



WILTON MANORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORICAL NOTES

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PERRY AND DOROTHEA MICKEL THEIR HISTORY IN WILTON MANORS

Written by Mrs. Mickel, Wilton Manors Pioneer Honoree 1974

Wilton Manors Historical Society

Perry Mickel came to Fort Lauderdale in September of 1924 to manage the Glades Restaurant on the river front by Swaggerty's Garage, and owned by Mrs. Vail and Mrs. Richardson. It was a wet month - Perry wore his bathing suit to work. I followed in October with my mother and six months old baby. With the "boom" exploding Perry soon went into the Real Estate business and I went back to nursing for Dr. Edwards.

Dr. Edwards and Dr. Harrison Walker were from Indianapolis where I had trained and often nursed for them. Dr. Lingerman had a brother who was an Ear, Nose & Throat man in Indianapolis. Dr. Lingerman came later. The Hospital was where the Pine Crest School was for so many years.

Perry worked out of E.J. Willingham's office and later bought and sold a number of Lauderdale Beach lots. After the boom bubble burst he built a garage apartment on a lot across from where the Sea Shore Hotel stands. This was the summer of '26. Here we weathered the 1926 hurricane, and sitting in our car, watched our apt. blow down. It was later raised and a first floor built under it. When the "rum runners" began unloading their cargo on this part of the beach, the Coast Guard refused to consider that any one live on the beach and Perry decided the shooting was too close for comfort. (We sold the Beach House to Al Capone gang and they burned it later.)

In the meantime Mr. Willingham's house in Wilton Manors was deteriorating for lack of care and offered it to us as a place to live and keep in shape. We moved to Wilton Manors in 1928 in time for the 1928 blow that did so much damage on the lake.

Bill Robinson family were with us for storm. In the meantime Dr. Walker had gone to Hollywood and open a small hospital near the beach and I went there as

head nurse so when the 1928 Blow came, I was there working and commuting.

Perry was gradually working into the building business with Charles Shaffer, a builder. Perry had worked for the Red Cross during the clean up days of Sept. 1926.

With the Willingham house we inherited two colored men who lived over the garage. The acreage back of the house had been in orange groves, but citrus cancer had been found and all the trees had been uprooted and burned. With two men to keep occupied Perry now began a small venture of farming. The fall of 1928 I was asked to apply for the position of County School Nurse and was accepted and given a model-T car to drive, along with a health card for every school child in Broward County. I spent one day a week at larger schools, one day every two weeks at Dania, Hollywood, Davie and Pompano once a month, also Deerfield.

Not long after I accepted the School nursing position. Dr. Walker closed the little Hospital in Hollywood and went to Miami Beach. Dr. Edwards had already gone there to the Allison Hospital.

By 1929-'30-'31 the depression was getting worse, Perry bought a cow and farmed about 25 acres and then in summers would do repair jobs-as building was at a stand-still. He gradually increased his farming activities and went as far as Boca Raton to plant beans and squash.

After '31 I went back to private duty nursing as the School work was only paying \$75.00 a month.

Sometime during these lean years the land north of Middle River and east of Wilton Drive sold for taxes. Perry was instrumental in retrieving this for the Willinghams by selling the house on Fifth Avenue to Frank Musebeck and the house at the entrance gates to George Smith, the Furniture store owner. Frank had the tire shop on down town Andrews. He also rescued Mr. Willingham's property in Idlywild by insisting that the bank would discount the mortgage they held for such a small sum that Tom Fleming insisted that they wouldn't take it, but Perry urged him to try and when he came back..he said "My God, Perry, they took it!".

Perry was now milking several cows and delivering milk to the Oakland Park area, along with his farming. The next few years were lean but we were much better off than many. Then things began to get better. In 1937 we obtained some acreage - west of Andrews. In 1938 the Willingham property sold to (George) Richardson for a golf course.

Perry built a house there on our acreage and while he was building it I did night

duty with a private patient. At that time the Hospital was on S. E. 18th St. in what had been called a Battle Creek Sanatorium. The place was small..Surgery up steps..no elevator...and Fairchild and Fannin took turns coming with their stretchers to take the patients up stairs to surgery. Every Saturday night was an emergency. The curve on Federal Highway called "Dead Man's Curve" was taking its toll and brain concussion cases with their Cheyn-Stokes Respiration could be heard all thru the Hospital. The old apartment House where Broward General now stands was being rejuvenated into a hospital and many a nurse helped wash down wood-work and steps, as Ann Boyd once said, "They never told that when they wrote up the Hospital Story". I was not nursing at the time.

In 1938 we moved into our new home. The suitcase full of worthless mortgages which we had stored all the 10 years was officially burned, a remnant of the "boom" days.

The later days of Wilton Manors should not be so difficult to obtain. We did our part by sub-dividing and selling lots.

The enthusiasm of the early pioneers of Wilton Manors working together to build a Community Building, later a library and volunteer work done on the Ball Parks and Recreation facilities is something to be remembered.

P.S. Perry and I both came from the town of Sheridan Indiana, and were married there in 1922. LaMar Thistlethwaite, Ethel Pogue of the Children's Shop, the Rickards and many others were from that area.

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