About the Author

Born in Aberdeen, Scotland, some time before the North Sea oil boom started, Shepherd always wanted to be a geologist after talking to the workmen in the granite quarry near the family home at the age of ten. They told him about the various minerals in the granite and how the rock had formed in the core of an ancient Scottish mountain, long since disappeared and he was hooked.

As a teenager, Shepherd saw the oil industry come to Aberdeen. The granite quarry shut down and later several oil company offices were built on the site, including those of Shell, Conoco-Phillips, Chevron, and Marathon. BP gave him his first job, and he found himself planning wells for the giant Forties Field, the biggest field in the North Sea. This was the beginning of a lifetime career as a production geologist working on oil and gas fields for variously Shell, Conoco-Phillips, Elf, Occidental, Amerada Hess, and Encana. In between, he managed to find time to take a year out of the ‘toil for oil.’ This was spent at Aberdeen University, and it was there that he started to write this book.

The theme of Shepherd’s working life has been a particular interest in getting more oil out of oil fields and in maximizing a key resource for society; the job is great fun. The task of understanding a reservoir with the aim of getting more oil out is very much like detective work, and he believes that it is also becoming an increasingly more important role as oil resources start to get scarcer.