

NATURAL GAS IS BIG FACTOR IN WEST VIRGINIA

Edwin Robinson Reviews History of Its Development in State.

IT BRINGS US MILLIONS

Bureau Chief Gregory Talks About the Government's Policy.

This year's annual convention of the natural gas men of West Virginia which was held at Huntington last week was one of the most interesting of the whole series of these meetings and the following paper by Edwin Robinson, of this city, which presented a resume of the economic side of the natural gas history of the state was one of the most interesting numbers on the program:

The producer, transporter and distributor of natural gas have been given public attention and criticism as to the manner in which their business is conducted from the inception of the natural gas industry.

In the early stages of the business little or no attention was paid to the leakage, defective pipe line laying or had plumbing in the consumer's residence.

Gas in those days was plentiful and the market was scarce. As everybody was after oil, gas was considered of little value and a great amount of it was allowed to go to waste.

Along about 1902 the possibilities of West Virginia's Natural Gas Resources became evident to some of the larger producers, leasing of territory began in earnest, leases were drawn more carefully, the drilling of wells was begun, locations were made miles apart for the purpose of testing the scope of the gas belt.

When gas was found in large quantities in scattered districts, it was then that the industry was put upon a business basis. Careful records of everything done, every formation and strata through which the drill went was noted.

Conservation, which heretofore was unknown, was being practiced in a primary way by some of the larger companies. It was not long after this that the gas companies began in earnest to see what gas once in the line should go to the consumer.

Leaks were stopped, line walkers were started in all directions to note any leaks, the condition of the lines or the probable chances of a slip or land slide. And this is in practice today.

Now, efficiency experts, geologists, engineers and chemists and every known device and invention for the betterment of the service have been adopted.

Some gas companies that formerly used gas for driving the gas compressors have installed boilers, opened coal mines that more gas could be delivered to its customers.

The amount of gas used under boilers for drilling wells was one hundred and ten thousand cubic feet every twenty four hours, now thirty five thousand cubic feet is used.

Everything is being done to conserve gas by the producer. The State has passed laws and the Public Service Commission rules to regulate the gas company in the conduct of its business. Reports of its business, in many of the most minute details are made, pressures in cities are reported, in fact everything about its business is known to the Administration at Charleston.

There is no objection to this—all the gas people ask is fair treatment and to be treated like other people and corporations. I will say that our relations with the Public Service Commission and the Administration and its Department have been most cordial and fair.

Conservation by the consumer has not yet begun. He has not made any noticeable effort to improve the use of gas in his home, for I believe that ninety percent of the appliances used in the homes in West Virginia where natural gas is used as a fuel are the same that were originally installed twenty to twenty-five years ago.

There has been no attempt on the part of the consumer to insist upon modern appliances properly installed that will save gas and reduce the gas bill.

A great many companies have men whose only duties are to see that its customers burn gas in the proper manner and not waste it. If this method was adopted by all of the distributing companies and the consumers would not object to installing modern devices and appliances the amount of gas saved would take care of considerable of the shortage that occurs during the extreme cold weather.

There is another class of consumers whose conservation of gas is unknown. I am speaking of the free consumers. We can cite an instance in West Virginia where a free consumer used one million cubic feet of gas in one month in his residence. This should be sufficient gas for one hundred consumers for the same period.

A great deal of this waste comes from the training and conditions incident to the early use of gas. From the beginning of the business until within a very short time ago natural gas had but little commercial value except as a fuel for heating industries by offering free gas for a term of years or at a rate so exceedingly low to amount to almost the same thing.

In West Virginia the earlier investors in the natural gas business followed in the footsteps of the north western Ohio producers by making it incident to the real estate business.

Along about that time the Ohio and Indiana gas fields were exhausted and a number of industries that were seeking locations where gas was plentiful and cheap, turned their eyes to West Virginia.

The manufacturer from Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania looking for cheap gas had never been trained to conserve in any way or to use any modern methods or appliances. The price of gas was so low that no attention was paid to the amount consumed. The gas men encouraged this for the bills were larger.

Today to a certain extent this is true for the reason that the majority of the industrial consumers have no idea as to the value of the commodity nor realize the importance of conservation.

The low price of natural gas has had more to do with the waste and careless use of it than anything else. Whenever the price of gas reaches the point of its value as a commodity both the industrial and domestic consumers will use every known device and appliance for getting every possible heat unit out of it.

The exceedingly low price for gas offered by producers, Boards of Trade or Real Estate men attracted to the towns one class of manufacturers, with few exceptions, namely those engaged in the manufacture of glass. Then came the Carbon Black maker, who followed cheap gas like the Window Glass Manufacturer, from Pennsylvania to Ohio to Indiana then to West Virginia.

