



A Collection of Information about Grimshaw, Texas

Compiled by George Howard Grimshaw

February 2, 2008

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Introduction

As a teenager, I remember my grandfather, George Olan Grimshaw, telling the story about how oil was discovered on his dad Amos' farm land in Young County in the early 1920's and how a town was built there named Oil City. He also told how when the townspeople tried to get a Post Office for the town, they found out that there was already another town in Texas named Oil City, so they named the town "Grimshaw", after Amos. George then told how a series of fires destroyed much of the town eventually leading to its demise.¹

As I listened to the story, hanging on every word, I wanted to know exactly where the town of Grimshaw was located. What was it like? What happened to it? What is there now? This collection of maps, articles and pictures answers these questions, respectively, and confirms the story of Grimshaw, Texas, passed down by George.¹

For over 35 years now, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Amos and Zona Grimshaw have been researching and collecting information about Grimshaw, Texas. George Olan's son George Noel Grimshaw, found a reference to the town of Grimshaw in a book of Texas towns and cities in the library at Gainesville, Texas. This brief two-sentence article appears in this document on page 22.² George Olan's, grandson, Boyd Grimshaw visited the former town site in the late 1970's, as did George Noel in the 1980's. Later in April 2001, George Noel, my son George Elliot, and I visited the site and the home a woman who lives on the southern end of where the town once stood. She remembered the Grimshaw's and attended the Mountain Home School with Arilla, Allie, Fitzhugh, Violet, Jim and Robert Grimshaw when they lived there in the early 1900's. Other family members have visited the former town site as well.

Over the years, George Noel visited libraries in Graham and the surrounding area and was able to find and get copies of articles about Grimshaw / Oil City, from newspapers and books, some of which had pictures of the area. One particular find he made in California City, California, where he lives. While at a garage sale, he came across an old book of maps, including Texas. He looked to see if he could find either "Grimshaw" or "Oil City" on one of the Texas maps, and sure enough "Grimshaw" was there. Needless to say he bought the book. A copy of this map follows on page 1.³

George Noel also visited and talked to his aunts, uncles, and cousins, and was able to find out more information about the town of Grimshaw. Amos' great-grandson John Grimshaw was one of the relatives who found some articles. Over the years George Noel collected this information and put it in a scrapbook. Amos' great-grandson Randall Grimshaw interviewed his grandfather James Julius Grimshaw, who provided a biography of his life, which includes information about Oil City.⁴ And Thomas Grimshaw posted some maps and pictures of Oil City, under the "The Texas Line of Grimshaws" on the "Grimshaw Origins and History" website.⁵ This information is included in the following pages. A "Brief History of Grimshaw, Texas" on the following page provides a synopsis of what we have discovered to date.

Brief History of Grimshaw, Texas

On August 24, 1906, Amos and Zona Grimshaw bought a farm in southern Young County.^{1, 4, 6} They moved their family there from Erath County and lived and farmed there for several years. However, the land was “tight” due to the clay soil and did not receive enough rain to sustain their crops of cotton, maize and corn. Then boll weevils

invaded the area destroying the cotton crops.^{1, 4, 7} An article on the history of Young County mentions that by 1910 there were 1,796 farms and ranches, in the area. “Cotton had become the most important crop, and almost 51,000 acres were planted in the fiber that year; another 17,400 acres were planted in corn.”⁷ It also reports that “the number of farms declined, and the area lost population when the cotton boom faded in the 1910s. About 31,000 bales of cotton had been produced in 1907, at the height of the boom, but in 1916 under 12,000 bales were produced.”⁷ Unable to sell the land, Amos decided to leave it and around 1914 resettled his family in Comanche County near the town of DeLeon, where they continued to farm.^{1, 4}

On May 19, 1917, Amos and Zona leased their land in Young County to C. W. DeFreest “for the purpose of prospecting for oil, gas and sulphur and production of the same.” According to the lease, the royalties they would receive for oil was “a quantity equal to one-eighth of all produced and saved.” For natural gas, “the rate of two hundred dollars per annum, payable quarterly.” For gas, ten dollars per year for each well and when this gas was being used for the manufacture of gasoline, an additional ten dollars per year for each well. For sulphur, “the rate of one dollar per ton for all mined.”⁸ In the fall of 1917, oil was discovered on Amos and Zona’s land in Young County.^{1, 4, 9, 10, 11}

“County records seem to indicate that Grimshaw began booming by 1919 when progression of oil drilling seemed to move east.”⁸ As a result a town sprang up on Amos and Zona’s land.^{12, 13} It was originally named for Amos, on whose land oil was discovered.⁹ “Amos platted the town in 1920 and due to the oil wells, the town was named “Oil City.”⁹ The oil well credited with starting Oil City was named the Mahaney Number 1, which came in during the fall of 1921. It was followed by the Bud Owens Number 1. Young County records show a plat for Oil City on October 21, 1921. Lots sold in the town for a record \$1,000 each. By 1922, County records show an estimated population of 1,500. By mid 1922, the town had about 40 businesses including: cafes and food stands, boarding and rooming houses, drug stores, mercantile stores, a doctor’s office, a dentist office, a post office, a theatre, a newspaper, and a church building.^{9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14}

In order to have a post office, the name of the town had to be changed from Oil City to Grimshaw and on July 6 1922, the post office at Grimshaw, Texas was opened. Harry L. O’Brien was the first Post Master.^{1, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17}

In 1922 and 1923 there were three disastrous fires in Grimshaw.⁹ The first of these fires happened about 10:00 pm on June 13, 1922, and decimated the northern half of the town resulting in damages of \$100,000 to \$150,000.^{18, 19} During this time oil production

also began declining, so on May 16, 1923, Amos and Zona sold their land and mineral rights.^{1,20} They sold their 199 acre parcel to J. J. Lory of Wichita County for \$8,250.²⁰

They sold their 160 acre parcel to their friend and former neighbor, Bud Owen, who also had oil discovered on his land.^{1, 10, 11} They then bought the Count Brothers filling station in DeLeon which Amos and his sons operated. They opened for business on August 17, 1923.²¹

Interestingly, Amos and his family never did live in the town that bore their name, although they did visit there.^{1, 4, 22} In 1924, for health reasons, Amos traded his filling station and garage in DeLeon for a ranch in eastern New Mexico, north of the town of Elida, where he farmed and ranched until his death in 1943.^{1, 4, 23}

With the above information providing the historical context, it is time to sit back, hold on, and enjoy an exciting and informative, trip to yester-year, and discover the “Roarin’ 20’s” “oil boomtown” of Grimshaw, Texas!

Maps Showing Grimshaw (Oil City), Texas

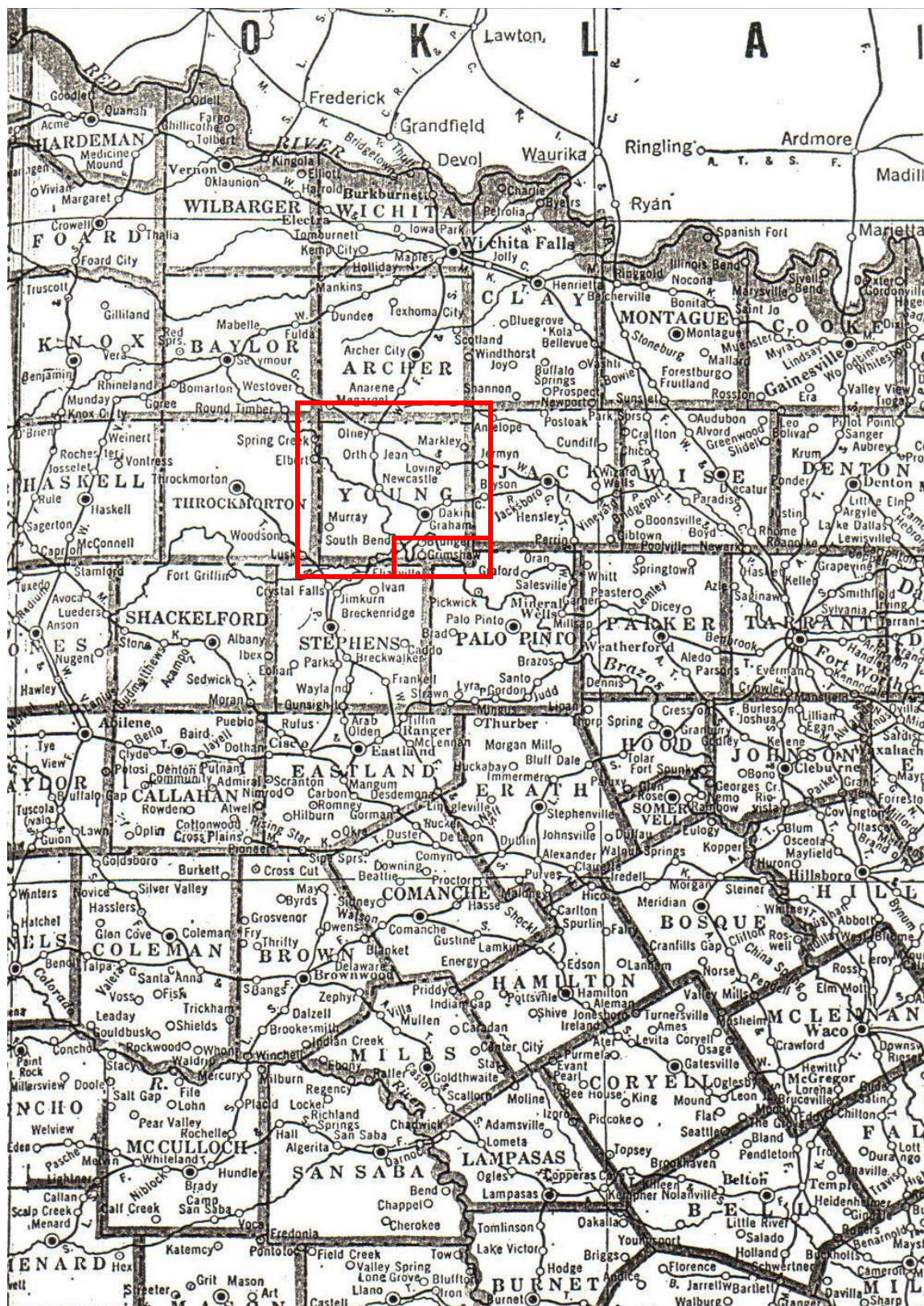


Fig. 1. Map of North Texas Showing Location of Young County & Grimshaw (Oil City)³

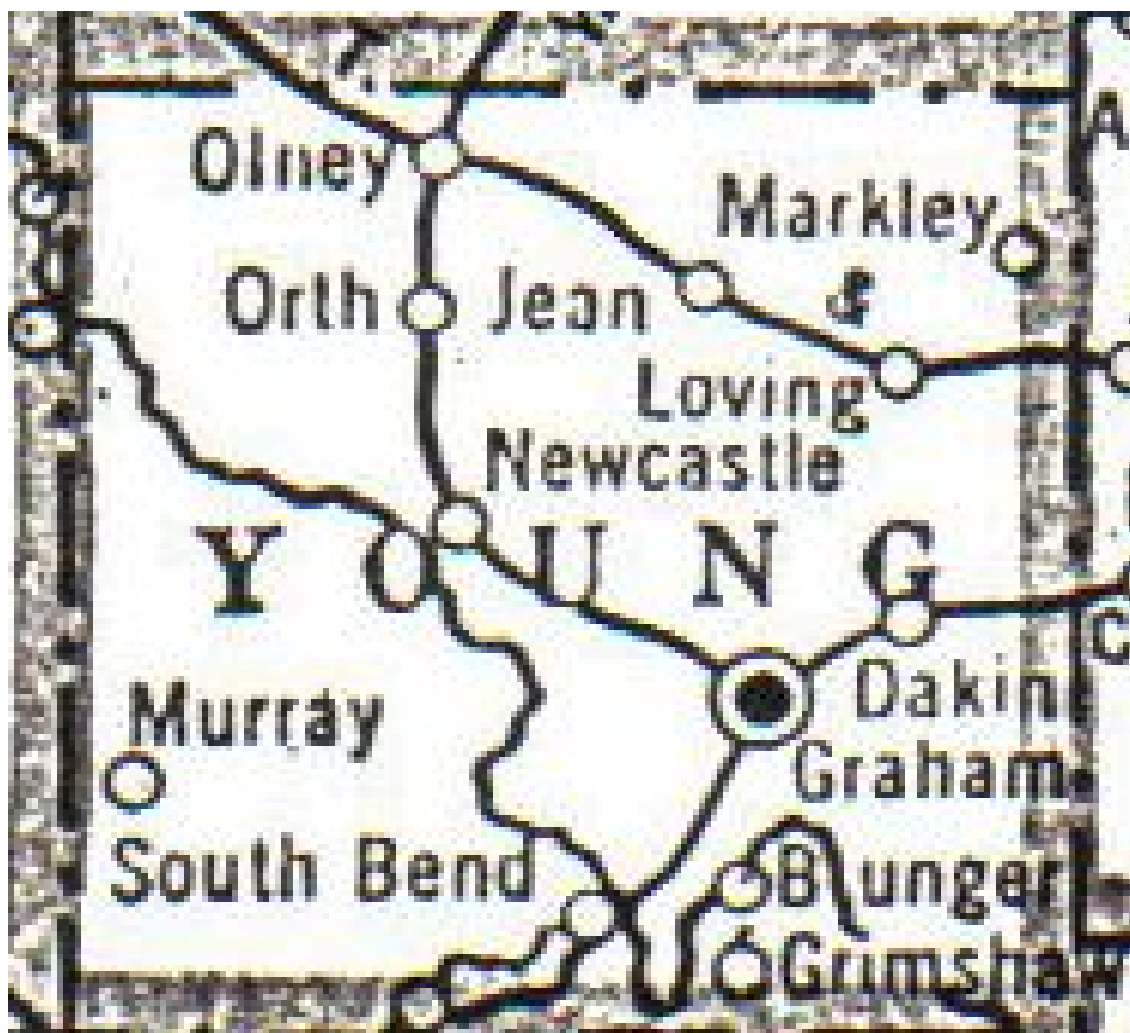


Fig. 2. Map of North Texas Showing Location of Young County and Grimshaw (Oil City).³

