GREGG COUNTY DISCOVERY OIL WELL*** ARKANSAS FUEL OIL CO.--F.K.LATHROP A-1*

037

AFTER 25 YEARS OF UNDAUNTED FAITH IN DISCOVERY
OF OIL IN EAST TEXAS, B.A. SKIPPER, SR., ASSEMBLED AN
8300-ACRE BLOCK UNDER LEASE; STAKED THE DRILLING
SITE; MADE A DEAL WITH CONTRACTORS SHOWERS AND
MONCRIEF; AND AT 3500 FEET PERSUADED ARKANSAS FUEL
OIL CO. TO BUY A HALF-INTEREST AND ASSUME OPERATIONS.
WORKING ALTERNATE 12-HOUR SHIFTS WERE THE DRILLERS
W.A. ANDREWS AND B.A. FERRELL. ON THEIR CREWS WERE
C.R. KAYLOR, R.J. CRISP, C. SPRILL, A. W. OWENS, C. O. CROLEY,
D. V. CHIDESTER, GEORGE JONES AND J. V. HUCKABOY.
THE F.K. LATHROP A-1 WAS SPUDDED IN ON DEC. 3, 1930.
IT HIT CAPROCK AT 3569 FEET, AND WAS COMPLETED ON

WITH AN INITIAL POTENTIAL OF 18,000 BARRELS OF OIL DAILY, THE WELL HAS PRODUCED MORE THAN 533,080 BARRELS DURING ITS FIRST 35 YEARS.

JAN. 26, 1931, AT A TOTAL DEPTH OF 3587 FEET.

OIL FEVER RAN HIGH WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE
JOINER NO.3-DAISY BRADFORD AT TURNERTOWN, OCT. 1930;
THE E.W. BATEMAN NO.1-L.D. CRIM AT KILGORE, DEC. 1930;
AND CLIMAXED HERE WITH THE F.K. LATHROP A-1. HOWEVER,
FEW COULD IMAGINE THAT SOON THESE THREE WOULD BE
LINKED AND EXTENDED TO FORM THE GREAT EAST TEXAS
FIELD, WHICH COVERS SOME 200 SQUARE MILES, AND HAS
MADE A WORLD RECORD AS THE LARGEST OF ITS TIME.**

(1965) ***

^{*3/4&}quot; lettering **1/2" lettering ***1/4" lettering

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Longview, Texas

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETINGS:

WHEREAS, B. A. Skipper, Independent Oil Operator, Developer, Realtor, and citizen of the City of Longview, County of Gregg, State of Texas, being the original promoter of the discovery well in the area of Longview, and

WHEREAS, B. A. Skipper assembled a block of some eighty-three hundred acres (8300) over a period of years and spent a considerable sum of money in preliminary geological work, and

Whereas, He wrote seven-hundred and fifty (750) letters to all major oil drillers and contracting oil operators offering the block, and finally with J. E. Farrell et al succeeded in getting the Arkansas Gas and Fuel Company to develop this property in the year of 1930, and

WHEREAS, the Longview Chamber of Commerce of that period offered a cash bonus of ten thousand (10,000) dollars to anyone who brought in or caused to be brought in a Commercial Producing Well within a radius of twelve (12) miles of Longview, and in the County of Gregg, and

WHEREAS, The Arkansas Gas and Fuel Company and J. E. Farrell et al brought in on January 26, 1931, Lathrop No. 1, which produced twenty-five thousand (25,000) barrels of oil per day on the eighty-three hundred (8300) acre block mentioned above, and

WHEREAS, The Longview Chamber of Commerce collected and paid approximately eight thousand (8000) dollars to the oil drillers and roughnecks who worked on Lathrop No. 1 of the promised ten-thousand (10,000) dollars in compliance with their offer, and

WHEREAS, The original promoter, developer, B. A. Skipper did not participate in the bonus money, we the present directors, and members of the Longview Chamber of Commerce, knowing full well that money cannot reflect the feeling of our hearts, and that the said B. A. Skipper would not accept money as a bonus; the present local Chamber desires to bring to the attention of the general public that, after full examination of the facts, we believe that, more than anyone else, B. A. Skipper was responsible for the drilling of oil in Gregg County, as County records and newspaper articles published at that time show that even in the face of ridicule at that time and for a period of more than twenty-five (25) years previously, even at a time when Mr. Skipper was himself hard-pressed financially, he begged farmers who thought to release their mortgaged land to the mortgagor not to do so, but to hold fast, as oil would be discovered in Gregg County, and they would reap the benefits if they would hold on.

