



# Drilling Wells in Oklahoma by the Mud-Laden Fluid Method (Classic Reprint)

*A G Heggem*

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Excerpt from Drilling Wells in Oklahoma by the Mud-Laden Fluid Method

The waste of natural gas in Oklahoma has been enormous, and unless methods of preventing this waste are adopted the wealth of that State Will be decreased, not only by the intrinsic value of the gas wasted, but by loss of income obtained from those communi ties and industries whose prosperity and life depend on the exist ence and utilization of this ideal fuel. Furthermore, the rapid removal of gas from oil-bearing beds tends to decrease the total yield of oil. The saving of the gas is important to the oil producer also, for the use of gas to generate power makes it possible to operate profitably an oil lease that otherwise may have to be aban doned, and this, too, at a time when the revenue, though small, is steady. At many wells in the older oil fields the natural gas has been wasted, and crude oil, or more generally gasoline, has been used to generate the power to pump the oil, thus increasing the cost of production. The maximum yield of oil can be obtained only where a fuel as cheap and efficient as natural gas is available.

During the winter of 1912 - 13 the development of the Cushing field in Oklahoma became very active, and many wells were drilled to the deeper sands which contained large volumes of natural gas. The enormous waste of the gas encountered during the drilling for oil called forth protests from various sources, and appeal was made to the President of the United States and to the Secretary of the Interior in behalf of the landowner and of the public welfare.

The facts were wanted regarding the amount of the waste and the technical conditions that were responsible for practices causing it.

An investigation was ordered and conducted under the direct supervision of J. A. Holmes, Director of the Bureau of Mines, who in the latter part of March sent the writers to Oklahoma to study well-drilling methods with reference to the waste of gas from wells on Indian lands and to suggest means of preventing the waste of natural gas on such lands.

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