Fred Hogan was born in Butte, Montana. During World War I, he quit high school to help his father, Thomas, convert their ranch into a wheat farm. Needing an additional source of income, the father and son duo drilled several wells in Montana, all of which were dry—until they found an extension of the Kevin Sunburst Field near the Canadian border. In 1925 they moved to Texas, Fred to Midland and his father to Fort Worth. Fred took a job as a scout for a New York geological firm. He brokered the sale of the McElroy Ranch to Franco-Wyoming Co., earning himself a sizable commission. With a portion of that money, Fred and his father built the Petroleum Building in Midland as a place where local oil companies could base their operations. Fred continued brokering deals and, in 1946, was elected mayor of Midland. He was instrumental in establishing the Midland International Airport. He also secured Hogan Park for the water that was beneath it.