

LOST HILLS

The founding of the town of Lost Hills followed the discovery of the oil field of that name, the story of which is told in the chapters devoted to oil. Martin & Dudley, discoverers of the field, laid out a townsite on sections 2 and 3, township 27, range 21, the winter following the strike. G. T. Nighbert erected the first building, which was occupied by a restaurant conducted by Mrs. Hamilton, the first woman in the new town. Nighbert also built the first hotel and the first store building, the latter being leased to Crow & Cullen, who previously conducted the first mercantile business in Lost Hills in a tent.

With the development of the Lost Hills field the town has grown steadily until there are now about 200 residents, and all lines of business one would expect to find in a city of that size are represented. Excellent telephone service with the fields and with the outside world is afforded, there is a daily stage to Wasco, and bonds for a school house have been voted.

Two explanations of the origin of the name "Lost Hills" are at the discretion of the historian. One is that a traveler approaching the district from the east sees from a distance what appears to be a considerable elevation of land, but as he comes nearer the hills seem to fade away until, when he has actually reached them, they appear hardly higher than the surrounding land. The second explanation is that the low range of hills which bear the name has no apparent relation to the surrounding country and the man who named them may have humored the conceit that they had wandered away from the other foothills of the Coast range — from which they are many miles distant — and lost themselves on the desolate and uninhabited mesa.

As a matter of fact, the Lost Hills are formed by a very steep anticline which the wash of centuries has nearly covered with alluvial sands. But it required expensive drilling to ascertain this fact, and so it probably did not influence the selection of the name.