INTERESTING INDUSTRIES

PEARL AND BUTTON INDUSTRIES IN 40 YEARS OLD NEXT APRIL

First Gem Discovered In Black River In 1897 By Late Dr. J. H. Myers of Black Rock Led To Establishment of New Flourishing Businesses That Give Many Jobs.

The variety of colors of pearls, Dr. Myers observes, is influenced by the elements upon which they are formed. Dark colors predominate in the south, but there is a predominance of white in the northern parts. Reasons for this are many; it may be due to the amount of heat, moisture, time, and the minerals in the sand. 1000 pearls will vary in color, some being yellow, pink, red, and intermediate colors. The demand for pearls increases, and the prices are at some time the price of gold.

Besides the time devoted to the pearl business, Dr. Myers was the first to advise the citizens of the Arkansas to take the pelts of the muskrat. The muskrat is the chief peltry for the winter. The muskrat and beaver are the most important peltries for the market. The muskrat is the most valuable of all the peltries. The muskrat is the only one that is worth much, and the beaver is the second. The muskrat and beaver are the most valuable peltries for the market.

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Pearls are the products of the American pearl oyster, a marine mollusk that lives in the fresh and salt waters of the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. The pearl is formed when the oyster is stimulated by a foreign object, such as a grain of sand, that enters the oyster's shell. The oyster then secretes a layer of nacre, which is the same material that makes up the mother-of-pearl of the shell, around the foreign object. As more layers of nacre are secreted, the pearl grows larger. Pearls are often used as jewelry, and are prized for their beauty and rarity.

The Black River is a tidal river that runs through the state of Arkansas in the United States. It is a meandering river that flows through the Ouachita Mountains, and is most famous for its abundance of muskrat pelts. The muskrat is a small, semiaquatic rodent that lives in the Black River and is an important peltry for the market. The muskrat is the most valuable peltry for the market, and the beaver is the second. The muskrat and beaver are the most valuable peltries for the market.
How Milady Gets Her Buttons

Democrat 6-6-37

Clipping from Kansas City Star August 24, 1932, concerning John L. Evans, Batesville, Arkansas.

entitled: An Arkansas Pearl Buyer Finds Thrills in His Work.

John L. Evans of Batesville has devoted a lifetime to his hobby and keeps between 2,000 and 3,000 precious gems in a bank vault. Old legends, such as the one that valuable pearls are found in eating oysters, are exploded. When a real window display is put on.

"Professionally, John L. Evans is the proprietor of a shoe store here, temperamentally he is a lover of pearls."

"The pearl buyer is required by state law to keep a list of the pearls he buys, together with their weight and price. Besides paying a state occupation tax as a buyer, he also pays taxes to the state and county on each pearl.

"I have between 2,000 and 3,000 pearls in the vault at the bank, purchased over a period of more than 25 years. I can tell you instantly the weight of each pearl, from whom I purchased it, and what I paid for it."

Up top, a mussel digger's shanty on Black River near Corning. Down below is a "prospector" in operation on the same river.

"These are the topsy-turvy days when shifting from oyster to oyster is as good as any, to pick up a few dollars for the freshwater shell which still brings a fair price in the button market.

Anyway, the pearls are free for the taking; it is pleasant and pleasant to paddle around on the deep water where the giant trees cast their shade, and "button, button, whose got the button," milady asks as she buys them by the dozen in all colors, shapes and sizes.

When only the finest white pearls or those of the "mussel" variety would serve. In the oldest days of 50 to 70 years ago, there were too, fine, glass buttons of every shape, often encrusted, gold, beautiful in design, color tone. There were wine reds, mauves, silver and gray, and many others.

The most common being the use of the aforementioned long. These are heavy iron "scrap," often weighing 20 pounds or more, and fastened to long handles 10 or more feet in length. When the shell seeker has located a mussel bed, where the shells are fairly numerous, will lower his boat, and let the long lines down into the water until the bottom is reached. The mussel can be learned only by experience, the shells are filled with the bottom mud, and brought to the top, where the dirt and gravel is removed from the shells. Often many days will be needed to obtain a single shell, and then again, several of the mussel may be taken at one filling of the longs. Hour after hour, the mussel digger pokes his longs, a back-breaking job, until he has worked out a particular spot, or decides he has enough of the mussel in his boat to warrant quitting for the day.

Another method of obtaining the mussel is sometimes used in shallow water, where there is no long required, and feeling about in the mud for the shell, which are thrown out, a pile on the bank or are put in a bucket each hour about the bank. Where the water is exceptionally clear, the mussel can often be found by wading along in water less than a foot deep on some gravel bed, and looking for the "eyes" of the shell fish as they protrude from the sand. This is a very difficult method, as the shells are entirely buried except for a small crack at the end, which remains open for the animal to feed.

In spite of the hardships, there is a fascination to the occupation that works upon the gambling instinct of every human being. For who knows, no matter how fruitful the hunt has been heretofore, but that the next shell opened will contain a pearl of such value that the lucky finder will become rich in a very short space of time.

Mussel diggers have been in the Black River Valley for decades, and the number of mussel diggers in the Black River Valley is at least as great as the number of mussel diggers in the Black River Valley.

Button-making is one of the peculiar industries of the state. At the factory at Black Rock, hundreds of tons of the shells are made into buttons annually, and shipped to big city markets. The buttons are sold at such a high price, the buttons are of such fine quality, it is one of the industries that are the mainstay of the state.