



“Black Gold”...OIL...the magic bullet of liquid petroleum not only propels all manner of people-movers globally, it’s also a component of more than 6,000 products—everything from motorcycle helmets, to vitamin capsules, to ink. But who **DISCOVERS** these critical—and elusive—fossil fuels of oil & gas?

Meet a wildcatter whose back-in-the-day journey from the hills of New York, to the ice fields of Alaska, to the plains of the Midwest brings the reader along on this complex quest to SEE underground. Here’s an insider’s look at the petroleum industry of the latter 20th century—and what geologist **Thomas E. Cochrane** experienced along the way. From Oklahoma, to Texas, to rubbing elbows with iconic oilman T. Boone Pickens, his personal tales of the oil field provide a first-hand glimpse into the art as well as the science of exploring and drilling—all in

the relentless pursuit of **“hitting the big one,”** every wildcatter’s dream. Surrounded by chain-smokers, throwin’ back another whiskey, pulling all-nighters, and guzzling bad coffee are other commonplace features of this dusty landscape populated by 10-story-high rigs siphoning the valuable black ooze from its subterranean hiding places.

From company man, to making indie deals and partnering on the fly while chasing the next hot prospect, Cochrane discloses the technical processes involved in detail...but also **the thrill of the hunt**—including what can sometimes go very wrong. From dry holes, to blowouts, to sketchy money men among a cast of other colorful oil patch characters, his story delivers a step-back-in-time look at a bygone era in an ever-evolving global industry, and he has a sage perspective on its future as well...

Tornados, Rattlesnakes & Oil — A Wildcatter’s Memories of Hunting for “Black Gold”

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“Most books about the oil patch usually fall into one of two categories. The first are tributes to the “greatest gamblers.” The others are tomes about the earth sciences. Rarely do we get a full-bodied peek into real life in the oil patch. Fortunately for us, Thomas E. Cochrane has accomplished the latter: a fast-paced and lyrical stroll through several decades of searching for oil and gas, punctuated with stories about the greatest gamblers and insights into petroleum geology written in a way that is accessible to the general reader. The honesty and earthiness of the prose come as bonuses. I want to thank Mr. Cochrane for this latest contribution to the literature on the oil patch.”

—Dr. Bob L. Blackburn, Executive Director, Oklahoma Historical Society

California Professional Geologist and former teacher **Thomas E. Cochrane** consults on geologic hazards and geology, and often lectures on plate tectonics and related topics. He’s also the author of *Shaping the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast – Exploring the Coastal Geology of Northern California*, a regional bestseller.

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