

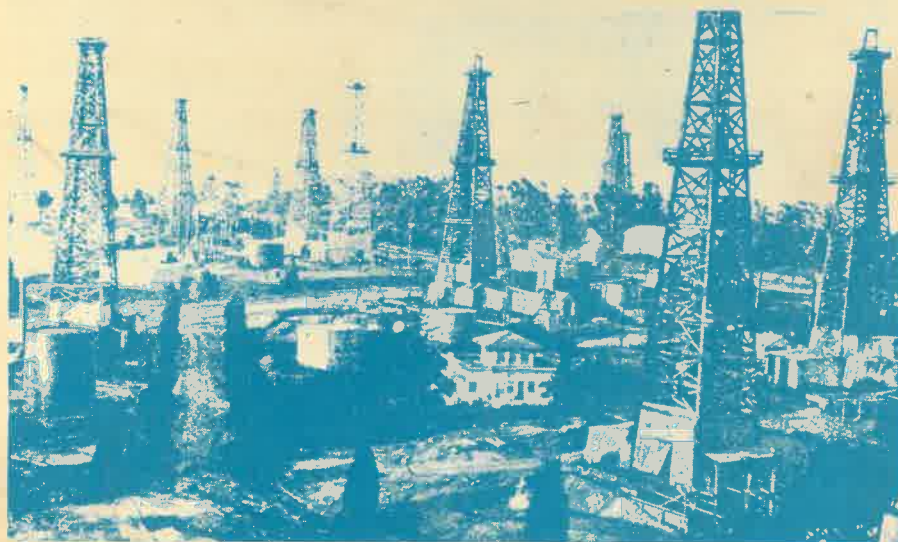
A PICTORIAL ESSAY OF OIL DRILLING IN CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA ADVENTURES IN OIL

BEFORE



EIGHT MONTHS LATER



By Gene Tompkins

Aegean Park Press



Eugene A. Tompkins was born in New Castle, Indiana. He came to Whittier, California at the age of 17 with his parents, a brother and two sisters. He soon got a job working nights at the Adams drug store. Though he previously had never seen an oil well, he listened to the tall tales of the men working for Standard Oil Company.

He soon became fascinated with "oil fields," and not being interested in going to college, he decided to make "oil fields" his career.

After graduating from high school, he applied for a job with Union Oil Company. He was hired and was sent to Long Beach where he worked nights in their warehouse which was really a large, spacious home where Jim Kamerdiner lived, and the garage was used for storing small supplies.

After working a year for this company, Tompkins asked his boss for a raise and was promptly laid off. He returned to Whittier where he saw his former boss at the drug store and was told that George Kipp, former manager for the National Supply Company, was starting his own business in Torrance; and that he was looking for a young man to work for him in his supply store. Tompkins went to Torrance, was immediately hired. He lived in an upstairs bedroom and was on call 24 hours a day.

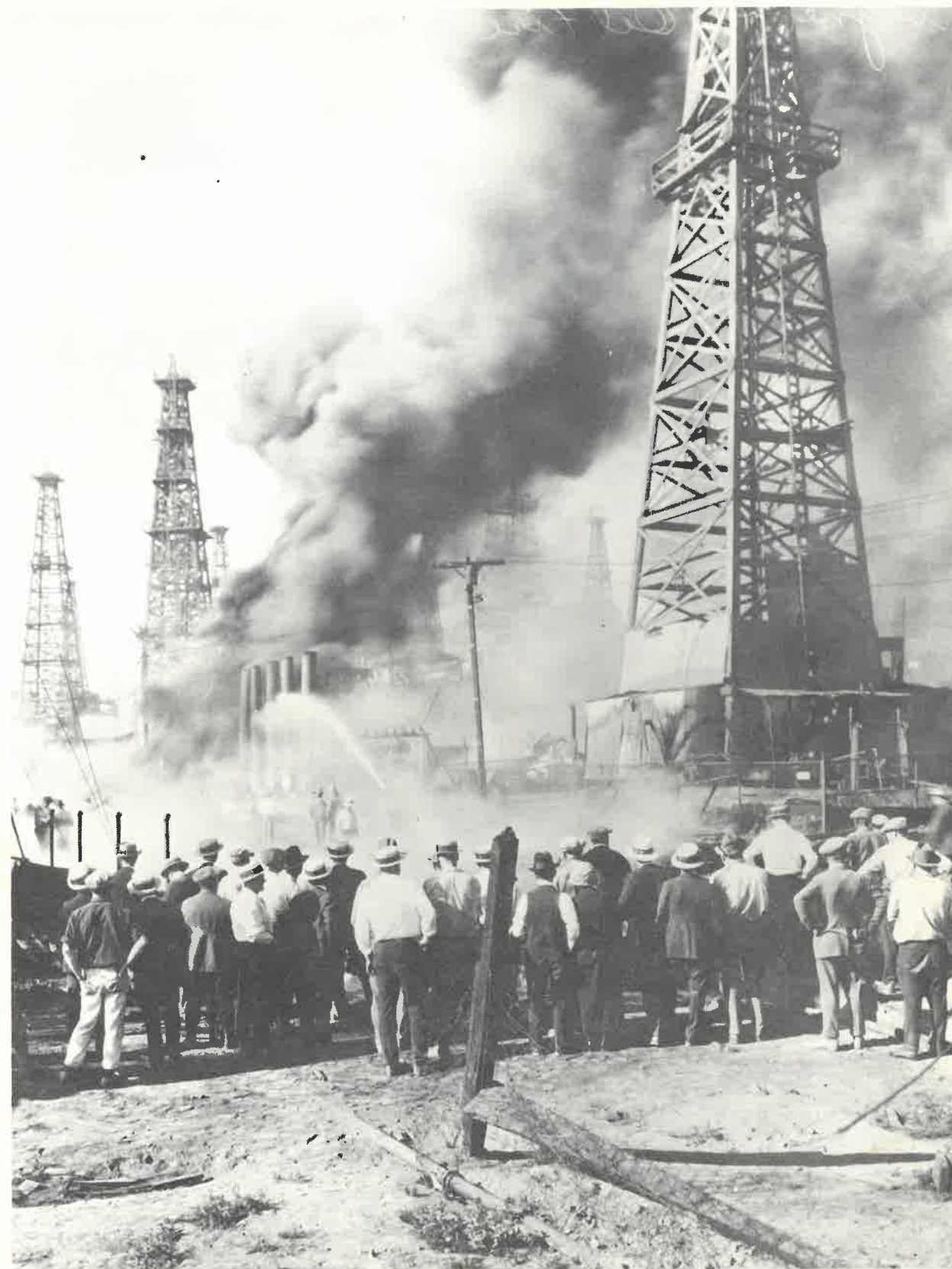
After two years, the Kipp Supply Company closed its doors. Jake Farbstein, who had been the principal backer of George Kipp, owned Standard Pipe & Supply Company; and Tompkins was asked if he would go to work for Standard Pipe & Supply Company as a field salesman. The offer of employment was accepted and Tompkins soon was covering oilfields in Long Beach, Huntington Beach, and other areas where oil wells were being drilled. After two years of hard work for Jake and the Standard Pipe & Supply Company, Tompkins had become restless. Moreover, by this time he had made and saved a great deal of money. He wanted to go into business for himself. With the aid of a friend, Claude Bills, a steel tank contractor, the E. A. Tompkins Company opened for business. Oilfield chemicals, fittings, pipe, and the like were sold. The E. A. Tompkins Company began in a small office and warehouse in Maywood. Several years later the business was moved to Signal Hill where it remained for some 20 years.

