

Gascapades

By Shila Moore

In The Hugoton Hermes, June 10, 1927, issue, “Drilling operations were begun at Crawford No. 1 last Friday. On account of the well being capped for a week the hold had to be cleaned out. This required some time. Tuesday the six inch casing was set and the drill again started its downward course.

“The first gas was completely shut out of the six inch casing and piped to the east of the well where it was the intention of the drillers to light the gas Wednesday evening, but the striking of additional gas Wednesday made this too dangerous and the gas was simply allowed to blow.

“After drilling about 20 feet a new showing of gas was picked up and as the bit continued to bite its way into the limestone formation, the gas continued to grow stronger. Thursday morning as this is written, about a hundred feet of new hold has been made and the drillers estimate that fully 4,000,000 feet of new gas has been found. This is a bluer gas than the former strike. There is sufficient strength to the flow to force the pulverized rock from the hole and as the drilling continues, a cloud of dust and gas comes from the hole and envelopes the tower.

“Owners of the well are confident that oil will be found before long. Our people are showing

great interest in the well. Wednesday evening hundreds of people visited the well to see its operations and remained late into the night.

“All that is necessary now is a market for the gas and that seems certain Dodge City and other towns in the southwest are anxious for gas and in due time a market will be worked out. We have the supply, that is certain. We understand that it is the intention of the owner of this well to sink four more wells near this one as soon as a definite market for gas can be secured.”

Also from Hugoton Hermes June 10, 1927, “People who visit the big gas well should be very careful about the use of matches or fire of any kind. Everything about the well is saturated with gas and the lighting of a match would set the whole thing aflame.

“People visiting the well while the gas is escaping as at present should not enter the derrick, but should remain back at a safe location.

“Workmen at the well cannot watch everyone who visits the well now and it will require added caution on the part of everyone to prevent a serious accident. In our opinion, it would be better to go to a funeral as a pall bearer than as a corpse.”

Those words proved prophetic because in The Hugoton Hermes two weeks later in the June

24, 1927, issue the headline was “Rig at Crawford No. 1 Destroyed by Fire”.

“At 12:10 last Friday night (June 17, 1927), the gas in Crawford No. 1, Hugoton's big gas well, was ignited in some unknown manner and the big rig was burned down and the gas has been burning since that time.

“The actual cause of the fire is unknown and will probably remain a mystery. It happened just at the changing of the shifts at midnight. Only four men besides the drillers were on the grounds. These were Editor Edson, J. M. Cunningham, W. H. Luther and another man from Rolla. The Rolla men were just leaving when they noticed a flicker of the electric lights in the tower, followed immediately by the explosion. Mr. Buzzard and Rube Castor had just taken their shift. Mr. Buzzard went into the tower, lowered the bit a little and started back to the tool house when the explosion took place. Rube was dressing.

“The fortunate feature of the whole thing was that just at this time there was no one in the tower. Probably at no other time of the day would this have been so. During the early part of the evening, many visitors were at the well, in the tower and around it. An explosion then would have been serious and some would have been hurt or killed.

“Since the gas has been burning, thousands

of people from the country and surrounding towns have visited the well during the last week. They were all pleased with the sight of the burning gas and all went away satisfied that Crawford No. 1 is all that The Hermes has claimed for it.

“The loss sustained will amount to around \$15,000, with no insurance. The engine and tool house containing the lighting plant were saved and there will be some salvage from the tower.

“Mr. W. L. Sidwell, drilling contractor and owner of the gas, arrived Tuesday evening and at once announced that the wreckage would be cleared away, the fire put out, a new rig erected and work resumed just as rapidly as possible. Workmen began clearing the wreckage Wednesday morning.

“The manner in which Mr. Sidwell took the news of his loss shows that he is a real sport and that a loss like this will not in any way change his plans. He told the Hermes Tuesday night, ‘We are going right on with the work. We mean business. This will delay us a short time, but the work will be finished. We have an engineer in the field surveying the larger towns and we expect to market the gas.’

“This is, indeed, splendid news to our people and they will, no doubt, lend encouragement to the enterprise.

“The gas came from the well between the six and eight inch casing and burned in the pit, also from the six inch casing which extended several feet above the ground, making a most beautiful sight.

“Tuesday it was noticed that the lower fire was becoming smaller and the upper one stronger. During the afternoon the flow from between the six and eight inch casing stopped and the lower fire went out. A little mud had been working up between the casings which bridged the hole. This increased the flow in the six inch casing and the flames leaped higher into the air making it a more beautiful sight to look at but will not be such a formidable fire to fight.

“Flames from the burning gas leaped from fifty to seventy-five feet into the air and have been seen from Ulysses, Guymon and other parts of the country.

“People have been here from Garden City, Lakin, Dodge City, Guymon, Rolla, and other towns to see the well.

“Crawford No. 1 is the largest gas well in this part of the field. The tester showed it to be between 12,000,000 and 15,000,000 feet. There have been other smaller wells found at one and two million feet. The log report on the big advertised gasser west of Liberal shows it to be only one million feet. Hovey No. 1 at Guymon had about the same as the Liberal well.

“Crawford No. 1 is 2875 feet deep. The hole is open about 65 feet. At the time the fire started, the drill was in the well and is still there together with 2800 feet of cable.”

Next week find out the actual cause of the fire and how it was extinguished. Also, please email me your stories of the gas and oil field or the stories of a family member. shilamoore007@gmail.com. I just want basic information like your name, the name of the company you worked for, the span of your career, your duties, changes you witnessed, and anything else you would like to share. Thank you!