NOW THEREFORE, We the committee appointed to investigate this matter, the Board of Directors and the membership of the Longview Chamber of Commerce, resolve and direct our President George A. Lee and our Manager Hugh Sawyer to present this scroll to B. A. Skipper in recognition of his pioneer spirit, integrity, leadership, and unselfish character and to recognize that he, more than anyone else, was the driving force that was responsible for the discovery of oil in Longview and Gregg County.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We have hereunto set our hands, and caused the seal of the Chamber of Commerce of Longview to be affixed at Longview, this thirteenth (13th) day of January in the Year of Our Lord, One thousand-nine hundred and fifty-three.

From Oil! Titan of the Southwest, by Carl Coke Rister (Norman, Okla., 1949), pages 310 ff.

The Dallas Morning News of October 6, 1930, evidently regarded Joiner's well as unimportant, for it relegated the news of it to the Sports Section. But it did supply important detials about the discovery. ... Tyler, Kilgore, Longview, Gladewater, Henderson and Overton also caught the oil fever.... The East Texas oil field expanded from and finally consolidated about three key wells -- the No. 3 Daisy Bradford; the No. 1 Lou Della Crim, 12 mi north of Joiner's discovery well, near Kilgore; and the No. 1 Lathrop, about 4 mi west of Longview and a shorter distance from Gladewater.... By the spring of 1931, it seemed probable that an enormous new field had been discovered, a probab ility that grew into a certainty a few months later.... When fully developed, the East Texas field was found to be on the west flank of the Sabine Uplift, where the normal regional dip was westward. It embraces a large stratigraphic trap along an old shore line where the Woodbine formation pinches out between the Austin chalk above and the Georgetown of the Lower Cretaceous below. (See "Major Oil Fields of the United States, " MS in E.DeGolyer's Library, Continental Building Dallas, Texas.)... Ed W. Bateman of Fort Worth had acquired a Kilgore lease belonging to the Crim family. On December 17 the Dallas Morning News reported 1.. his first test.... and 11 days later announced that on the previous day (Sunday) it had broken loose under a tremendous gas pressure for an estimated 22,000 bbl of crude oil daily.... ("Checkbook Bill") Cain, contractor on the well, brought it under perfect control, marking his sixth discovery well....

Kilgore was the "most seething, wildly excited and booming oil town" that W. R. Smith, president of the Oriental Oil Co of Dallas "had ever gazed upon".... He said "there is literally standing room

only in the town itself"....

Longview wanted a part of Kilgore's prosperity. As yet the field was undefined, and Longview had hopes that it would come its way. The chamber of commerce offered \$10,000 for the first well in Longview's trade territory. The J. E. Farrel, W. A. Moncrief and Arkansas Fuel Company's No. 1, J. K. Lathrop well, in the William Robinson survey, about 15 mi due north of the Crim well and 6 mi NW of Longview, won the \$10,000. The award was given to the drillers, Foster and Jeffries

A week before the well was completed a saturated core taken from it created intense excitement. Telegraph and telephone wires hummed at night; and by daylight fast cars whizzed in from El Dorado, Tulsa, Wichita Falls Fort Worth, Dallas, Houston and other oil centers, following all-night drives, while trains and busses discharged their human cargoes. Longview's hotel lobbies, sidewalks, streets, two local banks, and the Gregg County courthouse were alive with people, mostly strangers, while at night hotels and rooming houses had proof of the old adage "as thick as three in a bed".... Oil money brought new life to Longview....

Meantime, nearby leasing was lively. B. A. Skipper, a Longview real-estate operator, a short time before the Lathrop well was completed, sold a 10-acre tract near the well for \$750. When the big gusher assured this area of a great field, he offeredthe leaseholder \$25,000 for the 10 acres only to be told the lease was not for sale....

From the Bradford-Crim-Lathrop line, oil development rapidly spread throughout Rusk and Gregg counties and over into Smith and Upshur counties. There was a common belief in East Texas that the three oil producing areas would not and could not join.... But the Guy Lewis et al No. 1 Cook well, in the Jones-Jordon Survey, was drilled 42 mi W

of the No 3 Daisy Bradford well, extending the field into Smith County.

The Mudge Oil Co No 1 Richardson, 4 mi NN of the Lathrop well on May 5, 1931, carried production northward into Upshur County... and by the spring of 1931 it seemed probable that a vast field had been found. A few months later this probability had become a certainty.

Oil discoveries had defined a producing zone 36 mi long and from 3 to 7½ mi wide, with an approximate area of 92,000 square miles...

Tyler is the East Texas oil capital and consequently a thriving industrial center, but it is hardly more prosperous than Longview and Kilgore. At Longview one finds a progressive chamber of commerce, factories and an airport that would do credit to a city many times

its size.... (This paragraph from page 401 .7

the result is only 270 — and Tast Lexan only claim 200 apriore miles a the area of this field. D. farmele