Still restless, and with "oil" now in his blood, Tompkins decided to fully enter the oil business. He borrowed money and bought a small drilling rig. With a partner to handle the drilling, the Pacific Drilling Company was formed. Tompkins later moved to Newhall, sold his interest in Pacific Drilling Company; and with a new partner bought another rig and formed T. W. Drilling. Over 50 wells were then drilled in the Newhall area. After the drilling boom was over, Tompkins sold his drilling equipment, and started the Southwest Oil Company and the Newhall Drilling Company, servicing wells in the same field that he had drilled.

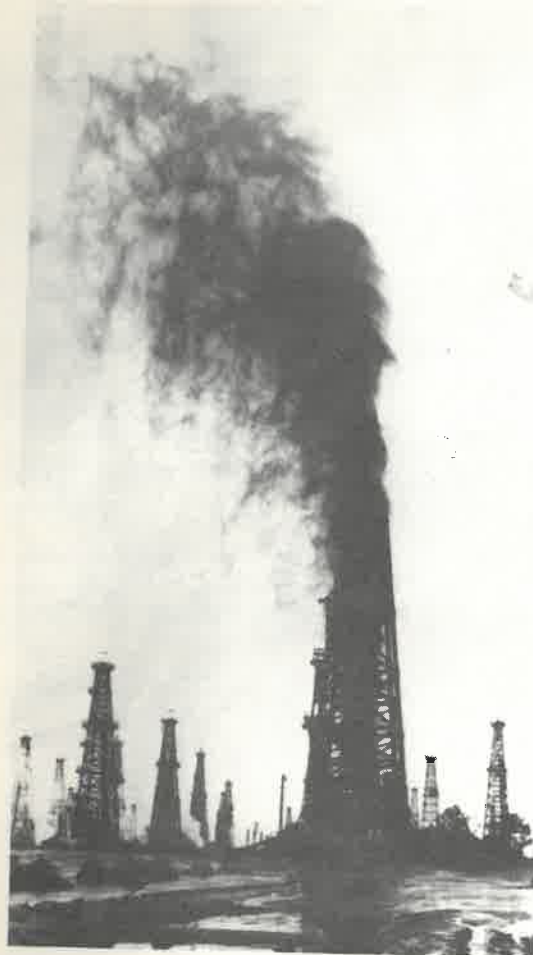
In 1963 Tompkins sold his interests in both companies and retired to live in Palm Desert.



Signal Hill Oil Fire, July 15, 1924. Picture courtesy Security Pacific National Bank.



Signal Hill Oil Fire, July 15, 1924. Picture courtesy Security Pacific National Bank.



Union Oil Company Bell No. 15 fire in Santa Fe Springs in 1921. Picture courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company.

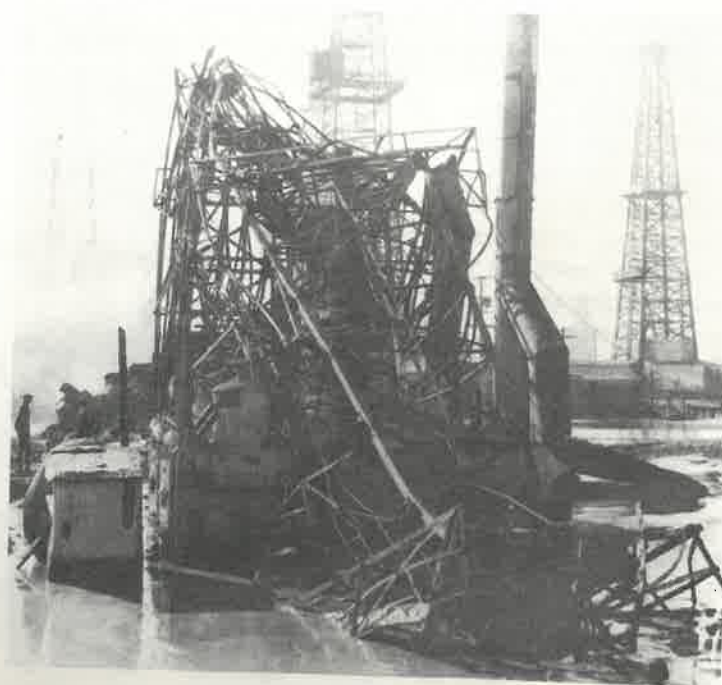
to nine days with modern equipment.

The drilling contractors drilled wells faster than anyone because they were paid by the foot and most of them didn't care how many men they killed, or how many accidents they had, as long as they made hole fast.

C. C. Julian was one of the most active and colorful promoters in the field, sold interests and stock to many people trying to get rich quick. Most of them lost every dollar they invested. He drilled about ten wells, handled a great deal of money, and finally died broke in Europe. There were 1,285 wells drilled in this field, and 1,440 proven acres. In 1969, there were 399 still producing.

Santa Fe Springs was a part of Rancho Santa Gertrudes, and in 1834 the Mexican government gave the widow Antonia Maria Nieto title to this huge Rancho, which included Downey, Los Nietos and Santa Fe Springs.

Later the Rancho was sold to Lemuel Carpenter, a Kentuckian, and in 1859 the Sheriff foreclosed, sold the property to John Downey and James McFarland. Carpenter had failed and later took his own life.



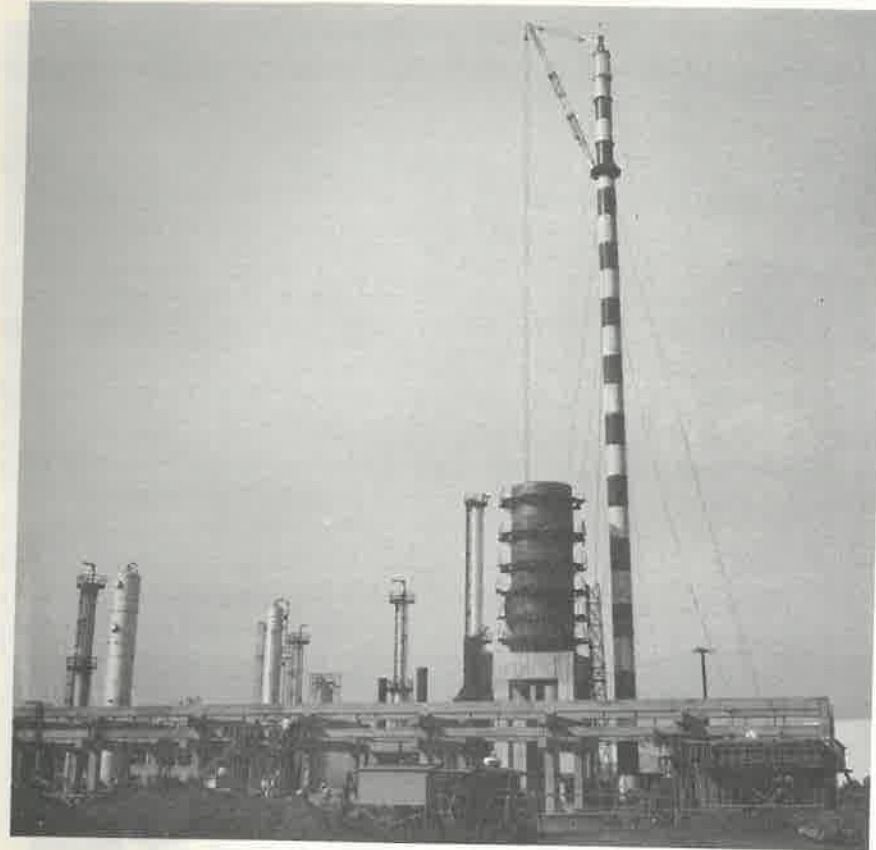
Getty No. 17 after fire in 1928. Santa Fe Springs. Picture courtesy Richard Hathaway and Chas. A. Waer.



