Numerous Applications Filed In Great Falls Land Office

Numerous applications for federal oil and gas leases were filed during the week at the Great Falls land office, much of the acreage involved being in the vicinity of Bowdoin dome, in northeastern Montana, on which the Texas Company is now drilling a deep test.

Included in the filing were the following:

C. L. Thompson, Havre, N½ NW¼ 22 and W½ NW¼, NE¼ and NW¼ SE¼ 10-31N-25E; E½ NE¼ 9 and W½ NW¼, NE¼ and NW¼ SE¼ 10-31N-25E, 760 acres.

Same, E½ Eu, NW¼ NE¼ and SW¼ SE¼ 17; NW¼ NW¼ 17, and NE¼ NE¼ 18-32N-25E, 320 acres.

Genevieve Miller, 1243 So. Ash, Sasper, Wyo., E½ 20, NE¼, SW¼ SE¼, SW¼, N½ NW¼ and SW¼ NW¼ 21; N½, W½ SE¼, N½ SW¼ 22, N½ 28, E½ 29 and E½ 32-30N-33E, and E½ 5 29N-33E, 2561 acres.

N. K. Harris, 842 So. Durbin, Casper, Wyo., lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 and S½ NE¼ and NE¼ 6-30N-31E; S½ SW¼ and NW¼ SW¼ 13-31N-30E. Also in the same townships and range, N½ SE¼ and SE¼ SE¼ 14, W½ E½ and W½ 23, N½ N¼ 24, W½ 25, E½ NE¼ and SE¼ 26, and SW¼ NW¼ 35, a total of 1909 acres.

An attempted 1120-acre filing by Anne E. Shaw of 417 So. Ogden, Denver, Colo., involving acreage in 37N-18E was for the most part rejected because it covered acreage on which mineral rights had not been reserved by the government.

Edna F. Guise, 1820 E. Colfax, Denver, filed on 200 acres in 32N-30E, including SE¼ SE¼ 12, E½ NE¼, NE¼ SE¼ and NW¼ NW¼ 13.

Crude Output Drops, August

The daily average production of crude petroleum declined 86,000 barrels from the July record to 4,836,000 barrels, reports the Bureau of Mines of the United States Department of the Interior. Except the decline of 88,000 barrels daily in Texas, changes in production of leading states were small. Louisiana output reached 400,000 barrels daily for the first time.

Oil well completions gained 184 to 1,425 in August and were 267 above the August, 1945, total. Active rotary drilling rigs numbered 3,815 at the end of August, 28 more than on July 31.

The daily average demand for domestic crude petroleum again increased to 4,886,000 barrels (22,000 barrels above the July rate) and caused the withdrawal from stocks of 50,000 barrels daily during the month. Total crude stocks, domestic and foreign, were 229,223,000 barrels on August 31, compared with 229,319,000 barrels on July 31.

Many New Cars Are "Lemons," View of Authoritative Paper

The oil industry and the automobile industry are inextricably linked. Because of that fact, there is reprinted the following from the authoritative and well-edited "Dealer News" of Los Angeles—a searching look at some of the glaring faults being found in the new cars rolling so haltingly off the assembly lines:

Enough of the 1946 model automobiles have rolled up enough miles in the hands of private owners to give the nation a pretty fair preview of the postwar "hossless kerrige"—and the verdict is a bit on the gloomy side, according to a recent survey conducted in 16 large cities.

Back in the dark days of the war people spoke with bated breath of the mechanical marvels which would materialize on the drafting boards and roll off the assembly lines when once the automobile industry could turn from its task of supplying a large portion of the "arsenal for democracy." Not only would the new cars be glittering, glamorous and gay . . . in the mind of a war-weary public . . . they were also imagined as far better mechanically and structurally than anything produced in prewar years.

Comes now the rude awakening. Not only have the 1946 models hewed close to the line of conservatism in design and refinements . . . they have been proven through use to be so full of "bugs" that their cousins of the vintage of 1941-42 . . . and even before . . . are reported to be eyeing the new generation with suspicion and distrust. Some thought even exists that the new generation is not worthy of flaunting the good old family names that stood for so much before the war.

It is, however, worthy of note and a very favorable comment on the American ideal of sportsmanship, that very few of the owners of 1946 cars inclined to place all the blame on the factories. Most of the comments gleaned in the survey were to the contrary. In Youngstown, O., for example, the owner of a new Ford quickly discovered that the car was "eating its head off" through excessive oil consumption. Examination revealed the startling fact that a loose piston had already scored the cylinder block. Through the Youngstown dealer the Ford Motor Company promptly replaced the block, without charge.

