

# **Flagler Monument**

# JOHN B. ORR

Plain and Decorative Plastering

Structural Tile and Brick Work

MIAMI, FLORIDA, April 10, 1919.

Mr. Carl Fisher,  
Miami, Fla.

Dear Mr. Fisher:-

In regard to the sketch of the Flagler Monument which I left in your office, I wish to say, in further explanation of the sketch, it is my intention to construct the monument of reinforced concrete, finished like stone, should this design meet with your approval.

The plan of reinforcing, I intend to have prepared by the Trus-Con Steel Company and the whole material will be as near indestructible as possible.

The figures will stand, including the base, 25 Ft. high; the figures themselves being 12' high. They will be in a white stone, this against the grey stone of the monument will insure them being seen a considerable distance off.

The whole monument will stand 100' high. The estimate which I quoted is for everything complete except the Pile foundation.

As you requested, I will telephone you about making an appointment with you before you leave,

Very truly yours,

JBO/EO

*John B. Orr*

April 21st, 1919.

Mr. John B. Orr,  
Miami, Florida.

Dear Mr. Orr :

We have made application to the Government for the three acres on which to put this monument. As soon as we get title to this land we will bulldoze it and fill it, and then we will go ahead.

Yours very truly,

CGF:R

Landscape work and  
plans of engineer  
superintendent  
of estates  
winter home

W. E. BROWN

CIVIL AND LANDSCAPE ENGINEER  
MIAMI BEACH, FLA.

Member Florida  
Engineering Society  
Registered Engineer  
State of Florida

June 10, 1919.

Mr. F. O. Van Deren,  
Indianapolis, Ind.

Dear Van:-

The War Department has set Tuesday, June 17th,  
as the day for a hearing upon the application of the Alton  
Beach Realty Company for a permit to build the Flagler  
Memorial Island, of which you have heard before this time.

Mr. Fisher accepted a design of John B. Orr,  
and this design of the monument was drawn upon a sheet of  
paper and from best accounts was laying on the table in his  
office here a short time before he left. This drawing or  
a copy of it must be available at the time of this hearing,  
so please see if the drawing in question was gathered up with  
others and taken to Indianapolis.

If you find it, send it to me as soon as possible,  
but if you cannot find it, be sure to wire me to that effect  
in order that Jack Orr may make a similar drawing before the  
day the drawing is needed.

Yours very truly,

*W E Brown*  
Engineer.

WEB:GA

*Sent 6/13/19*  
*Jan*

JOHN B. REILLY

FINANCIAL AGENT FOR  
JAMES DEERING PROPERTY  
MIAMI, FLORIDA

May 29th 1920.

*Personal*

Mr. Carl G. Fisher,  
Indianapolis, Ind.

Dear Mr. Fisher:

I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter which I have written this day to Mr. Harry Harkness Flagler.

While I have no desire to interfere in any way in the arrangements which you have perfected, to show your appreciation of Mr. Flagler, the thought occurred to me that you would like to know something with reference to the surviving members of his family. This young man is the only living child of Mr. Flagler. As far as I know, he never visited Florida but once between the years of 1895 and 1913. The occasion of this one visit was the illness of his father which terminated his life in the latter year.

Harry is now about 48 or 50 years of age, and his family consists of himself and wife and three daughters, the oldest being a debutant of the past season.

Sincerely yours,

*John B. Reilly*

June 1st, 1920.

Mr. John B. Reilly,  
James Dearing Property,  
Miami, Florida.

Flagler

Dear Mr. Reilly :

I have yours of the 29th with enclosure of letter to Mr. Harry Harkness Flagler. This is the first information I have had that Mr. Flagler had a son living. I would, of course, be very much pleased some time to meet Mr. Flagler.

You have said some very nice things about me that I don't think I particularly deserve, but I am a great admirer of the late Mr. Flagler. I think he was a great American with a splendid vision of the possibilities of Florida - and that regardless of these possibilities he took great pains and labor to develop the country as much as he could, to the limit of his finances - and I think that Florida owes Mr. Flagler more than any other man who has ever set foot in Florida.

I was in hopes that some time when the City of Miami would have a suitable Park, possibly on the Bay front, that it might be possible to interest the City in a statue of Mr. Flagler. This, however, can be taken up after the Park has been acquired. I am sure of one thing - I can always depend upon you to help.

Yours very truly,

GGF:R

November 18th, 1921.

Mr. Carl G. Fisher,  
Miami,  
Florida.

