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MRS FORD'S REMARKS

GLADYS CITY

April 21, 1976

WHAT AN HONOR IT IS

I.

TO BECOME A CITIZEN OF BEAUMONT---

A CITY WITH PEOPLE

OF SUCH GREAT IMAGINATION AND PRIDE

IN THE PAST.

IT SEEMS SO MUCH

2.

LIKE WHAT I'VE HEARD ABOUT TEXAS AND TEXANS---

THAT YOU BUILT A WHOLE TOWN

TO CELEBRATE THE BICENTENNIAL.

WHAT A TOWN!

3.

AND WHAT A BICENTENNIAL GIFT TO THE NATION!

EVERYONE---YOUNG AND OLD---

WILL BE ENTRANCED BY GLADYS CITY.

BECAUSE IT REALLY IS FUN

TO RELIVE SUCH AN EXCITING TIME.

AMERICA LOVES THE WEST---

4.

MEMORIES OF THE COWBOY AND THE "BOOM TOWN"

ARE FAVORITES IN OUR FOLKLORE

AND MANY OF OUR WORKS OF ART.

BUT GLADYS CITY IS MORE THAN A PLACE

5.

TO LET THE IMAGINATION WANDER.

AS I WALKED DOWN THESE STREETS,

I THOUGHT ABOUT THE CONTRAST

BETWEEN LIFE AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

AND TODAY.

...TREMENDOUS PROGRESS,  
We've made such tremendous progress,  
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OIL INDUSTRY

6.

HAS PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE

IN THIS PROGRESS.

GLADYS CITY BRINGS TO LIFE

7.

A TIME OF GREAT ADVENTURE

AND REMINDS US

TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF OUR DAY.

ON BEHALF OF THE NATION

8.

THANK YOU FOR A VERY EXCITING BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

I'LL ALWAYS BE PROUD

TO BE A CITIZEN OF BEAUMONT---

A "BOOM TOWN" GROWN INTO A DYNAMIC CITY.

# # #

# Background

Gladys City, Beaumont, ~~WA~~ Texas---Wednesday, April 21, 1976

Gladys City is a recreated oil "boom town." It is located about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the Spindletop fields where the first ~~big~~ big gusher came ~~in~~ in 1901. That ~~gusher~~ gusher launched Beaumont as an oil center. Both Gulf and Texaco were founded there.

Gladys City is a ~~B~~ Bicentennial project. Funds were raised by selling shares to local citizens. The town of clapboard buildings, wooden oil derricks, storage tanks and oil equipment displays was built strictly as a museum. It will be run by ~~Lamar University~~ Lamar University, a state-supported ~~school~~ university with about 10,000 students. Gladys City was dedicated in January of this year.

Beaumont is about 30 miles from the coast. The economy centers around the petrochemical industry. Rice farming ~~is~~ is also important.

## BACKGROUND

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## Betty Ford Visits Gladys City

and Beaumont

4/21/76

A program ~~heralding~~ heralding the arrival of First Lady Betty Ford in Gladys City in Beaumont will begin at 4 p m. today in the re constructed boomtown which sprang up around ~~Spindletop~~ Spindletop in 1901, where the discovery of oil ushered in the nation's petrochemical industry.

~~Entertaining~~ Entertaining visitors to Gladys City prior to Mrs. Ford's arrival will be the Forest Park High School Choir of Beaumont ~~which~~ which will present barber shop music.

Mrs. Ford is scheduled to arrive at Gladys City at 4:30 p.m. She will be greeted at the gate by Victor ~~Rogers~~ Rogers, chairman of the Beaumont Bicentennial Commission, Dr. John Gray, president of Lamar University which runs Gladys City, Beaumont Mayor KenRitter, Bill Neild, president of the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, Will Wilson, president of the Lucas Gusher Monument Association and Calvin Smith, director of Gladys City.

She will then walk to a platform areato the left of the main gate to meet members of the Bicentennial Commission and the Lamar University Board of Regents.

Mrs . Ford will then begin a tour of Gladys City, led by Calvin Smith. Three persons will be in each of the buildings to explain various aspects about each structure. She will start with the Gladys City Oil and Gas and Manufacturing Co., then to the Gladys City Drug Store, Edgerton Photography Studio, Brokers Office, general store, Gibsbn Dry Goods, and post office.

The national champion Nederland High school Westernaires will begin a routine in the concrete area in the middle of ~~the~~

more

Gladys City. ~~After a short routine, they will be followed by square dancers as Mrs. Ford continues her tour.~~

Mrs. Ford will then go to the Log Cabin Saloon, where a small group of Westernaires will do a can can routine for the First Lady. They will be followed by a group of square dancers who will invite Mrs. Ford to join them.

Upon exiting the saloon, Mrs. Ford will be welcomed to the city by Dr. Gray. Ritter will proclaim Wednesday as Betty Ford Day and read a proclamation passed by the City Council for the occasion.

Rogers, as head of the Bicentennial Commission, will read a Gladys City Proclamation and <sup>Jefferson</sup> County Judge Leonard Giblin will read highlights of a proclamation from the County Commissioners accepting a <sup>2</sup> 200-year-old map for Gladys City describing ~~an~~ the East Texas Coastal area. The map was donated by the British Royal Navy.

Mrs. Ford will offer a response ~~to~~ to the welcome and presentations and the tour will resume, with stops in the barber shop, livery stable, blacksmith shop, Nelson and White Engineers Co. and the Gladys City information bureau. *The Lamar University Band will also entertain during the tour. about 5:30*

Mrs. Ford will leave Gladys City ~~at the end of the tour~~ and go to the Red Carpet Inn in Beaumont where she will rest prior to attending a private party in her honor where she will meet with President Ford Committee volunteers and supporters.

Mrs. Ford will spend the night in Beaumont and leave Thursday for Austin where she will tour the LBJ Library with Lady Bird Johnson.

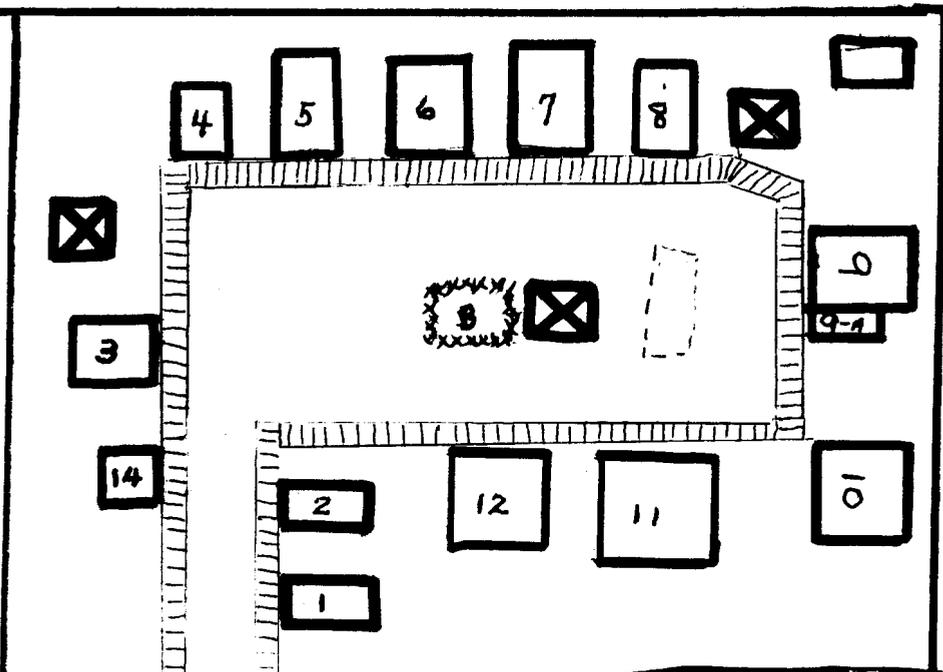
Mrs. Ford will be accompanied by Mrs. John Tower, wife of Texas' senior senator.



# GLADYS CITY LAYOUT

1. Information Bureau
2. Nelson & White Engineers
3. Gladys City Drug
4. Edgerton Photographer
5. Brokers Office
6. General Store
7. Gibson Dry Goods
8. Post Office
9. Log Cabin Saloon
- 9A. Barber Shop
10. Sheet Metal Works
11. Livery Stable
12. Blacksmith Shop
13. rest rooms
14. Gladys City Oil & Gas & mfg. Co.

N. ACCESS CARDINAL DRIVE



UNIVERSITY DRIVE

Gladys City, Wednesday, April 21, 1976

What an honor to become a citizen of Beaumont---a city with people of <sup>such</sup> great imagination and pride in the past. It seems so much like what I've heard about Texas and Texans---that you built a whole town to celebrate the Bicentennial.

What a town! ~~And~~ What a Bicentennial gift to the Nation! Everyone---young and old---will be entranced by Gladys City, because it really is fun to relive such an exciting time. America loves the West---memories of the cowboy and the "boom town" are favorites in our folklore.

But Gladys City is more than a place to let the imagination wander. As I walked down these streets, I thought about the contrast between life at the turn of the century and today. ~~What~~ tremendous progress <sup>such</sup> we've made! The Lucas gusher and the flow of oil has changed the way we live.

Gladys City brings to life a time of great adventure and reminds us to seize the opportunities of our day.

On behalf of the Nation, thank you for a very exciting birthday present. I'll always be proud to be a citizen of Beaumont--- a "boom town" grown into a dynamic city.



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Beaumont

1) Mrs. O. J. Lea Richardson  
(713) 727-7323 - party person  
OC 722-5193 - and along  
- close friend of  
pres. of House

Lamar U. is having the "Big Week"  
April 19-25  
"a week of special activities celebrating  
the Revolution"



FIRST LADY  
INV/1974/ST 43/Beaumont  
FL 5-1  
FORD, Mike & Gayle / INV/1974/Texas  
FORD, JOHN / INV/1974/TEXAS  
FORD, Steve / INV/1974/Texas  
FORD, Susan / INV/1974/Texas

September 9, 1974

LAMAR UNIVERSITY  
P. O. BOX  
BEAUMONT, TEXAS

Dear Mr. Stofan,

Your thoughtful letter inviting a member of the Ford family to participate in your Tele-Lecture series at Lamar University is greatly appreciated. Although their personal and official commitments will not permit them this opportunity, I am sure they would want me to convey their hopes for the success of this program.

APPOINTMENT OFFICE

August 16, 1974

With gratitude for your inquiry and warmest regards,  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Sincerely,

Dear President Ford:

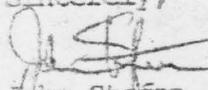
Earlier last month we invited you to participate in a Tele-Lecture series at Lamar University. Susan Porter, Director of Scheduling, Mr. Warren S. Rustand, indicated to us that you were interested in participating for Mrs. Ford.

We now realize it is impossible, with your busy schedule as President, to participate and we would be very happy to extend our invitation to members of your family. The discussion could be centered around the transmission of the message to make since you have become president.

