

## A Noble History

History is filled with stories of men and women who have advanced this nation through their remarkable vision, their desire to advance society and their unyielding generosity. Lloyd Noble was such a man.

As a young man in the early 1900s, Noble witnessed the value of agricultural production to Oklahoma and its people. However, he also saw the dramatic effects of poor farming practices on the land's fertility and the state's economy. As was often the case, farmers frustrated by their inability to make a living simply abandoned depleted croplands and moved to other areas of the country.

With the help of his mother, who co-signed a \$15,000 loan, the 24-year-old purchased his first drilling rig in 1921. He quickly became one of the most successful and respected onshore drilling contractors in the United States. His reputation was defined by his principles and his appreciation of technology that allowed him to drill faster and deeper than his contemporaries.

Noble used aviation to move between his headquarters in southern Oklahoma and his various drilling sites that were scattered from Canada to the Gulf Coast. From his vantage point above the rolling prairie, he confirmed the consequences of poor farming from another perspective.

Years of man's failure to return anything to the soil had resulted in barren, nonproductive land that was susceptible to erosion and incapable of supporting a viable economy. Noble saw the land as essential to the future successes of



Oklahoma and the nation. He understood that the land would continue to be needed long after oil and gas were gone.

Noble established The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation to address this challenge.

The Noble Foundation's early efforts focused on educating and encouraging area farmers and ranchers to practice land stewardship and resource conservation. Today, the Noble Foundation has grown to include three operating divisions – Agricultural, Plant Biology and Forage Improvement – which work together in a coordinated manner to move science from the laboratory to the field in an effort to enhance production agriculture and plant improvement, while remaining true to Noble's vision of assisting farmers and ranchers.

Lloyd Noble died unexpectedly of a heart attack at age 53 on Valentine's Day 1950. While the loss of Lloyd Noble left a great void, the stewards of the Noble Foundation – largely comprised of his descendants – have continued his legacy of generosity. The work has changed through the decades, but the mission remains the same – to benefit mankind.