

Mammoth Spring Said to Have Great Possibilities.

6-12-38

To the Editor of the Gazette: Arkansas has the distinction of having the largest spring on this planet. It is located in Fulton county and is known as Mammoth Spring. I once heard the late Governor Brough say that this spring had the potential power to run all the machinery in Arkansas. Why couldn't the federal government utilize this great water power in one of its electrification projects? It seems to me that our representatives in Congress and the Senate from Arkansas would make an effort along this line for the benefit of our rural population. I understand that this spring is owned by a company in Memphis, Tenn. It seems a pity that its ownership should have passed to non-residents. It would have been a great asset to the people of Arkansas if the state had become the owner of this great water power.

When I came to Arkansas 54 years ago I saw this spring for the first time. I was told then by an old lady resident that she had known the spring in her time to trade for a yoke of oxen. Some time before I came to the state I was told the railroad company tried to buy the spring for their shops and if I remember right they offered \$80,000 and the owner wanted \$100,000. The company built their shops at Thayer, Mo. Think what the state lost in taxes.

For Gazette readers who have never seen this great spring I'll give a brief description. The spring is 18 acres in area and pours forth from its subterranean throat 60,000 cubic feet of water every minute, which flows to the south and is known as Spring river, emptying into Black river 50 miles away. Mammoth Spring, a scenic little town of some 500 to 600 population is located on the west bank of the spring and the government has a fish hatchery there.

John W. Bell.

Moko, Ark.

Three Sisters Springs Sold To Chicago Couple.

Gazette 10-25-39

Hot Springs, Oct. 24.—The Three Sisters Springs at McFadden resort, northwest of Hot Springs, have been sold to Roy A. and Ruth Whipple of Chicago for \$25,000.

McFadden springs are located about 22 miles from the city on the Cedar Glades road, and adjoining the Ouachita National Forest. The springs have been a mecca for tourists for more than 50 years.

It is reported that the new owners plan to spend a large sum in developing the section into a resort. When the Arkansas Power and Light Company completes its Blakely mountain dam on the Ouachita river, the shore of the new lake will be close to but will not inundate the three medicinal springs. The springs are cold water and chemical analysis differs in each.

ASHLEY MINERAL SPRINGS

GAZETTE 6-16-40

Ashley Mineral Springs, formerly called Sulphur Springs because of the presence of sulphur in the water, is located approximately six miles southwest of Crossett.

Back in about 1840, according to Ovid Switzer, an Indian called Bob was hunting in the vicinity of the spring. He awoke one morning and heard his dog lapping water out in the middle of the marsh—the spring was then surrounded by vegetation and soft mud common in all marshy places. The Indian waded out to where his dog was lapping the water and wondered why he chose the middle of the marsh in which to drink. Curiosity running riot within him, the Indian stooped and brought up his palms full of water. He drank it and wondered at the unfamiliar taste. He went to the house of Colonel Wimberly, who lived about a half-mile from the spring, to tell of his find. The colonel went with him and found that the water was rich in minerals, especially sulphur. This colonel was homesteading a grant of land and he had the spring included in the homestead.

After the colonel had the property in his name for some time he sold it to Fred Switzer I. That was around 1845 or 1850. Mr. Switzer built a log hotel close to the spring, and several cabins. Here the typical Southerner came to rest and recuperate, for it was soon learned that the water was a good tonic to an exhausted system.

In the meantime Mr. Switzer had

brought all his slaves to his new location, and he now put them to work improving the vicinity of the spring. Thousands of wagon loads of dirt were carted in, and the place that was an almost impenetrable marsh took on a new look. Gone was the muck, mire and mud. In its place there was now good solid earth, and the spring was curbed.

But by now the black thunder clouds of Civil war were looming upon the horizon. Then like a lightning flash the entire country was in the toils of war. After the war visitors were less frequent at the spring. The slaves were free and the South was bankrupt. The spring was forgotten for a time. Mr. Switzer then evidently moved away. The cabins and hotel were torn down, or went into decay.

In Mr. Switzer's will to his heirs he firmly forbade passing possession of the spring from the hands of the family until 1930. In 1930, Fred Switzer II bought full possession of the spring and the adjoining land from the other heirs. He later sold the spring to Homer Bryant of El Dorado. Some improvements have been made and Mr. Bryant is catering to campers and others who wish to rebuild their health. The water from the spring has been analyzed and found to be absolutely pure, and the water truck makes regular trips to nearby towns where the water is dispensed in five-gallon jugs at a moderate profit.

