

a great name in oil

Sinclair through fifty years



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The words Sinclair and company are used loosely in this volume. According to particular context, Sinclair may refer to the founder, the parent corporation, or to any or all of the operating subsidiaries.



Mr. Saul A. Friess
9015 S.W. 62 Terrace
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Miami, Florida 33173

October 11, 1995



Mr. George Balazs
992-A Awaawaanoa Place
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

Dear George,

Just received your letter, dated October 5, 1995, and I'm rushing off an answer to you about the **Sinclair** stamps. Last week I received a letter from your friend Nancy Linsley.

First, the Archelon sea turtle stamp was sold a couple of days ago to Mr. Ian Hunter of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. I only had one duplicate copy of this elusive stamp.

Second, the story behind this stamp: The **Sinclair Oil Company** was founded in 1916 and used prehistoric animals in all of their promotions. During the period between 1935 and 1936 they distributed stamp albums (2 different) and it was necessary to visit and buy Sinclair Gasoline for a period of twelve weeks (for each album, total of twenty-four weeks) to complete the collection in each stamp album. One of the stamps depicted an **Archelon** sea turtle. Although 45 million stamps were distributed today these stamps are very scarce and very much in demand by collectors. These were the first prehistoric animals on stamps. Please see the enclosed photocopies that show the two albums and a few of the stamps.

Throughout the existence of the Sinclair Oil Company, all over the United States, the used meter postage always depicting different dinosaurs. Millions of letters were mailed every year with these cancellations and today they are almost impossible to find and they are very expensive if you do find one. Enclosed are a couple (photocopies) of examples from my collection. About twenty years ago Sinclair was purchased, in a merger, by the Richfield Oil Company and that was the end of another dinosaur. At the present time I'm working on an article pertaining to these stamps and meter cancels for a philatelic publication in Europe.

I understand that you have a list of Sea Turtles on stamps. How can I obtain a copy of this list? Thanks very much for for help with this.

That's all for today.

Aloha,

great promotions stimulate buying public in many ways

Sinclair had little money to spend on advertising in its early days, or much need to publicize its wares in an expanding automotive economy in which demand often exceeded supply. Except for special appeals to farmers and the oil trade, media were unused until 1927, when five national magazines carried lubricant ads. In 1930 Sinclair turned to network radio with Phil Baker, telling women they would find service stations "as clean as your kitchen." With the dinosaur campaign of 1932, billings crossed \$2 million for the first time, chiefly due to a minstrel show which rated among radio's "top ten" in popularity. Sinclair from 1934 was one of the first national marketers to use ads in movie houses. An antique car stamp album, similar to the dinosaur promotion of 1935, enlivened 1936 with 45 million giveaways.

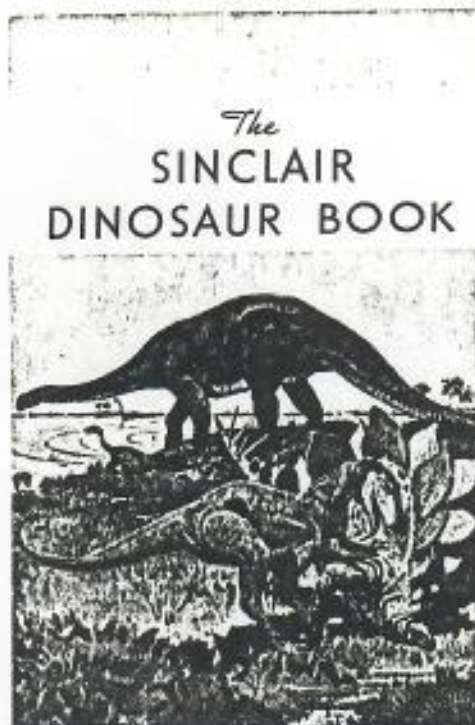
Since World War II, heavy accent has been placed on news and weather shows pitched to specific localities, rather than shotgun-spread advertising to the entire national audience. The TV-radio pitch usually is specific. Give people an idea for a trip, and they'll probably take it, thus stimulating the entire oil industry. A "drive with care" promotion, which has included 10,000 exhortations on 880 radio and TV stations in a single year, has won the Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. award for public service advertising. Sinclair buys regional circulation in magazines, and TV-radio time precisely where Sinclair products are available, for greatest impact per dollar of cost.



