

**REFINING INDUSTRY OF THE  
UNITED STATES: WITH LIST OF  
REFINERIES, CAPACITY AND  
INVESTMENT AND THE OIL  
JOBBER'S OF AMERICA**

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Refining industry of the United States: with list of refineries, capacity and investment and the oil jobbers of America by H. G. James

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## **FOREWORD.**

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The demand for the article on the refineries of the United States has been so great, that The Derrick Publishing Company presents it in pamphlet form.

It is the first attempt to gather a list of the refineries of the United States, with their location and capacity. There are doubtless some inaccuracies in the list, but since the article was published in the Daily Derrick, those to which the Derrick's attention was called have been corrected. That the refining companies found so few, would indicate the care with which the information was obtained.

The kaleidoscopic character of the business is forcibly illustrated by the fact that most of the corrections came from the completion of new refineries, and the addition to the capacity of others. These give an added refinery capacity of approximately 20,000 barrels of crude daily, more than when the publication of Mr. James' article began. These additions and corrections change somewhat the total figures, which it is impossible to correct without rewriting the pamphlet, and if this should be done other changes would be required in an endless chain.

As a review of the refining industry of the United States the article was complete when first written, and as such is submitted to the public.

**THE DERRICK PUBLISHING CO.**

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ART AND HISTORY



## Refining Industry of United States

The petroleum refining industry is like a kaleidoscope—always changing. Changes come so fast, the man who makes a success at it must be capable of quick action. He must think all the while a little ahead of the game. He who hesitates in the oil contest for success loses his opportunity. Like "The House of a Thousand Candles" it is "A Business of a Thousand Angles," and every angle is a nerve center of the enterprise. It is as "touchy" as a spoiled child. Prices are beyond the control of the manufacturer. They are gag-hawed by the cost of production and the peculiarities of the consuming market. A refiner can't make gasoline without making fuel oil. He can't advance the price of fuel oil beyond the competitive price of coal. The gasoline consumer demands an adequate supply. He growls if prices are high and demands a Federal investigation. Gasoline must bear the burden of manufacture. So gasoline prices are only incidentally and conditionally related to crude prices. The kaleidoscopic nature of the business is illustrated forcibly by the fact that Congress ordered an investigation of oil because prices were "unconscionably" low; the investigation was not actually made until prices were "warrantably" high; and before the report has been issued, prices are on the toboggan again. An Oklahoma refinery contracted for crude at 30 cents a barrel for three years. In a few months the market had advanced several hundred per cent. The contract was broken at the instance of the producers. Two months later only 50 per cent. of the output of the field was being taken and the price was nearly back to the contract figure. Such is the Cynthia-of-the-minute character of this fluctuating business.

### Steel Profits vs. Oil Profits.

Complaint is frequently made that earnings in oil are unwarrantably large. Fact is scores of other enterprises produce larger returns than oil. Some are so much larger as to sink oil into abject insignificance. Big profits in oil are generally made either by exceptional risk or by huge volume. Generally speaking petroleum profits are not unusual. You never hear of the thousands who lose. The public gets value received. Witness the amount of gasoline procurable at 15 cents; the amount of kerosene for 10 cents; and vaseline for five cents. Net earnings of the United States Steel corporation during the second quarter of this year averaged \$20.70 a ton. This is in excess of one cent a pound. A barrel of 42 gallons of gasoline weighs 277 pounds. If the refiner could realize a profit of one cent a pound, every barrel would return him \$2.77 profit. Therefore, a refinery running 5,000 barrels of crude a day, from which it secured 20 per cent. gasoline (some are getting as high as 30 per cent.), would have a profit of \$2,772 a day, or \$83,160 a month. And then he would have all of his products left. Miss Gasoline is shamed and

humiliated in the presence of this giant of industry, Mon. Sig. Steel. Indeed, refiners would be mighty well pleased if they could net 30 cents a barrel crude run.

