THE SPORTSMAN'S PARADISE

Fishing and Hunting in Jackson County the Finest in the World.

BY J. D. SMITH

In compliance with the Journal's request to write an article upon the natural advantages of this section, and its advantages in the way of sport for those who indulge in the pastime of hunting and fishing, I will endeavor to express my appreciation of these attractions. But since I am not blessed with a flow of language which is essential in a writer, I fear I shall fail to do the subject justice.

I would not be a citizen of Marianna or Jackson county today but for the abundance of quail, turkey, fish, and the natural attractions I found when I first came here, in 1881, while aiding in the construction of the P. & A. Railroad. But when I got a taste of the fine fishing and hunting which appeal so strongly to my nature, I became a fixture. And I believe this has been the case with others of like taste.

Right here let me say, I believe there is nothing of more value to a business or professional man than to be situated so that he can occasionally throw aside the worries and burdens of his affairs, and take a day off in the enjoyment of the pure, fresh air of a country so beautiful as this.

Jackson and Calhoun counties each offer equal attractions to the lover of sport. They cannot be surpassed in this line, in the South. The streams are clear and, as a rule, mostly rock bottom, making it impossible to seine out all the fish.

A Beautiful Stream.

The most beautiful small river I ever saw is the Chipola, which divides the county about half and half. This stream has its source not far north of Marianna, and is formed principally by tremendous boiling springs as clear as crystal, and abounding in all kinds of fresh-water fish. Most all of our creeks resemble our beautiful "Long Moss Spring," which receives its name from the famous authoress, Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, it being the scene of one of her stories, "Marcus Warland, or Long Moss Spring." This spring is about six miles from Marianna, and bubbles up from a depth of perhaps fifty feet or more, from between two large rocks which form a wall for it, and the water is so clear and deep that it looks almost blue. All these springs stand at normal stage in dry weather. Numbers of them afford wonderful opportunities for water-power. The Chipola, which is a clear, deep stream, has ten or fifteen sites for water-power.

The Best of Fishing.

From Marianna, about twenty miles south, on or near these shoals or falls, we find our best trout and bass fishing, and all the varieties of fresh-water fish to be found in Florida.

The shell-cracker, of the perch family, is a very game fish, always fat except in spawning season, as he feeds principally upon shells and mussels, which are to be found in all streams, like we have in the Chipola.

During the months of May and June we catch a great many rock fish, which come up the river to spawn. In weight these fish range from twelve to sixty pounds. The heaviest I ever caught weighed forty-five pounds.

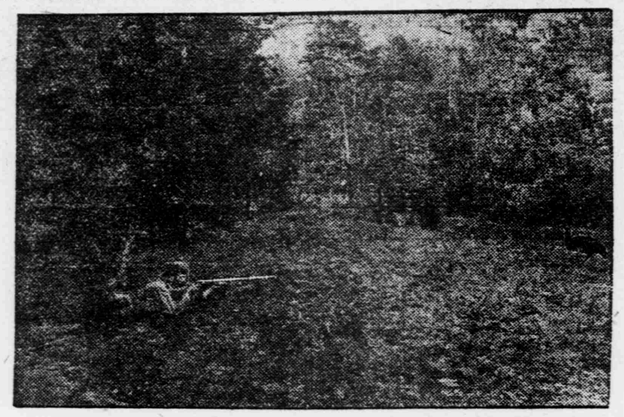
The best fish in this river, according to my taste, is the fresh-water mullet. They are large and fat, and of a peculiarly fine flavor. Some fishermen here have been known to catch them with hook and line. But few of these mullet have as yet been caught in the Chipola, although they are getting to be plentiful.

The Dead Lakes.

About twenty miles below Marianna the fishing is much better. At Dead Lakes it improves to such an extent that it can not be excelled by any fresh-water fishing in the state. A great many sportsmen from Georgia and Alabama visit these lakes for the purpose of fishing. The lakes are formed by the Chipola river, near where it empties into the Apalachicola, being fifteen or twenty miles in length. They are quite wide, several miles in places, and filled with Cypress as well as other timber. A perfect place, where fish bed during the spring, and from these lakes come our chief supply up stream.

Wild Turkeys in Abundance.

