

**The Last Haunting of Edgar Allan Poe:  
An Identification of “Poe Preferences” contained  
in  
*The Beale Papers***

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Between 1832 and his death in 1849, Edgar Poe authored seventy tales of fiction. These stories ranged in length from his three novel/journals, *The Unparalleled Adventures of One Hans Pfall*, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and *The Journal of Julius Rodman* to Poe’s last effort, the never completed, one and a half page, *The Light-House*.<sup>i</sup> All of these fictional tales contain words, phrases and concepts favored by Poe throughout his career. This monograph sets forth many of these “Poe Preferences” and compares them to *The Beale Papers*, an anonymous tale of buried treasure published in 1885 in Lynchburg, Virginia.

## ***The Beale Papers***

*The Beale Papers*<sup>ii</sup> tells the story of thirty “wild and roving” Virginia gentlemen who set out on a hunting expedition to the American southwest in 1817. In the course of their travels, the men discovered gold and silver north of Santa Fe and began mining the treasure. Primarily because of safety concerns, the men agreed to store their gold and silver in a secure location in Bedford County, Virginia. The leader of the group, Thomas J. Beale, was chosen to transport the cache of metal from Santa Fe to Virginia.

In the course of two trips to deposit the treasure, Beale made the acquaintance of a respected Lynchburg innkeeper, Robert Morriss. The Beale treasure party, having previously agreed to entrust the location of the treasure to a reliable man “in case of an accident”, selected Morriss. Beale gave Morriss a lockbox with instructions not to open it for ten years and, in a series of three letters to Morriss, Beale told of the discovery of the gold and silver and the deposit of the treasure near Buford’s Tavern in Bedford County. Beale also agreed to send the key to three coded messages contained in the box. Morriss received the letters and maintained custody of the lockbox with the coded messages but never heard from Beale or any member of his party, which he presumed had all been killed by Indians or died of privation.

Morriss kept the secret of the treasure for forty some years until shortly before his death in 1862, when he confided the story to a friend. This unnamed friend pursued the treasure for twenty more years, during which time he discovered that the key to one of the ciphers was the Declaration of Independence. This discovery provided details of the composition of the treasure but not its location. The unnamed friend then conveyed the story to James B. Ward, who published a summary of the mystery, entitled *The Beale Papers*, in 1885 in Lynchburg, Virginia.

The treasure, estimated to be worth “more than three quarters of a million” by the anonymous author, would today be valued at approximately \$30 million dollars.

## Preferences of Edgar Poe

In his *Review of Twice Told Tales by Nathaniel Hawthorne*, Poe observed that a writer, when creating a prose tale, should take care that, “in the whole composition, there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design.” Every single word, in other words, must be selected with the utmost care and deliberation to achieve the ultimate objective of the tale, that “unity of effect” which leaves the reader with “a sense of the fullest satisfaction.”

Did Poe practice what he preached? Did he, when composing his seventy tales of fiction, select every word with deliberation, as he claims, or was he, perhaps, subject to the human forces of preference, tendency and habit? The observations below suggest that Poe was partial to particular words, phrases, concepts, and numbers to such a degree that these preferences were repeatedly included in his stories throughout his career.

If Poe did choose certain words out of habit, might not these words provide evidence of his authorship of a particular document or story? The Poe preferences identified below are compared to *The Beale Papers*.

### **I. Poe’s Preferences**

If a man, Mr. P., writes seventy love letters to his sweetheart and he includes the word “honey” in sixty-eight of these letters, can we say, upon finding an unsigned letter to the girlfriend containing the word “honey”, that Mr. P. is the author? What if the seventy known letters contained sixty that included the word “sugar”, fifty-eight which used the word “darling” and fifty-five that had the phrase “love of my life” and “angel from heaven” in the body of the letter? If the seventy-first “mystery” letter also included these words and phrases, could we say definitely that Mr. P was the author?

Almost certainly, the techniques of author identification will never be able to produce results that approach the levels of certainty provided by fingerprint or DNA analysis. Nevertheless, the analysis of word choice, favorite phrases, sequencing of action, punctuation and other nuances of the written word can, on occasion, provide persuasive evidence of who may have authored a particular document. Perhaps the most famous demonstration of the potential of author identification is the Unabomber case. For eighteen years Ted Kaczynski terrorized the nation. The investigative might of US law enforcement was powerless to stop the brilliant but deranged Kaczynski until he published his “manifesto”. Shortly after the treatise was published in the newspapers, Kaczynski’s brother David courageously reported to the police his suspicions, based solely upon a recognition of certain writing traits of his brother, that Ted Kaczynski was the Unabomber.

Although a comparison of Poe’s body of fiction and the anonymous *Beale Papers* offers none of the drama of a criminal investigation, the techniques of author identification are just as valid. The possibility that Poe, one of history’s greatest writers,

is the author of *The Beale Papers*, may also provide “an interest and excitement to the work not to be resisted.”

### **Poe Preference #1: Reference to a foreign language (64)**

Poe included a foreign language reference in sixty-four of his seventy tales. Most of these references were in French. In two stories, *Silence – A Fable*, and *The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion*, the foreign language reference, Greek, was included in the epigram, not the body of the story. In addition to French, Poe tales included words or phrases in Latin, Norwegian, German, Italian, Greek and Spanish. In all stories except one, the foreign words were italicized. (None of the French words, written with a thick Irish accent in *Why the Little Frenchman Wears His Hand in a Sling*, are italicized.) Six stories, *A Tale of Jerusalem*, *Shadow – A Parable*, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, *The Oblong Box*, *The Power of Words*, and the never completed, *The Light-House*, contain no foreign language words.

One of Poe’s most common foreign language references was the French phrase, *par excellence*, which was included in six of his stories, *The Purloined Letter*, *Diddling*, *The Spectacles*, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Journal of Julius Rodman* and *The Man That Was Used Up*.

*The Beale Papers* contains two French references:

“His was the house *par excellence* of the town, and no fashionable assemblages met at any other.” (*The Beale Papers*)

“As an ‘old Virginia gentleman’, he was *sans peur et sans reproache*, and to a remarkable extent possessed the confidence and affection of his friends.” (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference #2: Use of indefinite measurements (66)**

Sixty-six of Poe’s seventy short stories contain at least one “indefinite” measurement; most contain dozens of these inexact measurements such as “about six inches”, “two or three men”, “a week or two” or “nearly three miles”. *The Beale Papers* contains **thirty-two** of these indefinite measurements. A few examples:

#### **Poe Tales**

He was, **perhaps, six feet in height**, and of a presence singularly commanding. (*The Man That Was Used Up*)

It was toward the close of the **fifth or sixth month** of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence. (*The Mask of the Red Death*)

It was **some thirty or forty feet** overhead, and constructed much as the side walls. (*The Pit and the Pendulum*)

Yet, **for some minutes longer** I refrained and stood still. (*The Tell-Tale Heart*)

It consists of little else than the sea sand, and is **about three miles long**. (*The Gold-Bug*)

At length, **for the third or fourth time**, they descended into the cellar. (*The Black Cat*)

I slept in one of the only two berths in the vessel – and the berths of a sloop of **sixty or seventy tons**, need scarcely be described. (*The Premature Burial*)

More Examples of “Indefinite Measurements” from Poe Tales

For half an hour or more (*Landor’s Cottage*)\*for ten minutes or more (*The Oblong Box*)\*some thirty feet or more (*The Pit and the Pendulum*)\*about twelve o’clock one night (*Bon-Bon*)\*a gigantic ship, of perhaps four thousand tons (*MS. Found In A Bottle*)\*for many weeks (*Berenice*)\*for many days-for many weeks and irksome months (*Morella*)\*about twelve o’clock one night (*King Pest*)\*a sojourn of some weeks (*The Fall of the House of Usher*)

The Beale Papers

In person, he was **about six feet in height**, with jet black eyes and hair of the same color, worn longer than was the style at that time. (*The Beale Papers*)

After remaining a **week or ten days**, the two left, after expressions of satisfaction with their visit. (*The Beale Papers*)

The company being formed, we forthwith commenced our preparations, and, early in April, 1817, left old Virginia for St. Louis, Mo., where we expected to purchase the necessary outfits, procure a guide and **two or three servants**, and obtain such information and advice as might be beneficial hereafter. (*The Beale Papers*)

Other “Indefinite Measurement” Examples from The Beale Papers

Some 250 or 300 miles\*two or three of an unimportant character\*more than twenty years\*eighteen months or more\*more than three months\*more than eighty years\*in a few days\*about four miles from Buford’s\*more than once

### Poe Preference #3: Use of descriptive conjunctions (66)

Poe seldom used one word when two or more were available. Certainly, Poe was not the only writer to use multiple adjectives to define his subjects. Nevertheless, he appears to have developed a fondness, if not a habit, for frequently describing his characters in this fashion. *The Beale Papers* contains over fifty examples of descriptive conjunctions. A few examples:

Poe Tales

The boundaries which divide Life from Death, are at best **shadowy and vague**. (*The Premature Burial*)

**Stupefied and aghast**, I had myself no power to move from the upright position I had assumed upon first hearing the shriek, and must have presented to the eyes of the agitated group a **spectral and ominous** appearance, as with **pale countenance and rigid limbs**, I floated down among them in that funeral gondola. (*The Assniation*)

His uneasiness, in the first instance, had been, but the result of **playfulness or caprice**, but he now assumed a **bitter and serious** tone. (*The Gold-Bug*)

...the roar of its impetuous ebb to the sea is scarce equaled by the **loudest and most dreadful** cataracts; the noise being heard several leagues off, and the **vortices or pits** are of such an **extent and depth**, that if a ship comes within its attraction, it is inevitably **absorbed and carried down** to the bottom... (*A Descent into the Maelstrom*)

...drunkards **innumerable and indescribable** - some in **shreds and patches**, reeling, inarticulate, with **bruised visage and Jack-lustre eyes** - some in **whole but filthy** garments...(The Man of the Crowd)

To that last hour of all, there hung a cloud of **intense gloom and devout sorrow** over your household. (*The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion*)

### The Beale Papers

Beale, who remained, soon became a **favoured and popular** guest; his **social disposition and friendly demeanor** rendered him extremely popular with every one, particularly the ladies, and a **pleasant and friendly** intercourse was quickly established between them.

(*The Beale Papers*)

His form was symmetrical, and gave evidence of **unusual strength and activity**; but his distinguishing feature was a **dark and swarthy** complexion, as if much exposure to the **sun and weather** had thoroughly **tanned and discolored** him; this, however, did not detract from his appearance, and I thought him the handsomest man I had ever seen.

Altogether, he was a model of manly beauty, favored by the ladies and envied by men.

To the first he was reverentially **tender and polite**; to the latter, **affable and courteous**, when they kept within bounds, but, if they were **supercilious or presuming**, the lion was aroused, and woe to the man who offended him. (*The Beale Papers*)

In manner Mr. Morriss was **courteous and gentle**; but when occasion demanded, could be **stern and determined**, too; he was emphatically the master of his house, and from his decision there was no appeal. (*The Beale Papers*)

## Poe Preference #4: Reference to body parts, especially eyes (60)

Poe's stories are replete with references to human body parts, particularly eyes and teeth. Although *The Beale Papers* contains none of the gore and dismemberment that sometimes appears in Poe's tales, it does contain a standard Poe description of eyes and hair. Observe a few Poe references to body parts:

### Poe Tales

The wine **sparkled in his eyes** and the bells jingled. (*The Cask of Amontillado*)

I think it was his **eye!** (*The Tell-Tale Heart*)

His gray hairs are records of the past, and his **grayer eyes** are sybils of the future.

(*MS. Found in a Bottle*)

They were of a **deep hazel, exceedingly large and lustrous**; and there were perceptible about them, just that amount of interesting obliquity, which gives pregnancy to expression. (*The Man That Was Used Up*)

He is an exceedingly puffy little old gentleman, with **big circular eyes** and a large double chin. (*The Devil in the Belfry*)

**My eyes are large and gray**; and, although, in fact, they are weak to a very inconvenient degree, still no defect in this regard would be suspected from their appearance.

(*The Spectacles*)

In person, he is short and stout, with **large, fat blue eyes**, with sandy **hair and whiskers**, a wide but pleasing mouth, fine teeth, and I think a Roman nose.

(*Von Kempelen and His Discovery*)

With high cheek-bones, a large hawk-nose, retreating chin, fallen under-jaw, and **huge protruding white eyes**, the expression of his countenance, although tinged with a species of dogged indifference to matters and things in general, was not the less utterly solemn and serious beyond all attempts at imitation or description. (*King Pest*)

His teeth, however, were like pearl, and **his large full eyes were deliciously white**.

(*How to Write a Blackwood Article*)

### The Beale Papers

In person, he was about six feet in height, with **jet black eyes and hair of the same color**, worn longer than was the style at that time. (*The Beale Papers*)

## **Poe Preference #5: Sentences beginning with “It was” (56)**

At first blush, the phrase “it was” would seem doubtful as an indicator of any author, it is so common. Nevertheless, Poe was particularly fond of beginning sentences and paragraphs with this phrase.

Louis Kruh, in 1982 and in 1988, in *Cryptologia*<sup>iii</sup>, compared the word usage and sentence structure in the 1822 letters from Beale to Morriss with the remaining text of the 1885 Beale papers. He noted that both the letters and the remaining text appeared to have been written by the same person. The frequent use of the phrase “it was”, and the use of reflexive pronouns, particularly the word “myself”, in both the letters and the text, suggested to Kruh that one man wrote both. Based on his analysis, Kruh concluded that *The Beale Papers* was a hoax.

Kruh pointed out that the 1822 letter writer, purportedly Thomas Beale, and the anonymous author of the 1885 text, made amazingly similar word choices in their writings. Kruh noted these sentences from the 1822 letters:

### **Beale Letters**

**It was** with this design that I first visited your house...  
**It was** finally decided that it would be sent...  
**It was** in accordance with these instructions that I visited...  
**It was** not considered advisable...  
**It was** too frequently visited by the neighboring farmers...  
**It was** at this time I handed you the box...

Kruh observed these examples from the text of the 1885 Beale pamphlet:

### **Beale Text**

**It was** during the period of his success that Mr. Morriss...  
**It was** at this time that Mrs. Morriss exhibited...  
**It was** the unblemished character ...  
**It was** in 1862...  
**It was** in the month...  
**It was** not until 1845...  
**It was** not until 1862...  
**It was** not the wealthy alone...

Now observe *The Gold-Bug*:

### **Poe Tale**

**It was** a novelty, and by no means an ungrateful one.  
**It was** about a month after...  
**It was** about three in the afternoon...  
**It was** a beautiful scarabaeus...  
**It was** a species of table land  
**It was** firmly secured by bands of wrought iron...  
**It was** growing late, and it behooved us to make exertion...  
**It was** difficult to say what should be done...  
**It was** quite dirty...  
**It was** at this moment that his eyes, and mine also, fell upon the scrap of parchment...  
**It was** lying half buried in the sand...



It was clear that the action of the caloric...

### **Poe Preference #6: Use of reflexive pronouns, especially “myself” (56)**

Let us now examine a very obvious and somewhat awkward sentence structure also observed by Kruh in *The Beale Papers*. He noted these sentences in the 1822 letters:

#### **Beale Letters**

Perhaps not so reliable as **yourself**  
Several friends who like **myself**  
Each member of the party bound **himself**  
Appropriating the portion assigned to **yourself**  
A gift not from **myself** alone  
Affecting the fortunes of **myself**  
Some letters addressed to **yourself**  
Sealed addressed to **yourself** and endorsed  
My highest esteem for **yourself**

Kruh observed these sentences in the 1885 text:

#### **Beale Text**

His friends, who were formerly as sanguine as **himself**  
Benefit from the source **himself**  
Readers be more fortunate than **myself**  
Friendship for **myself** and family  
It should revert to **myself**  
He came...seeking entertainment for **himself**  
Exception of the two letters to **myself**  
And to **myself** alone did he reveal it  
Save what has been consumed upon it **myself**  
As fully as I **myself** do

Poe was partial to the use of reflexive pronouns in his work. He especially liked the word, “myself”, using it at least once in fifty-six of his seventy tales. Observe some sentences from *The Gold-Bug*:

#### **Poe Tale**

...to speak the truth, (I) found **myself** not a little puzzled...  
...(I) flatter **myself** that I am not quite a blockhead.  
...(he) proceeded to seat **himself** upon a sea-chest in the farthest corner of the room.  
Jupiter and **myself** are going upon an expedition into the hills...  
We started about four o'clock- LeGrand, Jupiter, the dog, and **myself**.  
...while LeGrand contented **himself** with the scarabaeus...  
...in many cases were prevented from precipitating **themselves** into the valleys...  
Taking now a spade **himself**, and giving one to Jupiter and one to me...  
...and now and then caught **myself** actually looking...  
The settings **themselves**, which we picked out from among the other gold...  
Presently, I took a candle, and seating **myself** at the corner of the room...  
I let **myself** down to the ledge...  
With the rest of the adventure I believe you are as well acquainted as **myself**.  
...I betook **myself** to a more methodical investigation of the affair.

Why Poe developed a preference for the use of -myself- and other reflexive pronouns is not known. Perhaps he was taught to use this style or maybe it was popular among the authors he read in his youth. However he developed this tendency, there is little doubt that this habit of using reflexive pronouns is very apparent in his writing.

