first aid were handled. Records, kept from Tuesday, 21, to date, show an additional 882 first aid cases. Doctors Stranahan, Skiff, Robinson, Maxwell, Peavy, in fact most of the physicians of the city were prominent in the work at the Temple headquarters. Dr. Sanford, who lives next door, was the first to turn the Temple into a temporary hospital.

The exact number of people fed will never be known. More than three tons of foodstuffs were used. Special tables were kept for the soldiers and guardsmen after they assumed charge of the city.

Twenty-four hour service has been maintained daily since the storm. A crew of from eight to 10 potato peelers alone were kept busy continuously.

By noon Monday it was said that Messers Hannah, Kellar, Howard, Fisher, Dutch Yeoman and several other volunteer workers were every one practically on the verge of nervous breakdown. Some organization had been perfected by dusk, however, and these men carried bravely on.

On Wednesday after the storm refugees still were being brought in from the 'Glades and the numbers of those to be fed increased rather than diminished. Cooks, servers and those trying to keep the refugees in



The Las Olas Inn was on the beach and suffered greatly. The 30-year old grove of coconut palm trees at the Las Olas Inn, which made the historic inn one of the most picturesque spots in Broward County, was blown down and uprooted. Australian pines in the back of the inn were also destroyed. Waves swept through the lower part of the inn building destroying practically everything on that floor. A four-inch deposit of sand was left on the upper floor. Small fish were swept through the lobby and out the rear. Floyd Pyles Collection



Las Olas Boulevard looking west toward the Sweet Building and Broward Hotel. Sam and Art Graham Collection

line worked frantically. Meals started at 5 o'clock and were served as fast as humanly possible until after 9.

Special mention for work at the Temple was also made of Mrs. Elsie B. Shippey and her daughter, Betty Shippey, and Mrs. Peters and her son. The Peters, mother and son, had been employed at the Dutch Kitchen at the Broward.

The Masonic Temple was designed and built by George Young, local contractor. It withstood the storm as well or better than any of the larger buildings in the city.

Prior to the storm Mrs. Griffioen had served the weekly luncheons to all of the civic clubs of the city. It has been two weeks since the storm struck and her place of business is still being used to feed and house refugees. Most of the napkins and table cloths were used; the furniture, tables and chairs are scarred and broken and the walls and fixtures and floors have suffered considerable damage from the thousands who have eaten, slept and been given medical attention since the storm.

However, Mrs. Griffioen stated Friday that immediately the city turns the place back over to her that she will be ready to again serve her former patrons.

Food and assistance was sent to the workers at the Temple by the city government, the Red Cross and by the American Legion.

This first-hand account of the 1926 hurricane was written by Nellie Blanche Gallagher (1888-1968). Her family lived at 615 NE 3rd Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 1933. Oral N. Gallagher (1887-1945) was Nellie's husband. According to the voter registration cards in the collections of the Broward County Historical Commission he was a clerk from Missouri. Nellie's mother was Martha Buck (ca. 1860-1934); according to the Federal Census she was living with the Gallaghers in 1930. Nellie's children included daughters Genieve (ca. 1912 - 1983), also called "Genis," Paula (1914-1989 and Gertrude Charlie Gallagher (1917- present).



The Gallaghers sought shelter in the Pioneer Department Store (on right). The unfinished Wil-Mar Hotel, later known as the Governor's Club, was across the street from the store. This is a view of Las Olas Boulevard looking east from the top of the Sweet Building. Mrs. Clyde Brown Collection

On Friday evening the 17 of September 1926 we drove out to the beach about 7:30. The wind was strong enough then that it ripped the top of our car but the ocean was not nearly as angry as it had been in July so we went home and went to bed feeling assured the storm wouldn't be bad. O.N. and I slept on the porch but the wind blew so hard our rest was quite broken. At 2 a.m. I got up and went in to lay down with Mother. At 3 a.m. and some branches were down by this time. I called O.N. He moved the bed

in the house. The sheets were dripping wet. We put dry sheets on and went back to bed. At 4 a.m. we got up and dressed. We just walked the floor from one room to the other trying to see out.