The full commercial value of this natural resource is yet to be realized. Who knows but that Ashley Mineral Springs will become the mecca of southern Arkansas and northern Louisiana, and that its name will be as far-flung as that of our own Hot Springs?

We will owe this to an Indian called Bob and a dog that preferred sulphur water to ordinary water, and we will be indebted also to those who were proud enough of their heritage to keep it in the family and in good hands.

Water from this spring is now shipped to all parts of the country, even as far as California. Often the cost of transportation is several times the cost of the water.

Efforts are being made to get a good road from Crossett to Ashley Mineral Springs. Such a road would help to draw tourists and would be of considerable value to the entire community.

Garland County Has Several Sulphur Springs but No Hot Ones Outside of Spa Itself

Arkansas Democrat 3-24-39

The city of Hot Springs itself seems to have a monopoly on hot water springs in Garland county, however mountainous the rest of the county is, but there are several mineral springs, over the county, the state geological survey being made in co-operation with the Works Progress Administration, reveals.

Outside of Hot Springs, no springs having hot water have been located in the 450 square miles surveyed out of the 646 to be surveyed, James K. Riffel, county supervisor, reports. Few springs in the outlying section of Garland county are of distinctive mineral quality, the only minerals noted being sulphur and iron, the survey found.

Garland county is in a district composed of 12 southwestern counties of which Rex E. Mhoon, Hot Springs, is district supervisor.

In the extreme eastern and northern parts of the county the water in both springs and wells is usually soft. Many farmers depend on springs for their water supply. Most of the wells are of the dug type, the depth ranging between 18 and 30 feet.

Probed 63 Springs

Up to January 1, the survey had investigated 63 springs in Garland county, outside the city of Hot Springs. The spring having the greatest discharge is in the extreme eastern corner of the county, in section 24, T.1S., R.18W., one mile north of U. S. Highway 70.

This sulphur spring has a daily flow of 119,520 gallons, as measured by the four-inch pipe through which it flows. The water from this spring forms a tributary of the south fork of Saline river. Although a 6-foot cement curb has been fitted in this spring, there is nothing to indicate use of the spring nor could its name be learned.

In this same section, about three miles to the north, is Malcomb's Spring with an estimated flow of 72,000 gallons a day.

Two well known resort springs near Hot Springs are Fountain Lake on U. S. Highway 70 and Ozark Lithia Spring on state highway 7. Fountain Lake is fed by springs and Ozark Lithia is one large spring, 10 feet deep. Estimates of flowage were not available on these springs.

Sulphur at Lonsdale

In the vicinity of Lonsdale are a number of springs with a flow estimated at from 14,000 to 72,000

gallons daily. In section 7, T.3S., R.18W. (two miles north of Lake Catharine railway station) there are three sulphur springs in a group; four miles east of this group and three miles north of Lake Catherine station is another group of three springs. The estimated flowage of these springs is 36,000 gallons a day.

In the extreme southeastern sections of Garland county are many springs which are inaccessible by road and are used chiefly as watering places for livestock. None of these springs is being exploited. A number of springs in the Ouachita National Forest have been utilized at recreation camps and several have been dammed to make swimming pools.

Of the 207 wells so far investigated, the average depth is 37 feet; of these wells, 178 are dug and the remaining 29 are drilled. Up to the present time only two artesian wells have been found in Garland county. One of these is near the junction of state highway 7 with U. S. 70. This well is 110 feet deep and is used by one family.

Wells Are Shallow

A deep-flowing well which is called a spring is Potash Sulphur Spring, six miles from Hot Springs in the southeastern part of the county. This well was dug many years ago. It is 143 feet deep and has a daily flow of 36,000 gallons.

At the camp of Future Farmers of America at Couchdale are four wells, three of which are dug, one drilled. Two of these wells, one 25 feet deep, the other 35 feet deep, are located on hill tops and are used for reserve water supplies. Another well, 25 feet deep, is in an open field, 30 feet above the shore-line of Lake Catherine. This is good water but is used only in the summer when many people are at the camp. A well 16-foot deep supplies the water for an average of 200 persons the year round at Couchdale. This is in the "flat" between two hills, and connected with mess hall of the camp.

As the men of the surveying party locate and record data on springs and wells, they take samples of the water for analysis. The laboratory in Little Rock and several located in different parts of the state make such analysis. All records will become the property of the State Geological Survey and will be published in bulletin form under the direction of George C. Branner, state geologist.