

Good Evening Brethren:

Have you ever noticed that everyday more and more symbolism is all around us. For example, for most of us who drive automobiles, where do you see symbols used more often than along the sides of our roads and highways. Pictographs have replaced our bilingual signs, for example, pictures of walk, don't walk, winding road ahead, bump ahead and so many other signs. It doesn't matter if a person is fluent in English, French or any other language; everyone instantly understands these signs and hopefully obeys them.

We as Masons use symbolism in every aspect of our ritual and teachings. Why, because we are not operative but speculative Masons and many of our symbols are not meant to be taken literally, but are meant to be used as tools to guide us in our daily activities.

Some of you may be thinking why do we need another talk on symbols. Well, this simply gives me an opportunity to tell you about a little adventure that I had.

In early September 1984, I was reading an issue of T.V. Guide and noticed an advertisement about a contest, which had started on, or about May 26th, 1984.

The name of the contest was “Treasure, In Search of the Golden Horse”. To participate in the contest, the ad stated that you must buy a seventy (70) page beautifully illustrated book written by Sheldon Renan and/or purchase a one hour-long Beta video. Both told essentially the same story of a girl in search of her lost stallion, Treasure. The prize was buried somewhere in the continental United States. I went out that day and purchased the book and ordered the Beta tape by mail. My brother, John also purchased the book and ordered the tape. WHAT A MISTAKE! I never realized for almost the next five (5) years I would spend literally hundreds of hours searching for that golden horse.

Both the book and the video had a complete set of clues for searching for the lost stallion. But what a prize to the successful person that found the hidden horse. A one (1) kilogram solid gold statuette containing a key to a safety deposit box which contained a certificate for Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) U.S. This amount was payable Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) per year for twenty (20) years.

After a few weeks of working on the puzzle, my brother John seemed to have come up with a valid solution to the puzzle. He arrived at my home shortly after midnight and we sat and talked all night and all the next day and evening.

We decided to go and have a look for this horse and we recruited Eddie, a friend of ours, to help with the driving and we left my home on the stroke of twelve midnight. I am sure that each of our wives were shaking their heads and snickering as we drove into the night. I was the first designated driver and I drove all that night and into the following morning. By 10:30 a.m. we were about two hundred and fifty (250) miles on the other side of Chicago. We drove almost constantly to reach our destination, almost forty (40) hours of straight driving to a little town about thirty (30) miles north of Twin Falls, Idaho, twenty-two hundred (2200) miles from our homes. By the time we had returned home, I would have put over five thousand (5,000) miles on my Cadillac Eldorado. It was nighttime when we reached the location where John thought the treasure was buried. After trying for several hours, we finally convinced him to wait until morning to begin our search. We drove twenty-five (25) miles back to the nearest town to spend the night. The next morning we returned to a location known as the “Craters of the Moon”, a place so desolate that they used it for training the astronauts in preparation for their walk on the moon. Well we followed John’s instructions and with a little shovel, I began to dig a hole.

While watching me struggle, our friend commented that I had more chance in digging a hole in the concrete sidewalk at the corner of King & James in downtown Hamilton. He was right! The ground was rock solid.

We spent five (5) days out there looking for our treasure and finally decided to head home. What a long drive home it was. We came home by a slightly different route, which took us through Yellowstone Park. We rested for a few hours in the park at the huge chateau by the geyser called “Old Faithful” and when we decided to leave, I couldn’t find my car. It was almost nightfall before we were on our way. The three (3) Stooges lost in Yellowstone Park!

Now please let me take a moment to explain, the three of us were all city slickers. When it showed Yellowstone Park on the map, I thought it was just another park. I mean I thought Gage Park was a huge wide open area. You could drop the City of Hamilton in Yellowstone Park and never find it.

Finally, we reached the other side of the park and came down out of the mountains to a little town, called Cody, Wyoming, the home of Buffalo Bill Cody, its namesake. We stayed overnight in Cody,

and in the morning set out heading east towards home.

We came across the final set of mountains between us and home. In those mountains, we pulled over to relish the magnificent view. As we all stood together with the mountain dropping away from our feet, I noticed piles of something or other near our feet. When I asked my friends what they thought it was, it hit the three of us all at the same time. Bear poop! Well, you never saw such a sight in your whole life as three (3) grown men trying to scramble into a car through the same door.

I spent the next four years plus looking for Treasure until the contest ended on May 26th, 1989.

Two fellows, one a retired FBI agent and the other I believe, a District Attorney joined their resources and found the exact spot the treasure was buried - two weeks after the contest had ended. The organizers had removed the buried treasure by this time and in its place was a scroll of parchment. On the parchment, the contest organizers had written congratulations and also indicated that the seekers had, in fact, found the right location.

The cornerstone of the puzzle was the realm of ciphers and symbols used. However, both the book and the video contained many symbols and clues that were meant to lead you away from the

solution, in fact, to place you almost anywhere in the United States.

One of the ciphers was used by Mary Queen of Scots when she was imprisoned on an island in Loch Leven in Scotland.

Symbols in Masonry are not intended to lead you away from the truth but, in fact, are meant to lead you towards the light of becoming better men and better citizens.

By the way, Treasure was buried in a place called Tennessee Pass, ten thousand four hundred and twenty-four feet above sea level and it is intersected by Route 24 on the Continental Divide in central Colorado. Unfortunately, when we crossed into the United States at Detroit, Route 24 begins there and was waiting to take us to the buried treasure.

As for myself although I was a breath away from solving that difficult puzzle, I enjoyed every moment of the search.

Thank you Friends and Brethren.