

# Admiral's admirable

# admiral

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Stuart Dunbar Brownlee is a fifth generation Canadian from the Ottawa Valley, but he has not lived there for a long, long time and he qualifies as a new Mississaugan by adoption. After all, a man who provides employment for a good percentage of Mississauga's workers should be entitled at least to honorary citizenship.



STUART BROWNLEE

Stuart Brownlee is president of Canadian Admiral, a job he has held since February 1956 when his predecessor, Vincent Barreca, returned to the United States to become president of the parent company. It was a comparatively small operation when Stu Brownlee took over; today it is a giant with over 1200 employees and doing approximately \$50 million worth of business a year.

But this isn't the story of Canadian Admiral; it's the story of Stuart Dunbar Brownlee.

A writer doing this sort of job — unless he happens to be malicious and something of a heel — is usually able to choose a likeable person to be the central character of his story. It isn't always possible. Writers are not psychic and if the stories are far-ranging there is always a possibility of drawing an s.o.b. out of the hat. It doesn't often happen, though.

Driving away from the Canadian Admiral plant after interviewing Mr. Brownlee to glean material for this piece I was thinking how fortunate I was in meeting just the nicest people — Old Henry, up in Clarkson; Ken Rowe, the industrial commissioner; Eleanor Blake, the FR gal — a host of them. And now Stu Brownlee.

As always when I have interviewed somebody with whom I seem to have been in rapport, I was telling myself I would have to make the article good — real good.

"You gotta tell the story so people will get a lift

out of it the same way you did when talking to him," I exhorted myself.

It's a fact — I did get a lift. And yet it was from nothing he said that was particularly inspiring. It puzzled me thinking about it, then at last the explanation came. I'll tell you what it was.

Stuart Brownlee has been successful — I guess you could say immensely successful — but you know from his manner that he has taken success in his stride. I am quite sure he didn't reduce himself to a nervous wreck courting it, but I am equally sure that gaining it was for him a day-to-day job — doing what the day demanded, and doing it well.

Thinking along these lines I saw success in true perspective. It is not a matter of accumulating a big bank account, nor can it be measured by material achievements. True success is a matter of measuring up to life's demands and the real re-

ward for those who achieve it is an inner satisfaction.

Stu Brownlee has it and it gave me a lift to realize, as he talked, that the road is open to all.

Young Brownlee first attended school in Ottawa Valley, then after his family moved to Toronto he became a student at Malvern Collegiate. Later he took engineering at the University of Toronto and graduated a B. Sc. in 1934. Soon after graduation he joined the engineering department of General Electric.

After a few years years with G.E. he turned his mind to the improvement of products and he invented a couple of things in the small appliance field which were patentable. I don't know how the pa-

## by Arthur Lowe

tents worked out, but securing them worked a curious change in his life. It got him interested in patent law with all its ramifications. His interest resulted in a transfer from the engineering division to the legal department and in due time, after taking the necessary exams, he became a registered patent attorney.

"Surely you didn't give up inventing things?" I said, making it a question.

"Well — no . . ." He smiled, recollecting something. "One of the things I invented was a coffee table with re-

tractable wheels that could be turned into a bar."

It sounded like a mighty good idea.

Our subject remained with General Electric for 11 years, eight of them in the patent department. He left them in 1945 to accept two jobs which he handled simultaneously — president of Canadian Patents Ltd., and secretary of the Electronic Industries Trade Association. The first firm handled the leasing of patents. Mr. Brownlee told me in some detail how it operated, but I wasn't smart enough to catch on, except in a general way. He told, me too, what the trade association did. and

that was easy — it did practically everything.

Mr. Brownlee told me something about his company which I found very pleasing.

"We are completely staffed with Canadians," he said, "right the way through the company, but even more significant is the fact that our men are in great demand for executive positions with the parent company. One of the reasons is that a man gets a more diversified experience with us. For example the sales manager of Admiral International was drawn from Canadian Admiral . . ."

I'm lucky. Always meeting nice guys.