Mr. John Stofan  
Program Director  
Lamar University  
Post Office Box 10018  
Beaumont, Texas 77710

Something can be worked out and look forward to a reply

SP:js

Sincerely,  
  
John Stofan  
Program Director  
Lamar University

c: BF Pending folder to consider

JS/rw

RECEIVED

SEP 11 1974

SOCIAL FILES

Copy filed in Central file



LAMAR UNIVERSITY

P. O. BOX 10018  
BEAUMONT, TEXAS 77710

ACT 13.1  
T/D \_\_\_\_\_  
SCHEDULE BD. \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE RECEIVED

AUG 21 1974

GRF  
MAIL ROOM  
BREAKERS BUREAU  
OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

APPOINTMENT OFFICE

ETZER STUDENT CENTER

August 16, 1974

Gerald Ford  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Ford:

Earlier last month we invited you to participate in a Tele-Lecture series at Lamar University. Your Director of Scheduling, Mr. Warren S. Rustand, indicated to us you would be interested in participating.

We now realize it is impossible, with your busy schedule as President, to participate and we would be very happy to extend our invitation to members of your family. The discussion could be centered around the transition they have had to make since you have become president.

We hope something can be worked out and look forward to a reply from you soon.

Sincerely,

John Stefan  
Program Director  
Lamar University

JS/iw



PRESS ROOMS, THE WHITE HOUSE PARTY

Beaumont  
(713)  
17 singles

200	Lee THORNTON	CBS
201	ANN COMPTON	ABC
202	MURRY ALVEY	ABC
215	GEORGE GERLACK	ABC
203	WILLIAM JENKINS	ABC
204	JOHN HAMILTON	MELBOURNE HERALD
205	DON SMITH	ABC
206	TERRANCE LYNN FRY	cbs
207	LOUIS MILTON KIDD	cbs
216	THOMAS MORRIS BYRNE	cbs
208	ROBERT BARR	cbs
209	MARY LOU ABBOTT	HOUSTON chronicle
<del>DOUBLE</del>	<del>DAVID KENNETH BOLES</del>	<del>KPRC</del>
<del>DOUBLE</del>	<del>JOEL LESLIE SMITH</del>	<del>KPRC</del>
210	Jeanne Prejean	dallas morning news
211	KATHY LEWIS	HOUSTON POST
214	GAIL BURRIS	DAILY TEXAN
	217 Wdg	
	218 Fredrickson	

AUGUST WARD  
838-2611  
Red Carpet Inn  
call

153 Matson  
155 Weidenfeld  
356 { Kelly  
Gilbertson  
354 Schumacher



SAMPLE CREDENTIAL RELEASE

First Lady BF will be honored at San Jacinto day ~~ceremonies~~ <sup>festivities</sup> at Gladys City, Weds, April 21. The ~~prog~~ <sup>festivities</sup> ~~festivities~~, which will begin at 4 pm, will be sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_.

All media wishing to cover Mrs. Ford's visit should submit credentials requests to Phyllis \_\_\_\_\_, PFC (address) 2360 Calder, suite 231 (phone) (713) 838 0378 or 0377

Deadline for credentials request is Monday, <sup>April 19</sup> 8 5 pm.

- The following information is <sup>requested:</sup> required:
- Name
  - Affiliation + position
  - Social security number or passport number if not US citizen
  - Date of birth
  - Place of birth
  - Business phone number
  - Home phone number

The above information may be delivered in person or called in to the office listed above. This office will be open from 9 to 5 pm today (Weds, April 14) through Monday, Apr 19.

Credentials must be picked up in person by each individual member of the media at 2360 Calder, suite 231 from 9 to noon on weds, April 21.

Request for credentials will not be accepted after Monday, April 19 at 5 pm



**GLADYS  
CITY**

---



*By James Clark*



Jimmie Clark, Beaumont and one of the co-authors of "Spindletop" (published by Random House but now out of print) has volunteered to write a series of columns between now and Jan. 10 as his contribution to the Gladys City campaign. The new Gladys City will open Jan. 10.

His generosity, he explains, comes from the fact that neither the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce nor The Enterprise Co. offered to pay for the series and he was afraid they would ask someone else. That, he said, would be an invasion of his territory.

It is anticipated that there will be from three to six columns weekly in this series during the next two months.

Complaints may be addressed to Clark at P.O. Box 6751, Houston, 77005.

Gladys City was, in effect, a real estate promotion by Pattillo Higgins, the prophet of Spindletop. His vision was an industrial city in the southern outskirts of Beaumont, which was a small village in a county with barely 5,000 citizens at the time.

But the dream that Higgins had was far more complex than the average real estate promotion. The basis of his sales pitch was that oil wells would be found on the mound in the middle of a prairie that would produce tens of thousands of barrels of oil daily. It might have been this tendency to "exaggerate" that dampened the enthusiasm (if any) of Beaumonters for the project.

Higgins had promoted a company to back his project and he called it the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Co. His "angels" were George W. Carroll and George W. O'Brien, both distinguished leaders of the community. The company was named for Gladys Bingham, a 7-year-old member of Higgins' Sunday School class.

Higgins wanted the company to be a total Beaumont operation. He was convinced of its success, without even a hint of doubt, and he wanted it to make Beaumont the biggest city in the south.

Gladys City, the center of the promotion, was to be a complete industrial city four miles south of Beaumont's city limits.

One thing that must be constantly kept in mind about the Spindletop Oil Field (a name Higgins abhorred since it was the name of a competitive real estate development) is that this great field was the beginning of the liquid fuel age for America and the world. It has been called the first Texas oil field, which is wrong; the first oil gusher, which is wrong; or the first big field in Texas, which it was, or where oil became an industry, which it was not.

But the beginning of the liquid fuel age, far more important than all of these combined, it was. It was the field which gave the impression that it was completely inexhaustible, and caused one of the world's greatest oil wildcatters, John H. Galey of Pennsylvania, to tell Mike Welker, a Beaumont Enterprise reporter, that he considered it the birth of the liquid fuel age.

What the beginning of the liquid fuel age meant was that it was the field that changed the world. Industry would change from solid fuels, such as coal and wood, to petroleum. Oil's efficiency in burning, ease in handling, and relative simplicity in producing, gave the industrial revolution the kick it needed to project itself into the 20th century with a vigor that not even the dreamers of industrialization had anticipated.

So, it is important to remember that Spindletop was the birthplace of the liquid fuel age. Otherwise it would have been a relatively small, if temporarily spectacular, oil field and would not have been a fit subject for even a book by that name.

Yet the oil industry, the people of Texas and the nation, and even the people of Beaumont forgot that simple fact as the years passed. Beaumont forgot it so completely that they chose "Where Oil Became an Industry" as the slogan for the celebration of the old field's golden anniversary.

If anyone were going to pick a man with a vision in the late 1870s, the last person on the list would have been a rough, tough bully named Pattillo Higgins.

He wasn't the type who was likely to end up in prison because he was pure mischief without an ounce of felony. But he had what it took to keep the town boys out of his way and he built up a reputation for being a ne'er-do-well and a barroom wrangler.

Pattillo was the only son of Robert J. Higgins, named after his father's brother. He was born in Beaumont on Dec. 5, 1868, just over 33 years before the realization of a dream that would change the world.

He completed his education with the equivalent of four years schooling before he had to go to work in a shingle mill at the age of 13.

The elder Higgins was something of a character himself. He was said to have been a prisoner of war in the War Between the States, but he never confirmed that. He did speak of being one of Brave Dick Dowling's men in the famous battle of Sabine Pass.

Robert Higgins, a native of Georgia who stopped in Texas on his way to seek gold in California, became the town's gunsmith, mill mechanic, wedding ring manufacturer, and its only dentist.

Pattillo had four sisters. His mother was Sarah Catherine Anne Ray of Alabama. Robert met her on his trek west.

As a boy, Pattillo Higgins, known to his friends as "Bud," was big for his age and became a master at the art of fisticuffs. He was also a prankster whose mischief knew no bounds. As he grew into his teens he became a brawler, an habitue of barrooms, a penny ante gambler, and a tobacco chewer.

Among his pranks were such antics as setting an abandoned house afire on the outskirts of town in a driving rain so the town's volunteer firemen, composed of local society dudes, would respond by pulling their new fire engine through mud and high grass as he and his cronies roared in laughter when they passed.

On another occasion when two desperadoes were stashed in a cage-like pen, hanging by strong ropes from a large tree in front of the courthouse, Pattillo and his associates managed to cut the ropes. The cage fell and the bandits escaped. The boys also escaped to the Higgins home across Pearl Street.

But the most reprehensible of his stunts came one cold night north of town where a congregation of black Baptists was holding a revival. The boys carefully removed the steps from the front of the closed double door, took a hornets nest they had found nearby and placed it in a knothole in the floor of the church, freeing the hornets. Then they split their sides laughing under the church as the revivalists poured out headlong.

A passing deputy sheriff, attracted by the commotion, heard the boys scampering through the trees and took a shot in their direction to scare them into halting. The bullet ricocheted off a big oak and hit Pattillo in the hand. The hand became infected and the left arm had to be amputated, almost to the shoulder.

The loss of the arm slowed him down only slightly. He went into the woods to work as a logger and proved his prowess with his fists on every possible occasion. He continued his revelry whenever he came to town on the

weekends and, the natives were certain he was bound for the penitentiary before he could vote.

But one night as he passed the First Baptist Church something seemed to pull him in. A 19th century Billy Graham was conducting a revival. His booming but mellifluous voice seemed to hypnotize the wayward youth and right then and there his life changed and he accepted conversion. In the audience was a neighbor and his boss, George Washington Carroll, one of the city's leading lumbermen. He was impressed that this young Huckleberry Finn should so willingly accept Christ and decided to talk to him.

George W. Carroll was not only a distinguished business leader of the town of Beaumont, he was a power in the Baptist church and a devoted member of the congregation. Some said he was a fanatic, but that description was too strong. He was a genuine Christian.

He could have been called slightly eccentric. He believed in eliminating the occasion for sin, so he was militantly opposed to drinking and gambling. In fact, he personally led occasional citizens' raids on barrooms and gambling parlors.

He was a man who hated sin but sincerely loved sinners. It was his philosophy that churches were made more for sinners than for the saved. He knew Pattillo Higgins was a sinner, but not one beyond redemption. And Carroll knew the boy was bright, inventive and imaginative.

As Pattillo came out the door of the church with a sort of glow on his face, George Carroll stuck out his hand to greet and congratulate him and welcome him to the congregation. Pattillo was impressed and proud. Carroll told Pattillo that if there were ever anything he could do for him to ask, and the way he said it, Pattillo knew he meant it. There were many ways young "Bud" Higgins could use help.

The question comes up as to what led Higgins into the church that night. In several interviews with him, I was never able to find out. His friends tell me they think it was a sudden inspiration instead of something he had thought about for a long time. And after going in, which he had done with his mother many times in his boyhood, why did he decide to become baptized?

But when he finally decided to become a Christian, he wasn't shy about it. He went all the way. That very night he stopped drinking, gambling, chewing tobacco and chasing wild women. His change might not have been equal to the conversions of Saul or Aurelius Augustinus, but they all had similar characteristics.

In fact, in later years many Beaumonters reasoned that the Lord simply came to "Bud" Higgins that night because he had a job for him to do for mankind. Others said Higgins knew exactly what he was doing because he wanted to get George Carroll to help him get out of the woods. These were the hypocrites and cynics talking. They had no evidence, just the usual vicious talk of their type. But even so, you have to accept the thesis that even if that were Higgins' motivation for conversion, it was God acting in his usual mysterious way.

Whatever happened that night in that little Baptist church led to an event that changed the world, possibly one of the greatest economic events in the history of mankind.