The Carbon Black manufacturer today consumes one half as much gas as used by the domestic and industrial consumers of the State.

In Wheeling district, which has been and is the largest manufacturing district in West Virginia, most of the large iron and steel mills and glass factories were in operation before natural gas was discovered and have been and are successfully operated.

There are manufacturing centers. Iron and Steel at Pittsburgh, Rubber at Akron, Pottery at East Liverpool, Automobiles at Detroit, Machinery at Cincinnati and so on.

The inhabitants of these places are thoroughly familiar with its particular class of industry and the manufacturer would hesitate to move his plant for the skilled mechanic who has raised his family there, with his relatives and friends, does not care to move from place to place.

Since January 1915 the industrial consumption of natural gas has been unprecedented for two reasons, first, on account of all the plants in which natural gas is used for fuel being operated at their fullest capacity during the entire twelve months of the year. Second the great number of industries that began to use natural gas on account of the price of coal advancing from two hundred and fifty to five hundred percent of its former selling price.

I wish to say here had the price of natural gas advanced along with the price of coal there would have been comparatively little shortage during the winter of 1917 and 1918.

This increased demand for industrial gas has not been to the liking of the gas companies which had its protected wells shut in in virgin territory to be used for future domestic service. The land owners were paid their royalties for these wells from which no gas was taken, pipe lines in many instances were miles away.

Natural Gas Companies are Public Utilities and are not permitted to select their customers.

In the transporting of natural gas difficulties arise similar to transporting other commodities. We are affected to a certain extent.

All the railroads during the extreme cold weather are practically at a stand still and are unable to move either passengers, traffic, or freight trains on any regular schedules.

Industries are frequently closed down on account of the railroads being unable to deliver their materials, which are held up in a blizzard or blocked by a snow drift. This is taken as a matter of course. People understand it and do not complain. Competent management adjusts itself to conditions as they arise.

When we stop to consider the enormous increased demands made upon the natural gas utilities caused by a drop in the temperature of from thirty, forty and sometimes fifty degrees, with only a few hours notice and never more than from eighteen to twenty-four hours, it seems incomprehensible that the service is as good as it is.

For one degree drop in the temperature means an increase of three percent in the consumption of gas.

It does not take much figuring to show that the increased demand for natural gas on a few hours notice runs from one hundred to one hundred and fifty percent. We know of no business that is called upon to meet demands like this which comes at frequent periods during the winter months.

There is a way for the industrial and domestic consumers to co-serve and it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of experts and laymen that the kind of burners and appliances used with proper installation has everything to do with the amount of gas consumed.

It has been shown by tests made in one of the State Laboratories that certain kind of burners properly installed will save the house wife from thirty-five to fifty percent in gas than she formerly used in cooking.

Natural Gas is the fuel in the home of the laboring man, in other words in the home where the wife does the work, its convenience and cleanliness saves her many hours of work and drudgery. The family can sleep longer in the morning as it is not necessary to build a fire and wait half an hour for the stove to heat sufficiently to boil the coffee and cook the breakfast. This class of consumers should have preferred service. In other words, the man who uses gas in his furnace for heating his house, should be required to burn coal during the extreme cold months, so that those depending entirely upon gas and require it for heating and cooking should not suffer shortage.

The cost of producing gas has increased. Labor has advanced sixty to one hundred percent. Material from one hundred to one hundred and fifty percent, Rigs from seven hundred and fifty dollars to twelve hundred dollars. Teaming from five dollars to eight dollars per day. Boarding for the men has increased fifty percent and so difficult to secure that the establishing of camps is necessary in many places.

The average volume of wells drilled in 1914 was from one and a half million cubic feet to two million cubic feet, today, about six hundred thousand cubic feet.

In 1914 the pressure was almost sufficient to carry the gas to the markets, today mechanical means are

necessary, which adds to the cost. Pipe casing, fittings and machinery are the only materials purchased outside of the State, with but few exceptions.

If it were not for the gasoline, which was formerly wasted, and the revenue from oil production, which has been made attractive to the gas companies by Four Dollar oil, gas receipts would bring in no revenue for the stockholder.

