

EDMUND B. THORNTON

In examining the life records of self-made men, it will invariably be found that indefatigable industry has constituted the basis of their success. True, there are other elements which enter in and conserve the advancement of personal interests—perseverance, discrimination and mastering of expedients—but the foundation of all achievement is earnest, persistent labor. At the outset of his career Mr., Thornton recognized this fact, and he did not seek any royal road to the goal of prosperity and independence, but began to work earnestly and diligently in order to advance himself, and the result is that he is now numbered among the progressive, successful and influential business men of Lawrence county.

Edmund B. Thornton was born in the city of Bedford, Indiana, on January 1, 1856, and is the son of George A. and Mary (Braxton) Thornton, the father born near New Albany, Indiana, and the mother at Paoli, this state. George A. Thornton was a successful man and was cashier of the Bedford State Bank at the time of his death, which occurred in 1864, at the comparatively early age of forty-three years. He was educated with the intention of following the legal profession, but never practiced much along that line. He was elected to the office of county clerk, but resigned the position to accept that of cashier in the bank. He was for many years an elder in the Presbyterian church at Bedford, having come to this city in young manhood. He was survived many years by his widow, who died in 1894. They were the parents of eight children, of whom six are living, namely: Thomas V., Henry C. and Joseph F., of Indianapolis; Mrs. R. P. Shaw, of Tacoma, Washington; Mrs. A. H. Davis, of Washington, D. C., and the subject of this sketch.

Edmund B. Thornton received his education in the public schools, being a graduate of the Bedford high school, and in the normal school at Medina, Ohio. In the meantime, while pursuing his education, he had engaged in the grocery business in Bedford, but immediately after returning from the normal school he was elected county superintendent of schools of Lawrence county, and was re-elected, thus serving two terms, or eight years. He was eminently successful in this profession and could have had the best educational employment in the county had he been elected to continue in that line. However, he desired a broader field for the exercise of his efforts and engaged in the lumber business for four years, being located at Enterprise and Ford, Kentucky. About 1885 he returned to Bedford and accepted the position of superintendent of the new Hoosier stone quarry, and in the following year he was made general superintendent of all the Hoosier Stone Company's quarries, in which he proved the right man for the place. In 1888 Mr. Thornton organized the Bedford Steam Stone Works, of which he is president and which has been one of the most prosperous and successful of the stone companies organized here. In 1900 Mr. Thornton organized the Ottawa Silica Company, of Ottawa, Illinois, a hundred-thousand-dollar corporation, of which he has been president ever since its inception. This company is engaged in the mining and shipping of glass sand, ground silica and testing sand for cement tests. The latter product is of exceptionally fine quality and has been adopted as a standard by the Society of American Engineers. Mr. Thornton is also the largest stockholder and president of the Imperial Stone Company, of Bedford, director and vice-president of the Citizens National Bank, a director of the Citizens Trust Company, and director and secretary of the Central Veneer

Company, of Indianapolis. To write in full detail the account of all the interesting happenings in Mr. Thornton's life would require a much more elaborate article than the nature of this work admits or requires, but sufficient has been said to form a conception of the man and his career, a career characterized by work well done, keenness of perception, tireless energy, honesty of purpose and motive and every-day common sense. He has been successful in business, respected in social life, and as a neighbor has discharged his duties in a manner becoming a liberal minded, intelligent citizen of a community where the essential qualities of manhood have ever been duly recognized and prized at their full value.

In 1878 Mr. Thornton was married to Mary Louise Canton of Bedford, the daughter of James C. and Caroline (Mitchell) Canton. They are the parents of five children, namely: Carrie, deceased; Mary Louise; James C., who is engaged in business in New York city; Eddie Elizabeth, and George A. Politically, Mr. Thornton is a Republican but his business affairs have demanded his time to such an extent that he has not participated greatly in public affairs. Religiously, he is a member of the Presbyterian church, of which he is an elder. Personally, he is genial and approachable and enjoys the friendship of all who know him.

(History of Lawrence and Monroe Counties Indiana , 1914 B. F. Bowen & Co. Inc. Indianapolis, Indiana pgs 502-504)