



**Claud E. Aikman**  
**1896-1991**  
**Inducted 1993**

Claud Aikman was born in Stillwater, Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, on November 15, 1896. He served in France during WW I as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Signal Corps. Following his discharge, Aikman returned to Oklahoma and earned his geology degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1917. He moved to San Angelo, Texas in 1930 and formed Cardinal Oil Company with Dr. George D. Morgan and J. V. Shilling. Cardinal Oil Company developed production in the Howard-Glasscock, Yates, Toborg and the White and Baker fields, operating over 150 wells and maintaining substantial lease camps in Iraan and McCamey.

In 1939 Aikman, Morgan and Shilling formed Cooper Gas Company and drilled hundreds of wildcat wells. Cooper Gas Company opened gas production from the Strawn Reef on the eastern shelf of the Permian Basin, discovering significant reserves in the Basin.

In 1945 Cardinal Oil Company was sold to Helmerich and Payne and Panhandle Refining Company. Aikman and Morgan continued to operate as Morgan-Aikman, Ltd, conducting numerous exploratory and drilling ventures on the Basin's eastern shelf. In 1953 Aikman opened an office in Midland with his son, William, and added an Amarillo office with his other son, Robert, in 1957. Aikman was an active participant in exploration and drilling until his death in January 1991.

As the initial president of the West Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association in 1934, Aikman successfully presented the case for equitable oil pricing for West Texas Oil production in Washington. Aikman also negotiated the first "Gas Production Loan" in this part of the country and helped defeat serious proposals to nationalize the U.S. oil industry.

In San Angelo, he served as director of First National City Bank for more than 35 years. He was also a noted world traveler and columnist, making numerous trips

around the world. Aikman was a pioneering explorer for energy whose efforts helped shape the West Texas petroleum industry.