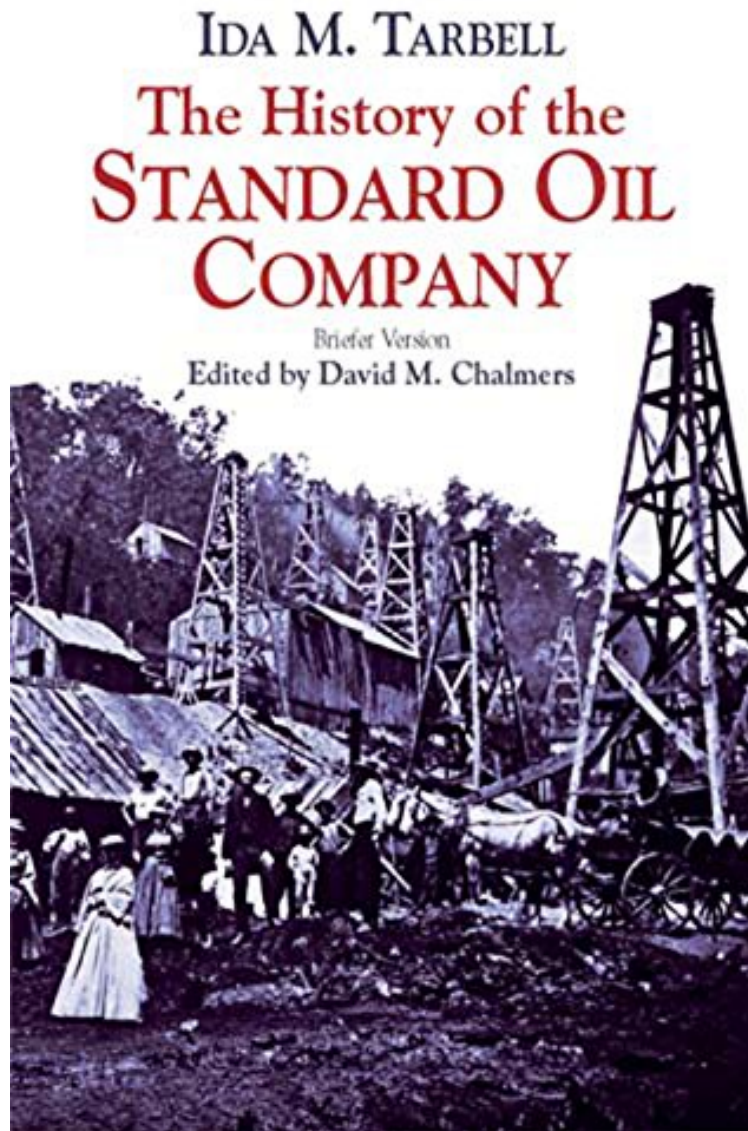


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The History of the Standard Oil Company: Briefer Version

Ida M. Tarbell

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Investigative journalism in the early 1900sBy Karl G. CoumouThis is an abbreviated version of Tarbell's original History of the Standard Oil Company, written in 1903 and later edited by David Chambers in 1968. While thoroughly researched, the book is so full of tedious details and repetitions that it is difficult to keep track of who did what to whom. The overall messages are: (1) the Standard organization was set up to

create a monopoly by illegal means, (2) at the turn of the century corruption was widespread in the US at many levels of business, in the Congress and in the judiciary, (3) the Standard Oil organization under the leadership of John D. Rockefeller became the most successful and efficient corporation in the world. Since the Standard Oil Trust had already been broken up before the writing of the book it would have been useful if Mr. Chambers, in his introduction, had informed the reader what happened to the Standard Oil Company after Tarbell published her account. What was the result of her detailed investigation? 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The absolute evil that capitalism can be is spelled out ...By Carol Elkins The absolute evil that capitalism can be is spelled out with care. There is no honor among thieves, and that includes John D. Rockefeller.. They weren't called "robber barons" for nothing. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Proofreaders Need Not Apply By Leo F. Nolan II This Kindle book is difficult to read because (or 's contractor) did not bother to have a human proofread the text after it was scanned by a computer. Characters are changed from one letter (or number) to another; punctuation and capitalization appear in odd places; footnotes appear in the middle of the page (usually a page to two after the referenced text). I saw similar problems with a printed book that had lost its copyright protection. I will finish reading this Kindle book because the topic is interesting, but I have started reading a newer Kindle book in the meantime. My rating is for the described problems, not the book itself.

Muckrakers — a term coined in 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt — referred to American journalists, novelists and critics who, in the early 20th century, attempted to expose corruption in politics and the abuses of big business. One publication spearheading these exposures was McClure's Magazine, and Ida Tarbell was the writer whose dramatic revelations eventually lead to effective regulation of the Standard Oil Company. Her story, serialized by McClure's in 1902 and 1903, tells the history of John D. Rockefeller's company. The first major industrial monopoly in the U.S., Standard Oil, in 1901, was the largest corporation in the country, and at its peak, controlled as much as eighty-five percent of oil refining in America. But with all his wealth and power, Rockefeller could not protect himself from Tarbell. Her story of the company, which became a model for militant journalists in the future, managed to place the blame for increasingly commercialized American ideals and practical behavior at Rockefeller's doorstep. Combining descriptions of his business practices with his personal characteristics and even his physical appearance, Tarbell created an image of a cunning and ruthless person — a picture that not even decades of Rockefeller philanthropy were able to dispel. This edition (the "briefer version" of her book; the original was more than 800 pages.) makes a great muckraking classic much more accessible to readers. As such, it will be invaluable to students and teachers of American economic history and a fascinating read for anyone interested in the muckraking era and the days of unregulated big business.

"Muckrakers" was the name that Theodore Roosevelt gave journalists of the early part of the 20th century who exposed abuses in American business and government. Ida Tarbell, one of the original muckrakers, was able to help shut down the Standard Oil Company monopoly that had hampered her father's efforts in the oil industry in Pennsylvania. Standard Oil founder John D. Rockefeller, irked by her stinging exposure, dubbed her "Miss Tarbarrel." The History of the Standard Oil Company is listed number five among the top 100 works of twentieth-century American journalism by the New York Times in 1999. About the Author Ida M. Tarbell is remembered for her muckraking journalism and her expose of the Standard Oil Company. Kenneth J. Winkle is an associate professor of history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and author of "The Politics of Community: Migration and Politics in Antebellum Ohio."