With degrees in both petroleum engineering and mechanical engineering, Jack E. Brown spent his first seven years in the business working in places ranging from Mexico to Venezuela, with stops in between in Alice and Abilene, Texas. In 1957 he met Cyril “Cy” Wagner. They worked well together and along with Dean Stoltz, formed Stoltz, Wagner and Brown in 1962. The company achieved great success two years later in the Bagley Field in New Mexico when Brown engineered a pipeline that removed the excess water that had caused a major oil company to abandon the field. Between 1964 and 1969 the team drilled 50 wells before they hit their first dry hole. In 1975, they began their largest drilling program ever on 30,000 acres in Sterling and Glasscock counties. Stoltz left the partnership in 1969 and the Wagner and Brown duo ultimately operated over 600 wells that produced more than 11 million barrels of oil and 265 billion cubic feet of natural gas.