

# f two millionaires

es spend it and some save it. Elizabeth Wilson reports on one of each.



The old man was just one of many people that Milton Petrie helped with his money. Whenever he read about personal disasters in his newspaper Petrie sent generous cheques, especially to the families of policemen or firemen injured at work. He also sent cheques to a mother who lost five children in a fire, and a beautiful model, whose face was cut in a knife attack. It cost him millions of dollars, but he still had millions left. He said that he was lucky in business and he wanted to help those less fortunate than himself. 'The nice thing is, the harder I work, the more money I make, and the more people I can help.'

Milton Petrie died in 1994, when he was 92. His will was 120 pages long because he left \$150 million to 383 people. His widow, Carroll, his fourth and last wife, said his generosity was a result of the poverty of his early years. His family were poor but kind-hearted. His father was a Russian immigrant who became a policeman, but he never arrested anyone, he was too kind. He couldn't even give a parking ticket.

## Hetty Green

**The Richest, Meanest Woman in the World**

**H**enrietta (Hetty) Green was a very spoilt, only child. She was born in Massachusetts, USA, in 1835. Her father was a millionaire businessman. Her mother was often ill, and so from the age of two her father took her with him to work and taught her about stocks and shares. At the age of six she started reading the daily financial newspapers and she opened her own bank account.

Her father died when she was 21 and she inherited \$7.5 million. She went to New York and invested on Wall Street. Hetty saved every penny, eating in the cheapest restaurants for 15 cents. She became one of the richest and most hated women in the world. She was called 'The Witch of Wall Street'. At 33 she married Edward Green, a multi-millionaire, and had two children, Ned and Sylvia.

Hetty's meanness was legendary. She always argued about prices in shops. She walked to the local grocery store to buy broken cookies (biscuits) which were much cheaper, and to get a free bone for her much-loved dog, Dewey. Once she lost a two-cent stamp and spent the night looking for it. She never bought clothes and always wore the same long, ragged black skirt. Worst of all, when her son Ned fell and injured his knee, she refused to pay for a doctor and spent hours looking for free medical help. In the end Ned's leg was amputated.

When she died in 1916 she left her children \$100 million (worth \$9.3 billion today). Her daughter built a hospital with her money.



## READING AND SPEAKING

### A tale of two millionaires

- 1 Who are the richest people in your country? Where does their money come from? How do they spend their money?
- 2 Match the verbs and nouns. Many of them are to do with money.

Verbs	Nouns
buy	a bank account
spoil	poverty
wear	a thief
open	a will
live in	stocks and shares
inherit	a child
make	a leg
arrest	ragged clothes
invest	a lot of money from someone
amputate	a lot of money in something

- 3 You are going to read about two millionaires. One was very mean, the other very generous. First read *quickly* about Milton Petrie. Can you remember any examples of his kindness?
- 4 Now read *quickly* about Hetty Green. Can you remember any examples of her meanness?
- 5 Read one text more carefully, then answer the questions with a partner who read the other text.
  - 1 When were Milton and Hetty born?
  - 2 What were their parents like?
  - 3 How did Milton and Hetty become so wealthy?
  - 4 Who wore ragged clothes?
  - 5 What was the meanest thing Hetty did?
  - 6 Why did Milton like making a lot of money?
  - 7 Who did they marry?
  - 8 When did they die? How old were they?
  - 9 Who left the most money? Who did they leave it to?

#### What do you think?

Discuss these questions in small groups.

- How were Milton and Hetty's childhoods different?
- How did their childhoods affect them later?
- Why was Milton especially generous to policemen?
- Why did Hetty's daughter build a hospital?
- What was the kindest thing Milton did?
- Who had the happier life? Milton or Hetty?

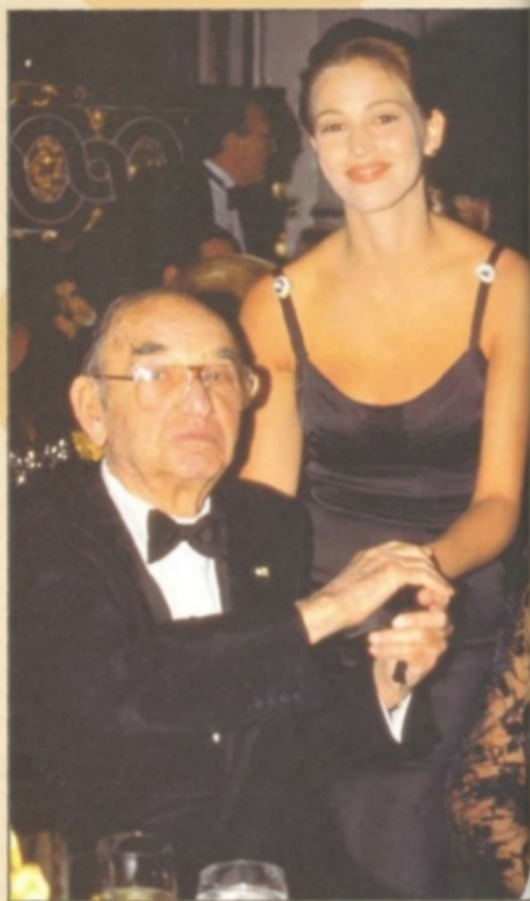
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## Milton Petrie

### The Most Generous Man in the World

**E**very morning, billionaire Milton Petrie walked from his New York apartment and bought a newspaper from the ragged old man on the street corner. One morning the man wasn't there. Petrie learned that he was very ill in the city hospital. Immediately he paid his hospital bill and later, when the man died, paid for his funeral.



Milton with the model he helped