### **Poe Preference #7: Reference to education or books (45)**

Poe was proud of his intellectual superiority and academic achievements. References to education or books in forty-five of his fictional tales may reflect a personal bias or merely indicate a preference for using academic background to describe a particular character in a story. Samples in Poe's short stories and *The Beale Papers* include:

#### **Poe Tales**

I soon found that nearly all the company were **well educated**; and my host was a world of good-humored anecdote in himself. (*Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether*)

I found him **well educated**, with unusual powers of mind, but infected with misanthropy, and subject to perverse moods of alternate enthusiasm and melancholy. (*The Gold-Bug*)

**Books, indeed, were his sole luxuries**, and in Paris these are easily obtained. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

He went **early to college and studied** pneumatics. (*Loss of Breath*)

He sent me, at six years of age, to **the school of old Mr. Ricketts**, a gentleman with only one arm, and of eccentric manners - he is well known to every person who has visited New Bedford. (*Arthur Gordon Pym*)

He had with him many **books**, but rarely employed them. (*The Gold-Bug*)

The gentlemen said little about her; but the ladies, in a little while, pronounced her "a good hearted thing, rather indifferent-looking, **totally uneducated**, and decidedly vulgar. (*The Oblong Box*)

Some peculiarities, either in his **early education**, or in the nature of his intellect, had tinged with what is termed materialism all his ethical speculations... (*The Domain of Arnheim*)

Hereditary wealth afforded me **an education of no common order**, and a contemplative turn of mind enabled me to methodize the stores which early study very diligently garnered up. (*MS. Found in a Bottle*)

#### **The Beale Papers**

Mr. Beale, who deposited with Mr. Morriss the papers which form the subject of this history, is described as being a gentleman, **well educated**, evidently of good family, and with popular manners. (*The Beale Papers*)

They all appeared to be gentlemen, well born, and **well educated**, with refined and courteous manners and with a free and independent air, which rendered them peculiarly attractive. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference #8: Reference to family (44)**

To the orphaned (at two) and abandoned (at 16) Poe, family was, at the very least, an important literary topic. References to family in Poe's work and *The Beale Papers*:

#### **Poe Tales**

The young gentleman was of an excellent - indeed **an illustrious family**, but, by a variety of untoward events, had been reduced to such poverty that the energy of his character

succumbed beneath it, and he ceased to bestir himself in the world, or to care for the retrieval of his fortunes. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

Of my country and my **family** I have little to say. (*MS. Found in a Bottle*)

My baptismal name is Egaeus; that of **my family** I will not mention. (*Berenice*)

He was of **an ancient Huguenot family**, and had once been wealthy; but a series of misfortunes had reduced him to want. (*The Gold-Bug*)

**Of his family**, I could obtain no satisfactory account. (*A Tale of the Ragged Mountains*)

The heroine of the story was Mademoiselle Victorine Lafourcade, a young girl of **illustrious family**, of wealth, and of great personal beauty. (*The Premature Burial*)

'Snob' is the nom-de-plume of Mr. Thingum Bob, of this city,- a relative of the great Mr. Thingum Bob, (after whom he is named,) and otherwise **connected with the most illustrious families of the State**. (*The Literary Life of Thingum Bob, Esq.*)

"The Montressors," I replied, "**were a great and numerous family**". (*The Cask of Amontillado*)

His **family** was one of the most illustrious of the empire. (*The Domain of Arnheim*)

The **family** is connected, in some way, with Maelzel, of Automaton-chess-player memory. (*Von Kempelen and His Discovery*)

#### **The Beale Papers**

Mr. Beale, who deposited with Mr. Morriss the papers which form the subject of this history, is described as being a gentleman, well educated, **evidently of good family**, and with popular manners. (*The Beale Papers*)

Until now, for reasons which will be apparent to every one, all knowledge of this affair was confined to a very limited circle--to **the writer's immediate family**, and to one old and valued friend, upon whose discretion he could always rely; nor was it ever intended that it should travel beyond that circle; but circumstances over which he has no control, pecuniary embarrassments of a pressing character, and **duty to a dependent family** requiring his undivided attention, force him to abandon a task to which he has devoted the best years of his life, but which seems as far from accomplishment as at the start. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference #9: Reference to a metal, especially iron (44)**

References to metal, particularly "iron", abound in Poe's stories. A few examples:

#### **Poe Tales**

And, when seen, there will be some to disbelieve, and some to doubt, and yet a few who will find much to ponder upon in the characters here **graven with a stylus of iron**. (*Shadow – A Parable*)

Now there are fine tales in the volumes of the Magi \_ in the **iron-bound**, melancholy volumes of the Magi. (*Silence – A Fable*)

It was firmly secured by **bands of wrought iron**, riveted, and forming a kind of trellis-work over the whole. (*The Gold-Bug*)

On the uppermost of the steps which led down into the dread chamber, was a large fragment of the coffin, with which it seemed that she had endeavored to arrest attention, by striking the **iron door**. (*The Premature Burial*)

In its surface were **two iron staples**, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. (*The Cask of Amontillado*)

No mere sea, though, could accomplish anything with this **solid iron-riveted wall**... (*The Light-House*)

It was riveted and studded with **iron bolts** and surmounted with **jagged iron spikes**.  
(*William Wilson*)

What I had taken for masonry, seemed now to be **iron, or some other metal**, in huge plates, whose sutures or joints occasioned the depression. (*The Pit and the Pendulum*)

This wall had **gates of iron**. (*The Masque of the Red Death*)

A **small iron safe** was discovered under the bed (not under the bedstead). (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

#### *The Beale Papers*

The **box was of iron**, carefully locked, and of such weight as to render it a safe depository for articles of value. I placed it in a safe and secure place, where it could not be disturbed until such time as it should be demanded by its owner. (*The Beale Papers*)

The above is securely packed in **iron pots**, with **iron covers**. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference #10: Use of unnamed narrator (43)**

Poe tells his story through the eyes of the unnamed narrator in forty-three of his tales. Perhaps his most famous narrator is C. August Dupin's devoted roommate. This character gave rise to legions of detective sidekicks, not the least of which was Dr. Watson of Sherlock Holmes' fame.

*The Beale Papers* comes to us from the point of view of an unnamed friend of a loyal innkeeper. This unnamed friend, after being advised of a buried treasure by the innkeeper, anonymously conveys to the public the treasure story.

### **Poe Preference #11: Use of the word "peculiar" (43)**

The word peculiar (or peculiarly) appears in forty-three of Poe's tales. It also is found in *The Beale Papers*:

In obtaining such a wife Mr. Morriss was **peculiarly** fortunate, as her subsequent career fully demonstrated. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference #12: Use of the word "excite"(43)**

Poe included the word excite (excited, excitement or exciting) in forty-three of his short stories. In *The Beale Papers*, the word "excitement" contributes to the description of a pending journey into the wilderness and the search for a solution to a problem.

What motives could have influenced him and so many others to risk their health and their lives in such an undertaking, except the natural love of daring adventure, with its consequent **excitement**, we can only conjecture. (*The Beale Papers*)

Until the writer lost all hope of ultimate success, he toiled faithfully at his work; unlike any other pursuit with practical and natural results, a charm attended it, independent of the ultimate benefit he expected, and the possibility of success lent an interest and **excitement** to the work not to be resisted. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference #13: Use of the word “scarcely” (42)**

Poe was rather fond of the word “scarcely”, using it in forty-two of his tales. It appears once in *The Beale Papers*:

Amongst his guests and devoted personal friends Jackson, Clay, Coles, Witcher, Chief Justice Marshall, and a host of others **scarcely** less distinguished, might be enumerated.

One of the guests listed in this sentence, Chief Justice Marshall, was known personally to Poe. The Allan family and the Marshall family shared a pew at Monumental Church in Richmond and John Allan took his oath of citizenship from Justice Marshall.

### **Poe Preference #14: Use of the word “interest” (42)**

The word, “interest” (interesting, interested) appears in forty-two of Poe’s fictional tales. It also is used in *The Beale Papers*:

The following details of an incident that happened many years ago, but which has lost none of its **interest** on that account, are now given to the public for the first time.  
(*The Beale Papers*)

Until the writer lost all hope of ultimate success, he toiled faithfully at his work; unlike any other pursuit with practical and natural results, a charm attended it, independent of the ultimate benefit he expected, and the possibility of success lent an **interest** and excitement to the work not to be resisted. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference # 15: Reference to wealth (41)**

Poe refers to wealth or fortune, lack of wealth or poverty, or loss of wealth in forty-one of his tales. Perhaps of most interest considering his personal life experience, are Poe’s references to a fall from wealth. Three Poe themes, the loss of wealth, the acquisition of a fabulous fortune and the inheritance of wealth all appear in *The Beale Papers*.

#### **Loss of Wealth**

##### **Poe Tales**

The young gentleman was of an excellent – indeed an illustrious family, but, by a variety of untoward events, had been **reduced to such poverty** that the energy of his character succumbed beneath it, and he ceased to bestir himself in the world, or to care for the retrieval of his fortunes.  
(*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

He was of an ancient Huguenot family, and had **once been wealthy; but a series of misfortunes had reduced him to want.** (*The Gold-Bug*)

**My entire worldly wealth was swallowed up,** and I resigned myself thenceforward to despair.  
(*The Black Cat*)

After the death of my father, and both sisters, I took no farther interest in our plantation at the Point, and sold it, **at a complete sacrifice,** to M. Junot. (*Julius Rodman*)

I soon grew as **poor as a rat...** (*Hans Pfall*)

### The Beale Papers

In conclusion it may not be inappropriate to say a few words of the time lost in the above investigation, **I have been reduced from comparative affluence to absolute penury**, entailing suffering upon those it was my duty to protect, and this too, in spite of their remonstrances.

*(The Beale Papers)*

The happiness of Mr. Morriss, however, was of short duration, and reverses came when they were least expected. Heavy purchases of tobacco, at ruinous figures, in anticipation of an upward market, which visions were never realized, **swept from him in a moment the savings of years, and left him nothing save his honor and the sincere sympathy of the community with which to begin the battle anew.** *(The Beale Papers)*

### Fabulous Wealth

#### Poe Tales

This act, however, did not prevent young Ellison from entering into possession, on his twenty-first birth-day, as the heir of his ancestor Seabright, **a fortune of four hundred and fifty millions of dollars.** *(The Domain of Arnheim)*

...”**pure gold can be made at will**, and very readily, from lead, in connection with certain other substances, in kind and in proportions, unknown.” *(Von Kempelen and His Discovery)*

But as I gazed about me, I could not bring myself to believe that the **wealth** of any subject in Europe could have supplied the **princely magnificence** which burned and blazed around. *(The Assignment)*

As the rays of the lanterns fell within the pit, there flashed upwards from **a confused heap of gold and jewels**, a glow and a glare that absolutely dazzled our eyes. *(The Gold-Bug)*

### The Beale Papers

This was the opinion of Mr. Morriss, and in this way only can we account for the fact that the treasure for which they sacrificed so much, **constituting almost fabulous wealth**, lies abandoned and unclaimed for more than half a century. *(The Beale Papers)*

All the pleasures and temptations which had lured them to the plains were now forgotten, and visions of **boundless wealth and future grandeur** were the only ideas entertained.

*(The Beale Papers)*

### Hereditary Wealth

#### Poe Tales

**Hereditary wealth** afforded me an education of no common order, and a contemplative turn of mind enabled me to methodize the stores which early study very diligently garnered up.

*(MS. Found in a Bottle)*

By these and other means he had managed to lay by a tolerable sum of money. He was more attached to myself, I believe, than to any other person in the world, and **I expected to inherit the most of his property at his death.** *(Arthur Gordon Pym)*

**Having inherited his estate**, all went well with me for years. *(The Imp of the Perverse)*

I say, at present, for it is only lately that I have been so called – having, legislatively, adapted this surname within the last year, **in order to receive a large inheritance** left me by a distant male relative, Adolphus Simpson, Esq. *(The Spectacles)*

### The Beale Papers

Before leaving my companions on the plains it was suggested that, in case of an accident to ourselves, **the treasure so concealed would be lost to their relatives**, without some provision against such a contingency. *(The Beale Papers)*

The other shares to be distributed to the parties named in the accompanying paper. **These legacies, so unexpectedly received, will at least serve to recall names that may still be cherished**, though partially forgotten. *(The Beale Papers)*

### **Poe Preference #16: Use of the word “singular” (41)**

Poe uses the word “singular” (singularly) in forty-one of his short stories. Only fifteen of Poe’s tales of fiction, *The Duc L’Omelette*, *A Tale of Jerusalem*, *Lionizing*, *Silence – A Fable*, *The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion*, *Why the Little Frenchman Wears His Hand in a Sling*, *The Business Man*, *The Philosophy of Furniture*, *Elenora*, *The Power of Words*, *The Imp of the Perverse*, *The Cask of Amontillado*, *Hop-Frog*, *Von Kempelen and His Discovery* and *X-ing the Paragrab*, contain neither the word “singular” nor the word “peculiar”.

The word “singular” does not appear in *The Beale Papers*.

### **Poe Preference #17: Use of the word “design” (39)**

The word “design” (designed) appears in thirty-nine of Poe’s fictional tales. A few examples:

#### **Poe Tales**

I thought at length that he contemplated my **design** - but, whether that was the case or not, he shook his head despairingly, and refused to move from his station by the ring-bolt. (*A Descent into the Maelstrom*)

This thirst it appeared to be the **design** of my persecutors to stimulate - for the food in the dish was meat pungently seasoned. (*The Pit and the Pendulum*)

#### **The Beale Papers**

It was with this **design** that I first visited your house, two years since, that I might judge by personal observation if your reputation was merited. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Poe Preference #18: Use of the word “accident” (37)**

Poe was fond of using the word “accident” (accidentally, accidental), it appeared in thirty-seven of his fictional stories. When Poe decided to use the word “accident”, he often inserted it five or more times in the same story. (For example, the word “accident” appears six times in *The Gold-Bug*).

The weather was chilly (oh rare and happy **accident!**) and a fire was blazing upon the hearth. (*The Gold-Bug*)

In the inmost recesses of this coppice, not far from the eastern or more remote end of the island, Legrand had built himself a small hut, which he occupied when I first, by mere **accident**, made his acquaintance. (*The Gold-Bug*)

He is, therefore, compelled, however unwillingly, to relinquish to others the elucidation of the Beale Papers, not doubting that of the many who will give the subject attention, some one, through fortune or **accident**, will speedily solve their mystery and secure the prize which has eluded him. (*The Beale Papers*)

The word “accident” appears six times in *The Beale Papers*.

## **Poe Preference #19: Use of the word “intense” (33)**

The word “intense” appears in thirty-three of Poe’s short stories. Most often, it is coupled with the word “excitement” or “interest”. Compare these Poe sentences to those from *The Beale Papers*:

### **Poe Tales**

We now worked in good earnest, and never did I pass ten minutes of more **intense excitement**. (*The Gold-Bug*)

...if indeed I am right in calling by so feeble a name as amusement that deep and most **intense excitement** with which I surveyed the wonders and majestic beauties of the wilderness. (*The Journal of Julius Rodman*)

Yet it was only at intervals - moments of **intense excitement** -that this peculiarity became more than slightly noticeable. (*Ligeia*)

His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision...which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most **intense excitement**. (*The Fall of the House of Usher*)

The teeming brain of childhood requires no external world of incident to occupy or amuse it; and the apparently dismal monotony of a school was replete with more **intense excitement** than my riper youth has derived from luxury, or my full manhood from crime. (*William Wilson*)

The atrocity of this murder, (for it was at once evident that murder had been committed,) the youth and beauty of the victim, and, above all, her previous notoriety, conspired to produce **intense excitement** in the minds of the sensitive Parisians.

(*The Mystery of Marie Roget*)

The longer I meditated upon these, the more **intense** grew the **interest** which had been excited within me. (*Hans Pfall*)

Of course a wide field lay before us for discovery, and it was with feelings of most **intense interest** that I heard Captain Guy express his resolution of pushing boldly to the southward. (*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*)

### **The Beale Papers**

Upon reaching the locality I found all as it had been represented, and the **excitement intense**. (*The Beale Papers*)

Inviting me to his room, with no one to interrupt us, he gave me an outline of the matter, which soon enlisted my **interest** and created **an intense longing** to learn more.

(*The Beale Papers*)

## **Poe Preference #20: Use of the word “anxiety” (31)**

The word “anxiety” (anxious) appears in thirty-one of Poe’s tales of fiction. A few examples:

### **Poe Tales**

On the other hand, there was much cause for **anxiety** as to what it might do in the house. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

And now a new **anxiety** seized me - the sound would be heard by a neighbor! (*The Tell-Tale Heart*)

Here again he made an **anxious** examination of the paper; turning it in all directions. (*The Gold-Bug*)



I therefore, after due deliberation, consigned the article to the more dignified pages of the "Lollipop," and **awaited the event in anxiety**, but with resignation. (*The Literary Life of Thingum Bob*)

*The Beale Papers*

It is needless to say that I shall **await with much anxiety** the development of the mystery. (*The Beale Papers*)

## II. Poe's Favored Phrases

Certain phrases appear more than once in Poe's stories. Some of these phrases also turn up in *The Beale Papers*.

### Favored Phrase #1: Delicacy of feeling

The phrases "delicacy of feeling" and "sense of delicacy" can be seen in Poe's work:

Poe Tales

I replied that I had entire confidence in his superior **delicacy of feeling**, and would abide by what he proposed. (*Mystification*)

...on my part, what I conceive to be a **proper sense of delicacy** forbade me to broach the subject; although, in truth, I was exceedingly tempted to do so.

(*The Man That Was Used Up*)

*The Beale Papers*

He had become long since satisfied that the parties were no longer living, but his **delicacy of feeling** prevented his assuming as a fact a matter so pregnant with consequences.

