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Thumb-nail Sketches of Birmingham Business Leaders

Faith in Birmingham and its future, coupled with an abundance of native courage and energy, are among the most powerful motivating forces in the life of one who, even in depression times, is preparing for expansion.



Arnold Photo. Mr. Bissett

He is Harry E. Bissett, proprietor of a store at 159 West Maple avenue for the sale of electric refrigerators, electric stoves and oil burners. Until July 1, the store was a branch of the Kelvinator Sales Corporation, but is now operated independently by Mr. Bissett. Already he is laying plans for expanding his stock to include a greater variety of household specialties.

Mr. Bissett's courage and enthusiasm have generated naturally from a life of broad experience. Tool-maker in Cleveland, salesman in Detroit, lance pavilion manager and promoter of horse matches in Fremont, O., sugar cane planter in the Everglades—these are some of the occupations Mr. Bissett has followed in former years.

Recently Mr. Bissett's associates honored him by electing him president of the Birmingham Rotary Club. It was an honor well bestowed and justly deserved, for since 1921 Mr. Bissett has been a member of three Rotary Clubs—in Detroit, Fremont and Birmingham—and in those 11 years has never missed a meeting!

Besides Rotary, Mr. Bissett has two other hobbies—golf and bridge. "Providing," he says, "you can be said to have a hobby even though you're not very good at it."

Eight years ago next Thanksgiving Day a stocky, black-haired young player one of the guard positions on the Royal Oak High School football team when it was defeated by the Baldwin High eleven, 6 to 0, on the field of play.



Arnold Photo. Mr. Brazier

That is William I. Brazier, proprietor of the Great Market which bears his name, located in the East End. He is a native of Royal Oak in 1924 and 1925, and was selected for the U.S. E. A. eleven the first year.

Two years with the Universal Cooler Company in Detroit, and five years in the meat market business in Royal Oak, have convinced him that the business advantage for young men in this country are much more numerous and promising than in England, his native land.

Although he has been in Birmingham only three weeks and is one of the village's youngest business men—he is only 22—Mr. Brazier is already optimistic about his prospects. That's his nature.

S. K. Bird, proprietor for the past seven years of an electrical service which bears his name at 240 Park street, has the distinction of being Birmingham's—and perhaps the world's—only business man who owes his success to the fact that a silo fell on him when he was a youth.



Arnold Photo. Mr. Bird

As Mr. Bird himself explains it, he had undergone three major operations when he was 17 years old, the effects of which had left him as stiff and crippled as an octogenarian.

Some time later he was helping his father and a gang of men take down a silo on a farm near Birmingham. Clinging to the structure near its base, he saw it starting to fall, jumped to the ground, and hurried out of the way as fast as his crippled body would carry him.

Mechanically minded since boyhood, Mr. Bird has spent nearly his entire lifetime with machinery. During the war he was a steam engineer at the Marine Officers' Training Camp, Parris Island, S. C., pumping all the water that was used at the camp.

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