“*McClure’s Magazine*: Vol.20.November- April 1902” (The first issue to feature Tarbell’s “History of Standard Oil”)

Although *McClure’s Magazine* was established in 1893, by 1900 it had not achieved any kind of popularity with or recognition by the American public. It wouldn’t be until 1902, when they first began publication of Ida Tarbell’s “History of Standard Oil” that *McClure’s Magazine* began to build a reputation for investigative journalism. Prior to 1902, *McClure’s* had focused on the various fiction works and short stories from authors like Mark Twain or Rudyard Kipling. They would also publish pieces pertaining to the current scientific or political issues of the day.

The immense popularity of Tarbell’s nineteen piece series “History of Standard Oil, published monthly in *McClure’s Magazine*, caused Samuel McClure and John Phillips to hire even more writers from all over the country to submit investigative pieces similar to that one. By the end of 1902, “the magazine began to specialize in what had become known as muckraking journalism,” and as a result was extremely popular. The low price of the magazine also contributed to its later success.

Investigative journalism had existed prior to the popularity of *McClure’s Magazine*, but had remained mostly underground before this point. *McClure’*s simply offered a vehicle to bring the issues of muckrakers to mainstream America, giving the public a firsthand glimpse in to the economic and political issues of the day. Ida Tarbell’s “History of Standard Oil” gave a first person account of what it was like to have your family and your livelihood threatened and destroyed by the Big Businesses of America.