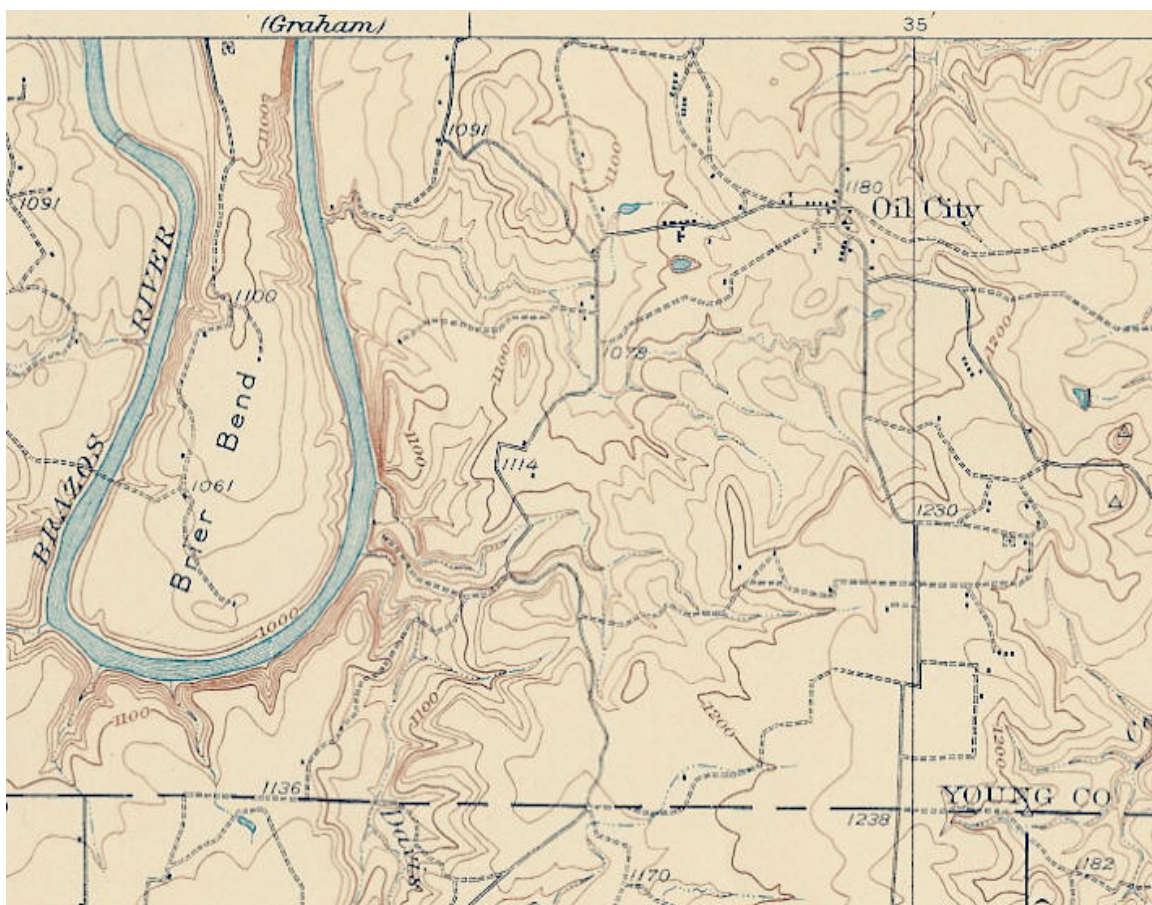


Fig. 3. "U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle map showing Oil City as surveyed in about 1925." Date of map is 1931.²⁴

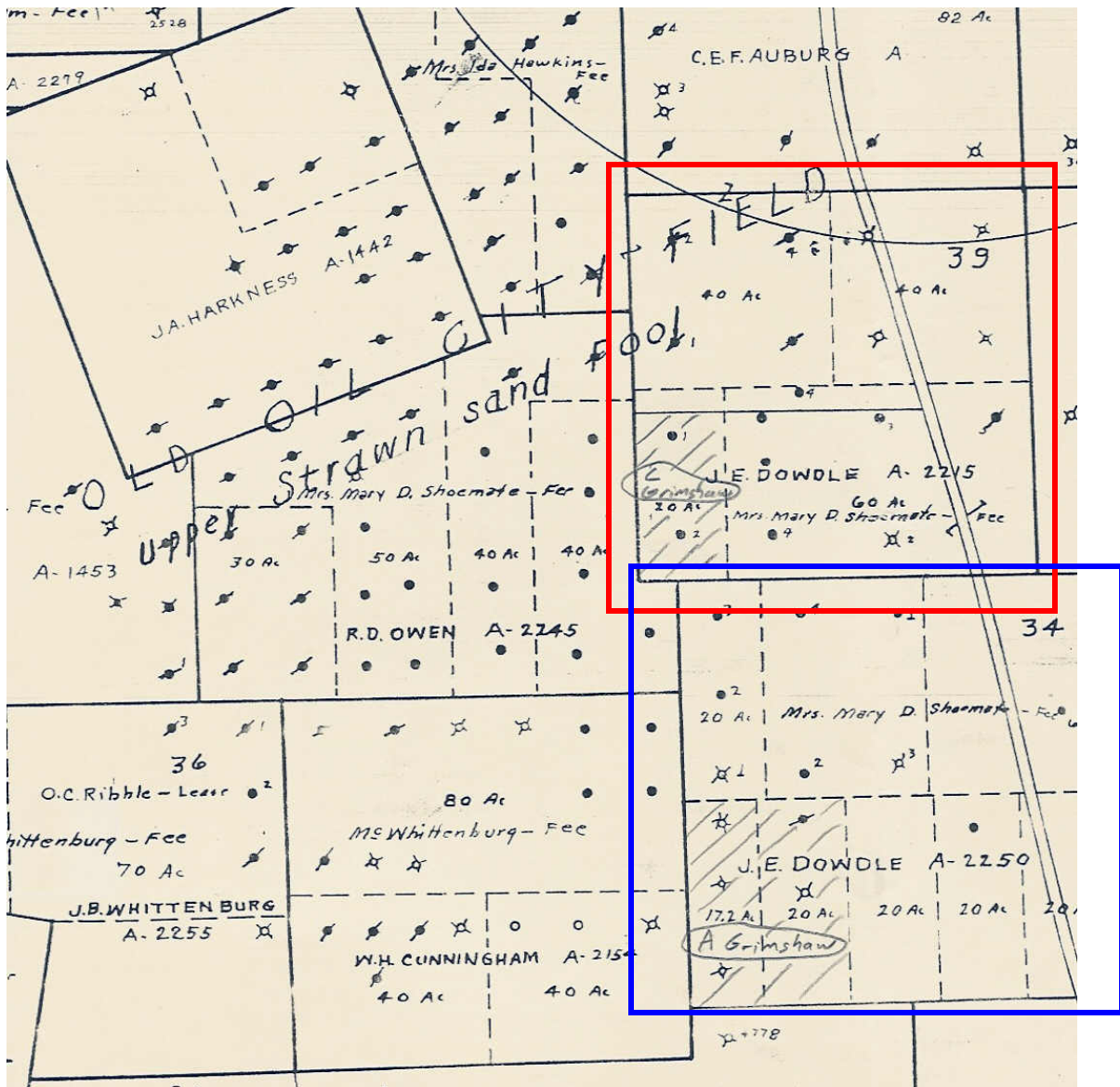


Fig. 4. "Railroad Commission map showing oil wells and the Old Oil City Field in southern Young County, Texas, 3 September 1953."²⁵

In Fig. 4, "the producing wells are indicated by solid dots, and the non-producers are shown as open circles. The C. Grimshaw and A. Grimshaw lease locations are delineated with cross-hatched patterns. At the time this map was prepared the C. Grimshaw lease was in the producing part of the field, and the A. Grimshaw lease was apparently just on the edge of the field."²⁶

The A. Grimshaw lease is located on what was Amos and Zona's 160 acre parcel on the B. R. I. R. Survey No. 3; J. E. Dowdle, Abstract No. 2215 (see box outlined in red on Fig. 4 for boundaries). The C. Grimshaw lease is located on the what was Amos and Zona's 199 acre parcel on the B. R. I. R. Survey No. 34; J. E. Dowdle, Abstract No. 2250 (see box outlined in blue on Fig. 4 for boundaries).²⁰

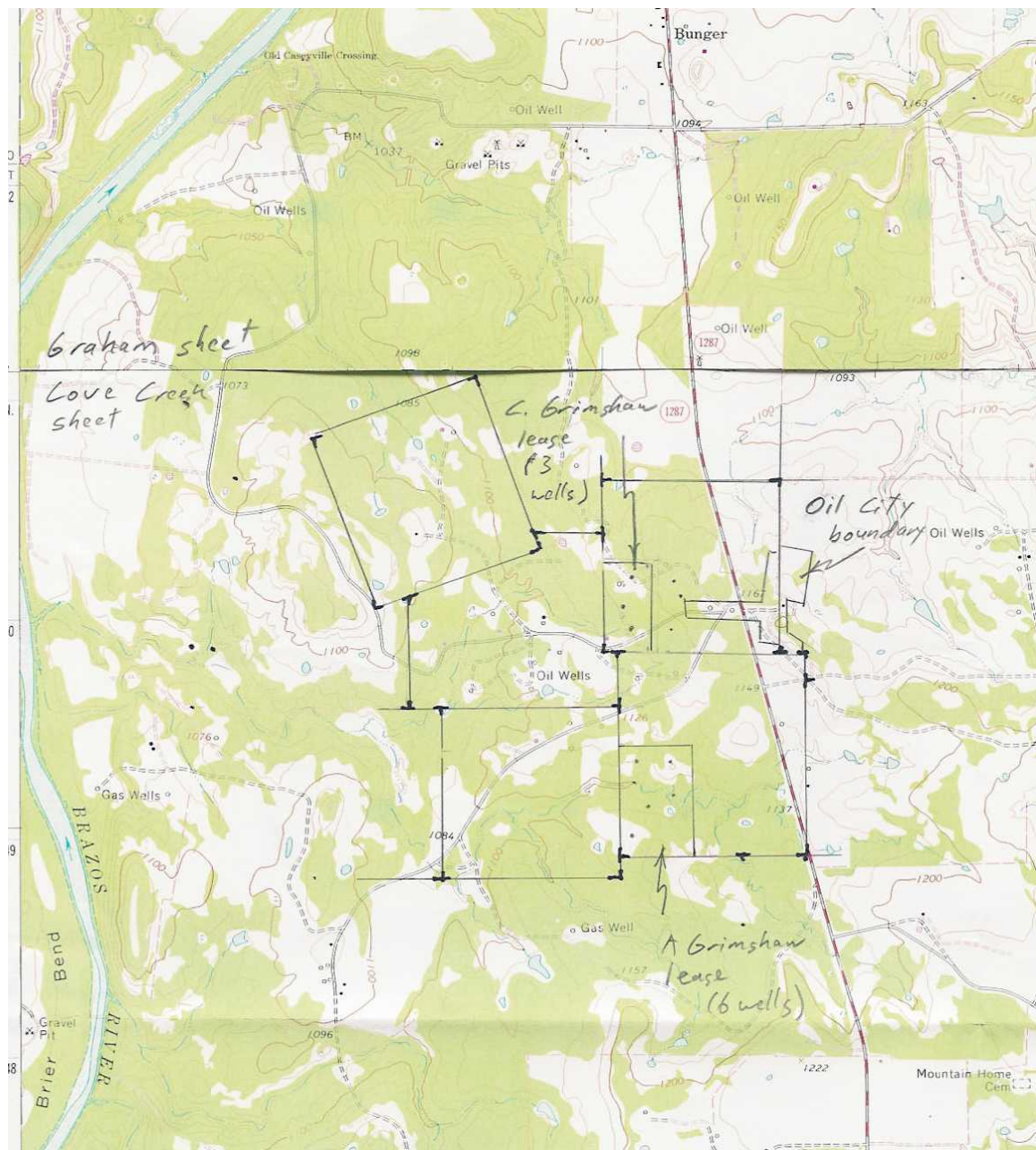


Fig. 5. “Preliminary sketch map showing boundaries of former Oil City location and the Grimshaw lease tracts in southern Young County, 1967. The C. Grimshaw has three wells, and the A. Grimshaw lease has six wells.” ^{27, 28}

“Recent research at the Railroad Commission of Texas, the regulatory authority for oil exploration and production in Texas, has revealed several important aspects of the Oil City area that are depicted in Figure 5. An outline map showing the former boundaries of Oil City – on both sides of FM1287 – was located, and two leases with the name of Grimshaw – A. Grimshaw and C. Grimshaw – were also found.” ^{26, 29} The base map for Fig. 5 “is constructed from two U.S. Geological Survey topographic quadrangle maps” ^{26, 27, 28}

“The C. Grimshaw lease is just west of the former Oil City location and has 20 acres. The A. Grimshaw lease consists of 37 acres and is about a quarter mile southwest of Oil City. Current records indicate the presence of three wells on the C. Grimshaw lease and six wells on the A. Grimshaw lease.”²⁶

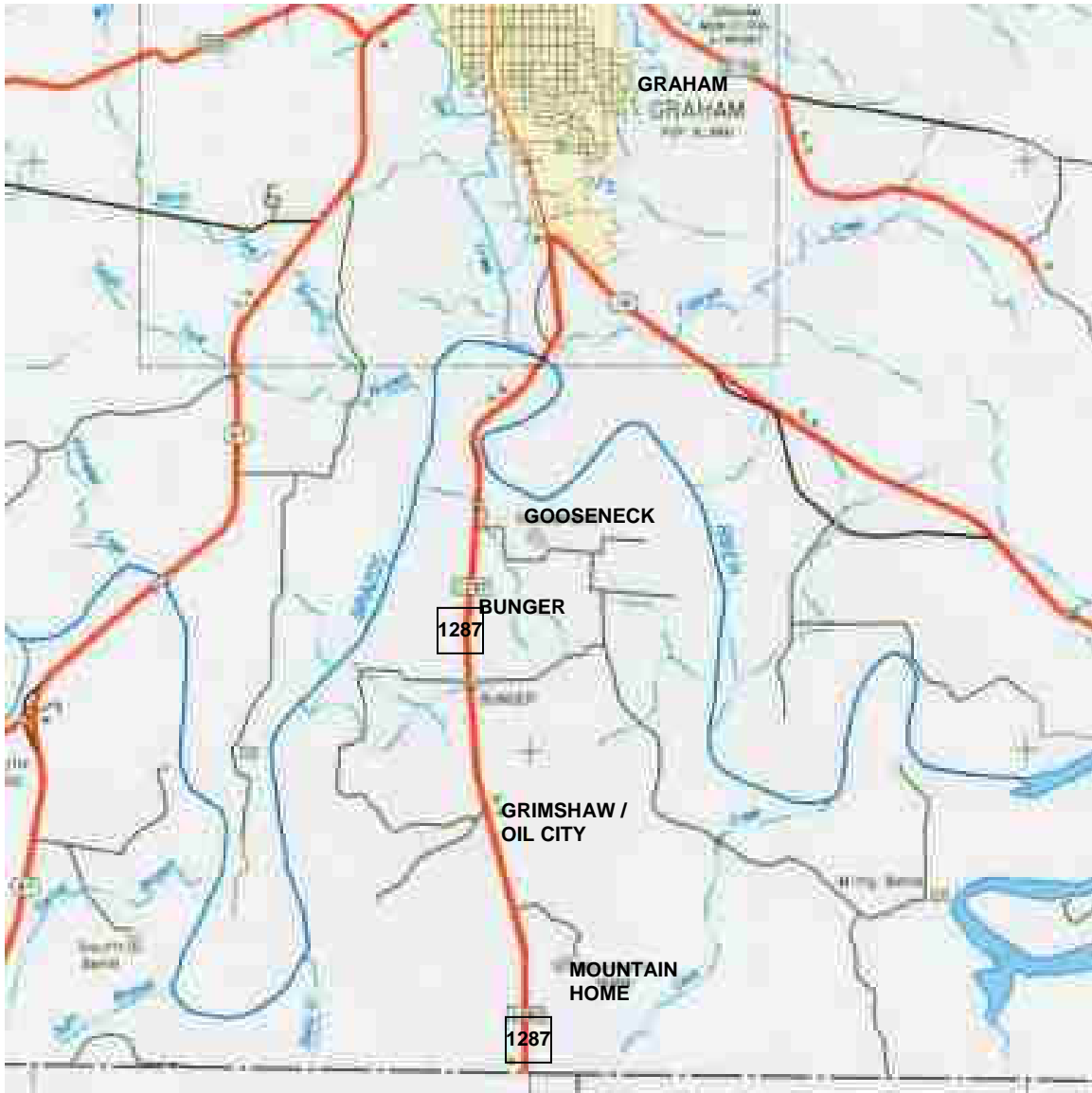


Fig. 6. “Map of a portion of southern Young County, Texas showing the town of Graham and the communities of Bunker and Mountain Home about 10 miles to the south. Oil City (Grimshaw) was formerly at the intersection (indicated on the map by mileage 0.3) between Bunker and Mountain Home.”³⁰



Fig. 7. Current YAHOO! Map Showing “Oil City Road.”³¹

Articles about Grimshaw / Oil, Texas

The Edgett well, located in the southern part of the Grimshaw land and the most southerly production in the field is still making 450 barrels of oil per day and a little water as the oil sand was encountered from 2604 to 2605 feet. This new sand was found on November 20 and puts an entirely new light on the entire section with a new sand to be drilled for each location. The Browning & Hodges well on the Durham tract is fishing after reaching the oil sand at 2598 feet. Applegate & Harlan have some oil in the hole at 2730 feet and are still trying to handle the water encountered above the sand. Cheney & Miller are on top of the sand on their No. 2 well which they reached at 1897 feet and a well is being brought in as we go to press.