It was as dark as Egypt and the air so full of water we couldn't see a thing. Between 5 a.m. and 6 a.m. the house started leaking. Then we moved from place to place trying to keep dry. O.N. was standing by the east windows in the back bedroom when they blew out. At the same time the door blew shut and it took both Mother and Genis to get it open to get in to help him. He took the mattress off the bed and nailed it over the holes. This is one thing that kept our house from blowing to pieces.

Two big trees fell on the roof but there was such a noise anyway that we didn't realize what it was for hours. Such a roar it would be impossible to describe. But if you can imagine the wind blowing off the ocean at the rate of 130 miles an hour and bringing with it the ocean water, possibly you can feature what it was like. Fortunately, the air was so filled with salt water we couldn't see across the street at anytime till about noon.



The Maxwell Arcade and what is left of the \$80,000.00 electric sign. The sign was the biggest electrical sign on Florida's East Coast. This view is looking south from the Andrews Avenue Bridge. Mrs. Clyde Brown Collection



Gallagher House after the storm. Charlie Flinn Collection.

It must have been about 10 o'clock when we caught water that ran down the electric cord and made coffee and postum. It was so salty we drank it tho'. We put our best clothes in trunks and suitcases and so saved most of them. Under the table in the dining room was the only dry spot in the house and we had a blanket, a comfort and suitcases under to keep dry. Every bed and pillow was soaked and didn't get dried out until Monday. We tho't every minute from 4 a.m. till after noon that it would be our last and it was sure a relief when we began to see men fighting the wind and water to get to every house to know if anyone needed help.

At one time the water was almost four feet deep around our house and the waves would hit the windows. At 2:30 we had potatoe soup made out of some more salty water and then Oral and Genis and myself started out to see if Lyman and Edna were all right. We met Lyman wading water more than waist deep coming to see us. We then went to town and we were about an hour walking seven blocks. We went back home about 5 p.m. and got some dry clothes and Mother and the children and took them to the Pioneer Dept. store (where Oral works) for the night. There 152 people spent the first night and not so many the second. There is a wonderful soft heavy rug on the floor and there we laid two nights and it wasn't so bad either.



Charlie Flinn and her older sister Paula. Charlie Flinn Collection.

The first night (Saturday) there was talk of the hurricane coming back and the wind did blow awful hard off and on all night but not hard enough to cause any damage. There were seventeen lives lost in Fort Lauderdale and this seems miraculous in considering the number of homes destroyed. I have never heard of a single person that had no damage of any kind.

I feel it was a great privilege to have gone thro' this storm and come thro' as we all did, without a scratch, but I am not craving another one. It was no human power that saved us from injury, but God's will that it be thus, and we are truly thankful for His mercy toward us.

*By Nellie Gallagher
Date unknown*

Mr. Lester (1916-1996) wrote this article around 1955. It is a first hand account of his and his family's experiences during the 1926 hurricane. The Lesters owned the Obispo Apartments at 200 S. E. 16th Street in Fort Lauderdale. In later years the Obispo became the nurse's quarters of Broward General Hospital which was torn down and rebuilt as the north wing of the hospital.

The Great Florida Hurricane

by Hugh Carver Lester



The Obispo Apartments

The storm of September 18, which began on Friday, got bad at about eleven o'clock at night. We, of course, were in the penthouse. We were awakened when the wind began to beat out the east windows with the wreckage from the awnings. We huddled in the hallway. As Father looked through the glass door leading to the backstairs, he thought he saw the incinerator stack sway. He called to Mother, "Is that chimney really swaying or is it an optical illusion?" Before she rendered an opinion, the stack made a wide swing and failed to come back. We remembered when the expert out talked Father about the need for anchoring the stack at each floor!

All this time the building was shaking as if by an earthquake, the windows were shattering, and the storm shrieking like a blizzard. That penthouse was no longer a suitable place for us. Father picked up Donald and I grabbed Mother by the hand and we stepped out onto the deck of the apartment house. There wind, saturated with salt water from the ocean, was blowing probably at one-hundred-fifty miles an hour. We inched our way to the concrete stairs and crept down to the third floor.

