

Hall of Fame Spotlights Businessmen

MOST Americans are aware of "Halls of Fame" for political figures, war heroes, sports stars and cowboys.

Not so well-known, perhaps, is the relatively new Hall of Fame for Business Leadership conducted by Fortune magazine. Biographies of eight new honorees published in the Jan. 30 issue should be encouraging to determined young people who may be starting their business lives, even if they have handicaps.

Arthur Vining Davis (1867-1962) was just 5 feet 2 inches tall. He took a job at \$60 a month in a struggling aluminum plant. He became head of Aluminum Company of America, creating a great industry from a plentiful but previously little used element.

Francis Cabot Lowell (1775-1817) was a mathematics wizard but he had poor health. While recuperating, he visited textile mills and devised machines to replace hand weavers. He is regarded as the founder of the U.S. textile industry.

Henry John Heinz (1844-1919), whose "57 varieties" became a household expression, got his start

peddling horseradish. He and a partner expanded into pickle making but they went broke when a bumper crop of cucumbers came in and sales dried up.

Heinz paid off what he called his "moral obligations" and rebuilt his business into an international success.

Frederick Weyerhaeuser (1834-1914) got his start when an Illinois sawmill he was working for failed. He and a brother-in-law bought it. He became an expert at estimating timber values and bought large tracts of timber that multiplied in value.

Donald Wills Douglas (born 1892) quit the U.S. Naval Academy because he thought instructors were being obtuse about what airplanes could do. In 1920, he went into the aviation business with \$600 he had saved. Douglas planes now circle the globe.

Harry Blair Cunningham (born 1907) worked as much as 90 hours a week as stock boy for S.S. Kresge Co. He earned promotions, but the company stagnated. Cunningham studied stores and markets.

After he was elected president, the first K-Mart discount store was opened to revitalize the company. There now are 1,367 K-Marts. In 1977, they made \$300 million on \$9 billion in sales.

Conrad Nicholson Hilton (born 1887) was son of Norwegian immigrants who lived in a tiny New Mexico town that didn't have a hotel. In 1919, he bought a seedy hotel in Cisco, Texas. It was the cornerstone of the present Hilton chain. Hilton believes he weathered hard times of the Depression by determination and prayer.

Joseph Irwin Miller (born 1909) was not a poor boy but he was shy and had a stammer. When he went to work for Cummins Engine Co., it was broke. He became manager and made it succeed.

How about a Hall of Fame for the great businessmen who have contributed so greatly to Oklahoma's success in business and industry? The day of opportunity is not past and their examples could prove an inspiration to future business leaders.