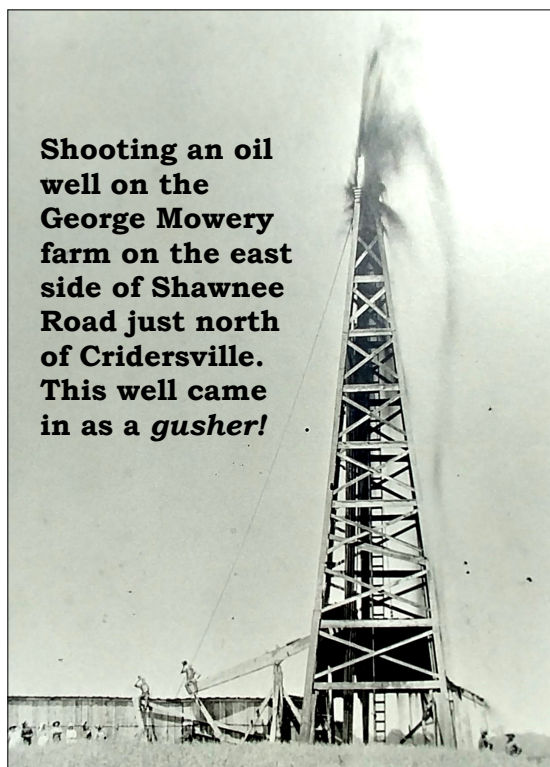


OIL DISCOVERED IN LIMA

Newspapers began to print stories stating “the extension of the oil field around Cridersville makes a bright future for the town, as it will now become truly an oil town.” Visitors from Lima and Wapakoneta came to Cridersville to see the oil wells and witness the excitement. It was estimated that nearly 2,000 men were working the local oil fields by the spring of 1887.

All of this oil activity soon resulted in the construction of new buildings for stores, hotels, and restaurants in Cridersville. Most of these were located in the first block east of the railroad on Main Street.



Lima postcard from the 1890s featuring oil field scenes

CRIDERSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Cridersville Historical Society was established in 1987 to promote interest and understanding of local history.

The Society operates the Cridersville Historical Museum in an 1880 church located at 111 W. Sugar Street. The museum is open the second and fourth Sunday of each month from 1:00-4:00 p.m. May through October. A special group tour can be scheduled by calling 419-645-4782.



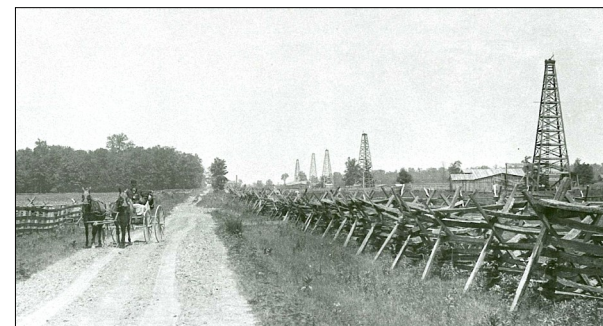
Preserving local history for future generations.

THE DAY THAT CHANGED ALLEN & AUGLAIZE COUNTIES AND WESTERN OHIO

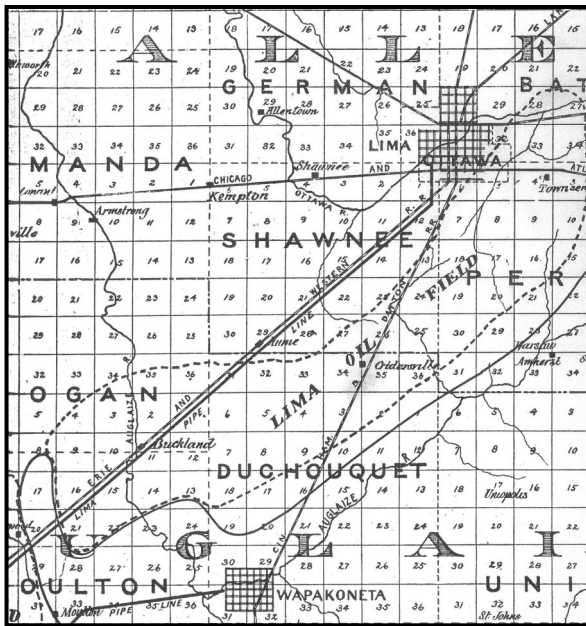
September 22, 1885



On September 22, 1885 Benjamin Faurot was drilling a well in Lima in hopes of discovering natural gas. Instead his drillers found crude oil. Within a year, the area around Lima became the largest known oil field in the world. Early in 1886 several farms around Cridersville were leased by oil drilling companies. By the fall, the village was well represented with oil men. Soon thousands of acres in the area were leased for drilling oil wells.



