



**John E. Mabee**  
**1879 - 1961**  
**Inducted 1989**

John Mabee was born in Missouri and grew up on his family's farm. At 15 he ran away from home and wandered the northwest U.S. for five years, learning about ranching and mining before returning to Missouri. He then married and moved to southwestern Oklahoma to homestead there, ultimately establishing the town of Randlett, Oklahoma. At that point he became an oil lease trader. Mabee received a patent on his land and later leased it to Carter Oil Co. for drilling. He also went to work for the firm, buying up leases around Randlett. In 1919, Mabee made his first venture in the drilling business when he leased 20 acres near Breckenridge, Texas. He drilled two wells and both were gushers. From that initial success he went on to be one of the largest independent drilling contractors in the world, drilling more than 200 wells in Oklahoma City alone. His nephew, Guy Mabee, and great-nephew, Joe Mabee, would follow in his oil industry footsteps.