It wasn't too long before Pattillo Higgins called on George Carroll in his office and received a genuinely warm welcome. Higgins explained that he would like to get into some business on his own and get out of the logging camps.

Carroll thought a few minutes and asked Higgins how he would like to get into the land and real estate business. Higgins said fine, but that he didn't have much capital to

start on. He said he could carry his own expenses for a few weeks.

So, that's what happened. Carroll told Higgins his company and others in the lumber business were always looking for new timberlands and frequently attempting to dispose of cutover land. Carroll said he would make some introductions and Higgins could start working when he thought he was ready. That didn't take long.

Pattillo Higgins was as bright and imaginative as Carroll suspected and he was not long in making his new business a success.

In a short time he had been accepted even by most of the "society dudes" who once formed the volunteer fire department. In fact, in about 1887 he joined George W. Carroll and Dr. W.H. Smith in buying a plot of land at Pearl and Forsythe to donate as a site for a new First Baptist Church. Later when the church outgrew the building there, it transferred the property to the Tyrrell Public Library.

The great vision of Gladys City, however, was yet to come into Pattillo Higgins' sight.

An almost instant success in the real estate business, it didn't take Pattillo Higgins long to become a respected citizen of Beaumont. Not only that, he made a host of friends in the surrounding area.

As he went through the country he frequently ran into his old logging friends in the timberlands. They were a rough lot and were constantly surprised at the changes brought about in "Bud," as they knew him.

He wasn't anything like he had been. Instead of looking for fights, he now went out of his way to avoid the few that presented themselves. He didn't drink, smoke or play cruel practical jokes, and he didn't even use profanity or chase loose women who seemed to try to throw themselves at him.

Of course, most remembered how he was the best fighter in the lumber camps despite the fact that he had only one arm, so he was not the butt of many jokes about his changeover, but he left his old cronies bewildered.

One day in the mid-1880s he was riding through a blinding rain in Orange County, not too far east of the Neches River, when he noticed a strange sort of reddish soil pushing its way up through the black earth.

A student of nature, he dismounted to look closer.

It covered a considerable area and his curiosity was aroused. He had never seen such a sign of nature before, so he dug down as far as he could with a small shovel he always carried and the phenomenon seemed bottomless. He put a sample in his saddle bag and proceeded to his home. There he analyzed it with chemical equipment and decided it was a rich clay of the type from which bricks were made.

This discovery gave him an idea for a brick kiln. His next step was to return to the area and buy as much of the cheap land as he considered necessary for such an operation.

He knew that in Houston and New Orleans many buildings, even houses, were being built of brick and that it couldn't be too long before the same thing might happen in Beaumont.

As his own boss he had ample time to study, research, and do the things he wanted to do on his own time. He went to several businessmen and suggested the idea for a kiln. He was a master salesman, among his many other talents, so he got the backing necessary.

He obtained literature on how to build a kiln and operate it from government publications and the library. When he was convinced he could build one, he gathered up the

necessary equipment, hired a crew, and in a few weeks had a workable kiln in operation.

The only trouble was the jerry-built plant was not very efficient. Despite this he produced a fair quality of brick and he and his investors made a small profit. It was a new business for him, but he doubted that it could succeed without considerable improvement.

Young Higgins was a remarkable man considering his limited education of less than four years in a poor elementary school. But he had inherited several talents, and he had an unquenchable interest in education. He bought books on every new subject that came across his mind.

His life in the out-of-doors gave him a consuming interest in the earth. But in addition he developed talents in such fields as chemistry, philosophy, economics, history, and more than anything else, the Bible. As a mechanic, he had few peers. He was also a cartographer, and drew the first complete map of Jefferson County. He also drew maps of the other counties and parishes where he did business.

He studied engineering, geology, and designing. He was also a good carpenter, plumber, and bricklayer. He could build a house or a boat or repair anything mechanical.

In fact, it was Higgins himself who recognized his kiln was inefficient and decided to do something about it.

The man who was to become the prophet of the liquid fuel age was a successful businessman. More than that he was a man at peace with God and the world.

His widowed mother and sisters were safe from the rigors of poverty due to Pattillo's success in business. Furthermore, he promised himself that he would not consider marriage until he could be assured they would never want for anything.

He had become a leader in the First Baptist Church and had accepted an appointment to teach Sunday school for a class of young girls.

It is said that one of the girls in his class was a bright and beautiful child named Gladys Odom. Once in a while his bachelorhood would come up in conversation and his stock answer was that he was waiting for Gladys to grow up. Unfortunately sweet Gladys died suddenly one day. The incident moved Higgins deeply.

Another Gladys later became his favorite. Her name was Gladys Bingham. Her father was one of his friends and boosters. Gladys was 7 years old and admired her teacher as much as her father did and often told him so. It was mutual.

All of the other girls loved Higgins also. Most of them were holdover members of his class of 30, the largest in the Sunday school, because they refused to be "promoted."

One of the reasons for this was his intense interest in teaching them. He told of the signs of nature. Often he took them on outings and furnished the refreshments. The most popular was a park at Spindletop springs near the edge of the Neches south of Beaumont, a short distance from the sour springs on a wide sloping mound west of the little park.

There he showed them five or six old springs of mineral waters some for drinking, others where animals with mange and other skin ailments often bathed or were dipped. He told how slaves in the old days built the walls for the springs.

He would often punch holes in the ground and light the gas which gushed from the earth. He said it was one of nature's signs and might mean there were valuable minerals below.

He also told of old tales about ghosts that would appear at

night. They were really emissions of gasses oozing upward, plus St. Elmo fires that would form, he told the girls.

Often Pattillo would go to the sour springs alone at night and study the phenomenon. He would dig into the ground and collect samples and think, often until the early hours of morning. Then he would mount his horse and ride home.

He would employ his natural artistic flair and skill to make drawings of his imagined subsurface formations of the mound which Beaumonters call the Big Hill, which had been known in the old days as Sour Springs.

He showed these drawings to his class and discussed them as part of his educational program. But most of that program was in the form of Bible stories. He talked of Christ and the disciples and what all of this meant to them and how they could live and serve their Maker and their friends.

It was amazing to those who had known this young man before that dramatic night of conversion to observe the incredible change in one who had been once regarded as evil and possessed of the devil.

But on weekdays Pattillo Higgins continued to worry about his brick kiln. He knew that if it worked right it could be an important addition to industry, put more poor people to work at the kiln and on construction. He even dreamed of other industries for his town, which he loved, and he hopes he could contribute to all of that. Beaumont was still a small, depressed little village. But it had many natural assets and good people.

He had notes from books on successful brick yard operation in the north and decided he should go there and get more ideas for rebuilding his own small plant.

Pattillo Higgins discussed his proposed trip to the north with his brick plant associates and they all agreed that he should go. Soon afterward he was on an extended trip north, providing most of the expenses himself, since he stayed longer than expected in Indiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York state.

He was fascinated by the things he saw. He observed the fine brick buildings and streets and realized even more what a good brick operation could do to help Beaumont.

He noticed that most of the northern kilns used gas or oil for fuel. He was in the midst of the great oil regions that had been discovered in 1859 by a promoter named Drake, a railroad conductor.

Petroleum, he now realized, was the principal reason the brick kilns there prospered. Their heat was good and even and easy to control. It was, he observed, far more efficient than coal or wood and, therefore, much less expensive.

His notebooks filled with date about making bricks, he turned his attention to oil producers. He asked how they found and produced oil. Some of them talked at length and told of many of the problems of finding and producing oil and gas, as opposed to the hit and miss ways of 30 years earlier.

The two things that interested him most were the signs of nature and how geologists selected good places to drill, and how drilling rigs worked.

Oilmen, fascinated by Higgins and his charm and interest in their work, supplied him with printed information about petroleum geology. One of these, in particular, was a pamphlet from the federal geological survey on how to seek oil.

The first thing, he learned, was to closely observe the earth and identify the "signs of nature," the very things he had been telling his Sunday School class about.

On the train back home he studied and thought and dreamed. Suddenly, he realized that the signs of nature at

Big Hill were identical with many of those covered in the government pamphlet. The thought ran across his mind that maybe Beaumont could progress even faster with oil than with a good brick kiln.

When he arrived back home he was met by his partners and found himself consumed with excitement to the extent that they had to calm him down before they could get much coherence out of him.

There was no problem to improving the Orange County brick kiln, he said. He knew exactly what they had done wrong in the construction and all of that could be cured through the application of simple principles of construction in order to get more heat from the fuel they were using.

BUT, he added, they could never have a plant as efficient as those in the north because they did not have oil and gas to use the fuel. But, he said, they could do a 100 per cent better than the old kiln did with wood and coal and made a great deal more brick — as well as more profit.

Then he got strung out on oil and gas and said he believed it could be found somewhere close enough to Beaumont to use it and even increase heat efficiency much more.

His friends said forget the oil and gas, at least for now, and get on with the improvements necessary to increase the production of bricks with the fuel available. Maybe they could think about petroleum later when they had made enough money. Pattillo went to work on the new plant, brought in an expert from the north to help in the construction, and started a retraining program of his crews and another program for additional men since he knew the plant would have to work around the clock.

With the improvements completed the plant worked even better than Pattillo had expected. The production of brick mounted and soon some of Beaumont's streets were being paved with brick and new brick houses and buildings were going up.

But he couldn't forget about oil. Soon he turned the kiln operation over to the man from north and got back to real estate where he could be free enough to think about oil.

For weeks Pattillo Higgins returned to the mound south of Beaumont whenever he had the time. He walked over every inch of it and studied its surface and outcrops. He tested the gases and pungent waters for chemical content.

One night he had a strange dream. He saw a community with nice homes, schools, churches, buildings and parks. In an adjoining area he could see large manufacturing plants. Near those were derricks towering over wells producing oil and gas.

He awakened in the middle of the night, went out to the stable, saddled up his horse and rode as fast as possible to the big hill. There he recognized the area where his dream had placed the town, the plants and the wells. He knew what he must do.

The next day he went back to the hill for a better inspection in the daylight. He laid out a townsite in his mind, exactly as he had seen in his dream. He sketched out blocks 300 feet square with lots 50 by 140 feet, streets 80 feet wide and alleyways 20 feet wide. Two streets on each side of the S.&E.T. Railway, a branch of the Southern Pacific, were each 100 feet wide, and one running through the center of the plat was 150 feet wide.

He even laid out the plant sites. One of these was a glass factory about 700 by 1,000 feet. It would employ 5,000 workers. That would not only wipe out all unemployment in Beaumont and Jefferson and Orange counties, it was only the beginning. The entire dream city would be fueled by a handful of great oil wells on the mound. There would be no boomtown. His city, which he had already mentally named

Gladys City, after Ike Bingham's little girl, would be a clean, busy and efficient industrial park.

He went to his brick plant associates and told them about his dream. They looked at him in puzzlement and told him they would have to pass up the opportunity. Not only had they invested heavily in the brick kiln, they were also getting ready to build a furniture plant. They invited him to join them in that venture.

So, Pattillo went to other prominent Beaumonters and attempted to arouse interest. He said his dream would make Beaumont and Port Arthur great cities with Gladys City in the center. Also, it would make all of them millionaires. Beaumonters looked at him with doubt.

