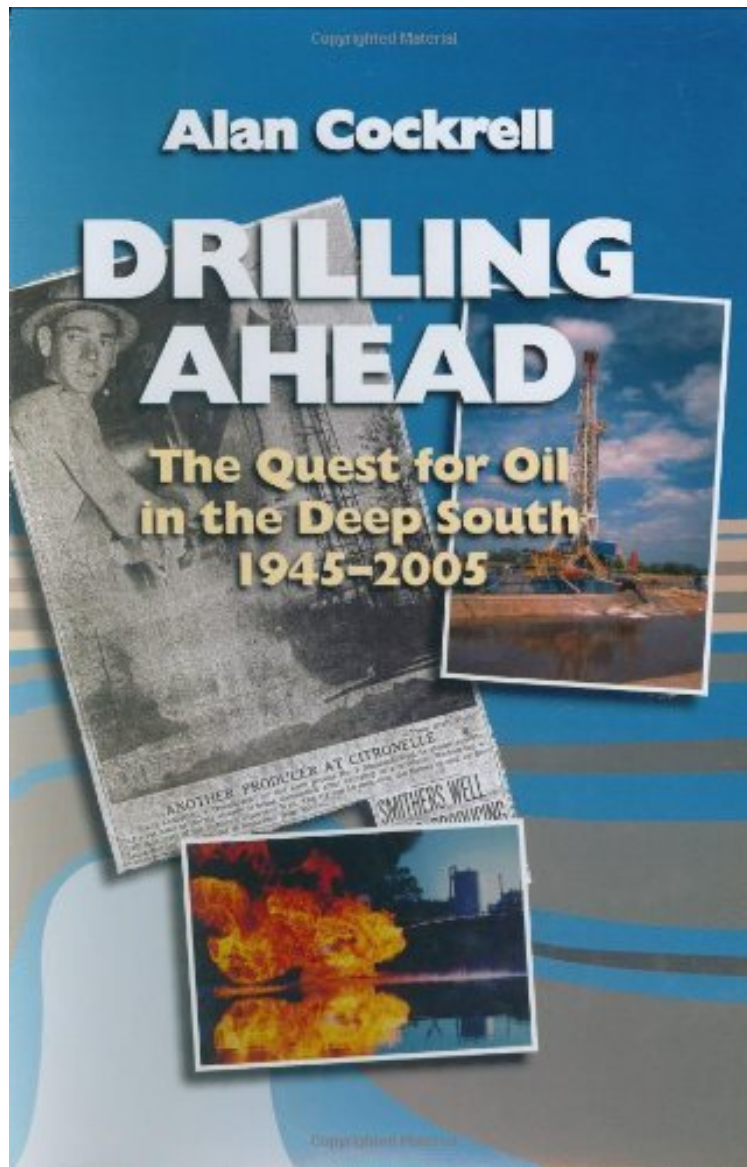


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## Drilling Ahead: The Quest For Oil in the Deep South, 1945-2005

Alan Cockrell

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**Alan Cockrell : Drilling Ahead: The Quest For Oil in the Deep South, 1945-2005** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Drilling Ahead: The Quest For Oil in the Deep South, 1945-2005:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Julann L. CallenderGreat book0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Educating a geologist about oilBy John ShawAlthough I have a B.S. In Geology from the University of Alabama, I never took Petroleum Geology. So Mr. Cockrell's book was not only enjoyable, but an educational tool for me. This book is extremely well written and presents a history of the petroleum industry in the

Deep South. After reading this book, one learns how drilling an oil well is not only expensive, but very chancy...a combination of experience and luck. Some of the people mentioned in the book were my professors at the University. I thought the last chapter (Epilogue) was the author at his best! That chapter about the old well driller and his antiquated cable tool rig, with his elderly wife sitting in the doghouse knitting, and his dogged determination to strike oil, was just superb! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Deep South Oil History for Everyone By Kimble M. This is a book written for the lay person. It explains the geologic processes that made petroleum and hid it in layers of deep sands and porous rock. It describes the art, science and luck involved in finding oil and natural gas, along with the evolution of techniques for extracting it from underground structures that would rather not give it up. It acquaints the reader with the sometimes complex deals that organize land owners, speculators, drillers and producers around a common goal. It also introduces the lingo of the oil business. Works about the history of technology risk focusing on technology to the exclusion of all else, limiting their audience and making them tedious. Not so with this one. Cockrell weaves a rich tapestry of concepts and chronology around the characters, producing an engaging and eminently readable account of every major oil find in Mississippi, Alabama and northwest Florida. The stories of the oil industry people are likely to remain with the reader far longer than the history, geology and technology. These independent spirits, wild with enthusiasm, chased their dreams, sometimes for decades. Some got rich; some died trying. It is clear from how Cockrell tells their stories that has great affection for them. A glossary, references and an index are provided.

The discovery of oil in Tinsley, Mississippi, in 1939 captivated the South and has deeply affected the region ever since. At the end of 1940, over 133 wells were flowing, and speculators were drilling holes and staking claims all along the Gulf Coast and its immediate environs. Consequently, the region's economy, ecosystems, and politics have been shaped by black gold since the end of World War II. Alan Cockrell, a petroleum geologist, provides an insider's account of the science of oil hunting, the political processes that help or hinder it, and the advances in technology that make it all possible. This book documents the ways in which wars, foreign competition, governmental regulation, and new business models affect oil exploration, and what that means to the South's people. Just as significantly, Cockrell provides compelling commentary on the people who hunt for petroleum, from pioneering wildcatters such as Chesley Pruet to savvy geologists focusing on science and technology. Drilling Ahead documents the triumphs and travails of oil hunters. Mavericks, underworld characters, professors, lawyers, and environmentalists have all played major roles in the South's oil production. A fascinating study of corporations, economies, and people, Drilling Ahead is a compelling, opinionated narrative as well as an exhaustively researched history.

From the Publisher This overview of the petroleum industry in the Deep South \* Provides a primer on the industry from the end of World War II to the present \* Features capsule biographies of pioneer geologists, oil workers, and corporate executives, including Fred Mellen, Chesley Pruet, and Dudley J. Hughes \* Includes approximately 75 photographs and 15 maps illustrating the history \* Is published for the Mississippi Geological Society From the Inside Flap An overview of the petroleum industry in the Deep South since World War II About the Author Captain Alan Cockrell is a pilot for United Airlines and worked as a certified petroleum geologist in the Gulf Coast oil industry for twelve years. He is the author of Tail of the Storm, and his essays have appeared in AOPA Pilot, Airline Pilot, Hemispheres, On Guard, and the Huntsville Times.