



Miss Maxine Cutlip  
Wewoka, Oklahoma

W. A. BISHOP  
(1909 - 1949)

HOMER H. BISHOP

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OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING

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March 22, 1951

Miss Maxine Cutlip  
Wewoka, Oklahoma

Dear Maxine:

It was my pleasure to hear Honorable C. Guy Cutlip deliver this speech on March 17, 1932. Never can I forget it. Your Dad was my friend and a great guy. I enclose a copy of speech to you as a gesture of the deep regard in which I held him and his family.

With kindest personal regards.

Sincerely,



HOMER H. BISHOP

HHB/gd

Enclosure

"He was a good man, possessing few, if any faults," said the late Judge C. Guy Cutlip of R. H. Smith, discoverer of the Wewoka pool.

# History of the Discovery Well And Advent of the Oil Boom in Wewoka

Some of the trials and tribulations encountered by Roland H. Smith in drilling the well which was to make the county seat town of Wewoka an oil town and the cynosure of the oil fraternity were vividly recalled at a memorial tree planting ceremony at City Park nine years later—March 17, 1932.

The excitement that followed on that memorial St. Patrick's day of 1923 also was vividly related.

The speaker was the late Judge C. Guy Cutlip, lawyer, judge, town builder and one of the prominent personalities in Wewoka's history who, a few years later, was to go to his reward.

Complete text of Judge Cutlip's eulogy of the late Mr. Smith was published in The Wewoka Times-Democrat, now The Wewoka Times.

"C. Guy," as he was affectionately known to thousands of friends, himself played no small part in hastening the discovery of oil here. When Mr. Smith was without funds to proceed further, the personable and resourceful Mr. Cutlip summoned a small group of Wewokans and succeeded in raising \$350.00 (a sizable sum at that time) to keep the project going. But for this assist at that crucial time, when Mr. Smith was discouraged and just about ready to "toss in the sponge," Wewoka may not have become an oil center for many years.

To commemorate the 28th anniversary of oil discovery here, the text of Judge Cutlip's eloquent address at the memorial tree planting is being republished today. It follows:

We have met here this afternoon for the purpose of paying tribute to the memory of Roland H. Smith, who first brought in an oil gusher from the deeper sands of Seminole county.

Others many years ago before this time had sought in the depths of the earth the black gold, but inadequate machinery and a wrong location had compassed their defeat.

More than thirty years ago Hon. Courtland L. Long, the patriarch of Wewoka, located the first well to be drilled on the western portion of the original townsite of Wewoka. In 1907 the Wewoka Trading Company brought in a well from the 1620 foot sand, known as the "Wewoka sand," which actually produced considerable low grade crude oil or petroleum. This was on the original townsite, but no other production was ever found in this vicinity although several wells were drilled.

**Many Were Interested**  
Mr. Samuel W. Lane, Joe Howard, Bill Laramour, E. E. Jayne and others drilled one on the Jackson Brown allotment just east of the present high school building. It was dry, also.

In 1920, the Producers & Refiners Oil Company drilled a well to the Wewoka sand a mile southwest of the southeast corner of the original townsite of Wewoka which produced low grade in

small quantities and was still producing the last time I heard from it.

However, in 1915, the same R. H. Smith to whom we dedicate this ceremony, drilled a well in section 4, township 7 North and range 8 east about three miles southeast of Wewoka just over in Hughes county. This was a small producer and gave promise of opening a pool. In fact it was just in the southeast edge of what was later to be known as the Smith pool.

### Well Started in 1922

But it remained for R. H. Smith on March 17th 1923, to make the strike that was to open the Greater Seminole fields. This well was started in 1922 and drilled under many difficulties. Mr. Smith was short of funds. He traded the offset forty to the north to the Producers & Refiners Company for a string of casing. He had to "stand off" the men working on the rig for their pay. It was drilled with what is known as a standard string or cable tools.