And the steel corporation was proved innocent of the charge of monopoly.

### Gathering Information.

The writer has been endeavoring the past year to secure a complete list of all oil refineries in the United States. Lists have appeared from time to time, but an effort to check these up shows that none of them has been wholly correct. The information, which we shall present in this article, is based upon letters received from various sources from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast during the past year. It is not claimed that this list is complete or wholly accurate. It is as complete as it has been possible to make it. In some instances information has been difficult to secure. It must be borne in mind that refineries the past two years have been built, as it were, over night. Again a refining plant which might have a charging capacity of 500 barrels today, next month might have a charging capacity of 1,000 or 1,500 barrels. Two or three years ago an independent refinery running 5,000 barrels a day was an exceptionally large concern. Today there are independent refineries with daily running capacity of 15,000 to 30,000 barrels. Their number is rapidly increasing. Some of these are merely what is termed "skimming" plants. Others are complete refineries, turning out all products of refined oils and greases. Western refiners are now turning attention to making lubricants. The field is widening. The independents are realizing their opportunity. One company can no longer do all the business. It is too big.

There was a time when it was practically true that the Standard Oil Company was the oil business of America. But this is not true today. The independent movement has been growing by leaps and bounds. The Standard Oil group owns only a small percentage of production and now controls only about one-half of refinery capacity. This brings forcibly to attention the fact that there are now three classes of refiners in this country. First, the Standard Oil Company group with its mighty forces; second, is that large group of big independents who come in strict and forceful competition with the Standard Oil Company; and third, there is that large element of small independents who shy with equal timidity in the presence of both the big independents and the Standard Oil group, and who are in a particular class by themselves. But no one is clothed with prophetic vision sufficient to say what the morrow may bring forth. Some of the greatest factors in the manufacturing

end of oildom today, yesterday were struggling in this third class. There are great opportunities in oil and during the past two or three years practically all that has been necessary to make a success has been native ability, quick action and good connections.

Just now an unprecedented number of new and exceptionally large refineries is being built or is planned for. I cannot say that they will or will not overproduce the market. To a casual observer it would seem that they will. Propheying about oil is hazardous. The prices of automobiles are coming down. I have talked with the representatives of several of the largest motor manufacturers the past week and they tell me the capacity of their factories is sold six months to a year ahead. This means a big increase in gasoline consumption. I presume the situation will work itself out. If there is too much gasoline next year, a period of no new refineries will follow and the twin law of averages and compensation will demonstrate their accuracy again.

But there is one thing of which I am morally certain and that is the petroleum refining business during the next five years is going to pass through the greatest evolution of its history. My opinion is that methods are going to be completely revolutionized and that much larger volumes of crude will be treated and greater precipitation of gasoline secured at a decidedly less expense. The progress in this particular made the past year has been quite remarkable. More than this, much more about oil and its contents and how to treat it is going to be known. Chemists and researchers are constantly amazed over what their experiments develop. But most refiners are too intent on making money to "run down" these discoveries.

The Mid-Continent field will continue for some time to be the center of activity. Intense energy is displayed here. Nothing is too big to undertake. The field possesses many natural advantages. Sixty gravity gasoline produced from Mid-Continent crude equals 55 gravity from the far-famed Pennsylvania crude,

and it has been found possible to make just as good lubricants from this oil as from Pennsylvania. So with the immense volume of crude, the probable future supply, the great marketing centers and natural advantages, the first is quite certain to hold its enviable position for a long while. More than 60 per cent of the gasoline of the country now comes from the Mid-Continent region. As it is found possible to make acceptable grades of low gravity gasoline, this volume will increase. The time is near at hand when the standard grade of motor gasoline will be 50 gravity with 410 end point. It may not be generally known, but the bulk of motor fuel sold in one of the largest cities of the United States tests only 54 gravity, but it is a good, satisfactory product.

