

“sufficient to build good roads throughout the county.” Another resolution to be discussed was that of requesting the state legislature to build a state highway from Gulfport through Jackson to Memphis—this last in view of the fact that “there are no roads running through the state fostered by the state.”

On the day following the announcement for the Good Roads Convention, the New Orleans Weather Bureau issued a hurricane warning. As the storm approached the Coast late on the afternoon of September 20, Harrison County Supervisor F. W. Elmer became party to an automobile excursion that gave him first-hand knowledge of the interaction of automobile, shell road, bridge, and hurricane.

At 5:10 p.m., Elmer and two others decided to let Leo Ohr, son of Biloxi’s “Mad Potter” George Ohr, chauffeur them from Gulfport to Biloxi along the front beach shell drive. Near Mississippi City the party encountered a small bridge which was “loose and floating.” Ohr decided that the bridge would bear the weight of the auto and drove onto the bridge where the car promptly got stuck. Abandoning the car, the four men crawled through the inky blackness dodging flying limbs and electric wires to the door of Mrs. Fayard’s house where they received shelter.

That night the wind and waves washed out large sections of the shell road and 20 miles of trolley track. By dawn the beach from Pass Christian to Biloxi was littered with boats and wharf and bathhouse timbers wrapped in electric lines. Only the draw remained on the Bay of St. Louis railroad bridge.

Despite the destruction, the Good Roads Convention met at the Great Southern Hotel on September 25 as planned. The 50 delegates present pledged themselves to call for county bond issues and to petition the Mississippi State Legislature to develop a road system.

By 1909, it was clear that any beach road would have to be protected from destruction by wave action. So Harrison County good roads advocates induced Major Jervey of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in Mobile to survey the Coast and make recommendations. He gave two choices—a seawall or a dredge-pumped sand beach. The problem with the first was expense. The problem with the second was impermanence.

The people of the Coast did neither. Instead they rebuilt the wharves, bathhouses, trolley line, and the beach road into a tempting target for the next blow. On the other hand, the state legislature of 1909 passed the Anderson Road Law, which allowed Harrison County to pass a \$50,000 bond issue for the purpose of building roads. The board of supervisors began issuing the funds on July 6, 1909.

On December 1, 1910, Dr. Robert A. Strong of Pass Christian, together with three other men as passengers, boarded a two-year-old Buick and set out to make the Coast’s first automobile safari to New Orleans. The intrepid party drove to Poplarville thence west to cross the Pearl River on the ferry to Balltown. On the Louisiana side they drove along logging trails torn up and rutted by ox-drawn timber carts. Reaching Bogalusa they passed over the top of Lake Pontchartrain through Covington, Pontchatoula, Hammond, Maxwell, and Springfield. There, instead of going all the way to Baton Rouge, the explorers dropped south and followed country