The oil people of the state laughed at Smith which tended to discourage and embarrass him. Lawyers "jumped" the title of some of his leases. This nearly broke him down. He came to my office protesting against the action of the Wewoka lawyers and threatening to discontinue his work. He stated he was out of funds and discouraged and was going to quit. I called a meeting of the citizenship and we made up three hundred and twenty-five dollars, a magnificent sum for those days, and now do not see how we ever raised it. I acted as chairman of the meeting and appointed Elmer Work and B. D. Lack, citizen of Wewoka, to go to the Indian who had employed the lawyers and fix up the titles. After much trouble this they did, and the well drilled on. Suddenly, it seemed to us who waited, the drill sank into the bowels of the earth. Thirty one hundred feet was reached and then ten more and it began to belch forth a murky mist. Oil had been struck in large quanti-



The Late JUDGE C. GUY CUTLIP

Whose eloquence proclaimed Wewoka's appreciation of Roland H. Smith at the memorial tree planting at City Park, March 17, 1932. The tree planted in honor and memory of Mr. Smith is now a stately one.



ties. The news traveled like wildfire.

### News Spreads Rapidly

At this time, looking back, it seems entirely impossible for the news to have gotten around as it did. The well came in late in the afternoon of March 17th, 1923. The little hotels of the town were crowded with oil scouts, oil men, lease brokers, royalty buyers, and all those others who keep tab on the oil development in strange places. There was feverish excitement, people ran here and there, apparently not knowing what they did. Talk of big money was first heard in Wewoka.

Middle aged men danced jigs on the street. A perfect stream of cars travelled the road to the new well. The papers of the state next morning carried "streamer" headlines of the strike. What had been a little, sleepy country village came to life and was astir with excited humanity. Throngs of humanity jostled each other on the streets seeking business locations, leases, royalty and town property.

The big rush was on that was to push Wewoka from a village of 1520 people to an excellent city of more than 10,000 people, and Seminole county from a bare 22,000 population to more than 78,000 population.

The well was located in section 33, township 8 north and range 8 east a mile and half southeast of the Wewoka townsite. After more than 20 years of spasmodic drilling for oil, the goal had been reached. Earnest and sober men with vision set out to build a city. Today demonstrated their accomplishment.

### Work Was Well Done

It would take too long and be too tedious to recite the activity, the toil, the strife, the worry and the judgement exercised by those sturdy men of 1923, '24, '25 and '26 in achieving their purpose. Suffice it to say their work was well done, their purpose was achieved, a city was built, such a one as any of us may be justly proud.

The perseverance, the confidence, the stick-to-it of R. H. Smith laid the foundation upon which we built. Had it been postponed the later difficulties of the oil industry might have thwarted our purpose. So we give credit today to R. H. Smith.

Roland H. Smith was born in Pittsburgh, Penn., on May 19, 1878 the son of Miranda Flack and Roland H. Smith. He was married in 1900. He came west to "wildcat" for oil in 1912, coming to northern Oklahoma and by chance only saw the spot that was later to make him immense wealth. He sold out his holding to the Dixie Oil Company in 1924 for something like \$3,000,000,000 but continued his activities in the Mid-Continent field, extending the operation in Pontotoc county near Ada. He organized the Oklahoma Oil Company and was its president until his death.

### Had A Kind Heart

He was a good man, possessing but few, if any faults. An amiable disposition, a kind heart, a friendly outlook upon life. He was loved and respected by everyone who knew him. Searching among one's acquaintances it would be impossible to discover a finer, nobler, better man. He died in Philadelphia on January 29th, 1932. And today we come to plant a tree to commemorate the life of R. H. Smith.

Little past the middle span of life he was stricken down. But what matters time, the great wheel of fate rolls majestically on, crushing some early, some late, but crushing all in time and today we are but the crushed and powdered dust of yesterday.

I might have, had I the wealth, reared here a great marble picture of the man, gazing intently upon the earth with unseeing eyes seeking the oily wealth hidden in the depths—the wealth that was to bring more satisfaction and contentment to men, more progress and change to the

community—more notice and publicity to the state.

But it is more fitting that I plant this tree, rearing its head toward the clouds as time goes on, springing from the earth from whence the man sought wealth, affording in its stately after-year cooling shades that bring the contentment and subtle satisfaction the wealth of earth can only give; defying the storm and welcoming the sunshine, affording shelter to the weary and beauty to the loitering throngs, it grows on through the centuries like the soul of the good men it commemorates who brought additional blessings and prosperity to the many through his perseverance, stemming as he did the jibes of the unbelieving and the storms of censure, ridicule and disbelief.

We honored him in his life and in his death we plant this tree to commemorate that honor and respect after death.