Oil City is fast taking on the proportions of an oil town as many new buildings have been erected and much improvement is going on continually.

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The excerpts above are from the article titled, "Drilling Campaign Will Not Start Until Rain Falls," which appeared in the Wichita Daily Times, Wichita Falls, Texas, on November 27, 1921.¹⁴

YOUNG COUNTY FIELD IS EXTENDED ONE MILE

**Lynn Well Brought in and New Sand
Found in Grimshaw
Well.**

Special Correspondence to The Express.

FORT WORTH, Tex., Jan. 2.—The Bunger field in the southeastern part of Young County started upon the new year with almost positive assurance of an extension of one mile to the east. The Lynn well, fully a mile outside of the proved area, has reached the top of the new 2,000-foot sand at 2,555 feet, and is flowing oil by heads, also making a large amount of gas. Casing is being set and it likely will be drilled in this week.

The Bunger territory has another important development in the discovery of a new deep sand in the Grimshaw well of Wilkins et al, at a depth of 3,072 feet. It is now spraying oil and making 3,000,000 feet of gas from the top of the lime. The formation is similar to some producing levels in the Stephens County fields and is believed to be the same, since there is a general outcropping of the Stephens County oil sands in the southern part of Young County, just as the H. F. Scott gusher of the North American Oil and Refining Company proved.

In the shallower sands there have been several completions. The Rosell Production Company has completed a fifth well on the R. D. Owens tract and a second producer on the Grimshaw. Cheney & Madden also have a fourth producer on the Grimshaw. The Brooks well of the Rosell Company also has gone on down to the deeper levels and is reported to have encountered an oil sand at 3,650 feet, showing both oil and gas.

“FORT WORTH, Tex., Jan. 2.”

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The article above appeared in the San Antonio Express, San Antonio, Texas, on January 23, 1922.³²

In the Oil City district much new work is being undertaken. The Conden-Ralco interests have made eleven locations on their own acreage, with two additional wells starting on the 40-acre Owen lease, which they own jointly with Cheney & De-Freest. Contracts have been let on most all of the wells and an active drilling campaign carried on to increase their production of 1500 barrels obtained in the recent purchase of the Rosell interests. Their well at the M-2 location, southwest corner of the Owen lease, is now gassing heavily at 1700 feet. This joins the Pomona Mutual's 30-acre lease that is being actively tested with five locations.

The Simms Oil company has completed four wells on the southeast 40 acres of the Harkness survey, Owen land, drilling two others and have made another location. The Ohio Fuel Oil company has 4,000,000 cubic feet of gas in their Grimshaw No. 1 at 2553 feet. This is just west of the Edgett well that was first to find production in the 2600-foot sand.

The Sun company's well in the southeast corner of their Driver lease that came in a short time ago at 480 barrels, is holding up and now doing 400 barrels. This was an extension of the field to the northeast and the oil runs are being closely observed. The Brooks No. 1 well on the Grimshaw land makes intermittent flows of oil in the 4,000-foot hole and the oil is light and of high gravity. When the string of 5 3-16 inch casing is successfully landed it is expected to make a thousand barrel well. The Brooks No. 2, near the south end of this lease is furnishing gas for the Ralco interests and is also producing around 75 barrels of oil.

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The excerpt above is from the article titled, "More Water For South Electra Is Assured By Deal," which appeared in the Wichita Daily, Wichita Falls, Texas on January 29, 1922.³³

South Bend Developments.

The Texas company is drilling the sand encountered at 1937 feet in the No. 2 on the Bunger lease and is showing for a good producer. No. 1 on the same tract is setting their 8½ casing at 1938 feet. On the Stoffer lease the same company is drilling around 2470 feet. The Gulf Production company's Lisle well is on top of the sand with casing cemented and will drill in this week, when

completed this well will add new territory southeast to the producing area of the field. The No. 4 Grimshaw of this company is drilling at 1300 feet. Over 40 wells are drilling towards the sand but nothing of unusual interest has happened from the usual drilling operations.

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The excerpt above is from the article titled, "More Water For South Electra Is Assured By Deal," which appeared in the Wichita Daily, Wichita Falls, Texas on January 29, 1922.³³

ANOTHER GUSHER IN.

Two Good Completions in Mexia Field Are Reported.

Special Telegram to The Express.

FORT WORTH, Tex., Feb. 12.—Two more good completions are reported from the Mexia field, one of which is a gusher. It is the Elita No. 7 of the J. K. Hughes Oil Company, which came in for an initial flow of 8,000 barrels daily. It is the second Hughes well on this tract, the other having been completed 10 days ago. The Elita Nos. 1 and 5 also are reported to be on the sand ready to complete.

The other new well is the Liles No. 2 of Fred M. Allison of Corsicana, which came in for 1,500 barrels daily.

Late completions in the Bunger field in Young County are:

Stoffer No. 1 of the Texas Company, 240 barrels.

Grimshaw No. 4 of the Gulf Production Company, 150 barrels.

Whittenburg No. 2 of Mann & Ascraft, 100 barrels daily.

"FORT WORTH, Tex., Feb. 12."

"Late completions in the Bunger field in Young County are:"

"Grimshaw No. 4 of the Gulf Production Company, 150 barrels."

The article above appeared in the San Antonio Express, San Antonio, Texas, on February 13, 1922.³⁴

Drilling activities in the Bunger and Oil City districts are continuing but no new strikes have been made in the last week. The only real interest of the week was centered at Briar Bend located in the neck of the river west of Oil City where the Rhodes Drilling Company found a sand in their Rowe No. 1, George T. Welch Survey, at 2,590 feet, which looked like a producer as much oil showed in the hole. The production was not great enough to warrant stopping at this depth so the well is now being drilled down to the lime and at present is about 2,700 feet deep. A small well could no doubt have been made at 2,590 feet as there were 12 feet of sand but those interested thought best to drill deeper.

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The Cosden-Ralco Interests are speeding up development on their properties in the Owen locality and much activity is evidenced throughout that section.

The Owen B-5 well is drilling at 1,800 feet, after having found two million feet of gas from 1,715 to 1,730 feet.

The Owen B-3 is drilling at 600 feet.

The Askew J-1 is being carried on down for a deep test and is now 3,300 feet.

The Grimshaw D-2 is drilling at 1,000 feet.

The E-4 Brooks-Grimshaw is drilling at 1,300 feet.

The A-4 R. D. Owen is drilling at 550 feet. The M-3 R. D. Owen is drilling at 900 feet. The R. D. Owen M-4, M-6, and M-8 are rigging up while on the No. 9 location a rig is being erected.

“The Cosden-Ralco Interests are speeding up development on their properties in the Owen locality and much activity is evidenced throughout that section.”

“The Grimshaw D-2 is drilling at 1,000 feet.

The E-4 Brooks-Grimshaw is drilling at 1,300 feet.”

The excerpts above are from the article titled, “Drilling Continues Active in Southern Young County,” believed to have appeared in the Graham Leader, Graham, Texas on February 23, 1922.³⁵

Grimshaw Is Name of Proposed Office

Postmaster Farmer has just received a communication from the post office department asking for applications for postmaster for Grimshaw, Texas. The applicant must be a resident of the place to be supplied by the proposed office and must be willing to provide a suitable building for the postoffice.

If this office is granted it will be located at Oil City, which is two miles south of Bunker, and nine miles south of Graham. The citizens of Oil City have been anxious for a postoffice and it seems that their appeal had reached the ears of the powers that be. It will be a great convenience to the citizens of Oil City if it is granted but it will necessitate the changing of the name of the town from Oil City to Grimshaw. It has always been very confusing for a town to have one name and the postoffice a different name.

March 2, 1922

"Postmaster Farmer has just received a communication from the post office department asking for applications for postmaster for Grimshaw, Texas. The applicant must be a resident of the place to be supplied by the proposed post office and must be willing to provide a suitable building for the postoffice.

If this post office is granted it will be located at Oil City, which is two miles south of Bunker, and nine miles south of Graham. The citizens of Oil City have been anxious for a post office and it seems that their appeal had reached the ears of the powers that be. It will be a great convenience to the citizens of Oil City if it is granted but it will necessitate the changing of the name of the town from Oil City to Grimshaw. It has always been very confusing for a town to have one name and the post office a different name."

The article above is believed to have appeared in The Graham Leader, Graham Texas, on March 2, 1922.¹⁵

In the South Bend district commercial wells have been procured from six different sands of the Strawn formation at depths of 1,848, 1,890, 2,108, 2,150, 2,545 and 3,019 feet. In the Bunker district commercial wells have been found in the Strawn sands at 1,850, 1,900, 2,100, 2,375, 2,580, 2,600 and 2,667 feet. The daily production of the South Bend district for the month of April was approximately 5,500 barrels, while that of the Bunker area amounted to 4,500 barrels. The Bunker production will probably increase to that of the South Bend this month. South Bend has over 200 producing wells at the present time, with 52 rigs and drilling wells in the district. The Bunker section has 89 producing wells, while the Herron, Williams and Costello district has seven producing wells. Five wells are now drilling in Briar Bend while 65 wells are going down in the Bunker-Oil City locality and that district lying to the south and east.

South Bend Field

The South Bend field got its first production in September, 1919 in the 1,850-foot sand, which was good for 35 barrels. The real strike however, was in the McCluskey No. 1 that was found on July 5, 1920 and came in with an initial production of 400 barrels. The first oil in the Bunker section was found by the Union Oil company in their Askew No. 1 on September 17, at 1,969 feet, but the real productivity of the sand was not known for some time. The well was reported for 75 barrels. The real opening of the Bunker field came from the strike made by Ross & Tyrrell on the Owen lease in August, 1921, where a 200-barrel well was obtained from the 1,900-foot sand.

"The Bunker section has 99 producing wells, while the Herron, Williams and Costello district has seven producing wells. Five wells are now drilling in Briar Bend while 65 wells are going down in the Bunker-Oil City locality and that district lying to the south and east."

The excerpt above is from the article titled, "Southern Young County Receiving A Lot Of Attention" which appeared in the Wichita Daily Times, Wichita Falls, Texas, on May 5, 1922.³⁶

The quality of the oil in southern Young county ranges from 36 to 41 gravity and carries a high per cent of gasoline, making it particularly attractive to the refiners, who made very quick provision for the transportation of the oil soon as new discoveries were made and the competition is now keen for the products. The Reark well, brought in by the Halco Oil company on March 21, 1922, at a depth of 3,778 feet, has shown to be the best producer in north central Texas. It is located eight miles due south of Graham and two miles southeast of the Bunker field. The formation from which the production is obtained is a limey sand six feet of which has been drilled and the well has now made 50,000 barrels of oil. It is now producing more than 2,000 barrels of oil per day and has never been shot, making it the banner producer of the section. Other wells are being drilled in this locality and much is looked for in the way of production, since the formation runs about 80 per cent sand and 20 per cent lime by test.

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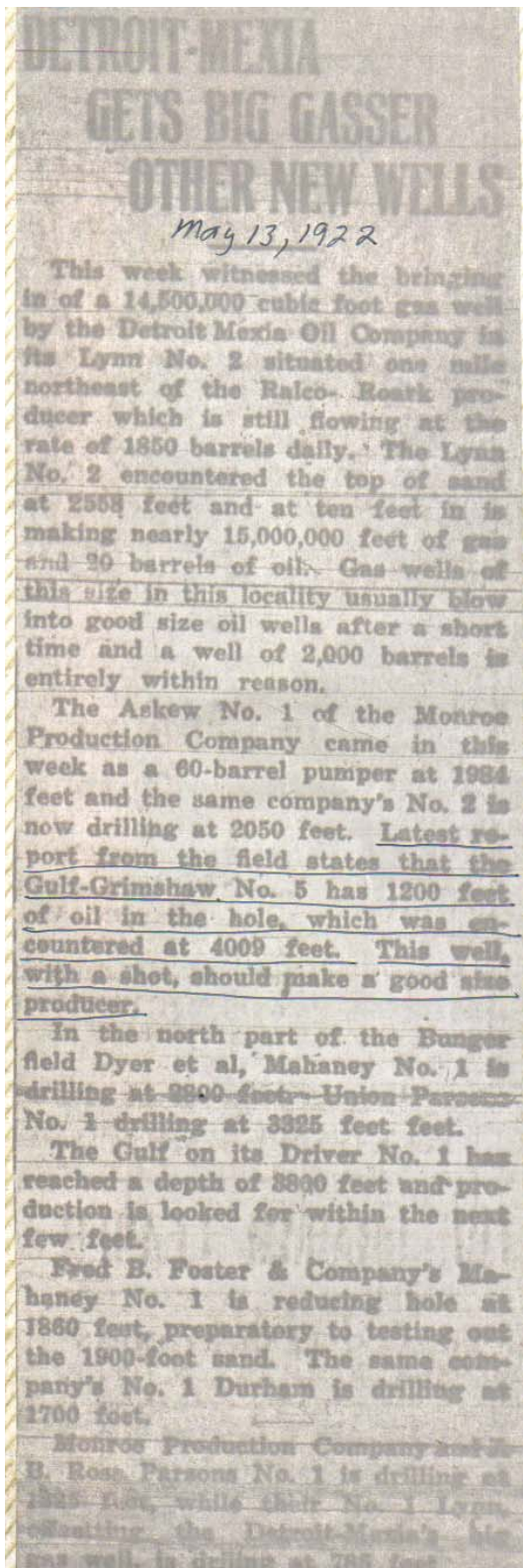
Oil City District

In the Oil City district the Pomona Mutual has an 8,000 000 cubic foot gas well in their No 5 Owen at 2,190 feet. This lease contains 39 acres and now has four producing wells with a production of 450 barrels a day, and shows good development. The Cosden properties are still being developed under their organization. The Detroit-Mexia Oil company is 2 250 feet in their Lynn No 2, which lease is being developed in connection with Cheney & DeFreest. The Monroe Production company and J B Ross are 500 feet in their Lynn No 1 on their newly acquired lease, while their well on the Parsons land is drilling at 1 200 feet. The Foster well south of Bunker on the northeast 40 acres of the Mahaney land is drilling at 1 100 feet and being watched with great interest as this particular section around survey No 44 has long been thought to be prospective oil territory. The same company is drilling on the Durham tract at 1 400 feet. Dyer and others are 2 300 feet on their Mahaney No 1. Harry Byrens has resumed drilling in his well near Bunker, at a depth of 2 700 feet after encountering several showings of oil and gas. Egger and others are cleaning out at 3 315 feet on the Horner No 1. The Union Oil company is 3 000 feet deep in their Parsons No 1. The Gulf is 1 500 feet in its test being put down on the Newby land, while it is 3 000 feet on its Driver No 1 and 940 feet in its Askew No 1. The Monroe Production company is setting casing at 1,970 feet in its Askew No 1 and is 1,400 feet deep in the No 2.