Alexander No. 1 Santa Fe Springs in 1922, showing crater after blowout that destroyed and buried drilling rig. Picture courtesy Richard Hathaway and Chas. A. Waer.



Hathaway Company of Santa Fe Springs, first well near Brea. They now have over 100 producers.



New modern refinery operating in Santa Fe Springs. Picture courtesy Powerine Oil Company, Harry Rothschild owner and founder, 1978.



CHAPTER 3 LOS ANGELES AREA



Los Angeles about 1873, north from the junction of Main and Spring Streets at Ninth Street. Picture courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company.

These fields comprise several districts in and around the city and include the downtown, West Pico, Fox Hills, Crescent Heights, Cheviott Hills, Las Cienegas, Beverly Hills, Bandini, Union Station, Sawtelle, and the old Salt Lake Field.

This is one of the most historic spots in California for the oil industry. Such well known men as E.L. Doheny, Charles Canfield, and W.W. Orcutt made their start here. Mr. Doheny was a lawyer and mining prospector. He had made and lost several fortunes in gold and silver mining in New Mexico. In 1892, he and Mr. Canfield leased a lot on 2nd Street and Glendale Boulevard. Their first well was drilled with a pick and shovel. Upon reaching a depth of approximately 48 feet, they were able to bring up in buckets four barrels of oil a day. They raised enough money to hire a driller, small rig, deepened the well to 155 feet, and it began to flow. Mr. Doheny had never seen an oil well, knew nothing about the business, and yet with this meager beginning, these two men became very successful and wealthy. This

Southern California's first oil well. Pictured with the oil well are Edward L. Doheny and Frank Seaver. Picture courtesy Petroleum World.



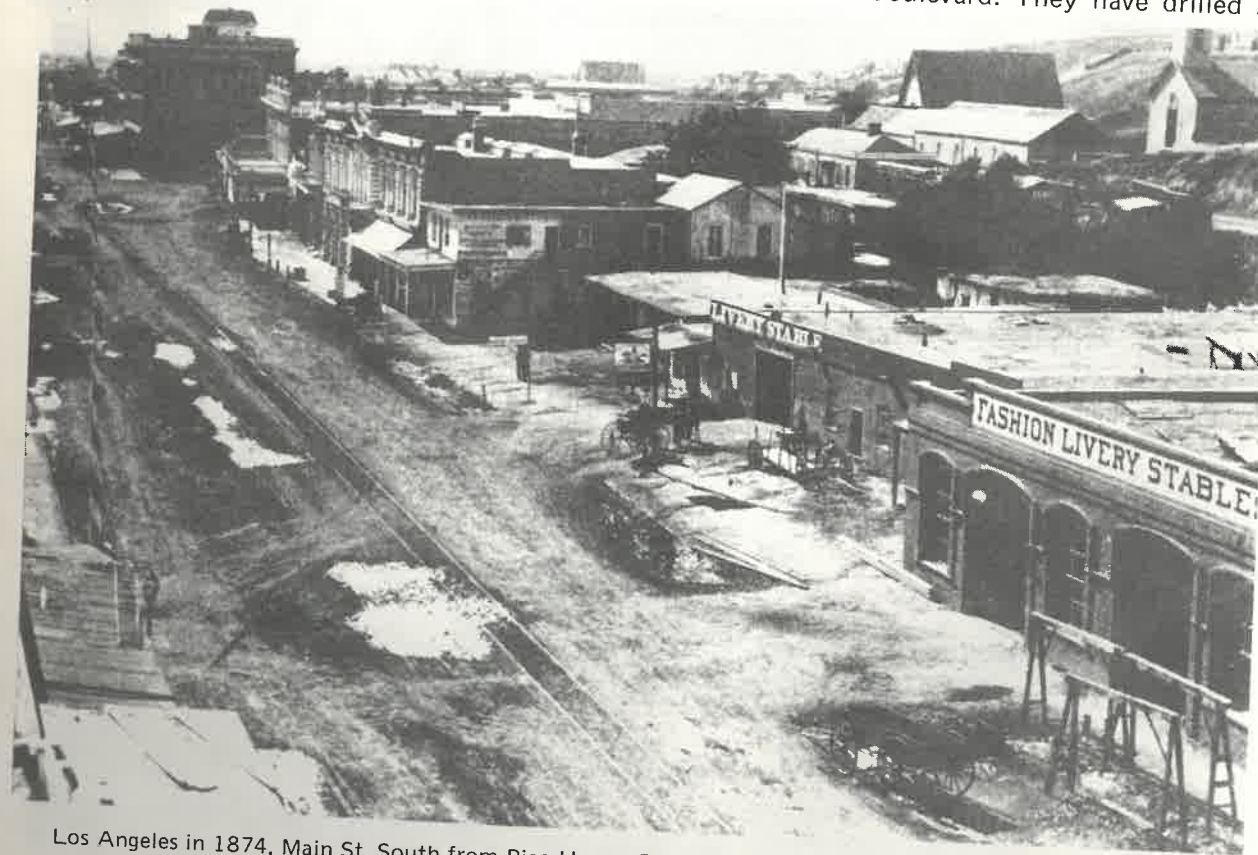
well started a drilling boom, and there were over 1,100 wells drilled covering an area about four miles long and 800 feet wide from North Broadway to Westlake Park. There were three zones in this field ranging in depth from 155 to 1,700 feet, and the proven acreage was almost 800. Many years later the Seaboard Oil Company drilled a well near North Figueroa Street, reached a depth of 7,500 feet and abandoned the well as a dry hole.



View of oilfield, City of Los Angeles.

The Beverly Hills field was discovered in July, 1900, by W. W. Orcutt. His first well produced 20 barrels of 22 gravity oil a day at a depth of 2,400 feet. There were 45 wells drilled to this shallow zone, 35 completed as producers and the proven acreage was 120. In 1954, Universal Consolidated Oil Company completed a well in a deeper zone flowing 525 barrels of 24 gravity oil a day. They drilled a total of 101 wells on the 20th Century Fox property with most of the facilities underground.

Occidental Petroleum Corporation extended this field one mile east and completed a flowing well that was drilled in a modern ten story building on Pico Boulevard. They have drilled 20



Los Angeles in 1874, Main St. South from Pico House. Picture courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company.