"I guess I can't blame anybody but the guy on the production line," said the owner. "Certainly it wasn't Henry Ford's fault . . . or my dealer's fault."

Pretty much the same sort of opinions have been voiced by owners of all makes and models, despite the weird epidemics of peeling paint, cracking chrome, busting bolts, sagging springs and mischievous motors.

The owners of the new cars consider themselves pretty lucky after all. If they start each trip with a prayer . . . still they're starting it in a new car! And they know that the manufacturers have had a lot to put up with—strikes, low efficiency, indifferences, parts shortages and a lot of general cussedness.

No make of car is entirely exempt from the 1946 crop of "bugs," the survey found. And the "bugs" come in amazing variety, although the commonest ailments are defective paint jobs, glass that cracks or leaks water mysteriously, rubber loosening around doors, bolts that are loose and often missing altogether, clutches that bind and wear rapidly, and noises that spring from the haunts of scores of wicked little gremlins. But you can also pretty well have your choice, like a Minneapolis man whose new car cracked a window, broke a speedometer cable, burnt out a distributor, leaked water under the dash, and finally turned up with nothing dependable about it but the electric clock. The clock was always dependably wrong. His choice was to sell the car . . . after months of use . . . at the same price he paid for it.

Less obnoxious to the owners, apparently, than the many defects, are the frills they are sometimes required to pay for. The survey uncovered numerous cases in which the new cars had been loaded to the guards with "extras" that often ran to nearly half the cost of a good new car in the old days. Sets of seat covers at $80, windshield washing gadgets that don't work, fog lights in country where fog is unknown . . . these were some of the things about which people complained to the survey field men.

It would be distinctly unfair to leave the impression that the survey found nothing but "bugs." Many owners reported that their 1946 cars had served them well on trips to Florida and back . . . or on other long journeys. But there was a sad lack of enthusiasm, even among these lucky ones. And they were far too few in number.

The nation's auto makers, questioned about this sort of a thing, get pretty cagey. They are in a tough spot. But they are cautiously admitting, through factory bulletins and other sources, that some of the 1946 output has been temperamental to say the least. In the words of one Detroit manufacturer, "We'll plug along . . . doing the best we can . . . and pinning our hopes on the future."

Gas May Soon Rival Crude Oil As Prime Source of Gasoline

In case you've been wondering about the sudden interest in building up major gas reserves along the Alberta-Montana border, you might consider the remarks of a scientist who recently asserted that conversion of natural gas into gasoline is now economically competitive with production of gasoline from petroleum.

E. V. Murphree, executive vice president of Standard Oil Development Co., central technical and research organization of Jersey Standard, declared that production of gasoline from coal is also practical but not yet competitive generally with production from crude oil. He said, however, that the development of coal conversion processes was continuing.

Murphree stressed that emphasis on conversion of natural gas and ultimately of coal to liquid fuels is "not basically due to fear of future shortage of oil," but rather that the "cost of finding oil and its production is increasing and will probably increase in the future."

"The urge for development of improved processes for conversion of natural gas and coal to gasoline, therefore, springs from economic considerations," he stated.

Murphree estimated the present cost of producing gasoline from coal at roughly 7¼ cents per gallon. This is not much higher than the cost of producing similar grade gasoline from crude oil at present crude prices, he commented, but added that the investment in the coal plant is much higher.

He gave no estimate of the cost of converting natural gas into gasoline.

"Recent work on conversion of natural gas and coal into liquid products," Murphree said, "has to a large extent been centered in the use of the fluidized solids technique which evolved out of the fluid catalytic cracking process developed by the Jersey Standard group. This use of the catalyst in powdered form has been one of the outstanding advances in making the conversion of gas and coal economically attractive."

Reviewing the past and present accomplishments of research and development in the oil industry which have given the public better products at lower prices, Murphree recalled that in 1925 gasoline in bulk having an octane number of 60 sold at the refinery for about 14 cents a gallon, while in 1945 gasoline of 76 octane number was selling at the refinery for 5⅝ cents a gallon.

More Miles Per Gallon Forecast

An increase of 20 percent in gasoline mileage per car within the next few years as automotive engines are designed to take advantage of the superior gasolines which will be available, was predicted here by Julian J. Frey, general sales manager of Ethyl Corp.

Addressing a local marketers' convention, Frey said a "conservative" estimate of the anti-knock quality of average fuels that will be available by 1950 is a "motor rating of 86 octane for Ethyl gasoline and 80 for regular grades."

"Premium grade fuels, moreover, will show a road performance of about 90 octane number bearing out our earlier estimates that postwar gasolines will show a better performance on the road than indicated by their laboratory octane number," he stated.