



Claude W. Brown
1904 – 1993
Inducted 1985

Claude W. Brown's interest in oil production was ignited by a small check his mother received from land she inherited in Oklahoma. He started out as a roustabout in 1922. Two years later he was managing the drilling and production of 50 wells in Brown County. But like so many others then, Brown was wiped out by the Depression. In 1935, with oil selling for barely \$1 a barrel, he bought an automobile on credit, drove to McCamey and set up shop selling second-hand pipe and oil field equipment. He traded casing for off-set acreage and started buying salvage wells. He increased productivity with deeper drilling and new recovery methods. After World War II, Brown went into business with a young geologist, Ed Thorpe. Among their accomplishments were the discovery of key oil and gas fields and the construction of the McCamey pipeline system that brought in oil from Pecos County. Brown eventually bought controlling interest in McCamey's Security State Bank, which had issued Brown his first loan in 1936.