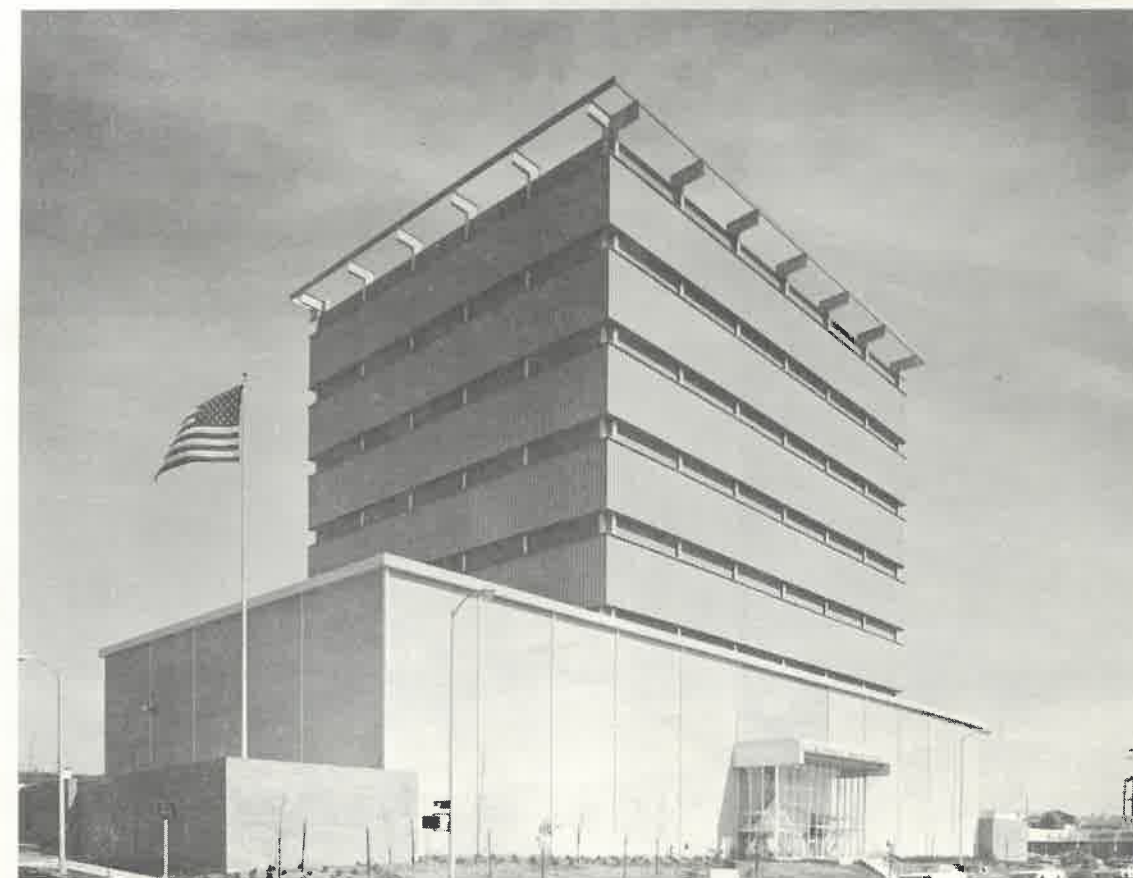
8th & Broadway Los Angeles, 1903. Picture courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company.



Occidental Petroleum Building on Pico Blvd.

wells directionally, and when their program is completed this building will be torn down. On January 19, 1967, they discovered a new and deeper pool at a depth of 5,209 feet flowing 827 barrels a day of 35 gravity oil.

On February 22, 1967, Standard Oil Company of California discovered a new field about two miles east of Beverly Hills on Pico Boulevard, called the Crescent Heights field. They have two drilling rigs working around the clock in a beautiful building. Nothing can be seen and the rigs are electric and noiseless. Their first well flowed 576 barrels of 30 gravity oil a day at a depth



Standard Oil Company drilling building housing 2 drilling rigs. Picture courtesy Standard Oil Company. Location Pico and Genesee Streets, 1968.

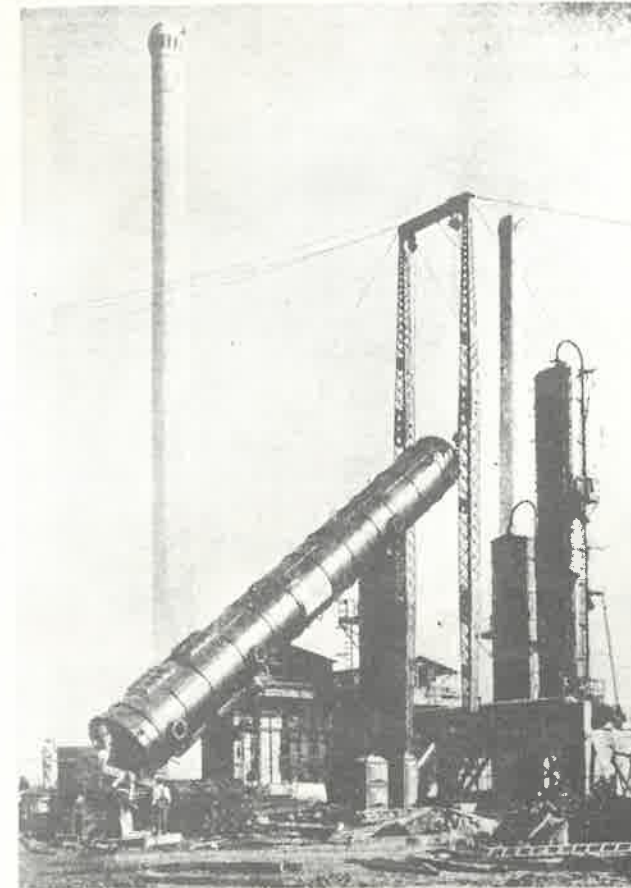
of 8,216 feet, and they have more than 45 wells producing that were all drilled directionally from this building. At the surface, these wells will be six feet apart with the bottoms extending from one half to one mile from the drilling island. This building showing their operation is open to the public on certain days and is completely landscaped and soundproof. The oil and gas flows through pipelines to Standard Oil facilities.

Atlantic-Richfield made a discovery at 23rd Street and St. James Place, designated the Las Cienegas field and has drilled 17 wells from one drill site. At the end of 1968 they had completed development of the field. Union Oil drilled and completed five wells. The two companies have a combined daily production of about 14,000 barrels.

In 1967, The Standard Oil Company of California discovered the Union Station Pool at First and Garey Streets with the completion of the first well flowing 130 barrels of oil a day. Later,



Drilling Island near 14th St., between Broadway & Hill Streets, 1969. Picture courtesy Standard Oil Company of California.



Richfield Oil Company Cracking Plant at Hynes, California, 1926.



Los Angeles Field near Dodger Stadium, North Figueroa Street, 1940.

Texaco and Union Pacific finished their first well flowing 150 barrels a day, and this confirmed that there was another field in the City of Los Angeles.

SALT LAKE FIELD

This field is located east of Beverly Hills near Wilshire and Fairfax Avenue, and was discovered in 1902 by the Salt Lake Oil Company.

The initial production of the first producer is unknown, and the well was completed at a depth of about 1,000 feet. In 1904 they drilled a well to a different



Salt Lake Field near 3rd & Fairfax Streets, Los Angeles, 1924. Picture courtesy Security Pacific Company.



5th & Spring Streets, Los Angeles, 1904. Picture courtesy Security Pacific Company.



Los Angeles City Field, 1910. Picture courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company.

zone and it produced 250 barrels of low gravity oil a day. The three principal operators were the Salt Lake Oil Company, Arcturus Oil Company, and the Rancho La Brea Oil Company. Their properties were later sold to the old Associated Oil Company. There were four zones in the field, ranging in depth from 1,000 to 2,800 feet. To make room for the development of Hancock Park, they were all abandoned about 1926 and early 1927.

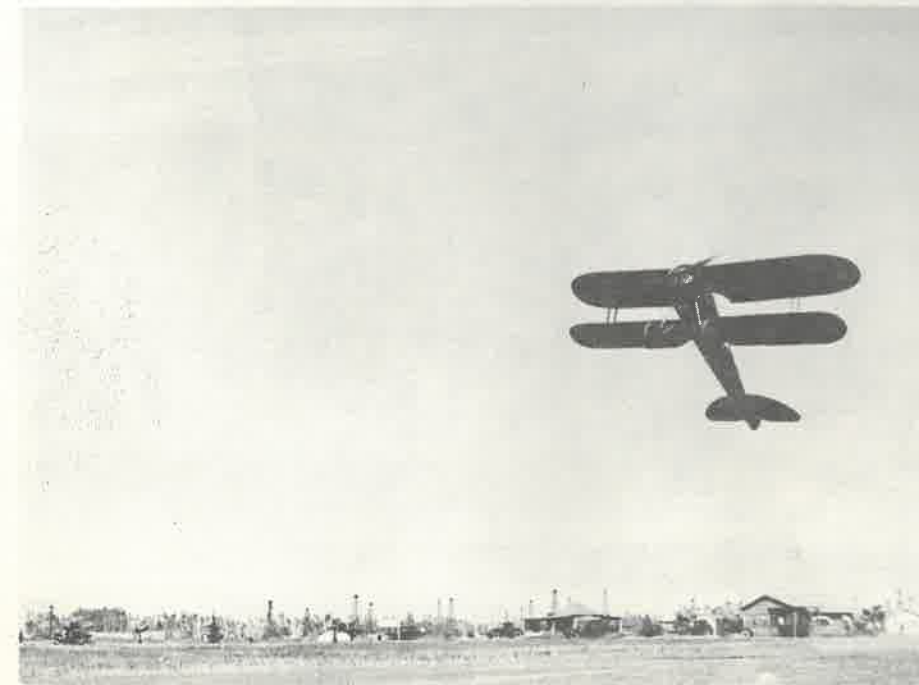
Rancho La Brea was a part of the Los Angeles Pueblo Lands, and in 1828 was granted to Antonio Rose Rocha and Nemicio Dominguez by Jose Antonio Carrillo, who was a brother-in-law of Pio Pico. The ranch derived its name from the La Brea Tar Pits, where heavy oil seeped out of the ground in large quantities.