He realized he needed a better approach. He found a tract of land containing 1,077 acres advertised for \$6 an acre in the James A. Veatch survey. It contained more than half the mound under which he knew he would find oil. He took an option on the land for \$1,000. He then engaged L.F. Daniel, a civil engineer, to survey the land and make a plat of his city.

His next step was to draw up geological maps to indicate just where he would place wells, a few, located apart from business, residential and industrial areas. These were the only lots where oil would be drilled. No mineral rights would be sold in any of the other lots in Gladys City. The few wells would produce all of the oil he would ever need from wells that would produce, if necessary, tens of thousands of barrels of oil daily.

With this organized data he went to see George Carroll. He had decided once not to impose on his benefactor, but he now felt he owed that much to the man whose help started him in business.

Carroll sat all one morning and listened to Pattillo tell about his dream, his inspection of the hill, his ideas about oil and gas, and what Gladys City might mean to Beaumont, Texas and even Louisiana.

The lumberman was fascinated. Finally, he stopped Pattillo in the middle of a sentence.

"I think your idea is magnificent," he said. "I will be honored to join you."

When George Washington Carroll told Higgins he believed in his idea, the prophet was momentarily stunned. He could hardly believe what he heard. No other man had even shown the slightest interest or asked him to come back and talk it over.

Then his enthusiasm almost overcame him. He grabbed Carroll by the shoulder and then wrapped his good right arm around the lumberman's body and embraced him. Carroll smiled as Pattillo backed off a little and said, simply, "Thank you Mr. Carroll I hope this will make you one of the richest men in the country."

Carroll gave him further encouragement when he said there was a man who might sell his land in the survey. That man was George Washington O'Brien, a distinguished attorney, who had also had some dreams of his own about the possibility of oil in the area around Beaumont.

They left the Carroll home, where they had met, and went to O'Brien's office. O'Brien met them warmly and asked what he could do for them. Carroll let Higgins make his pitch. He said he wanted to buy O'Brien's land for a new real estate development. He explained his idea for an industrial city. O'Brien stopped him only briefly several times to ask questions about points he didn't understand.

O'Brien had 1,350 acres in the Veatch survey. It abutted the Higgins acreage, and would more than double the size of the block. Most of it was within the circle Higgins had drawn to indicate the area he thought might produce oil.

When Higgins and Carroll said they were interested in

buying the O'Brien land to put into the industrial park. O'Brien brought on a temporary deflation in Higgins' enthusiasm. When he said he was not interested in such a sale.

But, he told them, he would be glad to put his acreage into a company they might form for the purpose of developing the previously worthless land. The price on the land Higgins had optioned indicated how Beaumont real estate investors valued it. There was other land to the northeast, known as Spindletop Heights, that was more favorable for development.

O'Brien said his interest in wanting to get into the company was based on his feeling that oil was somewhere in the area and that the evidence Higgins had presented made him think it might as well be beneath the hill as anywhere.

Then he told of his experience as an officer in the Confederate army on the hill, plus his meeting with other men who believed there would be oil in Beaumont a quarter of a century earlier. The idea had been in his mind for years, but Higgins was the first man who had ever made a logical argument for actual exploration.

O'Brien said he knew still another Beaumont who might be interested in putting land into the deal because he had about 300 acres in the Veatch survey also. That man was J.F. Lanier, known to both Carroll and Higgins as a man of fine reputation in the community.

This had been easier than expected. Carroll and Higgins were delighted.

They went to see Lanier and he, too, was fascinated by Higgins' presentation as well as his enthusiasm. Even his promise to make all of them "millionaires" didn't dampen his interest, although all of them were a little worried about it. He said he would put in his 273 acres.

That left only the small tract belonging to the Cleveland heirs. With that they would have the entire survey. But the Cleveland acreage was impossible to obtain.

Its ownership was clouded by faulty titles that could take years to clear up. So, they decided that if other details were agreeable to all concerned they would go without the Cleveland land. After all, no one else could buy it either.

That was the meeting that led to the formation of the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Co.

The date was Aug. 10, 1892. Beaumont was a town of about 4,000 population. Jefferson County had a few more than 6,000. The "Golden Triangle" was composed of some 11,000 citizens. It was almost 400 years after Cristobal Colon (sometimes called Christopher Columbus or even Cristoforo Colombo) discovered America.

It was the date that Pattillo Higgins, G.W. Carroll, G.W. O'Brien, and J.F. Lanier met to formalize the organization of the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Co.

It is a date, next to Jan. 10, 1901, that should (and probably already has) gone down in history books as one of high significance to the economic well-being of the American economy and people in most of the civilized world.

The company was capitalized at \$200,000. Carroll was its president (since he was the only man who put up any cash in the venture); O'Brien, who had put up the most land, was the vice president; Higgins, the man with the dream, the idea, and the persuasion to impress the other three, was treasurer and general manager, and Lanier, who had contributed a small parcel of land, was the secretary.

The money to start operations had been furnished by Frank Alvey, a banker, to Pattillo Higgins, on a note signed by Carroll.

It was at this meeting that Higgins suggested the name of

Gladys City for both the company and the industrial complex that it hoped to develop with a handful of closely controlled wells that would produce tens of thousands of barrels of oil and abundant gas. The officers who composed the board adopted the idea readily.

Then George O'Brien said someone should work out a plat of the proposed townsite and a letterhead to be sent out to prospective investors. Higgins came forth with both. He presented a layout drawn by civil engineer Daniell which included the entire mound, considerably more acreage than in the Veatch survey. It extended into the P. Humphreys survey and even took in part of Spindletop Heights. That was acceptable without argument.

The next item, the letterhead, was also in Higgins' hands when the time came. It was an imaginative depiction of the petroleum center. There was a picture of Gladys Bingham in a costume she probably wore for a school play, and the name of the company in a banner line across the top.

It showed the capital stock, \$200,000, the names of the officers, with titles, the identification of the main office as Beaumont, and the bold name, Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Co. across the top. The address, below the name, was Gladys City, Tex.

This did not pass without a whimper. O'Brien, the principal stockholder and the only other man on the board besides Higgins, who had an inkling of oil knowledge, objected.

A large part of the letterhead was the reason. The center sketch showed about 25 storage tanks of varying sizes, three or four office buildings, eight double smokestacks, apparently indicating refinery operations, what appeared to be derricks in the far background, and a passenger train with five coaches in the foreground. In the corner of the picture were the words, Jefferson County.

O'Brien stated calmly that he doubted the wisdom of a company letterhead depicting a non-existent scene.

Higgins said that if that sketch could prod the imagination of others, that it would help sell stock. The others, although believing it smacked too much of flagrant promotionalism, finally let Higgins have his way.

And that's how the company and the proposed town of Gladys City were started. The dream was alive and kicking.

The meeting on Aug. 10, 1892, was followed by about six months of delay by the directors while the general manager chomped at the bit. The only thing accomplished was getting a state charter.

There wasn't a day that Higgins wasn't prodding the others. They tried to cross the street when they saw him coming. They realized that before they could give anyone a drilling contract they would have to raise or borrow money. They raised not a cent in that half year.

It wasn't because Higgins wasn't buttonholing every prospect he could find on the streets of Beaumont and the surrounding lumber and rice country. In fact, he was beginning to bug the citizens.

There were two reasons. The first was that in a metropolis of 4,000 there were not too many men who could afford to invest in such a risky undertaking. The second was the overall approach that resulted from Higgins' approach to the potential investor.

The project was getting no help, and hardly any mention in the newspapers. In the whole country there were no wells making much more than 10,000 barrels a day, much less tens of thousands. While there were some millionaires, especially in the Standard oil monopoly, in the country, no one believed Pattillo when he said he would make millionaires out of those who invested even a few hundred dollars.

Another thing Higgins wanted was more land. His associates were not inclined to invest in even that relatively safe in vestment. Land prices had jumped slightly since the company had been formed. But not much. Higgings, failing to inspire his own fellow officers, went out and took options on acreage all over the mound. It had put a heavy burden on his own financial condition and his credit line was getting shaky.

Often some of his associates admitted that they had second thoughts. None of them, except O'Brien, believed there was much chance of oil. All of them, however, had some confidence in the real estate development.

Higgins said that was impossible. Without the oil there was no hope for a development. Everyone in Beaumont had a home and no one else was moving in.

Finally, on Feb. 17, 1893, the board agreed to a contract with M.B. Looney, a sewer contractor from Dallas. Looney said he would engage a man named Walter Sharp who was a rotary rig driller in the Corsicana field. Higgins was elated.

That is, he was elated until Sharp's equipment arrived — he took one look at the light rig and told Sharp it would not work. Sharp said he had drilled wells deeper than the 1,100 feet the contract called for.

But Higgins said he knew better. Sharp, he said, had never encountered the type of formations he would encounter on the mound. When Higgins showed his drawings of the subsurface, Sharp admitted he had never heard of anything like that. He added that he doubted such a formation existed anywhere in the country.

Anyway the equipment was not what Looney had been told he would need. Higgins told him he would need a heavy rig and the one Sharp had was too light.

Higgins fired Looney and Sharp, but was forced to let them go ahead when the board reminded him they would have to pay the contract cost even if the well were not even started.

So, the well started. Higgins said it would never reach 500 feet. Oil, he said, was between 1,000 and 1,100 feet.

And he was right. The well was stopped at slightly over 300 feet, even with a six-month extension of time. That meant Looney and Sharp had not fulfilled their contract.

Higgins wasn't surprised.

The year 1894 wasn't good for anyone in the country. In the previous year Grover Cleveland had become president and Adlai Stevenson was vice president. Cleveland had hardly settled in office when it was discovered that he was faced with an inexplicable currency problem. Paper money in circulation, all theoretically redeemable in gold, was five times as much as the gold in the national treasury.

That was the forerunner of the panic of 1894. Beaumont, along with the rest of the country was in dire economic straits. The lumber business, the backbone of the town's industry, was on the rocks. Any chance of raising money by selling wildcat stock in the Gladys City company was gone.

Carroll and O'Brien were able to stand the money strain, but Lanier was not. He sold his stock to Carroll. The company was depressed but Higgins, Carroll and O'Brien had not lost hope completely. Higgins, a general manager was working without a salary and looking for investors despite the disappointment of the well and the panic.

Beaumonters thought he was off balance. He kept saying he would make them all millionaires and the townsmen said they were happy to have Higgins in their community. They could use one "millionaire."

Then one day the company received an offer to lease Gladys City to the Savage Brothers of West Virginia. They offered a relatively handsome bonus and a 10 per cent royalty on all oil produced. Carroll, far behind financially in

the venture, and O'Brien, who doubted the practicality of the plans for Gladys City as an industrial possibility, still believed in Higgins' oil theory. They wanted to deal. It was something out of nothing for them.

Higgins revolted. For the first time he became vehement. Such lease, even if oil were found, would destroy for Gladys City. Of course, they may all get rich, but Beaumont might never become the leading industrial center of the south.

He told his partners these wildcatters would start a boom, if they hit oil. The oil would flow freely. Then the city would be deluged with promoters, swindlers and a rag-tag army of prospectors and camp followers. When it was all over, Beaumont's oil would be gone and Gladys City would be a dirty, greasy, blighted area on the outskirts of town. He had seen ghost town after ghost town in the oil regions of the north. He didn't want that.

His partners were unable to answer that. They knew he was right. But they needed money. And Beaumont would get something out of an oil field. Landowners would profit. Workers would be needed and unemployment would be wiped out for a while, anyway. And, even if they had the money, it would be impossible to get another contractor.

