

Buried Treasure

by Pinkney Gage



Sugar Bowl With Cat Cover Steal at \$55

A covered sugar bowl, in clear glass, with square handles and a shell design on the side, had just been auctioned off for \$15, and now the auctioneer was holding up another one.

It seemed to me identical with the first. Yet somehow or other, there was a heightened interest among the bidders—particularly among the women. It showed itself with an opening bid of \$15 that was quickly topped by a series of others, boosting the price swiftly to \$35.

The auctioneer paused to survey the crowd.

"Surely there must be more cat enthusiasts here," he said. "Who'll make it forty dollars?"

"What does he mean by that?" I asked the lady next to me, whose \$40 bid was quickly topped by another.

"The cover has a cat on it instead of a dog," she said, indicating a bid of \$55.

She got it at that price. "But what's so extraordinary about a cat being on the cover?" I asked.

"The other one was a dog," she said. "To have a cat on the cover is very rare."

Later she explained to me that back in the 1880s when the design was probably originated, cats were rarely portrayed in comparison with dogs.

"Cats weren't popular then as they are now," she said. "Maybe it was because people were then so much nearer the time when their ancestors believed in witches and regarded cats as their familiars. In any case, I'm very lucky to get it."

The other ladies evidently thought so, too. The one who had got the sugar bowl with the dog on it felt that she had paid a little too much, but she made it plain that she thought the \$55 price was a steal.

EASIER TO FIND U.S. GOLD COINS IN FOREIGN LANDS

A friend of mine, just back from in East Pakistan, asked me to take him to a coin dealer.

He had a gold coin, a one mohur piece that had been put out by the state of Cooch Behar, one of the princely states of India that has since been merged with West Bengal to form part of the Republic of India.

Though the coin had no date on it in Arabic numerals, the proprietor was able to identify it as a piece that had been put out in 1914. It was in excellent shape, even though there were a couple of minor scratches on the side that showed a lion and an elephant supporting a shield.

It took a little while for them to agree on price, but finally they decided that \$55 would be mutually satisfactory.

My friend said there are plenty of native money changers in Pakistan who have stocks of gold coins. They know nothing of numismatic values; hence they are more than willing to swap a smaller gold coin for a bigger one.

"It's the amount of gold they're interested in," he said. "Like this one mohur piece. I got it for a ten dollar gold piece."

"Okay," I said. "But where are you going to get the American gold pieces?"

He grinned. "You can find American gold pieces almost anywhere in the world but the United States," he said. "And in the Far East it doesn't carry a much higher value—in certain places—than American or Canadian paper money."

BOOK COLLECTING MANIA LEADS TO A RARE ITEM

The book collecting urge sometimes develops into a mania.

Jim showed me a book the title of which I had seen before and one that I had never thought of as other than a very low grade collector's item. It was "An Interpretation of Genesis," by Theodore Powys.

But the copy he handed me seemed different from the others I had seen. His was a small volume, somewhat less than six by four inches, page size, and bound in blue boards.

"Wasn't this the one published in New York back in the late 1920s," I asked, "and a few years earlier, in London, by Chatto and Windus?"

"It's the same title," Jim said. "But neither of those was the first edition, and this is. It was published way back in 1908. It has only 99 pages. You can get a full description of it in Dr. Jacob Schwartz's bibliography."

"I paid \$100," Jim said. "And I'm very lucky to get it. Schwartz says that only 100 of them were printed and 50 of those were destroyed. This happens to be one of the very few known copies."

(Released by McClure Newspaper Syndicate)

Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS
Ranger-Naturalist

The sense of hearing is far more acute in sleep than during waking hours. Originally, it was a life-saving necessity—protecting the sleeper from perils which might overtake him.

And so, even today, sounds are magnified to such an extent that even the drip-drip of a faucet can be truly intolerable. Part of this is due to the quiet of night—during which small sounds seem infinitely louder.

Sound has an amazing influence on all other senses. Patches of color, so distant as to be indistinguishable, can be brought into the subject's field of vision by the mere sounding of a tuning fork close to the ear. Many subjects can read barely legible print with ease and speed when a certain tone accompanies the effort. Tastes, odors, and touch are similarly affected by sound.

In contrast, the perception of sound is also affected by color and brightness. The ticking of a watch becomes clearer under the influence of red; and considerably less distinct in blue surroundings. As a result, a tiny alarm clock would seem much louder in a red room than a blue one.

As one might expect, music exerts very definite effects. Depending upon its pitch, intensity, and timbre it can make blood pressure rise or fall—and piped into hospital rooms doctors have found that classical music can be soothing, relaxing and conducive to the promotion of pleasant dreams.

Shrink from Shri!l Tones

Both mind and body are affected by what we heard: the rousing march has stirred

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Family Council

Sally T.—The child would be better off with me.
Myra M.—She adores me and I adore her!

Sally T.—My brother and sister-in-law were killed in a tragic accident not long ago. They left a 4-year-old girl. Since that time the child has been living with my mother and my unmarried sister. My mother is ailing and my sister goes to work. As a result, she has put the child in a nursery school during the day.

My sister, Myra, says she wants to keep Dorothy and bring her up as her own. Now Myra is nearly 40 and unmarried, so it doesn't look as though she'll ever be able to make a proper home for the child. I have three boys and I would love to complete my family with a little girl. I really feel that the child would be better off with an experienced mother like me.

Myra M.—Why do people assume that a single woman would not make a good mother? Dorothy has been thriving with me, in spite of the shock of her parents' death. She adores me and I adore her and she says she wants to stay with me.

I have a very good job and can give Dorothy the best of everything. I am prepared to devote myself to her welfare.

It is true that I have had no experience in motherhood, but I don't feel that my sister is so wonderful, despite her experience. She does not have a happy home. She and her husband fight a lot and have separated twice. I think she has done a very poor job with her own boys. In any case, I don't see why she should have everything she wants.

The Council: Despite their genuinely loving motives, these sisters have a great deal of self-interest in this matter. They should recognize that the child's welfare is the only important question.

Since they do not have the objectivity to determine this, they should be willing to let one or more competent outsiders offer their recommendations. A family service bureau would probably be best equipped to delve deeper into the matter and give advice.

Myra should realize people don't "assume" that a single woman would not make a good mother. They do assume that in most cases she cannot provide the best home conditions for a child. A home with a businesswoman and an ailing, elderly woman, such as Dorothy now has, would not be considered the best choice by most persons concerned with child welfare.

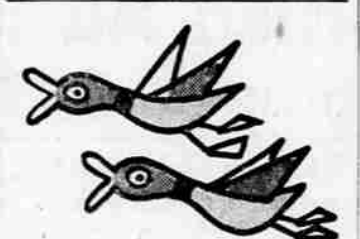
On the other hand, Myra's accusations about Sally's home would have to be seriously looked into by unbiased parties. It is possible that they could offer a third alternative.

In any case, a decision by competent outsiders might take some of the bitterness out of this struggle between the sisters. Whatever happens, it is important for this unfortunate child to have loving relatives. She should never be made to feel like a bone of contention.

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