

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Nancy Taylor No. 1 Oil Well Site
other names/site number The James Lease

2. Location

street & number Haskell Lake Road, Haskell, OK N/A not for publication
city, town Haskell vicinity
state Oklahoma code OK county Muskogee code 101 zip code 74436

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Saul L. Salay
Signature of certifying official

October 2, 1989
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Beth Boland

11/15/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Processing/Extraction--
extractive facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Processing/Extraction--
extractive facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

No style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/Awalls N/A

roof N/Aother Wood (tankage)Steel (pipe)

Describe present and historic physical appearance.Summary

The Nancy Taylor No. 1 Oil Well Site is located approximately 4 miles northwest of Haskell, Muskogee County, Oklahoma. The area is entirely rural. The site measures 130' by 160', taking in the basic amount of space needed for the original drilling equipment, well casing head, slush pit, and tankage. Remaining on the location today are a well casing head, a wooden storage tank elevated on a wooden platform, an elevated walkway (formerly attached to a battery of lease tanks which have been removed), and a slush pit. The 6' x 6½' wooden storage unit is fairly typical of those in use between 1865 and 1919 and was probably used to gauge this well's initial flow and to settle basic sediment. The 20' x 30' slush pit was excavated when the well was drilled in 1916; it stored the runoff of waste water created by drilling activity. The 18' metal walkway is handmade from scrap pipe, is not of standard manufacture, and cannot be precisely dated to the site. The well head, slush pit, and tank are counted as contributing resources because they date within the period of significance. The walkway is counted as contributing because it yields information about the placement and relationship of various other structures on the location. The site still reflects the associations of the area's energy development in the 1915-1916 "oil boom" era; the placement of the various units does not appear to have been changed since the site was first chosen by Getty in 1915, and the area has experienced no subsequent building up. It is still rural and isolated. Because of these factors, the site retains sufficient integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship to convey its historic significance.

Description

The Nancy Taylor No. 1 Oil Well Site is located in the NW¼ of the SE¼ of the SE¼ of the SE¼ of the SE¼ of Section 20, Township 16N, Range 15E, approximately 4 miles northwest of Haskell. It sits north of Haskell Lake Road, approximately halfway between Haskell Lake and Concharty Creek. The setting is rural; the site lies in an open, sparsely vegetated field. The structures are placed within a 130' by 160' area (please refer to site maps on continuation sheets), and the placement and relationship of the units is typical of an oil well site of the era.

The site consists in a well casing head, an elevated wooden tank and platform, a slush pit, and an elevated metal walkway. The well casing head

 See continuation sheet

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gives evidence of the precise drilling location chosen by Getty in 1915. The steel casing head exists independently of other equipment, and its continued existence does not depend on the presence of a pumping unit.¹ The head rises out of a 20' square level area north of the wooden tank. This level area is the grade for a 20' square derrick and drilling floor which would have been built on the site in December of 1915. Close by is an earthen-walled 20' by 30' slush pit. In 1916, while the well was being drilled by a cable-tool rig, a mixture of water, mud, and rock chips would have been periodically "bailed" out of the well hole and dumped into this pit.² The pit was subsequently used to hold salt water which was removed from the oil storage tanks.

The elevated tank and its platform are of the proper period and were no doubt installed when the drilling activity proved successful. The round wooden tank is typical of oilfield storage tanks used between 1865 and 1919.³ It is constructed of cypress staves, each 5" in width and 6' in height. It is slightly smaller in circumference at the top than at the bottom. The top outside diameter is 62", and the bottom outside diameter is 80". A tank of this dimension would have held 50 or 60 barrels.⁴ The staves are held in place by flat, 2"-wide bands of 12-gauge steel which encircle the tank. The bands are hand-bradded at the lap. The use of the flat bands (rather than round hoops) and the hand-bradding indicate that the tank may actually be older than the site; Getty and his partners may have acquired "used" equipment for their operation.⁵ The tank's early date is also indicated by the fact that wooden tanks were infrequently used at this time in Oklahoma; by the time of World War I, steel tankage was commonplace.⁶ Judging from the number and placement of inlet and outlet pipes (four, at present), this tank could have been used either as a gauge tank, in determining the well's initial output and subsequent production in barrels per day; or as a dehydration unit, in which the oil was heated in order to separate water from it before discharging the oil into the stock tanks; or as a gravity settling tank, for separating water and basic sediment from the oil.⁷ Judging from the number of inlet and outlet holes that were bored into the tank and later plugged, it may have served all of these purposes over its period of usefulness. The tank's top or "deck" is concrete and probably covers an original wooden deck. The deck is pierced by a 30-gallon drum which extends 1' above and 2' below the surface. The drum lid is also made of concrete and is dated "9-12-35." This would indicate that the tank was altered and a cleanout hole added in 1935, transforming the tank into a settling tank; the presence of 2' to 3' of basic sediment in the tank bottom supports this conclusion. The supporting platform is square and is constructed of 2" x 12" rig timbers; it raises the tank 5' above the ground. Both platform and base measure 80" x 80" at the outside.

