



Hazen P. "Cap" Slagel 1972

If you were looking for somebody who is bone and flesh of the oil business as it once was, you would stop hunting with H. P. Slagel, who has lived and breathed it nearly all of a long life.

He was born in Mason City, West Virginia, in 1895, and as a boy helped his father drill and produce brine wells. He was a Wells Fargo messenger in Atascosa County, Texas; served as a captain with the 36th Division – and picked up his nickname of "Cap"; worked in the Ranger, Texas, oil field; and then showed up in Colorado city in 1919. Any one of those experiences was enough to make a man out of you.

Cap Slagel worked as a tooldresser or driller on many of the more important Mitchell County wells. These wells, together with the flurry around Toyah a little earlier, brought the eyes of the nation's oil people to the Permian Basin for the first time.

Cap was on the Morrison No.2 well, which was the second and best of the early producers in the Westbrook Field in 1922. He was involved with the Sloan-Miller No.1, which extended the Westbrook and was a major producer. He was on the Chalk No.1, which found the Chalk field in Howard County.

Today's modern equipment makes exploratory drilling easy, or at least look easy. What we have today, though, was built on the muscle and skill of men such as Cap Slagel. What they learned about drilling and about the rocks beneath us are part and parcel of the technology we are using now. More importantly, they left a big tradition of determined manhood that has been with oil people ever since.

Cap Slagel has also been an independent producer and was involved in the Ira Field in Scurry County and wells on the Foster Ranch near Iatan. Take it all together, and you find he has been engaged in some phase of the oil industry continuously since 1919, which is well over 50 years. There are not many that can match that record, and there are not many that can match the example that H. P. Slagel has set for all the rest of us.