
Allen Percy Green

A.P. Green Fire Brick Company and A.P. Green Industries, Inc.

By M. Karen Hubbard

Allen Percy Green was 35 years old when, in 1910, he moved to Mexico, Missouri, and founded the A. P. Green Fire Brick Company. Under Mr. Green's leadership, the company was incorporated in 1915, and by 1937, his company had become the world's largest fireclay plant. Fireclay is a type of clay that is able to hold up against extreme heat without becoming damaged. This characteristic makes fireclay very useful in melting iron to make steel or melting silica sand to make glass. Green's company would form the fireclay into bricks, and the bricks would be used as a lining in the furnaces used to make steel and glass. As industries revolving around iron, steel, and other similar products grew, so did the need for firebrick. The firebricks were necessary for companies that produced glass, steel, iron, lead, and even electricity.

Green's choice of location turned out to be a very wise decision. The Mexico area provides the largest amount of fire brick and other similar materials in all of Missouri, and the state of Missouri ranks second in the industry among all states in the country. The Mexico area is also considered to be the largest reserve of plastic and semi-plastic clays in the entire world.

The company operated in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and even Indonesia. In 1997, A. P. Green's company reported revenues of about \$280 million. In 1998 though, Global Industrial Technologies bought A. P. Green Industries, Inc. for about \$195 million.

Allen Percy Green and his company did quite well in providing products for other companies that needed those products so that they could make their own. The firebrick from Mexico is even today used in the launch pads for space shuttles at Cape Kennedy. Green shows us that location is extremely important to the entrepreneur. He chose the location with the greatest amount of the materials needed for his business. His experience with location should be a lesson for all entrepreneurs.