Row of oil derricks along a road outside of Cridersville in the 1890s



THE LIMA OIL FIELD

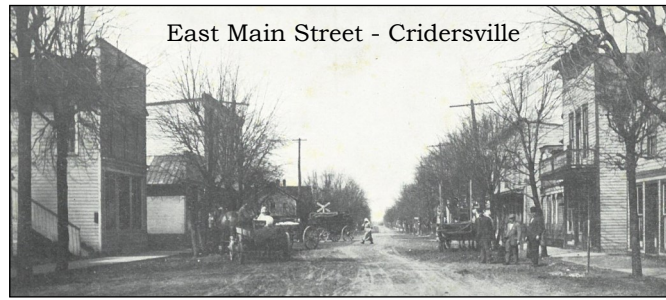
Cridersville was located at the center of the oil field

The leasing agents, representing the oil companies, would lease land from land owners to drill wells for a set amount plus an agreement that if oil was discovered, the land owner would receive a small portion of the profits from each barrel of oil pumped from the well.

John Reichelderfer, who lived west of Cridersville on National Road, had 12 pumping oil wells on his farm. One of the wells was producing more than 20,000 barrels per year. He, like many of the other farmers with pumping oil wells, began to invest in new businesses in Cridersville.

Between 1887 and 1905 the Lima Oil Field produced more than 300 million barrels of oil. It brought prosperity to the entire western Ohio region.

Soon after oil was discovered in Texas (1901) and Oklahoma (1906), the boom began to move there. Lima remained a refining and pipeline center.



The 100 Block of East Main Street looking west toward the railroad in 1900.

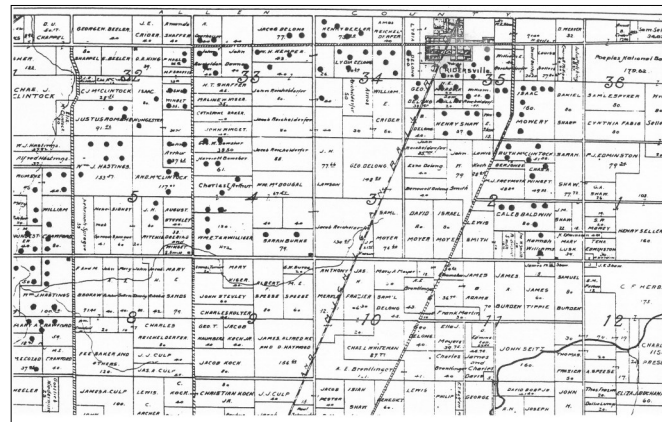
The Central Hotel at 105 W. Main Street; one of three local hotels during the Oil Boom years.



The Oil Boom years brought great prosperity to Cridersville. Visitors from Lima and Wapakoneta came on Sunday afternoons to see the oil wells and witness the excitement.

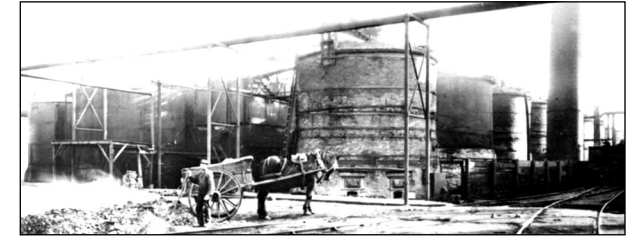
A real treat for these weekend tourists was the “shooting” of a new well, when an explosive torpedo was dropped down the oil well casing in hopes of bringing in a “gusher”.

This excitement continued until the Oil Boom began to move to Texas and Oklahoma in the early 1900s.



This map shows the northern part of Duchouquet Township in 1898. Cridersville is shown in the upper right. Each black dot represents a pumping oil well at that time.

The Solar Refinery in Lima, Ohio



During the infancy of America’s oil industry, the supply of oil came from oil fields in western Pennsylvania. By the end of the 1870s Standard Oil was refining 90% of the oil in the U.S, at its various refineries.

When news of the new Lima Oil Field broke in 1885, Standard Oil of Cleveland decided to build a refinery in Lima. The company began purchasing oil leases in the region.

Standard Oil purchased J.A. Hover’s 150-acre navy bean field as the site for the new refinery. Construction began on September 12, 1886. It started refining in December.

It consisted of four brick buildings and 20 600-barrel crude oil stills. It had a daily capacity of 10,000 barrels. It primarily produced kerosene and fuel oil. Prior to the development of the automobile, there was not much use for gasoline.



The world’s first off-shore oil drilling took place in Grand Lake St. Marys in 1891.