



*A trolley runs the tracks beside a portion of the front beach shell road east of Gulfport circa 1912. The trolley line, together with the shell road, fell victim to the hurricanes of 1906, 1909, 1915 and 1916. The fence at left, together with all the others up and down the road, had to be moved back on several occasions for the widening of the Old Spanish Trail (U.S. Highway 90). Motor buses replaced the trolley line on December 31, 1925. Photo courtesy of the Jon Richard Lewis Postcard Collection.*

sailed into Back Bay and crashed into the revolving drum of the drawbridge. This accidentally activated the draw through which the unmanned schooner sailed without further incident.

On the other hand the Biloxi Bay railroad bridge lost a span. And, as usual, the seas claimed nearly every wharf and bathhouse from Pascagoula to Bay St. Louis. Also, as usual, the beach road together with all its small bridges built since 1893 washed away.

In the aftermath of the storm, the Coast cities as usual

rebuilt the wharves and bathhouses. The Harrison County Supervisors began rebuilding the beach shell road and bridges.

On July 4, 1905, Captain Joseph T. Jones, the father of the new city of Gulfport, hosted a patriotic rally in front of the new Harrison County Courthouse (Gulfport had been the county seat since August 1902 because Jones wanted it to be). At the rally, Jones drove a silver spike to signal the beginning of the Gulf Coast Traction Company's electric trolley line envisioned to run from Biloxi to Pass Christian. He told the assemblage that he intended to build the trolley line parallel to and south of the front beach shell road. But he warned those present that if any landowner tried to block his right of way that he would build the trolley line in the shell road because Harrison County already owned that right of way.

In grading the trolley line from Gulfport to Biloxi, Jones's crews destroyed 60 percent of the front beach shell road. In many places workmen expropriated the road. In others they placed the tracks eight feet lower than the road resulting in erosion of the road by rainfall. An eyewitness reported to the *Biloxi Daily Herald* on September 24, 1906, that a hole "large enough to drop a piano in" lay in front of a dilapidated small bridge near Beauvoir. But he added, "Someone for the benefit of the public had stuck a pole in the depression as a warning to drivers."

Two days after the article appeared, torrential rains and pounding seas accompanying the Hurricane of 1906 washed out the bridge, the pole, the road, and the trolley line. But Pascagoula received the heaviest damage losing once again the railroad bridge and tracks spanning the Pascagoula estuarine delta.

In the wake of this storm, Biloxi seafood magnate Laz Lopez Jr. urged the Biloxi City