

# OUTDOOR INDIANA

March 1934

McCormick's Creek State Park

# Petroleum Production Drops

INDIANA produced 728,000 barrels of petroleum in 1933, a decline of 78,000 barrels from the total for the preceding year, according to figures released by the U. S. Bureau of Mines. This decline has been due largely to the failure of test wells in finding new discoveries, with their consequent flush production. Low prices, especially during the first part of the year, have been discouraging to testing activities, and there has been little drilling outside of proven fields.

Another factor affecting the statistical records during the past year has been the withdrawal of the Ohio Oil Company from northeastern Indiana. The few wells still producing in the old Trenton field have declined until their total output no longer made maintenance of the collecting pipe lines profitable, and the lines were all removed. These old wells are still selling some oil to local markets, though the amounts are not included in the state totals.

Posted prices for crude oil in the southwestern counties rose to \$1.23 before the end of the year, though a ten-cent cut was effected in January, 1934. Proration restrictions have been largely removed and this should help in bringing increased activity, not only in proved territory, but in wildcat locations as well.

Of the 165 wells completed in the state during the calendar year, 63 per cent were producers of oil or gas in commercial quantities. This percentage is materially higher than the average for recent years, because most of the drilling has been in conservative locations. Sixty wells were abandoned, and on December 31 there were twenty additional wells uncompleted. The total flush production of the fifty-four oil wells is estimated at 2,060 barrels, an average of nearly forty barrels per well. These completions were mainly in Vanderburgh, Gibson, and Perry counties. In Vanderburgh County, where drilling was most active, the Erskine pool on U. S. Road 41 has been partly outlined, and outlying producing wells in the county may prove, with further drilling, to be the discovery wells in new pools.

The new gas wells, the largest of which are located in Pike and Gibson counties, have reported a total initial open flow capacity of 82,426,000 cubic feet per day, an average of 1,600,000 cubic feet per well. Several of these gassers are in the old Trenton field of eastern Indiana, but the only new discovery was a promising pool near Portland, in Jay County.

Large areas still exist in Indiana in which there is a steady gas production at pressures ranging from twenty to three hundred pounds. Parts of these areas were drilled thirty or more years ago, but have remained productive as a result of the conservation and proper care of the wells. The total reserves of gas in these fields would reach many billions of cubic feet, and with continued care of the producing wells, would prove an

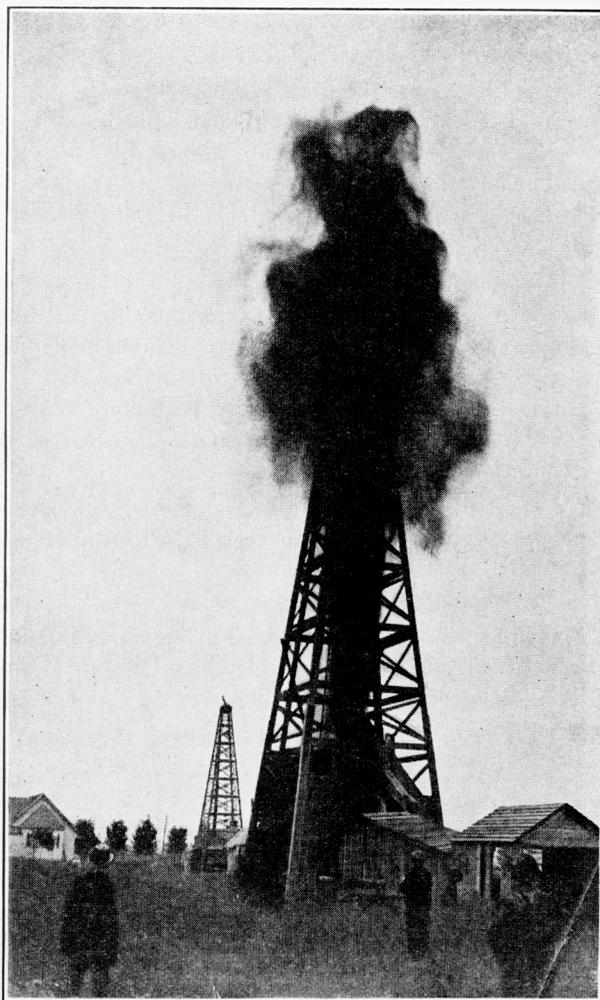
## Low Prices Discouraged Drilling in the State in 1933—New Gas Wells Flowing

asset to the state for years to come.

Wildcatting for oil, will, in the future, be mainly in

Vanderburgh, Spencer, Pike, and Sullivan counties, and the counties which join them, since the chances of making worthwhile discoveries are much greater in this area. The prospects for deeper drilling are especially bright in some sections. Testing for gas may be expected in the same counties and in parts of the Trenton field.

At the present time, in some of the proved fields of southwestern Indiana, wells are being deepened to lower horizons. It is likely that the horizons beneath the ones that have produced in the past, or are producing now, may contain oil or gas. The usual condition is that the structures favorable for the accumulation of oil or gas continue from the higher formations to those beneath them.



*This well has been shot with a charge of nitroglycerin, the force of the explosion being sufficient to throw water and oil over the top of the derrick. (Photo by courtesy of the Indianapolis News.)*