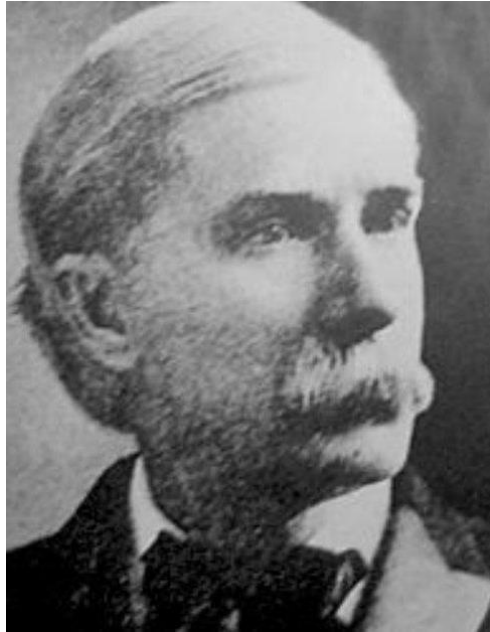


James M. Guffey

1839 - 1930



James M. Guffey of Pittsburgh was born in Westmoreland County, PA., January 19th, 1839, of Scottish parentage, the youngest but one of a family of six children. He passed his boyhood upon the ancestral farm. He attended the "Old Sulphur Springs" school and later attended the Iron City Commercial College, a pioneer commercial school in Pittsburgh. At eighteen, he entered the service of the Louisville and Nashville R.R. Co., at Louisville, as clerk to the superintendent. He resigned after several years to accept a more responsible and lucrative position with the Adams Southern Express Company at Nashville.

In 1872, attracted by the wonderful development in oil production in his native State, he returned to Pennsylvania and became a salesman of oil-well machinery and supplies at St. Petersburg in Clarion County for the Gibbs & Sterrett Company. This work gave him a large acquaintance in the newly developed oil regions and taught him a great deal about oil and its future possibilities. He accordingly leased land and began to drill. He soon became a prominent actor in drilling and producing oil and identified with every oil field in Pennsylvania, started development in Kansas, took a large part in developing the oil and gas fields of

Ohio and West Virginia, piping gas to Pittsburgh, Johnstown, Wheeling, Indianapolis, and hundreds of smaller towns. He was the pioneer operator in the Texas fields and is the owner of large interests there. The Texas gushers are producing at a rate of 70,000 bbls. Per day.

In his day, he was the largest individual oil producer and operator in America, had immense holdings of coal land and gas lease holds in West Virginia, as well as in his own state, and was the owner of gold and silver mining interests in Idaho and Colorado, in California and Nova Scotia. He was associated with many manufacturing and banking corporations; his advice and co-operation were much sought and highly valued in many business enterprises, including railway and other transportation lines.

He was an officially recognized leader of the Democratic party in his State, and a member of the National committee. He stood for ballot reform and good government. He was a trustee of Washington and Jefferson College and was interested in education and the younger generation.

Mr. Guffey was a notable independent oil operator who, in partnership with John H. Galey, developed oilfields in West Virginia, California, Pennsylvania, Texas and Kansas. Their Spindletop Texas discovery well produced 80,000 to 100,000 barrels a day when drilling began in 1901.

SOURCES: <https://wvhistoryonview.org/catalog/027761>
<https://prabook.com/web/james.guffey/3766821>