

"The Mullikin Man"

Photos from the camera
of William V.B. Mullikin

Introduction by BARBARA A. POLEO

In the 1970s Edith Lewis donated a small cardboard suitcase and some boxes filled with glass negatives to her longtime friend and Broward County Historical Commission founder, Judge L. Clayton Nance. Mrs. Lewis had moved to Fort Lauderdale from Kansas with her husband in 1913. The following year she took charge of the Women's Department of the H. G. Wheeler Department Store. By the time of her retirement in 1970, she had managed the family sign painting business, worked for the Broward County Credit Bureau for twenty-five years and organized the Women's Credit Club.

Last year the Historical Commission began an extensive project to accession all items in our collections. One of the first boxes we opened contained glass negatives and a note from Edith Lewis, indicating that she had acquired them in 1921. Using the resources of the Broward County Historical Commission, we were able to determine that William V. B. Mullikin was the most probable original source of the glass negatives. He is the only photographer listed in the City Directory of the time and a search of our voter registration cards

confirmed that Mullikin was in Fort Lauderdale between 1914 to 1921 and listed his profession as photographer. By matching photographic backdrops on the newly developed photographs with existing photos in our files, we were able to identify some of the subjects and firmly establish the time frame. Many of the photographs appear to be graduation pictures. In a May 25, 1917 advertisement in the *Fort Lauderdale Sentinel* Mullikin offers special

prices "For all size photos, school children and teachers, or any one."

According to the 1920 census, William V. B. Mullikin was born in South Carolina. He arrived in Fort Lauderdale in 1914 and bought the photography business of an individual named Sooy. Mullikin established his business on the second floor of the *Sentinel* building. There he photographed hundreds of people. Labeling himself "The Mullikin Man," he often publicized in the *Fort*

SUMMER RATE PHOTO TICKET

The holder of this ticket, when signed by "The Mullikin-Man" is entitled to half dozen \$4.00 per dozen Photos, Sepia finish, for **ONLY \$2.98** pay \$1 when ticket is signed up and the full balance of \$1.98 must be paid at time of sitting. One of them will be finished in Water Colors Prep; if desired.

Good until October 1, 1916.

Signed _____

W.V.B. Mullikin's advertisement from the *Fort Lauderdale Sentinel*, 1916.