They voted, and Higgins lost. The Savage Brothers were given a contract.

The wildcatters showed up with a skimpy cable tool outfit one spring day in 1895. The money panic was still raging. Higgins looked at the equipment and advised them to turn around and go home. They would, he said, probably not get as much hole as the 300 feet Sharp had gone.

None of his arguments prevailed. Higgins' partners urged him to cool down. The drilling went ahead. At about the Sharp depth, they gave up.

Higgins wasn't happy, but he felt vindicated again. He was delighted that Gladys City was still a possibility.

Panic or no panic he went out again and started trying to sell stock in his company so he could realize the dream he had seen so vividly four years earlier.

Higgins had a new lease on life after the deal on Gladys City fell through with the abandoned well. The Enterprise carried a story stating that the well was a dry hole. He went to the office and straightened out Mike Welker, the reporter. He showed him it was not dry. It was simply not completed due to equipment failure.

Walker corrected the story. That would help. Higgins thought. But he was wrong. The people said the wells were failures and that there was obviously nothing but sour mineral water on the mound.

The more Pattillo tramped the streets and talked about gushers that would flow tens of thousands of barrels of oil a day and make everyone who participated a millionaire, the more convinced even his friends became that he was slipping. The word spread.

Still a highly regarded man who had made a fine success as a realtor and a brick maker, his friends feared for his health. Others simply laughed and treated him as if he were the village idiot. Pattillo had what it took to handle a half dozen of them at a time but that was no way for a Sunday School teacher to act. Little Gladys and her sister, Cecil, still believed in him as did all of his class members.

In 1897 the Gladys City company got another offer to lease with the same royalty and a better bonus. It came from an outfit called the Texas Mineral Company. It turned out to be the Savage Brothers under a new name. They had found a small oilwell at Sour Lake and believed they were on the right track.

Higgins read the new offer and turned it down flat. His partners said it might be the last change they would ever get. Maybe these people were coming back because of confidence despite their first well's failure. And the company needed the money. They voted to make the lease.

Pattillo Higgins couldn't stand this second shock that came with leasing away his dream of a great Gladys City. He offered to sell his stock and Carroll, after pleading that he reconsider, bought it. The sale was Higgins' last act with the Gladys City Oil Company. He left with a heavy heart. The Savages came in with the same crummy equipment, drilled the same kind of well, and had the same result. The well was drilled slightly deeper but the bit could not penetrate the mysterious formations Higgins had warned about.

They quit, got out of town, and out of Beaumont. That is, until about three years later.

Pattillo returned to the real estate business. He was virtually wiped out financially and had some recouping to do. Not only was he a fine salesman. He was also one of the best timber evaluaters in the entire Gulf Coast. But he was loaded with debt and had some paying off to do.

After the second Savage failure, Carroll and O'Brien were thoroughly disgusted. They thought of dissolving the company, but reconsidered. Most of all, they were saddened by the three failures on account of Higgins. Their belief in and respect for him never wavered.

In 1898 the panic was beginning to lift. Higgins believed the money situation would soon improve, as it did, and that possibly he could still salvage his hopes for Gladys City.

He wrote a letter to E.T. Dumble, the state geologist, inviting him to come to inspect Gladys City mound, as he called it. There was no immediate reply, but several weeks later Dumble wrote and said he was sending an assistant, William Kennedy. This was good news to Higgins.

A self-trained geologist, himself, Pattillo believed he had enough evidence from the rocks he had collected from the three holes to show any trained geologist that oil was a fair possibility.

Kennedy came, seemed temporarily impressed, but finally said there was no hope for oil on the mound.

It was another blow for the prophet.

In 1898 the panic was lifting. The population of Beaumont was up about 50 per cent to 6,000 and still climbing. But Pattillo Higgins' spirits were at low ebb. Then one day the bottom seemed to drop out for him.

That was the day Higgins picked up the Enterprise and found a devastating statement about Big Hill by William Kennedy, the man State Geologist E.T. Dumble had sent to inspect the hill with Higgins. It had to have the approval of Dumble, a geologist with a sort of scientific halo in the eyes of all petroleum geologists, then and now.

The article quoted Kennedy as advising Beaumonters not to fritter away their hard-earned dollars in the futile hope that oil would be found either in Beaumont or anywhere else in the unconsolidated clays of the Gulf Coast.

He said rock was necessary for the accumulation of migrating oil and gas and that there was no rock in the substructure of the coast. He said Higgins' entire premise was without precedent and certainly without proof.

That was almost exactly what Kennedy had told Higgins himself, but Pattillo didn't expect him to make the same stupid statement to the newspapers. Higgins, of course, disagreed totally with Kennedy.

He had asked Kennedy if it were true there was no rock,

what he thought it was that had prevented Sharp and Savage in three wells from penetrating the surface more than 400 feet. Kennedy hadn't answered Higgins then and he didn't mention the question in his letter to the Enterprise. The Enterprise published the letter without asking Higgins for comment.

But instead of stopping Higgins, the article fired him up again. He went to Carroll and O'Brien and asked if he could look for another man to drill on the hill. They gladly assented.

So Pattillo put an advertisement in an engineering journal of national circulation describing his hill and his theory. It paid off. The lone reply came from a man named Anthony F. Lucas. After several interchanges of correspondence between the two, Pattillo believed he had his man.

Lucas was capable of financing his own well. Higgins would receive an interest. Lucas was a naturalized American citizen from Dalmatia. He explored salt domes along the Louisiana Coast in search of sulphur. He was still interested in sulphur.

When Lucas arrived in Beaumont he was greeted warmly by Higgins who explained his theory, showed his subsurface drawings, and told about the three unsuccessful holes.

Lucas was most interested. Finally, he told Higgins that from what he had seen on the hill and in the drawings he believed the hill was a manifestation of a piercement type salt dome. Higgins listened and agreed. He knew he had found a man who understood geology. But Lucas was no geologist. He was a mining engineer who had been trained in the Austrian Naval Academy.

Before they reached Carroll and O'Brien, they were fast friends. Higgins had suggested on the way that Lucas take land on top of the hill, not the whole 2,700 acres. That's the deal he made with the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Company. He paid \$50 an acre for 663 acres for \$31,500, payable a third then and a third on each of the next two anniversaries of the lease.

It wasn't long before Lucas, who had the title of captain from somewhere (he had never been higher than a midshipman in the Austrian Navy), would be spudding in the fourth well in Gladys City.

Pattillo Higgins did not get what he wanted out of the deal Captain Lucas made with Carroll and O'Brien, but he felt good about it anyway.

Carroll got enough money to pay off most of his investment in the company in the first payment. Captain O'Brien had cleared a nice profit. And both would get more.

The part of Higgins' dream about the oil was certain to come true, he reasoned. Lucas had finally identified the hill as a salt dome and he knew how to drill into one because he had done so before. Of course, the development of an industrial city was only a remote possibility.

Higgins asked for 25 per cent of the production from the 663 acres. Lucas said it was worth only 10 per cent in view of the fact that he was putting up all of the money. Had Higgins been able to match his investment, he could have had half of it. He took the 10 per cent. Carroll agreed to pay him 10 per cent of the company's royalty income from the acreage also.

That was compensation enough. After all, Higgins still held acreage abutting that of the 663 acres. If Lucas hit — and he would — that land would make him a millionaire along with the others.

But Lucas was drilling for sulphur, not oil, a fact with which Higgins was not entirely familiar.

When Lucas' rig and crew arrived, Pattillo took a look at

it and said it was better equipment than the others had used but it was still not equal to the dome on Big Hill. Lucas disagreed. He had drilled 2,100 feet on salt dome structures with that same rig.

He started the well in July. By January he was having great difficulties. Pattillo told Carroll that Lucas had about reached his limit. The rig wasn't equal to the challenge.

It wasn't but a few days later that the pipe collapsed in the hole and Lucas was forced to abandon it. Lucas was ready to give up the lease but his wife insisted that he try again. First, at Higgins' suggestion, he went to local capitalists.

One thing Lucas had accomplished was to recover a flask of 17 degree heavy black oil from the shallow sand. That was why Mrs. Lucas insisted that he try one more well. He could show the potential investors something he never had, Higgins told Lucas.

Lucas tried. It was futile. Beaumonters simply were not interested in any investment that was not a sure thing, especially high risks.

Then he went to a congressman from Pennsylvania who was also an oilman and got a cold turn down. Next he went to see Henry C. Folger, a high Standard Oil executive in New York. Folger was impressed and said he would send his "expert," Calvin Payne, to Beaumont to look over the prospect.

Payne arrived with J.S. Cullinan, former Standard man and head of the Corsicana refinery which Standard had financed.

Payne looked over the whole site, with Higgins and Carroll, and then made the same pronouncement, almost down to the word, that Kennedy had made. He even mentioned the 3,000-foot well in Galveston that was drilled for water and found none. Lucas was burned to a crisp and couldn't withhold a sardonic smile which he tried to make look sweet.

Later the chief of the United States Geological Survey, C. Willard Hayes, and an assistant, E.W. Parker, arrived in Beaumont and announced their interest in Gulf Coast geology. Lucas grabbed him in his room at the Crosby Hotel.

The diagnosis was identical to that given by the other "experts." Lucas was at the end of his rope. No money, no encouragement, only a wife's faith, which was still strong.

And there was also the undaunted support of Pattillo Higgins.

Dr. William Battle Phillips, professor of geology at the University of Texas, had studied all of the assessments of Big Hill made by other geologists and "experts." He was a student of profound depth in his discipline and had especially studied the nascent salt dome theory.

One day in 1900 he went to Beaumont to call on Captain Lucas, who was one of the few other men on earth acquainted with such growing domes. After their visit Dr. Phillips told Lucas he believed oil, gas and sulphur would eventually be found on his lease.

He suggested that Lucas go to Corsicana and talk with the greatest wildcatter in history, the illustrious John H. Galey of the firm of Guffey and Galey of Pittsburgh. Galey, he said, was the kind of man who liked a new idea and a challenge.

Lucas took his jar of oil and went to Corsicana. As Phillips said, Galey was intrigued with the idea of the salt dome. He suggested that he and Lucas go to Pittsburgh and talk with his partner Guffey. In Pittsburgh he found Guffey a totally different kind of man, but interested.

Galey suggested they all go see if credit could be arranged with the Mellon brothers. The Galeys and the Mellons

had come to the United States on the same boat from Ireland. Andrew Mellon said, "Galey's amazing power to scent a hidden pool of oil... transcends the power of other men with or without the benefit of a geologist's education." Anything Galey recommended, Dick and Andrew Mellon were willing to back.

The Mellon brothers decided to give Guffey and Galey a \$300,000 credit for the project, to be repaid, along with a profit, out of the first oil. They anticipated this would cover the cost of a large block of leases on the hill and its environs and up to 25 wells, if necessary, to prove Galey right in his faith in Lucas and Higgins. It also included pipelines, storage and loading facilities at Sabine Pass.

Lucas was given the usual eighth, plus the tenth royalty he had given to the Gladys City Co. The \$31,500 Lucas had paid or obligated himself to pay for the 663 acres in the Gladys City townsite would be returned out of oil.