Miracle Mile on Wilshire Blvd., showing Salt Lake Field, 1930. Picture courtesy Security Pacific Company.



The conveyance of this land provided that the owner allow the people of Los Angeles to take from the pits all the oil they needed for the roofs of their adobe houses.

In 1860 this Rancho was deeded to Major Henry Hancock, and parts of the land were later sold to Cornelius Cole, James Thompson, and Arthur Gilmore who founded the Gilmore Oil Company. The Hancock family kept much of the land and later developed Hancock Park and the Miracle Mile on Wilshire Boulevard. Many homes, apartments, and buildings were built. There was also a small flying field near the wells where you could take lessons or make flights in bi-planes. Many hundreds of years ago, large prehistoric animals roamed this land and became mired in the Tar Pits and were unable to get out. The historians have found many bones and frames of these



Rogers Airport near Salt Lake Field, 1922. Picture courtesy Security Pacific Company.



Old Los Angeles Oilfield, Figueroa Street.

were 8 zones found in depths ranging from 3,800 feet to 8,400 feet. There was a total of 63 wells drilled and 52 completed as producers.

At the end of 1968, there was a total of 376 wells producing in the City of Los Angeles and Beverly Hills.

Los Angeles was founded on September 4, 1781, by eleven homesick colonists from Mexico who had traveled for seven months to start a new life, farming on small plots to be given them by Mexico. Governor De Neve, a few soldiers and priests escorted them from the San Gabriel Mission, and they decided to settle near the Los Angeles River because of the abundance of water for their crops. They built makeshift huts until they could afford to build and live in adobe houses. By 1798, the population had increased to 139. There were 29 houses, a town hall, church, barracks, and a jail. Los Angeles later became the heart of the cow country, with large Ranchos extending from the seacoast to the San Gabriel Mountains.



Pico House in 1884, Los Angeles. Picture courtesy Title Insurance & Trust Company.

animals. These are in the Hancock Room at Exposition Park in Los Angeles.

BANDINI FIELD

This field is located about six miles south-east of the center of Los Angeles, and was discovered September 28, 1953, by General Exploration Company. Their C.W.O. D. No. 1 flowed 519 barrels a day of 38 gravity oil at a depth of about 5,000 feet. There



Los Angeles Fire Department, 1887, on 9th & Broadway. Picture courtesy Title Insurance & Trust.



Los Angeles Mounted Police on Broadway, 1904. Picture courtesy Title Insurance & Trust.

Governor Fages granted large tracts of land to his friends who had fought with him. Jose Verdugo was given land covering what is now Glendale and Burbank, Antonio Yorba received a huge grant east of the Santa Ana River, and Francisco Reyes was given land that took in most of the San Fernando Valley.

The most prominent families living in the small village of Los Angeles were the Verdugos, the Sepulvedas, the Lugos, the Picos, the Carrillos, and Figueroas. Joseph Chapman, a yankee ship-builder who had been shanghaied at Honolulu, leaped from a boat in Santa Barbara, was taken by Vaqueros, brought down the coast and became the first American citizen of Los Angeles. He later settled down on a large ranch in San Gabriel. In later years, a few yankees from the east made the long trip to Los Angeles, married into wealthy Spanish families, and in order to become



Los Angeles City Field in 1905. Picture courtesy Los Angeles Times.



1925. Courtesy Mobil Oil Corporation (formerly General Petroleum Corporation).

Mexican citizens, joined the Church. John Temple came from Reading, Massachusetts, and opened the first general store in Los Angeles. Abel Stearns came from Salem, Massachusetts, and became the owner of Los Alamitos Rancho through his marriage. This was a part of Long Beach, and a great part of this land was later acquired by the Bixby family. Phineas Banning had moved to California when he was 21 years old. He was a stage driver, and founded the first stage line from San Pedro to Los Angeles in 1852.

The first horsecar line was started in 1874 by Robert M. Widney, and in later years, the Pacific Electric supplanted these old horse drawn cars.

Oil has been a large factor in the growth of Los Angeles. One of the first companies organized and incorporated was the Los Angeles Pioneer Oil Company, started in 1865. After the capture of Los Angeles by General Stephen Kearny and Commodore R. F. Stockton with the help of Kit Carson, the population was about 5,000.

Now it is a sprawling city, covering more square miles than any other in the country, with its busy freeways, large airport, and many new highrise buildings.



One tank wagon and a team of horses — the Richfield Oil Company's entire delivery department in 1915.

CHAPTER 4

LONG BEACH, HUNTINGTON BEACH, WEST NEWPORT



Long Beach Harbor, 1924. Picture courtesy Mobil Oil Corporation.

In 1926, things began to slow down in Torrance and Athens. The drilling had practically come to a standstill. Some companies had been successful and some had gone broke. Our supply company was beginning to have difficulties. The finances were getting low and the partners were having problems. In 1926, the Kipp Supply Company closed its doors. This was a big disappointment to all of us. We had high hopes of growing with the oil industry.

Jake Farbstein owned the Standard Pipe & Supply Company and had a large pipe and used equipment yard on Date Street in Los Angeles. He had been the financial backer of George Kipp and had decided he had gone far enough.

He wanted me to stay with his firm, and offered me a good job as field salesman at \$250. per month and a car furnished. I was married, had a baby girl and wife to support and accepted his offer. I spent most of my time in Long Beach and Huntington Beach and was the youngest salesman in the fields. There was still a great deal of activity in Long Beach and some company would discover a new zone, and the boom would start all over again. Jake decided we should open a branch in Long Beach and I was in charge of that district, spending my time buying

CHAPTER 5

TORRANCE, DOMINGUEZ HILL, ATHENS-ROSECRANS

The Torrance field was discovered June 6, 1922, by Chanslor Canfield, Midway Oil Company Del Amo No. 1, at a depth of 3,500 feet, flowing 300 barrels a day of 21 gravity oil. Development of the field was slow until several more wells were completed flowing as much as 2,000 barrels of oil a day.

It started another town lot boom. Derricks were springing up on every available lot and we were soon selling everything from nipples to casing to oil companies and promoters. The most active companies operating in the field were Shell Oil, Standard Oil, George F. Getty Oil, C. C. M. O. Oil, Superior Oil, Petroleum Securities Oil, Texas Company, Petroleum Midway Oil, and many small unknown companies. The active drilling contractors were: Little & Bell, W. O. Todd, McKeon Drilling, Pugh-Miller, Rogers & Edwards, and Lloyd & Burns.

In May, 1924, there were 345 wells producing a total of 72,000 barrels of oil a day. The field gradually declined. In 1936, a new and deeper zone was discovered at a depth of 4,887 feet, producing a higher gravity oil. Three hundred twenty wells were drilled in this zone, and they came in flowing or pumping from almost nothing to as high as 700 barrels a day.

