

## SHULMAN BROS., INC.

The history of Shulman Bros., Inc. began in Jackson, Tennessee where five brothers were born . . . Harry, the eldest, Joe, Jake, Isadore (Izzy), and Maurice, the youngest.

It was during World War I and Harry was taking training at Georgia Tech to go into service when the Armistice Agreement was signed and the war ended. A friend suggested that he go with him to Texas where he knew jobs were available. After visiting with the family in Jackson, TN, Harry hitch-hiked his way to Texas, working along the way for food and shelter. He learned that Breckenridge, Texas was the hub of the oil business so he settled there and worked in the oilfields. He acquired leases and accumulated enough money to purchase a Wichita Spudder and some stripper production.

In 1920, Joe, the next oldest brother joined Harry in Breckenridge. Jake arrived in 1922. Jake was mechanically inclined and he took to Harry's spudder and became a driller for Harry.

Football was an important part of the Shulman brothers' lives. Harry played at Jackson High School. Joe played high school football and was on the Junior Varsity team at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1929 from the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania.

Jake was the first "Tramp Athlete". He played high school football in Jackson, Tennessee and at Breckenridge High School where he was the captain of the football team. From there he went to Terrell Prep near Dallas where he had a football scholarship and then to Weatherford Junior College which he also attended on a football scholarship.

After playing at Jackson High School, Izzy had a football scholarship to Georgia Tech. He played on the 1929 team that went to the Rose Bowl. Maurice was the quarterback on the Jackson High School team that was undefeated and unscored on in the 1934-35 season and won the Conference Championship.

Izzy received an engineering degree from Georgia Tech and after graduation went to Breckenridge to work with Harry, Joe and Jake.

In 1929 the Depression struck. Harry lost his holdings, but in 1930 East Texas was enjoying an oil boom; so Harry, Joe and Jake left Breckenridge for Longview, Texas. Izzy, who had gone to Tennessee to work for the Highway Department, returned to Texas in 1934 to work once again with the brothers.

A newspaper stand and a barbecue stand run by Joe, Jake, and Joe's friend, John Earl "Tiny" Hickey, kept the Shulman boys in the oil business. Joe and Jake purchased a Cardwell Spudder and Joe, Jake and Izzy worked for many independent contractors, especially Paul Doran and Lumis "Mutt" Johnson.

In the meantime, Harry moved to Kilgore, Texas where he purchased a rotary rig, acquired some leases and became successful.

Joe, Jake and Izzy were first known as Volunteer Development Company operating two Cardwell Spudders. In

1938 the boom in the East Texas oilfield had tapered off and things weren't too good. Paul Doran and "Mutt" Johnson had moved their equipment to St. Elmo, Illinois where an oil boom was beginning. They asked the Shulmans to move their spudders to Illinois to complete the wells they were drilling. Volunteer Development Company became Shulman Brothers, Contractors.

The first production that Shulman Brothers found was on a farm-out from the Ohio Oil Company which became the south end of the Loudon field near St. Elmo. Jake learned that Ohio Oil Company had a lease that had to be drilled by a specific time or the lease would revert to the landowner. Ohio Oil Company did not want to drill it and Jake got the farm-out for that lease, plotted the locations and the rest is history. This was the beginning of Shulman Brothers success in Illinois. They chose to settle in Vandalia, Illinois, not in the very busy and boom town of Centralia, Illinois. Their office has been over the Farmers and Merchants Bank (now First Bank) for many years.

Joe asked his friend, Carl Forrest, a CPA, to come to Illinois from Longview, Texas to manage Shulman Brothers' office. Years later, when Carl returned to Texas, Rollie Harris, Jr. was hired as office manager. After his death, his wife, Gene, who had been assisting him, became office manager and is there to this day.

Youngest brother Maurice worked with the brothers every summer while he was in high school and college. He graduated in 1941 from the University of Texas Law School and came to Illinois to join Shulman Brothers. He later became a partner and after Jake's blindness caused him to retire, Maurice became the operator of the rotary rigs and the mainstay of Shulman Brothers. In the late 1970s Shulman Brothers incorporated and became Shulman Bros., Inc. Maurice is president of the corporation.

Charles Priebe, a life-long friend from the Breckenridge, Texas days, joined the brothers as Lease Hound. He acquired leases in Illinois, Wyoming, Kentucky and Indiana for Shulman Brothers.

The company took many farm-outs from major companies; some good, some bad. The brothers drilled the discovery well in Owensville East in Indiana and the Hanson pool in Kentucky.

To lessen Maurice's work, the rotary rigs were sold, but Shulman Bros., Inc. still operates it cable tool. Through all these years relations with the people in the oil industry have been pleasant and rewarding. The Shulman brothers made many friends from the top of the industry to the bottom. However, tragedy strikes all families and Shulmans were no exception. Harry never made it to Illinois. He died in 1944 at the age of 41. Jake died in 1985 at the age of 80 and Joe lived to a grand old 90 and died in 1993.

It was Jake's dream that Shulman Bros., Inc. would go from generation to generation and that Maurice's four sons would be the next generation of Shulman Brothers. Three of the sons had other visions, but Todd, the youngest son, always wanted to be a part of the business and so he is. He has a degree in geology from the University of Colorado and a MBA from Washington University in St. Louis. He and Maurice are a team running Shulman Bros., Inc., but its future rests on Todd.