The metal walkway cannot be precisely dated, but it may well date from the period. It is "homemade," fashioned of 2" oilfield pipe, and it is fairly typical of the type of inventiveness exhibited in early-day oilfield construction. Serviceable and durable, it is permanently set in concrete.

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Its placement gives evidence of the placement of the stock or lease tanks which would have held the oil before it was discharged into a pipeline. The walkway stands beside two circular level grades where two 8', 100-barrel wooden or bolted steel tanks once stood. The walkway is 18' long, and its height is 6½' at the platform level and 9' at the handrail.

The site of the Nancy Taylor No. 1 is generally intact and retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship to convey its historic significance.

ENDNOTES

¹H. C. George, Oil Well Completion and Operation (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1931), 132.

²Robert D. Langenkamp, The Illustrated Petroleum Reference Dictionary (Tulsa, OK: PennWell Publishing Co., 1982), 13, 198.

³"From Titusville to T-1 Steel: The Evolution of the Oil Storage Tank," Petroleum Panorama, Oil and Gas Journal 57 (28 January 1959): A121-A122; "Tankage--Wooden Bands to LACT," in ibid., D18; "A Hundred Years of Petroleum Storage," in ibid., E36; Ed Clark (tankbuilder), interview by Jimmie Birdsall, 19 November 1937, Chelsea, OK, Indian-Pioneer Papers (Archives, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK, 50; L. C. Uren, Petroleum Production Engineering: Oil Field Exploration, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1953 [1924]), 572-573, 592-593; Wilbur F. Cloud, Petroleum Production (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937), 586, 589.

⁴Composite Catalogue of New and Standard Oil Field and Pipe Line Equipment, Oil Weekly (Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing Company, 1938), 303.

⁵Dr. Bobby D. Weaver (tankbuilder), interview by Dianna Everett, 27 May 1989, on the Taylor site, Haskell vicinity (notes on file in S. H. P. O., Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, OK). Weaver, an oilfield historian, built wooden and bolted steel tanks for 25 years in the West Texas fields.

⁶"Buiding Storage Tanks," Oil and Gas Journal 12 (30 April 1914): 23; "Oil in Storage," Oil and Gas Journal 13 (21 January 1915): 8.

⁷Uren, Petroleum Production Engineering, 572-573, 592-593; Cloud, Petroleum Production, 586, 589.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Period of Significance

1915-1916

Significant Dates

1916

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Getty, Jean Paul

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary

The Nancy Taylor No. 1 Oil Well Site, located approximately 4 miles northwest of Haskell, Oklahoma, is significant because of its importance in the early financial development of an historically significant person, J. Paul Getty (1892-1976), co-founder of one of the largest independent oil operating companies in U. S. history. The Nancy Taylor No. 1 was the first oil well ever drilled by Getty, and its inception in the autumn of 1915, completion in February of 1916, early production, and profitable sale in 1916 furnished the capital which enabled him to quickly become a successful independent oil operator and which resulted in the incorporation of Getty Oil Company in May of 1916. In addition, Getty's immediate success caused him to become a millionaire by June of 1916. The Nancy Taylor No. 1 is also significant within the industrial context of energy development in the Haskell region of northwestern Muskogee County. The well's completion in 1916 generated a boom of drilling activity in a previously unexplored part of the county, and, as a result, the Stone Bluff Oil Field, which had previously been explored only to the north in Wagoner County, was extended southward into Muskogee County by subsequent drilling in 1916-1923. Of the seven wells drilled on the Nancy Taylor allotment between 1916 and 1923, only the Nancy Taylor No. 1 remained on the pump after 1935.

