

## Harry Gore

### 1870 - 1951



Harry Gore was a pioneer in the development of the oil and gas industry in Kansas. He rose from humble beginnings to become one of the most prominent oil men in Kansas during the 1920's, '30's and '40's. He was born in Russia, in what is now Lithuania, in 1879 and came to this country with his wife Anna at the age of 25 in 1904. After a short time in New York City, they moved west to the mountains of West Virginia.

West Virginia was at that time the center of oil production in this country, with oil having been discovered there fifty years previously. There, Harry saw the need for drilling supplies in the oil patch and began an oil field supply business. At that time, oil wells were drilled using cable tools, which basically consisted of raising a large iron drill bit with a cable, and dropping it to "make hole" and drill the well. He would travel from one drilling rig to another by horse and wagon selling the drill bits, cable, tools, and various supplies that were needed for the wells. The supply company that he helped found, Mountain Iron and Supply Company, also known as MISCO, eventually became one of the largest oil field supply companies in the country.

The discovery of the El Dorado oil field in 1915 created an enormous oil boom in Central Kansas. It was the largest oil field discovery in the country at the time, and its development and production helped the Allies to achieve victory in WWI. Oil men from all across the country flocked to the boomtown of El Dorado, and among them was Harry Gore and his family.

Harry began drilling oil wells and buying interest in oil leases and also acquired leases and drilling rigs in lieu of payment from the drillers or as payment for his drilling fee. By 1920 the Gore family was living in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and in 1930 they were residing in Wichita. During the 1930's Harry Gore entered a partnership with his two sons, Ted and Ralph, operating as Harry Gore, Oil Producer. They also developed operations in the Russell, Kansas area. The partnership continued to drill wells and operate oil leases until the late 1940's, when the cable tool rigs were sold. Rotary drilling had by this time replaced the cable tool method of drilling, and the decision was made to not acquire the expensive new rotary drilling rigs.

Subsequent to that sale the partnership continued to explore for oil, utilizing contract drillers, and to operate properties on their behalf as well as other joint interest owners. These activities continued until Harry Gore's death in 1951.

Harry Gore, while having very little formal education himself, was very much aware of the importance of getting a higher education. He worked hard to ensure that his sons were able to get the best education possible, and both Ted and Ralph attended the University of Pennsylvania. At Penn Ted graduated from the Wharton School of Business and Ralph earned his law degree. In 1952 the two brothers established the prestigious Harry Gore Scholarship at Wichita University (now WSU) in his memory.

Information and bio from <https://goreoilco.com/about/>