

Never Say Never

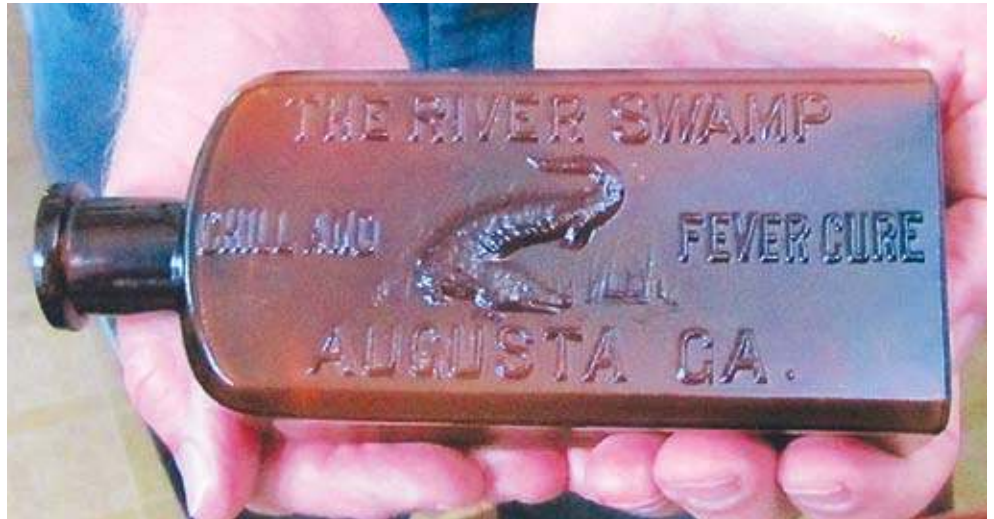
By Bobby Vaughn

As time has gone by, I have discovered that I really enjoy spending time with my wife. It can be as simple as us just reading in the same room and my live is in harmony. Another thing I enjoy "almost" as much, (my wife is reading this) is a good old fashioned bottle dig. A little treasure hunt is just the tonic to brighten my day or week. Sure, we know it's a lot of sweat equity, torn and dirty clothes, bug bites and even poor weather sometimes. Despite all of that, most things in life worthwhile are not easy.

Well, for at least two years I tried to entice my wife to come along on a bottle dig. But she would always have something to do or say, "I'll never go", it's just too messy. About a month ago we had a friendly bet and if she lost she would agree to go on a dig. She lost, and was I happy. My wife reluctantly agreed to go with me on the 10th of July, 2009.

Finally, the big day arrived and we drove out to a prime dump (1885-1900) site I had been saving just for her first dig. It was on the Chattahoochee River just north of the town of Franklin, Ga. I had talked with some local old timers and they practically drew me a map when I explained it would be my wife's first dig. These guys were old as dirt, but sweet as chocolate. As luck would have it, it rained the day before our dig and cooled off the temperature and lowered the humidity some - really decent for July in Georgia.

We arrived on the river about 0730am so we could dig a few hours before the oppressive humidity set in by the afternoon. I felt, a short fruitful dig could be just enough to give my wife the dreaded (an incurable) disease called "dig fever". I kind of felt a little guilty, but hey, what are husbands for? We hiked down to the lush riverbank and I showed her the uneven mounds under the huge live oaks. There were our hopeful rewards under those moss covered sentries of the forest. We both



started to probe about ten feet apart from one another and almost immediately hit the sound of metal on glass. Then, we started pulling out broken glass, melted glass, horseshoes, cast iron bands, everything but bottles for about 30 minutes. We noticed a 2 foot ash layer at the bottom and I told my wife to try and dig at that base, as I did the same.

My wife mysteriously became quiet after about 5 minutes and for her, that is unusual. I said, "Hey, what's going on over there"? She mumbled back at me, "Nothing, just stay there, I'm busy right now. In about ten minutes she called and said, "Come over and tell me if this bottle is a keeper or not". As I approached her I could see an amber, rectangular bottle. I cradled it and wiped off the excess mud to examine it. My heart started beating fast as I saw it was a large, River Swamp and Chill Fever Cure from Augusta, Ga. With the embossed alligator! Except for a little exterior staining, it was in perfect shape. "Well, is it any good" my wife asked me? I replied; "This is a very good bottle and I have never found one...ever.." She grinned at me and said, "What have you found?" I had only found a swig of envy and a large piece of humble pie by this time. Truthfully, I was very happy for her, especially on her first dig. We dug for another two - three hours then stopped to survey our "keepers". They were as follows:

- (3) River Swamp and Chill Fever Cure Augusta, Ga. Amber bottles (she found)
- (2) Clear unembossed hutchinson sodas (me)
- (5) Bromo-seltzer large size cobalt (me)
- (2) Large amber Jacobs pharmacy Atlanta, Ga. (she found)
- (1) Jacobs and Brewert sour mash Ga. Whiskey 1 gal crock (me)
- (1) Chattahoochee Saloon 166 4th St. Franklin Ga. one pint (she found)

Not a great haul, but my wife feels much like a fish, she is really hooked now. She placed her River Swamp cure bottles in a display case in her quilt room so I could "view" them whenever I want, Gee Thanks...

We now go digging as often as we can but it disturbs me that she always seems to know just where to look and dig. Is it luck or skill? It doesn't really matter as it makes both of our lives a little happier. Since that first dig near Franklin we have been back twice but the seasonal flooding has our dig site under two feet of muddy, river water.

Anyway, my wife has learned to NEVER say never again, and I have learned, be careful what you ask for - you just might get it....

Safe digging to you all.... Bobby and Deanne..