Historic Context

Development of Oklahoma's energy resources began in the six years immediately prior to statehood. In 1901 the first significant exploration and production occurred in the Red Fork-Tulsa Field; this initial success was soon followed by major strikes in the Bartlesville area in 1904.¹ In 1905 the famous Glenn Pool was opened, south of Tulsa; this discovery spawned a tremendous boom which brought developers and capital into Oklahoma from eastern states.² Among the "professional oil men" who invested thousands of dollars and hours to explore and develop Oklahoma's vast energy resources was George F. Getty, father See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Completion and Plugging Records. Microfilm. Oil and Gas Division, Oklahoma Corporation Commission, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
Getty, J. Paul. My Life and Fortunes: The Autobiography of One of the World's Richest Men. New York: Van Rees Press, 1963.
Haskell News, 10 February 1916.
Hewins, Ralph. J. Paul Getty, The Richest American. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1961.
Oil and Gas News 14, 10 February 1916, 17 February 1916.

N/A See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one (1) acre

UTM References

A
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B
 Zone Easting Northing

D

N/A See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description To find the point of beginning, proceed west 176' from SE corner of Section 20, T16N R15E (exact center of intersection of Haskell Lake Road and the north-south Section 20-21 line road), turn north and proceed 86'; this is the point of beginning. From the point of beginning, proceed north 130', turn and proceed west 160', turn and proceed south 130', turn and proceed east 160', having described a closed polygon.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This block measuring 130' by 160', includes the approximate size of the drilling site of the Nancy Taylor No. 1 well. It includes the existing well head and slush pit, the elevated wooden storage tank, and the metal walkway, as well as the "pad" area on which other storage tanks once sat.

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Dianna Everett, Researcher

organization S. H. P. O., Oklahoma Historical Soc. date May 31, 1989

street & number 2100 N. Lincoln telephone (405) 521-2491

city or town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma zip code 73105

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of J. (Jean) Paul Getty. The elder Getty, a Minneapolis lawyer whose lucrative inheritance and corporate law practice netted a quarter-million dollars by 1890, became an oil investor in 1903. He purchased leases in Oklahoma, and in December of 1903 he formed Minnehoma Oil Company, a private corporation of which his son Paul owned 100 shares. Minnehoma's Oklahoma investments helped develop the Bartlesville, Cushing, Cleveland, and Osage areas.³ In addition to his corporate dealings, George Getty made personal investments in oil development, and it was in this individual capacity that he shared in the costs and profits of exploring and testing in northwestern Muskogee County, in partnership with his son, J. Paul Getty.⁴

The Muskogee County area had been the scene of some of the earliest oilfield exploration and production in Oklahoma. In 1884 Michael Cudahy, an Omaha, Nebraska, meat packer, drilled the county's first wells: two wells in the city limits proved to be dry, as did another drilled on Nickle Creek.⁵ Subsequently, in 1904 and 1906 other developers drilled successfully southwest of Muskogee city;⁶ and to the northwest, near the town of Sowokla (now Haskell), oil was discovered in 1904.⁷ The main Haskell Field was opened five miles west of town in 1909.⁸ A few miles northwest of the Haskell Field, in southwestern Wagoner County, the Stone Bluff Field was opened in 1915.⁹ Although geologists of the day determined to their own satisfaction that the southern limits of the Stone Bluff pool could not extend southward out of Wagoner County, in late 1915 J. Paul Getty and his associates set out to prove the scientists wrong.¹⁰

Historical Significance

The Nancy Taylor No. 1 Oil Well Site is historically significant because of its association with the early career of oil magnate J. Paul Getty. In late 1914, after finishing college, Getty entered his father's oil business, buying and selling leases for Minnehoma from the corporate offices in Tulsa. In 1915 young Getty decided to begin operating as an independent. For \$500 he purchased a half-interest in an oil lease on the Nancy Taylor Allotment in the former Creek Nation in Muskogee County, northwest of Haskell. The young man was virtually penniless, and in order to raise the \$2,500 cost of drilling and completing the well, he formed the Lorena Oil Company; the partners included his father and several other local developers. In November and December of 1915 the site was prepared and the drilling rig set up, and on January 3, 1916, the well was "spudded in." Drilling continued twenty-four hours a day, with young Getty working alongside the drilling crew (he had worked as a roughneck at the age of sixteen).¹¹ On February 9, 1916, the well "came in" at 30 barrels per hour, or upwards of 700 barrels per day, a phenomenal flow for that region.¹² On February 12, Paul Getty sold the Getty's share of the lease and production to Cosden Oil Company for \$40,000, turning a

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handsome personal net profit of \$11,000.¹² In May, the young man was rewarded with a position as a Director on the Board of Minnehoma Oil. With his personal cash reserve, he was able to continue operating independently, purchasing additional leases and drilling more wells; by June of 1916 he had parlayed his profit into a million dollars, which, in his own words, "meant I was in the oil business--to stay."¹⁴ Although Getty moved out of the state shortly thereafter, his investments and his companies have continued to play a significant role in the Oklahoma oil industry.

