



Prentice Farrar Brown
1898 - 1974
Inducted 1983

Prentice F. Brown, known as “Brownie” was born in Colorado on October 22, 1898 to Augustus Henry and Ida Card Brown. He attended Denver schools and upon high school graduation received a scholarship to the Colorado School of Mines. He graduated in 1920 with a degree in Mining Engineering with the highest honors in his class. After graduation, Brown went to work for Denver consulting firm, Fisher and Lowrie, whose had a major client, Honolulu Oil Company.

Brown came to West Texas in 1926 as an employee of both Fisher and Lowrie and Honolulu Oil Company when they accepted his suggestion that the Permian Basin would be an area to investigate for future operations. At that time, San Angelo was the center of oil activity and that is where Brown conducted his research. When the decision was made to pursue West Texas, Fisher and Lowrie retired and their exploration staff, including Brown, was placed in the employ of Honolulu Oil Company.

The base of Honolulu Oil’s operation was transferred to Midland under the leadership of Brown. It was in Midland that Brown met his future wife, Aillene Ford. They were married on November 2, 1938.

Discoveries resulting from Brown’s mapping project included the Harper Field in Ector County in 1933, the Parker Field in Andrews County in 1934, the Bennett-Wasson Field in 1936, and six months later, the Dugan or Slaughter Field.

Brown had a record for oil-finding equaled by few. His discoveries include some of the largest fields in the nation, not only in acreage, but also in reserves. He developed fundamental concepts about the geology of the area and applied geophysics to those concepts. He pioneered the application of geophysics and employed torsion balance gravity, gravity meter magnetometer and seismic methods to his concepts of subsurface geology.

Poor health forced Brown to retired from Honolulu Oil in 1946, but a number of large discoveries were made on leases acquired by Brown. These include the Smyer and North Smyer Fields in Hockley County, the Ropes Field also in

Hockley County, and the Cope Field in Sterling and Glasscock Counties. In 1951, Brown and O.C. Harper drilled and discovered the Prentice Field of Terry and Yoakum Counties which was named after him, after his retirement.

Brown was recognized as an able and balanced administrator but his real interests always lay in exploration.