(*The Beale Papers*)

### Favored Phrase #2: Nothing of importance (interest)

The phrase "nothing of importance/interest/consequence" occurs in a few of Poe's stories:

Poe Tales

As the events of the ensuing eight days were **of little importance**, and had no direct bearing upon the main incidents of my narrative, I will here throw them into the form of a journal, as I do not wish to omit them altogether. (*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*)

**Nothing of any consequence** happened during the day. (*Hans Pfall*)

We omit the adventures of Mr. Rodman from this period until the tenth of April. By the last of October, **nothing of importance happening in the interval**, the party made their way to a small creek which they designated as Otter creek, and, proceeding up this about a mile to an island well adapted for their purpose, built a log fort and took up their quarters for the winter. (*The Journal of Julius Rodman*)

A small iron safe was discovered under the bed (not under the bedstead). It was open, with the key still in the door. It had no contents beyond a few old letters, and **other papers of little consequence**. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

*The Beale Papers*

**Nothing of interest occurred during the winter**, and of this little Mexican town we soon became heartily tired. (*The Beale Papers*)

That they would attach **no importance** to a seemingly unintelligible writing seems quite natural; but their attention being called to them by the publication of this narrative, may result in eventually bringing to light the missing paper. (*The Beale Papers*)

The papers given above were all that were contained in the box, **except two or three of an unimportant character**, and having no connection whatever with the subject in hand. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Favored Phrase #3: Brought to light**

Poe favored phrases such as “throw light upon the subject” or “bring to light”:

#### **Poe Tales**

Many minutes elapsed before any circumstances occurred **tending to throw light upon the mystery**. (*Ligeia*)

A careful search soon **brought to light** the hidden spring...(*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

When the proper time arrives, all that the gentleman intended, and all that he did not intend, **will be brought to light**, in the “Dial,” or the “Down-Easter,” together with all that he ought to have intended, and the rest that he clearly meant to intend:-so that it will all come very straight in the end. (*Never Bet the Devil Your Head*)

No one doubted that the mystery of this murder would be **immediately brought to light**. (*The Mystery of Marie Roget*)

#### **The Beale Papers**

Complete in themselves, they are respectfully submitted to the public, with the hope that **all that is dark in them may receive light**...(*The Beale Papers*)

That they would attach no importance to a seemingly unintelligible writing seems quite natural; but their attention being called to them by the publication of this narrative, may result in eventually **bringing to light** the missing paper. (*The Beale Papers*)

### **Favored Phrase #4: Virginia gentleman**

Although born in Boston, Poe was raised in Richmond and always considered himself a son of the South and a loyal Virginian. He attended the University of Virginia and defended Southern writers throughout his career. Although his adult years were spent in poverty, he considered himself a gentleman and never lost his belief in the righteousness of the aristocracy. Like the anti-bellum society of his youth, he admired good manners, wealth, education and a family name.

Beale and his party were all Virginians “well born and well educated, with refined and courteous manners”. Morriss was an “old Virginia gentleman”. Only in Virginia did the men feel safe enough leaving their treasure that they would carry it across hundreds of miles of wilderness. The key to one of the ciphers was the Declaration of Independence, authored by the greatest Virginian, Thomas Jefferson.

Poe sometimes set his stories in locations where he had lived. *The Gold Bug* and *The Balloon Hoax*, for example, were set in Charleston, South Carolina, where he served in the military. *The Beale Papers* is set partially in Lynchburg, an area about which Poe learned a great deal during his days at the University of Virginia. Poe set another of his stories, *A Tale of the Ragged Mountains*, near Lynchburg.

Some references to “Virginia gentlemen”:

#### Poe Tales

Among those **gentlemen in Virginia** who expressed the greatest interest in my statement, more particularly in regard to that portion of it which related to the Antarctic Ocean, was Mr. Poe, lately editor of the Southern Literary Messenger, a monthly magazine, published by Mr. Thomas W. White, in the city of Richmond. (*Arthur Gordon Pym*)

His name was Andrew Thornton, also a **Virginian**, and I believe **of excellent family**, belonging to the Thornton’s of the northern part of the State. (*The Journal of Julius Rodman*)

Returning from this in 1794, as hereinafter stated, he took up his abode **near Abingdon, in Virginia**, where he married, and had three children, and where most of his descendants now live. (*The Journal of Julius Rodman*)

During the fall of the year 1827, while residing **near Charlottesville, Virginia**, I casually made the acquaintance of Mr. Augustus Bedloe. This **young gentleman** was remarkable in every respect, and excited in me a profound interest and curiosity.

(*A Tale of the Ragged Mountains*)

#### The Beale Papers

As an "**old Virginia gentleman**," he was sans peur et sans reproche, and to a remarkable extent possessed the confidence and affection of his friends.

(*The Beale Papers*)

He registered simply from **Virginia**, but I am of the impression he was from some western portion of the State. (*The Beale Papers*)

Being assured of a comfortable provision for themselves and their horses, Beale stated his intention of remaining for the winter, should nothing occur to alter his plans, but that the **gentlemen** accompanying him would leave in a few days for **Richmond**, near which place they resided, and that they were anxious to reach their homes, from which they had long been absent. **They all appeared to be gentlemen**, well born, and well educated, with refined and courteous manners and with a free and independent air, which rendered them peculiarly attractive. (*The Beale Papers*)

### Favored Phrase #5: Order, system or method

Although Poe mocked the business man’s devotion to order and method in *The Business Man*, he possessed an analytical mind that valued the scientific, systematic approach to problem solving. A few references to system or method in his work:

#### Poe Tales

Here my friend, about whose madness I now saw, or fancied that I saw, certain indications of **method**, removed the peg which marked the spot where the beetle fell, to a spot about three inches to the westward of its former position. (*The Gold-Bug*)

Tell me, for Heaven’s sake...**the method** – if **method** there is – by which you have been enabled to fathom my soul in this matter. (*The Murders In The Rue Morgue*)

**Method** is the soul of business. (Epigram to *The Business Man*)

Especially, there is nothing to be made in this way without **method**. I did only a retail business myself, but my old habits of **system** carried me swimmingly along.

(*The Business Man*)

*Cui bono*, in all the crack novels and elsewhere, - in those of Mrs. Gore, for example, (the author of “Cecil”) a lady who quotes all tongues from the Chaldaean to Chickasaw, and is helped to her learning, “as needed,” **upon a systematic plan**, by Mr. Beckford...

(“*Thou Art The Man*”)

### The Beale Papers

Though all were at work, there was **nothing like order or method** in their plans, and my first efforts were to systematize our operations, and **reduce everything to order**.  
(*The Beale Papers*)

To **systematize a plan** for my work I arranged the papers in the **order** of their length, and numbered them, designing to commence with the first, and devote my whole attention to that until I had either unraveled its meaning or was convinced of its impossibility - afterwards to take up the others and proceed as before. (*The Beale Papers*)

### Favored Phrase #6: (My) Dear Friend

When Poe considered someone a close friend, he wasn't shy about expressing his feelings of friendship. In his fiction, this trait was particularly evident in the letters Poe inserted into his stories. Observe his affectionate greetings:

NOW, **my dear friend**- now, for your sins, you are to suffer the infliction of a long gossiping letter. (*Mellonta Tauta*)

**My DEAR P** — ,

You may as well come now. D — and F — are agreed that I cannot hold out beyond tomorrow midnight; and I think they have hit the time very nearly. (*The Case of M. Valdemar*)

The unendurable oppression of the lungs—the stifling fumes from the damp earth—the clinging to the death garments—the rigid embrace of the narrow house—the blackness of the absolute Night—the silence like a sea that overwhelms—the unseen but palpable presence of the Conqueror Worm—these things, with the thoughts of the air and grass above, with memory of **dear friends** who would fly to save us if but informed of our fate, and with consciousness that of this fate they can never be informed—that our hopeless portion is that of the really dead—these considerations, I say, carry into the heart, which still palpitates, a degree of appalling and intolerable horror from which the most daring imagination must recoil. (*The Premature Burial*)

Come to me, by all means, **my dear good friend**, as soon as you receive this. (*Some Words With a Mummy*)

**My Esteemed Friend** (*The Beale Papers*)

**My Dear Friend** Morriss (*The Beale Papers*)

I trust, **my dear Mr. Morriss**, that we may meet many times in the future, but if the Fates forbid, with my last communication I would assure you of the entire respect and confidence of (*The Beale Papers*)

### Favored Phrase #7: Barely (Faint, Just, Scarcely) Perceptible

Poe seemed fond of phrases containing the word perceptible:

#### Poe Tales

There were the same luxurious smoothness of face, the same **scarcely perceptible** tendency to the aqualine...(*Ligeia*)

The pulse was **barely perceptible**. (*The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar*)

Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a **barely perceptible** fissure...(*The Fall of the House of Usher*)

It is separated from the main land by a **scarcely perceptible** creek, oozing its way through a wilderness of reeds and slime...(*The Gold-Bug*)

The tracks of which I speak were but **faintly perceptible** -- having been impressed upon the firm, yet pleasantly moist surface of -- what looked more like green Genoese velvet than any thing else. (*Landor's Cottage*)

#### The Beale Papers

I commenced by reading over and over again the letters to Mr. Morriss, endeavoring to impress each syllable they contained on my memory, and to extract from them, if possible, some meaning or allusion that might give, perhaps, **a faint or barely perceptible** hint as a guide; no such clue, however, could I find, and where or how to commence was a problem I found most difficult to solve. (*The Beale Papers*)

It appears that when they left Santa Fe they pursued a northerly course for some days, being successful in finding an abundance of game, which they secured, and were on the eve of returning when they discovered on their left an immense herd of buffaloes, heading for a valley **just perceptible** in the distance. (*The Beale Papers*)

### Favored Phrase #8: “Reduced” from (Affluence, Wealth)/Want

Among the misfortunes suffered in his life, Poe experienced the pain of a downward movement in socioeconomic class. From childhood to age sixteen, Edgar was a favored son of Mr. and Mrs. John Allan, wealthy Richmond merchants. Upon his entry into the University of Virginia in his seventeenth year, however, friction with his father increased to the point where Poe was completely disowned. He moved from a life of relative ease to one of extreme poverty.

As previously stated, the theme of “reduced circumstances” appears throughout Poe’s writing. The specific phrases, “reduced from \_\_\_\_\_” and “want” can be seen in Poe’s correspondence and/or his short stories and *The Beale Papers*.

#### Poe Correspondence

Letter to George Poe, July 14, 1839-<sup>iv</sup>

...It affords me great pleasure, moreover, to recognize, in one of my own name & family, those very principles of stern independence which I trust, have always activated my own conduct through life, and which, at all events, **have reduced me from high affluence to comparative poverty** - or at least to a reliance upon my own resources.

#### Poe Tales

The young gentleman was of an excellent - indeed an illustrious family, but, by a variety of untoward events, **had been reduced to such poverty** that the energy of his character succumbed beneath it, and he ceased to bestir himself in the world, or to care for the retrieval of his fortunes. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)

He was of an ancient Huguenot family, and **had once been wealthy; but a series of misfortunes had reduced him to want.** (*The Gold-Bug*)

### The Beale Papers

In conclusion it may not be inappropriate to say a few words regarding myself: In consequence of the time lost in the above investigation, **I have been reduced from comparative affluence to absolute penury**, entailing suffering upon those it was my duty to protect, and this, too, in spite of their remonstrances.

*(The Beale Papers)*

It can be readily imagined that this course was not determined upon all at once; regardless of the entreaties of his family and the persistent advice of his friend, who were formerly as sanguine as himself, he stubbornly continued his investigations, until **absolute want** stared him in the face and forced him to yield to their persuasions.

*(The Beale Papers)*

### Favored Phrase #9: Manners

Poe occasionally referred to manners, or lack thereof, when describing a character in one of his tales:

#### Poe Tales

He sent me, at six years of age, to the school of old Mr. Ricketts, a gentleman with only one arm, and of **eccentric manners** - he is well known to every person who has visited New Bedford. *(Arthur Gordon Pym)*

We have the painful duty of announcing the death of Mr AUGUSTUS BEDLO, a gentleman whose **amiable manners** and many virtues have long endeared him to the citizens of Charlottesville. *(A Tale of the Ragged Mountains)*

He was the eldest son of the neighbor who bought me out, and **was a man of strange manners** and somewhat eccentric turn of mind, but still one of the best-hearted fellows in the world, and certainly as courageous a man as ever drew breath, although of no great bodily strength. *(Julius Rodman)*

#### The Beale Papers

They all appeared to be gentlemen, well born and well educated, **with refined and courteous manners** and with a free and independent air, which rendered them peculiarly attractive. *(The Beale Papers)*

Mr. Beale, who deposited with Mr. Morriss the papers which form the subject of this history, is described as a gentleman well educated, evidently of good family, and **with popular manners**. *(The Beale Papers)*

### Favored Phrase #10: In person

When describing a character in one of his tales, Poe often used a formula that included facial characteristics, i.e. lips, nose, complexion, etc., height, beauty and strength. Poe was notorious for some of his negative racial comments.

Twice, Poe began the description of a character with the phrase, "In person". This pattern can also be seen in *The Beale Papers*.

#### Poe Tales

**In person**, the Sioux are an ugly, ill-made race, their limbs being much too small for the trunk, according to our ideas of the human form - their cheek bones are high and their eyes protruding and dull. *(Julius Rodman)*

**In person**, he is short and stout, with large, fat blue eyes, with sandy hair and whiskers, a wide but pleasing mouth, fine teeth, and I think a Roman nose. (*Von Kempelen and His Discovery*)

**The Beale Papers**

**In person**, he was about six feet in height, with jet black eyes and hair the same color, worn longer than was the style at that time. (*The Beale Papers*)

### III. Poe's Uncompleted Journal

*The Journal of Julius Rodman* was published in six installments in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* from January to June 1840. In the summer of 1840, Poe quit the magazine after one of his many disputes with management, and *Julius Rodman* was never completed. The many similarities in *The Beale Papers* and *Julius Rodman*, stories of hunting expeditions that resulted in the discovery of a treasure (gold and natural beauty), justify closer scrutiny. Both Beale and Rodman were Virginians who led a band of "roving" adventurers on a hunting expedition into the wilderness. One group totaled thirty men, the other fifteen. Both groups began their journey in late spring, "procured" a guide, traveled through the wilderness, one to Santa Fe and the other to the Rocky Mountains, and established "winter quarters". During the winter, "nothing of importance" occurred and, finally, in the ensuing spring, the treasure was discovered.

Rodman and Beale were cut out of the same cloth, although some differences did exist. Both men came from excellent families, were well educated and resided, at one time, in the western part of Virginia. The tales of both men come to the public through their own writings, Rodman kept a journal, Beale wrote letters and coded messages. These writings were secretly maintained for many years, than given to another who undertook to present the story to the public.

Rodman is described as being "**about twenty-five years of age**" when he started his expedition. Although **short in stature, he was strongly built, vigorous and active**, with thin lips and a **saturnine complexion**. Beale and his men were said to have been a "**young and gallant band**". Beale is described as being, "...**about six feet in height**, with jet black eyes and hair of the same color, worn longer than was the style at that time. His **form was symmetrical**, and gave evidence of **unusual strength and activity**; but his distinguishing feature was a **dark and swarthy complexion**, as if much exposure to the sun and weather had thoroughly tanned and discolored him." Both men were natural leaders. Rodman fought Indians and grizzly bears, Morriss speculated that Beale was killed by Indians or grizzly bears.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Rodman</b>	<b>Beale</b>
Age	25	Young
Height	Short	Six Feet
Build	Strongly Built	Symmetrical
Activity Level	Vigorous and Active	Unusual Strength and Activity
Complexion	Saturnine	Dark and Swarthy

The two stories contain secondary characters, Robert Morriss and Andrew Thorton, who are also very similar heroic figures. Both men were Virginians of character who came from excellent families. Morriss was gentle and courteous but also stern and determined, if necessary. He was a man who sympathized with the poor, possessed the confidence and affection of his friends and could be trusted with a secret. Thorton was a man of such straight-forward earnestness that no one could doubt his word; he also could be trusted not to ridicule a confidant who expressed a love for the natural beauty of the country. The admiration and confidence of Beale for Morriss, and Rodman for Thorton, resulted in the sharing of confidences. Beale shared with Morriss the details of his discovery of the treasure, while Rodman found in Thorton, “precisely the kind of individual to whom (Rodman) could unburthen (his) full heart...” regarding his love of nature.

Morriss and Thorton also experienced parallel paths in dealing with adversity. Morriss suffered financial ruin as a tobacco merchant but with the help of his wife and the sincere sympathy of the community, rebuilt his life by managing a hotel. Thorton contracted a serious illness and almost died but with the help of friends who did everything for his comfort that could be done, he survived and recovered.

Another member of the Rodman party, Alexander Wormley, also a Virginian, “thought of nothing else than of finding gold mines in some of the fastness of the country.” The Beale party realized Wormley’s dream when they discovered gold and silver in a cleft of rocks north of Santa Fe.

Although the expeditions occurred twenty-six years apart, both parties moved across the United States, albeit one to the Northwest and the other to Santa Fe, in nearly identical fashion. For example, both leaders contemplated their journey in January, organized a party of adventurous men in the spring, started the expedition with a short, preliminary trip, began the primary journey within two weeks of one another and established winter quarters at the same time. Both excursions were originally established to hunt game, Rodman’s party sought to hunt and trap peltries for profit, while the Beale party hunted solely for pleasure. Interestingly, both stories contain a similar description of how the profits/spoils are to be divided. Rodman made an arrangement with the five Greeley brothers “which ensured them an **equal share** with Pierre and myself in the profits of the enterprise – that is to say, we divided the proceeds into **three parts...**”. The Beale party split the spoils after their discovery by entering into an agreement to consolidate all gold and silver and “each to be entitled to an **equal share...**” constituting one of “**thirty-one equal parts**” (emphasis added). Perhaps most curious, both leaders discovered their treasure, Rodman “natural beauty” and Beale gold and silver, at precisely the same time, in the middle of April of the following spring of the journey.

The similarities in the words and action sequences that appear in both *Julius Rodman* and *The Beale Papers*, appear to be more than just coincidence.