The storm was doing to the main house what it was doing to the penthouse, shattering the glass on the east side windows. The inside stairs with their big windows were on the east side and the wind was already blasting the north-south hallway. Though there was temporary refuge in the west side apartments, the safest place appeared to be the ground floor.

I do not remember if the third floor tenants preceded or followed us, but going down the stairs was not pleasant with glass flying and glass crumbling under foot. We and the tenants took refuge in the west side apartments on the ground floor. The lower hall had double doors front and back. The rear doors burst open. The adult male tenants and Father tried to shut the doors. They would get them shut and then the next gust of wind would throw the men on their backs and burst the doors open. Finally they had to give up for the wind had more strength than all of them put together.

About this time the front of the apartment house blew out down to the top of the front story. The tenant, Mr. Hennessy, in the second story front apartment on the east side later told us his experience. As his apartment was in the northwest corner of the building, they had not had any broken glass. He was sitting in a wicker chair at the north window, smoking and

looking out at the storm. Suddenly he saw a crack between the front wall and the partition. Like Doubting Thomas of old, he could not believe there was really a crack without walking over and poking his finger into it. As the crack widened, he decided that was no place for John Hennessy. He raced to the hall door and from there saw the front wall go out and his wicker chair follow it. Hennessy said that during the storm he was relieved because his other suit was at the Chinaman's. Then after the storm he discovered that there was no more Chinaman's. Hennessy, though a hunchback, had as sunny a disposition as I ever encountered.



The Obispo Apartments after the 1926 storm, the front wall of 2nd and 3rd floor were destroyed; rugs were hung out to dry. The building was rebuilt thanks to property insurance but the Lesters lost the property during the Great Depression.



(Left to right) Hugh Carver Lester, Donald Gordon Lester and Donald Baker pose on the roof garden of the Obispo apartments on April 1926

The storm roared on all night and all the next day, Saturday, until late afternoon. Mrs. Nickles, one of the tenants, kept saying, "Oh! If it would only subside." The rest of us felt like joining in with the concluding words of a jury verdict, "So say we all."

When the storm did subside, there was from one to two feet of water around the apartment house, depending on where one waded. In other parts of the city the water was deeper. Around our place it was salt water blown in from the ocean, while the wind was from the east. Our house looked like a pile of rubble, like London after the Blitz. The other buildings in the city looked just as bad or worse. The stores and the rest of the downtown area were several feet deep in water. In addition to the water blown in from the ocean, the river was obstructed by piled up ocean water at its outlet.

In Fort Lauderdale the electric lines were down and would not be restored for several weeks. The water system was disrupted. It would supply polluted water in a few days, but it would not supply drinking water for a week or more. Every house in town was probably unlivable. There was no electricity,

no way of cooking, no refrigeration, no water fit to drink. We paid high prices for bottled water from some deep wells south of town, and then after several days were told that the water was polluted.

Our car stood out of doors through the storm, and to our surprise it would still run afterwards. Of course, using a car saturated with salt water before it has been taken apart and cleaned of the salt water will ruin it. We did not know that then, but it would have made no difference if we had known it. It would have been impossible to find anyone to work on an automobile or anything else. We were lucky to have had a cheap, second hand car, instead of a good new one. As it was, Father ruined an old car; otherwise, he would have ruined a good one.



The Boat Yards on New River were terribly damaged by the storm. Mrs. Clyde Brown Collection

At the various grocery stores one could buy food, mostly canned goods that the storm had not ruined. For a few days we had bread, but that soon spoiled. Father and Mother did a little cooking over a kerosene heater, but we lived mostly on canned salmon and the like.

We slept on mattresses on the ground floor while sand crabs invaded the area by the thousands. They could walk in the house at will day or night.

Telegraph lines had been destroyed by the storm, but within a few days we were able to send telegrams. They were taken to West Palm Beach by motorcycle and the messages wired from there. We sent telegrams to my relatives up North stating that even though the house was wrecked we were well.

