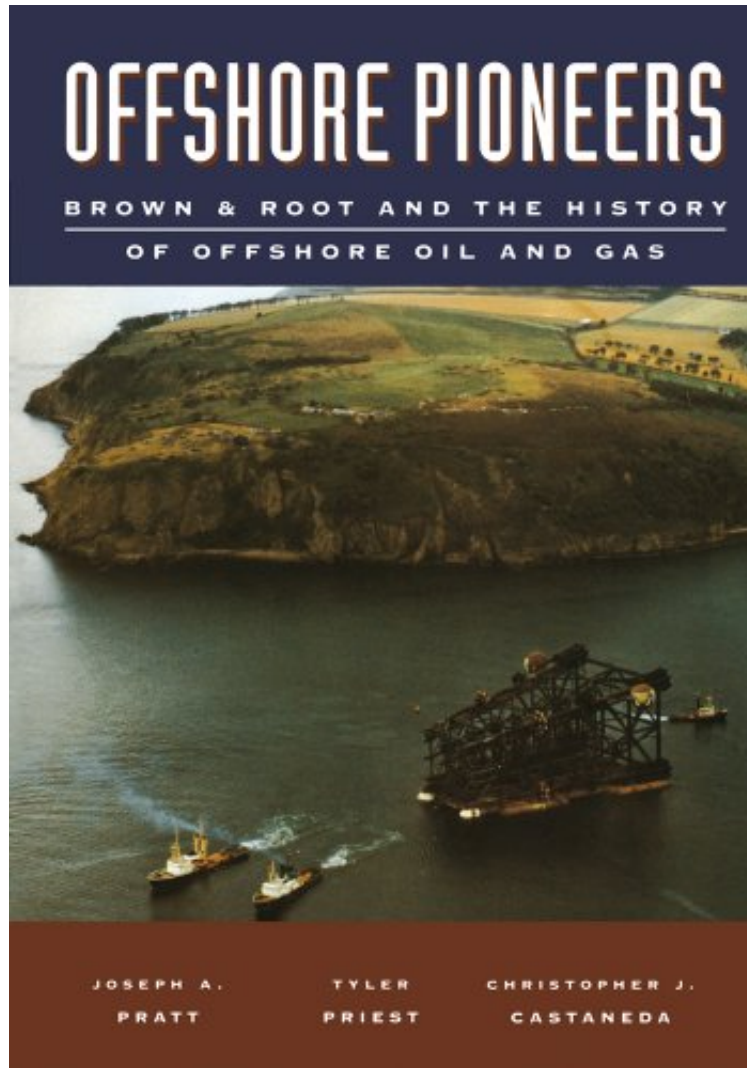


(Download pdf ebook) Offshore Pioneers: Brown Root and the History of Offshore Oil and Gas

# Offshore Pioneers: Brown Root and the History of Offshore Oil and Gas

*Joseph A. Pratt, Tyler Priest, Christopher J. Castaneda*  
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**Joseph A. Pratt, Tyler Priest, Christopher J. Castaneda : Offshore Pioneers: Brown Root and the History of Offshore Oil and Gas** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Offshore Pioneers: Brown Root and the History of Offshore Oil and Gas:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Would have like it more if their was more written about the ...By gmf2006 Would have like it more if their was more written about the divers who did the dirty work. (daughter of a diver) 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Memories. By Customer The reason I bought this book is because my husband used to work for Brown root in the North Sea and the Persian Gulf. He was superintendent on the

derrick barge Hercules. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, but not really a history. By brazos49 I discovered that this book existed when the Houston Chronicle mentioned its coverage of the Ixtoc blowout/oil spill in the Bay of Campeche relative to the BP blowout off Louisiana. And, I was glad to find it and read it. I actually worked in the Brown Root marine division as a structural engineer for about a year in the early 1970's. So, I knew some of the key players in this book and am familiar with some of the specific history covered. Also, a couple of my college classmates worked for BR in the international offshore pipeline construction area. I have to admit that reading this book made me wonder if I made the right decision to leave BR to work for another engineering consulting company. I could see that staying with BR Marine Division meant that I'd have to move around the world to move up the organization chart and I wasn't sure I wanted to do that. But, reading this book reinforced what I surely knew then - that what BR was doing in offshore structures was about the most interesting and challenging possible work for a structural engineer. As this book clearly describes, much of what BR was doing in this area was cutting edge and unique. I remember the situation being such that for a lot of offshore work, only BR or McDermott were candidates because they were the only companies in the world with the engineering knowhow to do it. And, I was offered a job at McDermott and I considered them to be a half step behind BR. Engineers such as Jay Weidler, Al Crossman, Larry Starr, Max Koehler and Stan Hruska were truly exceptional talents and their expertise shaped this history of extraordinary accomplishments. But, as far as this book goes in terms of being a history of the key events, there is a glaring omission. Because of their dominant market positions, Brown Root and McDermott were charged with bid rigging/price fixing relative to the offshore platform business. I vaguely remember the project engineer I worked under telling me once that he thought BR and McDermott kind of "took turns" winning certain bids because both companies were so busy it didn't make sense to go all out to compete hard to win each bid. That sounds reasonable unless you realize, as I didn't at the time, that it's illegal as hell. So, BR and several executives were indicted in 1978, the company paid a big fine and, most shockingly, the president of BR, Foster Parker, committed suicide. A pretty big deal by almost any standard and not the kind of thing that could be omitted in any "history" book. I guess this book was commissioned by BR or some people from BR, so overlooking how this amazing technological edge led to something so sinister and embarrassing is understandable as long as you accept that the authors are more PR flacks than real historians. So, I enjoyed the book for the reasons I listed, but I hated the fact that some very interesting aspects of the whole history were strategically omitted. If you're interested in a "house organ" style history of the development of this technology, you'll almost surely enjoy this book. If you're looking for the whole story, this won't be it.

Fifty years ago, in November 1947, Brown Root helped Kerr-McGee build the first out-of-sight-land offshore platform that produced oil. The date is widely celebrated as the birth of the modern offshore industry. In the years since this historic occasion, Brown Root has continued to pioneer in the design and construction of offshore pipelines and platforms. Along with the rest of the offshore industry, the company has helped develop technology capable of finding and producing oil in deepwater and in harsh environments around the world. This history puts a human face on the process of technological change. Using the words of many of those who took part in Brown Root's offshore activities, this book recounts their efforts to find practical ways to recover offshore oil. Building on lessons learned in the Gulf of Mexico before and after World War II, the company's personnel adapted offshore technologies to conditions encountered in Venezuela, the Middle East, Alaska, and other regions before becoming one of the first engineering and construction companies to confront the challenge of North Sea development in the 1960's. Through times of boom and bust in the oil industry, the search for effective technology had continued. The process has not always been smooth, but the results have been impressive. As we enter a new and exciting era in offshore technology, the history of the first fifty years of the industry provides a useful context for understanding current and future events.

The authors of this book have an established track record in writing serious company histories rather than the all too common vanity publishing that dominated the genre, and this is valid and well wrought addition to their collective canon. (The Journal of Energy Literature, Vol. V, No I)