The drilling on the deeper wells was mostly unprofitable and more money was lost than was

made. The entire field extended from the east part of Torrance and Lomita to Redondo Beach, a distance of about six miles, and covered 6,660 proven acres. There was a total of 1,541 wells drilled during the boom.

In later years, many of the wells produced such small quantities of oil that they were abandoned, and much of Torrance is now an industrial and residential center. At the end of 1968 there were 26 offshore wells and 514 onshore wells producing.



Shell Oil Company Lease, Dominguez Hill.

Dominguez, one of the most important oil fields in the Los Angeles Basin, was discovered by Union Oil Company in September, 1923. Their Callendar No. 1A was completed at a depth of 4,068 feet, flowing 1,193 barrels a day of 32 gravity oil. This field was controlled by four major companies and was developed in an orderly manner. Dominguez Hill is located about 14 miles south of Los Angeles, and was a part of the huge Rancho granted to Juan Jose Dominguez in 1799. It comprised over 43,000 acres and extended from the coast near San Pedro to Gardena and Compton. There were 574 wells drilled in the field, and the proven acreage covered 1,670 acres. There have been over 250,000,000 barrels of oil produced and this field is considered to be the fourth largest reserve in the Los Angeles Basin. In 1968, there were 195 wells producing. Russell Havenstrite extended the field several years later and drilled about seven wells, which were all good producers.

Mr. Dominguez was born in Spain in 1719 and was a soldier in the Spanish Colonial Army on the West Coast. In 1784, he sent a request to Pedro Fages, his company commander and then Governor of Alta California, for a land allotment. He had chosen the site of the Rancho San

Pedro, was granted this land, and built an adobe house on top of Dominguez Hill. He never married. He lived there until old age caused him to retire, and then moved to the Mission Capistrano, where he died in 1809.

The first air meet in the United States was held in Dominguez in 1910 near the old ranch house. This meeting of fliers was held when aviation was considered by many as a passing novelty. Glenn Curtis set a new speed record of 60 miles an hour in an old bi-plane.

The Torrance boom had reached its peak, and we decided to open a warehouse in Athens. The Rosecrans part of this field was discovered May 24, 1924,



Shell Oil Company Headquarters, Dominguez Hill California, 1940.

by the Union Oil Company Howard Park No. 1, flowing 723 barrels of 30 gravity oil a day. The field was located about 12 miles south of the city hall of Los Angeles. We opened our branch store in the Fall of 1925, and shortly after another boom started in the Athens-Rosecrans area. I had been made Secretary of the company and was now spending my time between locations, calling on a few customers, learning how to sell oil field supplies and equipment.

The Union Oil and Barnsdall Oil companies were among the largest of those active in the Rosecrans part of the field. In the Athens part, there were many small companies and rigs were moving in at a very rapid pace. This was mostly town lot and there was a great deal of activity for several months. The most prominent operators in the field were J. Paul Getty and E. J. Miley. The story is told that George F. Getty gave his son Paul \$1,000,000. to get into the oil business, which gave him a good start. With his first well he would drive out each night to check on things and talk to his Superintendent, Bill Macumber.

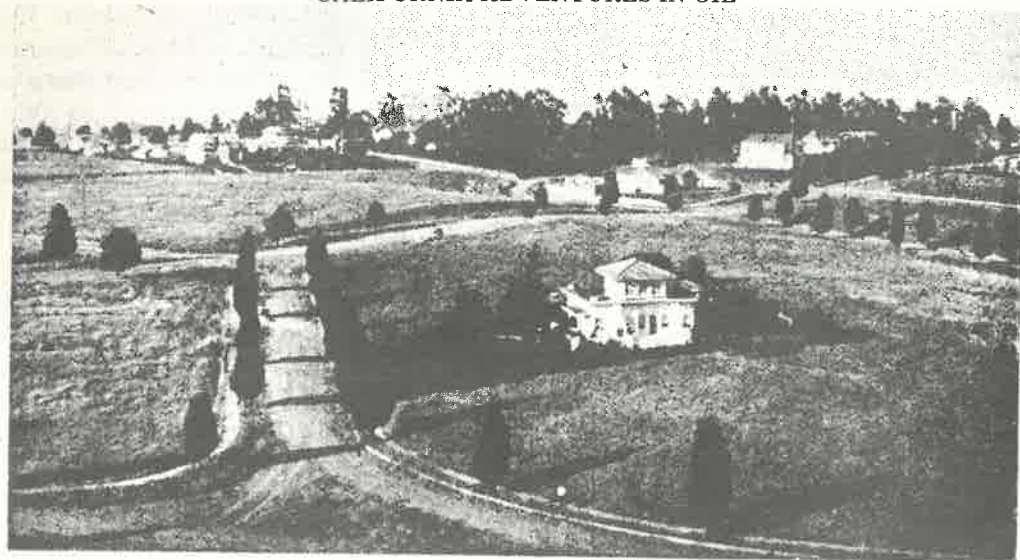
Bill was one of the best oil men in the business, had worked for a drilling contractor and could drill a well about as fast as anyone.

Mr. Getty brought in a big producer, drilled other wells in California, bought stock in the old Associated Oil Company, The Skelly Oil Company, and today these all are a part of the Getty Oil Company. Due to his shrewdness, he has holdings all over the world and is probably the wealthiest person in the world.

E. J. Miley had been active in the early days of Ventura with Ralph Lloyd and Joseph

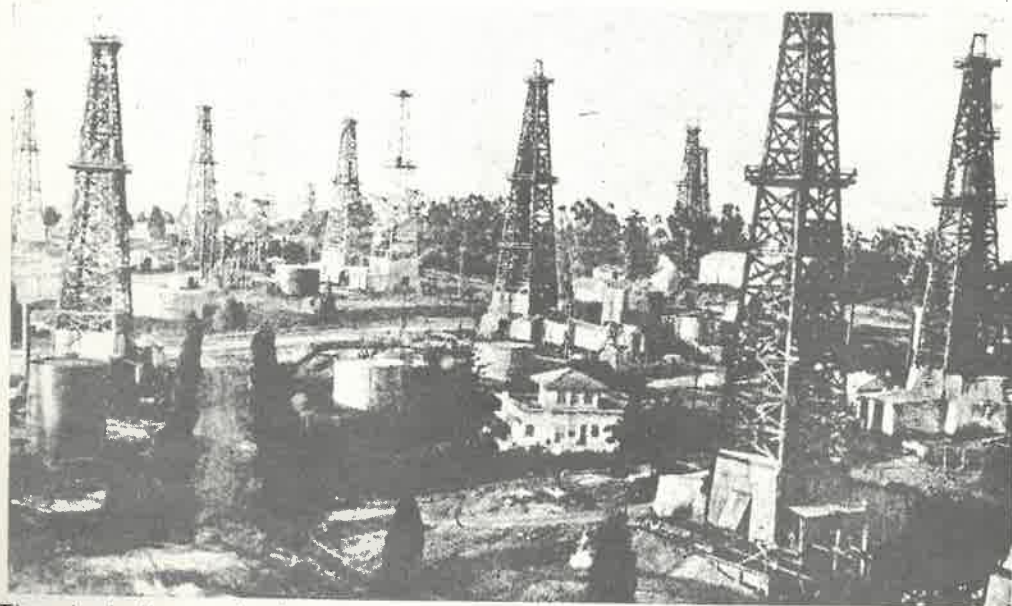


Pumping Island Enclosure - Torrance. Superior Oil Company.



WHAT OIL DID TO ATHENS-ON-THE-HILL

A beautiful California landscape, Athens-on-the-Hill, before and after oil was discovered in that field. The pictures were taken eight months apart. Note the attractive white residence in the foreground. It is the home of C. A. Reinhard, more familiarly known as "Reiney," who ardently broadcasts the merits of the Wiggins rotary underreamer.



