

### Heads Department



F. J. Janes, formerly of Apple Valley, has been added to the M. C. Hall & Sons realty and insurance firm as head of a new home planning department. The department will offer help in home planning, financing and actual construction stages. Another phase of the department will be a system whereby people can trade in present homes for new custom homes which are personally designed. Janes, his wife and two children are to move to the Santa Cruz area in June.

### On the occasion of Arrivals of Newcomers to Santa Cruz



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# Drillers May Not Get Oil But They're Set

By Margaret Koch

Up at the end of Happy Valley road there's a hill.

On the hill there's a derrick. Making the machinery under the derrick clank and bang and bore deep into the earth are two brothers. They own the rig and they are drilling for black gold—oil.

John Oneto and his brother, Lawrence, operate the large pear and apple orchard started by their father on the ranch years ago. The 218-acre orchard brings in "the bacon."

But—if and when the brothers strike oil—they will be bringing in the cake, too.

For what would be nicer to have than your own private oil well in the backyard? It would be as lucrative as a money-printing machine—and legal besides.

"No one knows just where the oil is, of course, but we feel there's a chance to find it here," John hastens to explain.

They feel this way for several reasons:

In the early 1900's the same men who drilled a duster in DeLaveaga park wanted to try on the Oneto ranch. Oneto Senior said "no" and went on planting orchard.

Around 1923 Standard Oil men predicted small oil pools in the ranch area, according to John Oneto. Walter Stalder, San Francisco oil geologist, made an extensive report on the entire Soquel area from the eastern limits of the city of Santa Cruz to Aptos creek and north to the headwaters of Soquel creek.

A quote from the report: "The area is not of a type which would particularly attract a conservative operator in search of large production. It has, however, some localities that might be prospected for small to moderate production..."

Near Davenport the Santa Cruz Portland Cement company drilled an oil well nearly 3000 feet deep. Oil sands were encountered but so was interfering water that couldn't be shut out.

In 1922 the Danish American Oil company drilled to about 1000 feet on the D. D. Wilder ranch up the coast. The company then put down a second well which produced gas, according to Stalder's report, but lost tools in it at about 500 feet.

Along the San Andreas fault, northeast of Watsonville, Judge Gaffey and some associates drilled in 1900 and struck a large flow of gas.

Then there's the producing Costa well in the Boulder Creek area. And don't forget the Moody Gulch well off Highway 17 below Holy City. Moody—drilled back in the late 1800's—is less than 1000 feet deep and is said to have produced 20 barrels per day of high grade oil—"almost like kerosene."

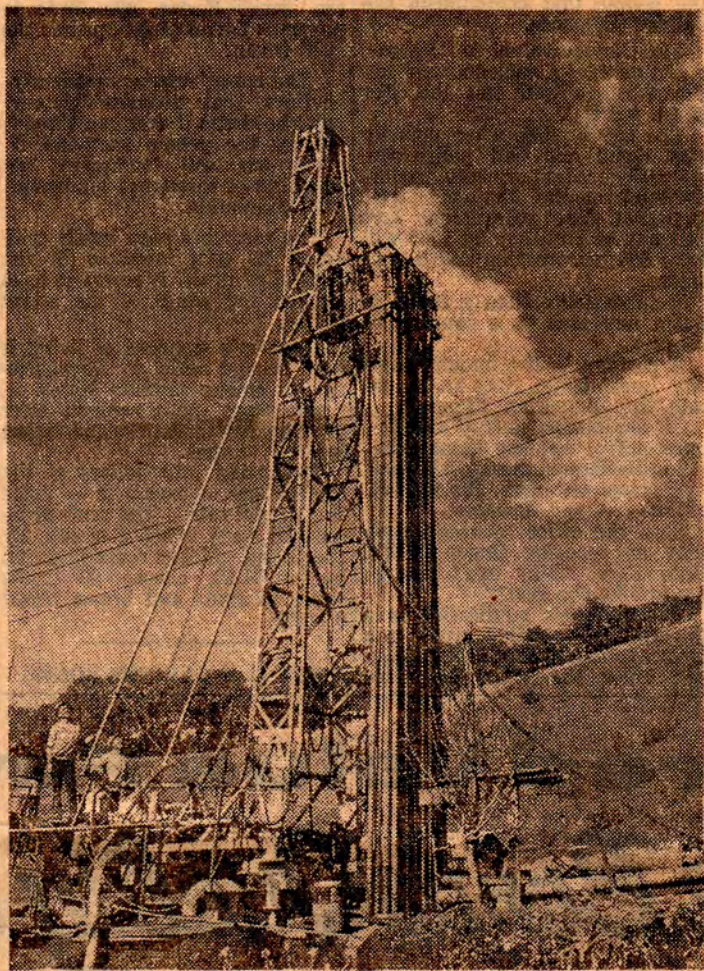
Oil men have been sniffing, digging and poking around Santa Cruz county for a number of decades. They all say, "It's here only in small amounts," but they all keep coming back from time to time. Oil—the stuff that turns the wheels of the 20th century—runs like a dark river through mens' imaginations.