Just Think!!!

We can live life God’s way and be guaranteed a home in Heaven

But how do we know what God’s way is if we don’t read our Bibles

Matthew 16:26; Acts 2: 38 - 47

Romans 6: 4-5; Colossians 2: 11-12

Lin Goode

PUBLIC NOTICE

(First published in The Hugoton Hermes, Thursday, September 10, 2026) 1t

The Towers, LLC proposes to build a 305-foot self-support communications tower. Anticipated lighting application is medium intensity dual red/white strobes. The Site location is 0 Road Y (near the intersection of Road 9 and Highway 56), Moscow, Stevens County, KS 67592. Lat: 37-19-19.64, Long: -101-12-52.65. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Antenna Structure Registration (ASR, Form 854) filing number is A1393418.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS – Interested persons may review the

application (www.fcc.gov/asr/applications) by entering the filing number. The FCC requires Requests for Environmental Review to be filed electronically. Instructions for filing can be found at: (www.fcc.gov/asr/environmental-request). HISTORICAL EFFECTS – In accordance with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the FCC regulations implementing Section 106 review, public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may also be submitted to: Trileaf Corp, Linnea Turner, L.turner@trileaf.com, 1515 Des Peres Road, Suite 200, St. Louis, MO 63131, 314-997-6111.

PUBLIC NOTICE

(First published in The Hugoton Hermes, Thursday, September 10, 2026) 3t

In the Twenty-sixth Judicial District
District Court, Stevens County, Kansas
Probate Department

In the Matter of the Estate of Vera Louise Sims, a/k/a Louise Sims, a/k/a Vera Louise Sims-Marsing, Deceased.

Case No. SV-2026-PR-25
Notice of Hearing

The State of Kansas to All Persons Concerned:

You are hereby notified that on the 1st day of September, 2026, a Petition has been filed in said Court

Kenneth Bruce Sims, Petitioner

Megan L. McCann
Davis & McCann, P.A.
2300 1st Avenue
Dodge City, KS 67801
Phone: (620) 225-1674
Fax: (620) 227-2770
e-mail: mmccann@dclawfirm.net
Attorneys for Petitioner

History from the Hermes

Thursday, September 12, 1996

A complex of greenhouses will produce vegetables costing \$18 to \$20 million will be constructed this fall near Wilburton. H.G Houston, an engineer of the firm who now lives in Hugoton, explains the plant is a vision of Jac Adams of Adams Engineering of Dubuque, Ia. The complex, which will involve 88 greenhouses, possibly measuring 50’ by 300’ will be located one mile south of Wilburton. The structures will be near a seaboard containment site and the lagoon waste will be used for the green house project.

The vegetables grown there, mostly tomatoes,

will be hydrophonically and organically raised. No commercial fertilizer will be used. Composting ovens will turn waste to compost. There will be no waste of any kind. Bumblebees will be used for pollination and Praying Mantis as well as Lady Bugs will be used for insect control.

Climate will be controlled year round, water will be heated with catalytic converters, and smaller plants such as peas, broccoli, baby carrots will be automatically harvested.

Thursday, September 12, 1991

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment today

announced that the animal specimens submitted to the Center for Disease Control laboratory in Fort Collins Colorado tested negative for plague. The clinical specimens from the boy in Garfield who was suspected to have had the plague was also negative. Cultures from the boy indicated that he had tularemia. Tularemia is a bacterial disease that affected both animals and man. There were seven reported in Kansas last year, and three so far in 1991.

Thursday, September 11, 1986

Hugoton Kiwanis Club members on Saturday cooked up to 270 steaks for the annual Kiwanis Teacher-Merchant steak dinner. Cooks were Gordon Morford, Dr. Steve Bienhoff, Walter McClure, and Quintin Martic. The grill was set up in the parking lot behind the courthouse and cooked over 100 ribeye steaks at a time. Merchants and their Teacher guests met in Memorial Hall for the dinner, a chance to get acquainted and to enjoy the program.

Thursday, September 10, 1981

The pace of oil and gas drilling in Kansas continued during the first half of 1981, according to statistics compiled by the Kansas Geological Survey

at the University of Kansas. Survey geologist Shirley Paul said that drilling was up by more than 28 percent during the first six months of 1981, compared with the first half of 1980. Kansas drillers completed 3,197 wells from January to June 1981; 2485 wells were drilled during the same period a year ago. Most of that increase came in oil wells. There were 1,510 successful oil wells during the first half of 1981, compared with 1,061 during the first six months of 1980, increase of 42 percent.

Development wells, drilled to increase production from established fields, have accounted for most of the state's oil wells so far in 1981. Kansas drillers bored 2,479 development wells and struck oil in 1,410, a success rate of about 67 percent.

If any readers have pictures or memories for the history page of the Hermes, please bring them in to the staff at The Hugoton Hermes newspaper.



Kiwanis Teacher-Merchant Steak dinner cooked by (from the left) Gordon Morford, Dr. Steve Bienhoff, Walter McClure and Quintin Martin.

Full-Service Ag Sales & Application -- “Created to Serve”

✓ Liquid and Dry Fertilizer Sales and Application

✓ Ground Rig Spraying

✓ Ag Chemicals & NH₃

G⁺Ag, Inc.

1114 Road A - Hugoton
620-417-9024

Visit our retail store today!