Turkey hunting, I think, has afforded me the greatest sport I have enjoyed in this country, in the swampy and hammock land on the creeks and rivers, where they are found in great abundance. I have a fine mounted wild turkey which I killed within the corporate limits of Marianna, and I have killed several in the woods near here. One morning I drove out about two and a half miles from town, killed six fine wild turkeys all in single shots, and returned home in time for breakfast, about the regular hour. I have photos of them taken at the time.



Shooting a Wild Turkey—The Country About Marianna Abounds in Turkeys and Large and Small Game of all kinds.

View of Beautiful Chipola River, Near Marianna, Florida.

In the Chattahoochee swamp, twenty to twenty-five miles east of here, wild turkeys are to be found plentifully, and also many fine deer. There are still a few deer in our vicinity.

Quail Plentiful.

This seems to be the natural home of the quail. They breed in every part of Jackson county, and seem to be in greater abundance this year than they have been for quite a long time.

The most satisfactory quail shooting we have is in the pine wood district south of the P. & A. Railroad, as those on the old plantations have been killed out considerably.

Private Game Preserves.

The law has done some good in protecting fish and game in this section, but the county commissioners should see that the law is better enforced by having a live, active game and fish warden. I am sorry to say this has been much neglected, but a true sportsman will not destroy game out of season. I hope to see the game and fish protected for those who delight in such sport, but, in my opinion, the only way to have things as we like is to buy up tracts of land suitable and have private hunting grounds. I would be glad to correspond with any lover of sport relative to this matter. I know of a large tract that can be bought cheap by accepting the timber, through which flows the Chipola, a most suitable place to raise game as well as fish. I would be glad to take stock in such a project myself, and there could be no possible loss in the investment, as tracts of land can be had now so cheap that in five or ten years it will prove very profitable, as lands soon double in value. Besides, we could have the pleasure of hunting and fishing all the while. It will come to this very soon, as land owners are fast posting their property in some sections here, while a few years ago such a thing was unheard of.

Our people are very nice about this. Many farmers have actually stopped their work and carried me over their places to locate the using ground of game. But of late, hunting and fishing has increased to such an extent that we cannot blame the farmers for posting their land. It is really better, as the "pot hunter" and idle negro are kept from destroying the game unmercifully.

I know of several locations that can be bought now from $3 to $5 per acre, on which could be stocked any quantity of game, being not so well located for farming or near the less populated sections, and on which are now found considerable game.

There are more inviting opportunities for development, and the best lands for the price here, than any place I have seen in the South; the only thing is, our people have been too well satisfied at making a living easy, don't care to have too much, and the wide-awake developer or investor has an easy thing in this section.

SOCIAL LIFE OF MARIANNA

Lady Who Has Spent Life Time There Describes it for Journal Readers.

By Mrs. Fannie B. Chapman.

The Journal has requested me to give a sketch of the social life of Marianna. My residence here from youth to old age enables me, I think, to form a just estimate of such matters. The majority of the people are of the old-time stock of Southern aristocracy, and while proud of their ancestry, they are not in any wise offensively so.

People are accepted in society not for what they have, but for what they are. "A degenerate son or daughter of an illustrious sire" is not more acceptable socially than degenerate children of anyone else. Culture, refinement and nobility of character are indispensable to admission into the best society.

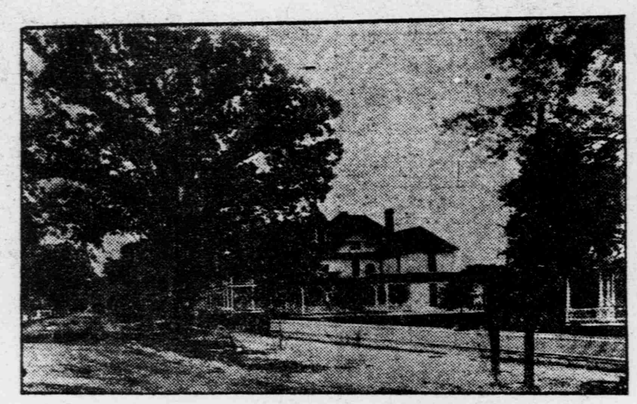
This being true, our people are generous, genial, hospitable, conventional, only in the right and best sense. Our women are cultured, refined and of the highest and best type of womanhood. They are above reproach as wives, mothers, daughters and sisters, as well as friends.

The community as a whole is free from petty jealousies, envy and disturbing elements that do so much to mar the social peace wherever it is found. The men of our town are worthy to be the friends and companions of the women with whom they are associated. There is plenty of life and gaiety among our young people without excess.

