

CHOCOLATE BY HERSHEY

A Story about Milton S. Hershey



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A Creative Minds Biography

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Pennsylvania Farm Boy

Eastern Pennsylvania was a dangerous place that hot July of 1863. The Civil War had come as far as a little town called Gettysburg, and now there was a rumor that General Lee was going to march on Philadelphia. If the rumor was true, the Confederate army of the South could troop right through the Hershey farm. Five-year-old Milton Hershey lived with his parents and his younger sister, Serena, just forty miles from Gettysburg. The horrible, bloody war had torn the

country apart, and now it had come to the Hersheys' doorstep.

Although they knew they couldn't stop the war from coming, many farmers in the area decided they could save their valuables by burying them. Milton wanted to save his valuables, too, so he scooted under his bed to get his precious matchbox full of pennies.

Milton carefully saved each penny he earned from running errands. And he planned to spend them—at the candy store. Milton loved all kinds of candy—sour balls, caramels, nougat, peppermints. . . . He was *not* going to risk losing his hard-earned cash, so he found a small shovel and began to dig behind one of the bushes lining the path to the back door. He slipped the box into the hole and covered it up with dirt. By the time he was finished, it was almost dark.

The next day, the Hersheys could hear the boom of cannon fire coming from the south. For three long days, the Hersheys and their neighbors waited in fear. They had no idea who was winning. Finally, word came that the Union troops of the North had won the battle, and the Confederates had retreated. The Hersheys could stop worrying, and life could return to normal.

On the morning after the battle, Milton dug furiously behind one bush after another. He couldn't remember exactly where he had buried the matchbox! The yard looked much different in daylight than it had at nightfall. Just then, his shovel struck something. He dug faster and unearthed his box—his pennies were safe. Milton couldn't wait to get to the candy store.

Milton Snavely Hershey was born on September 13, 1857, in an old stone farmhouse built by his great-grandfather near the little town of Derry Church, Pennsylvania. Milton's family belonged to a religious group called the Mennonites. His parents' ancestors had left their homes in Switzerland because their government required every able-bodied man to do military service. The Mennonites were peace-loving people and didn't believe in war. Many of them came to the rolling hills of Pennsylvania, where William Penn had promised religious freedom, and followed their sober way of life. They dressed in plain clothes, worked hard, and avoided most common forms of entertainment—they did not dance or play cards or go to the theater. They felt it was wrong to read for pleasure, and their only reading was the Bible.

Milton's mother, Fanny Hershey, taught young

Sourballs, peppermint drops, fudge—Milton Hershey loved candy. As a boy in the 1860s, he saved his hard-earned pennies for the candy store. When Milton was thirteen, he went off to learn candy making. He discovered that he had a gift for making delicious treats. But only after years of creating candies did Milton make it big with his CRYSTAL A Caramels. After that he decided to try chocolate. Readers will delight in the story behind Hershey's mouth-watering world of candy.

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