

**University of Oklahoma Libraries**  
**Western History Collections**

**L.C. Heydrick Collection**

**Heydrick, L. C. Papers, 1901–1953. .33 foot.**

Oil prospector. Correspondence (1901, 1931–1939, 1944, 1953) relating to Jesse A. Heydrick's discovery of oil in Red Fork, Oklahoma; a manuscript (1931) of unpublished chapters for John W. Flenner's *History of Early Oil Developments in Oklahoma*; legal papers (1901); newspaper clippings; and a bound report (1953) by Heydrick, entitled "Red Fork Discovery, June 1901."

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**Biography:**

L.C. Heydrick's father, J.A. Heydrick, was very successful in the petroleum business in Pennsylvania. Along with his brother, he was able to make a profit from 55 of the 60 well sunk. Living in Butler, Pennsylvania, the brothers lived comfortably. John S. Wick, another oil man who in lived in Butler persuaded J.A. Heydrick to team up with him to do some oil speculation in the Indian Territory (in present-day Oklahoma).

At the time, J.A. Heydrick was unaware of the trouble that he was getting himself into. After finding oil at Red Fork (near present-day Tulsa), Heydrick watched in amazement thousands of oil speculators swarm into Indian Territory with the hope of getting rich very quickly. Quite frankly, Heydrick was disappointed with the output of this misconceived well. He tried to sell the land but to no avail. The stockholders of his company would do no such thing when there was so much interest in the land surrounding the well.

Besides the financial burden that J.A. Heydrick was faced with, he also had to contend with the Department of the Interior of the United States of America. The Secretary of the Interior, Allen Hitchcock, thought that Heydrick and Wick had no right trespassing on Indian lands. Moreover, after the initial discovery, Heydrick and Wick were put up against two doctors who claimed that they were responsible for the Red Fork discovery.

**About the collection:**

The L.C. Heydrick collection contains 170 pieces spanning from 1901 to 1950. This collection contains papers connected to the Red Fork discovery, correspondence of family members as the time of the discovery, legal papers ranging from affidavits to articles of incorporation, newspaper clippings related to the Red Fork discovery, a manuscript copy of chapters thirteen and fourteen by John W. Flenner in *History of Early Oil Development in Oklahoma*, a map of Indian Territory (1899), and finally, a copy of a report by Dr. William A. Settle concerning the Red Fork oil discovery.

**Flap Folder 1**

Folder:

1. Correspondence within the Heydrick family from May 15, 1901 to August 3, 1901. Contents: deals with Red Fork discovery and assorted business matters involved in Heydrick's ventures
2. Correspondence of Heydrick family with Mr. and Mrs. John W. Flenner from May 12, 1931 to September 28, 1939. Contents: contains information relating to Mr. Flenner's writing of the discovery at Red Fork with the real founders, J.A. Heydrick and J.S. Wick, not Doctors Fred S. Clinton and J.C.W. Bland
3. Chapter XIV--"J.W. Flenner's History of Early Oil Developments in Oklahoma"--these original, unpublished chapters deal with the Red Fork controversy and the growth of the petroleum industry in Indian Territory. Flenner never finished his history because he died.
4. Correspondence of J.A. Heydrick from June 26, 1901 to September 16, 1901. Contents: related to Red Fork discovery
5. Correspondence of J.A. Heydrick from September 22, 1901 to September 4, 1931. Contents: material deals with Red Fork discovery and other business related items
6. Legal papers: affidavits, depositions, well record, etc, from October 2, 1899 to July 15, 1905. Legal documents deal with the acquisition of land and other business matters connected to the untried Indian Territory. Also, formal statement that supports J.A. Heydrick's claim that Wick and he were responsible of the Red Fork Discovery, not Doctors Fred S. Clinton and J.C.W. Bland
7. Articles of Incorporation from March 21, 1894 to August 19, 1901. Contents: there are also records of shares of stocks in certificate form
8. Newspaper clippings from July 1, 1901 to June 26, 1935 dealing with Red Fork discovery

## **Flap Folder 2**

Folder:

1. Unpublished series of documents organized and compiled by L.C. Heydrick, titled *Red Fork Discovery, June 1901* (part 1). A good deal of the information is copied from the original collection. There are other items of interest, such as a family history that traces the Heydricks back six generations.
2. *Supplement and Final Report of Red Fork Discovery, June 1901*, October 1, 1953, by L.C. Heydrick; deals with the final steps of the Red Fork controversy and its relation to the University of Oklahoma, unpublished account.
3. General correspondence, part 1: correspondence of Prairie Oil and Gasoline Company from July 23, 1901 to August 5, 1901, contains telegrams and letters

- pertaining to aftermath of the Red Fork discovery; correspondence of St. Louis and San Francisco Rail Road from July 24, 1901 to August 13, 1901, contains business matters related to the Red Fork discovery which pertains to the cooperation of J.A. Heydrick with his RR company; government correspondence-Department of the Interior from December 10, 1895 to August 1901, contains letters pertaining to the relationship of the U.S. Government to Adams and Sapulpa Mining Company (J.A. Heydrick a part of this) and the Five Civilized Tribes
4. General correspondence, part 2: correspondence of Keith Clevenger, research consultant, Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association from August 18, 1944 to November 2, 1944, Clevenger wanted to research Red Fork dispute using L.C. Heydrick's original papers; correspondence of Thomas J. Adams from November 15, 1901 to May 20, 1901; correspondence of C.I. Heydrick from March 1, 1896 to September 6, 1901; "Report of Examination of Heydrick Papers in Archives of University of Oklahoma dealing with Red Fork Oil Discovery, June 25, 1901" by William A. Settle, Jr. Chairman, Department of History and Political Science, university of Tulsa, Tulsa, Oklahoma, August 6, 1953; unidentifiable papers and notes

**Outsized Box:**

1. *Wichita Daily Times*, May 28, 1950, Sunday Edition, pages 9 to 12, with the emphasis on an article titled "Oil Lobby Quates" by Joe Reilly

**Map Collection:**

Indian Territory in 1809: "Map of the Indian Territory" Department of the Interior General Land Office, Binger Hermann, Commissioner: under the direction of Harry King, C.E., Chief of Drafting Division of G.L.O.