A pot of gold isn't always at the end of a rainbow—it may be hidden in your attic or basement, collecting dust and lucrative interest

DO YOU HAVE A FORGOTTEN FORTUNE?

By JERRY KLEIN

ARE YOU absolutely sure that those shares of United Pickleworks left you by cranky Cousin Agatha are worthless?

And how about the old family tradition that Uncle Abraham had thousands of dollars worth of bonds which the Government used to finance the Louisiana Purchase? Have you ever found out what happened to them?

It's entirely possible you're worth a lot more than you imagine simply because you—or a relative—committed a financial oversight somewhere along the line!

Oddly enough, people have a way of letting valuable assets slip through their fingers. Right this minute, there are literally billions of dollars worth of stocks, bonds, and other valuables frozen as "abandoned property" until they are rightfully claimed.

Take the case of the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad. It has about $600,000 worth of cash and stock waiting for unknown creditors to step forward and prove their right to the booty.

But time is short! The court has ruled that if claimants don't file bids on this hoard by Aug. 17, the railroad may keep it.

In this example of a forgotten fortune, errant investors have failed to exchange old bonds for new securities issued when the railroad was reorganized 15 years ago. Such corporate changes commonly leave careless investors in the lurch.

Probably the highest-priced piece of paper in America is stock certificate No. 390 of Texas Pacific Land Trust. Sold in 1888 through a now-defunct brokerage firm, it's worth about $1,500,000 to the person who can prove rightful ownership!

Half that stately sum may be yours if you can help Bryant L. McCormack establish *his* claim. A 55-year-old railroad telegrapher and bachelor living in Arcadia, Mo., McCormack says the gilt-edged certificate was originally purchased by a relative named Dewitt Clinton McCormack in July, 1888.

Trouble is that the records of the brokerage house, Blake Bros., seem to have been lost, including the confirmation of sale on "Old 390." This is why McCormack is willing to split the treasure with anyone who can locate the missing sales slip and thereby confirm his right to the windfall.

Under the ancient legal principle called escheat, and various abandoned-property laws, such lost fortunes eventually may be taken over by state treasuries.

Uncle Sam also has benefited from this "easy-go" attitude with an estimated *$5-billion* windfall in the form of bank accounts, safe-deposit vaults, bonds, dividends, wages, income-tax refunds, insurance payments, and various other valuables his nephews and nieces seemingly have forgotten!

Included are Government securities which have gone unredeemed since they were issued to finance such early adventures in American history as the Louisiana Purchase and the War of 1812.

More recently, citizens have failed to cash in about $350 million worth of U.S. Saving Bonds, and when New York State made a survey of 1,697 brokerage firms, 134 said they were holding thousands of dollars in dividends which the stockholders had neglected to claim.

Of course, there always have been suspicious souls who mistrusted banks, preferring to deposit their assets in such out-of-the-way places as mattresses, tea canisters, and shoe boxes—or who buried treasure in their back yards. And some of these troves have been forgotten as the years passed.

Just recently in Pleasantville, Iowa, for instance, crocks containing more than $1,000 in gold coins were accidentally discovered by a man hoeing his garden. It turned out that the gold had been buried there and apparently forgotten by an eccentric who owned the property about 75 years before.

The theatrical world has a standing joke about Katharine Cornell's inability to recall just what bank maintains her checking account, and Jimmy Durante also has a reputation for forgetting to deposit checks he has received. He drops them absent-mindedly around the house. Urged by the bank to "clean house" one time, Jimmy found more than $20,000 which he had overlooked!

Like Jimmy Durante, you, too, could possess a forgotten fortune. For as Montaigne, the 16th-century French writer, observed: "Taking it all in all, it is more trouble to watch over money than to get it!"

How to Check Your Securities

To protect stockholders against loss, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission publishes reports on securities which must be exchanged before a certain deadline because of corporate reorganizations. Dozens of such securities are listed in the current nationwide report, which may be obtained by writing the Securities and Exchange Commission at 225 Broadway, New York 7, N.Y.

COVER:

John Engstead photographs Pat Boone with daughters Laury, Cherry, Lindy, Debby in back-to-school finery. *See more fashions, p. 10.*

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