

# Barron G. Collier

BY B. L. HAMNER

TENS of thousands grind out their grist of human grief, in a never changing, never widening, soul stunting narrowness of mental vision. It is a joy to know one not shackled by cotton bands of fear or doubt . . . one whom the gossamer threads of tradition do not bind . . . a man who gives free rein to imagination and dares and does . . . the subject of this little sketch.

He is a national character, but it is not for that reason that I would have you know him. He is one of us . . . his interests are largely tied to Florida . . . to the West Coast . . . to Tampa.

The East Coast had its Flagler, the West Coast its Plant . . . these men have passed on . . . but, we have the living Barron Collier. I want you to meet . . . to know . . . and to appreciate him.

It is not amiss to often remind you of our physical advantages, our growth, development, possibilities . . . but if we have human values that transcend in power for good . . . that can almost grasp the hand of destiny . . . and write chapters in our current history . . . then the least that we can do is be appreciative, express that fine sentiment born of the heart, and give encouragement.

This is to be neither fiction nor romance . . . just a few facts about a very real man, one who without a great measure of acknowledgement from you and me, has done much . . . one capable and I am sure, inclined to do more. Perhaps together we can supply encouragement and incentive.

"In each age three or four men of genius undertake the ascent. From below the world follows them with their eyes. These men go up the mountain, enter the clouds, disappear, reappear. People watch them, mark them. They walk by the side of precipices. A false step does not displease certain of the lookers-on. They daringly pursue their road. See them aloft, see them in the distance; they are but black specks. 'How small they are' says the crowd. They are giants. On they go. The road is uneven, its difficulties constant. At each step a wall, at each step a trap. As they rise the cold increases. They must make their ladder, cut the ice and walk on it, hewing the steps in haste. Every storm is raging. Nevertheless they go forward in

their madness. The air becomes difficult to breathe. The abyss increases around them. Some fall. Others stop and retrace their steps; there is a sad weariness.

"The bold ones continue; those predestined persist. The dreadful declivity sinks beneath and tries to draw them in; glory is treacherous. They are eyed by eagles; the lightning plays about them; the hurricane is furious. No matter, they persevere."

Thus Victor Hugo wrote in general terms that which epitomizes the career of Barron Collier . . . our Barron Collier.

The date and place of birth of a man are not of interest to me. Those things are not of his choice. What he has done himself . . . and what is his philosophy of life . . . his goals . . . his ideal . . . and how has he performed. These things are the worth-while.

As a young man, when others were peddling pants and shirts and things people bought of necessity . . . Barron Collier was selling vision . . . the future . . . the things that play upon the imagination and makes men do and buy . . . advertising.

So well did he do the job, that he created one of the outstanding advertising organizations of the land . . . and came to control practically all street car, bus, elevated and subway advertising throughout this country.

Thus he came to meet . . . to know . . . most of America's executives . . . to know their likes . . . dislikes . . . their visions . . . their reactions . . . and to understand the workings of the human mind in general . . . the appeals . . . the incentives . . . the motivating influences . . . the motives for human action.

He gave of his experience, to help others grow, to prosper and succeed. Naturally, as he gave, so it came back to him by natural law, and he prospered . . . very much in fact.

His business is in every state in the Union and of course he knows this country as few men are given to know it. Back and forth, up and down it, he has been, times without number.

At heart he is an artist . . . has an eye for the

beautiful as well as the practical . . . a highly developed aesthetic taste, and this has been trained by travel throughout the globe. The accessible foreign lands of this world he has visited.

In the course of events he came to Florida. He fell in love with it . . . and he wanted to share it with his friends. All the world to choose from . . . and he selected Florida.

Probably, that he might share it with many, he established the Useppa Inn, on Useppa Island, at the entrance to the Ten Thousand Islands of Florida . . . where there is scenery so gorgeous, that the Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence are as sand dunes on a wind-swept shore in comparison. He came—he brought many . . . his vision of Florida, as it must, eventually be, grew and expanded, and he began to plan . . . and planning was followed by action.

What would you do . . . had you millions to do with . . . and had a consuming love for Florida?

We need not go into the details of his plans . . . a look at what he has done will reveal that his vision was far and beyond what you and I could conceive . . . and the daring . . . the courage . . . the risks . . . the perseverance . . . the exercise of the positive qualities of man he has displayed, will give you the picture of a man . . . and there is no greater tribute.

To carry out whatever plan was in his mind he began the acquisition of Florida properties. Today, he owns more than a million acres of land in Florida, in Collier, Henry and Charlotte counties. The Wood-Everglades Company which he owns, probably represents the largest holdings of cypress left in the world.

