

and a number of companies began to study the situation with respect to the acquisition of lands and the right to explore for oil. The discovery of the Redwater field in 1948 followed by the discovery of the Woodbend extension of the Leduc field, by Imperial Oil Limited, led to increased exploration activity by many companies, which, as new finds have been made, has been quickly expanded to cover not only the desirable prospective oil lands in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba but has been extended northwestward involving much of the northeastern corner of British Columbia east of the mountains and embracing large areas within the Northwest Territories south and west of Great Slave Lake.

In Alberta there have been numerous oil fields discovered in a tract of land extending from Edmonton to Drumheller. Development began with the discovery of the Stettler field in 1949, followed by such finds as Duhamel, Big Valley, Caprona, New Norway, Bashaw and Drumheller. To the west of Edmonton there is the Acheson-Stony Plain field and west of Leduc the Golden Spike field. To the south of Leduc there are a number of small oil fields—Wizard Lake found in 1951 and Bonnie Glen found early in 1952 are major discoveries in this area. Golden Spike, Wizard Lake and Bonnie Glen are of particular importance in that, although their real extent may not be large in comparison with some of the other fields, the thickness of oil-saturated coral formation is exceptional, in all three exceeding 500 ft., and in Bonnie Glen reaching the phenomenal thickness of 688 ft. This means that production per acre will be very large in comparison with some of the other fields where, as for example at Leduc, there are two oil zones in the Devonian each with a thickness of approximately 35 ft. The search for these pools of small surface extent, therefore, must be very intense, with no small area neglected in the promising oil territory.

In addition to the discoveries in the area of Edmonton and the southern part of Alberta, there have been two recent discoveries of oil in Saskatchewan of a quality considerably lighter than the oil being produced from the Lloydminster and Coleville fields. Southern Saskatchewan and southwestern Manitoba are occupied by the northward part of the Williston basin of North Dakota. In the Williston basin in United States there have recently been two very important oil discoveries, so that the finding of oil in Saskatchewan and small but significant discoveries in southwestern Manitoba have had a very stimulating effect in encouraging development in this part of Western Canada. To the northwest of Edmonton in the Peace River area of Alberta, there have been two oil discoveries and a number of very significant gas discoveries. In the St. John area of British Columbia there has also been a light oil discovery, which, although not large, is very important as indicative of excellent oil prospects, while recent gas discoveries give promise of large production.

Some indication of the amount of exploration being done in Western Canada in the search for oil and gas can be obtained from the drilling record. In 1951, 1,371 wells were completed in the four western provinces. The main part of this development was in Alberta where 1,228 completed wells accounted for more than 500,000 ft. of drilling in each of the last seven months of the year. These wells consisted of 757 oil wells, of which 35 were new discoveries and the remainder were development wells in oil fields, and 166 gas wells, of which 63 were new discoveries and 355 dry holes. Recoverable reserves of petroleum in Alberta are now estimated at about 1,500,000,000 bbl. In Saskatchewan, 112 wells were completed consisting of 53 oil wells, of which 2 were new discoveries, and 6 gas wells, of