



Life and Adventures in South Florida (1885)

ANDREW. P. CANOVA

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Andrew P. Canova (1835 – 1909) was a Florida settler and author of "Life and Adventures in South Florida", which may be said to cover "Wild West of the South".

He was a veteran of the Third Seminole War.

In Fall of 1858, he moved from Tampa Bay to Brevard County where he settled on the Sebastian River. He lived in a palm thatch hut near the mouth of the river. He, along with Ed Marr, hunted, fished and raised onions in a small garden. He started to cultivate citrus, but was impatient and abandoned that project.

Canova went to St. Augustine to enlist in the Confederate Army in 1861.

In 1885 he wrote *Life and Adventures in South Florida*, in which he lamented the demise of wildlife in the Indian River area.

It is left to Mr. Canova to pen-paint the scenes and incidents of soldier-life and adventure during the Indian War and to describe those hardships which the soldier experienced in morass and tangled scrub, or those pleasures he enjoyed in bivouac and camp. Hunting adventures, too — and Indian life — those fascinating realities which cover themselves with a halo of romance. The life of the early "settler" when the bear and panther roamed the wilds of a then sparsely inhabited State. These features are all touched with an unpretentious but smoothly -gliding pen, and make enchanting reading for Floridians.

Includes an interesting account of a manatee hunting, of which the author writes: "I tasted manatee flesh, and shall never forget it. The fattest, juiciest Tennessee beef is by no means equal to it, and I very much doubt if there is any anything in the animal kingdom, that is so entirely delicious."

"...I did not go out in the boat and consequently did not get the first sight of the monster, but they soon tugged him into shallow water. A combination of ropes and pulleys was arranged, and he was dragged ashore, and with his twelve hundred pounds, he was by no means easily managed. He was then placed in the tank, which was six by ten feet, and kept until a sloop arrived, which carried the precious freight to Key West. This was a male, and about a week afterward we caught a female. This was the only pair I know of ever having been captured."

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