"In the Oil City District the Pomona Mutual has an 8,000,000 cubic foot gas well in their No. 5 Owen at 2190 feet."

Dyer and others are 2300 feet on their Mahaney no. 1.

The excerpt above is from the article titled, "Southern Young County Receiving A Lot Of Attention" which appeared in the Wichita Daily Times, Wichita Falls, Texas, on May 5, 1922.³⁶



**DETROIT-MEXIA
GETS BIG GASSER
OTHER NEW WELLS**

May 13, 1922

This week witnessed the bringing in of a 14,500,000 cubic foot gas well by the Detroit Mexia Oil Company in its Lynn No. 2 situated one mile northeast of the Balco-Roark producer which is still flowing at the rate of 1850 barrels daily. The Lynn No. 2 encountered the top of sand at 2568 feet and at ten feet in is making nearly 15,000,000 feet of gas and 20 barrels of oil. Gas wells of this size in this locality usually blow into good size oil wells after a short time and a well of 2,000 barrels is entirely within reason.

The Askew No. 1 of the Monroe Production Company came in this week as a 60-barrel pumper at 1984 feet and the same company's No. 2 is now drilling at 2050 feet. Latest report from the field states that the Gulf-Grimshaw No. 5 has 1200 feet of oil in the hole, which was encountered at 4009 feet. This well, with a shot, should make a good size producer.

In the north part of the Bunger field Dyer et al, Mahaney No. 1 is drilling at 2800 feet. ~~Union Parsons No. 1 drilling at 3325 feet.~~

The Gulf on its Driver No. 1 has reached a depth of 3800 feet and production is looked for within the next few feet.

Fred B. Foster & Company's Mahaney No. 1 is reducing hole at 1860 feet, preparatory to testing out the 1900-foot sand. The same company's No. 1 Durham is drilling at 1700 feet.

Monroe Production Company and B. Rose Parsons No. 1 is drilling at 1925 feet, while their No. 1 Lynn, reflecting the Detroit Mexia's big gas well, is drilling at 785 feet.

"Latest report from the field states that the Gulf-Grimshaw No. 5 has 1200 feet of oil in the hole, which was encountered at 4009 feet. This well with a shot, should make a good size producer.

In the north part of the Bunger field Dyer et al, Mahaney No. 1 is drilling at 2800 feet..."

"Fred B. Foster & Company's Mahaney No. 1 is reducing hole at 1860 feet, preparatory to testing out the 1900-foot sand."

The article above is believed to have appeared in The Graham Leader, Graham Texas, on May 13, 1922.³⁷

SOUTHEASTERN PART OF YOUNG COUNTY SCENE OF ACTIVITY

May 1922

The operators in this district are being greatly handicapped by bad weather and by the loss of the bridge across the Brazos which now entails a thirty mile drive in order to reach the field. Under such conditions no new completions can be reported for the past week but many new wells were started and several of the drilling wells have reached interesting depths.

In the northern part of the Bunger field, Egger et al-Horner No. 1 is now 3812 feet with a very promising oil show.

The Gulf No. 1 Driver has reached a depth of 3825 feet and is due to encounter the pay within the next few feet.

Fred B. Foster & Company No. 1 Durham is shut down for pipe at 1907 feet; the same company's No. 1 Mahaney is drilling at 2050 feet.

Dyer et al No. 1-Mahaney is now 3225 feet and has made preparations for a deep test.

The Jack Nelson Oil Company No. 1 Rhodes is drilling at 3920 feet in the black lime.

The Union Oil Company's No. 1, Parsons is cleaning out at 3600 feet and preparing to drill deeper.

In the Bunger field proper the Gulf Company's No. 5 Ghimshaw is making 75 barrels daily from a sand found at 4019 to 4032 feet. With a shot this well may become a good producer. The Simms No. 11 Owen has a good show of oil at 1924 feet and its No. 12 Owen has 300 feet of oil in the hole at 1908 feet. Both of these wells will be drilled in immediately. The Union's No. 1 Lynn has just completed the setting of eight inch pipe at 2422 feet and is now drilling at 2625 feet. The Monroe

The operators in this district are being greatly handicapped by bad weather and by the loss of the bridge across the Brazos which now entails a thirty mile drive in order to reach the field. Under such conditions no new completions can be reported for the past week but many new wells were started and several of the drilling wells have reached interesting depths."

"Fred B. Foster & Company No.1 Durham is shut down for pipe at 1907 feet; the same company's No. 1 Mahaney is drilling at 2050 feet.

Dyer et al No. 1 Mahaney is now 3225 feet and has made preparations for a deep test."

"In the Bunger field proper the Gulf Company's No. 5 Grimshaw is making 75 barrels daily from sand found at 4019 to 4032 feet. With a shot this well may become a good producer."

The article above is believed to have appeared in The Graham Leader, Graham Texas, in May 1922.³⁸

BIG FIRE LAST NIGHT
 (By the Associated Press)
Fort Worth, Tex., June 14.—Fire
starting late last night destroyed
more than half the business district
of Oil City, Texas, causing damage
estimated at \$150,000.

“Fort Worth, Tex., June 14. — Fire starting late last night destroyed more than half the business district of Oil City, Texas, causing damage estimated at \$150,000.”

The article above appeared in the Bismarck Tribune, Bismarck, North Dakota, on June 14, 1922.¹⁸

DISASTROUS FIRE DESTROYS HALF OF FAMOUS OIL CITY

Oil City, one of the thriving oil towns of Young county was visited by a disastrous fire about 10 o'clock Tuesday night. About one half of the business section was destroyed - something like thirty houses. It was the worst fire in the county since the fire at Eliasville several months ago.

The fire, which is reported to have been caused by the explosion of a lamp, started in the Ritz rooming House and spread rapidly. Nearly all the houses on both sides of the street leading out to Graham were burned and practically all on the north side of the street running west from the intersection of the two main streets at the foot of the mountain was destroyed by spreading flames as they leaped from building to building. The people worked frantically and by heroic efforts saved the contents of some of the buildings. There was no insurance on any of the property and the loss is estimated at more than \$100,000.00.

The Leader has been unable to get a verified list of the business houses destroyed, but the following with probably others were consumed by the flames:

Army Store
 Dry Cleaning Establishment
 Busy Bee Cafe
 Mrs. Brown's Rooming House
 Ritz Rooming House
 Dr. Hodson's Dental Office
 Cold Drink Stand
 Oil City Pharmacy
 Bond's Boiler Works
 Feed Store
 Filling Station
 Hamburger Stand
 Rabbit's Cafe
 May's Rooming House

Lothlen and Young Dry Goods
 Dr. Mansfield's Office
 Faggard and Toon, Real Estate
 Owl Drug Co.
 Creek,s Barber Shop
 Brown's Meat Market
 Mrs. Wilson's Eating Stand
 Duke's Cafe
 Dr. Thornton's Office
 News Stand and Confectionery
 Davis Boarding House
 Mrs. Bank's Boarding House
 Crawson's Rooming House
 Show Shop
 Several vacant houses.

No one was seriously hurt in the fire, although several sustained minor injuries.

The above article appeared in the Graham Leader, Graham, Texas, on June 15, 1922.¹⁹

MOB OF 100 STORMS JAIL AT GRAHAM

By The Associated Press

Fort Worth, June 15. One hundred armed men from Oil City, ten miles south of Graham, in the Bunger field, last night stormed the Young county jail at Graham in an effort to secure "Happy" Conlee, held on a charge of killing A. A. Robertson, 23, oil well driller, there early yesterday.

The mob was met at the door by John Saye, sheriff of Young county, his deputies and police officials. Sheriff Saye, in a short speech, told the mob the first man who attempted to enter the jail would be killed, and that the prisoner would be protected at all hazards. Following his talk, there was a series of conversations among members of the mob. They remained in the vicinity for some time and dispersed about 1 o'clock this morning, leaving the threat behind they would come again for the prisoner tonight.

Sheriff Saye announced this morning that Conlee is still being held in the Young county jail, and that he would not be moved to any other place. "I do not expect the mob to-night, but if it comes, Conlee will be defended by my department," he said. Conlee is alleged to have inflicted a fatal knife wound on Robertson shortly after a fire, which did \$100,000 damage in Oil City early yesterday. The sheriff's office has not been able to determine the cause of the trouble. Robertson is said to have been very popular with residents of the oil town. Conlee is said to have been a "floater," who has been there but a short time.

The article above appeared in the Dallas Times Herald on June, 15, 1922.³⁹

H. SCHLITTLER, Sr. on New Mail Route

Henry SCHLITTLER, Sr., is now in charge of the Bunger-Grimshaw mail line. For seventeen years he has been on the Murray route and his patrons regret to see him leave them. He is one of the most faithful carriers that has ever handled the mails.

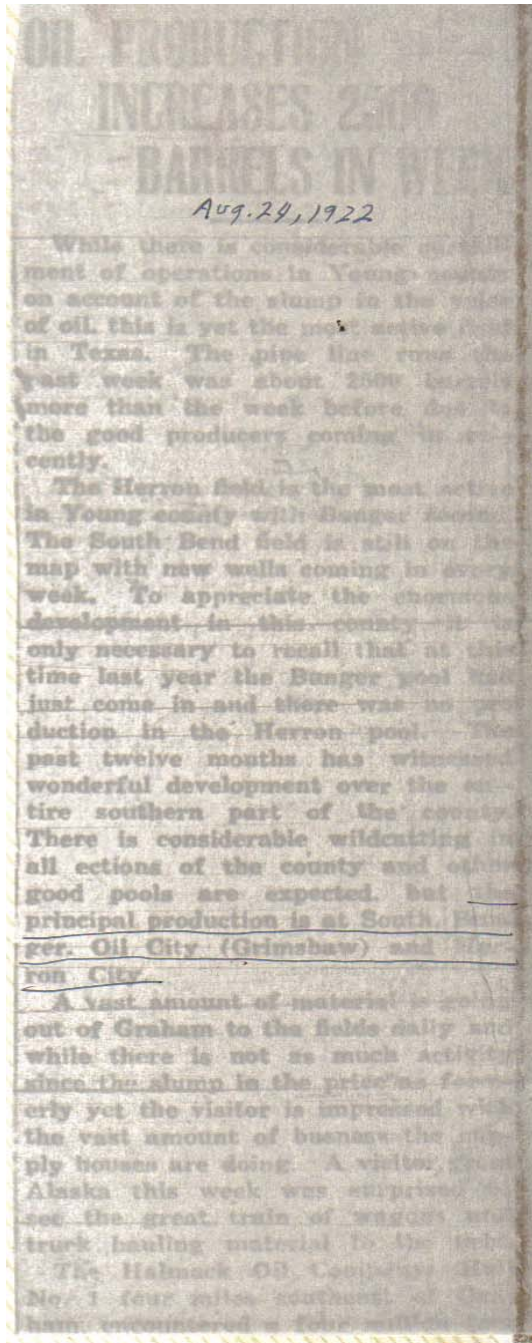
In talking yesterday with one of his patrons on the Murray route it was learned that he runs strictly on schedule times. The patron said that he lives a mile from the route but knew just when to find Henry at his box if he wanted to see him on any business. He said that Mr. SCHLITTLER never varied as much as five minutes.

He began to work for the government in 1890 when he carried the mail from Graham to various Young County points. From 1892 to 1894 he carried the mail from Graham to Henrietta; from 1894 to 1898, to Mineral Wells; from 1899 to 1903 to Jacksboro; from 1899 to 1922 to Murray. Last Monday he took over the route to Bunger and Grimshaw.

During these thirty-two years he has been a faithful employee of the government. The Bunger and Grimshaw people could not have found a better man if they had hunted the state over. He is faithful and dependable, patient and courteous under all conditions

Until recent years he made all his trips in stages and buggies. He now uses one of Henry Ford's vehicles that is always ready to go. He has used a touring car on the Murray route, but will likely use a Ford truck on the new route.

The article above appeared in the Graham Leader on August 17, 1922.⁴⁰



OIL PRODUCTION INCREASES 2500 BARRELS IN WEEK

“While there is considerable unsettlement of operations in Young county on account of the slump in the price of oil, this yet the most active field in Texas. The pipe line runs the past week was about 2500 barrels more than the week before due to the good producers coming in recently.”

“But the principle production is at South Banger, Oil City (Grimshaw) and Herron City.”

The article above is believed to have appeared in the Graham Leader, Graham, Texas, on August 24, 1922.⁴¹

Officers Capture Still Near Herron City

One of the biggest stills and choe breweries ever found in Young County was confiscated and burned by county officers last Saturday after its discovery on the banks of a creek midway between Oil City and Herron City.

Mrs. John B. Rhea, wife of the county attorney, accompanied her husband and Sheriff Saye and Deputy Livingston on the raid. She was given a pistol and stood guard while the others carried on the work of destruction.

A.J. Barry, an aged man formerly of South Bend, who was the only one arrested, sampled too much of the whiskey while the officers were busy, and was thoroughly drunk when the party left for town. Barry was charged with manufacturing and possession.

The still was the main source of supply for Oil City and Herron according to the belief of officers. They found 30 gallons of finished whiskey and 60 cases of choe beer. This stuff was laying outside the two tents waiting for truck transportation to the "markets".

Three men were sitting outside the tents eating fried chicken when the official party drove up. They scattered and Barry was the only one who was caught.

The outfit included 600 pounds of sugar and 300 pounds of corn mash.

The article above appeared in The Olney Enterprise, Olney, Texas, on October 20, 1922 and was supplied by The Graham Leader, Graham, Texas.⁴²

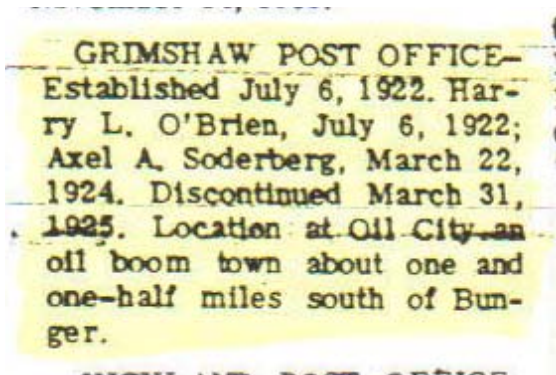
TEXAS CITIES AND TOWNS.