There need be no fear about the future supply of crude. There need be little apprehension on the part of refiners of a gasoline substitute that will put the refiner out of business. Other liquids may be found that will explode in internal combustion engines, but there is scarcely any likelihood of a competitor of gasoline.

The oil business has had a very extended "infancy" and the expression may be thread-worn, but in point of development it is still in its swaddling clothes. This has been shown by the wonderful progress of the past two years. Even since I began gathering the data for this story so many changes have taken place I have been compelled to revise again and again. New refineries are being projected so fast and old ones are increasing so rapidly that I fear this story will be out of date before it is printed.

I am presenting this statistical information with the hope that it will prove of much interest and value to the trade, and I trust if any errors have crept into these statements that corrections may be sent me for future guidance. It is hoped thereby to finally work out of this effort a complete and reliable directory of American oil refineries.

#### PETROLEUM REFINERIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

(Showing as fully as possible year built, investment and daily consumption of crude.)

California.		Year Built.	Approximate Investment.	Ap. Bbls. Crude Used D'y.
Standard Oil Company, Potos Richards	.....	1902		
Standard Oil Company, El Segundo	.....	1913	\$65,834,300	55,000
Standard Oil Company, Kern River	.....	1914		20,000
Union Oil Co., of California, Oileum	.....	1895	3,000,000	25,000
Union Oil Co. of California, Avila	.....			
Union Oil Co. of California, Bakersfield	.....			
Union Oil Co. of California, Brea	.....			
Union Oil Co. of California, Los Angeles	.....			
Union Oil Co. of California, Orcutt	.....			
Union Oil Co. of California, Santa Paula	.....			
Associated Oil Co., Avon	.....	1913	1,400,753	12,500
Associated Oil Co., Gaviota	.....	1899	530,397	(D'th pl'ts)
Phoenix Refining Co., Bakersfield	.....	1902		*1,300
Monarch Oil Refining Co., Berkeley	.....	1910		*600
Pinal-Dome Refining Co., Bitteravia	.....	1911	250,000	1,500
St. Helens Petroleum Co., Brea	.....	.....	.....	.....
Puente Oil Co., Chino	.....	1898		1,000
Paraffine Paint Co., Emeryville	.....	1885		300
			Other plants built since 1895	

Refining Industry of the United States.

American Oilfields Co., Fellows .....	1912	150,000	8,000
Ventura Refining Co., Millmore .....	1915	.....	.....
California-Fresno Oil Co., Fresno .....	1901	50,000	100
Pacific States Refineries, Coalinga .....	1902	50,000	800
Hanford Oil Refinery, Inc., Hanford .....	1912	45,000	250
Eastern Consolidated Oil Co., Kern River Field .....	1904	8,000,000	*1,000
King Refining Co., Kern River Field .....	1901	.....	*500
Producers Refining Co., Kern River Field .....	1904	50,000	150
Warren Bros., Kern River Field .....	1914	.....	*1,500
Warren Bros., Rodeo .....	1903	.....	*800
General Petroleum Co., Kerto .....	1912	.....	100
General Petroleum Co., Vernon .....	1913	300,000	2,000
Asphaltum Oil & Refining Co., Los Angeles .....	.....	.....	500
Amalgamated Oil Co., Los Angeles .....	1905	.....	3,000
California Oil & Asphalt Co., Los Angeles .....	1911	100,000	1,000
Densmore-Stabler Refining Co., Los Angeles .....	1902	.....	650
Esusaca Petroleum Co., Los Angeles .....	.....	.....	.....
Lincoln Motor Co., Los Angeles .....	.....	.....	.....
Pioneer Roll Paper Co., Los Angeles .....	1904	30,000	500
Service Oil & Asphalt Co., Los Angeles .....	1893	.....	900
Shell Co. (Trumbull Refining Co.), Los Angeles .....	.....	.....	.....
S. A. Thompson Oil Co., Los Angeles .....	.....	.....	.....
Yosemite Oil Refining Co., Los Angeles .....	1898	30,000	600
O'Neal Refining Co., Long Beach .....	.....	.....	.....
Santa Maria Oil Fields, Ltd., Roadamite .....	.....	.....	.....
San Diego A-1 Refinery, San Diego .....	1913	30,000	.....
Capitol Crude Oil Co., Santa Paula .....	.....	.....	.....
Tulare Refinery, Tulare .....	.....	.....	.....
British California Oil Co., Vernon .....	.....	.....	1,000
Hercules Oil Refining Co., Vernon .....	1900	.....	300
Jordan Oil Co., Vernon .....	1900	.....	300
National Oil Refining Co., Waits .....	1905	25,000	150
Adelaine, Consolidated Road Oil Co., Maricopa .....	1910	.....	300
Sunset Monarch Oil Co., Maricopa .....	1907	.....	*1,500
American Oriental Co., Martinez .....	.....	.....	8,000
Shell Company of California, Martinez .....	1915	.....	.....
Richfield Oil Co., Olanda .....	.....	.....	.....
A. F. Gilmore, Sherman .....	.....	.....	.....