Dabney. They had all gone broke drilling in this field before oil was discovered. Later, the Shell Oil Company took over the leases, found a deeper zone, and Lloyd and Dabney were back in the money again. Mr. Miley promoted someone, brought in some good wells in Athens, and started wildcatting again. He made a discovery near Santa Barbara; brought in a big well. He was offered several millions for this property, turned it down. His well later turned to water, and he was broke again.

I met F. E. (Free) Fairfield in the Athens field. He and his partner were running a small cafe. He later moved to Long Beach, promoted some money from a drilling contractor and went into the equipment and tool rental business on Cherry Avenue. He was very successful and later became a very prominent oil operator. The story was told that he had more cash in the banks in Long Beach than any other man. He sold one lease in Santa Paula for \$6,000,000. to the Shell Oil Company. He was the founder and sole owner of The Oil Tool Corporation.

There were 386 wells drilled in the Athens-Rosecrans area, 331 completed, and the field covered 708 proven acres. There were 135 wells still producing in 1968.



Union Oil well showing large Pumping Unit. Dominguez Hill Field, 1965. Picture courtesy Security Pacific Company.

RICHFIELD, VENICE
INGLEWOOD, LAWNDALE

After going into business for myself, I worked hard, long hours, picked up a few new accounts each week, and in about two months, was able to take home some money for our bare living expenses.

I believe my biggest break came when I landed the Superior Oil Company at Santa Fe Springs. They had a well flowing 7,000 barrels a day and I sold Floyd Jones, the production boss, my chemical. We pumped this into the flow line and by the time the oil hit the tanks, most of the water had been separated from the crude.

I was very grateful to Floyd for giving me this chance. We became very good friends and I did a lot of business with Superior Oil Company. I needed some help by this time and a friend of mine with Standard Oil recommended an ex-prize fighter who was out of work. I hired Temple Grady to take care of the delivery, pick up samples, and do other work so that I could devote all my time to selling. He had been a fighter in San Francisco in the early rough and tumble days and like others, was broke. He turned out to be a wonderful help, a good salesman, and friend. He was well liked by everyone in the fields. Our business grew better each month. I sold my chemical to Standard Oil, Barnsdall Oil, George F. Getty Oil, Ohio Oil Company, and many small producers. I decided I would like to own our small company and bought Claude Bill's interest. He was busy in the tank business, making money and not any great help to me.

The newest flurry of activity was Lawndale, located about five miles west of Rosecrans. The San Clemente Oil Company completed Peck No. 1 July 3, 1928, flowing 150 barrels of 31 gravity oil at a depth of 5,814 feet. December 16, 1928, Smith Development completed its Peck No. 1, flowing 900 barrels of 33 gravity oil at a depth of 5,897 feet. A town lot boom started and in February, 1929, there were 41 wells drilling, and 26 rigging up to drill. This activity was confined to an area of about 190 acres and only a small part was proven for production. By July, 1929, there were seven wells producing a total of 2,175 barrels, 57 were idle or abandoned; and this field proved to be the biggest fiasco in the oil industry. There was a total footage drilled of 361,000 feet; seven producers on 25 acres finally made a total of 1,000,100 barrels of oil. It was in this field that I met Walter Greenfield, who was Superintendent for Smith Brothers. Walter later was hired by Signal Oil and became a Vice President in charge of all their drilling and production. He was one of the best oil men in the business and was a pioneer in whipstocking wells in almost any direction. We became good friends and after he had gone with Signal, I sold him my chemicals. He deserves a great deal of credit for the success of Signal.

In December 1929, another new field had been discovered in Venice by the Ohio Oil Company, Recreation Gun Club No. 1, flowing 1,196 barrels of 24 gravity oil. There was a great deal of drilling done for several years until there was a total of 269 completions. There were still 88 wells producing in 1968. The Playa Del Rey area of this field was discovered in 1930.

In 1966, the Mobil Oil Company made a new discovery on a tideland lease owned by the city of Los Angeles, near Venice.



Mobil Oil Company, Lighthouse Drilling Rig, Venice, 1969.



This small field is off the beach of Venice and was discovered by Mobil Oil Company in 1966. Their L. A. City No. 1 well was completed flowing 573 barrels a day of 22 gravity oil at a depth of 6,000 ft. All the drilling was done from one location resembling a lighthouse. There were 13 wells drilled and 10 completed as producers.

Our business was increasing every month. We were making money, and our future looked bright. I had talked to Standard Oil about some foreign business and we had high hopes of growing into a good sized chemical company.

I drove out to the Richfield area to find some new customers, and to check into the amount of chemical used. The first man I met was Elwood Hathaway, and I talked him into trying five gallons of my chemical for cleaning oil. The Hathaway family had made a lot of money on royalties from their Santa Fe Springs lands and Elwood, Doc, and Dick, all brothers, had decided to go into the oil business for themselves. This was their first well. It was only making a few barrels of oil a day, but it was the beginning of a fine company, with production in California, Colorado, Texas and Oklahoma. They now own the old Temescal Ranch near Piru, ranches in Lancaster, and valuable industrial property which was a part of their original home and dairy farm in Santa Fe Springs.

The Richfield area is located about six miles east of Fullerton and was discovered on March 11, 1919, by Union Oil Company Chapman No. 1 at a depth of 3,025 feet, flowing 1,750 barrels of 22 gravity oil a day. On June 22, 1920, Standard Oil Company completed Kraemer No. 2 at a depth of 4,130 feet, producing about 300 barrels of oil a day, and this proved the existence of a deeper zone. The companies most active in the field were Union, Shell, Standard, Petroleum



Richfield Oil Field

Midway, General Petroleum, and Continental Oil. Many wells produced from 900,000 to 2,000,000 barrels of oil, and to date the entire field has produced more than 95,000,000 barrels. There were 668 wells drilled on 1,600 acres in 1968, there were 361 producing. There were four zones ranging in depth from 2,900 to 4,100 feet.

The Kraemer area of this field is located about two miles east of Richfield. In 1918, their Kraemer No. 1 was completed at a depth of 2,400 feet, producing 144 barrels of 15 gravity oil a day. There were 52 wells drilled in the field on 145 proven acres and in 1968, there were 16 wells still producing. There were three zones ranging in depth from 1,900 to 3,300 feet.

The land in the Kraemer-Richfield area was a part of 35,900 acres granted to Juan Pacifico Ontiveros on May 13, 1837, by Governor Juan B. Alverado. The original adobe ranch house was



Ohio Oil Company discovery well, Venice Field, 1929. Picture courtesy Security Pacific Company.

built near the town of Placentia and part of it is still standing.

The Hathaways were my best customers and our relationship grew as personal friends and as my most valued business associates in the equipment business as the years passed. Today, I consider them my closest friends in the oil industry and we get together at least twice a month to discuss problems and events that are happening in this interesting business. I made a trip to Kansas for them about 25 years ago to locate some 4 inch range 2 drill pipe. I found what I thought was a good string, bought it for them and shipped it to California. My largest sale to them was a production rig I had located in Bakersfield, and I sold it to them for \$55,000. cash. They are still using this rig for production and redrill work on their wells in Kern County. They were hard workers, often running their own rigs, and didn't have much time to look for needed pipe and equipment. Most of this was turned over to me. They were always interested in buying old producing wells and leases, and during my long association with them I have located and sold them more than 80 wells, and

most of these are still producing today.

