

Freeland Huston

Hersey Native Travels Through World In Search Of Industrial Gems

By MRS. JUANITA FINCH

PATTEN, Sept. 28—Few people in this section of Maine are aware that one of their own sons is responsible for the fact that Boston is the leading city of the United States in the industrial diamond business. Yet this is a fact, and though he would undoubtedly be the first to deny it, the life of Freeland L. Huston would make as interesting reading for the boys of today as a Horatio Alger story made for those boys of an earlier generation.

ONE OF FIRST SETTLERS

His grandfather, Samuel Huston, came from Plymouth in 1839, and was one of the first settlers in the little town of Hersey, then known only as No. 5, and his father, Samuel Huston, Jr., was born on the farm called the old Huston place, now owned and occupied by George Morse. It was here that Freeland was born and spent his childhood days. They were like those of all boys of two generations ago, plenty of work mixed with a little play. He probably found time after the farm chores were done to go fishing and swimming in the brook that still bears the family name, "Huston brook." In winter he slid on the hill named for the neighbors across the road, "Morse pitch."

The greater part of his formal education was obtained at the country schoolhouse in the Davis district a mile away. The family moved to Boston when Freeland was a boy in his early teens, and in 1892, at the age of 15, he entered a little shop on Washington street as an apprentice in gem diamond cutting.

At that time Boston was known

cleaving and polishing, is perhaps as important as any item on the list. But no one should gain an impression that industrial diamonds are not important.

They have grown so important in the economy of the nation that the government has stockpiled them beside the gold reserve in the vast underground vaults at Fort Knox, Ky. The firm of which Mr. Huston is the head bears the name Arthur A. Crafts, Inc. Mr. Crafts was a hotel man known throughout the United States who backed Mr. Huston financially when he first started in business for himself. Mr. Crafts died several years ago but the firm still bears his name. In addition to the Boston factory there are others at Detroit and Chicago.

TWO-MILLIONTHS OF AN INCH

Much of the machinery used to make the precision tools has been turned out by this company, and it is so precise that diamonds can be polished to two-millionths of an inch. The electrical industry utilizes many of their products to great advantage. When one stops to realize that the diamond is the hardest known substance in the world, one can readily understand its commercial value. Porcelain,

as the diamond center of the United States, but New York City now leads in the gem diamond business.

Since that day Freeland Huston has traveled hundreds of thousands of miles to buy diamonds. In fact the mines of Brazil are practically the only ones in the world with which he is not thoroughly familiar. The great mines of South Africa, the international market in Antwerp as it was before the second World War, the offices of the powerful diamond syndicate in London, all these are more familiar to him than the streets of his adopted city would be to us. The industrial diamonds he has bought have gone all over the world and it is doubtful if there are many men alive in any part of the world today who know more about this phase of the diamond business than he. In his long career he has never been fooled in buying diamonds. He has bought many thousands of dollars worth of these precious gems like "a pig in a poke." He explains the situation by saying that the big syndicate in London which controls the free flow of the gems, issues series of diamonds, is considered honest by the trade.

VASTLY DIFFERENT

To the ordinary citizen the word "diamond" immediately brings a picture of a glittering gem, but the industrial diamond, while it has the same basic characteristics, is still vastly different, according to Mr. Huston. Distortions in their structure, the size of the diamond, their color, form and shape largely determine their classification. Share, which will not allow for

marble, glass, plastics, even other jewels such as rubies and sapphires are cut and drilled only with the aid of diamonds. Diamond dust is one of the valuable by-products of the Huston factories, and is used to advantage in machine shops.

Freeland Huston was a frequent visitor in Patten in earlier years. He married Miss Natalie Piper, a sister of his cousin's wife, Mrs. Ferd G. Huston of this town, and until her death a few years ago she was a yearly visitor here. Though Huston was a busy man, he usually found time to join Mrs. Huston here for a short visit. Their one son, Roger, who was graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is now general manager of the Boston plant.

Since Mrs. Huston's death he makes his home in one of Boston's exclusive hotels and spends more time with his business, though he still turns to baseball and photography in colors—his favorite hobbies.

Huston's life proves that there is still opportunity in the world of business for those who are willing to look for it, but even more than that it demonstrates the fact that country life and country lads are still among those factors that make this country the greatest among nations.

Low-Cost House Plans Under Study Of Maine FHA

Federal

Samuel Huston

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Description: Article on Samuel P Huston and SP Huston Jr history of Maine