John Oneto had heard the oil stories for years.

"Then a few years back we put in hog barns and needed more water for the pigs," he said.

So the Onetos hired a water well-driller. The driller punched several holes. His verdict: "No water right here but it sure looks like a chance for oil."

## It Must Be Down There



Will they find it or not? And what are they looking for? — Oil, of course. John and Lawrence Oneto of Happy Valley road own their own rig and

have a corner on a pool of oil supposed to exist under their ranch property. At least they hope it's there. They have gone down 700 feet after it, so far.

In the earth cores brought up by the driller were "shadows"—oil shadows, that is. John located a second-hand oil rig in Bakersfield and bought it. (New, they run \$20,000.) Then he purchased a pump for \$2500. (New, it would be \$7000.) Oil drilling isn't cheap to start with.

And in between orchard chores—the almost never-ending round of spray, prune, thin, harvest and plant—he and his brother drill for oil. It takes four men to run the rig. As helpers they have "Cowboy" (Flo) Steger, their regular ranch hand, and Bob Tolbert, formerly of Oklahoma and Texas where he worked in several big oil strikes.

At present the Oneto rig is stopped at 700 feet and is in quartz. The brothers are busy putting a bigger "draw works" on the rig—they plan to go to 3500 feet if necessary, to find that black stuff that is down there somewhere.

At every five feet, core samples are taken out and recorded. Samples also have been sent regularly to Neves Petroleum and Union Oil company for testing. When the drilling is easy the bit can go down 100 or more feet in a day. But in the hard-bitten quartz they are lucky to go five or six feet in eight hours. They got stuck once—at 400 feet where they also had another show of oil. Then they had to ream out the hole in order to rescue their drilling bit.

The rotary rig operates on butane. Cuttings of earth are picked up by a special kind of mud which is pumped down into the hole while the drill operates. The earth cuttings from the drill then float up to the top where

they can be examined under a "black light" and sent in for analysis.

Of interest to oil men are the Santa Margarita and Purisima formations of shale, conglomerate sandstone and sandy shale. It is said to be the Purisima that has yielded oil near Half Moon Bay. Both these formations date from the Miocene and Pliocene ages.

Also of interest—even if not particularly important—are "shows" of oil seepage on several creeks and springs in the county.

In the meanwhile, drilling on the Oneto ranch will continue as soon as the larger draw works is installed on the rig.

"Maybe 50-60 feet more we will get a showing," predicted Tolbert.

Only one person showed skepticism and that was Mrs. Oneto, mother of the boys. She keeps house for them in the family home on top of the hill where windows look out to orchard and ocean.

"I don't know if they will find oil or not," she said. "But maybe they will hit water."

GR 5-3405

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