On October 20, 1926, there was another hurricane warning. The storm was said to be as bad as the one of September 18. Except for boarding up the open front, nothing had been done toward repairing our house. It was no place to spend another hurricane. We had a chance to ride out the storm with another family, so we did. By this time our second hand Chevrolet was completely ruined, and we decided that it was not a suitable vehicle in which to run away from a hurricane. We rode with our friends to Daytona Beach, where we spent the remainder of the night. It seemed that everyone who had experienced the storm had the same idea, and that was to get as far away from the hurricane area as possible. The road was packed with cars going north. All South Florida, south of West Palm Beach, was evacuating. During our flight north our car skidded to such an extent that it spun completely around without hitting anyone and started south. Strangely enough no one was hurt and no one saw us. They were too intent with their own problems of getting away to worry about us. We managed to get turned around and proceeded to Daytona Beach. In the morning we learned that the hurricane was going to miss Fort Lauderdale and we returned home.

Endnotes

1 "The Gulf Stream Saved The East Coast Of Florida," *Fort Lauderdale Greetings*, vol. 1, No. 37-38-39, *Fort Lauderdale, Florida*, October 8, 1926, p. 1.

2 Stuart McIver, "1926 Miami: The blow that broke the boom", *Stuart McIver, Sun-Sentinel*, September 19, 1993.

3 According to the *Daily News*, Fort Lauderdale, FL, September 19, 1926, the Tillmans were from Progresso and according to cemetery records they are buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Fort Lauderdale. From the *Daily News* of September 26, 1926: "W. A. Tillman, whose wife Fern, and two children, Robert and Martha, were killed during the hurricane last Saturday, wishes to express his appreciation for all the kindness shown him in the time of his trouble and bereavement. His three-year-old daughter, Anna Beth, is at the Edwards hospital in serious condition from injuries received during the storm." (also listed in the *Miami Herald*).

4 *Miami Herald* September 20, 1926, p. 1 listed as "Tellemer."

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*

9 *Riverside and Glade Avenue*, Mr. McClure is listed in the 1926 *Fort Lauderdale City Directory and Broward County Gazetteer*, Volume IV *Florida-Piedmont Directory Company*, Asheville, N. C. on page 200 as carpenter living with his wife Eva on Everglades Avenue, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

10 Mrs. R. D. Crawley was found in Lake Mable, her home was originally in Nashville, N. C. and she was visiting from Ocala. She

is listed in the *Fort Lauderdale Daily News*, September 19, 1926 as "Crowley", but is listed in the *Florida Death Index* as "Crawley." She is also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1 as "Crowley."

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid.*, The *Florida Death Index* lists Alma Thompson and B. A. Thompson as white females from Broward County who died in 1926.

13 Voter registration cards, in the collections of the Broward County Historical Commission, list Mr. Martin as W. L. Martin of Georgia, a laborer living at N. E. 17th St.; he was 52 in 1926.

14 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

15 *Daily News*, Fort Lauderdale, FL, p. 1.

16 An oral history interview with Ivan Austin January 14, 1985 in the collections of the Broward County Historical Commission explains that the large girl baby, Ivalyn, was delivered by forceps. The Austins were living in Rio Vista at the time, a few blocks from the hospital in Cooley Hammock. The Doctor and his wife were in the hospital during the storm. Ivan came in the night to check on his wife and new baby. The window next to his wife broke and showered her with glass. The power went off and they took her down to the first floor. The hospital ran out of oxygen and the baby died at one and a half days old. The Austins are all buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Fort Lauderdale; also listed in the *Miami Herald* September 20, 1926, p. 1.

17 *Daily News*, Fort Lauderdale, October 7., 1926, p. 2, "Frank Williams, 59, negro, died Tuesday as a result of injuries received during the storm, adding another to Fort Lauderdale's fatalities in the recent catastrophe. According to the report of vital statistics, of which Dr. D. L. Campbell is registrar, this is said to bring the total number killed to 13. This figure does not include some from Hollywood whose bodies were sent to Fort Lauderdale."

18 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

19 *Daily News*, Fort Lauderdale, 11 October 1926, p. 2, "Robert Nelson, negro, Died at the local hospital Sunday as a result of exposure received after the hurricane, according to authorities at the institution. He is said to have been sick before the storm but his death was hastened by the exposure. According to Dr. Campbell, local registrar of vital



This image was taken from the top of the 1st National Bank building and shows Andrews Avenue looking north. Meeks Collection

statistics, this is the fourteenth death to occur in this city as a result of the storm, if this may be counted." Mr. Nelson is not listed in Woodlawn Cemetery records but they are far from complete. Woodlawn is an African-American cemetery in Fort Lauderdale.