Guffey, when he learned of Pattillo Higgins, told Lucas he would have to take care of Higgins out of his part of the deal. But he swore Lucas to secrecy, even from Higgins, until the leasing program was completed. It was something Lucas didn't like, but he was forced to agree. Lucas' share of the deal was much smaller than he had anticipated, unless Higgins was right and wells on the Hill produced tens of thousands of barrels of oil daily.

Higgins was left completely in the dark about the deal with Guffey and Galey. Lucas was bothered about this and Mrs. Lucas, who deeply admired Higgins, was even more disturbed. In fact, there is some evidence that Mrs. Lucas told Higgins about the deal without naming Guffey and Galey and swore him to absolute secrecy. If this is so, it was without Lucas' knowledge.

The fact is, however, that Higgins had some knowledge that Lucas had a secret deal. He started working harder to pay off his heavy indebtedness and clear his credit so he could acquire more land or even buy back his interest in the Gladys City Co.

Guffey wanted all of the hill, everything on its flanks, and as much land in the general area as Lucas could round up before the well spudded. That was quite an assignment.

The \$300,000 credit the Mellon Bank provided for the drilling of the wells on Big Hill was ample evidence of the faith Galey placed in the salt dome idea advanced by Dr. Phillips and Captain Lucas.

It was to drill as many wells as necessary to find the oil that Galey was convinced was there. But to find that oil, considering the trouble in the first four tries, would take the best drillers in the country. Galey knew where to find them.

He sent Lucas to talk to Jim Hamill in Corsicana, on the same day, he went to Beaumont to stake out the location for the first try.

Jim and Al Hamill constituted the firm. A third brother, Curt, had turned down the risk of a partnership but had accepted a job, first as a cable tool driller and later as a rotary driller. Jim ran the office and Al managed the field work and often worked on wells.

When they arrived in Beaumont in early October, Pattillo Higgins was among those who watched them unload their equipment. He observed that it was better than that used in any of the other tests, but that it would take good men to penetrate the sandy soil and the rock formations beneath the mound.

Chances are that had the Hamills known what they were getting into, they would have asked more than the \$3.50 a foot, plus pipe, to drill the well.

They arrived in a downpour of rain. Water filled the ditches on either side of T. and N.O. railroad station. Beaumont had only one small section of Pearl street paved with brick. The other streets were dirt. There were no sidewalks, except a few boardwalks in the center of town.

When it rained, Beaumont was a sea of mud.

The Hamills were driven to the field by Lucas. There they found a tumbled-down shack with one room about 14 feet wide by 20 feet long. It was a nesting place for roaches, spiders and a variety of other bugs that none of the crew had seen before. Furthermore the place was infested by frogs of various sizes and colors that even inhabited the rafters. Then, there were the mosquitoes. The crew had never seen or even heard of a mosquito before. This was to be home for the duration.

The crew was led by Al Hamill and included Curt, who was the derrick man and night driller; Henry McLeod, day driller and derrick builder, and Peck Byrd, roustabout and fireman.

The first day was spend unloading and delivering the rig and other equipment. Everything had to be shipped in. There were no oilfield supplies or services available in this rank wildcat country, hundreds of miles from the nearest oil wells.

Captain Lucas knew he had the right men for the job on the day the pipe arrived. It was set out on a spur line by the railroad. A local hauler was employed to unload it. When he came out with one man, he said he would have to have another hand and it would be several days before he could get back for the job.

When Al Hamill heard this he went to the railroad car, laid two lengths of pipe from the car to the ground (about 10 or 15 feet apart) and then unloaded pipe in less than an hour by himself.

The Hamills were truly remarkable men. They were among the forerunners of a new breed of oilmen, along with Walter Sharp, Walter Fondren and others.

When the well was spudded in, the Hamills had no idea their uncomfortable adventure would have such a magnitude of results on a plot of land that Pattillo Higgins called Gladys City.

The drilling of the Lucas well was impossible, but the Hamills did it.

When Galey selected them for the job he did so because of their resourcefulness. When they went to the mound they took charge. No one helped them. They conferred occasionally with Captain Lucas, but Curt Hamill's book, "We Drilled Spindletop," leaves you with the impression the captain was so busy gathering leases that he seldom visited the drill site, although he lived only a mile or so away.

They saw Higgins more. Higgins immediately became immersed in total admiration for the little crew's hard work and savvy. Once he did see Curt Hamill and told him about his two dreams.

The well was only 40 feet down before trouble started. Everyday it was something new. The greatest block to progress was the sand. It came up the pipe and filled the mud pits. In formation it absorbed all of the water from a nearby bayou, and that presented an incredible problem. The pipe collapsed.

One time they built a back pressure valve, for which Captain Lucas later took credit. Again Curt hit on the idea of using drilling mud and that solved many problems.

The wood was soaked and boilers were difficult to fire. Material of all types were short and had to come from Cor-

sicana. Often they were delayed for days. One day after digging sand out of the slush pit for four days in a row, Henry McLeod, the day driller, walked off the job. He said he didn't come to Beaumont to dig sand. After that Al, Curt and Peck Byrd composed the drilling crew with no help from any other quarter.

On Dec. 9, 1900, Al was drilling at 3 a.m. and noticed the pump working freely, and then he smelled gas. When Peck and Curt came on at daylight they saw a scum of oil on the mud ditch. They were down about 870 feet.

Galey was informed and he rushed to Beaumont. He knew he had an oilfield, but due to the fineness of the sand and the great problems it provided he ordered the operation wrapped up and a new test started where the sand might be better.

Mrs. Lucas, a determined woman, said "no" — she said they had a contract for 1,200 feet and that she wanted it drilled that deep before moving. The others finally agreed.

By Dec. 24 the hole had been drilled to 1,020 feet. The crew set six-inch pipe and the Hamills went to Corsicana for Christmas. Peck Byrd stayed in Beaumont to watch the rig.

On Jan. 1, 1901, all hands were back and drilling proceeded. Not much progress was made, but on the next day, a pocket of gas was hit and the well had its first blowout. It lasted only 10 minutes, and not much damage was done to the equipment.

Later a formation of yellow material, never before seen in an oil well, came up, Captain Lucas called it "floating sand." He had come to the mound for sulphur and didn't recognize it when he saw it, Curt Hamill wrote.

Finally, while getting nowhere in making the hole, they hit a hard rock — the rock the geologists said didn't exist on the Gulf Coast. They pounded for hours to no avail.

They shut down for repairs and to tighten the machinery and make another stab at getting deeper.

On the morning of Jan. 10, the rock seemed to give way to the determination of the Hamills, and the bit slipped into a crevice. They couldn't budge it. They pulled the drill pipe, sharpened the bit and went back in the hole. They had gone down about 700 feet when all hell broke loose.

The rest is history. The greatest oil gusher in all of time started blowing in. There was a six inch stream of oil shooting 100 feet above the derrick.

The dream of Pattillo Higgins had been materialized. And the world changed that very moment.

The dream had run its course. Reality was here.

"... on January 10, 1901, the well came in — and it was like no previous well.

"The first sign was a fizzing and a whistling. Gas! As if some giant creature down below had been aroused." That is the description of the Lucas Gusher, in "Judge Mellon's Sons," a 1948 book by William Larimer Mellon.

Curt Hamill was caught in the derrick for the second time in a week. This time it was for real. He never knew how he got down until a man who had seen it told him 70 years later. The 700 feet of pipe spiraled out of the hole, knocked off the crown block, and fell to the ground in a shower of broken and twisted steel.

Captain Lucas came scurrying in from town in a buggy, fell out as he reached the site 30 minutes after the blowout, and let the oil from the great plume spray down on him.

Pattillo Higgins didn't know about it until late in the afternoon as he rode into town from his last day of trading, to pay off his debts and buy back into the Gladys City Company. But it was too late. He was not surprised at the

result. He had predicted it for nine years while the blockheads laughed and jeered at "the millionaire." He waited until the next morning to go out.

In an interview in 1951 Pattillo Higgins said his emotions were strangely mixed that day. He saw his dream of a model Gladys City drowning in the gusher of oil coming out of his hill. That was a sad moment, he said. But it was also exhilarating. There was oil flowing from that well in the tens of thousands of barrels of oil daily. In this case it was being wasted, to all burn later in a fire. But he said, he felt the little people would gain.

The well was out of control. The Hamills family used their remarkable resourcefulness to tame it. They built the first Christmas tree oilwell in history, to stop the well in ten days.

Galey was there the second day when Mike Welker of the Enterprise asked what the well meant to him, he answered without hesitation. "It means the birth of the liquid fuel age." Liquid fuel brought on a new age with automobiles, airplanes, giant ocean liners and faster trains.

Before that well Russia was the world's leading oil nation and America was a third rate power. That all changed. Seven wells like the Lucas could equal the whole world's oil production.

Beaumont's great boom was under way. The late trains from all directions were unloading visitors. The local J. S. Cullinan who had kept his silence when Calvin Payne condemned the prospect. He wished he could see Payne now.

Beaumont's population was less than 10,000 when the well came in and there were less than 15,000 in Jefferson County, including Beaumont. Those figures were three times what they had been when Higgins had his dream of Gladys City. It was a rapidly growing town that could have had its own money in its own bonanza. Even so, many who stood by and watched Higgins struggle for almost a decade were destined to become millionaires from his persistence, many of whom would never recognize his contribution to their welfare.

Lucas was the hero of the hour. But he, too, had forgotten Higgins when the well blew in.

The wire services around the world had heralded the incredible story of the great oil spouter. In a few days important people were arriving from all over the nation as fast as the trains could disgorge them in Beaumont.

There was a spirit of adventure, boomtown, swindle and gamble in the air. It was exhilarating and charged with danger and opportunity.

Pattillo Higgins was the first to start organizing a new oil company. He had the 33 acres he had taken as settlement for his undivided interest in the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Company. His land was only 200 feet north of the Lucas well. He selected those he would invite to join him in the Higgins Oil and Fuel Company. They were the men who had been most sympathetic with him all along.

The Lucas well was a geyser of oil, complete out of control. No one was able to judge the amount of oil that was flowing. The highest guess was 40,000 barrels daily, four or five times as great as any well drilled previously. Later they would learn the actual flow was about 100,000 barrels daily. The problem was to stop it.

The hill took on a carnival atmosphere. The Hamills got men to hold crowds back. A spark of fire could have caused a catastrophe.

Downtown Beaumont was gaining in population by the hour. The Crosby and other hotels were filling to capacity. Residences were taking roomers. Later this would demand that people sleep around the clock in eight-hour shifts per

bed. Cafes and all facilities were being taxed to the limit, and it was only the beginning. Soon all available lumber was being used to build new houses, derricks, roads and other facilities.

Within a few days a Gladys City started to appear. Jerry-built houses and stores with false fronts were going up on the north edge of the dome. The only evidence of Higgins' dream city was the streets, all bearing numbers for names, except Marian and Gilbert streets which were on either side of the proposed railroad running east and west, and LaPorte street, along side of the proposed north-south tracks. Later, when Spindletop became the name of the field, one street running generally east and west was given that name because it led to Spindletop springs.

From the first Higgins named the field the Gladys City Field. No one paid much attention to him because he was considered relatively unimportant. Even the Beaumont newspapers seemed to forget that it was Higgins who was responsible for the discovery. Later Higgins agreed that maybe the field should be called the Beaumont Oil Field; but it was too late; the magic of the name Spindletop had caught on.