His holdings are not all in undeveloped lands. He owns the Useppa Island Inn, mentioned above. The Everglades Rod and Gun Club, at Everglades City, a veritable Sportsman's paradise; The Gasparilla Inn at Boca Ceiga; Hotel Dixie Court, West Palm Beach; The Royal Worth Hotel at West Palm Beach; Hotel Lakeland Terrace, Lakeland; Hotel Sarasota Terrace, Sarasota; Hotel Charlotte Harbor, Punta Gorda; and right here in Tampa the Floridan and Tampa Terrace Hotels.

Nor are his interests confined to hotels. He

owns the Inter-County Telephone System in Southwest Florida; the truck and bus transportation company known as Tamiami Trail Tours; and an interest in banks at Boca Grande, Ft. Meyers, Punta Gorda and Everglades City.

These interests, one can easily understand run into millions, and of course, in acquiring them, when he did, he went into debt to the tune of millions.

To those familiar with the recent history of Florida, we hardly need recall that Florida went into a tail-spin in '27 . . . the whole nation and the whole world followed in '29 . . . and the great depression was on in all its fury. Picture, if you can, this lone individual carrying unproductive lands; hotels losing money every minute; interest

piling up with every tick of the watch; debts by the millions — and no market for anything.

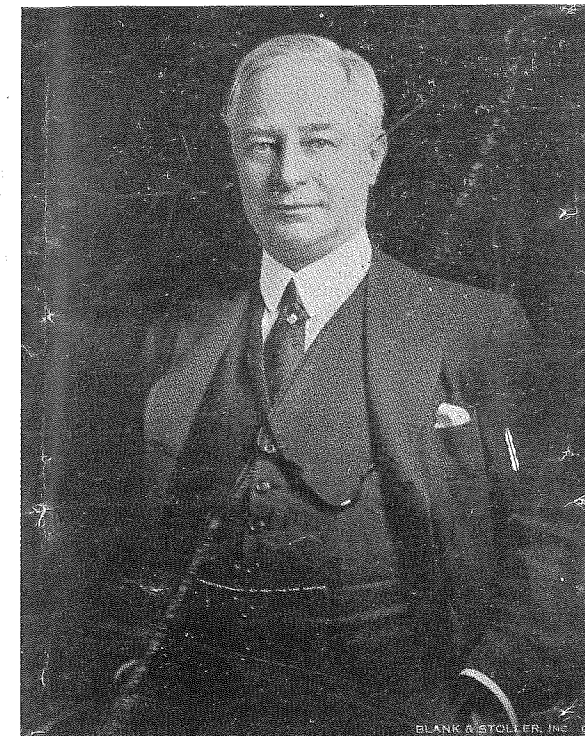
On all sides timid souls driven insane from losses; suicides from the dread of losses; and the whole world a-tremble from severe economic earthquakes.

Fortunately, the Federal Government had provided a form of bankruptcy which gave extension upon obligations to make unnecessary a form of bankruptcy that took all a man had and cancelled his obligations. Collier chose not cancellation or repudiation . . . but the form that gave him an extension. His hotels were placed in receivership.

Burdens that to little men would have been crushing, came singly and in droves . . . add to that the difficulties that must have been ever present in his great advertising organization, and you have the picture Victor Hugo painted and which we have quoted.

Like the Rock of Gibraltar, this giant fought the good fight, and during the whole battle, never released or sold one part of his Florida holdings! His vision never dimmed; he manned his enterprises with sailors tried and true, and with faith in the Captain unlimited. He gave them authority . . . freedom of action . . . and a straight course to steer . . . compasses . . . charts . . . sextants . . . and the Port of Success as destination.

Finally, the storm subsided; receivership dissolved.  
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# N. A. A. Convention to be Held in Tampa Nov. 27-29

**T**HE Southeastern & State National Aeronautic Association Convention will be held in Tampa next month, November 27, 28 and 29th. One of the highlights during the convention will be the dedication of the Peter O. Knight combination land and sea-plane base on Davis Island together with the dedication of the Tony Janus Memorial Administration Building.

The committee in charge of the convention and dedication ceremonies are as follows:

**GENERAL COMMITTEE:** Mayor R. E. L. Chancey, chairman; R. E. Burritt, Vice Chairman.

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS COMMITTEE:** F. J. Gannon, Chairman; Mayor R. E. L. Chancey, Honorary Chairman.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Ray B. Cralle, Co-Chairman; G. D. Curtis, Co-Chairman; E. P. Taliaferro; F. M. Traynor; George B. Howell; M. Leo Elliott; J. A. Waterman; Carl D. Brorein; J. W. Gray; W. L. Van Dyke; Al. Phillips; Leslie H. Blank; R. G. Jones; A. R. Hathaway; Ben Davis; A. L. Cuesta; H. H. Gifford; Otto Pelham; H. C. Culbreath.

**TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE:** L. B. Giles, Chairman; A. R. Christy; W. L. Blocks; Troy Brown; C. C. Watson; W. H. Frankland.

**TONY JANUS MEMORIAL COMMITTEE:** Hon. J. E. Wall, Chairman; M. Leo Elliott; Kelly D. Jones; E. P. McGeachy.

**INVITATION COMMITTEE:** M. Leo Elliott, Chairman; F. M. Traynor; A. K. Dickinson; J. A. Waterman; L. G. Moore; Rex Farrior.

**HOTEL COMMITTEE:** J. W. Gray, Chairman; B. C. Skinner; Nash Higgins; E. N. Crowder; George Mason; J. M. Pickard; Wm. Neilly.

**AIR MANEUVERS COMMITTEE:** Loper Lowry, Chairman; Fred Williams; Harold Anderson; James Warren.

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (TAMPA CHAPTER N.A.A.):** J. M. Bregar, Chairman; O. R.

Bussler; Kelly D. Jones; Frank R. Crom; Margaret Ware; P. M. Miller; Dr. A. R. Beyer; R. E. Burritt; Allen C. McKay; Walter Criddlebaugh; E. B. Powers; C. C. Cone; James F. Earley.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE:** R. E. Burritt, Chairman; Spencer Mitchell; Melvin Myer; Trenton C. Collins; Russell Kay; Carey Wilmer; Hampton Dunn; Al P. Burgert; R. E. McCarthy; F. Ralph Gervers.

**AIRPORT COMMITTEE (Parking, etc.):** E. P. McGeachy, Chairman; Clyde Hall; B. L. Nayler; R. H. Cason; H. D. Denege; Jerry McLeod; Chief C. J. Woodruff.

**N.A.A. SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE:** J. A. Waterman, Chairman; H. C. Whitney; Albert D'Arpa; C. C. Vega; Emilio Pons; C. W. Bray.

**STATE CONVENTION COMMITTEE:** H. C. Whitney, Chairman; Pete Sones; Guy Ball; J. R. Puckett; E. Nilson; Dick Bentley; Ike Vermilya; Richard Lindsey; Sam Magill; Carl Stengel; P. J. Pinaire; C. R. Coachman.

**DEDICATION & PROGRAM COMMITTEE:** Sidney C. Brown, Chairman. (The personnel of this committee will be appointed later.

The convention and the opening of the Administration Building marks another step forward in Tampa's continued march of progress since the days of the first scheduled air flight between Tampa and St. Petersburg, the result of which made Tampa known to the world as the cradle of commercial aviation.

## EXCHANGE CLUBS PROGRAM

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Club of Tampa, Toastmaster; Harold M. Harter, National Secretary, Toledo, Ohio, Master of Ceremonies; Charles A. Berkey, Founder of Exchange, Guest of Honor. Special Entertainment and Musical varieties by Ingley Trio. Address by Charles A. Berkey, Founder of Exchange and first National President, Detroit, Michigan.

Loyalty Ball (immediately following the banquet). Palma Ceia Golf Club, Ball Room and Palm

Patio. Elaborate program of novelties and entertainment. Manuel Sarchez and his orchestra will play in the Clubhouse. La Tropical Rhumba Band in the Palm Patio. Floor Show featuring Juan Martinez and his Senoritas; Callie Mae Penn and The Pividal Sisters. Program presented by Junior Exchange Club of Tampa.

## Wednesday, October 20

8 to 10 A. M. — All States Breakfast Conference, Roof Garden, The Hillsboro Hotel.

10 A. M. — Opening of Third Convention Session.

12:45 — Final Adjournment.

10 to 1 P. M. — Special Entertainment for Ladies. Program to be announced.

1 P. M. — Hasta La Vista Luncheon, Roof Garden, The Hillsboro Hotel. Introduction of National Officers and other members of National Board of Control. Special entertainment and music under auspices of the Florida Fair and Gasparilla Association.

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solved; and into a smooth sea he brings his enterprises . . . his vision still intact.

I know the holdings of Barron Collier. The Gulf Refining Company has contracted to spend \$192,000.00 in search of oil in the Everglades section. It is not at all improbable that Collier may, from his Florida holdings, become the world's richest man.

For years past he has individually supplied car advertising of Tampa and Florida and other worthwhile publicity, without limit without pay or compensation, when most others were lying down on the job.

Isn't he a human value we can claim our own? Do we do enough in the way of developing our human resources?

Collier knows that there are only five motives in the world that make men buy or do anything . . . that three of these are pleasure, pride and profit.

I hope that this well deserved little tribute adds to his pleasure . . . that the public generally may come to appreciate what he means to the West Coast of Florida, and thus justify his pride, and that we may all do our parts as he has done and is doing his to hasten the day of the world's recognition of the glories and possibilities of Florida.