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Sourisseau Academy

Smith-Layton Archive presents:

Gassing Up!

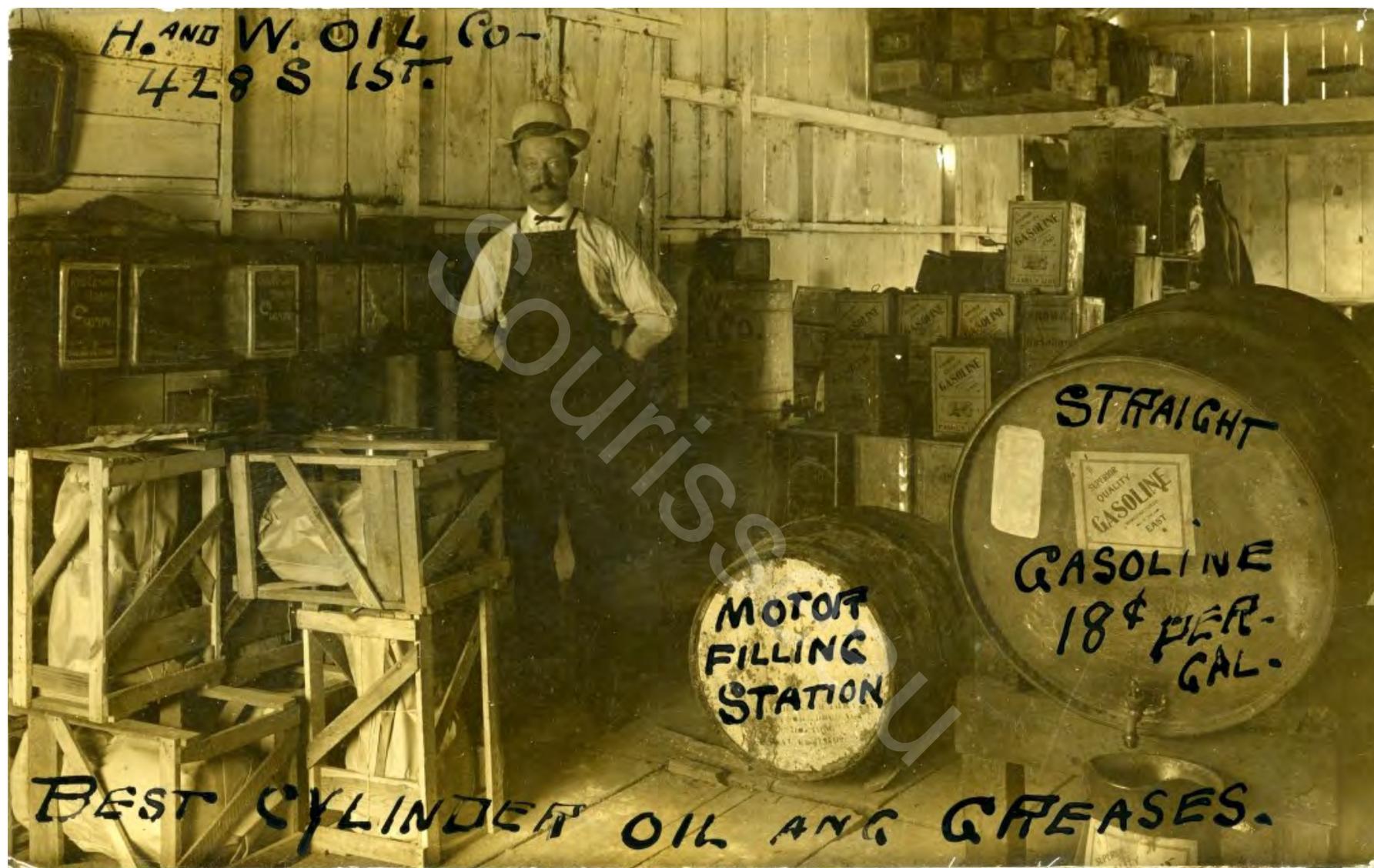
by Thomas N. Layton

Les Amis (The Friends)

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[150] **Gas Drums with prices.** The earliest motorists fueled up using a 2-step process. First, they turned the spigot on a metal drum to release the gasoline into a bucket or a measuring can. Then, they poured the gas from the bucket through a funnel into their automobile's fuel tank, a very dangerous procedure for smokers! By 1905, hand-crank gasoline pumps at actual gas stations were beginning to appear across America, but progress would be slow. Here in San Jose as late as 1912, the *H. and W. Oil Company* at 428 S. First Street was still selling gasoline by the bucket-full.



