



**Oliver C. "Kip" Harper**  
**1897 - 1973**  
**Inducted 1972**

Kip Harper was born in Chicago. He majored in geology at the University of Chicago before flying for the U.S. Air Corps in World War I. In 1922 he went to work for Gulf Production Company in Sweetwater, Texas. At that time the subterranean configuration of the Permian Basin was almost entirely unknown. But a small amount of oil was being produced in the Westbrook Field of Mitchell County. Using what he learned from the Santa Rita wells and a few of the dry holes Gulf had previously drilled, Kip set out to solve the Basin's geological mysteries. In 1924, he completed one of the most significant pieces of geological evaluation in U.S. history: the recognition and delineation of the Central Basin Platform. Many oil fields, with a total yield in the hundreds of millions of barrels, have resulted from this discovery. Later, as an independent, Kip Harper had several more discoveries: the Harper Field of Ector County, along with the Foster, Water Valley, Rafter-Cross, Vel-Rex, Prentice and Northwest Ozona fields.