61

Texas Postoffice Guide—Continued.

Postoffice—County.	Pop.	Postoffice—County.	Pop.	Postoffice—County.	Pop.
Fulbright, Red River.....	300	Grand View, John-		Hempstead, Waller.....	2,000
Fulshear, Fort Bend.....	100	son.....	1,084-1,084	Henderson, Rusk.....	2,273-2,273
Gageby, Hemphill.....	10	Granger, William-		Henly, Hays.....	25
Gail, Borden.....	128	son.....	1,044-1,044	Henrietta, Clay.....	2,503-2,503
Gainesboro, Matagorda.....	25	Grapeland, Houston.....	1,200	Hereford, Deaf	
Gainesville, Cooke.....	8,043-8,043	Grapevine, Tarrant.....	821-821	Smith.....	1,096-1,096
Gallatin, Cherokee.....	300	Grayburg, Hardin.....	1,406-1,406	Hernaleigh, Scurry.....	200
Galveston, Galves-		Green, Karnes.....	75	Hewitt, McLennan.....	70
ton.....	44,255-44,255	Greenville, Hunt.....	12,381-12,381	Hext, Menard.....	40
Ganado, Jackson.....	716-716	Greenwood, Wise.....	10	Hicks, Lee.....	50
Gap, Comanche.....	38	Gregory, San Patricio.....	400	Hicksbaugh, Tyler.....	500
Garcias, Starr.....	7	Grigsby, Shelby.....	50	Hico, Hamilton.....	1,635-1,635
Garden City, Glasscock.....	100	Grimeshaw, Young.....	200	Hidalgo, Hidalgo.....	250
Gardendale, La Salle.....	75	Grit, Mason.....	30	Higgins, Lipscomb.....	688-688
Garden Valley, Smith.....	218	Groesbeck, Lime-		High, Lamar.....	92
Garland, Dallas.....	1,421-1,421	stone.....	1,522-1,522	Highbank, Falls.....	100
Garner, Parker.....	30	Groom, Carson.....	300	High Island, Galveston.....	100
Garrett, Ellis.....	162	Grosvonor, Brown.....	142	Highower, Liberty.....	100
Garrison, Navarro.....	603-603	Groveton, Trinity.....	1,103-1,103	Hilbert, Tyler.....	100
Garwood, Colorado.....	400	Grow, Kint.....	25	Hillboro, Hill.....	6,052-6,052
Gary, Panola.....	350	Grulla, Starr.....	250	Hills Prairie, Bastrop.....	6
Garza, Denton.....	489	Guadalupe, Victoria.....	125	Hindes, Atascosa.....	25
Gasoline, Biscoe.....	20	Guajillo, Duval.....	10	Hitchcock, Galveston.....	350
Gatesville, Coryell.....	2,499-2,499	Guda, Falls.....	25	Hobby, Fort Bend.....	150
Gause, Milan.....	750	Guerra, Jim Hogg.....	50	Hobson, Karnes.....	150
Gay Hill, Washington.....	250	Guffy, Jefferson.....	300	Hochheim, De Witt.....	100
Gem, Hemphill.....	75	Guion, Taylor.....	18	Hockley, Harris.....	200
Geneva, Sabine.....	100	Gulf, Matagorda.....	1,500	Holland, Bell.....	690-690
Genevieve, Stonewall.....	100	Gunsight, Stephens.....	150	Holliday, Archer.....	219
Genoa, Harris.....	100	Gunter, Grayson.....	575-575	Homer, Angelina.....	130
Georgia, Madison.....	50	Gustine, Comanche.....	310	Honda, Medina.....	3,000
Georges Creek, Somervell.....	80	Guthrie, King.....	101	Honca, Montgomery	
Georgetown, Wil-		Guy, Fort Bend.....	20	honcy Grove, Fau-	
lamson.....	2,871-2,871	Guys Store, Leon.....	50	nin.....	2,642-2,642
George West, Live Oak.....	200	Hacienda, Uvalde.....	50	Honey Island, Hardin.....	200
Geronimo, Guadalupe.....	150	Hackberry, Edwards.....	75	Hooks, Bowie.....	100
Gibtown, Jack.....	163	Hagansport, Franklin.....	125	Hoover, Gray.....	15
Giddings, Lee.....	1,650-1,650	Hagerman, Grayson.....	150	Horger, Jasper.....	25
Giles, Donley.....	30	Hahn, Wharton.....	100	Hortense, Polk.....	25
Gillett, Karnes.....	200	Hale Center, Hale.....	250	Hot Wells, Hudspeth.....	10
Gilliland, Knox.....	50	Hall, San Saba.....	82	Houston, Har-	
Gilmer, Upshur.....	2,208-2,208	Hallettsville.....		ris.....	138,276-138,276
Gilpin, Dickens.....	150	Lavae.....	1,441-1,441	Hovey, Pecos.....	563-563
Glager, Rains.....	150	Hallsville, Harrison.....	603	Howe, Grayson.....	563-563
Girard, Kent.....	130	Hamilton, Hamil-		Howellville, Harris.....	30
Girvin, Pecos.....	15	ton.....	2,018-2,018	Howland, Lamar.....	500
Gist, Jasper.....	40	Hamlin, Jones.....	1,633-1,633	Howth, Waller.....	40
Gladewater, Gregg.....	500	Hammond, Robertson.....	100	Hubbard, Hill.....	2,072-2,072
Gladstiel, Liberty.....	500	Hamon, Gonzales.....	75	Huckabay, Erath.....	210
Glass, Somervell.....	25	Hampton, Tyler.....	50	Hud, Scurry.....	15
Glasier, Hemphill.....	140	Hamshire, Jefferson.....	15	Huffman, Harris.....	22
Glen Cove, Coleman.....	30	Hancock, Comal.....	10	Hutsmith, Harris.....	250
Glendale, Trinity.....	121	Hambley, Tarrant.....	605	Hughes Springs, Cass.....	831-831
Glenfawn, Rusk.....	260	Hanks, er, Chambers.....	200	Hull, Liberty.....	1,000
Glenfawn, Wharton.....	700	Happy, Swisher.....	250	Humble, Harris.....	1,500
Glen Rose, Somervell.....	1,000	Hardin, Liberty.....	80	Hungerford, Wharton.....	100
Glenwood, Upshur.....	135	Harleton, Harrison.....	300	Hunt, Kerr.....	25
Glimden, Colorado.....	400	Harlingen, Cam-		Hunter, Comal.....	75
Gober, Fannin.....	300	eron.....	1,784-1,784	Huntinton, Angelina.....	400
Gedley, Johnson.....	613	Harper, Gillespie.....	300	Huntsville, Wal-	
Gold, Gillespie.....	15	Harriett, Tom Green.....	10	ker.....	4,080-4,080
Golden, Wood.....	400	Harrisburg, Harris.....	1,461-1,461	Hurley, Bailey.....	14
Goldfinch, Frio.....	15	Harris Valley, La Salle.....	349	Hutchins, Dallas.....	500
Goldsboro, Coleman.....	100	Harrold, Wilbarger.....	20	Hutto, Williamson.....	571-571
Goldthwaite, Mills.....	1,214-1,214	Hart, Castro.....	300	Iye, Blanco.....	200
Goliad, Goliad.....	2,300	Hartburg, Newton.....	150	Lilton, Nolan.....	187
Gomez, Terry.....	75	Hartley, Hartley.....	200-200	Iago, Wharton.....	200
Gonzales, Gonzales.....	3,128-3,128	Harwood, Gonzales.....	200-200	Iatan, Mitchell.....	600
Goodlett, Hardeman.....	113	Haskell, Haskell.....	2,300-2,300	Idol, Sibley.....	200
Goodnight, Armstrong.....	500	Hassler, Shelby.....	20	Illinois Bend, Montague.....	63
Goodrich, Polk.....	200	Hasslet, Tarrant.....	40	Imperial, Pecos.....	25
Goose Creek, Harris.....	3,500	Hasse, Comanche.....	248	Inadale, Scurry.....	25
Gordon, Palo Pinto.....	650	Hatchel, Runnels.....	10	Independence, Wash-	
Gordonville, Grayson.....	300	Hawkins, Wood.....	300	ington.....	715-715
Goree, Knox.....	614-614	Hawley, Jones.....	100	Indian Creek, Brown.....	113
Gorman, Eastland.....	3,200-3,200	Haymond, Brewster.....	100	Indian Gap, Hamilton.....	30
Gossett, Kaufman.....	90	Hearne, Robertson.....	2,741-2,741	India, Zavalla.....	10
Gouldsboro, Coleman.....	150	Hebronville, Jim Hogg.....	600	Industry, Austin.....	800
Graford, Palo Pinto.....	313	Hebron, Denton.....	50	Inez, Victoria.....	200
Graham, Young.....	2,544-2,544	Hedley, Donley.....	504-504	Ingliside, San Patricio.....	50
Granbury, Hood.....	1,364-1,364	Hegar, Waller.....	20	Ingram, Kerr.....	100
Grand Falls, Ward.....	250	Heidenheimer, Bell.....	250	Iola, Grimes.....	500
Grand Prairie,		Helena, Karnes.....	181	Iowa Colony, Brazoria.....	8
Dallas.....	1,263-1,263	Belmic, Trinity.....	300		
Grand Salina, Van		Belotes, Bexar.....	10		
Zandt.....	1,523-1,523	Bemphill, Sabine.....	3,100		

The listings above are from the book "Texas Cities and Towns." 16



GRIMSHAW POST OFFICE –
“Established July 6, 1922. Harry L. O’Brien, July 6, 1922; Axel A. Soderberg, March 22, 1924; Discontinued March 31, 1925. Location at Oil City an oil boom town about one and one-half miles south of Bunker.”

The article above is from a book believed to be titled “Texas Cities and Towns.” This article is from the “Texas Postoffice Guide” section of the book.¹⁷

“Towns of the early days may have vanished, but there are modern ones whose life was shorter and whose departure was even more sudden and just as complete. Today their existence might not be believed except that oil boom towns left legal records.

Towns came into life when someone struck a pool of oil and were noticed chiefly by dumping of lumber and a row of shacks. Cluskey City had a population of five hundred two weeks after it had its name, and ten months later it was being plowed under for winter wheat. Harding and Lake City were also platted as towns along the Brazos when oil blew over derricks in 1921-1922. At the time oil was \$2.50 a barrel and companies paid bonuses for material on location. Trucks strained over the deep sand of the river country where straw had been dumped to make passage possible, Harding and Lake City lived more than two years, but with production established the boom was over and they were no more. Oil City was recorded as a town on October 18, 1921, and probably no town in Texas ever rose so quickly to so big a bubble. Fifteen miles south of Graham the town sprang up and became a place of fifteen hundred within a few weeks, with city lots selling for \$1000; Farther down on the river was Herron City, a long row of lively shacks where out-of-town reporters told of dice games held on the streets on Sunday afternoon and of its lovely Lady Godiva, sans her horse and long hair. A few dignified derricks are still left rearing their black crowns above the river near the site of the departed towns.”

The excerpt above is from “A History of Young County, Texas,” 1956, by Carrie Crouch.⁴³

OIL CITY - - BOOMING, LUSTY TOWN

By: BARBARA LEDBETTER

Black gold! Black gold! A precious commodity which has turned prairies into thriving business districts; turned night to day and made a poor man a very rich man overnight. It made a polyglot of boomtowns and brought prosperity to Young county and north central Texas. Black gold, teamed with men who had sinews of iron and frames of oaken firmness, who could endure almost any amount of exposure and fatigue, turned Young county from an agrarian economy to a multifaceted industrial economy. It is paradoxical that the search for black gold has overnight made a wealthy man of a poor man. But then, the commodity black gold is a paradox within it itself.

Almost every oil producing state in the U. S. has had an Oil City - - - and so did Texas. Oil City was born, lived and died within the second decade of the 20th century - - now called the roarin' twenties. Oil City was a bonanza. She died as a town but the oil which made her is still in evidence.

With a strong imagination one can still see her as a mirage - - a mirage amidst the swirling dust of a dirt ranch road. But let's find her. She lives yet she doesn't! She is a paradox.

Seven miles south of Graham on the Bunger Highway and to the right stands a sign. It reads: Whittenberg ranch. Turn right, and as you cross the cattleguard and travel westerly, you are on what was Main Street, Oil City. Or turn left and east from the Bunger Highway at the Whittenberg sign. You are still in Oil City. Take your choice. There are few obvious remains which tells you that you are at Oil City, but you are there and make no mistakes about it. She was a boisterous, lusty, slam-banging town and her sole purpose was to house and make headquarters for those who toiled for black gold; and make headquarters for those who were some of the most spectacular fortune-seeking ruffians this county has seen since the outpost called Camp Belknap.

Oil was not an unknown entity in Young county in that the Lindy Lou No. 1 on the B. F. Scott came in in 1917; the Arnold No. 1 near Newcastle came in on a hot July 26th, 1919 (The Arnold was heralded as the deepest producer - - - 4,005 feet - - - in the southwest); 1920 saw the McCluskey No. 1 (brought in by the Panhandle Refining Company which saw the beginning of the South Bend boom); 1920 also saw the Donnell No. 1 (brought in by Stanley, Langford & Chenault at 2,280 feet in Caddo Lime).

1921 saw the oil sprout over the prairie in Young county as though it were a freshly planted seed exposed to an Alaskan summer day. The Mahaney No. 1 came in (see photo) in 1921 and the second well at Oil City, the "Bud" Owens No. 1 (which flowed uninhibited at 700 barrels a day) was brought in by the Sims Drilling Company for the Cosden Oil Corp. With these two wells the boom was a reality.

The population has to be an estimate because Oil City existed after (the) 1920 census and before the 1930 census. There were 2,000 souls inhabiting the place with some coming and going at all times. Ernest Bishop, now ranch foreman for the Rosser Ranch Enterprises, says that Oil City had her greatest influx of workers when those who lived in Graham and worked in Oil City had to remain there because the Bunger - Gooseneck bridge washed away making a direct travel route impossible. Bishop described the town: "as wild as she was long; as wild as she was wide."



This unique photo shows the enthusiasm generated by the advent of oil in the area of Oil City (south of Graham on Bunger highway, 7 miles.) This well is still producing. The event of this photo is the ~~1911~~ discovery of G. W. Mahaney No. 1, east of Bunger. This well was followed by the "Bud" Owen No. 1. This

was the beginning of Oil City and the boom that followed. Note (1) the curvature of the skyline, (2) the horn in the immediate foreground used by the band to celebrate the well's arrival, and (3) the many women attending the eventful gathering.

Photo loaned to the GRAHAM NEWS by Mrs. W. P. (Owen) Steadham, Bunger.