Idle California Refineries

Beckett Refinery, Arroyo Grande .....	.....	.....	.....
Volcan Oil Co., Bakersfield .....	1901	.....	*400
Capitol Refining Co., Berkeley .....	1900	.....	*900
More Refinery, Goleta .....	.....	.....	.....
Ensign-Baker Refining Co., Halsey, San Luis .....	1910	.....	*1,000
Obispo county .....	.....	.....	.....
Buckeye Refining Co., Kern River Field .....	1901	.....	.....
Warber Asphalt Paving Co., Los Angeles .....	1890	.....	*1,400
Continental Oil Co., Los Angeles .....	1907	.....	*600
Quaranty Oil Co., Los Angeles .....	.....	.....	1,000
Southern Refining Co., Los Angeles .....	1900	.....	700
General Petroleum Co., Mojave .....	1914	.....	3,000
Sunset Oil & Refining Co., Obispo or Oatland .....	1903	.....	2,000
Producers & Refiners Oil Co., Oil Port, San Luis Obispo Co. .....	1906	.....	5,000
Pacific Roofing & Refining Co., San Francisco .....	1903	.....	*300
Fritzman Refining Co., San Francisco .....	.....	.....	.....
Sunset Oil & Refinery Co., San Pedro .....	.....	.....	.....
California Liquid Asphalt, Hadley, San Luis Obispo Co. ....	.....	.....	*1,000
Columbia Oil, Asphalt & Refining Co., Carpinteria .....	.....	.....	.....
1.—Number of tons of asphalt.	.....	.....	.....
2.—Leased to American Oilfields Co.	.....	.....	.....
3.—Topping plants only.	.....	.....	.....
4.—At point of dissolution.	.....	.....	.....
5.—Lubricating plant operated by Shell Company.	.....	.....	.....
6.—Asphalt and road oil plant.	.....	.....	.....
7.—Operated by Shell Company on short time lease.	.....	.....	.....
7.—Formerly Los Angeles Oil Refining Co.	.....	.....	.....

Utah.

Utah Refining Co., Salt Lake City .....	1907	\$ 35,000	600
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Colorado.

United Oil Co. (Standard), Florence .....	1887	500,000	3,000
Florence Oil Co., Florence .....	1889	300,000	1,500
The Inland Refinery, Boulder .....	1896	125,000	1,500

Wyoming.

Midwest Refining Co., Casper .....	1912	18,000,000	12,000
Continental Refining Co., Casper .....	1915	2,000,000	500
Northwestern Oil Refining Co., Cowley .....	1909	61,000	3,000
Ohio Oil Co., Greybull .....	1918	.....	Building
Greybull Refining Co., Greybull .....	1915	*500,000	2,000

New Mexico.

Oil Refinery, Farmington .....	1915	20,000	150
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