



Jesse Clement Barnes
1892 – 1975
Inducted 1981

Jesse Clement Barnes, the youngest of 10 children, was born in Eufaula, Alabama on June 22, 1892, to Zacharia Absalom Barnes and Emma Florida Baker Barnes. During his school years, he worked in his father's soft-drink factory. At the age of 19, he contracted tuberculosis and was sent the arid southwest to recover. It was there that he met Ruby Mae deChaum of Lordsburg, New Mexico. They married in 1919 in Tucson, Arizona.

Barnes served in the Army in the Quartermaster Corps as a private in World War I and in the Army Air Corps as an inspector of Defense Plants in World War II.

Barnes was active in both the insurance business and hotel management in Tucson. In 1936, he journeyed to East Texas to learn the oil business, mastering the fundamentals of leasing and mineral ownership. One year later, he ventured to West Texas to begin his career as a wildcatter and producer.

In 1937, Barnes bought leases in Winkler, Ector, and Pecos counties of West Texas. In 1938 Barnes drilled wells which extended the Keystone field in Winkler County. Later that year Barnes joined forces with Russell C. Conkling, an early Permian Basin geologist and together they drilled the well responsible for the discovery and definement of the TXL field in Ector County.

Although production in those days was confined primarily to shallow zones, Barnes was one of the first independent oil operators to undertake deep drilling, recognizing the possibilities of deeper structures which could yield commercial quantities of oil and gas. Believing in those possibilities, in the mid 1950's Barnes combined talents with C.V. "Cap" Lyman in discovering the Emperor Deep Field in Winkler County. Barnes also developed deep gas production in the Anadarko Basin with the discovery of the prolific Aledo Field in Dewey and Custer counties in Oklahoma.

Barnes was a 32nd Degree Mason and a member for more than 50 years. He was a member of the Permian Basin Petroleum Association and the Texas Independent Producers and Royalty owners. Barnes also served on several

advisory committees to the Midland City Council and an active member of First Presbyterian Church, serving as a Deacon and an Elder.