Consider the following comparisons:

### The Beale Papers v. The Journal of Julius Rodman

The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
January 4, 1817	Journey contemplated	Some five years since I, in connection with several friends, who, like myself, were fond of adventure, and if mixed with a little danger all the more acceptable, <b>determined to visit the great Western plains and enjoy ourselves in hunting buffalo, grizzly bears, and such other game</b> as the country would afford. [From letter dated January 4, 1822].	January 1791	Journey contemplated	After the death of my father (Fall 1790), and both sisters (Winter 1790), I took no farther interest in our plantation at the Point, and sold it, at a complete sacrifice, to M. Junot. <b>I had often thought of trapping up the Missouri, and resolved now to go on an expedition up the river, and try to procure peltries,</b> which I was sure of being able to sell at Petite Cote to the private agents of the Northwest Fur Company.
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Spring 1817	Number of Company	On account of Indians and other dangers incident to such an undertaking, we determined to raise a <b>party</b> of not less than <b>thirty individuals...</b>	Spring 1791	Number of Company	<b>Our party consisted of fifteen persons.</b>

The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Spring 1817	Composition of company	...we determined to raise a party of not less than thirty individuals of good character and standing, who would be <b>pleasant companions</b> , and financially able to encounter the expense. They all appeared to be gentlemen, with refined and courteous <b>manners</b> , and with a <b>free and independent air</b> , which rendered them <b>particularly attractive</b> .	Spring 1791	Composition of company	...five were Canadiens from Petite Cote...they were good boatman, and <b>excellent companions</b> ...six men ...from Mississippi boat..were brothers... <b>bolder or finer looking</b> persons it would have been difficult to find. Other two recruits were a negro named Toby..able bodied and capable..and Andrew Thorton, a Virginian...of excellent family.. <b>roving and adventurous propensity</b> . Pierre possessed great sagacity and ...courage...his <b>manners</b> were sometimes extravagant and boisterous
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Spring 1817 (Early April)	Begin first leg of journey	The company being formed, we forthwith commenced our preparations, and, early in April, 1817, left old Virginia...	Spring 1791 (February/March)	Begin first leg of journey	It was the middle of March when we first reached Petite Cote, and we did not succeed in getting ready until the last of May.

The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Spring 1817	Motives of company	What motives...except the natural love of daring adventure, with its consequent excitement...they were infatuated with the dangers, and the <b>wild and roving character of their lives</b> , the charms of which lured them farther and farther from civilization...	Spring 1791	Motives of company	Andrew Thorton, a Virginian...did not seem to have any object in view, more than the gratification of a <b>roving and adventurous propensity</b> ...As for the rest of the crew, I have no doubt in the world that the pecuniary benefit to be afforded by the expedition was the last thing upon which they speculated.
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
April 1817	Preparations	The company being formed, we forthwith commenced our preparations, and, early in April, 1817, left old Virginia for St. Louis, Mo., where we expected to purchase the necessary <b>outfits</b> , procure a guide and two or three servants, and obtain such information and advice as might be beneficial hereafter.	Early Spring 1791	Preparations	When Pierre discovered that I had not entirely made up my mind what course to pursue after my father's death, he urged me to <b>fit out</b> a small expedition for the river, in which he would accompany me...we proceeded to Petite Cote for the purpose of getting our equipments, and raising as many men as we could for the voyage.

The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
May 19th, 1817	Party leaves St. Louis	All was done as intended, and we left St. Louis the 19th of May, to be absent two years, our objective being Santa Fe, which we intended to reach in the ensuing Fall, and there establish ourselves in winter quarters.	June 3, 1791	Party leaves Petite Cote	On the third of (June 1791) we bid adieu to our friends at Petite Cote, and started on our expedition.
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Summer 1817	Procure guide	...we expected to purchase the necessary outfits, <b>procure a guide</b> and two or three servants...	Summer 1791	Procure interpreter	...we hoped to <b>procure an Indian</b> occasionally to interpret...
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
December 1, 1817	Arrive Santa Fe - Establish winter quarters	...we left St. Louis the 19th of May, to be absent two years, our objective point being Santa Fe, which we intended to reach in the ensuing Fall, and there establish ourselves in <b>winter quarters</b> . About the first of December we reached our	December 1, 1791	Company builds fort at site of old Ricara villages-takes up winter quarters	By the last of October...the party made their way to a small creek which they designated as Otter creek, and ...built a log fort and took up their <b>quarters for the winter</b> .

		destination, Santa Fe, and prepared for a long and welcome rest from the fatigues of our journey.			
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Winter 1817	Nothing of interest	<b>Nothing of interest occurred during the winter</b> , and of this little Mexican town we soon became heartily tired.	Winter 1791	Nothing of importance	We omit the adventures from this period until the tenth of April. By the last of October, <b>nothing of importance happening in the interval...</b>
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Early March, 1818	Short excursion	Early in March some of the party, to vary the monotony of their lives, determined upon a short excursion, for the purpose of hunting and examining the country around us.	April 10, 1792	Set out on voyage again	...we bade adieu to Little Snake and his band, with unfeigned regret, and set out, after breakfast, on our voyage.
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Middle April 1818	Discovery	One day...the party encamped in a small ravine, some 250 to 300 miles to the north of Santa Fe..when one of the men	April 12, 13, 14, and 15, 1792	Discovery	I found myself...more willing to turn aside in pursuit of ...that <b>deep and most intense excitement</b> with which I surveyed

		discovered in a cleft of the rocks something that had the appearance of gold. Upon showing it to the others it was pronounced to be gold, and <b>much excitement was the natural consequence.</b>			the wonders and majestic beauties of the wilderness.
The Beale Papers-Date	The Beale Papers-Action	The Beale Papers-Quote	Julius Rodman-Date	Julius Rodman-Action	Julius Rodman-Quote
Middle April 1818	Emotion of gold mining	All the <b>pleasures</b> and temptations which had lured them to the plains were now forgotten, and visions of boundless wealth and future grandeur were the only ideas entertained. Everything necessary for the <b>prosecution</b> of the work had been obtained...	Middle April 1792	Emotion of wilderness journey	...evidences of the feeling which..pervaded us all occurred during the <b>prosecution</b> of the voyage..Men who had traveled thousands of miles through the howling wilderness, beset by horrible dangers..enduring the most heart-rending privations..would leave..an entire cache of..beaver skin rather than forego the <b>pleasure</b> of pushing up some romantic..river

#### IV. Poe's Letters

Poe inserted letters into eight of his tales of fiction and his prose poem, *Eureka*. Letter writing conventions of the 1800's notwithstanding, there are some interesting similarities between the Beale letters and those written by Poe. Compare the greetings, terms of endearment and closings in some of these inserted letters with the Beale letters.

### Letters that appear in Poe's Fiction

1. Sir,- My **friend**, Mr. P\_\_\_\_, will hand you this note...With sentiments of **perfect respect**, Your most humble servant, JOHAN HERMANN (*Mystification*)
2. **MY DEAR----** Why have I not seen you for so long a time?...**Ever yours**, WILLIAM LEGRAND (*The Gold Bug*)
3. Monsieur Simpson vill pardonne me for not compose de butefulle tong of his contree so vell as might...EUGENIE LALANDE (*The Spectacles*)
4. Charles Goodfellow, **Esquire---**Dear Sir---In conformity with an order transmitted to our firm about two months since, by our **esteemed** correspondent, Mr. Barnabus Shuttleworthy, we have the honor of forwarding this morning, to your address, a double box of Chateau-Margaux, of the antelope brand, violet seal...We remain, sir, Your most ob'nt ser'ts, Hoggs, Frogs, Bogs & Co. (*Thou Art The Man*)
5. Come to me by all means, **my dear good friend**, as soon as you receive this...**Yours Ever**, PONNONNER (*Some Words With A Mummy*)
6. **MY DEAR P----**, You may as well come now. VALDEMAR (*The Case of M. Valdemar*)
7. TO THE EDITORS OF THE LADY'S BOOK:-- I have the honor of sending you, for your magazine, an article which I hope you will be able to comprehend rather more distinctly than I do myself...Truly yours, EDGAR A. POE (*Mellonta Tauta*)  
Now, **my dear friend---**now, for your sins, you are to suffer the infliction of a long gossiping letter...**Yours Everlastingly**, PUNDITA (*Mellonta Tauta*)
8. To their Excellencies Von Underdul and Rubadub, President and Vice-President of the States' College of Astronomers, in the city of Rotterdam. Your Excellencies may perhaps be able to remember an humble artizan, by name Hans Pfall, and by occupation a mender of bellows, who, with three others, disappeared from Rotterdam, about five years ago, in a manner which must have been considered unaccountable...I have the honor to be &c., your Excellencies very humble servant. HANS PFALL
9. Do you know, **my dear friend**, says the writer, addressing, no doubt, a contemporary-- Do you know that it is scarcely more than eight or nine hundred years ago since the metaphysicians first consented to relieve the people of the singular fancy that there exist *but two practicable roads to Truth?* (*Eureka*)

### The Beale Letters

1. *The Beale Papers*, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1822 letter:

*Robt. Morris, Esq.: My Esteemed Friend:* - Ever since leaving my comfortable quarters at your house I have been journeying to this place, and only succeeded in reaching it yesterday... With kindest wishes for your most excellent wife,

compliments to the ladies, a good word to enquiring friends, if there be any, and assurances of my highest **esteem** for yourself, **I remain as ever,**

**Your sincere friend, T.J.B.**

2. *The Beale Papers*, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1822 letter:

**My Dear Friend Morriss:** - You will, doubtless, be surprised when you discover, from a perusal of this letter, the importance of the trust confided to you, and the confidence reposed in your honor, by parties whom you have never seen, and whose names even you have never heard...I trust, **my dear Mr. Morriss**, that we may meet many times in the future, but if the Fates forbid, with my last communication I would assure you of the **entire respect** and confidence of

**Your friend, T.J.B.**

3. *The Beale Papers*, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1822 letter:

**Dear Mr. Morriss.** - You will find in one of the papers, written in cipher, the names of all my associates, who are each entitled to an equal part of our treasure, and opposite to the names of each one will be found the names and residences of the relatives and others, to whom they devise their respective portions.

## V. Poe's Short Stories: A Comparison of Length

In *Criticism: Hawthorn's Twice Told Tales*, Poe suggests the perfect length for a prose tale as being that which can be read at one sitting:

“Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfil the demands of high genius- should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion- we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from totality. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading, would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fulness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences- resulting from weariness or interruption.”

Poe practiced what he preached. A review of Poe's tales of fiction reveals that, with the exception of his one novel and two “journals”, Poe's short stories averaged about eleven pages (4,600 words). Interestingly, his five ratiocinative tales, *The Mystery of Marie Roget* (19,600), *The Gold-Bug* (14,400), *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (14,000), *The Purloined Letter* (7,400) and *Thou Art The Man* (5,800) are among his



longest, averaging about thirty pages (12,000 words). *The Beale Papers* contains about 11,000 words, including the 1322 words of the Declaration of Independence.

A listing of Poe's longest tales, with year published and word count:

<i>The Mystery of Marie Roget</i>	1842	19,600
<i>The Gold-Bug</i>	1843	14,400
<i>The Murders in the Rue Morgue</i>	1841	14,000
<b><i>The Beale Papers</i></b>	<b>1885</b>	<b>11,000</b>
<i>The Spectacles</i>	1844	9,800
<i>The Literary Life of Thingum Bob</i>	1844	8,200
<i>William Wilson</i>	1839	8,000
<i>The Fall of the House of Usher</i>	1839	7,600
<i>How To Write A Blackwood Article</i>	1839	7,600
<i>The Purloined Letter</i>	1844	7,400
<i>The System of Dr, Tarr and Professor Feather</i>	1844	7,200
<i>The Thousand-and-Second Tale of Scheherazade</i>	1845	7,200
<i>Some Words with a Mummy</i>	1845	6,800
<i>A Descent Into the Maelstrom</i>	1841	6,600
<i>Bon-Bon</i>	1832	6,400

## VI. Poe's Favorite Number

Undoubtedly the number 750,000 was never far from Poe's thoughts. This was the value placed by Poe on the estate of his "adopted" father, John Allan. On August 20, 1835, Poe wrote to his cousin William Poe regarding family matters. Included in this letter was Poe's valuation of the Allan fortune at \$750,000. Allan never acknowledged his son in his will and Poe was reduced from affluence to a life of poverty.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the Beale treasure is valued by the anonymous *Beale Papers* author at over three-quarters of a million dollars:

Complete in themselves, they are respectfully submitted to the public, with the hope that all that is dark in them may receive light, and that the treasure, **amounting to more than three-quarters of a million**, which has rested so long unproductive of good, in the hands of a proper person, may eventually accomplish its mission. (*The Beale Papers*)

### Poe's \$750,000 Letter

***To: William Poe'***

Richmond Aug: 20, 1835

Dear Sir,

I received your very kind and complimentary letter only a few minutes ago, and hasten to reply.

I have been long aware that a connexion existed between us—without knowing precisely in what manner. Your letter however has satisfied me that we are second cousins. I will briefly relate to you what little I have been able to ascertain, or rather to remember, in relation to our families. That I know but little on this head will not appear so singular to you when I relate the circumstances connected with my own particular history. But to return. My paternal grandfather was Gen: David Poe of Baltimore—originally of Ireland. I know that he had brothers—two I believe. But my knowledge extends only to one, Mr George Poe. My grandfather married, when very young, a Miss Elizabeth Carnes of Lancaster, Pa, by whom he had 5 sons—viz: George (who died while an infant) John, William, David, and Samuel: also two daughters Maria and Eliza. Of the sons none married with the exception of David. He married a Mrs Elizabeth Hopkins, an English lady, by whom he had 3 children, Henry, myself, and Rosalie. Henry died about 4 years ago—Rosalie and myself remain. The daughters of Gen: David Poe, Maria, and Eliza, both married young. Maria married Mr Wm Clemm, a gentleman of high standing and some property in Baltimore. He was a widower with 5 children—and had, after his marriage to Maria Poe 3 others—viz: 2 girls and a boy, of which a girl Virginia, and a boy Henry are still living. Mr Clemm died about 9 years ago without any property whatever, leaving his widow desolate, and unprotected, and little likely to receive protection or assistance from the relatives of her husband—most of whom were opposed to the marriage in the first instances—and whose opposition was no doubt aggravated by the petty quarrels frequently occurring between Maria's children, and Mr Cs children by his former wife. This Maria is the one of whom you speak, and to whom I will allude again presently. Eliza the second daughter of the General, married a Mr

Henry Herring of Baltimore, a man of unprincipled character, and by whom she ha[d sever]al children. She is now dead, and Mr Herring, having married ag[ain...] communication with the family of his (sisters) wife's sister, Mrs [Eliza Poe] the widow of General D. Poe, and the mother of Maria, died on[ly 6 week]s ago, at the age of 79. She had for the last 8 years of her life been [confine]d entirely to bed—never, i[n] any instance, leaving it during that time. She [h]ad been paralyzed, and suffered from many other complaints—her daughter Maria attending her during her long & tedious illness with a Christian and martyr-like fortitude, and with a constancy of attention, and unremitting affection, which must exalt her character in the eyes of all who know her. Maria is now the only survivor of my grandfather's family.

In relation to my grandfather's brother George I know but little. Jacob Poe of Frederick town, Maryland, is his son—also George Poe of Mobile—and I presume your father Wm Poe. G Jacob Poe has two sons Neilson, and George—also one [page 2] daughter Amelia.

My father David died when I was in the second year of my age, and when my sister Rosalie was an infant in arms. Our mother died a few weeks before him. Thus we were left orphans at an age when the hand of a parent is so peculiarly requisite. At this period my grandfather's circumstances were at a low ebb, he from great wealth having been reduced to poverty. It was therefore in his power to do little for us. My brother Henry he took however under his charge, while myself and Rosalie were adopted by gentlemen in Richmond, where we were at the period of our parents' death. I was adopted by Mr Jn Allan of Richmond, Va: and she by Mr Wm McKenzie of the same place. Rosalie is still living at Mr McK still unmarried, and is treated as one of the family, being a favourite with all. I accompanied Mr Allan to England in my 7<sup>th</sup> year, and remained there at school 5 years since which I resided with Mr A. until a few years ago. The first Mrs. A. having died, and Mr A having married again I found my situation not so comfortable as before, and obtained a Cadet's appointment at W. Point. During my stay there Mr A died suddenly and left me—nothing. No will was found among his papers. I have accordingly been thrown entirely upon my own resources. Brought up to no profession, and educated in the expectation of an immense fortune (**Mr A having been worth \$750,000**) the blow has been a heavy one, and I had nearly succumbed to its influence, and yielded to despair. But by the exertion of much resolution I am now beginning to look upon the matter in a less serious light, and although struggling still with many embarrassments, am enabled to keep up my spirits. I have lately obtained the Editorship of the Southern Messenger, and may probably yet do well.

Mrs Thompson, your aunt, is still living in Baltimore. George Poe of Baltimore allows her a small income.

In conclusion, I beg leave to assure you that whatever aid you may have it in your power to bestow upon Mrs Clemm will be given to one who deserves every kindness and attention. Would to God! That I could at this moment aid her. She is now, whi[le] I write, struggling without friends, without money, and without health to support [herself] and a children. I sincerely pray God that the words which I am [writing] may be the means of inducing you to unite wit[h] your brothers a[nd...fri]ends, and send her just now, and which, unless it reach her soonwill, [I] am afraid, reach her too late. Entreating your attention to this subject I remain

Yours very truly & affectionately

Edgar A. Poe

{Emphasis added}

## VII. Summary

The observations set forth in this paper will never conclusively establish the identity of the author of *The Beale Papers*. They can, however, provide hints that may ultimately lead to a solution of this fascinating enigma. In evaluating the significance of the data presented above, it may be helpful to consider Poe's own observations regarding this type of analysis. In *The Mystery of Marie Roget*, Poe addressed the evaluation of several clues at a crime scene:

"... it is not that the corpse was found to have the garters of the missing girl, or found to have her shoes, or her bonnet, or the flowers of her bonnet, or her feet, or a peculiar mark upon the arm, or her general size and appearance – it is that the corpse had each, and *all collectively*."

One, two or five similarities to Poe's style may be dismissed as coincidence. But when the apparent connection to Poe exceeds thirty or more examples, then, perhaps, a deliberative process is at work.

With respect to the identity of the author of *The Beale Papers*, there appear to be three possibilities:

### **1. The story has no connection to Edgar Poe**

The possibility that all of the apparent connections to Edgar Poe in *The Beale Papers* occurred *by chance*, appears unlikely. There are too many similarities to Poe's word usage, writing style and life experiences for the *Beale Papers* to accidentally possess all of the apparent connections set forth above. As Poe suggests in *Marie Roget*, the evidence must be considered collectively.