Above all, we thank God we have a "dry town," and if ladies are on the street morning, noon or evening they have no fear of a drunken crowd of men, white or black, blocking the sidewalks about saloons, and we have the faith in God and in the honor of the men of our county that saloons are buried in our past—never to come up again.

We have a flourishing Epworth League, Baptist Young Peoples' Christian Union, U. D. C. chapter, Knights of Pythias, Masonic lodge, and several other good things—Baptist, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Methodists are all well represented. I can not assert that a religious sentiment predominates, but am inclined to believe that it does in quite an eminent degree.

While I do not think ours quite a model town in everything, as here is always room for improvement in this world of ours, I am quite sure many places might be benefited by a little patterning after us. Is that egotism? If so, pardon it—this is my home and mine own people.



Resdience Street, Looking East, Marianna, Fla.

West Florida Home of the Fig

Fig trees grow like weeds all over West Florida and they yield prolifically wherever any attention is given to them.

There is no single factor which is more certain in its output, more sure in its growth and more reliable in every way than is the culture of figs.

This is a most appetizing and delightful fruit; it comes to maturity at least within three years, after setting (some claim within two years) and yields abundantly. It has no known enemy, and its yield per acre is something prodigious.

The fig tree is a tender growth, and at times an uncommonly severe winter will kill down the tender shoots. But in such case it immediately springs up again, and is in full bearing another season.

The fig is propogated by setting twigs or slips, which grow without the slightest artificial cultivation and bring to the owner such crops as seem fabulous.

At the present time there is small heed given this prolific fruit, although there is scarce a garden or farm throughout the entire region treated of in this issue but grows some figs for the use of the family. But as a market crop it has thus far received small attention.

Said a well-posted and experienced man, speaking of fig growing in this region: "Figs will make a bushel to a tree for each year after the second year. A five-year tree will make five bushels and so on up. I have a tree at my house which will make ten bushels of fine figs this year. You plant them ten feet apart and that makes 400 trees to the acre. On this basis ten acres will hold 4,000 trees. Ten acres of figs will make a man rich. Nothing hurts a fig; no insect pest disturbs it, and the beauty of raising figs is that you do not have to fertilize them or spend much time in their cultivation. This country is their natural home and they just grow in the fence corners or anywhere."

The culture of figs in Jackson county is one which holds much of attraction of the new-comer and promises large returns for the smallest amount of care and attention.

GOVERNMENT OF MARIANNA

Composed of Progressive Men Who Take Pride In Their City.

A town is judged largely by the public servants whom the people choose to serve them in official positions, and from that standpoint, if for no other reason, Marianna would be considered a progressive community. Her officers are as follows:

Mayor—Thos. E. Walker.

Clerk—F. G. Merritt.

Marshal—J. L. Behymer.

Board of Aldermen—Mr. L. Dekle president; John Milton, Sr., Dr. N. A. Baltzell, J. M. Dillon and J. C. Folsom.

All of these gentlemen take a pride in their community and are ready to answer questions and give information concerning it. A letter of inquiry addressed to the mayor, the clerk or the president of the council will elicit prompt response.

J. M. DILLON,

HORSES, MULES, BUGGIES AND HARNESS BOUGHT AND SOLD.

I raise stock of every description, for general use, under my personal supervision.

My record for one year was over 700 mules and horses.

MARIANNA, FLORIDA.

The Chipola Hotel

Marianna's Best Hotel

Headquarters for the Commercial Trade.
Large, Clean, Airy and Modern.
Table and Service Unsurpassed.
One Block from Depot.
Porter Meets Trains.

RATES, $2.00 PER DAY.

SPECIAL RATES BY THE WEEK.

MARIANNA, FLORIDA.

CITIZENS STATE BANK

MARIANNA, FLORIDA.

Capital, $30,000.00. Undivided Profits, $4,995.43. Surplus, $7,000.00.

Commenced Business January 1904.

Officers:--J. D. Smith, President, R. A. Willis, Vice-President, Theop. West, 2nd Vice-President, E. Bryan Erwin, Cashier.

Directors:--J. E. McLeod, W. B. Wynn, J. C. Folsom, R. A. Willis, M. V. Patrick, C. L. Wilson, J. D. Smith, Dr. Theop. West, E. B. Erwin.