If you are one of those who drive out to the mesquite dotted prairie where Oil City once stood, you will have to imagine a ghost town (which has never quite give up the ghost.) The town did literally stretch about one mile from north to south and one-half mile east to west. One can find a few deteriorated bull wheels and calf wheels leaning amidst the mesquite (see photo) and there is a concrete slab or two and a bois d' arc tree where the town once stood. There were clap-board hotels and boarding houses, a sprinkling of drug stores, grocery stores and there was what was called Negro Town east of Oil City proper. The Negro population constituted of those who cooked at the eating places and many were wood cutters who cut wood to stoke the boilers at the rigs.



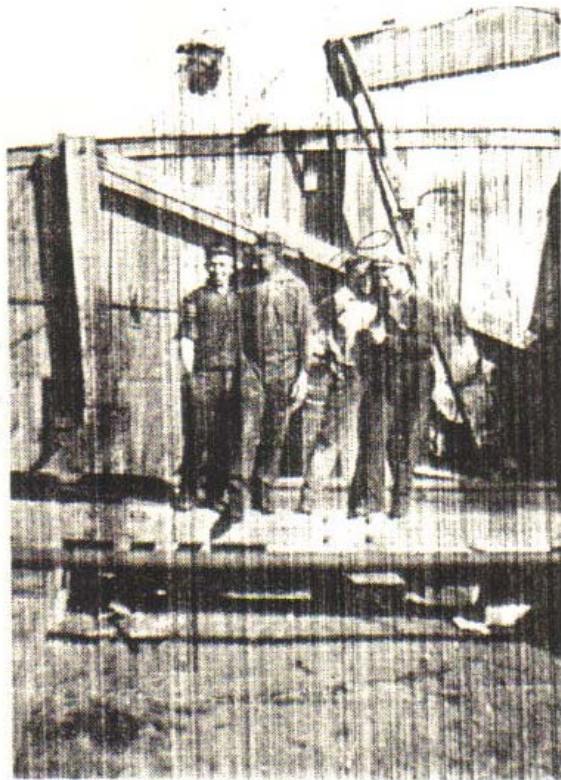
WOODEN BULL WHEELS in the pasture are all that remain of Oil City.

There was Edd Lear's Grocery Store, "Heavy" Brackeen Drug Company, Moody Bros. Garage (where the Beach home now sets), and LeSage Motor Company. There was Willie "Hotshot" Ash who worked in a drug store; there was a Choctaw Indian from Oklahoma who was known as "Choctaw" Owen and who was known for his fancy recipe for "Choctaw Choc." There were bakeries, laundries, Ribble Garage and Station. There was "Cabbage" Price, the driller and Frank Levi, Charley Burton, Bill Fultz, "Doc" Martin, Harry Neal and Bill Sims.

Oil City had a telephone office with one operator Bertha Barnett who stayed on duty around the clock. Jake and Walter Wade worked as linemen on the Independent Telephone Company lines where Robert Burton was manager for the company.

The Post Office located at Oil City oddly enough was call – Grimshaw (sometimes spelled Crinshaw).

Otto Cencebaugh (who lives on Jacksboro highway, east of Graham) owns a pictorial archives all his own. He has photographed oil field history as he lived it from the time of his arrival with Laughlin Bros. Co. in Ranger from his native Ohio until his retirement from the oil industry. Cencebaugh worked through the boom at Oil City (see photo) and he has a fantastic memory for names and happenings. He was a toll dresser and made \$15.00 each 12 hour shift. He recalls how glad he was when President Roosevelt took office and implemented for the first time as 8 hour working day. He remembers eating some of the best foods at "Missy" Ribble's Restaurant.



A CREW on the Whittenburg well in Oil City, 1922. Left to right: Sam Ramsey, S. J. Wright, Harry Gitters, W. Otto Cencebaugh.

The rotary drill had been in use since "Spindletop" near Beaumont, Texas in 1901 but it was never used at Oil City. The wooden derricks and cable tool drilling brought in every well. Pine knots (hauled in from Louisiana) and oak and mesquite wood was used to fire the fire the boilers (see photo of Mahaney No. 1). Later oil, gas and electricity, in that order was used for drilling but not in Oil City.

The moil for oil was the job of the casing crew, the rig builders, the roughnecks, the driller, the slush pit diggers, the boiler firemen, the tool pusher, and the amateur dirt eater.

The element of ruffians were those from all over the world who followed the finding of oil, for where there was plenty of quick money, there was a bonanza for the gamblers. Games of chance was a way of life and a part of every boom.

There was neither a Malamute saloon nor a Bucket of Blood but the cabarets were in Oil City. They were in most instances no-named. An informant who shall be nameless tells of the DIME A DANCE CABERETS. When dimes ran out, the dancing stopped. Neither seldom happened. Couples danced to the tune of a piano (which had attachments for a zither, harp, mandolin, and guitar) and a tambourine combo or a blaring nickelodeon.

One could dance with the girl of their choice for one dime. All went fairly well until two men wanted to dance with the same girl and, then, Pandemonium followed. There simply seemed to be no compromise among their breed and this brought on brawls which were sometimes settled with knives and guns.

On June 21, 1922, the Owl Drug Store in Oil City caught fire. The proprietor hired Albert Robinson -- a tool dresser, age 28, three days away from his wedding and known as "California Jack" --- to watch over the rescued goods. The merchandise was piled high in the street. At about daylight on June 22, a bartender known as "Happy" Conlee, and a woman companion ambled over to watchman "California Jack" and started jawing around. "California Jack" had a gun and decided to do some straightforward jawing back. Someone called the deputy sheriff from Graham and upon his arrival, "California Jack" was relieved of his gun. "Happy" Conlee wasn't finished. He returned to his saloon and came out sometime later with a butcher knife. He used the knife and reportedly stabbed to death "California Jack." Deputy Sheriff Black returned to Oil City where he arrested "Happy" Conlee and brought him to the calaboose in Graham, and "California Jack's" body was shipped to Sacramento for burial.

At about dark, a crowd gathered at the jail. There was some talk among the officials that the crowd was inspired by Young county's then active Klu Klux Klan. The crowd roared back that this was gross libel and that the citizenry would like to see a little more law and justice and order. "Happy" Conlee later made a jail break and a group of roughnecks summed it up one night while working near the rig. Two workers noticed a falling star streak across the heavens and one said to the other: "Look at that, must be "Happy" Conlee leaving Texas."

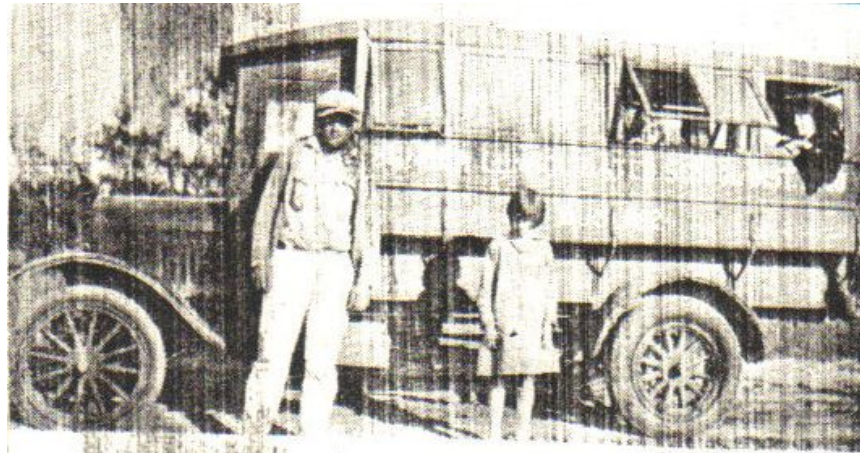
Booze, white lightening, sold for \$10.00 a gallon and games of chance were secondary hazards to Oil City compared to the hazards of fire and guns. There are folks today who swear they never entered Oil City proper; maintaining it was too dangerous. That it was where the action was, can be ascertained by reading old newspaper clippings about the boom.

Mr. A. B. Owen who is retired from the Continental Oil Co. (who loaned the photograph shown at the top of this page) tells of the time when a roof of a building caught fire. Several dozen roughnecks and merchants of the town gathered about the four

sides and literally lifted the burning building to an open area thereby saving the whole town from a burning holocaust.

Water from the clear fork of the Brazos was used for drilling purposes and drinking water was piped (in 4inch pipe laying on top of the ground) from South Bend and drinking water also piped in the same fashion from a natural water tank on the Norris land in Tonk Valley (now the Rosser Ranch).

Children from the Oil City families attended school in the Bunger school located a short distance north. Bunger school enrollment swelled to about 500 during the Oil City boom (See photo of bus used by the students.)



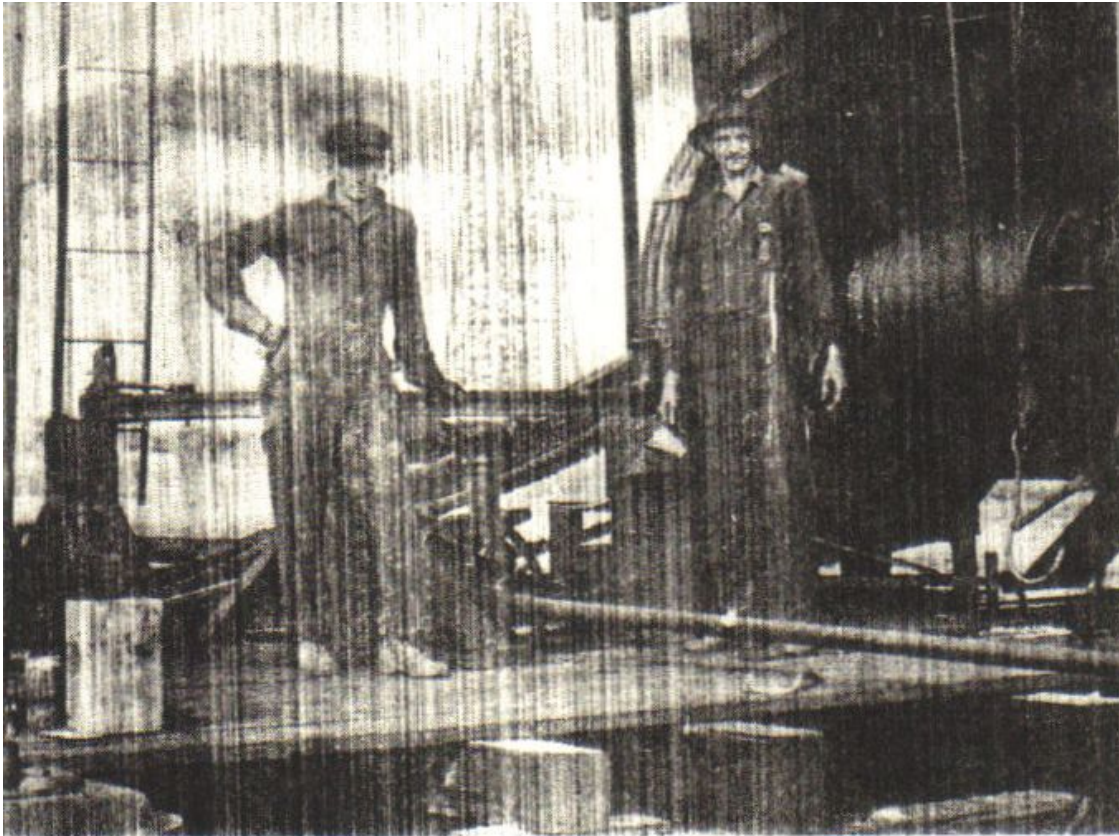
BUNGER School bus used to transport children from Oil City to Bunger School. (Persons in this photo are: Jim Buck Starms, Marie Owen, Mae Dell Wiley, Mary Dell Sharp, Katherine Blocker.)

There was Burt Hayes and there was the late Walter Beach; there was Buren Lisle's casing crew and there was C. Lee Jones who dug slush pits at Oil City as well as many other oil fields in Young county. Jones said one of the strangest sights of all was to see a group of men using teams of horses (later trucks) to skid an old wooden oil derrick from one location to another.

Rig builders had their work cut out for them when tearing down and building a wooden rig. Jones said that the fastest and the best rig builders he ever saw were "Slim" Curry and "Dutch" Bedner. The rig builders usually camped in tents at the site of a proposed well and stayed until the rig was built.

One oldtime rig builder told this reporter that the question to a rig builder never was "Can you build a rig?" but the question was "When can you build it and how long will it take you?" C. Lee Jones said that "Dutch" and "Slim" never followed the usual procedure for construction of a derrick. These men would stand a distance from the derrick and shout to the builders as to where and when to nail a plank. They judged it all by sight and never seemed to err.

Once upon a time one could tell a driller as he walked down the street. His outward appearance was not too much different from that of the next man. But there were telltale signs. His clothing may have been freshly laundered but one could see the permanent stains on the left side of his garment – stains where the old bull chains slung crater compound on his clothing. These stains remained until the garment was gone. Too, the driller had a social status – he smoked camels.



J. M. OWEN and an unidentified oil field hand shown standing on floor of rig. (Note clothing of the workers.)

Admittedly, fishermen and coon hunters are expert tale spinners but no one yet can outdo a group of old drillers assembled in a hotel lobby, a tavern, a living room, or a restaurant. The person who has not been an attentive listener to the braggadocio of a group of oil field roughnecks and drillers, has missed something indeed.

Space does not permit the relating of every factual story from those who know them best. But just once. Jesse E. Turner, a longtime driller, was drilling in Eliasville on the Hill No. 1. It was on this well he used eleven W 7 R drilling bits to drill eleven feet. It was at 6,912 feet that he hit quartz and the next eleven feet gave nightmare to driller Turner, the crew, and the tool pusher. At this time it cost only \$112.00 for the bits. Today the steel bits (complemented with tungsten from China) cost \$1,085.95 each.

There is a cliché which says: “Put on your Ki-Ki britches and fight.” This is derived from the oil field. The wearing apparel made them a motley crew of ragamuffins. Many wore bootbritches which had laced or buttoned legs, called Ki-Ki britches. There were the customary brogans but no steel-toed shoes, no water proof boots, no steel safety hats. Wesley Senkel of Graham tells of the time when a man came to the floor of the drilling rig and engaged in loosetalk about the new steel hats which they would soon be wearing. They were told the hats were to be patterned after the helmets worn by the soldiers in France in World War 1. Sure enough, safety hats were issued at about the cost of \$4.00 each but this was in 1936 and about 12 years after Oil City.

Biblical records show the use of pitch, copper, and zepheth (a term for free flowing oil.) The old testament tells how the mother of Moses coated his cradle with pitch so that it would float on the Nile. Old Nebuchadnezzar used asphalt to pave the streets of Babylon (600 years before Christ’s birth), and the Assyrians used asphalt to hold the bricks in the building of Nineveh.

The Bible says that Noah used pitch to seal the seams of the ark before the Deluge covered the earth. The ancient Egyptians greased chariot axles with petroleum which they found seeping from the ground. They also preserved bodies with crude petroleum.

The American Indian used petroleum hundreds of years before the white man came. This was evident where settlers found remains of ancient oil wells in Penn., Ohio, and Kentucky. The settlers found trees several hundred years old growing over the oil wells which signified the wells antiquity. Jesuit missionaries in North America in the 1600’s found Indians using oil for fuel and medicine.

