

inventors, and their names appear on the letters patent. They obtained the use of a flat car from the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad and mounted two round wooden tanks on it, each one over the trucks. The tight tanks were built of pine planks and held 40 to 45 barrels of crude oil each. James Densmore saw to the building and procurement of the tank cars. A partner, Watson & Company, bought oil for shipment and handled loading. Oil was shipped by the Densmore, Watson & Company to Clint Roudebush & Company in New York City on a steady basis. Other shippers followed the design and a vast bulk commerce of crude oil and refined products resulted from this invention.

The Densmore two tank design was patented tardily on April 10, 1866. Many of those cars were already on the tracks before that date as well as similar cars built by others. Patents for protection purposes were also obtained on June 26, 1866, for designs having a single tank, three tanks and square tanks, but the cars with two wooden tanks remained the most common. The patents stated that light riveted sheet iron could also serve. However, pine wood, being in plentiful supply, was preferred. The Densmore cars were gradually replaced by horizontal boiler-type iron tank cars beginning 1868-69. Some of the wooden tank cars lingered on into the early 1870's.

## THE MEXICAN GULF OIL COLLECTION AT CENTENARY COLLEGE

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Published information on foreign oil and gas companies in Mexico typically focuses on the general geology of the country or political conditions building up to 1938. However, little is written about the living conditions, transportation, and equipment that were ever-present in the lives of the men sent to Mexico in search of oil.

The Mexican Gulf Oil Company Collection in the Centenary College Archives is composed of approximately 13 linear feet filled with maps and reports in both Spanish and English. The following selections will be on display:

- *Mexican Gulf Oil field men manual* - goes into great detail on how to survey an area in Mexico, what should be included in a report, and what style the report should be written. It also provides geologic age charts, information on the typical formations in Mexico, and a chart on map symbols.
- *The Campeche Hardwood Tract report* - provides a verbal picture of an unexploited Mexico.
- *The Hacienda Cocuite report* - interesting report on mud mounds. The author goes into great detail on both natural mud mounds and those made by the Indians. A sketch of different mounds is provided at the end of the report.
- *Hacienda Palo Blanco report* - discusses the difficulty of traveling over the Mexican roads in both fair and foul weather.
- *Gravity, lease, and contour maps*
- *Correspondence* – postcards
- *Pictures* - of men and equipment