[151] A thoroughly modern *Shell* Gas Station in 1915. Most of the early gas stations were owner-operated. By 1915, however, the major petroleum refining companies were establishing their own dispensaries with their own distinctive architecture and colors. Try to imagine stopping at this garish, red and yellow *Shell* Station with its uniformed attendants at the town of Colma on the road to San Francisco.



[152] *Associated Gas Station*. The first architectural style for gas stations featured a small office and a roofed-over carport, adjacent to at least two gas pumps. These uniformed attendants at a circa-1920 *Associated* Station in San Jose stand proudly for their portrait. (Photo by John C. Gordon)



[153] *Standard Oil Co. Letterhead.* This 1921 San Jose envelope from *Standard Oil* featured a modern gas station design, where you could drive up to the pump in your stylish roadster and have an attendant dash right out to fill-it-up with Red Crown Gasoline.



[154] **Standard Gas Station.** If that letterhead was not sufficient enticement, you could stop at this spiffy new Standard station at the corner of N. First and East St. James Streets to view a full array of *Standard Oil Company* Products.



[155] **Shell Gas Station in Burbank area.** This ancient 1915-era *Shell* station, located in the Burbank district of San Jose, was still operating in 1932!



[156] *Foster-Stuart Service Station.* Meanwhile, by the early 1920s some gas stations were becoming "Service Stations," offering for a modest fee to perform many other auto maintenance tasks. In addition to four brands of gasoline, *Foster-Stuart* at the corner of East Santa Clara and North 12th Streets offered engine repair, lubrication, tire and battery service. (Photo by John C. Gordon)



[157] *Beamus & Moe Super Station.* The *Beamus & Moe "Super Station"* at the corner of S. Second and San Carlos Streets featured over eight service-and-repair ports, surmounted by a colorfully painted panorama of a placid lake-side scene — sure to calm the most harried customer arriving at this busy downtown location. (Photo by John C. Gordon)



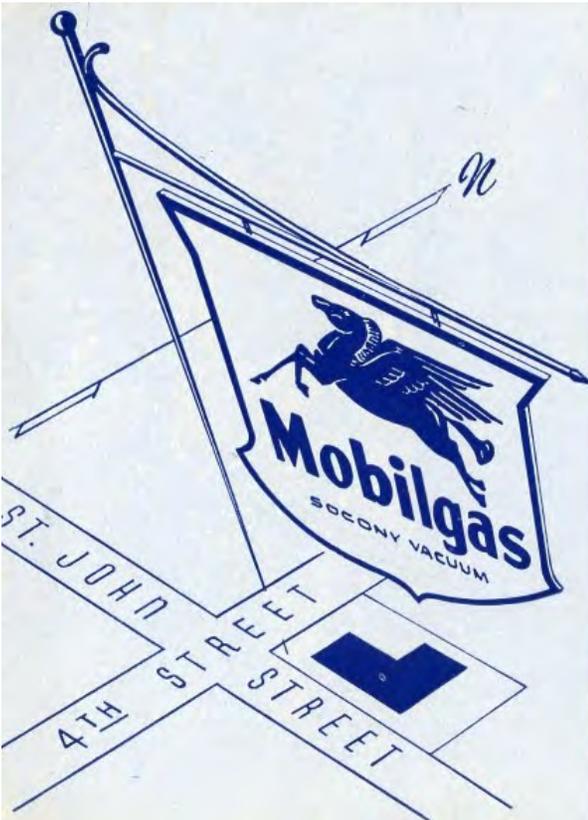
[158] **Granger Motor Sales Service Depot.** *Granger Motor Sales* established a "Service Depot" adjacent to their Willys-Knight and Whippet dealership at 263 W. Santa Clara Street. Their sign reads: "Our ad seeks you. Our service keeps you!" You can see the old Notre Dame College Science Building in the distance beyond the pumps. The other college buildings had already been torn down by the time this photo was taken in 1928. (Photo by John C. Gordon)