In the 1700’s saltmakers often found oil while drilling for salt and they considered the oil a nuisance. They were not unlike the rancher or farmer today who often grumbles about the loss of pasture land or farm land where oil is found.

It was what is widely known as the Drake well which in 1859 ushered in a new era for the oil industry. Colonel E. L. Drake drilled his famous well near Titusville, Penn.

Eight years before the Drake Well and on October 15, 1851, Gen. William Belknap wrote a letter to Washington and reported his findings along the Red Fork of the Brazos River where Fort Belknap is now located. He wrote: I found bituminous coal (of which I took a sample), limestone and a healthful locality.”

Five years before the Drake Well, in the summer of 1854, a geological survey was made in north Texas and Young county. Had there been a Jeremiah among the party, Young county’s future in oil might have been predicted from the geological findings in the vicinity of Fort Belknap.

It was Dr. G.G. Shumard (with Capt. Randolph B. Marcy’s Fifty Infantry expedition down the Brazos) who collected and defined his geological findings in our exact county area.

Dr. Shumard sent to Washington specimen of terebratula, bellerophon, pleurotomaria, eucrinite, iron ore, carboniferous limestone, bituminous coal, perna and cyathophyllum; all specimens indicating the Paleozoic period. Coal and mineral outcroppings were found and there was indication of rich minerals. The oil had lain dormant for 1 million years and it was to lay below the surface for another 60 short years before the genius of man discovered it in a wildcatting operation. Oil City was one of those operations.

Oil City and Herron City came into being as many changes were occurring in the oil industry. It was in 1920 that a first tax for roads was placed on oil. In 1920 when Oil City boomed, oil brought \$3.50 a barrel. In a few days oil went a \$1.00 a barrel. Perhaps

conversation among oil workers in 1922 was concerning the antics of Fatty Arbuckle and the increase of oil prices which went to \$2.50 per barrel.

Oil City began to die a sudden death in 1925 when Corsicana oil field “broke-out” for the second time. Within five years of her birth, Oil City buildings were left to rot, moved away, or had burned to the ground.

Since the Lindy Lou No. 1 in 1917, Young county has produced 196, 110, 300 barrels of oil. Oil City has contributed her part. The year, 1966, saw 8 new oil fields opened in Young county and rank second in the North Texas District in producing fields.

For many of those who in some way or another make their livelihood from oil, some can purloin four lines from Robert Service and say:

Some say that God was tired when He made it;
Some say it's a fine land to shun;
Maybe; but there's some who would trade it;
For no land on earth – and I'm one.

The article above appeared in The Graham News, on Thursday, January 5, 1967.¹²

West Texas Historical Association Year Book

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OCTOBER, 1967

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OIL CITY, YOUNG COUNTY, TEXAS

BARBARA LEDBETTER

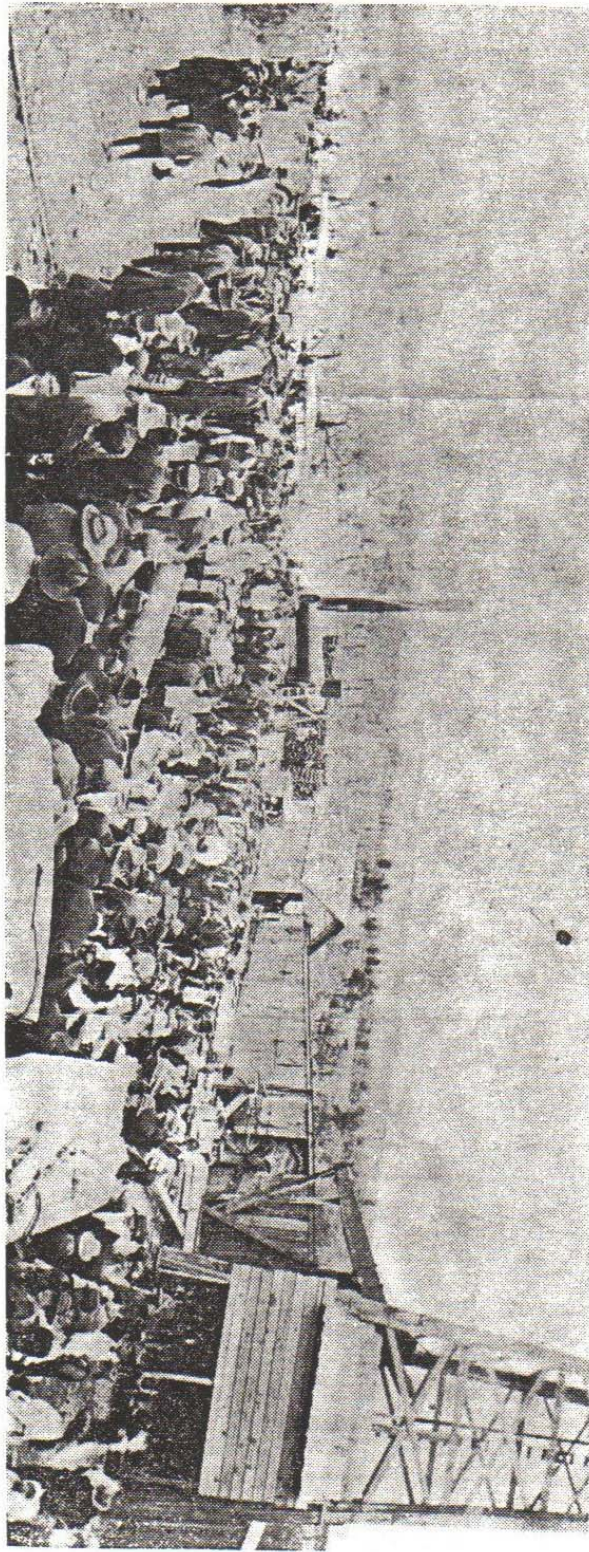
Black gold is a precious commodity which has turned prairies into thriving business districts; turned night to day, and made a poor man a very rich man overnight. It was a polyglot of boomtowns and brought prosperity to scores of communities in north central Texas. Black gold, teamed with men who had sinews of iron and frames of oaken firmness, who could endure almost any amount of exposure and fatigue, turned this region from an agrarian economy to a multifaceted industrial economy. Furthermore it is paradoxical that the search for black gold has overnight made a wealthy man a poor man. But then, the commodity black gold is a paradox within itself.

Almost every oil producing state has had an Oil City, and so did Texas. Oil City was born, lived and died within the third decade of the 20th century, now called the roaring twenties; her official beginning was October 28, 1921. Oil City was a bonanza. She died as a town, but the oil which made her is still in evidence.

Seven miles south of Graham on the Bunger highway and to the right stands a sign. It reads: "Whittenburg Ranch." Turn right, and as you cross the cattleguard and travel westerly, you are on what was Main Street of Oil City. Or turn left and east from the Bunger highway and you are still in Oil City. Take your choice. There are few obvious remains which tell you that you are at Oil City, but you are there and make no mistake about it. She was a boisterous, lusty, slam-banging town and her sole purpose was to house and make headquarters for those who toiled for black gold; headquarters for those who were some of the most spectacular fortune-seeking ruffians this country has seen since the settling of an outpost called Camp Belknap in 1851.

Oil was not an unknown entity in Young County in that the Lindy Lou No. 1 on the B. F. Scott place came in in

FIRST OIL well which started Oil City. This is the MEHANNEY NUMBER ONE, 1921. Courtesy Mrs. Mary Owen Stedham



1917;¹ the Arnold No. 1 near Newcastle came in on a hot July 26th, 1919 (The Arnold was heralded as the deepest producer, 4,005 feet, in the Southwest).² The following year the McCluskey No. 1 was brought in by Stanley Langford & Chenault at 3,280 feet in Caddo Lime.

The year 1921 saw oil sprout over the prairie in Young County as though it were a freshly planted seed exposed to an Alaskan summer day. The Mahaney No. 1 came in in 1921 (see photo³) and the second well at Oil City, the "Bud" Owens No. 1 (which flowed uninhibited at 700 barrels a day) was brought in by the Sims Drilling Company for the Cosden Oil Corporation.⁴ With these two wells the boom was an and Oil City became a reality.

The population soon reached approximately 2,000, with some persons coming and going at all times.⁵ Earnest Bishop, now ranch foreman for the Rosser Ranch Enterprises, says that Oil City had her greatest influx of workers when those who lived in Graham and worked in Oil City had to remain in Oil City because the Bunger-Gooseneck bridge washed away, making a direct travel route impossible. Bishop described the town: "as wild as she was long; as wild as she was wide."

The town did literally stretch about one mile from east to west and about one-half mile from north to south. One can find a few deteriorated bull wheels and calf wheels leaning amidst the mesquite and, there is a concrete slab or two and a bois d'arc tree to mark the spot where she stood. There were clap-board hotels and boarding houses, a sprinkling of drug stores, grocery stores and there was a Negro popula-

1. Carrie J. Crouch. *A History of Young County, Texas* (Austin, 1956).

2. Newcastle Chamber of Commerce, "Newcastle, Texas," Newcastle, 1919.

3. MaHaney family records; also Young county courthouse records.

4. Owens family records; also Young county courthouse records.

5. Interview with Earnest Bishop, ranch foreman for Rosser Ranch Enterprises Murray Route, Graham, Texas. Bishop to Ledbetter, November 11, 1966.

tion which lived east of Oil City who were employed as cooks in eating establishments and as woodcutters for the wood to stoke the boilers.⁶

There was Edd Lehr's Grocery Store, "Heavy" Brakeen Drug Company, Moody Brothers Garage (where the Beach home now sits) and LaSage Motor Company. Willie "Hot-shot" Ash worked in a drug store; and a Choctaw Indian from Oklahoma, known as "Choctaw" Owen was famed for his fancy recipe for "Choctaw Choc." There were bakeries, laundries, and Ribble's Garage and Station. Some other well known citizens were "Cabbage" Price, the driller, and Frank Levi, Harry Neal, Bill Fultz, "Doc" Martin and Bill Sims.⁷

Oil City had a telephone office with one operator, Bertha Barnett, who stayed on duty around the clock⁸. Jake and Walter Wade worked as linemen on the Independent Telephone Company lines while Robert Bowers was manager of the company. The post office located at Oil City oddly enough was called Grimshaw, sometimes spelled Crimshaw.⁹

Otto Cencebaugh, who lives on the Jacksboro highway, east of Graham, owns a pictorial archive all his own. He has photographed oil field history as he lived it from the time of his arrival with Laughlin Brothers Company in Ranger from his native Ohio until his retirement from the oil industry. Cencebaugh worked through the boom at Oil City and he has a fantastic memory for names and happenings. He was a tooldresser and made \$16 for each 12 hour shift. He recalls how glad he was when President Roose-

6. Interview with former oil field workers and business people who once lived at Oil City.

7. Personal interviews with C. Lee Jones. Jones to Ledbetter December, 1966.

8. Interview with Otto Cencebaugh, Graham, Texas; Cencebaugh to Ledbetter, September, 1966.

9. Letters postmarked to Otto Cencebaugh, Graham, Texas. Old letters in possession of Mr. Cencebaugh.

velt took office and implemented for the first time, an eight hour working day. He remembers eating some of the best foods at "Missy" Ribble's Restaurant.

The rotary drill had been in use since Spindletop, near Beaumont, Texas, in 1901 but it was never used at Oil City.¹⁰ The wooden derricks and cable tool drilling brought in every well. Pine knots, hauled in from Louisiana, and oak and mesquite wood were used to fire the boilers. Later oil, gas, and electricity, in that order, were used for drilling, but not in Oil City.

The moil for oil was the job of the casing crew, the rig builders, the roughnecks, the drillers, the slush pit diggers, the boiler firemen, the toolpushers, and the amateur "dirt eaters."

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One could dance with the girl of his choice for one dime. All went fairly well until two men wanted to dance with the same girl and, then, pandemonium sometimes followed.

10. Interview with drillers who drilled in wells at Oil City.

There simply seemed to be no compromise among this breed of men. This brought on brawls which were sometimes settled with knives and guns.

On June 21, 1922 the Owl Drug Store in Oil City caught fire.¹¹ The proprietor hired Albert Robinson, a tooldresser, age 28, three days away from his wedding and known as "California Jack," to watch over the rescued goods. The merchandise was piled high in the street. At about daylight on June 22, a bartender, known as "Happy" Conlee and a woman companion ambled over to watchman "California Jack" and started a row. "California Jack" had a gun and did not hesitate to promote his side of the quarrel. Someone called the deputy sheriff from Graham and upon his arrival, "California Jack" was relieved of his gun. But "Happy" Conlee was not finished. He returned to his saloon and came out sometime later with a butcher knife. He used the knife and reportedly stabbed to death "California Jack." Deputy Sheriff Black returned to Oil City where he arrested "Happy" Conlee and brought him to the calaboose in Graham, and "California Jack's" body was shipped to Sacramento for burial.

At about dark on the following evening a crowd gathered at the jail. There was some talk among¹² officials that the crowd was inspired by Young county's then active Klu Klux Klan. But the crowd roared back that this was gross libel, that as citizens they would like to see a little more law, justice and order. "Happy" Conlee later made a jail break and apparently left Texas without any leave-taking. Shortly thereafter two oil field workers noticed a falling star streak across the heavens and one said: "Look at that, must be Happy Conlee leaving Texas."¹³

11. Newspaper account published in *The Newcastle Register*, June 26, 1922, taken from microfilm of newspaper in Ledbetter Family Library.

12. Newspaper accounts as published in *The Newcastle Register*; also interview with C. Lee Jones, Graham, Texas.

Booze, "white lightning," sold for \$10 a gallon and games of chance were secondary hazards of Oil City compared with the hazards of fire and guns. There are folks today who swear they never entered Oil City proper, maintaining that it was too dangerous. Newspapers of that day reveal beyond a doubt that much excitement and action centered there. A. B. Owens, who is retired from the Continental Oil Company¹⁴ tells of the time when the roof of a building caught fire. Several dozen roughnecks and merchants of the town gathered about the four sides and literally lifted the burning building to an open area, thereby saving the whole town from a burning holocaust.

Water from the clear fork of the Brazos was used for drilling purposes. Through a four-inch pipe placed on top of the ground, drinking water was piped from Clear Fork at South Bend and also from a natural water tank on the Norris land in Tonk Valley, now the Reosser Ranch.

Children from Oil City families attended school in the Bunger school located a short distance north.¹⁵ Bunger school enrollment swelled to about 500 during the Oil City boom .

Making their contribution to the boom were Buren Lisle's casing crew and C. Lee Jones, who dug slush pits at Oil City and many other oil fields in the area. Jones said that one of the strangest sights of all was to see a group of men using teams of horses (later trucks) to skid an old wooden oil derrick from one location to another. Rig builders had their work cut out for them when tearing down and building a wooden rig. Jones said that the fastest and best rig builders he ever saw were "Slim" Curry and "Dutch" Bender. The rig

13. Interview with Ernest Bishop, and C. Lee Jones, both of Graham, Texas.

14. Interview with A. B. Owens, Bunger Route, Graham, Texas.

15. School group photos and also interview with Mary Owen Steadham, Bunger Route, Graham, Texas, who attended Bunger School.

builders usually camped in tents at the site of a proposed well and stayed until the rig was built.