### **2. The story was designed to appear as if written by Edgar Poe, but is otherwise unconnected to him**

Discounting Poe as the author, the most logical explanation for the many apparent connections to Poe in *The Beale Papers* is that Poe was deliberately mimicked or used as a model by the true author. The many connections to Poe discussed in this paper suggest a deliberate process is at work. Why would someone mimic Poe? Great writers are mimicked all the time. Maybe the author was an admirer of Poe. Whatever the reason, the "mimic theory" is strongly supported by the fact that the story was published thirty-six years after Poe's death. However, *The Beale Papers* contains one reference to "the confederate war". This reference is counterintuitive to a deliberate attempt to mimic Poe. Why go to all the trouble of mirroring Poe's word choices and other preferences but insert a reference to an event that occurred after his death? One might also ask why someone would go to such lengths to imitate Poe and then not sign Poe's name as the author.

### 3. Edgar Poe is the author of *The Beale Papers*

Despite the fact that the story was published thirty-six years after his death, Poe may be the author of *The Beale Papers*. The story possesses that hint of genius that only a great writer such as Poe could have created. Since 1885, *The Beale Papers* has attained legendary status among cryptographers and treasure hunters.

The story also has the air of a hoax, Poe's specialty. G. R. Thompson summarized Poe's literary style as being that of "a hoaxer". His description of a literary hoax applies perfectly to *The Beale Papers*:

"A hoax is usually thought of as an attempt to deceive others about the truth or reality of an event. But a literary hoax attempts to persuade the reader not merely of the reality of false events but of the reality of false literary intentions or circumstances-that a work is by a certain writer **or of a certain age when it is not...**" (emphasis added)<sup>vi</sup>

In his time, there were few better than Poe at deceiving the public by perpetrating a literary hoax. Poe's April 13, 1844 newspaper report in *The Sun*, later entitled *The Balloon Hoax*, convinced many that the Atlantic had been crossed in three days by hot air balloon. In *Von Kempelen and His Discovery*, Poe persuaded chemists and treasure hunters alike, of the existence of an invention that converted metal into gold. *The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar* was viewed by much of the public, particularly within the scientific community, as a factual report of a conversation with a dead man who had been mesmerized prior to dying. *The Journal of Julius Rodman* was so convincing that the United States Congress made reference to it as a factual report in an official government study.

If Poe did write *The Beale Papers* with an eye towards the future, he would likely have arranged for its publication after his death. Certainly, he would have needed some assistance. There is a very slight hint in *The Beale Papers* of how Poe may have arranged to publish from the grave:

"The reasons which influenced him in selecting me for the trust, he gave, and were in substance as follows:

First: Friendship for myself and family, whom he would benefit if he could.

Second: The knowledge that I was young and in circumstances to afford leisure for the task imposed.

Finally: A confidence that I would regard his instruction, and carry out his wishes regarding his charge."

During his lifetime, Poe may have selected a young family friend whose discretion was assured. This young aid would "regard his instruction, and carry out his wishes" concerning the time, location and manner in which *The Beale Papers* was to be published. One interesting observation concerning the dating of *The Beale Papers* is that, with the exception of the Confederate war reference, the story could easily have been

written in the 1840's, as most of the action takes place between 1817 and 1822. Poe was a master at using time to make his readers unsure of where and when the action took place in his stories. He could have easily arranged for his loyal, young, confidant to place names and events in *The Beale Papers* that had occurred after his death, solely to deceive his future readers.

By deceiving the public as to the date the story was actually written, Poe would have fooled the "mob", and his intellectual critics, one last time. He would get the last laugh! By sending a coded message to men and woman of the future, in essence, writing from the grave, Poe may have seen himself as acquiring a degree of immortality.

The fact that *The Beale Papers* contains two of the oldest unsolved cryptograms also points to Poe. Secret writings abound in Poe's stories and he possessed a life-long interest in cryptography. Poe wrote one of the greatest treasure hunt stories, *The Gold-Bug*, which required that a cryptogram be deciphered for the treasure to be found.

Poe also loved to put "secret" messages in his writings. He wrote a poem in which the name of his "Valentine" was hidden in the verse. The first letter of the first line, second letter of the second line, third letter of the third line, etc., spelled the name Frances Sargent Osgood. He gave his own birthday to the main character in *William Wilson*. The descriptions of school grounds and teachers in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and *William Wilson* came from Poe's life experiences.

Perhaps he is sending a hidden message to those who attempt to solve the riddle of *The Beale Papers*. After all, Poe's initials, EAP, can be found twice in the title:

### The Beale Papers

#### Conclusion

In determining who wrote *The Beale Papers*, there are three possibilities:

1. The story has no connection to Edgar Poe.
2. The story is designed to appear as if written by Edgar Poe, but is otherwise unconnected to him.
3. Edgar Poe is the author of *The Beale Papers*.

The evidence set forth above suggests that either number 2 or number 3 is correct. There is insufficient evidence, however, to determine which of these two options is the correct answer. There is little doubt, though, that continued research of this enigma is justified by the possibility that Edgar Poe, one of the world's greatest writers, is, in fact, the author of *The Beale Papers*.

## Notes

### i. **Edgar Poe’s Seventy Tales of Fiction (with date published and approximate length of story)**

Novel and “Journals”	Length
<i>The Unparalleled Adventures of One Hans Pfall</i> 1835	20,000
<i>The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym</i> 1837	70,000
<i>The Journal of Julius Rodman</i> 1840	26,800
<b><i>The Beale Papers</i> 1885 (Written 1840’s?)</b>	<b>11,000</b>
<b>Tales</b>	
<i>Metzengerstein</i> 1832	3,400
<i>The Duc De L'Omelette</i> 1832	1,400
<i>A Tale of Jerusalem</i> 1832	1,600
<i>Loss of Breath</i> 1832	5,000
<i>Bon-Bon</i> 1832	6,400
<i>Four Beasts In One</i> 1833	3,200
<i>MS. Found in a Bottle</i> 1833	4,200
<i>The Assnigation</i> 1834	4,800
<i>Lionizing</i> 1835	2,200
<i>Shadow – A Parable</i> 1835	1,000
<i>Silence - A Fable</i> 1835	1,400
<i>Berenice</i> 1835	3,200
<i>Morella</i> 1835	2,200
<i>King Pest</i> 1835	4,800
<i>Mystification</i> 1837	3,400
<i>Ligeia</i> 1838	6,200
<i>How to Write a Blackwood Article</i> 1838	7,600
<i>The Devil in the Belfry</i> 1839	3,400
<i>The Man That Was Used Up</i> 1839	4,000
<i>The Fall of the House of Usher</i> 1839	7,600
<i>William Wilson</i> 1839	8,000
<i>The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion</i> 1839	2,400
<i>Why the Little Frenchman Wears His Hand in a Sling</i> 1840	2,200
<i>The Business Man</i> 1840	3,600
<i>The Philosophy of Furniture</i> 1840	2,400
<i>The Man of the Crowd</i> 1840	3,600
<i>The Murders in the Rue Morgue</i> 1841	13,800
<i>A Descent into the Maelstrom</i> 1841	6,600

<i>The Colloquy of Monos and Una</i> 1841	3,600
<i>Never Bet the Devil Your Head</i> 1841	3,800
<i>Eleonora</i> 1841	2,400
<i>Three Sundays in a Week</i> 1841	2,600
<i>The Oval Portrait</i> 1842	1,200
<i>The Masque of the Red Death</i> 1842	2,400
<i>The Pit and the Pendulum</i> 1842	5,800
<i>The Mystery of Marie Roget</i> 1842	19,600
<i>The Tell-Tale Heart</i> 1843	2,000
<i>The Gold-Bug</i> 1843	14,400
<i>The Black Cat</i> 1843	3,800
<i>Diddling</i> 1843	4,200
<i>The Spectacles</i> 1844	9,800
<i>The Oblong Box</i> 1844	4,600
<i>A Tale of the Ragged Mountains</i> 1844	4,200
<i>The Premature Burial</i> 1844	5,400
<i>The Purloined Letter</i> 1844	7,400
<i>The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether</i> 1844	7,200
<i>Mesmeric Revelation</i> 1844	4,000
<i>"Thou Art the Man"</i> 1844	5,800
<i>The Balloon-Hoax</i> 1844	5,200
<i>The Angel of the Odd</i> 1844	3,800
<i>The Literary Life of Thingum Bob, Esq.</i> 1844	8,200
<i>The Thousand-and-Second Tale of Scheherazade</i> 1845	7,200
<i>Some Words with a Mummy</i> 1845	6,800
<i>The Power of Words</i> 1845	1,600
<i>The Imp of the Perverse</i> 1845	2,400
<i>The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar</i> 1845	3,800
<i>The Sphinx</i> 1846	1,800
<i>The Cask of Amontillado</i> 1846	2,600
<i>The Domain of Arnheim</i> 1846	6,200
<i>Mellonta Tauta</i> 1849	5,800
<i>Landor's Cottage</i> 1849	4,800
<i>Hop-Frog</i> 1849	3,800
<i>Von Kempelen and His Discovery</i> 1849	2,800
<i>X-ing a Paragrab'</i> 1849	2,600
<i>The Light-House</i> 1849	600



ii. The Beale Papers

## The Beale Papers

containing Authentic Statements regarding the

TREASURE BURIED in 1819 and 1821,

near Bufords, in Bedford County, Virginia,

and Which Has Never Been Recovered.

Lynchburg:

Virginian Book and Job Print 1885.

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1885, by J. B. Ward, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

The following details of an incident that happened many years ago, but which has lost none of its interest on that account, are now given to the public for the first time. Until now, for reasons which will be apparent to every one, all knowledge of this affair was confined to a very limited circle -- to the writer's immediate family, and to one old and valued friend, upon whose discretion he could always rely; nor was it ever intended that it should travel beyond that circle; but circumstances over which he has no control, pecuniary embarrassments of a pressing character, and duty to a dependent family requiring his undivided attention, force him to abandon a task to which he has devoted the best years of his life, but which seems as far from accomplishment as at the start. He is, therefore, compelled, however unwillingly, to relinquish to others the elucidation of the Beale papers, not doubting that of the many who will give the subject attention, some one, through fortune or accident, will speedily solve their mystery and secure the prize which has eluded him.

It can be readily imagined that this course was not determined upon all at once; regardless of the entreaties of his family and the persistent advice of his friend, who were formerly as sanguine as himself, he stubbornly continued his investigations, until absolute want stared him in the face and forced him to yield to their persuasions. Having now lost all hope of benefit from this source himself, he is not unwilling that others may receive it, and only hopes that the prize may fall to some poor, but honest man, who will use his discovery not solely for the promotion of his own enjoyment, but for the welfare of others.

Until the writer lost all hope of ultimate success, he toiled faithfully at his work; unlike any other pursuit with practical and natural results, a charm attended it, independent of the ultimate benefit he expected, and the possibility of success lent an interest and excitement to the work not to be resisted. It would be difficult to portray the delight he experienced when accident revealed to him the explanation of the paper marked "2."

Unmeaning, as this had hitherto been, it was now fully explained, and no difficulty was apprehended in mastering the others; but this accident, affording so much pleasure at the time, was a most unfortunate one for him, as it induced him to neglect family, friends, and all legitimate pursuits for what has proved, so far, the veriest illusion.

It will be seen by a perusal of Mr. Beale's letter to Mr. Morriss that he promised, under certain contingences, such as failure to see or communicate with him in a given time, to furnish a key by which the papers would be fully explained. As the failure to do either actually occurred, and the promised explanation has never been received, it may possibly remain in the hands of some relative or friend of Beale's, or some other person engaged in the enterprise with him. That they would attach no importance to a seemingly unintelligible writing seems quite natural; but their attention being called to them by the publication of this narrative, may result in eventually bringing to light the missing paper.

Mr. Beale, who deposited with Mr. Morriss the papers which form the subject of this history, is described as being a gentleman well educated, evidently of good family, and with popular manners. What motives could have influenced him and so many others to risk their health and their lives in such an undertaking, except the natural love of daring adventure, with its consequent excitement, we can only conjecture. We may suppose, and indeed we have his word for so doing, that they were infatuated with the dangers, and with the wild and roving character of their lives, the charms of which lured them farther and farther from civilization, until their lives were sacrificed to their temerity. This was the opinion of Mr. Morriss, and in this way only can we account for the fact that the treasure for which they sacrificed so much, constituting almost fabulous wealth, lies abandoned and unclaimed for more than half a century. Should any of my readers be more fortunate than myself in discovering its place of concealment, I shall not only rejoice with them, but feel that I have at least accomplished something in contributing to the happiness of others.

## **THE LATE ROBERT MORRISS**

Robert Morriss, the custodian of the Beale papers, was born in 1778, in the State of Maryland, but removed at an early age, with his family, to Loudoun county, Va., where, in 1803, he married Miss Sarah Mitchell, a fine looking and accomplished young lady of that county. In obtaining such a wife Mr. Morriss was peculiarly fortunate, as her subsequent career fully demonstrated. As a wife she was without reproach, as a generous and sympathizing woman she was without an equal; the poor will long remember her charities, and lament the friend they have lost. Shortly after his removal to Lynchburg, Mr. Morriss engaged in the mercantile business, and shortly thereafter he became a purchaser and shipper of tobacco to an extent hitherto unknown in this section. In these pursuits he was eminently successful for several years, and speedily accumulated a comfortable independence. It was during this period of his success that he erected the first brick building of which the town could boast, and which still stands on Main street, a monument to his enterprise. His private residence, the house now owned and occupied by Max Guggenheimer, Esq., at the head of Main street, I think he also built. There the most unbounded hospitality reigned, and every facility for enjoyment was furnished. The elite of the town assembled there more frequently than elsewhere, and there are now living some whose most pleasant recollections are associated with that period.

The happiness of Mr. Morriss, however, was of short duration, and reverses came when they were least expected. Heavy purchases of tobacco, at ruinous figures, in anticipation of an upward market, which visions were never realized, swept from him in a moment the savings of years, and left him nothing save his honor and the sincere sympathy of the community with which to begin the battle anew.

It was at this time that Mrs. Morriss exhibited the loveliest traits of her character. Seemingly unmindful of her condition, with a smiling face and cheering words, she so encouraged her husband that he became almost reconciled to his fate. Thrown thus upon his own resources, by the advice of his wife, he leased for a term of years the Washington Hotel, known now as the Arlington, on Church street, and commenced the business of hotel keeping. His kind disposition, strict probity, excellent management, and well ordered household, soon rendered him famous as a host, and his reputation extended even to other States. His was the house par excellence of the town, and no fashionable assemblages met at any other. Finding, in a few years, that his experiment was successful and his business remunerative, he removed to the Franklin Hotel, now the Norvell House, the largest and best arranged in the city. This house he conducted for many years, enjoying the friendship and countenance of the first men of the country. Amongst his guests and devoted personal friends Jackson, Clay, Coles, Witcher, Chief Justice Marshall, and a host of others scarcely less distinguished, might be enumerated. But it was not the wealthy and distinguished alone who appreciated Mr. Morriss; the poor and lowly had blessings for the man who sympathized with their misfortunes, and was ever ready to relieve their distress. Many poor but worthy families, whose descendants are now in our midst, can remember the fact that his table supplied their daily food, not for days and weeks only, but for months at a time; and as a farther instance of his forbearance and unparalleled generosity, there are now living those who will testify to the fact that he permitted a boarder in no way connected with him, to remain in his house for more than twenty years, and until he died, without ever receiving the slightest remuneration, and that he was never made to feel otherwise than as a favored guest.

In manner Mr. Morriss was courteous and gentle; but when occasion demanded, could be stern and determined, too; he was emphatically the master of his house, and from his decision there was no appeal. As an "old Virginia gentleman," he was sans peur et sans reproche, and to a remarkable extent possessed the confidence and affection of his friends. After a chequered and eventful life of more than eighty years, passed mostly in business, which brought him in contact with all classes of people, he died, lamented by all, and leaving not an enemy behind. His death, which occurred in 1863, was just two years subsequent to that of his wife. It can be truly said that no persons ever lived in a community for such a length of time who accomplished more good during their lives, or whose death was more universally regretted.

It was the unblemished character of the man, and the universal confidence reposed in him, that induced Beale to entrust him with his secret, and in certain contingencies select him for a most important trust; that his confidence was not misplaced, every one remembering Mr. Morriss will acknowledge.

It was in 1862, the second year of the Confederate war, that Mr. Morriss first intimated the possession of a secret that was destined to make some persons wealthy. At first he was not very communicative, nor did I press him to reveal what he seemed to speak of with reluctance; in a few weeks, however, his mind seemed changed, and he voluntarily

proffered his confidence. Inviting me to his room, with no one to interrupt us, he gave me an outline of the matter, which soon enlisted my interest and created an intense longing to learn more. About this time, however, affairs of importance required my presence in Richmond, and prevented further communication between us until after my return, when I found him ready to resume the interesting subject. A private interview was soon arranged, and, after several preliminaries had been complied with, the papers upon which this history is based were delivered into my possession.

The reasons which influenced him in selecting me for the trust, he gave, and were in substance as follows: First: Friendship for myself and family, whom he would benefit if he could. Second: The knowledge that I was young and in circumstances to afford leisure for the task imposed; and finally, a confidence that I would regard his instructions, and carry out his wishes regarding his charge. These, and perhaps others, he gave during our frequent conversations upon the subject, and doubtless believed he was conferring a favor which would redound greatly to my advantage. That it has proved otherwise is a misfortune to me, but no fault of his. The conditions alluded to above were that I should devote as much time as was practicable to the papers he had given me; master, if possible, their contents, and if successful in deciphering their meaning and eventually finding the treasure, to appropriate one-half of his portion as a remuneration for my services; the other half to be distributed to certain relatives and connexions of his own, whose names he gave me; the remainder to be held by me in trust for the benefit of such claimants as might at any time appear, and be able to authenticate their claims. This latter amount, to be left intact, subject to such demands, for the space of twenty years, when, if still unclaimed, it should revert to myself or my heirs, as a legacy from himself.

As there was nothing objectionable in this, the required promise was given, and the box and the contents were placed in my possession.

When the writer recalls his anxious hours, his midnight vigils, his toils, his hopes and disappointments, all consequent upon this promise, he can only conclude that the legacy of Mr. Morriss was not as he designed it - a blessing in disguise.