[159] *Hi-Way Auto Court*. By 1930, drivers approaching San Jose on Monterey Road could spend the night at *Hi-Way Auto Court* and hand-pump any of four brands of gasoline. From left to right: *Hancock Regular Gasoline*; *Union 76*; *Richfield Hi-Octane*, "The Gasoline of Power"; or *Gilmore*, "More Power with Red Lion Gasoline." Note the tall vertical handle on the left side of the *Gilmore* pump. By hand pumping this handle, the gasoline was pulled up into the glass container (that had graduated measurement marks) atop the pump and down through the hose and into your auto's gas tank.



[160] *San Luis Service Station*. Meanwhile, the "Service Station" moniker was becoming established, even at remote locations. By 1930, motorists who traveled from Gilroy across Pacheco Pass and into the San Joaquin Valley could stop for gasoline and a cold drink at the *San Luis Service Station* — its location now, unfortunately, beneath the San Luis Reservoir.



ST. JOHN STREET
4TH STREET

YOUR CAR REPRESENTS AN INVESTMENT OF SEVERAL HUNDRED DOLLARS

LOOK WHAT WE DO FOR **\$100** TO HELP YOU PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT

1. MOBILUBRICATION SERVICE

A Complete Lubrication Job Performed by Trained Men Using MOBIL PRODUCTS According to Your Car Manufacturer's Recommendations.

AND

2. Inspect Condition of Transmission and Differential Lubricant.	9. Recondition floor mat and running boards with rubber preservative.
3. Inspect front wheel bearings, ball retainers, cones and hubs, for safety.	10. Vacuum clean upholstery and empty ash trays.
4. Test Battery, add water, clean and treat terminals.	12. Clean and dress tires.
5. Test, Clean and respace spark plugs.	13. Clean windows, inside and outside.
6. Examine air cleaner, oil filter and fan belt.	14. Polish bumpers, hub caps and all metal trim.
7. Check tires and remove dangerous foreign material.	15. Tighten bumper bolts and license plates.
8. Inspect condition of all running lights.	16. Clean steering wheel and all driving controls.
	17. Polish instrument panel.

GENERAL PETROLEUM STATION
Fourth and St. John Streets, San Jose
CALL—BAI!ard 8536 FOR FREE PICK-UP AND DELIVERY SERVICE
Let Us Service Your Car While You Work

[161] **Mobilgas promo.**

By the mid-1930s, *Mobilgas*, at the corner of N. Fourth and St. John Streets, was offering seventeen different services - - although item #17 does seem a bit of a stretch!



[162] *Flying "A" Station.* By the late 1940s, locally owned and independently operated gas stations were being rapidly replaced by the standardized architecture of national brands. This modern, "big logo" *Flying "A" Service Station* was constructed in 1956 at the *Ann Darling Shopping Center* on McKee Road. (Photo by Arnold Del Carlo)



[163] **Texaco Station.** Land was cheap in the suburbs. This "big logo" Texaco station, constructed in the mid-1950s in the Alum Rock area, enjoyed an unobstructed view of San Jose's eastern foothills. (Photo by Arnold Del Carlo)



[164] **G.E.M. Shopping Center.** The early 1960s saw the emergence of discounted, members-only, pump-your-own gasoline stations — like this G.E.M. (Government Employees Mart) Shopping Center and gas station at 1717 N. First Street. (Photo by Arnold Del Carlo)



[165] **Rotten Robbie in Willow Glen.** It seems like only yesterday that after raising the hood, pulling the dipstick and checking the oil level, a white-uniformed attendant would wash and squeegee our windshield. Today, as we pull into Rotten Robbie on Lincoln Avenue in Willow Glen, we may ponder the fact that "Service" (unmodified by "Self-") is no longer a part of the gas station experience. (Photo by Tom Layton)