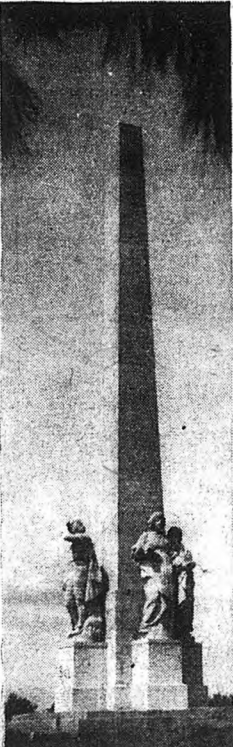
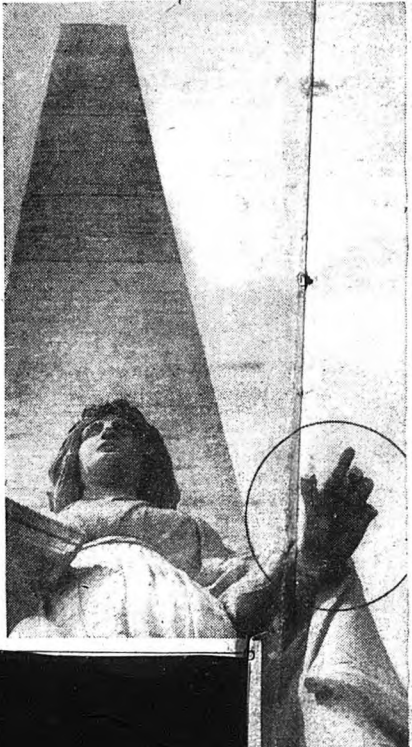
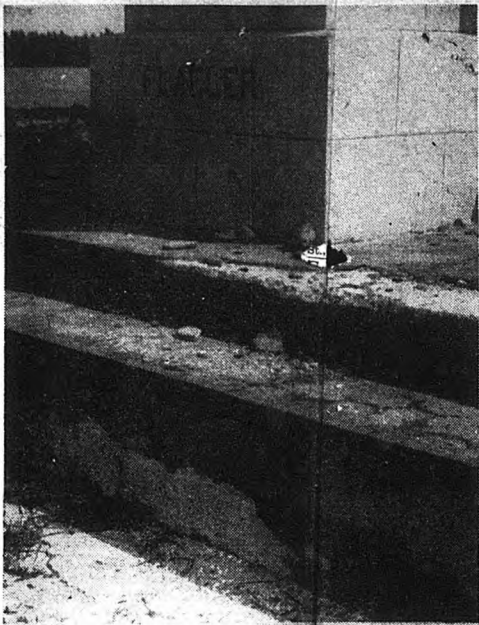
My dear Sir:

I have just been advised that the beautiful memorial monument that you have erected in Biscayne Bay in memory of our chief, Mr. Flagler, has been completed, and as one of his associates in his Florida work, I want to thank you with all my heart for this beautiful recognition of his faith in the East Coast, and his love for his fellowmen, whom, above all things else, he wanted to help, to help themselves.

Yours very truly,

JEI-s.

*J. E. Ingraham.*



**DESECRATION** of this section's one great work of art, the Flagler Memorial monument, set on a filled-in island in Biscayne bay, passes unnoticed although the city of Miami Beach has charge of its upkeep. The shaft with four statues depicting 30-foot figures representing "Prosperity," "Industry," "Education," and the "Pioneer," stands neglected on an unkempt island adjacent to Hibiscus, Rivo Alto and Belle islands. Carl G. Fisher had the monument built at a cost of \$100,000. The photographs above show only minor damage to the monument itself. Acids could remove the paint, and the construction of a small dock transform the island into a rendezvous for boating parties.



# Memorial To Flagler Desecrated By Vandals

**Monument In Biscayne Bay Smearred Grotesquely With Paint; Shaft, Inaccessible To Public, Goes To Waste In Unkempt Wilderness; Erected In 1920 By Fisher**

By CHARLES CROMER  
Herald Staff Writer

Vandals who enjoy the many beauties and pleasures of the Miami area, made possible by the late Henry M. Flagler, have desecrated the only monument which rises in Dade county to honor the great builder of railroads, bridges, hotels and resort cities.

Pleasure boats are unable to pass close to the Flagler memorial, erected on a filled-in island in Biscayne bay, and perhaps it is just as well. The occupants of those boats would see a beautiful work of art neglected, set amid a scene of careless growth that mocks the pioneer efforts of Flagler, whom it proposes to immortalize.

## Lips Daubed

Vandals have left their marks, someone even going to the trouble of climbing the 30-foot statue of the figure symbolizing "Prosperity," to daub with red paint the lips of the heroic character.

"Prosperity's" cheeks similarly have been smeared grotesquely with paint and the "vandal artist" even has added heavy black eyebrows.

Bases of the figures are marked with names in black and red paint. The figure of "Education" is marred with a skull and cross bones at the base. Many initials smear the base of the "Pioneer," while "Industry" is as badly marked up.

## Constructed In 1920

The shaft of the monument rising like a slender finger in the bay represents the only monumental shaft that revives the memory of the early pioneers who sank their roots into the soil of Florida.

It was conceived by Carl G. Fisher and constructed in 1920 at his own expense at an estimated cost of \$125,000, which included the cost of filling in the island in the bay. Working with Fisher in building this monument was the late John B. Orr and the late James A. Allison. A nationally-known sculptor was employed, H. P. Peterson, who died last year. The casting and installation took about three months. The original plaster casts of these statues are still intact in the shop of John B. Orr, Inc., 25 N. E. Twentieth street.

Within the past month, the Alton Beach Realty Company, owned by Fisher, deeded the island and monument to the city of Miami Beach,

although the city has been responsible for the upkeep of the property for some time.

## Poor Contrast

About six months ago, bulkheads around the island became so unsightly and dangerous to navigation that the city council appropriated enough money to remove them. It has been cleared of the underbrush to some extent.

In order to land on the island and get close enough to observe the truly heroic proportions of the statue, one must wade through the water, clamber over slippery clay and then trek through thorny grass.

The shaft is located about equally distant from Hibiscus, Rivo Alto and Belle Island, where are located many of the finer homes of the Miami area. The island on which the shaft is located makes a poor contrast to the luxurious tropical vegetation of these islands.

Miami's only memorial shaft to the genius that was Henry M. Flagler's thus goes to waste in an unkempt wilderness. Inaccessible to the public, it is made more so by lack of facilities that would en-

March 7, 1939.

Mr. Tom Smith,  
The Miami Herald,  
Miami, Florida,

Dear Mr. Smith:-

Your article regarding the Flagler Monument is very much incorrect on the cost of same.

I don't want to sail under any false colors regarding that Monument. It cost about \$26,000 or \$28,000, outside of the pumping job, but at the outside, with the wall and all, I know it wasn't over \$35,000.

So, if you must refer to the cost in any future articles you have, hold down the figures to facts.

Yours very truly,

CGF:AVM

GARL G. FISHER.