The Nancy Taylor No. 1 Oil Well Site is also significant within the context of energy industry development in the Haskell region of northwestern Muskogee County. The Stone Bluff Field was originally developed in Wagoner County, with the first production coming from wells drilled in Section 5, T16N, R15E by the B. C. Goble Company in 1915. A shallow pool with nine producing horizons from 1000' to 2275', the Stone Bluff pool held both high-viscosity oil and gas.¹⁵ Three pipeline companies served the region by 1916, and Cosden Oil Company transported much of the production to its plant south of Haskell.¹⁶ Although geologists had condemned the northwestern corner of Muskogee County as worthless for oil prospecting (because no anticlinal structures were discernable), J. Paul Getty's successful completion of the Nancy Taylor No. 1 in Section 20 of T16N, R15E proved the existence of a southerly extension of the Stone Bluff pool.¹⁷ Wildcatters quickly bought up leases, and exploration and production continued through 1916. That year, the Lorena Oil Company brought in three more wells in the vicinity, on Section 20.¹⁸ For some time afterward the area was touted as a significant discovery within the Stone Bluff Field. Service industries in Haskell reaped much of the economic benefit of this production. The town grew from 857 in 1910 to 2,196 in 1920.¹⁹ The tiny community of Stone Bluff, just north of the county line in Wagoner County, also "boomed" during 1916.²⁰ By the end of the year, wells had been completed in Sections 18, 20, 21, 24, 28, 29, 30, and 31 of T16N, R15E.²¹ This minor boom was largely due to Getty's willingness to pursue his fortunes in an untried area. Between 1917 and 1923, three more wells were completed on Section 20 in the Nancy Taylor Allotment, but by 1935 all except the Nancy Taylor No. 1 had played out and were plugged. Until it was abandoned in recent years, the Nancy Taylor No. 1 was the only producing well in the section.²² The well site of the Taylor No. 1, with its related equipment, exemplifies the speculative nature of the oil industry in the region.

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ENDNOTES

¹Edward Everett Dale and Gene Aldrich, History of Oklahoma (Edmond, OK: Thompson Book Co., 1969), 448.

²Ibid., 448.

³Ralph Hewins, J. Paul Getty, The Richest American (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1961), 27-36.

⁴J. Paul Getty, My Life and Fortunes: The Autobiography of One of the World's Richest Men (New York: Van Rees Press, 1963), 6, 53.

⁵Kenny Franks, The Rush Begins (Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Heritage Association, 1981), 5.

⁶L. C. Snider, Petroleum and Natural Gas in Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, OK: Harlow-Rafliff Co., 1913), 115.

⁷Odie Faulk, Muskogee City and County (Muskogee, OK: Western Heritage Books, 1982), 77.

⁸Bess Mills-Bullard, "Digest of Oklahoma Oil and Gas Fields," Oklahoma Geological Society Bulletin 40 (July 1928), 166.

⁹Ibid., 249.

¹⁰Oil and Gas Journal 14 (10 February 1916): 8-9.

¹¹Getty, My Life, 54; Completion and Plugging Records, 1-T12R15 thru 36-T17R16, Microfilm (Oil and Gas Division, Oklahoma Corporation Commission, Oklahoma City, OK), Roll 99.

¹²Completion and Plugging Records, Roll 99; Getty, My Life, 7.

¹³Oil and Gas Journal 14 (17 February 1916): 8; Getty, My Life, 50, 54.

¹⁴Getty, My Life, 55-57.

¹⁵Coweta Star, 17 February 1916.

¹⁶Haskell News, 26 August 1915; Oil and Gas Journal 14 (17 February 1916): 8.

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¹⁷Getty, My Life, 54; Haskell News, 10 February 1916.

¹⁸Haskell News, 10 February 1916; Muskogee Phoenix, 13 February 1916; Oil and Gas Journal 14, 2 March 1916; ibid., 6 March 1916; ibid., 13 April 1916; ibid., 18 May 1916; ibid., 17 August 1916.

¹⁹U. S. Bureau of the Census, 14th Census of the United States, 1920, Population (Washington, D. C.: G. P. O., 1921), 575.

²⁰Haskell News, 3 April 1916; ibid., 27 April 1916; ibid., 7 December 1916.

