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Spring 1982

Review of *The Oklahoma Petroleum Industry* By Kenny A. Franks

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The Oklahoma Petroleum Industry. By Kenny A. Franks. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. xvi + 284 pp. \$17.50.

Anyone who undertakes to survey the economic history of the Great Plains in the twentieth century is struck by the fact that the literature on the subject is exceedingly sparse, particularly when measured against the importance of the field. Scholarly studies of agriculture, special industries, banking and credit institutions, and government regulation in these spheres at the federal and state level are still needed, even though the era of the Great Depression in the 1930s has received some special attention. This book, spawned by an increasing awareness of energy crises in the 1970s, pro-

vides a succinct survey of the petroleum industry in Oklahoma from its beginnings to the present day. Its author is director of the Oklahoma Heritage Association and editor of the Oklahoma Horizons Series in which this volume appears.

In twenty-two concise chapters Franks surveys the growth of the petroleum industry in Oklahoma. He discusses discovery of some of the great fields in the early twentieth century such as Red Fork, Glenn, Healdton, and Cushing as well as the extraordinary development of the Greater Seminole and Oklahoma City fields in the 1920s. At the same time he gives due attention to the problems of energy waste and pollution that resulted in state and federal regulation from the birth of the industry. Oklahoma was one of the pioneers in formulating comprehensive state regulation even before World War I. Under the sting of the Depression in the 1930s Oklahoma legislators extended public controls. In fact, Governor E. W. Marland, himself a leading oil producer, assumed leadership in utilizing the Oklahoma experience to organize the Interstate Oil Compact of 1935. This agreement provided for cooperation among oil-producing states, and between them and the federal government to regulate production. The years since 1945 are less adequately covered in the work as Franks sketches the lives of outstanding Oklahoma oilmen and their philanthropic contributions.

Franks has fashioned a well-written and terse history of the Oklahoma oil industry. It is as much a work of synthesis as it is a product of original research. The book is copiously illustrated with 150 photographs that show the growth of the industry. Franks also interviewed scores of people in the industry and had access to materials in the custody of the Oklahoma Heritage Association and the Oklahoma Petroleum Council. He has combed newspapers and summarized detailed information found in periodicals and dissertations. Great Plains historians will find this compact volume to be useful and informative.

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