The boom that followed the controlling of the wild Lucas gusher was all of the previous booms rolled into one. Great men and men to become great invaded Beaumont. There were the Hamills, the Sharps and then men such as Howard Hughes Sr., S. P. Farish, Walter W. Fondren, J. S. Cullinan, W. T. Campbell, the Heywood brothers, Gov. James Stephen Hogg, W. L. Mellon, J. Edgar Pew, the Sturm brothers and a host of others whose names became household words of petroleum for the next quarter of a century.

William Kennedy, the state geologist who had written the letter condemning the field, became famed as a salt dome specialist. The names of Beaumonters who grew tremendously wealthy out of the oil Spindletop produced still live.

But maybe the most unfortunate man of all was J. A. Paulhamus, who was sent to Beaumont by the Forward Reduction Company to find oil in 1898, and found none but a string of dry holes south of the dome. He was steered away from Higgins by the Beaumont business leaders who had land off the mound.

Higgins' Oil and Fuel Co.'s first well was started in the Spindletop Heights subdivision and that became the name of the field.

The name Higgins Hill field had been suggested but Pattillo ruled that out himself. He had named the field the Beaumont field in honor of his town. Carroll and O'Brien were quick to pick up Higgins's first suggestion as Gladys City and they called it that for some time.

As the boom grew and one 100,000-barrel well after another came in, the flood of people continued to flow into Beaumont's limited facilities. The Heywood brothers, a group of showmen and adventurers, finally wound up with the champion of all wells in the field. Pattillo Higgins said it made 200,000 barrels of dark, heavy crude oil in each 24-hour period.

The field became a quagmire and the scene of magnificent fireworks, as wells were ignited in the haste of drilling and the carelessness of visitors.

Excursion trains were bringing potential investors to the field in hordes. Promoters were paying for the trains to bring in the people who would finance their activities. Some with only an acre or so of land were incorporating for

hundreds of thousands of dollars. The field was filling with people from the oil regions of the east, but most of the field workers were cable tool drillers, completely unfamiliar with rotary drilling operations.

The field itself was flooded with people, many of whom were aimlessly wandering around watching the great wells flow. Operators were rigging up valves in order to turn on spouters for the visitors.

Beaumonters were quick to get into the action. On the ground floor, such citizens as the McFaddins, Keiths, Wards, Perlsteins, Tyrrells, Gilberts, Heisigs and others were getting into the action early.

Downtown around the Crosby, other hotels and cafes, land and lease trading was developing at an incredible rate. Even the smaller businessmen, merchants and average citizens were in on the great bonanza.

Crockett street became the center of prostitution and gambling. The demi monde were aggressive, frequently visiting the field on horseback to fill their date books.

The banks were overburdened and new ones were being constructed.

Great names of the world of industry, politics and finance were on the streets. The Pews, the Mellons, Andrew Carnegie, William Jennings Bryan, Gov. James Stephen Hogg, the arch enemy of the Standard Oil Co. which he had prohibited from operating in Texas, were among the early arrivals.

David R. Beaty, a short, slender, energetic railroad and real estate man from Galveston, quickly organized a company and drilled the second well in the field. It was a gigantic 70,000-barrel well. It gave Beaty the honor of the first million-dollar deal in the field when he sold his well to C. D. Pullen of New York for \$1,250,000. Of this amount \$250,000 was his own and the \$1 million went to his partners.

Beaumont was sitting on top of the world. It was the scene of the inexhaustible supply of oil that had opened the liquid fuel age.

Newspapers from coast to coast were predicting that the town would become the center of oil and the largest city in the south, if not the world.

One day after the boom was well under way, Pattillo Higgins went to the Crosby House with two giant posters and set them up in the lobby. One contained the Daniell drawing of the proposed layout for Gladys City. The other was an enlarged copy of the letterhead for the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Co., with its oil wells, brick buildings and smoking stacks over factories. A friend came along and drew a cartoon showing Higgins walking along the street hawking shares in the company and yelling that he would make millionaires of all investors, no matter how small.

But out at Spindletop the Higgins dream city was nothing like Pattillo had hoped it would be. Instead of the glistening buildings, beautiful homes, spacious parks, hospitals, schools, city hall and other model city features to go along with its handful of oilwells and great factories and storage tanks, the picture was far different.

Gladys City was taking shape but it was a budding shanty town of false front buildings. There were no spacious streets. The area between the stores facing each other was simply a wide area that served as a street. Long after Houston and other cities were using nickle crude from Beaumont to cover dirt streets, Gladys City used none and was either a swirling sea of dirt on dry days and a mud puddle when it rained.

That was the "business district." There were a few small wells on the far reaches of the dome flank on the north side. To the west were assorted buildings. Some of them were other stores and warehouses, barns, pump houses, storage tanks, outhouses, tents, saloons, livery stables and a host of other small wooden structures of various descriptions.

But this was no model industrial park. It was just an assembly of typical boom town jerry-built shanties that would last until the boom petered out. But it must have been bringing in a pretty penny to the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Co., which probably built everything on its land and rented them all at prices that matched the boomtown incomes.

Eventually there was a post office for Gladys City when the burden at Beaumont reached the point where mail for people at Spindletop could no longer be handled without great delay. Gladys City was not only a shanty town, it was a dangerous one. Killings were not unusual and robberies, burglaries, assaults and other crimes were hourly events. The law enforcement officials in the county did a magnificent job under the circumstances, but they could barely handle the crime wave in Beaumont, which had gotten out of hand only a few days after the Lucas gusher came in.

The day before the Lucas gusher blew in, the mayor of Beaumont, D.P. Wheat, and a committee of city leaders had been turned down when they went east to sell city bonds. Within a week after the event Beaumont could have sold bonds anywhere. The city was the center of world-wide attraction for its great bonanza.

Within months after the event new wealth in Beaumont was beyond imagination. The millionaires Higgins had predicted were multiplying.

Hyman A. Perlstein, for instance, announced the city's first skyscraper, a six-story building on Pearl Street. The new wealth of W.W. Kyle had enabled him to start the erection of one of the finest theaters in the South and one that could compare with some of the best in New York. These were samples of things to come.

Soon the city would be building other large buildings from the bricks that Pattillo Higgins had inspired Beaumont to produce.

The city was on its way to becoming the Gladys City that Higgins, Carroll and O'Brien had planned.

Pandemonium was the only word that could describe Spindletop and Beaumont in 1901. Downtown the promoters and traders set up headquarters at the Crosby hotel. The field was for the operators and workers.

Gladys City was expanding by the day. Now there was a Main street. It was near the street where the original business houses were set up.

Along the tracks the Southern Pacific built a depot. Texas Iron and Supply and others set up business. There were drug stores and a host of hotels and boarding houses. Electricity came to the field and the power company in Gladys City was on Shell Road. There were a dozen saloons. The fanciest was the two-story Log Cabin which became famous as a watering hole. Some of the rowdiest battles without Marquis of Queensbury rules were its greatest attractions after the whiskey. It was also a cigar and tobacco shop and what was upstairs and never advertised. It was also headquarters for Pabst beer. Millers was served in other saloons.

Russell and Davis established the Spindletop Iron Works, specializing in cable tools as well as blacksmith jobs, engines and pumps. It also handled rotary equipment.

It was finally decided that the post office would be named Guffey for the colorful old partner of John Galey. The

Southern Pacific depot was located in Gladys City to balance things out.

There were hundreds of companies operating in 11 districts named Yellow Pine, Gober Track, Keith-Ward, Block 22, Gladys City, Guffey, Sun Oil Company, Higgins Oil and Fuel Company, National and Heywood. The most densely populated of these were Keith-Ward and Hogg-Swayne with about 200 wells in each.

Higgins marvelled at the growth and activity. But he was equally inspired by what was happening in Beaumont. New stores, plants, hotels and dozens of saloons were in operation. The streets were being paved with wooden blocks and wooden sidewalks were built. There was no doubt that Beaumont was on the way to outstrip both Houston and New Orleans as the boom continued.

Then one day the overproduction would catch up with the boom and oil prices would tumble. One company after another would close down as oil dropped to three cents a barrel. The more financially stable companies would take over when the volume of oil was far greater than the pipelines and railroads could carry or the storage could hold.

This wouldn't stop the boom but it would slow it down. That was when the ghost town that Gladys City would eventually become started to show. Few knew it, but before the field was two years old it was destined for even worse days when the pressure would start dropping drastically from overdrilling and the young field would start to resemble the plunge of the great Pit Hole boom and bust town of Pennsylvania into oblivion. But that was some time off. Many Beaumonters would start to pull in their horns and stack their easily won dollars in the new banks.

In time, young Jesse Jones from Houston would come in and lure the biggest and best companies and oilmen to Houston.

Among those who would follow Jones would be Beaumont's greatest hero, Pattillo Higgins himself.

But these were the beginning days and all of the gloom of Spindletop was for the future.

Spindletop's virtual demise was in the future and Beaumont's losing the opportunity to become the South's largest city was still further down the road. Big things were to happen first.

The first big oil company was the Guffey Petroleum Co. owned by the three partners, Guffey, Galey and Lucas. That was soon succeeded by the J. M. Guffey Petroleum Co., financed by the Mellon bank and other large investors. The original company was purchased for \$1.5 million. Of this amount Galey received \$366,000 and shares of mining stocks from Guffey's holdings. This was Guffey trading. It was intended that Galey would get \$750,000. Lucas got \$400,000 plus 1,000 shares in the new company.

On May 16, 1901, when the charter was granted for the J. M. Guffey Petroleum Co., Guffey made his first and last trip to Beaumont for the ceremonies. The new company was capitalized for \$15 million. Guffey got 70,000 shares, 30,000 went into treasury stock and 50,000 went to the Mellons and their associates.

Then the Gulf Refining Co. of Texas was formed. The refinery was to be built in Port Arthur where deep water was available. That was the company that was eventually to absorb the faltering J. M. Guffey petroleum for all practical purposes.

That was the first major oil company of any importance in the nation with the exception of the Standard Oil Co. Port

Arthur was not even a city at the time. It was a small settlement about a few miles south of Spindletop.

The real founders of what was to become Texaco were J. S. Cullinan, the man who visited the mound with Standard "expert," Payne; James Stephen Hogg, one of the great Texas governors and the first native Texan to hold that position; John Warne Gates, colorful industrial promoter known internationally as Bet-A-Million-Gates; Arnold Schlaet, a German with a brilliant mind and financial power, and representative of the Lapham family which controlled the leather trust, and the illustrious Walter Sharp who failed on the first try on the mound, but who was regarded, even so, as one of the masters of the rotary drilling rig.

The company was actually started by Cullinan, but was to include the others when it was chartered by the group under the name of the Texas Co. on May 1, 1902, taking over the Texas Fuel Oil Co., which Cullinan had started as a pipeline and storage company. The company almost died aborting when a supplier of 3-cent oil reneged on Cullinan.

The savior was Sharp who, with Howard Hughes Sr., formed the Moonshine Oil Co. with a patented process for reviving dying wells with air injections to make them flow again. That company also started a refinery in Port Arthur and became the second participant in the besting of the Standard Oil Trust.