Having assumed the responsibilities and consented to the requirements of Mr. Morriss, I determined to devote as much time to the accomplishment of the task as could be consistently spared from other duties. With this purpose in view, I requested from Mr. Morriss a statement of every particular connected with the affair, or having the slightest bearing upon it, together with such views and opinions of his own as might ultimately benefit me in my researches. In reply, he gave me the following, which I reduced to writing and filed with the papers for future reference:

"It was in the month of January, 1820, while keeping the Washington Hotel, that I first saw and became acquainted with Beale. In company with two others, he came to my house seeking entertainment for himself and friends. Being assured of a comfortable provision for themselves and their horses, Beale stated his intention of remaining for the winter, should nothing occur to alter his plans, but that the gentlemen accompanying him would leave in a few days for Richmond, near which place they resided, and that they were anxious to reach their homes, from which they had long been absent. They all appeared to be gentlemen, well born, and well educated, with refined and courteous manners and with a free and independent air, which rendered them peculiarly attractive.

After remaining a week or ten days, the two left, after expressions of satisfaction with their visit. Beale, who remained, soon became a favored and popular guest; his social disposition and friendly demeanor rendered him extremely popular with every one, particularly the ladies, and a pleasant and friendly intercourse was quickly established between them.

"In person, he was about six feet in height, with jet black eyes and hair of the same color, worn longer than was the style at that time. His form was symmetrical, and gave evidence of unusual strength and activity; but his distinguishing feature was a dark and swarthy complexion, as if much exposure to the sun and weather had thoroughly tanned and discolored him; this, however, did not detract from his appearance, and I thought him the handsomest man I had ever seen. Altogether, he was a model of manly beauty, favored by the ladies and envied by men. To the first he was reverentially tender and polite; to the latter, affable and courteous, when they kept within bounds, but, if they were supercilious or presuming, the lion was aroused, and woe to the man who offended him. Instances of this character occurred more than once while he was my guest, and always resulted in his demanding and receiving an apology. His character soon became universally known, and he was no longer troubled by impertinence.

"Such a man was Thomas J. Beale, as he appeared in 1820, and in his subsequent visit to my house. He registered simply from Virginia, but I am of the impression he was from some western portion of the State. Curiously enough, he never adverted to his family or to his antecedents, nor did I question him concerning them, as I would have done had I dreamed of the interest that in the future would attach to his name.

"He remained with me until about the latter end of the following March, when he left, with the same friends who first accompanied him to my house, and who had returned some days before.

"After this I heard nothing from him until January, 1822, when he once more made his appearance, the same genial and popular gentleman as before, but, if possible, darker and swarthier than ever. His welcome was a genuine one, as all were delighted to see him.

"In the spring, at about the same time, he again left, but before doing so, handed me this box, as he said, contained papers of value and importance; and which he desired to leave in my charge until called for hereafter. Of course, I did not decline to receive them, but little imagined their importance until his letter from St. Louis was received. This letter I carefully preserved, and it will be given with these papers. The box was of iron, carefully locked, and of such weight as to render it a safe depository for articles of value. I placed it in a safe and secure place, where it could not be disturbed until such time as it should be demanded by its owner. The letter alluded to above was the last communication I ever received from Beale, and I never saw him again. I can only suppose that he was killed by Indians, afar from his home, though nothing was heard of his death. His companions, too, must all have shared his fate, as no one has ever demanded the box or claimed his effects. The box was left in my hands in the Spring of 1822, and by authority of his letter, I should have examined its contents in 1832, ten years thereafter, having heard nothing from Beale in the meantime; but it was not until 1845, some twenty-three years after it came into my possession, that I decided upon opening it. During that year I had the lock broken, and with the exception of the two

letters addressed to myself, and some old receipts, found only some unintelligible papers, covered with figures, and totally incomprehensible to me.

"According to his letter, these papers convey all the information necessary to find the treasure he has concealed, and upon you devolves the responsibility of recovering it. Should you succeed you will be amply compensated for your work, and others near and dear to me will likewise be benefitted. The end is worth all your exertions, and I have every hope that success will reward your efforts."

Such, in substance, was the statement of Mr. Morriss in answer to the various interrogations propounded to him; and finding that I could elicit no further information, I resolved to do the best I could with the limited means at my disposal. I commenced by reading over and over again the letters to Mr. Morriss, endeavoring to impress each syllable they contained on my memory, and to extract from them, if possible, some meaning or allusion that might give, perhaps, a faint or barely perceptible hint as a guide; no such clue, however, could I find, and where or how to commence was a problem I found most difficult to solve. To systematize a plan for my work I arranged the papers in the order of their length, and numbered them, designing to commence with the first, and devote my whole attention to that until I had either unravelled its meaning or was convinced of its impossibility - afterwards to take up the others and proceed as before.

All of this I did in the course of time, but failed so completely that my hopes of solving the mystery were well nigh abandoned. My thoughts, however were constantly upon it, and the figures contained in each paper, in their regular order, were fixed in my memory. My impression was that each figure represented a letter, but as the numbers so greatly exceeded the letters of the alphabet, that many different numbers represented the same letter. With this idea, a test was made of every book I could procure, by numbering its letters and comparing the numbers with those of the manuscript; all to no purpose, however, until the Declaration of Independence afforded the clue to one of the papers, and revived all my hopes. To enable my readers to better understand the explanation of this paper, the Declaration of Independence is given herewith, and will be of interest to those designing to follow up my investigations. When I first made this discovery, I thought I had the key to the whole, but soon ascertained that further work was necessary before my task was completed. The encouragement afforded, however, by this discovery enabled me to proceed, and I have persisted in my labors to the present time. Now, as I have already said, I am forced by circumstances to devote my time to other pursuits, and to abandon hopes which were destined never to be realized.

The following is the letter addressed to Mr. Morriss by Beale, and dated St. Louis, May, 1822, and was the latest communication ever received from him:

*St. Louis, Mo., May 9th, 1822.*

*Robt. Morris, Esq.:*

*My Esteemed Friend: - Ever since leaving my comfortable quarters at your house I have been journeying to this place, and only succeeded in reaching it yesterday. I have had altogether a pleasant time, the weather being fine and the atmosphere bracing. I shall remain here a week or ten days longer, then "ho" for the plains, to hunt the buffalo and*

*encounter the savage grizzlies. How long I may be absent I cannot now determine, certainly no less than two years, perhaps longer.*

*With regard to the box left in your charge, I have a few words to say, and, if you will permit me, give you some instructions concerning it. It contains papers vitally affecting the fortunes of myself and many others engaged in business with me, and in the event of my death, its loss might be irreparable. You will, therefore, see the necessity of guarding it with vigilance and care to prevent so great a catastrophe. It also contains some letters addressed to yourself, and which will be necessary to enlighten you concerning the business in which we are engaged. Should none of us ever return you will please preserve carefully the box for the period of ten years from the date of this letter, and if I, or no one with authority from me during that time demands its restoration, you will open it, which can be done by removing the lock. You will find, in addition to the papers addressed to you, other papers which will be unintelligible without the aid of a key to assist you. Such a key I have left in the hands of a friend in this place, sealed, addressed to yourself, and endorsed not to be delivered until June, 1832. By means of this you will understand fully all you will be required to do.*

*I know you will cheerfully comply with my request, thus adding to the many obligations under which you have already placed me. In the meantime, should death or sickness happen to you, to which all are liable, please select from among your friends some one worthy, and to him hand this letter, and to him delegate your authority. I have been thus particular in my instructions, in consequence of the somewhat perilous enterprise in which we are engaged, but trust we shall meet long ere the time expires, and so save you this trouble. Be the result what it may, however, the game is worth the candle, and we will play it to the end. With kindest wishes for your most excellent wife, compliments to the ladies, a good word to enquiring friends, if there be any, and assurances of my highest esteem for yourself, I remain as ever,*

*Your sincere friend, T.J.B.*

After the reception of this letter, Mr. Morriss states that he was particularly careful to see the box securely placed where it could remain in absolute safety, so long as the exigencies of the case might require; the letter, too, he was equally careful to preserve for future use, should it be needed. Having done all that was required of him, Mr. Morriss could only await Beale's return, or some communication from him. In either case, he was disappointed. He never saw Beale again, nor did a line or message ever reach him. The two years passed away during which he said he would be absent, then three, four, and so on to ten; still not a line or message to tell whether he were living or dead. Mr. Morriss felt much uneasiness about him, but had had no means of satisfying his doubts; ten years had passed; 1832 was at hand, and he was now at liberty to open the box, but he resolved to wait on, vainly hoping that something definite would reach him.

During this period rumors of Indian outrages and massacres were current, but no mention of Beale's name ever occurred. What became of him and his companions is left entirely to conjecture. Whether he was slain by Indians, or killed by the savage animals of the Rocky Mountains, or whether exposure, and perhaps privation, did its work can never be told. One thing at least is certain, that of the young and gallant band, whose buoyant spirits led them to seek such a life, and to forsake the comforts of home, with all

its enjoyments, for the dangers and privations they must necessarily encounter, not a survivor remains.

Though Mr. Morriss was aware of the contents of the box in 1845, it was not until 1862, forty years after he received it, that he thought proper to mention its existence, and to myself alone did he then divulge it. He had become long since satisfied that the parties were no longer living, but his delicacy of feeling prevented his assuming as a fact a matter so pregnant with consequences. He frequently decided upon doing so, and as often delayed it for another time; and when at last he did speak of the matter it was with seeming reluctance, and as if he felt he was committing a wrong. But the story once told, he evinced up to the time of his death the greatest interest in my success, and in frequent interviews always encouraged me to proceed.

It is now more than twenty years since these papers came into my hands, and, with the exception of one of them, they are still as incomprehensible as ever. Much time was devoted to this one, and those who engage in the matter will be saved what has been consumed upon it by myself.

Before giving the papers to the public, I would say a word to those who may take an interest in them, and give them a little advice, acquired by bitter experience. It is, to devote only such time as can be spared from your legitimate business to the task, and if you can spare no time, let the matter alone. Should you disregard my advice, do not hold me responsible that the poverty you have courted is more easily found than accomplishment of your wishes, and I would avoid the sight of another reduced to my condition. Nor is it necessary to devote the time that I did to this matter, as accident alone, without the promised key, will ever develop the mystery. If revealed by accident, a few hours devoted to the subject may accomplish results which were denied to years of patient toil. Again, never, as I have done, sacrifice your own and your family's interests to what may prove an illusion; but, as I have already said, when your day's work is done, and you are comfortably seated by your good fire, a short time devoted to the subject can injure no one, and may bring its reward.

By pursuing this policy, your interests will not suffer, your family will be cared for, and your thoughts will not be absorbed to the exclusion of other important affairs. With this admonition, I submit to my readers the papers upon which this narrative is founded.

The first in order is the letter from Beale to Mr. Morriss, which will give the reader a clearer conception of all the facts connected with the case, and enable him to understand as fully as I myself do, the present status of the affair. The letter is as follows:

*Lynchburg, January 4th, 1822.*

*My Dear Friend Morriss: - You will, doubtless, be surprised when you discover, from a perusal of this letter, the importance of the trust confided to you, and the confidence reposed in your honor, by parties whom you have never seen, and whose names even you have never heard. The reasons are simple and easily told; it was imperative upon us that some one here should be selected to carry out our wishes in case of accident to ourselves, and your reputation as a man of the sternest integrity, unblemished honor, and business capacity, influenced them to select you in place of others better known, but*



*perhaps, not so reliable as yourself. It was with this design that I first visited your house, two years since, that I might judge by personal observation if your reputation was merited. To enable me better to do so, I remained with you more than three months, and until I was fully satisfied as to your character. This visit was made by the request of my associates, and you can judge from their action whether my report was a favorable one.*

*I will now give you some idea of the enterprise in which we are engaged, and the duties which will be required of you in connection therewith; first assuring you, however, that your compensation for the trouble will be ample, as you have been unanimously made one of our association, and as such are entitled to share equally with the others.*

*Some five years since I, in connection with several friends, who, like myself, were fond of adventure, and if mixed with a little danger all the more acceptable, determined to visit the great Western plains and enjoy ourselves in hunting buffalo, grizzly bears, and such other game as the country would afford. This, at that time, was our sole object, and we at once proceeded to put it in execution. On account of Indians and other dangers incident to such an undertaking, we determined to raise a party of not less than thirty individuals, of good character and standing, who would be pleasant companions, and financially able to encounter the expense. With this object in view, each one of us suggested the matter to his several friends and acquaintances, and in a few weeks the requisite number had signed the conditions, and were admitted as members of the party. Some few refused to join with us, being, doubtless, deterred by the dangers, but such men we did not want, and were glad of their refusal.*

*The company being formed, we forthwith commenced our preparations, and, early in April, 1817, left old Virginia for St. Louis, Mo., where we expected to purchase the necessary outfits, procure a guide and two or three servants, and obtain such information and advice as might be beneficial hereafter. All was done as intended, and we left St. Louis the 19th of May, to be absent two years, our objective point being Santa Fe, which we intended to reach in the ensuing Fall, and there establish ourselves in winter quarters.*

*After leaving St. Louis we were advised by our guide to form a regular military organization, with a captain, to be selected by the members, to whom should be given sole authority to manage our affairs, and, in cases of necessity, ensure united action. This was agreed to, and each member of the party bound himself by a solemn obligation to obey at all times, the orders of their captain, or, in the event of refusal, to leave the company at once. This arrangement was to remain in force for two years, or for the period of our expected absence. Tyranny, partiality, incompetency, or other improper conduct on the part of the captain, was to be punished by deposing him from his office, if a majority of the company desired his dismissal. All this being arranged, and a set of laws framed, by which the conduct of the members was to be regulated, the election was held, and resulted in choosing me as their leader.*

*It is not my purpose now to give you details of our wanderings, or of the pleasures or dangers we encountered. All this I will reserve until we meet again, when it will be a pleasure to recall incidents that will always be fresh in my memory.*

*About the first of December we reached our destination, Santa Fe, and prepared for a long and welcome rest from the fatigues of our journey. Nothing of interest occurred*

during the winter, and of this little Mexican town we soon became heartily tired. We longed for the advent of weather which would enable us to resume our wanderings and our exhilarating pursuits.

Early in March some of the party, to vary the monotony of their lives, determined upon a short excursion, for the purpose of hunting and examining the country around us. They expected to be only a few days absent, but days passed into weeks, and weeks into a month or more before we had any tidings of the party. We had become exceedingly uneasy, and were preparing to send out scouts to trace them, if possible, when two of the party arrived, and gave an explanation of their absence. It appears that when the left Santa Fe they pursued a northerly course for some days, being successful in finding an abundance of game, which they secured, and were on the eve of returning when they discovered on their left an immense herd of buffaloes, heading for a valley just perceptible in the distance. They determined to follow them, and secure as many as possible. Keeping well together, they followed their trail for two weeks or more, securing many and stampeding the rest.

One day, while following them, the party encamped in a small ravine, some 250 or 300 miles to the north of Santa Fe, and with their horses tethered, were preparing their evening meal, when one of the men discovered in a cleft of the rocks something that had the appearance of gold. Upon showing it to the others it was pronounced to be gold, and much excitement was the natural consequence. Messengers were at once dispatched to inform me of the facts, and request my presence with the rest of the party, and with supplies for an indefinite time. All the pleasures and temptations which had lured them to the plains were now forgotten, and visions of boundless wealth and future grandeur were the only ideas entertained. Upon reaching the locality I found all as it had been represented, and the excitement intense. Every one was diligently at work with such tools and appliances as they had improvised, and quite a little pile had already accumulated. Though all were at work, there was nothing like order or method in their plans, and my first efforts were to systematize our operations, and reduce everything to order. With this object, an agreement was entered into to work in common as joint partners, the accumulations of each one to be placed in a common receptacle, and each be entitled to an equal share, whenever he chose to withdraw it - the whole to remain under my charge until some other disposition of it was agreed upon. Under this arrangement the work progressed favorable for eighteen months or more, and a great deal of gold had accumulated in my hands as well as silver, which had likewise been found. Everything necessary for our purposes and for the prosecution of the work had been obtained from Santa Fe, and no trouble was experienced in procuring assistance from the Indians in our labors. Matters went on thus until the summer of 1819, when the question of transferring our wealth to some secure place was frequently discussed. It was not considered advisable to retain so large an amount in so wild and dangerous a locality, where its very possession might endanger our lives; and to conceal it here would avail nothing, as we might at any time be forced to reveal its place of concealment. We were in a dilemma. Some advised one plan, some another. One recommended Santa Fe as the safest place to deposit it, while others objected, and advocated its shipment at once to the States, where it was ultimately bound to go, and where alone it would be safe. The idea seemed to prevail, and it was doubtless correct, that when outside parties ascertained, as they would do, that we kept nothing on hand to tempt their cupidity, our lives would be more secure than at present. It was finally decided that it should be sent to Virginia under my charge, and securely buried in a cave near Buford's tavern, in the county of Bedford, which all of us had visited, and

*which was considered a perfectly safe depository. This was acceptable to all, and I at once made preparations for my departure. The whole party were to accompany me for the first five hundred miles, when all but ten would return, these latter to remain with me to the end of the journey. All was carried out as arranged, and I arrived safely with my charge.*

*Stopping at Buford's, where we remained for a month, under pretense of hunting etc. we visited the cave, and found it unfit for our purpose. It was too frequently visited by the neighboring farmers, who used it as a receptacle for their sweet potatoes and other vegetables. We soon selected a better place, and to this the treasure was safely transferred.*

*Before leaving my companions on the plains it was suggested that, in case of an accident to ourselves, the treasure so concealed would be lost to their relatives, without some provision against such a contingency. I was, therefore instructed to select some perfectly reliable person, if such an one could be found, who should, in the event of his proving acceptable to the party, be confided in to carry out their wishes in regard to their respective shares, and upon my return report whether I had found such a person. It was in accordance with these instructions that I visited you, made your acquaintance, was satisfied that you would suit us, and so reported.*

*On my return I found the work still progressing favorably, and, by making large accessions to our force of laborers, I was ready to return last Fall with an increased supply of metal, which came through safely and was deposited with the other. It was at this time I handed you the box, not disclosing the nature of its contents, but asking you to keep it safely till called for. I intend writing you, however, from St. Louis, and impress upon you its importance still more forcibly.*

*The papers enclosed herewith will be unintelligible without the key, which will reach you in time, and will be found merely to state the contents of our depository, with its exact location, and a list of the names of our party, with their places of residence, etc. I thought at first to give you their names in this letter, but reflecting that some one may read the letter, and thus be enabled to impose upon you by personating some member of the party, have decided the present plan is best. You will be aware from what I have written, that we are engaged in a perilous enterprise - one which promises glorious results if successful - but dangers intervene, and of the end no one can tell. We can only hope for the best, and persevere until our work is accomplished, and the sum secured for which we are striving.*

*As ten years must elapse before you will see this letter, you may well conclude by that time that the worst has happened, and that none of us are to be numbered with the living. In such an event, you will please visit the place of deposit and secure its contents, which you will divide into thirty-one equal parts; one of these parts you are to retain as your own, freely given to you for your services. The other shares to be distributed to the parties named in the accompanying paper. These legacies, so unexpectedly received, will at least serve to recall names that may still be cherished, though partially forgotten.*

*In conclusion, my dear friend, I beg that you will not allow any false or idle punctillio to prevent your receiving and appropriating the portion assigned to yourself. It is a gift not*

*from myself alone, but from each and every member of our party, and will not be out of proportion to the services required of you.*

*I trust, my dear Mr. Morriss, that we may meet many times in the future, but if the Fates forbid, with my last communication I would assure you of the entire respect and confidence of*

*Your friend, T.J.B.*

*Lynchburg, Va., January 5th, 1822.*

*Dear Mr. Morriss. - You will find in one of the papers, written in cipher, the names of all my associates, who are each entitled to an equal part of our treasure, and opposite to the names of each one will be found the names and residences of the relatives and others, to whom they devise their respective portions. From this you will be enabled to carry out the wishes of all by distributing the portion of each to the parties designated. This will not be difficult, as their residences are given, and they can easily be found.*

The two letters given above were all the box contained that were intelligible; the others, consisted of papers closely covered with figures, which were, of course, unmeaning until they could be deciphered. To do this was the task to which I now devoted myself, and with but partial success.

