

OAK ISLAND & THE MONEY PIT

THE MASONIC CONNECTION AND MORE FOOD FOR THE MARVELOUS

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Suppose it was just a matter of time before the Oak Island mystery would be hammered into Masonic lore. In short, the island, which is just off the coast of Nova Scotia, is said to have a buried treasure, now (2015) proclaimed to have been placed there by Freemasons.

When I first researched the “treasure” (1990s), it was said to have been buried by a pirate, probably Captain Kidd or Henry Morgan. There was not even a hint of a Masonic connection.

As the story goes, in 1795 a 16-year-old youth, Daniel McInnes, went hunting on the island and found an old ship’s tackle block hanging from a tree. Below the block, there was a 12-foot depression in the ground, indicating that there might be something buried there.

McInnes and his friends dug down in the spot and found thick oak platforms, which they broke through, at about 10, 20, and 30 feet. The boys gave up, and in 1804, a wealthy merchant, Simeon Lynds, decided to continue digging. He broke through 6 more platforms, arriving at the 90-foot level where he found a “cipher stone” alleged to read: “Forty feet below two million pounds are buried.” He continued digging, arriving at a spruce platform about 10 feet farther down. He broke through this platform, going down several more feet; as it was getting late, he went home. In the morning, he found the shaft filled with sea water up to the 60-foot level.

Now dubbed the “money pit,” for the next 211 years many treasure seekers have tried to get whatever is at the bottom of the water-filled “pit.” Six men have been killed in the process.

Apparently, whoever buried the “treasure” dug two channels to the sea, which when passed caused sea water to break through by pressure and flood the shaft. Lynds had hit the first channel; another was discovered later further down (153 feet) as the shaft was dug (dredged) deeper.

Core drilling in 1967 got down to 212 feet, yielding bits of wood, china, and a piece of brass. If my math is right, then according to the cipher stone, something should have been found at about 130 feet, rendering the second channel unnecessary.

Whatever the case, work on the “money pit” has been undertaken by a new group and we now have continuing television documentaries (*The Curse of Oak Island*) on their progress (more correctly, lack of progress).

Enter the Masonic connection. The new group has concluded that the “treasure” could be the Holy Grail, Ark of the Covenant, and King Solomon’s “Menorah” (gold candle holder). How do we get from pirate treasure to these artifacts, especially buried on a little island in North America?

Here’s the story: The historic Knights Templars who already



had the Holy Grail, obtained the Ark and Menorah when they went to Jerusalem in 1099. They dug down in the location of King Solomon’s Temple, and found these additional artifacts at the bottom of a long shaft. The shaft had nine tiers or sections that are associated with the “money pit” platforms. The Templars took all of the artifacts to a location in France. Here they were stored, and after a passage of time moved to a second location. During this time the Knights Templar organization morphed into the Masonic Order. Fearing discovery, the Masons moved everything to a little church in Scotland (built in the early 1400s). It was then thought best to move everything to North America (long before Columbus made his voyage), where it was buried on the little island.

This is all very “romantic” and wonderful for television docu-fictions, but let’s get practical. There can be no doubt that the original Oak Island shaft was made with human hands and ENGINEERING brains. Researcher Rupert Furneaux offers that the shaft was probably made by the Royal Engineers in Nova Scotia during the American Revolution. The British in Nova Scotia were afraid that the Americans would raid them and take all their money, so they had the engineers construct something with booby traps (sea water). The British were as concerned about losing the money as they were about the Americans getting it and using it to further their revolt against the British Crown. If the Americans dug down and thereby rendered the “treasure” lost forever, so be it—better than them getting hold of it.

Whether or not the money was actually put in the shaft has to be given thought. My guess is that in the course of events, it was not found necessary to use the shaft. It was likely built as a precaution (it would not take long to take the money over to the island). Indeed, when the shaft was deemed unnecessary, the engineers did not even bother to remove the block and tackle hanging from the tree above the shaft.

As to the cipher stone, that was likely something created to embellish the story. If what it says were true, why would anyone provide such a message, and does “two million pounds” represent the value of the Ark of the Covenant, Holy Grail and Menorah? There is no logic here.

The main clue provided that the “Masonic connection” might be valid is that the church in Scotland has decorative sculptures depicting North American corn (Indian corn), which was not taken to Europe until the 1600s. We need to assume here that the corn sculptures were added after the expedition to North America returned. The sculptures are odd, I agree, but the Vikings definitely established a colony in Newfoundland in about the year 1000 and explored the whole area. They would have been introduced to “Indian corn” and likely took some back to Scandinavian.

It is obvious that the docu-fiction fanatics decided long ago that if you want to “spice things up,” add a little Freemasonry. (*Canada, Issued 1991*)