Their father, Jesse, was an orphan, came to California from the East when he was 16 years old. He worked for a while for William Randolph Hearst, then got a job repairing engines in the Los Angeles City Oil Field in 1894. He was married, saved his money, and finally had enough to make a small down payment on the original Hathaway Ranch at Santa Fe Springs. He struggled and worked hard with his sons, running their dairy farm for many years. Then oil was found on his property and he became a very wealthy man. He never changed and when I would call on the boys, he was always working in his shop, or on his ranch — enjoying it seven days a week. Doc, Elwood, and Dick are always working, either on the road, on oil wells, feeding cattle on their huge Temescal Ranch, and are never at a desk. With their success in everything they have done, they have never changed and never will. They are the most unusual people in the oil business and possibly the best liked.

The largest manufacturer in our chemical field decided I had gone far enough. I called on Standard Oil Company and they advised me that they had received a letter saying I was infringing on certain patents. They told me they couldn't get mixed up in any law suits and would have to quit doing business with me until this was settled. It was quite a blow to us and I decided to go to San Francisco to their head office and discuss it.

I called on a Vice President in charge of purchasing. He received me very graciously, explained their position, and said he was sorry about the whole thing.

I arrived back at our office, found letters from most of our good customers saying the same thing, and knew I was out of business. The manufacturer of my product wouldn't fight a law suit and I didn't have the money to do it.

The company made other products out of fish oil, paints, pipe spray to prevent rusting, and cut-



Venice Oil Field, 1930. Picture courtesy Security Pacific Company.

CONCLUSION

I have met and had dealings with many fine men. Some prospered, some became heads of large companies, and others who had once been wealthy, died broke and didn't have enough money to pay their funeral expenses. To make it in a big way, you have to be lucky and get some good breaks. Many men have drilled wildcats and made discoveries, and others drilled dry holes and never were a success in any of these ventures.

Elwood and "Doc" Hathaway of Hathaway Company in Santa Fe Springs have been more helpful and closer to me than anyone else in the oil business. They would always buy something from me when I needed business very badly to keep myself and my family going. Through the years, I have sold them more pipe and equipment than any other company. I consider them my close personal friends, see them often to discuss their activities, problems, plans for the future in growing with this great and exciting industry.

I am grateful to Bob Reid, Vice President of United California Bank, who had faith in me when I had very little in assets. Through the years, he loaned me a great deal of money without any security, and I couldn't have made it without his help.

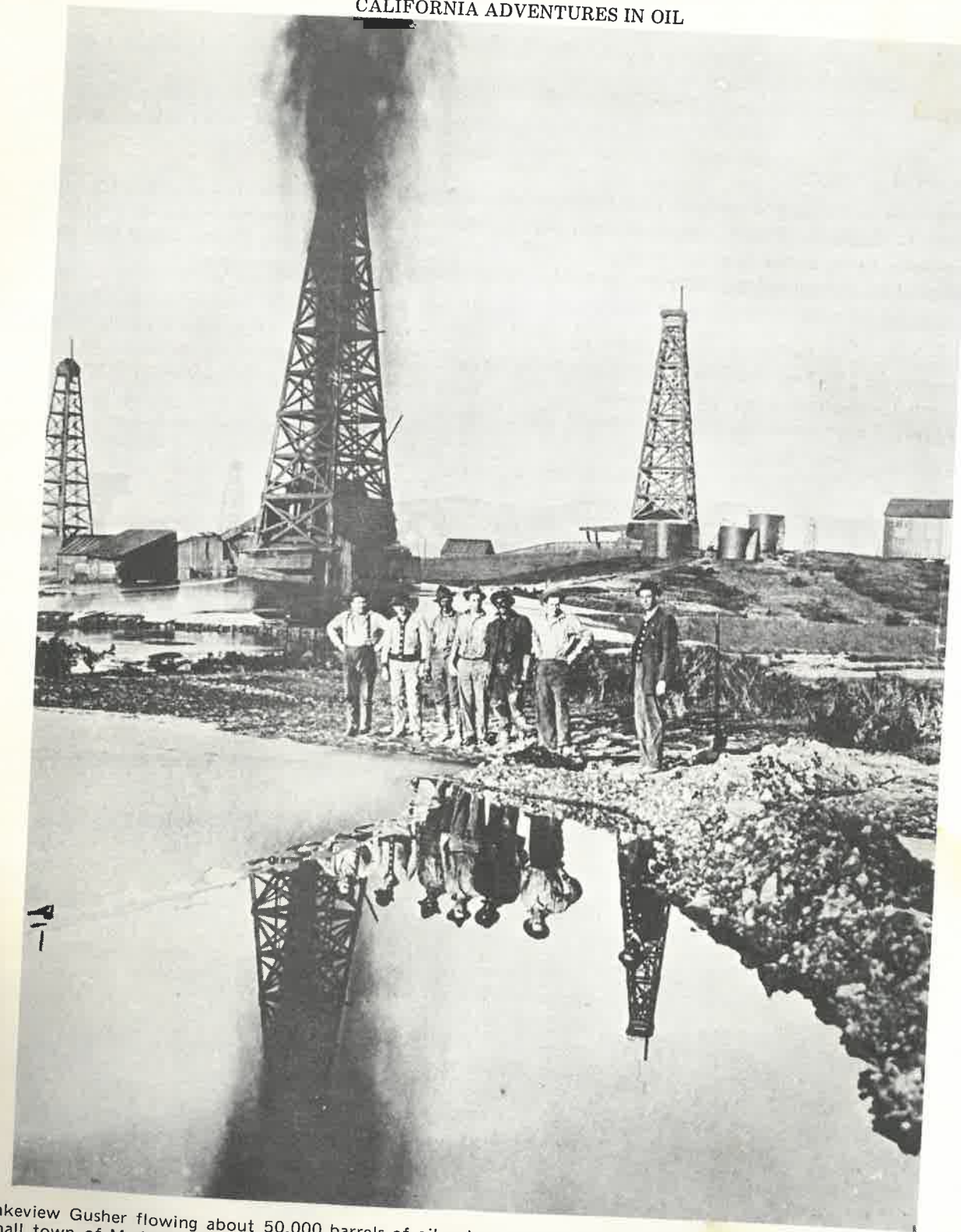
In the past few years, many independents, and smaller companies have been taken over by the "majors," and as time passes, the oil business will be made up of huge corporations with large cash reserves to develop their holdings all over the world. Companies that operate refineries are in a position to make a great deal out of a barrel of crude oil. Their modern facilities, the methods of cracking oil, and the low prices they pay companies for their oil will give them a big advantage over smaller operators who have no refineries.

In 1951, our T. W. Drilling Company drilled a wildcat for an early day contractor who at one time had more than 20 rigs running and was doing well financially. He became President of a large oil company. Many years later he lost everything, and a few of his friends helped him drill what was to be his last well. We drilled a dry hole for him near San Fernando. His dreams of getting a fresh start were shattered.

The past events and town lot booms, with all their excitement and with many wells drilled on twenty-five foot lots, will never happen again in California. With new and protective laws, the high-powered, colorful, crooked promoters will never operate again. There were some who were honest and successful, but many left the country with creditors and disillusioned investors having been the suckers.

My experiences and participation have been in almost every phase of the oil business. It has been very interesting and exciting.

I have had successes and failures, seen good times and been through depressions, with all the gambles and problems that are a part of this fascinating business. With all my hard work, I have enjoyed it to the utmost, and am happy to have taken a small part in seeing the growth of the California Oil Industry, which has contributed millions of dollars annually to the economy of our state. I am grateful to everyone who helped me achieve some of my goals and ambitions in all my activities, and to all of my friends who helped me when I needed it during some of our hard times.



Lakeview Gusher flowing about 50,000 barrels of oil a day out of control. Well located in Kern County near the small town of Maricopa. This well was drilled by the Lakeview Oil Company, and flowed an estimated 8,000,000 barrels of oil in a span of one and a half years.