

## WILHELM HAUBOLD

Successful exploration geophysicist  
& pioneer of shallow water seismics



1893 – 1986

Friedrich Wilhelm Haubold was born in Dortmund on January 27, 1893. In 1912, he initially began studying mathematics in Rostock, but soon transferred to the University of Göttingen to study physics and chemistry. From 1914 to 1918, however, Haubold had to interrupt his studies due to military service during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, where he worked as an airship crew trooper and a meteorologist for the Army Weather Service. After the end of the war, he continued his studies in Göttingen under the supervision of Emil Wiechert. Wiechert had also noticed Haubold's talent for building geophysical instruments, which is why he made him his private assistant. While working at the Geophysical Institute, he then assisted Wiechert in building new and improved seismographs. In 1923, Haubold graduated from university with a doctorate in the field of meteorology.

After his university years, Wilhelm Haubold was drawn to business and in 1923 he began working for the Seismos GmbH in Hanover, which had been founded by Ludger Mintrop. He soon became one of the company's most successful exploration geophysicists and was working around the world, including in the Netherlands, in Mexico, and in the United States in Louisiana and Texas, where he discovered numerous salt domes using seismic and gravimetric methods. However, this golden era ended in 1930 with the onset of the world economic crisis, which also brought the foreign activities of Seismos GmbH to a halt.

In 1931, Wilhelm Haubold therefore returned to the University of Göttingen, where he devoted himself to geoelectrical, geomagnetic and gravimetric methods, which he used, among other things, in the Geophysical Survey of the German Empire (*Geophysikalische Reichsaufnahme*). In 1935, however, he returned to Seismos GmbH, where he became department head and he led several refraction seismic exploration teams in northern Germany. Unfortunately, due to the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and its economic consequences, even this employment was not to last. Between 1945 and 1950, Haubold worked in various jobs ranging from construction worker and office worker to translator. In 1950 he found a job as a seismic engineer at the company C. Deilmann Bergbau GmbH, where he took his first steps towards the then unknown field of marine seismics with shallow water seismics (*Niedrigwasserseismik*). Haubold recorded his eventful life in a report published in 1959 and over 30 pages long with the title "*Ein Leben für die Geophysik – Rückblick eines in ihrem Dienst ergrauten Pioniers* (A life for geophysics - retrospect of a pioneer graying in its service)".

Wilhelm Haubold died, as the last of the 24 founding fathers of the DGG, on August 29, 1986 in Göttingen at the age of 93.

*DGG PRO – Public Relations & Outreach, Hannover*

Modified after Jacobs F. & Börngen M. (2019): Wiechert, Mintrop & Co. – Die 24 Gründungsväter der Deutschen Geophysikalischen Gesellschaft. Publisher EAGLE.