To enable my readers to understand the paper "No. 2," the only one I was ever able to decipher, I herewith give the Declaration of Independence, with the words numbered consecutively, by the assistance of which that paper's hidden meaning was made plain:

## **DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

When(1) in(2) the(3) course(4) of(5) human(6) events(7) it(8) becomes(9) necessary(10) for(11) one(12) people(13) to(14) dissolve(15) the(16) political(17) bands(18) which(19) have(20) connected(21) them(22) with(23) another(24) and(25) to(26) assume(27) among(28) the(29) powers(30) of(31) the(32) earth(33) the(34) separate(35) and(36) equal(37) station(38) to(39) which(40) the(41) laws(42) of(43) nature(44) and(45) of(46) nature's(47) god(48) entitle(49) them(50) a(51) decent(52) respect(53) to(54) the(55) opinions(56) of(57) mankind(58) requires(59) that(60) they(61) should(62) declare(63) the(64) causes(65) which(66) impel(67) them(68) to(69) the(70) separation(71) we(72) hold(73) these(74) truths(75) to(76) be(77) self(78) evident(79) that(80) all(81) men(82) are(83) created(84) equal(85) that(86) they(87) are(88) endowed(89) by(90) their(91) creator(92) with(93) certain(94) unalienable(95) rights(96) that(97) among(98) these(99) are(100) life(101) liberty(102) and(103) the(104) pursuit(105) of(106) happiness(107) that(108) to(109) secure(110) these(111) rights(112) governments(113) are(114) instituted(115) among(116) men(117) deriving(118) their(119) just(120) powers(121) from(122) the(123) consent(124) of(125) the(126) governed(127) that(128) whenever(129) any(130) form(131) of(132) government(133) becomes(134) destructive(135) of(136) these(137) ends(138) it(139) is(140) the(141) right(142) of(143) the(144) people(145) to(146) alter(147) or(148) to(149) abolish(150) it(151) and(152) to(153) institute(154) new(155) government(156) laying(157) its(158) foundation(159) on(160) such(161) principles(162) and(163) organizing(164) its(165) powers(166) in(167) such(168) form(169) as(170) to(171) them(172) shall(173) seem(174) most(175)

likely(176) to(177) effect(178) their(179) safety(180) and(181) happiness(182) prudence(183) indeed(184) will(185) dictate(186) that(187) governments(188) long(189) established(190) should(191) not(192) be(193) changed(194) for(195) light(196) and(197) transient(198) causes(199) and(200) accordingly(201) all(202) experience(203) hath(204) shown(205) that(206) mankind(207) are(208) more(209) disposed(210) to(211) suffer(212) while(213) evils(214) are(215) sufferable(216) than(217) to(218) right(219) themselves(220) by(221) abolishing(222) the(223) forms(224) to(225) which(226) they(227) are(228) accustomed(229) but(230) when(231) a(232) long(233) train(234) of(235) abuses(236) and(237) usurpations(238) pursuing(239) invariably(240) the(241) same(242) object(243) evinces(244) a(245) design(246) to(247) reduce(248) them(249) under(250) absolute(251) despotism(252) it(253) is(254) their(255) right(256) it(257) is(258) their(259) duty(260) to(261) throw(262) off(263) such(264) government(265) and(266) to(267) provide(268) new(269) guards(270) for(271) their(272) future(273) security(274) such(275) has(276) been(277) the(278) patient(279) sufferance(280) of(281) these(282) colonies(283) and(284) such(285) is(286) now(287) the(288) necessity(289) which(290) constrains(291) them(292) to(293) alter(294) their(295) former(296) systems(297) of(298) government(299) the(300) history(301) of(302) the(303) present(304) king(305) of(306) great(307) Britain(308) is(309) a(310) history(311) of(312) repeated(313) injuries(314) and(315) usurpations(316) all(317) having(318) in(319) direct(320) object(321) the(322) establishment(323) of(324) an(325) absolute(326) tyranny(327) over(328) these(329) states(330) to(331) prove(332) this(333) let(334) facts(335) be(336) submitted(337) to(338) a(339) candid(340) world(341) he(342) has(343) refused(344) his(345) assent(346) to(347) laws(348) the(349) most(350) wholesome(351) and(352) necessary(353) for(354) the(355) public(356) good(357) he(358) has(359) forbidden(360) his(361) governors(362) to(363) pass(364) laws(365) of(366) immediate(367) and(368) pressing(369) importance(370) unless(371) suspended(372) in(373) their(374) operation(375) till(376) his(377) assent(378) should(379) be(380) obtained(381) and(382) when(383) so(384) suspended(385) he(386) has(387) utterly(388) neglected(389) to(390) attend(391) to(392) them(393) he(394) has(395) refused(396) to(397) pass(398) other(399) laws(400) for(401) the(402) accommodation(403) of(404) large(405) districts(406) of(407) people(408) unless(409) those(410) people(411) would(412) relinquish(413) the(414) right(415) of(416) representation(417) in(418) the(419) legislature(420) a(421) right(422) inestimable(423) to(424) them(425) and(426) formidable(427) to(428) tyrants(429) only(430) he(431) has(432) called(433) together(434) legislative(435) bodies(436) at(437) places(438) unusual(439) uncomfortable(440) and(441) distant(442) from(443) the(444) depository(445) of(446) their(447) public(448) records(449) for(450) the(451) sole(452) purpose(453) of(454) fatiguing(455) them(456) into(457) compliance(458) with(459) his(460) measures(461) he(462) has(463) dissolved(464) representative(465) houses(466) repeatedly(467) for(468) opposing(469) with(470) manly(471) firmness(472) his(473) invasions(474) on(475) the(476) rights(477) of(478) the(479) people(480) he(481) has(482) refused(483) for(484) a(485) long(486) time(487) after(488) such(489) dissolutions(490) to(491) cause(492) others(493) to(494) be(495) elected(496) whereby(497) the(498) legislative(499) powers(500) incapable(501) of(502) annihilation(503) have(504) returned(505) to(506) the(507) people(508) at(509) large(510) for(511) their(512) exercise(513) the(514) state(515) remaining(516) in(517) the(518) meantime(519) exposed(520) to(521) all(522) the(523) dangers(524) of(525) invasion(526) from(527) without(528) and(529) convulsions(530) within(531) he(532) has(533) endeavored(534) to(535) prevent(536) the(537) population(538) of(539) these(540) states(541) for(542) that(543) purpose(544) obstructing(545) the(546)

laws(547) for(548) naturalization(549) of(550) foreigners(551) refusing(552) to(553) pass(554) others(555) to(556) encourage(557) their(558) migration(559) hither(560) and(561) raising(562) the(563) conditions(564) of(565) new(566) appropriations(567) of(568) lands(569) he(570) has(571) obstructed(572) the(573) administration(574) of(575) justice(576) by(577) refusing(578) his(579) assent(580) to(581) laws(582) for(583) establishing(584) judiciary(585) powers(586) he(587) has(588) made(589) judges(590) dependent(591) on(592) his(593) will(594) alone(595) for(596) the(597) tenure(598) of(599) their(600) offices(601) and(602) the(603) amount(604) and(605) payment(606) of(607) their(608) salaries(609) he(610) has(611) erected(612) a(613) multitude(614) of(615) new(616) offices(617) and(618) sent(619) hither(620) swarms(621) of(622) officers(623) to(624) harass(625) our(626) people(627) and(628) eat(629) out(630) their(631) substance(632) he(633) has(634) kept(635) among(636) us(637) in(638) times(639) of(640) peace(641) standing(642) armies(643) without(644) the(645) consent(646) of(647) our(648) legislatures(649) he(650) has(651) affected(652) to(653) render(654) the(655) military(656) independent(657) of(658) and(659) superior(660) to(661) the(662) civil(663) power(664) he(665) has(666) combined(667) with(668) others(669) to(670) subject(671) us(672) to(673) a(674) jurisdiction(675) foreign(676) to(677) our(678) constitution(679) and(680) unacknowledged(681) by(682) our(683) laws(684) giving(685) his(686) assent(687) to(688) their(689) acts(690) of(691) pretended(692) legislation(693) for(694) quartering(695) large(696) bodies(697) of(698) armed(699) troops(700) among(701) us(702) for(703) protecting(704) them(705) by(706) a(707) mock(708) trial(709) from(710) punishment(711) for(712) any(713) murders(714) which(715) they(716) should(717) commit(718) on(719) the(720) inhabitants(721) of(722) these(723) states(724) for(725) cutting(726) off(727) our(728) trade(729) with(730) all(731) parts(732) of(733) the(734) world(735) for(736) imposing(737) taxes(738) on(739) us(740) without(741) our(742) consent(743) for(744) depriving(745) us(746) in(747) many(748) cases(749) of(750) the(751) benefits(752) of(753) trial(754) by(755) jury(756) for(757) transporting(758) us(759) beyond(760) seas(761) to(762) be(763) tried(764) for(765) pretended(766) offenses(767) for(768) abolishing(769) the(770) free(771) system(772) of(773) English(774) laws(775) in(776) a(777) neighboring(778) province(779) establishing(780) therein(781) an(782) arbitrary(783) government(784) and(785) enlarging(786) its(787) boundaries(788) so(789) as(790) to(791) render(792) it(793) at(794) once(795) an(796) example(797) and(798) fit(799) instrument(800) for(801) introducing(802) the(803) same(804) absolute(805) rule(806) into(807) these(808) colonies(809) for(810) taking(811) away(812) our(813) charters(814) abolishing(815) our(816) most(817) valuable(818) laws(819) and(820) altering(821) fundamentally(822) the(823) forms(824) of(825) our(826) governments(827) for(828) suspending(829) our(830) own(831) legislature(832) and(833) declaring(834) themselves(835) invested(836) with(837) power(838) to(839) legislate(840) for(841) us(842) in(843) all(844) cases(845) whatsoever(846) he(847) has(848) abdicated(849) government(850) here(851) by(852) declaring(853) us(854) out(855) of(856) his(857) protection(858) and(859) waging(860) war(861) against(862) us(863) he(864) has(865) plundered(866) our(867) seas(868) ravaged(869) our(870) coasts(871) burnt(872) our(873) towns(874) and(875) destroyed(876) the(877) lives(878) of(879) our(880) people(881) he(882) is(883) at(884) this(885) time(886) transporting(887) large(888) armies(889) of(890) foreign(891) mercenaries(892) to(893) complete(894) the(895) works(896) of(897) death(898) desolation(899) and(900) tyranny(901) already(902) begun(903) with(904) circumstances(905) of(906) cruelty(907) and(&)(908) perfidy(909) scarcely(910) paralleled(911) in(912) the(913) most(914) barbarous(915) ages(916) and(917) totally(918) unworthy(919) the(920) head(921) of(922) a(923) civilized(924) nation(925) he(926) has(927) constrained(928)

our(929) fellow(930) citizens(931) taken(932) captive(933) on(934) the(935) high(936) seas(937) to(938) bear(939) arms(940) against(941) their(942) country(943) to(944) become(945) the(946) executioners(947) of(948) their(949) friends(950) and(951) brethren(952) or(953) to(954) fall(955) themselves(956) by(957) their(958) hands(959) he(960) has(961) excited(962) domestic(963) insurrections(964) amongst(965) us(966) and(967) has(968) endeavored(969) to(970) bring(971) on(972) the(973) inhabitants(974) of(975) our(976) frontiers(977) the(978) merciless(979) Indian(980) savages(981) whose(982) known(983) rule(984) of(985) warfare(986) is(987) an(988) undistinguished(989) destruction(990) of(991) all(992) ages(993) sexes(994) and(995) conditions(996) in(997) every(998) stage(999) of(1000) these(1001) oppressions(1002) we(1003) have(1004) petitioned(1005) for(1006) redress(1007) in(1008) the(1009) most(1010) humble(1011) terms(1012) our(1013) repeated(1014) petitions(1015) have(1016) been(1017) answered(1018) only(1019) by(1020) repeated(1021) injury(1022) a(1023) prince(1024) whole(1025) character(1026) is(1027) thus(1028) marked(1029) by(1030) every(1031) act(1032) which(1033) may(1034) define(1035) a(1036) tyrant(1037) is(1038) unfit(1039) to(1040) be(1041) the(1042) ruler(1043) of(1044) a(1045) free(1046) people(1047) nor(1048) have(1049) we(1050) been(1051) wanting(1052) in(1053) attention(1054) to(1055) our(1056) British(1057) brethren(1058) we(1059) have(1060) warned(1061) them(1062) from(1063) time(1064) to(1065) time(1066) of(1067) attempts(1068) by(1069) their(1070) legislature(1071) to(1072) extend(1073) an(1074) unwarrantable(1075) jurisdiction(1076) over(1077) us(1078) we(1079) have(1080) reminded(1081) them(1082) of(1083) the(1084) circumstances(1085) of(1086) our(1087) emigration(1088) and(1089) settlement(1090) here(1091) we(1092) have(1093) appealed(1094) to(1095) their(1096) native(1097) justice(1098) and(1099) magnanimity(1100) and(1101) we(1102) have(1103) conjured(1104) them(1105) by(1106) the(1107) ties(1108) of(1109) our(1110) common(1111) kindred(1112) to(1113) disavow(1114) these(1115) usurpations(1116) which(1117) would(1118) inevitably(1119) interrupt(1120) our(1121) connections(1122) and(1123) correspondence(1124) they(1125) too(1126) have(1127) been(1128) deaf(1129) to(1130) the(1131) voice(1132) of(1133) justice(1134) and(1135) of(1136) consanguinity(1137) we(1138) must(1139) therefore(1140) acquiesce(1141) in(1142) the(1143) necessity(1144) which(1145) denounces(1146) our(1147) separation(1148) and(1149) hold(1150) them(1151) as(1152) we(1153) hold(1154) the(1155) rest(1156) of(1157) mankind(1158) enemies(1159) in(1160) war(1161) in(1162) peace(1163) friends(1164) we(1165) therefore(1166) the(1167) representatives(1168) of(1169) the(1170) united(1171) states(1172) of(1173) America(1174) in(1175) general(1176) congress(1177) assembled(1178) appealing(1179) to(1180) the(1181) supreme(1182) judge(1183) of(1184) the(1185) world(1186) for(1187) the(1188) rectitude(1189) of(1190) our(1191) intentions(1192) do(1193) in(1194) the(1195) name(1196) and(1197) by(1198) authority(1199) of(1200) the(1201) good(1202) people(1203) of(1204) these(1205) colonies(1206) solemnly(1207) publish(1208) and(1209) declare(1210) that(1211) these(1212) united(1213) colonies(1214) are(1215) and(1216) of(1217) right(1218) ought(1219) to(1220) be(1221) free(1222) and(1223) independent(1224) states(1225) that(1226) they(1227) are(1228) absolved(1229) from(1230) all(1231) allegiance(1232) to(1233) the(1234) British(1235) crown(1236) and(1237) that(1238) all(1239) political(1240) connection(1241) between(1242) them(1243) and(1244) the(1245) state(1246) of(1247) great(1248) Britain(1249) is(1250) and(1251) ought(1252) to(1253) be(1254) totally(1255) dissolved(1256) and(1257) that(1258) as(1259) free(1260) and(1261) independent(1262) states(1263) they(1264) have(1265) full(1266) power(1267) to(1268) levy(1269) war(1270) conclude(1271) peace(1272) contract(1273) alliances(1274) establish(1275) commerce(1276) and(1277) to(1278)

do(1279) all(1280) other(1281) acts(1282) and(1283) things(1284) which(1285)  
independent(1286) states(1287) may(1288) of(1289) right(1290) do(1291) and(1292)  
for(1293) the(1294) support(1295) of(1296) this(1297) declaration(1298) with(1299)  
a(1300) firm(1301) reliance(1302) on(1303) the(1304) protection(1305) of(1306)  
divine(1307) providence(1308) we(1309) mutually(1310) pledge(1311) to(1312)  
each(1313) other(1314) our(1315) lives(1316) our(1317) fortunes(1318) and(1319)  
our(1320) sacred(1321) honor(1322) .