The Government's Attitude. The address which attracted the most attention because it foreshadowed impending changes in the government policy with regard to natural gas was that made by T. B. Gregory, chief of the bureau of natural gas, in the Fuel administration. Mr. Gregory said:

It affords me great pleasure and I regard it a special privilege to meet so many representative men of the oil and gas industry that are assembled here today, especially so, as it was in West Virginia I had some of my early experience laying gas lines; in 1888 having been associated with Mr. E. M. Grant, of Morgantown, and three other gentlemen of Pennsylvania, in the construction of the natural gas and water system for that city. A few years later representing the same parties it was my pleasure to have charge of the construction of the natural gas line to Fairmont and Grafton. While I am no longer connected with these companies, I am still so closely identified with the gas and oil producing and refining industry of the state as to feel justified in claiming myself a West Virginian.

Of this closely allied industry should feel proud of the commanding place it is taking in helping win the great war for the preservation of our families, homes and National honor, and making the world a safe and decent place to live in by crushing out for all time the aims and selfish aspirations of the Kaiser and his minions, and establishing a universal slogan stated by the word "Democracy."

When we look back to the last great war this country was engaged in and consider the petroleum industry was practically unknown in 1860, taking no part in that struggle, and compare it with the situation of today, in which it is admitted by everyone on both sides as being, after the part taken by the mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts, the first and most important factor in the struggle, and that gas is finally going to win this great conflict, America being depended upon to supply this product for our own and allies use, it can readily be seen the importance of everyone connected, in even the remotest way, doing his utmost to speedily achieve this most desired result.

The question of meeting the petroleum requirements resting with us, we must have the most hearty co-operation among all workers of the industry who are still left to fill the great gaps made in our ranks by contributions made toward that noble army and navy who are showing such grand results across and on the water, and of the many others who are still waiting anxiously for the opportunity placed upon those of us who are most unselfish and hearty efforts of all and by forgetting state or community lines or individuality.

That the petroleum industry will keep its co-ops intact and well lubricated to give the greatest efficiency by all who are in any way connected with it, is my confident prediction, made from personal knowledge by work and association with them, and in behalf of the oil division of the U. S. Fuel administration I ask all to take a personal interest in the work by helping in every way, give your neighbor friendly and timely help if you see the necessity, such as reporting leaks, broken lines, etc., or if a little work on your part will avoid some break stop and repair it. Field and lease men should give their best efforts to maintain production and equipment saving all material possible so that more munitions can be made, and if they are employed by a large or prosperous concern do not imagine it is not necessary to save, as by saving they are helping in a double way, first by preserving the material, leaving its replacement available for other needs, and second by increasing the amount of income and excess profits tax that company must pay. Such help is not only expected by our men in the army and navy who are risking their lives for us but by our government who asks it as your "bit" in assisting in every way the great efforts being put forth by such men as Dr. Garfield, Mr. Requa, Mr. O'Donnell and others who have left their homes and business and by the untiring work in assisting these men by Mr. Bedford and Mr. Teagle, of the Standard Oil company; Mr. Davidson of the Gulf Oil company; Mr. Doherty, Mr. Doheny, Mr. Daves and others of the Petroleum War Service committee, representing all the leading oil and gas companies of the country who are unselfishly giving their time and means to the end that the industry shall fulfill the trust imposed upon it and that we can look our boys in the face when they return or greet the dear ones of those who will never return, and feel better in knowing we too have made some slight sacrifice and helped in a small way to bring about the desired result we all so confidently anticipate.

It is fitting that I announce to this assembly that there is under contemplation the issuance of a proclamation placing the distribution of natural gas under license and making rules governing the distribution of natural gas in order to equalize its use and secure the greatest efficiency in the war program. The reasonable needs of the domestic consumer is proposed to be taken care of first, then in order of priority as will seem to be of the greatest benefit for the conservation of fuel. It is hoped should this order be found necessary it will be received by all concerned in the spirit that is intended "the greatest efficiency of its distribution looking to the needs of the laboring family who are depending on it to enable them to conserve their time and resources for important war work."

NOTICE
My wife, Florence Deselm, has left my bed and board without a just cause. I will not be responsible for any debts contracted by her. B. A. Deselm.

7-26-124-171

OUTBURSTS OF EVERETT TRUE (BY COMBS)



Evening Chat

Contrary to expectations, of water there was none yesterday when the sun did not arise. A God sent rain came down just on purpose to fill barrels and tubs so that poor Fairmonters might not go utterly waterless. Many amusing tales were told tonight out of the city. At the hot is a number when asked if they would have room and bath, declined with thanks. What was the use of a bath with no water! But the far seeing clerk said the baths on land and supposed he must dispose of them somehow. The Meredith spring, according to several reports, has been closed, whether gone dry or not was not stated. The Watson spring runs feebly and as many as fifty people at a time wait politely in line for a chance at the precious liquid. There's a saying about water never being appreciated till the well runs dry and it is certainly true.

