

Her Lucky Find had a Warm Ending

I WAS BORN in 1924 and grew up in the Depression, the youngest of three children, in the small town of Centreville, Maryland.

My parents ran a small laundry. My father would go to people's homes and pick up clothing, and my mother and a helper would wash and iron them. The price for doing a man's shirt was 20¢, with or without starch.

Anytime there was a carnival in town, my brothers Tony and Jack and I would get up early the day after the carnival. We went to the carnival grounds, hoping to find money that someone might have lost the night before.

After looking awhile, Jack found a nickel. We were near the soda booth when I saw a dollar bill on a hedge.

I showed it to my brothers, and they said it wasn't a dollar bill—it was a \$5 bill, and they wanted me to give it to them.

I held on to it and started running home. My brothers got on their bikes and passed me.

When they got back home, all they could say was my name, over and over.

My mother thought I had been injured—or worse—until she saw me.

She used the money to buy me a chinchilla coat—not the fur kind, but a coat made of a thick wool-and-cotton cloth.

That winter was the first time I got a new coat.

—Margaret W., Denton, Maryland