

On this 10th day of September, 1935, at Ft. McPherson, Fulton County, State of Georgia, before me, O. E. Hawk, a field examiner of the Veterans' Administration, personally appeared

LOUIS D. KITE, who having been first duly sworn according to law deposes and says:

Q. State your full name and address.

A. Louis D. Kite, Columbus, Georgia. I have not lived there since 1916. I call my aunt's home my home. She lives at Mt. Holly, North Carolina. Her name is Mrs. G. B. Brown. I also have a brother, Walter P. Kite, at the same address.

Q. Are you a veteran?

A. Yes.

Q. What is your age?

A. 35.

Q. Were you employed at the veterans' camp on the Keys?

A. Yes.

Q. Were you at the camp during the hurricane?

A. Yes.

Q. What camp were you a member of?

A. Camp #3.

Q. Were you injured?

A. Not so much, I don't think.

Q. Describe any injury that you received.

A. I got a lot of skin injuries. A plank hit me on the shoulder and one on the hip, but my hip is all right. My arm is pretty bad when I raise it up and down.

Q. Are those the only injuries you received?

A. I had two or three knots on my head.

Q. What time were you rescued?

A. We left there Wednesday about 4:30 or 5:00 o'clock on Coast Guard Cutter. They brought us up Snake Creek.

Q. Did anyone prohibit you or discourage you from leaving camp before the storm?

A. No, sir. They took all the keys out of the trucks.

Q. Who took them?

A. I don't know. Someone took them. If there had been a key in the trucks we would have left there. Joe Dombresky was foreman of the trucks.

Q. Do you suppose he collected the keys?

A. I imagine he did. He had charge of them.

Q. What time were the keys collected?

A. I don't know.

Q. Did you make any attempt to get away in a truck?

A. No, sir, but if I had found a key I would have.

Q. When did you try to find a key?

A. We went over there after the first blow.

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Q. What time was that?

A. Around 5:00 o'clock Monday.

Q. During the first blow, around 5:00 o'clock you looked for keys to the trucks and they had been collected?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Has anyone attempted to prevent you from saying anything you wanted to say about the storm?

A. No, sir. I don't believe they have.

Q. Did you identify any of the dead bodies?

A. Yes, I helped carry thirty-five out of the swamp.

Q. Whom did you identify? Do you remember the names?

A. I identified fellows by the name of St. Clair, John Rawlins,

McCoy and an electrician at the power house. I identified several more but can't remember their names.

Q. Do you know the name of any veteran who left the camp prior to the storm and who is missing or unaccounted for at the present time?

A. George Driverd left camp on Friday. He was in Key West. He did not come back to Miami until about Thursday. He was in Key West during the storm but came to Miami on Wednesday or Thursday after the storm.

Q. You saw him, did you?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. That was the only man you know of?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is there anything, Mr. Kyte, that you wish to say regarding the storm or any of the activities that preceded the storm?

A. I would say that I had plenty of chance to get out of there, if they had seen to it. I believe Chenit was responsible for it.

Ray Shelton was Ghent's assistant at my camp.

Q. What storm warnings were received at your camp?

A. I don't know.

Q. When were you first notified to prepare to leave the camp?

A. There was a man there named Bradford who ran a store at the end of the ford. His daddy lived in Miami. He rang him up and told him to get his wife and two children away from there. That was Saturday. He left Saturday.

Q. From then on when was the first time that you received any official warnings from the authorities in your camp?

A. Monday. They stated the train was coming down, but it did not get there.

Q. Do you know what time they gave you the first information?

A. It was sometime after breakfast. I imagine 8:30 or 9:00 o'clock.

Q. What were the weather conditions at that time?

A. It was raining and the wind was blowing.

Q. Was it blowing very badly at that time?

A. No, sir, not very bad.

Q. Where were you during the storm? At what point?

A. I stayed on a fishing boat until about midnight Monday night. There were three of us on it.

Q. What were the other fellows' names?

A. One was a fisherman who was not in the camp. The other was Joseph

Mundelle.

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Q. Was he a member of your camp?

A. Yes.

Q. Did Mandelle survive the storm?

A. Yes, sir. We stayed on there until the boat sank, something around midnight Monday night. Three of us were bailing water and we could not keep it out. It came in the boat and filled it up. We stayed in there as long as we could and it sank.

Q. Was there any effort made to care for the sick or injured?

A. It blew the hospital away. There was not as much as an aspirin.

Q. When did you receive the first relief?

A. About three or four o'clock Wednesday afternoon. One man named Tillman from my camp was taken to Miami by airplane Wednesday morning. Tillman was taken to Miami in the same plane that Carson Bradford, the storekeeper at lower Matacombe, was taken in.

Q. Who was the Superintendent of your camp?

A. Mr. Burt Davis was Superintendent of our camp. His address is Clearwater, Florida.

Q. How many trucks were in camp at the time of the storm?

A. About fifteen or twenty trucks, sufficient to have removed all of the men at camp.

I have read the above and my statements have been correctly recorded. I make these statements of my own free will.

AFFIANT

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 18th day of September, 1935, and I certify that the contents were read by the affiant before signing.

O. E. HAWK, Field Examiner, Veterans
Administration, Authority: V.A. Form 4505

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checked 9/16/35 JHJ