



Oriental Oil Company

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In 1904 the Oriental Oil Company was organized. It was named from a meeting in the Oriental Hotel (later named the Baker Hotel [see **Note** below]). First office was in Room 305 Wilson Building at 1621 Main Street. Phone number was 3673. This was the first business in the Wilson Building. In 1908 the Oriental Oil Company expanded to room 304. In 1921 it expanded to rooms 401, 407 and 439. In 1923 it built its own General Office at 1911 ½ Pacific Avenue, phone number Central 8151. The location is now Aston Park bounded by Live Oak and Pacific Streets.

The Company slogan was "Hurry Back." Stations were located at:

- No. 1 St. Paul & Jackson
- No. 2 Davis & Vernon
- No. 3 Jefferson & Marsalis
- No. 4 1909 Eagle Ford Road
- No. 5 Ervay & Sanger
- No. 6 Cedar Springs & Maple Avenue
- No. 7 Main Street & Houston Street
- No. 8 Haskell & East Side Avenue
- No. 9 McKinney Avenue & Hall Street
- No. 10 Main Street & Walton
- No. 11 Knox Street & Cole Avenue
- No. 12 4100 Oak Lawn Avenue
- No. 13 Greenville Avenue & Alta
- No. 14 5001 Columbia Avenue
- No. 15 Fitzhugh & East Grand Avenue
- No. 17 Pacific Avenue & Live Oak
- No. 18 9th Street & Beckley Avenue

The officers were:

William R. Smith – President – He always said the "R." (initial only) was for "reliable."

Claude D. Cain – Vice-President

Franklin Mayrant Smith – Secretary and Treasurer

Douglas G. White – Secretary and Assistant Treasurer

The Company products were greases, illuminating oil, kerosene, purple gasoline. The Company was a producer, refiner, distributor and retailer. The Company closed in 1934 due to the depression. William R. Smith also owned the Lakeview Dairy on

the site of what is now "The Cloisters" homes at West Lawther Drive and Mockingbird Lane.

W.R. Smith also owned the W.R. Ranch in Denton County at Highway 377 and Smoot 22 Roads. He sold the ranch in 1939 to Dallas former Mayor Robert L. Thornton. Today, under different ownership, the ranch still uses the "W R" cattle brand.

Mr. Smith built the first home on Forest Avenue, now Martin Luther King Blvd. He later built a home at 5505 Gaston Avenue – one of the few remaining homes on that part of Gaston Avenue.

By Robert Mayrant Robinson, Sr.

Note: The Oriental Hotel was completed in 1893. It was in operation for many years and was demolished in 1924 and replaced with the Baker Hotel.

San Antonio newspaper advertisement



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