²¹Scattered references to drilling in the area are to be found in: "Oil Notes," Haskell News, 1916, inclusive; in "The Oklahoma-Kansas Oil Fields," Oil and Gas Journal, 1916, inclusive; and in "Phoenix Oil and Gas News," Muskogee Phoenix, 1916, inclusive.

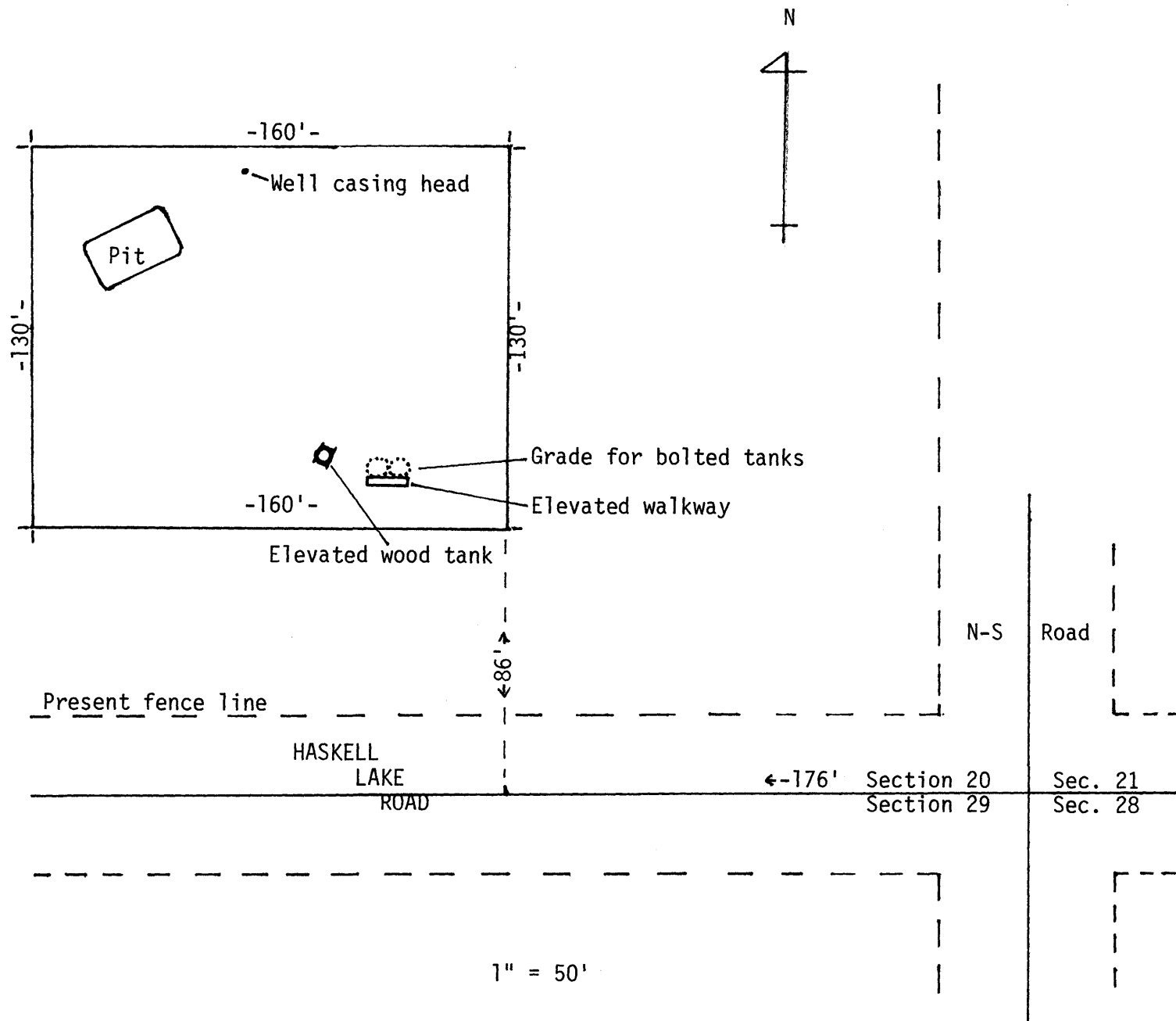
²²Completion and Plugging Records, Roll 99.

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Nancy Taylor No. 1 Well Site
Haskell vicinity



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Nancy Taylor No. 1 Well Site

NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 20, T15N R15E