One old time rig builder told this reporter that the question asked a rig builder never was, can you build a rig? Instead he would be asked, when can you build it? How long will it take? C. Lee Jones said that "Dutch" Curry and "Slim" Bender never followed the usual procedure for construction of a derrick. These men would stand at a distance from the derrick and shout to the builders as to when and where to nail a plank. They judged it all by sight and never seemed to err.

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Admittedly, fishermen and coon hunters are expert tale spinners but no one yet can outdo a group of old drillers assembled in a hotel lobby, a tavern, a living room, or a restaurant. The person who has not been an attentive listener to the braggadocio of a group of oil field roughnecks and drillers has missed the bulk of oil field lore.

One driller's story must suffice as typical. Jesse E. Turner, a veteran driller,¹⁶ was drilling in Eliasville on the Hill No. 1. It was on this well that he used eleven W 7 R drilling bits to drill eleven feet. It was at 3,912 feet that he hit quartz and the next eleven feet were like a prolonged nightmare for

16. Interview with Jesse E. Turner, Abilene, Texas. Turner to Ledbetter, September, 1966.

driller Turner, the crew, and the tool pusher. At that time each bit cost only \$112. Today the steel bits (complemented with tungsten imported from China) cost \$1,085.00 each.

Their wearing apparel made oil field workers a motley crew of ragamuffins. Many wore boot breeches which had laced or buttoned legs, called Ki-Ki breeches. There were the customary brogans but no steel toed shoes, no water proof boots, no steel safety hats such as one sees today.¹⁷ Wesley Senkel of Graham tells of the time when a man came to the floor of the drilling rig and engaged in loose talk about the new steel hats which they would soon be wearing. They were told the hats were patterned after the helmets worn by the soldiers in France during World War I. Sure enough, safety hats were issued at about a cost of \$4 each, but this was in 1936, some 12 years after Oil City.

17. Interview with Wesley Senkel, Graham, Texas, October, 1966.

The article above appeared in the "West Texas Historical Association Year Book," October 1967.¹³

Grimshaw, Texas. Grimshaw, a Young County post office during the year 1919, was named for Amos Grimshaw, on whose land oil was discovered. Later called Oil City, the community failed to develop.

The article above is from a book containing small articles on cities and counties of Texas.²

Grimshaw, Texas

Grimshaw was located a few miles northwest of Bunker between R.J. Dowell Survey Abstract No. 2215 and A.J. Driver Survey Abstract No. 1980. The town was named for landowner, Amos Grimshaw.

The oil boom town sprang up when oil was discovered on the land by the fall of 1917 in a test well. The oil boom in Young County began in South Bend in 1917 and the resources of the drillers centered in that area until the move began.

County records seem to indicate that Grimshaw began booming by 1919 when progression of oil drilling seemed to move east. Amos Grimshaw platted the town in 1920 and due to the oil wells, the town would change their name to "Oil City." Young County records show a plat for Oil City in October 1921. Lots sold in the town for a record \$1,000 each.

By 1922, County records show an estimated population of 1,500. The town had drug stores, post office, hotels, mercantile houses, theatre, newspaper and one church building.

With three disastrous fires in 1922 and 1923 and the production of oil, the town did not exist in 1927.

The post office was located at Grimshaw from 1922 to 1925 according to Federal records and Henry Schlittler, Sr. carried the mail from Graham to Grimshaw as a rural carrier.

Nothing remains at the site of Grimshaw or Oil City today.³

The article above is believed to have been written by Jeanne F. Lively. (Compare with the articles "Grimshaw, Texas" and "Oil City, Texas" on the following page.)⁹

Grimshaw, Texas



Grimshaw, also known as Oil City, was about ten miles south of Graham and a few miles northwest of Bunger, in southeastern Young County (on the boundary line between the R.J. Dowell Survey, A-2215 and the A.J. Driver Survey, A-1980). It was built during the beginning of the county's oil industry and was originally named for Amos Grimshaw, on whose land oil was discovered. Although the discovery well was brought in during 1917, the settlement did not boom until the 1920's. In October 1921 Oil City was recorded as a town and it had a population of 1,500 within a few weeks. Its city lots were selling for \$1,000. By 1925 only 200 residents remained there, and by 1927, none. The community had a post office, called Grimshaw, from 1922 to 1925. Henry Schlittler, Sr., transported both mail and passengers over roads occasionally made nearly impassable during heavy rains. After the town's demise a few oil derricks were left to mark the site.

Jeanne F. Lively

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Last Updated: February 15, 1999

Comments to: comments@www.tsha.utexas.edu

The article above is from the Texas State Historical Society web site in 1999. It incorrectly provides the location of Grimshaw as “northwest” instead of “south” of Bunger, Texas. A revised version of the article from the Texas Handbook On-line appears below¹⁰

OIL CITY, TEXAS (Young County). Oil City, also known as Grimshaw, was ten miles south of Graham in southeastern Young County. It was built during the beginning of the county's oil industry and was originally named for Amos Grimshaw, on whose land oil was discovered. Although the discovery well was brought in in 1917, the settlement did not boom until the 1920s. In October 1921, Oil City was recorded as a town; it had a population of 1,500 within a few weeks. Its city lots were selling for \$1,000. By 1925 only 200 residents remained there, and by 1927, none. The community had a post office, called Grimshaw, from 1922 to 1925. Henry Schlittler, Sr., transported both mail and passengers over roads occasionally made nearly impassable during heavy rains. After the town's demise, a few oil derricks were left to mark the site.

The article above is from the Texas Handbook On-line. It also appears on p. 1117 of a book of unknown title containing short articles on Texas cities and towns.¹¹

“Young County” “...Exploratory drilling by major oil companies had begun in the mid-1910s, and their hopes were encouraged in 1917 when the Lindy Lou No. 1 well came in. Actual production of petroleum began in 1920, and wildcatters, workers, and others looking for opportunities swarmed into the area. In 1921 and 1922, the landscape was dotted with new oil boom towns such as Clusky City, Harding, Lake City, Oil City, and Herron City; already established towns, like Olney and Graham, also grew rapidly. While almost all of the new boom towns disappeared as soon as production had been established, the new industry became an important part of life in the area.”

The excerpt above is from the article, “Young County,” dated 20 December 2007, on the “Handbook of Texas Online.”⁷

“...it was not until 1920 that the first producing commercial well was brought in by Panhandle Refining Company. On July 4th, the McCluskey #1 came in at 6800 BOPD, recovering over \$1,000,000 of revenue in the first eight months of production.

This kicked the oil boom off in earnest and towns such as South Bend, Eliasville, and Bunker grew up almost overnight. Other communities such as Oil City, Ming Bend, Harding, Lake City, Pleasant Valley, and Herron City, which was located right across the river from Wildcatter Ranch and Resort sprung up and disappeared within a matter of two or three years. In the first decade of production, almost all of Young County was explored with many new fields causing boomtowns to be established.

The article above appears on the “Wildcatter Ranch” Webpage under “Local History.”⁴⁴

“... “wildcatter” is defined as one who explores for oil and gas in unproven areas. In the early 1900s, this definition fit those who roamed this Brazos River Valley area looking for the elusive barrel of oil.

In 1872, the Graham brothers, founders of Graham, drilled the first gas well to a depth of 400 feet, looking for gas to fuel their salt works. They encountered salt water with only a trace of gas.

In 1887, another well drilled for fresh water found water impregnated with coal oil and flammable gas. Oil entrepreneurs felt certain this area had to have commercial quantities, but their efforts between 1912 and 1919 failed. Only small non-commercial quantities were found.

Finally, in 1920, the Panhandle Refining Company drilled the McCluskey No. 1. The well came in on July 4, 1920, at 6,800 barrels of oil per day, returning over \$1,000,000 in revenue in only eight months.

Word quickly spread and drilling operations, mainly along the Brazos River in Young County, hit a fevered pitch. Numerous discoveries, associated development wells and boomtowns sprang up all along the Brazos from western Young County to eastern Young County.

Western Young County “big boys” were Eliasville and South Bend. Both grew rapidly with populations topping 10,000 in just a few years. In fact, three refineries and two casing head gas plants opened in South Bend in 1921. In the same year Bunker, Oil City (Grimshaw), McCluskey City, Harding, Lake City and numerous smaller unnamed settlements developed.

The article above appears on the “Wildcatter Ranch” Webpage⁴⁵

Businesses in Grimshaw, Texas, in 1922^{1, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19}

Army Store
Mrs. Bank's Boarding House
Bond's Boiler Works
Brackeen Drug Company
 "Heavy" Brackeen
Brown's Meat Market
Mrs. Brown's Rooming House
Busy Bee Cafe
Church
Cold Drink Stand
Crawson's Rooming House
Creek's Barber Shop
Davis Boarding House
Dry Cleaning Establishment
Duke's Cafe
Edd Lear's Grocery Store
Faggard and Toon, Real Estate
Feed Store
Filling Station
Grimshaw Post Office
 Postmasters:
 Harry L. O'Brien
Hamburger Stand

Dr. Hodson's Dental Office
Independent Telephone Company
 Manager - Robert Burton
 Linemen - Jake and Walter Wade
LeSage Motor Company
Lothlen and Young Dry Goods
Dr. Mansfield's Office
May's Rooming House
Moody Bros. Garage
Newspaper
News Stand and Confectionery
Oil City Pharmacy
Owl Drug Co. (Owl Drug Store)
Rabbit's Cafe
Missy Ribble's Restaurant
Ribble Garage and Station
Ritz Rooming House
Show Shop
Telephone Office
 Operator - Bertha Barnett
Theatre
Dr. Thornton's Office
Mrs. Wilson's Eating Stand

Residents of Grimshaw, Texas, in 1922^{1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19}

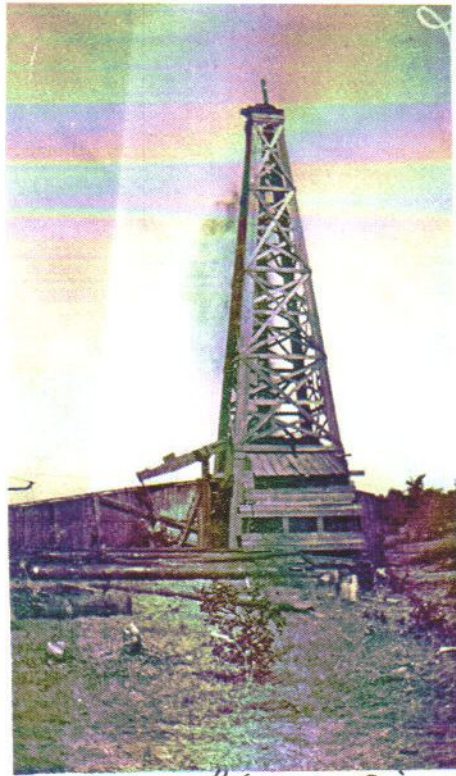
Ash, Willie “Hotshot” - Drug store employee	Levi, Frank
Banks – Boarding House	Lisle, Buren – Casing Crew
Barnett, Bertha– Telephone Operator	Lothlen – Store Proprietor
Beach, Walter	Mansfield, Dr. – Medical Doctor
Bonds – Boiler Works	Martin, “Doc”
Brackeen, “Heavy” - Drug store owner	Moody – Auto Mechanic
Bedner, “Dutch”– Rig Builder	Moody – Auto Mechanic
Brown – Meat Market, Rooming House	Neal, Harry
Burton, Charlie	O’Brien, Harry L. - Postmaster
Burton, Robert – Independent Telephone Co. Manager	Owen A.B.
Cencebaugh, Otto – Tool dresser	Owen, “Choctow”
Conlee, “Happy” - Bartender	Price, “Cabbage” - driller
Crawson – Rooming House	Sims, Bill
Creek - Barber	Soderburg, Axel A. - Postmaster
Curry, “Slim” – Rig Builder	Ribble, Missy – Restaurant Owner
Davis – Boarding House	Ribble Roy– Service Station and Garage
Faggard - Realtor	Robinson, Albert “California Jack” – Tool Dresser
Fultz, Bill	Thornton, Dr. – Medical Doctor
Hayes, Burt	Toon - Realtor
Hodson, Dr. - Dentist	Wade, Jack – Telephone lineman
Jones, C. Lee – Slush Pit Digger	Wade, Walter – Telephone lineman
Lear, Edd - Grocery store owner	Wilson - Eating Stand
	Young – Store Proprietor



Oil City, Young County, Texas, in early 1920's.²²



**Zona and Amos Grimshaw (front) at
Oil City, Texas.²²**



Oil Well (near Grimshaw)

An oil well near Oil City, Texas.²²



Grimshaw, Texas

Milton Bunger and Monroe Cole in front of the Roy Ribble Filling Station in Oil City, Texas. Photo taken in 1922.²²



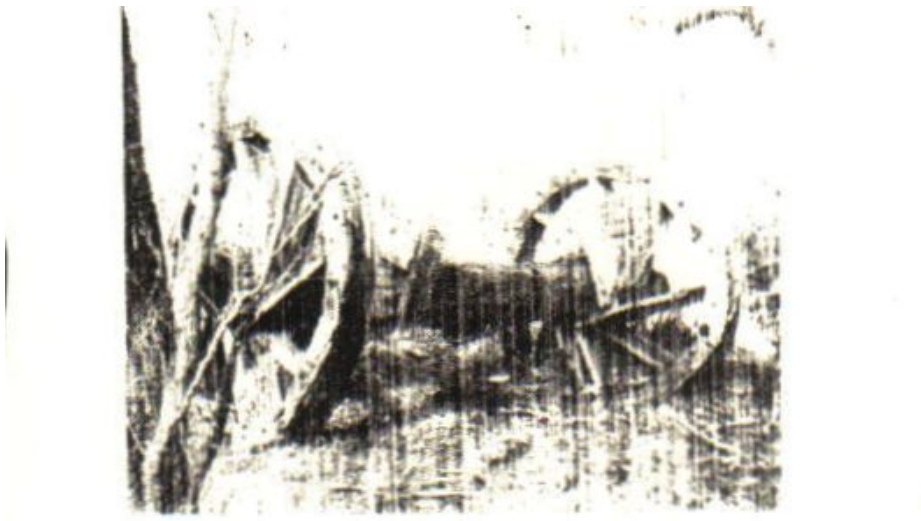
Arilla and Zona Grimshaw and Mrs. R. D. Owen in front of Water Tank at Grimshaw, Texas. The names of the children are unknown. The signage on the door of the truck in the picture reads "Stephens County Water Co. Inc. NO 3."²²



Road sign on FM 1287 showing Oil City Road, which heads west from the highway at the former Oil City location. Photo taken March 2001.⁵



Actively pumping oil well at former Oil City Location, just west of FM 1827. Photo taken March 2001.⁵



WOODEN BULL WHEELS in the pasture are all that remain of Oil City.

Remains of Wooden Bull Wheels at Oil City. Photo taken in 1966.¹²



Remains of Wooden Bull Wheels at Oil City. Photo taken 2001.⁵



Lease sign located at intersection of Oil City Road and FM 1827, for nearby C. Grimshaw lease. Photo taken March 2001.⁵



Current Resident of Oil City, Texas. Photo taken April 2001.³⁵

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