1930s: big movie series lured farmers



1931: dealer did his own promotion



1934: first booklet of Sinclair's outstanding educational program in paleontology and conservation, scientist-approved for use in schools



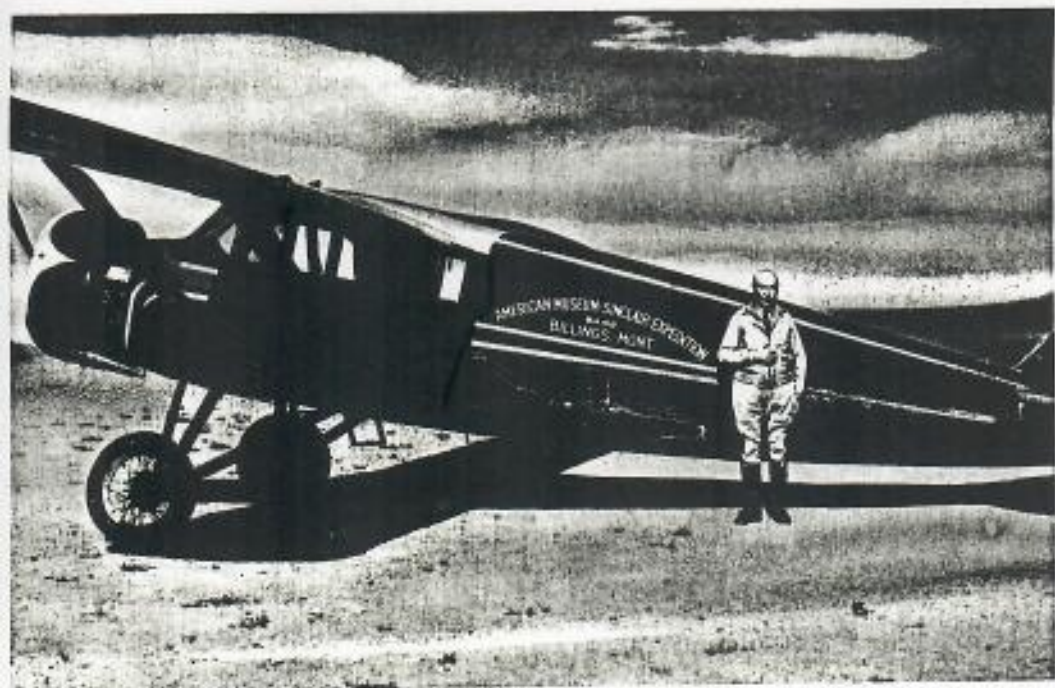
Petroleum... Source of Fuels and Lubricants

Over billions of years, the sun's heat and light, and the heat and pressure of the earth's interior, have transformed the remains of plants and animals into the oil and gas that we use today. This process is still going on, and it is the source of the petroleum that we use for fuel and lubricants.

1935: this promotion stimulated national public interest in paleontology. Twelve weekly visits to stations were necessary to collect all the stamps



Chicago World's Fair exhibit 1933-1934 had 16 million viewers, featured seven life-size dinosaurs, two of which fought battle with horrendous sounds



Scholars accepted dinosaur promotions for school use with Sinclair's sponsorship, 1934-1938, of Dr. Barnum Brown's fossil-gathering expeditions

This is Brontosaurus, the thunder reptile. He appears here to emphasize . . .

. . . the vast age of crude oils from which Sinclair Motor Oils are refined. Sinclair Opaline Motor Oil, for example, is refined from the oldest Mid-Centiment crudes. These crudes were mellowing and filtering in the . . .

. . . earth even before dinosaurs roamed America. Oldest crudes plus most modern refining are the reasons why Opaline lasts longer and stands up better. Ask your nearby Sinclair dealer. You'll like the way he treats you.

