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## Hardwicke: ANTITRUST LAWS, ET AL. V. UNIT OPERATION OF OIL OR GAS POOLS

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## RECENT BOOKS

This department undertakes to note or review briefly current books on law and matters closely related thereto. Periodicals, court reports, and other publications that appear at frequent intervals are not included. The information given in the notes is derived from inspection of the books, publishers' literature, and the ordinary library sources.

## BRIEF REVIEWS

ANTITRUST LAWS, ET AL. v. UNIT OPERATION OF OIL OR GAS POOLS. By *Robert E. Hardwicke*. New York: American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers. 1948. Pp. ix, 258. \$1.50.

The author, former chief counsel of the Petroleum Administration for War, here discusses in great detail the history and present importance of unit operation of oil and gas pools, with particular emphasis on the effects of state and federal antitrust laws. Mr. Hardwicke includes in his book: (1) a description of the situation of the oil industry in 1925; (2) a conclusion that the fundamental problems then facing the industry were finding methods to increase recovery of oil and gas and to decrease well operation expenses; (3) a chronological summary of activities of various individuals and organizations (federal and state governmental bodies, the American Petroleum Institute, the American Bar Association, the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, the Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association, the Interstate Oil Compact Association, and others) directed toward solving the above problems, primarily by means of voluntary or compulsory unit operation and various types of government regulation; and (4) a clear exposition of the present need for unit operation and its present status under state and federal law. Mr. Hardwicke indicates that although state regulation has made unit operation less necessary as a means of preventing waste resulting from competitive overproduction, unit operation continues to be essential to secondary recovery operations which are relied on increasingly to satisfy American petroleum needs. The danger that unit operation agreements, which generally restrict the rate of production from a pool (although usually increasing ultimate recovery), will impinge upon state or federal antitrust laws is thoroughly considered. The author concludes that the antitrust laws do not condemn such agreements "which are reasonably necessary to prevent waste and protect correlative rights." The thorough historical treatment of all phases of unit operation contained here will interest all those concerned with oil and gas law. The large amount of collateral material discussed in text, notes and appendix is of considerable reference value.