



J. Hugh Liedtke
1922 - 2003
Inducted 1995

Brothers Bill and Hugh Liedtke were born in Tulsa, Oklahoma in the early 1920s. They both served in the military during World War II, graduated from the University of Texas Law School and, in 1949, moved to Midland, Texas to open law firm Liedtke & Liedtke. As attorneys they formed oil and gas partnerships and invested in oil well royalties, buying whole groups of producing properties for Tulsa investors. In March 1953, the brothers merged their firm with George H. W. Bush and John K. Overby, who had formed the Bush-Overby Oil Development Company. The new company, Zapata Petroleum—named for the Mexican rebel Emiliano Zapata—spent \$850,000 of a \$1 million investment in Coke County and drilled 137 wells. The result? Not a single dry hole! Expansion continued and Zapata separated its onshore and offshore operations, with the Liedtke brothers retaining the onshore work. The 1960 merger of West Texas Zapata Petroleum with South Penn Oil Company and Stetco Petroleum gave birth to Pennzoil. The Liedtkes moved to Houston and, in 1968, a final merger between Pennzoil and United Gas Corporation completed the Pennzoil Company. Bill Liedtke served as president; Hugh was chairman and CEO Hugh Liedtke was a leading member of a generation of Texas oilmen who turned their earnings from wildcat wells into large public companies.

