Joe Miller passed away, after a long illness, on November 18, 1992, in Midland, Texas. He is survived by his wife, Sue, one son, Bruce, and four grandchildren.

Joe was born in Many, Louisiana, on October 16, 1933. He was the son of an oil-field father, and the family moved frequently during his early years. He attended high schools in San Antonio, Dallas, and Big Spring, Texas, and then graduated from Odessa High School, Odessa, Texas, in 1952. He attended Texas Tech University at Lubbock, Texas, graduating with a B.S. degree in geology in 1956.

Joe’s early career was with Petty Ray Geophysical Company. In 1958 he joined the American Maracaibo Oil Company that later became Felmont Oil Corporation. In 1961 Felmont greatly reduced its holdings of producing properties and Joe was furloughed; however, Felmont management soon realized its mistake and he rejoined Felmont’s exploration team. He then became general manager of the western division until his retirement in 1991.

Joe had been a member of the AAPG since 1959, and he also was a member of the West Texas Geological Society. He was a true sportsman of west Texas and will be remembered by many hunting and fishing friends.

Joe Miller was considered one of the most experienced and intuitive Permian basin geologists. He had prospected in nearly every county in west Texas and eastern New Mexico, as well as Wyoming and other western states during his career. He had a reputation for thoroughness and caution; but, after extensive study, he was prepared to be aggressive and follow through on his drilling recommendations.

Joe was directly responsible for well over half the reserves that Felmont produced from the mid-1970s until the early 1990s. Perhaps his greatest success was the discovery of the huge Hilight field in Campbell County, Wyoming, in 1968.

In addition to his exploration successes, Joe acted as chief engineer for Felmont’s western division and was personally responsible for many types of projects, including drilling, workovers, secondary recovery projects, production facilities, pipelines, and other enterprises toward which he focused his knowledge and expertise.

Joe is best remembered by Felmont management for his business acumen. He was able to size up the land and legal situations of every prospect and judge the financial risk vs. the potential reward, according to the geology and the engineering problems. As a result, the western division was one of the most profitable divisions of Felmont, even during the great oil-field depression of the late 1980s. Joe Miller was capable of running a division virtually alone—a quality that is hard to find in today’s specialists.

The most important thing former Felmont employees will remember is Joe’s integrity and loyalty. He worked for one company throughout most of his career. He was often put to the test, but he had faith that fairness would prevail. Joe was someone you could always count on. The Permian basin, and all his other friends, will miss him.