The letter, or paper, so often alluded to, and marked "2," which is fully explained by the foregoing document, is as follows:

115, 73, 24, 807, 37, 52, 49, 17, 31, 62, 647, 22, 7, 15, 140, 47, 29, 107, 79, 84, 56, 239,  
10, 26, 811, 5, 196, 308, 85, 52, 160, 136, 59, 211, 36, 9, 46, 316, 554, 122, 106, 95, 53,  
58, 2, 42, 7, 35, 122, 53, 31, 82, 77, 250, 196, 56, 96, 118, 71, 140, 287, 28, 353, 37,  
1005, 65, 147, 807, 24, 3, 8, 12, 47, 43, 59, 807, 45, 316, 101, 41, 78, 154, 1005, 122,  
138, 191, 16, 77, 49, 102, 57, 72, 34, 73, 85, 35, 371, 59, 196, 81, 92, 191, 106, 273, 60,  
394, 620, 270, 220, 106, 388, 287, 63, 3, 6, 191, 122, 43, 234, 400, 106, 290, 314, 47,  
48, 81, 96, 26, 115, 92, 158, 191, 110, 77, 85, 197, 46, 10, 113, 140, 353, 48, 120, 106,  
2, 607, 61, 420, 811, 29, 125, 14, 20, 37, 105, 28, 248, 16, 159, 7, 35, 19, 301, 125, 110,  
486, 287, 98, 117, 511, 62, 51, 220, 37, 113, 140, 807, 138, 540, 8, 44, 287, 388, 117,  
18, 79, 344, 34, 20, 59, 511, 548, 107, 603, 220, 7, 66, 154, 41, 20, 50, 6, 575, 122, 154,  
248, 110, 61, 52, 33, 30, 5, 38, 8, 14, 84, 57, 540, 217, 115, 71, 29, 84, 63, 43, 131, 29,  
138, 47, 73, 239, 540, 52, 53, 79, 118, 51, 44, 63, 196, 12, 239, 112, 3, 49, 79, 353, 105,  
56, 371, 557, 211, 505, 125, 360, 133, 143, 101, 15, 284, 540, 252, 14, 205, 140, 344,  
26, 811, 138, 115, 48, 73, 34, 205, 316, 607, 63, 220, 7, 52, 150, 44, 52, 16, 40, 37, 158,  
807, 37, 121, 12, 95, 10, 15, 35, 12, 131, 62, 115, 102, 807, 49, 53, 135, 138, 30, 31, 62,  
67, 41, 85, 63, 10, 106, 807, 138, 8, 113, 20, 32, 33, 37, 353, 287, 140, 47, 85, 50, 37,  
49, 47, 64, 6, 7, 71, 33, 4, 43, 47, 63, 1, 27, 600, 208, 230, 15, 191, 246, 85, 94, 511, 2,  
270, 20, 39, 7, 33, 44, 22, 40, 7, 10, 3, 811, 106, 44, 486, 230, 353, 211, 200, 31, 10, 38,  
140, 297, 61, 603, 320, 302, 666, 287, 2, 44, 33, 32, 511, 548, 10, 6, 250, 557, 246, 53,  
37, 52, 83, 47, 320, 38, 33, 807, 7, 44, 30, 31, 250, 10, 15, 35, 106, 160, 113, 31, 102,  
406, 230, 540, 320, 29, 66, 33, 101, 807, 138, 301, 316, 353, 320, 220, 37, 52, 28, 540,  
320, 33, 8, 48, 107, 50, 811, 7, 2, 113, 73, 16, 125, 11, 110, 67, 102, 807, 33, 59, 81,  
158, 38, 43, 581, 138, 19, 85, 400, 38, 43, 77, 14, 27, 8, 47, 138, 63, 140, 44, 35, 22,  
177, 106, 250, 314, 217, 2, 10, 7, 1005, 4, 20, 25, 44, 48, 7, 26, 46, 110, 230, 807, 191,  
34, 112, 147, 44, 110, 121, 125, 96, 41, 51, 50, 140, 56, 47, 152, 540, 63, 807, 28, 42,  
250, 138, 582, 98, 643, 32, 107, 140, 112, 26, 85, 138, 540, 53, 20, 125, 371, 38, 36, 10,  
52, 118, 136, 102, 420, 150, 112, 71, 14, 20, 7, 24, 18, 12, 807, 37, 67, 110, 62, 33, 21,  
95, 220, 511, 102, 811, 30, 83, 84, 305, 620, 15, 2, 10, 8, 220, 106, 353, 105, 106, 60,  
275, 72, 8, 50, 205, 185, 112, 125, 540, 65, 106, 807, 138, 96, 110, 16, 73, 33, 807, 150,  
409, 400, 50, 154, 285, 96, 106, 316, 270, 205, 101, 811, 400, 8, 44, 37, 52, 40, 241, 34,  
205, 38, 16, 46, 47, 85, 24, 44, 15, 64, 73, 138, 807, 85, 78, 110, 33, 420, 505, 53, 37,  
38, 22, 31, 10, 110, 106, 101, 140, 15, 38, 3, 5, 44, 7, 98, 287, 135, 150, 96, 33, 84, 125,  
807, 191, 96, 511, 118, 40, 370, 643, 466, 106, 41, 107, 603, 220, 275, 30, 150, 105, 49,  
53, 287, 250, 208, 134, 7, 53, 12, 47, 85, 63, 138, 110, 21, 112, 140, 485, 486, 505, 14,  
73, 84, 575, 1005, 150, 200, 16, 42, 5, 4, 25, 42, 8, 16, 811, 125, 160, 32, 205, 603, 807,  
81, 96, 405, 41, 600, 136, 14, 20, 28, 26, 353, 302, 246, 8, 131, 160, 140, 84, 440, 42,  
16, 811, 40, 67, 101, 102, 194, 138, 205, 51, 63, 241, 540, 122, 8, 10, 63, 140, 47, 48,  
140, 288



By comparing the foregoing numbers with the corresponding numbers of the initial letters of the consecutive words in the Declaration of Independence, the translation will be found to be as follows:

*I have deposited in the county of Bedford, about four miles from Buford's, in an excavation or vault, six feet below the surface of the ground, the following articles, belonging jointly to the parties whose names are given in number "3," herewith:*

*The first deposit consisted of one thousand and fourteen pounds of gold, and three thousand eight hundred and twelve pounds of silver, deposited November, 1819. The second was made December, 1821, and consisted of nineteen hundred and seven pounds of gold, and twelve hundred and eighty-eight pounds of silver; also jewels, obtained in St. Louis in exchange for silver to save transportation, and valued at \$13,000.*

*The above is securely packed in iron pots, with iron covers. The vault is roughly lined with stone, and the vessels rest on solid stone, and are covered with others. Paper number "1" describes the exact locality of the vault so that no difficulty will be had in finding it.*

The following is the paper which, according to Beale's statement, describes the exact locality of the vault, and is marked "1." It is to this that I have devoted most of my time, but, unfortunately, without success.

#### **THE LOCALITY OF THE VAULT.**

71, 194, 38, 1701, 89, 76, 11, 83, 1629, 48, 94, 63, 132, 16, 111, 95, 84, 341, 975, 14, 40, 64, 27, 81, 139, 213, 63, 90, 1120, 8, 15, 3, 126, 2018, 40, 74, 758, 485, 604, 230, 436, 664, 582, 150, 251, 284, 308, 231, 124, 211, 486, 225, 401, 370, 11, 101, 305, 139, 189, 17, 33, 88, 208, 193, 145, 1, 94, 73, 416, 918, 263, 28, 500, 538, 356, 117, 136, 219, 27, 176, 130, 10, 460, 25, 485, 18, 436, 65, 84, 200, 283, 118, 320, 138, 36, 416, 280, 15, 71, 224, 961, 44, 16, 401, 39, 88, 61, 304, 12, 21, 24, 283, 134, 92, 63, 246, 486, 682, 7, 219, 184, 360, 780, 18, 64, 463, 474, 131, 160, 79, 73, 440, 95, 18, 64, 581, 34, 69, 128, 367, 460, 17, 81, 12, 103, 820, 62, 116, 97, 103, 862, 70, 60, 1317, 471, 540, 208, 121, 890, 346, 36, 150, 59, 568, 614, 13, 120, 63, 219, 812, 2160, 1780, 99, 35, 18, 21, 136, 872, 15, 28, 170, 88, 4, 30, 44, 112, 18, 147, 436, 195, 320, 37, 122, 113, 6, 140, 8, 120, 305, 42, 58, 461, 44, 106, 301, 13, 408, 680, 93, 86, 116, 530, 82, 568, 9, 102, 38, 416, 89, 71, 216, 728, 965, 818, 2, 38, 121, 195, 14, 326, 148, 234, 18, 55, 131, 234, 361, 824, 5, 81, 623, 48, 961, 19, 26, 33, 10, 1101, 365, 92, 88, 181, 275, 346, 201, 206, 86, 36, 219, 324, 829, 840, 64, 326, 19, 48, 122, 85, 216, 284, 919, 861, 326, 985, 233, 64, 68, 232, 431, 960, 50, 29, 81, 216, 321, 603, 14, 612, 81, 360, 36, 51, 62, 194, 78, 60, 200, 314, 676, 112, 4, 28, 18, 61, 136, 247, 819, 921, 1060, 464, 895, 10, 6, 66, 119, 38, 41, 49, 602, 423, 962, 302, 294, 875, 78, 14, 23, 111, 109, 62, 31, 501, 823, 216, 280, 34, 24, 150, 1000, 162, 286, 19, 21, 17, 340, 19, 242, 31, 86, 234, 140, 607, 115, 33, 191, 67, 104, 86, 52, 88, 16, 80, 121, 67, 95, 122, 216, 548, 96, 11, 201, 77, 364, 218, 65, 667, 890, 236, 154, 211, 10, 98, 34, 119, 56, 216, 119, 71, 218, 1164, 1496, 1817, 51, 39, 210, 36, 3, 19, 540, 232, 22, 141, 617, 84, 290, 80, 46, 207, 411, 150, 29, 38, 46, 172, 85, 194, 39, 261, 543, 897, 624, 18, 212, 416, 127, 931, 19, 4, 63, 96, 12, 101, 418, 16, 140, 230, 460, 538, 19, 27, 88, 612, 1431, 90, 716, 275, 74, 83, 11, 426, 89, 72, 84, 1300, 1706, 814, 221, 132, 40, 102, 34, 868, 975, 1101, 84, 16, 79,

23, 16, 81, 122, 324, 403, 912, 227, 936, 447, 55, 86, 34, 43, 212, 107, 96, 314, 264, 1065, 323, 428, 601, 203, 124, 95, 216, 814, 2906, 654, 820, 2, 301, 112, 176, 213, 71, 87, 96, 202, 35, 10, 2, 41, 17, 84, 221, 736, 820, 214, 11, 60, 760

The following paper is marked "3" in the series, and as we are informed, contains the names of Beale's associates, who are joint owners of the fund deposited, together with the names of the nearest relatives of each party, with their several places of residence.

### **NAMES AND RESIDENCES.**

317, 8, 92, 73, 112, 89, 67, 318, 28, 96, 107, 41, 631, 78, 146, 397, 118, 98, 114, 246, 348, 116, 74, 88, 12, 65, 32, 14, 81, 19, 76, 121, 216, 85, 33, 66, 15, 108, 68, 77, 43, 24, 122, 96, 117, 36, 211, 301, 15, 44, 11, 46, 89, 18, 136, 68, 317, 28, 90, 82, 304, 71, 43, 221, 198, 176, 310, 319, 81, 99, 264, 380, 56, 37, 319, 2, 44, 53, 28, 44, 75, 98, 102, 37, 85, 107, 117, 64, 88, 136, 48, 151, 99, 175, 89, 315, 326, 78, 96, 214, 218, 311, 43, 89, 51, 90, 75, 128, 96, 33, 28, 103, 84, 65, 26, 41, 246, 84, 270, 98, 116, 32, 59, 74, 66, 69, 240, 15, 8, 121, 20, 77, 89, 31, 11, 106, 81, 191, 224, 328, 18, 75, 52, 82, 117, 201, 39, 23, 217, 27, 21, 84, 35, 54, 109, 128, 49, 77, 88, 1, 81, 217, 64, 55, 83, 116, 251, 269, 311, 96, 54, 32, 120, 18, 132, 102, 219, 211, 84, 150, 219, 275, 312, 64, 10, 106, 87, 75, 47, 21, 29, 37, 81, 44, 18, 126, 115, 132, 160, 181, 203, 76, 81, 299, 314, 337, 351, 96, 11, 28, 97, 318, 238, 106, 24, 93, 3, 19, 17, 26, 60, 73, 88, 14, 126, 138, 234, 286, 297, 321, 365, 264, 19, 22, 84, 56, 107, 98, 123, 111, 214, 136, 7, 33, 45, 40, 13, 28, 46, 42, 107, 196, 227, 344, 198, 203, 247, 116, 19, 8, 212, 230, 31, 6, 328, 65, 48, 52, 59, 41, 122, 33, 117, 11, 18, 25, 71, 36, 45, 83, 76, 89, 92, 31, 65, 70, 83, 96, 27, 33, 44, 50, 61, 24, 112, 136, 149, 176, 180, 194, 143, 171, 205, 296, 87, 12, 44, 51, 89, 98, 34, 41, 208, 173, 66, 9, 35, 16, 95, 8, 113, 175, 90, 56, 203, 19, 177, 183, 206, 157, 200, 218, 260, 291, 305, 618, 951, 320, 18, 124, 78, 65, 19, 32, 124, 48, 53, 57, 84, 96, 207, 244, 66, 82, 119, 71, 11, 86, 77, 213, 54, 82, 316, 245, 303, 86, 97, 106, 212, 18, 37, 15, 81, 89, 16, 7, 81, 39, 96, 14, 43, 216, 118, 29, 55, 109, 136, 172, 213, 64, 8, 227, 304, 611, 221, 364, 819, 375, 128, 296, 1, 18, 53, 76, 10, 15, 23, 19, 71, 84, 120, 134, 66, 73, 89, 96, 230, 48, 77, 26, 101, 127, 936, 218, 439, 178, 171, 61, 226, 313, 215, 102, 18, 167, 262, 114, 218, 66, 59, 48, 27, 19, 13, 82, 48, 162, 119, 34, 127, 139, 34, 128, 129, 74, 63, 120, 11, 54, 61, 73, 92, 180, 66, 75, 101, 124, 265, 89, 96, 126, 274, 896, 917, 434, 461, 235, 890, 312, 413, 328, 381, 96, 105, 217, 66, 118, 22, 77, 64, 42, 12, 7, 55, 24, 83, 67, 97, 109, 121, 135, 181, 203, 219, 228, 256, 21, 34, 77, 319, 374, 382, 675, 684, 717, 864, 203, 4, 18, 92, 16, 63, 82, 22, 46, 55, 69, 74, 112, 134, 186, 175, 119, 213, 416, 312, 343, 264, 119, 186, 218, 343, 417, 845, 951, 124, 209, 49, 617, 856, 924, 936, 72, 19, 28, 11, 35, 42, 40, 66, 85, 94, 112, 65, 82, 115, 119, 236, 244, 186, 172, 112, 85, 6, 56, 38, 44, 85, 72, 32, 47, 63, 96, 124, 217, 314, 319, 221, 644, 817, 821, 934, 922, 416, 975, 10, 22, 18, 46, 137, 181, 101, 39, 86, 103, 116, 138, 164, 212, 218, 296, 815, 380, 412, 460, 495, 675, 820, 952

The papers given above were all that were contained in the box, except two or three of an unimportant character, and having no connection whatever with the subject in hand. They were carefully copied, and as carefully compared with the originals, and no error is believed to exist.

Complete in themselves, they are respectfully submitted to the public, with the hope that all that is dark in them may receive light, and that the treasure, amounting to more than

three-quarters of a million, which has rested so long unproductive of good, in the hands of a proper person, may eventually accomplish its mission.

In conclusion it may not be inappropriate to say a few words regarding myself: In consequence of the time lost in the above investigation, I have been reduced from comparative affluence to absolute penury, entailing suffering upon those it was my duty to protect, and this, too, in spite of their remonstrances. My eyes were at last opened to their condition, and I resolved to sever at once, and forever, all connection with the affair, and retrieve, if possible, my errors. To do this, as the best means of placing temptation beyond my reach, I determined to make public the whole matter, and shift from my shoulders my responsibility to Mr. Morriss.

I anticipate for these papers a large circulation, and, to avoid the multitude of letters with which I should be assailed from all sections of the Union, propounding all sorts of questions, and requiring answers which, if attended to, would absorb my entire time, and only change the character of my work, I have decided upon withdrawing my name from the publication, after assuring all interested that I have given all that I know of the matter, and that I cannot add one word to the statements herein contained.

The gentleman whom I have selected as my agent, to publish and circulate these papers, was well-known to Mr. Morriss; it was at his house that Mrs. Morriss died, and he would have been one of the beneficiaries in the event of my success. Like every one else, he was ignorant of this episode in Mr. Morriss' career, until the manuscript was placed in his hands. Trusting that he will be benefited by the arrangement, which, I know, would have met the approval of Mr. Morriss, I have left the whole subject to his sole management and charge. It is needless to say that I shall await with much anxiety the development of the mystery.

iii. **Kruh, Louis, "A Basic Probe of the Beale Cipher as a Bamboozlement", *Cryptologia*, 1982, Volume 6, Number 4. and**

**Kruh, Louis, "The Beale Cipher as a Bamboozlement - Part II", *Cryptologia*, 1988, Volume 12, Number 4.**

iv. **Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore. Letters. Edgar Allan Poe to George W. Poe, Jr, - July 14, 1839.**

v. ***Poe, Edgar Allan, 1809-1849. Letters. Edited by John Ward Ostrom. New York, Gordian Press, 1966, Volume I, Page 66.***

vi. ***Great Short Works of Edgar Allan Poe. Introduction. G. R. Thompson. New York, Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1970.***

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