20 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

21 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale* September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

22 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale* September 22, 1926, p. 1 and 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

23 "Mrs. Cory, at Hollywood Administration Building," *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1, as "Corory" but Dania cemetery records indicate three members of the "Cory" family died September, 18, 1926.

24 Dania cemetery records indicate three members of this family died September, 18, 1926. In a Historical Commission program held October 30, 1985 Dania resident Verlon Burrell gave an account of the death of his sister and her two children, a baby girl who was one year old and a son.

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 1, listed in *Florida Death Index* as Jim J. Jordon, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

27 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

28 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1., also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.,

also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 25, 1926, p. 13, "Burial will be in Naranja cemetery by Kings" (Homestead, Florida).

29 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2

30 *Ibid.*

31 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale* September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald* September 20, 1926, p. 1.

32 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2

33 *Ibid.*

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.*

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1. as "Rhoda"

38 *Ibid.*, Voter registration cards, in the collections of the Broward County Historical Commission, list Mr. Peter A. Vighes as farmer from Ohio who was 51 in 1926, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1 as "Vigher".

39 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2.

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, October 8, 1926, p. 1.

42 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2

43 "Storm Hurts Fatal to Hollywood official, West Palm Beach Fla.", *Miami Herald*, September 26, 1926, p. 1., Sept. 25 "Thomas B. McCarrell, Jr., 22, of Hollywood, died here tonight from injuries received in the hurricane. He was assistant city engineer of

Hollywood and was married on September 14."

44 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

45 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2.

46 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

47 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

48 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1 as "Cohy."

49 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

50 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2.

51 *Ibid.*

52 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2 lists him as Leon "Helem" but the Florida Death Index lists Lorena and Leon her brother as "Helems"; they are both buried in the Dania Cemetery, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1 as "Helem."

53 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

54 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2 lists him as "H. G. Luther," also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1. The Florida Death index lists him as "Henry Grady Luther."

55 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1 as "Peter."

56 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2. The 1920 Federal Census lists Mr. McFarland as a 70 year-old single man from Canada living in Dania. He is buried in the Dania cemetery whose records there indicate he was born December 15, 1850.

57 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2, also listed in the *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

60 *Miami Herald*, September 20, 1926, p. 1.

61 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 22, 1926, p. 2.

62 *Ibid.*

63 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 19, 1926,

64 *Fort Lauderdale City Directory and Broward County Gazetteer*, 1926, vol. IV (Florida-Piedmont Directory Company, Asheville, N. C.).

65 *Fort Lauderdale Greetings*, vol. 1, no. 37-38-39, *Fort Lauderdale, Florida*, October 8, 1926, p. 1.

66 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, October 17, 1926, p. 1.

67 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale*, September 28, 1926, p. 1.

68 Oral history interview with Mercie L. Mims, January 19, 1983 interviewed by Erma Allen, CD-Rom, in the collections of the Broward County Historical Commission.

69 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale, FL*, September 28, 1926, p.3.

70 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale, FL*, September 26, 1926, p. 1.

71 *Daily News, Fort Lauderdale, FL*, September 30, 1926, p.1.

72 Minerva Hansen (1876-1976)

73 The Hansen's had five children: John Howard., Virginia M., Winnifred G., Robert E. and Alice P. Hansen.

74 Progresso stretched from today's NE Sixth Street up to the south fork of the New River and from the Intracoastal Waterway westward to present NW Fourteenth Avenue. The community of Progresso was platted in 1896 by the Florida Fiber Company. Everglades land investor Richard J. Bolles later purchased the land but it wasn't until 1908, after the state's Everglades drainage program began, that the land began to sell. Bolles sold buyers ten acre tracts of un-drained Everglades land and threw in a town lot in Progresso as part of the bargain.

75 "Jack" is John Howard Hansen who would have been around 16 at the time of the storm.

76 Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Culver were former residents of Eau Claire, WI and lived in St. Petersburg, FL. That city was not hard hit by the storm.