Joe Pew, a Pennsylvania farmer's son, had one of the most successful independent oil companies in the country in Philadelphia. He sent his nephew Robert C. Pew, to Beaumont when the Lucas Gusher came in. He came back with glowing reports. Robert's brother, J. Edgar Pew, who started working as a pipefitter in his uncle's small refinery, and was destined to become one of Texas' and the nation's great oilmen, went to represent Sun.

He discovered that the Lone Star and Crescent Oil Co. had gone bankrupt after only a year of operations because its wells had all suddenly stopped producing. The property, worth \$1 million was put up for auction by Sheriff Ras Landry. It was Decoration Day, 1902.

Pew bid \$100,000 and got the bid. He had to scramble to get a check cashed on the holiday, but managed by borrowing it from a bank secretly controlled by Standard Oil. What he bought was pipelines, loading docks, wharf facilities at Sabine Pass, six 37,500 storage tanks, pumping stations and loading facilities on the railroads.

It was enough to make Sun Oil Company a budding major and a third thorn in the monopoly's side.

And those were the beginnings of three of the giants that had their inception on the hill at Gladys City.

At least two other significant oil companies grew out of the Spindletop boom and the men it attracted and developed.

One of these was to be the Houston Oil Co., which developed from the Higgins Oil and Fuel Co. Higgins had founded the company on his large block of acreage directly offsetting the Lucas Gusher. He had taken in some outstanding citizens from Beaumont and other areas.

The Higgins Co. made tremendous profits which also made Pattillo a real millionaire on his own. Then, he decided that the company was not spreading out enough, so he sold out to his partners. This made him even richer — much richer.

It was this company which eventually became the Houston Oil Co. which a half century later would sell its assets to the Atlantic Petroleum Co.

The other company was formed by an assorted group of probably the most intelligent and farseeing men to come out of Spindletop. It was called the "Beaumont group." The result of this merger of talents eventually became the Humble Oil and Refining Co., after associating themselves with Ross Sterling's small Humble Oil Co.

The group got its start when Lee Blaffer, son of a New Orleans coal dealer, and William S. Farish, a young lawyer from Natchez, accidentally bumped into each other one day on Pearl Street.

These two became fast friends and rented rooms at a boarding house on Calder Avenue. There they ran into such men as William Wiess and his young son, Harry Wiess, who along with W.W. Fondren, an inventive driller, and L.A. Carlton later joined them and Sterling in founding Humble.

The result of this humble beginning turned out to what is now EXXON USA, the most important domestic oil company in the nation.

Soon Standard slipped into Beaumont incognito under the name of the George A. Burt Co. On Jan. 4, 1902, Burt announced in the Enterprise that he had purchased the Caswell tract on the bend of the Neches, five miles from Beaumont and three miles from Spindletop for \$89,000.

The next day the Enterprise reported that the tract would be the site of the world's largest refinery to cost more than \$5 million.

This overshadowed both the Gulf and Texaco refineries and meant that the ship channel Bet-A-Million Gates, which had been dug from Sabine Pass to Port Arthur would undoubtedly be extended to Beaumont.

Undoubtedly, citizens assumed, Beaumont was more than ever on its way toward becoming the south's and maybe the nation's largest city.

As a climax to the story it was that Col. Fred W. Weller, the world's outstanding refinery designer and builder, would break ground for the plant on Spindletop's anniversary, Jan. 10 at 10 a.m.

A year later Burt was out as head of the refinery. S.G. Baynes a New York banker became president, and Weller vice president. The name was changed to Security Oil Co.

But the ownership identity was virtually assured later when Weller left to become a member of Standard Oil Co.'s board of directors.

The boom in Beaumont lasted almost two years. Then the bottom dropped out.

First the great surge of oil, coming from almost 1,000 closely spaced wells on less than 300 acres, flooded the market. Oil prices around the world were depressed, but in Beaumont it was worse than that. Oil was selling for 3 cents a barrel for a while and more was being wasted or burned off than was being sold.

This condition was corrected by a far worse sign of the end. That was when the pressure started dropping and many wells started making excessive salt water, both due to the overdrilling.

That brought on the birth of the first successful secondary recovery program. Walter Sharp, Howard Hughes and Ed Prather formed the Moonshine Oil Co. based on a patented process to bring dying wells back to good production by injecting compressed air into the producing sand. The fee was half of the oil produced. J. S. Cullinan financed the venture with Texas Co. money. It worked and extended the life of Spindletop. The owners of the Moonshine Co. all got rich much faster than they expected.

That kept Spindletop alive but the boom was over.

Stock promotion came to an end and swindlers and promoters were rapidly eliminated from Beaumont's overgrown population.

One of the casualties of the termination of interest in Beaumont oil stock was the Higgins Standard Oil Co. It got started too late. His big idea, based on the best holdings offered any purchaser since the field started, was doomed. He moved to Houston at the invitation of prominent friends and started operating on his own.

Hundreds of Beaumonters had lined their pockets with the great flow of money from Spindletop. Many fortunes so won would last for many years.

Beaumont also had a great refinery, many other new industries, and the Neches had been dredged to make Beaumont an authentic port. Gladys City would become a ghost town, but Beaumont would never lose the jobs and prosperity that came from Pattillo Higgins' unaccepted idea. Had the idea been accepted there is little doubt the city would have been a metropolis of the Houston-Dallas type in time.

Furthermore, Spindletop was the reason for the birth of Port Arthur. Many say even now that had Spindletop not been viciously exploited that the metropolis would have covered both cities and all of the area in between. Today that seems reasonable since it is obvious that one day this area will be one great city.

From Spindletop, oilmen went to the four corners of the earth. In the Gulf Coast one salt dome after another was found. Petroleum geology came into its own and even today the great fields in the Gulf are primarily salt dome structures of the type Lucas was able to identify, and Dr. Phillips of the University of Texas had great faith in.

Spindletop was not an inexhaustible supply of oil, but it led to one.

The Hamills, Sharps, Fondrens and others came out of Spindletop as masters of rotary drilling to bring new potential for oil and gas. Hughes' remarkable inventions, in conjunction with Sharp, expanded the horizons even greater. But it all started on the little hill Higgins called Gladys City.

The world changed on Jan. 10, 1901. A new age of energy was born.

Those who have doubts about the works of God have only to consider the night that Higgins accepted Christ at a revival in a Baptist church, and the fact a man who had never known one iota about an oilwell was marked by destiny to bring about this new age of human progress.

# President Ford Committee

P.O. BOX 15345, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78761 (512) 459-4101

## MEMORANDUM

To: *Paty Matson*

Date: *4-15-76*

From: *Phyllis Spittler*

*Enclosed is the release distributed to all local media. It includes press credentials request & pictures for appropriate media. Things*

*looking fine.*

*Also enclosed are news clippings. Publicity will be no problem.*



For immediate Release

For further information, contact Phyllis Spittler,  
President Ford Committee, 83800378

First Lady Betty Ford will visit Beaumont Wednesday, April 21, on behalf of President Gerald Ford to accept Gladys City as a Bicentennial gift to the nation.

Though plans are still being firmed up, Mrs. Ford is scheduled to tour Gladys City on San Jacinto Day with a program beginning at 4 p.m. April 21, amid bands, dancers and local personalities dressed in period costumes. The festivities will be open to the public.

The visit will be sponsored by the Beaumont Bicentennial Commission, which built Gladys City with contributions from local citizens interested in preserving the significance of Spindletop, whose discovery of oil in southeast Texas in 1901 ushered in the nation's petrochemical industry.

Vic Rogers, head of Beaumont's Bicentennial Commission, said he was "pleased as punch that Mrs. Ford would take time to visit our museum."

"We are particularly delighted because Beaumont is one of the first cities in the nation to be recognized as an official Bicentennial City. We are further pleased that our project, the Gladys City Museum, has the recognition of the first family in the White House," Rogers said.

Also on her tour of Texas next week, Mrs. Ford will be grand marshal of a San Antonio fiesta parade and will join Lady Bird Johnson for a tour of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library in Austin.

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more



Page 2-Betty Ford in Beaumont

Enclosed is a biographical sketch of Mrs. Ford.

Important: Any reporters or photographers wishing to cover the First Lady's visit must have press credentials. The enclosed form must be turned into the person and address listed on the credentials form. There is no restriction on the number of reporters or photographers from any station or newspaper, but all must be cleared by completing the form or calling in the information.



April 16, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: Milt Mitler  
FROM: Joe Doba *J D*  
SUBJECT: Gladys City: New Old Town

Principal Participants: Mayor Ken Ritter, Bicentennial Committee  
Chariman: Victor Rogers. (Gladys City Beaumont is in Congressman  
Jack Brooks' district.)

The following information received from our Dallas office hopefully  
will be helpful to you. If you need additional information on any  
portion, please advise.

#### GLADYS CITY: NEW OLD TOWN

When the Beaumont Bicentennial Committee decided to celebrate a 75-year-  
old event that help change the world - the Spindletop oil discovery -  
they decided a simple ceremony was not enough.

With a desire to make the celebration appropriately important, and with  
a lot of hard work, the BBC under Chairman, Vic Rogers, has accomplished  
something remarkable, the rebirth of a 75-year-old city as a permanent  
museum.

At about 10 a.m. January 10, 1901, the Lucas Gusher exploded at Spindle-  
top, spawning not only a new age but a new town, Gladys City. From  
Gladys City came Beaumont, and Beaumont has returned the favor.

Gladys City will live on as a permanent gift to the nation, with free  
guided tours available seven days a week, from 1 to 5 p.m. The Lucas  
Gusher Monument Association will move its Spindletop monument to the site  
in the near future as part of a new Spindletop Museum - Phase II of this  
unique Heritage '76 project.

The opening of Gladys City was picked as one of the 20 Top Bicentennial  
events in the country for January by the Bicentennial News Service of the  
Discover America Travel Organization in Washington.

The Gladys City project was further honored by receiving a certificate  
of merit from the Beautify Texas Council.

Gladys City is built around a square, reproducing as closely as possible the original city. The building include a dry goods store, post office, livery stable, blacksmith shop, photography studio, industrial building, pharmacy and doctor's office.

Also included are the offices of Nelson and White, engineers, the Gladys City Oil, Gas and Manufacturing Company, public toilet facilities, a barber shop, a building housing brokers, attorneys and Minor Oil Company offices, a general store with boarding house on the second floor, and the Log Cabin Saloon with its brothel occupying the upstairs section.

As an added attraction, an observation tower has been built off the main complex to provide an overview of the turn-of-the century city.

All the buildings are completely furnished with antiques of the era generously donated by area residents and merchants. Office furniture was obtained from the original Minor Oil company. Descendants of Nelson and White, engineers, donated furnishings for that building. Bill Nelson, one decendant, was architect for the rebuilding project.

The Jefferson County Bar Association assisted with the law offices, and the Gulf Coast Pharmaceutical Association furnished the doctor's office. Beaumont Police Captain George Schuldt and his father offered materials for the blacksmith shop and rancher Bill Gilbert donated more than 50 items, including two rare wagons and an antique bathtub and bed.

The saloon and bordello apparently proved to be the most challenging building, as authentic bars and tables of the era are increasingly rare. But Calvin Smith, museum director, noted that the upper half of the building would be displayed "as tastefully as possible".

Support came also from those who donated several hundred thousand dollars so that this "living history" museum could become a reality.

So, if you desire a trip through time to the early twentieth century, for recreation, for education, or for a vibrant "feel" of the past, try Beaumont's Gladys City - Boomtown, U.S.A.