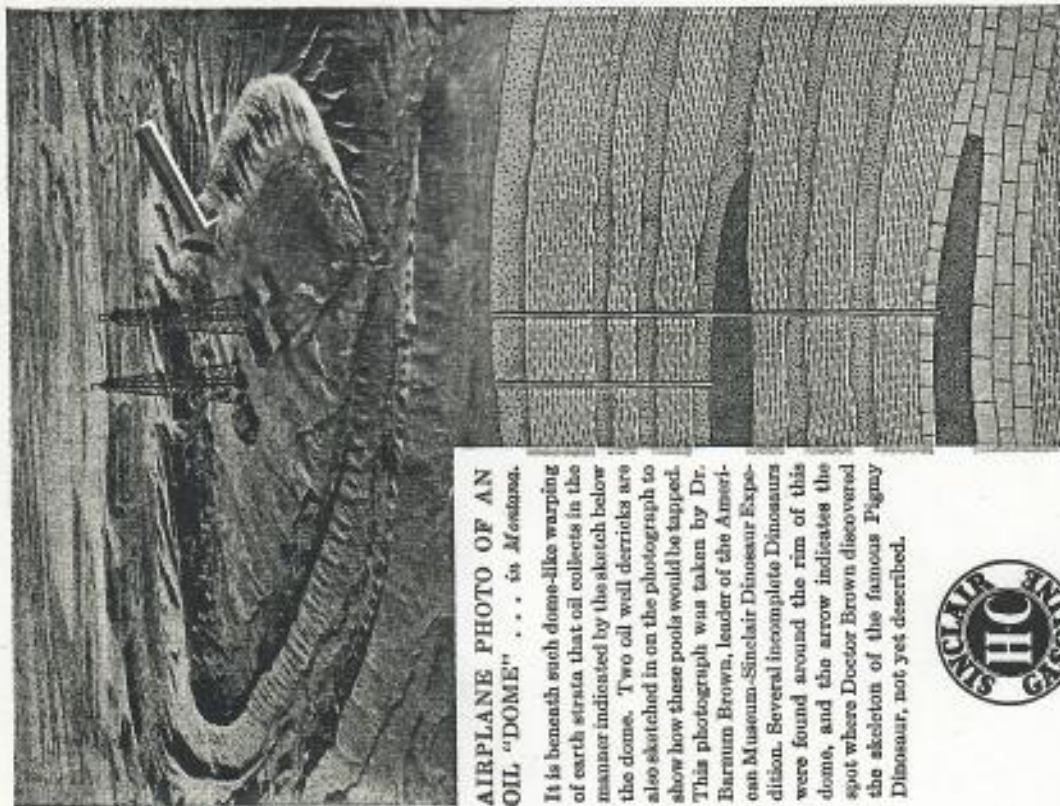
1938: in magazine ads, same message as 1930 but brontosaurus alone used



Containers used Dino in mid-1930s; note premium oil was mellowed longer



WHERE OIL IS FOUND



AIRPLANE PHOTO OF AN OIL "DOME" . . . in Montana.

It is beneath such dome-like warping of earth strata that oil collects in the manner indicated by the sketch below the dome. Two oil well derricks are also sketched in on the photograph to show how these pools would be tapped. This photograph was taken by Dr. Barnum Brown, leader of the American Museum-Sinclair Dinosaur Expedition. Several incomplete Dinosaurs were found around the rim of this dome, and the arrow indicates the spot where Doctor Brown discovered the skeleton of the famous Pigmy Dinosaur, not yet described.

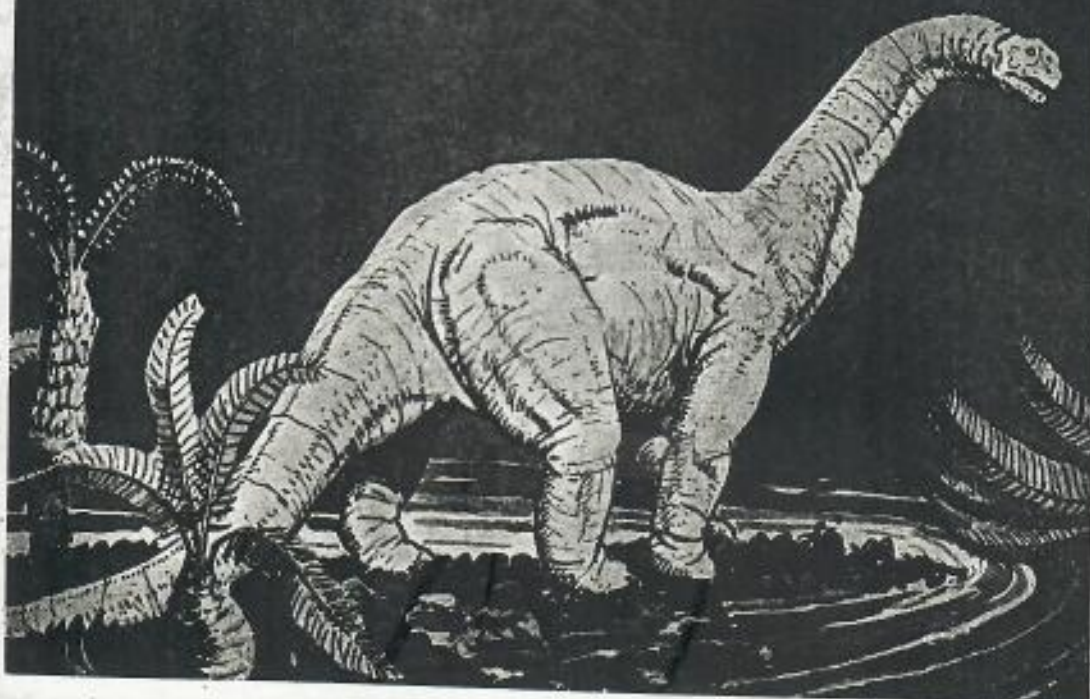


SINCLAIR DINOSAUR STAMP ALBUM

with Contemporary Reptiles



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WITH OTHER ANCIENT REPTILES**



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Mr. D. J. Roenigk,
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