house in his mother's basement, with chairs enough to seat fifty and a stage with screen above. He has a regular box office and he charges four cents admission, showing first class pictures. His audiences say his shows are fine and he is hoping to do good business next season. He only shows pictures Wednesdays and Saturdays, and his hour for showing is five in the afternoon, owing to other business duties. Robert is only fourteen but he lost his father a year ago and since then has determined to be a success in the world, with a small sister and a mother to look out for. He is a serious minded youngster with many worth while traits, as observed by neighbors and friends and everybody wants to lend a hand in the building of his career. Robert has a capable machine operator, Louis Ridenour, who receives half the profits. Louis furnishes part of the films. Last Saturday as much as forty cents was taken in.

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Republicans:—

Do you want a Candidate who can win?

Do you want to honor a Soldier of two wars?

Do you want a successful Business Man in the Senate?

Do you want a Candidate who can poll the great Soldier Vote in the November Election?

Do you want a representative in the Senate who you will find always easy of approach and glad to see you?

Do you want a whole-souled West Virginian, whose every interest, financial and otherwise, is in West Virginia, to guard your and the State's best interests?

Do you want a "man's man," as free as the great out-doors, energetic, clean, wholesome, kind-hearted, charitable, sympathetic—yet firm as a rock when necessity requires—to hold this high office it is in your power to give?

Do you want to place your vote to the honor of a true son of America, intensely patriotic, personally interested and not by proxy, in the winning of the war with Germany, ready and willing to make any sacrifice demanded, to the giving up of his life if need be?

Do you want a true party harmonizer, who never took part in a factional fight, whose efforts have always been for harmony, yet whose fealty to party has never been questioned, to represent you in the Senate of the United States, to lead you to certain victory in the coming November election? If so—

Vote for Major Davis Elkins for the Republican Nomination for United States Senate

Several people got wagons and went to the river with barrels last night, bringing home enough to take care of present needs. Expense in drayage is not considered in spite of the fact that when the water does come on, if it ever does, we'll have extra water tax, meters, etc., to pay for just the same. The supplying of water to Fairmont is a task, as we all know, especially for the rapid growth of the city. But these things will happen and taken altogether, sometimes it is necessary to have a big break down all at once to show us just the condition of matters.

Robert Amos, of 112 High street, is quite a business man at present. He has a fully equipped moving picture

Comparison is The Only Test of Value! We Invite Comparison

\$2.50 women's white gabardine wash skirts	\$1.25	Up to \$9.00 women's striped and flowered voile dresses as slightly soiled choices	\$2.60
\$2.00 Girls gingham voile middie cloth etc. tub dress sizes 3 to 12 years	\$1.25	\$2.50 Serpentine crepe kimono or either flowered or plain	\$1.50
\$3.00 women's gingham house or street dresses in pin-blue only	\$1.95	\$3.00 women's china silk-waists white or flesh only	\$2.20
\$4.00 white gabardine wash skirts for women in sizes 24 to 38 waist	\$2.75	\$3.00 women's silk crepe de chine envelope	\$2.50
\$10 Men's Palm Beach Suits in light or dark colors, sizes 33 to 44	\$6.95	Up to \$2.50 women's white canvas slippers strap sandals and pumps	\$1.95
A belated shipment of new crisp and fresh white voile, organdie and madras	\$1.00	\$1.00 Boy's olive twist and romper play suits made of dress fabric cloth	75c

"A STORE FOR THE PEOPLE" HARRISON'S ON "ECONOMY CORNER"

which though it may not provide for a vast amount of luxuries, goes a long way to start. Come to his show Saturday and bring the children.

According to Isaac Watson the world is growing worse instead of better. We may have had suspicion of the fact as far as a certain country we are fighting is concerned, but we don't exactly believe it of America, through these are the facts he says are proofs:

In 1914 we spent for amusements over eight hundred million dollars. For tobacco, nine hundred million, for candy seventy-eight million, for soft drinks, thirty-six million, for chewing gum twenty-six million, against only fifteen million dollars for missionary work! That's the argument. That because we like to be amused and eat a lot of candy, etc., we are growing worse. He says murder is increasing at the rate of five per cent. faster than the population and that divorces number thirty-seven thousand in 1913. These figures are supposed to cover the whole world. In reading them to one of our thinkers in the city the following remark was made:

The LAW'S DELAY.
What do they mean by Court calendar? I don't under the term. Nor do I. I thought Courts could no attention to time.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

"MAN OF THE HOUR"

Measures Up to Every Requirement

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- Do you want a Candidate who can win?
- Do you want to honor a Soldier of two wars?
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