

In the small ranching community of Kurten there are three types of landowners — those who have oil wells, those who want oil wells, and those who have oil wells and want some more.

Everyone wants to jump on the oil well bandwagon.

Until about four years ago, Kurten was just a small town whose major industry was cattle ranching. Although it used to be one of the largest communities in the area, as Bryan-College Station grew, its population dwindled.

Today, Kurten appears much the same as it did four years ago. With one general store, a small telephone sub-station, a

post office and a population of 150 people, one would think it hasn't changed at all.

But the shadows of towering oil well trees, the shiny paint of new pick-up trucks and snatches of passing conversations suggest that since oil was discovered there four years ago, things in Kurten have changed.

"Everybody wants a well," H. P. Dansby, a Kurten landowner, said. Dansby said he leased some of his land to Bonanza Amalgated, Inc., the largest oil company operating in the Kurten area, but "we never dreamed they'd go into production." Dansby has one well on his land, but said he wished

they would put about 10 more. "I think it has rejuvenated this whole country," he said.

W. W. Humphries, another landowner, agreed.

"We hope they drill the whole country," he said. "It pays off more than cattle and the income from the wells has helped to keep taxes down."

Harold Schoellman, a native of Kurten who works for the

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Wensa Wireline Service Co., said everyone he knew was happy when the oil companies came to town.

"People hear oil field and they go crazy," he said. "They don't know what to expect."

The oil companies in the area said the Kurten community overall did not object to the oil fields coming in, but since the first drilling, some residents in the area have mixed feelings.

Troy Yates, production supervisor for Amalgated Bonanza, Inc., said lack of knowledge about the oil industry has caused some problems.

"The people don't know anything about the oil fields," he said.

Noises from the wells, roads on the drilling sites and occasional oil spills are some of the

**Although profits from some wells are increasing, in other wells they are slowly going down.**

things that other oil company employees said the people were not prepared for.

An employee of one oil company said the reason some landowners had misconceptions about the oil fields was because one of the first oil company representatives in the area went around talking to the people and promised them things the oil companies couldn't live up to.

One thing that was promised, he said, was that the oil companies would maintain county roads. Although the companies do maintain roads they use heavily as well as the roads they build, the employee said there is no way the companies can or should be responsible for all the roads, because other people use them, too.

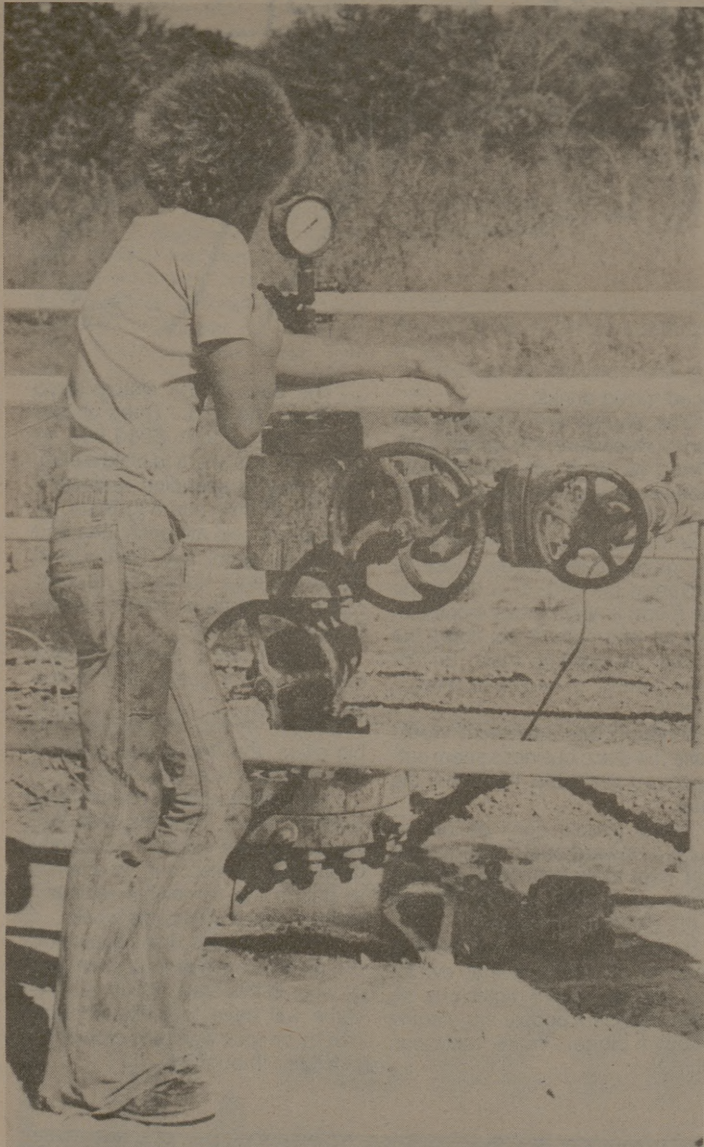
Not all Kurten landowners have to own a large piece of land to share in the oil profits. Yates said Amalgated Bonanza, Inc., who has 80 wells in a 75,000 acre area, leases 160 acre lots from the landowners. If the land needed is owned by more than one person, the owners go together and form a pool, and the royalty each landowner receives is in proportion to his acreage in the pool.

Lyle Burnager, an accountant for Amalgated Bonanza, said

the landowners get 12.5 percent of the production profit from a well on their land. He said this royalty is a standard lease royalty that is not affected by

maintenance costs or well repairs.

The oil company and the owners decide before leasing where a road to the well will be



Guages are used to measure the pressure of the free-flowing wells in Kurten.



**"Everybody got a taste of the money and now they 'Chubby' Winton, one of the first to drill for oil in**



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